

NEWS CLIPS

WHITE SUPREMACISTS WIN SUIT AGAINST CITY OF BOSTON

BOSTON — A federal judge awarded a white supremacist group \$700 four years after the city banned it from holding an anti-homosexual parade. The Nationalist Movement, a Learned, Miss.-based group, was denied a permit to conduct the parade to show support for sponsors of a St. Patrick's Day parade who canceled their event rather than comply with a federal injunction that forced them to let a group of Irish gays march. The group went ahead with the march in May 1994, in violation of the city's ban, which was based on traffic and public safety concerns. About 20 people marched on the sidewalk instead of the street and were met by about 300 counterdemonstrators. No arrests were made. The group sued the city, and U.S. District Court Judge George O'Toole ruled last week the denial was a violation of the group's right to freedom of expression and awarded them \$700 in compensatory damages. "Our victory is a victory for the majority and a victory over the homosexuals, the leftists ... and the minorities," said Richard Barrett, who described himself as general counsel for the group.

KWAME TURE STAGES SIT-IN AT OFFICE OF NEW NAACP CHAIRMAN

Kwame Ture, formerly Stokely Carmichael, an organizer of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party, held a 13 hour sit-in on last Friday in the office of Julian Bond, new chairman of the board of the NAACP. Since 1969, the AAPRP has given Ture the assignment to contact the leadership of the key national organizations within the African community in the United States so that they can join forces and create an African United Front. The AAPRP says that the NAACP has been reluctant to participate in this process. After a tentatively scheduled June 12 meeting between Bond, Ture and Minister Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam was canceled by Bond, Ture sent a certified letter to him asking that a firm meeting date be confirmed. In his letter Ture said, "everywhere....we see, hear and feel the impact of the continuing racist onslaught. Our people are bleeding under the lack of unity ... We cannot see the need to postpone at this crucial time, the meeting which we have discussed any further." He further explained to Bond that by "using all of the creative and redeeming love of Dr. Martin Luther King's non-violence, we have no qualms with sitting-in at your office until you agree to a meeting between you, Minister Farrakhan and myself." At press time neither Bond, who was on vacation, nor Kweisi Mfume, NAACP president and CEO was available to comment on the incident. However, Ture did confirm that Mfume and the staff of the NAACP were very accommodating during his sit-in.

CONGRESS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVES CONSTRUCTION OF MLK MEMORIAL

Without opposition, both the House and Senate approved the final measure to allow construction of a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in what is known as Area 1 of the nation's capital. The House and Senate action allows Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. to now choose any available site in the mall area between the Lincoln Memorial and the U.S. Capitol building or between the Capitol building and RFK Stadium. In November 1996, the nation's oldest African-American Greek letter fraternity was given authorization by Congress and the President to raise funds and to construct the memorial to Dr. King — one of the fraternity's most notable members. The planning team must now begin the task of choosing a site, working with the National Park Service to plan and design the memorial and raising funds for its construction. "Whatever type of memorial we construct, it will reflect not only the life and times of Dr. King, but also the movement he represented and the millions of people who were involved in the arduous task of changing the minds of Americans," said John Carter, the project chairman.

SCLC'S 41ST CONVENTION, INAUGURATION SLATED FOR D.C. SUBURB

Thousands of Southern Christian Leadership Conference members and supporters will assemble at the Jericho City of Praise in Landover, Md. a suburb of Washington, D.C. July 25-29. The event marks the organization's 41st convention and the installation of Martin Luther King, III as the fourth president of the civil rights organization founded in 1957 by his father, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph David Abernathy, Sr., Fred Shuttlesworth and others. The theme of the inauguration is "Passing the Torch to a New Generation of Leadership," and the theme for the convention is "Commitment to Quality: The Movement and the Mission." Among the notable personalities delegates will hear from are Andrew Young, Dr. Maya Angelou, motivational speaker Les Brown, the Rev. Bernice King, Dr. Myles Monroe, elected officials and many others.

Caucus helps obtains \$30 million for black farmers

Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rep. Maxine Walters (D-Calif.), Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), hailed the passage of the House of Representatives' Agriculture Appropriations bill, H.R. 4101, which includes provisions to waive the statute of limitations for certain discrimination claims filed by black farmers.

"The CBC has achieved the first part of a major victory to close this ugly chapter of discrimination by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) against black farmers, who have endured decades of discrimination.

The Agriculture Appropriations bill includes approximately \$30 million to compensate black farmers

"The Agriculture Appropriations bill includes approximately \$30 million to compensate black farmers where there is a determination of discrimination."

— Rep. Maxine Walters (D-Calif.)

where there is a determination of discrimination," stated Rep. Walters.

Many black farmers filed discrimination claims against the USDA from 1983 to 1996. But the claims languished because the USDA, under the Reagan-Bush Administration, had secretly dismantled the division responsible for handling them. The Department of Justice (DOJ) now argues that the claims are barred by the statute of limitations because the farmers did not file a court action within

two years of filing their administration complaints.

For the past two years, the CBC has held hearings, participated in "listening sessions" around the country, joined with black farmers at various rallies, facilitated a meeting between the President and the black farmers, worked with the attorneys representing black farmers, and negotiated the USDA's administrative complaint process for black farmers.

"Despite this victory, the statute of limitations provisions

still must pass the Senate and must be signed into law by the President," added Rep. Walters. "There still is more work to be done. The farmers will have their day in court in a class action lawsuit on February 1, 1999. There also may be other farmers who have individual constituent complaints that have not been dealt with by the USDA. The CBC will continue to assist and fight for the rights of black farmers," vowed Rep. Walters.

Rep. Walters also specially thanked CBC members — Rep. John Conyers, Rep. Edolphus Towns, Rep. Eva Clayton, Rep. Sanford Bishop, Rep. Jim Clayburn, Rep. Earl Hilliard, Rep. Cynthia McKinney, Rep. Bobby Scott, and Rep. Bennie Thompson — who have worked tirelessly to ensure justice for black farmers.

ACLU says hair drug test biased against minorities

By Chinta Strausberg

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Officials from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) have called for an investigation by the Chicago City Council into the use of a hair drug test given to police recruits.

They allege that the testing, now being conducted by Psychomedics Corp, a private firm, is "inaccurate, biased and unreliable."

William Spain, a spokesperson for the ACLU, criticized the Cambridge, Mass.-based firm and claims the use of hair instead of urine to see if a person has used illegal drugs is "unreliable," even by the standards set by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the Society of Forensic

Toxicologists and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA). He also believes the test is culturally biased and negatively impacts Blacks and other minorities with dark, coarse hair.

Chicago Alderman Robert Shaw is calling for a public hearing on the testing and its implications for the Chicago Police Department. "We didn't approve this test. This is something that the police department came up with. We were unaware of this test, but because of the ACLU's reports, the police department should refrain from this test," Shaw said.

Alderman William Beavers, chair of the Police and Fire Committee, said after looking at documents from the

ACLU, he'll be investigating the allegations that the test is racially biased. He also said the test is currently being used in Las Vegas and "so far, they have not had any problems."

A spokesperson for the police department told the *Chicago Defender* the hair drug test is given only to recruits and that it would not answer any more questions until representatives appeared before the Police and Fire Committee.

Although he has no confirmation of the hair test's scientific accuracy, Fraternal Order of Police president Bill Nolan said, "We did not agree to have this in our next contract. If there is a change in that, it would be subject to contract negotiations. "We don't have

any scientific results. No one has told us this is a sure-fire thing and until we find out, we're going to fight it," Nolan vowed.

However, Bill Thistle, general counsel for Psychomedics Corp., stands by the procedure. "The test has been used for 20 years forensically. We've been doing this for 10 years and it's more accurate than urine testing," he said.

Thistle also denied Spain's charge that the hair test may yield racially biased results. "You don't go to the ACLU to learn about drug testing," he said. "There is no biological difference between Black and White hair. There are no biological markers," Thistle said.

Racist graffiti found in Virginia Beach during holiday

Special to Sentinel-Voice

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — Vandals defaced an entire neighborhood with racist graffiti, covering about 30 pieces of property with swastikas and slurs.

Residents of the racially diverse Salem Lakes neighborhood woke up on the Fourth of July to find graffiti written in black spray paint on homes, cars, fences and signs. The graffiti — much of it violent and obscene — defamed Jews, blacks and homosexuals.

On one spot, vandals wrote "Hitler was right." On another, they used a racist epithet to warn black people to "get ready."

The vandals apparently did not single out individuals, Virginia Beach police spokesman Mike Carey said. Instead, they struck one house after another and painted messages on fences lining several streets. Residents of the suburban neighborhood set aside holiday plans and worked together to scrub, paint and blast the messages off their

property Saturday morning.

"I'm mad at the people who do it," said Richard S. Allen, one of several residents whose property was spared but who helped neighbors clean up.

Rabbi Israel Zoberman of nearby Congregation Beth Chaverim, a synagogue that was vandalized during its construction two years ago,

came to inspect the graffiti.

"It's really incredible that on the Fourth of July, we would contend with such a hate crime that obviously was created to disturb such a large portion of the population," Zoberman said. "I think we need to take it very, very seriously."

The FBI was assisting in the investigation.

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