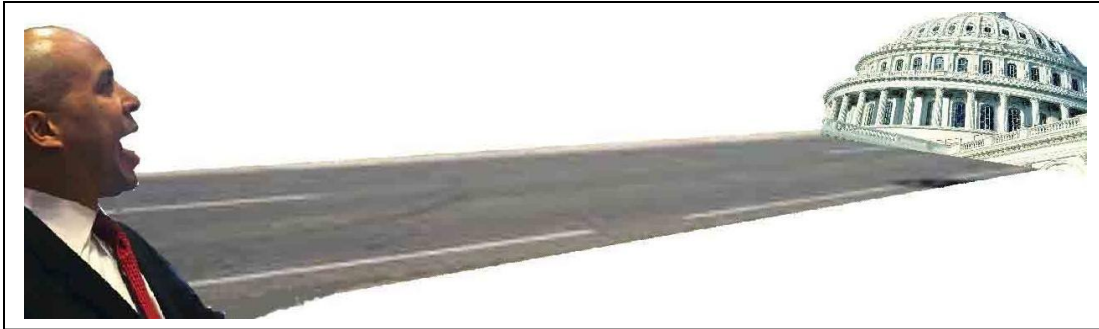


# Cory Booker: Open Road to the U.S. Senate

by Ukachi Uwadinobi



A name that comes readily to mind among a crop of African-American politicians with high aspirations for national office such as the presidency of the United States is Cory Booker, the Mayor of Newark, New Jersey. Young, smart and charismatic, the ivy-league educated Cory Booker, who displays a vibrant personality, effervesces with political energy that underscores his passion for public service. It was not too long ago that the conventional wisdom was Cory Booker would be, for New Jersey Democrats, the antidote to the reelection prospects of the Garden State governor, Chris Christie, currently surging in job approval ratings. Figuring it would be a prodigious challenge to take on the governor, who is as politically formidable as he is in physical size, Cory Booker shied away from his gubernatorial pursuit for 2014 -- for now, at least. Instead, he announced he'd seek to run for the Senate seat of 89 year-old New Jersey Sen. Frank Lautenberg, who recently made it official that he would not seek reelection in 2014.

With Sen. Lautenberg stepping down in 2014 and having no known discernable Republican contender for the seat at this time, it seems for Cory Booker an open road to the US Senate. And since Governor Chris Christie, in all likelihood, will be reelected in 2014, he will have served one full term and a half as governor, enough to burnish his resume with the governing experience that would portray him as possessing the executive background and political maturity to run for the Oval Office in 2016.

Cory Booker meanwhile, assuming he's elected to the U.S. Senate, would keep an eye back home and leave the door of the Seat on Capitol Hill open to exit and run for governor of New Jersey, if "The Boss" in Trenton, NJ, decides to step down for a White House run in 2016. Whichever way it goes for Chris Christie, and let's say the imaginary rosy scenarios for Cory Booker go from fiction to political reality, his resume would show that he'd served a full term as a popular Mayor of Newark, one third of a term in the US Senate, and a full term as Governor (2016 - 2020). By then he'd be well positioned with the executive background experience under his belt, to run a credible campaign for the office of President of the United States.