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BLACK  
C o m m e n t a t o r**  
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on issues affecting African Americans  
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**Radical Civic Action:  
A Process for Social Change  
Keeping It Real  
By Larry Pinkney  
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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When activists and/or voters become *fans* instead of *serious, committed, and actively engaged citizens* in the political process, we end up with dangerous politicians like Barack Obama and crowd. We become mesmerized by nebulous rhetoric and manipulated by corporate images and brands rather than being committed activists whose constant watch words should be critical thought and analysis.

Those who supported whom they deemed to be the lesser of two evils in the past corporately controlled so-called *election* neglected to remember that the lesser evil is still *evil* and we do *not* have to continually be the pawns of Democrat and Republican parties, (i.e. the *Republicrats*) whose interests are to *perpetuate* corporate / military empire and exploitation at home and abroad. *Systemic* change is no nearer now than it was under George W. Bush.

We still have no universal, single-payer health care, rendition (international kidnapping) and the bloody wars in Iraq and Afghanistan continue unabated, joblessness and homelessness continue to grow at an alarming rate for the masses of Black, White, Brown, Red, and Yellow peoples, and police brutality and judicial injustices of all kinds, nation-wide, have increased - not decreased.

So where do we go from here?

We must go to the *root*. The word *radical* derives its meaning from the Latin word, *radix* or *radicis*, meaning *root*. Malcolm X repeatedly emphasized the need to study and delve *deeply* into matters, and he correctly noted that, "The future belongs to those

who prepare for it today." Our collective futures will be determined by the methodology of our approach. This calls for a radical / *root* approach, as Henry David Thoreau aptly stated, "There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the *root*." Indeed.

We must ask ourselves, is what we are doing "hacking at [a] branch" or addressing the *root* of the matter? Are we struggling for real *systemic* change or simply spinning our wheels like a caged hamster, running continuously on a rotating wheel but going absolutely nowhere?

We must organize, educate, and agitate, but *for* real **root** / **systemic** change, *not* half-baked and meaningless rhetorical or pigmentation change, for this is no change at all. There are many Malcolm Xs, Harriet Tubmans, and John Browns among us. Only when we begin to specifically formulate, and proceed to *actualize* what it is that we are striving for, can we successfully and collectively carry on the process of bringing about real *systemic* change. This takes work. It will not come about by merely hoping for it or by osmosis.

No one of us is as smart or as strong as *all* of us. Many *stumbled* when they succumbed to the corporate media-induced Obama madness, but they did not necessarily *fall*.

Onward then my brothers and sisters! There is much work to be done...

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
**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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