

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

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analysis and investigations on issues affecting  
African Americans and the African world.

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## **Self-Determination and the American Dynamic Worrill's World By Dr. Conrad W. Worrill, PhD BC Columnist**

In order for the African Community in America to continue our fight for self-determination and dignity, it is important that we remind ourselves of the nature of the American dynamic. Essentially, and at the foundation of the American-European dynamic, is the fact that it is made up of people of many nations who migrated to this country and continued to fight for and develop their national interests, inside this country. At the same time they maintained their economic, political, cultural, linguistic, and social relationships with their country of origin.

We can witness this phenomenon on a daily basis by just taking a quick glance at the national/ethnic group practices and beliefs of the Jews, Poles, Irish, Italians, Germans, Swedes, Greeks, French, Slovaks, Czechs, etc., and how they have consolidated their political and economic power in America. They have all done this through their nationalistic unity on the fundamental life-giving and life-sustaining issues that affect their interests.

In other words, they have maintained a strong sense of where they came from, who they are, and where they are going. This formula has been at the heart of their historical efforts to acquire power in America. We can observe this same trend among the Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Jordanians, and Palestinians who are the new national/ethnic groups of America. In fact, the Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and other Spanish-speaking national/ethnic groups are following this same pattern. They are fighting for nationalism in America, without calling it that.

When African people in America talk about nationalism, we are often charged with being racists or anti-white. However, the historical record demonstrates clearly that nationalism has been the primary method by which every national/ethnic group has achieved and maintains power.

Harold Cruse describes this dilemma of the African Community in America, in his most profound analysis of our movement, in his book *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*. Cruse framed the American dynamic in this manner when he said, "On the face of it, this dilemma rests on the fact that America, which idealizes the rights of the individual above everything else, in reality, a nation dominated by the social powers of groups, classes, in-groups and cliques - both ethnic and religious."

He goes further to explain, "The individual in America has few rights that are not backed up by the political, economic and social power of one group or another." Therefore, Cruse states, "...the individual [Black person] has, proportionately, very few rights indeed because his ethnic group (whether or not he actually identifies with it) has very little political, economic or social power (beyond moral grounds) to wield."

In our efforts to acquire Black Power, we should remind ourselves that the **Black Nationalist Tradition** has always been opposed to integration, assimilation, and accommodation as a solution to the problems of people of African ancestry in America. In this regard, the Black Nationalist Tradition has rejected the strategies and tactics of appealing to the morality of white people and their white supremacy system.

Black Nationalists have been historically clear that people in power do not teach powerless people how to get power. And they certainly do not give power away, even though, when challenged, they may make some concessions.

It is so clear that every national/ethnic group understands their political, economic, and cultural interest. It is so natural for them to function in a nationalistic manner in their struggle to acquire and maintain power. The African Community in America has not fully conceptualized and reached a consensus on our nationalistic agenda. Many of us function as if we are scared of really acting out what we really know, for fear of being called racist. We need to stop denying our own reality.

Being called racist because we believe in, and will fight for, the interests of our race with undying loyalty should become the most honorable badge of courage in our community. We should get off this defensive "trip" when we fight for the interests of our race and some other national/ethnic group calls us racist. We should know by now, this is a tactic to sway us away from the path of acquiring power.

Let's continue our movement "to assert our own identity, define our own purpose, to make and enforce decisions and to move into our own national interest." *It is called nationalism!*

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