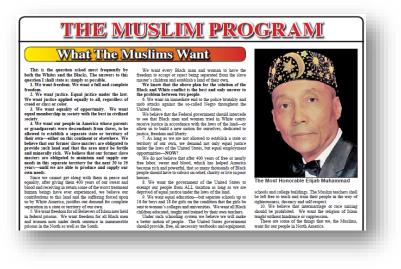
# The "No-Show Paradox":

## Can the Black Community get what it wants by not voting? -Demetric Muhammad

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**The question of the day is what do Black people want and how do we get it?** It is safe to say that most in the Black electorate want to live in communities that are economically strong. We want safe neighborhoods free of violent crime. We want a healthy relationship with police that does not involve racial profiling and the resultant brutality and killing of Black men and women by law enforcement. We want good schools for our children where they can get an education that not only prepares them for a global economy but also roots them in the beautiful cultural heritage of their people.



The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad answered this question in a brilliant and succinct way when he authored in 1963 the now famous document entitled "What the Muslims Want." Please don't be turned off by the term "Muslim." You have to understand that the Honorable Most Eliiah Muhammad explained that the term "Muslim" simply means a

righteous person; one who is willing to submit their will in order to carry out the righteous will of the Creator (Allah/God). And he taught that all Black people are righteous by nature;

Muslim by nature. Thusly in his divinely inspired vernacular the terms **"Muslim"** and **"Black man and woman"** (*Black people, etc.*) are interchangeable. So **"What The Muslims Want"** is really **"What The Black Man and Woman Wants."** 

This brilliant and all-encompassing list of righteous demands and wants originally appeared as the inside back cover of the Muhammad Speaks newspaper. Today it remains the inside back cover of the **Final Call newspaper**, published by the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan. And according to some of the founding members of the Black Panther Party, it was also the basis of the Panther Party's 10 Point program.



What may surprise most readers is that when we consider the collective wants and needs of the Black community in America we arrive at a startling conclusion. That conclusion is that **everything we want and desire as a collective mass or body of people can be achieved without voting** and with little to no involvement in electoral politics.

Certainly this conclusion may anger traditionalists. But let's face the grim reality of our times. Barack Obama got 92% of the Black vote in his victory to become America's first Black president. His victory is by far the crowning

achievement of all who say *"we've got to vote our way out of this."* For many years now, there have been Blacks holding office in every level of government; local, state and federal. And to have a Black president was a previously unbelievable feat. Yet despite this achievement, the Black community's needs and wants today are virtually identical as to what they were in 1963 when Mr. Muhammad penned his **"What the Muslims (Black People) Want."** 

Again, consider that we have voted for judges, mayors, governors and even now for a Black president twice, yet we are still a community in need. **Poverty** is high among us; **disease** is prevalent among us; **blight** and **crime** are problems for us and we still have a **pitiful educational system** that we depend on to educated our children.

It is painfully clear and rather obvious at this point that *politics is not the answer*.

If electoral politics isn't the answer, then how do Black people get what we want?

## **Ethnic Enclaves**

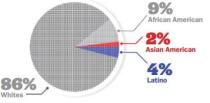
The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad was always telling his beloved Black people in America to *"hurry and unite on to your own kind."* He taught us that our own kind included

all non-white peoples of the earth. Nowadays, America has received so many of *"our own kind"* as immigrants from their home countries and they have formed their own communities that exist within many major cities as carved out territories and neighborhoods.

The social conditions within immigrant communities in America are in stark contrast to those within the Black community. Scholars like to refer to immigrant communities as *"Ethnic Enclaves."* An ethnic enclave is defined as *"Usually urban areas, within which culturally distinct minority communities maintain ways of life largely separate from those of the generally larger communities that surround them"* 

The most Hon. Elijah Muhammad encouraged his beloved Black people that we should have knowledge of self and kind. The practical application of acquiring such knowledge in today's world involves an examination and study of these ethnic enclaves that are in many areas made up of our Black, Brown, Red and Yellow brethren of the global Black diaspora.

TABLE 1: emographics of	Group Name		% of All State Legislators
State Legislators January 2015	Democrats	3199	43
	Republicans	4106	56
	Other Party	72	1
	Women	1791	24
	Men	5597	76
	African Americans	639	9
	Asian Americans	125	2
	Latina/os	296	4
	Whites	6328	86



As Minister Farrakhan has pointed out most recently in his profound analysis of the National Presidential Election, the major cities of America and their ethnic enclaves must become the new model for the disparate and dis-unified Black community-affectionately and pejoratively dubbed **"the hood."** 

Chinatown, Koreatown, Little Haiti, Little Africa, Greek Town, and the more than 850 ethnic enclaves in America are examples of something

that academics refer to as the **"No Show Paradox."** I am not a political scientist and most who read this will not be. So I won't bore you with the complex mathematical and academic jargon related to the specifics of this concept within the academy. My usage of it in this article is to emphasize the larger general concept of the **"No Show Paradox"** which is essentially, as author Grant Hayden defines it in his work *Abstention: The Unexpected Power of Withholding Your Vote* that **"there are times when a voter is better off (in terms of achieving a desired outcome) by not voting rather than voting according to her preferences."** 

As we have already pointed out, voting in National Elections does not change the reality of suffering, injustice and poverty in the Black community. In fact the Black community has essentially become the victim of over usage of a failing strategy. This strategy termed by author Harold Cruse in his *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* is that of "non-economic liberalism."

The NAACP and other **white led Black groups** steered many leading Blacks under their influence to prioritize voting and electoral politics rather than the pooling and harnessing of economic wealth and capital as the primary means of achieving what the Black community wants and needs.

To a large extent the various immigrant groups throughout America have not been so victimized with such poisonous strategies and ideologies. They thrive in spite of being poorly represented in electoral politics. They are examples of the **"Do For Self"** mantra and philosophy of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

In one example, the *New American Leaders Project* is a part of an effort to increase the level of political participation among Asian and Hispanic immigrants. Their report entitled **States of Inclusion: New American Journeys to Elected Office** points out that Blacks make up 9% of all state legislators, Asians only 2% and Hispanics are 4% of the 7,388 total of state legislators. And even though state level elections have a potentially greater impact on the locales that they have created their enclaves inside of, the immigrant communities are clearly not emphasizing political participation as a way to live "the American dream."

As far as the 2012 National Election is concerned, the Pew Research Center points out that among eligible voters, Blacks voted at 67% while Asians voted at 47% and Hispanics at 48%. According to the philosophy of **non-economic liberalism**, such higher voter turnout by Blacks should mean that social conditions within the Black community would be far better than those within immigrant communities and enclaves. But we only need consider as an indicator the high rate of Black deaths at the hands of law enforcement to make the point that social conditions in the Black community make it an environment whereby most who live there are seeking the means of escape to someplace else.

## **On Crime**



Theodore Curry, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Criminal Justice

Immigrant communities have less crime than the Black community. At the University of Texas in El Paso (UTEP), Professor Theodore Curry, Ph.D., is an associate professor of criminal justice who is leading a research project that is challenging popular beliefs about crime among immigrants. "Curry pointed out that there are interesting theories addressing this issue, which has blindsided criminologists and other experts. **One is that immigrant neighborhoods have lower** 

crime rates because they are stronger communities of families that are more strongly connected to each other. In addition, immigrants tend to be working even though they may be poor, so they are invested in their community." Professor Curry's project is officially titled *Why are Immigrant Neighborhoods Low Crime Neighborhoods? Testing Immigrant Revitalization Theory and Cultural Explanations.* It is being funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

UTEP News in its coverage of this project shared an important perspective that further illustrates our overall thesis in this article. According to Jorge Luis Hernandez who is a research assistant working with Professor Curry, his experience growing up in an immigrant community was very positive. He said, "Growing up in an immigrant community, **I always detected a sense of togetherness where everybody had each other's backs and would help each other any way they can.**"

## **On Economics**

According to a CNN Money report prepared by Jose Pagliery entitled *On the Rise: Immigrant Entrepreneurs*, there is a strong **"Do For Self"** zeitgeist among foreign born workers and citizens. Pagliery writes, "Immigrants created 28% of all new firms last year. They were also **twice as likely to start a new business when compared to those born in the United States.** It's a notable shift. Nearly all new firms are small, and many are hiring new workers, seeking small business loans and shaking up established industries.



## exceeds even their population growth.

Pagliery continues by sharing words from Rob Fairlie who authored the Kaufman Foundation report entitled *Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Small Business Owners, and their Access to Financial Capital,* "the recession drove low-skilled workers into figuring out what to do…the same applies to Hispanics, who are creating new businesses at a faster clip than any other ethnic group. Hispanics make up more than half of the nation's 40 million foreign-born, and **they are starting businesses at a rate that** 

That is a fascinating statistic. I wonder if there is any other ethnic group in America like the Hispanic community who are **starting businesses faster rate than they are making babies!** Wow!

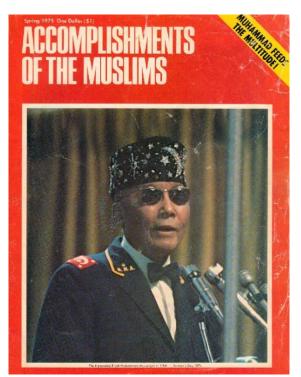
This CNN Money article concludes with a strong reminder of some of the divine wisdom and sage advice offered to the Black man and woman of America by the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad and the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan:

"Javier Palomarez, president of the Hispanic chamber, links the rise of entrepreneurship to the immigrant frame of mind. "It's certainly a boot-strap mentality: 'I had the gumption to leave where I came from to get here. By God, I'm in the land of opportunity. These people need some good baked goods, so I'm opening a bakery."

## **On Education**

Writer Lee Dye authored a report for ABC News entitled *Why Immigrants' Children Do Better in School* that plainly stated **"Children who immigrate to the United States with their** *families are likely to outperform kids with a similar background who were born here. And when they grow up, their own children are also likely to do better than their peers."* 

Dye's report highlights and discusses the findings of a study performed by Johns Hopkins University. In preparation for Dye's article she interviewed sociologist Lingxin Hao, who serves as the lead author of the study. According to Dye, "Hao offered one theoretical explanation for why immigrant children do so much better than their peers: 'It's about family,' she said. 'The parents have an optimistic view of bringing up their children in the United States. One important motivation for immigrants is to improve their children's lives. The United States is the land of opportunity. If we work hard, we will get it."



Dye's report concludes, "New immigrants tend to settle in communities that have many other residents from the same part of the world, thus buttressing the "cultural tools" that might otherwise diminish over time." And according to lead research Hao, "If you go to Chinatown you see bankers there, but you also see people washing dishes. There's many different people there. So even if your parents aren't highly educated, you have other role models in your community."

## Nation of Islam Example

Again, the strong economic activity and subsequent societal benefits within America's ethnic enclaves is what the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad not only advocated and taught, but also demonstrated

**in his magnificent work of building the Nation of Islam in America.** His message of selfhelp, unity, pride, decency and righteous living can never be considered as empty platitudes and slogans. No, his weighty word and teaching produced 'a nation within a nation.' Consider how in 1974 His National Secretary read off from a report that outlined just some of the accomplishment of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad and his enthusiastic followers:

## National Secretary catalogues accomplishments

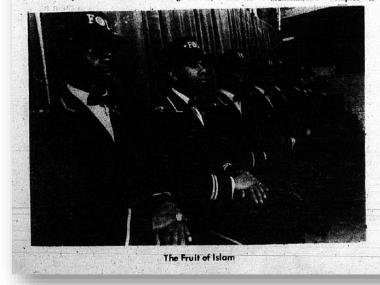
By Abass Rassoull National Secretary

During my report to the Nation on Saviour's Day, February 26, 1974, I read to the audience a list of accomplishments of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad

and the Nation of Islam. Included in the list were some projects which are still in the design stage. In order to clarify any misunderstanding caused by my statement, "These are the things that the Honorable Elijah Muhammad is leading us to," and to

separate those projects that have already been completed from those in the design stage, we are printing the following list:

**Existing Enterprises** and Projects Muhammad's Temples of



Islam in more than 150 cities in House. North America, Bermuda, Jamaica, and Belize.

· Muhammad Universities of Islam in 46 cities. Muhammad Speaks Newspaper and Printing Press. (a multi-million dollar complex printing the international news weekly with eirculation of more than 850,000 copies).

\* Cold and dry storage and warehouse facilities. \* Good Foods, Inc. (meat, produce, and eggs). .

\* Chicago Lamb Packers. A cross-country trucking

system. \*A fixed base Aviation Departmen\* at the Gary

Municipa aport. \* A cannery in Georgia. \* Fruit, vegetable, poultry, and dairy farms in Georgia, Alabama, and Michigan (thousands of acres of farmland). \* Shabazz Barber Shop and

Cleaners. \* Shabazz Bakery and Coffee

\* Salaam Snack Shop.

\* Muslim Import Store.

\* Capitol Cleaners. \* Temple No. 2 Clothing Store

and Office Building. \* National Clothing Factory.

\* National Fez Factory. \* Guaranty Bank and Trust

Company. \* Muhammad's Sales and

Office Building (a \$1.5 million structure being completed in Chicago). • Residential homes.

\* More than 200 apartment units in Chicago alone

Muhammad's Fish Imports: Importation of millions of pounds of fish each month for at least the next year from the unpolluted waters around South America.

### Projects in the Design Stage

Renovation of Muhammad's Temple No. 2.

\* Muhammad University of Islam No. 2 Annex

\* Phoenix Proposal (Phoenix,

Arizona). \* Cottage Grove Redevelopment Project. • A 300-bed hospital in

Chicago. \* The Islamic University.

The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, in similar fashion to the Jewish community and other economically powerful groups within America, gained quite a bit of political power based on the popularity of His movement among the masses and due in large part to His focus and emphasis on developing economic strength as a prerequisite to political involvement. Many have falsely accused Mr. Muhammad and Minister Farrakhan of being anti-voting. Nothing could be further from the truth. Instead, the Nation of Islam's position has always been to take care of first things first. So, since electoral politics bends and submits to "moneyed interests," any people who want to gain privilege and power in the political realm would be wise to become a "moneyed interest." In other words the Black man and woman should work first to make their vote matter by developing the ability to hold accountable all who would receive our vote. And this is only achieved through economic strength.

More evidence of Mr. Muhammad's wise and judicious use of the vote is seen in that he waited some 33 years to lead the Nation of Islam into electoral politics. His

Shop. \* Shabazz Restaurant.

<sup>\*</sup> Your Supermarket and Fish

announcement that the Nation of Islam would take up an interest in the political realm was published in the March 18, 1963.



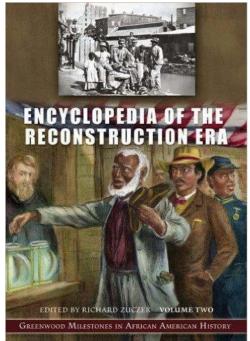
He understood as a close friend and scholar said to me that brother "voting DOES have great value to a people who know what they are doing. Jews, for instance, needed to build an infrastructure to move their plantation products to market—that means bridges, roads, docks, mail, courts, etc. to support their international business aims. THAT is why they needed that cadre of middleman operatives known as politicians. In other words, once economics are locked in, politics can grease the skids with permits, ordinances, regulations, laws, etc."

Because of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad's initial guidance in 1963, the Nation of Islam has supported Adam Clayton Powell, Julian Bond, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Cynthia

McKinney, Barack Obama, Earl Hilliard and numerous other Black elected officials. And Minister Farrakhan has been a frequently sought after speaker at events and functions where Black elected officials were convened.

## **Blacks During Reconstruction**

Thus, what emerges when we look at the Nation of Islam is not the common misuse of the Black vote. No, the Nation of Islam is a modern portrait of the wise strategic use of the Black vote much like the early Blacks during the Reconstruction Era.



"Flourishing black towns, such as Langston in Oklahoma, Nicodemus in Kansas, Davis Bend in Mississippi, and Eatonville in Florida, sprang up across the nation. In these communities, blacks could exercise authority over themselves and lead productive and successful lives, unhindered by white racism. They owned farms (which they purchased), schools, stores, newspapers, and churches. Blacks who lived in predominately white areas were often poorer than those who lived in black communities, as they received less pay than their white counterparts and worked at inferior jobs. Denied opportunities for advancement and selfempowerment, and alienated from mainstream society, poverty and crime became a way of life for blacks." (Encyclopedia many of these of

Reconstruction Volume 1, page 443)

## Why Do People Vote?

After reviewing these and other indicators of the health and vibrancy of most immigrant communities in America, and how they don't emphasize voting as the solution to getting what they want as a people, I begin to ask myself the question, "Why do people vote if you really get nothing out of it?"

Some scholars and researchers have concluded that most people who vote are not voting to make their lives better. They are not voting to necessarily solve the problems of their communities. According to jurist and economist Richard Posner most people vote for entirely different reasons than what we have been lead to believe.

In his short blog written in 2012 entitled The Paradox of Voting, Posner lists several reasons that people vote. Consider the following passage excerpted from his treatise on the subject found here <u>http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/2012/11/the-paradox-of-voting-posner.html</u> :



"The paradox of voting in national elections is that, since a single vote is almost certain to have no effect on the outcome (in a Presidential election, it will merely add one digit to an eight-figure number), there seems to be no benefit from voting.

1. Some people vote because the political campaigns make it costly for them not to vote—one technique in "get out the vote" drives is pestering people to vote so that they will feel uncomfortable not voting.

2. Some vote because they think that it will encourage others to do so.

- 3. Some vote because they consider it a civic duty.
- 4. Some voting is purely expressive—a way of expressing strong feelings pro or con a candidate (or pro one and con his opponent); certainly anger played a role in votes against Romney by members of groups that he or his party seemed to disrespect, and anger at Obama played a role in the large number of votes that Romney received. In this respect voting is like booing or cheering at an athletic event or other entertainment. One person's applause at a concert is inaudible to the performers, yet people applaud, and not mainly I think because others in the audience would look askance at them if they did not.
- 5. And finally people interested in politics like to vote to convince themselves and others that their interest is serious—they are willing to put their money (not money exactly, but the cost in time and bother of voting) where their mouth is.

No one thinks that applauding is irrational, even though like voting it has no instrumental value, and has some, though very slight, cost."

It is noticeable that Judge Posner **not once makes mention of voters voting to make a change in the social conditions of their communities**. Not once does he mention that voting leads to freedom, independence, and equality. **He doesn't even reference voting as a way to get justice, despite him himself serving as a judge, and knowing that many judges are elected!** And this is because as a member of the ruling class of whites in this country, he understands that community change is not a product of the electoral process. Community development and change is the product of groups of people coming together with a like mind and agreed upon goals and finding a way to live work and worship together. Such can be achieved in nearly all possible political scenarios in America.

## Conclusion

In my brief overview of the concept of the **No Show Paradox** and the healthy and powerful conditions of ethnic enclaves I have deepened my appreciation for what the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad and Minister Farrakhan have been encouraging the Black man and woman of America to do for many years. Their advice and guidance has been that we **Do For Self** 

and that we work to unite as a people and make our own communities safe places to live. Their call has never been to alleviate from responsibility the United States Government. To the contrary, their call has been to give guidance to both the Black people of America and the American government. Black people must take charge of our own fate and destiny. The American government owes Black people land and territory since it was our ancestor's free labor that made America the wealthiest nation on earth. And at this date, both sides have failed in accepting the divine guidance of Mr. Muhammad and the man who the Aaron to his Moses, the Paul to his Jesus, the Ali to his Muhammad-Minister Louis Farrakhan. So, unfortunately, dire consequences have appeared to vex and place in peril the descendants of the former slaves and the descendants of the former masters.

But while there is still a little time left before total and complete collapse of the American government and social order, the immigrant community model should be implemented and acted upon as we bid farewell to non-economic liberalism's over-emphasis on electoral politics. We have shown clearly in this short essay that when it comes to the major significant



changes that need to be made in the Black community, participation in electoral politics is not necessary. We can get safe neighborhoods, clean streets, better schools and job creation by almost completely ignoring the political process. All we need is operational unity among the diverse elements within the Black community around common goals and objectives, utilizing our shared ancestry, shared suffering and shared abilities as the

ties that bind us together. We have proven that the immigrant model of building community life among your own ethnicity or race is the superior approach and strategy for Blacks nationwide. We have discussed the instances where voting and participation in electoral politics is of value and that being as a tool for an already established economic engine to make use of. But in a capitalist economic system, and as has been declared by Minister Farrakhan, **"politics without economics is symbol without substance."** We have identified benefits that can be obtained by taking a deliberate "no-show" behavior at the ballot box when the choice is, as they are in today's national presidential election, a lose-lose proposition.

We end this essay on a spiritual note and reflection. As a student of the ministry class led by the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan, I can't help but consider the scriptures in this analysis. For when I look upon the seemingly unconcerned posture of the ethnic enclave and its members to any of the developments and trends in the political realm, I think about

certain principles from the scriptures that are similarly impervious to any legal mandates or statutes. Consider the Bible in the Book of Galatians. In Galatians chapter 5 verses 22-23 we read the following:

# "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no Law."

It is clear to me that what we witness on display within the immigrant communities/ethnic enclaves is the implementation of these spiritual principles that the Book of Galatians refers to as the *fruits of the spirit*. These fruit of the spirit of God, when carried out in a group or community setting, serve as laws that do more to regulate a society than any statue voted on or approved of by the U.S. Congress or state legislatures. So perhaps these insular, separate and interdependent societies where the members share a common ethnicity or race, a common language, a common history, a common suffering, a common goal and a common spirit have found a way to live above the law. They live among each other largely observing the highest of all possible laws, which are the universal laws of the Creator that are also the same principles that govern and regulate the natural world. In other words by living by the laws of God, they never worry about the laws of man.

These model communities have found a way to live and take advantage of what America has to offer by living together in unity, love and mutual respect. And **against such there is no law.** I argue that my beloved Black people should do the same.

## November 7, 2016