

MILLION MAN MARCH

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Showboat. Anyone interested in attending the \$40 event can call 647-0414 or buy tickets at the Native Son Bookstore, the NAARPR, or the MLK Jr. Committee.

Additional March goals include re-registering all American Blacks into the Independent Party, setting and distributing a political, social and economic agenda for Blacks, and creating unified Black communities at home. While it might sound too good to be true, the Nation intends to move with the community in this direction, organizers said.

"The March is a starting point," said Min. X. "It's not a finishing point. You start by galvanizing the community, but then you plan an agenda that goes beyond that, one that extends into the future."

The hope is that by starting something, anything, together, Black people can build on from there.

"We have to start from someplace," said Min. X.

The need for a start has motivated the Nation to seek financial and outreach support from such groups as the NAACP, the NAARPR, WAAK-UP and other local and national groups. Former NAACP National Director Ben Chavis is helping to organize the event nationally along with many others.

Said WAAK-UP founder Marzette Lewis, "We support it, and we will take out an ad (in the official program.)"

Lewis also said that if any other local group organized another rally for the March, "we will support it."

"I couldn't think of any other group that could do it better than the Nation of Islam," she said.

However, the Million Man March, according to Nation members, is not a Nation of Islam event.

"It's a Black people's march. This is a people at large march for those who have been locked out of society," said Min. X.

Still, some worry that the Nation's involvement may discourage some otherwise interested men from participating. One local legislator voiced similar concerns.

People seem to be afraid of the backlash associated with participating with an event associated with the Nation of Islam, said State Assemblyman

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However, "From an individual standpoint, I totally support it."

When asked if he would be getting recognition for his support, Williams said no.

"I just think it's the right thing to do. As a politician, this is something every politician hopes for, people getting involved in their own community," he said. "Every politician should be out to support this."

Williams expressed confidence that the event is and would continue to be well organized.

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purpose should be enough to bring out one million men... There is a tremendous and dire need for African-American men to get together," he said.

Unfortunately, one drawback is that there is no agenda laid out at this point beyond just getting together. Min. X said planning is on-going but Black men shouldn't let that stop them from getting

involved.

"We moved in a Democratic direction, and they have not tended our agenda," he said. "We moved in the Republican party, they have not tended our agenda. (A lack of an agenda) has never stopped us from moving in the past."

Williams believes that the demonstration itself "will not be ignored." He also urges local men to get involved because a poor showing of men from Las Vegas could be viewed negatively, considering this city's Black progress.

Another issue that has been

raised is the role of women in this venture. As of yet, Black women are invited to participate but in what capacity is not known.

Payment for the March rests strictly with the participants. No non-Black groups will be contacted, because this is viewed as a community. On the other hand, no financial support is being offered either. "This is a day of responsibility for the Black man. We will not be paying anyone's way, Min. X said.

That leaves a lot to be done. Rough expenses for the March begin at \$3 million.

Locals men and women interested in participating need to first register for the event, and pay a \$10 donation. There are no registration deadlines. The men, as just mentioned, are expected to make their own transportation, boarding and food arrangements although local organizers expect at least one bus to be leaving from Las

Vegas.

Some families in the D.C. area will also be opening up their homes but nothing is definite as of yet.

"We don't have time to wait until all the conditions are perfect. The spirit is moving, and all those who are moved by it will be in D.C.," said Min. X.

On the day of the March, there will be a fast from sunup to sundown. After that Min. X said food will be available for the marchers.

Plans for other activities are still being organized but several prominent speakers and rap artists have been contacted to participate. Despite the questions, local leaders have come out in support of the event.

"The Million Man March will be and must be a success," said local NAACP Vice-President Edward "Chippis" Taylor.

"When it's all said and done it will be well organized. It's been a long time in coming," commented Lewis.

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