

Money does talk—especially money from Black America

By James Clingman
Special to Sentinel-Voice

You've heard the saying, "Money talks." And it's true. You probably also have heard the saying, "Money talks and [you know what] walks." In this country, as in most, that statement is true as well. But, have you ever wondered what money says when it talks? Have you thought about the facts that point out, quite graphically, that when money raises its head, or is put on the table, or is taken off the table, the attention of those affected by it dramatically increases? Obviously, understanding its power and the role it plays in this economy, money speaks loudly and clearly, and Black money speaks even louder. But what does it say?

We know from past experience when we have grievances, if we resort to economic retaliation we can get things done. Why? Because Black money speaks louder than any other; \$600 billion can get pretty loud, and those who are getting the lion's share of it right now pay close attention to what it is saying. They sit up and take notice when we resort to withholding our money from their coffers. Just look back in history and you can see what I mean.

Now look at what happened on what is affectionately referred to as Black Friday. Wal-Mart had \$1.43 billion in sales. In the aggregate retailers enjoyed a 12 percent increase in sales over the previous period. Total retail sales reported were \$7.2 billion—on one day! How loudly did Black dollars speak to the retailers on that day? And what did those dollars say? I am sure whatever they said at the malls and other stores, it was sweet music to the retailers' ears.

The only language that

gets things done in this country is the money language. How else could executives of major corporations steal so much of it and get off with what amounts to a disciplinary hearing and a warning? How could we now be faced, once again, with going to war under the guise of "national security" when it's really all about oil? Whatever happened to Miss Martha Stewart? Didn't she commit a crime? And what about the stock market? Now there's a good one. They tell us that insider trading is illegal, and they expect us to believe they don't tell their friends and relatives that a deal is about to go down. C'mon. If you believe that I have some ocean front property in Kansas I'd like to sell you. As I've said before, why do you think those folks on that balcony at the stock exchange always clap at the end of the day—regardless of a loss or a gain?

Why do you think the call went out from George W. Bush and the gang to spend more money immediately after the World Trade Center tragedy? Why would he wipe out a budget surplus to give the proletariat \$600 in advance tax refunds, thus, putting us back into a deficit? Of course, we know the richest folks received the greatest benefit from that so-called tax cut. Have you given much thought to the executives from Tyco, Enron, WorldCom, Arthur Andersen, Haliburton, General Electric, and all the others who have pilfered billions from their stockholders? That's money talking, folks, and it's speaking volumes.

Now what about Black money? Well, I see a great deal of it in the hands of brothers and sisters who seem to have plugs in their ears, unable to hear what their money

is saying. I see the hip-hop crowd doing voting summits but not economic summits, despite their collective worth of billions of dollars. I see many of our Black athletes and entertainers, also large and in charge of billions of dollars, spending, spending, spending rather than investing in businesses of the their own brothers and sisters. And I see millions of everyday brothers and sisters spending their share of our \$600 billion haphazardly, aimlessly, and unashamedly on the baubles, bangles and beads made by everyone else except Black folks. It is obvious they are not listening to their money.

Black money is talking and saying positive things to White-owned businesses, Asian-owned businesses, Arab-owned businesses, and the many others that Black consumers support. Our money is saying nice things like, "Hi, how are you today? I hope you are doing well, sir, and I trust that I can help make your day much better by soothing your mind and fattening your bank account. You know, we really love you so much, and we want you and your children to prosper, and always feel secure in your knowledge that we are here for you. All you have to do is make something and we will purchase it. So, don't you ever worry about anything; we will be with you and we will support you. Have a nice day."

Yes, money talks, and Black money talks even more. But do you know what Black money is saying to Black folks? It's simply saying, "Good-bye!"

James E. Clingman, an adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati's African-American Studies department.

First Tuesday

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N. Stella Lake Drive near Martin Luther King and Lake Mead Boulevards.

"Our community really needs to support and embrace the First Tuesday program and other Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department events," said David Wallace, Deputy Probation Supervisor with the Clark County Juvenile Justice Services Department's "STEPS" gang diversion program. "It is a great opportunity," he said, "for networking and addressing the concerns and components of our community; and having a substation right in our backyards truly is a blessing to all of us, and a honor to Larry Bolden."

Bolden was one of the first black police officers hired to work in Las Vegas. He

served from 1958 until 1991 when he retired as a captain. He died two years ago.

He advocated for fairness within the department and helped young black officers rise through the ranks of the department to become sergeants, lieutenants, detectives and captains.

"Capt. Bolden's contributions to our community will never be forgotten, and this new substation is more than a building, it's the continuation of his legacy," Commissioner Gates said.

"Everyone in this community should be proud of his efforts, the equality he stood for, and the hard work he demonstrated to build good relationships between the community and the police."

Race spoof raises loot

'Fightin Whites' aids scholarships

DENVER (AP) - What started out as an attempt to shame a local high school into dropping a mascot name viewed as racist has raised at least \$100,000 for scholarships for Indian college students.

The effort began last winter when a group of Indian students at the University of Northern Colorado asked officials at nearby Eaton High School to change the school's mascot from

"Fighting Reds" because the name was offensive.

When the school refused, members of the UNC intramural basketball team, made up of Indians and whites, decided to get even.

They named themselves the "Fightin' Whites" and began wearing T-shirts bearing the name.

After getting national media attention they began selling the shirts, which also bear the slogan "Everythang's going to be all white," from their Web site.

More than 15,000 shirts and hats have been sold, raising at least \$100,000.

"It's actually kind of an amazing thing that happened there in Colorado. Not only did they raise the level of debate but they also turned it around and raised money for Native American scholarships," said Charlene Teters, vice president of the American Indian Movement's National Coalition on Race in Sports and Media.

"There have been posters before that made fun of teams, but nothing has been this successful," said Teters, a member of the Spokane Nation.

She estimates that about 3,000 professional and amateur team names are offensive.

"You have to understand that these names and symbols have a history in the same way 'boy' has a history with African-Americans. That is the connection people don't get. First you take a people and commit genocide against them, then you turn them into a stereotype," she said.

Jeff VanIwarden, a team member who helped manage the T-shirt campaign, said the amount of money available for scholarships will depend on whether an application for tax exempt status is accepted.

A \$10,000 endowment has already been set up for one scholarship at UNC starting next year.

The money collected could have been used to help campaign against the use of Indian names as mascots, but most of the team members felt more would be gained by helping Indian students, he said.

VanIwarden said he wasn't worried that the T-shirts might "be a form of white pride."

"We can't regulate who does or does not buy them. We do have their money," he said.

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