

The 2006 National Hip-Hop Political Convention

Written by Mark F. Armstrong ID2751
Tuesday, 20 June 2006 03:15 -

To settle all ensuing confusion over multiple events at the 2006 National Hip-Hop Political Convention by Mark F. Armstrong Chair, Greater Chicagoland Hip-Hop Filmmakers Caucus Parliamentarian, Chicago Hip-Hop Initiative NFP.

Now that the umpteenth person has asked me what the 2006 National Hip-Hop Political Convention is about and what they should tell people about it and the events organized just before and during the week of the convention toward Chicago Hip-Hop Heritage Month, I'd advise answering thus:

The Screen the Power Film Festival and the events we have organized leading up to it, as I have consistently told the vast majority, are auxiliary events for the convention Auxiliary is defined by Webster's New World Dictionary as "adj. 1. giving help or aid ... 3 additional; supplementary; reserve —n., ... 3 an assisting or supplementary group or organization [this club has a women's auxiliary]. To wit, auxiliary is derived from the Latin verb for to help.

If folk insist on defining said events as subsidiaries and subordinates to the convention, as opposed to an adjunct to it, because they refuse to read and comprehensive behind several recent decades in which persons of color, et.

al., have been grossly miseducated and undereducated, we can't help them. My folk came from sharecropping stock with barely negro high school educations who managed to excel at dissecting the Queen's English by reading everything they could get their hands on, including black newspapers like the Chicago Defender and the dictionary.

And beyond my cotton-picking and woodchopping father and my cow-milking and chicken-feeding mother, I learned best how to read the letter of the Queen's English by reading law under the late Howard Walton, alderman of Markham, a World War II Navy veteran with a high school education who was a retired truck driver at the time I knew him.

The fact that we have persuaded our sponsors to accommodate convention staffed registration tables and street teams at the Virgin Megastore Chicago and Subterranean negates any suggestion that we are dueling or competing with the convention. As the likes of Dr. James G.

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White to the Hip-Hop Congress to Mr. Sam Greenlee know, the convention's Chicago Host Committee didn't have any programs or venue locked in at the time we locked in events and venues leading up to and occurring during Chicago Hip-Hop Heritage Month.

I am informed through the newspapers that the Coup is performing that weekend of the convention at the Wicker Park Festival. I am therefore quite sure that allegations of "sabotaging the convention," "undermining the convention,"

"jacking the convention," "hating," and "jacking our programs" will not be directed at the organizers of the Wicker Park Festival and whoever they engaged to book the Coup.

Our answer to stepping on folks' toes by not subordinating ourselves in blind fealty to their programs and rhetoric occurring related to the convention and beyond is to cite the Dutch maxim that "someone has long toes." And we must defer to the original Chairman Fred Hampton's wisdom of why anyone would want to integrate into something before it is cured of its social ills and diseases.

When Amina Norman-Hawkins envisioned Chicago Hip-Hop Heritage Month, and Cool-Out Chris and I worked liked niggers to take it beyond a twinkle in her eye, first with the resolution Chicago City Council unanimously adopted and then with incorporation of the Chicago Hip-Hop Initiative NFP, the great plan was to promote a sense of cooperation in uplifting Greater Chicagoland as a world center of hip-hop beauty and culture. We stand firmly united in that Cause, brothers and sister, despite attempts to divide and conquer us over ideologies concerning a hegemony at the convention that neither CHI nor the Greater Chicagoland Hip-Hop Filmmakers Caucus wish to pursue. There is one hip-hop culture, and many manifestations of it. The rest is a debate of trifles.

As for talk of rival parties bum-rushing the convention, CHI and the Greater Chicagoland Hip-Hop Filmmakers Caucus, without qualification, condemn even the notion of that. For it is most fascist, brutish, uncivilized, juvenile, and counterrevolutionary to what we should have learned from Chairman Fred the 21 years he walked this earth. It also violates the civil liberties guaranteed in the federal Constitution and more liberal 1970 Illinois constitution. All parties are—by virtue of the Declaration of Independence and the federal Constitution—are guaranteed the right to refuse, resist, dissent, and agitate when rulers cease to serve the general welfare of those who have consented to their rule. And true democracy begins with 1,000 trains of thought emerging and 1,000 flowers blooming.

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Concerning the advice that we should be wary of rabble bum-rushing the events leading up to and occurring during Chicago Hip-Hop Heritage Month, fear them not, for I assure you that we fear them nothing at all. They are our folk, products of the ghetto, birthing pains in the Birth of a Hip-Hop Nation.

Sincerely,

Mark F. Armstrong

Chair, Greater Chicagoland Hip-Hop Filmmakers Caucus Parliamentarian, Chicago Hip-Hop Initiative NFP