

OUR VIEW

LV must have more ethnic conventions

Now that the sisters of Delta Sigma Theta have come and gone we can begin to reflect on the best of what they brought with them.

In Our View, the tangibles and intangibles are many. The Deltas, with their ethos of public service, brought a universal sense of belonging and commitment to community.

This commitment as workers in the vineyard alone makes the Deltas coming here worthwhile. That's a tangible. The intangible is what they do for our witness. Intrinsicly we become what we see and hear and then understand. We are better that Deltas convened their annual national gathering here.

Las Vegas follows only a few cities in the United States as a tourist destination, but lags way behind in attracting multicultural conventions. Detroit is attracting its share of the multicultural convention business and Indianapolis has a plethora of events clustered around Indiana Black Expo and Summer Celebration.

Detroit hosted the National Urban League Convention in July and announced last week that the city will host the NAACP convention in 2008. Other groups Detroit has recently hosted for conventions include the National Baptist Convention, Alpha Kappa Alpha and the National Bar Association.

"We see nothing but continued growth with the multicultural market," said Carla Conner Penzabene, director of sale for the Detroit Visitors Convention Bureau. "We expanded our efforts last year and intend to expand them again this year to reach this important convention segment."

Demonstrating our support of diversity-based groups through program sponsorship has been a very successful strategy."

Detroit, says Penzabene, has strong working relationships with the American Society of Association Executives and Meeting Planners International.

Detroit might be considered phoenix-like in its return as a convention magnet, multicultural or otherwise. Detroit, not too long ago, was more known for being notorious than a magnet for multicultural conventions. As we see, things do change.

On the other hand, Indianapolis has been a growing attraction for national conventions for three decades. Indiana Black Expo Inc., which was founded in 1970 by a group of religious and civic leaders, made the city of Indianapolis credible as a showcase for the achievements of African-Americans in the areas of culture, art, history, and economics.

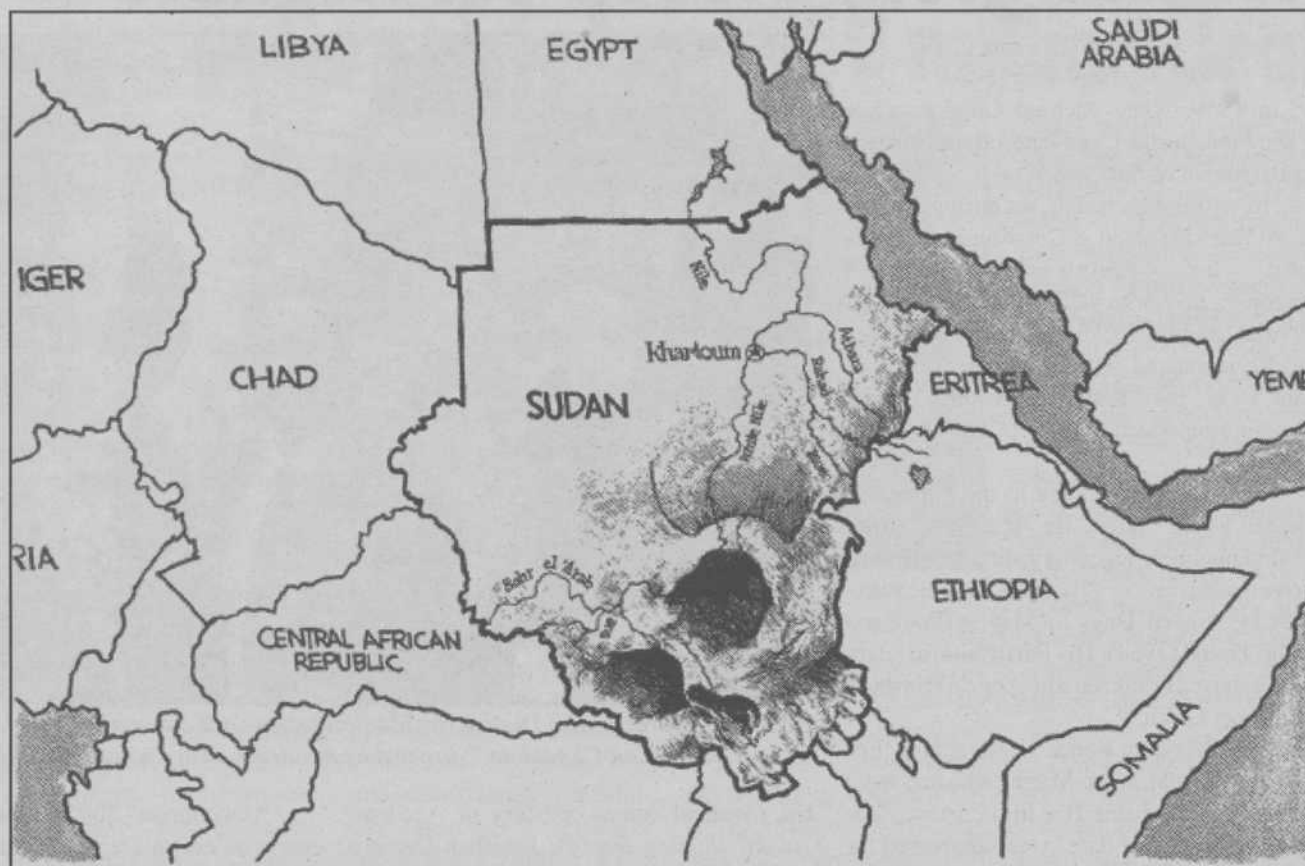
Indiana Black Expo created a comfort level and a public relations tool to market Indianapolis to the nation's multicultural convention markets.

In Las Vegas, we would like to see more of an effort made to attract multicultural conventions to this market. There are models out there to emulate. Detroit and Indianapolis provide a track record for the city of Las Vegas to follow.

Why more of this business for Las Vegas? Intrinsicly we become what we see and hear and then understand. We are better that Deltas convened their annual national gathering here and will be made even better with more conventions like theirs coming to Las Vegas.

What the MGM-Mirage did by bringing the Deltas here should only be the beginning.

POINT OF VIEW



9/11 Commission: Nation ill-prepared

By Louie Overstreet
Special to Sentinel-Voice

In case you have not found time to run out to purchase a copy of the voluminous report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States — commonly known as the 9/11 Commission—I will save you the trip by highlighting some of the findings in the 31-page executive summary.

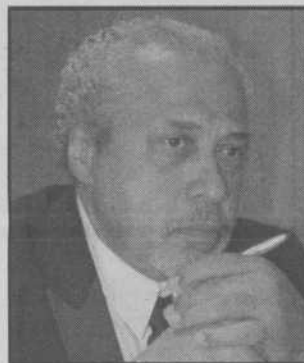
The report is proof positive that something can be boring and very important at the same time.

The Commission was comprised of 10 persons, including five Republicans and five Democrats. In a testimony to the nature of governmental bureaucracy, Commissioners were assisted by no less than 81 staff persons.

As has been generally reported, the findings did not single out individuals who should have been held accountable for the series of mishaps leading up to Sept. 11, 2001. Critics generally feel this was done in order to have the findings adopted by unanimous consent of the 10-person panel.

In the opening statement, a four-word sentence sums up the findings in damning fashion, stating "The nation was unprepared."

The report starts off by defining the enemy. It traces the roots of the present day al Qaeda to a group of young Muslims who volunteered to go to Afghanistan in the early 1980s to fight the then Soviet Union. Osama bin Laden was numbered among this group. After defeating the Soviets in



LOUIE OVERSTREET

the late 1980s, al Qaeda was formed to conduct jihad (holy struggle) in other parts of the world.

By the turn of the century, the group possessed the ability to do the following:

- Develop leaders who were able in evaluating, approving, and supervising the planning of major operations
- A personnel system to recruit, indoctrinate, and train young men
- The ability to move people great distances
- The ability to raise and move money necessary to finance attacks

Basically, the report is a far-ranging indictment of a number of federal agencies and the lack of cooperation existing between these agencies, thus, allowing the foregoing development of al Qaeda to go largely undetected and certainly unchallenged for the decade of the 1990s. This was despite the bombing of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in the summer of 1998 and attack on the USS Cole in the fall of 2000.

The circumstance of our not being prepared is evidenced on 9/11 the two agen-

cies charged with defending U.S. air space, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) had no protocols in place to deal with a situation where airplanes could be used as weapons.

The general findings of the report made note of some of the following:

- Lack of imagination of our national leaders in understanding the gravity of the threat of terrorism, as it was rarely discussed in the 2000 presidential campaign
- Terrorism was not a high-priority policy concern in either the Clinton or Bush administrations
- Capabilities or the lack thereof on the part of the CIA was cited as a contributing factor of 9/11
- Management, as practiced by governmental agencies, was not capable of meeting the challenges of the threats to our national security in the 21st Century.

Also, the FBI, Department of Defense and Department of State were cited as being inept in the face of modern-day challenges. The Bush Administration and Congress were subject to criticism in the report as well.

Based on hearings and findings, the Commission set forth a number of recommendations among which the following are included:

- Attack terrorists and their organizations
- Prevent the continued growth of Islamist terrorism
- Protect against and prepare for terrorist attacks
- Promote unity of effort by reorganizing our government by establishing a national counterterrorism center
- Appoint a national intelligence director
- Sharing information between federal agencies.

Next week, let's discuss the basis for some of the Commission's recommendations.



Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.
Published every Thursday by Griot Communications Group, Inc.
900 East Charleston Boulevard • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104
Telephone (702) 380-8100 • Fax (702) 380-8102
Email: lvsentinelvoice@earthlink.net

Contributing Writers:

Mary Bleier
Tanya Flanagan
Parker Philpot
Dianna Saffold
Lés Pierres Streater

Photographer:

Patrease Ashley

Ramon Savoy, Publisher, Editor-in-Chief

Kathi Overstreet, Associate Publisher

Albert C. Jones, Copy Editor

Don Snook, Graphics

Ed & Betty Brown, Founders

Member: National Newspaper Publishers Association
and West Coast Black Publishers Association