

Collectively, we African Americans have been voting as a block since the late 1960's as the Voting Rights Act began being implemented throughout the South and other venues. We have been very kind especially to the Democratic Party and to anyone who is Black running for a local office. We have elected officials who have spent an entire career in some slots without having anything of substance to claim as an accomplishment. African Americans have been the least selective and least demanding of all blocks of voters. Poverty, crime, legal injustice, unfair taxation and unemployment have become household terms to us and for some reason we accept it. We do not hold our elected officials accountable - especially the Black ones.

This November I propose we do something radically different. If things aren't noticeably better than they were at the last election we should make big changes. Upgrade your local officials by voting in new ones who claim they can do better. Give the new ones a one term chance. If they succeed they can have another shot at it. If they don't succeed send them packing also. It is time to run our elections like a tightly run business. Maybe then our plight will improve.

Many of our communities have Black mayors, chiefs of police, fire chiefs, school superintendents and school board members, city council members, county commissioners, sheriffs, district attorneys, etc. etc. Yet, we have double digit unemployment while the American average is 4.2%. We have children who are functionally illiterate. Our children, especially boys, are unjustly represented in court and go off to jail needlessly. We are taxed to the neck and get little government service in return. Things are bad and someone Black either did it or let it happen. Why do we continuously reelect them or in succession elect their children or apparent heirs? No longer can we blame "The Man". It is on us.

How ludicrous is it when a locally elected official proclaims that a construction project has been declared "union only" when there is no one in his district or precinct who belongs to any construction union. Negro Please! You just secured total unemployment for the people who have elected you. How sick it is when school board members meet continuously while students cannot learn the fundamentals of reading, writing and basic math. In Detroit, the school system received millions of dollars in new books and it took years to deliver them from the warehouse to the classrooms. Why do we put up with such incompetence? Let's throw them out and get some forward thinking leaders.

The biggest rip off to the residents of "chocolate cities" around the nation is professional sports stadiums. Billions of dollars have been appropriated for the erection of stadiums that replace perfectly fine existing ones. The money is raised through industrial or

revenue bonds which are in effect tax increases upon the residents of those cities. The work benefit (jobs/contracts) goes to people and companies who do not reside or pay taxes within those cities. Those hotels and restaurants around the new stadiums are not owned by any resident of the applicable city. The vast majority of the fans who will enjoy the sporting events come from the suburbs and rural areas that do not have to pay a cent in the tax burden. Thus, it is total exploitation. Outsiders get the thrill and the Black residents get the bill. Vote out anyone who supports another stadium deal.

After you clean up the "local trash" begin evaluating the state and federally elected officials. Has your governor done something about prison reform? If not, vote him out. What has he done about your state's healthcare delivery system and affordable service? If not enough, vote him out! Call the local office of your congressional and senate office and see how they voted on the renewal of the Voting Rights Act. If they voted against it, vote him/her out! Do they support Affirmative Action? If not, vote them out! It is imperative that we put pertinent issues on their mind so that they can adequately think these issues out and do the right thing.

That is why a Corey Booker and a Barack Obama excites us all. They bring fresh air and dare to lead. This is what America needs. No longer, in this dangerous world, can we afford to have followers instead of leaders. Those who go along to get along or do not think at all cannot sit in places that require people who can act on behalf of the voters who put them in office. Vote them out!

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