

## Thank You Mr. Stringfellow

by

C. Liegh McInnis

Many African American adults are often frustrated that our children are not adequately abreast of current events, especially politics. Well, if I were eighteen and my leadership was Journalist Eric Stringfellow, Congressman Bennie Thompson, Attorney Isaac Byrd, Councilman Leslie McLemore, and Dr. Mary Coleman, then I would prefer to become an ostrich and hide my head in the sand rather than deal with the truth that "Negro Leadership" essentially means a group of Negroes leading us to the damnation of integration.

After reading Stringfellow's Thursday, November 15, 2001, editorial in the *Clarion Liar*, it is perfectly clear why young African Americans feel apathy about their so-called leadership. Stringfellow is blind enough to dedicate an entire column to justifying the *Clarion Liar's* misrepresentation of facts and its bias portrayal of black people. No wonder whites think that he is a role model. He is a role model for how to sell your soul to racist rags and get paid doing so.

Accordingly, after being an active participant in the Ayers case and witnessing Thompson, Bryd, and Coleman in action, I have resigned myself to not being able to ever again vote for middle-class Negroes. But what should I expect? For years, the Negro democrats have allowed Mike Moore and Amy Tuck to act like Dixie-crats with no repercussions. No black democrat said anything when Moore attempted to help white plantation owners use public funds to develop all white public schools in Tunica County. No black democrat said anything as Moore fought to ensure that Zero Tolerance was applied in a discriminatory manner to black children as opposed to white children. Also, Tuck suffered no repercussions when her first act as Lt. Governor was to remove African Americans from key committee positions. Do we really think that it was happenstance that Tuck replaced Hillman Frazier as Chair of the Colleges and Universities Committee just before the State began pushing for a settlement with Ayers? And the truth is that nothing has been done and nothing will be done because Mississippi Negro leadership is inept because the black middle-class has rarely cared about the black mass. This is why Langston Hughes rejected the black middle-class because of their desire "to be as little Negro and as much American as possible." Of course, Kim Wade will assert, "Then maybe you should vote Republican." As much as I respect C. Darryl Neely, he is in the party of Ben Allen. (Ben Allen? Enough said.)

So what has McLemore to do with this? Well, he is the ultimate Negro politician who loves to tell people about how he was in the struggle, and the only struggle in which we have seen him has been how to vote with Ben Allen while giving a MLK speech. My larger fear is that he is grooming Marshand K. Crisler to be just like him. Every Negro official in the state was elected by a mass of black people who want/need them to create policy and laws that change Mississippi's racist system. I am saddened to say that there is not one plan on the table that does so, not even in Jackson, Mississippi, where African Americans have an overwhelming majority. Even in Jackson, the Negro officials are thinking more about appeasing white folks than working for their constituents, and McLemore is the poster child for this pattern.

Thus, there is a reason why the *Clarion Liar* champions Negroes like Stringfellow and dehumanizes Negroes like Ivory Phillips. In the *Liar's* Thursday commentary, they called an appeal by those of us who want to opt-out of the current Ayers litigation "Sour Grapes." When did fighting for that in which you believe become "sour grapes?" The truth is that Thompson, Byrd, and Coleman have allowed this case to be turned into an issue of "take the money and run" or "take what little justice the State is willing to give black people." The same is also true for black legislators who cut deals with Nissan for the black middle-class, ignoring the injustice done to the black mass. And that is the problem with Negro leadership. Embracing integration and capitalism has caused them to lose sight of the larger goal, first-class citizenship, which is based on humanity and self-determination. As long as the black agenda is concerned with appeasing white people, the black mass will never achieve self-determination. Additionally, what the *Liar* is really doing is continuing to set the black agenda, which has been its goal throughout the Ayers discussions. Unfortunately, our so-called black leadership has allowed the *Liar* and other white folks to set our agenda by allowing the *Liar* to tell us what we need and what we should do. Is it "sour grapes" when white folks still complain about the O.J. verdict? Was it "sour grapes" when white people *kept* going *back* to court to *over turn* Affirmative Action? So why is it "sour grapes" when black people refuse to accept Judge Neal Bigger's racist and prejudicial rulings and agenda, especially when 4000 African Americans disagreed in writing with Thompson, Byrd, and Coleman? The reason that an Ayers appeal is "sour grapes" is because in America the Negroes are suppose to take the word and agenda of the *Liar* without any questions, and when the *Liar* tells you that something is "over" or that it has been "resolved," you should act accordingly. "Sit Negroes, sit. Good curs. Now roll over." "How much is that Negro politician in the window, the one with a pocket full of kickbacks?"

African American children see all of the above and are not fooled. How can we ridicule black children for embracing the "bling--bling" culture when their leadership has? It seems that black children have peeped the game and are applying the serenity prayer to

it. "God give me the serenity to accept the things that I cannot change. The courage to change the things that I can. And the wisdom to know the difference." It seems that Ivory Phillips is the only person with the "courage," so black children have "wised" up and realized that the rest of the Negro leadership is inept, and the best plan for them is to get paid. At least, that is the model given to them by their leadership. So they gain and keep their serenity by being purposefully uninformed, and that keeps them from having to deal with the reality that voting for middle-class Negroes is a waste of time.

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