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BLACK
C o m m e n t a t o r**
Commentary, analysis and investigations
on issues affecting African Americans
www.blackcommentator.com

June 25, 2009 - Issue 330

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**Obama's Upcoming Hush-Hush Damage Control Meeting with LGBTQ Leaders
Inclusion**

**By the Rev. Irene Monroe
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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The President has been an Obama-nation on LGBTQ issues since he's taken office.

The political carrots Obama dangled before us as campaign promises are now looking like merely empty rhetoric that was used to court our votes and to collect our campaign dollars.

But with a 74 percent disapproval rating the President now has with us according to the recent Washington Blade poll that asked the question "Is Obama moving fast enough on LGBT issues?," and with many LGBTQ Democrats, especially those with deep pockets, boycotting the June 26th DNC fundraiser in D.C. that would fill the party's coffers with queer dollars, the Justice Department decided to have a conversation with us.

And in their effort to thwart off both a huge political and financial lost to him and the party, the DOJ is conducting a hush-hush damage control meeting with the nation's top LGBTQ heads of organizations on Monday June 29. In a written invitation from the White House it states the following:

"The President and Mrs. Obama request the pleasure of your company and a reception to be held at the White House on Monday, June 29, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. Please respond at the Social Secretary of the White House at your earliest convenience giving your date of birth and social security number of your guest and yourself."

The purpose of the gathering is to ask us what we want?

But the question appears not only disingenuous but also deceptively political given the glaring evidence of the president's conflicted and contradictory actions his administration has taken on key LGBTQ policies this month.

Let's start with June 1.

On June 1 Obama issued a Presidential Proclamation in honor of Pride Month, stating, "Here at home, I continue to support measures to bring the full spectrum of equal rights to LGBT Americans. These measures include enhancing hate crimes laws, supporting civil unions and Federal rights for LGBT couples, outlawing discrimination in the workplace, ensuring adoption rights, and ending the existing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in a way that strengthens our Armed Forces and our national security."

On June 4 Jonathan Capehart, an African American gay journalist at the Washington Post wrote an op-ed "Okay, Obama. Now Let's Have a Speech on Gay Rights," stating "After last night's airing of NBC's Inside the Obama White House interview, in which Obama provided a tepid answer to a question about whether "gay and lesbian couples who wish to marry in this country have a friend in the White House," the blogosphere is filling with cries of "shameful" and "no passion, no heart, no real connection to our cause."

On June 8 the Supreme Court agreed with the Obama administration in refusing to review the Pentagon policy that prohibits LGBTQ servicemembers to serve openly in the military.

To add salt to an already open wound for our LGBTQ servicemembers, Obama's administration stated in the court papers that the ruling on DADT was correct because of the military's legitimate concern of LGBTQ servicemembers endangering "unit cohesion" in spite of the 2002 study "A Modest Proposal: Privacy as a Flawed Rationale for the Exclusion of Gays and Lesbians from the U.S. Military," that proved otherwise.

On June 12 the LGBTQ community got another blow: Obama defend (DOMA), a law that prevent couples in the states that recognize same-sex marriage from securing Social Security spousal benefits, filing joint taxes and other federal rights of marriage. His reasons: DOMA is not a valid exercise of Congress's power, and it is not consistent with Equal Protection or Due Process principles, and it would infringe on the rights of taxpayers in states that fundamentally oppose same-sex marriage.

During the evening of June 12 Campbell Brown of CNN sensing the tension in the LGBTQ community had a segment asking the question "Is President Obama Selling Out the Gay Community?"

Dan Savage, a nationally syndicated gay columnist gave his response. "I'm sick of hearing about the president's commitment. I want to see action from the White House... The president has sold us out in California today. The Obama administration filed a brief to dismiss the challenge to the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). The DOMA brief is so insanely bigoted that the HRC, Human Rights Campaign, which is the most mainstream middle of the road gay group, called it's legal arguments false and damaging. People are incensed.

On June 17 Obama extends some benefits to same-sex partners of federal employers, but leaves couples without federal and health benefits. No one is sure what these few benefits the President has doled out to our community will mean as long as DOMA isn't repealed.

Gay writer and radio host Michelangelo Signorile wrote on his blog, "[T]he Obama administration is throwing us a pathetic bone: benefits for federal workers. Wow. Give me a break!"

And on June 19 invitations went out to major LGBTQ organizations for us to come talk with the President. The talk will be followed by gala reception to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion.

Is the President playing us stupid? It will take more than lip-service and a party for us to believe we got a friend in the White House.

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The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog

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