

DO POLITICIANS PIMP THE POLITICAL SYSTEM?

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney, Associate Editor
Wednesday, 28 November 2012 00:00



The recent resignation of U.S. Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr., surrounding the federal ethics investigations that came to light in recent months, led me to start thinking of how this could have happened.

Jackson was a burgeoning star on the rise until several situations involving ethics came to light, including a federal criminal probe based in Washington, D.C., into the alleged misuse of campaign dollars.

It really didn't take me too long to realize that Jackson got caught slipping, doing the same thing that many other elected officials have fallen victim to.

And what is that you might ask?

Using their political positions to pad their pockets financially or take care of others financially.

Jackson submitted his resignation letter to House Speaker John Boehner, acknowledging the ongoing federal corruption investigation. His words were very loud and quite clear to me.

"I am doing my best to address the situation responsibly, cooperate with the investigators, and accept responsibility for my mistakes, for they are my mistakes and mine alone," Jackson said in the two-page letter. "None of us is immune from our share of shortcomings or human frailties, and I pray that I will be remembered for what I did right."

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So Jackson is facing these legal hurdles, but if found guilty, do we deem these as mistakes or personal privilege gone wrong?

Yes, we all make mistakes, but even if he is not found guilty, his letter indicates that he knew what he was doing.

Now, as a result of this alleged impropriety, he has shamefully had to resign and his constituents who voted for him have to go without representation. On top of that, current Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn had to announce the date of a special election to fill Jackson's seat, which could cost taxpayers in the state between \$600,000 and \$1 million.

All politicians, especially one as seasoned as Jackson, know that they can't use campaign funds for their own personal use or personal gain.

See, Jackson isn't the first, nor will he be the last politician that has taken the bait and allowed their greed and ego to put them in a situation where they bite off more than they can chew.

Remember former Louisiana congressman William Jefferson?

A federal jury found Jefferson guilty of soliciting bribes, money laundering and participation in a racketeering scheme. FBI agents discovered nearly \$90,000 in purported bribe money stuffed in Jefferson's freezer when they raided his home.

Prosecutors accused him of soliciting millions of dollars in bribes from companies while using his office to broker ventures such as telecommunications transactions in Ghana and Nigeria, oil concessions in Equatorial Guinea, investments in a Nigerian sugar plant and satellite transmission contracts in Botswana, Equatorial Guinea the Republic of Congo. Sadly, he and his wife had to file for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection and he was sentenced to 13 years in prison.

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These are two notable national politicians, but trust me, it takes place in our own backyard as well.

Former Harris County Commissioner Jerry Eversole pleaded guilty to one felony charge of lying to FBI agents in his case, in which the Department of Justice had alleged Eversole took \$35,000 for antique firearms with ivory pistol grips and \$63,000 for the final payment on a \$180,000 piece of land that Eversole bought, in exchange for steering contracts and appointments to a contractor. In exchange for Eversole's guilty plea, he resigned from office and prosecutors dropped charges of conspiracy, bribery and two counts of filing false income tax statements.

A civil lawsuit accusing HISD Trustee Larry Marshall of bribery, money laundering, wire fraud and racketeering filed a year-and-a-half ago has cost taxpayers of the Houston Independent School District at least a quarter of a million dollars in legal fees, according to HISD officials. The lawsuit is still ongoing.

If you start looking close enough at these bond referendums and other places where your taxpayer dollars are being spent and distributed, you may find that there are other elected officials that are getting more than your vote.

Some of these politicians look at their position as either a job that pays them or as an opportunity for a hook-up. The only reason that more people don't speak up and address these issues is because many of them are kept in the dark or are uninformed about what is really happening.

Everyone needs to turn the light on and see who is lurking in the shadows. Politicians aren't above reproach. You don't have to be afraid of them. I know I'm not.

They are merely humans that can easily be replaced and removed, and as you see above, many of them can be dealt with when their pride and ego gets the best of them.

So, are many politicians pimping the political system? Yeah, maybe.

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But, know that pimps are only effective when they got someone working for them. SELAH!!!

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