

NEWS CLIPS

GORE PROMISES SUPPORT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

WASHINGTON (NNPA)—In an exclusive NNPA interview with Vice President Al Gore, the candidate for president discussed his positions on police violence and profiling, education, employment and the recently signed African trade law. Trade with Africa: "Africa represents an exciting new market for American businesses. Naturally, the African American entrepreneur will have entree to many countries and that will be very exciting," Gore said. "For example, in South Africa, the percentage of African American businesses who have a business involvement with that country is higher than those companies doing similar business in Europe or Asia. We expect that to expand. When the continent is opened up, we will have access to more than 700 million people in business. Now [our access] is only six percent. This new legislation will increase that." Racial profiling: "I want to develop national legislation around this problem and an executive order around police profiling," Gore said. "I have started this groundwork already. If its not completed by the time this election has taken place, I intend to follow it through as president." Affirmative action: "I support affirmative action because we still need it," Gore said. "I also support the national hate crimes law. I support strong enforcement of the civil rights laws that are on the books and increasing legislation where necessary." Education: "Our educational system is in a state of national emergency," said the veteran public servant. "We cannot allow our kids to sit in failing and deteriorating schools one more day." Gore went on say that his list of solutions to end problems within education included hiring bonuses of up to \$10,000 to attract new teachers.

REPARATIONS ISSUE HEATING UP, LAWSUIT TO BE ANNOUNCED

WASHINGTON (NNPA)—As the 2000 presidential elections become more pressing and scores of organizations jockey to position their agendas onto the national platform, two organizations pushing for reparations for African-Americans are taking action. The National Coalition Of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA) and the Harvest Institute, a Washington, DC-based public policy research organization, are preparing a series of events, starting with a June 14 conference that will discuss the next moves in the fight for the United States to pay African-Americans compensation for more than 300 years of slavery and Jim Crow. NCOBRA's website states the conference will be the site of the announcement of a class-action lawsuit. The series continues with a Juneteenth reparations rally on June 18 and an Independence Day event the following day. "The movement has grown over the past 11 years," says NCOBRA treasurer Kalonji Olusegun. "The reparations issue can no longer be ignored. The demand has started since our emancipation and has been ignored. We have been persistent. Times have changed; the world has changed." Dorothy Benton Lewis, NCOBRA co-chair supports that idea. "There are more people believing that reparations can happen because more are demanding and receiving reparations around the world," she says.

BLACK SUPPORT GROUP CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF RESEARCH

WASHINGTON (NNPA)—The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington D.C.-based think tank that conducts research on public policy issues, will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year. Originally named the Joint Center for Political Studies, its purpose is to improve the socioeconomic status of Black Americans and other minorities, expand their effective participation in the public policy arenas and to promote communications and relationships across racial and ethnic lines. Founded in 1970 by a group of Black intellectuals, professionals and elected officials the center was originally mandated to provide training to Black elected officials. The group has expanded its mission by currently conducting research, holding conferences and publishing a wide variety of materials including FOCUS, its public policy magazine that covers a multitude of issues facing people of African descent. Its website, <http://www.jointcenter.org/about.html>, features its accomplishments.

Jesse Jackson blocked from Decatur

DECATUR, Ill. (AP) — Hours before the graduation ceremonies, the Rev. Jesse Jackson backed off his threat to challenge a court injunction by attending commencement Friday at the school where he led protests over the expulsions of six students last fall.

In an emergency hearing Friday, a Macon County judge reaffirmed his ruling that Jackson and other Rainbow/PUSH Coalition protesters could not come within 50 feet of the city's three high schools without permission. School administrators argued that Jackson's presence would take the spotlight off the graduates and could spark unrest.

Shortly after the judge ruled, Jackson announced he would not attend the ceremonies and instead would leave on a planned trip to Europe.

"In no way does he want to let the Decatur school board use him as a diversion to the

graduation of these students," Rainbow/PUSH spokeswoman Macy Morales said.

Other coalition leaders decided against trying to attend the commencement exercises as an act of civil disobedience. Rainbow/PUSH Vice President Janet Mathis said they wanted to avoid any confrontation or disturbance.

Instead, coalition leaders gathered at a church to congratulate graduating seniors Roosevelt Fuller and Gregory Howell and to honor their parents and others who supported them as they worked toward graduation.

Asked what he would say to Jackson if he were present, Fuller said, "I would just say thanks. If it wasn't for him, this day wouldn't have come."

The conflict began when a brawl broke out in the stands during a high school football game Sept. 17. Six students involved in the videotaped melee were expelled, and

criminal charges were filed against four.

The case sparked a national debate over zero-tolerance policies on violence in schools and brought Jackson and his supporters to this central Illinois town to protest.

Circuit Judge James Hendrian permanently banned the protesters from campus in March, agreeing with school administrators that the demonstrations had disrupted classes.

Rainbow/PUSH leaders contended that the court order was not applicable to graduation ceremonies, and Jackson said on Wednesday that he planned to attend despite the school board's threats to have him arrested.

Jackson had planned to attend at the invitation of Fuller and Howell, two of the students who were expelled. Jackson had helped to pressure the district to put the students in an alternative school so they could gradu-

ate with their classmates.

Rainbow/PUSH asked Hendrian for the hearing on whether the injunction applied to graduation ceremonies.

Jackson attorney Lewis Myers Jr. said that by barring the civil rights leader and the others from commencement, the judge was letting the school board squelch free speech.

He said the earlier ruling applied to demonstrations that disrupted classes — something not at issue with graduation.

But Decatur school attorney Everett Nicholas said: "Their presence will do nothing but create problems that this board does not need. There is no constitutional right to attend graduation."

Jackson faces criminal charges for last fall's protests and is out of jail on a \$10,000 bond. One condition of his bond is that he not go on school grounds.

Tapes show LBJ tried to avoid civil rights violence

AUSTIN, Texas. (AP) — President Lyndon B. Johnson used his vaunted powers of persuasion to try to calm a fiery Alabama Gov. George Wallace and head off civil rights violence in 1965, according to newly released tapes of their telephone conversations.

By mid-March 1965, state troopers and segregationists had killed two civil rights workers in Alabama and beaten others during marches from Selma to the state capital of Montgomery.

With the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. planning to lead another, bigger march, Johnson tried to reassure an anxious Wallace during a phone call March 18.

"They are flying in nuns, priests and we got hundreds of bearded beatniks in front of my capitol," Wallace said. "And the point I'm making is that we are going to do the best we can, but we hoped that you might use your influence to at least make them have an orderly march."

Johnson pointed out that the sooner the march occurred, the sooner the out-of-state protesters would leave.

"The longer the march is postponed, the greater the presence, the longer the people from outside are going to stay in Alabama and the more problem you are going to have, the more problem I am going to have, and the more problem the country is going to have," Johnson said.

After Wallace worried that the upcoming demonstration might look like "a revolution," Johnson voiced his displeasure.

"When you talk about revolution, that really upsets us all and we — we know you don't and I know I don't want that — so we've just got to work together best we can to see that we discharge our duties," Johnson said.

Wallace backpedaled, saying he didn't actually mean a revolution was imminent, but said, "We have some revolutionaries down here."

Three days after the conversation, King led civil rights activists from Selma to Montgomery to protest discrimination against black voters.

The tapes were released Friday by the LBJ Library at the University of Texas in Austin.

Johnson was well aware of how civil rights activists could help him. In a January telephone call, he wooed King with the possibility of appointing a black man to the Cabinet.

He also urged King to publicize the worst example of discrimination against a black who wanted to register to vote — a prestigious person such as a government official or university president — because it would help Johnson get another civil rights bill through Congress.

"If you take that one illustration and get it on the radio, get it on television, get it in

the pulpits, get it in the meetings, every place you can, then pretty soon the fellow who didn't do anything but drive a tractor would say, 'Well, that is not right, that is not fair,'" he said.

For his part, King gave Johnson — who had been elected president only a couple of months earlier — some political advice about the benefits of registering more blacks to vote.

"And it is very interesting, Mr. President, to notice

that the only states that you did not carry in the South, the five Southern states, had less than 40 percent of the Negroes registered to vote," King said.

"That is exactly right," Johnson said.

Presidential scholar Michael Beschloss, who is writing about the tapes, said Johnson's persuasive abilities were well-known, but it was surprising to hear King talk about political strategy.

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