



Would They Be Proud?

One can't imagine the fear in the hearts of the parents of those nine black students who walked past shouting placard-carrying mobs as they entered Little Rock Central High School in 1957. Each day, they were greeted with angry shouts of "Two, four, six, eight, we don't want to integrate." In some rural and urban areas, during the school desegregation era, parents escorted their 5- and 6-year-old children past crowds shouting threats and screaming racial epithets. Often there were Ku Klux Klan marches and cross burnings. Much of this protest was in the South, but Northern cities were by no means exempt from the turmoil and violence of school desegregation.



Most of the parents and civil rights leaders whose sacrifices and courage made today's educational opportunities possible are no longer with us. My question is: If they could know what many of today's black youngsters have done with the fruits of their sacrifice, would they be proud? Most schools identified as "persistently dangerous" are predominantly black schools. To have a modicum of safety, many schools are equipped with walk-through metal detectors, security cameras and conveyor belt X-ray machines that scan book bags and purses. Nationally, the black four-year high-school graduation rate is 52 percent. In some cities, such as Detroit and Philadelphia, it's considerably lower — 20 percent and 24 percent, respectively. In Rochester, N.Y., it's 9 percent.

What black politicians, parents, teachers and students have created is nothing less than a gross betrayal and squandering of the struggle paid in blood, sweat and tears by previous generations to make possible the educational opportunities that were denied to blacks for so long.

Born in 1936, I've lived during some of our racially discriminatory history. I recall being chased out of Fishtown and Grays Ferry, two predominantly Irish Philadelphia neighborhoods, with my cousin in the 1940s and not stopping until we reached a predominantly black North Philly or South Philly neighborhood. Today that might be different. A black person seeking safety might run from a black neighborhood to a white neighborhood.

On top of that, today whites are likely to be victims of blacks. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics' 2008 National Crime Victimization Survey, in instances of interracial crimes of violence, 83 percent of the time, a black person was the perpetrator and a white person was the victim. Most interracial assaults are committed by blacks. What's worse is there're blacks still alive — such as older members of the Congressional Black Caucus, NAACP and National Urban League — who lived through the times of lynching, Jim Crow and open racism and who remain silent in the face of the current situation.

After the George Zimmerman trial, in cities such as Baltimore, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Chicago and New York, there have been a number of brutal revenge attacks on whites in the name of "justice for



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Trayvon.” Over the past few years, there have been many episodes of unprovoked attacks by black gangs against white people at beaches, in shopping malls, on public conveyances and in other public places in cities such as Denver, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, Washington and Los Angeles. There’s no widespread condemnation, plus most of the time, the race of the attackers was not reported, even though media leftists and their allies are experts in reporting racial differences in everything else.

Would those black Americans who fought tooth and nail against Jim Crow, segregation, lynching and racism be proud of the findings of a recent Rasmussen poll in which 31 percent of blacks think that most blacks are racists and 24 percent of blacks think that most whites are racists? Among whites, in the same Rasmussen poll, 38 percent consider most blacks racist, and 10 percent consider most whites racist.

Black people don’t need to have a conversation with white people on matters of race. One first step would be to develop a zero tolerance for criminal and disruptive school behavior, as well as a zero tolerance for criminal behavior in neighborhoods. If city authorities cannot or will not provide protection, then law-abiding black people should find a way to provide that protection themselves.

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