

# NEWS CLIPS

## RACIAL POLICIES OF OIL GIANTS INVOLVED IN MERGER PROMPTS COMMUNITY CONCERN

The merger of two oil giants with histories of racial discrimination is prompting the concern of national civil rights groups and community organizations, many of whom receive funds from the two. Los Angeles-based community groups, political leaders and representatives of national civil rights groups, including the Congressional Black Caucus, TransAfrica, CORE and the NAACP, held a press conference March 19, 1997 to protest the merger of Shell and Texaco. The merger of their refining and marketing in 28 Midwest and Western states will make the new operations the largest in the domestic oil industry. Texaco was recently the subject of a nationwide boycott after tapes were made public featuring company executives making racist comments. Shell is currently the subject of a discrimination lawsuit by African-American employees, who charge the company with creating and maintaining a company-wide policy of race based discriminatory employment policies. One plaintiff in the case against Shell said she heard she was not given a better performance review, because she reminded the regional manager of an "old washerwoman." This is the same plaintiff who in 1994 received the best numbers in her region but claims she was denied an internal award.

## ELDERS ADDRESSES AIDS DEATH DISPARITIES

According to new data released this month from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the overall death rate due to AIDS has declined for the first time since the beginning of the epidemic. However, while the overall death rate from AIDS declined by 13 percent, tremendous disparity was seen in the death rates among Hispanics and African Americans when compared to whites. Among whites, the AIDS death rate declined by 21 percent, while the decline was 10 percent among the Hispanics and only two percent among African Americans. In a recent telephone press briefing Dr. Joycelyn Elders, former U.S. Surgeon General and current professor of pediatric endocrinology at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences at Arkansas Children's Hospital, was joined by Moises Agosto, a patient advocate with the National Minority AIDS Council and Dr. Alberto Avendano, executive director of the Florida AIDS Action Council, to discuss the disparity. Key issues addressed included the potential barriers that may limit access to treatment and prevention information in affected populations, the importance of knowing one's HIV status and how to access assistance and the need for a clearer understanding of recent treatment advances as well as the importance of seeing a medical professional.

## TIGER WOODS YOUTH GOLF CLINICS OFF WITH A 'BANG'

The Tiger Woods Foundation began its youth golf clinics with a bang, when the 21-year-old phenomenon was joined by 150 eager young golfers aged from five to 17. Woods worked one-on-one with the youngsters, at the Walt Disney World Resort, answering a stream of questions about the sport and life in general. He also treated his audience to a hitting exhibition, which included a drive that finished with a burst of fireworks. The blast drew rousing applause from the young participants who were from the Orlando Minority Youth Golf Association and Urban Junior Golf in Tampa. The March 16 clinic marked the first of six scheduled for 1997. They continue in Dallas, May 12; New York, June 16; Chicago, June 30; Memphis in August and in Miami, in early fall. "Our mission is to open the game of golf to a wider audience and to strengthen the fabric of economically disadvantaged communities," said Greg Marshall, director of junior golf for the Foundation. At the conclusion of the clinic, Dr. T.J. Dorsey, executive director of the Orlando Minority Youth Golf Association was presented with a \$5,000 check from Nike, while the city of Orlando received a \$5,000 check from Walt Disney World earmarked for inner city golf. Orlando Mayor Glenda Hood also presented Woods with a key to the city.

# Church arsonist receives stiff sentence

By Nancy Watson  
Sentinel-Voice

Richard Dale Morrison of Henderson, who pleaded guilty in December to deliberately setting fire to a church because most of its members are African-American, was sentenced last week to five years in federal prison.

The first person in Nevada to be sentenced under the federal Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996, Morrison received the maximum sentence allowed under the law.

U.S. Judge Phillip Pro said the 23-year-old Morrison "richly deserved" the maximum sentence and said he would have sentenced Morrison to more time if he could have done so under the law.

He chided Morrison for making "grossly inappropriate" statements at the scene of the fire and he stated that his "commission of the arson evidenced Morrison's great distaste for an entire group of the community, that being the church's African-American parishioners."

Assistant U.S. Attorney Collette Rausch, recommended Morrison receive the maximum sentence based upon his background, which includes several prior convictions and a lengthy history of drug and alcohol abuse and his willful disregard for the church's congregation.

"He set fire to the church because many of its members are African-American and it appears that there will be an increase in his criminal and violent behavior," she said.

Morrison was arrested Sept. 27 on a warrant issued by U.S. Magistrate Roger L. Hunt after an investigation by the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

He pleaded guilty Dec. 20 to one count of damage to a religious property in connection with the Sept. 19 fire that caused \$500 in damage to the Church of Christ located at 131 E. King St. in Henderson.

Pro also informed the court that "members of the community affected by Morrison's crime needed to be assured that a convicted defendant would be dealt with to the full extent of the law."

Bobby Siller, special agent in charge of the Las Vegas office of the FBI, stated in a press release, the vigorous investigation in this matter by the FBI and ATF is an example of "zero tolerance" and the attention given to activities which appear to be racially motivated and are often referred to as "hate crimes."

"Morrison received an enhanced sentence under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines because the court found that Morrison intentionally selected the victim church because of the race of the parishioners," Kathryn E. Landreth, U.S. Attorney for the District of Nevada stated in a press release.

The Rev. Chester Richardson, spokesman for the local branch of the NAACP, said "it is excellent that Morrison was prosecuted and sent to prison.

"It's sad that racism exists in the Las Vegas Valley, but it does and it will prevail until

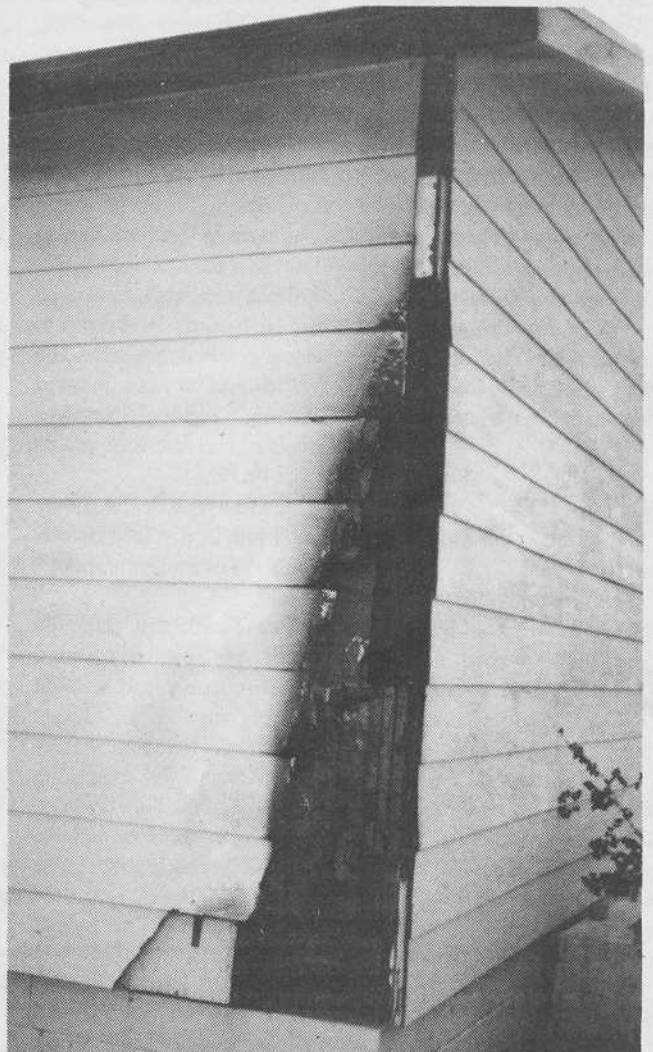
decent men and women stand up against it," he said.

More than 100 predominantly black churches, most located in the southeast United States, have been burned since January 1995, according to federal statistics.

In response to the dramatic increase in church burnings, Congress passed the Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996 which amends Section 247 of

Title 18 of the United States Code. The act makes it easier to prosecute suspects of arson involving houses of worship by eliminating the damage requirement. Prior to the 1996 law there was \$10,000 damage requirement.

The law was also extended to cover violent conduct directed at a place of worship that is motivated by ethnic or racial hatred.



Church of Christ at 131 E. King St. in Henderson.

Photo by Savoy LVS/Voice

## Southern Nevada Enterprise Community presents

# Career Day / Job Fair

**Saturday, April 5, 1997**  
**10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.**

**Magic's Westland Plaza**  
**in the Vons Parking Lot**  
*(at the corner of Owens & H Street)*

- Financial Aid and Career Information
- Entertainment • Refreshments • Jobs

*For Additional Information Call:*  
**MAURICE REID**  
**455-5025**