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Commentary, analysis and investigations  
on issues affecting African Americans  
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*Issue 174 – March 9, 2006*

The CBC Monitor Report:  
Sorry, Heritage, I'm Not For Sale  
by Leutisha L. Stills, CBC Monitor

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*The far-right Heritage Foundation apparently believes that intra-Black arguments provide fertile field for recruitment of African Americans to their profoundly reactionary ranks. A representative of the Heritage Foundation, who we shall not name, was deluded enough to contact Leutisha Stills, one of the prime movers in The CBC Monitor, in hopes of recruiting her. As you will see, Ms. Stills knows what's up, and she ain't buying it from the racists at the Heritage Foundation.*

*This is the first of what will be a regular column: The CBC Monitor Report. – The Editors.*

My parents always taught me that when people compliment you for a job well done be gracious, acknowledge it, and move on to the next project. Don't bask in the accolades – don't get high on the compliments. Keep going to get the work done. So, for those of you who responded to the **BC** article, "Why is Tavis Smiling and Why are We Watching?" I am humbled by your emails and your encouraging words. Let's face it, we are in a war to take back our communities, and any way I can be your voice while waging this war, I am honored and obligated to do so.

Having said that, it appears that because I wrote a critical commentary on the efforts of Brother Tavis' forum, other factions are looking at me as though I can be the next African-American inclusion project for the GOP. While I hate to burst anyone's bubble, I find that I'm forced to do just that.

Anyone who knows me, or who is familiar with what little I have written publicly, would know that I am as far removed from the conservative viewpoint as the execrable Ward Connerly is from the progressive left. As the late Sister Shirley Chisholm would say, "I am unbought and unbossed." Just because I asked questions as to why African-Americans continue giving Tavis Smiley attention every February with his State of the Black Union (SOBU) conferences, does not mean that I'm open to complimentary overtures (via email) from

## The Black Commentator – The CBC Monitor Report: Sorry, Heritage, I'm Not For Sale

organizations such as the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), or the Bradley Foundation. Don't you have enough of the 2% Negroes for Rent, such as Cory Booker, or the good "Bishops" Floyd Flake, Eddie Long and Harry Jackson on your payroll already, without having to include lil' ol' me as the newest portrait of a self-hating Negro?

Why am I pointing these overtures out? It's because organizations like the Heritage Foundation or the AEI are so *simplistic* in their thinking. They think when one African-American is critical of another prominent African-American, that the critique is a license for them to recruit that African-American to start "illin'" against the efforts of a Jesse Jackson, an Al Sharpton, and yes, even a Tavis Smiley, on *their behalf*. To provide their "perspective" on the matter, if you will. That is *not* why I wrote my *BC* article.

That article was born out of deep thoughts, angst, and wondering just what do we, African-Americans get out of attending such events. During the era of the Civil Rights movements, the movements of the Black Panther Party and other Black Nationalist movements, the events were recorded for posterity to demonstrate for the generation to follow, that when movements are created, and events/gatherings held, actions *must* follow, and be *a direct result of such events*; otherwise all you are doing is having social gatherings that no more benefit us than the talk we exchange in our local hair salons or the neighborhood barbershop on Saturday afternoons.

I wrote my article to critique Brother Tavis, yes; but I also wrote it to encourage Brother Tavis to engage in some deep thinking of his own; thoughts so deep that he might get motivated to actually hold those forums with a thought towards sending attendees away with concrete action plans, timetables, follow-up, evaluation and monitoring to determine the effectiveness of planning, organization and execution that are created out of forums like the SOBU.

Most of you stated in your emails that you have long been frustrated with Tavis because you send him emails and he doesn't respond; or he hosts talk shows on radio and television, and doesn't allow you to call in while he's on the air so you can give voice to the concerns and issues affecting African-American communities. When you see one of our own that has access to venues where we can and should be heard, but he pisses away the opportunities for doing so, you call him on it. And that's all I was trying to do. Not advertise myself as the next poster girl for the Heritage Foundation. While it was nice that you saw fit to reach out to me, Mr. Heritage, I am more offended than flattered that you in these right-wing foundations believe that with the right amount of flattery and kind words, I could easily be persuaded to join your camp.

Oh, and the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) shouldn't jump for joy, either, upon reading this essay. You run the plantation that advertises itself as the means to free African-Americans from the "slavery" of the traditional Democratic Party, only to enslave us differently as you have enslaved over 30% of the Congressional Black Caucus to the point they have decimated the political will of the majority Black districts they represent through their legislative votes. (See CBC Monitor Report Card.)

When you can justify why African-Americans aligned with you continue in their loyalty in light of all the evidence that shows you would rather destroy us than help us (can you say "school vouchers" "Project 21" or "New Democrats Network"), that's when I'll give you a fair hearing and be willing to engage you in dialogue. But, I won't be waiting by the phone for your call.

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