



Melanie L. Campbell

State of Equality and Justice in America: It's Time to Step it Up, We Have Not Arrived!

by Melanie L. Campbell

Reflecting upon the past 50 years since the 1963 March on Washington we must pay homage to our civil rights leaders for their hard work, strength and endurance in the fight for equality and justice in America. Their unwavering commitment to The Movement made it possible for a Black man named Barack Hussein Obama to become President of the United States of America.

As I look at the state of equality and justice today, we are at a very critical moment in time. Our elders have taken us this far. Some have transitioned on, others are continuing on the battle field for justice. Also, with all the progress over the past 50 years, some of us are under the misguided impression that we have arrived. I feel compelled to appeal to my generation and today's young leaders to make sure they understand: There is no more time, we must take the torch or the fire will die. It's time to step it up and get busy.

The task before Black leaders today begins with making sure that those coming behind us understand that even though the Civil Rights Movement forced laws to change, it did not change the hearts and minds of all Americans. Some of those who want to retain their power and money are threatened by inclusion.

Our young people must understand that a small group of people are continuously plotting to create new ways to exclude entire communities. In 2013, new school activists must make sure our young people understand that racism and inequality may not always manifest itself in a white sheet or barking dog but the dogs are still biting. Inequality comes in many packages.

Back in the day people in power relied on slick tactics like Jim Crow Laws and Poll Taxes to hold us back. Today, it's voter IDs and the "War on Drugs." For example, a person with a non-violent drug conviction on their record is restricted in their ability to secure housing, financial aid for education, public assistance, jobs, and the right to vote.

What does the fight for equality and justice look like in 2013 and beyond? In 2013 and beyond our fight is not just for access to education. We must make sure our schools are teaching critical thinking, promoting innovation, and preparing our youth for jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey reports that STEM workers earn more than other workers. Non-Hispanic Whites hold 72 percent of STEM jobs while only 6 percent of STEM jobs are held by Non-Hispanic Blacks.

In 1963 March organizers called for "Dignified Jobs." In 2013 "Dignified Jobs" must provide good jobs with a livable wage. We must also unite to support our unions and workers' rights. Modern-day equality struggles include closing the digital divide. Access to high-speed broadband Internet will increase job and educational opportunities as well as democratic participation. Broadband access will also help to lower health care costs and make quality medical care more accessible to the Black community.

Diversity strengthens our democracy. We must make sure employers don't just talk about "diversity" and "women's equality", but also back up the talk through their hiring practices. From the federal government to Wall Street to the corner store, we want to see Black women represented in top positions.

The elimination of racial disparities in our criminal justice system is paramount. The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world. Pew Charitable Trusts reports that the incarceration rate for Blacks is more than six times as high as the national average and over 60 percent of those incarcerated are racial and ethnic minorities.

In 2013 and beyond we will continue to lead the fight to eliminate barriers to civic participation fighting against restrictive voter ID laws, felon disenfranchisement and any other tactics created to block Black people from voting.

Finally, I must address our responsibility as a people to work harder to prepare our youth in this ongoing fight for justice and equality. We must encourage them to pursue STEM careers, teach them to be environmentally conscious, and help them understand the dire need to stop the violence in our neighborhoods. We must take the time to instill good moral values so they turn to each other and not on each other and our journey will not be in vain.

As we celebrate 50 years of progress, let's thank our elders for their great fight by stepping it up because we have not arrived.

Melanie Campbell is president/CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation and convener of the Black Women's Roundtable.

*Trust in the Lord
with all your heart*

Proverbs 3:5

The National Primitive Baptist Convention, USA Convenes in LA, California



Elder Bernard C. Yates, President

Hosted by the Western Region and local Primitive Baptist churches in the Los Angeles area, approximately 1500-2000 individuals comprising of national officers, auxiliaries, regional vice presidents, state presidents, moderators, pastors, elders, delegates, and laity of the National Primitive Baptist Convention, USA will convene its 106th Annual Session on August 18-23 at The Westin Bonaventure, 404 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California. Elder Dr. Bernard C. Yates, Pastor of Zion Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Pensacola, Florida, is the General President and the 6th individual to lead this national organization from the State of Florida.

For six days, this national body will assemble to: 1) conduct business on behalf of the body; 2) participate in Church School Training Sessions, Lectures, and Workshops; 3) hear the Word of the Lord from the clergies, share in joyous worship experiences, inspirational singing from the National Choir, and daily Bible Expositions; 4) promote evangelism and mission; and, 5) fellowship with each other. Live internet streaming of Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday worship services can be viewed on www.faithvideodemand.com.

The theme for this year's annual session is "Celebrating the Church: Worshipping, Working, Warring, and Winning" (John 4:23; Ephesians 4:11-12; Ephesians 6:10-11; Psalms 126:5-6). At this year's annual session, President Yates will challenge the organization to "occupy till He comes" meaning to be busy about the Master's business until Christ returns. The focus for this year's annual session is to return with passion to the following priorities: worship, work, warfare, and winning the world for Christ.

About The National Primitive Baptist Convention, USA

Inspired by a desire for unity and Christian fellowship among Primitive Baptists in the United States of America, this national organization was organized on July 17, 1907 as the Colored Primitive Baptists of America (now known as the National Primitive Baptist Convention, USA) by Dr. Clarence Frances Sams of Key West, Florida and Elder George S. Crawford of DeLand, Florida---after enlisting the support and cooperation of leading pastors and moderators of Florida, Alabama, and North Carolina.

Today, the largest concentration of Primitive Baptists who are members of the National Primitive Baptist Convention, USA still remains in the State of Florida.



What Black Parents Must Do This Summer

By Dr. Jawanza

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I have a theory that I can go into your house and within 5 minutes tell you the type of student who lives there and predict their future. I believe that engineers, doctors, lawyers, accountants etc. need different items in their house than ballplayers, rappers, and criminals. I am very concerned when I visit a house that has more cd's and downloads than books. My company African American Images has designed a special collection of books for boys. Research shows one of the major reasons boys dislike reading is because of the content. The set is titled Best Books for Boys. We also have one for girls, parents and teachers. Enjoy your summer. Let's close the gap. I look forward to your child's teacher asking your child what did you do for the summer? And your child answering we went to the library, museum, zoo, colleges and other great educational places.

Author of "There is Nothing Wrong With Black Students, Changing School Culture For Black Males And Raising Black Boys"