

Black Presidential Candidates, A Source Of Black Hope?

BY KEN MORGAN

Are you into black presidential candidates? Then take your pick! Colin "Hit-man" Powell, Jesse "run-then-hide" Jackson, Alan "Its-okay-to-be-a-black-conservative" Keyes, or Arthur "I'm-the-godfather-of-affirmative-action" Fletcher for president in 1996.

Only Keyes and Fletcher have officially declared. Of the four, Powell and Jackson have been the most prominently talked about in the upcoming presidential campaign season. These four black men, like the parties and class politics they represent may differ - for and against different approaches to domestic and foreign policy - but they are cut from the same cloth.

Most of their ideas or solutions start from a common source, one similar to Bill, Bob, Pat, Phil, Pete, Pat, Newt and Ross, where politics is being pushed to the right. They will usually use words like "our econo-

my, "our foreign policy," "our national interest" or "our government." That's when you know that you have caught the propaganda virus, when you start saying "our" and "we" when talking about the U.S. or its actions.

These runners of the race may spout some of the rhetoric that reflects the interest of black and working people, but it is never in our context or on our terms. These "bloods" hang out in the "hood" of fake choices that are passed off as the people's democratic right to choose their political representatives - the bedrock of "our" (oops!) U.S. democracy. They represent or are influenced by: the entities who control the majority of wealth in the country, the ones who control most of the economy and who frame our political and social environments.

Take for example Jesse's "Parent Pledge" project to be signed by parents in 50 cities. His idea is to encourage parents to be more in-

involved in school. Nobody disagrees with this thought. However, he starts from the premise that parents are the roots of the troubles with public schools, an idea similar to both the Democrat and Republican Parties' rhetoric, which are neatly tied into the family values issue.

Jackson completely ignores the declining resources for public schools, the fact that they are more segregated now than before the landmark Brown vs. Kansas 1954 Supreme Court decision; that there is a big drive to privatize public education and the oppressive socio-economic system that marginalizes, dehumanizes and alienates ever larger segments of the black and working class populations. In reality Jackson helps to justify the assault on public education. Though Jesse is threatening to run as a fake independent, he will again play the role of Pied Piper, drawing blacks to Bill.

Powell, most likely the first seri-

ous black presidential candidate, is so because he has proven his mettle as National Security Advisor and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Powell unlike Jackson was a major participant in shaping establishment politics and enforcing its will and "national interest." For example, he played a leading role in unleashing the killing machines in the U.S. invasion of Panama and in the Desert Storm operations where thousands of Iraqi soldiers were gunned down fleeing back to Iraq, all in the name of protecting U.S. oil and dominance in the Middle East.

And true to form, even in his retirement, he served as one of the ambassadors of 'bad will' in negotiating the occupation of Haiti by U. S. forces. America's hero could run as a Democrat, Republican or fake independent. He has not declared his candidacy for the oval of office.

Just like Bill, Bob, and the others in the herd of presidential candi-

dates, none of our good brothers are for quotas and timetables in enforcing true affirmative action. All of them like Bill and Bob start from how "we" can get rid of the deficit. None of the black presidential hopefuls, like Bill and Bob acknowledge the real deal; that government cut backs in social programs and entitlements mean lower taxes and less social wage contributions from employers.

And they ignore that much of the balance-the-budget ballyhoo is based on protecting the government and the bond security holdings of the wealthy (between 40 and 50 percent of U.S. government bonds and security holdings are owned by banks, corporations, and insurance companies). In other words the less social wage and taxes they pay, the more profits are made in a world where profits are harder to come by.

So in November 1996, if you vote for these brothers dressed up in

donkey brown, elephant gray, or as fake independents or whether you vote for Clinton or Dole, be reminded, black gains are the results of our organized struggle. The civil rights movement is a prime example of what I mean. All social gains, from women's rights to labor gains, including the eight-hour day, resulted from struggle. Politicians have responded because the political price was usually too high not to.

I call for a truly black independent political party led by working people, everyday people where political action takes place every day, not once every two or four years; a party where participants are not beholden to the orchestra of the wealthy and big businessmen to whose music the two parties almost always dance; where foreign policy is based on international human solidarity and not how much profit you can squeeze from a country. That's the only time we can say "our" or "we."

Do Black Women Hate Black Men?

"Although racism is destructive to black people in America, it falls far short of the destruction caused by the conflict between today's black woman and black man," contends author and psychologist A. L. Reynolds, III in his latest book entitled, *Do Black Women Hate Black Men?*

The black male in American society is an endangered species and strong black families are decreasing to dangerous levels. In this provocative new book, author A.L. Reynolds frankly addresses such questions as: Why are black communities filled with "boys" in their 20s, 30s, and 40s? How did this evolve? Why are black women furious with black men? Why are there so many destructive behaviors in black male and female relationships that are contributing so forcefully to the disintegration of the black community? What is preventing the rise of an economically sound black America? How can the black community - men and women -- restore the black family unit?

Do Black Women Hate Black Men? relates how the roots of African American community problems lies within the battle between the genders. Drawing from case histories selected from over 300 interviews with black men and women across America, psychologist A.L. Reynolds presents their testimonies to demonstrate and examine the destructive dynamics of separation, hostility and anguish that is thriving today in relationships of African American men and women.

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ADL Amicus Brief Says Beckwith Conviction Should Be Upheld

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) filed an amicus curiae brief urging the Mississippi State Supreme Court to uphold the conviction of Byron de la Beckwith for the murder of Medgar Evers in 1963.

"This verdict," said Abraham H. Foxman, ADL National Director, "serves justice in a pivotal case of the civil rights era: the assassination of the Mississippi head of the NAACP amidst the most violent and concerted effort to resist desegregation in American history." Said Foxman, "The conviction sends a clear signal that racial hatred will not go unpunished in this country."

In *Beckwith v. State of Mississippi*, Beckwith claims

the conviction should be overturned because his right to a speedy trial was denied. The ADL brief argues "those guilty of assassinating political figures because of their beliefs or because of racially inspired hatred should not go unpunished simply because time has elapsed."

In 1994, Beckwith was convicted of the murder; he had been tried twice in 1964, but both times all-white juries failed to convict him even though the evidence linking him to the murder was overwhelming.

In 1973 police stopped Beckwith's car outside New Orleans, Louisiana. While searching the vehicle, authorities found a time bomb, firearms, white supremacist propa-

ganda, and a map marking directions to the home of ADL's then-Regional Director in New Orleans, A.I. ("B") Botnick. When asked by police of any prior criminal activities, Beckwith replied that he shot Medgar Evers.

"Byron de la Beckwith's conviction," said Foxman, "provides an opportunity both to celebrate Medgar Evers' legacy and to assess the strides Mississippi and the nation have made towards securing civil rights for all citizens."

The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913, is the world's leading organization fighting anti-Semitism through programs and services that counteract hatred, prejudice and bigotry.

Kenya Fossil Reveals New Human Ancestor

Fossil discoveries in Kenya have reveal a new species of human ancestor that lived 4 million years ago, were hardly any bigger than chimpanzees, bore striking resemblances to both apes and evolving man, and, perhaps most significantly, were already standing erect and walking on two legs much like modern humans.

Leg and arm bones found near Lake Turkana, paleontologists said, provide the earliest direct and unambiguous evidence for upright walking, or bipedalism, by any members of the human family tree. Until now, the oldest evidence has been the 3.6-million year-old footprints at Laetoli in Tanzania, together with tiny foot bones from South Africa, first reported last month that are about the same age.

By placing the emergence of bipedalism further back by about half a million years, the discovery supported the growing impression that this novel mode of locomotion might be the defining adaptation that first

set human ancestors and their close relatives, known collectively as hominids, apart from the quadrupedal apes.

From genetic studies comparing modern apes and modern humans, molecular biologists have established that the split between the two lineages occurred 5 million to 7 million years ago.

The discovery also crowds and probably complicates the base of the hominid family tree. It could provoke a new round of controversy among scientists trying to reconstruct human genealogy.

For two decades, the earliest known hominid was a species represented most famously by the Lucy skeleton.

Known as *Australopithecus afarensis*, this appeared to be the sole hominid species from 3.9 million to 2.9 million years ago. Reading the DNA clock in the genes based on guesses about the rate of mutation, molecular biologists started assert-

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Still Forging Ahead



The NAACP hosted a successful convention in Minneapolis recently as it sought to address the issues of affirmative action and voter registration for African-Americans in the nation's cities. Its new chairman, Myrlie Ever-Williams, has succeeded in gaining significant corporate and philanthropic support for the organization which is currently emerging from a rather challenging reorganization. She is pictured with one such supporter, above, William J. Richardson, Vice President, Urban Market Development for Schieffelin & Somers et Co.

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Legal Battle Over Tobacco Centers On Drug Question

Legal experts say efforts by tobacco companies to fight government control over cigarettes will boil down to whether nicotine is a drug.

Led by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., a unit of RJR Nabisco Holdings Corp., major cigarette makers filed suit in North Carolina against the Food and Drug Administration and FDA Commissioner David Kessler, seeking to block the agency's attempt to regulate cigarettes.

Proposed FDA regulations would limit sale of tobacco to minors, ban

cigarette vending machines, limit the exposure of children to tobacco advertising and prohibit distribution of items such as T-shirts bearing tobacco logos or slogans.

The lawsuit will seek an injunction against proposed FDA curbs on

tobacco ads, arguing that the FDA is extending beyond its legal regulatory reach, the companies said.

Peter Schuck, a law professor at Yale University, called the lawsuit "a diversionary tactic."

"It will boil down to whether the FDA has the statutory authority,"

Schuck said. "It's simply another way of raising the salient issue as to whether this is indeed a drug. This is certainly the core issue."

Schuck and others said the lawsuit seemed premature, given that the FDA has not issued the particulars of its proposals.

Schuck said, in the end the tobacco companies will likely not succeed. But just slowing down the process is an end in itself, noted attorney Henry Miller, of White Plains, N.Y. who worked to ban tobacco ads on

television.

"The tobacco companies know ultimately they will lose the war, but that will be years and years away and this slows down the process," Miller said.

"The issue is, is tobacco a drug? The FDA will hold public hearings and issue regulations and this looks like the tobacco companies will make it all-out warfare to prevent them from making that inquiry," he said.

Cliff Douglas, a legal consultant to tobacco litigation cases, said he believes the FDA does have the regulatory power under existing law to regulate cigarettes.

Should the tobacco companies lose this legal round, they can challenge the FDA's regulations, once issued, on any number of grounds, experts added.

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