

January 29, 2010

Dear President Obama,

Let me say that the STATE OF THE UNION speech of January 27 was simply brilliant; it caught your detractors completely off-guard, plus it set forth a positive plan to build the economy, including JOBS, JOBS, and more JOBS.

Now, I must apologize for not E-mailing you yet; I still have not been able to utilize what seems so easy for most of the world! I've taken several steps to learn it, and to try to engage friends and family and classes to teach me, but so far, no success. I guess that I am just a Baby Boomer, hard to learn something I've never really tried.

I also must compliment you on the swift action that you took in the Haitian earthquake catastrophe, two weeks ago. I have known Haitian students, musicians and workers that have come to this country, a real feat for Haitians to enter this country. The celebration of the Haitian people that I observed on CNN last night, displays the spiritual strength that they possess, especially despite the treacherous circumstances that they went through.

At work here at the Department of Public Social Services, I have been transferred from the General Relief Lobby, one day notice, to CalWorks Homeless. It, of course, uses three new computer programs that I have not been trained for, which increases my skepticism of computers, in general. My Director says, "You're smart, you'll get it." Well, it is taking a long time, and direction to me is more than being smart.

I continue to go into the GR Lobby a few times a week, just to feel like I'm really doing something. I continue to give them a summation of what you are doing, and their responsibilities to do something positive for themselves, indirectly and directly helping you. I'm suggesting now that they finish their HSD, or take training in what interests them, or learn another language, anything that increases their knowledge and positive outlook and ability to contribute.

Included in this letter is a memo from Philip L. Browning, the Director of DPSS, who summarizes the CA Governor's suggestions to cut our programs. The Governor seems so short-sited and unresourceful, to me—he only talks cut, cut, and cut.

I have written my thoughts to many of you over the years, but I have not received acknowledgement of my letters, in proportion to those sent out. It would be beneficial for me if I had something to respond to. Please respond to the thoughts and ideas that I've thrown out there. I could be way-off base, but I'll never know, if I don't get any feedback.

Whatever you decide to do in responding, you are all my brothers and sisters, and there is no harm done.

My best to you and your family.

Always keeping the Faith
Through Christ Jesus,

Althais J. Aka
4261 ¼ Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008

February 26, 2010

Dear Maulana,

I had never heard Angela Davis speak, and judging from what I did hear, I hadn't missed too much. But, that is not the reason that I'm writing you now. I have about exhausted my knowledge of pertinent topics in order to help the President. With your broader grasp of world events and current problems in the US, please "help a brother out," if you have not already done so. Anybody that you know, who can bring clarity to the present situation, please enlist them to participate in the problems at hand.

I don't know what your thinking is about Obama, but whatever it is, we all will be better off with your input.

Thank you for whatever you can come up with, and know that when thoughts start to flow once more through me, I will be excited to contribute, again.

It doesn't have to be you, personally, but, perhaps someone else in the group who can help out.

Always your friend,

"Bootsie"

March 3, 2010

Dear Pastor Billy Ingram,

I have no negative reason for not including you in my letter writing, although I did send letters twice to Ms. Celia Bell, in the anticipation that they would get to you. I have undergone three operations and some other setbacks that may have contributed to some sort of lax on my part. In any event, I have continued to write the letters and hope that the contents can be used in our community. I did see on TV that you had a very successful job fair, and I hope that your organizational skills and leadership continue to be used in our area.

It is not clear just what is happening to that Baldwin Hills shopping area; I'm sure that it has affected Maranatha, but I'm not sure just how. I have very little mastery of the Bible, but I would like you to know, again, my understanding of the Book of James was largely attributed to the Bible studies that you gave.

I hope that you are in good health and in great Spirits, because each new step requires such perseverance! We have seen too many successes to give up now, and you know that that is the truth.

I will deliver the packet of letters one day this week; the Post Office does not deliver what might be considered "homeland security risks."

We have our President, who is more intelligent than anyone I've known, but we still have to help him. I've gotten in trouble at the County for telling the GR Recipients of his many attempts to bring about change, and their need to flow with him for their own benefit, as well.

Well, I'm closing for now. Please excuse any typos or misspellings—the computer and typing are just not my strong points.

Always keeping the Faith,

Althais J. Aka

March 31, 2010

Dear Bishop and First Lady,

Again, it has been a light-year since I've felt the urge to write, and am really "faking" it right now. It is as if there is a block inside, but I really must break through it! I was happy to see that the Health Insurance Bill finally got through, though my GR Participants will not be covered this year. President Obama does so much, and even after the delay, he was only able to get most of the Democrats to vote for the bill, but luckily, enough to pass the legislation. It is said that he had to be successful in the passage, but each obstacle has somehow found him successful.

But, he is having to "run the extra mile," each time – making campaign-like speeches to inform and gain support for his programs. All of these actions are caused by the fact that there seems to be little organization, where the grass-roots leadership is concerned. Even those who supported him have gone back to a "business as usual" stance, instead of staying in there to coordinate support on a local level for the President's programs. What can be done to continue the support, shown during the election?

My suggestion is that each church, school and organization incorporate the substance and relevance of legislation for the people in the community. If the community, churches and organizations can be drawn into the process, then we stand a better chance of bringing unity behind the necessary changes that must be done.

I've written about my father, Donald Jones Sr., who meticulously organized NAACP's membership drive in Cincinnati, by organizing, block by block, with block captains responsible for their block, for raising the number of memberships, and disseminating the relevant information. I know that we have much more access to media and computer than my father had in the '50's, but there is no replacement for "face to face" contact. That is why, in my opinion, President Obama finds it necessary to electrify his audience with his personality, program and presence, in order to get support and understanding of his explanation of his proposals. Certainly, the President could use on his twitter phone, or computer, to communicate to the masses, but one-to-one contact with those in the audiences, and those watching by television all over the world, get the message across better.

I am proposing that those of us in the profession of working with people, make alliances with the organizations in our community, and incorporate what is important to the community and its members.

I have written my thoughts to many of you over the years, but I have not received acknowledgement of my letters, in proportion to those sent out. It would be beneficial for me if I had something to respond to. Please respond to the thoughts and ideas that I've thrown out there. I could be way-off base, but I'll never know, if I don't get any feedback.

Whatever you decide to do in responding, you are all my brothers and sisters, and there is no harm done.

My best to you and your family.

Always keeping the Faith
Through Christ Jesus,

Althais J. Aka
4261 1/4 Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008

April 2, 2010

Dear President Obama,

I was at home yesterday to hear the Portland, Maine speech, which was next to wonderful! But, I can't say that I completely understand the Health Care Bill, and how we are going to shift from what we presently have to the "new and improved" version. I understand that the plan does not cover everyone; but, are there others who could provide another voice to express its features? It is a little sad that you've had to defend all of your own programs, and not have anyone else to back you up, by his or her understanding of the bill and how we will be affected. I might be blocking on his name, but, how about Axelrod? He seems to have a grasp on the topics he has spoken upon, with your voice, in the past---just a suggestion. Your Press Secretary and Vice-President Biden seem to shoot more from the hip, and might be too freewheeling, in a technical discussion about health.

My best to Michelle, the Girls and "Bo."

Always keeping the Faith
Through Christ Jesus,

Althais J. Aka
4261 1/4 Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008

April 9, 2010

Mr. Benjamin Jealous
Chairman, NAACP
4805 Mt. Hope Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215

Enclosed, you will find my latest letters, which I used to send to Julian Bond, before his departure from the NAACP. Please give him my warmest regards, when you do see him. Julian is my cousin, by marriage.

Though I have not been writing as much as usual, I still feel the need to express my ideas, in the hope that it will spark "someone" to foster needed change.

I went the other day to see the Tavis Smiley I AM exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry in LA, and it was excellent. The docents expanded the exhibit with their verbal explanations of the various periods in Black history. If the exhibit comes to your city, I recommend it.

I'll am closing for now, but know that I still support your efforts to bring real change for our people. Thank you!

We still have a lot of work to do.

Always keeping the Faith
Through Christ Jesus,

Althais J. Aka
4261 ¼ Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008

April 12, 2010

Mrs. Mary Henry,
Dear Mrs. Henry,

I pray that the Lord is looking favorably over you, and that you are feeling better.

I'm including the last letters that I have written to various people, including our President, T. D. Jakes and others.

Please share the letters with your son, and anyone that you see fit. My goal is to help bring organization to So. Central, Compton and beyond.

Always keeping the Faith
Through Christ Jesus,

Althais J. Aka
4261 ¼ Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008

June 6, 2010

Dear President Obama,

I don't know if I had mentioned it, but I worked for two years in Washington as Country Desk Officer in the Peace Corps, as liaison between Headquarters and four African countries, Mali, Togo, Niger and Chad, in the '70's. Reading over one of my letters from Julian Bond, he mentioned, "the need for a domestic Peace Corps for members of low-income residents to organize themselves against exploitation by shoddy merchants, terror from gangs, lack of city service – the how long list of problems which plague the urban poor."

Perhaps, I have already sent the letter to you, but the idea of a domestic Peace Corps seems to be part of the answer to rejuvenate the urban poor, and as Julian put it, "And we ought not forget the rural poor, either."

There are so many problems showing themselves in the country, right now, BP, just to name one. But, despite those problems, I think we need a national program that will address the solving of, at least, our domestic situation. I'm also including my response to his letter, although it might not speak directly to the Peace Corps suggestion.

I'm going to try and fax them to you from my apartment, and if that doesn't work, I'll mail the letters, as usual.

Please give my love and admiration to Michelle and the Girls, and "Bo." Michelle's decision to work with Community Centers is great and very important. Most of the Community Centers that I know are in need of funds and dedicated workers, thus not having sometimes the means to create meaningful programs. I did not send it to you, because it was 1992 that I copied, in the Reference Section of the library a list of 64 California Foundations, that funded Child and Youth Programs. It seems that a "computer person" could pull them up, quicker than the six-and-half hours that it took me to write them down in 1992.

Stay encouraged, and remember that God watches over all of us who are trying to make a positive difference, in His name.

Always keeping the Faith
Through Christ Jesus,

Althais J, Aka

September 16, 2010

Ms. Holly Mitchell, CEO
Crystal Stairs, Inc.
5110 W. Goldleaf Circle #150
Los Angeles, CA 90056

Dear Ms. Mitchell:

My name is Althais Aka, and I work in South Central at the Department of Public Social Services as General Relief Case Manager for 12 years, and almost a year as Homeless Case Manager. I am writing this letter to commend you for the card that you sent out, 101 Ways to Praise Kids.

It is the most important literature, in my estimation, that we have ever had that addresses the way we speak to our children, and helps them to recognize their own beauty and what areas they will be good in. I have even gone so far, after the Participants have listened to what is said about the children, to point out that we all have good and bad points in our personalities. And, as an extension of that, if we all complimented each other on the good points, we would have much better chance to turn around the "negative talk" that is so prevalent, especially in our community.

I have sent copies of the card to those that I know in our community, Bishops, to the Urban League and NAACP, and to our President Obama, and others. If we all could improve the way we speak about, and to each other, most of our problems would be solved. Otherwise, we become self defeating.

Thank you again for all of your efforts to bring supportive and healthy child care to Los Angeles; I really admire what I have seen of your organization.

Yours truly,

Althais J. Aka
Department of Public Social Services
10728 So. Central Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90059
(323) 563-4498

September 17, 2010

Dear President Obama,

Well I haven't figured out the www. yet, and am not happy with the computer at all. For me, it is tedious and frustrating. With my recent operation and return to work, I don't like exasperating myself. It makes me feel stupid. We are all good in something – I'm glad that almost everyone is good in computer operations, but it is just not my thing, so far. Sorry to be so down, but that is exactly how the computer makes me feel.

I wish your speeches came on later in the day: sometimes I'm able to catch it later on C-Span, but they don't always replay the speech, later. Yesterday, I walked in the door and was only able to catch the last sentence. I hope you all (you, Michelle and the girls) are doing well. Yours is such difficult position, but, remember that you are the best person for the job! There could be no one better.

I'm including that same 101 Ways to Praise Kids, that I sent to you before, but this time, I included a letter to the Director of Crystal Stairs, Ms. Holly Mitchell. In my own family, bad actions and demeaning words were not permitted: but we were lucky. Ugly behavior and seeing things that were inappropriate were not in our house. Now, children see everything in the house, in the neighborhood, and on computer and TV, too. Even now, I block the things that I deem unworthy of even my viewing. I usually watch the news-in glancing, and Home Buying and Home Decorating shows – something constructive and positive.

Please send my love to Michelle and the Girls and Boo, too. We are all sending thoughts of admiration, even though we are not saying it.

Always keeping the Faith
Through Christ Jesus.

Althais J. Aka
4261 1/2 Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008

November 6, 2010

Dear President Obama,

The last few weeks have been excruciatingly painful, and we, who have your back, still support you, like nobody's business.

I could see your demeanor change somewhat at the results of the last election, but consider this: All of the work that you have done in these last two years, plus, takes time and patience to come to fruition, and three things played against you. One, we have not given enough time to bring your efforts about, that the Republicans have pushed so hard against any plan, and perhaps as I have noted in my letter to you on October 30, indicated that, as you know from your work in Chicago, more local organizing in raising the self-esteem of the poor, and in creating jobs at city and state level, which definitely increases self-esteem.

But, if everything went like clockwork, we would not learn how to correct any attitude and production methods that might not have worked as we have planned.

You have done a magnificent job, better than anyone could have dreamed of, all the energy that you have exerted even shocks admirers and detractors, alike.

There are a three of suggestions that may be useful:

- 1) As well as your international exchanges, make a concerted effort to work with organizations and leaders, whom we know have knowledge of brining forth change in the community.**
- 2) And, using businesses, both large and small to create jobs. (I know that your Jobs Bill is stalled in Congress).**
- 3) Work with foreign countries, as you are doing in Asia, to create businesses and jobs on both sides of the oceans.**



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

December 29, 2010

Althais AKA
4261 1/4 Leimert Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90008-4605

Dear Althais AKA:

Season's Greetings and Happy New Year to you and yours!

I received the holiday card you sent and I thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

This holiday season presents the opportunity to appreciate the blessings of the past and look towards the future with a renewed sense of hope. I look forward to continuing our work together to build a better city and brighter future.

Best wishes,

ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
Mayor

ARV:jo

December 31, 2010

Dear President Obama,

It has been a couple of months since I have written – sometimes, I'm just not able. There are a couple of matters that I want to address. If you did not receive my last letter of November 6, 2010, please let me know and I'll send it again.

Like you, so I've heard, I am a smoker. I have been able to stop for a four month period, but when some stressful situation arises, I'm right back in it. It is very addicting.

Now, the Cigarette Industry is extremely big business all around the world. I know that there is a distinct taste for each brand. But, what is in them to make them taste so differently? I think that this needs to be studied. In addition, what is in the filters? (I believe that the filters are made of fiberglass, which cannot be good for the smoker).

A few years ago, I had proposed to Julian Bond that all brands needed to be tested by Public Health officials or Medical Schools to determine whether they are healthy or not. And in the Black community, there is enough stress that makes smoking very common. When China sends toys over here that contain lead, do we not send the toys back? Even though the Surgeon General tells us of the danger of smoking, shouldn't the dangerous cigarettes be taken off the market? We and the world are doing a huge disservice to ourselves, wherever we live.

The other subject, that I was able to hear on the news, was that you had assigned Vice President Joe Biden to work directly with the Governors. This proposal is extremely important! It will help Washington work more closely with the States, assist them in dealing with more local problems, and bring about change more effectively. I believe we need to begin the process as soon as possible. I'll be waiting, with bated breath, to hear more about the actual plans. But, it is very good that you put the idea out there.

**Well, I hope that you, Michelle and the girls had a relaxing Holiday season.
We "saw" you all in Hawaii, and it looked like fun.**

**My best to you, President Obama, First Lady Michelle and the Girls. May we
all keep positive ideas and visions in our repertoire for the future of the world!**

**Always keeping the Faith,
Through Christ Jesus,**

**Althais J.Aka
4261 ¼ Leimert Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90008**