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**Political Strategy  
What Are We Going To Do?  
Part 1 of a 3 Part Series  
Spiritual/Psychological Dimensions of Our Struggle  
By Chuck Turner  
Boston City Councilor  
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board Member**

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*Note: This is the first of a three part series outlining a plan for the future - a political strategy for African Americans and Progressives to move forward in America.*

**Part 1 - Spiritual/Psychological Dimensions of Our Struggle**

Excited as I am about the possibilities of electing an African-American as President, I also recognize that the primary question for us is what are WE going to do after the election. Even, if Barack's call for "Change" were based on a foundation of progressive policies (which it isn't from my perspective), we would still need a

strategy to move us forward. Given the psychological and material effects of slavery and neo slavery, progressive government policies and programs should not be viewed as the complete answer to our problems.

Let me be more specific. We have spent two hundred years in slavery and experienced another two hundred years of hostile toleration and a brutality bordering on terrorism. Obviously, such an experience has had devastating effects—psychological and material. Thus, while challenging the white society to acknowledge and change the oppressive policies and practices that keep racism and its partner, economic exploitation, alive and well, we also have to develop a strategy to cope with the internalized oppression, anxiety, and depression that result from a four hundred year denial of our humanity.

Opening up opportunities has been the paramount objective of our struggle, particularly during the last 50 years of our struggle. However, if we believe consciously or subconsciously that we are valueless; if we believe that our problems primarily stem from our own deficiencies; if we believe that the white society is all powerful; if we in effect accept the negative definition of us held by society, then it is unrealistic for us to expect to have the energy necessary to create the internal and external change that must take place in order for the dreams of our ancestors to become a reality.

In what follows, I will outline a framework of thought regarding a strategy for liberation from our internal and external oppression. I will begin by examining the psychological/spiritual aspects of our struggle for liberation; I will then focus on organizing strategies; and finally focus on a political agenda for change at the federal level, drawing on the ideas that provided the focus for Dr. King's Poor People's March. I put this forward Not as the blueprint for our future struggle but as A framework for thinking about what we need to do and how to do it.

### **Spiritual/Psychological Dimensions of Our Struggle For Liberation:**

In view of the confusion regarding psychology and spirituality, trying to define an approach to these issues for us as a people is a daunting if not foolhardy task. However, it is essential given the psychological/spiritual malaise, which I believe envelops us as a cloud - especially our younger people. To begin the discussion, I think we all would agree that a person's view of herself or himself as well as the person's vision of her/his relationship with others guide the choices that we make. I think that we also would agree that popular culture's definition of us and our relationship to others play a significant role in the way we view ourselves.

Thus, as African-Americans, we have a serious psychological dilemma to resolve if we are to overcome the effects of our experience in what Elijah called, "The wilderness of North America". Simply stated, the dilemma is how to transcend the paralyzing psychological, mental, and spiritual impacts of the doctrine of WHITE MALE SUPREMACY. No one can question the pervasiveness of this doctrine not only in this country but also across the world. In fact, from my perspective, the Christian culture (particularly the right wing variety), social Darwinism, and even Marxism reinforce the doctrine of White Male Supremacy.

Let me explain what I mean. As a child, I had great trouble understanding how white people could treat us the way they did, given their claims to be Christians. As I grew older, I learned that the story of Ham being cursed because he looked on the nakedness of his father Noah was the rationale given by Christians to explain our enslavement. If you want to test my theory regarding the story of Ham, take a minute and Google Ham and Slavery and see what you get. As ridiculous as it seems, I think we are treading on thin ice to disregard the impact, conscious and subconscious, of this mythology.

Let me cite an even clearer example of Christianity's reinforcement of White Male Supremacy. Compare biblical descriptions of Jesus as having hair as wool and feet of burnished brass to western pictorial representations and then answer whether you believe Christianity has whitewashed Jesus. If Jesus Christ, our Savior is white, what does that say about our relationship as black people to white people in general and white males in particular?

Charles Darwin's theories on evolution flowed from his research on plant and animal life. Through his studies, he developed the theory that there is a struggle that goes on in nature that leads to a process of natural selection where the fittest survive. While Darwin focused on biological evolution in the plant and animal world, others such as Spencer and Malthus used his theories and their research to develop the concept of social Darwinism.

That is, social Darwinism was the projection onto the human species of the survival of the fittest theories developed through Darwin's investigations of the plant and animal world. Thus, scientific theories of evolution joins fundamentalist Christian belief and popular Christian imagery in affirming the thought that the Doctrine of White Male Supremacy is rooted in the nature of life and its processes. From this perspective I find the fight between "evolution" and "intelligent design" fascinating given that the similarity between the racial perspectives that flow from both. That is, while science and religion may disagree about the origin of life, they both project the idea of the innate supremacy of White Men and the innate inferiority of Black people.

Many will reject my claim that Marxist ideology reinforces the doctrine of White Male Supremacy. They will point to Marx's utopian writings. They will point to the countries of color where the leadership follows Marxist doctrine (despite the accusation of racism in the Cuban government). They will note the focus on Marxist theory of the dialectical process in nature that impels an evolutionary struggle by the oppressed against the oppressor.

While I don't deny the above or other arguments that might be made, Marx also envisioned a leadership class, enlightened by struggle, which would use their totalitarian power to lead people to a utopian society. Marx's denial of Acton's dictum that "...absolute power corrupts absolutely" not only led to the development of a world movement controlled by whiter men who viewed their adoption of Marxian philosophy as justification for behavior at least as brutal as their capitalist foes but also to a subtle reinforcement from the left of the doctrine of "White Male Supremacy".

Thus it doesn't matter whether you look to the right with its religious overtones, to

the center with its scientific certitude, or to the left with its utopian vision, they all reaffirm the modern version of the concept of the divine right of kings—White Male Supremacy. The purpose in the above analysis is to help us understand that it is not only white popular culture—music, movies, etc. that reinforce the concept of White Male Supremacy but also the religious, scientific, and both right wing and left wing political perspectives. That is, you can run but you can't hide from the concept—it surrounds us like air.

To create new realities that continuously challenge our historical subservience to oppression rooted in the doctrine of White Male Supremacy, we must as a people break the psychological and mental hold of this pernicious doctrine. It is an ideology designed to convince us that we have no other choice than to accept our natural inferiority as well as our dependence and subservience on a society controlled by a people who continuously displays its disdain for us.

The question is how to achieve liberation from this destructive ideology. Some may argue that religion is the key. However, as pointed out, Christian religion and as well as the institutional Black church historically have reinforced the doctrine of the supremacy of the white culture and urged submission to the authority of oppressors as part of the Christina message. Many black ministers viewed even Dr. King as a renegade. Thus Christianity and the institutional Black church are often at war with the self-affirming messages emanating from our internal centers of spiritual energy.

Others may argue that education is the key. Yet, how do children, inundated by messages of inferiority even within the educational institutions and their pedagogies, summon the spiritual, intellectual, and psychological energy necessary for transforming information into knowledge? Since educational systems are designed to initiate the children into the knowledge and value system of the society, it is clear that at this stage of development of this country, it is unrealistic to look to the educational system, public and private as the seedbed of our internal liberation. As I will discuss later, we need our own education centers that will help us rediscover ourselves.

Based on my own research over the last forty years, I suggest that there is a rich store of information in print, which supports a view of reality that is significantly different than the ones described above. Simply put this "Gnosis"—this body of knowledge—asserts that as human beings we are evolving. However, while Darwin's research focused primarily on the biological aspects of evolution, Gnosticism focuses on the evolution of consciousness as well as biological evolution.

In fact, from a Gnostic perspective, the purpose of life is to enable the life forms on earth, and the solar system as a whole, to expand our consciousness. By consciousness, I mean our awareness of the multilayer energy dimensions of our environment, our interactions with these many dimensions, the development of the ability to create within these dimensions, and finally to retain memory of our interactions and our reaction to them that enable us to be creators within the various energy dimensions. .

At our present stage of development, from a Gnostic perspective, we as human beings have developed a consciousness of the world of physical energy and how to use it to create new realities. In addition, we are in the process of building a consciousness of

the worlds of emotional, mental, and spiritual energy. In other words, Gnostic doctrine agrees with the principles of modern physics, which assert that we are part of a system of moving energy of varying densities. From a Gnostic perspective, the purpose of human life as well as that of all other life forms is to move from consciousness of the physical world and how to use physical energy creatively to a consciousness of all other levels of energy—etheric, psychological, mental, and spiritual—and develop the capacity to use these energies creatively.

I share the above not with the thought that my readers will say “That’s Right”. In fact, given the lack of familiarity with the Gnostic perspective I can understand the emotional and intellectual resistance to the above. However, I believe that we all can agree that our present system of education, public and private, was developed on and continues to rely on the foundation of the ideology of White Male Supremacy. Therefore, as we struggle to achieve “freedom” from the effects of slavery and neo slavery, it makes sense that we explore worldviews other than those that have supported our oppression as well as the oppressions of others.

*Part 2 (Organizing Objectives) of this 3 part series will appear next week (June 12, 2008).*

**BlackCommentator.com** Editorial Board member, Chuck Turner is a Boston City Council member and founder of the Fund the Dream campaign. He is the Chair of the Council’s Human Rights Committee, and Vice Chair of the Hunger and Homelessness Committee. [Click here](#) to contact Councilmember Turner.

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