

After Serving 30 Years For A Crime He Didn't Commit, Glenn Ford's Wish List Is Being Fulfilled

By Eleanor Goldberg



Glenn Ford

It's been nearly a month since Glenn Ford was released from jail after serving three decades for a crime he didn't commit. And he's wasted no time collecting the items and experiences he missed out on while in prison.

Ford, a 64-year-old black man, was convicted by an all-white jury for the robbery and murder of Isadore Rozeman -- a 56-year-old Louisiana watchmaker, Reuters reported. He sat on death row from March 1985 until March 11 of this year when, acting on new information that vindicated Ford, a judge ordered him released from Louisiana State Penitentiary.

When he was finally set free, Ford had his eyes set on the novelties he never could get his hands on in jail -- some mangoes and a fresh change of clothes.

On his first day out, Ford told WAFB, he just wanted to "get something to eat."

But just paying for the very basics proved challenging. The state just gave him a debit card with \$20 on it, as well as the 4 cents that remained in his prison account, according to The Atlantic.

Tired of seeing his dear friend wait for what he deserved, John Thompson decided to help Ford set up a registry -- the kind brides and moms-to-be typically send out to friends and family.

The pair got some help from Danielle Mickenberg, an investigator with the Capital Post Conviction Project of Louisiana, and eventually set up Ford's wish list on Amazon.com.

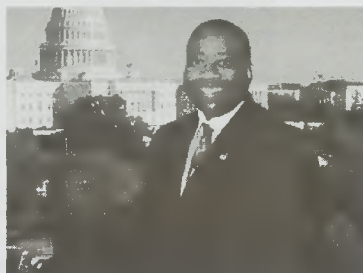
At first, they just posted the essentials: toilet paper and paper towels. But as things were quickly getting bought up, Ford decided to go out on whim and check off some bigger-ticket items, including a fan with four speeds that goes for \$79.98 and \$96 overall.

Ford's supporters also set up a PayPal account through which people can donate money directly, but Mickenberg noted that people have been more inclined to buy donate tangible items.

"Maybe they want to give a thing, not just money," she told The Atlantic. "It is a really nice moment in time, to see how people are reacting."

Whitewashing Republican Support of Civil Rights

By Raynard Jackson



Raynard Jackson

One of the best kept secrets over the past 50 years is that, proportionately, Republicans in Congress supported passage of the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act by a much wider margin than Democrats.

As CNN.com reported, "The Guardian's Harry J. Enten broke down the vote, showing that more than 80% of Republicans in both houses voted in favor of the bill, compared with more than 60% of Democrats. When you account for geography, according to Enten's article, 90% of lawmakers from states that were in the union during the Civil War supported the bill compared with less than 10% of lawmakers from states that were in the Confederacy."

This is from a report from CNN, not FOX, the network despised by liberals.

There was another interesting tidbit in the CNN report:

"Ohio's Republican Rep. William McCulloch had a conservative track record -- he opposed foreign and federal education aid and supported gun rights and school prayer. His district (the same one now represented by House Speaker John Boehner) had a small African-American population. So he had little to gain politically by supporting the Civil Rights Act."

"Yet he became a critical leader in getting the bill passed.

"His ancestors opposed slavery even before the Civil War, and he'd made a deal with President Kennedy to see the bill through to passage."

The article noted, "The Constitution doesn't say that whites alone shall have our most basic rights, but that we all shall have them; McCulloch would say to fellow legislators."

But you would not know any of this if you relied on the official ceremonies at the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library last week marking the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights. The three-day

summit at the University of Texas featured President Obama and former presidents Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

Other speakers included Black Democrats such as Julian Bond, the former NAACP chairman; Congressman John Lewis of Atlanta, and former UN Ambassador Andy Young, among others. (To see a full list of speakers, go to: <http://www.civilrightssummit.org/program/>.)

How can you have a discussion of Civil Rights and not have one Black Republican? How could you not have Robert J. Brown, top aide to President Nixon and one of Dr. King's closest confidants?

What about former Eighth District Court of Appeals Judge Sara J. Harper? Last year, she was inducted into the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. She was also the first Black to graduate from Case Western Reserve University's Law School. Is it really that easy to overlook the first Black National Security Adviser and Secretary of State, Colin Powell? Really?

They even had my good friend, former Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour as one of their speakers (a White southern male). So, they had White Republicans, but no Black Republicans. WOW!

As George Orwell wrote his book, 1984, "He who controls the present, controls the past. He who controls the past, controls the future."

If the summit were your sole source of information, you would think no Black Republicans were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Arthur Fletcher is known as "the father of affirmative action." Though he is deceased, his work lives on -- and should have been recognized.

Former Secretary of Transportation Bill Coleman was a proud Black Republican but just as proud of his support for civil rights. And so was former Senator Ed Brooke of Massachusetts. The list goes on and on -- except at the LBJ ceremonies in Austin.

Am I the only one that noticed this intentional rewriting of history?

As usual, the media has been woefully and willfully negligent in not covering this angle. These supposedly bastions of journalistic integrity such as The Root and The Grid have caught a bad case of laryngitis. Melissa Perry and Joy Reid on MSNBC have suddenly forgotten how to speak English.

The LBJ library and Democrats should be ashamed of themselves for prostituting the real bi-partisan history of the Civil Rights Movement. This should have been one event that was truly reflective of the real history of America -- the good and the bad.

Slavery and racism are still the biggest blemishes on American history; but

because we are Americans and showed resolve, we also have one helluva story of redemption to tell. We have come a long way from the days of slavery and Jim Crow. We have Blacks making millions of dollars in sports, music, business, science, and education. Blacks have been to the moon and back. We even have a Black president.

In the very moment when we should have been celebrating the journey America has taken, we have been forced to reflect upon the willful deceit propagated upon the true history of our nation.

Raynard Jackson is president & CEO of Raynard Jackson & Associates, LLC., a Washington, D.C.-based public relations/government affairs firm. He is also the author of: "Writing Wrongs: My Political Journey in Black and White." He can be reached through his Web site, www.raynardjackson.com. You can also follow him on Twitter @raynard1223

Raising Hope with Heartstrings Benefit



Brian Banks

"Heartstrings welcomes Brian Banks as keynote speaker at the Empire Room in downtown Greensboro. Doors open at 6pm, and the program starts promptly at 6:45pm, followed by a lively jazz reception and "Raise your Glass Raffle." Registration opens March 17th & guest fees are \$125 per person.

Brian Banks was a promising young football star whose dreams of playing for the NFL were crushed when he was wrongly convicted of a crime and incarcerated for 5 years. Despite the loss of his freedom he maintained hope until he was finally exonerated. His message of hope and ability to overcome devastating life circumstances with a remarkably positive attitude will inspire all who attend.

Heartstrings provides compassionate validation, bereavement education and hope to Triad families who have suffered pregnancy, infant and child loss through peer-based support groups and one-to-one peer mentoring.

www.heartstringsupport.org