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## **Race Still** Mattered in the **2008 Election**

## **By Alexis Karteron**

Special to the NNPA from thedefendersonline.com here has been widespread speculation about President-Elect ock Obama's campaign and election heralding a "post-racial" rica. In conversations across the nation and such headlines as ma, Racial Barrier Falls in Heavy Turnout," (The New York s) and "Obama's Post-Racial Promise," (Los Angeles Times) wing the election, some seemed eager to believe that Americans come together in unprecedented ways on Election Day. While ma's victory proves this proposition true in some respects, elecresults indicate that race did play a decisive role in voting choic-

hile the much-discussed "Bradley Effect" - best described as the maneet between what white voters tell pollsters they are going to the voting booth and what they actually do - did not materialize my had feared, exit poll results reveal that race still matters and lectorate was not as unified as some seemed to hope. imply put, Barack Obama was not the overwhelming choice of

Roughly 131 million Americans voted this year. While oters. 8 million more cast ballots than in 2004, this number consti-just 63 percent of those eligible to vote. This turnout rate was the third highest since 1920, when women got the right to vote. the record, 1960 saw America's highest turnout rate in a presial election, with 64.8 percent of eligible Americans voting, but ien higher rate of 67.8 percent of those who were actually eli-to vote are considered, i.e., if southern blacks who were overof those 131 million, Obama received roughly 53 percent of ote. While that may seem like a resounding victory given the er results of the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, it is hardly wight to suggest that Americans are particularly united in their port for the President-Elect.

he story of who composed the winning Obama coalition gets interesting when you look at the details. For example, contrary inventional wisdom, the youth vote was not particularly robust mpared to recent elections. As two political scientists recently while the vector of the rest of the set of t background, race is particularly important. Obama owes his vic-both to a substantial increase in the number of minority voters, heir overwhelming support of his candidacy.

look at the racial breakdown of Obama's winning coalition some interesting food for thought:

Black voters constituted 13 percent of voters, an increase from in 2004

Hispanics made up nine percent of the electorate, up from eight ent in 2004

95 percent of blacks and 67 percent of Hispanics voted for

initial analysis by the Joint Center for Political and Economic is estimates that black turnout swelled by approximately 23 ant, meaning that an astounding three million more blacks cast us than in 2004. However, the enthusiasm among black voters Dhama was decidedly not shared by whites. Obama received 43 ent of the white vote, up from Kerry's 41 percent of the white in 2004, the only group that did not, on the whole, vote for

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## LDF Takes a Stand for Teacher Quality and Equity in ESEA Reauthorization



Special to the NNPA from the Daytona Timesm - Singer/songwriter and activist Stevie Wonder "saw" the face of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. statute prior to the Oct. 16 official dedication in Washington, D.C. (COURTESY OF WONDER **PRODUCTIONS / GEDIYON KIFLE)** 

## **Most Black Americans** Sitting Out 'Occupy'

By Chris Levister

Special to the NNPA from the Black Voice News When Ray Leeds saw a crowd gathering in front of the California Museum of Photography, in Riverside's downtown pedestrian mall recently, the photography buff and out-of work union pipefitter left nothing to chance.

"I grabbed my camera and just started taking pictures. It was surreal. Out of nowhere they just started singing and pitching tents," he said. "It was engrossing. You couldn't just stand there

and snap pictures." When Leeds saw a couple dressed up like zombies holding a placard that read "Every-one Needs to Pay Their FAIR Share: End Corporate Greed." He traded his camera for a piece of poster board that read: "It's About the People: Not Profits." What unfolded before his eyes was Riverside's entry into Occupy Wall Street one of the nation's most progressive grass-roots movements. A month ago the protests took shape in lower Manhattan to express anger over Wall Street greed, lack of jobs, political inaction, corruption and other issues.

regular. "This is not black folk's protest.

"Black folk have been protesting and going through hell since the `man' brought us over here from Africa," he said. "Young white Americans are

finally getting a taste of the kind of hell black Americans have en-dured for generations," said an unapologetic Shaun Rubinson during a discussion at Andre's

Hair Salon in San Bernardino. "I don't think blacks are rejecting this movement. We are just too busy surviving," said Rubinson, a long time hair stylist whose clients include all races.

Rubinson, shop owner Andre' Mayes and client Stephanie Lewis, a nurse practitioner at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center are among a growing number

Their school loans can't be paid because they too now are un-employed or underpaid. Their stocks and 401K's have been eviscerated by the one percent. Their middle class status is slip-ping away," said Rubinson. "Their stark reality has gotten

closer to what black people have

been battling for years." Bennett College for Women president and noted black economist Dr. Julianne Malveaux, wrote in an October 17 blog entitled: What Does The Occupy Wall Street Movement Want?

"Banks got bailed out, we got ripped off. Banks were given money to lend and they chose not to lend it. Banks created risky financial instruments - derivatives and when they couldn't perform, they whined and leaned on an excuse that they were "too big

**Heckler Interrupts Obama Speech During MLK** Dedication **By Erica Butler** Special to the NNPA from the AFRO-American newspapers

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As the presidential election nears, a heckler or two isn't uncommon, but during the Martin Luther King, Jr. dedication, such an outburst by a man was simply not going to be tolerated.

As Obama began to speak during the Martin Luther King, Jr. dedication Oct. 16, a heckler, who sat close to the stage, started to chant anti-Obama slurs.

"It was definitely a head turner," said Danita Delaney, an AFRO photographer who witnessed the outburst. "[Event] volunteers that were standing in the area immediately escorted him out."

She said some crowd-goers yelled, "Get him out of here," but U.S. Park Police confirmed no arrests were made during the MLK dedication. Antoinette Charles, another photographer who covered the same event, said he called Obama the anti-Christ. "He was just going on about re-ligion," she said.

Less than a month earlier, Obama was interrupted during a fund-raising event in Los Angeles and called the "Anti-Christ" by another heckler.

The unidentified Los Angels heckler, similar to the MLK dedication heckler, shouted, "The Christian God is the one and only true living God, the creator of heaven and the universe! Jesus Christ is God!" before he was escorted out by security and drowned by supporters who chanted, "Four more years."

Obama jokingly re-sponded: "I agree Jesus Christ is the Lord. I believe in that."

Although the two men appear to be similar, the AFRO could not confirm that both men were the same person.

Special to the NNPA from thedefendersonline.com DF joined more than 80 civil rights, disability, parent, stugrassroots and education organizations from across the utry to urge Congress not to turn back the clock on teacher ity gains for poor and minority students, English Learners, students with disabilities as it considers reauthorization he Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), curwknown as "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB)

ha letter to Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Michael Enzi WY), chairman and ranking member of the Senate Commiton Health Education, Labor and Pensions and co-sponsors bill to reauthorize the ESEA, the coalition urged that the sed ESEA require teachers to complete a minimum level of ing and demonstrate competence to teach effectively "be-"they enter the classroom. While the groups applauded the alors for introducing a bipartisan bill and attempting to fix ne of the many flaws in NCLB, they expressed their serious mem that their reauthorization proposal would undermine critical goal of providing all children with equal access high-quality teachers. Specifically, the bill would severely aken NCLB's "highly qualified teacher" standard, permit inequitable distribution of quality teachers, and eliminate pirements for the public disclosure of data on teacher qualand equity. The groups offered several recommendations to less these problems and ensure that the neediest students full and equal access to well-qualified teachers.

As Leeds panned his camera lens across the swelling crowd he could not help but notice the faces were overwhelmingly white and young.

"My first question was where are the blacks, Latino's and other minorities? My next question was are people of color too busy making ends meet to join the "Occupy Wall Street" move-ment, or is there a disconnect between progressives and people of color?"

So during his regular visit to the barber on Saturday, Leeds a black American, fully expected the crowded black shop to be in full tilt over the protests.

"Hold your breath Bro," explained Jason Haney, a Saturday of black Americans who have chosen to sit on the side lines even as Occupy picks up stream, cash and big name black supporters including Kayne West, Jay-Z, Russell Simmons and

Rev. Al Sharpton. "Where were these young white MBA's and laid off corporate workers when black Americans were losing their homes and jobs at unprecedented rates during the early days of the recession," asked Lewis.

"Where were those protest-ers as Tea Party conservatives took over Congress, blocked the president's historic healthcare overhaul law, smashed his job creation efforts, trashed his landmark stimulus initiative, and undermined his efforts to reign in big banks," said Mayes. "Instead of fighting the de-

mons on Wall Street they put on their earbuds and turned their wrath on the president calling him an absentee leader. What gives," said Mayes. "This ap-pears to be more about their pain than America's pain."

"Their working class parents have had their homes foreclosed.

to fail." Now they are even (Continued On Page 2)



An unidentified heckler interrupted President Obama's speech during the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial dedication ceremony, shouting anti-Obama slurs. (AFRO Photo/Danita Delaney.)