

Lighting The Road To Freedom

New Orleans

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Essence in New Orleans

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The Soul of New Orleans

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Wayne Carrier



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Crime, Crisis... Crossroads:

D.A. Eddie Jordan on the Hotseat Fires Back

by Edwin Buggage
Photos by Glenn Summers and
Jamie Jones

Crime Out of Control

As the summer is in full swing and the sun beams down on the city of New Orleans bringing its heat mar-

Embattled New Orleans District Attorney Eddie Jordan finds himself inside the crosshairs of a barrage of criticism as leaders from around the city are calling foul for the role his office played in a case involving the brutal slaying of five teens in the Central City area of New Orleans; where the charges against the alleged triggerman Michael Anderson being

dropped because Jordan's office claimed they could not locate a key witness, but the next day Police Superintendent Warren Riley said his detectives located the witness. This snafu over at the D.A.'s Office handling of this high profile case led to several members of the New Orleans City Council to soundly denounce District Attorney Eddie Jordan and one councilperson Shelly

Midura going as far as demanding his resignation immediately. These sentiments were echoed by a crowd of angry citizens who showed up at a rally held by Democratic Party U.S. Presidential hopeful John Edwards calling for the D.A. ousting from office. In a heated city council meeting Jordan attempted to defend his record with Midura again castigated him saying he should resign.

Double Standard?

"I am outraged that members of the city council have responded in

this way, because they don't know what all the facts were surrounding this particular case and that we did not have a cooperative witness at least for a period of time, and that is a problem that is fairly common in our homicide cases where witnesses may cooperate initially and then later decide otherwise," Says Jordan answering his critics. As there are many cases that his office handles, with all the particulars regarding them to be very different, he cites that his conviction rate has been higher than his predecessor, and that his office should not be judged by a single case.

Race has been a pressing issue for many local elected officials, and where some feel that the assessment of their performance are skewed, and they are held to a larger degree of scrutiny, something not lost on D.A. Jordan. "I don't believe that the standards they've applied to my office have been fair, I don't think that they've looked at the process as a whole in fact I know they have not, and when I have raised issues addressing that they simply dismiss it. And I feel that if you look at my record during my tenure you see that we have had a higher conviction rate than my predecessor, and there have been marked improvements and yet there are members of the council who care to overlook those improvements." "And these changes came about by a restructuring and reorganization of the office and leadership, certainly there is room for improvement, but there is room for improvement in all our criminal justice agencies."

After Hurricane Katrina the unusual political climate that is part and parcel of this city and state has become even more uncanny as those who aspire to lead jockey for position in what resembles a second reconstruction. And similarly as was the case during the period following the civil war the struggle for those who would lead in the future is still an open question. D.A. Jordan who is up for re-election in the Fall of 2008 feels that after the storm a concerted effort to change the political landscape on the horizon, "I think there is a mood in the city to change all the top leadership and my office is no exception, I believe there is a such a movement underway and I believe its been underway for quite some time certainly since the storm."

As accountability from the city's elected officials become a pressing issue many of the city's leaders are presently facing increased scrutiny and the questions about how the mainstream media deals with theses thorny issues have some African-American leaders suggesting that they are dealt with in a more heavy handed way by members of the mainstream media. Something D.A. Jordan feels like he has experienced fist hand, "I think the mainstream media has been much more critical of the leadership in the city, and the leadership in the city is predominately African-American so we bear the brunt of that, and I think the rules applied to us are different and the level of scrutiny; there's no question in my mind about that and it's the same thing I am hearing from the citizens." "Also I feel that some

Continued next page.



ried to the sometimes unbearable humidity, the streets of the big easy has once again become one of the most dangerous cities in America. Today New Orleans is less urban and more of a frontier type town that is reminiscent of Dodge City, Kansas the setting of the television series Gunsmoke. The streets of the Crescent City presently is a place ablaze with gunfire, and where murder and mayhem continues to paint a less than ideal picture of a city fighting to recover after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

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in the mainstream media choose to focus on the negative, and not some of the positive things we have done for example we send out press releases about convictions we get yet that's rarely reported."

Power, Problems, Solutions

On the heels of the recent demand for his resignation by Councilperson Midura, Jordan received harsh criticism from New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin who demanded an independent investigation of the practices at the D.A. Office by bringing in state Attorney General Charles Foti. Jordan says he became aware of the proposed investigation through a television broadcast and said that he has attempted to reach out to the mayor's office on several occasions, "I first heard about the investigation on television, but that is the way I usually hear about things from city hall, unless of course there is something that they have an interest in accomplishing then I get a phone call a day or so or an hour or so before the event." "I certainly got a lot of phone calls when the mayor wanted to present a united front surrounding the crime problem." "And I have reached out to the mayor I've sent him letters pointing the need for some changes and reforms and us working together and I have not received any responses to those letters."

In March of this year Jordan told Data News Weekly about an agreement between his office and the New Orleans Police Department, several months later he says that there has been marked improvements in their crime fighting efforts, "In general I would say it is going well, the 701 releases have declined by eighty percent in June of 2007 compared to the beginning of the year." But all is not well in regards to keeping potential criminals and suspects off the streets as evidenced by the possibility of the Anderson case and similar cases, the revolving door of the criminal justice system for many concerned citizens is real. Jordan says, "I think the problem of the revolving door over the years we are remedying that problem with defendants that have been in trouble repeatedly, and what we have done is put our most experienced prosecutors on those cases that are the most serious."

One of the major obstacles to getting convictions is the problem

of getting witnesses to cooperate. This may stem from the historical adversarial relationships between law enforcement and the African-American community that serves as an impediment to cooperation between them and the citizens. Jordan thinks it would be in the citizens' best interest to reconsider and began to partner with law enforcement to help rid their neighborhoods of crime and vice. "I understand that citizens sometimes are intimidated and frustrated, but there is also the problem where people feel 'snitching' is a bad thing, and it's hard for me to understand that type of thinking because obviously the people who are being victimized are people in that same neighborhood and if we don't have people who are willing to come forth and stay with us throughout the process."

What the Future Holds?

Safe streets and a criminal justice system that works is what citizens in any city desires, now in this city a city that is known as one that care forgot is truly at a turning point in its history. The issue of crime and the ensuing fight to cleanse the city of the scourge of violence is one of many issues that plagues the city where a laundry list of problems continue to soil one of America's great cultural treasures. Where race, class and struggles for power are intertwined and question arise where are the selfless leaders who are willing to work with the community to rid the streets of crime and consider what's right and in the best interest of all its citizens in this dark hour for New Orleans?

With the fall of 2008 a year away and D.A. Jordan will more than likely be in for the fight of his political life. It is so much more with these recent elections that are at stake, more than just personalities, and the blood thirst of those who lust for power, position and privilege people, but the fabric of a city being torn apart at the seams and what needs to be done to repair it. What is a city where lawlessness has become the image that the world sees, and the ultimate question becomes who captains this ship to make the city a safer place. Is it solely the responsibility of elected leaders, is it law enforcement, is it the citizens, or is it the collective strength of all these forces finding a common thread to mend the divide working together to make the city safer for all people.



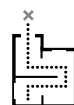
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JMJ Foundation TRAILBLAZERS

Wayne Carriere Man On A Mission



By Renetta Burrell Perry

As another hurricane season is upon us we pray that the devastation that washed away so many of the memories of our past will never happen again. As citizens of the Crescent City we seek hope, faith, and inspiration as our lives have nearly changed forever. July's Trailblazer's words and works are a testament of these words. Wayne Carriere is a Hurricane Katrina survivor who has experience a lot in his forty some odd years. Like many he has come through the storm and its aftermath scarred, bruised, and battered, but never defeated. His life has been on filled with service inside the community as he has worked with A.C.T. (All Congregations Together) after Hurricane Katrina Car-

riere became inspired and stepped out on fate to tell his story to the world. Writing a book entitled, *Inspirational Perspectives of a Katrina Storm Victim* "I thought this book was necessary for me to write as an outlet as I was inspired as a result of my travels throughout Hurricane Katrina and I felt the need to chronicle my thoughts and feelings and maybe inspire people that we can overcome whatever adversity comes our way." Continuing he says "During the time I was laid off from my job with the City of New Orleans, and as a result of the hurricane, I stepped out on faith to write a book which hopefully will help us all to better understand what it takes to endure the trials/tribulations/tragedies in our lives - faith."

Speaking about his book he says, "The book is a rare

one in that I turn every event of this hurricane - which I experienced - into a positive lesson/perspective by which we can see better how to move forward in our lives. I have heard enough of the accolades given to the power of this hurricane, and insist that we instead recognize the power of our Creator through these chaotic circumstances. I see the hurricane as a wake up call for us all to look at how we've been living, and to make sure that it's in line with our Heavenly Father's plan for our lives." "Throughout the varied chapters of the book, I deal with our relationships with each other, our relationship with our Creator, and the implications of interpreting significant events in our lives, in order to provide an inspiring angle by which we should live our lives."

For many years Carriere has been involved in community activities mentoring young people and serving and through his work has affected the lives of many youths. He feels that the pleas for government to address the ills in the community is only one of what he thinks should be a multifaceted approach to dealing with the problems of the city of New Orleans, "It's time that we stop relying on government handouts, and false promises, and start to recognize who we can always rely upon in our time of need and that is almighty God and his protective armor and loving arms will protect those who believe."

After the storm Carrier came back to New Orleans with a renewed faith a desire to be a positive force for change, "Faith is what got me through this hurricane, and it's what can get us through any trials and tribulations which we face in our lives. It got me through four days at the New Orleans Convention Center. It got me through wondering about the fate of family members from whom I was separated, through the rescue efforts." "My faith has me feeling good about the prospects of me and my family returning/rebuilding in New Orleans. I also feel a responsibility for sharing my story with others to help them to see that God really deserves all the glory, and makes it possible for us to overcome any obstacle in our lives." "It is by faith that I have come to realize that perhaps I needed to go through this scenario in order to become a stronger, better individual, and that I am so blessed to be able to know my Creator in the intimate way that I do. With this faith and with this reliance on the right entity, I feel like I can accomplish anything I put my mind to - because I know that I have the 'Ultimate Power' backing me."

After returning to the city he resumed his employment at the City of New Orleans, and continued serving as a member of the Toastmasters a fraternal organization where he served as President the past two terms. Inside the organization he is dedicated

to helping young people, and throughout his service over the past decade he was recently awarded the organization's highest honor (Distinguished Toastmaster). Of many of their projects they are developing youth leadership programs to help at risk youth develop communication and leadership skills.

Reflecting on the hurricane, and his life, one which is sealed in faith, and the power of prayer, "I understand the power of prayer that is why I have praying hands coming out the eye of the hurricane on the cover of my book." "If everyone could recognize the benefits of prayer, we could cut down on going to the other unreliable sources, which have let us down and perhaps caused some of us to give up on our goals/dreams." Speaking about his community work, and the prophetic messages in his book, "I'm using negative events to demonstrate positive revelations. I'm hoping that my interpretation of these events may spark some inspiration, which causes the people to seek a more intimate relationship with our Creator." Wayne Carriere is a man on a mission, as he continues to aspire to inspire with his work giving people hope through spirituality. He is a concerned citizen who is blazing a trail, and this month he is being honored for his efforts as a New Orleans Data News Weekly Trailblazer.

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*This deadline applies to applications for the Homeowner Assistance program ONLY.
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Even if you aren't sure of your plans yet, you need to apply to *The Road Home* program by **July 31, 2007**, to make sure that you don't miss out on potential program benefits.

For information on *Road Home* meetings in your area, visit our website at www.road2LA.org.

Your *Road Home* team isn't going anywhere.

We'll be here to help you with the process in the months to come. The July 31 deadline is for new applications only. You will have more time to schedule your appointment with a *Road Home* advisor and to complete other steps in the process. Plus, there's plenty of time to take advantage of *Road Home* Advisory Services.

Unsure if you registered or applied?

The Road Home began accepting applications on August 20, 2006. Even if you registered for the program before then, you need to apply. If you are unsure if you have applied, you can call 1.888.ROAD.2.LA to see if you have an application on file with the program.

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Scandal-linked senator returns to work

WASHINGTON – U.S. Sen. David Vitter returned from a week-long absence from Congress Tuesday, a day after he made a public apology for “a serious sin” as investigators probe an alleged prostitution ring that operated in the nation’s capital.

Vitter vanished from public view last week after his phone number turned up among those kept by a reputed “D.C. Madam” in records that have become part of her upcoming criminal trial.

The Louisiana conservative apologized privately to his fellow Republican senators at their weekly policy lunch Tuesday, senators who attended the lunch said.

One described Vitter’s his apology as “humble” and “short and to the point.” The senator said Vitter was met with a great deal of “empathy” by the senators in the room.

Tuesday morning, Vitter did not visit his Senate office, where

the media had camped out in anticipation of his return. He also was not seen at a residential address near the Supreme Court building.

He eventually emerged at a scheduled Senate hearing taking place near his office building. He arrived nearly 30 minutes late for the start of the panel, which heard testimony regarding commercial airline service to outlying parts of the United States.

The senator left the hearing early and tried to ignore shouted questions and camera lights in the hallway. He then turned and stopped.

Vitter referred to comments he made Monday evening near New Orleans, then said, “I look forward today to be back at work, really focused on a lot of important issues for the people of Louisiana. I’ll leave it at that.”

Last week, Vitter acknowledged in a statement that his number



had turned up in the telephone records of accused “D.C. Madam” Deborah Jeane Palfrey. Vitter, 46, said those calls were made prior to his election to the Senate in 2004, and he and his wife had already dealt with what he termed a “serious sin” privately, through marriage counseling and confession to a Roman Catholic priest.

On Monday, Vitter and his wife Wendy spoke to reporters in Metairie, where he lives. “I know this has hurt the relationship of trust

I’ve enjoyed with so many of you and that I have a lot of work to do to rebuild that trust,” the senator said.

Vitter is the first lawmaker entangled in the case, although State Department official Randall Tobias resigned in May after confirming he patronized Palfrey’s business.

Larry Flynt’s Hustler magazine claimed credit for exposing Vitter’s connection to Palfrey, saying he came clean only after a journalist working as a paid consultant for the magazine discovered the senator’s number in her phone records.

Doug Redd is not sick anymore, and we are grateful for his peaceful transition.

On Wednesday, July 18 at 9:23 a.m. Douglas Redd beloved Founder and Artistic Director of Efforts of Grace, Inc. and Ashe Cultural Arts Center was welcomed to the realm of the ancestors. His spirit and legacy lives on and will be remembered in the work of Efforts of Grace and the Ashe Cultural Arts Center. His art will live on in every medium from wood to computer graphics, in every form and size from jewelry to murals. He taught anyone who would learn.

From the sixties through the millennium Doug, as he was lovingly called by most, created logos, posters, book and pamphlet covers, fliers, and post cards and anything else people working for social justice needed, and more often than not, all someone had to do was ask. Anyone who has been involved in the struggle of our people in New Orleans will instantly recognize his line art which reverberates themes of Egypt and Morocco throughout the New Orleans movement for equality and justice.

In addition to this unsung service Doug’s portfolio and artistic credits include design and/or creation of the Congo Square Area at the Jazz and Heritage Festival for 20 years, design of the Essence Music Festival logo, creator of the Efforts of Grace series of installations and a line of ethnic themed holiday cards. He is entrusted with the design of images for almost every effort that seeks to celebrate the spirit and images of

the Diaspora in New Orleans.

Over the last several years of his life, his total commitment to Efforts Of Grace, and his merger of commitment with co-founder and co-director Carol Bebel has gifted our city with the ASHE Cultural Arts Center. Together their dedication, service and credibility has attracted the kind of support that will insure that our art and culture has a permanent home in Central City.

Our hope is that for generations to come, Douglas Redd’s life and art will inspire others to such commitment and achievement. To that end, the board and staff of Efforts of Grace have renamed their Artist Housing Project. Upon his crossing over it was renamed ‘Redd House’ so that the generations will always know who Douglas Redd was and what he did for them.

Memorial Services for Doug will be held on Thursday, July 26th (Community Service) from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Tremé Community Center, and Friday, July 27th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Ashe Cultural Arts Center- A Repast will follow at Ashe until 3:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made to: The Efforts of Grace/Douglas Redd Memorial Fund, c/o Hope Credit Union, 1726 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.

New Orleans, La. 70113. Donations will be dedicated to the Redd House Ashe Artist Housing Project

Autopsy: Man killed by police after Katrina was shot in back

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana – A man killed by New Orleans police in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was shot in the back, according to an autopsy report.

That autopsy finding seems to raise questions about the police department’s conclusion that its officer fired only because his life was in danger.

Danny Brumfield, 45, was shot outside the New Orleans Con-

vention Center in the early hours of September 2, 2005, after he stepped in front of a patrol car. He wound up on the car’s hood with shears or scissors in his hand.

Police said the officer fired in self-defense. District Attorney

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Mobile Medical Units Provide Healthcare around the City at No Cost

New Orleans Children's Health Project adds mobile mental health unit to address both physical and mental health needs of uninsured and under insured residents

In a response to the critical need for mental health services for returning families, the New Orleans Children's Health Project (NOCHP) launched their second medical mobile unit dedicated to providing mental health services and case management to families with children ages 0-24. NOCHP has been operating their initial medical mobile unit for over one year now.

Their units can be found in a different part of the city each day of the week working to reach as many patients as possible. Both units provide comprehensive continuity care including referrals to specialty and inpatient care, mental health services, and disease prevention education. In addition, an on call pediatrician is available to assist families after hours, seven days a

week. The services are for children ages 0-24 that are uninsured, under insured, and those families who have limited or no access to a pediatrician due to the loss of physicians after the storm.

The second mental health mobile unit was recently added

to address the mental health crisis in New Orleans and supplement the medical health care service that NOCHP is already providing. "We hope to build our program to address the varying needs of the children we see and work together to help foster physical and emotional

wellness in our community's children," stated Dr. Jaya Aysola, Medical Director of the New Orleans Children's Health Project.

The health care system in New Orleans was broken and severely underfunded even before Katrina. Access to this system has been further compromised by additional barriers including increased

lack of transportation, difficulties obtaining insurance, and shortage of health care providers.

The New Orleans Children's Health Project has developed the Operation Assist program to ad-

dress this disparity. The mobile medical units are an integral component of a larger program that covers clinical services, mental health, public health, and policy advocacy. NOCHP works on a

broader scale to draft and support policies that will enable Louisiana citizens to acquire health insurance that is affordable and have access to quality health care.

NOCHP doctors and staff are committed to providing top tier comprehensive primary care service through the mobile medical units without regard to ability to pay. Dr. Jaya Aysola serves as the Medical Director and Donna Usner serves as the Mental Health Coordinator. The schedule for the units is as follows:

Monday: Lower 9th Ward Health Clinic

Tuesday: Kingsley House (Uptown)

Wednesday: Andrew Jackson Elementary (Chalmette)

Thursday: Pierre Capdau (Gentilly)

For Medical Appointments please call:

(504) 988-0545

For Family Support or Mental Health Services please call: **(504) 460-1001**

*Autopsy,
continued from previous page.*

Eddie Jordan has closed out any criminal investigation, and he told reporters the shooting has been ruled a justifiable homicide.

According to the autopsy report, Brumfield was struck in the back of the left shoulder by a single shotgun blast that entered his body in a "back-to-front" trajectory with "little deviation from top-to-bottom."

When shown those words from the autopsy report, an attorney for Brumfield's family, Robert Jenkins, questioned the official police report that said the officer in the passenger seat of the patrol car fired when Brumfield, lying on the hood, made a stabbing motion at him through his side window.

"It almost means he [the police officer] was standing right behind

him when he fired," said Jenkins, who had not seen the autopsy before. "How can he be in the car and shoot somebody in the back?"

The Brumfield autopsy was released several days after Jordan's office closed out its investigation of the shooting. The family has filed a civil lawsuit against the New Orleans Police Department in regard to the shooting.

The district attorney said the only question raised by the autopsy is "how Mr. Brumfield was shot in the back." Jordan suggested perhaps he was turning or falling off the patrol car at the time.

"I don't believe that autopsy alone is sufficient to create a situation where we would be able to carry our burden of proof," Jordan added.



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Essence Festival Revisited

Words by Edwin Buggage
Photos by Glenn Summers

As Essence Festival came back to the Crescent City with events happening from the inaugural parties given by the City Council and the Mayor that ushered in the return of the fest to its rightful home, in addition to the shows, parties and empowerment seminars Essence Fest was by all accounts a success. With beautiful ebony faces of many shades covering the streets of New Orleans in a show of the continuing support of the renaissance of one of this country's most valued cultural treasures. Data News Weekly was there as we present some of the faces and places during this historic weekend as Essence Festival returned to the Big Easy.



New Orleans Police Superintendent Warren Riley, and Data News Weekly Vice President of Advertising and Marketing Glenn Jones.



Data News Weekly publisher Terry Jones and Essence Magazine founder Ed Lewis.

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New Orleans Recovery Czar Dr. Ed Blakely and Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco.



New Orleans City Council person Cynthia Willard-Lewis, Data News Weekly Publisher Terry Jones, Data News Weekly Editor-in-Chief Edwin Buggage and Rianna Lewis.



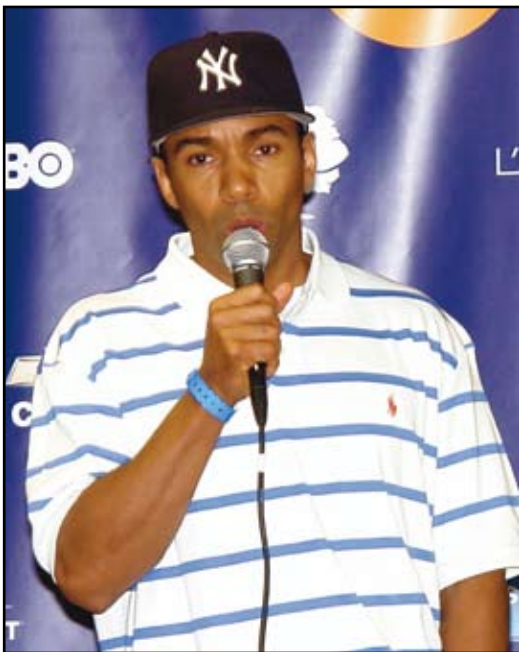
New Orleans Hornets Senior VP of Communications and Public Affairs Steve Martin, Stacy Simms Director of Community Relations Fair Grounds Race course, State Representative Austin Badon, and BellSouth Regional Manager for Customer Affairs Keith Hitchens.



City-Council members James Carter, Cynthia Hedge-Morell, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, and City-Council members Cynthia Willard-Lewis, and Oliver Thomas.



Legendary hip-hop group Public Enemy performs during at Essence Fest.



House of Payne star Allen Payne.



State Representative Cedric Richmond, Stephanie Richmond, Blair Boutte, and Sidney Richmond.

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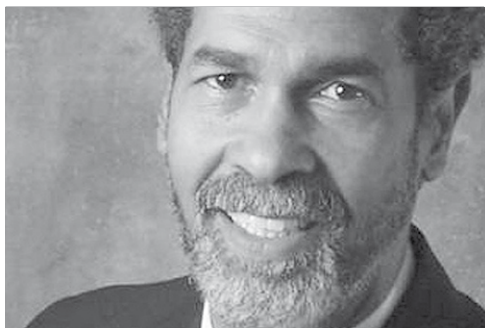
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Opinion

In The Spirit

Why Vote?



The Love Dr.
Data Columnist

A significant change from now on there has to be a significant change in the way poor and working black people use our right to vote. We have been using the vote as a way to elect black people to office, and that has made a major difference for some black people, notably those who are close to those who get elected, and surely just because they are black, whatever trickle down happens as jobs and professional services trickles down more in the black community with black elected officials, for the same reason that electing white people creates mostly trickle down for them, because the people they grew up with and socialize with and go to church with are white. That is called politics, and its usually a game for "insiders", and in a very segregated society, "insiders" tend to look a lot like the people who were elected to serve.

That's the game and the sad reality of today's America is that too many people seek office as a way to use the power of the office to enhance their own personal power and wealth, and it works. An individual gets a lot more attention from corporate America when they can influence laws, policies and contracts. In today's media market, it takes so much money to run a media campaign that potential public servants have to make wealthy friends before we even get to cast our vote.

And that brings me back to the change of attitude we working and struggling folk must adopt if we are going to get the attention of and good service from folk who are primarily driven by personal ambition. We have to vote to represent ourselves.

I've been very close to the election process for years and there are a couple of things I need to share with regular everyday folk so we can maximize our ability to make elected officials do what we want. First and foremost, voting is about representing your neighborhood. Here's the deal. Unless everyone in your precinct votes exactly the same, no one can tell for whom you voted, but anyone with a few dollars can get a list of the people who voted in the last few elections. Now if you didn't vote, and especially if your name isn't even on the voter registration roll, do you really expect a power ambitious politician to spend any time and money on your issues

when he or she can spend time and money in neighborhoods that will vote for him or her the next time he or she has to run of reelection or a higher office?

So represent! The reality is that elections are really contest between neighborhoods, or interest groups. The higher the voter turnout in a group of people, or neighborhood, the more they will have their way with politicians. One of the primary reasons, poorer people and people who need housing assistance are pretty much ignored by elected people is because once we began to elect black people to office, we believed they would automatically represent our interest, and in some cases they did, especially among the "first" blacks we elected.

But then the poor and struggling stopped registering and voting and suddenly elected officials who looked out for struggling people stopped getting support at election time, and everybody else learned the lesson, that struggling people will not represent themselves and their own interest by showing up on election day.

I'm upset that folk who claim such strong neighborhood identities, who "represent" in music, with "shout outs", call ins hand signs and graffiti are screwing themselves, their children, elders and neighborhoods by neglecting to "represent" on election day. I'm upset, but I'm not mad with anybody. Its just time grown folk learned this lesson, that ambitious elected officials, black or white, can't afford to look out for people who don't vote... if they want to keep their position or move up.

And that brings me to the second thing. We need to start electing less "ambitious" people. We need to elect men and women who are firmly rooted in community service, and not people who can just list a bunch of board and committees. We need to elect people who have a reputation for serving community and speaking out in our interest, and perhaps we need fewer lawyers, so other ways of thinking get a chance (not every problem can be solved by changing laws).

You can hate the players and you can hate the game, but nothing's going to change unless you play your part and represent your interest and neighborhood on election day. You always loose when not enough players show up, its call forfeiting the game.

How do you think public housing tenants would be treated if every elected official knew that 90% will show up on election day and voted with a vengeance? You already know how we are treated when we don't! Let's Represent.

After Essence remember July 18th, a free evening of powerful motivation entitled "Are We Learning Yet", featuring Eddie Francis, Mark Johnson and me, at Sweet Lorraine's Jazz Club. Dinner will be available from 5pm and the show starts at 7:00.

Essence: The Power of Unity



Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Data Columnist

When I think about Essence, it reminds me about people coming together, especially African-Americans. I look at all of the beautiful people coming together for the world's largest annual gathering showcasing African-American music and culture. This year, Essence brought us amazing performances from artists such as Beyonce, Chris Brown, Mary J. Blige, Lionel Richie, Frankie Beverly and Maze and many more. The festival was more than just something to get people bodies moving, it also fed their minds and the souls with seminars that gave information on success in finances, business, self-help and other aspects of life.

Essence Fest this year has returned and is one of the most exciting and exalting events that takes place in the city of New Orleans. This year has been even more special for this is the return of the festival to its rightful place in turn reviving and uplifting the spirits of so many who wonder what the fate of New Orleans holds. The festival returning was a blessed event, after all that we have been through with Katrina and Rita, we all needed something where we could let our hair down and relax and reflect on our lives. When I think about what happens during Essence, it reminds me of our strong heritage as African-Americans and what our ancestors went through. Essence is not just an African-American event, but it's a spirit filled event that all people can come together to learn and

interact and have fun at the same time. Again, what is Essence truly about?

Essence is more than just the great music and entertainers spanning generations or people just coming together having a good time. It's more than just our five star hotels in the city of New Orleans, it's more than just going to some of the best restaurants in the world, and enjoying some of the best foods you can imagine. What is it then? Essence is an event that celebrates the spirit of our ancestors who fought and died for the success of African-Americans to experience the joy and freedom of being part of this great country that we call the United States of America.

When I look at the Essence Festival, I look at us coming together in unity because there is power in unity. In the Bible, David when he was king talked about unity in psalms or songs 133. When we are united for God's purpose there is nothing we cannot do or accomplish. If we take the time out to look at the Solar System, everything is in unity. The sun, the moon, the stars and the rest of the galaxy is working together each and every day for which they have been ordained to do by Almighty God.

Unity represents brotherly and sisterly harmony. Some theologians say David probably wrote this song after the Civil War with him and Saul. Today more than ever we need more unity in our homes, in our schools, in the community, in our government, and come to a day where people can come together regardless of race; for God always blesses unity and those who come together and exercise it.

Dr. Aaron E. Harold is the pastor of New Millennium Breakthrough Ministries. To contact him with your comments or suggestions you can e-mail him at rharold@cox.net or call (504) 813-5767



Report: Gang Suppression Doesn't Work

By ANDREW GLAZER

LOS ANGELES (AP)

- Anti-gang legislation and police crackdowns are failing so badly that they are strengthening the criminal organizations and making U.S. cities more dangerous, according to a report being released Wednesday.

Mass arrests, stiff prison sentences often served with other gang members and other strategies that focus on law enforcement rather than intervention actually strengthen gang ties and further marginalize angry young men, according to the Justice Policy Institute, a Washington, D.C., think tank that advocates alternatives to incarceration.

"We're talking about 12-, 13-, 14-, 15-year-olds whose involvement in gangs is likely to be ephemeral unless they are pulled off the street and put in prison, where they will come out with much stronger gang allegiances," said Judith Greene, co-author of "Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies."

The report is based on interviews and analysis of hundreds of pages of previously published statistics and reports. And though it is valid and accurate, the ideas raised in it are not new, said Arthur Lurigio, a psychologist and criminal justice professor at Loyola University of Chicago.

"These approaches, although they sound novel, are just old wine in new bottles," he said. "Gang crime and violence in poor urban neighborhoods have been a problem since the latter parts of the 19th century."

Lurigio, other academics and gang intervention workers have echoed elements of the report that found gangs need to be viewed as a symptom of other problems in poor communities, such as violence, teen pregnancy, drug abuse and unemployment.

The report says Los Angeles and Chicago are losing the war on gangs because they focus on law enforcement and are short on intervention.

It cites a report this year by civil rights attorney Connie Rice, who was hired by Los Angeles to evaluate its failing anti-gang programs. Her report called for an initiative to provide jobs and recreational programs in impoverished neighborhoods.

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Police Chief William Bratton both commended Rice's report. But in February, they unveiled a strategy that focused on targeting the city's worst gangs with arrests and civil injunctions that prohibit known gang members from associating with one another in public. Rice describes the city's policy on arresting the city's estimated 39,000 gang members as "stuck on stupid."

Wes McBride, executive director of the California Gang Investigators Association, dismissed the findings of the report, which he said was written by "thug-huggers." The investigators association is a professional organization for police officers.

"Are they saying we can't put a thief in jail, we can't put a murderer in jail, that we should spank them, put a diaper on them, pat them on the bottom, hug them and let them go?" McBride said. "It's obviously a think tank report, and they didn't leave their ivory tower and spend any time on the streets."

"Gang Wars" also criticizes politicians who overstate the threat of criminal gangs and seek tougher sentences.

Greene specifically criticized a bill introduced by Sens. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, that would make it illegal to be a member of a criminal gang and would make it easier to prosecute some minors as adults.

But Feinstein spokesman Scott Gerber said the bill also calls for spending more than \$400 million on gang prevention and intervention programs, which he said would be the largest single investment of its kind.

Associated Press writer Dan Strumpf in Chicago contributed to this report

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Instructions... How to Destroy an African-American City in 33 Steps

By. Bill Quigley

Special to the NNPA from the San Francisco Bay View

(NNPA) - Lessons from Katrina: Step One. Delay. If there is one word that sums up the way to destroy an African-American city after a disaster, that word is DELAY. If you are in doubt about any of the following steps – just remember to delay and you will probably be doing the right thing.

Step Two. When a disaster is coming, do not arrange a public evacuation. Rely only on individual resources. People with cars and money for hotels will leave. The elderly, the disabled and the poor will not be able to leave. Most of those without cars – 25 percent of households of New Orleans,

overwhelmingly African-Americans – will not be able to leave. Most of the working poor, overwhelmingly African-American, will not be able to leave. Many will then permanently accuse the victims who were left behind of creating their own human disaster because of their own poor planning. It is critical to start by having people blame the victims for their own problems.

Step Three. When the disaster hits, make certain the national response is overseen by someone who has no experience at all handling anything on a large scale, particularly disasters. In fact, you can even inject some humor into the response – have the disaster coordinator be someone whose last job was the head of a dancing horse association.

Step Four. Make sure that the president and national leaders remain aloof and only slightly concerned. This sends an important message to the rest of the country.

Step Five. Make certain the local, state and national governments do not respond in a coordinated, effective way. This will create more chaos on the ground.

Step Six. Do not bring in food or water or communications right away. This will make everyone left behind more frantic and create incredible scenes for the media.

Step Seven. Make certain that the media focus of the disaster is not on the heroic community work of thousands of women, men and young people helping the elderly, the sick and the trapped survive, but mainly on acts of people looting.

Also spread and repeat the rumors that people trapped on rooftops are shooting guns not to attract attention and get help, but at the helicopters. This will reinforce the message that “those people” left behind are different from the rest of us and are beyond help.

Step Eight. Refuse help from other countries. If we accept help, it looks like we cannot or choose not to handle this problem ourselves. This cannot be the message. The message we want to put out over and over is that we have plenty of resources and there is plenty of help. Then if people are not receiving help, it is their own fault. This should be done quietly.

Step Nine. Once the evacuation of those left behind actually starts, make sure people do not know where they are going or have any way to know where the rest of their family has gone. In fact, make sure that African-Americans end up much farther away from home than others.

Step 10. Make sure that when government assistance finally has to be given out, it is given out in a totally arbitrary way. People will have lost their homes, jobs, churches, doctors, schools, neighbors and friends. Give them a little bit of money, but not too much. Make people dependent. Then cut off the money. Then give it to some and not others. Refuse to assist more than one person in every household. This will create conflicts where more than one generation lived together. Make it impossible for people to get consistent answers to their questions. Long lines and busy phones will discourage people from looking for help.

Step 11. Insist the president suspend feder-

al laws requiring living wages and affirmative action for contractors working on the disaster. While local workers are still displaced, import white workers from outside the city for the high-paying jobs like crane operators and bulldozers. Import Latino workers from outside the city for the low-paying dangerous jobs. Make sure to have elected officials, Black and white, blame job problems on the lowest wage immigrant workers. This will create divisions between Black and Brown workers that can be exploited by those at the top. Because many of the Brown workers do not have legal papers, those at the top will not have to worry about paying decent wages, unemployment compensation or workers compensation, providing health insurance, following safety laws or allowing union organizing. They become essentially disposable workers – use them, then lose them.

Step 12. Whatever you do, keep people away from their city for as long as possible. This is the key to long-term success in destroying the African-American city. Do not permit people to come home. Keep people guessing about what is going to happen and when it is going to happen. Set numerous deadlines and then break them. This will discourage people and make it increasingly difficult for people to return.

Step 13. When you finally have to reopen the city, make sure to reopen the African-American sections last. This will aggravate racial tensions in the city and create conflicts between those who are able to make it home and those who are not.

Step 14. When the big money is given out, make sure it is all directed to homeowners and not to renters. This is particularly helpful in a town like New Orleans that was majority African-American and majority renter. Then, after you have excluded renters, mess the program for the homeowners up so that they must wait for years to get money to fix their homes.

Step 15. Close down all the public schools for months. This will prevent families in the public

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Continued on next page.

*Commentary, continued
from previous page.*

school system, overwhelmingly African-Americans, from coming home.

Step 16. Fire all the public school teachers, teacher aides, cafeteria workers and bus drivers and de-certify the teachers union – the largest in the state. This will primarily hurt middle class African Americans and make them look for jobs elsewhere.

Step 17. Even better, take this opportunity to flip the public school system into a charter system and push foundations and the government to allocate

extra money to the new charter schools. Give the schools with the best test scores away first. Then give the least flooded schools away next. Turn 70 percent of schools into charters so that the kids with good test scores or solid parental involvement will go to the charters. That way the kids with average scores or learning disabilities, or single parent families who are still displaced are kept segregated away from the “good” kids. You will have to set up a few schools for those other kids, but make sure those schools do not

get any extra money, do not have libraries nor doors on the toilets nor enough teachers. In fact, because of this, you better make certain there are more security guards than teachers.

Step 18. Let the market do what it does best. When rent goes up 70 percent, say there is nothing we can do about it. This will have two great results. It will keep many former residents away from the city and it will make landlords happy. If wages go up, immediately import more outside workers and wages will settle down.

Step 19. Make sure all the predominantly white suburbs surrounding the African-American city make it very difficult for the people displaced from the city to return to the metro area. Have one suburb refuse to allow any new subsidized housing at all. Have the sheriff of another threaten to stop and investigate anyone wearing dreadlocks. Throw in a little humor and have one nearly all-white suburb pass a law which makes it illegal for homeowners to rent to people other than their blood relatives! The courts may

strike these down, but it will take time and the message will be clear – do not think about returning to the suburbs.

Step 20. Reduce public transportation by more than 80 percent. The people without cars will understand the message.

Step 21. Keep affordable housing to a minimum. Use money instead to reopen the Superdome and create tourism campaigns. Refuse to boldly create massive homeownership opportunities for former renters. Delay re-opening apartment complexes in African

Continued on page 15.



Round 2 of The Small Rental Property program is open until July 5th!

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At National Conference: Despite Hardships, Bond Predicts 'Grander Victories' for the NAACP

By. Hazel Trice Edney

NNPA Editor-in-Chief

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – NAACP Chairman Julian Bond, while pointing to the ills of America that he says have been exacerbated by the administration of President George Bush, told the NAACP annual convention this week that the organization must now prioritize its own refueling and growth for "grander victories" over injustices.

"There is nothing more important for us to be doing right now than ending felony disenfranchisement elsewhere and registering voters. If you don't believe one vote counts, look at the Supreme Court!" Bond told the audience of thousands in prepared remarks at the 98th Annual NAACP Convention, themed "Power Beyond Measure", in Detroit.

"But there are other things we must do too. We must make strengthening our Branches and State Conferences a first priority, building membership where it is low and insisting on activism where Branches

are moribund. We must expand our outreach to and collaboration with our coalition partners – the time has long passed when we were the only soldiers in this fight. We cannot and should not go it alone."

The Detroit convention hosted by the nation's largest NAACP branch, comes on the heels of a national appeal from Bond for the public to "show some love" to the NAACP by giving money.

Interim CEO Dennis Hayes, who stepped into leadership after former Verizon executive Bruce Gordon stepped down abruptly, has announced that the organization had to cut its Baltimore headquarters staff from 119 to 70 people. He said the organization had used more than \$10 million in reserves over the past three years to cover shortfalls. Gordon cited disagreements with the organization's 64-member board as a reason for his resignation.

Despite financial woes, Bond, who kicked off the convention with his speech on Monday, said the civil rights battles ahead underscore the continued need for the NAACP.

"As we find ourselves re-fighting battles we thought we had already won, we are reminded that the NAACP is as needed now as ever," he said, citing surveys that show increasing belief in the work of the NAACP.

"A 1993 leadership study by Brakeley, John Price Jones, Inc., showed 75 percent of Blacks believed the NAACP the leader among groups with civil rights, social justice and race relations agendas. An October 1995 US News and World Report poll reported 90 percent of Blacks supported the NAACP. In an April 1998 poll conducted by the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding, 81 percent of Blacks reported a favorable opinion of the NAACP."

Ultimately, he announced the results of a survey taken just two weeks ago.

"Conducted by the respected firm Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates, this poll confirms that our work is both valuable and valued. The NAACP has the highest favorability of 17 organizations working in the civil rights arena. The NAACP is viewed favorably by almost all Blacks – 94 percent,

including 70 percent who view it very favorably, and by three-quarters of the general public. Fully 93 percent of Blacks surveyed believe the NAACP represents the interests of the American-American community, and 67 percent believe this strongly."

Financial difficulties being no stranger to the NAACP or other civil rights organizations, Bond said its work must be unhindered even as it rebuilds.

Consistent with past years - Bond did not spare the Bush administration scorching criticism. In recent years having described the political operations of the Administration as like "the Taliban" and "snake oil", Bond used the flowery words of Thomas Jefferson to make his point:

"A little patience and we shall see the reign of witches pass over, their spells dissolve, and the people, recovering their true sight, restore their government to its true principles. It is true that in the meantime we are suffering deeply in spirit, and incurring the horrors of a war and long oppressions of enormous public debt," he quoted Jefferson. "If the game runs sometimes

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National News, continued from previous page.

against us at home, we must have patience till luck turns, and then we shall have an opportunity of winning back the principles we have lost, for this is a game where principles are at stake."

Cautious to avoid mention of political parties so to stay within Internal Revenue Service guidelines, Bond was obviously making reference to the presidential race, in which many voters –Republican and Democrat –have used polls to express hope for change in the direction of the nation.

Meanwhile, as a part of its philosophy, "No permanent friends, no permanent enemies, just permanent interests," the NAACP this week prepared to reward Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.), the reputed dean of the Congressional Black Caucus, with the coveted Spingarn Medal, the highest honor that the NAACP bestows.

Conyers, a member of Congress for more than 35 years, earns consistent A's on the organization's annual Legislative Report Card and now chairs the House Judiciary Committee, which has the power to champion NAACP civil rights causes.

"Last fall's midterm elections did not increase the number of Blacks in Congress, which is 43, but it vastly increased their power, elevating more of them to key positions than ever before in our nation's history," Bond told the audience.

He expressed hope that, meanwhile, answers to a litany of major civil rights and economic problems will come legislatively.

"Indeed, for most of us, the notion that race ought not be considered in remedying racial discrimination is ludicrous," he said. "Now the ludicrous has become law."

He was referring to the most recent blow to civil rights, the Supreme Court's recent 5-4 decision that tightened prohibitions on how school districts can use race in assuring racial diversity in the classroom. Civil rights leaders say the ruling eliminates some of the remedies legalized by Brown v. Board of Education.

"The Bush Court, on the same day the bald eagle was removed from the endangered species list, removed Black children from the law's protection," Bond said. "The truth is, there are no non-racial remedies for racial discrimination. In order to get beyond race, you have to go to race. To suggest racial neutrality as a remedy for racial discrimination is sophistry of the highest order."

The answers are simple, said Bond. Among them, "no more Bush appointees to the Supreme

Court! No more appointees, period, who cannot see that there is no constitutional equivalence between race-conscious efforts to segregate and race-conscious efforts to integrate public schools."

He said the second answer is to help school districts find solutions that will fit within the permissible range of race-consciousness, expressed by Justice Anthony Kennedy.

From the recent rejection of Bush's immigration bill by members of his own party, to continued criticism of his handling of Hurricane Katrina and the war, the Bush Administration has been repudiated, said Bond.

"What happened on Election Day last November was not an election – it was an intervention! 'The people, recovering their true sight,' have begun to 'restore their government to its true principles.'"

The organization also attempted to wipe out the often self-inflicted negative self-image of African-Americans by having a mock funeral to "bury the N-Word."

Still, he said, the NAACP must now prioritize its focus inward.

"We've experienced some real losses at the NAACP in recent months. We lost our CEO, who couldn't align our mission with his. We've lost more than 70 valuable employees because of the downsizing our finances forced upon us. But we know if we cannot bear the cross, we cannot wear the crown."

He outlined the organization's strategy for recovery.

He said the NAACP is in the early stages of a drive to put one hundred million dollars in the NAACP treasury by its Centennial in 2009. Leadership 500, spearheaded by the board's Vice-Chair Roslyn Brock, has already contributed \$230,000 to the Centennial Campaign, he said. He said each member of the board of directors and Special Contribution Fund has also agreed to contribute at least \$15,000 by year's end.

But, the backbone, he said, is in the community: "Our state conferences and branches, as always, also have put their shoulders to the wheel. They're raising money too. They won't let us down. They will lift us up... Our programs are continuing, our purpose and commitment are strong, our dedication to justice is unwavering."

We are poised for 'greater efforts and grander victories.'"

Commentary, continued from page 13.

American neighborhoods. As long as less than half the renters can return to affordable housing, they will not return.

Step 22. Keep all public housing closed. Since it is 100 percent African-American, this is a no-brainer. Make sure to have African-Americans be the people who deliver the message. This step will also help by putting more pressure on the rental market as 5,000 more families will then have to compete for rental housing with low-income workers. This will provide another opportunity for hundreds of millions of government funds to be funneled to corporations when these buildings are torn down and developers can build up other less-secure buildings in their place. Make sure to tell the 5,000 families evicted from public housing that you are not letting them back for their own good. Tell them you are trying to save them from living in a segregated neighborhood. This will also send a good signal – if the government can refuse to allow people back, private concerns are free to do the same or worse.

Step 23. Shut down as much public health as possible. Sick and elderly people and moms with little kids need access to public healthcare. Keep the public hospital, which hosted about 350,000 visits a year before the disaster, closed. Keep the neighborhood clinics closed. Put all the pressure on the private healthcare facilities and provoke economic and racial tensions there between the insured and uninsured.

Step 24. Close as many public mental healthcare providers as possible. The trauma of the disaster will seriously increase stress on everyone. Left untreated, medical experts tell us, this will dramatically increase domestic violence, self-medication and drug and alcohol abuse and, of course, crime.

Step 25. Keep the city environment unfriendly to women. Women were already widely discriminated against before the storm. Make sure that you do not reopen day care centers. This, combined with the lack of healthcare, lack of affordable housing, and lack of transportation, will keep moms with kids away. If you can keep women with kids away, the city will destroy itself.

Step 26. Create and maintain an environment where Black on

Black crime will flourish. As long as you can keep parents out of town, keep the schools hostile to kids without parents, keep public healthcare closed, make only low-paying jobs available, not fund social workers or prosecutors or public defenders or police, and keep chaos the norm, young Black men will certainly kill other young Black men. To increase the visibility of the crime problem, bring in the National Guard in fatigues to patrol the streets in their camouflage hummers.

Step 27. Strip the local elected predominately African American government of its powers. Make certain the money that is coming in to fix up the region is not under their control. Privatize as much as you can as quickly as you can – housing, healthcare and education for starters. When in doubt, privatize. Create an appointed commission of people who have no experience in government to make all the decisions. In fact, it is better to create several such commissions; that way no one will really be sure who is in charge and there will be much more delay and conflict. Treat the local people like they are stupid; you know what is best for them much better than they do.

Step 28. Create lots of planning processes but give them no authority. Overlap them where possible. Give people conflicting signals whether their neighborhood will be allowed to rebuild or be turned into green space. This will create confusion, conflict and aggravation. People will blame the officials closest to them – the local African-American officials – even though they do not have any authority to do anything about these plans since they do not control the rebuilding money.

Step 29. Hold an election but make it very difficult for displaced voters to participate. In fact, do not allow any voting in any place outside the state even though we do it for other countries and even though hundreds of thousands of people are still displaced. This is very important because when people are not able to vote, those who have been able to return can say, "Well, they didn't even vote, so I guess they are not interested in returning."

Step 30. Get the elected officials out of the way and make room for corporations to make a profit. There are billions to be

made in this process for well-connected national and international corporations. There is so much chaos that no one will be able to figure out exactly where the money went for a long time. There is no real attempt to make sure that local businesses, especially African-American businesses, get contracts – at best they get modest subcontracts from the corporations which got the big money. Make sure the authorities prosecute a couple of little people who ripped off \$2,000 – that will temporarily satisfy people who know they are being ripped off and divert attention from the big money rip-offs. This will also provide another opportunity to blame the victims – as critics can say: "Well, we gave them lots of money. They must have wasted it. How much more can they expect from us?"

Step 31. Keep people's attention diverted from the African-American city. Pour money into Iraq instead of the Gulf Coast. Corporations have figured out how to make big bucks whether we are winning or losing the war. It is easier to convince the country to support war – support for cities is much, much tougher. When the war goes badly, you can change the focus of the message to supporting the troops. Everyone loves the troops. No one can say we all love African-Americans. Focus on terrorists – that always seems to work.

Step 32. Refuse to talk about or look seriously at race. Condemn anyone who dares to challenge the racism of what is going on – accuse them of "playing the race card" or say they are paranoid. Criticize people who challenge the exclusion of African-Americans as people who "just want to go back to the bad old days." Repeat the message that you want something better for everyone. Use African American spokespersons where possible.

Step 33. Repeat these steps.

Note to readers: Every fact in this list actually happened and continues to happen in New Orleans after Katrina.

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