

THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT

BLACK AGENDA + POLITICAL ACCESS = POWER

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

The election results of 1994 underscore the importance of intensifying our dialogue on political options for the African American community.

For the last 25 years there has been a problematic separation between the formulation of a Black Agenda and strategies to successfully implement it. Black militants and nationalists have concentrated on the content of a Black Agenda. Black Democrats have concentrated on political access through the electoral process. Those focused on the Black Agenda's content have, for the most part, not dealt with how best to implement it. Those focused on access through the Democratic Party have, too often, submerged Black interests in order to protect the interests of the party.

It is time for us to create a formula that can achieve both. In my opinion, such a formula cannot be found within the Democratic Party.

The Black community's future does not lie in the Democratic Party, because the Democrats are caught in a bind which ultimately precludes any

responsiveness to us. Though the Democrats want Black votes, they don't want to give the Black community anything because doing so costs them white votes. Whenever President Bill Clinton promises or gives something to the Black community in order to get Black votes, he is promptly attacked by the right. When he downplays the Democratic Party's relationship to us in order to draw support from white voters, he is attacked by the left. When he tries to find a compromise in the middle, he is attacked by both.

The Republicans have clearly taken advantage of this bind. They have successfully held on to the right and played hard for the center. When they grab it - as they did in the 1994 elections - the Democrats get creamed. This scenario reinforces for the Democrats the importance of capturing the white center in order to save themselves. Consequently, they are less and less responsive to the Black community.

The Black community is also in a bind. We have maintained our loyalty to the Democratic Party, agreeing to help its electability by giving it our votes

while demanding virtually nothing. If the Democrats succeed in capturing the white center and win, the Black community will have to be dealt out. If the Democrats lose to the Republicans, the Black community will be dealt out. The current set-up is a no-win situation for African Americans.

Where does that leave us? In my opinion, we have to walk out on the current set-up. As long as we are an appendage to the two-party agreement, we will have no leverage with which to fight for our interests. We've got to move into new and independent arrangements in which we can both express the Black Agenda and exert political power.

President Clinton is working hard to bring the Perot voter into the Democratic Party while keeping African Americans loyal. He knows that's his only shot at staying in the White House in 1996. But if we allow Clinton to broker that relationship then we will have given him and his Democratic Leadership Council the power to negotiate on our behalf with the white center. Why should we give that power away, particularly when those negotiations are directed toward

preserving the Democratic Party and not promoting the interests of either constituency?

For some time I have been advocating for and working to build an independent alliance between the African American community and this highly sought-after radical white center, outside both the Democratic and Republican parties.

The overtaxed and the underserved together have much to gain from a restructuring of the total political arrangement. Instead of being setup as competitors within the Democratic Party, we need to work as allies outside it. Building that independent alliance is what the National Patriot Party, which I participated in founding, has

been busy doing since April of this year.

Here we come full circle to the question I raised at the beginning, namely: how do we come up with a new formula through which the Black community can simultaneously express its Agenda and have the power to implement it? In order to do so, I believe the Black community has to play an active role in the realignment and rearrangement of American political life.

When the Republicans grabbed their victory they set the stage for a major political restructuring. The Black community can go down with the sinking Democratic Party or we can move aggressively into



DR. LENORA FULANI

that restructuring.

We've got to get beyond our passivity on the one (Democratic Party) side, and our excessive militant rhetoric on the other (nationalist) side and become serious players in the new political scene. It's time we gave the Black Agenda some clout

THE RAY WILLIS REPORT

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operator wants it to look like.

The resulting computer-enhanced photograph looks as real to the naked eye as the original.

Say, for instance, if you were smooth shaven and the operator wants you to appear to have a

beard. The computer is given a command. And, presto chango! The person in the photo instantly has a growth of beard. In O.J.'s case, they added on just enough whiskers to make him look sinister, like he has done something wrong.

Not only did they detract from

O.J.'s appearance, but they also darkened his complexion in the controversial computer enhanced picture of him that appeared on the cover of Time magazine. And we all know what that means, since we've been conditioned since birth to believe that dark means bad.

Now comes Nicole Brown Simpson, whose murder O.J. is charged with committing. A national tabloid, currently on the supermarket newsracks, displays a "battered Nicole" on its cover. The cover caption says, "Photos taken by her sister show how O.J. beat her up."

To the naked eye the picture appears real. Nicole's face is black and blue. Her eye is swollen. She is covered with facial bruises, abrasions and scratches. She looks like she has been beaten to within an inch of her life.

But what it shows is not real. The picture has been manipulated to make it look like she had been beaten. The only hint that the picture was altered were the words "computer recreation" appearing in small print at the bottom of the front page.

Computer-enhanced photography is used frequently nowadays in many publications. It is used most often to make a person look younger, remove facial lines and for other cosmetic alterations.

But with O.J., there was a conscious decision by someone to render him in a negative light. Call it what you will. It's a blatant manipulative tool, designed to lead you to a conclusion about him that may, or may not, be true.

In this case, if O.J. looks like a criminal (as he did in the computer-enhanced Time magazine photo) and he battered (See Ray Willis Report, Pg 5)

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. COMMITTEE KING WEEK OF ACTIVITIES CALENDAR OF EVENTS



SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1995

DIRECTIONS BREAKFAST
8:30 A.M.

IMAGE LOUNGE
717 N. RANCHO

TICKETS \$5.00 PER PERSON

SPEAKER: COUNCILMAN FRANK HAWKINS

1ST ANNUAL TENNIS TOURNAMENT

12 NOON

LAS VEGAS ACADEMY

315 S. 7TH STREET

NO CHARGE

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MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 1995

COMMUNITY FORUM
WEST LAS VEGAS LIBRARY
951 W. LAKE MEAD
7:00 P.M.
NO CHARGE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1995

CHAT AND CHILL/MEMBERSHIP DRIVE
CHEZS RESTAURANT
910 MARTIN LUTHER KING BLVD.
6:00 P.M. UNTIL 10:00 P.M.
NO COVER CHARGE

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1995

YOUTH NIGHT
CHEYENNE HIGH SCHOOL
7:00 P.M.
NO CHARGE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1995

INTERFAITH SERVICE
EVERGREEN BAPTIST CHURCH
1915 LEXINGTON
7:00 P.M.
NO CHARGE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 1995

JAZZ NIGHT
BALLY'S HOTEL AND CASINO
3645 S. LAS VEGAS BLVD.
8:00 P.M.

FEATURED ARTIST JAZZ ARTIST:
TICKETS: \$15.00/\$20.00 PER PERSON

JOE MCBRIDE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1995

PARADE
LINEUP @ 8:00 A.M.
ENTRY FEE: \$35.00

14TH ANNUAL BANQUET
BALLY'S GRAND HOTEL AND CASINO
3645 S. LAS VEGAS BLVD.

6:00 P.M. NO HOST COCKTAILS
\$50.00 PER ADULT UNTIL 01-09-95
\$35.00 PER YOUTH UNTIL 01-09-95
SPEAKER: PATRICIA RUSSELL MCCLOUD

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 1995

MLK/KCEP CULTURAL FESTIVAL

LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED

UNIVERSAL FUNERALS:

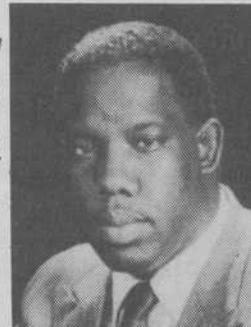
Cleveland, Tara Charisse Ms.

Watkins, Shirley Jean Ms.

Council, James Henry Mr.

Taher, Steve Mr.

Shepherd, Keith R. Mr.



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