## OUR VIEW AIDS Stimulus?

Stimulus is a word that's steadily burning a hole in our collective psyche. In the months before the Nov. 4 election—the economy teetering on the brink of collapse—the Bush Administration, led by Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson, said that the nation needed a gigantic bailout to stave off a national and global financial meltdown. Congress agreed to a \$700 billion infusion of cash. That money was not only supposed to stabilize the financial markets, but it would also trickle down to the middle class, the segment of society hardest hit by plummeting home values, constricted credit markets and high foreclosure rates.

Then Paulson and others decided the money would better serve the nation's largest banks, many of them suffering under the weight of hyper-leveraged balance sheets, the result of shaky mortgages propped up by subprime loans. Nationalizing these banks would have a trickle-down effect, we were told, and in no time Americans could access the necessary cash and credit needed to pay bills, stay in their homes, repay debt and help keep the economy moving.

Then came word that half of the bailout money, \$350 billion, had already been spent (largely on recapitalizing banks) without so much as a penny making its way on down to the people most in need. What's going to happen with the remaining \$350 billion? Who knows?

Then came news that the Big 3 automakers in Detroit wanted a bailout, \$25 billion to be exact, to save them from collapsing. On Capitol Hill, the auto chiefs made a salient point: letting them die could have wide economic aftereffects. Experts say the auto industry employs more than 3 million people nationwide. Whether that \$25 billion would come from the remaining bailout funds is anyone's guess. What is certain, though, is that the automakers are in for a fight: Congressional officials want to see a plan for restructuring and retooling to compete against foreign car companies before they agree to any financial aid.

Then came word, just this week, that President-elect Barack Obama, along with many Democrats on Capitol Hill, think another large infusion of cash is needed in order to do what the initial bailout was supposed to. This stimulus—estimates range from \$100 billion to \$500 billion—would energize the economy by creating millions of jobs. Before it's all said and done, we could be talking about more than \$1 trillion in new debt.

Since our federal lawmakers seem to have fallen in love with printing and spending money, then why hasn't anyone called for apportioning funds for other pressing issues in America? On the eve of World AIDS Day, how about a stimulus package aimed at fighting one of the most pernicious diseases known to man? Say \$1 billion? Think about what the nation's best scientific minds could do with an extra \$1 billion. (To his credit, in 2003, President Bush launched the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which authorized up to \$48 billion to combat global HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria).

If not HIV/AIDS, then how about carving out several billion to attack many of the other health-related things that bedevil, such as smoking-related cancers, breast and prostate cancers, infectious diseases, childhood and adult obesity, behavioral and cognitive disorders, mental illness—you get the idea. Or how about pumping millions in America's struggling public school system? Investing in children at an early change pays off in the long run. Research proves it. We can either build classrooms now and staff them with competent, well-paid teachers or continue erecting prisons to deal with our inaction.

How about a slice of money geared to social and civic stimulus? Sadly, after former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards bowed out of the 2008 presidential race, the word poverty was rarely mentioned on the campaign trail. Edwards had said that he wanted to cut poverty in half in 10 years and end it in 30 years. What better way to than to direct considerable resources to ensuring that no family goes to bed hungry, that all Americans have health insurance, that people have the chance to earn a livable wage. If you look at it objectively, dear elected leaders, you could see that it's not just the big corporations that deserve a bailout. The American people deserve one, too.



## Barackonomics: Let's cash on in

By James Clingman Special to Sentinel-Voice

There was Reaganomics in the 1980s, and some of us had the Reaganomic Blues during that time. Old Ronnie ushered in a period of economic empowerment, for some, that is still remembered, by some, as the best ever.

To this day, the "conservatives" are making every attempt to reincarnate the Great Communicator, by holding séances otherwise known as political debates, like the one we saw held at the Reagan Library in Simi Valley, California, during the Republican primary. Those folks love themselves some Ronald Reagan — and they loved Reagonomics.

Now we have Barackonomics. No, we have not seen the result of Obama's economic policies yet, but the current environment is rife with excitement, anticipation, and "hope" for the "change" millions voted to see.

We will soon find out what the big picture holds, but even prior to the election, Obamania ushered in a new language, a new zeal for politics, and a new economic arrangement for Black folks, the likes of which I have never seen.

Always watching for the economic advantages available to Black people, during



JAMES CLINGMAN

the campaign I saw hordes of brothers and sisters making money. Although it was reported that the lion's share of the \$650 million or so raised by the campaign flowed into the dominant media outlets, Black owned media receiving very few of those party favors, some of our more enterprising Black entrepreneurs managed to hitch a ride on the Obama gravy train.

I attended one of the Obama rallies held at the University of Cincinnati, during which I saw Black vendors — as matter of fact, I saw only Black vendors selling everything from Obama Action Figures, to Obama Bobble-Head Dolls, glow-in-the-dark thingamabobs, to placards, buttons, glasses, cups, banners, and T-shirts of all designs and themes. Barack should have copyrighted his name and image.

My old friend and world renowned painter, Gilbert Young, called me to announce his latest creation: a painting of Barack Obama that Obama himself signed and endorsed.

The painting is titled, "History + Hope = Change" (historyhopechange.com). Now you know there will be bushels of money made from that painting. And, as they say, "It's all good!"

I can't recall seeing Black vendors selling Reagan items, or those of the other 42 Presidents for that matter; no, not even Clinton and Kennedy. (I wonder if Gilbert Young did a painting of Reagan; just kidding, Gilbert.) So I was encouraged to see so many Black folks cashing in on Barackonomics, at least as long as the phenomenon lasts. It's about time.

It's good to see Black folks finally getting in on the economic side of politics, especially the folks at the bottom of the heap. Yes, big business got its share, as it always does; the television companies and their affiliates, newspapers, radio stations, and the major marketing and advertising firms received a windfall from the Obama campaign.

But, finally, thousands and maybe even millions of brothers and sisters got in on the act as well. My advice is for them to stay with Barackonomics as long as they can. Come up with new ideas, new products, and new services to sell.

The ICE Supreme Man(www.icesupreme.com), Ashiki Taylor, in Atlanta, has created a new flavor "Obama Medley;" Farley's Coffee (www.farleyscoffeeinc.com) Executives, Raymond Wilford and Ricky Tillman have developed an Obama

(See Clingman, Page 9)



Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.

Published every Thursday by Griot Communications Group, Inc.

900 East Charleston Boulevard • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104

Telephone (702) 380-8100

Email: lvsentinelvoice@yahoo.com

Contributing Writers: Parker Philpot Shirley Savage Lés Pierres Streater Kanika Vann

Ramon Savoy, Publisher, Editor-in-Chief Don Snook, Graphics Ed & Betty Brown, Founders

Member: National Newspaper Publishers Association and West Coast Black Publishers Association