

Obama Determined to Expand the National Counter-Insurgency Against the Black Liberation Movement

Changing the Guard in Black America

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The “miracle” that so many Black Americans wept with joy to behold in January, 2009, has evaporated in totally predictable increments over the past six years. (We at BAR did, in fact, predict the general outlines of the debacle, long before the “[The Great Black Hajj](#)” that brought a million African Americans to the national mall, in Washington, to witness Barack Obama’s first swearing in). The advent of a Black-led, center-right Democratic federal administration has worked no substantive change in the trajectory of U.S. society. Obama’s first term confirmed that Blacks would continue to be firmly rooted at the bottom of the economic muck, with Black median household wealth shriveling to one-twentieth that of whites – a point from which there is no possibility of rescue absent full-blown revolution.

Obama’s second term was set in stone in 2013, when the U.S. Justice Department said there was “[insufficient evidence](#)” to bring federal civil rights charges against George Zimmerman after the vigilante was acquitted in the death of Trayvon Martin. That’s when previously rock-solid Black support for the First Non-White President began to grow brittle, like shale ground down under a glacier. The rockslide began the next year with the killing of Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Missouri. Yet, as early as October, fully a month before the racist prosecutor in St. Louis County subverted his own grand jury probe of Brown’s death, unnamed “officials” and “lawyers” for the U.S. Justice Department were leaking to the press that “the evidence so far [did not support civil rights charges](#)” against Officer Darren Wilson.

The leaks kept on coming, even as Attorney General Eric Holder continued the investigatory charade. Last week’s [re-re-re-affirmation](#) leak to the New York Times leaves only Holder himself maintaining the formalistic pretense that the case remains open. As veteran activist and BAR editor and columnist [Marsha Coleman-Adebayo writes in the current issue](#), “We now know what to expect from the Obama administration – nothing.”

What Obama/Holder actually offer are “sweet-nothings” – reluctant and peripheral reforms such as Holder’s minimalist retreat from police highway robbery-style [civil forfeiture seizures](#) of cash and property from people “suspected” of criminal activity; executive orders on [drug sentencing](#) that are not binding on future administrations; increased, yet temporary, oversight of local police departments through [consent decrees](#); and support for re-passage of Rep. Bobby Scott’s legislation requiring police departments to [report officer shootings of civilians](#), which Congress had allowed to expire in 2006.

All of these measures fall within a “bipartisan” consensus, very much including the Republican libertarian Right, that is willing to modestly scale back public spending on

incarceration - often through prison privatization - while increasing funding, equipment and technology for policing and “intelligence” gathering at all levels. Obama has done more to [militarize local police](#) than any of his predecessors; the Pentagon gives half a billion dollars a year in equipment to cops and Homeland Security transfers twice as much. Despite the worldwide furor over the storm trooper spectacle in Ferguson, Obama’s sham “demilitarization” proposals actually emphasize increased [training of local police](#) in the use of military weapons - for “safety” purposes - which will inevitably result in an even more intimate police/cop relationship.

(Let no one forget that 80 percent of the Congressional Black Caucus [endorsed police militarization](#) in rejecting the Grayson Amendment against Pentagon transfers to cops, in June of last year.)

The conclusion is obvious: the Obama administration is determined to escalate and expand the national counter-insurgency police mission begun in the late Sixties in response to the Black Liberation Movement, a policy that has led to the establishment of a Black Mass Incarceration State. The summer-to-winter Black Lives Matter campaign is the long-delayed resistance to this Black Mass Incarceration State that has murdered thousands of Michael Browns and incarcerated millions of his brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers and grandparents over more than two generations. The election of a Black president and attorney general only gave added momentum and legitimacy to the diabolical project.

The fact that masses of Blacks now know, as Marsha Coleman-Adebayo writes, that Obama will provide no relief from hyper-surveillance, militarized occupation and arbitrary murder at the hands of police, is the most important contribution of the nascent movement, to date. The purpose of framing and pressing demands is not just to force Power to take the desired action: in this case, to indict Darren Wilson for violating Michael Brown’s constitutional right to live. Demands, even when rejected, force Power to show its true colors, to unambiguously reveal its real nature. The movement has unmasked Obama as the Oppressor-in-Chief and exposed the Black Misleadership Class as fawning accomplices to the dehumanization of the rest of us. It is a lesson that had to be learned through blood and pain, in the heat of confrontation with State, itself. Thanks to the young movement, Black folks understand, in ways they did not before, that the established Black “leadership” is a foul accretion of 45 years of corruption and self-aggrandizement, which must be rejected and replaced. The process has already begun. That’s pretty good work for less than half a year in the life of a people.

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