

# DNC chair's comments outrage Lt. Gov. Steele

Annapolis, MD. (AP) — When the Democratic Party's new national chairman made a comment to the Democratic Black Caucus that Republicans interpreted as a slam at minorities, Maryland Lt. Gov. Michael Steele jumped into the fray.

Appearing on national television, Steele criticized Dean's statement as insensitive to minorities, and called it a message to Black voters that, "We've got your vote. Where are you going to go?"

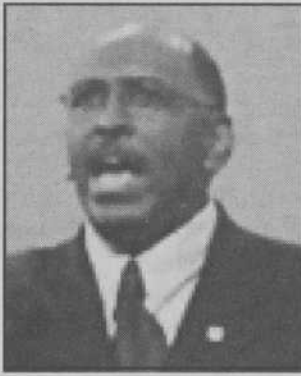
Steele was responding to Dean's appearance last Friday before Black Democratic members of Congress when the former presidential candidate and Vermont governor questioned the ability of Republicans to get support from minorities.

"You think the Republican National Committee could get this many people of color in a single room?" Dean asked to laughter. "Only if they had the hotel staff in here." In a press release Wednesday coordinated with the Republican National Committee, Steele and former U.S. Rep. J.C. Watts, a Black Republican from Oklahoma, said they were outraged over what they called racially insensitive remarks implying that only members of minority groups would work in a hotel.

Since becoming the state's first Black lieutenant governor as Gov. Robert Ehrlich's running mate, Steele has become increasingly visible on the national stage. He is one of the highest-ranking Black Republican elected officials in the country and is

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Michael Steele  
Maryland Lt. Gov.



tapped by the national party to be a spokesman for President Bush's efforts to reach out to Blacks, who mostly vote Democratic.

Steele spoke at the Republican National Convention in New York and has made several appearances on national television news and opinion shows.

"I think his national profile has already exceeded Bob Ehrlich's," said Thomas Schaller, a political science professor at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

The latest national platform for state's first Black lieutenant governor was on the "Hannity and Colmes" show on Fox television Wednesday night to discuss Dean's comment.

"It just shows a level of insensitivity," Steele said. "What it says is you don't see me in any other role."

"I don't think Howard Dean is a racist, but Howard Dean is a little bit insensitive," Steele said.

Two Black Democratic members of the General Assembly dismissed Steele's criticism of Dean.

"I think it's all politics, specializing in putting a spin

on this," Sen. Delores Kelley, D-Baltimore County, said. "He seems to be carrying a lot of water" for Republicans.

"He's been trotted around with an entourage," she said. "I'm not sure there is a lot he can claim to have done."

Delegate Curt Anderson, D-Baltimore, said Dean's choice of words was unfortunate, but the point he was making about a lack of Black Republican elected officials was true.

But he agreed with Kelley that Steele has little to show for more than two years as lieutenant governor.

When Comptroller William Donald Schaefer and Ehrlich recently talked about the need to end the state's minority business enterprise program at some point, "he (Steele) should have said something," Anderson said.

The fact that Steele is getting so much attention as a lieutenant governor reflects "a serious racial deficit in the Republican Party," Schaller said. "Michael Steele and J.C. Watts are the exception, not the rule."

But he said Steele is "a very effective spokesman" for the Republican Party.

# Dean urges GOP official to recant terrorist remark

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Howard Dean, the new chairman of the Democratic National Committee, called on the head of New York's Republican Party to apologize or resign Wednesday over remarks linking the Democrats to a civil rights lawyer convicted of aiding terrorists.

Dean called Stephen Minarik's comments offensive, and said, "The American people deserve better than this type of political

character assassination."

On Monday, Minarik said that Dean's election shows that "the Democrats simply have refused to learn the lessons of the past two election cycles, and now they can be accurately called the party of Barbara Boxer, Lynne Stewart and Howard Dean."

Stewart is a New York City lawyer convicted last week of helping terrorists by smuggling messages from one of her imprisoned clients, a radical Egyptian sheik,

to his terrorist disciples on the outside. Boxer is a liberal senator from California. Minarik issued a statement Wednesday saying "it is not the Republican Party's problem that these far-left activists have made their home in the Democratic party."

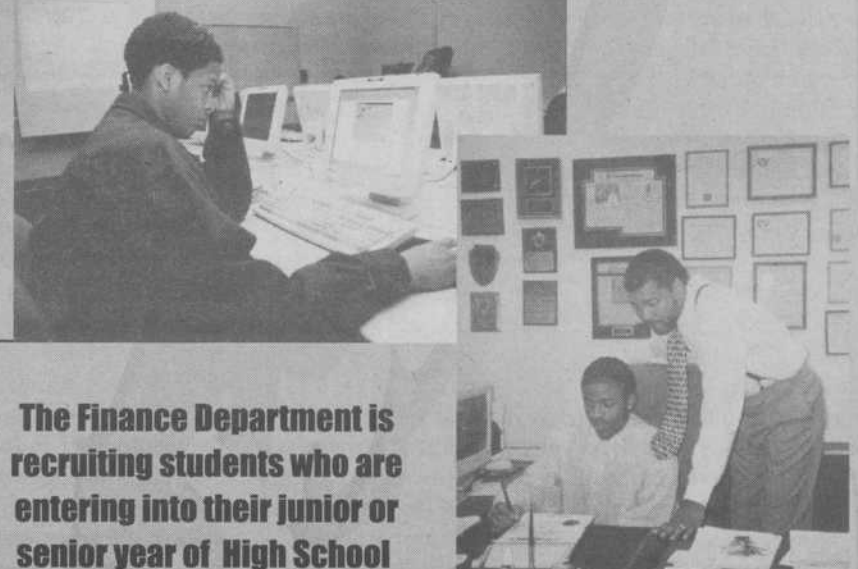
Republican Gov. George Pataki scolded Minarik on Tuesday, saying his remark was not "within the realm of appropriate political discourse."



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# Emancipation Proclamation goes on public view in D.C.

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declaring the end to slavery goes on public view Friday as part of Black History Month celebrations.

The document will be on display at the National Archives, where visitors regularly see the original Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

The poor quality of the paper and ink on the final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation make it vulnerable to light, so it has been only occasionally brought out of storage. It was last seen on Jan. 19, 2004, the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.

The proclamation, issued in the midst of the Civil War on Jan. 1, 1863, said:

"I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the mili-

tary and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons."

The proclamation, issued in the midst of the Civil War, applied only to areas under the control of the rebel Confederate States of America. So it had no practical effect on any individual. Slave states which had not joined the confederacy, and areas of others occupied by the Northern forces, were exempted.

But it served the military purpose of making trouble for the South. It asked Blacks to refrain from violence but encouraged them to seek the protection of Northern armies. It eroded support of the South by European governments avid for southern cotton.

The proclamation was followed by state and federal action over the next two years until the 13th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified after the collapse of the Confederacy and Lincoln's assassination, ending two centuries of bondage in North America.