

Hip Hop on Religion Leadership and Business

Written by Davey D ID3192

Wednesday, 27 December 2006 05:13 -

Breakdown FM: Religion-Leadership-Business-Hip Hop Steps Up

As we come to the close of this year we wanted to leave you with some words of wisdom on some very important topics. Recently there was a panel discussion held in Houston where they talked about the topics of Hip Hop and Religion and Hip Hop and Leadership. Among the panelists were Poet Saul Williams and Activist Troy Nkrumah of the National Hip Hop Political Convention.

Both Saul and Troy gave excellent analysis and food for thought on the intersection between Hip Hop and Religion. As you listen to the discussion, the first speaker you will hear is Saul Williams who grew up as a preacher's son. He notes that the first people he ever saw wearing bling and driving cars with big rims were church folks. He also talks about misogyny in Hip Hop as well as the church.

The second speaker to address this issue is Troy Nkrumah of the Hip Hop Political Convention. He drops some powerful gems about the real purpose of religion-being a tool of liberation. He questions why today's church leaders aren't out in the streets dealing directly with folks. He challenges people to really be "religious" and emulate the ways of Jesus, Malcolm and Martin and go out and be liberators.

Next we hear Saul Williams responding to an audience question about the role of gangsta rap. He talks about how gangsta rap started out being anti-establishment and somehow got compromised. He likens today's gangsta rappers to Republicans because of their approach toward people and money.

Troy Nkrumah follows Saul by addressing an audience member about leadership and Hip Hop. He asks why are so many of us looking for rap stars to be our leaders when in reality many of them DO NOT care about us. All they wanna do is sell us records. with a bristling breakdown about Rappers and leadership. he feels that rappers ARE NOT leaders and we should stop looking to them to get us out of our present conditions.

Finally we take you back into time and pulled out a speech that Sista Souljah gave several

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years ago on the topic Business. Here Sista Souljah explains how Black folks and Hip Hop have become big business for America. She tells us how to NOT get played. Also below we included a statement from Sista Souljah which was given a while back when she came into the spotlight because President Bill Clinton decided to publicly dis her as a way to check Reverend Jesse Jackson.

SISTER SOULJAH STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO BILL CLINTON DIS

<http://www.theroc.org/roc-mag/textarch/roc-09/roc09-07.htm>

Peace. I stand before you today feeling very confident, steadfast and powerful; at the same time, I am surprised, that I as a young African woman, have impacted and effected the development of not only national politics, but international politics as well. It is very shocking to me that in a time of American economic recession, and inner city urban chaos, Democratic presidential contender Bill Clinton has chosen to attack not the issues, but a young African woman who is very well educated, alcohol free, drug free and a successful self employed businesswoman, and community servant.

Considerable time has been spent debating whether America should take seriously the words of a rap artist, or so called entertainers. Let me clarify for the press who I am - I am Sister Souljah; rapper, activist, organizer, and lecturer. I was born in the Bronx, New York, spent the earlier part of my life there, was raised by my mother, was on and off the welfare system for approximately 15 years, lived in government subsidized housing and was classified by sociologists as being in the under class-meaning living below the poverty line in a vicious cycle of poverty that America says one can not break out of. I supplemented my education in the White American school system by reading African history, which was intentionally left out of the curriculum of American students. By doing so, I was able to become the well-balanced, reassured woman that I am now. While in high school, I was a Legislative intern at the House of Representatives for the Republican party. I was a winner of the American Legion's Constitutional Oratory Contest, attended Cornell University's Advanced Placement Summer Session, and entered Rutgers University. I attended the University of Salamanca's Study Abroad program in Salamanca, Spain, worked at a medical center in Zimbabwe, visited Mozambiquan refugee camps and traveled throughout the Southern African region. I have also visited and lectured in the former Soviet Union, England, France, Portugal, Finland and Holland.

Moreover, at Rutgers I was a well known writer and political commentator for the university

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newspaper. I attended church in the Bronx in New York City, where my great grandmother was the pastor. She died this year at age 92. While finishing at Rutgers University, I was offered a job by Rev. Benjamin F. Chavis of the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, which is a church sponsored civil rights firm. I developed, organized and financed, through hip-hop music, a sleep away summer camp called the African Youth Survival Camp for children of homeless families and ran it successfully for 3 years, thus leaving Rutgers one semester prior to graduation. I have spoken on the same platform with Jesse Jackson, Minister Louis Farrakkan, Rev. Ben Chavis, Rev. Calvin Butts and Nelson Mandela.

As you can see I am no newcomer to the world of politics. I am mentally, spiritually, physically, emotionally, intellectually and academically developed and acutely aware of the condition of African people throughout the entire world.

My album "360 Degrees of Power" is an amalgamation of all of my thoughts, personal, and professional experiences here in America. My album was produced by Eric Sadler, one of the producers who created the music for Public Enemy, Ice-Cube and others. Any person who purchases my album will have a full understanding of what I think and believe, although it was designed specifically with the African community in mind. I was certain that Bill Clinton was unfamiliar with me, my development and work, musical and otherwise. He chose to comment without any investigation whatsoever based on an interview in an ultra conservative newspaper, The Washington Post, which is about as familiar with the experiences of Africans in America, inner city youth, and hip-hop, as Bill Clinton is. I however, did not fail to do my research and my research reveals the following indictment of Bill Clinton's integrity:

1) Bill Clinton is a draft-dodger who wrote in a letter "Thank you...for saving me from the draft" and then asserts regularly that he supports military force when necessary, especially against Communism. He, therefore, feels it's alright to send your son to fight wars when he himself would not fight for the principals he SAYS he believes in.

2) Bill Clinton talks of morality but admits that he was a reefer smoker who does not inhale. Sister Soujah has never smoked reefer or any other drug.

3) Bill Clinton says he believes in a strong family unit but could never quite get his own personal and social behavior together. His treatment and dismissal of Jennifer Flowers is indicative of how he relieves himself from his personal responsibility and created an emotionally abusive environment to Jennifer Flowers. He seems to feel comfortable attacking and alienating women

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for his own shortcomings.

4) Bill Clinton says that Sister Souljah is a racist like David Duke, a well known ex-Klan member and White supremacist, but was a member in an all White segregated club up until this year.

5) Bill Clinton portrays himself as compassionate, yet he supports giving prisoners lobotomies, removing sections of the brain.

6) Bill Clinton takes shots at Dan Quayle's intellectual feasibility yet he has not presented America with any substantive, comprehensive agenda around economic development, foreign policy, budget containment or social policy.

7) Bill Clinton says he is not a racist but he tries to distance himself from Jesse Jackson - a candidate who has registered more voters, served the interest of poor Blacks, poor Whites, poor Latinos, unions, laborers and farmers and by experience, intellect, and charisma, is far more qualified for the job.

Therefore, we can conclude that Bill Clinton lacks integrity at painting himself as a staunch patriot, a people's servant, a compassionate liberal, a family man, a pro-woman candidate and a coherent scholar. Sister Souljah, on the other hand, was used as a vehicle, like Willie Horton, and various other Black victims. A poor excuse for an AGENDA-LESS candidate.

Sister Souljah does not own a gun, has not shot or killed anyone, did not invade Grenada, Panama, Nicaragua, Kuwait or Angola. Sister Souljah has never ordered the National Guard into anyone's community and has not made drug deals with Noriega. Sister Souljah has never been a member of a terrorist organization, has no history of crime, has not burned crosses on anybody's lawn or lynched or hanged White people from trees. Sister Souljah has not systematically denied people the right to study and enjoy their culture in the so-called public education system. Sister Souljah did not send Haitians back to Haiti as though they were sub-human. Sister Souljah did not kill the native Indians under the guise of friendship. Sister Souljah did not cause or inspire police brutality, did not beat Rodney King, or shoot Phillip Panell and never shot and killed a little White girl in the head for stealing orange juice and let her murderer go free. Sister Souljah did not vote on the Simi Valley jury and let criminal cops free. Sister Souljah did not create the economic conditions of South Central L.A. or any other

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urban area for that matter, and did not create an environment of insecurity that forced people into gangs.

Therefore, we can conclude that Sister Souljah is not a racist. Neither Sister Souljah nor any other African leader in this world has the power to collectively and systematically beat down and destroy European people, White people deny it all, refuse to discuss it, silence, intimidate and harass those that take a stand and fight back. Yes, I am angry, which means that I am sane. Only an undereducated and misguided African person would not be angry at the racist White transgressions of this society.

The context in which my statements were made in the Washington Post was this, and I paraphrase speaking in the mind-set and in the mind of a gang member: Were you surprised at what happened in L.A.? No, I was not, White people should not have been surprised either; they knew that Black people were dying everyday in the streets of Los Angeles to gang violence created by poverty and social chaos, but they did not care. If young Black men in L.A. would kill their own kind, their own Brothers and Sisters, what would make White people think they wouldn't kill them too? Do White people think they're better, or is it that White death means so much more than Black death?

Breaking it down, this means injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. As Sister Souljah, I reserve the right to fight against White racism--I have not ordered anyone to kill anyone. My album creates pressure on White America--a lot of pressure, and pressure is what America needs, deserves, and inherited--no justice, no peace.

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