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**Political Strategy  
What Are We Going To Do?  
Part 3 of a 3 Part Series  
A Political Agenda for Change at the Federal Level  
By Chuck Turner  
Boston City Councilor  
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board Member**

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### **Political/Electoral Organizing**

It seems clear that we should not expect the Democratic or Republican Parties to be forces for change in the near future, given the extent that both parties are controlled by the wealthy. While the Green Party of which I am a member is not controlled by those forces, we have not developed what I believe is essential to the success of alternative political formations—the combing of electoral organizing with issue organizing at the grassroots level. By combining electoral organizing with issue organizing, the party not only strengthens its legislative skill through combing theory (creating laws) with practice (issue organizing) activity but also creates a flow of potential candidates trained by struggle to represent the interests of the people whom they had already been representing in their roles as community leaders and organizers. Perhaps quiet middle class communities can afford elected leaders who

work comfortably within the deal-making model of representation. Most of our urban areas need leadership seasoned by struggle.

Until we develop a national party that has grassroots organizing at the core of their agenda, I believe, we must concentrate on building the type of networks and actions that can pressure legislative bodies to be supportive regardless of affiliation. Without the grassroots organizing and confrontational strategies, we could not have passed the Voters' Rights Act and the Equal Accommodations Act in the sixties. It was clear that the Congress controlled by the Democratic Dixiecrats did not want to legally tear down the legal walls of segregation, which provided their base of economic, political, and social power. Yet, the demonstrations in the streets by African-Americans and our allies publicized the racist practices in ways that put national and international attention on the issue of racism and hypocrisy in this country, forcing the Dixiecrats to concede to the forces of change.

## **National Goals**

This section on our national goals grows out of Dr. Martin Luther King's goals for the Poor People's March—the elimination of the “three evils” from governmental policies: militarism, economic exploitation/materialism, and racism. The fact that the “three evils” are alive and well means that despite all our work, we have much more to do before this country can be considered civilized.

As stated before, without including the expenditures in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Defense Budget of \$600 billion dollars is approximately two thirds of Congress' discretionary budget of \$900 billion plus. Regardless of who becomes President, we need a broad political alliance focused not just on ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan but also on reducing the military budget and developing a foreign policy focused on the development of planetary economic cooperation where military action is viewed as a last resort to maintain a peaceful planet.

In addition to the militarism that Dr. King warned against, economic exploitation and materialism seems to be even stronger than it was in the time that Dr. King was with us. Ronald Regan accomplished his goal of weakening government oversight to the stock market and financial services industry, which has led to the financial debacles of the last twenty years, including the foreclosure crisis. In addition, Congress has approved a set of tax policies that are consciously making the rich richer.

The unacknowledged reality that we see before us is that without a fair system of taxation, democracy is a joke. That is, as the rich gain more wealth and power they set an economic standard that the average worker or unemployed person cannot afford and thus becomes mired in an economic stress, thus sapping energy and will. In addition, as the rich gain more wealth and power, they enhance their ability to control the political process and ability to gain an even greater share of government resources.

The rich have created a belief in the minds of the people of this country that the taxation system is not fair in general. However, the reality they hide is that our present tax system is burdensome to the average person because the rich are not paying their fair share. And they won't pay their fair share until we build the alliance necessary to bring economic justice to this country.

Despite the political rise of Obama, institutional racism continues to flourish. The laws, regulations, and practices relating to those with criminal records have become America's newest form of discrimination, which is not even covered by the Civil rights

Act. American's War on Drugs is a policy, which has quadrupled the prison population in 35 years, disproportionately imprisoning Blacks and Latinos while doing little to stem the flow of drugs into the country or speed the development and financing of effective recovery programs. While we spend 55 billion a year on the War on Drugs with no reduction in drug use, the money for drug rehabilitation has declined.

In conclusion, we need to develop a focus on peace that enables us to move toward the goal of beating our swords into ploughshares. We need to end our militarism so that our resources can be used for development and prosperity for all. We need an economic and tax policy that benefits all the people of the country rather than just the rich. We need policies that eliminate the economic ravages of racism by developing governmental policies that enable all the people of the country to feel supported, productive, and economically secure.

We need an economic strategy focused on the creation of meaningful jobs for all who need and want to work and the building of strong sustainable local economies. Most of all, we need to move beyond the emasculated definition of the human being that has enabled America to operate as a slave state for an initial two hundred years and a neoslave state for an additional two hundred. It is time to free our minds. Its time to realize who we Really Are! Its time to live by the creed "What the mind can conceive, the will can achieve." Marcus Garvey urged us almost 100 years ago, "UP You Mighty Race, You Can Achieve What You Will". It's time for us to free America by freeing ourselves.


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**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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