

Pols, Press Party with Sharpton and His Corrupt Network

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The governor of New York is having lunch today with a tax dodger who owes the state nearly a million dollars. The mayor is chowing down, too. Tomorrow the vice president will wrap his arms around the same celebrity cheat who stiffed the IRS for nearly \$2 million.



David Paterson, Mike Bloomberg and Joe Biden are partying down with Al Sharpton this week at a three-day gala sponsored by the Rev's National Action Network — the same organization that the Federal Election Commission found illegally subsidized his 2004 presidential campaign committee.

In addition to the federal and state tax liens on Sharpton, the FEC has imposed another half million dollars in penalties on him. His campaign was already forced by the FEC to repay another \$100,000 in matching funds he improperly took from the commission.

The FEC found that campaign, NAN and funds from Sharpton companies like Rev-Als Production Inc. were so commingled that the Sharpton campaign “received \$735,314 in possible prohibited contributions,” almost \$400,000 of it from NAN. Sharpton spent much of this at luxury hotels at up to \$4000 a night, ostensible-mistress-in-tow, turning his presidential gambit into a whirlwind countrywide tour with the then executive director of NAN. The director, who has since departed and is quoted in the FEC report, wound up with a Mercedes, a Caddy, a \$7000 Rolex, mink coats, David Yurman jewels and a Trump apartment. The largess of 2004 might be some indication of how Sharpton and the current NAN gang will spend the pot of gold he collects at this event.

You would think the press would be all over a scandal like the so-called conference taking place at the Sheraton New York. And they are: many of them are sitting on media panels and joining in the celebration of the so-called civil rights activist who's been living at the Helmsley Carlton on Madison Avenue for years.

Daily News owner Mort Zuckerman is moderating one panel, and media giants like ABC's Robin Roberts and Larry King are part of the hoopla. Even real journalists like the *News'* Errol Louis are lending legitimacy to this fraud.

Another *News* columnist, Juan Gonzalez, examined this week the peculiar alliance between Sharpton and NYC Schools Chancellor Joel Klein, revealing a half-million-dollar donation to NAN from a hedge fund tied to a former chancellor. The big check was funneled through a pro-Bloomberg nonprofit. Klein and a top aide will appear on Sharpton panels so skewed in favor of the Bloomberg school reforms that minority critics have just about been locked out.

The black mayoral candidate and longtime Sharpton friend, Comptroller Bill Thompson, doesn't even appear on the agenda. Bloomberg's apparent champion for the Independence Party line, old Sharpton ally Lenora Fulani, is also a panelist.

Sharpton screamed politics when the IRS and federal prosecutors went after him over years of tax dodges, invoking Martin Luther King, Jr. and claiming that "every major civil rights leader has had to face this kind of harassment." Of course, he tried to put it all on the Bush White House, citing the "clear political motivation of the Justice Department and the IRS under this administration." Maybe he'll also blame the \$884,669 state tax lien against him on the political targeting of his longtime friend Paterson, who was governor when the state moved against him in 2008.