

# commentary

## After Attacks on Brussels, More Personal Attacks on Obama



By George E. Curry  
George Curry Media Columnist

Not even President Obama would argue it was the best of timing.

While he was on the first leg of a two-stop trip to mend a 50-year non-relationship with Cuba and a 20-isolation from Argentina, terrorists attacked Brussels. Instead of rushing home, which would serve as propaganda for terrorists, Obama continued his scheduled journey.

But instead of being applauded for his resolve, the president was attacked for everything from attending a baseball game in Cuba to dancing the tango at State Dinner in Argentina.

Andrew Napolitano said on Fox News Channel's Fox & Friends, "At a time when we have a crisis, is that the impression that he wants to convey? He's a great dancer and maybe he didn't want to change his plans. But I'm not so sure he should be doing that when everybody else is worried about where ISIS is, who they're going to kill next, and are they going to come over here. Perhaps he should be giving a different impression of strength and preservation of freedom and safety."

Aside from the reality of President Obama having access to the same tools he would have had if he had returned to Washington, he is being held to a different standard.

Bernard Goldberg, a former CBS broadcaster, acknowledged, "...too often conservatives on radio and television wouldn't give Barack Obama credit if he found a cure for cancer. Look, we need honest analysis, and too often what we're getting is not honest opinion journalism."

That's the understatement of the year.

As was pointed out by this website, "A particularly intolerable meme continues to play out in the news media and online: apparently U.S. history began on January 20, 2009 when Barack Obama was inaugurated. In case you were unaware, President Obama is evidently the first president to take vacations; he's the first president to play golf; he's the first president to be photographed without a suit or tie; and he's the first president to routinely use a teleprompter. If you believe any of that, then you're a moron who needs to refresh your memory about all things pre-2009. There you'll find that not only are Obama's vacations and so forth in line with most previous presidents, but in terms of overall time off, he's taken the fewest vacation days of any modern president other than Bill Clinton.

"The latest round of outrage directed at the president has to do with his so-called 'bad optics' - allegedly inappropriate non-presidential behavior. In this latest case, Obama's crazy decision to remain in Cuba for his historic reopening of U.S./Cuban relations following the dual terrorist attacks in Brussels on Tuesday. A cursory check of AM talk radio, Fox News Channel and conservative Twitter reveals the usual double-standard and historical amnesia we've seen over and over again."

To refresh their memories:

EVENT, October 10, 1981 -- The funeral of assassinated Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

REAGAN OPTICS, October 10, 1981 -- Reagan went horseback riding at Camp David.

EVENT, August 29, 1983 -- Two Marines were killed and 14 wounded in Beirut.

REAGAN OPTICS, August 29, 1983 -- Reagan remained on vacation at Rancho Del Cielo, California.

EVENT, September 1, 1983 -- Reagan was still on vacation in California when the Soviets shot down Korean Airlines Flight 007.

REAGAN OPTICS, September 1, 1983 -- According to FOX News Channel's Chris Wallace, as well as contemporaneous accounts, Reagan planned to remain on vacation until he was photographed horseback riding and was convinced to return to the White House.

EVENT, October 22, 1983 -- The administration began planning its military incursion into Grenada.

REAGAN OPTICS, October 22, 1983 -- Reagan remained on vacation at the Augusta National Golf Club in Georgia. Repeat: golf resort.

EVENT, July 18, 1984 -- 21 people were killed and 19 wounded when a gunman entered a San Ysidro, California McDonald's and opened fire.

REAGAN OPTICS, July 21, 1984 -- On the day when many of the gun massacre victims were to be buried, Reagan went horseback riding at Camp David.

EVENT, April 2, 1986 -- Four Americans were killed in a terrorist attack at a TWA counter at the Athens Airport, Greece.

REAGAN OPTICS, April 4, 1986 -- Two days later, here's Reagan's uber-presidential optics, while on vacation (11) at Rancho Del Cielo.

EVENT, September 5, 1986 -- The Pakistani military stormed the hijacked Pan Am Flight 73. 22 people were killed, including two Americans, and 150 were injured.

REAGAN OPTICS, September 6, 1986 -- Again, while on vacation at his California ranch, Reagan went horseback riding with the First Lady and was photographed with a "Just Say No" sign.

On top of that, conservatives had the temerity to criticize First Lady Michelle Obama's decision to showcase her well-sculptured shoulders early in the Obama presidency. Yet Donald Trump's wife can expose more intimate body parts on the cover of magazines and expect to receive a pass.

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## The Moment We Have Waited For

By Marian Wright Edelman

Rev. C.T. Vivian, legendary civil rights leader, believes young people today are inheriting the world at a unique crossroads in history and that "this is the moment we have waited for. When I say 'we've waited for, I'm talking about humankind has waited for. I'm talking about all the great philosophers and thinkers have waited for this moment. We have lived like we have lived, blowing each other up, killing each other, stealing from each other, making a world that is not fit for human beings - we have lived that way because it's been allowed to be." But Rev. Vivian believes we are reaching a tipping point where many are realizing we just can't go on this way and survive. I truly hope so for our children and grandchildren' sake!

Rev. Vivian, a Presidential Medal of Freedom winner, leader in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a confidant of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a role model for so many of us in the 1960s era of civil rights activism and still, has been and remains an indispensable long haul moral, racial and economic justice warrior. At 91 years young he has a crystal clear message for today's young people and all of us. He inspired and challenged a receptive Children's Defense Fund audience of college students when he said he is convinced this is the generation that will finally create new ways of solving social problems to make that new, better world we must build together with urgency and persistence.

"The human drama of your time will not be a military drama . . . Even if they want it, it can't happen, because we've come to the point that violence cannot solve human problems . . . We can't live in an atomic world and think like we used to think in terms of how wars were fought, in terms of how men killed each other, because today, if we decide to live like we lived yesterday, none of us will live at all." Instead, "we have to come with a different understanding of our relationships to the world around us, and that's the most important thing of all . . . You can't live in yesterday's world. And I want you to be very thankful of that, because you are forming the new world to be and the old world has no place in it."

Rev. Vivian believes "if we are wise, we will not allow any of us to treat the rest of us as though we were less than rather than more than." And he looks to history to prove that hatred and violence always destroy more than they create and always turn back the clock of progress. "By the time the First World War ended and the killing was over, Europe was destroyed," he said. "All the work and hope and dreams that went on before it were destroyed in the midst of it. Second World War, right, we did the same thing - we destroyed what we had worked for and hoped for and dreamed for. War cannot be used anymore because you can't create the beloved community on yesterday's understandings. We will destroy more than we create, and you can't have the world you want that way. It's up to us to create the world we really want."

"The central task" he continued, "will be to remove violence as a means of solving social problems. When we really think of it that way, then we are on our way. The task will be different than before. We all dreamed of it. We sat in church and talked about it. We made songs about it. We talked about a new world coming. We talked about all of that, right? Now that it's here, we've got to make it real."

It's up to us to create the world we really want . . . We've got to make it real. The 1960s Civil Rights Movement laid a foundation for the new world as ordinary people tired of injustice seized the moral high ground and confronted the racial violence surrounding them with controlled, disciplined, nonviolent action which allowed America to see there was another way to create change. When C.T. Vivian was jailed and beaten, he never wavered. He says: "Gandhi and the world he lived in changed because he used a different method and a different means. Dr. King changed America because he used a different understanding. He used a different way to move" and Rev. Vivian believes today's young people can finish what his generation began.

His words have a special meaning and challenge today when violence as a conflict resolution strategy has become a daily threat internally and externally in this era of domestic and global terrorism; relentless gun violence in our nation driven by a powerful gun lobby that saps the lives of 30,000 human beings every year including thousands of innocent children; and out of control demagogic political discourse which encourages violence at home and fuels anger around the world by demonizing people who believe and pray differently from many of us. What is it going to take for enough of our political leaders and citizens to stand up and reject the old world view too often riddled with intolerance and hatred? When will a critical mass of citizens and leaders come together to build a new nation and world fit and safe for all of our children and confront those who fuel racial and religious intolerance within and without our borders? And how many of us will stand up and say no to the violence of coarse and careless political, racial, gender, or any rhetoric intended to demean another human being and that teaches our children we cannot disagree without being disagreeable?

The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists publishes a "Doomsday Clock." In 2016, the clock has been set at 3 minutes to midnight as tensions between the U.S., Russia, North Korea and other nations, particularly those involved in conflicts in the Middle East, remain high and landmark climate change agreements have not yet evolved into the fundamental changes needed to ultimately arrest the problem and mitigate additional conflict and catastrophe. Rather than be discouraged or paralyzed by these disturbing concerns, we need to get up, organize, and mount without ceasing our strong nonviolent voices and witnesses to change the narrative of what it means to be a good steward of God's earth and all of God's peoples - and be determined to pass on a safer and better nation and world order to our children and grandchildren.

Marian Wright Edelman is president of the Children's Defense Fund whose Leave No Child Behind(R) mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. For more information go to [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org).

## Beyond the Rhetoric

## Black Republicans Says New Stadiums – Where Public Funds turn into Private Profit

By Harry C. Alford

Oh how I remember those beautiful Sundays when my father would take me to the Los Angeles Rams football games. We would drop my mom and baby brother off at my Aunt Lula's home and we would journey down Hoover Ave. to the fabulous Los Angeles Coliseum. Home of the Rams NFL team and the mighty University of Southern California Trojans football team. The Coliseum (capacity 100,000) still stands today and is useful as any other stadium in the nation. However, soon that became a problem.

It was built in 1932 for the Olympics. The whole world marveled at it and it became the host to the 1984 Olympics as well. The owner of the Rams noticed all of the new stadiums going up around the nation. He started demanding a new stadium for his Rams – not that he needed it but just for the fashion. Besides the Coliseum was located near South Central Los Angeles and that gives the image of a "Black thing". Shockingly to Rams fans he packed up and moved his team to Orange County for a temporary location until some city would offer the team a brand new home. It was like a death in the family to me. Later, the Rams would find their new and pretty stadium in St. Louis, Missouri.

The Oakland Raiders would desert their fans and city in exchange for the magnificent LA Coliseum and NFL starved fans of Los Angeles. The city fell in love with the Raiders and being that it was a winning team at the time was frosting on the "cake". But after a few years the Raiders would return to Oakland, California and once again LA was without an NFL franchise. It seems very odd that the second largest city in the nation was without a money making football team. The Sundays were so lonely.

But times have changed after a few decades. The city of Los Angeles has agreed to allow not one but two new stadiums. They may be the venues for two if not three teams! Neighboring Orange County may jump in the game and build a new stadium for the San Diego Chargers who is leaving because no new stadium has been approved in San Diego. The Los Angeles Rams will be returning via converting the Santa Anita Racetrack grounds (Inglewood suburb) into a new stadium. The Carson suburb will house the second stadium and, in the end, the Chargers and Raiders will share the venue.

Both stadiums will be in predominantly Black neighborhoods. There will be some eminent domain declared by Los Angeles County and some Black families and small businesses will be getting the "boot". The exploitation will start with developers and many of those Blacks will become "refugees" in their own city. But so what??? LA has NFL football back where it should be.

Much of the money to build these two stadiums will come from the citizens of greater Los Angeles. They will have no say in this but their property and sales tax will go up and a huge revenue bond will be created by Wall Street. This fund will be paid back plus interest to the investors. The citizens of Los Angeles will be the debtors and payment via more taxation and without their approval will be assessed to them.

The huge funding will be applied to the design and construction of the stadiums. At first look, you imagine contracts for businesses and jobs for the people. True but there is one "catch". No Blacks will be allowed to participate in this economic windfall. They will pay taxes and may lose their neighborhoods but forget about winning contracts and participating in the jobs activity. You see, Los Angeles is a big union town. In fact, the whole state of California is. These stadiums most likely will have Project Labor Agreements attached to them. PLA's mean union only. The big problem is that 98% of Black contractors are non-union. The union halls are notorious for discrimination against Black and females. Hispanics will be greatly under-utilized also.

Let's look at the new stadium for the San Francisco 49ers. Despite constant protests and exposure (they have no shame), hardly any Blacks participated in this great project. When they built PacBell Park for the San Francisco Giants baseball team they slowed down the progress because there was a shortage on union labor. Rather than hire Blacks and Hispanics for the project they waited for more unionized whites to become available. The project did not finish on time and was \$70 million over budget.

Unless the people of Los Angeles will somehow wake up to the game. It is going to happen again. Public funds will not be used for the general public workforce. The stench of construction union manipulation is already starting to appear. Maybe this time the people will take it to the streets and change the status quo. We will be watching.

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## Child Watch



Rev. C.T. Vivian