

Just Who are "We the People"

Written by James Clingman
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Blackonomics

Lincoln's words, included in the Gettysburg Address, "...and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth," take on an esoteric meaning as we look at today's political situation. A brief look at politics will show anyone with an ounce of sense that "we the people" have not, do not, and will not run the U.S. government. The silly name-calling among politicians, the bought-and-paid-for members of Congress, the lack of progress on anything related to our economy, the absolute lack of concern for the poor, the elderly and veterans, the kowtowing to Wall Street puppet masters, and the total aloofness of those whom "we the people" sent to Washington are blatant examples of how screwed up our political system has become.

Just who was Lincoln referring to when he spoke his famous line about "the people"? One thing we know for sure is that he was not talking about Black folks, and I would venture to guess he was not talking about poor White folks either. And that whole thing about the government being of, for, and by "the people" is in no way applicable to us, which leads to the logical conclusion that "we the people" must mean those who have the most money.

So where does that put Black people when it comes to the current economic state of this country and its future? What does it say about our political clout? Do "we, the Black people" and "we, the poor people" have a dog in the hunt as regards economic security, political influence, and/or power?

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Can you wrap your mind around \$2 billion being spent by the two Presidential candidates for the right to occupy the White House for the next four years? How about the billions of dollars in bailouts for banks and investment firms that are deemed "too big to fail"? How many of you have attended one of those \$20,000 per plate political fundraisers?

When I think about the fact that the bank bailout fund earmarked \$50 billion for those whose mortgages were underwater, yet only \$4 billion was used for that purpose, I cannot help but think that we are being played. But what else is new, huh? As a result of the bailout, the "too big to fail" banks are now even bigger; if one of them fails now its sheer size will drag the entire economy down the drain with it. Maybe that's why the Department of Justice has not prosecuted Goldman Sachs. Banks can now do whatever they want to "we the people."

At the end of the day, all of the vitriol, sarcasm, and lying back and forth will result in more millionaire politicians holding on to their money and making every effort to cut into yours. We will see no relief prior to the election because the two parties are squabbling and posturing for votes and dollars right now. There will be no solution to unemployment, the housing market, tight lending policies, Medicare, the national debt and deficit, and all the other fiscal ailments that have beset us, simply because the folks we sent to Congress are more interested in keeping their jobs and all the accoutrements thereof.

Meanwhile, Black men are incarcerated at an unprecedented rate; they are shooting themselves in the head with guns that were undetected during two searches, all with their hands cuffed behind their backs; they are still being shot (30 times, or was it 46 times?) by six police officers in Saginaw, Michigan, for cursing and holding a knife. I suppose they shot him because they didn't want him to hurt the police dog they threatened to let loose on him.

I don't claim to know much, but one thing I am certain of is that politicians, no matter what stripe, are not going to do anything about the conditions we, the Black people, face. I believe it was Marcus Garvey who said, "All the shoes have been shined and all the cotton has been picked." He went on to suggest that Black people were no longer needed by white folks, therefore, if we did not change our ways when it came to business development we would indeed become obsolete.

No matter how you look at it you cannot deny that our system of government is broken. A stranger might ask, "Why would you keep putting the same people back in office, especially considering how they treat you when they get elected?" Good question, isn't it? So I ask

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again: Just who are "we the people"? Another thing I know for sure is that, it sure ain't us.

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