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News Weekly

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Honoring Dr. King & Continuing His Legacy

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Continuing "The Dream" in New Orleans



Members of 1733 protesting city officials refusal to recognize Their union in 1966.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. went down to Memphis in 1968 to assist with a garbage worker's strike.

By Robert Dabney

Once again we gather, march, pray and celebrate the life of one of this country's most outstanding citizens, one whose name never appeared on a political ballot – the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. During most of the celebrations that will be held in his honor, participants will be challenged to reflect on what many consider his greatest speech, I Have a Dream. Men, women and children will be asked to uphold the dream of peace and brotherhood:

"I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood."

Many celebrants of the King's dream will be asked to continue to strive for racial equality, and we'll subtly convince ourselves that we have achieved such equality among the races:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character..."

...down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" – one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

With this special edition of Data Newsweekly, we look at another section of this famous speech, as well as other, remarkable speeches by Dr. King, most of which are rarely seen in print. The purpose is to examine

and evaluate one of the tenets of Dr. King's philosophy and hope for the most vulnerable people of this country - economic equality;

"...In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the "unalienable Rights" of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds."

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was dedicated to economic justice and equalita fair distribution of wealth. As best stated by Bishop Desmond Tutu ...

"I am not interested in picking up crumbs of compassion thrown from the table of someone who considers himself my master. I want the full menu of rights."

Both of these great men, believed in the full 'menu' of rights for every human being, and that includes economic equity.

Unfortunately, what we have been taught about Dr. King, and even Bishop Tutu, has been diluted to tra-

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

ditional stories and told in a way that is designed to makes us feel simultaneously safe and proud of our country's progress with the assumption that our racial problems are all in the past. The dream has been achieved, right?

The civil rights movement was fully engaged with economic issues, from the Montgomery bus boycott that brought buses in Montgomery to a slow crawl, as well as the boycotts of retailers like Woolworth's. Dr. King became very focused on the economics of the civil rights movement and the United States. In fact, when he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968, he was attending a strike by sanitation employees who had a work stoppage because they were not being paid a fair wage. Dr. King was working organizing the Poor People's Campaign, a focus on anti-poverty policies.

In Beyond Vietnam—A Time to Break the Silence, a speech delivered by Dr. King on April 4th, 1967, he discussed the restructuring of a society that produced poverty, disingenuous international investments and the ills of a society that prioritizes war over humanity;

"A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. On the one hand we are called to play the good Samaritan on life's roadside; but that will be only an initial act. One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth..."

In August 1967, in a speech called Where Do We Go From Here? King said to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC);

"The problem indicates that our emphasis must be twofold: We must create full employment, or we must create incomes. People must be made consumers by one method or the other. Once they are placed in this position, we need to be concerned that the

potential of the individual is not wasted. New forms of work that enhance the social good will have to be devised for those for whom traditional jobs are not available... The poor, transformed into purchasers, will do a great deal on their own to alter housing decay. Negroes, who have a double disability, will have a greater effect on discrimination when they have the additional weapon of cash to use in their struggle."

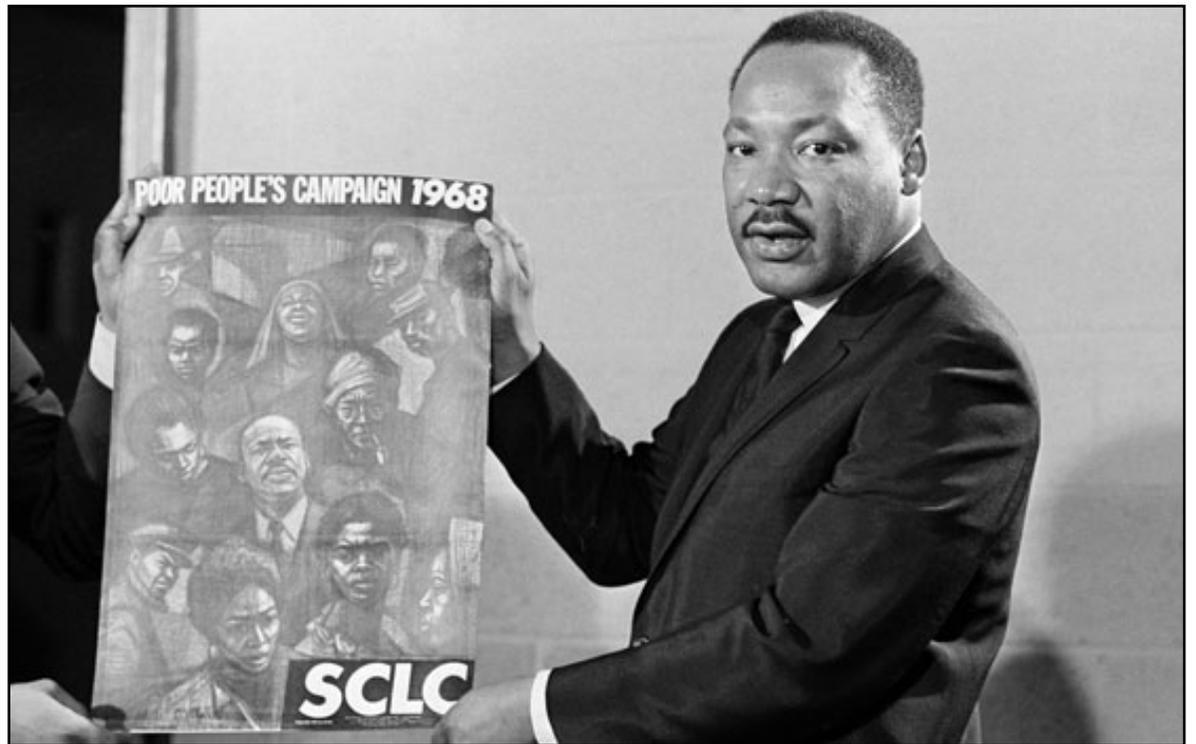
"Beyond these advantages, a host of positive psychological changes inevitably will result from widespread economic security. The dignity of the individual will flourish when the decisions concerning his life are in his own hands, when he has the assurance that his income is stable and certain, and when he knows that he has the means to seek self-improvement."

In his short life's journey, Dr. King embodied the true power of economic equality, not the superficial or selfish lining of one's own pockets, but the powerful and positive effect of impacting an entire community – mentally and emotionally. He also recognized the power of economic equality in transforming and reform a city, state and country.

I want to say to you as I move to my conclusion, as we talk about "Where do we go from here?" that we must honestly face the fact that the movement must address itself to the question of restructuring the whole of American society. There are forty million poor people here, and one day we must ask the question, "Why are there forty million poor people in America?" And when you begin to ask that question, you are raising a question about the economic system, about a broader distribution of wealth... one day we must come to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. It means that questions must be raised. And you see, my friends, when you deal with this you begin to ask the question, "Who owns the oil?" You begin to ask the question, "Who owns the iron ore?"

...now, when I say questioning the whole society, it means ultimately coming to see that the problem of racism, the problem of economic exploitation, and the problem of war are all tied together. These are the triple evils that are interrelated.

Today, we could duplicate Dr.



Dr. King displays a poster as he announces the "Poor Peoples' Campaign", which many believe led to his death.

King's statements and reach a very contemporary conclusion by substituting the words "oil" and "iron ore" with the words "banks", "hotels", "port".

Dr. King's philosophy about the impact of a broader distribution of wealth and the assurance of 'full employment' and 'creating an income' are battle lines that remain drawn today, often camouflaged by the distribution of "crumbs". When we think of creating incomes, persons such as Oprah, Tom Joyner, and Bill Cosby are notable entrepreneurs that come to mind. Locally, and in line with the subject matter of Dr. King's economic equality Dream, Mr. Alvin Richards, owner of Richard's Disposal and Mr. Jimmy Woods, owner of Metro Disposal, are persons who crossed the battle lines and unknowingly waged a political war when they were awarded the bid (in accordance with LA State Law) for sanitation services in the City of New Orleans, less than four years ago.

Richards and Woods create incomes and they assure full employment for hundreds of men and women in the metro area. Recently, a local media campaign about the two companies boasts of their contributions to the community and testimonials from citizens praising the excellent quality of service, but listen carefully to the under tone and you can hear the war cry as one citizen chides 'critics' of Metro and Richards sanitation companies and speaks

to constant problems that have existed since these companies began service in the city. One can ask "why"? The answer to that question lies in the words of Dr. King and Bishop Tutu outlined in this article. Broad distribution of wealth=power, advancement of a community. Not accepting crumbs, but demanding the full menu of rights.

As we celebrate the Dream and life of Dr. King, surely we would think Richards and Woods are examples of this local community's "overcoming", but, as many of us in the city have witnessed over the years – scenes of citizens and activists crowded in City Council chambers to defend the work of Richards and Woods, challenges to the Councilmembers about cancelling these two, but not all three, sanitation contracts, the waving of posters, and vocal clashes among Councilmember – are just some of the theatrics that have been displayed when the discussions of these contractors are on the council agenda. And matters of race and racism always underline the conversation - in public and in private.

Two men who created companies and created incomes remain a lightning rod because of the complicated interplay of economics and race in New Orleans. If we were to examine the works, words and life of Dr. King, even moments leading into when he supported the strike of the Memphis sanitation workers

and spoke of ending poverty, and changing the world by creating a just economy, we would not celebrate that the dream has been achieved, as we look at these two heroes – Woods and Richards. We would ask the questions that Dr. King challenged us to ask, "who owns the oil?"

We would demand from politicians who "seek" our vote an answer on how are they going to broaden the distribution of wealth in the City of New Orleans? How are they going to assure full employment and the opportunity to create incomes? When are we going to ask why our state politicians sat by and watched a \$3 billion surplus accumulate when people were robbed by Road Home? When are we, as an electorate, going to show our power, as Dr. King and the civil rights activists, and boycott retailers and industries that do not pay a fair wage, that produce degrading and false materials that destroy our leaders and our communities and ultimately our children?

March 31, 1968, less than a week before Dr. King died in Memphis, he spoke at the National Cathedral about the changes going on in the world, the challenges and opportunities they presented, and about the Poor People's Campaign. His speech was titled, Remaining Awake Through A Great Revolution. Let's honor Dr. King by Remaining AWAKE.

US Residents Mount Humanitarian Aid to Haiti

by Garry Pierre-Pierre
Special from New American Media

This week, the most devastating earthquake in over 200 years, happened in Haiti. The tiny nation, already battered by poverty was devastated beyond anything seen in recent history. The magnitude of destruction eclipses that of Katrina and the flood, and the nation awaits lifesaving assistance from the United States and the rest of the world.

A group of Haitian American leaders, state and local officials met late last night to map out a humanitarian relief efforts as the extent of the damage from a category 7.0 earthquake hit Haiti.

The group will send a couple of people in the ground as early as Wednesday for a quick assessment. The goal is to get about 300 people, mostly health care professionals engineers to support foreign government's efforts.

A command center will be set up and then the volunteers will arrive after logistics are set up.

The group is hoping to have things in place by this weekend.

"Our goal is to do humanitarian work, and not first aid," said Brooklyn physician, Jean Claude Compas during the conference of scores of people.



The Presidential Palace in Haiti was not spared from devastation in this monumental earthquake.

"The Cuban government, the American government, the Venezuelan government and the Dominican government are all doing rescue work."

The group is calling on people or government to donate water and food supplies. The capital's infrastructure, already precarious is in shambles. The most telling sign is the near collapse of the gleaming white palace, once a symbol of grandeur in a sea of poverty.

Communications were widely disrupted, making it impossible to get a full picture of damage as powerful aftershocks shook a desperately poor country where many buildings are flimsy.



A Haitian woman and man try to extract themselves from the rubble.

Electricity was out in some places.

The earthquake was the strongest to rock Haiti in more than 200 years, collapsing a hospital where people screamed for help and heavily damaging the National Palace, U.N. peacekeeper headquarters and other buildings. U.S. officials reported bodies in the streets and an aid official described "total disaster and chaos."

Karel Zelenka, a Catholic Relief Services representative in Port-au-Prince, told U.S. colleagues before phone service failed that "there must be thousands of people dead," according to a spokeswoman for the aid group, Sara Fajardo.

"He reported that it was just total disaster and chaos, that there were clouds of dust surrounding Port-au-Prince," Fajardo said from the group's offices in Maryland.

In addition to the group's effort, many people have started Facebook pages to help in the relief efforts. The entertainment community is planning several fundraising activities at night clubs throughout New York, Florida and the Boston area.

Haiti's ambassador to the U.S., Raymond Joseph, said from his Washington office that he spoke to President Rene Preval's chief of staff, Fritz Longchamp, just after the quake hit. He said Longchamp told him that "buildings were crumbling right and left" near the National Palace. The envoy said he had not been able to get back in contact with officials.

With phones down, some of the only communication came

from social media such as Twitter. Richard Morse, a well-known musician who manages the famed Olafson Hotel, kept up a stream of dispatches on the aftershocks and damage reports.

The news, based mostly on second-hand reports and photos, was disturbing, with people screaming in fear and roads blocked with debris. Belair, a slum even in the best of times, was said to be "a

broken mess."

The earthquake had a preliminary magnitude of 7.0 and was centered about 10 miles (15 kilometers) west of Port-au-Prince at a depth of 5 miles (8 kilometers), the U.S. Geological Survey said. USGS geophysicist Kristin Marano called it the strongest earthquake since 1770 in what is now Haiti. In 1946, a magnitude-8.1 quake struck the Dominican Republic and also shook Haiti, producing a tsunami that killed 1,790 people.

The temblor appeared to have occurred along a strike-slip fault, where one side of a vertical fault slips horizontally past the other, said earthquake expert Tom Jordan at the University of Southern California.

The quake's size and proximity to populated Port-au-Prince likely caused widespread casualties and structural damage, he said.

"It's going to be a real killer," he said. "Whenever something like this happens, you just hope

for the best."

Most of Haiti's 9 million people are desperately poor, and after years of political instability the country has no real construction standards.

In November 2008, following the collapse of a school in Petionville, the mayor of Port-au-Prince estimated about 60 percent of the buildings were shoddily built and unsafe in normal circumstances.

Tuesday's quake was felt in the Dominican Republic, which shares a border with Haiti on the island of Hispaniola, and some panicked residents in the capital of Santo Domingo fled from their shaking homes. But no major damage was reported there.

In eastern Cuba, houses shook but there were also no reports of significant damage.

If you wish to contribute to the humanitarian or rescue efforts, contact your local Red Cross or Salvation Army for information.

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your voice
and be free
let hope pour
from you endlessly
and like a bird
shares its song
express happiness
openly...

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Michael Baptiste a local vocalist held his birthday party at Sweet Lorraine's on Saturday, January 2, 2010. It was a big success, with standing room only. Many of his friends in the music industry performed. There were performances by vocalist and musician - Naydja Cojoe, Jay Hall, Gina Brown, Alan Colon, Kurt Brunus, Werner Richmond of Houston, TX, Brian Wise, Troy Branch, Andrew "Snap" Sylvester, Shameka, David Lanoix, Percy Williams, Bobby Parker, Dave Badie, Miranda, Neshia Ruffuns, Kermit Ruffins daughter and of course Michael Baptiste himself. Everyone had a great time.



Eric O'Neal and his wife, Charlesetta O'Neal



Melisa Adams, Clyde Wilson and June Hazeur



Lonnie Baptiste, Michael's wife, Michael Baptiste, June Hazeur, and Deacon John



Kermit Ruffins, Terry Jones and Deacon John

Young Men Illinois Club, Inc. Presents: A Belle of Orleans



Dionne Character, Author
Entertainment Editor/Columnist



Cedric Richmond, Cynthia Willard-Lewis and Kenya Smith at the Young Men Illinois Debutante Party honoring, First Maid-Elect Michon Vontrice Wright



Mr. and Mrs. Eric A. Wright and First Maid-Elect, Michon Vontrice Wright

Photos by Bernie Saul

Eric A. Wright, Esq., presented his daughter, First Maid-Elect, Michon Vontrice Wright, who made her grand social entrance into "Society" on Saturday, January 9, 2010.

The ballroom, dazzling as the honor-

ee who was dressed in a beautiful white gown wearing a rhinestone tiara, whose charm glittered throughout the night.

With traces of her initials monogrammed in gold throughout the ballroom, Michon Vontrice Wright took us

all aback to the classic tale of Cinderella, as she captivated everyone with her Southern allure and beauty.

A Queen in her father's eyes, Miss Michon Vontrice Wright enjoyed stepping out into society with members of the

Young Men Illinois Club, guests, family and presenters, as she danced the night alongside all the debutantes, princesses and pages, who enjoyed a memorable debutante party featuring live music by Bobby J and Stuff Like That Band.

Local Entergy Companies Reach Out to Customers Facing Tough Financial Situations

LIHEAP and Power to Care Programs Offer Aid

New Orleans, La. – Following the holiday season and as frigid weather settles in, many New Orleans-area customers may be worrying about heating their homes while facing tough financial situations.

Both Entergy New Orleans, Inc. and Entergy Louisiana, LLC can help.

Approximately 20 to 25 percent of Entergy's 2.7 million customers need government assistance to survive. The latest poverty report released by the U. S. Census showed that the number of Americans living in poverty was the highest since 1997. The four states that Entergy serves have some of the highest statewide poverty rates in the nation. Louisiana ranked fifth.

Various state and federal programs are available to help cus-

tomers manage their bills. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides money to help individuals with energy bills and other energy-related expenses. LIHEAP is funded through the federal government and works with the community action agencies to help customers pay for and keep electric service in their homes. Both homeowner and renter households are eligible to receive LIHEAP assistance. A Louisiana household's annual income must be at or below 150 percent of federal poverty level. Energy costs must also be documented.

"We know times are tough for many people, and Entergy has a number of assistance opportunities available to help our customers," said Melonie Hall, customer service director, Entergy New

Orleans, Inc. "We encourage our customers to contact us or local charitable, nonprofit agencies that have programs to help with energy bills as soon as they think they could have a problem paying their bills. Let's start the process together, as early as we can, before bills become unmanageable."

Entergy's Power to Care fund helps low-income, elderly or disabled customers pay their energy bills in times of financial distress. Entergy employees and customers donate to The Power to Care, with company shareholders matching new contributions up to \$500,000 annually.

The company works with Councils on Aging to distribute these funds. Inquiries regarding The Power to Care should be directed to a customer's local Council on Aging:

- New Orleans Council on Aging - (504) 821-4121.
- Jefferson Parish Council on Aging - (504) 888-5880.
- St. Bernard Parish Council on Aging - (504) 278-7335.
- Plaquemines Parish Council on Aging - (504) 392-3725.

A donation to The Power to Care is a small act that makes a big difference in someone else's life. Donations may be made by checking a box to add a dollar to the monthly bill, or online through the secure Web site at entergy-neworleans.com or entergy-louisiana.com.

To help manage payments, Entergy New Orleans and Entergy Louisiana provide payment extensions and payment plans for qualified customers having difficulty paying their bills. Additionally, the companies can help customers avoid disconnections and the fees and deposits that often are required to restore service.

To help manage bill payments, Entergy offers these programs:

Pick-A-Date - Only customers know the best time to pay their monthly bill. With Pick-A-Date, they may be able to select the date each month when their electric bill is due.

Level Billing - The Level Billing option allows customers to pay about the same amount for electric service every month, making it easier to budget and plan for this

cost, regardless of the season and usage. Under this program, each bill is essentially an average of 12 months of previous bills. Bills will vary on slightly each month.

Energy efficiency programs are available as well. These programs help reduce energy usage without sacrificing comfort. Customers can find answers to energy-related topics, including what goes into energy costs and what Entergy is doing to ensure affordable energy, at EntergyAnswers.com. The Web site also offers easy-to-use tips to help customers lower their energy bills.

The company's new Bill Analyzer offers customers a simple overview that shows why their bill amount may have changed compared to previous bills. Details on customer usage, energy charges and other factors are available for customers who want more information. To access this feature, customers should register for My Account Online at entergy.com. My Account Online also allows customers to view and pay their bill, view their billing and payment history and update account information – all with a few clicks of a computer mouse.

"The programs and plans mentioned above, and more, are also available to customers by calling 1-800-ENTERGY," added Hall.

Data News Weekly

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Election 101

Why Can't the Loyola University Institute of Politics Find Any Black Voices They Believe Are Qualified To Speak On Black Politics?

by Tracey Washington

On Tuesday evening the Loyola University Institute of Politics (IOP) hosted a closed session on the subject "Black Politics in New Orleans." The guest speaker was Moon Landrieu, the last white mayor of New Orleans. Landrieu's term in office ended in 1978.

Not only was the timing of this selection of a speaker curious, it suggests that former Mayor Landrieu is the best expert to lecture graduate students on the subject of Black politics in New Orleans. While former Mayor Landrieu is certainly a wise political sage and he earned a reputation for racial fairness in his day, he is clearly

not best qualified to lead a discussion of contemporary issues related to African Americans and politics in New Orleans and Louisiana. We find it curious that the IOP did not select one of dozens of recognized scholars and African American political professionals who have worked in this field for decades.

The entire community and particularly African Americans should be outraged. For far too long, we've allowed others to define our history, distort our struggles and attempt to determine our destiny. Enough is enough.

As center of higher learning, the Loyola Institute of Politics

should be held to a higher standard of honest intellectual inquiry. Further, as a Jesuit-affiliated institution of higher education and a member of the academy, the IOP should not be allowed to miseducate our state's future political leadership by failing the standards of academic objectivity and scholarship, demeaning the integrity of the political struggles of African Americans in New Orleans.

Among the countless speakers who the IOP could have been considered are: Don Hubbard, Jerome Smith, Andy Washington, Dr. Rudy Lombard, Dr. Raphael Casimere, Dr. Mtangulizi Sanyi-

ka, Lolis Edward Elie, King Wells, Ron Nabonne, James Gray, II, Dale Atkins, Dr. Gary Clark, Dr. Silas Lee, Sheriff Paul Valteau, Dr. Ron Gardner, Louis Charbonnet, III, Sherman Copelin, Vincent Sylvain, Doug Evans, Jay Banks, Jerome Bondi, Paul Beaulieu, Beverly McKenna, Renee' Lapeyrolerie, Judith Dangerfield, Sundiata Haley and Lolis Eric Elie.

So as we enter this political season readying ourselves for a change in municipal administration, as African-Americans we should also be mindful that the institutions influencing our future are most certainly not exclusively government related. While we

know the African American community will be chastised with cries of racism for calling-out this IOP-type slights, we must not forget they are, indeed, injustices that must be confronted. And no, in 2010 it is not the obligation of the African-American community to continue to meet with wrongdoers and explain again – for the 45th consecutive year post-Civil Rights Act of 1965 – why this and other acts are discriminatory. No more Mulligans. From this point forward, failure will be graded with 'F'.

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Anyone can make promises but Jon Johnson has made his promises a reality. Jon Johnson for Council District E.

What has Jon Johnson accomplished?

As a former State Representative and State Senator, Jon Johnson has a record of concrete accomplishments. His legislative leadership paved the way for new jobs and businesses – bringing Pic N' Save, Jazzland Theme Park, and the National Finance Center to the district. He expanded the New Orleans Business and Industrial District, helped to triple the size of the SUNO campus, and secured \$30 million to build the Technology and Research Park at UNO. His legislative leadership helped secure \$31 million to expand the Morial Convention Center and pass the \$215 million sports development package to recruit the Hornets and keep the Saints and Zephyrs in New Orleans.

Fighting Crime

He created neighborhood Security Districts in the legislature and brought new police stations and police patrols to the district. He stiffened penalties against drive-by-shootings and car-jackings, created gun-free zones, and won recognition as Outstanding Legislator by Victims and Citizens Against Crime.

Road Improvements

He secured millions of dollars in state funding to resurface highways, widen highway interchanges, improve traffic signals, implement a Motorist Assistance Program, and install road hazard/evacuation advisory signs along the Interstate Highway.

Serving Citizens

He provided state funds to build an Olympic-size indoor swimming pool for our youth and to expand senior citizen programs. He secured state funding to restore Lincoln Beach and to revitalize the Lake Forest Plaza and Methodist Hospital. He sponsored job fairs, health fairs, neighborhood summits, computer classes for children, after-school tutorial programs, day-care, and neighborhood clean-up campaigns.

What will Jon Johnson do as Councilman?

Jon Johnson knows the District E can bounce back better than ever and has developed a 10-point plan to ensure it happens:

Crime – improve police training; open police stations; increase neighborhood patrols; and overhaul the juvenile criminal justice system to provide increased resources for counseling, restitution, rehabilitation, and education; **Economic Development** – aggressively work to return retail businesses to restore neighborhood conveniences and build entrepreneurial capacity in the local minority-owned businesses; **Education** – restore the community's voice to the Recovery School District; **Housing** – Use Community Development Corporations to receive and redevelop Road Home properties to return properties to home ownership; **Health Care** – reopen Methodist Hospital – now; **Environmental** – create a Housing/Environmental Court to remove blight from our neighborhoods; **Infrastructure** – accelerate street and drainage repairs; **Ethics** – impose a "glass-pockets" standard on city officials and employees to guard against back-door dealing; **Recreation** – revigorate NORD and Joe Brown Park; **Government Services** – open a City Hall Annex in District E to enhance constituent services.



Jon Johnson is married to Dr. Angela Barthé and they have a five-year old daughter, Hannah. He is a member of St. David's Church and serves as a Eucharistic Minister and usher at St. Maria Goretti Church.

10040 I-10 Service Road, New Orleans, LA 70127
504-241-5191

www.votejonjohnson.com

What Haiti Needs



Bill Clinton

Hillary and I went to Haiti for the first time in December 1975. A banker friend of ours had some business down there. He had built up a lot of frequent-flyer miles and called and said he was giving us a delayed honeymoon. We were married in October, and we went down there in December. Both of us just kind of fell in love with the country, and I have kept up with it

ever since.

Why is Haiti so special to me? Haiti is completely unique in our hemisphere because of its history and culture. There are other French Caribbean islands, but none of them have Haiti's particular Creole influence. None of them feature Haiti's distinctive mix of West African religious and cultural influences, the most visible of which is the persistence of the voodoo faith, which is practiced alongside Christianity. Unfortunately, ever since the first slave revolt by Haitians in 1791, the country has been beset by abuses caused from within and without. It has never been able to fulfill its potential as a nation.

But I think it can. Haitian immigrants do very well when they come to America or France or Canada. I've always thought that

given the right organization and support, Haiti could become a self-sustaining and very successful country. I still believe that.

In order to stave off a disaster and get Haiti on its feet again, the world needs to respond in rapid and coordinated fashion. The focus first must be on search and rescue, and on meeting people's basic human needs. After the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, where just one building was bombed and we had all the help in the world, it still took several days before all the living and dead had been recovered. There were survivors who were recovered many hours later in the rubble.

We need to get as much equipment as we can into Haiti. The military is sending in helicopters, and there will probably be a need for it to supply some logistics and communications support. The U.S. is going to have to carry a lot of the load there early on. But

it's very important that the U.S., which is so pivotal to this emergency period, work very closely with the U.N. peacekeeping mission stationed in Haiti, which is very well organized and is operating well. In fact, the U.N. system has already swung into action: it has offered \$10 million in immediate emergency relief and organized food relief through the World Food Programme. There are hundreds of thousands of people that are going to be coming out of there alive that have to be cared for; the World Health Organization is trying to meet the health care needs.

The international relief effort that followed the Asian tsunami of 2004 offers some lessons that can be applied in Haiti. First of all, there has to be national buy-in by the U.S. There has to be a national vision, and I think we have that. Secondly, coordination is really important both within the U.N. and among all the donor countries and nongovernmental groups. There are 10,000 nongovernmental organizations working in Haiti, the highest number per capita in the world except for India. We've got to all work together toward a common goal. We have to relentlessly focus on trying to build a model that will be sustainable, so we don't plant a bunch of trees and then revert to deforestation, or adopt a program to bring power to the country that can't be sustained, or adopt an economic strategy that is going to wither away in two years.

I'm trying now to get organized to make sure not only that we get the emergency aid that Haiti needs but also that donors come through on their pre-existing commitments. We need to keep the private sector involved. Once we deal with the immediate crisis, the development plans the world was already pursuing have to be implemented more quickly and on a broader scale. I'm interested in just pressing ahead with it.

Haiti isn't doomed. Let's not forget, the damage from the earthquake is largely concentrated in the Port-au-Prince area. That has meant a tragic loss of life, but it also means there are opportunities to rebuild in other parts of the island. So all the development projects, the agriculture, the reforestation, the tourism, the airport that needs to be built in the northern part of Haiti — everything else should stay on schedule. Then we should simply redouble our efforts once the emergency passes to do the right sort of construction in Port-au-Prince and use it to continue to build back better.

Before this disaster, Haiti had the best chance in my lifetime to fulfill its potential as a country, to basically escape the chains of the past 200 years. I still believe that if we rally around them now and support them in the right way, the Haitian people can reclaim their destiny.

Former President Clinton is the United Nations special envoy for Haiti

The only candidate in this race to have served as a Civil Court Judge.

In 2004, Paula Brown was appointed by the Louisiana Supreme Court to sit as Judge Pro Tempore in Civil District Court.

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Is What's Good for "Everybody" Always Good for Us?



By Phil Wilson
Black AIDS Institute

In order for the Black community to end the AIDS epidemic, we must all assume individual responsibility for taking care of our health. Sometimes this means going to the doctor for an annual checkup. Sometimes it means getting an HIV test. But you can't take care of yourself if you don't know what steps to take. Many of us need to know more.

This week we ask questions about a very important self-care step that women can take to prevent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and cervical cancer.

In "The New Pap Smear Guidelines: Are They Right for Black Women and Girls?" we ask Elizabeth Bradley, M.D., vice chair of ob-gyn at the Cleveland Clinic, whether the dramatic changes in Pap smear guidelines issued by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) are good for Black women and girls. While we understand why the changes could be positive overall, we have good reason to be concerned. One reason: ACOG's recommendations include one that would raise the age at which a young woman obtains her first Pap test to 21—no matter how old she was the first time she had sex. A Pap smear helps doctors test for human papillomavirus (HPV), the STD that can cause genital warts, cervical cancer and other sexual-health problems.

With an STD epidemic raging among Black folks—for example, research shows that 50 percent of Black teenage girls have an STD, by far the highest rate of any race—might such a delay unintentionally negatively affect our community, perhaps contributing to the further spread of STDs? Or are the benefits of waiting until 21 that ACOG describes (for example, fewer invasive medical procedures performed on our teens) worth the risk? If ACOG is right, are there alternative ways for sexually active teens and young women to protect themselves until they turn 21? And if you already have HIV, do other changes in the guidelines apply to you?

These questions are critically important in the fight against AIDS, since people who have one STD not only are more likely to become infected with HIV if they're exposed to it—STDs weaken the immune system—but are also more infectious to others if they already have the HIV.

As you'll learn, determining how these questions apply to your individual situation isn't always straightforward or easy. But by becoming informed, each woman can take the appropriate steps to protect her health and, by extension, that of our community. When we know better, we do better.

Dr. Phil Wilson is CEO of the Black AIDS Institute

Live the Dream

In celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.



Ticket purchasers must be at least 21 years of age. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call 1-877-770-7867.

COMBINED NOTICE

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

JANUARY 13, 2010

This Notice shall satisfy the above-cited two separate but related procedural notification requirements.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about February 1, 2010 the City of New Orleans Office of Community Development, (OCD) will submit of behalf of BP1315,LLC for the release of HOME funds under Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (NAHA) of 1990, as amended, to undertake a project known as Blue Plate Lofts, for the purpose of the rehabilitation and conversion of the Blue Plate Building into multi-family housing rental units, located at 1315 S. Jefferson Davis Parkway. Grant numbers M08MC220201 and M09MC220201 for \$3,500,000.00.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The City of New Orleans has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at Office of Community Development, 1340 Poydras Street, 10th Floor, New Orleans, LA 70112 and may be examined or copied weekdays (9:00) A.M. to (5:00) P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on the project may submit written comments to the Office of Community Development, 1340 Poydras Street, 10th Floor, New Orleans, LA 70112. All comments received by January 28, 2010 will be considered by the City of New Orleans Community Development prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Commenters should specify which part of this notice they are addressing.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

The City of New Orleans certifies to HUD that C. Ray Nagin in his capacity as Mayor consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities, and allows the Associated Neighborhood Development to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will consider objections to its release of funds and the City of New Orleans certification received by February 16, 2010 or a period of fifteen days from its receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer or other officer of the City of New Orleans approved by HUD; (b) the (RE) has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the project have committed funds or incurred costs not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58) and shall be addressed to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at 501 Magazine Street, 9th Floor, New Orleans, LA 70130. Potential objectors should contact HUD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

WWW.CITYOFNO.COM



Kenya J. Smith
Director, Office of Community Development

Anthony Faciane
Deputy Director, Neighborhood Stabilization

C. Ray Nagin
Mayor, City of New Orleans



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