

COMMENTARY

• SENATOR CURREN D. PRICE, JR. •

Communicating with Civility in our Community

Last week my Republican opponent purchased a quarter page advertisement announcing that I would be engaging in a "live debate" with him, to which I had never agreed.

The ad contained other mis-truths and misrepresentations and directed readers to contact a website that contains divisive and inflammatory accusations against segments of our community.

This type of racially-charged language invoked by the purchasers of the ad and the authors of the website, does nothing to promote unity or progress in our community during a time of unsettling economic challenges and anxiety.

I will never be a party to race-baiting, scape-goating, and I will not dignify this type of posturing by engaging people who operate on this level.

My goal as an elected official is to represent all of my constituents in the most honorable and effective manner that I can; and to promote unity in a most diverse district.

To that end, I have partnered with other legislators within my own party and across the aisle to

introduce legislation that will benefit the people I serve.

This year I introduced a bipartisan, pro business measure co-authored with Republican Senator Bob Dutton (Rancho Cucamonga).

The bill, SB1155, which passed unanimously in the Senate, streamlines California's Capital Access Company Law to make it easier for small businesses to access capital for expansion.

This bill will help small businesses obtain the resources they desperately need to keep their doors open and prosper and is a step in the right direction to help small businesses create jobs in California which has the fourth highest unemployment rate in the nation.

Most of us know that history's annals are filled with examples of societies undermined by the divide and conquer tactics that destroyed from within. I'm working to make sure that we do not have a page in that book. Let us all work toward building unity in our community.

Curren D. Price, Jr. is Senator of the 26th Senate District.

WAFFORD'S CORNER

• TONY WAFFORD •

False Choice: Obama's National HIV/AIDS Strategy vs. The View

BY NII-QUARTELAI QUARTEY

Change without a plan is change without a chance. Like the thousands of other HIV/AIDS activist across the United States, I was proud to see President Obama and his Administration make good on a campaign promise to change the way we fight against HIV/AIDS with the first National HIV/AIDS Strategy in the history of the U.S. epidemic.

The goals of this inaugural National HIV/AIDS Strategy include:

1. Reducing HIV Infections by 25%
2. Lowering the rate of HIV transmission by 30%
3. Increasing the number of infected people who know their status by 10%
4. Increasing the number of people accessing care within three months of diagnosis by 30%
5. Increase the proportion of gay and bisexual men, Blacks, and Latinos with undetectable viral loads by 20%

According to the National HIV/AIDS Strategy Executive Summary: "In 1995, 44 percent of the general public indicated that HIV/AIDS was the most urgent health problem facing the Nation, compared to only 6 percent in March 2009." I can't help but firmly agree with the 44% of the general public, especially in light of the fact that HIV/AIDS stigma, lack of quality and affordable health care, and poverty most severely impact the lives of African-Americans.

After reading through the executive summary of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy I kept asking myself this simple question about the largest risk-group in the community most impacted by HIV/AIDS in the United States: Do African-American heterosexual, gay, and bisexual men have a chance to be saved with this strategy?

I am concerned that the \$30 million in new HIV/AIDS dollars attached to this strategy from the Patient Protection and Affordability Act could be better used to build and develop the capacity of new and existing organizations to do greater prevention and treatment work, while a sizable investment from the existing \$19 billion/year domestic HIV/AIDS prevention budget could be redirected in-part to develop severely lacking infrastructure in high-risk communities like the African-American community.

The social change that we have an opportunity to help deliver requires that we as activist identify and report targeted communities and risk groups not receiving badly needed resources to local, State, and Federal government officials and agencies;

create our own public education and prevention plans rooted in the undisputable findings found in the National HIV/AIDS Strategy; identify and report intervention strategies that work and are consistent with the goals outlined by the National Strategy; over communicate all of the above in our quest for State and Local support and resources to help expedite the progress we have a unique opportunity to be apart of.

Earlier this month during the hot topics segment of ABC's "The View" when discussing the gay blood ban barring any man that has had sex with another man since 1977 from donating blood, Co-Host Sherri Shepherd and Guest Co-Host D.L. Hughley's claimed that African American gay and bisexual men are "primarily" responsible for increased HIV rates among African American women.

Now the proportion of Black gay and bisexual men infecting Black women likely does not account for a majority of cases but the truth of the matter is that there is no empirical evidence to back up Shepherd and Hughley's claim especially when many African-American men do not self-identify as gay, bisexual, or men who sleep with men (MSM). There is no evidence to support men engaging in situational sex with the other men, either.

Now some activist might have you believe that a public apology from Shepard and Hughley for "factually incorrect" comments about Black men on the "down low," require more attention than having you weigh in on this National HIV/AIDS Strategy.

Let's be clear: the National HIV/AIDS Strategy will impact more lives than the most watched episode of ABC's "The View."

I would argue that this continued brow-beating between GLAAD and ABC's strategic communications team takes away from the fight against HIV/AIDS and causes African-Americans to fight each other thus incubating a climate of homophobia and limited understanding.

The Obama Administration just spent 15-months building a National HIV/AIDS strategy and now well-meaning National LGBT groups and individuals are fighting to correct the view of two comedians-this is a poor use of limited resources and limited time to counter the rising tide of HIV/AIDS infections in the greatest at-risk communities-Black, Latino, and low-income.

Our activism must have more depth, stamina, and vision. Blaming two comedians for lacking the expertise that most everyday people lack when it comes to discussing infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS may be more of an indictment of flawed and outdated outreach strategies than this manufactured protest.

COMMENTARY • MARC H. MORIAL

National Urban League Centennial Conference Celebrates 100 Years

Next week, from July 27-31, some of the nation's foremost power brokers, celebrities, corporate leaders and activists will convene at the Washington Convention Center in the nation's Capital to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Urban League. Our Centennial Conference marks the completion of our first century of leadership and service, and kicks-off a second century calling for a new civil rights strategy to meet the new challenges to equal opportunity in America.

The National Urban League was founded in crisis 100 years ago as an organization devoted to paving the way for African American men and women migrating from southern farms to northern cities in search of jobs and a better life. Together we have made great strides and have torn down many of America's ugly walls of discrimination and injustice—from the segregated water fountain to the separate and unequal classroom to the Whites-only Oval Office. So, there is much to celebrate. But there is also much unfinished business.

America is once again in crisis. You know the story: 15 million Americans out of work. A national unemployment rate of nearly 10 percent. African American unemployment much worse at nearly 16 percent. A million young people dropping out of school each year. African Americans and Latinos—two to four times as likely to be unemployed or to lack health insurance. An epidemic of housing foreclosures. Tax cuts for the rich. Jobs shipped overseas. A trillion dollars misspent on the war in Iraq.

A man-made disaster in the Gulf. And in the face of all of this, we have a coalition of the unwilling in Congress who have turned their backs on the middle class and refused to take action to create jobs. In the face of all this, we have the emergence of a new right—the Tea Party movement that seems determined to turn back the clock.

Obviously, we have work to do. Fortunately, we have support from every sector of American society to help us do it—from the White House to the foot soldiers working in our cities to create jobs, improve education and expand opportunity. Invited conference speakers include President Barack Obama; NAACP President, Ben Jealous; Republican National Chairman, Michael Steele; Democratic National Chairman, Tim Kaine; UN Ambassador, Susan E. Rice; Harlem Children's Zone founder, Geoffrey Canada; poet, Maya Angelou and Hip-Hop activist, Common.

In our first century, the National Urban League helped desegregate the nation's schools and open doors of opportunity that had historically been closed to African Americans. In our second century, we will forge new partnerships, employ new strategies and use new tools of social networking and technology to ensure that everyone has an equal chance to walk through those doors.

I urge you to join us in Washington, DC to add your voice to this important empowerment movement. Register today at www.nul.org/2010conference.

Marc H. Morial is President and CEO of the National Urban League.

COMMENTARY

• DONNA BRAZILE •

Unemployment

We're about to see benefits for the jobless expire in a period of high unemployment—for the first time in 50 years. And Republicans are the only ones to blame.

It isn't just wrong—it's wrong-headed.

Conservatives in the Senate have been at this for weeks—abusing the rules to block Democrats from passing legislation. Their filibuster means millions of people lose their unemployment checks, and the entire economy suffers because of it.

All the polling suggests that the American people overwhelmingly support extending benefits and doing it now. But the conservatives aren't getting the message. So I've written a letter that calls for them to stop their obstruction and let the Senate vote on benefits for the jobless—will you sign with me?

If thousands of us stand together and issue the same call, we'll focus attention on this issue—in D.C. and across the country. Reporters will take notice, and more voters will rightly point to the GOP as the cause for this nightmare. In other words, we'll send a message that can't be ignored.

And movement on these

benefits can't come a moment too soon. Almost half of our jobless have been out of work for more than 26 weeks—that's the highest level we've seen for long-term unemployment since the Great Depression. And because of the Republicans, about 33 people lose their benefits every minute.

Just about every expert will tell you the same thing: Unemployment benefits help the entire economy. In order to collect benefits, you have to demonstrate that you have been looking for work. While you look, they keep bills paid, put fuel in the car, and ensure that families don't suffer when there aren't enough jobs to go around—things that keep the economy from shrinking even more. And at a time when there are five unemployed workers for every job opening, that's something we just can't afford.

So let's all stand together to send a very loud and pointed message to Republicans. Sign this open letter and help us create the kind of national outcry it will take to shame the GOP into letting us vote on unemployment benefits: <http://my.democrats.org/unemployment>

Donna Brazile is Vice Chair for Voter Registration and Participation, Democratic National Committee.

LETTERS TO MALIK • MALIK SPELLMAN

Money Talks

Is money saying America's capitalism is a direct link to America's high crime and incarceration rate?

BY JEORALD PITTS / LIL TONE

We have all heard the phrase "Money talks". But what is it saying? It communicates among other things a set of presumptions about the mindset and character of the person that possesses it. A person having money is likely to be seen as better, or more intelligent, or capable. This communication is accepted as real in our capitalistic/materialistic society where many people know what they want to have, but have no idea of who they want to be. The dream of the American dream is offered equally to everyone in a culture that places great emphasis on the value of individual attainment of success; and at the same time, quite significantly, the means of achieving success are left up to the individual. The legitimate pathways to money, fame, or power are not given great attention in America; whereas those who attain success by criminal devices may be admired as or even more than those who rely on legitimate methods.

So it is no coincidence that the United States leads the world in crime, capital, and incarcerated people. This capitalistic society has even found many ways to profit from crime and incarceration—for example, the privatization of prison and putting them on the stock exchange. So as long as people live better, they get treated better due to them having money/capital/paper/cheese, etc. and not based on their character. People will always be

inclined to commit crime to acquire it (money), especially in times when recession and lack is so smothering. A lot of people believe that the ends justify the means; however, when these types of ends justify the means there is often a trap in such open and shut things. This form of thinking causes people to not place a lot of value on character, especially in an environment where many people with all the character have no money.

With the combination of relentless stress of getting a big piece of the money pie and of uneven distribution of the means to getting a slice, it allows many people to feel justified in finding new and illegal ways to get a slice. Ironically, for most Blacks, hustling in the underground economy allured by instant gratification from instant messages to instant money; thus choosing not to distill wealth of delayed gratification often lands them in the Pen working for crumbs (\$0.15 an hour), living the American nightmare instead of the dream.

Many say that money is the root of all evil; however, I do not subscribe to such an idea. I firmly believe that the LACK of money is the root to all evil. It's true that money may not be able to buy happiness, BUT I know from experience that the lack of money can make you very unhappy and cloud your thinking. Where upon wealth is a byproduct of man's capacity to think. Tough times can bring out more creative ways to make money. Don't let money make you while chasing the dream without being lured by the oh so seductive whispers of money into the nightmare).

Jeorald Pitts/Lil Tone is author of the forthcoming book, "To Bang or Not To Bang—A Book of Questions." Mr. Pitts can be reached at jp2bangornot2bang@yahoo.com.

Request for Proposal

Request for Proposal to Provide Student Support Services: WERC is seeking proposals from nonprofit community-based organizations to provide concentrated mental health counseling and social services for up to 50 unemployed, dislocated, or lower-wage incumbent workers applying for training into high-growth allied health occupations.

- Worker Education & Resource Center, Inc. (WERC) is soliciting under a grant from the City of Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board
- Our address is 500 S. Virgil Ave., Suite 200, Los Angeles 90020. Phone: 213-639-2220. Fax: 213-380-4142 Contact: Cheryl McDonald. Email cmcdonald@we-rc.org
- Issue date: 9:00 am, Monday, July 12, 2010
- Response date: 3:00 pm, Tuesday, July 28, 2010
- A copy of the RFP may be obtained between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm from the receptionist at our office or by email request addressed to Cheryl McDonald using the Subject: Requesting RFP.

Request for Proposal

Request for Proposal to provide Community Health Worker Training: WERC is seeking a training provider to train 30-50 unemployed, dislocated, or lower-wage incumbent workers to become Community Health Workers (CHWs) in community clinics throughout Los Angeles County.

- Worker Education & Resource Center, Inc. (WERC) is soliciting under a grant from the City of Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board
- Our address is 500 S. Virgil Ave., Suite 200, Los Angeles 90020. Phone: 213-639-2220. Fax: 213-380-4142 Contact: Cheryl McDonald. Email cmcdonald@we-rc.org
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Kleinfelder is submitting a proposal for RFP 0-1459 to Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) to provide on-call environmental services for various projects located throughout the County of Orange.

OCTA has established a 9% Underutilized Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (UDBE) participation goal for this contract. Kleinfelder has a history of offering opportunities to minorities and women, both within the firm and as subcontractors on state and local projects. We recognize the importance of these programs and we fully support the OCTA's efforts in promoting such a rewarding program. Thus, Kleinfelder wishes to identify UDBE firms who can offer support for the following environmental services:

- Phase I Initial Site Assessments (ISAs)
- Phase II Site Investigations
- Surveys of Buildings, Containers, etc.
- Geophysical Investigations
- Soil Gas Surveys
- Trenching
- Drilling
- Monitoring Well Installation
- Soil and Groundwater Sampling
- Analytical Laboratory Testing

For consideration, firms are requested to mail or e-mail a Letter of Interest including the following materials or information to: Kleinfelder, Attention: Ms. Michele Goldman, Outreach Program Coordinator, 2 Ada, Suite 250, Irvine, CA 92618 [mgoldman@kleinfelder.com] by 5:00 PM Friday, July 30, 2010.

- Firm name
- Firm address
- Firm's status as a DBE (include certification number)
- Age of the firm
- Type of services provided by the firm
- Range of annual gross receipts for the last year

Firms being considered for further evaluation will be issued a separate request for specific information required for the proposal upon receipt of the information requested above.

We pledge to conduct ourselves in good faith when negotiating with firms interested in joining our team. A copy of the RFP can be obtained by contacting Ms. Goldman at (949) 727-4466.