Advocates who say Black Americans should be compensated for slavery and its Jim Crow aftermath are chalking up victories and could gain national momentum.

So, how have you fared economically since President Obama took office and the Senate voted to endorse a national apology for slavery? The Obama presidency is one thing, and the Senate apology is another; but neither has accrued a whit for the majority of Black Americans. Reparations compensation is a subject that is never discussed in America. To the Senate measure, author Randall Robinson insists that “an apology to African Americans is meaningless without reparations payments.” In contrast with African-Americans’ political leadership, Robinson is primarily concerned with speaking out on behalf of African Americans and makes a grand case in his 2001 book, "The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks.”

A lack of Black leadership on the issue has allowed reparations for slavery to linger on the fringe of American political thought. The legacy of slavery, segregation, and racial violence against African Americans continues to be a divisive issue in America. Whether or not descendants of Black slaves are entitled to reparations is an American debate that not only divides Whites from Blacks, but many Blacks from one another.

The money Black Americans are owed could cure a lot of our ills. According to Harper's Magazine, America owes African Americans more than $100 trillion in reparations, based on 222,505,049 hours of forced labor between 1619 and 1865, with a compounded interest of 6 percent.

Mainstream American thought is that "a $100 trillion payoff to Blacks is inconceivable" therefore, no real thought or discussion is given it. Whites have a 400-year head-start on Blacks in America and want the status quo to remain. Mainstream thinking makes Americans of all races ill-at-ease on the subject of reparations and causes them to amble into "non-racial discussions" on more acceptable themes of national unity, and adherence to particular political philosophies.

A multitude of Blacks subscribe to Mainstream thought and thinking to our own detriment. We accept our conditions at the bottom of the rung in America and make no concerted effort to collect the debt. Though Obama rejected the concept of reparations long before his election, surely a substantial debt is owed Black Americans. The legacy of slavery has hindered the economic progress of Blacks in America; and reparations would rectify a historical wrong, would give poor Blacks more disposable income which would increase their living standards and lift entire communities.

We sure could use a few trillion dollars. Who among us wants our just inheritance, the trillions of dollars due us for the labor of our ancestors? The more Mainstream thinking among African Americans the more we neuter ourselves. Since so many Black have ascended into very high places in American politics, church realms, businesses, sports and entertainment, more and more of the Black population have become confused in exercising our priorities.

Whites continue to support and advocate a system that's been very good for them these last 500 years. How to make justice happen for us and get our needed amends in America will require Black Americans to reject Mainstream programming and agree that present-day racism stems from 246 years of slavery and Jim Crow laws and practices. We should be looking for

advocates who agree that American slavery was “one of history’s most brutal genocides.” While President Obama is on record in his opposition to reparations to Blacks, supporters should be looking to the two dozen members of Congress who are co-sponsors of current legislation to create a commission that would study reparations – that is, payments and programs to compensate Blacks for the damage done by slavery.

Advocates who say Black Americans should be compensated for slavery and its Jim Crow aftermath are chalking up victories and could gain national momentum. Civic governments in Washington, D.C., Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Chicago, and a half-dozen other cities have all endorsed "restitution" payments to Black Americans. Following Black leadership such as that of Randall Robinson and joining and supporting local groups dedicated to reparations is a way to make it all happen.