

family, and all of the other small businesses that continue to serve America and drive our economy. I wish them well and Godspeed in their future ventures.

THE MCKINNEY AFFAIR—RAM-PAGING RACISM AND A COWARDLY CAUCUS

HON. CYNTHIA MCKINNEY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD.

[From the Black Commentator, Apr. 13, 2006]

THE MCKINNEY AFFAIR—RAM-PAGING RACISM AND A COWARDLY CAUCUS

(By Glen Ford and Peter Gamble)

There are profound lessons to be learned from the ongoing travails of Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney (D-GA), under siege by white America at large, the leadership of her own party, and the chairman of her own caucus.

In the aftermath of McKinney's run-in with a Capitol Hill police officer, we have witnessed an orgy of unadulterated defamation that is actually directed at Black women in general. In rejecting and denouncing McKinney's defense, her tormentors demonstrate that the very concept of racial profiling was never sincerely accepted among most white Americans, and that 9/11 is just an excuse for undoing decades of legal and political struggles against the abominable practice.

So virulent and shameless have been the attacks on McKinney—spewing caricatures of the six-term lawmaker that reflect whites' own hallucinatory visions of Black people—it leads us to conclude that racists are conducting a kind of ritual, an exorcism to cast the "militant Black" out of the national polity, once and for all. Disgustingly, a number of Black voices have joined mob, in order to prove that they are reasonable and trustworthy Negroes who won't intrude on white folks' illusions of innocence.

Most distressingly, the McKinney affair dramatically demonstrates that the Congressional Black Caucus has been eviscerated as a body. The CBC is revealed as collectively gutless, devoid of any semblance of Black solidarity, without which it has no reason for being.

CBC HITS NEW LOW

We at BC had previously believed that April, 2005, when 37 percent of the 42 Black House members voted for Republican bills, was the lowest point in Congressional Black Caucus history. A year later, the CBC has found a new nadir. On the evening of April 5, undoubtedly on orders from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, CBC chairman Mel Watt gathered twenty or so members to browbeat McKinney into firing her legal team and cease appearing before the media. Watt absented himself from the beat-down, so that it would not appear to be an "official" CBC event.

As congressional aides wandered in and out of the room, some Members dutifully echoed Pelosi's demand that McKinney not frame the March 28 confrontation with the policeman as a "racial" incident, and that she issue an apology on the House floor the following morning. According to several sources who spoke with BC on condition of anonymity, and based on an account given by McKinney staff assistant Faye Coffield to a weekly Atlanta meeting of the Georgia Co-

alition for the People's Agenda, a "consensus" was reached that McKinney would deliver the apology and abandon efforts to defend herself in the media (although not her legal team).

The next morning, at the appointed hour, McKinney was prepared to offer her apology to the House. But Mel Watt had already put the word out that CBC members were to renege on their part of the deal. The Caucus must not stand with McKinney when she stepped to the microphone. Mel Watt, Nancy Pelosi's poodle, attempted to enforce his Mistress's wish that McKinney appear utterly isolated and alone. Nothing should distract from the Democrats' non-strategy of doing and saying nothing until mid-term elections in November. The Republicans must be allowed to self-destruct without interference. McKinney's charge of racial profiling was a distraction from the Democratic non-strategy—so she must be shunned. Mel Watt was the enforcer—the designated shunner-in-chief.

Pelosi appears to harbor a deep hatred for McKinney, whom she cannot control. Most recently, the 51-year-old Georgia lawmaker defied the Leader's orders, voting in favor of a Republican bill, cynically modeled on Democrat John Murtha's measure for a quick exit from Iraq. She was among only three Democrats, and the only CBC member, to do so. McKinney also ignored Pelosi's order that Democrats boycott hearings on Katrina and leave the field to Republicans.

However, Pelosi has been the aggressor all along, bent on bringing the CBC and other progressives to heel as she pursues her spineless non-strategy for victory by default over the GOP—a scenario that by definition requires African Americans to mute their own demands, to be quiet and compliant. When McKinney returned to congress in January 2005 after a two-year hiatus, Pelosi denied her seniority, bumping her down to freshman status despite her previous ten years on The Hill. Not a peep from the CBC, cowed by their Leader and, recent events have shown, packed with members who are themselves fearful that McKinney's militancy will raise the bar of constituent expectations for their own performances on Black people's behalf.

On the House floor, the morning of April 6, Pelosi/Watt had set McKinney up for further humiliation. Not only would she be required to deliver an apology that would be seen as an admission of guilt (by those who had already condemned and defamed her), but the absence of CBC members at her side would mark her as a lone "extremist," a "loon" whose politics could be dismissed out of hand. Why, even McKinney's own colleagues won't stand with her. She's crazy (like the rest of those darkies who cry racism).

According to several congressional sources, McKinney confronted a gaggle of CBC members, reminding them of the consensus agreement of the night before, in which they had promised a display of physical solidarity at the microphone in return for her concessions. White Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), seeing the commotion, hurried over to the Black circle: "I'll stand with you, Cynthia." Others stepped forward to fulfill their pledge, despite CBC chairman Mel Watt's treacherous machinations.

Here is a partial list of those who were videotaped standing with McKinney when she read the words of apology that had been demanded of her:

\*Elijah Cummings (MD), \*Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick (MI), \*Barbara Lee (CA), \*Alcee Hastings (FL), \*Maxine Waters (CA), \*Bobby Rush (IL), \*Corrine Brown (FL), \*Major Owens (NY), \*Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX), Marcy Kaptur (OH), Dennis Kucinich (OH), Jose Serrano (NY), Bob Filner (CA), (\*CBC members).

Only nine of the 20-plus CBC members who had reached "consensus" on standing with their sister the night before, bucked Pelosi's petty dictatorial edict—and straw-boss Mel Watt's attempt to enforce it.

Once upon a time, the CBC could collectively call itself "the conscience of the congress." No more.

MULTI-PROFILING AND SHEER MALEVOLENCE

By bowing to Pelosi, Black congresspersons reinforce her and other white's belief that they can pick and choose the African American leaders and representatives they deal with, and isolate the rest, while still retaining mass Black support for the Democratic Party. Such Blacks are enablers of racism, and must eventually pay the price at the hands of their constituents, who are no different than the Black Georgia voters who sent McKinney to Washington six times. Worse, in urging McKinney to drop the "racial" aspect of her defense—to pretend that she was not racially profiled, when they know that police profiling is near-universal—they do grave injury to fundamental Black interests.

Days after his attempt to pound McKinney into dust, the duplicitous Mel Watt related to the Charlotte Observer his own scary run-in with Capitol police "a year or so ago":

"I was running to the floor to vote and an officer said, 'Can I see your ID?' and I said, 'No' and kept running. I looked back and he had his hand on his gun. Then another (Capitol) police officer said, 'Member.' He recognized me (as a House member). It just so happened that the first (officer) was white and the other one was black . . . I was probably very rash. In retrospect, I thought to myself, 'You had to be out of your mind.' I was trying to get to a vote and he had a job to do."

Watt understands very well that the Black officer, who didn't go for his gun, but instead called his white partner off, was intervening in a case of racial profiling. Yet Watt's desire to stay in the good graces of his Leader, Pelosi, drives him to conspire against a fellow Black congressperson, Cynthia McKinney, whose recent hair makeover is said to have made her fair game to be accosted by Capitol police. Said McKinney:

"Do I have to contact the police every time I change my hairstyle? How do we account for the fact that when I wore my braids every day for 11 years, I still faced this problem, primarily from certain police officers."

Nobody knows better than Black officers that racism is rampant in the Capitol Police force. Of the 1,200 officers, 29 percent are Black, and many still have racial bias suits outstanding. "You have, basically, a renegade police department up here, that's been operating under the protection of Congress," said Charles J. Ware, an attorney representing the Capitol Black Police Association.

But it's not just race. Police officers, like workers in any organization, spend much of their time talking shop. For Capitol police, the subject of their shop-talk is the members of congress they are hired to protect. Cynthia McKinney is famous—no less so on Capitol Hill. She is the Black woman viciously branded as a friend of "terrorists," the most uppity African American in the federal legislature. The cops are quite aware of what she looks like, new hair-do or not.

A McKinney lawyer got it right when he told a Howard University press conference that his client was targeted for reasons of "sex, race and Ms. McKinney's progressiveness."

The cops know who McKinney is—they have profiled her politically. Michael C. Ruppert, former Los Angeles cop and current honcho of the popular web site From the Wilderness, has felt the police hostility directed at his longtime friend, Cynthia McKinney:

"I have walked the halls of Congress with Cynthia McKinney maybe eight to ten times. I have walked into and out of the Cannon and Longworth house office buildings with her. I have walked to hearings in the Rayburn house office building with her. I have walked the underground tunnels from one of those office buildings directly to the edge of the House floor and its anteroom with her. I can tell you one thing for certain because I have seen it and I have felt it. Cynthia McKinney and her staff get treated differently from just about anyone else on the Hill. It's subtle, but so is the taste of dirt when it's in your mouth."

Although the Capitol police have failed to produce a surveillance tape of McKinney's confrontation with their officer, the congresswoman captured one incident in the movie, "American Blackout," now being screened at sites around the country. The film depicts McKinney's investigation of voting irregularities in the 2000 elections. One segment shows the congresswoman being accosted by police as she and her party approach the Longworth building of the Capitol. McKinney turns to the camera and reports that police subject her to such treatment "all the time."

Does that happen to 535 members of congress "all the time"? Not hardly.

California Rep. Tom Lantos, according to the web reference site Wikipedia, "ran over a teenager in the Capitol parking area and refused to stop despite screams from the crowd. He never apologized for the hit-and-run either." The Boston Globe reported that Lantos was not charged with hit-and-run, but was only fined \$25 for "failure to pay full time and attention." However, a teacher accompanying the student was threatened with arrest by Capitol police when she chased Lantos' car, demanding that he stop.

Apparently Capitol police are quite zealous in protecting their lawmakers—if they are white.

In an otherwise inane, anti-McKinney article, Black columnist Earl Ofari Hutchinson gave some historical perspective to recent events:

"In past years, the Caucus raised heck when a white Republican Congressman punched a black Capitol police officer and a year later Ohio Democratic Representative Louis Stokes was hassled by Capitol police. And the Congressional Black Caucus rushed to their defense."

Not this time, not for Cynthia McKinney. The Congressional Black Caucus is broken.

#### SEX AND THE FEDERAL CITY

Around midnight on April 8, Saturday Night Live's Kenan Thompson performed a grotesque, bewigged skit in which he conjured up a fat, sloppy, dull-witted, belligerent, loud-talking, no-listening, from-deep-in-the-ghetto character who was supposed to be—Cynthia McKinney. Of course, this TV minstrel's interpretation bore no resemblance to the congressperson—daughter of one of Atlanta's first Black policemen, a former faculty member at Clark Atlanta University, world traveler and sought-after speaker, six-term legislator. But that did not matter. Although SNL does superb work caricaturing public personalities, its usual standards did not apply in McKinney's case. The skit was a dehumanizing assault on Black women as a group, with "Cynthia" standing in for the female gender of her race.

A specific profile of Black women exists in the minds of vast sections of white America. As Dr. Abdul Karim Bangura relates in this issue of BC, in "an analysis of White students' stereotypes of Black women by professor of women's studies and sociology Rose Weitz at Arizona State University and Wakonse fellow Leonard Gordon at the same

university, the students primarily characterize Black women as loud, aggressive, argumentative, stubborn, and bitchy."

White men (and women, and some Black men) on and off Capitol Hill are eager to vilify and diminish McKinney, to call her a "bitch," a "racist," "crazy" and all manner of epithets. This abuse is actually directed against the defamers' twisted idea of who and what Black women are. So diseased are their minds, they see only their sickness-induced delusions. White supremacy allows them to translate their delusions into public policy. September 11 gave them a free pass to run buck wild, with no apologies, under the umbrella of "homeland security."

#### BLACK VOTERS WILL DECIDE

It can be no consolation to Rep. McKinney, that she is just a convenient target for what we now recognize as a great resurgence of racism in the United States. The South rules a South that is not defined geographically but socio-politically. White Americans have become much more homogenous in the electronic and high-mobility age—to the detriment of sanity. Their never-forsaken dreams of domestic and planetary racial conquest were given a Frankenstein-like jolt and boost by the Bush regime, which spoke directly to the predatory core of American myth and historical practice. Emboldened, they have snared Cynthia McKinney in one of their IRTs: Improvised Racist Traps. She awaits the decision of a grand jury.

The moral and political collapse of the Congressional Black Caucus could not come at a worse time—but it has occurred. Corroded by corporate money dependent on corporate media—with the near extinction of independent Black media—adrift in the gulf between the needs of the Black masses and the narrow aspirations of the minuscule hyper-mobile Black classes and still steeped in rank male chauvinism much of Black "leadership" cannot abide a genuinely progressive, charismatic female in their midst. Many also look on in sulking jealousy at the burgeoning unity and militancy of Latinos, whose grassroots are on the move and whose media support their cause.

The CBC cannot even support each other.

When CBC members urged Cynthia McKinney to forsake the truth, to hide the ugly fact of racial (and political, and sexual) profiling they gave enormous aide and comfort to the enemy. If there was one victory that African Americans had achieved in the post-Civil Rights era it was to make racial profiling legally, politically and socially unacceptable. This victory was the fruit of countless suitor demonstrations—all manner of political struggles—and the legacy of the legions of dead, maimed, jailed and humiliated victims of profiling who became the focus of sustained Black action.

September 11 provided the excuse to undo decades of anti-profiling victories. Profiling is reckoned to be a good thing. Now the racists seek to reestablish arbitrary and capricious white supremacy, with legislation that would de facto deputize every police officer as an agent of "homeland security" who need not respect the constitution in the case of "suspected" undocumented immigrants. At that point, all persons of color become grist for the suspicion mill. Just as the Capitol policeman chose not "recognize" Cynthia McKinney as a congressperson, any cop could willfully fail to recognize his fellow Americans and strip them of their rights. Such a regime already exists in designated "drug zones" in urban America where everyone is suspect.

Yet the CBC allows Republicans and racist Democrats to jeer and bully Cynthia McKinney into a legal cul-de-sac because she dares to cite profiling.

The masses of African Americans know the deal—they are profiled constantly in stores, when observed outside their neighborhoods, on the highways, when breathing while Black. McKinney's version of events does not seem bizarre to them. Although the laughing racist hyenas convince each other—with the tacit help of be chair Mel Watt—that McKinney is on the ropes, it is the Black constituents of Dekalb County who will decide if she is "crazy" for standing up for her (and our) dignity and rights.

When McKinney arrived back in Atlanta shortly after her confrontation with the uniformed profiler, State Representative Tyrone Brooks, president of the Georgia Association of Black Elected officials, was among those to greet and support her: "It's really not about Cynthia McKinney," said Brooks. "It's about African-Americans in America who are victims of racial profiling every day."

Much of the Congressional Black Caucus seem to have lost touch with this reality. As a body, they have lost their moorings, and must be rehabilitated, surgically. A bunch of them have got to go.

BC Co-Publishers Glen Ford and Peter Gamble are writing a book to be titled, Barack Obama and the Crisis in Black Leadership.

#### HONORING OTTO W. "BILL" MEYER OF MARION, KANSAS

#### HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a man who is a legend in Kansas journalism and his community, a man not afraid to challenge an issue even if it rocked the boat, man who let his readers know what they needed to know, a man who served his country and community with strong will and strong opinions, and a man who will be missed throughout Kansas. I am here today to honor a respected leader and friend—Bill Meyer.

Bill may best be known as the editor and publisher of the Marion County Record. During his 55 years of service to this weekly paper, he brought a fire to the paper establishing it as a challenge to the status quo. After graduating from the University of Kansas in 1948 with a bachelor's degree in journalism, he began his five and a half decade career. Bill didn't stop at just reporting the news. His active role in civil issues, including the construction of Marion Reservoir and the local football stadium, helped create good news for the city of Marion.

Bill's weekly column, "Mostly Malarkey," gave voice to his strong opinions. These challenging positions often led to productive dialogues, but for others it led to violent reactions. On occasion his property and the newspaper office were vandalized. This past president of the Kansas Press Association has woken to slashed tires, egg-covered vehicles, and even a bullet hole in his office window. It takes a tough man to withstand the attacks he endured defending his fiery positions.

Bill also endured attacks while serving our country in World War II. He earned the Purple Heart for permanent injuries suffered from freezing temperatures during the Battle of the Bulge and the liberation of concentration camps in Bavaria. Bill was decorated by several European countries and his own for his