

Point of View

The views on these editorial pages are those of the artists and authors indicated. Only the one depicted as the Sentinel-Voice editorial represent this publication.

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

PRESIDENT-ELECT CLINTON AND AFRICAN-AMERICANS



BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS, JR.

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

In the wake of the victory of Bill Clinton over George Bush, there exists within the African American community a rather wide range of hopes, aspirations, anxieties, and fears. On November 3, 1992, in many African American communities, both rural and urban, the mood in the long lines of voters was "This is not just election day, this is a day of reckoning!"

And so it was, because the vast majority of the millions of voters in the African American community voted against President Bush and in favor of Bill Clinton.

Already there is an unlimited amount of analysis about the election of 1992. We are sure that professional political scientists and other experts will be debating the critical factors that led to Clinton's victory and Bush's defeat. Someone, however, needs to state in the clearest of terms what this election will or should mean to all Americans and especially to the millions of persons of color who voted for the Democratic slate of candidates.

No one questions the fact that the African American community has been the most loyal constituency of the Democratic

Party during the last 30 years. Now President-elect Clinton has received the historic vote of confidence of millions of persons who have been ignored or politically abused at least for the last 12 years. What will President-elect Clinton now do to lead this nation in a more inclusively constructive direction?

Will the African American community have a greater opportunity to become self-empowered economically as well as politically under a Clinton Administration? Will the millions consigned to the abject pains of poverty and homelessness of the so-called "underclass" be

liberated as a result of timely initiatives by the new executive in the White House? Will the masses of the unemployed be given productive jobs as Clinton attempts to keep his campaign promise to "put our nation back to work?"

Will finally a President of the United States of America take a bold, visible and viable stance against the deep sin of racism that permeates all of the institutions of this society? Will the urban agenda get the drastic and immediate attention that it deserves in the nation's domestic policies? Will the foreign policy of the United States

change from exploiting the "underdeveloped and developing nations" of the world to a policy of mutual interdependence with a universal respect for human and environmental rights? These are only some of the questions that need some answers before the honeymoon starts.

But before listing some of our recommendations to President-elect Clinton, we do have something to say to President Bush. It is our hope that Bush and Quayle will take the time to ascertain why they lost the election. We believe it had little to do with how much money was spent on the campaign or whether the most effective ads were put on the radio or television. There is an old saying in the African American community that "What you hide from others you eventually will hide from yourself or delusion soon becomes self-delusion."

In other words, Bush and Quayle attempted to hide the truth from the people of the nation on so many different things from the state of the economy to the racist and divisive motives of appointments to the judiciary that they began to believe their own misstatements and misdeeds.

On domestic policy, we recommend that President-elect Clinton take the necessary steps to identify and to dismantle what

amounts to an "American apartheid" system in regard to racially discriminatory policies and practices in employment, education, housing, delivery of health care, environment, criminal justice and economic development. As the nation moves towards the 21st Century, the rapidly changing racial demographics demand Presidential leadership in helping to rid this nation of institutionalized racism.

On foreign policy, we recommend that President-elect Clinton act with dispatch to revamp American policy interests in particular in the Caribbean, Africa, Latin America, Asia and in the Pacific. Specifically the United States should stop being the world's largest arms exporter. We should be sending grain, bread and food to other nations rather than bullets, missiles and bombs.

The global economy and ecology will be dependent upon the implementation of long term policies which commit the United States as a global partner with the rest of the international community than as a dominating "superpower."

In conclusion, African Americans, like other Americans, are looking to President-elect Clinton for real leadership that will lead the nation as a whole forward and not backwards.

ALONG THE COLOR LINE

WHY GEORGE BUSH LOST

Dr. Manning Marable

Bill Clinton's landslide Electoral College victory over George Bush has been viewed as a sharp rejection of twelve years of Republican rule. But the clear majority of Americans voted either for Perot or Bush, not Clinton. The Arkansas Governor really didn't win the presidency: George Bush lost it. Bush will be remembered chiefly for his narrowness of political vision, an absence of personal ethics, and his sheep-like devotion to corporate interests.

Political power is never exercised in a historical vacuum. Every American election from 1948 until 1988 had occurred in the context of the Cold War, and the international conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. In selecting a leader, many American voters thought of the qualities necessary for leadership against what Reagan termed the "Evil Empire." Expertise in international affairs, some intimate knowledge of America's military arsenal, and even personal experience in the armed forces was considered nearly essential. The Cold War's domestic impact was to push the entire axis of American poli-

tics to the right. Reagan's rise to power in 1980 was the triumph of a whole history of growing economic reaction, racism, and class warfare against working people. And George Bush was a logical product of that repressive history: a decorated veteran of World War II, the son of a wealthy Republican Senator, two-term Congressman from Texas, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Vice President to Reagan. Whenever Bush's personal beliefs conflicted with his drive for power, he eagerly sacrificed his principles. In the 1980 Republican primaries, Bush challenged Reagan by denouncing his economic plans as "Voodoo Economics"; twelve years later, he had become Voodoo's High Priest.

But history never stands still. With the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the dismantling of the Soviet bloc in Europe, and finally the termination of the USSR, everything changed. Both the United States and the Soviet Union actually lost the Cold War. The real costs to the American people should be weighed by hundreds of billions of dollars annually wasted on

nuclear and conventional weaponry, little investment in upgrading factories and new technologies, deteriorating highways and bridges, and the lack of adequate federal government support for schools, health care, housing and other basic human needs. No amount of anti-Communist rhetoric could hide the millions of lost jobs, the decline in real incomes for millions of workers, and the rise in poverty rates. Somehow, Bush never understood this. He had never felt the pain of hunger, discrimination or poverty in his lifetime. He couldn't comprehend the heartache of being without a job, or the fear of not being able to buy warm clothes for his children, as the winter months approached. Bush couldn't feel the deep anxieties of middle class families, the fear of losing their homes. But "anxiety" for President Bush was not knowing which fork to use at a formal dinner.

The economic recession which Bush boasted having ended more than one year ago continued to depress wages and increase unemployment lines. In the twelve months prior to the election, over 20 percent of all



DR. MANNING MARABLE

American families had experienced someone who had lost a job during that time. Of those jobless Americans who had obtained new employment, more than half had experienced a loss in wages in their new jobs. But the Bush campaign virtually ignored this entire class of American working people.

However, Bush's most crucial electoral mistake was in underestimating Clinton's political strengths, and the capacity of the national Democratic Party to mount a serious campaign. If political clout is calculated by the number of ballots one receives, Clinton had received a higher percentage of the national primary vote, 52 percent, than any Democrat seeking the presidency in twenty years. He won 10.5 million primary votes, more than any Democrat or Republican, in the history of presidential primary elections. Any by mid- (See Color Line, Page 9)

LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.
Published every Thursday by Brown Publishing Co. Inc.
1201 South Eastern Avenue • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104
Telephone (702) 383-4030

Betty Brown, President & Publisher
Lee Brown, General Manager / Editor
Ramon Savoy, Advertising & Marketing Dir.
Lourdes Cordero-Brown, Office Mgr.
William G. Ramirez, Assistant to the Editor
Willis Brown, Production
Ulysses Palrose, Distribution
Don Snook, Graphics

Contributing Writers:
Assemblyman Wendell P. Williams
Ray E. Willis (CCSD)
Rev. Jesse Scott (NAACP)
James S. Tate, Jr., M.D. (NAARPP)
R. K. Brown
Gwen Walker
Kimberly Bailey

Members:
National Newspaper Publishers Assoc.
West Coast Black Publishers Assoc.
This newspaper is audited by:
Community Papers Verification Service,
6225 University Ave., Madison, WI 53705
(608) 238-7550

Subscriptions payable in advance
Six months \$15.00
Twelve months \$25.00
The rates apply to
Continental United States only