

HOMELESS IN PARADISE

June 4-10, 2021

LET THE BOONDOGGLE-BUSTING BEGIN! – Part 3

*James Weldon Johnson's
"lift every voice and sing"
started as a poem...*

*brother Rosamond
set the lyrics to music
their new song was born...*

*it was first performed
at Lincoln's birthday party
in 1900...*

*black folks claim it's their
"negro national anthem"
listen to it here...*

<https://binged.it/3vMmF6D>

(copy & paste if click won't work)



L-R Bob Cole, J. Rosamond Johnson, James Weldon Johnson

Photo courtesy of Google Free Images

DO YOU KNOW THE WORDS TO THE NEGRO NATIONAL ANTHEM?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

NAMING two three-word slogans as Black National Anthems in last week's column proved personally humiliating and humbling.

If the slogans "Black is Beautiful" and "Black Lives Matter" don't qualify as anthems, I don't know what does; however, what I didn't realize was a magnificent song beloved by Black Americans had already been called the Negro National Anthem since 1900!

Black readers could have been understandably offended by my seemingly officious attitude! "Ignorant" seems a more appropriate term.

Why?

I simply didn't know such superb choral art existed.

Nor did I know two gifted Black brothers from Jacksonville, Florida, co-composed it in 1899 for presentation at a party honoring Abraham Lincoln in 1900.

How can that be?

America's white history and literature as I learned them have been non-inclusive for far too long.

It's time that historical educational boondoggling is busted and truth be told. So, starting here and now, I share the opening stanza of the Negro National Anthem by social activist James Weldon Johnson and his musical-composer brother John Rosamond Johnson. For details see:

<https://blackartstory.org/2020/11/06/profile-james-weldon-johnson-1871-1938/>

[J. Rosamond Johnson \(1873-1954\) • \(blackpast.org\)](#)

The Negro National Anthem

Lift Ev'ry Voice and sing

(Opening stanza)

*Lift ev'ry voice and sing,
'Til earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on 'til victory is won.*

Busting a boondoggle whose time has run out

According to *The Boondogglers Bible*, a boondoggle is any scheme, act, or plot that could and should be resolved, but isn't - because delay tactics perpetuate it.

Since deliberate withholding of truth fits this definition, it seemed a century-old boondoggle was being busted by history-changing truth via the media over Memorial Day weekend.

Grisly facts emerged about the 1921 massacre in Tulsa's Greenwood section of between 30 and 300 affluent, educated Black citizens by a mob of white rioters.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of residents of "Black Wall Street" fled to avoid lynching. They were run out of town, burned out, or too scared to come back after calm was restored. How many became homeless is unknown. Mass graves are still being discovered. Identities of victims may never be known.

Racism in America

Our white history portrayed Oklahoma as the place Indians settled in "the nations" in exchange for land in the east. If such history were true, would we not have learned about the Negro National Anthem years ago instead of last Monday on television?

And would not the white men who perpetuated systemic racism have been brought to justice?

According to reports, no one was ever prosecuted for the Oklahoma massacre and town-destroying fires.

Could it happen again? You bet. Boondoggle-busters, be aware!

Campus Town is coming

The City of Seaside is developing Campus Town later this year. A group of locals working with Seaside City Council and developers Danny Bakewell Sr. and Danny Bakewell Jr. claim their ancestors came to America aboard slave ships. They're averse to encroachment by white-skinned outsiders wanting control of their future affordable city on the hill.

Meanwhile, the city once known as the Filipino and Black community of the Monterey Peninsula is undergoing a metamorphosis. Around half the population of Seaside now falls into the general category of Latin X.

So, while I apologize for my social gaffe of incorrectly calling two slogans Black National Anthems, might not the peninsula benefit from as many uplifting songs as possible starting with two minor and one major Black National Anthems, the final stanza of the latter being:

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

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CREDITS: Photo from Google Free Images; haiku quartet by Wanda Sue Parrott.
The Boondogger's Bible - How to Fight Like City Hall to Win! (\$17 from author Wanda Sue Parrott,
P. O. Box 1821, Monterey, CA 93942-1821) or search by title on amazon.com.

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