



## Tony Brown's Comments

### Black President On The "Family Plan"

A few weeks ago I wrote an article entitled "A Good Idea About To Go Bad." It examined the possibility of a black person running for the Democratic nomination for President in 1984 to show the Party that the black vote can no longer be taken for granted. Since the article, fears about the black community missing out on a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity have increased.

Most conspicuously missing is any widespread involvement of the black community's Democrats, 90 percent of black voters, in choosing a favorite son or daughter. Although what the 25 or so members of the self-ordained planning group are doing in a series of meetings is admirable, it is at the same time, in the long term, destructive to the very idea they are advocating. In selecting a black person to run in a democratically designed electoral process, the process and structure they are employing are dictatorial.

Unless there are state and regional elections in which every black Democrat is invited to be involved, the disunity will overwhelm a good idea whose time is overdue. And unless a significant number of candidates are involved and campaigning, the idea will die on the vine of protectionist opportunism.

Which leads me to Jesse Jackson, the acknowledged front-runner for the job of articulating the political aspirations for the majority of African-Americans. One can conclude that, based on the initial reaction to him as the person to fill this crucial role and his performance thus far, the handwriting is on the wall as it was at King Belshazzar's feast in the Bible: "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting."

"In a 'Speak Out' feature in The Pittsburgh Courier, eight black people were randomly selected and asked who they saw as the strongest black contender for President. Only two picked Jackson. A similar poll was held in 'USA Today, and Barbara Smith of Fremont, Ohio had this to say: 'And I wouldn't vote for Jesse Jackson in a million years. He's overzealous and two flamboyant. I couldn't take him seriously.' Jackson said that one criterion of the black candidate is to articulate black interests to the interest of whites. If Barbara Smith is a barometer, he won't get many white votes. Smith is white.

The National Leader, a Philadelphia-based black newspaper, quoted Warith Deen Muhammad, Chief Imam and spiritual leader of the American Muslim Mission, as "sharply" criticizing Jackson: "He called Jackson an unsuitable choice, saying Jackson is a black leader who has been created by the media."

William Raspberry, a black columnist of the Washington Post, joined with a media criticism of his own. Citing Jackson is a liability to Harold Washington's campaign for mayor of Chicago, Raspberry quoted a Washington supporter as saying: "Probably the best thing Jesse could do for Harold is to spend more time out of town these next few weeks." Raspberry concluded, "Given Jackson's love of the limelight, that might not be easy to arrange."

Vernon Jarrett, one of the country's most reputable and revered black

journalists, wrote in the Chicago Tribune that "Jackson's thoughtless announcement that he may be a candidate for President in 1984 hasn't helped Washington..." Jarrett also pointed to reports that "Washington is being used to launch Jackson's bid for President."

Another of Jackson's hometown writers, syndicated columnist Mike Royko of the Chicago Sun-Times, remarked in an interview when asked if the PUSH leader was a liability to Washington: "Jackson acts like a jackass.... During the election night, he almost pushed Harold off camera. I'm surprised he let Harold even get his face on the tube. Nobody really likes a showboat... Yes, he is becoming a liability."

Instead of being drafted, it appears that Jackson is in the draft. The New York Voice reports that some in the ad hoc planning group "would not support Jackson as their candidate. Jackson has disturbed many black leaders." Milton Coleman wrote in the Washington Post: "Jackson also has burned several bridges during his career."

Rep. Mickey Leland, Chairman of the Black Caucus of the Democratic National Committee, said: "There is fear that Jesse doesn't feel accountable to anybody but himself." There were also concerns that Jackson would be viewed as running "to embellish his ego," the Washington Post quoted Leland as saying.

Rep. Walter Fauntroy said, as diplomatically as Leland, that Jackson, "is not a politician" and "has alienated politicians in many key districts in the black community." California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown was more candid: "I'm not sure if Jesse's involvement helps the consideration of the idea."

It's a dunk in the sheep-dip for anyone who does not know that the only constituency for the aspiring leader of black America is his ego's own need for gratification. And, of course, his interest in federal matching funds is another motivating factor. He wants to represent all Black people, but he is attempting to bypass the black community with his "black leadership family," as he refers to the 25-member self-selected group.

Why not have regional elections to select from among candidates such as Walter Fauntroy, Warith Deen Muhammad, James Lowery, Louis Stokes, Tom Bradley, Shirley Chisholm and any other black Democrat? Why not broaden the base of leadership in order to broaden the base of interest and participation, a participation that binds all Democrats who participate to the ultimate winner?

"Now is the time for talent and faces other than known civil rights activists," said The Waller Report of Richmond, Va. However, Jackson knows the threat to his ambitions that a truly democratic process can bring.

"Tony Brown's Journal" TV series can be seen on public television Saturdays on Channel 42 at 6:30 p.m. It can also be seen on Channel 58 on Sundays at 6:30 p.m. Please consult listings.

## Guitarist Alexandre Lagoya To Perform At Spirit Square

One of the greatest living masters of the guitar, Alexandre Lagoya exhibits his excellence at Spirit Square's NCNB Performance Place Saturday, April 9, at 8:15 p.m.

Tickets to his performance are \$9 for adults and \$4 for students and are available at the Spirit Square Box Office. Get your tickets by calling or stopping by the box office, 318 N. Tryon St., 376-8883, Monday through Saturday between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. and until 9 on performance nights. MasterCard, Visa and American Express are accepted for ticket purchases.

Giving his first concert at age 13, despite his parents' objections to his guitar playing, and promoting himself for more than 500 concerts he had performed by age 19, Alexandre Lagoya has been heralded as one of the supreme masters of the guitar by critics and mu-

### Teen Fashions

Tots and Teens Fashion on Parade will be presented April 10, 5-7 p.m., at the Greenville Center by the Travelettes Social Club.

Tickets for this creative event are only \$1. The first place prize will be a \$25 money tree.

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sicians throughout the world.

Born in France to a Greek father and an Italian mother, neither of whom were musical, Lagoya performed his way to success, gathering a large and enthusiastic following. At age 19, Lagoya traveled to Paris to study harmony and counterpoint. Three years later, he married another famed guitarist, Ida Presti.

The two became a formidable concert duo, and during the 15 years they toured the world, they played some 2,000 concerts and introduced many brilliant new

techniques for the guitar. Among Lagoya's innovations are his unique trills and pizzicatos, as well as his approach to the staccato.

After Presti's death in 1967, Lagoya quit performing in concert for nearly seven years and taught mainly at the Paris National Conservatory and the International Academy of Music in Nice. Since he resumed his work as a concert guitarist, Lagoya has played at least 200 concerts a year and recorded several albums. He continues to teach guitar in France and around the world.

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