

# OPINION

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# Snubbed by Giuliani and Romney

## Appeasing white evangelicals

BY MARC H. MORIAL

Back in November, the National Urban League extended invitations of anyone considering a presidential run to speak at our annual conference this July in St. Louis, Mo. We figured they'd have no legitimate excuse not to come if we started our outreach two years before Election Day. Well, we were wrong.

After two rounds of invitations, we've received two rejections - from former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.

As Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama start their jostling for the black vote, Giuliani and Romney appear to have written us off even through their party's sitting leader - President George W. Bush -- saw fit to include us on his calendar - three times since he took office in 2001.

Bush boycotted the NAACP in 2004, but not us. His latest visit - in 2004 - featured a debate between him and Democratic presidential nominee Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry. In 2006, then-Republican National Committee chairman Ken Mehlman and Democratic National Committee head Howard Dean appeared.

It's so ironic that Giuliani, often called "America's Mayor" would turn down an invitation to speak in front of the nation's largest organization devoted to urban issues. But then again, he cannot possibly

depend on us to pull him through to victory in the GOP primaries. He needs to do what every other red-blooded political candidate seems required to do - court white evangelicals, an increasingly influential and populous sector of the electorate. In 2006, they made up 24 percent of the electorate, up from 23 percent in 2004, according to exit polls.



*Our political leaders must take everyone's opinions into account if they want to lead our nation effectively.*

In the height of the recent mid-term elections, the media surmised that the Republican Party was losing its grip over white evangelicals. Their predictions, to a large extent, didn't quite live up to expectations: 71 percent of white evangelicals surveyed in exit polls supported the GOP, down from 78 percent in 2004. It seems that both parties are bending over backwards way too much to appease this sector of the electorate.

The irony is that a higher percentage of blacks compared to whites attend church at least once a week or more - 37 percent versus 25 percent, according to a 2004

National Opinion Research Center poll. So, we're not talking about two groups that have absolutely nothing in common.

Minorities made up 20 percent of voters on Election Day in 2006 - 10 percent African American, 8 percent Latino and 2 percent Asian, according to exit polls. By the end of this century, there will be no majority ethnic group. So, our political leaders must take everyone's opinions into account if they want to lead our nation effectively.

The days of white men governing a mostly white population are

that the nation was losing ground on an assortment of domestic issues: the budget deficit, the income gap and health care. Those were followed by moral issues - with 55 percent expressing concern.

Obviously, the American public has other things on their minds than whether gays should be allowed to marry or whether Americans should be permitted to burn their country's flag, which still rank high but not as high as pocketbook issues.

Interestingly enough, only 38 percent believe that we were losing ground with regards to international terrorism. Do you get a feeling of déjà vu here? I do. Think back to 1992 when maverick presidential contender H. Ross Perot centered his entire campaign around the federal deficit issue that resulted in steering some likely Republicans into the Independent column on Election Day.

That, much to President George Herbert Walker Bush's peril, paved the way for the victory of Bill Clinton whose handlers coined the political slogan - "It's the economy, stupid" - and ingrained it into the America's consciousness.

Giuliani risks repeating history much like Bush if he ignores domestic issues and fails to reach out to the American electorate that cares about them.

And let me also add that Clinton, Obama, McCain and the rest are hardly off the hook. We haven't heard from them, either. But at least, they haven't written us off.

Marc H. Morial is president and chief executive officer of the National Urban League.

# Sparking a Serious Conversation

## South Park episode on race a good thing

BY JANICE L. MATHIS

Last week, I did something I had never done before - I watched South Park. If an irreverent parody can spark a serious conversation about race relations in America, it's a good thing.

Even if it shows Rev. Jesse Jack-

son in a demeaning light.

Jackson accepted former Seinfeld actor and comedian's Michael Richard's apology and challenged him to make amends to the community he offended. Unlike the cartoon version of events, there was no kissing involved.

Like Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King, black men who dare to challenge racist assumptions about black Americans



earn derision during their lifetimes. And also like Douglass and King, Jesse Jackson is likely to be revered by history long after South Park is forgotten. We tend to accept their ideals, but not their right to express them.

DuBois had it almost right - the problem of the 20th century in America was the problem of the color line. And now it is the problem of the 21st century as well.

At some point America should have a serious conversation about race in order to find re-

demption and reconciliation? Despite his unfortunate name, Token is right, too many whites don't understand how racial slurs affect the society.

Fortunately for the children in the South Park episode, and perhaps for the children of America, by the end of the show there was common ground on which could find a shared understanding of their differences.

Janice L. Mathis is vice president of Rev. Jesse Jackson's Rainbow PUSH Coalition

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# Wrecking Kids' Lives

## Curfew sweeps, preconceived notions

BY J.E. BOLES

Are you kidding? Curfew sweeps?

Surely you will have someone at Northeast Precinct to keep an eye on those idiot cops and Deputy D.A. Jim Hayden, whom I know to be quite sloppy, civil rights-wise, and to have a lot of preconceived notions about the people in northeast Portland.

Never was a Brooks Brothers shirt put to worse use than on that guy. Never were the class symbols worn more as elements of armor, than when Jim Hayden suits up to do battle against crime in the streets.

Watch him wreck the lives of a lot of rambunctious kids this summer, as they get busted for doing nothing more than walking down the quiet streets of their own neighborhoods.

The caseworker establishment must be short of clients, is all that's really going on. Throw out a net and sweep 'em up where they live.

Catch those kids for chewing gum after dark. Jail those kids for too-long shirt-tails.

Bust 'em for hair-dos that don't

conform. Fine their parents, if you can find their parents.

Anything to keep the juvenile justice establishment busy. Anything other than providing better educations and better jobs for the kids.

Anything at all. Send in an army of caseworkers, but don't do anything to send the kids down a constructive road.

Wreck the kids' lives by giving them a taste of handcuffs, but don't give them any kind of positive experience.

Spend the public's dollars on cops and curfew sweeps, flashy media exposure, caseworkers and juvenile justice.

Who cares what happens to those kids later?

Everybody knows they are all dead-enders and it won't be good, and they are doomed anyway. It's all a foregone conclusion.

Maybe the Iraq War will last long enough so they can all enlist. Those kids are all good cannon fodder, anyway.

J. E. Boles is from northeast Portland.

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