

August 29, 2013

We celebrate the March on Washington. Roger Simon, a veteran of the civil rights brigades of the 60's says it is time to end the movement.

End the civil rights movement. Now. Shoot the sucker and put it (and us) out of its misery.

It's a relic of the 1960s about as relevant as bell bottom trousers.

When we are debating Oprah Winfrey's right to buy a thirty-five thousand dollar purse or whether Barack Obama's dog should be flown to Martha's Vineyard in the canine's own private state-of-the art military transport, you know it's finished. Or should be.

It's also time for the NAACP and the Black Caucus to close up shop. They are dinosaurs from another era, making life miserable for the very people they are intended to help.

Black unemployment is at record levels during the administration of the first black president and that horrible situation is aided and abetted by those organizations. They are determined to preserve the image of black people as victims — an insulting self-fulfilling prophecy. What was once a solution has become the problem.

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... And when we discuss Oprah, tell it like it really is — she's a celebrity who has been extremely rich and famous for decades and has almost no idea what it's really like to be a shopgirl in Zurich or anywhere else.

Her story is one of Marie Antoinette, not Rosa Parks.

And that's the point. Rosa Parks was a very brave woman who made a tremendous contribution to our country — in 1955! That's almost sixty years ago. Stop this nostalgia for racism. Stop playing the race card. Switch to Old Maid — or rummy. End the civil rights movement. We should all honor Rosa Parks' great contribution by moving on.

More proof of Harry Truman's saying the only thing new is history you don't know.

Paul Mirengoff takes a look at how the "I have a dream" speech was reported.

Would you believe it was almost ignored in the WaPo the next day?

With the 50th anniversary of the civil rights march on Washington fast approaching, I had intended to check old newspapers at the Library of Congress to see how the mainstream reported the march. I confess to having an ulterior motive: I participated in that march and wanted to test the view, now a commonplace, that the media never gets right a story about which one has no personal knowledge.

Unfortunately, veteran Washington Post reporter Robert Kaiser has beaten me to the punch. Not only that, he shows that the Post missed the boat to a degree that I would not have imagined possible.

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Commentary has reminiscences from [Joshua Muravchik](#) who was there. This is long, because he covers the highlights of decades of civil rights struggles.

On August 28, 1963, a quarter million Americans staged the most important demonstration in our nation's history. They marched from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial in what is now remembered primarily as the setting for Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. But it was much more than that. The speech was epochal precisely because the event culminated the civil-rights "revolution" that put an end to the dark era of racial segregation and open discrimination.

Growing up in an activist household, I was, although just shy of 16, already a seasoned protester, having for example first seen Washington when my parents took me to the 1958 Youth March for Integrated Schools, a prequel to the 1963 march. Thanks to being in the right place at the right time, I now found myself in the role of coordinator of two old yellow school buses bringing marchers from Harlem to Washington. As we prepared for the nighttime drive to the capital, the sense of anticipation in the air along 125th Street was not limited to those who would make the journey. In a late-night drugstore, I assembled the contents of a first-aid kit for each bus, and when I told the clerks it was for the march, they cheered and refused to accept payment.

A checklist for the kits had been issued by the march's organizers, who seemed to have thought of everything even though there was no template for a mobilization on this scale. In addition to first aid, there was another checklist for the contents of box lunches and dinners that participants were told to bring. Alcohol was banned, as were children younger than 14. Large numbers of portable toilets were rented and so was the best available sound system. Bayard Rustin, the lead organizer, was determined to ensure that everyone could hear the speeches and singers so no one would grow restless. Members of the Guardians, a fraternal order of New York City's black police officers, were enlisted to provide volunteer crowd control without the help of weapons or uniforms.

The columnist Mary McGrory quipped that it was "the most elaborately nurse-maided demonstration of grievance ever held." The aim of these preparations was to confound dire predictions that such a gathering would devolve into violence. Weeks later, I heard Rustin chortle at another civil-rights rally: "No one believed we could bring all those Negroes to D.C. without someone getting cut." For that reason, President John F. Kennedy had tried to dissuade the conveners, fearing that any incidents would jeopardize the civil-rights bill he had sponsored.

After Kennedy's failure to dissuade the march organizers, members of his administration ghostwrote letters to them from liberal senators warning of difficulties. A Gallup poll showed that most Americans had heard of plans for the march and disapproved of it by a 3:1 ratio. ...

... The dignity of participants, two-thirds black, one-third white, according to a sample counted by the Washington Post, was matched by the rhetoric from the podium, which resonated with patriotism and measured moral indignation. A. Philip Randolph opened the program by proclaiming: "We are not a pressure group...we are not a mob. We are the advance guard of a massive moral revolution." Touching on the most controversial part of the civil-rights bill, he said simply and tellingly: "Property rights [cannot] include the right to humiliate me because of the color of my skin." The NAACP's leader, Roy Wilkins, displayed an eloquence belying his known preference for legal briefs over soapbox oratory, decrying racial discrimination as a "sickness which threaten[s] to erode...the liberty of the individual, which is the hallmark of our country among the nations of the earth." And King's peroration invoked "the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning, 'My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing.'"

When John Lewis, the 23-year-old leader of SNCC (the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or "snick") prepared a speech of more radical tenor—rejecting Kennedy's bill for being too modest and threatening a "nonviolent" reprise of Sherman's March through the South—the other leaders told him that he would not be allowed to speak unless he moderated those words. The specter of a shrill and perhaps violent black militancy that the leaders believed would harm the cause was already in the air. King addressed it directly in his speech, inveighing: "We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence."

But King did not fear Lewis as much as the spirit that was personified in Malcolm X. The Black Muslim rabble-rouser camped out in the lobby of the Statler Hilton, where the leaders were staying and the journalists were swarming, and offered up sound bites about the "farce on Washington." "While King was having a dream, the rest of us Negroes are having a nightmare," he declaimed. "The Negroes spent a lot of money, had a good time, and enjoyed a real circus....Now that it is all over, they are still jobless, homeless, and landless, so what did it accomplish?"

In fact, it accomplished a lot. ...

... The march was commemorated this August 24 by another march that did more to remind us of the eventual sad decay of the movement than of its glorious apogee. It was convened and led by Al Sharpton, who uses the title "Reverend" before his name although he never attended divinity school. Sharpton came into prominence in 1988 as the advocate of Tawana Brawley, a teenaged black girl who claimed to have been kidnapped and raped by white men, when in fact she was merely afraid to go home to her stepfather, a convicted killer. The man who served as Sharpton's assistant during the first four months of the affair later quoted Sharpton as exulting, "We beat this, we will be the biggest niggers in New York." Eventually, a jury found Sharpton guilty of having defamed one of the accused white men, awarding substantial damages. Since

then, Sharpton has made a career as what black columnist Jonathan Capehart calls a “racial ambulance chaser,” highlighted by a campaign against a white store owner in Harlem that culminated in an arson attack in which eight died. Although he denies any responsibility for violence, the formal slogan of Sharpton’s National Action Network is menacing: “No justice, no peace.” Sharpton’s agenda has never been difficult to discern. NAN’s homepage is graced with a photo of King, one of President Barack Obama, one of Trayvon Martin, and three of “Reverend Al.” I have said that the Big Six were men who would never glorify themselves on the backs of their people; Sharpton, in contrast, never passes up an opportunity to do so. Nonetheless, the various reputable civil-rights groups, or rather their empty shells, as well as some labor unions and other organizations, fell in line behind Sharpton’s call.

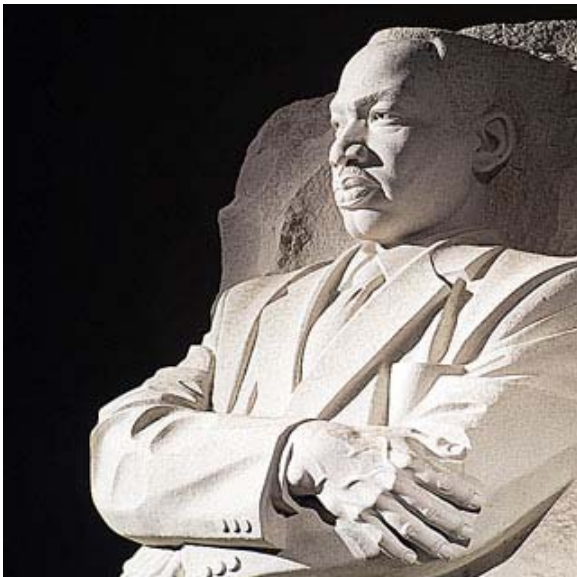
Thus continues the perverse appropriation of the memory of one of the greatest moments in American history—itsself the culmination of one of the greatest episodes—when hundreds of thousands of black and white citizens came together peacefully and in dignity and succeeded in putting an end to the worst evil besides slavery that has ever blighted our land.

For a change of pace, would you believe this has been the mildest summer in a century? [Real Science](#) has the story.

This summer, the US has experienced the fewest number of 100 degree readings in a century. The five hottest summers (1936, 1934, 1954, 1980 and 1930) all occurred with CO2 below 350 PPM.

CO2 went over 400 PPM this year, indicating that heatwaves and CO2 have nothing to do with each other. Scientists who claim otherwise are either incompetent, criminal, or both

Roger L. Simon [End the Civil Rights Movement](#)



Martin Luther King would not be amused by the pitiful current state of the civil rights movement.

End the civil rights movement. Now. Shoot the sucker and put it (and us) out of its misery.

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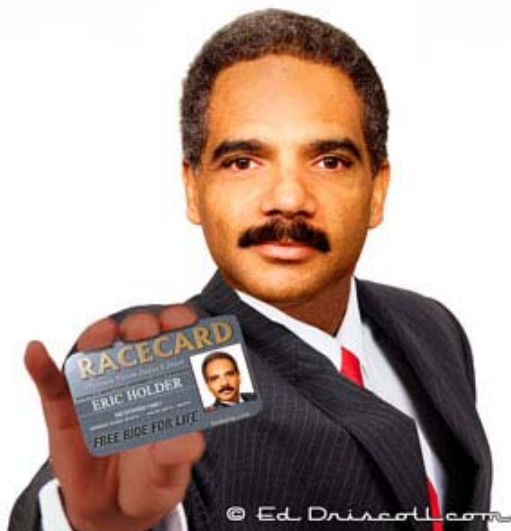
Black unemployment is at record levels during the administration of the first black president and that horrible situation is aided and abetted by those organizations. They are determined to preserve the image of black people as victims — an insulting self-fulfilling prophecy. What was once a solution has become the problem.

Affirmative action should also be flushed down the toilet with the civil rights movement. It contributes to the same syndrome of victimhood, simultaneously dividing our society, which is divided enough already.

The race card is a perfect example of this division and why this movement should be extinguished. Anybody who plays the race card in our country today is less than pond scum. It has become the 21st century equivalent of accusing someone of witchcraft in seventeenth century Salem.

Anyone who uses the race card should be considered a pariah automatically. It's almost always projection.

Black and brown people above all would profit from the end of the civil rights movement. We already have strong civil rights legislation. If anyone breaks the law, prosecute them. Meanwhile, move on. Stop dwelling on discrimination. Stop scratching the scab and let it heal.



The bill's long overdue on Eric Holder's maxed-out race card.

Let's find some productive work for Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, and the rest. Find them a shovel-ready project.

And forget about race.

Forget about Trayvon Martin, George Zimmerman and all of that.

Stop the endless discussions of race on the cable news networks, send the talking heads out to pasture or make them blather on about something else, force Geraldo to ignore the next phony story about someone who allegedly called somebody something twenty years ago when they had too much bourbon.

And absolutely no more talk of the n-word, crackers or any other racial epithet known or unknown. Just drop it.

And when we discuss Oprah, tell it like it really is — she's a celebrity who has been extremely rich and famous for decades and has almost no idea what it's really like to be a shopgirl in Zurich or anywhere else.

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Power Line

Sleeping through the dream

by Paul Mirengoff

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This is baffling. It's not as if King's speech flew under the radar. To the contrary, it stood out like a sparkling gem in the rock garden of endless mediocre oratory served up, so it seemed, by every civil rights leader in country and his brother.

Less than a minute into King's speech, my father looked at me. He wanted to make sure I understood that this was something exceptional. My look back showed him that I did.

[This collection](#) of remembrances by participants in the march includes a number of statements similar to the following:

When [Dr. King] started talking, everybody got quiet. You didn't hear babies crying or anything. It was just still. And the momentum that started to build up, you saw people crying. I was crying. And you saw people, strangers, black and white, hugging each other. Even now when I hear the speech, I'll start crying. I don't care where I am, tears will start coming.

I don't remember crying or hugging, but without question a hush came over the crowd early on in King's speech.

I'm also at a loss to understand how the Post selected three paragraphs from King's speech without including "I have a dream." This wasn't exactly a buried subtext in the address.

Oh, well. At least the Post didn't report that King said "I have a scheme" or "[Blessed are the cheesemakers.](#)"

I don't think that conservatives who criticize the mainstream media overestimate its level of bias. But I believe we underestimate its level of incompetence.

Commentary

[Fifty Years After the March](#)

by Joshua Muravchik

On August 28, 1963, a quarter million Americans staged the most important demonstration in our nation's history. They marched from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial in what is now remembered primarily as the setting for Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. But it was much more than that. The speech was epochal precisely because the event culminated the civil-rights "revolution" that put an end to the dark era of racial segregation and open discrimination.

Growing up in an activist household, I was, although just shy of 16, already a seasoned protester, having for example first seen Washington when my parents took me to the 1958 Youth March for Integrated Schools, a prequel to the 1963 march. Thanks to being in the right place at the right time, I now found myself in the role of coordinator of two old yellow school buses bringing marchers from Harlem to Washington. As we prepared for the nighttime drive to the capital, the sense of anticipation in the air along 125th Street was not limited to those who would make the journey. In a late-night drugstore, I assembled the contents of a first-aid kit for each bus, and when I told the clerks it was for the march, they cheered and refused to accept payment.

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In the end, there was not a single untoward moment. The *New York Herald Tribune* reported: "The Negro March on Washington yesterday turned out to be a profoundly moving demonstration, so big, so orderly, so sweet-singing and good-natured, so boldly confident and at the same time relaxed, so completely right from start to finish, that America was done proud beyond measure."

The dignity of participants, two-thirds black, one-third white, according to a sample counted by the *Washington Post*, was matched by the rhetoric from the podium, which resonated with patriotism and measured moral indignation. A. Philip Randolph opened the program by proclaiming: "We are not a pressure group...we are not a mob. We are the advance guard of a massive moral revolution." Touching on the most controversial part of the civil-rights bill, he said simply and tellingly: "Property rights [cannot] include the right to humiliate me because of the color of my skin." The NAACP's leader, Roy Wilkins, displayed an eloquence belying his known preference for legal briefs over soapbox oratory, decrying racial discrimination as a "sickness which threaten[s] to erode...the liberty of the individual, which is the hallmark of our country among the nations of the earth." And King's peroration invoked "the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning, 'My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing.'"

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In fact, it accomplished a lot. First, it lifted black people. Randolph had said that the march aimed to “imbue the American colored man [with] a sense of his own responsibility and power.” And it did. The *Los Angeles Sentinel*, a black paper, exulted, “the professionalism displayed by Negroes in this instance proved a maturing Americanism which few outsiders have previously credited to our race,” providing a sense of “unsinkable pride.” New York’s *Amsterdam News* said the march “left the Negro standing ten feet taller.” And novelist James Baldwin said his race was “no longer at the mercy of what the white people imagine the Negro to be.”

More important, the march brought tangible benefits. Within a year the civil-rights bill had been enacted, ending discrimination in public accommodations. That was followed a year later (1965) by the Voting Rights Act, making southern blacks a political force that could not be ignored. The Fair Housing Act of 1968 drove the final nail into the coffin of Jim Crow. All of this could not be attributed to the march alone, but the march was the turning point.

Its great success was attributable to impressive leadership. Four whites—representatives of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish denominations and labor leader Walter Reuther—spoke at the march and served on its executive committee. But they were later additions to the original core group, comprising the leaders of the major civil-rights organizations: King, of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Wilkins, of the NAACP; Lewis, of SNCC; James Farmer, of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); Whitney Young, of the National Urban League; and Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first predominantly black labor union. The Big Six, as they were called, naturally had their rivalries and vanities and other shortcomings, but in addition to their eloquence, they each exhibited intelligence, learning, and a profound sense of responsibility for the advancement of their race. None was a hustler or huckster or demagogue out to glorify himself on the backs of his people. After a White House meeting in June at which Kennedy failed to persuade them to cancel the march, the historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., who was present as an aide to the president, said the six struck him as being “as gifted and impressive a group as one could find in the country.”

In addition, at the very core of the march was what we might call the “big two,” Randolph and Rustin. The march had been conceived by them late in 1962 with the assistance of two young disciples, Tom Kahn and Norman Hill. Randolph, who was already in his seventies, was in effect the chairman of the march and Rustin its director, but these roles could not be formally

designated. Rustin, one of the most fascinating and flamboyant figures of 20th-century America, had three strikes against him. He had been a member of the Young Communist League; he had served time for having sex with two men in the backseat of a car; and, a devout pacifist, he had been a conscientious objector and served 28 months in prison for it during World War II. Some of the Big Six, especially Wilkins, feared that if Rustin was identified as the march's director, these aspects of his history would be used to tarnish it. They told Randolph that he, himself, should be the director. He agreed on the condition that he was free to name his own deputy. So Rustin ran the march as its "deputy director." Wilkins's fears were understandable. Senator Strom Thurmond did indeed make an issue of Rustin's past, but to little effect, and later, Wilkins paid tribute to the accomplishment of the "big two." History, he reflected, "has attached the name of Reverend King to the march, but I suspect it would be more accurate to call it Randolph's march—and Rustin's."

The same might be said of the entire civil-rights revolution: It could not have taken off without King's rare gifts of exposition and inspiration, but it was mostly the creation of Randolph and Rustin. Randolph, tall, handsome, and athletic, dressed impeccably and spoke with a patrician accent. He had spent time as a Shakespearean actor and was the very personification of his time of black dignity. College-educated, he was drawn to radical politics, as was true of most socially conscious blacks, and he devoted himself to the goal of unionizing black workers, working with elevator operators, waiters, hotel employees, and shipyard men. In 1925, he acceded to the appeal of some sleeping-car porters to take up their cause. Sleeping cars were the main method of interstate travel, and the porters numbered many thousands. They were all black and were terribly exploited. Their base work week was 92 hours, and additional unpaid hours were required. Randolph kicked off his drive with a conclave of 500 porters in Harlem, described by the *Amsterdam News* as "the greatest labor mass meeting ever held of, for, and by Negro working men." For 12 bitter years, Randolph battled the Pullman Company, losing many skirmishes until 1937 when, bolstered by New Deal labor laws, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters won a contract, a tremendous breakthrough in black representation.

In 1941, Randolph set his sights on discrimination in burgeoning military production and announced what would have been the first civil-rights march on Washington to demand its end. Rustin, then 29, volunteered to work on the march. President Franklin Roosevelt sought to dissuade Randolph, offering to issue a statement supporting his goals. But Randolph would settle for nothing less than an executive order. When FDR yielded, formally outlawing "discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color or national origin," Randolph called off the march.

Although the march was canceled, genuine preparations had been made, and the successful threat of it constituted another Randolph landmark. As author Charles Euchner explains in *Nobody Turn Me Around: A People's History of the 1963 March on Washington*:

Blacks had never massed together for a major protest. Before Randolph, the civil-rights movement remained torn between Booker T. Washington's conservative approach (creating a vibrant culture of education, business, and faith while accepting white dominance) and W.E.B. DuBois's "talented tenth" (forging a black leadership class from the best and brightest of all blacks). Randolph believed in the power of the masses.

The cancellation angered some of Randolph's own young followers, including Rustin, who hoped also to secure integration of the armed forces. Randolph calculated that with American entry into World War II beckoning, this would have to wait. He judged the time ripe after the war,

when, in 1948, a new military-service law was passed that contained nothing to undo racial separation. He announced a campaign of civil disobedience, urging blacks to resist conscription. Once again a U.S. president, this time Harry Truman, capitulated, issuing an executive order ending segregation of the armed forces.

Rustin, 23 years younger, served as Randolph's lieutenant in this fight. He was an uncannily well-suited protégé. He, too, was tall, handsome, and athletic, having starred in track and football. He, too, had attended City College of New York without graduating and was drawn to leftist politics. He, too, had experience as a performer, having toured as a vocalist with the popular folk singer Josh White. He, too, spoke with a distinctive accent, British-sounding although he had been born and raised in Pennsylvania to an unwed mother so young that he grew up believing her parents were his, too, and that she was his sister. The striking difference between the two men was Rustin's sexuality. "He was the only openly gay man I knew," recalled Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, whose collaboration with Rustin went back to the 1950s. Being "out" in an age when this was rare was but one manifestation of the remarkable courage that bore him through some two dozen arrests for civil disobedience and countless beatings at the hands of racists and police. Much later, the same quality enabled him to offer a lonely, principled voice against a new style of black militancy that was often demagogic, violent, and racist in itself.

When he seconded Randolph in the 1948 campaign for military integration, Rustin had already made his own mark as a protestor. In 1946, the Supreme Court had ruled against segregation in interstate buses, and in 1947 he and a racially mixed team of eight other men from the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation set out on the first "freedom ride," to test compliance with the ruling. Arrested in North Carolina, Rustin served 22 days on a chain gang. He wrote a harrowing account of the experience that was serialized in the *New York Post*, prompting North Carolina to put an end to chain gangs. However, segregation on interstate buses in the South was not vanquished until another round of freedom rides organized by CORE in 1962.

By then the movement had strengthened considerably thanks to the 1956 Montgomery bus boycott, which saw the emergence of the 27-year-old King as a major figure. Rustin, who had spent 1948 in India studying Gandhi's movement, hastened to Montgomery, where he stayed in King's basement and tutored the young leader and his colleagues in the philosophy and tactics of nonviolent action.

The fight against local bus segregation was finally won in the courtroom,¹ not by economic pressure, but the ability of Birmingham's black community to unite in the boycott, bearing its inconveniences for a year, constituted a huge stride in grassroots mobilization. To build on it and to provide an ongoing platform for King, a new civil-rights organization was formed, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Rustin participated in this decision, and he was the one who drew up the blueprint for the SCLC.

One year later, in 1957, Washington finally saw its first large civil-rights demonstration, the so-called Prayer Pilgrimage. Initiated by King and Randolph, endorsed by Wilkins, and organized by Rustin, it rallied an estimated 25,000 participants. King's speech on the theme "give us the ballot" prophetically foresaw that voting power would break down many other barriers and foreshadowed the greatness of his 1963 address. The editor of the *Amsterdam News* wrote that it established the young preacher as "the number one leader of...Negroes in the United States." In 1958, Rustin organized another Washington demonstration, the Youth March for Integrated Schools, which he reprised in 1959, and these proved to be warm-ups for the 1963 march.

Yet even as that culminating march was reaping its rewards in the form of the legislation of 1964, 1965, and 1968, the leaders who had made it possible were passing from the scene. Randolph, now pushing 80, stepped down as president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Other members of the Big Six were sidelined in a surge of militancy that saw the slogan "freedom now" replaced by "black power." Those who supplanted them exhibited little of their majesty of character and intellect. Farmer, who had been the principal founder of CORE in 1942 (his then colleague Rustin was called an "uncle" to the group) was forced out as its director in 1966, after which the CORE's white members were made unwelcome. My grandmother, a nurse in her seventies who lived near Harlem, had for years stuffed envelopes in the CORE headquarters as a volunteer, and her presence posed little threat to "black power" within the organization, but eventually even she was asked not to return. Farmer was replaced by Floyd McKissick, a lawyer and self-described businessman who left after two years to found Soul City, a model community for which McKissick raised tens of millions in investment, mostly from government agencies, but which failed to come to fruition.

SNCC expelled its white members after John Lewis was succeeded in 1966 by Stokely Carmichael, who denounced racial integration as "an insidious subterfuge." Carmichael himself was expelled from SNCC a year later by the still more extreme and bloody-minded H. Rap Brown, inspiring the quip that the group had transformed itself into the Nonstudent Violent Coordinating Committee. After his expulsion, Carmichael left America, married singer Miriam Makeba, changed his name to Kwame Ture, embraced febrile anti-Semitism, and became an aide to Guinea's president, Ahmed Sekou Toure, rated by Freedom House as among the world's most repressive tyrants.

No such upheavals occurred in the NAACP or National Urban League, but in 1968 members of a group called the Revolutionary Action Movement, one of them the assistant principal of a New York public school, were convicted of plotting to assassinate Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young. The plot was thwarted, and Wilkins continued at the helm of the NAACP for another decade while Young lived for another three years before succumbing to a heart attack.

At the SCLC, the assassination of King in 1968 caused a vertiginous drop in the quality of leadership. Four days after the killing, at a march in Memphis to continue his work, organized by Rustin and led by King's widow, I heard his successor, the Reverend Ralph David Abernathy, deliver a eulogy that was mostly about...Abernathy. (To quote from memory: "Martin was Moses, and now I am Joshua who will lead my people to the promised land.") With Abernathy unable to cut a compelling figure, secondary leaders of the SCLC scrambled for a piece of the action. Jesse Jackson's bid was particularly vulgar: On the morrow of the assassination, he got himself booked on national-television interviews displaying a bloody shirt and claiming King had died in his arms. In truth, as others present attested, after King's body was taken by ambulance, Jackson, who had been in the courtyard with other aides and had run up to King's room, dipped his hands in the blood that remained on the floor and then wiped them on his shirt.

Hosea Williams, another SCLC figure, sought to seize the leadership of the Poor People's Campaign that King had announced but to which he had given little definition. Probably at the urging of other civil-rights leaders, Abernathy secured Rustin's agreement to take over its management and transform the "campaign" into another major march, focusing on economic issues. I was thrilled to be asked by Rustin, who knew me from my young Socialist activity, to act as "youth coordinator," and I quickly took incompletes in all my courses at CCNY. But not long after I started working, Williams took to the press to challenge Rustin's authority. Abernathy reneged on his pledge to back Rustin and instead accepted his resignation. Without him, the

campaign devolved into a fiasco. When the D.C. police cleared the last remnants of the filthy and pointless tent city that it had come down to, Andrew Young, the King disciple who went on to become mayor of Atlanta, commented, “Whoever it was who ran us out of there maybe did us a real favor.”

The degeneration of the movement reached its apotheosis in the rise of a new organization, the Black Panther Party, a mélange of hucksters, hoodlums, and psychopaths. Its slogan was “off the pig,” and its principle activity was to ambush police officers on routine patrol, shooting them in the back. Several were killed in this manner, some of them black. By this time, however, white guilt, as if in compensation for being long overdue, had swelled to such bizarre proportions that no act of black militancy failed to garner a sympathetic audience. Leonard Bernstein, conductor of the New York Philharmonic, hosted a fundraising party for the Panthers attended by nearly 100 of the crème of the Big Apple’s high society. As various Panther officers with titles such as “field marshal” served up semiliterate babble about Maoism and the urgency of violent revolution in America, Bernstein thoughtfully rejoined, “I dig absolutely.”

The Panthers soon flamed out, but the same dynamic captured in Tom Wolfe’s essay “Radical Chic” that immortalized Bernstein’s shindig has permanently shaped the historiography of the movement. Atop the Wikipedia entry for “American civil-rights movement” is an array of four portraits. One, of course, is King. But no other member of the Big Six appears. Instead, we see W.E.B. DuBois, Rosa Parks, and Malcolm X. The selection of DuBois and Parks, rather than, say, Randolph, Wilkins, or Rustin, can be written off to shaky judgment or ignorance. But Malcolm X? He was a forthright opponent of the civil-rights movement. The American Nazi Party was sometimes welcomed at Nation of Islam events, and Malcolm X acknowledged having held secret talks with the Ku Klux Klan. Both of these gestures toward cooperation flowed from the frank recognition of a shared belief in racial separation. I spent the summer of 1963 mostly on the streets of Harlem, campaigning for the Socialist Party’s black candidate for city council, which is what led to my small role in the march. There were always Black Muslims out hawking the sect’s paper, *Muhammad Speaks*, and since I was 15, earnest, and pro-black, sometimes I would get one of them to exchange a few words with me, but they were under orders not to *speak* to any “white devils.”

Yet, the Wikipedia entry is not idiosyncratic. On the contrary, Malcolm X is probably the most celebrated black figure today besides King. Why? His speeches, now compiled in books, were demagogic—and childishly so. Almost every sentence exuded malevolent ignorance and semantic gamesmanship. He espoused violence (“we get tricked into being nonviolent”), racism (“if the white man doesn’t want us to be anti-him, let him stop oppressing, exploiting, and degrading us”), and anti-Semitism (“they only killed six million Jews....Eighty million black people...murdered, and these Jews have the audacity to run around here and want us to cry for them”). He heaped scorn on genuine civil-rights leaders (“the Muslim movement...frightened the white man so hard that he began to say, ‘Thank God for old Uncle Roy, and Uncle Whitney and Uncle A. Philip’. ...I heard they can sue you for libel. ...[s]o I don’t call...them Uncle Tom anymore”) and on the civil-rights movement itself (“I’m not one who goes for ‘We Shall Overcome.’ ...If you’re going to get yourself a .45 and start singing ‘We Shall Overcome,’ I’m with you”). Much is made of Malcolm X’s alleged turn from racism after his break with Elijah Mohamed’s Nation of Islam, about two years before being gunned down as a consequence of that split, but almost all of the quotations I have supplied here are from this period.

In contrast, Randolph, Wilkins, Farmer, and Young are largely forgotten, and Rustin has been rescued from the memory hole, paradoxically, only by the fact of his being gay. (This, which

caused him so much grief during his lifetime, has won him a new constituency, posthumously, leading to the release of important biographies in print and film.) What enabled the demagogues and hucksters to chase the heroic men who engineered black emancipation from the stage and then displace them from the history books? It was some symbiosis of pent-up black rage and white guilt. But there was an additional factor. After the civil-rights and voting-rights and fair-housing bills of the 1960s, the movement had nowhere to go.

The full and proper name of the great march was the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The freedom part, insofar as it meant an end to discrimination and enforced segregation, could be achieved by legislation—and it was achieved. The jobs part was another matter. How to attain *that*? The thorniness of the problem was illustrated by one of the march's odder demands: "to defeat unemployment and automation." And, too, if blacks on average are less well-off than whites—as they were, and still are to a lesser degree—then the disparity in purchasing power may give rise to segregation even without design.

Rustin, for one, recognized this. "Public accommodations," he said, "are relatively peripheral both to the American socio-economic order and to the fundamental conditions of life of the Negro people." He called it a "myth" that "the removal of artificial barriers should result in the automatic integration of the Negro into all aspects of American life."

He offered these observations a year and a half after the march in an article in these pages titled "From Protest to Politics." In it he laid out a strategy for a coalition of blacks, labor unions, and white liberals that he was confident, based on Lyndon Johnson's landslide presidential victory only months before, could dominate American politics. He hoped to see laws that would "meet not only the Negro's needs, but human needs generally." These laws would comprise "radical programs for full employment, abolition of slums, the reconstruction of our educational system, new definitions of work and leisure." He went on:

We need to propose alternatives to technological unemployment, urban decay, and the rest. We need to be calling for public works and training, for national economic planning, for federal aid to education, for attractive public housing—all this on a sufficiently massive scale to make a difference.

It was a glorious idea, and I believed in it all fervently. It bore the earmarks of the socialist philosophy on which I had been raised and which was also part of the intellectual baggage of Rustin, Randolph, Farmer, Kahn, Hill, and a large share of other civil-rights activists. It was admirable, too, in that the rising current of black nationalism was increasingly evident, and Rustin was attempting to offer a constructive alternative. But it was all wrong. There was no political majority for such actions. More important, even if there had been, they would not have worked. It was beyond the capacity of government to provide good jobs and "attractive" housing for all, not to mention that the only places where government furnished "new definitions of work and leisure" were prison-states where "volunteers" were sometimes mobilized to harvest potatoes on their "days off." In the event, President Johnson's War on Poverty consisted of steps in the direction that Rustin was urging, and the results proved disappointing. Worse, some of the programs were exploited as slush funds by the very race hustlers that Rustin was hoping to marginalize.

Rustin's effort to chart a beneficial future for the movement was futile because the civil-rights cause had largely run its course—in magnificent triumph. Today, the only substantial body of opinion that would deny King's dream that his children "not be judged by the color of their skin,

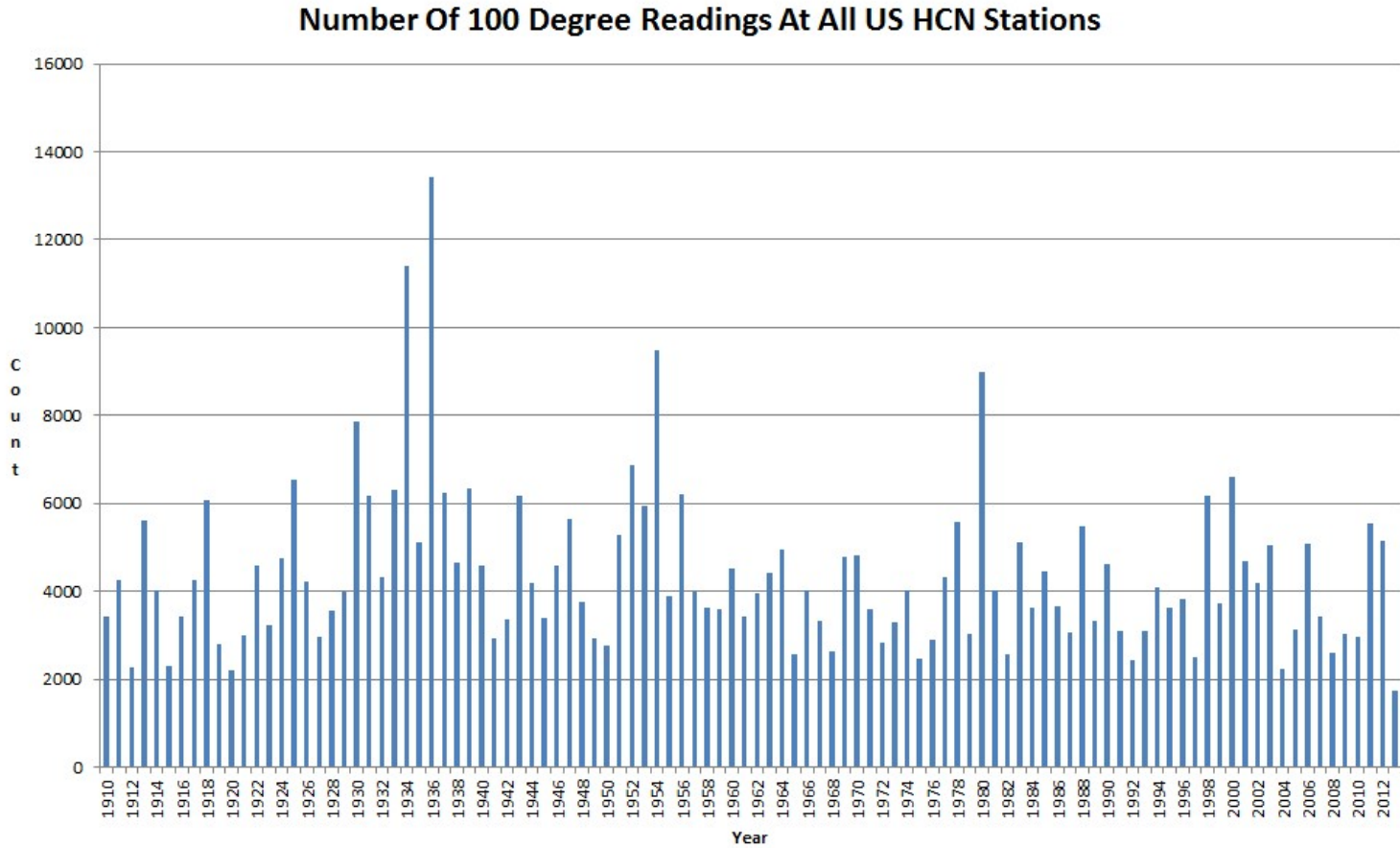
but by the content of their character” consists in supporters of racial preferences for minorities. We have a black president and now our third black national-security adviser, having also had two black secretaries of state. Recalling how much of the civil-rights struggle played out in buses and restaurants, it is poignant that the premier travel company, American Express, has a black CEO, as do such eateries as McDonald’s and Darden Restaurants, “the largest publicly traded casual dining restaurant company in the world,” including Red Lobster, Olive Garden, and many other chains. The fading of racism applies on a more personal plane, too. According to a recent Gallup poll, 84 percent of whites (and 96 percent of blacks) approve of intermarriage—up from an infinitesimal 4 percent in 1958.

On the other hand, socioeconomic disparities, although narrowing, have not changed as dramatically as attitudes. Educational attainment has shown the most change. At the time of the march, less than two-thirds of younger blacks completed high school, as compared with more than 80 percent of whites. Today for both groups, the proportion is around 90 percent. Back then, the share of young whites who had completed college was around 20 percent while the rate for blacks was much less, roughly 5 percent. Today, the difference is considerably smaller: The percentage among blacks is in the low 20s and for whites, in the mid-30s. The mean income of black males the year of the march was 54 percent that of white males; in 2011 it was 67 percent. The corresponding numbers among females were 69 percent and 88 percent. The area, ironically, that shows no improvement is jobs, the foremost demand of the march. Indeed, the unemployment rate is about one-third higher today than it was in 1963, and the rate among blacks is double that among whites today, just as it was then.

The march was commemorated this August 24 by another march that did more to remind us of the eventual sad decay of the movement than of its glorious apogee. It was convened and led by Al Sharpton, who uses the title “Reverend” before his name although he never attended divinity school. Sharpton came into prominence in 1988 as the advocate of Tawana Brawley, a teenaged black girl who claimed to have been kidnapped and raped by white men, when in fact she was merely afraid to go home to her stepfather, a convicted killer. The man who served as Sharpton’s assistant during the first four months of the affair later quoted Sharpton as exulting, “We beat this, we will be the biggest niggers in New York.” Eventually, a jury found Sharpton guilty of having defamed one of the accused white men, awarding substantial damages. Since then, Sharpton has made a career as what black columnist Jonathan Capehart calls a “racial ambulance chaser,” highlighted by a campaign against a white store owner in Harlem that culminated in an arson attack in which eight died. Although he denies any responsibility for violence, the formal slogan of Sharpton’s National Action Network is menacing: “No justice, no peace.” Sharpton’s agenda has never been difficult to discern. NAN’s homepage is graced with a photo of King, one of President Barack Obama, one of Trayvon Martin, and three of “Reverend Al.” I have said that the Big Six were men who would never glorify themselves on the backs of their people; Sharpton, in contrast, never passes up an opportunity to do so. Nonetheless, the various reputable civil-rights groups, or rather their empty shells, as well as some labor unions and other organizations, fell in line behind Sharpton’s call.

Thus continues the perverse appropriation of the memory of one of the greatest moments in American history—itsself the culmination of one of the greatest episodes—when hundreds of thousands of black and white citizens came together peacefully and in dignity and succeeded in putting an end to the worst evil besides slavery that has ever blighted our land.

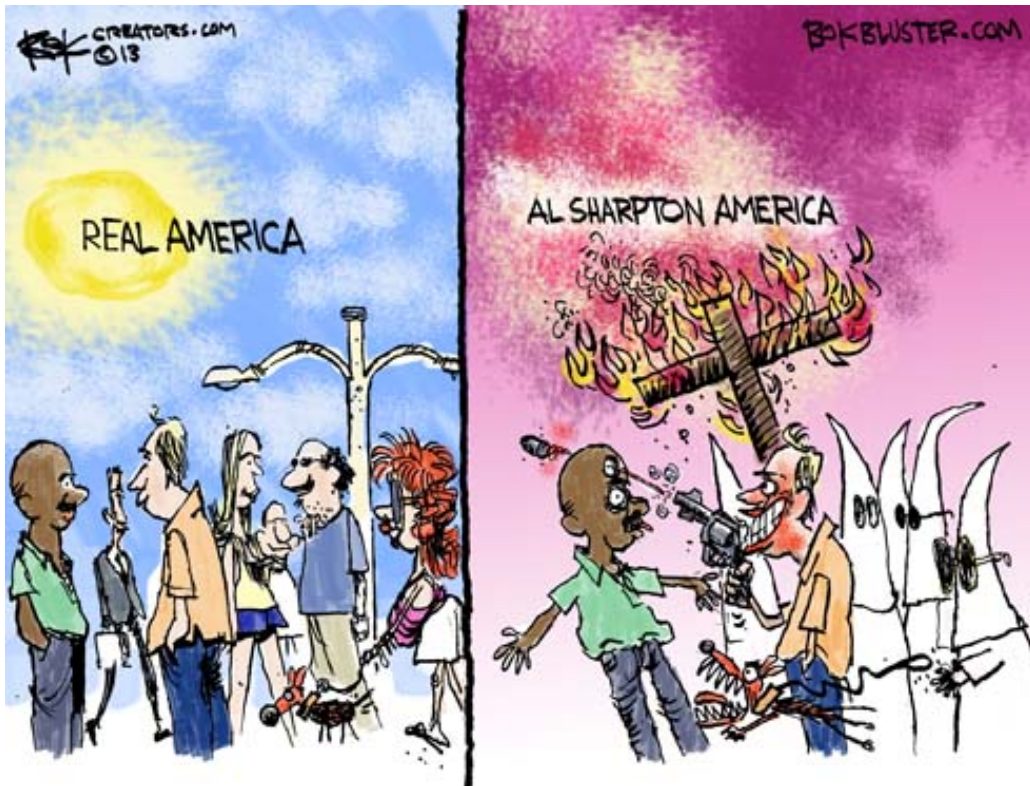
Real Science
Mildest US Summer In A Century



This summer, the US has experienced the fewest number of 100 degree readings in a century. The five hottest summers (1936, 1934, 1954, 1980 and 1930) all occurred with CO2 below 350 PPM.

CO2 went over 400 PPM this year, indicating that heatwaves and CO2 have nothing to do with each other. Scientists who claim otherwise are either incompetent, criminal, or both.

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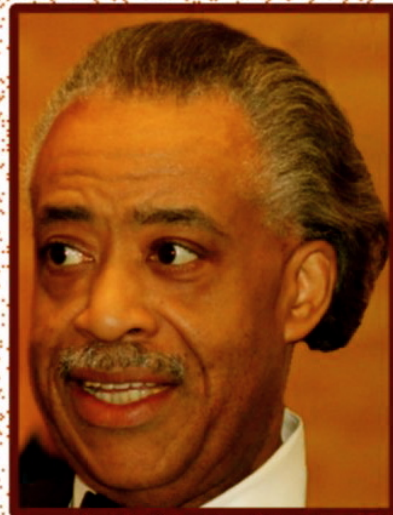
Official Race Baiters Identification Card

Name: Alfred Charles Sharpton, Jr.

Date of Issue: Birth

The Bearer of this card has been determined to be 100% oppressed, and is hereby granted special privileges and entitlements extended above and beyond those already guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.

Signature: Rev. Al Sharpton





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