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The Political Voice of Conservative Reform



AMERICAN RACISM: TRUTH IN BLACK and WHITE PART 2

MOVING BEYOND THE RACIAL DIVIDE

A young man with a short haircut, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt, is smiling warmly at the camera. He is sitting at a desk with a large stack of books to his right. His hands are resting on a book in front of him. The background shows a bookshelf filled with books.

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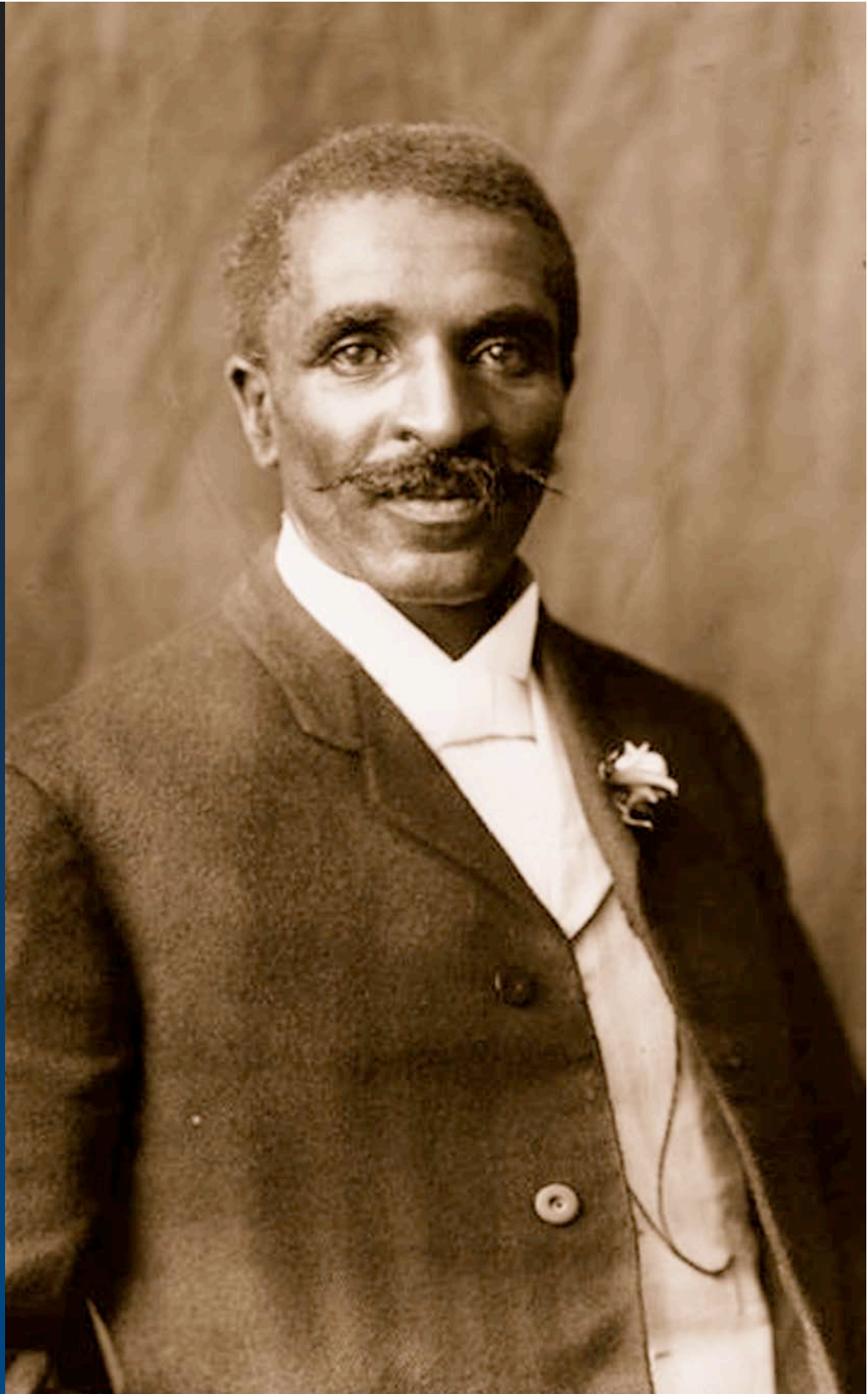
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"When our thoughts - which bring actions - are filled with hate against anyone, Negro or white, we are in a living hell. That is as real as hell will ever be."

-- George Washington Carver

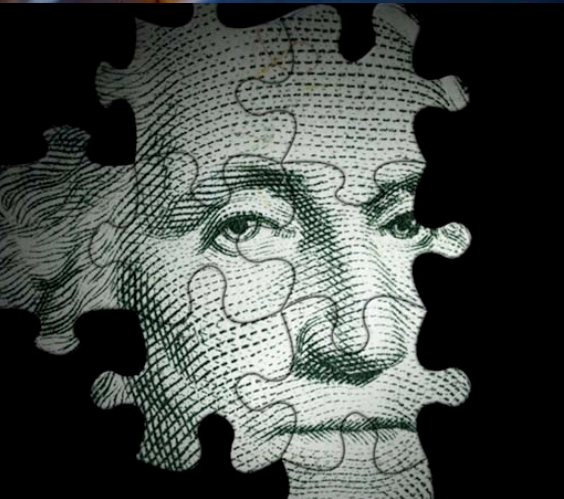


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Welcome to Freedom's Journal Magazine (FJM)

Welcome to the second edition of our two part series on American Racism. This issue begins (where we left off) by examining race in relation to education, economics and politics. Although it's clear, that vestiges of racism still exist; we are convinced they are neither obstacle to the advancing of our people, nor to our great nation as a whole.

Our most significant hurdle is that of reconciliation. In these turbulent times, we are in great need of being reconciled to our white brothers and sisters, to our God, and to ourselves as a people. Dr. King once said:

I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.

Dr. Martin L. King Jr

He looked forward to the day we'd get beyond ourselves and our pain, to learn forgiveness. He envisioned the day when blacks and whites would fellowship together in harmony. Today sadly, that "peace and brotherhood" remain in the

distance; while many so called "leaders" in the black community fuel the flames of "racism and war," and pass it off as a gospel message.

This is not the ministry of reconciliation, which the apostle Paul spoke of in 2 Corinthians 5:18-19,

*All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of **reconciliation**: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of **reconciliation**.*

This reconciliation is about offering peace and forgiveness. It is about discharging any real or perceived debt in favor of restoration and fellowship. This is what God does for us through Christ Jesus and exhorts us to be reconciled to each other.

It is our hope that as you read the articles in this issue you will be motivated to seek reconciliation and not retribution, fellowship and not fault finding, constructive engagement not estrangement. We encourage you to spread the "unarmed truth and unconditional love" that God Himself has demonstrated to us, in Christ. ■

Eric M. Wallace, PhD
Eric M. Wallace, PhD



No Child Left Behind: Challenging the "Soft Bigotry of Low Expectations"

“This is a good bill. It's a good piece of legislation because it aligns authority and responsibility at the local level, because it believes in setting high standards... A system that doesn't hold people to account assumes that certain children cannot learn, and that it's acceptable to shuffle them through school...” —President Bush

Why Aren't Blacks Supporting It?

By John Arrington

Polarizing, a debacle, inadequate, adding insult to grievous injury, pathetic, and debauchery, terms usually relegated to villains or criminal behavior are just a few of the more diplomatic terms being used to criticize the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002. The NCLB Act is being considered by congress for reauthorization and many political, social, educational factions (all major teacher unions included) and ethnic groups have sharpened their swords against it. While this bi-partisan legislation has brought sweeping federal reforms not seen since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, change doesn't come easy. The Acts basic tenets, accountability, measuring and evaluating, annual yearly progress, transparency of achievement levels, have met tremendous resistance, especially from minority groups.

Over the past 170 years, America's public educational system has seen highs and lows, and clearly our nation is experiencing one of those lows. According to one of the international report cards, Trends in International Mathematic and Science Study (TIMMS), America is falling well below world standards, and nationally there is an embarrassing divide among some ethnic groups' achievement levels that many are calling deplorable. Then there is the high drop out rate in public high schools that Gary Orfield in his book “Dropouts in America” calls “A Catastrophe Ignored”.

While much has changed since the formalizing

of public education in the 1830's, much has stayed the same. President George W. Bush's comments on the NCLB Act of 2002, mirrors President Lyndon Baines Johnson's remarks on the 1965 ESEA Act, almost 50 years prior. President Johnson commented “By passing this bill, we bridge the gap between the helplessness and hope for more than five million educationally deprived children in America... And we rekindle the revolution—the revolution of the spirit against the tyranny of ignorance.” President Bush stated it this way referencing NCLB, “This is a good bill. It's a good piece of legislation because it aligns authority and responsibility at the local level, because it believes in setting high standards... A system that doesn't hold people to account assumes that certain children cannot learn, and that it's acceptable to shuffle them through school. Well, that's not acceptable in America, to shuffle children through school. That's what I have called the soft bigotry of low expectations. Through the No Child Left Behind Act, we have challenged that soft bigotry”.

Regardless of being called the “tyranny of ignorance” or the “soft bigotry of low expectations” the educational experience for American students could be as different as a sunny California summer or a bitter Alaskan winter. Both presidents were addressing an educational crisis among minorities head on. This vast disparity and gap among minority groups could be dependant on such factors such as where the student lives, their parents' socio-economic level, or the culture of their community and school, but it is real, appalling, and both presidents confronted it.

What should also be confronted is while minority groups are faring far worse academically than their Anglo counterparts, there are few outspoken voices addressing it. The minority groups hit hardest by academic failure, African-Americans, Hispanic, American Indians, and Asians (although they appear to have reversed the downward trend) often operate in a responsive mode, as if the problem is irritating and discomforting but also someone else's responsibility. This educational crisis is severe and impacts the future of these ethnic groups as well as America's outlook and international status.

It appears some minority communities, to a large degree, have accepted academic mediocrity and "substandard academic enrichment", and have yet to take the "educational bull by the horn" and make the system work for them. Parameters are still being set from the outside in, rules still defined externally. NCLB legislation is focused on improving the system for all students, specifically targeting underperforming groups consisting of the aforementioned minority groups. Where are those minorities championing this act, adding their input, shaping the debate, writing letters, challenging elected officials, questioning the powers that impact them educationally?

One of the major concerns for schools, particularly in minority communities is parental and community involvement. While there are many parents and stakeholders who are concerned and involved in parent teacher conferences, school board meetings, city/village council meetings, conferences with state and local elected officials, the overwhelming majority are not! It's easy to blame the president in Washington for everything from academic failure to the divorce rate, but it's another when individuals don't take responsibility in their own communities. If all politics are local, double that as it relates to education. Billions



of dollars are spent annually on education in these communities; thousands of decisions are being made over who, how, when, and where it is spent. Many minority groups are either unable, unwilling, or don't know how to effect decisions impacting them personally and communitywide. In assuming (which is always dangerous) that the latter is primarily the challenge; I have six recommendations to assist minority communities control decisions that affect them, specifically as it relates to education.

1. Get Organized - Minority groups must begin to become more organized, strategic, analytical, and prayerful about the educational systems in their communities. A large, if not the largest chunk of your taxes go to schools. Partner with a community organization to have your issue championed by larger numbers of residents. Raise educational issues at block club meetings, at church and Sunday School, social gatherings, picnics and any faith based gathering. Attend every school meeting open to the public in your community. Have school and elected officials inform you of their plans and visions for the schools. Always inquire about the pros, cons, advantages, disadvantages, proponents and the opponents of what's being discussed. Any meeting you're in where information is being given and you're unclear, don't be afraid to ask "why".

2. Increase Expectations

- Minority communities must expect the best for themselves and their students, and hold all levels of government and educational institutions accountable for mediocrity and average service delivery. Don't be afraid to ask your appointed educational or elected officials the difficult questions concerning education, finances, testing, annual yearly progress, etc. This public relationship is one of accountability not likeability. You don't need

to be liked, loved, or admired by officials, just respected. To think of them as your friend, comrade, buddy, or “family” is to short change yourself and community from what you should expect and deserve. They are leaders whose primary responsibility is to serve you.

3. Be Open Minded - The minority community must be open minded to new ideas and concepts of change that give them advantage and leverage. School choice, voucher systems, charter schools, unifying districts, and other options that give parents greater involvement in their students’ educational plans should be explored along with the familiar “choices” of mandated failing schools. A number of other countries and six states have already implemented school choice allowing parents to send their students to the school of their choice, public or private.

4. Register To Vote - A registered voter is a resident with power. Registering to vote is critical and knowing and meeting with your local, county/district, state, and federally elected and appointed officials is important. Elected officials in particular know who is registered and the neighborhoods with high percentages of registered voters, or “squeaky wheels.”

5. Forward Thinking - Vote issues that are beneficial and salutiferous to you instead of historical party affiliations. Politically historical mindsets of ethnic groups have grounded some communities in the “abysmal quicksand” of yesteryear. Remember although the issues, context, and political dynamics were different, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a republican. Don’t be afraid of change because it’s packaged in a shape, size, or color you are unfamiliar with. Be cautious in allowing any political party, local, state, or national to presume upon your vote based on your skin color or where you live.

6. Be Proactive - Minority communities must cut through the issues; frame the right questions and arguments for improving education locally and nationally. It took NCLB to awaken many local community members to the educational earthquake shaking America’s foundation. Set the parameters, you don’t have to be an expert on education to make productive

changes. Former Secretary of Education Dr. Rod Paige, the mastermind behind NCLB stated that over 55 million students are educated every year in America at a cost of over 525 billion annually. He suggested five basic questions to frame the discussion on improving our educational system:

- After providing over \$525 billion per year for education, what should the American people expect from their investment?
- Should there be any expectation that children read and do math at grade level after eight years of public schooling?
- Do parents have a right to determine what the best academic environment is for their children? And if so, how far does that right go?
- Should there be a minimum level of academic achievement expected from all children?
- Do we expect that, in this highly advanced country, all children should be educated to high levels?

NCLB like all other educational acts, legislation, and reforms before it, is a work in progress. There are areas to be tweaked, and enhanced, yet the foundation is solid, the focus is clear, and the basic tenets must remain in place. NCLB is a necessary and appropriate Act addressing the “soft bigotries”, failures, and the “tyranny of ignorance” of our current educational system. Now is the time and this is the place for minority communities to take advantage of this legislation with goals of closing the achievement gaps, equalizing the educational field, and providing a first rate education for all. The NCLB express train is still in the station and clearly minority communities benefit from boarding. But as I will discuss in detail in the next edition, an even more aggressive, landmark, and transformational legislative Act will be required long-term for America to truly retake her place on the educational pedestal of international preeminence. The time for minorities to improve themselves and the educational system is now!■

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Feature

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Race and Economics

By Eddie Huff

Economic independence is the foundation of political independence. . . . There are certain great natural and economic laws that govern the problems of nations and races. Soil, rain and sunshine draw no color line. The forces of nature will yield their wealth as quickly to the hands of the brown man, the yellow man, as they will to the hands of any other race. Man may discriminate, but the economic laws of trade and commerce cannot discriminate. We must act in these matters before others from foreign lands rob us of our birthright. —Booker T. Washington

There are those who'd have you believe that the thing holding back any individual or group of individuals is some external contrivance of men. In most cases these days (with regard to black Americans), they would have you believe that it's all a matter of race. However, in these words spoken over 100 years ago and less than 40 years after emancipation, Booker T. Washington summed up in true prophetic fashion what our nation's founders understood and ordained to be constitutionally protected. Economic freedom is the foundation and the power of all freedom, corporate and personal. This freedom is the single force, which drives people from around the world to risk everything to come to this nation. And yet as Dr. Washington foresaw, while other nations (and people) understand this truth clearly; black Americans still hadn't gotten the memo. Race and class are not keeping black Americans from prosperity; rather it is a rejection of the laws of prosperity that are the real stumbling block. We did not heed Dr. Washington's words and, therefore, have been, and continuing to be, robbed of our birthright. How and by whom? That is the subject of this article.

From the turn of the 20th Century (a mere 35 years after slavery and well into the 1900s) many descendants of slaves made great strides. As late as 1960, the percentage of blacks living below the

poverty line was at 47% and falling (having fallen from 87% in just 20 years). While there were great hurdles yet to clear (particularly in the south due to access to better education and rise in industry); a large number of black Americans were doing very well, while others were learning how to do so. This, of course, posed a great threat to some in the white community who, as a result of their own ignorance, were easily manipulated into actions that worked against them as much as they worked to hinder black people. While on the surface the direct physical actions of these ignorant whites seemed to pose the greatest threat to the freedom and prosperity of the black community, the real enemy was subtler and far more sinister.

There are thieves who rob, using people against themselves. Fear, bitterness, hatred and envy are some of the tools these thieves have used (and continue to use) to rob others (and in this case, black Americans) of their birthright. Like the pickpocket, these thieves use diversion to get our focus from what is precious; to where we are vulnerable, then to what they know we are sensitive too, but is really not important. While we are diverted, they help themselves to what they want. That is why we must learn to identify the real thief and his tools. Once we understand the thief, his accomplices, and how they operate; we have a better chance of stopping them.

While the issue and central focus of this article is economics; the same 'perps' (and the same methods) apply to many other areas of our society. "Race" thieves (as I will call them) tend to work in tandem,

as do the best pickpockets. While one gets our attention, the others take what we have. In the world of politics and economics, this tandem may be composed of various combinations-- but the goal is always the same: agitate, divert and steal. Among them are labor unions; civil and environmental groups; gay, animal, ethnic or woman's rights groups. A certain political party is home to, as well as support and use for, all of these. The goal is always the same: to steal more and more individual power, thus leading to a dilution of group power.

Each of these groups uses the main pressure point of "grievances" against their mark. A focus on these grievances (real or imagined) keeps people from being aware of the real matters of importance. They are then easily manipulated into surrendering individual power and prosperity.

Let's look at a couple of areas where this exists.

Fear of rejection and/or fear of failure cause people to refrain from competing in the world's marketplace. Bitterness, hatred, and envy cause people to view others with an eye of suspicion. Often the objects of their ire are the same people who could (and would) aid them in starting and succeeding in industry or business.

It is thought; the best way to keep children from competing one with another--is to convince them they can't compete. If I can cause you to fear, to hate, or to envy and offer you an easy way out void of struggle and/or discipline; I have removed you from the competitive pool. This lies at the heart of much of the regress in black economic elevation, from the mid-sixties to the present. Consequently, the introduction of welfare, affirmative action and constant social agitation mentality have served to accomplish the exact scenario outlined above.

Another tool is 'class' envy. In his best selling book *Secrets of the Millionaire Mind*, T. Harv Eker states that class envy is one of the greatest hindrances to achieving wealth. Instead of wanting to learn from, do the things they do, and be like the wealthy, many people want to hate and destroy them. This does not help the poor, and it doesn't hurt the wealthy either. The 'prosperity' thief (by causing people to envy and hate the wealthy) keep people from emulating the wealthy and enslave them to the 'class enviers' state they are in.

Let's apply this to some real life situations.

Social Security

Because the idea of reforming and privatizing social security is a Republican idea (and nearly most often attributed to President Bush); millions of 'Bush haters', who the new system would actually help, flatly reject it. These people are totally unaware of how the new system works, and more importantly, how it benefits them. By merely associating the plan with President Bush; many immediately resist, with all their might. Let's look at some facts about social security.

1) Social security is only paid on earnings up to \$95,000. Anyone who makes over \$95,000 pays no social security income above that. So, while a person making up to that amount pays 15% of their income, a person making \$1 million pays only 1.5% of their income into social security-- Ten million and they pay a mere .15%.

2) Currently, a person collects full social security if disabled (or their survivors receive it if the children are under 18 and/or the spouse is living and over 65). In the absence of these, the money is forfeited to the federal pot. You work your entire life, you die and the govt. keeps your money. This is especially unfair to black Americans since the average life expectancy of the black male is only 66 1/2 years. Hence, more of their money will be forfeited than is ever collected. If a 25-year-old person invested the same amount they pay in social security every month-- they could get a \$500,000 30-year life policy, a disability insurance policy, and have almost \$1 million in their retirement account at age 65. Here's the best part: when they die they can leave that to any one they'd like. Imagine that, being able to leave several hundred thousand to your wife, kids or whomever you choose.

Taxes

In his book *Rich Dad, Poor Dad*, Robert Kiyosaki describes what he calls a "Cash Flow Quadrant." This cash flow quadrant, which divides how income is derived into the 4 stages of "ESBI," is a blue print to wealth. All are stages of how we derive income. The first stage is Earnings from working at a job; the next is from being Self Employed; next is earnings as a Business Owner and finally, income earned from Investment. The goal is to get to

Cont. on pg 50



“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

— Harriet Tubman

Feature



Race and Politics

By Rev. Wayne Perryman

Although his speech touched the hearts of all American citizens, its fatal flaw was its failure to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth regarding who was really behind the efforts to divide our country by race...

After Senator Obama's inspiring and thought-provoking speech on race, most Americans feel it is time to set the record straight regarding the origin of racism in America. Over the years, we have had several discussions on the subject, most of which focused on the relationship between blacks and whites. But seldom have we ever acknowledged the number of whites who gave their lives to wipe out this deadly social disease nor have we reviewed the role that politics played in establishing a racist society.

Historians report that one party supported slavery and Jim Crow while the other party opposed them. They also report that one party was known as the Party of White Supremacy and the other party was known as "Nigger Lovers." Senator Obama confirms this fact in his book: *Dreams from my Father*. He tells his readers how white Chicago Democrats vowed to vote Republican before they would vote for a 'black man' (Harold Washington) to be mayor of Chicago.

Many have confessed that the Senator's speech was compelling, comprehensive and forthright and perhaps one of the greatest speeches on race since the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Although his speech touched the hearts of all American citizens, its fatal flaw was its failure to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth regarding who was really behind the efforts to divide our country by race.

Had the Senator known the true history of our country and the role that politics played in establishing racism, he would have revealed that during the Constitutional Convention in 1787, the pro-slavery members (who eventually became the Democratic Party five years later) argued that the slaves in their states should be counted as citizens when considering the number of congressional seats their state would receive, even though they had no intention of giving

the slaves the same rights afforded to the white citizens of their states. The anti-slavery members (who eventually became the Republican Party) strongly opposed this racist proposal. To finalize the Constitution and not give in totally to the pro-slavery members, they reached a compromise with a three-fifths clause. Under the new clause, the pro-slavery states could only count the slaves as 3/5 of a person when determining how many congressional seats their state would receive.

Shortly after this matter was settled, Pierce Butler, from the slave state of South Carolina proposed the Fugitive Slave Clause, which would classify runaway slaves as criminals and treated them as such. To avoid further delay in finalizing the Constitution, the Constitutional Convention approved the clause, but stated the federal government would not enforce the clause. Enforcement would be the responsibility to the individual states.

1793 Democrats Pass First Fugitive Slave Law

Six years later (1793) and one year after the formation of the Democratic Party (1792), Democrats introduced the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793. This law included a clause to impose fines on anyone (abolitionist) interfering with the slave master's right to re-claim his slave. Northern states countered by passing Personal Liberty Laws to protect free blacks from being kidnapped or mistaken as slaves. The Democrats were furious.

1819 Democrats Gained Another Slave State

When Missouri petitioned to join the union, the pro-slavery Democrats rushed to make it a slave state. Their goal was to expand slavery and gain a majority in Congress. A compromise was reached when Maine applied for statehood. The Missouri Compromise as it came to be known permitted Missouri to join the union as a slave state and Maine as a free state.

1844 Democrats Platform Supporting Slavery

In 1844 the Democratic Party stated the following in their 1844 Platform: "Congress has no power

to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several States; and that such states are the sole and proper judges of everything pertaining to their own affairs.... That all efforts by the abolitionist and others, made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery... are calculated to lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences.”

1850 Democrats Modify Slave Fugitive Law

Pro-slavery Democrats fought for and passed the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793. Under the new modified law, slaves weren't permitted to testify on their behalf and federal commissioners would be assigned to every county in the country to conduct hearings. These commissioners received \$5.00 if they decided that the black person on trial was not a slave and \$10.00 if they decided that he was a slave. Under this new law some 900 slaves were returned to their master. Democrats claim that over 11,000 had escaped between 1850 and 1861 (pp. 317 *The Oxford Companion to Supreme Court of the United States* second edition).

1852 Democrats Platform Support New Fugitive Slave Laws

After the passage of the modified Fugitive Slave Law the Democratic Party stated the following in their 1852 Platform Democrats: “Resolved: That the foregoing proposition covers and was intended to embrace the whole subject of slavery agitation in Congress; and therefore the Democratic Party of the Union, standing on this national platform, will abide by and adhere to a faithful execution of the acts known as the compromise measures and the acts for reclaiming fugitives from service or labor. The Democratic Party will resist all attempts at renewing in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, under whatever shape or color the attempt is made.”

So you see, politics has always played a role in establishing racism in America. The primary party that made the greatest contribution and invested the most time and money in establishing racism in our society, was the Democratic Party. ■

These are just few of a multitude of facts in Rev. Perryman's latest book; *The Drama of Obama* Regarding Racism. Doublebro@aol.com.

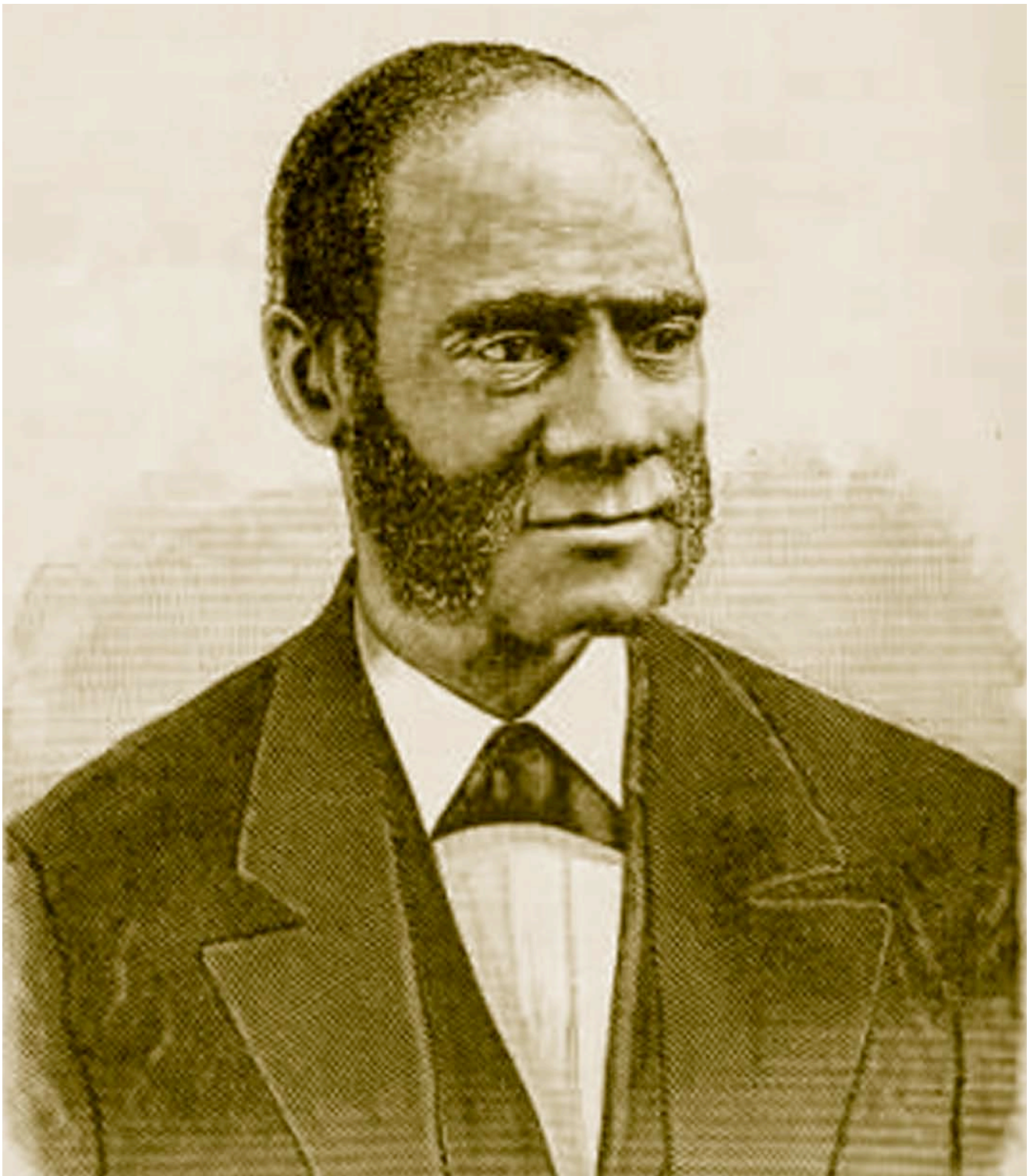


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“In every man's mind the good seeds of liberty are planted, and he who brings his fellow down so low, as to make him contented with a condition of slavery, commits the highest crime against God and man.”

— *Henry Highland Garnet*



A. D. King

Daddy King

Martin King, Jr.

“As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.”

The Legacy Lives On

Overcoming Racism in America

By Dr. Alveda C. King

Over 50 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of “The Beloved Community,” a place where people would live together in love and harmony, regardless of ethnicity or social status. Dr. King embraced the American dream as conceived by the founding

fathers of this nation, and by those who fought to end slavery in our country. These men and women understood that we are “one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” Fully understanding that we are one single race of people on this planet, where all human beings are “created equal”, and are therefore equally entitled to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” we can only imagine that Dr.

King would be compelled to remind us today that we should regard each other, not for the color of our skins, but for the content of our character. For those seeking the heart of Dr. King on matters of race, please revisit his “I Have A Dream” speech.

As a product of the pre and post Civil Rights Movement of the mid 20th century, I can remember in vivid detail the white and colored water fountains and restrooms. I can remember being called from my bed by my parents, in the wake of a white supremacy terrorist bomb attack on our home in Birmingham, excuse me, Bomingham, Alabama. I can see my friends and I being arrested during our protest on City Hall in Louisville, Kentucky during the “Open Housing Movement” led by my father, Rev. A. D. Williams King, I.

I can remember seeing “white” people shake hands with “black” people, and then consciously or unconsciously wipe their hands on their garments as if they had touched something dirty. This behavior is not something from the distant past. This still happens today. I still marvel at Satan’s deceptions, where he can cause one group of people to inflict forced labor on another group of people, allowing for such intimate acts as cooking of food, nursing their babies, entering into sexual relations, and yet find the servant or slave class to be considered untouchable. Some of these differences are so ingrained in our DNA and RNA, that a radical blood transfusion is required, with... the blood of Jesus!

In considering the issues surrounding racism in America, we must consider that the whole concept is based upon the lie that there are separate “races” on the planet. Acts 17:26 tells us that God “has made from one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation”. This passage clearly denotes the truth that there is only one single dominant human race of people populating planet earth today. The lie of separate races is divisive and leaves room for genocidal attempts to cleanse the earth of “undesirable” groups of people.

Once such practice is eugenics, which in its

***Acts 17:26 tells us that God
“has made from one blood all nations
of men for to dwell on all the face of
the earth, and hath determined the
times before appointed, and the
bounds of their habitation”.***

most virulent forms has been manifested in Hitler’s Holocaust, in the North American slave trade, and most recently, in the legalized murder of infants sanctioned by Roe VS Wade. To date, over 50 million legal abortions have robbed America’s weakest members of society of their lives, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

Having first hand experience with the horrors and pain of abortion, I can appreciate the expanding outcry for clarification on the subject. Abortion not only murders a human being, abortion kills the seed of the father and exposes the mother to the risks of breast and cervical cancer, depression and in many cases, death, either by the hands of the abortionists or by suicide.

I have a dream, it’s in my genes! My very name, Alveda Celeste is a testimony of my family’s commitment to life. My daddy, slain civil rights activist Rev. A. D. Williams King, I, and brother to the more famous Martin Luther King, Jr., named me Alveda. Having researched the word “vitae” which means “life,” Daddy was grateful to add “life” to my name. He also named me Celeste for “celestial” because he wanted to get me “as close to heaven” as he could. Yet, I almost missed out on being born. When I was conceived, I didn’t know that my grandfather, Dr. Martin Luther King, Sr. had prevented my mother from aborting me. Mother was a freshman in college, and wanted to finish her education. When Mother and her mother went to Daddy King to talk about Mama’s “situation,” Daddy King said: “No! You can’t abort that baby.

She's a girl, I saw her in a dream three years ago." The rest is history, with a prophetic course that would lead me into a high impact, pro-life civil rights ministry.

Years later, as a young woman, I hid two abortions and a miscarriage from my family and my church members. I experienced cervical surgery and lost a child due to damage from the abortions.

This cycle of shameful secrets was finally broken in the mid-nineteen seventies when I told my grandfather that I was pregnant and about to abort yet another child. Daddy King said: "No! You will not abort my seed. This is a baby, my grandchild. The baby's daddy said the same thing: "No! You are not going to kill my baby." From that point on, I realized that Planned Parenthood had been lying to me and millions of others. Our babies are not "blobs of tissue."

Our sanctuary wombs are the first dwelling place of little human beings, who, at conception receive their life in the form of 46 chromosomes, 23 from each parent. That little tiny bundle of human life is immediately endued with the power to dream, to create, to expand into a lifetime of contributing to "The Beloved Community!" Over the next few years, I began to tell my experiences to increasing numbers of audiences, until the time came when I would join community leaders across America, speaking up for the civil rights of life. Life is the first human right.

Is there any wonder that upon discovering that Planned Parenthood, founded by eugenics racist Mar-

garet Sanger, is actively accepting donations even today, to specifically target black women and their babies for abortion, that I and hundreds of thousands of Americans are crying out: "Enough is enough!" Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. The Negro cannot win if he is willing to sacrifice the futures of his children for immediate personal comfort and safety."

Abortion is unjust, denying the life and personhood of our babies. Abortion is racism in prime form, and this practice is alive and thriving in America today. It is time for us to rise up and call for an end to abortion and all forms of racism.

The truth, in black and white, is that we can make a difference and strike a mighty blow to racism in America. We can erase the thought of separate races from our minds and from our language. We can communicate the urgency of the civil rights of the babies denied their personhood to our elected officials. We can replace the lie of separate races with the truth of one race of humans, created equal. We can educate our communities regarding the sanctity of life. We can work to do our

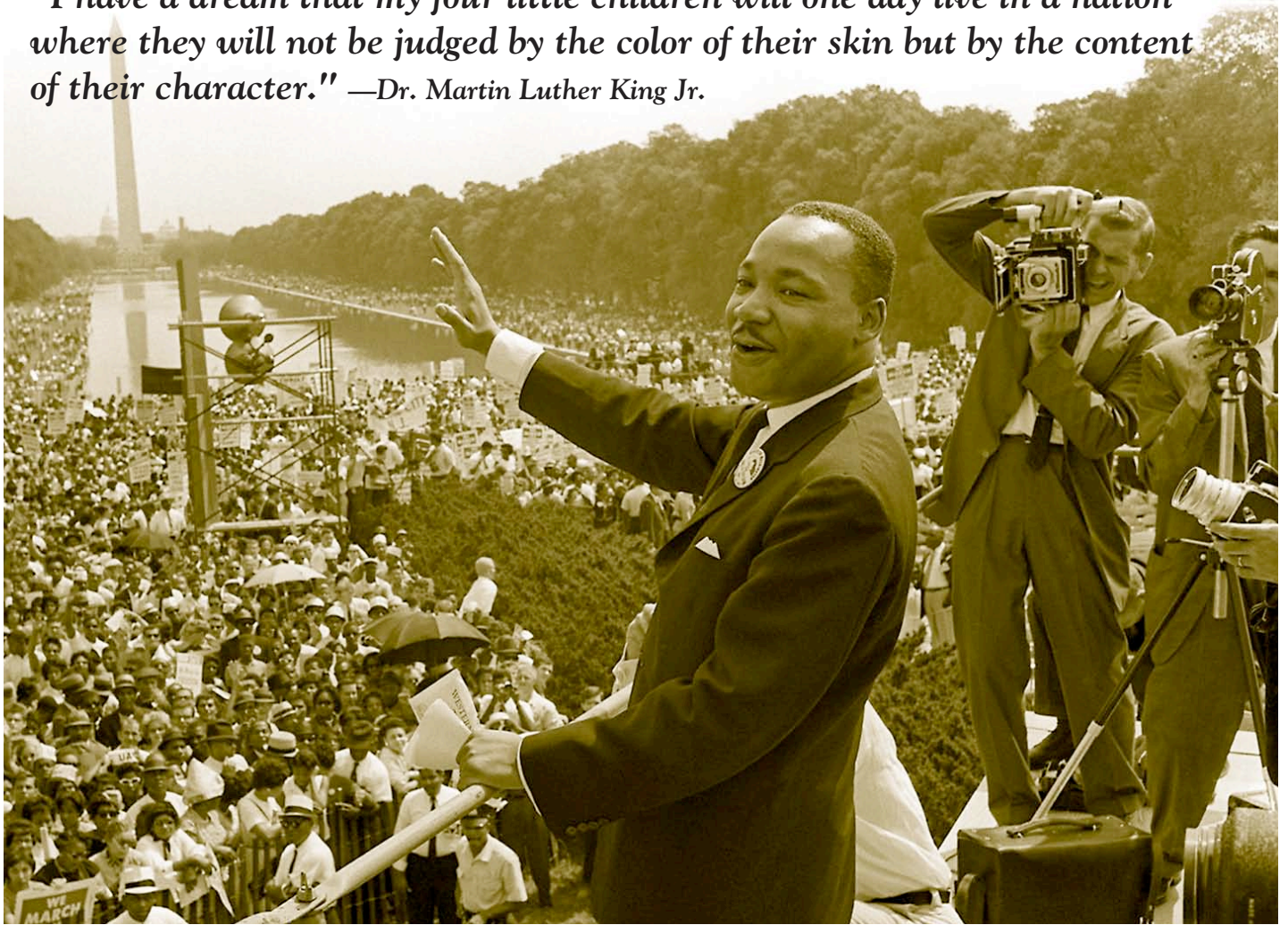
part in leveling the playing fields across the economic strata. We can insist that we love our neighbors as we love ourselves. Most importantly, we can pray that God will deliver us from the evils of racism. We can follow the example of Jesus Christ who teaches us to love unconditionally. When we do these things, we can look forward to overcoming racism. ■



Our babies are not "blobs of tissue." Our sanctuary wombs are the first dwelling place of little human beings, who, at conception receive their life in the form of 46 chromosomes, 23 from each parent.

Dr. Alveda C. King is the niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a pastoral associate with Priests for Life, and Founder of King for America. www.kingforamerica.com

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." —Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



A Time to Laugh



...I Still Have A

Dream

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This Is Our

Hope

This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"



Freedom's Journal Magazine was particularly excited to speak with Bishop Harry Jackson. Bishop Jackson is the senior pastor of the Hope Community Church in the Washington D.C. area and is the founder of the national organization known as the High Impact Leadership Coalition. Bishop Jackson has authored 6 books, which includes his current work "The Truth in Black & White", and hosts a daily radio update program of the same title. Ceasar LeFlore interviewed Bishop Jackson for Freedom's Journal Magazine to get his unique perspective on the topics of race, religion, and politics in America.

An Interview With

Bishop Harry Jackson

By Ceasar Leflore, III

FJM: Bishop Jackson, welcome to Freedom's Journal Magazine.

This issue of Freedom's Journal Magazine is the second in a series of issues we've dedicated to the discussion of race, and racism in America. You've recently written a powerful book entitled *The Truth in Black & White* that deals with what you call the shifting landscape of race, religion, and politics in America.

Could you tell us a little about the book and what you mean when you say "shifting landscape" as it concerns race and religion? Is this a shift towards the positive or are we yet vacillating in the same racial discussions we've been having for years now?

Bishop Jackson: Well, I think it's a shift towards the positive and the basis of that is that there is a new leadership that has emerged from among African Americans that is making a major difference. They are faith based (coming from the church) and they are doing some great things in terms of re-defining and re-establishing what direction things have to go to make America stronger.

Essentially, the leaders of both major political parties in the country - and I share this in the book - tend to ignore black voters until the last six weeks of the campaign; this year is a major exception. And so consequently, black voters have historically felt like the other woman in an illicit affair. We're jostled from place to place and forced to wait in the shadows. So many promises were made to us in the past, but very few were kept. It seemed like both the Democratic Party and the Republicans have been married to others who have the money and influence that they need, but they still keep tip toeing to our door at midnight. So, we've only been loved as voters in the African American community for what we can give.

So this new black church is less wedded to the Democratic Party than ever before, and that gives us leverage if we function as a swing vote who votes our interest. The old civil rights folks use to say, "we have no permanent friends, only permanent interest."

Therefore; I think that things are shifting and this whole book talks about how black folks can frame their own agenda to match the agenda of the evangelical Christian community and thereby multiply its voting effect. Then we can demand justice in terms of how sentencing is done - I'm talking about prison reform.

Family breakdown is huge in the black community - it's a value that is espoused by evangelicals and it needs to be talked about. Poverty comes into line now as more and more evangelicals are talking about poverty and Christian values based solutions for it. Blacks need to hear options other than government sponsored welfare programs that served only to lock people into the poverty of dependence. In education, there is this whole thing about

vouchers and how effectively they work in other areas and the fact that 25% of students are now in charter schools. Health care is huge, African relief and our involvements in other nations are big topics.

These are major issues and if we connect with the evangelical community we may find that we can carve out niches of reform in these areas that are based on a huge voting block. That, in essence is what *The Truth in Black & White* is about.

Ironically, I emphasize Barack Obama in the beginning - in my introduction - and it's almost like I was writing a prophetic manuscript because of his recent comments, including those that Jesse Jackson disliked that are almost right down the line to what I've been talking about.

FJM: Those six points that you were just speaking of are the main clauses in your so called **Black Contract with America on Moral Values**; those points being Family Reconstruction, Wealth Creation, Education Reform, Prison Reform, Health Care, and Africa Relief.

How has this contract initiative been received in America so far, especially among African - Americans?

Bishop Jackson: Well, among blacks it was received as a leadership document and it helped launch the High Impact Leadership Coalition. We had hoped to have a million individual lay-people sign the contract, but instead we got tens of thousands of leaders to sign the document. Now, what this says to me is that a lot of people thought that this was just Republican rhetoric, but the leaders - the out of the box new black church leaders - got the point. Times are changing, things have to be different, and that's why people like Barack Obama are saying "we've got to cater to this new black church," and this realization is becoming a source of controversy between him and people like Jesse Jackson. Obama, in working with these emerging black churches, now knows that there is a fundamental shift happening that is consistent to what I outlined in that contract, and that it is being fleshed out and made clearer and more understandable to the people who are going to get it done.

FJM: From what you can tell, how would the election of Barack Obama either help or hinder the advancement of The Black Contract with America on Moral Values, especially within the black community?

Bishop Jackson: Well, I think right now, if he doesn't reform some of his thinking, he could hurt us, especially in the area of the family breakdown with his stance on abortion on demand and his current lack of commitment to stand up and protect the sanctity of marriage. With a

70% out of wedlock birth rate, we have a marital crisis in the black community. One might say that we have a moral crisis in America with the over sexualization of our culture, so until he comes around in that area I believe we have major problems.

He epitomizes the division in the church. The things he is strongest on socially are part of the social justice dimension of Christian thinking. The things that he is weakest on, in my view, have to do with what I call the personal righteousness and holiness areas of the scriptures. So, the Bible says in Psalms 89:14 that, "righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne." So, from a conceptual point of view, Barack Obama can't bring righteousness and justice together, yet.

By contrast, many who are involved with the Republican Party often only emphasize what I'm going to call the righteousness parts of the scripture. They're against same sex marriage, and against abortion, and against gambling, and against pornography, and so on. And all of that is important, but you also have to be for something that creates an atmosphere where people can be helped.

So I would say that if he (Obama) changes his idea on some of these issues we've just discussed he could be a very positive person for the black community because through him we would have broken the ultimate glass ceiling. But if he doesn't change that dimension of thinking, however; I'm going to say that he could be a big, big problem. What we need is someone who can bring together a liberal / conservative coalition and redefine, based on Biblical concepts, what a real conservative is and what a real liberal is. The way we are currently operating is polarizing and not productive.

FJM: Bishop, in your opinion, how has Barack Obama's campaign for the presidency of the United States changed the way we view race in America? Will it continue to be a major problem?

Bishop Jackson: I think it will continue to be an issue. I think Barack Obama's candidacy simultaneously shows us how far we've come in America, and how far we have to go. As a person he is symbolic of what they call the talented 10% for whom there is no longer a glass ceiling, those who would make it not matter what the odds are. But the other 90% still need a way of dealing with the systemic problems that are in the black community. The danger is, if Barack Obama becomes president, that we could be deceived and believe that there is no longer a need to fix the systemic problems of racism in America and those self-destructive problems that exist within the black community.

FJM: Bishop, you speak of High Impact Black Churches

and the political impact that their emerging leaders would have. Could you please describe what an African American High Impact church is, and what role do you see them playing in this upcoming presidential election.

Bishop Jackson: I believe a high impact black church is just a church with a newer mindset that is goal oriented and is not just locked into whatever the status quo tells us to do. They are Biblically based – I like to use the term "Biblicentric" – but I think that that kind of church is one that understands that we now can make history if we will take the time to approach our world from a Biblical perspective and stay engaged as the historic black church has been engaged in politics and policy for years.

I am pushing for a moral agenda, and I believe that the church's impact in this election will be to actually swing it and perhaps even make whoever becomes president adapt his administration to meet our desires. Some of these issues that are of moral consequence are going to be dealt with because people are going to want our vote. It's already happening with Obama and that's why you're going to hear McCain and his people start talking about protecting marriage and abortion, and he is even looking at changing his understanding about stem cell research. It's happening because people like me have sat down with his top people and said, "hey, you've got to give us a choice. You can't win unless you excite the base and we're not going to vote for you unless you put some beef on the table."

FJM: You're describing for us an emerging high impact black church that has political influence, but considering that 70% of black children are born out of wedlock, the millions of black babies that have been aborted, and the unprecedented incarceration rate of black men; has the black Church lost its influence within its own communities? If so, how did this happen, and how do we get that influence back?

Bishop Jackson: Wow, what a question. Let me give you a point blank answer! The black church has lost its influence with the younger emerging generations, and it has tolerated a dilution of its message and ministry. So yes, it's lost some influence, but numerically, at one point upwards of 90% of the black population had some kind of affiliation with the church. We still have about a 47% involvement rate of blacks who say they are born again, and no other ethnic group that I am aware has access to nearly half of its people. So even though it has slipped, I still think that it's stronger than its white counterpart.

FJM: Back in 2005, you said "In my view, God has been preparing the heart of President Bush to take a radical stand for social justice in his next term. This could be the begin

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Racial Reconciliation: Whose Responsibility Is It?

By Dr. Peggy Elliott

Whenever the word 'racism' is written or spoken, it tends to emit strong feelings of shame and guilt or anger and hostility in some individuals. Though the words 'racial', 'racial relations' and 'race reconciliation' are more palatable and less explosive, even inviting to some extent in conversation, they are no less demanding of our attention as black Americans. An ebb and flow surrounds the topic of racial reconciliation in America. However, regardless of whether or not the individual addressing the issue is a former-pastor or a presidential candidate. The one truth in which we must all agree is that there is only one race, the human race, yet we treat one another differently many times based on skin color alone.

The early 90's spawned the beginning of a racial reconciliation movement that began publically tearing down the

walls of racism. These acts of reconciliation were not planned nor programmed. White men and women moved by God, who, with a broken heart, and tears streaming down their faces, asked their black brothers and sisters for forgiveness for the cruel acts of slavery committed by their forefathers as slave owners. They called for basins of water to wash their feet, re-enacting what Jesus did with his disciples, showing himself as a servant-leader. I have also heard the same types of reconciliation services held and reconciliation being made with American Indians and Hispanic brothers and sisters.

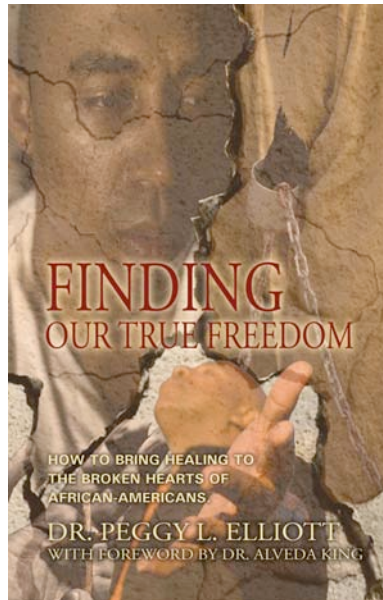
Rarely have I heard of a similar type of ministry where black brothers and sisters ask for forgiveness from their white counterparts. Why? Whose responsibility is race reconciliation anyway? Aren't there ways that some of us have hurt and/or wounded white Americans? Surely some would say that Black America does not need to reconcile with its white brothers and sisters, we do not need to repent for any of our behavior, because it is their fault that we feel and act the way we do.

We never purchased white people to be our slaves, ripped them from their homeland, destroyed their family units, raped and pillaged them, nor took away their original names and culture. These statements are indeed true. Yet, the Word of God does not tell us to retaliate, nor to harbor hatred in our hearts towards the perpetrations of ill will. We are to forgive those who hurt us and to reconcile to those willing to reconcile.

While we may not have enslaved white Americans, many black Americans have held white America hostage with unforgiveness and bitterness. In my newest book, *Finding Our True Freedom: How to Bring Healing to the Broken Hearts of African Americans*, one chapter is focused on how unforgiveness blocks blessings. Far too many Black Americans, yes, even those in the Body of Christ, have harbored anger, bitterness and resentment towards white Americans and feel justified. There is no doubt that slavery was repugnant, that racism still exists and is dastardly and inhumane, but we can no longer afford to escape a mandate from God, to forgive others so that we might be forgiven and to not be conformed to the things of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

We have both power and control over how we feel and treat white people. As Jesse Lee Peterson, President of BOND Ministries in Los Angeles, Calif. says, "If we do not forgive, we become like that which we hate." There are well meaning white individuals who have experienced the sharp blows of our racism towards them. Yes, I said it; it is possible for black folks to be racist, when we describe racism as treating someone else negatively because of the color of their skin alone. I challenge black America to search her heart. Though we are no longer slaves, many of us are enslaved by unforgiveness. Whenever we see or experience injustice, we are not to ignore what is happening, but we are to deal with injustice head on. But, if in doing so, we harbor unforgiveness, unforgiveness then turns into bitterness, bitterness into hopelessness and hopelessness into apathy. Apathy married with suppressed anger often leads to premature death - spiritual, mental, emotional and physical death.

So, whose responsibility is racial reconciliation? Is it the Body of Christ? Those not serving the Lord are living in darkness; therefore, they do not comprehend the things of God. Thus because the way of the world is to hate and harbor resentment, some black individuals, even some who have been walking with the Lord for years, feel justified in being angry and in rejecting white men and women as their brothers and sisters. This is unacceptable to God.



Though we are no longer slaves, many of us are enslaved by unforgiveness.

Reconciliation is a mandate from God. We are to be ministers of reconciliation. The word 'reconciliation' means to change from enmity to friendship. It is mutual, i.e., it is a change wrought in both parties who have been at enmity. In Colossians 1:21, 22, the word there refers to a change in the personal character of the sinner who ceases to be an enemy to God by wicked works, and yields up to him his full confidence and love. In 2 Corinthians 5:20 the apostle beseeches the Corinthians to be "reconciled to God", i.e., to lay aside their enmity.

In Ephesians 2:11-13, it says, "Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called 'uncircumcised' by those who call themselves 'the circumcision' remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ."

Unforgiveness separates us from Christ. When we are separated from Him, we are not concerned about how we treat our fellowman or woman. That's the way of the world. Ephesians goes on to say, "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one (we are to be one in Christ, which can only happen at the cross) and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in Himself one new man (and woman) out of the two, thus making peace." Reconcilers are peacekeepers. "And in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. "For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit."

When we reconcile, and are in right relationship with our white brothers and sister, we do not lose who we are as black people. When we reconcile, that does not make us 'sell-outs'. When we reconcile, that does not make us less black. It makes us more as God desires us to be. Ephesians 3:6 says, "Through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus." Racial reconciliation: Whose responsibility is it, anyway? Anyone who calls themselves a servant of God, a believer in Jesus Christ and who depends on the power of the Holy Spirit to live a godly life. ■

Dr. Peggy Elliott is the President and Founder of Dr. Peggy Elliott Ministries. Elliott is an author and international conference speaker on such issues as racial and cultural diversity, pro-life, spiritual warfare, healing and deliverance. To order a copy of her newest book, *Finding Our True Freedom*, please go to her website www.drpeggyelliott.com. For information about speaking engagements email: peggy@drpeggyelliott.com.

The Justice Journey™ Experience 2008 From the Bridge to the Cross

By Rev. Alvin Bibbs

For the fifth year in a row, Chicago area local churches from very different cultural and denominational backgrounds have traveled together on what is now known as – **The Justice Journey**. The Justice Journey is an educational and spiritual pilgrimage into southern cities connected with one of the most important movements in our nation's history – the Civil Rights Movement.

The ultimate destination for the Justice Journey is nothing short of racial reconciliation in the American church and social justice in the nation. Getting there may take a very long time, but we are on our way and the Justice Journey is one incredible resource to assist in the process.

The 2008 Justice Journey began on June 16th and ended on June 21st, “but the true journey has only begun,” says Rev. Alvin C. Bibbs, Sr. the Founder and Lead Facilitator of the Justice Journey.

The vision behind the Justice Journey is – **To be one, the church united racially and socially**. The main reason for this vision statement is quite simple. It doesn't take long for any Bible-believing person to notice that even today in 2008, local worshipping centers around the country on Sunday morning continue to be homogeneous in nature. At some point, wise spiritual leaders who are willing to take some risks must examine why this sad phenomenon continues to exist and then attempt to do something about it. Consequently, the Justice Journey is one small attempt at tackling this humongous dilemma.

In addition to the vision of the Justice Journey there are three core purposes which the journey attempts to live out ‘during’ and ‘after’ the experience:

1. Relationship - To build connections individually and corporately during and after the Justice Journey experience

2. Reconciliation - To build awareness of the need for reconciliation by learning about history and how it has impacted socio-economic realities today

3. Resource Sharing - To initiate change by partnering on local community initiatives

“Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.”

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
March on Washington, August 28, 1963

“These core purposes are absolutely essential to the Justice Journey's overall effectiveness. It is our desire that each member on the bus captures a vision for becoming Biblical reconcilers within their church and local community,” says Rev. Bibbs.

We remind everyone that the Justice Journey is not a vacation or a trip. A trip has a ‘beginning’ and an ‘end point’ affiliated with it – for that reason, the Justice Journey is a life-long experience that leads a journeyer on a transformational encounter that will affect their lives and their Christian worldview forever.

Eight Key Elements of the Justice Journey

The Justice Journey has proven its effectiveness in assisting African American, Caucasian and Hispanic believers in addressing the painful racial divisions between them from a Christian perspective. Unlike seminars or workshops that examine these issues on an academic level, the Justice Journey combines eight elements that enable participants to go deeper and make real progress, individually and collectively, toward racial reconciliation and social justice endeavors.

1. Learning by Experience — *“... truth requires a maximum effort to see through the eyes of strangers, foreigners and enemies.”* Taylor Branch, Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years 1963-1965

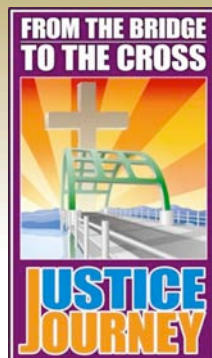
The Justice Journey is centered on experiential learning, taking participants to the places where the Civil Rights Movement was fought, introducing them to the “foot soldiers” of the Movement, and examining the lasting divisions in our society. This type of learning quickly leads to accelerated understanding more than just lectures or readings alone. One of the most



powerful experiences on the Justice Journey takes place at the Slavery & Civil War Museum in Selma, where the group participates in a re-enactment of the loading of a slave ship and experiences some of the humiliation and fear involved.

2. Building Relationships — *“The entire experience convicted me of my responsibility in being intentional in my relationships and being conscious of my reaction and interactions with all people of every nationality and culture.”*
—Anonymous Justice Journey Participant

The structure of the Justice Journey promotes one-on-one and small group interaction, creating safe places for people to interact across racial lines. The journey emphasizes small group interaction which allows participants’ time and space to process each day’s events. In addition, relationship building starts prior to the experience through a carefully guided orientation session for everyone participating on the journey. The educational



component of the journey is led by a team of faculty members who have devoted their lives as ambassadors of justice and racial reconciliation causes. Dr. Jennifer Kottler and Dr. John Perkins were two faculty members available on the entire journey for constant interaction with participants.

3. Challenging Assumptions — *“We can make a difference. We can get over our hatred. We don’t have to accept what we have – the deaths in New Orleans, the killings in Jackson, Mississippi – but we can’t do it with a divided church. God wants all of us to be involved.”* —Dr. John Perkins President John Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation and Development

Participants hear provocative lectures and visit historical sites throughout the week. The group views documentaries and movies that challenge their understanding of American values of fairness and equality, including a film on prejudice and racial discrimina-



tion. During the orientation Dr. Michael Emerson, author of *Divided by Faith*, and Associate Professor of Religion at Rice University, provides some in-depth teaching on multi-cultural realities facing local churches today.

4. Taking a Biblical View — “But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” —Amos 5:24

The concepts of justice and righteousness, deeply embedded throughout the Old and New Testaments, are the focus of Biblically-based teachings on racial reconciliation and social justice. Dr. Larry Lloyd, President of Crichton College, in Memphis, TN provided an introduction to God’s heart for justice and righteousness and offered concrete suggestions for Christians who wish to address and advocate for changes when it comes to racial equality and social fairness in the land.

5. Calling for Repentance—“Before God can change the world, He will have to change the Body of Christ. This whole experience is about brokenness. You have to be broken for God to use you.” —Rev. Dearal Jordan, Director of Pastoral Care, Salem Baptist Church

At some point in every Justice Journey, the participants are led to a place of conviction for their own personal sins and complicities in racial prejudice and injustice, followed by a call to repentance. During the service at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Dr. Perkins gave an impassioned message on forgiveness and grace, and Rev. Dearal Jordan led the group in communion and a prayer for repentance. This moment truly captures the essence of why the journey exists – to offer our lives back to God as living sacrifices for him – in the same place where four little girls lost their lives due to the evils of society.

6. Celebrating the Progress—“Discussion with seat-mates and in small groups gave me a new awareness of social disparities between races; lectures helped me to see that the church has a responsibility to be the leader in racial reconciliation and social justice.” —Anonymous Justice Journey participant

The Justice Journey is an extremely intense experience, leading people to difficult places of understanding. It is important to spend time celebrating the commitment of the participants to encounter the truth about themselves and society. This year, Dr. A.G. Miller, Religion Professor at Oberlin College, shared an insightful message that helps participants translate this experience into action. At the close of the Journey, the participants celebrate with a banquet, and a time of worship and laughter led by Rev. Dr. Rudy Howard, founding president of Luke 4:18 Ministries, Memphis.

7. Structuring the Follow-Through — “How do you account for a church that is 100 million strong and we are like apartheid on Sunday morning? We have to capture in our minds that we are one in Jesus Christ.” — Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, President, The Skinner Institute, previous Justice Journey Faculty Member

Participants of the Justice Journey begin to develop relationships that they wish to take further. We encourage each church that participates to meet with Justice Journey alumni after the journey to listen to stories of how God is at work in their lives. Our hope is that each church on the journey will continue to lift up the values learned and begin to incorporate the learnings within their church culture. We continue to hear stories of how churches from previous journeys are engaging formally and informally with each other.

8. Leading by Example— “A lack of love is a moral failure. God has been working with me about how I need to use my voice to speak into situations of injustice.” —Anonymous Participant

The Justice Journey participants, for the most part, represent key leaders and staff members of various churches, who are empowered by their senior leaders to lift these very important values extremely high within the different departments they are leading and amongst their colleagues. It is also hoped that Senior Pastors and other senior leaders within a given church would take strong positions on social justice and reconciliation, backing up their teaching with public action.

“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to

Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Justice Journey Future

The Justice Journey is intended to serve as a model for churches across America to make the same pilgrimage of reconciliation – a pilgrimage toward the truth about the racial divisions and injustices in our society, in our churches, in our neighborhoods and in our hearts. We plan to utilize the Justice Journey template as a resource to be offered by the Willow Creek Association to other churches nationwide who desire to put together their own Justice Journey experience.

By participating in the Justice Journey, churches benefit by:

- Being able to utilize the journey as a springboard for future conversations in their church for how to be intentional and inclusive in their church environment regarding race.
- Participants being able to experience what true Biblical community is like and then transferring that experience back into their church setting through stories, small group settings, etc.
- Gaining a broader perspective of racial discrimination and social disparities so that their church is better positioned to advocate in their community and region as God leads them.

“We’re excited at the potential to cross the racial divide in the Christian church and in our society by promoting a greater understanding of the issues that divide us. We plan to lead Justice Journeys every year to give people the opportunity to experience the hope of reconciliation and to understand the role that the local church can play in elevating its engagement in social justice ministry”. —Debbie Kreml, Co-Founder of the Justice Journey ■

Rev. Alvin C. Bibbs Sr. is the executive director of multicultural church relations at Willow Creek Association. He can be reached at abibbs@willowcreek.org. For more information on how a Justice Journey can be offered in your area or through your local church contact: Debbie Kreml, at justicejourney@willowcreek.org or call 224.512.1496 between 9 and 4 PM (CST).

First Blacks in Congress



Engraved according to bill of Congress in the year 1870 by Turner & Lee in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

U.S. Senator HIRAM R. REVELS of Mississippi BENJ S TURNER, M.C. of Alabama ROBERT C. DE LARGE, M.C. of S. Carolina JOSIAH T. WALLS, M.C. of Florida JEFFERSON H. LONG, M.C. of Georgia JOSEPH H. RAINEY, M.C. of S. Carolina ROBERT BROWN ELLIST, M.C. of S. Carolina

THE FIRST COLORED SENATOR AND REPRESENTATIVES.
In the 41st and 42nd Congress of the United States.

NEW YORK, PUBLISHED BY CURRIER & IVEY, 233 NASSAU STREET.

703804

Passed by Congress February 26, 1869. Ratified February 3, 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave the vote to all male citizens regardless of color or previous condition of servitude. It reads as follows:

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude—

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

African Americans became involved in the political process not only as voters but also as governmental representatives at the local, state and national level. Although whites often contested their elections, and members of the legislative bodies were usually reluctant to receive them, many African American men ably served their country during Reconstruction. Pictured here from left to right are Senator Hiram R. Revels of Mississippi and Representatives Benjamin S. Turner of Alabama, Robert C. De Large of S. Carolina, Josiah T. Walls of Florida, Jefferson H. Long of Georgia, Joseph H. Rainey of S. Carolina, and Robert Brown Elliot of S. Carolina.

(Freedom's Journal Magazine proudly features this historic replica of the "first [African Americans] to serve as members of the 41st and 42nd U.S. Congress" as part of its official logo).



“He who succeeds in the sight of heaven, does his duty, even though, in the sight of men, he has failed, utterly failed.”

—Hiram Rhodes Revels



Republicans For Black Empowerment

By Jennifer Salley

With the call “for change” growing louder (and louder) among African American voters on either side; the matter of race may be essential to determining the next president of the United States. And while most celebrate the historic implications of a ‘first black’ president; many still cling in anticipation to Dr. King’s dream that every man (or woman)...“not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Among these are the Republicans for Black Empowerment (RBE), a grassroots coalition based in Washington, D.C. dedicated to investing in the political future of Black Americans through “raising awareness of the benefits offered by conservative solutions to the black community’s concerns”. This includes RBE’s goal of “tapping into the personal potential of Black Americans to provoke critical thinking, increase black Republican candidates, and empower individuals and groups to take leadership roles within their communities”.

According to Don Scoggins, RBE’s chairman, the organization aims “to build on the current interest and psychological lift created by the Obama campaign, to encourage future generations of critical thinkers”. He says the “RBE is committed to ongoing partnerships with Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU’s), the Congressional Black Caucus, and

others, as a means of providing alternative images to combat issues of race”. Scoggins believes that by dispelling negative ‘Uncle Tom’ stereotypes, “black conservatives become agents of change who add (to the public discourse) a much needed dose of conservatism, which is ‘head and shoulders’ above mainstream socialistic rhetoric”. Although acutely aware of the challenges facing the Republican Party in the upcoming presidential elections, Scoggins agrees that “racial pride is ultimately a poor substitute for policy differences”. And though he publicly acknowledges Obama’s trail blazing efforts in breaking down racial barriers, he believes “that more effort must be made to highlight key issues and traditional values, regardless of color”.

RBE’s key program goals include: “establishing a network for black conservatives; formation of state and local black Republican organizations; educational activities, and support of candidates and public policies aligned with improving the lives of Blacks by emphasizing reduced government dependency, personal savings and investment, educational reform, economic empowerment, and equal opportunity”. [For more information on the Republicans for Black Empowerment, visit: www.theblackgop.com.]

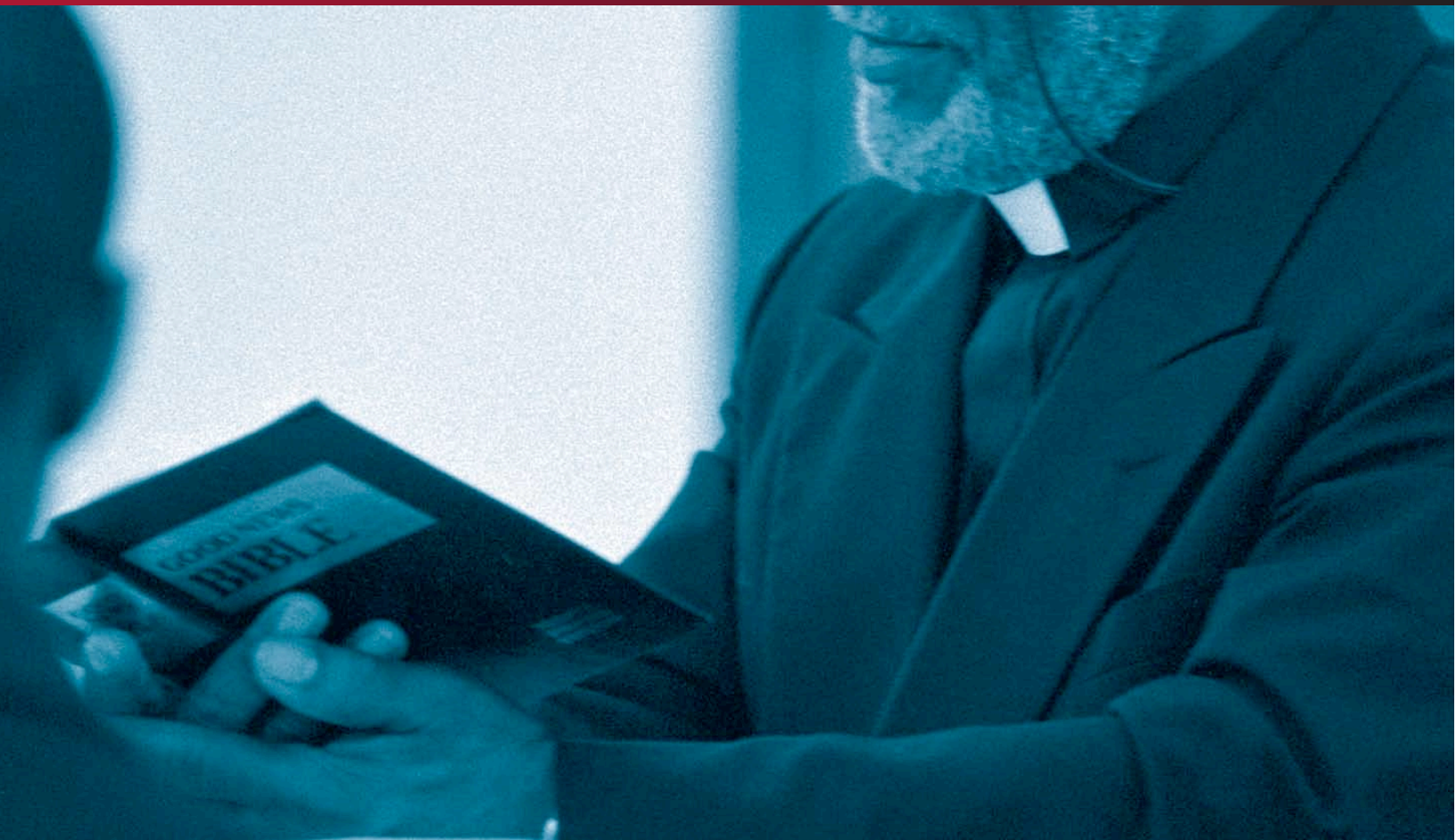
“...racial pride is ultimately a poor substitute for policy differences”

Freedom’s Voices spotlight is devoted to promoting awareness of civic, social and religious organizations, which share the views and support FJM cause of revitalizing conservative (L.I.F.T) principles, freedom and a judicious political process that reflects the traditions, values and issues facing our nation’s African American constituency.



I am a Republican, a black, dyed in the wool Republican, and I never intend to belong to any other party than the party of freedom and progress.

Frederick Douglass (c. 1817-95)



Dirty Collars:

How Some Christian Leaders Are Advancing Un-Christian Personal Agendas By Ceasar Leflore, III

Recent public comments from the pulpit of The Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago by its former pastor, the Reverend Jeremiah Wright, and those uttered by one of his closest associates, Father Michael Pfleger of St. Sabina Parish, have launched a firestorm of heated discussions throughout the nation and its media concerning the black church, racism, and the peculiar role that religious leaders play in campaigning for political candidates.

Comments by pastors John Hagee, Rod Parsely, and, most recently, James Dobson of Focus on the Family have insured that the maelstrom of discussion is not unevenly slanted to either the left or the right in this controversy. Many contend that their voices offer counterbalance to the likes of Wright, Rev. Al Sharpton, and Pfleger as faith leaders who extend themselves beyond their pulpits and

seek to leverage their political clout.

The ongoing controversies are raising some very important questions concerning both the roles that faith leaders play in shaping public opinion and motivating support for political candidates, as well as their own personal stances on critically important social issues including abortion, racism, homosexuality, and even popular music.

Where should the leaders of the church stand on these issues, and exactly what distinctive ideology undergirds their publicly declared positions concerning them? Many today are left to wonder if prominent preachers and pastors are taking positions that accurately reflect the tenets of the Christian faith that they claim to represent, or do they have their own personal agendas that they are seeking to advance? Is the ministry simply the most effective platform from which they can build a like-minded constituency? Exactly what do the collars they wear represent, and whose interest do they actively seek to serve?

In recent years, I and many others have become increasingly more appalled at the shameless way that some so-called leaders attempt to wrap Christianity around themselves in order to camouflage their selfish obsessions with personal enrichment, and political empowerment.

By advancing the populist social agendas of those who have economic and political clout – but who make no pretense of commitment to honor and maintain the traditional Judeo-Christian values upon which this great nation was established – these ministers are burning what could be called “strange fires” on altars of sacrifice that are unrecognizable to those of us who are true believers of the Holy Bible and see the world from a uniquely Judeo-Christian perspective.

Many famously popular clerics claim that their faith informs their public positions, but as a Christian who follows Biblical doctrine very closely, I question, as Barack Obama recently did, what type of Christianity some of these leaders are advocating.

The clerical collars behind which they operate seem to be stained and dirty if their claims of Christianity are to be judged by the politics they practice and by who they choose to empower through their political and organizational support.

Like most ministers, I was taught and teach those under my care that your doctrine (that which you believe) influences your discipline (the way in which you behave).

I was told that people should be able to understand your beliefs by observing your behavior.

Watching the behavior of some prominent ministers during this most recent political campaign is raising some very serious questions for me as to exactly what the doctrinal positions are that are guiding the Christian church of the new millennium.

What doctrine, one might ask, influences the behavior of a Father Michael Pflieger of Chicago when he stands before a congregation, as he did recently, and spews out racially polarizing invectives in an effort to support Senator Barack Obama’s campaign to become the Democratic nominee over the formerly popular Hillary Clinton?

Did it matter to him that his comments failed to serve that which is believed to be the prime directive of the Christian church, to promote the love of God and reconciliation to Him and to each other? I don’t think it did, as he apparently had a personal agenda based on racial politics that took priority over his mandate to preach love and forgiveness through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul, who Christians recognize as the primary architect of the Christian church, was very specific in his description of that which would be the world agenda for the church. In a letter he wrote to the body of believers in Corinth, Greece, he emphasized that the agenda of the Christian church would be reconciliation.

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 *New International Version

Very seldom, if ever, have I heard the likes of Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, or Jeremiah Wright in their numerous television appearances preach the gospel of love and reconciliation between those who had been oppressed and their former oppressors. When you hear them speak, it’s obvious that their doctrine and that of many so-called church leaders is not reconciliation, but retaliation.

Many black ministers use the injustices of slavery and segregation in America as an excuse to defend the most hateful anti-American speech and actions by those who follow a liberation theology – a theology that does not advance the notion of reconciliation, but one of retaliation which celebrates any misfortune that happens to America as something that is deserved and divinely orchestrated.

Did they learn nothing from the example of those great social and religious leaders who led huge social uprisings for justice and equality before them?

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who founded The Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC), fully understood the great directive of reconciliation and firmly established it to his membership by declaring that “our goal is not victory, it’s reconciliation.”

Even in the face of brutal resistance from those who opposed them in the civil rights movement, their response was purely Christ-like in that they desired to see this nation reconciled to the divine principles that had been established in it’s founding documents. They did not pray for nor advocate the destruction of this nation, but rather desired to see its people, of all races and backgrounds, reconciled to each other as loving brother and sisters.

Did they learn nothing for Jesus, Himself, who led the world’s most impacting and transformational popular uprising against social injustice and founded the ministry or reconciliation? That’s what the collar and he who wears it are sup-

Many black ministers use the injustices of slavery and segregation in America as an excuse to defend the most hateful anti-American speech and actions by those who follow a liberation theology...

posed to represent in thought, word, and public deed. No wonder most of these ministers have forgone the clergy collar and replaced it with expensive suits and silk shirts.

And what about the critical social issues that are defining our nation and the moral principles upon which it will stand? What doctrinal understanding motivates the Christian leaders of today who support the anti-biblical and anti-Christian philosophies that are being advanced in our legislatures and courts, and being embraced in the hearts of our people? Just how dirty can clergy collars get in support of society's demands for broad based acceptance of abhorrent and unrighteous social behaviors? I'm almost too afraid to imagine, but we do have some unfortunate examples to draw from.

In 1999, as a member of The Life Education and Resource Network (LEARN), I attended a counter protest in Washington, D.C. of an ecumenical group called The Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) as they hosted their "Breaking the Silence" summit on black sexuality which attracted over 600 clergy and laity.

Summit speakers, which included Jeremiah Wright, defended not only the continued full availability of abortion on demand for women of all ages throughout America, but also the full acceptance of homosexuality by churches and the distribution of contraceptives to sexually active children.

Although the RCRC was comprised primarily of predominantly white religious bodies, their summit had at its core, the desire to enlist more socially conservative black churches into the abortion rights and sexual liberation movements.

The RCRC was absolutist in its defense of abortion on demand, even defending the legality of the horrific late-term procedure known as "partial-birth abortion." For reasons that make absolutely no common or religious sense to me, they even opposed parental notification and consent laws for under-age teen-agers seeking abortions.

During one of his presentations at the event, Jeremiah Wright, then the pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, told the RCRC audience that he once had been "homophobic" but now accepts that God has created a certain number of animals in each species to be attracted to the same sex.

He told parents to accept their children's homosexuality and to avoid the example of Saul in the Bible, who Wright believes opposed Jonathan because of a homosexual relationship with David.

Wright received thunderous applause when he concluded by saying "fag hags [meaning women who

support homosexual causes] need to rise up and put Homo-bashers in their place."

Ten years later, one of Pastor Wright's most prominent protégés, Senator Barack Obama, is running to become the President of the United States and promises that, if elected, he would seek to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which prohibits same-sex marriages.

It should be easily recognized that neither Pastor Wright's collars nor hands are clean when it comes to spreading a doctrine that is neither Christian or in the best interest of this nation. Thanks to Youtube and the 24 cable news cycle, that fact has become painfully obvious to many people who were shocked and thoroughly disgusted by the hateful rantings of Pastor Wright as well as the cheerful support of his ideals by his blindly loyal followers.

While watching the many video segments depicting Wright's anti-American and racist diatribes, I could not help but relate the reaction of his followers as they cheered him on in his hate speech with those followers seen in black and white footage cheering on a defiant and hate-filled Hitler or Mussolini.

Let me be clear, I am not suggesting any moral equivalence between Pastor Wright and Adolph Hitler – but I will go as far as saying that those who cheered him on for all those years and still seek to excuse his hate speech are just as guilty as those who ignorantly supported the hatred and fascism that Hitler propagated.

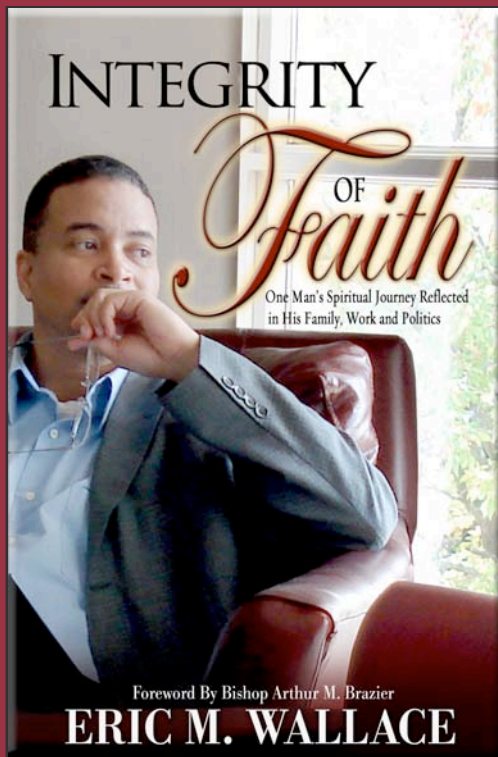
It is absolutely shameful the way that Wright and other dirty-collared ministers conduct themselves in the pulpit. And it is equally appalling the way that those who attend their churches and who join their organizations fall right in line to not only defend the leftist liberal leanings of their leaders, but also seek to arrogate to them the right to be indignant when being called on their complicity and ignorance.

To me, their actions are as antithetical to a proper understanding of scripture as those of the Reverend Finis Dakes who misapplied scripture and insisted that there were "30 Biblical Reasons for Segregation." Sadly, many racist churches and organizations believed his madness and wrought severe pain and havoc on thousands of innocent black people living in the South. His teachings led many to be comfortable in not only wearing dirty white collars, but also in donning dirty white sheets that represented a fatally flawed vision of the Christian faith.

"The shepherds are senseless and do not inquire of the LORD; so they do not prosper and all their flock is scattered." Dirty collars will lead us nowhere we should want to go.■

“Dr. Wallace’s story is a testimony of integrity and faith experienced by many, but told by only a few. His account is a compelling reminder that those values are enduring despite the negative forces to the contrary.”

Herman Cain, President and CEO
THE New Voice, Inc.



Through the ages, God has chosen men after His own heart to confound the wise and energize the weak. Old Testament heroes like Moses, Abraham, Isaac and King David were imperfect men who God ultimately perfected because of their faith in the midst of hardship and trials.

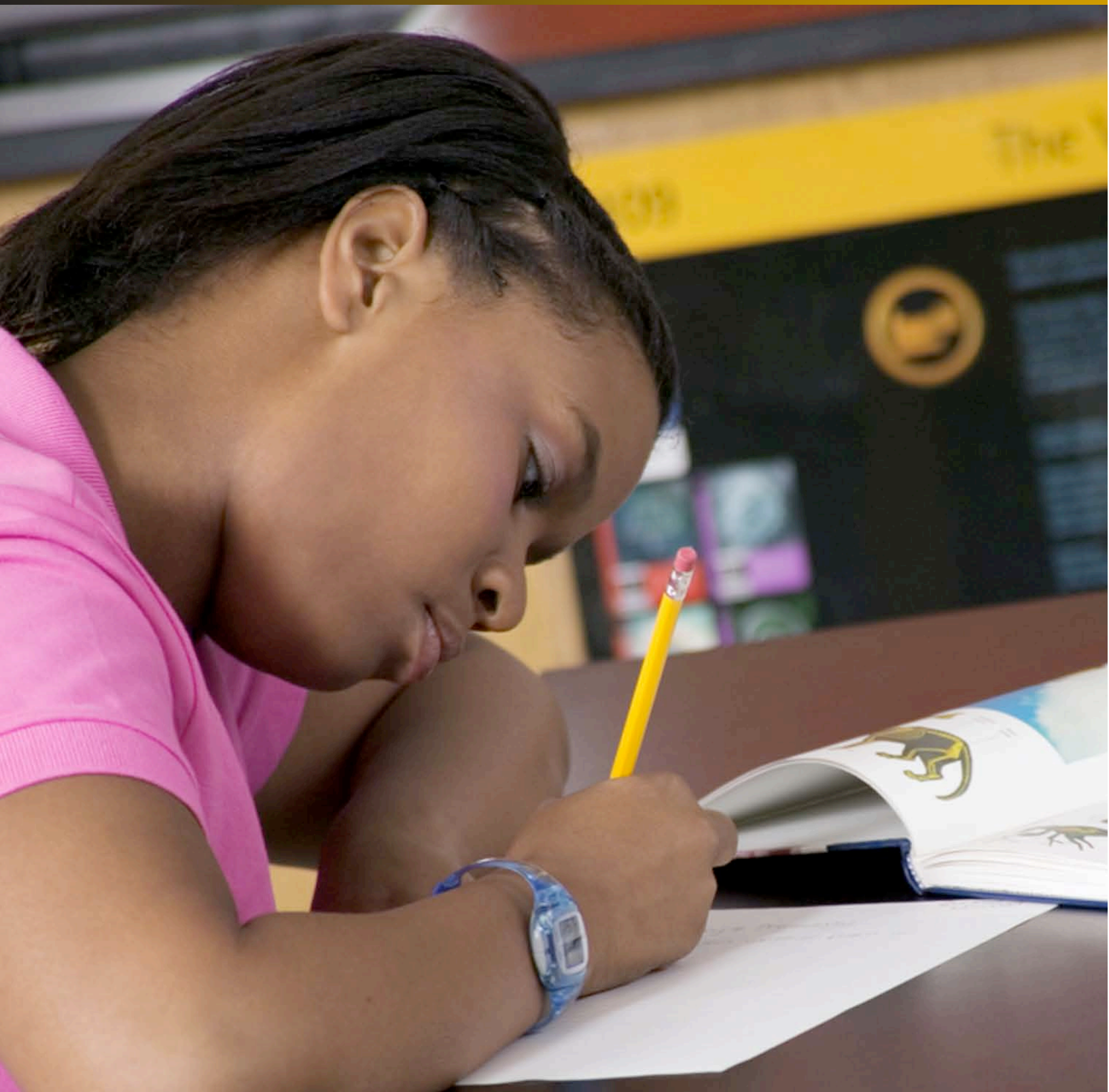
Dr. Eric M. Wallace is a 21st century replica of those heroes, a man whose ongoing faith journey is one that will encourage and inspire you.

While traveling through the numerous peaks and valleys of his life, Wallace learns to appreciate his family and heritage in a new and uplifting way. Then building on those lessons, his story of hope and faith will challenge you to discover a new purpose and energize you to commit to the Lord and His people your best.

Through sharing his life’s travels as a janitor, a theological student, a youth minister to his experience as political candidate, Dr. Wallace in “Integrity of Faith” gives insight into the heart of a modern day Abraham as he strives to honor his Lord and exemplify God’s perfecting power to his family and those about him.

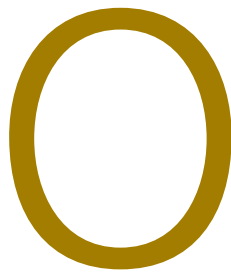


**Available at a book store near you or visit
www.integritybooks.net**



Failing Schools and Local Districts Undermining Families NCLB Options

By Neal McCluskey



ne of the major promises of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has been that kids in chronically bad schools will be able to reach beyond those institutions for help. According to a

U.S. Department of Education report released in April, however, few kids have been using those options, and it's not due only to disinterest.

The report--Volume IV in the department's "State and Local Implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act" series--examines implementation of NCLB's school choice and supplemental educational services (SES) provisions through the 2004-05 school year.

Under the law, parents with children in schools that receive federal Title I funds and fail for two consecutive years to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) on state assessments--schools deemed "in need of improvement"--are entitled to choose for their child a school in a district not deemed as needing improvement. In schools that miss AYP for another year, students must be offered free tutoring as well as choice.

Using Choice

The good news in the report is that more students used choice and supplemental services in the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years than in NCLB's first year. In 2002-03, only 18,000 students nationwide used the school choice option provided by the law, and 42,000 used SES. By contrast, in 2003-04, 38,000 students nationwide took advantage of school choice and 233,000 used SES. Data were unavailable on SES for 2004-05, but 45,000 students nationwide used school choice.

Despite increases in absolute usage, findings about the percentage of eligible students using the NCLB options were less positive: Only 17 percent of eligible students used SES in 2003-04, and only 1 percent of eligible students took advantage of public school choice in 2003-04 and 2004-05.

The report offers several explanations for why choice and SES utilization were not greater. One is that in many districts choice options simply aren't available. The report notes 77 percent of districts have only one high school, 67 percent have only one middle school, and 53 percent have only one elementary school.

Undermining the Law

Another reason for low take-up is that parents don't feel exercising their options would be worth the effort it would require.

For instance, 75 percent of eligible parents who didn't use choice said it was because their child's assigned school "is located in a place that's easy to get to." Forty-six percent of eligible parents who didn't use tutoring said it was because the times when tutoring was available were "not good for my family."

Most damning, however, is that districts themselves might be undermining NCLB's options. Researchers found in the 2004-05 school year only 29 percent of districts that were required to offer school choice notified eligible parents of their options before the first day of school. In addition, district letters notifying parents of their options were often "confusing, misleading, or biased in favor of district-provided services."

Kara Hornung, director of communications at the nonprofit Center for Education Reform in Bethesda, Maryland, said these latter findings are an indication too many district administrators are out to protect themselves instead of doing what the law requires and what is best for students. "They're trying to keep people in their districts, whether they like it or not," Hornung said.

Evading Consequences

With that as a distinct possibility, in late April the U.S. Department of Education proposed several new regulations to address the problem. These would include requiring districts to notify choice-eligible families of their options at least 14 days before the beginning of the school year and providing clear information about the availability and benefits of supplemental services.

Dan Lips, an education analyst at The Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC, while encouraged by the proposed regulations, did not think they'd end district evasion.

"If enacted, the Department of Education's new regulations would be an improvement over existing law," Lips said. "Unfortunately, I fear many public school systems will still find a way to get around these provisions and deny parents these options--as many have successfully done since 2002." ■

Neal McCluskey (nmclcluskey@cato.org) is associate director of the Cato Institute's Center for Educational Freedom.



GA. Consumers Get More Control Over Health Insurance Care

By: Jeff Emanuel

Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue (R) has signed into law a pair of measures intended to make High Deductible Health Plans (HDHPs) paired with Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) more affordable and available in the state's insurance market. Critics have called the new laws "little more than a hefty tax break for insurers," according to the Associated Press. But health finance experts have lauded Georgia's new policy as the country's first attempt at a market-based, consumer-directed solution to the nation's health coverage crisis.

Among other market-based adjustments, the new laws exempt HSAs from state and local premium taxes, which is expected to save consumers and insurers nearly \$150 million. "This legislation encourages more consumer choice by making quality, affordable health care coverage more available," said Perdue at the bill's May 10 signing. "More insured citizens means lower costs for all taxpayers, and preventative care means a healthier population. It will also allow small business owners to provide low-cost health insurance to employees and their families."

Tax Exemptions

House Bill 977, the first of the two bills, exempts insurers who provide HDHPs that include HSAs from having to pay state and local taxes on the premiums charged for those policies. It also allows people to deduct the amount paid in premiums from their state income taxes. The exemption and deduction are expected to save insurers and consumers nearly \$150 million per year.

The legislation also provides a \$250 annual tax credit for small business employers that spend at least that amount each year to enroll their employees in an HSA plan. HB 977 will allow the state commissioner of insurance to fast-track approval of employer-sponsored HSA plans. It will also allow insurers to reward their HSA policyholders for healthy lifestyle changes, a key measure in the government's ongoing attempt to focus as high a percentage of health care spending as possible on prevention, rather than treatment.

Honoring Consumer Choice

Senate Bill 383 was designed as a complement to HB 977, with two added provisions. First, SB 383 officially states that Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs)--employer-sponsored accounts that allow employees to use pre-tax dollars to pay for certain verified health expenses, including health insurance--which are not packaged with individual health insurance policies do not qualify as "insurance" for state recognition purposes.

Second, SB 383 declares HSA plans must comply with the consumer choice option under current law, meaning the insured will be able to choose any willing provider so long as that policyholder pays any increase in premiums and costs that are incurred after initial enrollment.

'Patient-Centered Solutions'

"Georgians suffer from skyrocketing health care and insurance costs," said State Sen. Judson Hill (R-Marietta), one of the chief architects of the Senate bill. This legislation "makes Georgia the first state to deliver a patient-centered, prevention-focused, free-market solution providing greater financial security to thousands of our working families through more affordable health insurance," he said.

Market analysts largely concurred, saying Georgia's plan could serve as a model for other states currently struggling to effectively solve their health insurance problems. "This bill is a smart move for Georgia," said Paul Guppy, research director at the Washington Policy Center. "By reducing taxes on HSAs, state lawmakers are cutting the cost of health insurance and allowing Georgians to own their own health benefit, without being dependent on an employer or government program."

'Edge' in Attracting Businesses

"This policy initiative not only helps reduce the number of uninsured," Guppy continued, but it will also "give Georgia an edge over other states in attracting new businesses." Oklahoma State Rep. Doug Cox (R-Grove), an M.D. and chairman of the state assembly's public health committee, lauded the new Georgia legislation, saying, "As Oklahoma studies health care policy over the interim, we will examine the progressive changes Georgia has undertaken. "Georgia has now proven to be a leader in addressing the health care issues facing our nation," Cox added.

'Model for Other States'

"Georgia has made a major addition to the variety of state approaches for increasing coverage and lowering costs," said Greg Scandlen, director of Consumers for Health Care Choices. "It may become a model for other states once it is tested in the marketplace." However, Scandlen warned, the legislation should be seen as only the first step in a lengthy process of establishing a nationwide market-based health care system. ■

Jeff Emanuel (emanuel@heartland.org) is The Heartland Institute's research fellow for health care policy and managing editor of Health Care News.

The Immigration Divide

By: Lee H. Walker

Why has the current debate on immigration reform incited so much passion and become the new "third rail" of politics? Perhaps the sheer number of illegal immigrants currently living in the U.S. is the cause of the increased heat. In 1986 when immigration was last reformed, there were roughly three million illegal immigrants in the U.S. Now there are approximately 12 million - maybe more. Additionally, the promises of tougher enforcement that were part of the 1986 amnesty agreement never materialized, and many constituents no longer trust their representatives to follow through on their promises.

However, I believe that at the core, the immigration debate hinges on two primary factors. On one level, the debate is about race relations, and on another level it is naked partisan politics. On the political level, most Democrats seem to be in favor of comprehensive immigration reform. A small group of Democrats, however, including many black leaders, are opposing reform. Without a doubt, most of the illegal immigrants in question would likely vote for Democrats if allowed to vote, which means additional help for the party in 2008 and beyond. This would seem to benefit blacks, largely aligned with the Democratic Party, which makes their dissent on this issue so unexpected.

Republicans clearly have no incentive to commit political suicide, so why would they support amnesty? Their only motivation is to somehow avoid the "anti-immigrant" label that comes from opposing President Bush, himself a supporter

of immigration reform. The partisan squabbling between Democrats and Republicans explains why illegal immigration is so difficult to solve, especially on the run-up to a Presidential election.

With respect to the racial dynamic, most blacks in political and community leadership positions are opposed to immigration based on the conventional wisdom that the low skilled workers coming across the border from Mexico are taking jobs from blacks and the poor. However, recent studies do not support this theory.

Black concerns stem not so much from the current statistics as from the history of American immigration. It is a well known fact among blacks that America's free-market system has had a long standing preference for immigrant labor over indigenous black workers, even when indigenous blacks would have cost less to employ. Booker T. Washington implored the South in vain after the Civil War to hire blacks rather than import immigrants to fill the labor force. Even the Chinese, who were initially kept out of the country by law, were brought in to build the railroads and supply cheap labor in lieu of blacks. Whites overcame their racist objections to the Chinese before they would hire blacks in large numbers, despite the fact that the Chinese arrived without being able to speak English.

The point is that immigration policy has always uncovered a form of discrimination and/or racism, and this present debate is no exception. Now, interestingly enough, we are beginning to hear comments like "blacks and whites will have to band together to protect our country from the immigrants." Unfortunately, I hate to admit that some blacks are buying into this. One such organizational leader speaking recently before the Subcommittee on Immigration in the House of Representatives stated that "The interests of black Americans are clear: No amnesty, no guest workers, enforce the immigration law." The solution to black's economic woes, however, is not turning back immigrants; it is equipping native blacks with the basic skills and attitudes towards work that will enable them to compete. It is truer now than ever before that education continues to be the best road to freedom in our Republic rather than relying on an abundance of low skilled jobs.

There was one black leader who found a solution to the immigration issue without

Cont. on pg 50



Lee Walker (lwalker@newcoalition.org) is the president of The New Coalition of Social and Economic Change.

Common Sense

By Armstrong Williams

The great patriot Thomas Paine once wrote, “a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right.” Though Paine was railing against American colonists’ complacency in the face of British tyranny, the same can be said today of many American citizens whose lives are tyrannized by the labyrinthine bureaucracy our society has become. Like the colonists, many Americans have succumb to habits of thought that, left, unexamined, are threatening to steal their liberty. We desperately need a return to common sense in this country if we want to turn things around.

One of the primary obstacles to common sense, and hence a principle cause of personal enslavement, is the modern educational system. It’s not that education is an evil in itself. In fact, a true education, one that brings out strengths, talents and independence of thought, is actually a liberating influence. But today’s education system, with its over-standardization, testing and endless abstractions, has become a system of tautologies and ‘constructed truths’ that are solely self-referential, and have no bearing whatsoever on the real world.

Everyone knows someone who is highly educated, perhaps possesses a master’s degree in business, or a PhD in higher education, who can never seem to balance his or her checkbook and has trouble keeping a job. Yet these people seem to know it all. Whenever you talk to them, they are full of advice about how you should run your life, or how the Chinese should treat their workers. However, a closer inspection of their own lives often reveals a tenuous mess on the precipice of disaster. These “walking bureaucracies” as I call them are hampered by indecision. They spend more time thinking about how to act than acting. And they greatly suffer because of it.

On the other hand, there are many people without much formal education who make won-

derful contributions to society. You can find them at the pinnacle of business and industry. While they might not have a PhD, they and their families have found a way to thrive in this country. They often lead better and more rewarding lives than those with multiple degrees. What makes these people succeed when others who are seemingly better prepared end up failing? The answer lies in the basics: hard work, thrift, faith in God, compassion and humility. These enduring qualities have stood the test of time. What’s more, these are God-given qualities, endowed on all human beings, and expressed in the highest nature of a free society. One does not need to be born with a silver spoon in one’s mouth to attain them.

Declining common sense in average citizen stems from a failure of intelligence at the highest levels of our society. Take, for example, our rapidly inflating economy. Anyone with any sense whatsoever knows that the past five years have been an unprecedented inflationary period in this country. Since 2002, the prices of gasoline and home heating fuel have more than doubled, housing prices have skyrocketed, and the real value of the dollar on the world market has significantly weakened. People out in America are feeling real pain. They have less buying power, work more for less money, and suffer a diminished quality of life.

Yet, official indicators such as the consumer price index, the official employment rate, and the august wizards over at the Federal Reserve, continue to promote the fiction that inflation is under control. These indicators often base their assumptions on the fact that gasoline and housing prices are subject to periodic fluctuations, and therefore should be excluded from the calculation of inflation. However, the evidence over the past five years makes it clear that this assumption simply does not hold true in the current economy. Prices for these basic commodities have risen and not declined. But the habit of assuming price

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With Obama's Success, Fairness Moves to the Front of the Bus

By Herman Cain

Barack Obama's victory in the contest for the Democratic presidential nomination was not just historic because of the color of his skin. It was a historic victory for fairness in America. As imperfect as our political system can be at times, fairness moved to the front of the bus.

Attempts by some to make race, sexism or class warfare central issues in the campaign have failed. They are still issues and will be throughout the general election to November 2008, but they are now riding in the back of the bus.

Most of the mainstream media missed this historic significance for fairness. I did not, because I grew up in Atlanta in the 1950s and 1960s when I was not allowed to ride in the front of the bus because of the color of my skin, which is black.

I also experienced as a young man the indignity of separate water fountains in downtown Atlanta's retail department stores, and all other public accommodations. Having graduated from high school in 1963, one year before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed such practices, I experienced unfairness and discrimination firsthand.

I was denied admission to both the University of Georgia and the Georgia Institute of Technology, even though I graduated from Samuel Howard Archer High School in 1963 with the second highest grade point average in my class as salutatorian. As a result, I attended Morehouse College and, in hindsight, I ended up with a great education and a much better college experience.

I'm not mad. I just see Obama's accomplishment through a different set of lenses, as a lot of

black people do. Although there are millions of accomplished black Americans in all fields of endeavor, becoming the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee is special.

No. I am not going to vote for Barack Obama because he is black and I am black, as some people will do. To paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we should judge a candidate based on the content of their character and their ideas, not the color of their skin.

Barack Obama's ideas for changing this country are disturbing to me, because they add up to more taxes, more government, more handouts and less individual responsibility. A lot of people who are excited about his candidacy have not looked past the word "change". I have, and all of his ideas have socialist leanings. It does not sound that way when he is delivering one of his inspiring and eloquent speeches, but that's what it is.

If you would like to look behind the Obama curtain of "change" you can find a summary by The Associated Press titled, "Where they stand: Obama, McCain on the issues" dated June 3, 2008. Decide for yourself. The Democratic Party allowed the process to play out fairly, which is good for America, the Democratic Party and the political process.

The Democratic Party leadership could have stolen the nomination from Barack Obama, if they had reversed their decision to not allow delegates from Michigan and Florida to have full voting rights, since they went against party rules before the primary contest began. The Democratic Party tried to appease them and Hillary Clinton with a half vote per delegate, but it was not enough to change the final outcome. The Democrats could have also stolen the nomination from Barack Obama if the superdelegates had caved in to the lobbying by Hillary and her team in the face of an impending defeat. They did not.

Some of Hillary's supporters are now saying Hillary was not treated fairly because she is a woman. If Barack Obama had lost, there is no doubt that some of his supporters would have said he was not treated fairly because he is black. I never said that race and sexism were totally off the bus. But it is up to all of us to keep them in the back of the bus. ■

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Racism In Retreat

By John McWhorter

A year and a half ago, often I was sweetly dismissed when I said that Barack Obama was possibly on his way to the White House and would certainly trounce Hillary Clinton for the nomination. “You don’t know what they’ll do to him,” they’d say. As often as not, the idea was that America could not seriously support a black man for its highest office.

I didn’t get this. The America I live in today does not seem as deeply stamped by bigotry as these people seemed to think. It seemed as if, on this topic, I was talking to people who had woken up after 25 years and didn’t know how the country had changed. Couldn’t they see that this man’s color was only going to help?

Well, here we are. Are there some bigots? Of course. Did they, or any purported instance of “racism” during the campaign, keep Barack Obama from the nomination? His victory demonstrates the main platform of my race writing. The guiding question in everything I have ever written on race is: Why do so many people exaggerate about racism?

This exaggeration is a nasty hangover from the sixties, and the place it has taken as a purported badge of intellectual and moral gravitas is a tire-block on coherent, constructive sociopolitical discussion.

Here’s a typical case for what passes as enlightenment. On my desk(top) is an article from last year’s *American Psychologist*. The wisdom imparted? To be a person of color these days is to withstand an endless barrage of racist “microaggressions.”

Say to someone, “When I look at you, I don’t see color” and you “deny their ethnic experiences.” You do the same by saying, “As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority,” as well as with hate speech such as “America is a melting pot.” Other “microaggressions” include college buildings being all named after straight, white rich men (I’m not kidding about the straight part). This sort of thing will not do.

Why channel mental energy into performance art of this kind?

Some may mistake me as implying that it would be okay to stop talking about racism. But that interpretation is incorrect: I am stating that it would be okay to stop talking about racism. We need to be talking about serious activism focused on results. Those who suppose that the main meal in the aforementioned is to decry racism are not helping people.

At this point, if racism was unattended to for 10 years, during that time it would play exactly the same kind of role it does in America now — elusive, marginal, and insignificant.

Note that I did not say that there was no racism. There seems to be an assumption that when discussing racism, it is a sign of higher wisdom to neglect the issue of its degree. This assumption is neither logical nor productive. I reject it, and am pleased to see increasing numbers of black people doing same.

Of course there is racism. The question is whether there is enough to matter. All evidence shows that there is not. No, the number of black men in prison is not counterevidence: black legislators were solidly behind the laws penalizing possession of crack more heavily than powder.

In any case, to insist that we are hamstrung until every vestige of racism, bias, or inequity is gone indicates a grievous lack of confidence, which I hope any person of any history would reject. Anyone who intones that America remains permeated with racism is, in a word, lucky. They have not had the misfortune of living in a society riven by true sociological conflict, such as between Sunnis and Shiites, Hutus and Tutsis — or whites and blacks before the sixties. It’d be interesting to open up a discussion with a Darfurian about “microaggressions.”

To state that racism is no longer a serious problem in our country is neither ignorant nor cynical. Warnings that such a statement invites a racist backlash are, in 2008, melodramatic. They are based on no empirical evidence. Yet every time some stupid thing happens — some



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the point of deriving the bulk of your income purely from investments. This is a legitimate blue print and worthy of adopting; although, not just any investment income should be the goal. The ultimate goal should be income derived from tax-free investments. This is the secret of the truly wealthy. Did you realize that in 2004 (the year of the last presidential election) those evil defenders of the rich, President Bush & VP Dick Cheney, paid taxes on 32% of their income; while the defenders of the poor paid only 12% on their income?

What I am getting at in the above scenarios is that to talk about increasing taxes on those above \$250,000 is not punitive to the wealthy. It is punitive to those wanting to become wealthy. It, in effect, becomes a shield protecting the wealthy from those wanting to join them.

How many of you remember M.C Hammer. In his couple of years of fame, the rapper earned about \$30 million. Now that's a lot of money to the common man or woman. Brother Hammer, however, did not get the memo that explains how federal, state and local taxes work. So, while Hammer made \$30 million he spent \$17 million. That left him \$12 million. What he didn't realize is that the taxman was due 50% of his income. Oops, he was now \$2 million upside down. He promptly had to sell all he had just to satisfy the taxman and joined the rest of us, a common mortal.

Booker T. Washington had it right. There is nothing racist about economics; we must learn how money and wealth work, and reject the socialistic notions that the race and class baiters use to try to rob and enslave us. Let's break free from the class envy and small mindedness to work, save, invest and teach the future generations how to prosper and succeed. To do less would be a sin. ■

Eddie Huff is a financial services representative in Tulsa, OK. He also serves as executive director of the Booker T. Washington Inspirational Network (BTWIN)

Bishop Jackson Interview cont'd. from pg 26

ning of the development of a "kingdom agenda" instead of a limited conservative versus liberal approach. The current political labels have led to bitter divisions that do not serve the nations best interest." First of all, are you satisfied with the impact President Bush's 2nd term has had in advancing social justice in America.

Bishop Jackson: No, I think that he fell short because he got side tracked in following up on some pet projects that he thought would allow him to have a legacy, but in my view have damaged his legacy. I think that if he would have started in on the agenda as we had talked about it – marriage, family, and so forth – he could have done well. I think he got side tracked on things that were not so important. And then Hurricane Katrina hit and he did not respond well to the accusations that came forth, and I think that's how he got caught up there. I could be wrong. I've been wrong once before, and as a near perfect human being, that's about as many times as I care to be wrong. (An obvious joke)

FJM: Would you please define for our readers exactly what a "kingdom agenda" is?

Bishop Jackson: A kingdom agenda is essentially what we've lined out in our Black Contract with America on Moral Values and saying that you can go back and find a Biblical basis as to why someone should become involved in the culture based on those six points. It's similar to what I wrote in *The Truth in Black & White*, and also I have a book that I wrote with Tony Perkins called "Personal Faith Public Policy" that like all of my books I go from the Word of God and what I called common Biblical concepts and then attack public issues from a Biblical perspective.

FJM: You always point out the fact that you are a democrat. What's your message to other black leaders whose loyalty to the democratic party cause them to remain silent on issues like abortion and the impact of planned parenthood on our communities.

Bishop Jackson: I am a registered De-

mocrat and I vote democratic locally, but I haven't felt comfortable with the democratic presidential candidates because of issues like life, etc.

I always say that the only people, who can be a conscience to a political group, in these days, are people who are actually a part of the group. I think black clergymen who happen to be democrat and black church lay people have a tremendous responsibility to stand up and make a difference. They can't expect someone else to be that voice because it will only be seen as criticism.

They can't be told to leave their Christianity at the door, nor can they say that an issue like the sanctity of life is a Republican issue. Bring the moral issues into the party and into the dialog.

Immigration Divide cont'd. from pg 46

marching or waiting for someone else to offer a solution. At the turn of the twentieth century, Booker T. Washington was the largest black employer of educated blacks in the country. He realized that he had to find a solution to the problem of unskilled blacks falling behind due to Irish immigration. In a 1912 speech before the National Negro Business League here in Chicago he said the following:

"Now is the time - not in the some far off future, but now is the time - for us as a race to prove to the world that in a state of freedom, we have the ability and inclination to do our part in owning, developing, manufacturing, and trading in the natural resources of our country. If the Italians and the Greeks can come to this country, strangers to our language and civilization and within a few years gain wealth and independence by trading in its fruits, the Negro can do the same thing."

That comment by Washington is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago. Blacks should not feel threatened by low skilled immigrants who arrive without even being able to speak the language. If we focus on education and entrepreneurship, we can thrive alongside the immigrants. ■

Lee Walker is President of The New Coalition for Economic and Social Change. This article originally appeared in the Chicago Defender on June 9, 2007.

Common Sense cont'd. from pg 47

changes for these commodities are “periodic” has given this obviously wrong idea the veneer of correctness, and anyone who dares contradict the conventional wisdom is branded an ignoramus or, worse yet, a heretic, and practically burned at the stake.

A similar story can be told about so-called “productivity” gains in the economy. Conventional economic wisdom holds that real economic growth occurs when workers become more efficient and therefore generate more value. But the truth is that much of the capital value created by major corporations in the past few years has come, not from efficiency gains on the part of the American workforce, but as a result of tax shelters, off shoring and outsourcing. These quick-fix schemes have made corporate balance sheets glitter like a desert mirage, but the glare has masked a much bigger problem: America is living beyond its means, importing too much, and producing too little to continue to be an eco-

nommic powerhouse. A quick comparison to China reveals a nation with a real growth rate in terms of actual volume goods produced and sold that dwarfs that of the U.S. in recent years.

We as Americans need to stop deluding ourselves, stop hiding behind our degrees and beleaguered assumptions, and wake up to the fact that this country is on the precipice of a major financial disaster. If we don't voluntarily tighten our belts, hunker down and make provisions for the future, we might find ourselves lost in the storm on the horizon. And make no mistake, all the signs point to an imminent breakdown of the financial system in the near future.

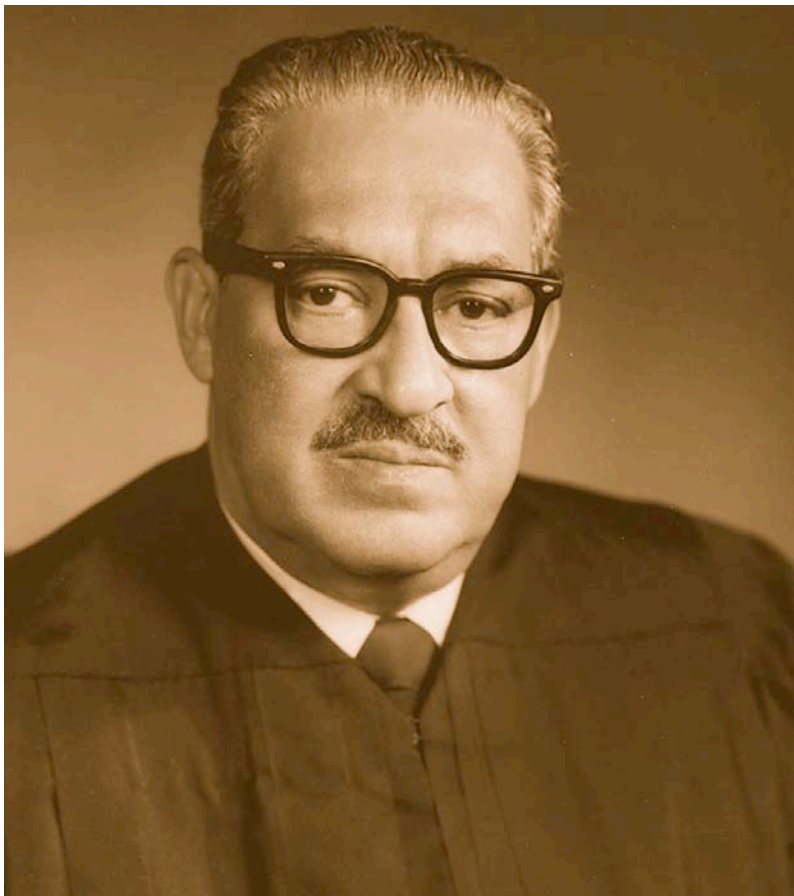
The rules for tough times ahead call for common sense. No one needs to go see the Wizard of Oz to be blessed with the brains, heart and courage to succeed. Success comes from adherence to God-given virtues of faith, hard work, compassion and humility. These qualities, if practiced in abundance, can overcome virtually any deficit in education, talent or societal condition in which one finds oneself. This is a lesson we all need to learn and practice. ■

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comedian says a word, some sniggering blockhead hangs a little noose, some study shows that white people tend to get slightly better car loans — we are taught that racism is still mother's milk in the U.S. of A. “Always just beneath the surface.”

Barack Obama's success is the most powerful argument against this way of thinking in the entire four decades since recreational underdog-gism was mistaken as deep thought. A black man clinching the Democratic presidential nomination — and rather easily at that — indicates that racism is a lot further “beneath the surface” than it used to be.

And if Mr. Obama ends up in the White House, then it might be time to admit that racism is less beneath the surface than all but fossilized. I know, I don't know what they'll do to him now. Let's just wait and see. Mr. McWhorter is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute. ■



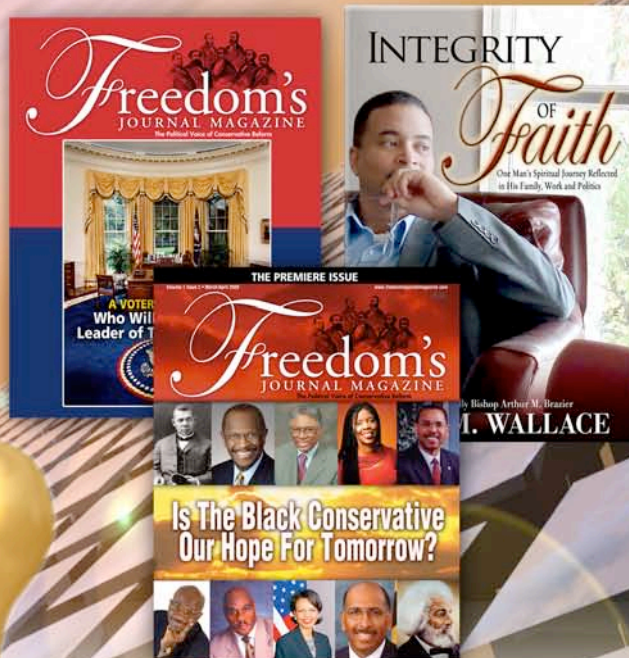
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—Thurgood Marshall

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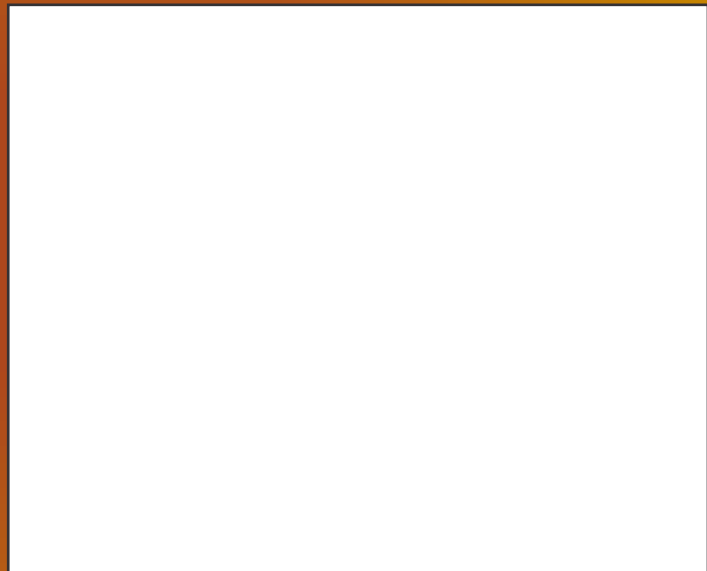
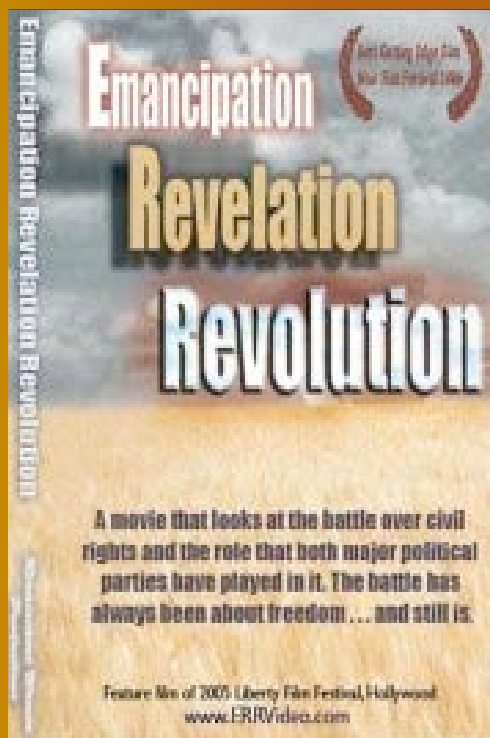


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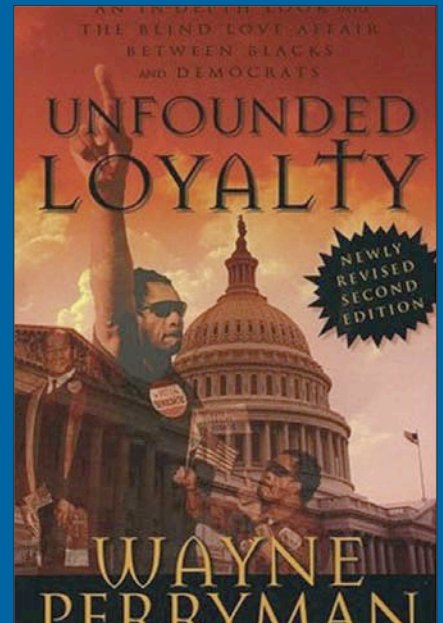
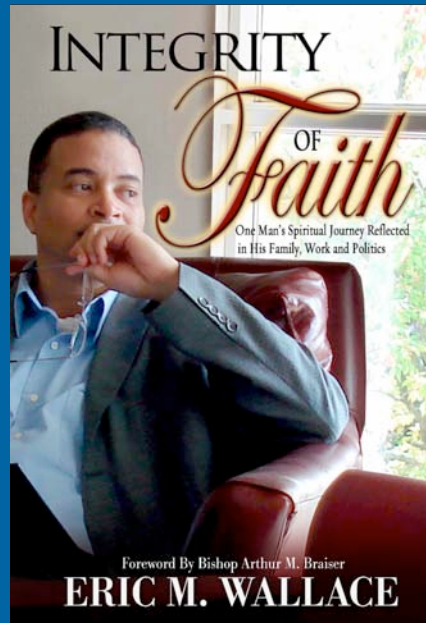
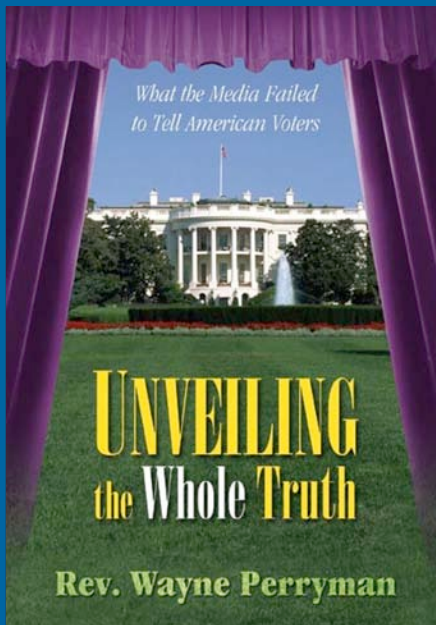
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