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QUOTE FOR THE DAY:

“Movements are most powerful when they begin to affect the vision and perspective of those who do not necessarily associate themselves with those movements.”

Angela Y Davis, political activist, acquitted of four capital murder charges in 1972, retired in 2008, but still active.

BLACK LIVES MATTER, BLM:

This quote was chosen as it is absolutely reflective of what is going on today. As a result of the spate of black deaths at the hands of police over the past seven years, and subsequent to the killing of George Floyd, it is estimated that 26 million people have been involved in 2,000 protests in all 50 states.

So, how did BLM come to the fore? It all began with the killing of Trayvon Martin by George

Zimmerman, and Zimmerman's eventual acquittal. The movement was initiated by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opel Tometi. They advocated for, "Non violent civil disobedience against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against black people."

In the intervening years, BLM has grown to a global network of more than 40 chapters, but it is anything but an organization – that is, there is no organizational chart – it is very much an ad hoc group of people, often working at cross purposes to each other. With no command structure, each group pretty much decides what is most important in their own region.

You will find on the internet a listing of what are purported to be BLM's overall objectives. These are pursued – or not- as each chapter sees fit, with additional objectives thrown in at the say so of the local chapter. The original target areas were: "Racial injustice; police brutality; criminal justice reform; black immigration; economic injustice; LGBTQIA & human rights; environmental conditions;

voting rights & suppression; healthcare; government corruption; education and common sense gun laws.”

That which is quite obvious, is that the only objective the public sees being pursued today is the fight against police brutality. As recently as 2018, public opinion about BLM was net negative. Even Oprah expressed reservations, but, by June, 2020 Pew research reported that a majority of Americans supported BLM.

On 6/20/2020 it was reported that 53% of voters supported the activities of BLM and 28% did not, but then came a turning point, which reflects badly on BLM’s command structure and their inability to control their own supposed supporters. Barbara Reynolds, a civil rights activist states regarding BLM, “At protests today it is difficult to distinguish legitimate activists from the mob actors who burn and loot.” This has been pointed out in previous issues discussing the Portland riots where smaller peaceful BLM protests have been overshadowed by primarily white violence and destruction, with BLM seemingly powerless to stop it. End result – the public is

starting to associate the riotous behavior with BLM, and some will contend certain BLM groups are heartily into it. Regardless, the net result is that popular support for BLM has dropped to 49% (that's tolerable), but, those who disapprove of BLM have jumped from 28% to 38%.

Issues that are apt to bring further negative pressure on BLM support are the knee jerk reactions to any violent interaction between the police and black people. Two current examples: The shooting of Jacob Blake. In these volatile times, people have zero interest in getting all the facts. What they know is that a police officer shot Blake so it's time to take to the streets again. I don't know all the facts and assuredly the people on the street don't know them. What I have read, however, is that Blake was wanted on a serious charge. In attempting to arrest him, instead of following lawful police orders he got in a fight with an arresting officer. The police then took non-lethal action and tasered Blake (twice). Blake seemed unaffected and fled on foot with the police in pursuit. On reaching his car he went for a knife on the floor of the driver's side at which time

he was shot. Would someone contend that he should have been permitted to pick up the knife, turn around and then, well -what? Seven shots? Why not one or two? I don't know, but I suspect Wisconsin police may operate under the same type instructions as NY State police, who are trained to only take out their firearm when their life or the life of another is threatened. And, in the act of then firing, you never shoot to wound, you always shoot to kill.

In any event, Kenosha is in flames because we're in volatile times and neither BLM, the mayor, governor or police can keep the rioters off the streets. How does this play out? The old expression - a good D.A. could indict a ham sandwich may well result in a trial for the police officer, but when all the facts come out at trial, if anything close to what is now being reported in the press, no way will there be a conviction- and what does that mean? Back to the streets for the rioters again.

The other example: Just this past Wednesday in Minneapolis, police closed in on a black man to arrest him on a homicide charge. Before the

man could be apprehended he committed suicide, prompting a fresh round of protests and looting. No police brutality. Talk about bad optics; the seeming incapability of BLM chapters through media messaging or direct contact with their supporters, to moderate their activities, is hurting their cause.

BLACK VISIONS:

I'm like, "say what?" Really, I had never heard of these folks before, but they are major players in the after math of the George Floyd killing.

This group was established about three years ago in Minneapolis by people previously affiliated with BLM. The leaders of the group describe it as a "black organization with a black, queer feminist lens." The founders are: Kandace Montgomery, queer and non-binary; Oluchi Omeoga, transsexual and Miski Noor, queer and gender non-conforming; rather complicated life style descriptions, but these folks appear to be much better organized and more effective than BLM, albeit on a micro scale as they are only in Minneapolis. Members

are carefully screened (there are only about 50) and well indoctrinated to the main objectives, fighting police brutality, racial inequity and defunding the police- currently their number one priority. In fact, they don't just want to defund the police they want to disband the department and have it replaced by "The Department of Community Safety and Violence Prevention." How you do all those things without a police force is beyond me, but these are the folks who brought so much pressure on the city council members that the city council voted unanimously to disband the police department.

Like it or not, Black Visions (BV) is a force to be reckoned with in a city considered one of the best in the United States – that is if you are white.

Blacks are only 20% of the population and, while median white salaries are \$83,000, black median salaries are only about a half of that.

It is astonishing therefore that BV was able to get this vote from the City Council, and through great media and internet access they have

raised a whopping \$30 million. Their latest headache is handling the criticism that they are too slow and stingy in providing grants for other black activist groups.

In any event, an interesting contrapunto to BLM – BV, structure and discipline vs BLM, big PR and loose controls.

VIRAL MISINFORMATION FLOURISHES:

Just as crowd mentality results in actions unwarranted by the facts, Americans continue to be mesmerized by false health information on the internet. “Networks spreading health conspiracy theories and pseudoscience generated an estimated 3.8 billion views between May 2019 and May 2020.”

Superspreaders of health misinformation include sites such as GreenMedInfo and RealFarmacy. These folks tell you that 5G technology is injurious to your health and that for viruses you should be taking colloidal silver. 3.8 billion views of bogus information-what desperate times we live in.

Your faithful scribe, PB

