

# We've Set a Low Bar for "Courage"

✘ Looks like I'm one of the few observers who doesn't think Mitt Romney's appearance before the NAACP in Houston was all that courageous.

Yes, he showed up to speak to people who won't vote for him or any other Republican under any circumstances. But we're setting the bar pretty low if just showing up qualifies you as a profile in courage.

Romney had the opportunity to speak truth to power. But while Democrats will never speak honestly to black people – their white liberal guilt won't allow it – Republicans won't tell inconvenient truths, either. They just don't have the courage to do it.

Romney talked about turning the economy around, if he's elected; of putting Americans back to work. But he could have – and should have – told the NAACP that he's not going to have much success finding jobs for 15-year old girls who have babies. And he's not going to find jobs, either, for boys who drop out of high school because in some perverted way, taking school seriously for them is "acting white."

Romney should have told his audience that as long as the out-of-wedlock birth rate in Black America is around 72 percent, there's not much he, or any president can do, for the black community. He should have told them that dysfunctional behavior – not racism – has put so many young black people behind the 8 ball.

He should have also said that since there's just so much government can do in this area the burden falls on organizations like the NAACP to turn things around. Romney can't walk into South Central LA or Chicago's South Side and

say stop having babies when you're a child yourself. If anyone has a chance to change behavior, it's influential black leaders. And since we're constantly being told about the "venerable" NAACP, it's up to the *venerable* people in the audience, including the ones who booed him, to do more than they're doing.

Ask not what government can do for Black America, he could have said, ask what Black American can do for itself.

And to those who say what ails Black America is the result of racism, he could have read to them a short portion of a piece written in 2005 by Walter Williams, the black conservative economics professor, who wrote this:

"In 1940, the illegitimacy rate among blacks was 19 percent, in 1960, 22 percent, and today (in 2005), it's 70 percent. Some argue that the state of the black family is the result of the legacy of slavery, discrimination and poverty. That has to be nonsense. A study of 1880 family structure in Philadelphia shows that three-quarters of black families were nuclear families, comprised of two parents and children. In New York City in 1925, 85 percent of kin-related black households had two parents."

The less racist this country has become, the more babies who are born without fathers in their lives. The explosion in the illegitimacy rate, by the way, just happens to coincide with the onset of the War on Poverty and its welfare mentality. Never before in the recorded history of the planet, have so many men voluntarily abandoned their children. This is not a problem the bureaucrats at Health and Human Services can fix.

Mitt Romney could have said a lot more than he did, though he gets one cheer for at least pointing out that people who finish high school, don't get married until they're at least 20, and don't have kids until they're married, almost never wind up in poverty, while people who don't do those three

things wind up in poverty nearly 80 percent of the time.

Would Romney have been trashed by the liberal media if he had done what I suggest. Sure. But so what? They're part of the problem. Treating black people like hothouse flowers who can't tolerate some hard truths, isn't doing anyone any favors – and it certainly isn't courageous.