

# THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT

# Black Elected Officials Are In A Bind



DR. LENORA FULANI

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

As an increasingly influential caucus within the Democratic party, the party which controlled Congress for almost 50 years, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) was the voice of a Black Agenda in government. The Democrats had the majority. And the CBC had leverage within that majority to influence the party to support government policy favorable to (or, in some cases, not hurtful to) African Americans. The members of the CBC (along with other Black elected officials) had the political

job of mobilizing Black voters to support Democratic Party candidates. That was the source of its leverage inside the Democratic Party, which in turn shaped the legislative agenda of the country. But when the Democratic Party lost its majority on Election Day, 1994, the CBC's role as the voice of a Black Agenda in government was substantially muted.

And that is where the trouble lies. The Democrats, as you would expect, are trying to figure out how to retake Congress from the Republicans. President Clinton and the Democratic Leadership Council had decided that the Democratic Party must continue to reach out to white, moderate middle class voters who have shifted to the Republican Party (or supported Ross Perot) and downplay its historical association with the Black community in order to reconstitute its majority.

In a recently published book, *Middle Class Dreams*, author

Stanley Greenberg, Clinton's pollster in the 1992 campaign and an influential strategist in the reconstitution of a Democratic Party majority, presents a 300-page blueprint for the Democrats' comeback; only four paragraphs deal with the role of the Black community. In fact, Greenberg doesn't envision any role at all for African Americans. He insists that Black interests automatically correspond to those of the party.

But the evidence indicates the opposite. The Democratic Party is more and more pursuing policies that are destructive to the Black community and the Black Agenda.

The latest of these are the Democratic Party-sponsored welfare reform packages, which are harsh and punitive to welfare recipients. Their sponsors justify these proposals on the grounds that unless they are passed an even more abusive Republican

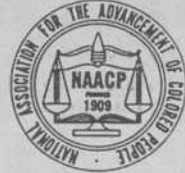
version might become law. Unfortunately, they are right.

All of this puts the CBC in a bind. During the era of Democratic Party majority rule, the CBC was able to use the Black community's political loyalty to the Democrats to influence government policy. Now, with the Democratic Party increasingly advocating an anti-Black agenda in order to make itself and its candidates electable, Black voters are left without any voice in the system and with no motivation to remain loyal. For the Black community a shift to the Republicans is not a serious option. But as the CBC and other African American elected officials come face to face with the contradiction between leading the Black community in its own interests and keeping the Black community in a no-win relationship to the Democratic Party, a break to a third party

appears more and more viable. That's why I'm building the independent, multi-racial Patriot

Party in your state, and in every state where Black people must have a new political choice.

## THE NAACP AND YOU



Rev. James Rogers  
President  
Las Vegas, NAACP



## STEPPING UP — MOVING FORWARD

America is in a struggle for her life. She has turned on the very source of her strength — her people. We must pray, hope and work to help America and Las Vegas to love, honor and help her citizens. America is headed to certain doom and destruction, if she does not change her course.

Affirmative action and welfare reform and other social programs are not the destructive force in this nation. Monetary greed, racism and fear are the deadly enemies. There are those who want to have all the wealth, power, praise and credit.

As African Americans, we must continue to press-on, "Step-Up and Move-Forward," in joint business ventures with each other. When will we stop this so-called "crab in the barrel mentality?" Let us continue to prove them wrong - both black and white - that African Americans do not have trust in each other. Let's pool our resources together and move forward.

There are great job and business opportunities in South Africa under the leadership of President Nelson Mandela. Let us get in on the ground floor of these great investment opportunities. President Mandela's *New South Africa* presents numerous financial markets.

BY GENE REDDEN

Last October, Black Enterprise Magazine sent Mr. Frank McCoy to South Africa. Mr. McCoy returns far beyond excitement.

McCoy, an international affairs buff who had already visited much of the continent, was struck by the sheer beauty of the country. But most moving, he says, was his encounter with black South Africans.

"Several times, I'd ask people, 'How do you feel about your new South Africa,'" recalls McCoy. "They'd stop me and say, 'No. This is your new South Africa too, because if it wasn't for African Americans, there would be no new South Africa.'"

There is so much to be proud of that is happening in South Africa. You are to feel proud of your contributions to the change of America and to South Africa.

You have been and can continue to assist in the rebirth of the African nation and it's wealth of fresh opportunities.

I am eagerly awaiting and ready to assist the Las Vegas African-American community to organize it's bank, its credit union and its financial lending institutions. I am encouraged by other African-Americans in America who have Stepped-Up and are Moving-Forward. In New Orleans, a group of black investors have purchased one of the Crescent City's oldest banks.

When the last failed savings and loan in Louisiana was auctioned by the Resolution Trust Corp., the newest black-owned bank in the deep South — Dryades Savings bank FSB — was born.

The bank is a wholly owned subsidiary of Dryades Bancorp Inc., a New Orleans thrift-holding company owned by a group of 14 investors from Los Angeles to New Orleans. Taking pride in what they have achieved should motivate us to do also.

*Stepping-Up And Moving-Forward — Preparing The New Generation For The Struggle*

## WESTSIDE STORY

(Continued from Page 3)

means at the point of equal standards in this discriminating society, but we are at the highest point that we have ever been.

Just 30 years ago, America didn't want blacks or any other minority to even set foot in the same public settings as its "white citizens." It was just the other day, when crazed Klan lynch mobs went around terrorizing innocent black communities in the name of white "purification."

Examine any encyclopedia of the 1920s or 30s, and you will find clear manifestations of racist propaganda. At that time America wanted to claim that African culture had no substantial place or influence on world history. Today we know that Africa is the birthplace of man, knowledge, and culture.

At one time, black America had to accept any biased and ridiculous concept of his-story. As we reflect upon how hard we have it now, we must never forget that our American ancestors started each day and ended each day as well, in all-out slavery! In the height of their racial oppression, many times black bodies would be burned at the stake, just as a reminder of America's racist legacy.

So...today, as we set to battle a new chapter of conservative forces in our history, we all should recognize that yesterday, today and tomorrow.... American blackness will shine brightly. We will continue to progress and achieve forever...and until the end of time! peace...

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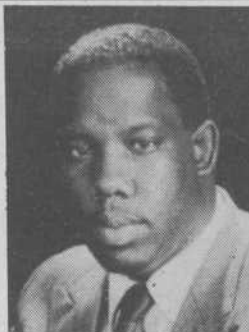
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