

McKinney: New York Mayor needs to listen more

By John Price

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NEW YORK (NNPA)-Criticizing New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani for rejecting a \$10 million gift from Saudi Arabian Prince Alwaleed bin Talal for the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks at the World Trade Center, Rep. Cynthia McKinney, D-Ga., has asked the prince to consider donating to those Black Americans who need the assistance.

Giuliani recently refused to accept the check from Prince Alwaleed, a nephew of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, after the prince issued a statement urging the United States government to re-examine its foreign policy and "adopt a more balanced stance towards

the Palestinian cause."

"I was disappointed that Mayor Giuliani chose to decline your generous offer and instead criticize you for your observations of events in the Middle East," wrote McKinney in a letter to Prince Alwaleed in an Oct. 12 letter.

"Whether he agreed with you or not I think he should have recognized your right to speak and make observations about a part of the world which you know so well."

"I think Mayor Giuliani would do well to listen to the words of one of our greatest Americans, former Sen. Robert Kennedy," stated McKinney.

"In 1968 [Kennedy] said that America 'is

a great nation and a strong people. Any who seek to comfort rather than to speak plainly, reassure rather than instruct, promise satisfaction rather than reveal frustration-they deny that greatness and drain that strength. For today as it was in the beginning, it is the truth that makes us free.'"

Prince Alwaleed toured the World Trade Center ruins on Oct. 11 with the mayor and offered his condolences to the victim's families. He gave a \$10 million check to the mayor after a morning memorial service held at Ground Zero.

After the ceremony, the prince later released a statement, issued by his Kingdom Holdings Company in Riyadh, saying the

U.S. "must address some of the issues that led to such a criminal attack."

"I believe the government of the United States of America should re-examine its policies in the Middle East and adopt a more balanced stance toward the Palestinian cause," the statement said.

"While the U.N. passed clear resolutions numbered 242 and 338 calling for the Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip decades ago, our Palestinian brethren continue to be slaughtered at the hands of Israelis while the world turns the other check," it continued.

John Price writes for The New York Amsterdam News

Workfare

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being on hardship," she said.

Grundy emphasized that not all benefits expire even when time limits are reached. "Even though a family may have reached their time limit, the time limits apply only to cash assistance," she explained. "Medicaid and food stamps have no time limits."

There are various programs that help welfare clients find employment and otherwise become independent of the system. The federally funded "Welfare to Work Program" is a concept that arose early in the movement for reform.

Individual states oversee its administration, and here the state has contracted with

other agencies to help provide the program's services to Nevada recipients. In southern Nevada, one of those allied agencies is Nevada Business Services, Inc. (NBS), which wants, ultimately, to provide clients with independence- from the welfare system.

A board of state welfare officials certifies those who are eligible for the program and assigns them to one of several sites, such as the NBS office in Nucleus Plaza. There, a case manager determines their needs and how the agency might help.

"That is the focus of this program," said Daena Castaneda, NBS Case Manager at the agency's Nucleus

Plaza office. "I see this program as an assistance in providing training, guidance, job search, providing them with the means to make them self-sufficient." Many of her clients are about to lose benefits or may have already lost them.

"It's a great program," Castaneda said. "We provide training, assistance and other needs on a case-by-case basis. I'm just so happy we have this program because it's a benefit to the clients."

She believes the state has done its part to apprise welfare clients of the program. "I think they're doing an excellent job," she said. Somewhat sadly, however, she added that many "refuse the service

or aren't interested."

Other programs help clients achieve independence in other ways. A prime example is "The Family Self-Sufficiency Program" (FSS).

The FSS program was designed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) "to give families currently living on Section 8 Housing assistance the opportunity to learn how to live independently from public assistance," according to the Housing Authority of the City of Las Vegas (LVHA).

The LVHA announced last Thursday that an application for federal funding was approved recently, and that it had received \$120,000 from

HUD "to help low-income families become self-sufficient." Its Housing Programs Division indicated the money "will be utilized to support staff services for the program, which will pay for staff salaries."

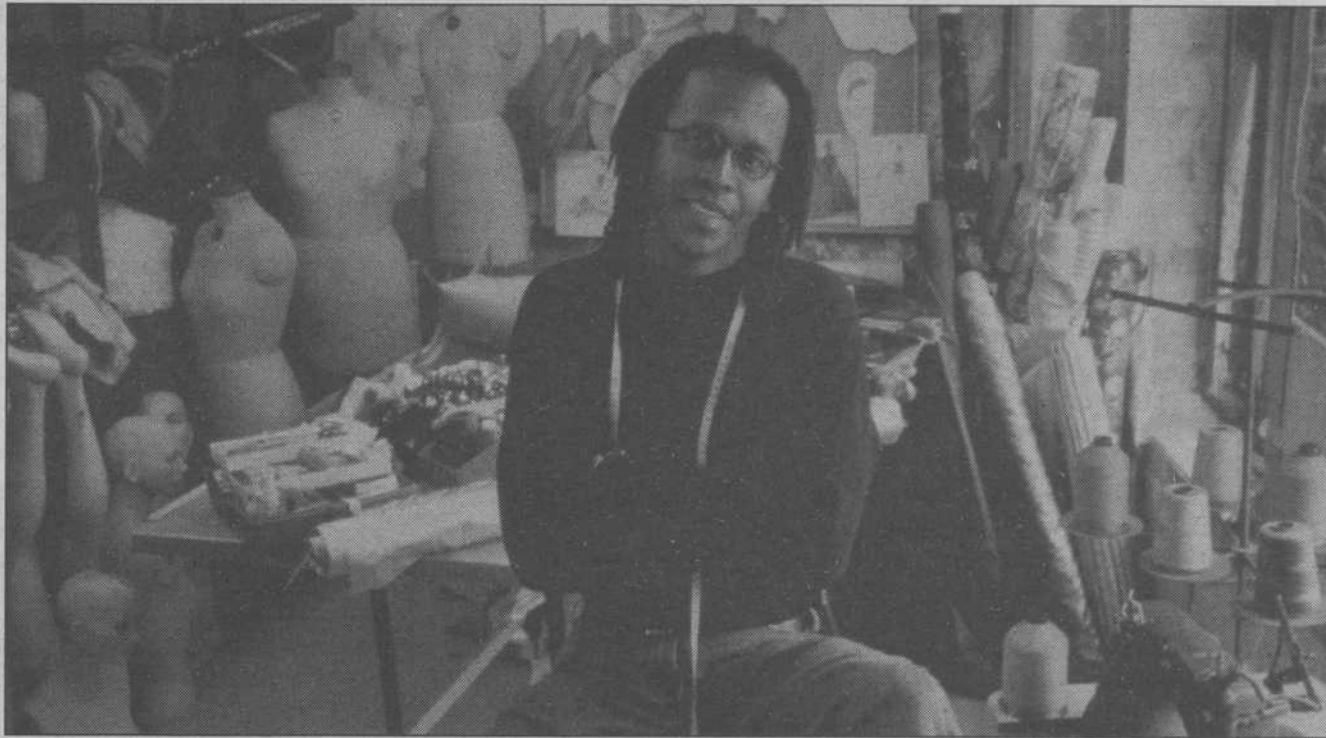
The FSS Program, it said, "teaches them to rely on themselves rather than public assistance." The program typically lasts five years, according to the agency, and covers such issues as case management, counseling, childcare, job training, educational programs-including GED, and preparation for home ownership.

"Families enrolled in the program," says LVHA, "learn advanced job skills,

typically earning them higher salaries."

Although higher income causes a Section 8 family's rent to rise, the FSS Program places the amount of the rent increase into a savings account for the family, which may then use the money saved towards purchasing a home, starting a business or any other goal it may have.

"Over 220 families are currently enrolled in the program," according to the LVHA, "and nearly 100 families are on a waiting list to enroll. In addition," it says, "the program has just celebrated the graduation of the program's first five families, who all became homeowners."



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