OPINION

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Ernest J. Hill, Jr.

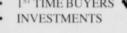
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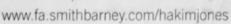
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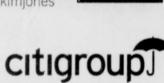


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Snubbed by Giuliani and Romney

Appeasing white evangelicals

BY MARC H. MORIAL

Back in November, the National Urban League extended invitations needs to do what every other red-

tial 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

depend on us to pull him through to victory in the GOP primaries. He of anyone considering a presiden- 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.

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

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

In the height of the recent midterm 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 then again, he cannot possibly 25 percent, according to a 2004 (more than 60 percent) polled felt tional Urban League.

over. I realize that African Americans tend to support Democrats but does that mean Republicans like Giuliani and Romney should write us off so early in the campaign? The Democratic presidential contenders must also realize that our support is not a given.

Giuliani's courageous performance on 9/11 won him some welldeserved worldwide acclaim and media attention but he is sadly mistaken if he thinks he can ride those war-on-terrorism coattails all the way to the Oval Office.

According to a recent Pew Center poll, a majority of Americans

National Opinion Research Center that the nation was losing ground poll. So, we're not talking about two 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

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.

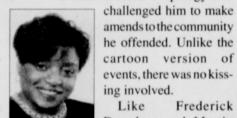
Marc H. Morial is president and chief executive officer of the Na-

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.



son in a demeaning light.

he offended. Unlike the cartoon version of events, there was no kissing involved. Like

Luther King, black men

Even if it shows Rev. Jesse Jack- sumptions about black Americans about race in order to find re- bow PUSH Coalition

challenged him to make forgotten. We tend to accept their affect the society. ideals, but not their right to express

DuBois had it almost right – the problem of the 20th century in America was the problem of the Frederick colorline. And now it is the problem Douglass and Martin of the 21st century as well.

At some point America should who dare to challenge racist as- have a serious conversation

earn derision during their lifetimes. demption and reconciliation? Jackson accepted former And also like Douglass and King, Despite his unfortunate name, Seinfield actor and comedian's Jesse Jackson is likely to be revered Token is right, too many whites Michael Richard's apology and by history long after South Park is don't understand how racial slurs

> 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 Rain-

conform. Fine their parents, if you

justice establishment busy. Any-

thing other than providing better

educations and better jobs for the

thing to send the kids down a con-

them a taste of handcuffs, but don't

give them any kind of positive ex-

cops and curfew sweeps, flashy

media exposure, caseworkers and

Anything at all. Send in an army of caseworkers, but don't do any-

Wreck the kids' lives by giving

Spend the public's dollars on

Who cares what happens to

Everybody knows they are all dead-enders and it won't be good,

Maybe the Iraq War will last

and they are doomed anyway. It's

long enough so they can all enlist.

Anything to keep the juvenile

can find their parents.

structive road.

juvenile justice.

those kids later?

perience.

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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.

Those kids are all good cannon fodder, anyway.

all a foregone conclusion.

J. E. Boles is from northeast

Bust 'em for hair-dos that don't Portland.

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