

## COMMENTARY

## African-Americans should not panic if Bush wins

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

In a recent speech to a group of Black ministers in New Orleans, Al Gore virtually demanded that they vote for him.

Gore is not the only Democrat to deliver a vote for me-or-else ultimatum to Blacks. In the closing days of the race a parade of Black Democrats, athletes, entertainers, and trade unionists have begged, cajoled and pleaded with Black voters to stampede to the polls to vote for Gore.

They get away with this brazen racial condescension because they know that in every election since 1964 Blacks have been the loyalist of loyal foot soldiers for the Democrats, and that many Blacks panic that a Bush win will spell social and political doom for them.

But Gore's record on the big-ticket racial items should leave room to wonder whether he'll be any better.

• Racial gulf. Apart from a few high profile speeches

to NAACP confabs during the Clinton years Gore paid the barest of lip service to race matters.

The one exception was Clinton's race panel. The panel's anemic proposals to support Clinton's watered down affirmative action policies, stronger efforts at preventing police abuse, and the elimination of the gaping racial disparity in the drug sentencing laws went nowhere. Clinton and Gore did not put their political muscle behind the panel's proposals and torpedoed publication of the panel's full recommendations.

Their inaction doomed the panel to be yet another one of the endless commissions on race that make recommendations for reform and are quickly forgotten.

• Abortion funding for the poor. As a congressman, Gore did what many Republicans clamored for. He supported a Congressional ban on abortion funds for poor women.

• Welfare reform. Gore

urged Clinton to sign the landmark legislation that ended welfare as we know it. He did not urge Clinton to approve any substantial funds for job, skills training, education, health, and child care programs to make sure that those bounced from the welfare rolls stayed off the streets or out of the prisons.

• Affirmative action. Gore bought the angry white male fiction that affirmative action is riddled with quotas and mandates that force contractors to replace White workers with inept minorities and women. Gore heartily agreed with Clinton's much-publicized plan to end so-called abuses in federal government affirmative action programs.

• Crime and punishment. Gore shamelessly pandered to public fear and hysteria over crime. He backed block grants for prison expansion. He publicly praised Clinton's get-tough Omnibus Federal Crime Bill that added scores of new death penalty provisions to federal law, enthusi-

astically endorsed Clinton's call to put 100,000 new police officers on the streets and promised that he would add 50,000 more.

The massive law enforcement build-up has ignited the wave of race profiling and police abuse cases, the grotesque racial disparities in the drug sentencing laws, and has resulted in more than 1 million Black men warehoused in America's jails for mostly non-violent, drug offenses and petty crimes.

• Supreme Court. There will be three or four vacancies on the court during Bush or Gore's term(s). Blacks and liberals are scared stiff that Bush will appoint another Rehnquist or Thomas to the bench.

If he does, they still have to be confirmed. They forget that liberal and centrist Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee and in the then-Democratic controlled Senate buckled each time and voted to confirm them.

The price that Blacks pay for their blind obedience to Democrats is that they get away with a brand of plantation politics, meaning that they flat-out ignore them or appease them by tossing out a few high profile appointments, a bit of patronage to Black elected officials, and a handful of jobs for upwardly mobile Black professionals.

The over-reliance of Blacks on the Democratic Party makes them politically invisible when it comes to welding any influence on social and political issues among Republicans.

This was glaring during the Reagan years. Blacks uniformly assailed him, and Reagan in turn gave the green light to unleash the full conservative assault on civil rights, social and education programs.

There's even an upside to a Bush victory for many Blacks. He will probably boost aid to small business, push teacher accountability and school vouchers, expand

urban enterprise zones, provide bigger tax breaks and credits for businesses to train and hire the hard core unemployed, and school prayer, and traditional family values. These are pet Republican themes that Black Democrats ridicule but a substantial number of Blacks favor.

On the other hand, Bush probably won't embrace racial diversity in his political appointments, and will be loath to confront issues such as racial profiling, police abuse and drug policy reform.

This will shake Black organizations and leaders from their Clinton-induced lethargy and again force them to wage their own battles to protect civil rights and social programs. But then there's no guarantee that they won't have to do the same if Gore wins.

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## Conference to build upon legacy of old black power movement

By Dr. Conrad W. Worrill  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The New York-based Dec. 12th Movement and the National Black United Front are co-sponsoring a "Black Power" conference in support of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism from Friday to Sunday.

The United Nations World Conference Against Racism will be held in Durban, South Africa from August 31, 2001 - September 7, 2001.

In our call for this conference we said, "As we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the birth of El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz (Malcolm X), we heed his call to make our struggle a struggle for human rights, to bring our conditions before the court of world opinion.

"The United Nations is holding the Third World Conference Against Racism in South Africa, August 31, 2001 - September 7, 2001, for 40 million Africans in the United States and millions more in the Caribbean and South America, the burning issue is the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade.

"Racism is the Achilles heel of the United States, which is why it has opposed the World Conference, as have the other Western powers whose wealth was built on slave labor.

The United States has refused to call a national preparatory meeting for the conference, as they did for the United Nations' sponsored Women's Conference in 1995 in China. Indeed, it has embarked on the same strategy it used against the 1963 March On Washington.

They have chosen their loyalists, Black though they may be, to exclude the grassroots, those who heed Malcolm X's call for Black Power, Land, and Independence."

In this connection, the conference will be held at Northeastern Illinois University's Center for Inner City Studies, 700 East Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago.

The conference will begin at 7 p.m. Friday.

The focus of the conference will be to expose the economic roots of racism, to organize, to stop the attempt at exclusion, and how the millions of us who adhere to Black Power are going to South Africa.

It is important to understand the background to this conference.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland, through the Center for Human Rights, established for three years, in 1993, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance.

The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations confirmed this mandate and assigned it to Mr. Maurice Glélé-Ahanhanzo of Benin.

At its 52nd session, the Commission, by resolution in 1996 expressed its full support and appreciation for the Special Rapporteur's work and decided to extend his mandate for a period of three years.

Since the establishment of the Special Rapporteur's Office, Mr. Glélé-Ahanhanzo offices examined racism and racial discrimination in Australia, Austria, Canada, the United States, the Russian Federation, France, Israel, Indonesia, Brazil, and Italy and many other countries.

In 1997, the Special Rapporteur's Office observed "that racism and racial discrimination persist in various regions of the world

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## Value of a Black database

By Louie Overstreet  
Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice

The collective community question that I have for you is would it be of value to have away of identifying and interacting with the 140,000 African-Americans that live in Clark County? Did your yes answer include examples of the value of political power, economic strength and social unity?

The controversy in the County of Palm Beach, Florida notwithstanding, the outcomes of a number of close races here in Clark County, Nevada certainly dramatized the need for us to turn out and vote our political interests. Understanding the value of political power, then it is a "no brainer" to appreciate what could be accomplished by being able to identify and communicate with the registered voters among the 140,000 of us that live in Clark County and then turning out to vote our interests.

How about the economic value in knowing that between 500-750 blacks are moving to Clark County each month from around the country? These new arrivals are purchasing between 150-200 homes a month. If we had a way of identifying them, it could mean up to 1.5-2 million dollars a month in real estate commissions for black real estate agents.

On a social level, by having the ability to communicate with newcomers, the vari-

ous civic, masonic, fraternal and sororal organizations could increase their membership roles. By increasing their membership roles, they would have an increased ability to award scholarships to deserving students.

If there is value in identifying our people, then the hard part will be in developing a database of existing residents and new arrivals. The ideal group to spearhead such an effort would be our religious leaders. However, in all candor, they suffer from the same petty jealousies that afflict our community and political leaders.

If you believe the affliction of jealousy to be an incurable disease among our people, then there is no hope for our future. However, if you believe a strong dose of accountability is capable of curing this affliction, then there may be hope for a better quality of life for African-Americans that live in Clark County.

The best way to hold our leaders accountable is to ask them questions in public forums about what they are doing to promote community unity and progress. If they attempt to give you the "Old O.K. Doke," then let them know that they are valueless and not deserving of a leadership role in charting a course that is capable of guiding our people to the land of first-class citizenship.

## Black Agenda

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penalties for crack are 100 times the penalty for powdered cocaine.

Yet, almost nine out of 10 of those behind bars for crack are Black.

The political support for the Republicans and Democrats are so close that our leader-

ship ought to get action on main agenda items for their support. We should expect no less.

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