



the NOSE

Tony, We Want You Back!

BY ANONYMOUS

Is The Nose the only DC resident dreaming about a “Draft Tony Williams—Again” campaign?

It’s hard to believe the introverted, wonkish, politically clueless Mayor Bowtie would be more adept at transparent, accessible and responsive government than Mayor BlackBerry. But, hey, sometimes things don’t turn out like you expected—like it wasn’t the best time to cash in on the real estate market, right, Tony?—and it’s time to admit a collective err, ahem, um....boo-boo.

Nevertheless, The Nose has tried to ignore the Who-Will-Challenge-Fenty blather, focusing on the more pressing matter of whether our Virginia neighbors will allow a backward-thinking, keep-married-women-barefoot-and-pregnant-thesis-writer to be their governor. But then The Nose read this equally sexist quote in the Washington Post by Consigliere-In-Chief Peter Nickles: “For her to make comments like that, it’s stupid,” said Nickles about Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh, a Fenty administration critic. “She’s an angry woman.”

The Nose decided its time to address the 2010 mayoral race. After all, R. Creigh Deeds is boring.

Adrian: Drop the BlackBerry and Pick Up the Mic!

Despite three BlackBerries, an iPhone, and other high tech communications, our current mayor is arguably the most inaccessible, unaccountable, bunker-mentality-driven chief executive this city has seen. Sure, he’ll do coffee talk on MSNBC’s Morning Joe and the local morning news circuit, but after 8 a.m. he refuses to answer a question from the DC Council, the media, or the public.

Take the absolute fiasco swirling around his Department of Parks and Recreation right now. The mayor knew the DC Council rightly or wrongly would rake his nominee over the coals. Did he pay a visit to members likely to vote against Ximena Hartsock to hear their concerns and persuade them to support her? No.

Did he take questions from the press to respond? Nope.

Did he meet with union leaders and laid-off workers from the department’s early childhood division—some of Hartsock’s biggest critics—to show them he’s not a heartless SOB? Nada.

So what did Mayor BlackBerry do? He allowed his Consigliere-In-Chief to douse verbal lighter fluid on the Council disapproval of Hartsock,

turning a small, extinguishable flare-up into a full-blown wildfire. With this strategy, Mayor BlackBerry has managed to ostracize most of the smart, reform-minded public servants on the Council, including Phil “Nitpicker” Mendelson and Mary “Angry Woman” Cheh. Ward 6’s Tommy “Bleeding Heart” Wells is pretty pissed lately too.

So Mayor BlackBerry can’t play well with others at the Wilson Building. That’s not a total shock, because he was hardly Mr. Congeniality as a councilmember. Yet while The Nose feared Mayor BlackBerry might be captive to the NIMBYs who worshipped him as Ward 4 Councilmember, Fenty seems to have cast aside the Terry Lynches for a totally different acronym crowd: FBOFs, fraternity brothers of Fenty, aka Sinclair “Grahamzilla the small business killa” Skinner.

Two weeks after Hartsock went down, news emerged that several multi-million-dollar parks and rec contracts bypassed Council scrutiny by getting sent directly to the DC Housing Authority, a quasi-independent agency. Many of those contracts went to FBOFs.

Mayor BlackBerry’s response? “The practice predates my administration,” he told the Post.

Yes, Dear Reader, this is what our reform-minded mayor has turned into: an unabashed apologist for graft.

And that quote was quite a feat in itself. In his extensive search of best practices, Fenty seems not to have modeled his government on San Francisco or New York, but on pre-Glasnost Moscow. He clearly believes in a Soviet-style approach to communications -- little information is given, only Fenty-approved minders are allowed to interact with press, and the mayor is seen only in controlled situations. Pravda? That’s otherwise known as the Post editorial page.

Certainly Mayor BlackBerry has succeeded in one area Mayor Bowtie did not: taking decisive action to try to boost our underperforming public schools. And he did get rid of those ridiculous zone maps in taxicabs. The Nose credits him with these accomplishments.

But week in and week out—except when he was in Europe, Asia or Africa, of course—Mayor Bowtie did something Mayor BlackBerry never does: He made himself accountable to the people. Once a week, Mayor Bowtie would stand in front of a microphone and answer questions.

Here’s Mayor BlackBerry’s approach to questions: Silence. Then he says his press team will get

back to you. Twenty-four hours later, a vacuous two-sentence e-mail reply from his apparatchiks answers nothing.

Here’s a campaign promise you can make good on, Mayor BlackBerry: Bring back the Wednesday press conferences. Accountability is good.

Vince: Much Ado About Nothing

So what’s the alternative to another four years of Fenty? The media and Fenty haters have been goading DC Council Chairman Vincent Gray to throw his hat in the ring. But The Nose has one question: What has the DC Council chairman done?

Anyone? Anyone? Bueller?

The Nose will point to the Parks and Rec fiasco once again. During the confirmation hearing, Mayor/Councilmember-for-Life Marion S. Barry Jr. was xenophobic, condescending and hostile to Hartsock. Does Gray do anything to reprimand Barry? No.

Or how about when it was reported that Barry failed to pay his taxes? Nope. Barry remains a member of the Council’s Finance and Revenue Committee.

Or when the Mayor/Councilmember-for-Life was accused of funneling money to fraudulent nonprofits? Nada.

Chairman Gray also vowed to make his Council open and transparent. Yet during last summer’s budget deliberations, Gray shut the public out.

Kwame And Michael:

Let’s Not Fade To Brown

Ok, that leaves us the Browns. First, The Nose will address Kwame. As the kids say, ‘nuff said.

Then there’s our Candidate-for-Life, Michael Brown. The Nose was not enamored of Brown when he ran for Mayor, nor for Ward 4 Councilmember, nor for At-Large Councilmember. The Nose is still weary, yet we cannot deny he has worked hard on some important pieces of legislation.

Mayor Bowtie, The Nose knows you are bored stiff in the law offices of Arent Fox, as head of the state and municipal practice. That sounds like a lot of trips to Boise and Buffalo, not Barcelona.

Consider getting back in the game.

You know you have plenty of supporters for your petitions: The Nose, “Martha Stewart,” “Billy Joel,” and “Kofi Annan” are all ready to sign for you—again. ★



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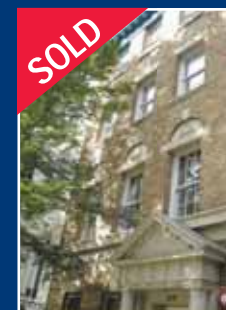
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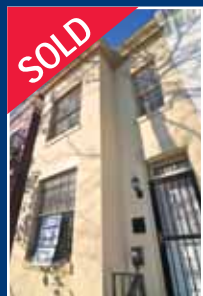
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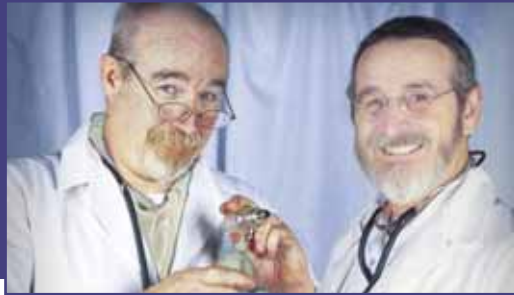
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