

Making History... Again

By Benjamin Todd Jealous



Ben Jealous

Remember the March on Washington? August 28, 1963. Tens of thousands of activists on the National Mall. A preacher's son from Atlanta talking about his dream for the country.

We don't need a history lesson. Even if we weren't at the March itself - even for those like me, who were not yet born - Dr. King's words are etched into our minds as deeply as they are inscribed in stone at the base of his memorial. The preacher's son has taken his rightful place in the pantheon of national heroes.

We don't need to watch a rerun of that fateful day. We need a sequel. On Saturday, August 24th, the NAACP is co-hosting a sequel to the March on Washington for Jobs and Justice: the 2013 March on Washington. The march begins at 8:00 am, at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Join us.

If this year has shown us anything, it's that the work of the 1963 march is not yet finished. Texas and South Carolina are sprinting forward with voter ID after the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act. African American unemployment has flat lined. Our children are gunned down each and every day in senseless acts of violence. Trayvon Martin lies in the ground after one such senseless act.

At the same time, our culture of civic engagement is experiencing a renaissance. In the past month, hundreds of cities held vigils and rallies to protest the Zimmerman verdict. The nation is having a serious conversation about racial profiling for the first time since 9/11. In North Carolina, Moral Mondays has grown larger with each passing week.

We have the numbers, and we have the capacity for motivation. The question is whether we will allow ourselves to be motivated.

So join us - NAACP, National Action Network, Realizing the Dream and others - on the National Mall on August 24th. If you live within two hours of Washington, DC, hop in a car or on a bus - or even better, organize

a bus. If you live farther away, you are still encouraged to come and be a part of history.

The 2013 March on Washington will be a people's movement. It will not be fueled by cash - it will only be energized by your decision to participate. We need you there to help us gain a critical mass of voices, and prove once again that organized people can beat organized money any time.

On this fiftieth anniversary of the March on Washington, we should celebrate our history, but it's more important that we never stop making history. Meet us at the Lincoln Memorial. Join us on August 24th.

Ben Jealous is president/CEO of the NAACP. Contact: Ben Wrobel 917-846-0658 bwrobel@naacpnet.org @NAACPPress

Trayvon Inspired Obama to Act Like the First Black President

By Raynard Jackson, NNPA Columnist



Trayvon Martin

In 2004, at the Democratic National Committee's presidential convention, I was mesmerized by Barack Obama, a little known state senator from Illinois. He electrified the convention and created a global buzz among those who watched on TV. In 2006, I was proud to see him elected to the U.S. Senate from Illinois.

In 2008, I was even more proud to see a Black man elected to be president of the United States. Americans throughout the U.S. celebrated this historic accomplishment. This was one of America's best moments.

In 2013, I am most proud that the first Black president finally seemed to find his voice before the American people on an issue that was of particular concern to the Black community. After more than four years in the White House, President Obama finally spoke to America and directly to Black America simultaneously.

For the first time, Obama did not lecture or speak down to Blacks. He spoke as one of us. He spoke from his heart to our hearts, to my heart.

He did not give a speech, for that

would have been cynical and would have fallen flat. He simply exposed his soul to us; but he also allowed us to penetrate the veil that he had erected that prevented him from connecting with his own people. For the first time, he actually showed an emotional connection to the plight of Blacks in this country.

Lord knows, in my columns, I have been one of his biggest critics of how he interacts with the Black community. I would be nothing short of a hypocrite not to praise him for speaking directly to the American people in the aftermath of the Zimmerman trial, especially in a way that connected to Black Americans.

He didn't take a position one way or the other on the jury's verdict; that wasn't the important thing at that moment. He spoke as president of all of America, but at the same time spoke directly to the Black community without separating the country. Non-Blacks of goodwill for certain will understand my statement.

This is the Obama I have been seeking for almost five years. It was quite obvious that Obama was touched by the emotions that were raging from within the Black community since the tragic night of Trayvon Martin's death.

Policy considerations aside, Blacks have always wanted Obama to show us that he understood the plight of being Black in America. We have wanted him to connect to our issues like he showed the residents of Newtown, Conn. after the massacre last year.

Sometimes one can be so beat up that you just want someone to say, "I feel your pain, I understand what you are going through," even if you can't make the pain go away. Nothing Obama said will bring Trayvon back. But for once, America saw its first Black president in public.

Some of my readers will not understand anything I am writing; it is not you to whom I am writing. Those with similar backgrounds and experiences as mine will understand intrinsically what I am saying.

I don't expect some to understand why I behave the way I do when a policeman pulls me over or approaches me while I am parked.

Policemen will ask me why I am putting both of my hands out of the driver's window like I did two weeks ago. I tell them because I don't want them to have any allusions about my being armed and to make sure they know that I am no threat to them. They don't seem to understand that before I reach into my glove compartment that I tell them that I am about to reach into the glove box to retrieve my car infor-

mation that they are requesting (title, proof of insurance, etc.).

In my professional life, I constantly have to prove my abilities, even though my records of accomplishments are part of the public domain, as any Google search would reveal. In meetings, I tell the attendees that I will call a certain person and get them to do a certain thing. I report back to the group only to be asked, "Wow, so you really do know that person?" They are actually amazed that I have personal relations with some of the most powerful people in the world; they have a hard time reconciling my background (being a Black kid from the hood of St. Louis) with knowing certain types of people.

Yes, America has come a long way since the days of Jim Crow and segregation; but please don't criticize our president or the Black community for wanting, every now and then, for the leaders of our country (regardless of color) to be touched with the feelings of our struggles.

Sometimes we just want to be told that together we will all be OK.

Raynard Jackson is president & CEO of Raynard Jackson & Associates, LLC., a Washington, D.C.-based public relations/government affairs firm. He can be reached through his Web site, www.raynardjackson.com. You can also follow him on Twitter at raynard1223.

Yo!, No Low Riders Allowed!

FACTS:

Young men were molested by older and stronger inmates.

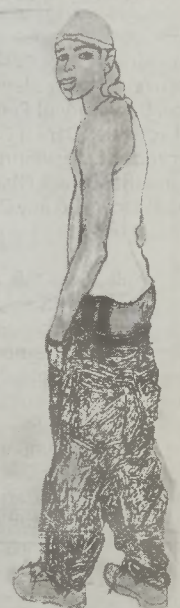
They became suicidal because of what happened to them.

Prison officials took away their belts to prevent them from hanging.

That ended up being a symbol that the young man was actually someone's GIRLFRIEND!

This style began in PRISON!

SAGGERS



This is not cool! It's a disgrace! Sagging is "Not Cool!" It is unacceptable to girls, women and ladies!