

The Donald Sterling scandal: Keep your eyes on the ball

Written by Fred Easter
Thursday, 08 May 2014 15:49



Nobody asked me, but LA Clipper's owner, Donald Sterling, is an 80 year old, white billionaire. How can we be surprised by his views? Last week, Ben Jealous, former NAACP President made a telling point in a TV interview I watched. I paraphrase: How is it that the media and public figures jump up and down over the, admittedly despicable, racist comments of an individual and do so little to decry the insidious racism of the society, at large?

Who would bet me that the advertisers who are so noisily jumping off the Sterling/NBA bandwagon aren't some of the very same corporations that anonymously support candidates and causes that are far more harmful to the hopes and dreams of people of color specifically and democracy, in general.

Corporations, we can't know which ones, are spending millions to stave off the push to require corporate funders to disclose their political contributions. To be more accurate: the push is to require Political Action Groups to disclose the sources of their financial support.

Are Donald Sterling's comments racist? Yes. Condescending, out of touch? Yes and yes. Saddest thing is that they are pitiful as well. Sterling is nothing more than a jealous, impotent 80 year old white dude who doesn't want his granddaughter/girlfriend to parade in front of him with brothers who get, for free, what he has to pay so dearly for.

Focusing on the rants of a Donald Sterling or a Clive Bundy, Montana's welfare, rancher cheat, only serve to focus our attention on the wrong issue. Everybody in the public eye gets to point righteous fingers at an individual racist. They get to appear "holier than thou", while "the beat goes on".

If I had a choice, I'd have Sterling or Bundy write out their views and have them printed in every newspaper, IF, I could trade that for having the Supreme Court restore the teeth in the Voting Rights Law and return corporations to "entity" status.

What Donald Sterling says does not injure me in any way. Worse things have been said to me in metro parking lots and screamed from passing pickup trucks, since Obama's election. I applaud, quietly, the NBA's action in expelling him. That was a financial decision. BUT:

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At the end of the day, he will still be old, white, racist and rich as hell. Most of us will be none of those things. So, let's forget about the Sterlings and Bundys of the world and focus on our very real economic and political interests.

The fight to present President Obama with a Democratic House and Senate for his last 2 years is pivotal. He may have Supreme court nominations to make. In the present climate, confirmation would not be a, pardon the expression, slam dunk.

The effort to get our elders registered to vote is important.

Thrusts to abolish the Electoral College and evict big money from politics are important.

There is much to be done without diverting our attention on a Donald Sterling. Father Time is stalking him and his ilk, as I write. Did I just hear a knock on my door?