

Street Fight: Image Matters

time 00:00:00

YOUNG MAN: You ain't seen this room? Let me show you this room.

CORY BOOKER: It's been described to me as the card room.

YOUNG MAN: Can you step in here, Mr Booker?

OTHER MAN: You can step in, Mr Booker.

YOUNG MAN: Can you imagine playing cards with three of your friends?

CARY BOOKER: In here?

YOUNG MAN: In here.

CARY BOOKER: Sure.

YOUNG MAN: (Inaudible).

CARY BOOKER: Sure, you want to play some cards? Want to roll a little dice?

(laughter)

CORY BOOKER: The people in this town really have amazed me, and maybe you realize more than any other place the truth of what Martin Luther King said, that we are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a common garment of destiny, that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

BOOKER: Jimmy?

JIMMY: Yes sir.

BOOKER: There are rich people in this world.

JIMMY: You're telling me.

BOOKER: They live in some very large houses too.

MAN IN BACK: I had to call my -- when I flushed the toilet, and it didn't make any noise...

BOOKER: (laughs)

MAN IN BACK: I said, I got to call my girlfriend and tell her about this.

(laughter)

BOOKER: What did Job say? Naked I came into the world, and naked...

MAN IN BACK: Naked I came into the world, and naked I shall leave.

BOOKER: Does your toilet make a sound?

FEMALE AIDE: How you doing, Cory?

BOOKER: I'm doing really well.

MALE AIDE: Man, you see the total for today?

BOOKER: What was the total for today?

MALE AIDE: Sixty-four.

MARSHALL CURRY: That's 64,000 dollars, for the day.

BOOKER: That's pretty damn good.

CURRY: Cory's fundraising effort has managed to surpass Sharpe's. Their filings with the government show that each side has raised between two and a half and three million dollars, which should be a huge boost for Cory. It shows that he's a real competitor. But Sharpe has managed to turn this advantage into a disadvantage. Everywhere he goes he's saying that Cory has raised ten million dollars, not three, and is trying to buy the election.

SHARPE JAMES: Ten million dollars can buy a lot of votes (laughs). Why does Cory Booker, after four years in Newark, have ten million dollars? If money can buy an election, then it will. But what the people are saying in Newark, Newark is not for sale.

SUPPORTER: Booker can't buy this.

CROWD: Newark is not for sale!

Newark is not for sale!

BOOKER: Well, Sharpe has this amazing ability to tell a lie so many times that people believe it is the truth.

If the mayor of the city is saying this, you sort of put some veracity in it.

CURRY: Even I began to wonder whether perhaps I was being spun by the Booker folks. So I confirmed by looking online. It's all public information on a government website.

BOOKER: So we don't have ten million dollars?

CURRY: But it's not just a matter of how much money there is. It's also where it comes from. An anonymous flier goes out, accusing Cory of conspiring with Jews to take over the city. Sharpe tells reporters that Cory is propped up by white, right-wing investors.

JAMES: Because of the extreme groups, far right, right-wing Republican Party who are supporting him.

CURRY: His commercials and speeches and mailings all push the message hard.

BOOKER: I'm a tool for the Republican Party. I confess it.

JEN BLUESTEIN: I thought you were a tool of the Jews.

BOOKER: I'm a tool of the Jews, the Republican Party, Afghanistan, the Taliban...

(laughter)

I am a member of the KKK, I'm part of a CIA conspiracy.

BLUESTEIN: Oh, you want to know what the newest one is?

BOOKER: I'm gay?

BLUESTEIN: There's a media conspiracy to elect Cory Booker.

BOOKER: I'm part of the media conspiracy.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: You are listening to 98.7 Kiss, WRKS FM New York.

DJ 1: And our guest, candidate for mayor of the city of Newark, New Jersey, Cory Booker.

He says he's a Democrat, no matter what some of these people are saying about him, including his opponent, Sharpe James. This piece that we have here from the internet, the Black Commentator, rips you a new booty.

(laughter)

DJ 2: What is this dalliance with Republicans? You know, of course you say the word Republican and black voters are ready to run.

BOOKER: Well, let's just put it this way. I am a Democrat. If there are some moderate Republicans who have chosen to support me, that's their prerogative. What my focus has been since I've been a young man is working to make sure the Democratic Party is as strong as it can be so that the needs of inner-city communities are met. So I'm proud of my roots in the Democratic Party. And I'm tired, frankly, of Sharpe James trying to cast this debate in terms of Republican and Democrat as opposed to what he should be casting it in terms is, why has his city had a poverty rate that's gone up? Why has his city had an unemployment rate that's gone up?

DJ 2: But do you take it, spoken now, to align yourself with extremists or far-right people like JC Watts?

I mean, you know...

BOOKER: Sir, I'm not sure what you're talking about. I have never met JC Watts, nor have I aligned myself with him.

DJ 2: I mean, you have had no sort of alliances with them?

BOOKER: None whatsoever.

DJ 2: Sort of the Republican handlers, anybody coming to you, I want to bring you...

BOOKER: These smear campaigns really, really concern me because I've never met JC Watts, I've never met a lot of these people he's talking about. I've been a lifelong Democrat. And suddenly here we are wasting time talking about Sharpe James's accusations.

DJ 3: Here's the problem though, Cory, and I think that people are confusing your broad-

based support -- I mean, I gather just from looking up the contributors and looking where the money's coming from, you are getting a broad base of support. And you know what, Cory? That scares people.

BOOKER: Well, let me tell you this. This is what is almost comical about this. The majority of Sharpe James's supporters are developers and people that have city contracts. And the majority of those are people that don't live in the city of Newark. And the majority of those happen to be white.

DJ 2: Republicans?

BOOKER: Many of them are Republicans as well. So here is a man who is allowing our city, the most precious resource we have, our 600 million dollar budget — 87% of those contracts are being taken by outsiders.

DJ 1: And we'll be right back with our guest Cory Booker, a Democratic candidate for mayor of the city of Newark, New Jersey, after these messages. You're listening to the week in review on Kiss.

BOOKER: I'm enjoying this.

DJ 2: My brother.

DJ 3: We knew you could handle it.

BOOKER: Now I'm waking up.

Before, I wasn't awake.

DJ 2: Look, I've given Cory a hard time because I had some questions, and I was suspicious about his associations. But I think that it's time for a change. Cory Booker to me represents the type of young leadership, leadership that Newark wants. I like his answers on the questions of police, what he's going to do with that. I like his answers on the question of education. I think he has bright ideas; I think that's what Sharpe James is afraid of.

(applause)

BILL BRADLEY: Today I'm endorsing Cory Booker for mayor of Newark because I believe he is Newark's best hope for the future. Cory represents the best of the Democratic Party, honored by both the DNC and the DLC and asked to speak at the Democratic National Convention. So if anyone tells you Cory Booker is not a Democrat, they got a lot of people they got to argue with.

(applause)

WOMAN: We're really tired of people lying to us and telling us, we're going to do this, if you elect me I'm going to do this. And then you get into office and you work part-time and you don't do what you say you're going to do.

And then our streets still look like they look, and the stolen cars and drugs and we don't

have what we need. We're tired. We're really, really tired.

BOOKER: Right. But I need your help then; I need your help. All I ask you is to look at me and how I've led my fight. OK?

WOMAN: See, I don't listen to that stuff because I'm not into politics and I haven't been in New Jersey that long.

BOOKER: Give me two minutes.

WOMAN: But they've been following you and now they're disappointed at the fact—at some of the things that you have promised that you have not done.

BOOKER: Specifically what?

WOMAN: OK. You said you lived in Brick Towers. There's no proof that you have lived in Brick Towers.

BOOKER: Oh my gosh.

Oh my gosh.

(multiple voices at once)

BOOKER: Stop for a second, stop for a second. Stop for a second, hold up.

I appreciate you keeping it real with me about what you've heard out there and what people are saying, but I'm simply saying I'm asking you to look at my record. And if you wanted to, right now, anybody who doesn't think I live in Brick Towers, come to my apartment. I'll show you my mess.

(laughter) I got dishes in the sink, I got dirty laundry on my floor. People say I'm tired of politicians lying to them, that's because we've had the same politicians there for 32 years Thirty-two years!

WOMAN: It's just sad that, you know, we've been lied to for so long.

BOOKER: You have a question for me, brother? OK, fire away.

BOY: Is you lying?

SOMEONE: Thank you. That's what I'm saying.

BOOKER: That crushes me, man.

JIMMY: That hurts. I mean, all that time you put in... Man.