

## Black Shriners Eye LV for '88 Conclave

The Imperial Potentate of America's largest black fraternal organization toured Las Vegas recently and declared the city a prime candidate to host the August

Mayor Bill Briare and several black community leaders, and stated, "The environment, the atmosphere, the enthusiasm received from the local

Denver last hosted a Western Area National Shriners Conclave in 1982.

Hales said as a Convention Planner he is impressed by "reasonable room rates and



**SHRINERS WELCOMED**—Las Vegas Mayor William Briare (rt) extends greetings and a key to the city to Earl H. Gray (2nd from rt.) Imperial Potentate of the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North and South America. Charles Hales (2nd from lf.), Imperial Convention Director and Cranford Crawford, Jr. (lf.), Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Prince Hall Masons of Nevada, observe the ceremony.

1988 National Convention of the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North and South America.

Earl H. Gray, accompanied by Convention Director Charles Hales and Deputy Convention Director Bob Brown, inspected local hotels, met with Las Vegas

populace, make us want to come to Las Vegas."

Gray said if Las Vegas is selected at the Shriners August 1987 National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, the Entertainment Capital can expect some 40,000 conventioners.

He said it is time the convention came West;

dining costs" in Las Vegas, and by the large block of rooms that can be obtained at a few hotels.

Former State Assemblyman Cranford Crawford, Jr. is the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Prince Hall Masons in the jurisdiction of Nevada.

## Black Members of Congress Chair Top Committees

By Larry A. Still

The expanding 24 member Congressional Black Caucus is assuming new strength and influence in the 100th congress as they take command of 25 committees among the 435 seats in the House of Representatives this year. This empowerment reflects a record number of black members serving on congressional committees.

The Caucus membership now includes chairpersons of five full standing committees, two select (temporary) committees and 18 subcommittees in the Democratic controlled Congress.

Among the full committees, Rep. Louis Stokes heads the newly formed Intelligence Committee, currently involved in the investigation of Irangate and the reported diversion of hostage funds to Nicaraguan rebels. Subcommittee chairmen include Reps. Mervyn Dymally (D-Calif), Census and Population; George Crockett (D-Detroit), Foreign Affairs Western Hemisphere; Gus Savage (D-Chicago), Public Works and Economic Development, and Major Owens (D-NY), Educational Institutions. Dymally is the new CBC chairman.

Other full committee chairmen are Reps. Augustus Hawkins (Calif), Education and Labor; Ron Dellums (Calif), District of Columbia (and the Subcommittee on Military Installations); Julian Dixon (Calif), Standards of Official Conduct, and William H. Gray III (Pa), the Budget, one of the most influential committees in Congress.

Rep. Charles Rangel (NY),

is chairman of the Select Committee on Narcotic Abuse and Control, although he lost his bid to become majority whip, a top post. Rep. Mickey Leland (Texas), past CBC chair, remains chairman of the Select Committee on Hunger which has been seeking more legislation and funds to combat world wide poverty and hunger.

Subcommittee chairman from the CBC ranks include Reps. John Conyers (Mich), Criminal Justice, William Clay (Mo), Labor and Management; Rangel (NY), Select Revenue Measurers; Cardiss Collins (Ill), Government Activities and Transportation; Dixon, District of Columbia; Leland, Postal Operations and Services and Dymally, Judiciary and Education and Postal Personnel and Modernization, and Rep. Alan Wheat (Kansas), the subcommittee on Government Operations and Metropolitan Affairs. Fauntroy switched from the Subcommittee on Domestic Monetary Policy because of his interest in developing legislation for Africa.

Rep. John Lewis (Ga), Mike Espy (Miss) and Kwame Mfume (Md), freshmen in Congress, have not been considered for chairmanships.

Consistent with current Congress procedures, committee chairmanships are generally based on seniority of service. Rep. Walter E. Fauntroy often states, "When we were first elected, we were opposed to the seniority system, but the longer we stay the better we like it." He is referring to the tradition of electing a chairman according to years of service.

## Black History Month in Washington D.C.

By Rhoda McKinney  
NNPA National Correspondent

Despite winter's bitter wind, celebrations of black history abounded in the nation's capital. Government agencies and their employees both black and white paid homage to past pilgrims of racial justice and tribute to the legacy of black voices who gave shape and form to America's future.

At the Pentagon, the combination was rare indeed as the queen of the talk show circuit, America's girlfriend Oprah Winfrey and the Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger joined their efforts to carry out the 1987 governmental theme for Black History month "The Afro-American and the Constitution."

Weinberger spoke of Black America's contribution to the defense of the nation and their valor in wars from the colonial past to the present. He mentioned that Crispus Attucks was the first martyr of the American Revolution and he remembered the thousands of poor young blacks who gave their lives in Vietnam.

"It is an unfortunate stain on our history," he said, "that black Americans did not receive the full blessings of liberty guaranteed under the Constitution they were fighting to defend."

"Blacks assumed the burden of citizenship, even though they did not receive all the benefits," said Weinberger, stating he was "glad" the days of discrimination in the armed forces were long passed.

According to Weinberger, presently 410,000 black Americans serve in the volunteer military, 19 percent of the armed force, 17 percent in the select reserve and 18,000 black officers at the highest rank.

He said the statistics were proof of "greater patriotism among blacks."

Oprah Winfrey, conjured up spirits of the past by quoting the words of Sojourner Truth and other freedom fighters as Winfrey said, "who refused to lay their religion down." She called them "sturdy black bridges."

"I've come here today to celebrate those black voices," Winfrey said, "those who made it possible

See HISTORY, Page 8

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