

White House manipulates terrorism fears for Bush

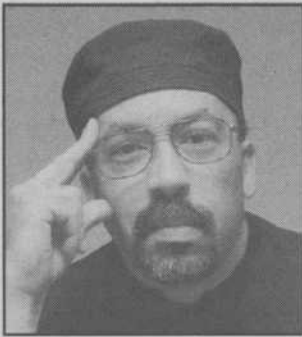
By Bill Fletcher Jr.
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Despite the continuous campaign rhetoric by President Bush, Vice President Cheney, and their supporters about the alleged hard-line stance of this administration against terrorism, evidence continually emerges of inconsistencies, if not outright hypocrisy.

In an outrageous and callous act, the outgoing government of Panama pardoned four individuals who had been convicted in connection with a plot to assassinate Cuban President Fidel Castro. Though the Bush administration denied any involvement in encouraging the release of these criminals, the fact of their release less than three months before the U.S. presidential elections and at a moment when the Bush campaign is attempting to solidify support among Cuban Americans in Florida is hardly a coincidence.

Yet, in some respects, the most outrageous portion of this outrageous act is that upon their being pardoned, they immediately left Panama and flew to...Miami.

These criminals are not very nice people. They have been involved in various plots, including the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people; the bombings of six Havana hotels in 1997; the kidnapping of Cuba's consul to Mexico in 1977; and the killing of a pro-Cuba activist and a



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Cuban diplomat.

When one examines this roster of activities and compares this with the accepted definition of terrorism — using military means against civilians in order to obtain political objectives — how can one define these individuals as anything but terrorists? And, if they are terrorists, why are they being

allowed into the United States at all? Again and again we see the two-faced approach of the Bush administration toward so-called terrorism. In cases where a military activity is contrary to the alleged interests of the U.S.A., it can be defined as terrorism. In those cases where such an activity serves the perceived interests of the U.S.A., then that action can be defined favorably, or not commented upon at all.

Yet, one continues to get the feeling that the people of the U.S.A. are being played for suckers. Our fears regarding terrorism, particularly since September 11, have been manipulated in order to gain our support for invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Alleged terrorists are regularly held up for a public viewing and condemnation.

Despite all of this, terrorist actions against Cuba are not condemned and convicted terrorists are permitted to roam the United States free and clear.

If we fear terrorism, then it must be
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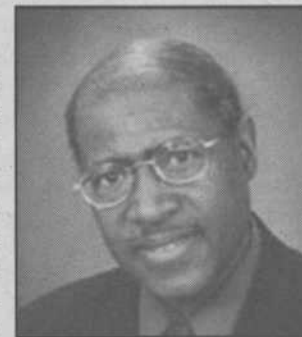
'Big pimpin,' or how GOP expresses its compassion

By Ron Walters
Special to Sentinel-Voice

In the 2000 elections, Republicans tried to evoke a convention theme that projected them as the "compassionate" party. The problem was that the Republican Party was really nationalist and had an image constructed by Rep. Newt Gingrich, who had recently stepped down as Speaker of the House. Gingrich's GOP was viewed as aggressively narrow, mean-spirited and even hateful.

In order to win, George Bush and his colleagues set out to paint a more moderate image by parachuting in some Black ministers and their choirs, along with Hispanics and Asians to give a false picture of the party.

The 2004 convention did it again, this time against the backdrop of George Bush, the president's Hispanic nephew; First Lady Laura Bush representing women's issues; Black Lt. Gov. Michael Steele of Maryland, and Secretary of Education Rod Paige. Curiously, the Bush people prevented Secretary Colin Powell, a popular moderate Republican, from attending on the grounds that national security should not be politicized. But at the same time, they allowed Condoleezza Rice to attend the convention and hauled out General Tommy Franks, head of the war effort in Iraq, for a political



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endorsement.

Michael Steele however, was to be a key voice representing diversity as the GOP's version of Barack Obama. Like Obama, Steele gave a speech asserting that opportunity was "at the reach of every American" if they would just work for it and that Blacks have come a long way since the Civil Rights movement by refusing to accept "the poisonous path of complacency."

I resent the not so subtle suggestion by conservatives that Blacks have not become equal in America because they haven't tried hard enough. Look at the odds of racism, classism, genderism, and the rest.

In fact, Steele did admit that the challenges are real, and that we all must be vigilant in the fight against poverty and the lack of education, since what defines civil rights today, is whether you can own that lunch counter to create a legacy of wealth for your children. Steele also railed against the theme of hope that was highlighted at the Democratic Convention. He said that results were what mattered and that Bush had delivered results on his agenda by promoting tax cuts, home ownership, education and the like.

Steele then closed his speech referenc-
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Boycott hypocrisy makes protests virtually toothless

By James Clingman
Special to Sentinel-Voice

When I heard the advertisement on a Black-owned radio station in Cincinnati, Ohio, I simply shook my head in exasperation and shame. The ad touted the upcoming Procter and Gamble Ohio Football Classic, a game featuring two Black colleges, Grambling and Bethune-Cookman.

Although I have written about the righteous struggle for human rights taking place here in Cincinnati, citing the National Baptist Convention agreeing to bring their \$21 million convention in return for chump change and silly perks, and the so-called Black football game and the image it projects, I just had to share this new wrinkle with all of you across the country. This really takes the cake.

A little background is appropriate. A Black man brought the football game to Cincinnati but decided it was best to allow Procter and Gamble to co-opt it.

You may not know it, but P&G is in charge of most things in this town, including the Black Family Reunion and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. (I can hear some Cincinnati Blacks now. "Uh oh, Jim's in big trouble now; he said something about Procter and god ... I mean Gamble") Anyway, the game was taken to Cleveland last year (2003) and is being brought back to Cincy in September 2004 despite the boycott — or should I say "to spite" the boycott?; or could it be to "break" the boycott? Take your

pick.

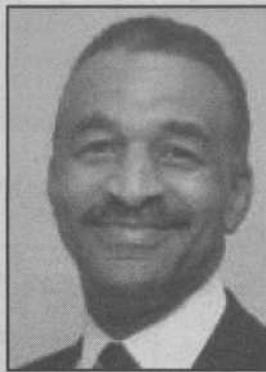
The Cincinnati Enquirer wrote: "City officials and corporate executives say they have a golden marketing opportunity when Cincinnati will host a college football game, pro baseball and football games and the annual Oktoberfest on the same weekend.

The events, the weekend of Sept. 17 to 19, are projected to bring 750,000 people to the city and pump millions of dollars into the regional economy, they said.

Cincinnati has been trying to overcome the stigma of the 2001 riots that followed a White police officer's fatal shooting of an unarmed Black man who fled police, plus an economic boycott imposed by Black activists angered by the shooting."

The article went on to say, "Procter & Gamble Co. and Federated Department Stores Inc., through its Lazarus-Macy's store group, are among corporations contributing \$1.6 million to support the game and three days of events leading up to it. Procter & Gamble's \$400,000 contribution allows the company to add its name to the Ohio Classic title this year, spokesmen said.

All those events combined could bring as much as \$72.7 million into the local economy, according to a study by the University of Cincinnati's Center for Economic Educa-



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tion. As I always say: It's always about the money. And I ain't mad at them for taking our money, especially when we willingly and graciously give it to them anyway. How much of that \$72 million will come from Black folks reveling at the football game? How much of it will go to Black folks via business ownership in the tourism industry?

It's not enough that there is real desperation among Black people in this city who have been consistently and continuously marginalized and underserved by their elected officials and the corporate "suit." Now we will witness more Black people coming to this town, gleefully spending their millions, in the face of that desperation and partying on the graves of those often unnamed "unarmed Black men" as the newspaper article stated. By the way, the one to whom they referred was named Timothy Thomas.

And as if that were not enough to upset the most ardent football fan, according to the commercial I heard, we now have Tom Joyner and Ludacris coming to entertain the people at the football game. Why is this significant? Can you say Comp USA? Can you say Pepsi Cola? Do you remember those boycotts, or should I say those threatened boycotts?

The Comp USA fiasco was discussed ad

nauseam on the Tom Joyner show a few years ago, and Black folks were asked not to shop there until "we get some answers." Black folks complied, and the "answer" came in the form of the usual apology, advertising dollars for a Black agency, and some discount coupons for the aggrieved parties to come back to Comp USA and spend money.

The Pepsi boycott, called by Russell Simmons on behalf of Ludacris (Simmons said he called it because of Pepsi's double-standard, when they fired Ludacris and hired Ozzy Osbourne. However, the resulting concessions were for Ludacris and Simmons.) The answer to that failed attempt to stand up to a corporate giant was the promise of a few million dollars from Pepsi, to be given over a period of a few years, to the Ludacris Foundation. Of course the usual apology was demanded as well as the reinstatement of Ludacris in the Pepsi ad, the former of which is highly overrated and the latter of which never happened. In the immortal words of Mike Tyson, "That was 'ludicrous.'"

Black icons who solicited and/or benefited from Black support of boycotts, albeit, short-lived boycotts, will now come to Cincinnati and break a boycott called by those who supported them in their efforts. You gotta love it, brothers and sisters; you just gotta love it!

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