

Scared for What?

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney
Thursday, 11 October 2012 09:30



It's been a little over a year since I started writing for the Houston Forward Times newspaper. I had always known about the rich history of the Houston Forward Times and how it has always been a leading voice for truth and timely information in the African-American community. The Houston Forward Times has been around for over 52 years in the Greater Houston area. Major celebrities, business leaders and elected officials, from all over, would stop by the Houston Forward Times to be interviewed or to share their side of a story.

From the storied Black Pages to the hard-hitting literary work of the late Bud Johnson and Ed Wendt, the Houston Forward Times has always been on the cutting-edge of news in our community.

Sadly though, whenever you choose to stand on the side of right and speak the truth, there are some that would seek to silence you and stand in your way. When the truth starts being told, small factions of people will come out of the darkness and threaten you with cowardly tactics, hoping that you become fearful and stop telling the truth. I use the word "cowardly," because they are masters of throwing rocks and hiding their hands. Many of them don't have the guts to deal with things on a mature, direct manner. They want to hide behind invisible masks or robes, similar to the way the Ku Klux Klan used to do Black people in the South. The only major difference between the Klan and the cowardly lion of today is the fact that many of these cowards aren't defined by a certain racial demographic. Many of them look like me.

Prior to going to the Congressional Black Caucus in Washington D.C. last month, we arrived at our offices on Almeda, in 3rd Ward Houston, Texas, to find a message that someone tried to deliver to us. Someone left two dead fish on the ground in front of our doors, which if you are familiar with the "Godfather" movies and mafia culture, is synonymous with "sleeping with the

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fishes” or being killed.

See, a lot of people don't know the history of the Houston Forward Times, or the impact that the Black Press had in our country and in our city. It was in 1971, three years before I was born, that the Houston Forward Times had a huge bomb explode in the same building that we call home today. And why did the Forward Times get bombed? It was bombed because a series of hard-hitting race-related articles were published by the Forward Times. These articles pissed somebody off to the point that they wanted to send a message. Not only did they want to send a message of fear, they wanted to send a message of murder.

Four days after the bombing, Houston Forward Times founder and publisher Julius Carter died.

They tried to send a message that said that they would do ABSOLUTELY anything to silence the pen of the writers at the Houston Forward Times and prevent Black people from hearing the truth. Although there was significant damage to the building and to vehicles parked on the street, even with the powerful explosion, the Houston Forward Times never missed a week of print. As a matter of fact, the Houston Forward Times has never missed a week of print in 52 years. That is a significant and historical achievement.

Fast forward to modern day, the Houston Forward Times has been taking on some tough issues that impact the Black community and concerning issues that are important to the Black community. Many of these stories and articles have apparently ruffled the feathers of some people and awakened a sleeping giant.

See, it gets even better. After returning from the Congressional Black Caucus, we came to the office to find that someone had shattered or apparently shot at one of our larger plane glass windows in the front of the building. This had never been done before and no justifiable reason could be thought of, as to why someone would do this. Then, immediately after that we started to receive rude and vicious phone calls, about the articles that we had been writing. I know, some of you may be asking yourselves, “Why would we subject ourselves to stuff like this. Why don't you just play it safe and avoid the controversy?”

Growing up, I never played it safe. And if you look at and even know the history of the Houston Forward Times, you know that it hasn't either. It is during times like these that you have to stand

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tall and know who you are and why you do what you do.

It's really easy for people who have no problem going along to get along, to play it safe. There is nothing wrong with playing it safe. Just depends on how you wish to be remembered.

People will forever remember Julius Carter and Lenora Carter.

People will forever remember Varee Shields.

People will forever remember Bud Johnson and Ed Wendt.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter." Telling the truth to our community and for our community is what the Houston Forward Times is all about. And guess what, telling that truth won't stop as long as I'm affiliated with it.

Me scared? Scared for what?

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