

# The BLACK C o M M e n t a t o r

An independent weekly internet magazine  
dedicated to the movement for economic justice,  
social justice and peace - Providing commentary,  
analysis and investigations on issues affecting  
African Americans and the African world.

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**It's a Non-Denial Denial!**  
**By Dr. Lenore J. Daniels, PhD**  
BlackCommentator.com **Editorial Board**

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When Gregor Samsa woke up one morning from unsettling dreams, he found himself changed in his bed into a monstrous vermin.

-Franz Kafka, [The Metamorphosis](#)

It's the *economic* system in trouble. It's bank CEOs; it's bundled debt. It's greed; it's Bernard Madoff and Robert Allan Stanford! Individuals! But they won't say it is *capitalism*! The *economic* system is in trouble - but not *capitalism*!

The Corporate class of Washington and on Wall Street, desperate to save their lifestyle - exclusive homes, \$1400 dollar office trash cans, \$35,000 dollar toilets, vacations on remote islands, and private jets - are busy cleaning up the mess they created. They are working hard to restore the "economy" for the "American people." The corporate class isn't crazy. *Capitalism* is too big to fail, and *capitalism* is America; it is the banks and the financial sector! *Capitalism isn't guilty!*

So in lieu of a strategy, a vision that begins with a ceremonial burial of the corpse of capitalism, we have quick-fix tactics. Bandages costing trillions are ordered to patch up the holes that continue to develop daily while with leftovers, the American people are given the stimulus package and told to scrabble among themselves to figure out who gets what.

In the meantime, "we are confronted with a broader and deeper slowdown than has been experienced in decades," said Secretary of the Treasury, Tim Geithner. What is in a "slowdown"? What has not been experienced before? Geithner rushes! The world is to wait until the operation is over, until the "economic" crisis has past and the "economy" is on its feet again: "all countries need to sustain a commitment to open trade and investment policies which are essential to economic growth and prosperity." The former Federal Reserve operator and his few "good" ex-corporate "patriots" are working on policies "essential" to the "growth" of capitalism and the "prosperity" of a few "good" men and women.

CNN's Money broadcast featured a *Fortune Magazine* article by Allan Sloan in which the author called for a reality check - let the banks fail: "I think Geithner can overcome any deficits by quickly smacking Citi and Bank of America." According to Sloan, both banks received \$90 billion in bailout money. But Sloan won't say that a Bush II and former Secretary of Treasury, Henry Paulson, operated under *capitalism*.

Simon Johnson, former chief economist for the IMF, speaking to Bill Moyers, suggests we are witnessing the doings (or un-doings) of an "oligarchy," a "government by a small number of people." We have in Washington an oligarchy of a few "good" men lined up behind Geithner. His chief-of-staff is a former Goldman Sachs lobbyist, and his deputy secretary of state is a former CEO of Citigroup. "Another CEO from Citigroup is an assistant to the president and deputy national security advisor for International Economic Affairs. And one of his deputies also came from Citigroup," Johnson said. The "powerful" are "insiders."

The powerful people are the insiders. They're the CEOs of these banks. They're the people who run these banks. They're the people who pay themselves the massive bonuses at the end of the last year.

These "powerful" represent the "arrogance" and "feeling of invincibility" - but of what? Johnson won't say that these men represent the "arrogance" and "invincibility" of *capitalism*. He won't analyze what signifies the "powerful" "insiders," what makes them stand apart from all other Americans, if they do. Johnson will direct the viewer to see a collection of the few in Washington and on Wall Street - as if there's no relation between this group and the American people in general.

The American people won't see that, as Michel Foucault wrote years ago, "power is co-extensive with the social body; there are no spaces of primal liberty between the meshes of its network." Relations of power are interwoven with other kinds of relations (production, kinship, family, sexuality) for which they play at once a conditioning and a conditioned role.

These relations of power "are of multiple forms" and their interconnections delineate general conditions of domination, and this domination is organized into a more-or-less coherent and unitary strategic form [in which] localized procedures of power are adapted, reinforced and transformed by these global strategies [and] all of this being accompanied by numerous phenomena of inertia, displacement, and resistance.

Economist like Simon Johnson and others have used strong words to condemn the corporate capitalists. Johnson's talk of "a decisive moment.. [to] break the power"

hints at burying the dead, as if it is a singular entity, in singular individuals, in a singular spot on the map of the United States.

What a display of "inertia" if you can't even name the problem!

It's is not just the "few" at the "top." Too many average Americans won't let go of capitalism without kicking and screaming. The so-called "insiders" can count on it, and President Obama, too, knows this all too well. It's not just the Geithners and masters of war in Washington and on Wall Street; American citizens have long been in pursuit of the icy and dispassionate "American Dream." For the last 40 years, American citizens have been "duped into thinking that the gates of class power and privilege were truly opened for everyone," writes bell hooks, [and] "there was no longer a need for an emphasis on communalism or sharing resources, for ongoing focus on social justice."

Reagan stood in Philadelphia, Mississippi and shouted: White supremacy without the white sheets! And Americans threw him a landslide party! Bush I, Clinton, and Bush II established "essential" policies of deregulation on Wall Street and repression in urban America. And Americans flocked to the college campuses to study corporate law and urban policy. Excess is good. Greed is better! Happy days returned for white America and even some Blacks, passing the white filter of "progress," felt "free at last," and lost themselves in the frenzy. Power, Foucault writes, "produces things." It "induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces (sic) discourse." The American public is wedded to this power as evident in what it knows to deny. The "few" are the American people and collectively, they are the product of *capitalism*.

Neither pastors nor priests asked the American public to think: Where's the freedom in purchasing the latest Apple product or the 100 channels of corporate programming from Comcast or Direct TV?

Neither news anchors nor journalists asked the American public to consider the necessity of all these "must have" purchases on credit that ultimately helped finance the super elite billionaires, living in exclusive neighborhoods and earning millions in bonuses each year.

Neither teachers nor public intellectuals asked the American public why they needed to be Tiger who doesn't want to be Black. Why do they need to be a CEO who doesn't want to be them! Why?

Neither politicians nor community organizers told the American public to be weary of corporate capitalism - kick them out! But Americans always want the homeless out of their neighborhoods!

And you know why pastors, priests, news anchors, journalists, politicians, and community organizers didn't warn the American public? They couldn't say *capitalism* either.

Capitalism created people in America who *are* Tiffany diamonds; they're homes in Mission Hill, Kansas, they're Cadillacs, they're even Egg Mc Muffins and just- plan-glad-to-be-shoppers of fashion and trinkets! What else was there to do or to think about?

The "arrogance" and "feeling of invincibility" of *capitalism* in the flesh (dying in

incremental stages everywhere) won't abide by a smooth-talking African American Head of State talking *change*! But neither will an American public accustomed to the power given individuals, families, businesses, institutions, who really desire a little fascism to keep wheels turning in their favor. *Change means more* - give us (the middle class, the working-so-hard-to-be-billionaire-class) more of that word we can't say and take a few of the "unhinged" greedy down a peg or two!

It's not just the "insiders" ultimately delivering drones to Pakistan and turning a blind eye to Israeli violence; it's not just the "insiders" sending additional troops to Afghanistan for what may very well be the final showdown for the U.S. Empire; it's not just the "insiders" who will cling to power and will crush resistance even if this collective display of power means millions more dead and imprisoned here and elsewhere. The American public, believing in its invincibility, maintains the sacrificial pyre that is constantly ablaze, consuming the lives of others so that those few "good" men, in turn, maintain the good high life in America!

The American public won't say it either to save its own life - because what is life - if not measured by the market!

In this "economic" crisis, millions of Americans are experiencing profound feelings of "displacement" having little to do with the loss of homes or jobs. The owners of the plantations on which they themselves were allowed to reign as overseers and enforcers of "essential" policies of the State have betrayed them once again. And once again, they find themselves standing in proximity to the "enslaved." The American public (no surprise) never learned the first time that they too were enslaved. Now, the American public refuses to think of resistance; they refuse to muster up the courage to bury the unspeakable. They are well conditioned - they won't say *democratic socialism* either because that would be too logical!

*Capitalism is too big to fail!*

For so long now, America has awakened every morning and prayed to its god - *capitalism*! Then one morning in September 2008, Americans woke up to discover that something happened to the - "economy."

*And Tim Geithner says he and his men are working on it! It's just a "slowdown." Don't worry!*

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**The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog**

**BlackCommentator.com** Editorial Board member, Lenore Jean Daniels, PhD, has been a writer, for over thirty years of commentary, resistance criticism and cultural theory, and short stories with a Marxist sensibility to the impact of cultural narrative violence and its antithesis, resistance narratives. With entrenched dedication to justice and equality, she has served as a coordinator of student and community resistance projects that encourage the Black Feminist idea of an equalitarian community and facilitator of student-teacher communities behind the walls of academia for the last twenty years. Dr. Daniels holds a PhD in Modern American Literatures, with a specialty in Cultural Theory (race, gender, class narratives) from Loyola University, Chicago.

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