

THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT

Black Convention Endorses Independent Politics

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

Over the last year there's been an intensification of a two-decade discussion and debate about the issue of independent politics: does an independent party represent a more intelligent and potentially powerful road for Black America than the Democratic Party? This debate was a centerpiece of the dialogue at the New York State Black Convention convened by the Reverend Al Sharpton, which I

co-lead. The 300-plus delegates voted overwhelmingly to endorse moving in the direction of an independent party. They also voted to support term limits, thereby breaking with Democratic Party Black elected officialdom, which unanimously (and self-servingly) opposes limiting the terms of elected officials.

During the course of this debate, which I know will continue beyond the Black

convention, I've been very struck by the position that some have put forward which says that the Black community's interests are intrinsically and strategically tied to the Democratic Party. In essence, this argument rests on the premise that we are fundamentally — almost genetically — Democrats. While Bill Clinton and Al Gore might subscribe to this definition of Black people, I do not. Moreover, if you look at our history and the

history of our greatest leaders you will find that the African American people are America's independents. We are not simply the conscience of this country. We are, and always have been, its most independent-minded community.

Our great scholar and activist, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, who was harassed and hounded by the powers that be until the moment of his death, pointed an angry finger at the problem of the color

line. But he also pointed an angry finger at the problem of the party line. People of color cannot trust the two major parties, he told us, and with good reason. We were in slavery when both the Republicans and the Democrats were founded. We did not build those parties. They are not ours. We may have visited them along the way, but they are not our true home.

Malcolm X affirmed our independent identity. He castigated the two major parties for their racism. And although he was assassinated before his movement could turn its attention to electoral politics, he believed deeply in our spiritual and political independence.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., together with masses of courageous Black people, placed the issue of democracy, fairness and voting rights on the national agenda. He inspired all America to care about the issues of political choice and the sacred right to exercise that choice. Dr. King took the issue of political choice very seriously. He was considering a run for the presidency as an independent in the year before his death.

Then came the 1972 National Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana. The question of Democrat vs. independent was intensely discussed at that convention.

The Reverend Jesse Jackson was among those to support the idea of a Black-led, multi-racial third party. Although Rev. Jackson went on to run for the presidency twice in the Democratic primaries and made history in doing so, he continues to assert African American political independence and the prospect of a third party move.



DR. LENORA FULANI

For Rev. Jackson, this remains a live option 23 years after he first endorsed it.

Rev. Sharpton is likewise a political independent. He and I have worked, at times together and at times separately, sometimes in agreement and sometimes not. Many participants noted and applauded that the convention became the occasion for our return to a political partnership.

I have been building a road to Black participation and leadership in a new majority third party for 15 years. In the last several years we have seen that process move forward in ways which are complicated and dangerous, but also very exciting. The decision taken at the Gary convention 23 years ago to focus on increasing the number of Black elected officials through the Democratic Party was a tactic, not a strategy. Our politics and our sensibility have always been, and will always be, independent.

Today, much of America is in a rebellious and independent mood. African Americans, people are beginning to look at the opportunities for political repositioning.

Things are moving. Some of us are moving. I urge all Black America to move with us to what is ultimately our rightful and independent home.

WESTSIDE STORY

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skinheads, or any other name the U.S.'s racists can come up with.

Germany's elite police force was, of course, the SS. Well, let me tell you: the average brotha' would laugh at the SS! Hey... In America we have pure racists who will plant evidence, shot to kill, and lie for injustice. And that is just on the official side...we won't get into the national government's ATF agents and

FBI, paid to protect all taxpayers, but they instead have "nigger rallies" and picnics with our money.

America studies Hitler to say: "Man, he sure treated people bad. He kept the Jews in death camps for 10 years." Well, you same racists have kept brothas' in death camps for hundreds of years! Are you kiddin' me? Germans fried innocent people in gas chambers by the millions. I would agree, it is one of the

greatest tragedies in the history of this world. But, it is no more worse than George Washington or Jefferson. While Germany burned with the chamber, America burned brothas by the stake!

At least Germany didn't have other races close enough to slaughter without war. Here again, America is unequalled. Not only did they take brothas from the original soil of Africa and killed them by the millions, but they then raped and killed the Native Americans by the millions.

I wish I could stop there...racist whites (I make the example racists because as we all know, there are always moral, clean-hearted whites); anyway, racist whites went out into the Pacific, slaughtering and taking Hawaii, and every other island

they wanted from the native people.

They took the southwest and Cali' from the Mexicans. Now they have the nerve to hate Latin people to this day! A study of Hitler? They blew away the middle east just a couple of years ago, and ruthlessly burned towns by the millions, dropping one nuclear bomb after another on Asia. I mean, all of Asia. You name it, whites have shot up Korea, Japan, Vietnam and many other nations of color who wants some death!

So, in the end, although there are always good white people who move with love in their hearts, many times they are blown away by whites for not supporting the racist side of America. Forget Hitler, let's start with Washington! peace...

RAY WILLIS REPORT

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- Question 5 - What time it is?
 - A. Literally, whatever time your watch/clock says it is.
 - B. Figuratively, meaning are my perceptions in line with reality.
 - C. This is just a fashionable statement, devoid of any real meaning.


Thank you for taking this test. There is no answer key. If you're African American, you should know how well you did, anyway. All I can say if you don't know how well you did is, better luck next time! To know is to grow. Until next week.

NAARPR REPORT

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enough, the beast will not notice them and will not devour them. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, you would find that the beast will be less likely to attack, the more vocal you are, as the beast is no fool and would not wish to have to fight for his next meal. Perhaps if the African community began to make more specific demands on its physician population (I do not mean demands for more services, more free clinics or free "Health Fairs") for an ongoing commitment of black physicians and their organizations to become involved in the struggle, there would be a change in their mentality. Until then, we will have to view them as mindless sheep following the lead of the almighty master. La Lucha Continua! The Struggle Continues!

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POINTS TO PONDER BY PROFESSOR HARRIS

HOW THE AMERICAN MEDIA PORTRAYS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION..... BUT THE TRUTH IS.....

BLACK MEN BEAT US BOXING, PLAYING BASKETBALL, ETC... BUT NOW THEY EVEN BEAT US AT OUR FAVORITE SPORT.....

...KILLING BLACK FOLKS!!

AGREE OR DISAGREE...
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