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Opinion

Do Black Organizations Really Have Our Backs?

While Black people are bogged down in shallow and meaningless political discourse, our vaunted Black organizations continue to be M.I.A. except for their time in front of the cameras with Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. They say they cannot endorse candidates, but we all know that's a sham.

In an article written by Freddie Allen of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, Marc Morial said the nine Black organizations that met with the candidates wanted to "provide to every candidate who is running for president of the United States, be they Republican or Democrat, the opportunity to hear from us on issues of civil rights, social justice, and economic justice in America, today." Any real demands made on our behalf?

Al Sharpton said, "For the first time in American history, we will watch a Black family leave the White House and we do not want to see the concerns of Blacks leave with them."

So, that's where our concerns have been hibernating for the past seven years – and all this time I thought Sharpton and the POTUS were taking care of them.

And, I suppose to give comfort to Clinton and Sanders, Morial said the nine historic civil rights organizations represent tens of millions of

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Americans and that all of their organizations were "multicultural and multi-ethnic." Multi-cultural and multi-ethnic? That's strange. I thought they were Black or at

“Only a relative few members, among those who have actually seen these shenanigans take place, are willing to stand up against the NAACP's corruption

least "colored."

Speaking of colored, let's look at one of these "Black" multi-cultural/ethnic organizations.

The NAACP, known for "Nonstop Aiding and Abetting in Corrupt Practices," in my opinion, answered the Ferguson issue by walking 130 miles to the Missouri Governor's office, followed up by a 1,000 mile stroll from Selma to the steps of the U.S. Capitol in search of justice. Guess they didn't find it when they got there.

This is the group that practices outright hypocrisy by railing against voter suppression and voter ID laws while accepting and even promot-

ing those corrupt practices within their own ranks. More specifically, this is the group that has wreaked havoc in Ohio by conducting four elections for State President, two of which were legitimately won by Jocelyn Travis over Sybil McNabb, and two of which were do-overs by the national office via its henchman, Gill Ford, to keep their chosen candidate, McNabb, in office.

In the first corrupt election

over which the national office presided, children were allowed to vote for McNabb – yes, children! In the second corrupt election, which just took place on March 12, again under national supervision, the same corrupt practice used in Cincinnati was used by Gill Ford in Columbus.

The NAACP's "Nonstop Aiding and Abetting in Corrupt Practices" is shameful, especially in light of holding themselves up as the national champion for fairness in the voting process. Even more shameful is the fact that only a relative few members, among those who have actually seen these shenanigans take place, are willing to stand

up against the NAACP's corruption.

The good news is that a group of members throughout Ohio have followed the lead of the Crittenden County (Arkansas) and Cincinnati branches by seeking and winning a temporary restraining order against the national office of the NAACP, due to its continued interference in local elections.

Aside from the obvious hypocrisy displayed by the national leadership of the NAACP, not only in this case, but also in several other branches across the country, their corrupt practices also point to a larger problem. So-called Black organizations like the NAACP, despite their implied social contract with Black folks, can be swayed, bought, rented, or leased with nothing expected in return except a few dollars under the table, a political photo-op, or a nice hotel suite.

As for nine Black organizations suggesting they are the repository of Black power, here's a question: If they have power, why after nearly eight years of a Black President are we, as cited in Morial's State of Black America Report, worse off now and in "crisis?" As leaders now intercede on our behalf, by meeting with presidential candidates, what would make us believe Blacks will get anything specific from the next administration?

Black Voices Missing in Discussion on Western Sahara

I was thrilled to hear that there would be a hearing on Capitol Hill regarding the human rights situation in the Western Sahara. The "Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission," co-chaired by Congressman Joseph Pitts and Congressman James McGovern, along with Commission member Congressman John Conyers, hosted the discussion March 23. This was quite important in light of the pathetic media coverage of the on-going and illegal Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara and the human rights abuses carried out by the occupying forces. Morocco has occupied most of the Western Sahara, since it invaded the territory shortly after the Spanish withdrew in 1975.

There were two things quite noticeable about the hearing, despite its many strengths. There were four presenters, each of who gave compelling testimony emphasizing the illegality of the occupation and the abuse of the indigenous – Sahrawi – population by the Moroccans. Yet the presenters – Kerry Kennedy, the president of the Robert F.

Bill
Fletcher Jr.The Global
African

Kennedy Human Rights group, Francesco Bastagli, the former Special representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara of the United Nations, Eric Gold-

“I kept looking for other members of the Congressional Black Caucus to stick their heads into the room as an expression of solidarity, but that did not happen

stein, the deputy director MENA Division of Human Rights Watch, and Erik Hagen, the chair of the Western Sahara Resource Watch – were all White. Don't get me wrong. The presentations were all compelling and warranted. Yet, I found myself wondering why there were no Africans or African Ameri-

cans making the case in addition to these white specialists.

The second noticeable feature of the meeting was that the meeting itself, with certain noticeable exceptions, e.g., Congressman John Conyers some representatives and supporters of the Sahrawi liberation movement (Polisario), were very White. Perhaps I should put it another way. There were very few African Americans present in the room. I kept looking for other members of the Con-

gressional Black Caucus to stick their heads into the room as an expression of solidarity, but that did not happen. Perhaps they sent their staff? Perhaps there was something else transpiring? In either case, the lack of an African American presence was more than noticeable, at least to me.

Throughout the history of

people of African descent in North America, there has always been a constituency that has concerned itself with developments in Africa. Sometimes such individuals (and groups) have been inspired by religion, while at other times by politics and economics. In the more recent past TransAfrica emerged in the late 1970s as an institution launched through the work of the Congressional Black Caucus as a means of bringing national attention to matters facing Africa and the African Diaspora. Similar organizations, such as those that would in the early 2000s constitute Africa Action, followed a similar path.

Today, the weakness and/or non-existence of such organizations is evident in the void found in hearings such as the March 23 examination of the situation in the Western Sahara.

This is a void that needs to be filled and it needs to be filled by progressive Black organizations and individuals lest it is filled by those who – even in wearing a black skin – have nefarious objectives on the Continent.