

# Why some Black leaders 'hate' the president

**By Cash Michaels**  
*Special to Sentinel-Voice*  
(NNPA) — In the aftermath of President Barack Obama's historic address to a joint session of Congress last week, the reaction to his call for American courage in the face of economic uncertainty has been widely hailed.

"Tonight, President Obama set forth a powerful vision for our country and an agenda for change that deserves the support of all Americans," said Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass.

"President Obama is exactly the kind of leader we need in the face of our nation's significant challenges," echoed Sen. Robert Menendez, D-NJ.

Instant national polls afterward showed well over 65 percent of Americans surveyed viewed the first Black president and his message favorably, with almost that many saying that they trust his leadership in this time of crisis.

And, of course, it's no secret that ever since he mounted his historic run for the White House two years ago, Obama has ultimately enjoyed the overwhelming support of his natural constituency — the African-American community. Most Blacks see both Obama's election, and leadership, not only as a tremendous source of pride, but an extraordinary example of excellence and achievement that all African-Americans, especially young people, should follow.

"Children with foreign-sounding names learned that they too can be president of the United States, and the electoral aspiration of almost an entire generation of young American voters was realized," Benjamin Jealous, president/CEO of the NAACP, said the day after Obama's historic election last November.

But not every Black leader is as fond or as proud of the new president as the NAACP and the American people are.

In fact, there are a number of Black "leaders," who span the spectrum of religion, politics and gender, who expressed during the presidential campaign, and many who continue to expound today, assessments of President Obama that range from philosophical annoyance, to petty envy, and even, in at least one case, absolute hatred.

Some actively worked to stop Obama's election, and at least one is feverishly at work trying to legally undo it.

Normally these "leaders" — many, but not all of whom, serve as mouthpieces for right-wing organizations or interests that mightily tried to cripple Obama's presidential candidacy — are ignored, if not dismissed, not only by the African-American community, but the public at large.

But given the tremendous challenges Obama faces on the economic and national security fronts in his still infant administration, if his massive \$787 billion stimulus plan fails to produce jobs and recovery, or if the nation is struck once again 9/11-style with a crippling terrorist attack, Obama's critics, especially in the Black community, will gain instant currency to undermine his leadership, and possibly destroy his presidency.

One need only look at the extraordinary cast of Black characters who are fully invested in creating dire drama for Obama.

Number one on the list is a former 2008 presidential candidate himself, arch-conservative Alan Keyes.

"Obama is a radical communist, and I think it is becoming clear," Keyes, who lost to Obama in a contentious 2004 U.S. Senate race in Illinois, told Nebraska TV station KHAS-TV two weeks ago. "That is what I told people in Illinois and now everybody realizes it's true."

Then Keyes, who also has at least four failed runs for the White House under his own belt, issued this dire prediction on-camera, "He is going to destroy this country, and we are either going to stop him or the United States of America is going to cease to exist."

Keyes, who is party to a lawsuit alleging that Obama assumed the office illegally because he has not proven to Keyes that he is a natural-born citizen (the state of Hawaii, which has Obama's original 1961 birth certificate locked away, confirms the president's citizenship), alleges even further constitutional calamity for the nation.

"I'm not sure he's even president of the United States," Keyes, who refuses to address Obama as "president" continued, "and neither are many of our military people... who are now going

to court to ask the question, 'Do we have to obey a man who is not qualified under the constitution?'"

Apparently the TV reporter off-camera openly displayed mocking disbelief of Keyes' pointed charges, causing the Black conservative to say, "We are in the midst of the greatest crisis this nation has ever seen, and if we don't stop laughing about it and deal with it, we're going to find ourselves in the midst of chaos, confusion and civil war."

To say that Keyes, who once served in the Reagan administration, is obsessed with Obama is an understatement.



**Alan Keyes, a former senatorial campaign opponent of Barack Obama, has been a brutal critic of the president.**

On his website, "Loyal to Liberty," Keyes not only calls Obama a "coward," "tyrant" and "communist," but even suggests that the president may "threaten" Keyes' very life and liberty with counter legal action because of the Black conservative's efforts to remove him from office.

"To any who insist on questioning his actions, he offers the drastic change of ruin and destruction," Keyes writes, later adding, "To tell you the truth, I expected Obama's ruthlessness, as I expect that it will escalate until his threats extend to liberty and even life itself. Tyrants are like that."

When Irving Joyner, associate professor of law at North Carolina Central University's School of Law in Durham, saw Keyes'

KHAS-TV interview online, he couldn't believe it.

"Alan Keyes is the worst example of radical right-wing politics even as he clothes himself in Black skin," Prof. Joyner told *The Carolinian*. "It is certainly tragic that Keyes is able to obtain undeserved and unwarranted press attention by being a lead 'attack dog' for interests and sentiments which are in direct opposition to the best interests of the vast majority of African-Americans."

Joyner continued, "It also demonstrates how desperate Keyes has become, and the unmitigated gall which he exhibits when he goes to any

agrees.

"As an African-American who fully embraces the agenda that has been set by our President Barack Obama, I am perplexed and dismayed by the remarks of Alan Keyes and others who have made outlandish and very close to seditious statements against our President, she told *The Carolinian*.

"I find it hard to believe that men like Alan Keyes, Larry Elder and others are sincere in their demagoguery but rather they understand that their outlandish positions will extend their 15 minutes of fame," Adams continued. "Unfortunately, the media believes that it must put forward the opinions of any Black pundit who speaks in opposition to President Obama regardless of its relevance, I guess it is no different from the coverage that Ann Coulter receives."

As both Adams and Prof. Joyner indicated, Keyes heads a long list of Black conservatives who have worked overtime trying to claim Obama's political head for their mantle.

Black conservative Ken Blackwell, the Republican former Ohio secretary of state who failed in his bid recently to become the new chairman of the Republican National Committee is another who relentlessly branded Obama a "socialist" and questioned his patriotism based on Obama's "questionable" association with controversial figures like his former pastor, Rev. Jeremiah Wright, and 60s Weatherman radical Prof. William Ayers.

"I want to make sure we protect the integrity of our democracy," Blackwell told conservative commentator Glen Beck last year when asked why he opposed Obama.

Conservative author Shelby Steele wrote the book, "Bound Man: Why We are Excited About Obama and Why He Can't Win," postulating that the Black liberal presidential candidate, like all Black liberal public figures, would have to bargain with Whites that if they would forget he's Black, he won't accuse anyone of racism. Steele felt that Obama, as some point, would undoubtedly fall short of the bargain, and lose, because, using the word "cowardice," he refuses to define himself.

"Sometimes, he's Martin Luther King, sometimes, he's

a Black militant from the sixties, then he's a Baptist minister. He can be so different. There's not yet an Obama voice. That troubles me on other levels. It's hard to know what bag he's going to come out of when he takes to the podium," Steele said in an interview with Kam Williams.

Months later, when it was clear that Obama was a lot more talented than he thought and stood an excellent chance to win, Steele admitted to Fox News' Sean Hannity that the "Why he can't win" subtitle was an ill-advised "afterthought" that he "regretted."

Other noted Black conservatives like Walter Williams and Thomas Sowell have attacked Obama as "lacking in character, values and understanding," and "is himself a lie."

On the journalistic front, they've been joined by Juan Williams, prizewinning author of "Eyes on the Prize," national correspondent for National Public Radio, and frequent commentator on Fox News' "Sunday" and "The O'Reilly Factor."

Williams, originally thought to be politically moderate, has distressed many in both the liberal and African-American communities with his remarks about both President Obama, and First Lady Michelle Obama.

In March 2008 during the height of the Rev. Jeremiah Wright controversy, Williams was frequently appearing on Fox News blasting Obama for remaining a member of Wright's church for 20 years.

"This is the closest Black people have ever been to having a president of the United States of America. And suddenly you see, wait a second, he's playing games and corners here on the race question. He's not being straight ahead and saying, 'You know what, I stand astride racial polarization.' He's saying, 'I play racial polarization at one moment to my advantage — Reverend Wright — next moment I will distance myself and disavow Reverend Wright when that's convenient, too,'" Williams said.

None other than arch-conservative radio host Rush Limbaugh, famous for playing the "Barack the Magic Negro" song on his program and calling Obama a "half-

(See Hate, Page 5)