

MINISTER PAUL SCOTT: Fear of the Intelligent Thug "When Black Power Gets Gangsta"

By Min. Paul Scott

"You're now about to witness the strength of street knowledge." -- NWA

You see them every morning same time. same place. "Dem boyz in da hood sell anything for profit, five in the morning on the corner clockin'." I wonder if anyone has ever taken the time to tell these 14 year old kids about Fred Hampton, who by the age of 21 had already become one of the most powerful leaders we'd ever produced? Wonder if anyone ever took the time to tell them about Huey P Newton or Bunchy Carter organizing tha hood to protect Black people? Probably not.

I passed a group of Brotha's yesterday, on my way to the annual Kwanza celebration. I started to pull over and drop a Black History moment on the Brotha's but I didn't want to lose my front row seat. Plus, the dashiki that I had rented from Mr. Nagasaki Sun Lee's Authentic African Kwanza Rental Shop and Soul Food Restaurant was due back by nine. Sometimes our priorities are so jacked up.....

The problem of Black on Black, gang violence is not unique to any hood in America and thanks to a Holly'hood propaganda machine, it is now spreading through hoods, worldwide.

Although American gangs originated from European immigrants, the face usually put on a "gangsta" is a young Black male in a white T-shirt with a bandana hanging from his back pocket. To hear white folks tell it, the gang problem is a result of lack of morals and parental responsibility, gangsta rap or some criminal chromosome that is buried deep within the genetic makeup of all Black men that makes even Old man Deacon Johnson a suspect to any break in within a 5 mile radius of his home.

In reality, the genesis of the gang problem can be attributed to the systematic destruction of Black leadership and the fear that white America has of Black men organizing anything more political than a pickup basketball game.

As early as slavery times, there was a constant fear by massa that every "Black Sam" was a potential Nat Turner and if he ever hooked up with an "educated negro" like David Walker, he may have become inspired to become a militant and spark the revolution. The fear of the "intelligent thug" was born. Therefore, the white power structure put steps into place to not only prevent the gathering of Black folks but sowed seeds of division between the enslaved Afrikans. After the end of chattel slavery there were various Black Codes put in place to prevent 3 or more Black men from being on the same block at the same time.

Perhaps the most devastating manifestation of the fear of the "intelligent thug" was the COINTELPRO program of the 60's. So afraid of the rise of a "Black Messiah" that would energize the youth was FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover that he put together a plan to have our boldest and brightest either assassinated or sentenced to life behind bars. It must be noted that the biggest long range victory of COINTELPRO was not the removal of Black leadership but the fear that it created in Black folks that even today the most vocal proponents of Black nationalism are scared to organize, effectively despite all of the Black unity rhetoric that they push to the people.

COINTELPRO led to a void of leadership in the Black community which was filled by the LA street gangs made up of a generation too young to remember the horrors of the counter intelligence program. Although largely ignored by the media, the Black on Black violence that eventually became the norm for street gangs was fueled largely by external and sometimes government sponsored sources that pushed crack and guns into tha hood.

So that leads us to where we are today, a society where 15 year olds send 14 year olds to early graves for no other reason than the color of a T-Shirt. To most of America and many in the Black community (except for that old grandma that would never give up on her babies) they are a generation of mindless brutes without a shred of socio-political consciousness. They are funky Frankenstein's monsters or Hip Hop Incredible Hulks led purely by blind rage with no sense of reason. That is if you believe the self fulfilling prophecy being propagated by the media.

That is why every instance of civil unrest reported by the news is always followed by the disclaimer "the riots do not appear to be racially nor politically motivated." Or any act of political outrage whether it be the demonstrations of the Civil Rights Era or the LA or Toledo rebellions are blamed on "outside white liberal Commie college agitators." White protestors are idealists expressing their first amendment rights but Black protestors are rebels without a cause just tearing up some stuff.

So any Black person who has the ability or just the potential to organize the Boyz in tha Hood is seen as an enemy to the state. Whether Tookie Williams was guilty of murder is a matter of debate but what is not debatable was that he was executed for his ability to organize young Black males.

However, as Kwame Ture went to his grave saying "We must organize us." That is why it is refreshing to see that a group of Black Brotha's and Sista's have formed a new "gang" called RAW (Revolutionary Afrikan Warriors). They are replacing the "OG's" with the elders of the Black community, the gang colors with Red, Black and Green, the gang signs with the Black Power fist and a mission to destroy the Black community with a mission to uplift it. To bridge the gap between the Black Power Generation and the Hip Hop Generation they pay homage to those who came before them by listing as their founders "all those who have lived, bled and died for the LIBERATION of Afrikan people."

At some point our desire to save a dying generation has to be greater than the fear of COINTELPRO, the bogeyman or any other apparition preventing us from organizing.

It's 2006, Brothers and Sister! We must get our act together before another casket with a 16 year old child drops.

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