

Clinton lost his temper: Wow! Great!

By Ron Walters
Special to Sentinel-Voice

It's about time that somebody in the leadership of the Democratic Party had the backbone to stand up and confront the right-wing drivel that passes for respectable news that is now cloaked in "am-Bush" journalism. The coverage of the Bill Clinton's response to the questions about Osama bin Laden raised in his interview with Chris Wallace of Fox News has been replete with charges that "Clinton flew off the hook," "lost his cool" or was "unpresidential."

Totally understated was the truth of his message that he had attacked Bin Laden with more vigor than George W. Bush — and almost got him. But Republican critics charged that it was a "wag the dog" action to divert attention away from the Monica Lewinsky scandal. However, an old debating tactic I learned in high school is that sometimes when you can't attack the content of the message, attack the style in which it was delivered.

Just a cursory look at Clinton's record, however, reveals that in 1996 he proposed and led the passage of the Anti-Terrorism Act, partly in response to the bombing of the Oklahoma federal building by home-grown ter-

rorist. Nevertheless, the bill had a healthy international focus, and some of the instruments were used after the bombing of the USS Cole, when he prepared battle plans to go after the Taliban in Afghanistan. The action was canceled, however, because the FBI and the CIA refused to certify that Osama Bin Laden was the source of the bombing and the military was unable to secure basing right in Uzbekistan.

Nevertheless, *USA Today* reported that this administration's use of reconnaissance satellites to record Bin Laden's phone calls prevented six more bombings of U.S. embassies after the Kenya and Tanzania bombings. And even in the last years of Clinton's administration, in May of 2000, he announced the addition of \$300 million more to the terrorism fighting units of the governments. I don't think that is a bad record, considering he had nothing like the unity of public support behind his policies that Bush had after 9-11.

Nevertheless, there is — or should be — a political effect of Clinton's defiant response



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to Chris Wallace. First, Republicans have been attempting to hang 9-11 around Clinton's neck, saying that his administration did nothing about terrorism, something the facts simply do not bear out. The point of this is to obviously to shift the blame for the fact that the war in Iraq is going badly and Osama bin Laden has not been captured, potentially leaving a legacy for the Bush administration of failure all around.

Second, effectively rebutting Republican charges that his administration was ultimately to blame for 9-11 creates some running room for Hilary Clinton's presidential aspirations; she would surely have to address that issue. Right now, she has strongly supported her husband's forthright response to these charges, saying that he was right to defend his administration strongly and agreed that the Bush administration dropped the ball when it came into office.

Third, there is a need to shore up the base vote of the Democratic party for the fall general election and this is the kind of red meat that gets the blood flowing. Democrats have

been rolled over by the aggressiveness of the Republican Party, beginning with their impeachment of Clinton.

Most recently, they have consistently flouted bipartisan governance and run roughshod over Democrats over elections, over the nomination of conservative judges, over the budget, over whether the war is either wise or just, and Democrats just have not fought back.

Thus, I agree with David Gergen's comment that this might have just created a dynamic that is needed by the base of the Democratic Party: seeing a credible leader finally stand up to the Republican onslaught. Democratic Party Chair Howard Dean has suffered rebuke from fellow Democrats when he has tried to lead in the direction of confronting Republicans.

Party leaders were either outright timid or preferred a more moderate approach because they believed the American people were afraid of the topic.

But, Clinton proved that he is not afraid of any topic.

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AKA, Omega show financial leadership

By James Clingman
Special to Sentinel-Voice

In 1998, I spoke at the organizing meeting of the Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce. In addition to the occasion of Black folks taking control of their economic resources, the meeting was even more special for me because it was held in a building built and owned by the local Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. I was so proud to be speaking about economic empowerment within a glowing example of economic empowerment. I remember pointing out that we need more examples of ownership among our sororities and fraternities.

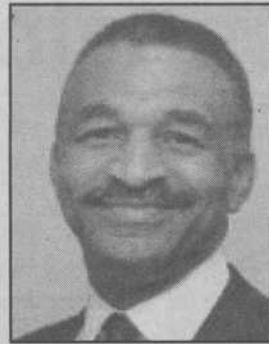
Eight years later, I am pleased to see these organizations implementing real economic empowerment strategies. Guided by intelligent, conscious, and aggressive leaders, sororities and fraternities are using their tremendous collective leverage to bring about positive economic change via real estate development, technology, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, banking, and other areas in which their members have expertise.

I recently spoke with two of those leaders, and it was a pleasure to hear their plans

and share their visions for helping to move our people into the 21st century of economic empowerment.

Barbara McKinzie, the newly installed International President of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, is a sister with whom I thoroughly enjoyed talking. She has that rare combination of consciousness and commitment, undergirded by a wealth of talent and experience in finance as a Certified Public Accountant. It did not take long for me to see that McKinzie definitely understands not only what it will take to move us forward economically, but she is also willing and quite able to support her words with action.

In her new role with the AKAs, the oldest and largest sorority (200,000 members worldwide), Barbara will continue her quest to empower our youth by preparing them to be leaders and instilling in them her philosophy of "making excellence a habit." McKinzie has also adopted the theme, "Continued Improvement," which has to do with enhancing and



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strengthening our basic competencies, and encourages a "pay as you go, not after you get there" system among Black people. Now I like that.

One of the most impressive things McKinzie shared with me was: "You can't give what you don't own." She gets it. She knows that in order for our people to be economically empowered we must be own-

ers of wealth-generating assets. She cited the age-old, wrong-headed message that has gone out to our youth for years, "Get an education and get a good job." Instead of that message, McKinzie strongly advocates for business ownership and business growth, which is indeed the proper economic message for our people. Barbara McKinzie is a blessing and a model for the brand of leadership we need. Congratulations to her and the AKAs.

The other leader I want to highlight is Warren Lee, newly elected Grand Basileus of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. I met Brother Lee during a recent visit to Dallas, when he emphasized his commitment to the theme: "Economic Empowerment Leading to Social and Political Change." Warren, an entrepreneur himself, understands that by devising and implementing economic initiatives that establish and grow businesses, Black people will be empowered. He also knows how important home ownership is for Black people, who are at the bottom in that category, and that is where he is placing his emphasis.

Lee has adopted Claud Anderson's "Powernomics" philosophy, which is refreshing. Many of our brothers and sisters who claim to be leaders are reluctant to espouse and support anything that is all Black, despite the fact that their organizations and those whom they supposedly lead are all Black. How sad it is to be so conditioned that you would not support your own people un-

less other groups are involved. Warren Lee is just the opposite. He knows who he is and he is not ashamed or afraid to claim it.

Lee stated: "We have the capacity to be a lot better and to do a lot more when it comes to having a positive impact on Black people. It's not that we are against anyone; we are simply for Black people, and we will contribute what we can to the cause of Black economic empowerment."

Lee's local Omega chapter in Dallas recently started an investment club called, "Omeganomix." Dallas entrepreneur and Omega man, Detrick DeBurr, describes it as "economics in the mix," which enhances economic literacy and builds wealth simultaneously.

In my call for and support of new Black leadership, these two leaders fit the bill. There is a document making its way into Black newspapers, on radio talk shows, and around the Internet called, "Open Letter to Black America, It's Time to Bring Back Black," which poses some questions about our direction and, of course, our leadership.

An excerpt from that letter states: "Enough is enough, Black people are in need of leaders who without apology are committed to the very real needs of Black Americans. We urge our leaders who feel trapped by their Blackness to go quickly to the task of providing leadership for other groups so that we can get away from their mis-leadership long enough to get out of our current political and economic ditch."

You will never know how good it makes me feel to know that Barbara McKinzie and Warren Lee are around. I know the Kappas, Alphas, Deltas, Zetas, Sigmas and any that I omitted, are doing similar things on economic issues. Please let me hear from you. Let's spread the word about this most important subject: economic empowerment.

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why we can't waste this golden opportunity.

It's hammer time. It's time to lower the boom on White and Black Democrats who think that it's okay to disrespect Black voters and then expect them to go to the polls in significant numbers on Election Day simply to support the Democratic slate.

Let's be clear. I am not advocating supporting all Black Republicans running this year — some of them are far worse than the White Democratic alternative. The GOP, in general, has to provide more than compassionate rhetoric; Republicans need to compile a compassionate record on social issues — and they are a long way from that.

The most recent NAACP Civil Rights Report Card, issued in February for the 108th Congress, showed that 98 percent of all Republicans in the U.S. House and Senate earned an F. By contrast, only 2 percent of Democrats failed to support civil rights issues.

Voting for Michael Steele would send shock waves through both major parties. And that's exactly what we need. Otherwise, two years from now, we'll still be complaining about Democrats taking us for granted and Republicans just taking us.

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