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**BE A PART
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Opinion

Hypocrites, Hucksters, Histrionics and Hype

Aren't you tired of the rap and clap sessions by political wannabees and their respective contingents? I know I am.

The so-called "debates" are downright insulting and embarrassing, especially on the Republican side, reminiscent of a stand-up comedy show, or "throwing shade" as young folks say.

Over on the Democratic stage (or should I say in their "ring"?), what was a fight has turned into a face-saving swan song for Sanders since he was, in his own words, "decimated" in South Caroli-

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Columnist

political three-ring circus. We will be the diversions, the ones who turn the lion's attention away from the performers, the clowns who turn the bull's ire away from the bull rider by yelling and then jumping into a barrel.

The "Yo Mama!" debates in the Republican ring are really

ants who offer condescending words and platitudes directly to Black folks — as opposed to the Republicans, who say absolutely nothing to Blacks. The Democratic candidates rail against the business establishment and tell us that we really need more jobs to solve our problems. I don't know how they expect to bring us more jobs, which are created by private businesses, when they are constantly denigrating business. It's just hype. (By the way, why do you suppose the Black candidate — Willie Wilson — has been invisible?)

must have them sign an agreement signifying their support of our issues.

If they refuse to support our demands, verbally and in writing, then why should we vote for them? What do we have to lose? Why vote for any candidate who does not support reciprocity for those who vote for him or her? That's just stupid.

We must stop accepting the hypocrisy of candidates who say one thing and do another. We must not get sidetracked by arguments among political hacks and commentators that mean absolutely nothing to us in the scheme of things.

We must stop doing our best impression of Pavlov's dog when they come to call on us. If nothing is funny, don't laugh; if you are not itching, don't scratch. We must change the silly way we deal with politics by collectively leveraging something of substance in return for our votes. If we don't change, the hucksters, Black ones and White ones, will always win.

Join the One Million Conscious Black Voters and Contributors and let's make a real difference this time.

James Clingman is the nation's most prolific writer on economic empowerment for Black people. His latest book, Black Dollars Matter! Teach your dollars how to make more sense, is available on his website, Blackonomics.com.

“Rather than asking the candidates what they will do for us, we must present our demands to them, and rather than settle for lip service, we must have them sign an agreement signifying their support of our issues

na. Black folks strike again!

With all the money these candidates have in the bank, this "theater of the absurd" could go on for months, and when it's all over Black folks will have not moved one inch toward real empowerment.

Unless we get serious about our own economic and political future, by establishing our political platform and being willing to promote, support and leverage it, Blacks will continue to be relegated to the clown ring in this current

not debates, in case you have not noticed; they are rap sessions, Ronald Reagan séances, and pseudo-patriotic diatribes — repeated ad nauseam by guys who swear they are the answer to our problems. The only one who has any kind of real record of having actually solved a few political problems is John Kasich. But he's so far behind the others that a victory for him is very unlikely.

Over in the Democratic ring, we have two combat-

Why are many of our people spending inordinate amounts of time arguing over whose plantation is more comfortable?

Rather than organizing ourselves into a voting bloc that must be reckoned with and leveraging our votes, we end up acquiescing to political parties and their selected candidates. Rather than asking the candidates what they will do for us, we must present our demands to them, and rather than settle for lip service, we

Why 'Diamond' and 'Silk' Support Trump

Isaw it on Facebook: two Black women at a Trump rally expressing their support for "The Donald."

I realized, once again, that there is a certain type of emotional naiveté that I possess when it comes to our people. I assume that in light of the history of White supremacy which we have experienced for several hundred years, including indentured servitude, slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and de facto segregation, not to mention the ideological demonization of our people at the hands of an assortment of characters, that we can look a racist in the eyes and know their stand.

I found myself staring at these two Black women backing Trump and I realized I felt the same emotions about the candidacy of Dr. Ben Carson (who has since endorsed Trump himself). How is it, I have asked, for a Black person to utter some of the most ridiculous statements known to humanity?

It is only when I have calmed down that I remind

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African

myself that not only are we, as a people, far from monolithic, but that — despite our history — there is a very conservative, if not outright reactionary minority among Black

to address. It is that there are people who honestly believe, for whatever reason, that their personal future or our collective future resides in conforming to the worst caricatures that White America has of us. They seem to believe that by joining in on the pile-on against Latinos and Muslims, for instance, that we will somehow become accepted as "real" Americans."

It will never happen. Some Black folks tried that after

the execution of five Black men who were accused in the Central Park brutal rape of a white woman in 1989, only for them to be exonerated. Trump calls for excluding and expelling Mexicans for allegedly bringing crime to the U.S., as if no other ethnic group has ever been or is associated with crime.

Trump calls for banning Muslims from entering the U.S. for allegedly bringing terrorism despite the fact that

“They seem to believe that by joining in on the pile-on against Latinos and Muslims, for instance, that we will somehow become accepted as 'real' Americans

Americans that are actually convinced that we ourselves are the problem. Many also believe there is some other racial/ethnic/religious group, e.g., Latinos or Muslims, who can take some of the racist heat away from us that we have experienced for so long.

It is not simply self-hatred that we are facing. In some respects, that would be easy

9/11. It does not work. We are still hated.

It is the revelation that the Adolph Caesar character has at both the beginning and end of the classic film *A Soldier's Story*: the "game" has been rigged and masses of Whites still hate us, even when we get on our knees and do everything that they ask.

Donald Trump called for

most terrorist attacks since 9/11 have been carried out by white supremacists.

What am I missing? Is there any reason to take anyone who supports Trump with any degree of seriousness? I think not.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is a talk-show host, writer and activist. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook and at www.billfletcherjr.com.