

NBCSL

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director of TransAfrica, a lobbying group, told the audience that their actions would play a major role in the final resolution of the transfer of political power in South Africa. He said, "the question is no longer whether there will be change -- the question now is when, and at what price. You will play a role in deciding the amount of blood that will be shed in achieving that goal."

Jesse Jackson, who also addressed the group, informed them that redlining in this country is practiced by many corporations who invest in South Africa, he said, "we need to put companies like this higher up on the hit list. Right now we are the backbone and the legs of that system." Jackson called for strict enforcement of the Voting Rights Act and said that they must join the Alabama fight against the Justice Department in voting.

Joshua Smith, President of Maxima, a Black-owned business, said, "there is a wide gap between those with and those without resources. The difference between the two is the greatest social problem we have today."

Marshall Bass, Vice President of R.J. Reynolds Inc., said, "we can rid ourselves of the problem of discrimination in business, but we must work together. Work in partnership with corporate America and you will have the power to work wonders."

NBCSL adopted a plan that each state caucus will develop an alternative budget for submission to its governor to provide funding for programs needed by their constituents. This was based on the New York plan of Black and Puerto Rican state legislators, which secured \$400 million for their programs. Mitchell said, "our approach will be to identify the programs necessary for our constituents' well being and then incorporate them into the alternative budget."

The legislators decided to raise one million dollars in the upcoming year to assist the Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund. This fund was established by Representative Parren Mitchell to enforce setaside provisions established under federal law.

Further resolutions at the

By Bob Palm

So it would seem, society has come to the point where some kids serve no useful purpose. In an apparent attempt to bring order, purpose and meaning to their lives, kids are turning more and more to gangs. White youths have begun to form loose societies revolving around satanic worship, while black and Hispanic youths form gangs that prey on one another through violence and the general public through drive-by shootings, intimidations and the selling of drugs.

In the next few weeks, the Sentinel-Voice will explore the gang phenomenon primarily in the black community and what should be done to redirect the activities of the young gang members.

A "Benzo" pulls to the curb on a street corner. Muscular youths run to the car, yelling "the rocks are screaming," which means top quality cocaine.

"Fresh freaks," attractive young girls, sashay by in the background.

Then an argument erupts. "Deuces and deuces," .22-caliber pistols, and "tray eights," .38s, flash in the sunlight.

A black and white Metro patrol car speeds around a corner and someone hollers:

"Let's do a ghost," and the area empties in seconds.

The scenario is described in the street language of the youthful gangs in West and North Las Vegas. They have their own turfs; their own colors and their own way of dressing when they plan to go to war against another

meeting focused on educational and health issues and the Black church.

In summing up of the conferences' values, Mitchell said "the greatest value of our annual conference is the opportunity it affords us for sharing information and experiences in our respective legislatures. The result is an increased ability to leverage more resources for our constituents."

In accomplishing its goals, the Legislators will be assisted by Corporate Roundtable members and the International Franchise Association.

gang.

Mujahid Ramadan, gang liaison for Clark County Juvenile Court Services, said originally the gangs were separate, but in the past five years, they have taken on more sinister organizational structures. They have adopted the "big city concept" of gangs, where smaller gangs form alliances under one umbrella.

He said in West Las Vegas, gangs are organized under primarily two umbrellas.

They are "the Bloods" and "the Cuzzs." They have their own codes of recognizing one of their own in public, but they also use colors to set themselves apart.

The bloods wear red while the cuzzs wear blue.

Ramadan said the animosity between members of the two factions is so strong that he was summoned to the Clark County Detention Center once where several members of the "bloods" were being held.

They absolutely refused to brush their teeth with the toothbrushes they had been given because they were blue. He asked one of them why, and was given the reply they hated the color blue in any shape or form because it was the color of the "cuzzs."

Ramadan said the membership of the "cuzzs" has grown tremendously in the past few months, and with its growth, their power and prestige have expanded.

The "cuzzs" originated on Donna Street in North Las Vegas, but now their turf has been widened all the way up the northern side of West Lake Mead Boulevard to Las Vegas in Vegas Heights and the Gerson Park housing project, the home of the Gerson Park Kings gang, who has been known to declare war on the Metro Police Department for perceived infractions against them or one of their members.

Ramadan said members of the "cuzz" tend to be more economically deprived than members of the "bloods," who often are from middle and upper middle-class families.

The turf of the "bloods" is loosely bound between the southside of West Lake Mead

and West Bonanza Road.

Another new aspect of the gang culture is they have gone co-ed, using the young girls to transport dope and weapons, reasoning that cops won't search a girl in public.

But the most drastic emergence in gang life is that they are turning to the selling of drugs which makes them even more violent than before. Where once they had only their turfs to protect, they now have a turf to protect where they are making money, Ramadan said.

Ramadan said contributing factors to gang memberships are high unemployment among black youths, which leaves them with only the selling of dope as a way to make money; poor home environments; single parents; lack of education; poor role models; few recreational outlets; too

much time on their hands and no parental supervision.

Ramadan said many youths are forced to join gangs as a way of protecting themselves from gang members in their area and members of other gangs when they leave their turfs.

Ramadan said even though there are frequent drive-by shootings by gang members, and weekly fights, gangs are still not that visible to the general public, but gang related incidents affect people in every aspect of life.

Ramadan said in 1983 and 1984, 65 percent of the killings in the county were gang related.

He said in the past five years, 17 of the gang members known to him have been sent to prison and six of them have been killed.

Ramadan and Clark County Commissioner William Pearson, the first elected official to meet with the

individual gangs on their turfs, consider the gang members highly intelligent.

Pearson said he found the gangs "don't want to be involved in gang wars, but don't have anything else to do and drugs also contribute to gang violence. 'Jobs are the answer to gangs,'" Pearson said.

Ramadan said since the gang members have high I.Q., he was surprised recently to discover that a lot of them are in special education classes in school.

He said he later learned the youths were in the classes because of their anti-social, anti-educational attitudes.



(NEXT WEEK we'll explore the gang activity throughout the county touching on gang members of ethnic groups of whites, hispanics and blacks.)

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