

Mannie Jackson: Tone Down The Rhetoric

by Mannie Jackson

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I'm not a writer, but as a leader, I've managed to influence good results by communicating and solving complex problems. In 2012, I decided to write my autobiography - entitled *Boxcars to Boardrooms* and the first book signing was held in my hometown attended by 100 plus people who turned out at the Lewis and Clark Community College facility for a signing and listening session.

I walked away thinking about the critical nature of leadership in our pliable information and diverse society; and the idea of forming a new kind of concierge Humanities research foundation focused solely on the understanding and skills needed for new-age leaders.

After five decades as a world traveler and fortune 500 executive- I realized I am unable to find the words to adequately describe the dangers of the emerging challenges our Nation faces.

Fast backward, to January 6, 2021 in Washington DC, where it's been described by social scientist, activist, Republicans and Democrats; as an event where thousands of rioting Americans chose their 'whiteness' over democracy (according to the Associated Press). I believe everybody needs to come together and say, this appears to be an outright coup d'etat and those culpable need to be held accountable and pay for the nature of this insurrection and the structural damage it has caused.

And from THE HISTORY MAKER report - Who would have dreamed on January 8, 2021 this kind of headline would appear on the cover page of a national magazine," WEDNESDAY MORNING'S EXHALATION AND GLEE SOON TURNED TO AN INTERNATIONAL FOCUS ON THE U.S CAPITOL AS THE TYPICALLY CEREMONIAL COUNTING OF ELECTORAL VOTES BECAME A TAKE-OVER BY A MOB WEILDING GUNS,SHIELDS, AND AN ARRAY OF FLAGS." Like many of my friends, I'm still in shock. There's no one specifically to blame.(blame will not fix the past nor provide a cure for the future). My advice is simply TONE DOWN THE RHETORIC. This is a family matter- a USA family matter foretold over and again by African Americans. But strangely, WHITE MOBS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS have been angered by betrayal, distrust, disrespect and misunderstanding. My Black neighbors blame White folks and the angry White mobs blame Blacks.

At my 2012 book signing, I remember saying to my friend and Advisor Sherman Brown," I love my hometown, but sadly too many people are without the tools, to see, to feel or prepare for the scary future ahead". I went on to say, I plan to invest several hundred thousand dollars in a nonprofit Humanities startup. By doing so, maybe a Foundation can help avert the disasters that lie ahead for many innocent and unknowing men, women and children.

My business training, my life experiences, and my Blackness propelled my initial cash and real estate donation to the Co-founding of MJCHF on North Main Street. At that point I made the decision to accept the invitation of Dr. Ed Hightower and Dr Dale Chapman in putting together a unique organization, with a vision to help Leaders understand the benefits of the Humanities as the emerging centerpiece for success. As corporate American took major operational and attitude steps in the 1980's to solve the quality problem- similar steps can be taken in the Humanities.

I believe the war on distrust and violence will be with this nation for years to come- we need coaches/leaders without political bias and visionary people of goodwill to lead the shaping of a caring society.

From my Harlem Globetrotters experience; the millions of people we met; want people they trust, want to be comfortable, want to be safe, want to be appreciated, and most importantly want to smile.

On some level some of those folks who were protesting and rioting; should be pitied for the influences of irresponsible and disrespectful leadership, no one is born hating and unhappy; the seeds of distrust and hatred are planted and cultivated. The takeaways from that harrowing experience on January 6, 2021 in Washington DC was that disappointment/distrust is like a cancer capable of disrupting families; the potential of this great country and the fragile state of our democracy.

My observation is this: SHUT OFF THE BLAMING and TONE DOWN THE NAME CALLING; pursue trust and the practice of understanding, dignity, respect, and forgiveness.