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America in Bush's Crosshairs  
by Rep. Cynthia McKinney

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*Congressperson McKinney (D–GA) gave the following speech before the Georgia Black Chamber of Commerce, January 7, 2006.*

Good Morning!

I have been given a most unenviable task.

I am to pay homage to the legacy of Del Delaper [a noted minority business developer].

Thank all of you for allowing me to represent you in Washington, DC, and give you a Washington Report – all in five minutes.

Now, for those of us who knew Del, we can only speak of his interminable commitment to the financial freedom of black people. That, indeed, was the unfinished dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. For we must remember that it was at the dawning of the Poor People's Campaign, the submission to America of the "bounced check to the Negro," and the launching of the demand to Congress for an economic bill of rights that Dr. King was cut down by snipers' bullets at a Memphis, Tennessee motel.

But Del didn't let the dream die with Dr. King. His labor of love was to cradle and nurture the black entrepreneurial spirit – for we all know that the long road to freedom lies at the end of self-sufficiency. And so, for Del and for Lou, the Georgia Black Chamber was a labor of love. And so it must be for all of us. Thank you for being here this morning.

But now, in my remaining minutes, what can I say but that in 1968, Dr. King was demanding 12 billion dollars for jobs for those able to work, incomes for those unable to work, and an end to discrimination.

Finally, a decade later, President Carter signed into law, the Humphrey–Hawkins Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act.

How far from the ideals of Dr. King and this legislation has this Administration taken our country?

When I return to Washington and take up the budget, the Republican majority will be forced to raise the debt limit beyond its current 8.2 trillion dollars.

They will try to hide that vote from you because it exposes the dismal fiscal stewardship of the party that is supposed to represent fiscal restraint. But today, our economy teeters on the brink due to the profligate spending of the White House and the Congress.

Record deficit. Record national debt. Record trade deficit.

Yet just a quick read of a few of the December headlines reveals:

December 2, 2005: Halliburton got bonuses for over billing taxpayers by \$169 million

December 2, 2005: Halliburton workers get paid 50 cents an hour in Iraq

December 6, 2005: Navy awards another \$6.5 million to Halliburton for Katrina work

December 15, 2005: Another Halliburton employee involved in bribery – that is, other than Dick Cheney who is under investigation in France for bribing Nigerian officials

December 27, 2005: Halliburton stalls Pentagon proposal banning forced labor, human trafficking – yes, Halliburton and DynCorp reportedly still trade in young girls and women

December 29, 2005: Navy awards Halliburton another \$20 million for Hurricane Wilma cleanup.

Now that takes care of our Vice President who still receives a check from Halliburton in what they call deferred compensation; but we can't finish our report on the State of Washington, DC without also acknowledging the fattening portfolios of Donald Rumsfeld and our President (through his father, of course).

Suffice it to say that \$4 billion dollars this year was set aside for bird flu and giving liability protections for flu drug manufacturers. No one is asking why bird flu? But never mind that pesky little detail. Donald Rumsfeld will be happy since he owns shares in the company that holds the patent for Tamiflu, reputed to be the only drug that treats bird flu. So what if we stockpile for bird flu and it ends up being swine? You've only lost your ability to sue and the \$4 billion dollars down payment on flu preparedness that this Administration has sold you. But you really don't have to worry if they stockpile the wrong vaccine for the wrong flu; the Congressional Budget Office says the likelihood of a flu pandemic is less than one-third of one percent, anyway.

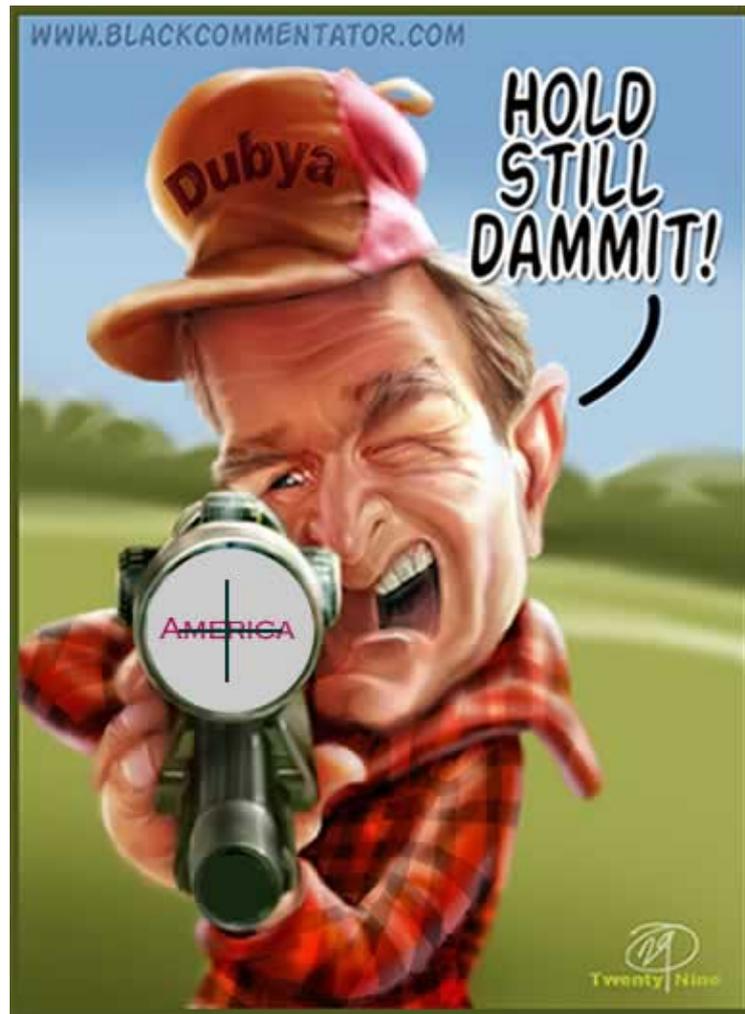
Finally, I can't leave this discussion without mentioning the Bush family portfolio and the fact that Carlyle is currently investing in bioweapons labs, satellite communications, and the military industrial complex that Eisenhower warned us against. The more we fight, the more they make! Just dial Carlyle when the next disaster strikes.

Oops. That remark will certainly warrant a few wiretaps. But don't worry. It's all to protect you. From me.

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At the same time, first Iraq under Hussein – well, he's been taken care of now – but both Iran and China signal a switch in their reserves away from the dollar. I hope their prescription for that isn't war against Iran or China next.

So instead of protecting the American people at a time of great economic uncertainty, Hurricane Katrina unveiled for us the utter lack of will on the part of this Administration to focus on the true needs of the American people.



And sadly, this month I will be forced to vote on an extension of the Patriot Act and a budget that takes \$40 billion away from the sick, the poor, the elderly, single parents needing child support, college students and their families. No segment of the American population is left outside the crosshairs of this budgetary weapon of mass destruction called the Bush Administration and the Republican Congress. Except, of course, for the wealthy who roll away with an additional \$70 billion in tax cuts and the no bid, sweetheart deal government contracts to which they've become accustomed.

The only word left in my vocabulary to describe what is happening to our country is "sinful." And what I've described for you in these few short minutes is only the tip of the iceberg of a sea change in the culture of public policy making in Washington, DC. There was a time when the United States government was known as caring and nurturing of people both at home and abroad. But now, I have to agree with Kanye West. Not only does George Bush not like Black people, his policies hurt all of us. And as a Democrat in a majority Republican House, Senate, White House, and Supreme Court, you can count on me to do what I can to keep

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up the good fight for you in Washington, DC.

Thank you for inviting me to share with you this morning; congratulations on surviving 2005; Best Wishes for 2006!