

Spitzer destroyed the Black United Fund of NY. Why would African Americans vote for him?

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As I read the papers and listen to the news, I am totally confused at the polls that say Black New Yorkers are in favor of Eliot Spitzer over 2 to 1 in the primary election for Comptroller. My question is: Why?

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Don't you know –or, at least, you should– that Mr. Spitzer, former Attorney General and then the disgraced Governor, was responsible for the destruction of the only Black Self-help organization in New York State building an economic base to empower the Black community? BUFNY was seized by Spitzer in May 2003, supposedly to investigate the organization for late grant payments and State filings, and involving itself in real estate, ie, affordable housing development programs sponsored by New York City and the State. Imagine that!

That investigation did not result in one accusation or charge. The two top executive managers were fired by the Spitzer-appointed board in August 2003, after he replaced the entire volunteer BUFNY board. To this very day, Spitzer has never explained why or what he was looking for –and found– that warranted such abuse of power with such tragic and destructive results for an organization described even by Assistant Attorney General Juan Merchan, who conducted the so-called investigation, as “a successful and innovative charity ...which had served the community for nearly 25 years.”

It must not be omitted that this destruction of BUFNY was aided by a willing hit team that is best described as Jackals for Spitzer: William E. Davis, Jr., Briding Newell, Delores Kershaw, Bettye Easley and Lance Clarke. *"Our goal here is to help BUFNY flourish. The interim board ... will breathe new life into BUFNY, and help shepherd its finances and programs,"* Spitzer announced May 13, 2003.

This was in stark contrast to his handling of the grant-making Grand Mariner Foundation where board members had for years lined their pockets at \$50,000 each annually and then had to repay \$1.5 Million in settlement. Only three directors were forced to resign, five were added and the organization is still operating. *"Our goal is to help nonprofit organizations flourish and meet their charitable mission,"* Spitzer said February 20, 2004. Sounds familiar?

The assault on BUFNY was even more egregious when compared to Spitzer's treatment of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) and American Section (AS) where the violations of law were far more serious than those at the Grand Marnier Foundation, including the

international transfer of \$1.2 Million in pension funds; excessive compensation; no operating board or oversight; illegal lobbying; inaccurate, incomplete and late IRS 990 filings; loans to officers; and more.

The WJC and AS were allowed to re-organize and re-structure themselves and even to re-file years of amended 990s to be in compliance with the lenient settlement agreement. No one was fired. No board members were forced to resign. Neither of these Jewish organizations, WJC nor AS, suffered the indignities like those Spitzer showed BUFNY. They were encouraged and allowed to "flourish." There was even a January 31, 2006 joint press release announcing the conclusion of the investigation by the Attorney General.

After "working tirelessly with the Attorney General's office..." it was announced that "The World Jewish Congress was stronger than ever." Was this a case of Jews helping Jews? It sure looks, walks and quacks like a duck!

Is this a case of like father like son where the taint of discrimination against African Americans by the father, Bernard Spitzer, rubbed off on the son Eliot? The elder Spitzer lost a \$1.3 Million discrimination suit in 2008 to four African American workers at a 57th Street luxury apartment owned by Spitzer Enterprises. Eliot Spitzer is now being asked to "make right what his father messed up," as reported by Buzzfeed, August 16, 2013.

We, at BUFNY, were building an economic base involving land (ie, real estate) and economic development (businesses) in New York State and across the country, which is something that the African American Community must do, if we expect to have any true power and freedom anywhere. Economic power always takes precedence over political power.

Every other nationality in this country has built or is building except the Black community. That fact is most evident in Harlem where the Black community has been decimated and gentrified. The Black politicians are powerless to stop it or, worse, so co-opted that they must betray their own people and community.

African Americans must have independent sources of income, eg, workplace payroll deductions, business revenues, intra-community commerce, etc.; and we must have people that won't give up no matter what they are offered to jump ship and move to the "Big House."

Please remember, don't be an Alfred Sharpton or a former "jail-house" Congressman Clarence Norman or a weak-kneed David Paterson and become an even silent supporter of a man without principles and integrity; a hater of Black people; and a man without morality such as Elliot Spitzer who quickly ran to the very community he has exploited for help to get him back in the political game. That 2 to 1 margin of support for Spitzer says you fell for it again.

Ladies and gentlemen we must become smarter than we are and learn from history.

For further Information go to www.kermiteady.com and read about the Black United Fund of New York.

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