

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.

www.BlackCommentator.com

February 26, 2009 - Issue 313

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'America:' "A Nation of Cowards?"

Keeping it Real

By Larry Pinkney

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board

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There is a difference between cowardice and hypocrisy, just as there is an important distinction between benefiting from economic and/or class privilege (no matter what one's pigmentation might be) versus suffering in the throes of worsening economic poverty - including joblessness, homelessness, and no comprehensive single-payer health care, etc.

To label an *entire* "nation" *collectively* as "cowards" on the subject of race, or *anything else*, is arrogant, uninformed, demagogic, and just plain wrong. Harriet Tubman, Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Huey P. Newton were not cowards, *nor* were John Brown or Viola Liuzzo. U.S. Attorney General, Eric Holder's, recent use of the word "coward" in the context of racial discourse in the United States, is at best misguided, and at worse, cynically opportunistic. Moreover, Holder's statement totally misses the point of the need for real and total *systemic* change in this nation, which crosses both color and gender boundaries. This nation's political "leaders" are indeed, *for the most part*, cowards *and* hypocrites, but the common everyday Black, White, Brown, Red, and Yellow peoples are definitely *not*. Rather, they are misinformed, disinformed, and deliberately manipulated by a corporate "news" media who in fact serve as nothing more than the fifth column for the U.S. Government's internal and external propaganda machine. Surely, Eric Holder knows this, for he and the Barack Obama regime, of which he is a part, directly benefit from this economic reality of class privilege.

Holder's militantly *uninformed* comment is no practical or acceptable substitute for militantly informed, *principled organizing* for collective and holistic *systemic* change. Militancy *without* revolutionary ideology is nothing more than opportunistic banter.

Race / color has been and continues to be an *extremely* important factor in the United States, and must be forthrightly addressed. However, class issues are also integrally intertwined with race/color issues in 'America.' Thus, a Black oppressor and/or economic exploiter is no more acceptable than a White one, or one of *any other* color. If there is any "coward[ice]" involved, it is that of pretending that color is the *only* important operative factor, when every passing day highlights to the suffering masses, nationally and internationally, that economic and class issues are *also* an integral part of the unfolding equation.

U.S. Attorney General, Eric Holder, made his above mentioned remarks to an audience celebrating "Black History Month." But it seems that Holder himself misses the point that every single month of the year is, in fact, Black History Month, and indeed every *day* of the year is one of discourse, agitation, and struggle for *all* peoples, including our indigenous so-called "Indian" sisters and brothers.

The Black, Brown, White, Red, and Yellow everyday peoples of this nation are *not* cowards. The privileged so-called leaders of this nation, for the most part, *are*.

It is up to you and me to change both the narrative and the terms of the political equation, for we are not the cowards but too often continue to be the victims of the cowardly actions of our so-called "leaders."

Onward...Onward NOW brothers and sisters. It's time to *change* the equation.

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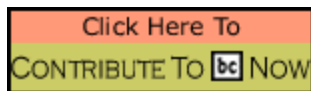
The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board Member, Larry Pinkney, is a veteran of the Black Panther Party, the former Minister of Interior of the Republic of New Africa, a former political prisoner and the only American to have successfully self-authored his civil/political rights case to the United Nations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In connection with his political organizing activities in opposition to voter suppression, etc., Pinkney was interviewed in 1988 on the nationally televised PBS NewsHour, formerly known as The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour. For more about Larry Pinkney see the book, [Saying No to Power: Autobiography of a 20th Century Activist and Thinker](#), by William Mandel [Introduction by Howard Zinn]. (Click [here](#) to read excerpts from the book). Click [here](#) to contact Mr. Pinkney.

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