

EDITORIAL

NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

Jesus Was Not Middle Class--Missed Tax Cuts

In a nationally televised address, President Bill Clinton argued for a Bill of Rights for the Middle Class. The middle class should have economic security, job security, a decent house, universal and comprehensive health care, and their children educated. In fact, however, those are goals shared by all Americans, not just the middle class.

The political operatives in both parties in Washington today are arguing against a "big tent" inclusive strategy, and for courting the middle class as the way to maintain or gain the White House in 1996. Thus, the Republicans propose \$197 billion in middle class tax cuts, and maybe more in budget cuts to pay for them. Mr. Clinton proposes \$60 billion in

middle class tax cuts--a sort of "Republican Light" proposal--to be paid for with \$76 billion in budget cuts. The consensus among economic experts is that all these tax cut proposals: (a) will result in higher deficits; (b) will result in higher interest rates; (c) come at the wrong time; and (d) encourage people to spend and consume at a time when we need more savings and investment for future development.

It is ironic that on the very day that the U.S. Conference of Mayors was making public its annual report on the plight of the poor in their cities--which indicates that the problems of hunger and homelessness are getting worse--President Clinton was announcing cuts in government programs for the poor in order to pay for a middle class tax cut. Mr. Clinton postponed announcing how many

middle class jobs would be cut until after Christmas. President Clinton cut food subsidies for the poor from \$80 million in fiscal 1994 to \$25 million in fiscal 1995. CBS News reported that corporate contributions to help the needy are significantly down, and if Republicans have their way the budget cuts they propose will virtually remove any national safety net from beneath the poor.

The middle class deserves tax relief. All Americans deserve to be taxed fairly. Inherent in fair taxes for all, however, is a tax cut for the middle class. Inherent in a mere middle class tax cut is more of the same--more debt and deficit, higher interest rates, more of our taxes going to pay the national debt, slower growth, more inequality, fewer jobs, and more hunger, homelessness and poverty.

During this Christmas season

we would do well to remember that neither Mary, Joseph nor Jesus would have qualified for any of the tax cuts proposed by either the Republicans or the Democrats. The President's Bill of Rights for the Middle Class would have passed them by. They were not middle class. Mary was an unwed mother engaged to Joseph, an unemployed carpenter. Both of them lived under occupation, without the right to vote or economic justice. In the current climate, Mary would have been degraded and humiliated; Joseph would have been marginalized; and Jesus threatened with an orphanage.

The way out of our dilemma is not the exclusivity of the political center of the middle class, but the moral center, which is inclusive of all Americans and speaks to the very soul and character of our nation.

THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT For A Unified Independent Party

BY DR. LENORA FULANI

I have spent the weeks since the November 8 election studying results from around the country and I am struck by a number of factors.

The Republicans picked up a substantial congressional advantage by campaigning against a sprawling, debt-ridden and tax-hungry government, that they themselves participated in creating; the Democrats, forced to defend that government in all its gridlock and ineptitude, lost their congressional edge in doing so.

In contrast, the independents (and by independents here I mean the board spectrum of multi-partyists who lead and vote from the variety of third parties in America) provided much of the substantive democracy and fiscal reform agenda that the Republicans successfully coopted and rode to victory. The independents gained political ground, and succeeded in making a dent

in the "two-party consciousness" of the country's major media.

The independent success stories of the 1994 election season are, for the most part, known to all of us. The Libertarian Party, while describing its own results as mixed...but generally upbeat...elected seven Libertarians to public office, re-elected three and picked up ballot status in five states, bringing the total number of their ballot lines to 23. The national Patriot Party, with which I am affiliated won ballot status in Minnesota and held ballot status in Pennsylvania. The Independence Fusion Party of New York - which grew out of the combined efforts of Patriot Party activist, political scientist Dr. Gordon Black, and myself won ballot status through a highly publicized campaign which saw Ross Perot endorsing the IFP gubernatorial candidate, Tom Golisano, and making one of Perot's strongest pro-third party statements to date. (Several other attempts at ballot status in New York did not succeed. The Pro-Choice Party, an effort by a network of NOW-associated activists, did not submit the

requisite number of petition signatures. The Black-oriented Freedom Party, and effort inspired by the Reverend Al Sharpton fell short of signatures as well. But while Freedom's ballot status bid failed, it remains a force for independent politics in the African American community. An Reverend Sharpton, together with his close colleague the Reverend Jesse Jackson, have been putting forth the idea of an independent "rainbow" party with some vigor.) The Patriot Party of Alabama won the party's first elected public official. The Green Party also had a strong year, picking up major party ballot status in New Mexico and Maine. Maine, of course, elected an independent governor, Angus King.

All that said, it seems to me that this is an opportune moment for all independents - with all our ideological and tactical differences - to sit down and discuss our respective prospects and review the possibilities for joint strategies up to and including fielding a single presidential candidate in 1996. Right now the Republicans are assessing their victory.

But there are substantial internal divisions with the party that must, and will, be overcome in the interest of a unified bid to defeat a vulnerable Bill Clinton in 1996. On their part, the Democrats are furiously debating how to interpret the message of November 8 - whether to move right, left, or stay where they are and promote themselves more effectively. Competing elements from Jesse Jackson to Al From (of the Democratic Leadership Council) are trying to assert ideological and political leadership in the party this is in serious - some would say terminal - disarray.

The independents, taken as a whole, are analogously situated. We embrace diverse viewpoints, constituencies and levels of organizational development. I think it is fair to say that whichever of these three forces consolidates itself and sets its course most swiftly, (and most in sync with the anti-two party sentiment growing among the American people - here we have the advantage), will win the White House in 1996. Nothing less is at stake.

perspectives

Newt Gets The Loot - Ethics Gets The Boot

Top Republican cashes in before he's sworn in! Senator Newt Gingrich, the next Speaker of the House of Representatives, replacing Tom Foley (D), has been paid three million dollars in "advance" royalties for three books which he has not yet written. The benefactor? Rupert Murdoch, the Australian billionaire who, among other empires, owns the particular book publisher, magazines and newspapers.

Of course, it just so happens that Mr. Murdoch also owns the Fox T.V. network, and it is the case that NBC and



By Professor Mckinley Burt

others are strenuously objecting, since federal law states that no foreigner may own an American Television Network. And it, also, just happens that these complex matters and their solution will be among the first orders of business before Mr. Gingrich's new congress and the Federal Communications Commission (Murdoch denies knowing about the payments).

Only a confirmed cynic would suppose that there is a connection between the magnanimous royalty payment and the most certain congressional hearings, right? Senator Gingrich probably intends to take that three million dollars and donate it to one of those food programs for poor children and his cohorts have "contacted" to eliminate. We would note that in Oregon, the Food Stamp Program serves 137,388 low-income children a month; 50 percent of school lunches in Oregon are served free or at reduced price; and that 63,756 women, infants and children are served each month by the Supplemental Nutrition Program for women, infants and children.

I wonder if the correct spelling of the senator's name is GRINCH? And, in addition, just who do these fatcat millionaires leading the savage charge against the poor think they are fooling? (Senators Gingrich, Dole, Gramm and Helms). According to respected writer for the Washington Post, David S. Broder, the current expenditure for the 'big three' welfare programs that the inhumane 'big four' plan to cut is \$43 billion. This sum is absolutely insignif-

icant when compared with the hundreds of billions in subsidies granted to industry and agricultural combines -- I've listed many the past few weeks. Along with Senator Gramm's \$15. billion Texas hole in the ground.

Add the grain companies (ethanol), firms trying to enter foreign markets like McDonalds, Motorola, etc (subsidized advertising), Dairy and Tobacco farmers and similar specialty producers of agricultural products (don't forget sugar), huge multi-billion dollar projects like those of West Virginia

Senator Byrd who is shifting entire units of Washington federal agencies like the FBI to his state for no other purpose than to create jobs, duplicating the costly buildings and infrastructure. Yet don't hear a single word out of the "big four" about this budget breaking rascal. We don't hear them uttering one word of sympathy for thousands of workers who have years of seniority and who will be unemployed. Merry Christmas dears.

Now that nonsense about "Transferring funds to the states for a more sensible and economical distribution" is a planned disaster. Karen McCarthy (D), a veteran of the Missouri Legislature and the head of the National Conference of State Legislatures until her election to the House of Representatives, says that her experience showed "the poor are the weakest constituency, when it comes to fighting for some funds in state budgets". Sounds about right, can we poor in Northeast Portland compete with the big industries that just 'treated' a bunch of our Republican Senators to that seminar in Hawaii? Several had nerve enough to charge us for the transportation.

Now that Mr. Gingrich, the senator with the questionable I.Q. and a domestic experience to match, also wants to cut the budget of the U.S. Office of Travel and Tourism, a tiny \$15 million office which produce a billion dollar economic input, and this with the Olympics coming up in 1996. More next week on these ugly charades. With Senator Sam Ervin's help we may get back sharecropping and plantations for black and white.

SELF-REALIZATION

"I REALLY DID IT LAST NIGHT, BARRY THOUGHT. GOT DRUNK, ACTED STUPID AND WENT HOME WITH WHO IS THAT?"

"WHAT AM I STUPID? HOW DID I DO THIS? BARRY BEGAN TO WORRY, REALLY WORRY. WHAT ABOUT AIDS?"

THEN HE REMEMBERED, "HEY, I'M JUST A CARTOON CHARACTER. I DON'T EVEN HAVE TO SHOWER."

GET HIGH, GET STUPID, GET AIDS.

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