

It really isn't a contrast of two distinct cities. Charlotte, North Carolina and Tampa, Florida have a lot in common. They are National Football League cities with a recent history of growth and cutting edge technology leading to much business growth. They are two southern cities on the economic move and striving to become even greater. Because of this they were each selected to become the venues of two of the most important conventions in our recent history. Charlotte will become the venue for the 2012 Democratic National Committee Convention. Likewise, Tampa will become the venue for the 2012 Republican National Committee Convention. This is where the two comparisons start to contrast significantly.

Tampa won an NFL franchise as well as a Major League Baseball franchise by being a diverse community. It prides itself in this and promotes it as a selling point when it bids on conventions such as the RNC Convention. Living up to this commitment, it presented its minority business inclusion program to the RNC for 2012. The Republican Party adopted it totally. We will discuss the significance of this later.

Charlotte, likewise, has won an NFL franchise as well as a National Basketball Association (NBA) franchise because of its progressive and diverse policy. Here is where the contrast begins. They won the 2012 Democratic National Committee convention and soon presented their in place program. It was soundly rejected by the DNC. The Democratic National Committee wanted no part of a diversity program. It got so contentious that the DNC stated "No diversity or no convention". The city government of Charlotte was dumbfounded and confused how such a large organization would take such a racist stand.

It should come as no surprise. The DNC has a long track record of discrimination in its business opportunity practices. You can go back to the Dixie Crats segment of this party that would refuse any Black participation at its conventions and even in 2008 refused Black vendors from participating in the procurement opportunities of its convention. The procurement opportunities are reserved for the "good ol'boys" and they are lily white. It is the legacy of the DNC – Jim Crow business practices. The Ku Klux Klan and the DNC were hand in hand on much of the political history of this nation. A lot of that still sticks and it shows its ugly head today in Charlotte, NC at its upcoming convention. I challenge them to change their racist ways. I am waiting.

In contrast to the DNC racist operandi, the RNC has a beginning with diversity. The co-founders of the RNC were diverse. It included the great Black orator Frederick Douglass who challenged the incorporators every step of the way to include Blacks. He was successful. Another

champion was the great Booker T. Washington who stated “Faith, education, entrepreneurship and communication” were the 4 keys to Black empowerment. He was so convincing that moguls such as Andrew Carnegie and Henry Ford funded his National Negro Business League which was the forerunner to the National Black Chamber of Commerce and started ten years before the US Chamber of Commerce. President Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican, invited him to the White House for dinner. This enraged the lily white Democratic National Committee so much that they formally protested and started rival groups to oppose Mr. Washington – the NAACP and Urban League.

Here we are today with the DNC blocking a great city, Charlotte, who has a program to include all of its citizens in the business opportunity process, by resisting any semblance of equal opportunity. This city is struggling economically like the rest of us but even CNN has done a recent study on the Black middle class of Charlotte. They are disproportionately hurting by this downturn in our economy. Here comes the DNC to pour “salt” onto those wounds. They want no part of Black entrepreneurs participating in the business opportunities of their convention. They have Black groups strung out and bought off to their rhetoric and absolutely do not have to share any business exchanges with the “coloreds”. They sing the music and we dance. It is a shame but until we become aware of this hustle we will continue to suffer.

Just how much opportunity does a political convention offer? Think of a Super Bowl. It brings billions of dollars to a city. The dollars flow from the hotel owners to the shoe shine stands and everything in between. A national political convention is equal to 12 Super Bowls. Twelve times the amount! So, what is possible for Tampa is an economic boom that will bless all segments of its population. What Charlotte has is a potentially missed opportunity for its minority businesses and job creation for all because an outsider comes to town and is adverse to diversity – simply racist.

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