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## Class and the Politics of the Black Community in the Obama Age

by Pascal Robert

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*"The large majority of the Negroes who have put on the finishing touches of our best colleges are all but worthless in the development of their people."* – Carter G. Woodson, Harvard trained historian and creator of Black History Month.

Due to the importance of depicting Black Americans as a permanent underclass in the function of capitalism in this country, people outside the Black community are generally oblivious to the existence of the class distinctions that have wreaked havoc among Blacks from the earliest points of American history.

When contemplating the sophistication of the oppression required to keep Blacks collectively in check and totally unable to topple the system built on their subjugation, the importance of the Black collaborator to maintaining this same economic system becomes more obvious. One of the most effective ways to ensure that collaboration has been creating classes of Blacks who through either their proximity to the White power structure, skills attained navigating that morally bankrupt system, or educational attainment, maintained such a desire to excel in the very paradigm that was destroying their brothers and sister in race that they would act in ways intentionally, or often unintentionally, that sabotaged the very well being of other Blacks who

had not obtained their class distinction. The irony of this reality is that usually those Blacks who are blessed with the skills to be the most effective collaborators to Black subjugation are the ones who have been largely controlling Black political discourse for over a century.

*“The Black poor and working class were sold a bill of goods in this president based on credentials appealing to the Black petite-bourgeois.”*

One may ask what makes this particularly distinctive in the case of the Black community since the elite, or upper classes, of every society are the ones who control their respective political discourse. The answer to that question lies in the very problem caused by the initial public perception that all Blacks function as one community in some greater “underclass minority.” Since broader society makes no distinction as to the various levels of Black American class structure, the notion of an elite segment within the Black community acting to the detriment of the larger segment becomes lost. Hence, when MSNBC has Black Phds discussing the plight of the Black poor and Obama’s policies relative to them, most Americans take that Black person as an authentic representative of Black aspiration without realizing that particular Black Phd is vested in better serving the presidential administration that is generally damaging the Black community as opposed to actually representing the interests of the Black poor. Hence, the class dynamics of the Black community, working behind the shadows of America’s racist social structure, allows an educated cadre of Blacks to work their best at assuring the viability of the White power structure, while being chosen as the legitimate representatives of the Black poor and working class that are being destroyed by that same power structure.

These dynamics are particularly damaging to the larger Black community when the face of the White power structure vested in Black subjugation is a charming tall Black man with a beautiful wife that fulfills all the vapid aspirational self serving desires and fantasies of those well trained Black collaborators. This is the reality of the Obama age.

*“The most effective collaborators to Black subjugation are the ones who have been largely controlling Black political discourse for over a century.”*

From the beginning, the Black poor and working class were sold a bill of goods in this president based on credentials appealing to the Black petite-bourgeois. Obama’s Ivy League education and sterling credentials from through the liberal foundation world of Chicago, had no real resonance to poor Blacks living in a world of de-industrialization, neo-liberal privatization, and mass incarceration. But because those credentials were given light through the prism of the pedigreed Blacks who make up the same vacuous circles of “Public Intellectuals,” Talk Show Celebrities, and the Black Misleadership class, the Black poor and working class were pitched top down an image of the new Black savior who was the “the one” Black people had been waiting for.

Hence, the craven petite bourgeois Black professional desire to both validate their presence in the hostile White working world, and vindicate all the abuses they received in that world, would be consummated in an Obama presidency. The Black working class and poor were conned into buying the hustle.

Obama's presidency comes to life as the creation of Madison Avenue marketing, Wall Street Financing, and Ivy League propaganda. The Grass roots bona fides of this president as "community organizer" were completely exaggerated if not concocted to dupe Black working class and poor. Meanwhile, pimping out symbolism of a noble Black Freedom Struggle to dupe the Black poor into supporting a Black elite political fantasy was key to electing Wall Street's Perfect Manchurian Candidate. This, when the browning of America and the limits of finance capitalism required Blacks to be neutralized to ensure wealth transfer upward

In the end, both the Black poor and the Black elite have been left with nothing but "Yes We Can" buttons and worthless empty symbolism. At the same time, the Voting Rights Act has been gutted, the Black/White wealth gap increases, Black unemployment continues unabated, and now Historically Black Colleges and Universities are being eviscerated by the same "one," Barack Obama, that Black people supported with over 95% of their votes. This is how the age old trajectory of the Black Educated elite controlling the political reality of the Black community has ended, with the deepest abyss of Black socio-political status since the death of Dr. King.

Hope and Change, indeed.