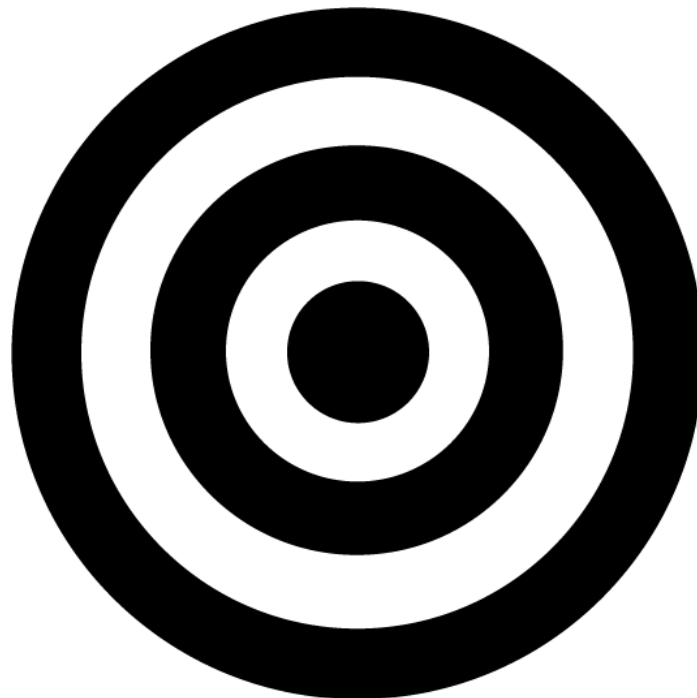


February 2020



ENDARCH

JOURNAL OF BLACK POLITICAL RESEARCH

A Publication of
The Clark Atlanta University
Department of Political Science and
Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library

Endarch

Journal of Black Political Research

About

Endarch: Journal of Black Political Research is a double blind peer-reviewed journal published by Clark Atlanta University Department of Political Science in partnership with Atlanta University Center Robert Woodruff Library. The journal is an online publication. *Endarch* seeks to reflect, analyze, and generate activity, which will lead toward the expansion, clarification, and edification of black political thought. We seek to publish high quality works regarding the experiences of African peoples relative to political activities which are investigated, critiqued and evaluated in a manner supportive of greater understanding and constructive developments, and we thereby contribute original scholarship to the field of political science.

For more information or to read the current and previous editions please visit <http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/enda/>

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Statement of Purpose*

In a decade characterized by the complete atrophy of all struggle from the sixties and the defection of most of the former participants, the principal question must be, why? What has happened consistently to denature and distort incipiently progressive impulses that appear among Black people? That question must be answered if we are to build a movement, and it cannot be answered apart from careful analysis of the economic, political and sociological structures and functions of capitalism in all its national and international, social and existential mediations. It is time that the victims move seriously to grapple with Leviathan.

Endarch, as its name would suggest identifies with motion; not any haphazard or desultory movement but movement that is conscious of its origins and destinations. As an embodiment of aggregate but mutually consistent perspectives, this journal seeks to reflect, analyze and generate activity which will ultimately lead toward the expansion, clarification and solidification of Black political thought.

The conscious nature of movement is derived from a clear social and analytic methodology. An approach which views the world as a totality but also diaphanously understands that the components comprising this world are not of equal importance. With this in mind, and given Black peoples historical grounding in oppression and exploitation, Endarch sees of paramount importance those phenomena and groups of phenomena which operate in the system of oppression and exploitation. Recognition of such phenomena must lead to the discernment of those vital elements, the crucial essences of which define and condition the world. Our purpose is to expose those essences and through this explication illuminate the totality from the vantage point of a specific oppressed people. Such is the task of a conscious and critical black political thought imbued with the task of defining the black experience in politics. It is toward this goal that we aim.

- Reprint, Endarch, Fall 1974

CONTENTS

***Endarch* Interview with Dr. Gary McGaha**
Gary A. McGaha

***Endarch* Interview with Dr. Ron Daniels**
Ron Daniels

***Endarch* Interview with Rick Adams**
Rick Adams

Editor's Remarks

In this edition of *Endarch* we present three insightful interviews with well-known community leaders who have made significant contributions toward increasing political awareness and the educational opportunities for African Americans. The interviews cover a variety of issues as the interviewees share their personal experiences, proposals to influence the political process, suggestions for improving access to higher education, and reflections on the practice of Pan-Africanism and enhancing the effectiveness of cooperative political ventures.

Dr. Gary A. McGaha holds the distinction of being the first African American to graduate with the Ph.D. degree in Political Science from the University of Mississippi. He spent a career in higher education leadership, and he has built a strong legacy by successfully leading an institution which transformed the lives of thousands of underserved persons in Atlanta. Dr. McGaha provides us with his discerning insights toward resolving some of the challenges currently facing higher education. He further gives us reflections and insights from his experiences about the challenges of educating people with modest means, dealing with racial disparities in the current political environment, and educational leadership.

We also present two interviews with Dr. Ron Daniels and Richard Adams, who are respectively the president and chair of the board of the Institute for the Black World 21st Century. Dr. Daniels is highly regarded as one of the leading scholar activists of his era. Richard Adams has served for several decades as a community organizer and activist. He has worked with many local grassroots group to address problematic conditions. With their wide experiences and keen insights Daniels and Adams address a wide array of concerns about ways and means for enhancing cooperative efforts among progressive groups, the prospects for Pan-

Africanism in the 21st century, and building responsible leadership that will push to empower Black communities.

N. Welchel
Editor-in-Chief *Endarch*
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About the Authors:

Dr. Gary A. McGaha is the former president of Atlanta Metropolitan State College where he served as president for twelve years. Dr. McGaha received his bachelor's degree in Social Science from Mississippi Valley State University, a master's in Political Science from Bowling Green University and the Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Mississippi. He began his career in educational leadership by serving as the Executive Assistant to the President at Kentucky State University and he later held the same position at the Morehouse School of Medicine. In the 1990s he became an administrator in the University System of Georgia serving as an academic dean at what was then Georgia Perimeter College. He later became the dean of the Social Science Division at Atlanta Metropolitan College. In 2007 he was named the president of the college and he immediately moved to make transformative changes. During his tenure as president the community college status of the institution was upgraded to state college status and the first bachelorette degrees were offered. Also, the infrastructure of the college was greatly improved with the addition a new classroom building and a new Student Success Center building. Dr. McGaha left a legacy at the school of serving the underserved with high quality educational experiences and giving many access to higher education opportunities that they would not have otherwise had.

Dr. Ron Daniels is the founder and President of the Institute for the Black World 21st Century which operates with the mission of empowering African people and marginalized communities. Dr. Daniels received his undergraduate education at Youngstown State University. He has obtained the M.A. in political science from the Rockefeller School of Public Affairs and a Ph.D. in Africana Studies from the Union Institute and the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Daniels taught

courses in political science as Distinguished Lecturer at York College, City University of New York. Dr. Daniels was the first African American Executive Director for the Center Constitutional Rights where he led campaigns against police brutality, voter disenfranchisement and environmental racism. Dr. Daniels writes the column *Vantage Point* which appears in many Black and progressive news outlets and websites. He also hosts a talk show on Pacifica Network in New York. As the founder and President of IBW21 Dr. Daniels has advanced the efforts of the National African American Reparations Committee to secure reparations for African Americans. He also helped to mobilize the Haiti Support Project to build a constituency of political support for the people of Haiti in the United States.

Richard “Rick” Adams is the Chairman of the Board for the Institute for the Black World 21st Century. Adams is also currently the Assistant Vice President for the Frieda G. Shapira Center for Learning Through Service at the Community College of Allegheny County. Adams received his bachelor’s degree in Government and Afro-American Studies from Bowdoin College and he has a master’s degree in Business Communications from Jones International University. He has spent many years involved in local politics and he served as a regional campaign manager for the 1988 Jesse Jackson presidential campaign. Adams has been a member of the Pittsburg Human Relations Commission as well as an elected member of the Pittsburg School Board. Adams is the Co-Convener of the Western Pennsylvania Black Assembly and a board member of the African American Leadership Association. He is also a local radio talk show host and he writes a regular column commenting on current events entitled *Just a Thought...*

Endarch Interview with Dr. Gary A. McGaha

Gary A. McGaha, Ph.D.
President, Atlanta Metropolitan State College

You have the distinction of being the first African-American to obtain a PhD from the University of Mississippi. Was that the first African-American to obtain a PhD overall or the first to obtain the degree in political science?

I was not the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from the University of Mississippi but, I was the first African American to receive a Ph.D. degree in Political Science... There had been other PhDs earned in other disciplines. There were people who obtained them near the time that I did, in small number. There was one in particular individual who was a good friend, Dr. Grover Barnes who went on to get an MD from the University of Minnesota, after he received the Ph.D. in 1975 at Ole Miss. I was also able to teach political science at Ole Miss. I had the full teaching responsibility for a class each semester during my first year there teaching American Politics and Introduction to Political Science. It was an interesting and enjoyable experience.

What influenced you to pursue political science, and what made you want to obtain a doctorate degree?

I'm a student of the Civil Rights Movement. I finished high school in 1968. That was one of the most significant, if not the most significant year in the 20th century. There were so many game changing decisions made at that particular time. And then of course there were the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy as well. But, the focus on the body politic of this country at that time was very, very clear and that focus influenced my decision. I wanted to study as much as I could about what was transpiring and why. Becoming a political scientist was something that I immediately said I would do in high school, because it

gave me a chance to get deeper into the whys and the why nots. After getting into that and seeing the things I observed, I wanted to dig deeper.

My motivation for going to school came from my parents and my grandfather. However, my grandfather, Issac Marcus McGaha, who was born in 1877, was my most impactful motivator. He met his grandfather who was an African slave who had earned his freedom. Education was embraced by the African slave, his son Issac Willie C. McGaha, the first African American McGaha to be born free in America and by my grandfather. All three strongly encouraged and supported getting an education because they firmly believed it was the only thing that whites could not take away from blacks. I drove my grandfather to conventions, association and church meetings from the time I was 12 years of age and our conversations always included discussions about the importance of an education. I was influenced immensely by those conversations.

That African slave purchased his freedom prior to 1850, and one of his sons who settled in Rienzi, Mississippi, my hometown, purchased a 160 acre family farm in 1899 that remained in the family until 1990's. I still own a small portion of the farm. We grew up on that farm with my grandfather's siblings and their families and we had a great deal to embrace and wrap our arms around.

What challenges did you have to overcome in obtaining your doctoral degree?

Well, to do the work was intriguing, which I was really motivated to do. I was blessed. My dad was a one hundred percent disabled veteran who was still able to do carpentry work on his own. We received funds under the GI bill to go to undergraduate school. In addition, I had a full scholarship to Mississippi Valley as a percussionist in the marching band. I was able to graduate from undergraduate school magna cum laude. I received a full ride to Bowling Green

State University for a master's degree. I decided to attend Bowling Green because I was inquisitive about what higher education was like at a northern university. The program was very high in quality and professors were very exceptional. I was awarded a Graduate Teaching Assistantship which covered the cost of attending the institution. However, Bowling Green did not offer the Ph.D. in Political Science. My plans were to attend Ohio State or Brandeis for the Ph.D. and I had applied and was accepted to both programs. However, my father became ill and I decided to return to Mississippi and enroll in the Ph.D. program at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss). I had a Teaching Assistantship the first year I was at Ole Miss and a Research Fellowship the second year which paid much better than the Teaching Assistantship. The financial resources from the assistantship and the fellowship permitted me to focus my attention exclusively on academics. I was not invited to come to Ole Miss. But, I was treated fairly. I had a great experience academically with some world class faculty members at Ole Miss which was gratifying and enjoyable. The relationships developed during that experience are still very important to me and my family.

Who or what motivated you to achieve excellence in your life and career? Who inspired you to become a leader? Who were the people who significantly influenced your career choices and how did they influence you?

It goes back to my small community. My grandfather was quite influential in terms of encouraging me to achieve excellence. I was recruited by several institutions my senior year in high school. I had already applied to become a part of the marching band at Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU). A professor by the name of Dr. W. A. Butts came to my high school to give the Career Day Program address which was shortly after Dr. Martin Luther King, [Jr.] had been assassinated. He gave an address entitled, "I Too Have a Dream." He was the first African-American I had met with a Ph.D. He electrified that high school. He simply touched

everybody, and he inspired us all. I said, "I want to be like that guy." I had already decided to go to Mississippi Valley, but I decided that day that I wanted to major in political science. He was Dean of the Liberal Arts Division at Mississippi Valley, and Chair of the Department of Political Science. He had a PhD in Political Science from Southern Illinois University. I took as many classes as I could from him. He was a very compelling and difficult teacher. He became like a father figure to me. While I was in graduate school he became president of Kentucky State University and he invited me to be his Administrative Assistant. He had been there a year by the time I completed the requirements for my degree.

Dr. Butts was a member of the 1890 Land Grant Council of Presidents and he served as the Secretary Treasurer for that organization. Those presidents were giants in higher education. As his Administrative Assistant, I was provided with an opportunity to sit at the feet of those institutional presidents which included; Alabama A & M University, Alcorn State University, Fort Valley State University, Kentucky State University, Tuskegee Institute and the presidents of other institutions who were also phenomenal. I was 26 years of age at that time, and it provided an unprecedented opportunity for me to meet and converse with those academic and administrative giants which clearly positively impacted and helped to shape my perspective. In addition to serving as the Administrative Assistant, I also served as Chair of the History and Political Science Department, as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and was offered the Vice President for Academic Position, which I declined because I had agreed to accept an administrative position at Morehouse School of Medicine.

That's some important history. I don't know if that group is still meeting. Certainly, a gathering like that is still needed...

I left Kentucky State University to come to the Morehouse School of Medicine in 1983. We then were looking down the road, predicting what would happen and trying to envision how

those institutions could become stabilizers in our communities on a long term basis. We talked about creating a vehicle – that those institutions could use to train chief academic and chief fiscal affairs officers to help keep historically black and minority serving institutions afloat long term. As we looked at the few schools that were having challenges at that time, they were always in academic affairs or fiscal affairs. There was an organization at that time that the presidents could use for those purposes called NAFEO – the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education. We noted that NAFEO institutions should be the vehicles used as a training ground for chief academic and fiscal affairs officers. We had the wherewithal at that particular time to recruit students from high school, and put them in selective undergraduate and graduate programs at our respective institutions so that when there was a need for someone in Academic or Fiscal Affairs, we could reach into that pool and pull them forward. Those individuals would already be oriented and would understand the DNA of those schools. That didn't happen, and it was a mistake. Just look at where we are right now. Every time you see a HBCU having an issue, it's either in academics or fiscal affairs. That was an idea that we proposed back then, and which was probably 1978 or 1979. Just take a look at Knoxville College, Mary Holmes College, Morris Brown College and Paine College and go down the list. There's still time to do what was proposed but, we don't have forever to prepare for a war. We need to do a better job of preserving and protecting the academic and fiscal stability of HBCU's and minority serving institutions.

After becoming the president of what was then Atlanta Metropolitan College, you have led the school through significant changes, growth and transformation. What would you say are your most significant achievements? What have been your greatest challenges as president?

My most significant achievement clearly was making Atlanta Metropolitan State College a baccalaureate degree granting institution. Doing that against the back drop of the Atlanta University Center (AUC) and Georgia State University was not an easy task. But, I was blessed to have worked at Morehouse School of Medicine and to have spent a number of years in the AUC, and to be in this community. I understood what was going on. Being able to get the baccalaureate degree status is clearly one of my most significant achievements.

Another achievement was being able to help position AMSC to assist with closing the opportunity divide that exists in Atlanta. Many people are now beginning to talk about this divide. Atlanta is a tale of two cities; the void between the haves and the have-nots is wider here than at any other place in the nation. It has all to do with education and not race. It impacts the races, but it's all about education. This institution is the bridge, the major vehicle that can be used to help close the divide. Those are immense accomplishments. Positioning AMSC to be recognized as an equal partner in higher education is a third accomplishment which was not easy. People used to tease and say AMSC was the thirteenth grade, or you go there when you can't go anywhere else. But, now Atlanta Metro is not just a member institution, it is an academic leader in many regards. There are seventeen institutions in the University System of Georgia offering the associate degree, – that's among nine state colleges and eight universities offering the associate degree. We have the highest graduation rate for the associate. Our graduation rate is 65% higher than the graduation rate for the University System of Georgia for the Associate Degree. The baccalaureate degree is still relatively new and we are doing quite well. AMSC has also become a major pipeline for identifying youngsters, who would otherwise never have a chance to get a college education. Following the May 3rd 2019 commencement, AMSC had

awarded more than 3,800 degrees to mostly Atlanta residents who otherwise would not have had an opportunity to acquire college degrees.

What you offer at Atlanta Metropolitan is unique. I don't believe you can duplicate what you have here anywhere else in the metropolitan area.

Not with the academic quality that we offer. If you follow our guidelines, a student can start and finish a baccalaureate degree for less than \$17,000 and you can leave here going to work, medical school, law school or graduate school. What we are also doing now is offering a premiere dual enrollment program which is expanding and growing. During the May 3rd commencement, I also awarded 11 associate degrees to students in the public school systems who went on to become juniors at AMSC or other universities right out of high school and they have saved two years. We have more than 200 students in the Dual Enrollment program which speaks to the importance of this institution and how it is clearly a major force in the Atlanta community.

Higher education in the United States is facing a number of serious challenges. For the past decade tuition and fees have annually increased at rates 3-4 percent higher than inflation. The cost of a college education is considered by some to be outpacing the growth in well-paying jobs. Also, about a third of students at 4-year colleges fail to complete their degrees within six years. The dropout rate is much higher at 2-year colleges. Furthermore, many employers complain that too many college graduates are poorly prepared for the job market. Why do institutions of higher education fail to meet the needs of so many students? In your tenure as president what initiatives did you take which have had the greatest impact on student success?

We have been able to look very closely and zero in on the failure rate of students. As an access institution we look at how prepared students are when they arrive. The students' preparation has all to do with how successful they will be once they are enrolled. We are working with high schools offering pre-matriculation enrichment programs in the high schools and on this campus to ensure that once they arrive they are prepared to matriculate successfully.

We also see that one of the standard components of quality in higher education is shifting and disappearing. By that I mean you can talk to people now with degrees and you can't determine that they have a degree based upon their conversation, and their use of the King's English. We use writing across the curriculum to ensure that students are being baptized in the correct way in terms of using grammar, writing, and thinking critically. I have insisted that we use English teachers who are grammarians, who teach the fundamentals of good grammar and writing. It is nice to have faculty members with the PhD because it looks nice on paper. However, having an English teacher with a PhD in literature with a focus on Chaucer or Shakespeare is not always a wise investment for an access institution. Grammarians with a Master's Degree in English who teach the fundamentals tend to do a job which really makes a difference when it comes to successful matriculation at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

In addition, we look at cost and try to hold them down. We are an access institution and our costs are the lowest in Atlanta. We try to not let students borrow money they don't need. We have been able to implement a program that limits what students are permitted to borrow to cover the cost of attendance. This is a federal government called Experiment Six. I also implemented a new Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) program which ensures that a student must complete at least two thirds of the courses that they enroll in with a minimum C average to continue to receive financial aid. Those two things put some pressure on enrollment, but they produced much stronger students.

These are things I believe we should do collectively as a nation to reduce the deterioration of quality. We need to be more innovative and intrusive in directing students to go to schools they can afford so that the money last longer, and inspire them to take larger class

loads once they enroll. We now try to require everybody to take at least ten hours of course work even if they are part-time students. Only taking a course now and again simply increases the cost, delays graduation and prolongs the time students are enrolled. These are the things we have done to address the issues you raised.

Some schools charge what seem to be exploitatively high tuitions to students from low income families, and then those students end up with high debt loads that they will struggle to repay while the schools end up with very high default rates. The programs that you have implemented here can help to address this problem.

It's unfair to the students for the institution not to take a leadership role in holding down costs. We have workshops with community leaders and with parents to discuss these issues. We encourage students to come in for orientation programs prior to being admitted, so we will have those discussions. I could have increased the enrollment far more than what we have in the past three years. But, I denied admittance or continuation to between one hundred fifty and two hundred students last fall because they simply were trying to live off the financial aid, and not go to school. They had used up all of their Pell Grant money, which is free, and had not progressed academically or acquired the GPA to be classified as solid students. The only way they could have remained in school was with 100% loans. Those were bad investments and I said no. The students were told, you are welcome to come to school, but, you must pay and you have to build your GPA back up, and you have to take just one class at a time. As a result of Experiment Six, SAP and some other intrusive things we have implemented, the default rate at AMSC has dropped from 24 or 25% to 17% over the past five to six years. In addition, it is unfair to burden students with large amounts of unnecessary debt that they don't understand. Many of these students are signing their hearts and souls away and creating debts they cannot pay back . Moreover, because of the opportunity divide that exists in Atlanta, I see institutions driving their vehicles to inner city of Atlanta admitting and enrolling students who come from homes where

they don't have the meals that they need. Many of them don't live in environments that are conducive to study and they enroll in those institutions, and sign up for massive student loans just to get places to live and meal tickets. Those schools are not good fits for where some of the students come from. In many instances two, three or four semesters later, those students are out of luck, they're in debt, and they don't have anything to show for it. All they have done is help pay the debt services on the residence halls where they lived at those institutions. They could have come to Atlanta Metro in the beginning. We have a larger percentage here of students who are transferring from other schools than any other institution and it's because they have been literally – I won't say taken advantage of, but they have clearly been misled, and they have this indebtedness without academic progress. We don't do that to students. We say, "We love you but, it's tough love." We will not let you borrow that kind of money, knowing you can't pay it back, and you then have nothing to show for it." That is awful, but it is happening every day.

African-American college graduates are twice as likely to be unemployed as other college graduates. They are also over-represented in low-paying college majors. Moreover, African-American college students frequently end up with higher student loan debts than other students and they have a much higher default rate (49% for African-Americans compared to 21% for whites) than students from other demographics. What policy initiatives or programs would you suggest to address this situation?

We need to honestly tell students the best places to go, and encourage them as best as we possibly can to go to those schools that they can afford, that are accredited and that will willingly provide them with the support they need to matriculate successfully. We also have to push them into disciplines that we know will pay more. Our first baccalaureate degree was in Biological Science. We push the STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) initiative. We also have some great partners like The Georgia Institute of Technology and we have an engineering transfer program with Georgia Tech. AMSC has a strong relationship with Tech, and maybe the strongest in the city. We've had more than a hundred students go through Georgia Tech, and we

had more than one hundred students from Georgia Tech on our campus this summer at their request taking courses they asked AMSC to teach for them. We do this because we want students to get into disciplines that are going to pay higher salaries, so they can better take care of themselves and their families. By the same token, we push them to not borrow money that they don't need while they're in school. The Experiment Six program that I mentioned a moment ago is a perfect example of a program that allows us to tailor what we permit students to borrow to the cost that we charge. It prevents them from getting loans that they don't need, and it drives them into directions that will make them more effective, and it gives them the chance to better take care of their families and get degrees in higher paying disciplines. That matters a great deal.

How do you push students toward the higher paying disciplines?

We push, pull and prod students to be successful. We expose students to our science math and health professions disciplines. We let them participate in things like the Lou Stokes Initiative that we have with Clark Atlanta [University]. We also talk to students about the fact that they can get a bachelor's degree in a STEM discipline and start jobs with six figures. We use a variety of mechanism to expose students and familiarize them with high paying disciplines. Our recruiters talk about those things. Our dual enrollment students are required to go to the Research Day that we have on campus each year so that they can see other students in STEM disciplines in white coats explaining their research projects. And they began to think that they can do these things as well. We have a TRiO program which has a STEM component. We use that program to provide assistance and motivate students to embrace STEM disciplines. We expose them to those things, and many of them say that they did not know about it, or that those opportunities were available. They simply weren't aware of it. We try to get them to do those

things, and it makes a difference. We are seeing now that they are beginning to embrace those disciplines. We just emphasize that STEM disciplines and that's why our biological sciences program was our first baccalaureate program. We want them to not just become skilled artisans with a job, we want them to get science and math and other technological degrees that will permit them to do well. These things are beginning to work, but we have had to push them because are not part of all of our communities.

Many people will say, "I cannot do Math very well, so why should I try?" We have a couple of things we are doing on campus to change that type of thinking." We're now requiring students to take the Math and the English their first year – it's called the Momentum Year. It doesn't matter what your IQ may be in Math, we'll help you get through that challenge. What is happening now is that we're finding students who come here and say, "I can't stand math," but who then become Mathematics majors after working with our teachers and support staff. They simply had not been exposed to the right kind of teaching, and they had not been given the right kind of encouragement. We have to make sure that we balance our exposure to them, and balance means everything. But, we sometimes focus more on the STEM disciplines because they pay better dividends in the end.

There have been many changes in America since the 1960s, but racial disparities in socioeconomic conditions have not changed. There is a huge racial wealth gap. The median liquid net wealth for African-Americans is just \$1,700 compared to about \$116,800 for whites. The net wealth for African-Americans is declining and will reach \$0 in 30 years at the current rate of decrease. There are also significant disparities in the criminal justice system where African-Americans are treated much more harshly than whites. There are further disparities in access to appropriate health care and access to educational opportunities and so on. Some would argue that systematic racism or white supremacy in the United States has continued unabated though under new guises despite the passage of civil rights legislation in the 1960s. Would you agree with that argument? In your view why have these disparities persisted? What public policy proposals would you suggest to help substantively change these conditions?

Racism is alive and well in this country. And unfortunately it seems to be increasing. I must say that some of this is being unfortunately generated by signals and directives coming from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. It's unfortunate to say that as a political scientist, but I am not going to lie about it. I'm surprised and disappointed that we are seeing a resurgence in the dog whistles some elected officials are using and we see them consistently in 2019. But, there are things that we can do to address these issues.

The unfortunate continuation of racism is discouraging, but we can address the wealth gap, we can certainly address educational access, and we can also address the disparities in the criminal justice system. The wealth gap is basically related to education. If you look at this city, as I said earlier the median income for a black family, you're talking about the high teens or low twenties [in thousands of dollars] and for a white family its \$86,000, and this has everything to do with education, not race. So we have to simply educate more of our people. We have to use vehicles like Atlanta Metropolitan State College to bring those things to fruition creatively. We have done so with our seven day a week schedule through our Evening and Weekend College where people can work and still go to school – we have to do that.

In terms of the criminal sentence disparities, yes those things exist. But, what we're going to have to do is train police officers and judges differently. We just created a new program that I put together with Dr. Larry Stewart. We pulled criminal justice out of the social sciences division, and we have a new criminal justice police sciences institute. That institute can address criminal justice issues in a diversified way, and it involves training people differently who will be the front line police officers, and hopefully judges. We have some judges and attorneys who are teaching in this program who literally talk to the students about how to prevent them from being criminals going to jail, and how to handle people so you can literally equip them so that

they will not end up getting prosecuted and so forth. Collectively, we are seeing this thing change. We have signed agreements with several local police departments. From DeKalb County alone over the past four months we've had more than 800 police officers come to orientation programs here to position themselves to try to get into school. We're doing something very similar with the Atlanta Police Department and Fulton County Police Department. And we have requests from other counties. What we are doing here is that we are changing the calculus on how we go about addressing criminal justice. We're calling it what it is. There are disparities here that should be addressed. It's not fair that many of these young black guys are prosecuted and incarcerated just because of who they are. So, we're talking about a different approach to that of using community policing and a number of other things.

As far as the health disparities, education helps us to address those as well. The more educated you are, the more likely you are to get access to healthcare. As we continue to educate more people we will automatically increase access in those areas. I did a paper on healthcare reform when I was at Morehouse School of Medicine just before I left in 1993. That paper was sent to the U. S. Department of Education, to President Bill Clinton and to Vice President Al Gore. That was when Hillary Clinton was leading the effort in healthcare reform... I did the paper for the King Center during King Week. When I was doing the research in Georgia there were 17 counties, in 1993, where African-Americans males did not live to be 65. They worked, and just about the time they would have collected social security, they died. They were dying from things that a primary care physician would be able to help them prevent.

So, to reduce those disparities we have to use education to make people more aware, and at the same time to give them the training that they need to get the jobs so that they can afford healthcare. We have to push those things, and there has to be a massive attempt in our

communities where we come together including educated blacks like myself, where we lock arms and say, “We have to do these things to address health disparities.” Now, we can’t move that dial all at one time, but we can move it. We have to use the methods that I just mentioned to get that done. Once we do that, we will see these things changing. I believe that we will witness some major accomplishments in two years with the next election. One or two people in the right position, a governor or a senator, can change the trajectory, and the acquisition of many of those things. And I think we are positioning ourselves for those things to transpire.

A study by the political scientists Martin Gilens and Benjamin Page in 2014 found that elite interests tend to have far more influence on outcomes in public policy than majoritarian interests. Institutions which should serve the needs of the whole populace seem mostly to serve only the needs of an elite few. This suggests a major crisis in American democracy and leadership. Would you agree that there is a crisis in effective leadership in major institutions? Is the dominance of elite interests simply inevitable, a matter of the Iron Law of Oligarchy? What can be done to make our institutions more democratic and more responsive to the needs of the entire populace?

Well, there’s no question that these elected officials are catering to the people who elected them. You look at their electoral base and you see that very clearly. Elite interests are getting more attention because they vote more frequently. Politicians recognize that, and that’s why they are getting some of the responses that they receive. The authoritative allocation of scarce values has always been what politics is about. To me the best explanation of that in terms of a response is something that Hosea Williams said thirty five years ago, “You can’t beat a black bloc vote.” You put those votes in place and every politician will listen to what you’re saying. Our people simply are not voting. They are not voting in larger numbers and that’s unfortunate. It doesn’t take a great deal to change that because there is a shift in the body politic of this country. You’re seeing this country become more brown, and that really frightens some in the majority population, because they know that the impact will be profound if you harness the people and get more of them to vote. That’s the motivation behind voter suppression. The idea

is to inspire people to vote, to teach them that they should, and to have individuals at these institutions reach out to them.

We want an educated population. An educated population is a dependable population. A population that is not educated, you can't depend upon. People vote more frequently when they are educated. That's what we need to do a better job of. The numbers are there. I need not talk about the gubernatorial election here in Georgia, but it could have been very, very different, and it probably will be the next time around because the numbers are there. It's a matter of putting a harness on the numbers. The late Reverend Hosea Williams called this "A black bloc vote." He contended that when the Black bloc is together, it is very powerful. However, it doesn't have to be all black. The point to remember is that it is powerful and difficult to stop. People of color have to recognize that without our vote...and we are going to see a bloc vote because there are so many similarities in what the needs are across all ethnic, racial, gender and cultural lines. Clearly, we are seeing the elites control those allocations because they vote more frequently and in larger numbers. When those numbers are challenged, you certainly will see a change.

You have been a respected and successful administrator and leader for most of your career. In your view, what are the three most important characteristics of effective leadership? What makes leadership legitimate? You have helped to lead an institution that serves mostly African-Americans, serves many people who have modest incomes and serves those who are subject to social marginalization. What have you learned about leadership in this special circumstance?

Leadership begins and ends with integrity. Integrity is the cornerstone for any effective leader. Now, there are other characteristics such as character and dependability and so forth. But, the integrity piece is the foundational component of any leader. People will literally commit themselves to you, and they will follow you when they believe in you. But, they want to see what you are doing, and not just what you're saying. I would say that of the three pieces for me would be integrity...it includes doing the right thing. When I really dig deep into integrity, it

means doing the right thing even when the circumstances that motivated you to do those things initially no longer exist, but you still do them because it is right and you care. The other piece of that is how you treat people. People want to be treated fairly. You don't have to hide behind your title/position or shout it from the roof top, because the people know what you are doing. The other piece is to accept the fact that you will not always have all the answer. However, good leaders know how to surround themselves with people/experts who have the answers or know how to get them. Knowing how to enthusiastically marshal the composite resources of the team for the greater good of the organization is what good leaders do. I tell my cabinet that if I had my way, I would only use a round table for my conference room. Anointed and committed leaders can lead from any place in a room. You don't have to sit at the head of a table to lead. Finally, any leader who will not follow cannot lead effectively. You have to listen to others. You have to solicit the opinions and thoughts of other experts who are part of the team. After you hew through, analyze, evaluate, weigh and consider all of those things, then you arrive at the conclusions required to really make a difference.

Those three things have to be followed. So many people get hung up on the leadership role that they forget that this is really about people. As I said, any leader who will not follow cannot lead. I see leaders who cannot put themselves in a followership position, and that's a crucial mistake. But, if its integrity that's guiding all of this, then you're on safe ground. People will believe in you if they see you doing the right thing. And if they believe that you really care, they will follow you without any question. But, if they see you talking, and don't see you doing, then they may not follow you any place.

What are some things that you would say to encourage and inspire those who would wish to follow in your footsteps as an accomplished scholar and a successful leader?

Start with the small things, and take advantage of those. Houses are built piece-by-piece and brick-by-brick. You can't start out with everything. Be faithful over the few things, and the larger things will come. Do well as an associate or undergraduate student, and the graduate programs will come. I tell students to get in the programs that will be productive for them academically. I'm constantly telling the graduates, and I sometimes get in a little hot water with this, because I'm telling them that if you want to succeed in higher education you need a degree in an academic discipline. Don't go and get all of these organizational leadership, and higher education Administrative leadership graduate degrees, and then say I want to teach at the collegiate level. You are limiting yourself. You need to get a degree in an academic discipline so that you can become a faculty member. Academic degrees give you temperament and the DNA to understand the whole academy. You are better able to navigate in that society, and to move forward, if you are someone who has been climbing the professorial ladder, you have a degree in a discipline, and you understand how we got to where we are. I'm not against the administration or leadership degrees, but when you have to sit in full judgment on the institution, and you can do that best when you have been a faculty member or staff member.

I came from a small country town, but I wanted academic excellence and I tried to pursue it one step at a time. I would encourage anyone to do that. What I tell everybody I have mentored or had an influence on is to give others the same things I gave to them, at the same cost – that means it is free. Do it because you care. When you do that, when you help others because we care, we will have a much larger impact.

Endarch Interview with Dr. Ron Daniels

Ron Daniels, Ph.D.

Founder and President, Institute for the Black World 21st Century

What are the three most critical challenges facing African peoples today– inclusive of both those on the continent and those in the Diaspora?

Well, I think that this is a really critical question. Because I think one of the critical crises we still face is one which Dr. Maulana Karenga raised decades ago. That is he said the key crisis in Black life is the cultural crisis. By that he meant that there is a way in which – let me begin here in the United States. Even though we have made significant progress in terms of Black consciousness, Black awareness and whatever, there is still in the U.S. at least and maybe in other parts, a deep sense of inferiority which has yet to be completely rooted out. So even today we find people drifting from people of African descent or Black people to discussions of quote “people of color.” So we have Black people talking about people of color when they are talking about Black people. Now, in the broader sense it is crucial to understand that this is particularly challenging because of all of the enslaved African people the damage done to the people in the U.S. was the most severe. Not in terms of the punishment or the work or all of that, but in terms of the cultural damage. You know Malcolm [X] of all the crimes committed by Europeans against Africans the greatest crime was to take our names. So what he meant by that was cultural aggression. When you really reflect on it, if you go to Brazil you still find people speaking pure Yoruba right now. Almost everywhere else where African people were enslaved, or migrated, or transported against their will the culture remained relatively intact because there was not the direct assault on the culture per se as a mechanism of control. That was completely different here in the United States of America. So, that this issue of the cultural crisis,

overcoming this deep-seated sense of de-Africanization that has taken place, that has transpired, is a major challenge. And that challenge also is different on the African continent because if you go back to Carter G. Woodson's proposition – he or she who controls minds has nothing to fear from bodies – well, when you go to Europeanized education which was the case for the elite in Africa then of course that became an issue. Because Africans weren't taught about African history they were taught about European history, and the question of domination is important. So you still have to some degree even on the African continent there is some disconnect with the sense of Africanness that is potentially you know problematic. I would see that as number one a major problem.

The second problem, I would say, is that we still because of that in this country and Africa and other places, there is this issue of I would call fragmentation. The fragmentation of the Black community, which is one of the issues that you see me addressing in setting of the IBW proposition. It would be a challenge because we simply do not function in a collaborative way. Not in terms of some bland, "oh, let us all get along blackness," I mean on a principled basis we still face challenges cooperating with each other in a way that would help us collectively advance our interests. I think that's true here in the United States, I also think that's true on the African continent. The other issue I would cite as sort of the third major issues – there are certainly others – is the question of economic self-sufficiency, economic development. And these are not unrelated to each other. I think on the African continent one of the great challenges is that the vision of Nkrumah, Nyrere, Sekou Toure and others, and Cabral, that the anticolonial struggle would not only result in national liberation, which is simply the takeover of the reins of power, but it would also result in national reconstruction. And that national reconstruction – the total decolonization of the African mind such that the resources of Africa

would be used for the development of African people. That is a huge challenge on the African continent today. So when you start talking about values, that value that was articulated by the revolutionaries in terms of the anticolonial struggle, I would dare say in large measure has been betrayed. After a few years, the whole notion of the blaming the external, which is real, there is no question that the imperialists – Nkrumah talked about neocolonialism as the last stage of imperialism. There is no question that that's true. What is being overlooked is Cabral's point that we must always struggle to overcome our own weaknesses, we must identify them and we must overcome them. And what I see is the corruption, the savaging of Africa's resources, not in the interest of the African people but for self-aggrandizement, it borders on obscene. And the counterpart of the is sort of, the second Berlin [Conference]... the second re-colonization of the African continent by the Chinese, whole bunches of people you know who African leaders are cooperating with in giving away or giving lucrative contracts, and lucrative kinds of concessions in a way that really do not advance the interests of people at all. That is a huge problem. Now, when we come to the United States on that third point we still suffer from in a different kind of way and because of the cultural problem in a different kind of way. It's not so much corruption but the inability to sufficiently aggregate our resources in a way to utilize them for our own self development. And that holds us back. So we have political, you know a lot of people in politics and so on, but it's not undergirded by a solid economic foundation. So when you look at the continent, and the Americas, and the Diaspora here in the U.S., if in fact Africa is as DuBois said the richest continent on the face of the earth. If the resources were being utilized by using the values of Ujamaa and Ujima, if you know what I'm saying, and if the same thing were to happen here in the United States imagine the tremendous global power that would represent. So that has not been happening, so that is a major challenge that we need to be working on.

Authors like Cheikh Anta Diop and John Henrik Clarke have proposed that the basis for Pan-African economic development and political cooperation is to be found in similar patterns of cultural expression (i.e. African cultural unity) as well as common historical experiences. What are your views on how cultural and historical consciousness being used to promote cooperative ventures among different groups of African peoples?

Well, the first question, I inadvertently answered much of that question. Cheikh Anta Diop and John Henrike Clark are both correct. That's why if you look at what Karenga attempted to do, that's what Kawaida is about. If you understand Kawaida what Karenga did was look at the traditional way of life of African people. What were the commonalities irrespective of the ethnicities which is point I'm going to come to in a moment. What were the commonalities? And he saw in the traditional African way of life essentially communalism. So what he did was he said well we may not be able to go back and practice all of the ways in which the communalism worked, but we can extract the values of that. And of all of the values frankly the cornerstones of it are Ujima and Ujamaa. If you strip it down those are the real cornerstones because the traditional way of life of African people is based on common land ownership, common sense of kinship and collective work. That is the basis really of the African way of life, sort of the communal African way of life. So, yes that is, that should be the foundation that is the commonality. Now there is however one thing that we have to understand that my dear beloved sister Dr. Chershe McIntyre, whom you may or may not know. Dr. Charsee McIntyre was a brilliant, brilliant sister who deserves much more credit and recognition than she perhaps gets. She once said to me and others, you know you have to understand that ethnicity and culture is more important than skin color so therefore what we are attempting to do with a Pan-African proposition around the commonality of values, and by the way they were brought by African from Africa to this country, so therefore when you look at, if you look at the...the vestiges were

brought, even the despite the cultural aggression the vestiges remained there. So when you see what Richard Allen and Absalom Jones set up earlier, they set up communal kinds of structures. You saw that happen with the maroons, particularly in Central and South America and the Caribbean in particular. But, even in North American, in the rural south you saw this common kind of collective way of doing things that eventually came under???? Now our people may not be aware of where that was coming from but it was embedded in that migration. The problem with the African continent is that ethnicity – I am an Igbo, I am a Hausa, I am a Yoruba – has been, has because of colonialism particularly has been utilized to create ethnic tensions and ethnic conflicts that makes it sometimes difficult for us to maximize the potential of that cultural commonality. You see what I'm saying. So there's no question about it, but we shouldn't, we shouldn't romanticize it as if automatically that means that people will work together. Let me put it to you another way. Let's look at Native Americans. Native Americans all across this continent also share a similar kind of worldview, and yet there were conflicts between...even before the Europeans came. Now they weren't vicious savage conflicts in the way that took place in [Europe]...but nonetheless there were conflicts, and that's one of the reasons, Native Americans could not really come together... you know the story, they eventually did rally to try to come together to resist the Europeans. But, they themselves had distinct ethnicities. The Comanches were Comanches the Kawia were Kawia, the Iroquois – you see what I'm saying. So, that ethnicity becomes a bind.

The Pan-African proposition is to say we must – that ethnicity can be respected – but we must rise above that in terms of our cultural identity, and that must be the basis for unity. That is an aspirational proposition. You understand, that it is aspirational... We have to always take that into account as we do our organizing. Because it is not as simple as saying we have this

commonality therefore automatically it's going to happen, we have to... right what are now some of the biggest things happen on the African continent have definitely been exacerbated, no question, by Europeans coming in and slicing up, the Berlin Conference, that's one of the most judicious aspects of it. But these tensions to some degree, milder and what not, but there were distinct African nations and ethnicities who did not always get along with each other...it wasn't negative, it doesn't compare to anything like what the Europeans in their struggles with each other. But, we have to keep that in mind as we look at what those values are. But, there's no question that both John Henrik Clark and Cheikh Anta Diop are correct. And we as Pan-Africanist advocate that all the time. But, we have to understand that it's aspirational, that it's about internalizing these values and then applying them even in the face of the fact that we have different ethnicities, and that in some ways, that ethnicity more than anything else end up in certain variance in relationship to culture.

What are the important characteristics of good leadership for African people under current conditions?

Well, I think that's an easy question. It's an easy question, but it's not an easy thing to achieve. And that is that we need servant-leadership. That is leadership that places the interests of the people before ego, before one's own personal self-development. That's ideal leadership. And I would say there are many leaders who epitomize that on the African continent. But, uphold and ask us to study Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere in that regard. Nyere was the reluctant leader. And by the way I would add that almost as a caveat. If someone is reluctant to lead, that's the person you probably want to lead. And I would uphold and give you a couple of examples quickly...Martin Luther King [Jr.] did not want to be the leader, he did not want to be the leader, he did not want to even lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott. He was reluctant. The

people asked him to do it. The people charged him, “Martin we need you to do this.” He did want to do it. Rev. William Barber whom you are familiar with no doubt is the same way. Rev. Barber...”y’all asked me to be a national leader...I – I don’t...” Hey, that’s who you want to lead. Because you know that he is not there simply to advance his own interests. He is genuinely, you know...And Nyerere, Nyerere he volunteered “Nkrumah, you want to be president? Sekou Toure, whoever? Let’s do this.” And not only that, he walked away from the presidency, I think at least twice. They called him back, at least twice they called him back. Finally, he said, “I’m not coming back anymore. You have to solve this.” Now, compare that with the president-for-life syndrome you see on the continent today. I mean you see what I’m saying. You have people who want now...that’s the other part of the betrayal at one level...You have people who want to be president for life, who want to change the constitution....Servant-leadership is what we need. We need people who are really genuinely committed servant-leaders and are willing to build across constituencies to build what I would say, are willing to create what I would call inclusive structures of governance. [They] are particularly important when you have ethnic and national tensions within a place like Nigeria. So almost all of these countries have it. So, if you just want to organize for the Kikuyu and overlook the Luo in Kenya, that’s a prescription for disaster. You need people who recognize that and who are willing to...So Servant-leadership is the model.

Now, the second one, the second level however is – are people who do want, who thirst, “I want to be important,” “I want to be a leader.” But, who in the process of doing that also do good, if you understand what I’m saying...actually contribute in a constructive way to empowering and building Black people in the process. You might say that they are two sides of the same coin in some way. The second one is acceptable, I would prefer the first. I would

prefer first one, the reluctant leader, somebody who sees himself first and foremost as a servant-leader. But, there are people who aspire to power because they want to be...they want that, they thirst for it. But, in the process of doing that they are also willing to contribute to, and to making the life for the people better. What we see on the African continent and even around here sometimes is, you know, they just want to be in power. And essentially some little crumbs may accrue to the people but they basically want to be in power and it's corrupting because to really look at what's happening on the African continent today. I'm trying to begin to write more and more about this because we have a reluctance to criticize ourselves. Which I think is really problematical. Because I'm saying look, General Tieu going back to the Vietnam War who was a favorite of the United States, and he was trying his best to curry favor to the United States and hang on to power in the face of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese. So he turned to his generals one day and he said to them, I'm paraphrasing, "Must you steal so much?" So, there's stealing, and then there is STEALING. You know what I mean? Let's just take a quick example. Let's look at what happened in South Africa with the former President Zuma. He was a hero of the revolution. Now he stole some. You took care of your family, now you got \$2 or \$3 million in the bank. What is it? Why do you need so much? Dos Santos in Angola, his daughter becomes the richest woman, one of the richest women in the world. Why do you need so much? After a while, you may have started off on the right track, but at the end of the day...And then you want to stay in power and keep doing it. Now, I just wrote a piece that you can find on the website and it calls for the end of sanctions in Zimbabwe. I kind of hinted that well you know the new president, I'm not sure that they're really going to do anything to be honest about it. But, what I say is "Y'all have all taken care of yourselves now. You already stole some. Now can you now turn to helping the people?" These are the characteristics of

leadership. We need people who are selfless. You look at Malcolm [X], you know Malcolm, these are people who wanted to lead, he didn't want to lead. In fact he's facing death...knows he's going to be killed, and continued because the mission and the cause. I mean you know he could have said "Damn all of this, alright then let me just go on and behave and whatever." But, that, that's what we need, and we need to share that. And when I say, and I would say as a result of that that we need to share leadership. We need collective leadership. That's not to say that you can't be charismatic and all of that, but we need people who are will...and that's with Nyerere, you know he was willing to share, and that's not an easy thing to do sometimes. But, that's what we need to be putting forth.

If reparations from Europeans and Euro-Americans were to be provided in recompense for slavery and colonization, then what group or class of people should receive the most benefit from reparations? It has been proposed and advanced by persons like Henry Louis Gates that African nations or some African nations should also provide reparations to African descendant persons in the Diaspora due to their "significant" role in the slave trade.

Well, for the first part I'm going to suggest that you take a look at the National African American Reparations Commission Ten Point Reparations Program because it spells out how would we would envision reparations being distributed. Even though in the commission there is still a little bit of disagreement about it, we are talking about it overwhelmingly the consensus is that we are talking about a collective not individual process. That reparations would go to projects, would go to initiatives that benefit Black people in terms of rebuilding socioeconomic development infrastructure. And by implication that suggests that you're talking about really helping the marginalized, the disadvantage to gain access. I would suggest that you take a close look at that document. It was carefully worked out. And that was one of the challenges that we had to address in terms of who would benefit, who would get a check and those kind of questions. But, you're right this is something that's crucial in this period.

Now on the question that Gates poses, and Gates poses it because he wants to blame. He has made Africans equally complicit in the enslavement of their sisters and brothers. A proposition which was totally discredited by Walter Rodney in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* in which he basically says you that Africans did not initiate the slave trade nor were they the primary beneficiaries. That does not mean that there were not some people who were complicit. But, that's like suggesting that the drug dealer on the corner here in New York has the same degree of culpability you know as the Columbian Cartel. Now having said that it seems to me that what we're looking at... and this is beginning to develop...So should there be some discussion about the role that Africans played in the enslavement process. I think the answer to that is yes. Should governments therefore look at ways in which that era of trauma and the role that was played by kingdoms and so forth is addressed, I think the answer to that is yes. And some have already begun to do that. Ghana for example has offered some opportunity for Africans to return and set aside land. So there has been some acknowledgement of some complicity on the part of certain groups in this overall process. But, that should not in any way detract from the major question. That's my point, you see what I'm saying. All of it is fair game. We have to be honest with each other in exploring these questions. But, in all honesty, the Africans...this was an incursion, a brutal incursion on the part of people with guns. We should not forget that...with guns who came in and played tribes or ethnic groups off against each other and those kind of things, and again the African nations were underdeveloped as a part of this process. So, yes there's an internal discussion that should take place. I think people in Benin and other places are having this conversation. And that's an internal conversation that we should have. And we should find ways to heal each other in that regard.

What I am concerned about is trying give...urge by way of the masses in Africa, the civil society to push the leaders to demand reparations from Europe. That's what really needs to be focused on. Europe has yet to pay. You know that's where...just as the Caribbean even in their state of dependency...which is so ironic, because if African leaders they were doing what the hell they need to be doing, they would not be dependent, and the Caribbean would not be dependent. Because the relationship between Africa, the Caribbean and the Diaspora would be so strong that the...I mean China is not coming to Africa by chance, the resources that they need are there. So if we organize those resources in our own benefit then we wouldn't have to rely on anybody. But, we are dependent. This is what Nkrumah warned of, this is neocolonialism; this is the last stage of imperialism. But, Caribbean leaders, they had the guts, in the space of that dependency to stand up and say, "You still owe us, you created the mess and we want you to clean it up." We need African leaders to do likewise. To have the guts to stand up and say, "You all created this mess, and despite the fact that, yes we have these relationships, we need you to clean it up." Now, let me just make this other little caveat here that has not been paid enough attention to. And that's why I'm just hoping that we can get IBW up on its feet and I don't have to stuff envelopes and do day to day routine work. This is not beyond the pale of possibility because in dialectical terms look at what happened. African people are now infused all over Europe, and Caribbean people are infused all over Europe. They become the internal contradiction, particularly because in all of these countries there is a left, there is generally a progressive left that is open to looking at questions of neocolonialism and past exploitation. So, therefore this is not a pipedream. If properly put together pressure can be brought to bear on these nations to look at not only apologizing but actually relieving debt, doing any of a number

of different things that could result in these African receiving reparations for the Maafa we would say.

Please comment on the following three statements: A) Strengthening the African Union to promote economic development on the continent is the most critical strategy for African people in the 21st century since a strong system of African states will be of benefit to all Africans. B) We must place the greatest priority on building the reparations movement because it is the most likely way of acquiring the means to change the socioeconomic conditions of African peoples globally. C) Building international linkages among grassroots organizations is more important than working with governmental bodies because grassroots organizations are closer to the people, and because they are tend to be more authentic representatives of Pan-African values and ideals.

Well, first of all we skipped over [question] five. But five I think if we look at what I talked about in terms of IBWs work you can get a sense of what my feelings are about that. Institution building is incredibly important. But, some of the same cultural factors become very, very important in that regard. One of the key challenges is finding ways to finance what do and here we have to study more closely what Garvey did. My goodness gracious, how is that Garvey did what he did? There was no snapchat, no twitter, no facebook, no email, I mean how did that happen? Some things are peculiar to a particular point in time and yet somehow we need to figure that out because one of our biggest challenges is getting Black people to support Black people and continue to do so. Garvey was able to do, we have not been able to do so on a scale that we need sense that time.

Now, Yes the African Union does need to be strengthened. I'm learning more and more that within its current framework...Let me just back up. One of the problems that we have to address is that when the OAU was formed there were two different groups. There was the Monrovia Group and the Casablanca Group. The Monrovia Group was essentially headed by His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie. And the Monrovia Group took the position yes we should all come together with the proviso that we must never ever intervene in the internal affairs of

another state. In other words whatever another state does is its business. The Casablanca Group took the position, which was a more radical progressive view that essentially if groups were not moving toward decolonization, were not functioning in way that...you should intervene, you had a right to criticize, to push and to encourage. Now as it turns out they compromised, they went with the Monrovia approach. So the OAU was formed on the basis of the Monrovia compromise you might say. Now the question becomes the same thing with the AU. To what degree is there willingness to adopt a set of principles that would allow it to offer critique of what is going on in other countries as a way of advancing the Pan-Africanist vision, a progressive Pan-Africanist vision? Which is a vision which should include democratic governance, respect for human rights as well economic development. On the economic front I'm learning more and more that the AU seems to be placing emphasis on that. I'm learning some things I had not known about. It seems to be moving in a pretty positive and constructive direction and that needs to happen. The critical question becomes what is its relationship to the Diaspora? And how is the Diaspora plugged in? In that regard there has been the whole notion of the Diaspora as the Sixth Region as you well know. But they say nothing about how it ought to be organized. Groups have been tripping over each other to become the representative...I want to be it, I want to be it...You know there's all kinds of groups who want to... That has to be addressed at some point. My idea of addressing is by having some kind of assembly. You don't have one group. The Diaspora is what? The Diaspora is the United States, its South America, it's the Caribbean, its Brazil, its Canada, its Europe. So, you have to have a structure that reflects all of those constituent elements in a way in which there might even be almost like CARICOM, where there's a rotating leadership. You understand what I'm saying. So, that has to be addressed at some point if in fact it's going to be really, really viable. Now in the absence

of doing a structure what appears to be occurring...the apparent direction is to focus on economic development projects. To find ways and means to in fact connect the Diaspora with organizations, constituents, even create zones for economic development for the Diaspora on the African continent. I think that's a positive direction. The issue becomes more of sorting out who is who because if you're not aware of who you are dealing with that could be potentially a problem. So creating some kind of advisory group which I think the AU ambassador is interested in doing to help her and even beyond her, let that institution see who is who, to verify credentials and so forth I think is incredibly important. Now at the end of the day whether the AU pushes it or not we should be pushing from the bottom up. There must be grassroots advocacy for African Union, African unity, principled African unity. And by that I mean I would lean toward the Casablanca Group's overarching vision of pushing for a Pan-Africanism which is rooted in the idea of helping the African masses, utilizing Africa's resources for African people. And navigating relationships with the rest of the world on that basis.

Uncompromisingly that needs to happen, but it needs to happen from the bottom up, it's not likely to be promoted by heads of state. It has to be promoted by civil society and that's where Africa Rising and Friends of Congo and others that I probably don't even know about. These young people, it seems like there is more and more restlessness. So I would say that grassroots organizing becomes a critical part of that proposition. Let me say one other thing. The Pan-African Unity Dialogue is potentially very instrumental in that regard. Because what we try to do is bring African Americans, Caribbean Americans, Afro-Latinos and Continental Africans together. And we are doing it very successfully. In fact there is a document...which we are about to adopt and we are talking about many of the issues you are talking about. It talks about economic development, it talks about embracing the African Union. But, that's something from

civil society, that's a push from the bottom. To say that these leaders cannot by themselves do this, and left to their own devices they may never do it. There needs to be a push from the bottom.

What can be done to increase Pan-African awareness and the participation in Pan-African programs?

- a. In your career what have found to be the most difficult challenges around getting people to work together on the projects?***
- b. How would you address the push back given by some people to the question of Pan-Africanism that we in the Diaspora already have too many domestic problems of our own, and we cannot help the people in Africa.***

It is from the point of view of working people and marginalized people a correct observation. From their perspective it's difficult for them to see that. I'm trying to get my next paycheck, I'm trying to get some food and you're talking about doing something in Africa. So we have to be sensitive to that, and the way you do it...and we've had to address this around African Liberation Day, we've always had to address this question. But, the way you address it initially because of the actual work that you are doing on those issues. If you understand what I'm saying. If you are only talking about doing something in Africa, then you will get nobody else. But, if you are asking people to look at what's going on in Africa because that's also a part of the overall way of introducing identity of who we are as a people...[it] becomes a part of that discussion. So, if you see yourself as an African person it's a little bit more acceptable. If you're learning about Africa that's a little bit more acceptable. But, it has to be from the point of view of the work that's being done...when people see you involved in those issues. Then when you speak, then people are more likely to listen than if you're talking about some pie in the sky way over there somewhere. Then to be perfectly honest about it, it's going to be as Cabral said the petty bourgeoisie that's going to be the most convincing class. Students, not the people who

are the most hard up, the most oppressed, that's the class that will be more susceptible, more amenable to hearing the discussion because you can make a clear rational argument among those who have a little bit more leisure, who are not facing grinding day-to-day poverty and whatever. Look if we can hook up with Africa...as a matter of fact there are a lot of people doing quite well going back and forth to Africa, making fortunes doing it. So you can make that argument better with students, lawyers, doctors, the petty bourgeoisie as Cabral would put it. But, we continue to need to make the overall argument even with the working class and the marginalized within the working class because at the end of the day all of that going to be required to build the kind of structural relationships we need. And it's interesting...I'm sure there were a lot of people who flocked to Garvey from those areas too, the middle class...very often it's the quest for equality of opportunity that drives reform and revolutionary process. In other words I'm a lawyer, I'm in the South, the White guy he's a lawyer, and the White lawyer has benefits that I don't have. So very often it's in my self-interest that I'm saying I'm a lawyer, he's a lawyer why don't I have the same benefits? That drives reform. But, what happens is for the best of those reformers it moves beyond me to "we." That is to say and my people don't also have. But, there is no question that when Cabral talks about it is most often the petty bourgeoisie that drives reform and revolution he's correct. And in that regard Malcolm [X] is a little off when he talks about the house negro and the field negro because in almost every instance the slave revolts were led by house negros. Those who were a little bit better off, who were in the house. Malcolm was making a different kind of point. But, when you apply what Cabral said you understand if you look at SNCC, if you look at the Black Panther these were people who were largely the petty bourgeoisie. But, what did the Panthers do once they were politicized, they merged their interests with the masses of the people to help make the point, to help build the movement, to

build the struggle and the is similarly what we have to do in terms of building Pan-African consciousness and Pan-Africanist work.

Have you had the experience where people are willing to be involved in domestic issues but less willing to deal with issues that have a more international focus?

Yes, we have. Sometimes it's just because people that may tip their hat to it. I would say concretely if we do something in Washington, D.C. for example around criminal justice policy there's a certain constituency that comes out, if we talk about having an international symposium on democracy and development as we did in Africa and the Caribbean, some of those same people who are working on returning citizens issues or criminal justice issues may not be in the audience. They may not show. Some of them will show but not all of them. That is a challenge. But at the end of the day it's not because they don't recognize that, it's just that they feel they have to stay focused on the vital issues that they are organizing around. It is a challenge, but if it were an insurmountable challenge we would not have had the free South Africa movement be so successful. How is it with Randall Robinson and others and even African Liberation Day which I was the founder of in 1972 how did we put 25,000 people in the streets and build on that, students beginning the divestment movement. So you can build a sufficient critical mass...the churches in Washington, D.C. you had all over "Free South Africa" banners everywhere you looked. And these congregations are catering to working class people in many instances.

What has your organization accomplished which you believe to be your best accomplishment? What are the things that your organization could most improve upon?

Well, I think that the most important accomplishment that we have done so far is that we are working establish a culture of collaboration. We've done it reasonably successfully as is

illustrated in document that I sent you with the Pan-African Unity Dialogue, the Black Family Summit, all of that I think is very positive. What remains to be done ultimately is the consolidation and institutionalization of it...what we are attempting to do is not well understood in the foundation world. I want to send you the Proud Africans Policy document. It lays out the breadth of what we are doing, and its almost breathtaking really. I feel proud about what we are attempting to do, I think it's critical to building the eco-structure of organization in the community. Two challenges 1) getting the funders to fund it so that we really have the staff and the institutional infrastructure to really institutionalize it 2) if I had my druthers we would be in a position where 50 – 60 – 70 percent of the resources would actually be coming from Black people. We have a program for that called the Gregory Griffin program for sustaining contributors. That's not only with us but the United Negro College Fund, the NAACP who have yet to duplicate what Garvey did. Such that the Koch brothers are penetrating the Black community because we're so starved for resources some people are willing to sacrifice principle for the money. We're not willing to do that. The Koch brothers couldn't do nothing for us. But, you see that's still a dilemma that we need to solve. We are not alone in that dilemma. In the most immediate sense got to do a better job or at least find a way to get a sufficient number of foundations and donors who will contribute to IBW. I'm convinced once we are able to get our infrastructure solidly in place that we'll be able to increase the number of Black people that are actually supporting it. It's a chicken egg proposition. Once we get the resources I think that we'll be able to market in such a way that we can increase the number of supporters.

Our reparations work is totally funded by the people. In every instance that we've done key events we've gone in with no resources, have risked, put our little dollars on the table, and it's been rewarded by the people. And I'll close on this note. The summit that we did on reparations

was one of the most amazing, unbelievable... We brought people together from 22 nations together about two years ago, a milestone event. It cost \$42, 0000; we did not have \$42,000. We went out on a limb, took some of our resources and seeded it. Part of it was to ensure that people when they got here had lodging, meals, transportation all of those things, it cost \$45,000 plus, much of it for the hotel bill. We raised \$42,000 from the people through appeals at a church rally in Harlem at an event that was held to honor Congressman John Conyers and a final rally that we did in Brooklyn. The problem is that we raised \$42,000 of the \$45,000. And we went to the people and said we're broke. And the people said ok and wrote checks and we raised about \$46,000. The issue is that we really needed to raise \$150,000. Then we would have a staff and it would be sustained and we would not have to go to people and beg again. It's not that the people won't respond, they will. If we could get ourselves in a position where we could do the kind of sustained marketing, and we think our website will help in that regard...Everything we're doing is episodic, you know, we're hanging on by a thread, and that's the issue that we face right now. But, you know with the blessing of God and the Ancestors, you know it's as Molefi Asante said we will be victorious.

Endarch Interview with Rick Adams

Rick Adams

Chair of the Board, Institute for the Black World 21st Century

Authors like Cheikh Anta Diop and John Henrik Clarke have proposed that the basis for Pan-African economic and political cooperation is to be found in similar patterns of cultural expression (i.e. African cultural unity) as well as common historical experiences. What are your views on how cultural and historical consciousness can be used to promote cooperative ventures among different groups of African peoples?

Well, I look at the different movements on either side of the ocean, as once can put it, those here in the United States and those on the continent, and how for example the national liberation movements of the 60s looked to, were informed by Civil Rights, Black Power, Black liberations movements in the United States. And one of the things, even though we might speak different languages and have substantially different in local communities and histories....It is so much informed. You see it in our music, you see it in food. Over the years I have been just fascinated just how much African Americans eat and love about soul food and other things is that we find out our West African brothers and sisters eat the same food, and so whether its yam, greens and so many...And then you learn about words “ok” and different phrases, and even how we relate our verbs and nouns there is some reflecting the queen’s or whoever’s English it’s supposed to be, were saying they were speaking incorrectly, actually they were using and reflecting other linguistic patterns. So some of how we say things may be that way but other stuff you can see corresponding things in West African languages. Forever in my mind is etched in one of the movies where James Brown came in a plane somewhere in Africa, the Mother Continent, how the brothers and sisters just were ecstatic, “Soul Brother Number One!” In the music you can see the interplay, you can see...A thing a like to do is see a video of brothers and sisters dancing and I can say “Hey this is where I got my moves” And even to some of my

friends I can say, “This is where I got my steps, check this out.” So there is a worldwide unity and a worldview and our cultures all come from very distinct and similar roots. Having said that, that’s and why I pointed out about Kawaida...Dr. Karenga and others Imammu Baraka, Haki Madhabuti and many other folks developed the notion of “tradition and reason” which I thought was functional. No one’s trying to go back to the 1800s or anything like that. What is reasonable, what is good, what is functioning in today’s culture and environment should be brought forward, but then we should be able to add things informed as 21st century Africans if you will. And then the creation of Kwanzaa which Kawaida had a whole philosophy, the Congress of African People, the Committee for a Unified Newark, and US in California and other organizations speak into this philosophy. But one of the things to this day that survives from the 60s, the militant, nationalist, Pan-Africanist movements, is Kwanzaa. And people of any religion, economic class, political ideology can buy into this. So I think that’s a marvelous example of how you take from traditional beliefs and practices that were observed, and realize that there were a lot of commonalities could be updated and give a unity to some ethos and cultural beliefs that we do have as people. I think we need to explore that and that’s why in movies we see our brothers and sisters in the Caribbean, in South America and Africa.

Because of the salience and power of African American culture, which very quickly where did we get that from, from Africa, the source. We dress alike, we like the same music, you go anywhere and folks are doing Michael Jackson moves...Rap, reggae we share and relate to, and it’s not like all of us like all of the music, but the commonalities in gospel and jazz, it’s a unity that we have yet to explore in its fullness. As a young man in the 60s I would often go into some of the drinking establishments and I was...how the juke box, that the people who owned those machines and serviced those machines were European Americans. But, the most vibrant

music was our music. If you explore art and artists in those areas, you explore the stories of our talent. I took a course in jazz once from Marion Brown and one thing that he liked about, he loved about jazz was that all of the masters of the genre were African people. There were all kind of folks who came along later who were of Euro and other ethnicities but the masters were all Black people, African people. And we got our just due out of that development. If Black people could control what springs from our cultural experience, everything that comes from that, I mean like in music for example, the singer obviously, the composer, the promoter, the producer of the CD, the mp3's, the lawyers, the distribution folks, the presentation venues, the packaging of those deals. It's amazing to me that if we controlled that vertically from bottom to top, what a powerful industry that is...and when we see people like, not that its representative of what I'm suggesting, but like Dr. Dre and he gets out of the game more or less and gets paid something like a billion dollars. I once said to a friend of mine I felt like a failure, because I'm not too much older than Michael Jackson and I read where at 25 Michael Jackson had \$25 million, 25 years of his life. Well, my wise friend who has now gone on to be an ancestor said, "Yeah, Michael made \$25 million, but what do you think the White people made?" Just think some of the things I just named, different occupations. So in terms of looking for opportunities, communication, you listen to TV, you listen to commercials and jingles you would think that this was a totally Black controlled enterprise. I even went back and thought about in my youth I liked musical and things, and I would watch these movies, black and white movies, and of course you could see Nat King Cole, the Nicholas Brothers here and there you see Black folk, Cab Calloway once in a while, that kind of thing. But, you really didn't see a lot of it. Think about the music all the way to the 30s and 40s into the 60s and 70s when I'm watching movies and so-called blackexploitation, the music was always our music. Before it was jazz, then it was

rhythm-and-blues, and today I mean McDonalds anybody, they use rap. So the power of that, I think it has paid dividends to us because we got some allies. Sometimes they can be annoying, because they pretend they were Black and try to emulate...but a lot recognize, sense the genius of the cultural offering and through that they recognize our humanity and often they frequent our venues, etc., etc. Well, it's just a whole area. If we would think about controlling the communications and realizing that we have some of the most vibrant examples as a culture in words that we use sayings in the streets...the news around a tragic situation that airplane that crashed in Pennsylvania with the people that rebelled against the hijackers...Well after that some of the family members wanted to patent "Let's roll!" Supposedly one of them said before they went and tried to break into the pilot's area "Let's roll!" They weren't successful, but I immediately said wait a minute, "Let's roll!" I said that on a playground in elementary school. You can't patent that. I mean that was part of Black slang. I mean seriously something I would give my friends in saying 50 years ago. You want to claim it, patent it. So again I say with the vibrant contribution the Africans made to culture and music and the fine arts.

I also mention there are some things that we can mutually share that are of a historic nature, that are political. I remember literally standing up in front of my TV, watching Nelson Mandela leave prison walking down that long road...tears rolling down my face...I just knew he was going to die in jail. From the time I first became aware of him, how long he had been in prison, two and a half decades for literally doing nothing. And I some of things I myself was trying to do, it was shared among right-thinking people, but particularly African people all over the world, everybody shared that moment. So if we want to do a movie, if we want to do an annual conference, if we want to establish a scholarship to train people to follow the example and study the example of Nelson Mandela and go on to get a head start and be successful in

society that's a mechanism of production continuing the genius that got their head on right. So you can just take your pick, there's so many heroic kind of things. People learn about our history...Queen Nzinga...I remember a movie, it was interesting because it was about a Moorish American, as I recall I think it was "El-Cid" and Charlton Heston was in the movie, now you can't get much more Euro than that. Part of the thing where he is depicted as having been killed and then comes back and the army panics and leaves...Well I think that it's grounded in truth. I read that Queen Nzinga did something like that, they thought she had been slain and then she came back and resurfaced. That was one of the first efforts of Africans in that era anyway to band together people of different clans and tribes to fight against the Europeans. So, we need to give those heroic stories...Wakanda shows it and particularly on the financial side it was out of this world. Now, there were some problems with who got the lion's share of the money and some things were not as accurate as they could be and what the follow-up will be. I think again that points to an example of what our people want to see. There was an obvious worldwide audience they obtained and they raised more money than any movie I think in history.

As you mentioned African peoples have a creative dynamism that is second to none. But, one of the things that come up is that art should be produced for art's sake. Using art to promote historical consciousness or things that could be considered political is resisted by some because they think that art should be for art's sake. Of course then there are people like W.E.B. DuBois who made the argument that all art is propaganda. What would be your response to someone who says we shouldn't necessarily try to control what we creatively produce in order to support our own culture because art should be for art's sake?

That's kind of an esoteric viewpoint. I certainly understand it as one who would really love to be an artist. I don't have many skills that are generally recognized as artistic. There's a word we hear a lot now – weaponized – and it's applied to words, events, articles, reports that become weaponized. When you think about it that's a way of saying it has beyond the obvious material objective existence of this thing or this event, that it has a resonance or meaning beyond

that or you can attach to it a political, cultural, social viewpoint. To the degree that you do that I don't think that it's necessarily bad as long as it is not a negative use of weaponizing something and certainly if it transmits negative things. Now, I love the creativity of the hip-hop community the way they use words, invent words...by spoken word. Now the down-side is that sometimes they seem to, sometimes they are glorifying the most negative things that can be found in African communities. The artist bears a responsibility and we bear a responsibility as consumers of the art even though we are not artists ourselves. When C. Delores Tucker and others jumped on Tupac and the rap community about how they were hurting the community by their images of women and talking of drugs and gangs and violence, I do think they were right when they said well we're representing reality. And for a lot of us unfortunately they were representing reality. But, the flip side of that is though that with very few exceptions, a lot of them have just started happening recently, people like Prince, Jay-Z, his wife Beyonce, Terry and Jimmy Jam, they have their own label, their own production studios...Master P begin selling out of the trunk of his car and a few years ago he gave his son something like \$20 million for his birthday. But, my point is they are starting to get control of their craft but for the most part a lot of the music, I firmly believe, that they could do songs about the glories of Ancient African societies and warrior queens, of the great loves of royal families in Africa, they could do all kinds of stories. They could do political things and sing about the glories of African communalism [or] socialism as long as it had a beat. My point is if those non-Africans who own these companies, who own most of the superstructure of the industry did not want some of this stuff to be released it wouldn't be. Many of the young people oppose it but they are told, "No, this is what sells," or they don't let them get recorded. Amazingly it seems that they promote just the ones they want to promote and give good radio play and all of that. It completes the circle; we come back and

say well if we had control of these entities, and you might say well that's going beyond art for art's sake, just put it out there and let people grab it. Well we have a social responsibility to not do that, but to put out positive things for people to grab. Or you may put out positive things but nobody's hearing it, nobody's seeing it, ok you're self-gratified. That's kind of a bourgeoisie kind of experience, but that doesn't help a young guy, a young girl, in the neighborhood.

What are the important characteristics of good leadership for African people, especially under current conditions?

I think because in too many instances we have little control, no control or let's say not real control. And what I mean by this last point...I think there's a lot we can learn. Look at South Africa, it's like a mirror image of the United States, and what I mean by that is the majority of the people there are African people, people of color, but those who control the wealth and the land are non-Africans or non-Black Africans. In the United States we have gotten levers of power, we got mayors, bought to get a couple of governors I hope, Governor Wilder in current history, and we still don't...in these cities we can have an all-Black city council, all-Black school board, Black mayor, Black police chief, and we still have the same systemic problems. So, obviously this isn't sufficient. Something is missing and we need a different organization of society, of the city, of the community, of the nation-state. We have a lot I think we can learn particularly from South Africa because I've been there. Folks always say South Africa's so much like the United States it's like crazy. Because it's so industrialized, as are other nations in Africa, it has the urban element and the whole bit. There's a lot we need to talk about, how does affirmative action work or does not work in the United States, and how does it work or doesn't work in South Africa. Given where most of us live, our situations wherever we live, we're not as organized as we should be, we don't control the levers of government, we're not the dominant

economic prime force. We are workers, cluttered toward the bottom of society, the poor, the have-nots.

And what I like about the Institute of the Black World, one of our biggest problems is how we got here, our ancestors, many moons ago. If you bring people over here and strip them of their historical continuity, of their families, of their language, of their culture, even of their knowledge of God, you're creating a new creature, a new person. We used to say in the 60s, somebody coined it, "Negro – made and manufactured in America." So we came from many nations, speaking many different languages...and part of the story of our sojourn in this country...and sometimes it's good to be all together... if you mix us all up we might be together on a plantation and can't speak, we're prohibited from really speaking to each other, then we got to learn our oppressors language and get punished for speaking in our native languages, and our concepts and their will is put on us, especially with the children growing up in such an environment. At other times like say the 60s we're all bunched together and we kind of got it together and figured it out, "We're all living on this little piece of land here we got power, we can vote, we can aggregate our dollars, we can physically tell people in here they should be doing stuff they shouldn't do." So what do we have now? We have scattered housing, they destroyed large public housing, and they are scattering us because they saw we got a little conscious and said, "It's better to put a few here, a few there." They do it on a political level, they gerrymander, they put all of us in one community, one congressional district, so we get one seat and get some representation... but see [if we were] in three different districts [we could] control at least if not have actual Black representation in more districts. It's a game they play. Let me say this ability to convene our many tribes. Tribes, what are you talking about? Well, when you start talking about the Bloods and the Crips, the Alphas and the Kappas, the Baptists

and the Catholics, I mean all the different bags we're in, the Northsiders and the Westsiders. We have so many other identities and the intersectionality is a problem, particularly if you're talking about coming together worldwide....had a 100 percent or majority identity that is connected to a nation-state. In other words I might on one hand as a Pan-Africanist look at brothers and sisters in Jamaica and Nigeria and say I'm not Black, I'm Nigerian, I'm Jamaican, I'm kind of cool with that. I've done some DNA stuff so I do have some suggestions of the nations. But, that organic connection to a state that is to your national state as well, sometime maybe in the future folk will give that up, but I don't see them giving that up. How do we forge a Pan-African identity that doesn't threaten anybody? How do we bring together people that come from so many different backgrounds to work together in collaborative formations?

So that's where we have put together...Dr. Ron has talked about us [the IBW21] being a good faith facilitator, a communicator, we can work on public policy, a black think-act tank. Do the theory part of it without the practice – ok, that's nice, you got this fancy theory, but it means it's not being used, we're satisfied, but how do we get the larger community to experience it. It's hard work, particularly if you don't bring resources to the table. There's something magic...you can bring resources in terms of your intellectual experience, your commitment, your ethical character, all of that stuff is absolutely important, but it would help if I could come to the table and say "Hey, I got \$10 million and I want you to work with me on this project." I suspect things will move a lot faster, it won't be problem-free, but you certainly can get some things off the ground if you have a greater resource base than you've had. Then we've been so victimized on so many levels and so many of our people have gotten caught up in it that it's very hard to even call and say, "Let's all collect all of our monies." Those of us who are old enough or who have read about it will bring up in a minute Marcus Garvey's efforts, and people bring up

different stories, “Well, you know the Black people stole the money.” We had a Black bank here in Pittsburg for a while and it failed. So people are like skeptical. How do you get people to buy in and be committed? Minister Farrakhan, Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X they dealt with that stuff, it’s a difficult track. The ability to communicate and form collaborative relationships is probably the greatest set of skills that are needed.

You mentioned being a good faith facilitator and that was also mentioned by Dr. Daniels. What makes a good faith facilitator? How do you recognize a good faith facilitator? You have brought people together from all different walks of life and different perspectives. What has made that work for you?

I believe that when Dr. Daniels come into a situation and proposes a collaborative initiative that people realize a) either it’s very intangible what we get out of it, i.e. we’re not asking for money or anything like that or if we do ask for money then at best it’s an equal share. We don’t come in and say well we’re the experts, we’re the older ones or whatever. We work it out equitably. Or even we’ve gone into situations where we have said, particularly dependent upon the community, its grassroots folk who are literally scratching to make their living and to exist, formally incarcerated or as I like to say returning citizen we give them a bigger share. We may say we got this \$100,000 and we want 30% of it but then the rest of that you all can divide that up and have that. I don’t know that a lot of groups and leaders have done that. So it’s almost proving yourself by walking the talk rather than just talking the talk. How your resolve conflicts... You don’t reflectively support somebody if they are wrong, and particularly if they’re like perceived as being very close to you. The times you say like, “No brother, sister that’s not right, I can’t support that, we’re not degrading you or sending you out to the pasture, but the rule is we think this is a fair way to do this.” Almost the Wisdom of Solomon is needed. It’s not easy; it’s a long arduous trek.

What are the three most important factors that make for successful institution building and governance? (By institution building and governance we mean motivating and organizing people to accomplish common objectives and regulating the behavior of people within the institution)

Well, I think that we just that discussed really. Fair and equal process of rewards, recognitions and disciplinary actions...If the very thing that you are trying to build has what people see as injustices within it, well hell, we're already in an unjust situation – come join us and get some more, that decimates the future immediately.

The notion of visionary leadership and being committed to long-term development and hopefully collective development...everything really can't be done collectively, some days I wish Ron had somehow followed along the steps of Oprah. Now I realize this man who is so committed, he's honest as the day is long, if he had a billion dollars...we do so much work with nothing, I cannot imagine if we had resources like that what all would occur. That's something we can talk about for a long time. Even sometimes people who get help with opening doors. And this isn't a criticism of Oprah or anybody else, but I do believe there are some keepers-of-the-gate who are very careful about who they let get where. Sometimes folk will get up there and they will be a beacon of light in terms of how they fight and everything, and then they'll have a very serious Achilles heel which those in power will know, and at the time that's convenient they'll bring that Achilles heel up. "Yeah, you know he's a good man, but did you know he's strung out on heroin?" You know that kind of stuff. So, sometimes I do believe that they promote or leave alone folks who have some serious flaws as opposed to the man or woman who is more righteous, if you will, knowing that they can deal with that person rather than somebody who is like no compromise, straight arrow, ethical, and got a strong following....It's almost like Martin Luther King coming to a gathering business leaders of things and talking to them about

non-violence and uplifting folks out of the ghetto, and before he spoke to them everybody prayed...they're kind of rolling their eyes and looking like what's going on with that preacher. Then the next week Malcolm [X] comes and he gives his version and more a less he says, "You better deal with the preacher, cause if you have to deal with me there's going to be something to pay." Then supposedly those in that same group say "Get that preacher back here!" It's probably urban mythology on some level but you see that realistically happening – a good cop, bad cop thing. Where people who looking from the outside who weren't working together actually were working together in kind of a dialectical relationship, a yin and yang kind of thing.

The other piece beyond visionary leadership and long-term development is being transparent. People will debate Democratic, as in Democratic Party or Democrat Party as Republicans say.... well even ideologues and average folk on the street, put it that way, might be very derisive or very critical of organizations that appear to many like probably be middle class that are into the election of leaders, very developed decision-making processes...I think transparent works wherever, but there is a style which might be slow, it takes time to come up with commonalities, if there's an election where you come up this is what we're going to do, or consensus which is even worse, you got to get everybody together. But, that is important. I've said to people, it's been real critical, in your family or in a club you are in or on a ball team, do you prefer one person whoever he or she may be making all the decisions and telling you what to do? Do you want a group of folks who literally do the same thing or would you want a say in it, and would you like your opinion to be considered and would you like to have a say in the election of your leaders? And most of the time people are like, "Yeah, I want a say." So I think that's almost human nature, almost in a way, I know that in African societies there were like groups that would meet, there might be a royal line, bloodline, but they would talk about who

was best, not going to male at the right age at the right time. “Well, you know you’re the king if not the deity, son of God,” you know put you on a pedestal. Give it some rationality. The women would get together and decide the king had to be a man, but there was a council of something or elders that had a say about who should be....we need to recognize and experiment with different models of democracy, but I think at bottom that is such a rock-solid value that where we violate I think we see you plant the seeds of your own destruction. It might work sometimes, that model, the benign king concept, you want somebody strong, but on the other hand how long, how often does that work?...You wither the vines, the roots of other leadership, you never let it develop, you never let them exercise those skills. Then all of a sudden, oh the king has died, who’s in charge now? He never told us anything. We don’t know how to do it. Now you’ve got a problem.

What has your organization accomplished which you believe to be your best accomplishment? What are the things that your organization could most improve upon?

That short sentence and the language – steady, sober leadership – and providing worry-free [support]...not that I do a lot of disagreeing or have great debates with Dr. Daniels, I just about agree with 90 percent or 80 percent [of things]. Usually what the hesitation is....well, next year we’re going to have the next State of the Black World Conference, we only have \$10,000 in the coffer. And I’m like doc how are we going to do this? It’s like amazing how we have raised the money for each project. There is not a lot of disagreement, we’ve got a 21 – 22 member board, and there’s a lot of agreement, not that everyone agrees on everything all the time, naturally. But, I do think for Ron, Dr. Daniels to exert his leadership, to practice his leadership, to promote his vision he doesn’t have to worry about me sitting around plotting with somebody, “Well I want to be the head next.”

We did have one of the State of the Black World Conferences and we were into a real pickle that year. We miscalculated some expenses, particularly using a city convention hall – New Orleans – and it was so crazy that when we wanted to have our town hall meeting, and Farrakhan, somebody of that stature was going to speak, several folks like that...for the sound system of the all they wanted like \$90,000....probably I guess for the whole thing it might have been \$100,000 something that was not on the table as we planned....And even to the point that this one hotel they wanted to charge us \$100 per flip chart. I became incensed. We got like 20 workshops. You want us to give you \$2,000 for a flip chart that might cost what \$25 a piece? Brother Noel I literally went to the bar, I didn't have much to contribute to the conversation with those folks, and there wasn't any way of winning. But I went to the bar and had me a take, and I thought it's my job here, especially when we have problems, is to make things as easy as they can be, and to back up Ron, not to cause more controversy or be another problem.

I am on the board of a health center where I've been an officer since '77 and been the initial president, and I've been president for I guess about the last ten years now. But, our CEO project director who passed away about two years ago, one of the things that he remarked and shared with us that some guys and gals when they went to conferences and went to lobby the federal government for more money for health centers, and came back and board chairs had initiated a coup and fired the project director. And he thanked us and said "I've not had to have that worry at all. Many of my colleagues have had that, they were scared to leave the building. They wanted to keep things under control." So to be as consistent and steadfast in support as I can, and to work with the board...I'm not satisfied in terms of things that need to be done. As you can probably tell I'm kind of busy here on the local level. And we don't have dedicated staff, so all of us do this volunteer thing. We say we're going to do this conference and it costs

\$100,000 we know at least 30% or so is going to be our volunteer time doing things and in fact contributing some money if no more than just supporting our travel to the thing.

In terms of important work that needs to be done, I think the documenting and hopefully the replication of things like the Pan-African Unity Dialogue which is a New York City formation where Africans from all over the globe come together quarterly and do some work based on needs. They've gone to the U.N.; they recently blasted Museveni and some of the problems he was causing on the continent. I think the Justice Collaborative which I'm sure Ron and Don probably talked about in terms of the war on drugs, coalitions in some cities, particularly in Philadelphia, Pittsburg and Washington, D.C. We have another thing as far as it fits with being a good faith facilitator – Ron's recognition that travelling around the country, and indeed the world and looking at different problems and listening to what people say, so many of the problems we share, we have in common. When we come into a local area, however people come together even before IBW involvement in bringing people together, folks are doing things that literally are in the same discipline, subject area, content area, public policy area who don't know each other. So the ability to think about the need for what we used to call back in the day the "united front" I think that's still a current language that needs to be brought up. So even if there is a Black united Front important, the work that [??] are doing is vitally important, but even so people need to understand what that was at first and definitely what the dream was, and read the work of Malcolm and African American Unity. Remember he had the Muslim Mosque Inc. and the Organization of African American Unity which was to be for all of us. Kwame Toure, Stokely Carmichael, where he is literally dying of cancer was sitting outside the office of the head of the NAACP I believe it was... trying to think who it was – Ben Hooks. The reason he was there, he was trying to get the NAACP, the Urban League, Farrakhan all of these groups

to try to form a united front. He was almost on his death bed, he's doing that kind of work. The State of the Black World Conference which did start out as the State of the Race Conference – all of them are models and we need to get them institutionalized. The conflict, the dilemma in the question for me is – What is an organization, an institution? Is it that they've been here for a hundred years? I can probably think of an organization, a business, a church that's one hundred years old, but then it dissolves, it goes away, it had a good run. In my mind an institution is like forever. Now, a hundred years is a good run. But, what things can we have out there, and we can document it in film, in audio, on the internet, mp3s and everything else, so at least there is a record that people can look at and they know to find it and use it.

And better yet looking at an existing formation, it's a very pale, pale shadow of its former self, but I'm a co-convener of the Western Pennsylvania Black Political Convention Assembly...which in its first incarnation in the 70s when they had the National Black Political Convention in Gary Indiana. So then there was a Pittsburg [group] and then there was also an Allegheny County Black political assembly and they were all organized through that structure, which was one of the most profound movements I have ever been involved in. But, then it went away. But, we here in Pittsburg in 2003 called folks together and said we need to bury political apathy; we need to resuscitate the Western Pennsylvania Black Political Assembly. So we do candidates forums, we encourage people to vote, we break into political action committees, support a candidate and those kind so things. Well, that's an institution that's barely surviving, but at least that kernel of that idea is out there. Any chance I get I tell people about how, in answer to our disunity which comes from many different things, economics, out of the roots of the slave experience, one way to get unity is to use the convention model. You set up a formula for people to elect delegates, they come together...and then it goes back to when you asked what

are the skills that are needed...you have a transparent process where the people who would run to be mayor, and then you get a vote, and the majority of the vote wins who the community is going to back. And if it's done right and people have good faith with each other through this process you can take all of the resources and have a popular candidate. That's the idea. So we do it as a people, not the Democratic Party, not the Republican Party. They all can be represented in there, but in the end we ought to say the greater sense of the community, and who best can deliver it and then you should pledge at the beginning of the process that whoever we pick we're going to stick with, support with our time, our money and our efforts. That's a model that been used variously. It's hard to do, but I think that's the direction, that's the kind of thing that remains to be done with these models, how you build these different formations, and the work that you do is critical.

I mentioned the Black Family Summit, I'm sure Ron talked to you about that...the FEMA agreement....Don Rojas, I know he talked about CARICOM and NGO status...I think fourteen nations, fifteen nations, sixteen nations, like twelve of the nations have formed reparations commissions, about an equal number came up with initiatives or commissions to study marijuana decriminalization a few of them are moving forward on that. That's an important part of Pan-African work, in terms of us being there at the table suggesting how we might work here in the states with our brothers and sisters in the Caribbean.

What is your most hopeful vision for African people for the next 100 years?

That we develop these interlocking models of self-reliant, self-organizing developments on the international level, the regional level and within nation-states that are multiethnic; that descendants of Africans are organized to see that their needs are met. I took a course when I did my master's in business communications, and it really struck me how the master's was

structured around business principles, internet based principles and it was also structured around the global economy, and how as a manager you could make decisions even though you're not steeped in technology you have to know enough about how to go about ordering equipment and evaluating software and hardware and that kind of thing. Well, the international piece struck me, but one thing they made a point was, they said the most successful community in the world is the international Chinese, they were the most successful. In the West we'll call it nepotism. But, in their businesses, you better believe it it's all brothers, cousins, in-laws, as best they can they get all the brothers, and if you think about it...I laugh I went to school up in Maine they had cleaners, a restaurant, you go to the Caribbean and they're there and why not over 1 billion Chinese. I wish I still had this book...we had the little Black pages, they had their own. In Alleghany Latinos and Asians are less than 1%, in the county we're Black and White and that's part of our problem. 1.3 million people in the county and only 150,000 are Black. For us being able to you know, if we're not highly organized you're not going to be able to organize nothing...I got a hold of this book and it had so many businesses and so many pages. What it was like a Chinese chamber of commerce like thing. I couldn't believe it, it smoked the number of Black businesses, and I know that they do not have 150,000 Chinese, I'm like wow, look at all of this and that they're in communication with one another... An important lesson I think for us to look at. You go to...how many towns have a China Town, how many towns have a Little Africa? Places that we're proud of, not a quote unquote "ghetto," but we're like here's where you go. We've had some places over the years in Atlanta and so forth. We don't have our heads wrapped around that notion enough. In every place there ought to be a place for us to socialize, to display our culture, to exchange our wares... to go take family friends out and have a good time and be among ourselves. We do that, we are great social people...How many times are

renting somebody's apartment or we are still in that old rundown building our fathers and grandfathers went to. So I hope that we will be much more organized as African people, recognizing our commonalities and being respectful of each other. Let me get specific. We're going to have an African stock market. There are some stock markets in Africa, certainly not as many as there are nations. We had an ambassador from Africa and he was talking about the need to form a credit union, like international but with regional branches, but an African credit union. That's a fascinating idea particularly because it's a cooperative model, if you join a credit union, you're part owner, and one of the things about it I never heard of a credit union where you have to come up with \$10,000 a share or anything. I mean you just start it, even with very little money and then it has preferred lending rates, lower lending rates particularly to those who have accounts there. Those kinds of things we can explore. Can we see the possibility of [utilizing] many of the things we produce culturally as we talked about in the beginning of our conversation?

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