

LAS VEGAS

Sentinel



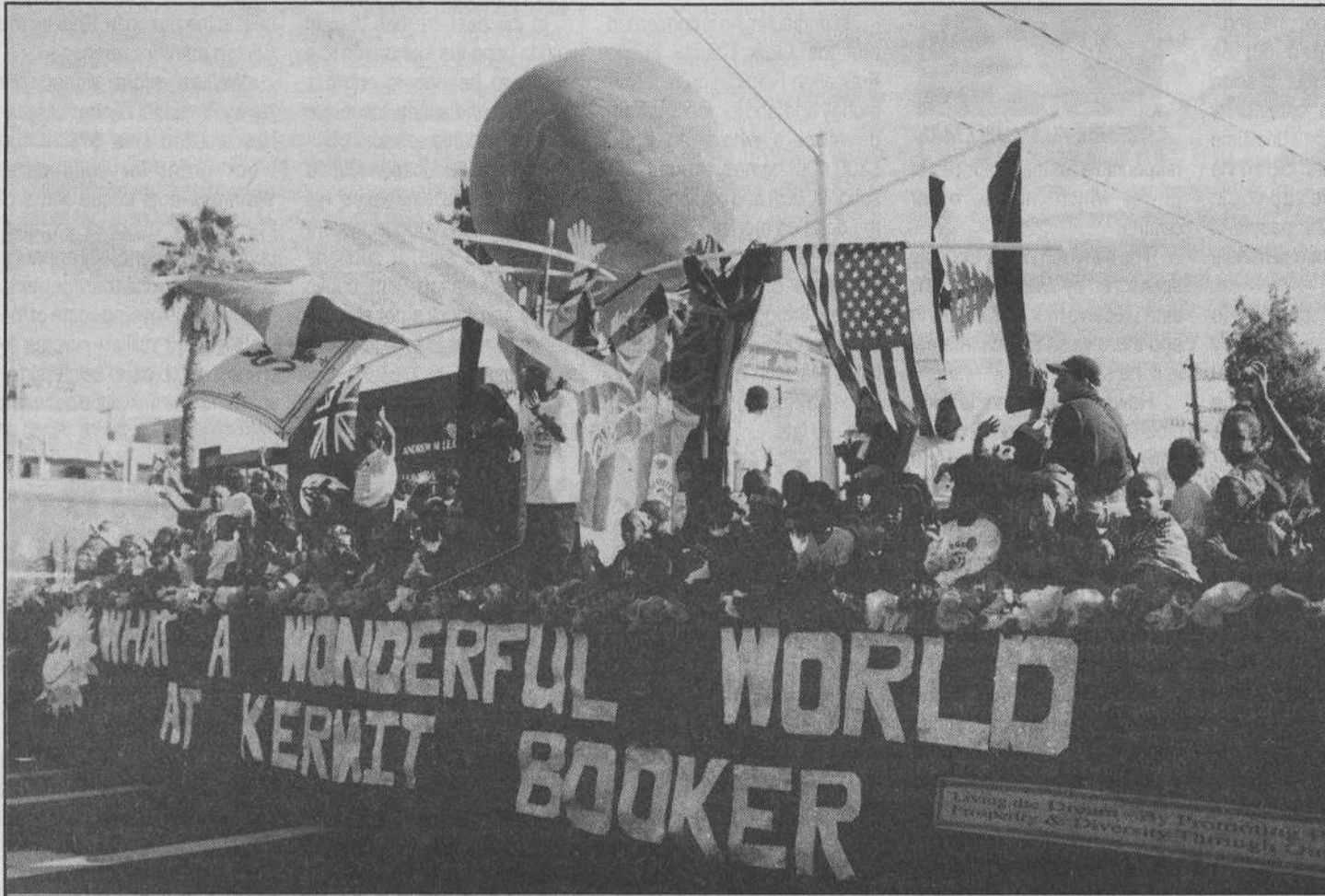
Voice

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



Top Honors

The Kermit Booker Elementary School float representing the many faces and cultures of the world took home best overall entry trophy from Saturdays Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parade. See related photos on pages 8 and 9. Photos by Savoy/LVS-Voice

The O.J. fall-out on black America

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The betting odds are that O.J. will lose the civil suit. If so, it will be the first publicly known case in which a defendant acquitted of murder in a criminal court is found liable for the same crime in a civil court. Many blacks believe that if O.J. is found liable it will end the case and only O.J. will suffer. They are wrong.

Millions of Americans will cheer a liable verdict against O.J. They believe that O.J.'s acquittal in the criminal trial was a travesty of justice. They believe that a black attorney played the race card, a predominantly black jury itching to thumb their noses at "white man's justice," grabbed it, and a black murderer went free.

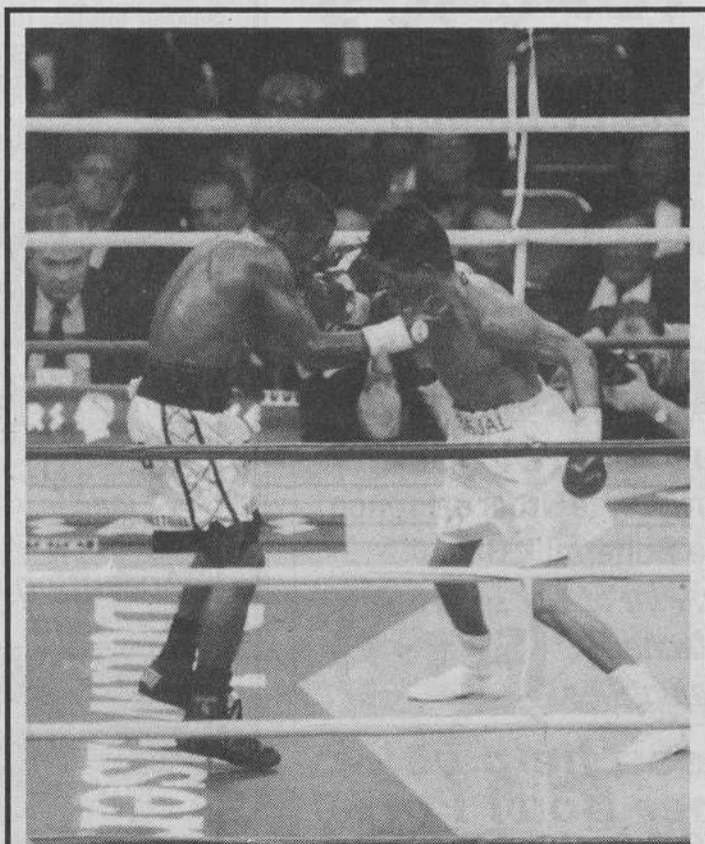
The O.J. acquittal reinforced the public suspicion that blacks harbor a deep animosity toward white authority. Many whites won't forget the polls that showed that many blacks ignored the "mountain" of physical evidence against O.J. and doggedly claimed he was the victim of a police frame-up/conspiracy. They were

enraged at the media exaggerated scenes of joyous blacks celebrating the verdict. This was final proof to many whites that blacks tied their strings to the coattail of a brutal murderer.

Even though surveys show that more blacks believe that O.J. is guilty, this distancing from him is too little too late. It can't erase these bitter memories. If O.J. loses, he will be a social pariah and a financial pauper. The quiet whispers of murderer that dog him will turn to loud shouts. This almost certainly will spark a furious debate over why a black murderer is free. This is the likely fall-out for blacks:

- **Media Stereotyping:** O.J.'s fame and race-neutral lifestyle did not exempt him from racial stereotyping. The deliberately darkened picture of O.J. on Time magazine cover subtly reinforced the crime-drugs-violence image of black males. The O.J. verdict will heighten public fear and suspicion of blacks, increase hostile

(See O.J., Page 5)



IBF champion gains respect

International Boxing Federation (IBF) light flyweight champion Michael Carbajal (44-2), right, lands a counter punch to top rated challenger Mauricio Pastrano (15-0) during their 12 round championship bout at the Thomas & Mack Center last Saturday. Pastrano endured the punch and went on to win the title on a close split decision. Photo by Jonathan Olsen/Front Row Photos

Event offers peek at LV's future

By Parker Philpot
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Preview '97 offered a "sneak peek" into Southern Nevada's future economic, environment and community development, according to the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce (LVCC) presenters of the 12th annual event held last week.

During the all-day event, held at the Las Vegas Hilton Pavilion, Jan. 15, more than 30 speakers offered a look into the future of Las Vegas. On display, in the Expo area, viewers got previews of planned building and development projects underway for the Southern Nevada area.

More than 1,500 attendees included entrepreneurs, civic organization directors and students. In addition to the LVCC, other area municipal and ethnic chambers of commerce took part. Members of the newly-formed Urban Chamber who attended the annual event included board members, John Phillips, Earl Douglas and Dr. Herman Bass.

Do opportunities exist for African-Americans in the growth of Las Vegas? The outlook is positive, according to Harvey Phelps, president of the Urban Chamber, Phelps said many opportunities exist, but "we must step up to the plate" to be a part of the planning and participate in the development going on in the area. Phelps added, the Urban Chamber is networking more solidly within the Southern Nevada business community. Phelps said this chamber's focus will be to ensure there is African-American business and professional involvement "in all areas" of local economic development.

Keynote speakers included real estate developers, gaming executives and corporate consultants. Lead speaker Steve Wynn, chairman, president and CEO of Mirage Resorts, Inc. cautioned that the growth in the Las Vegas area should focus more on quality than quantity. During the luncheon, more than 20 speakers, including Mayor Jan Laverty Jones, offered brief commentaries on the future of Las Vegas.

County Commission Chairwoman Yvonne-Atkinson Gates, referred to the need to quickly address the challenges of our growing community. Beyond local government efforts, Gates said "the key to Las Vegas' future lies in the hands of the business community." Gates cites crime reduction, traffic flow, flood control and air quality improvements as Las Vegas' major challenges. The issues and problems require a "holistic approach" rather than just "dealing with each of [them] separately," she said.

Commissioner Lorraine Hunt told the audience that Las Vegas must become more than just a place for entertainment, but also a supplier of "entertainment products." Hunt said Las Vegas can fill what she says is the "growing need" for many kinds of entertainment related products. Las

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