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on issues affecting African Americans  
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Harry Belafonte has really gotten under the rightwingers' and racists' skins – and that's a good thing. As part of a thirteen-member African American delegation to Venezuela, Belafonte called George Bush "the greatest tyrant in the world, the greatest terrorist in the world" – a sentiment shared by a huge chunk of world opinion. Belafonte also said that "millions of the American people" support Venezuela's revolution.

Not just the Hard Right, but much of the corporate media scoff at the second part of Belafonte's statement. They can't believe that millions of Americans feel that way about George Bush, or are glad to see a Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez thumbing his nose at the United States. But I maintain that many millions of Black Americans are saying Right On! to Harry. When competently questioned, African Americans consistently express solidarity with Third World nations seeking to distance themselves from United States power. Black Americans have consistently opposed U.S. military adventures abroad, including the current one.

Harry Belafonte is an icon in Black America, especially among those who remember his deep involvement in our struggles over the decades. When he called Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell "house Negroes," only a minority of Black people were upset. And George Bush's name is anathema to the vast bulk of African Americans, especially after Katrina. Belafonte can say anything he wants about Bush, and most of us will applaud.

Thinking they were being cute and witty, corporate commentators reacted to Belafonte's Venezuelan remarks with references to his "Banana Boat" song; they attempted to belittle him as a singer who doesn't have the brains or right to speak on world affairs. But Belafonte and the late Ossie Davis are cut from the same cloth as Paul Robeson, possibly the greatest singer of the Twentieth Century, who used his worldwide reputation to tirelessly fight for peace and social justice. Robeson was punished by the taking away of his passport and the imposition of the harshest blacklist imaginable.

## The Black Commentator – Radio BC: Right On! Harry and Hugo

Now, folks are calling for Belafonte's head, some calling him treasonous. Yet it is George Bush who violates international law as a matter of policy, and whittles constantly away at the freedoms of Americans. Hugo Chavez has held three national elections since 2000, none of them as tainted and suspect as George Bush's two presidential campaigns. Chavez is the leader with the genuine claim to democracy. George Bush Bush is, indeed, the most dangerous tyrant in the world. Belafonte got it right. For Radio BC, I'm Glen Ford.

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