

Bond tags Bush—'When Clinton lied, nobody died'

By Mark Moss

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GREENSBORO, N.C. (NNPA) — The first applause that NAACP Chairman Julian Bond received during a recent speech at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro came when he compared the repercussions of presidential lying between the one currently occupying the White House and the president that preceded him.

"I'd rather have the (presidential) election turn on issues of war and peace, rather than issues of race and sex," Bond said.

"I thought we had 10 commandments. What happened to the ones about lying, stealing and killing. Bill Clinton may have lied about the war between the sexes; George W. Bush lied about the war. When Clinton lied, nobody died."

And the audience in the Aycock Auditorium clapped in agreement.

Bond, a long-time activist, was the keynote speaker at the school's Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration, which attracted more than 600 people. His speech covered a range of subjects, from his

recollections of being a student in one of King's classes at Morehouse College, to his grandfather who was born in slavery but went on to earn a college degree, to sarcastically referring to U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft as "J. Edgar Ashcroft" because of what Bond believes are the attorney general's civil liberty abuses since 9/11.

Bond said that discrimination is much more of an "elusive target today."

"No more do signs read White and colored," Bond said. "The law now requires the voter's booth, the schoolhouse door, to swing open for everyone. No longer are they closed to those whose skins are dark."

But despite an increase in the number of Black politicians and despite the ability to attend schools that used to "bar Black faces, in some important ways, non-White Americans face problems more difficult to attack now" than ever before.

The NAACP, he said, believes that old and new problems have their root in race and racial discrimination.

Without using the label, he came down hard on con-

servatives, and at one point said that "their idea of a pristine environment is a parking lot before the lines are painted in. Their idea of equal rights is the American flag and the swastika flying side-by-side."

"They've written a new constitution for Iraq, and they're trying to re-write the constitution here at home. They might as well give ours to them 'cause we're not using it here." The audience, a mix of Black and White, applauded him heartily.

The country's "economic imbalances not only mean difficult times for many, but they also undermine democratic values. The danger is that plutocracy will prevail over democracy, that the free market will rule over the free citizen," he said.

Bond blamed the current deficit on the "tax giveaways to the rich," and claimed that the point of the cuts was to "further enrich the already wealthy, to starve the government, making it unable to meet human needs, signing the death warrant for social programs for decades and decades yet to come."

Mark Moss writes for the Carolina Peacemaker.

Grief

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common than people would think and can transform ripples into emotional tidal waves.

Dr. Kenneth Thompson, director of the Institute for Public Health and Psychiatry at UPMC, said the dynamic within the Penn household sets the stage for what he calls traumatic grief, which can manifest itself in ways similar to post-traumatic stress disorder.

"Though it's difficult to say without speaking to her I would imagine the older sister is devastated," he said. "This was someone she cared about that has hurt her younger sister. How does this family come to grips with this extraordinary ambivalence?"

Thompson compared these love-hate feelings to those that might be experienced by someone who had been sexually molested by an otherwise caring and attentive parent when that parent dies.

He added that the weight of the other friends who have died violently over the years adds to the family's emotional burden. He suspects other families have similar stories.

"It's a heavy amount of trauma for any family to absorb," said Thompson. "And given there isn't a large African-American population here, when you start losing a lot of young men to violence, more people will know them. I'm sure families have lost multiple friends."

Erika Fearby Jones, director of the

school district's Gang-Free Schools Project, said beyond the emotions the sisters must be experiencing, there are families being torn apart because of split allegiances to different neighborhood gangs.

"Because you can have family members in different parts of town, you can have cousins in rival gangs, like in Manchester and Northview Heights" she said. "That tears a family apart because kids are forced to pick rival gangs."

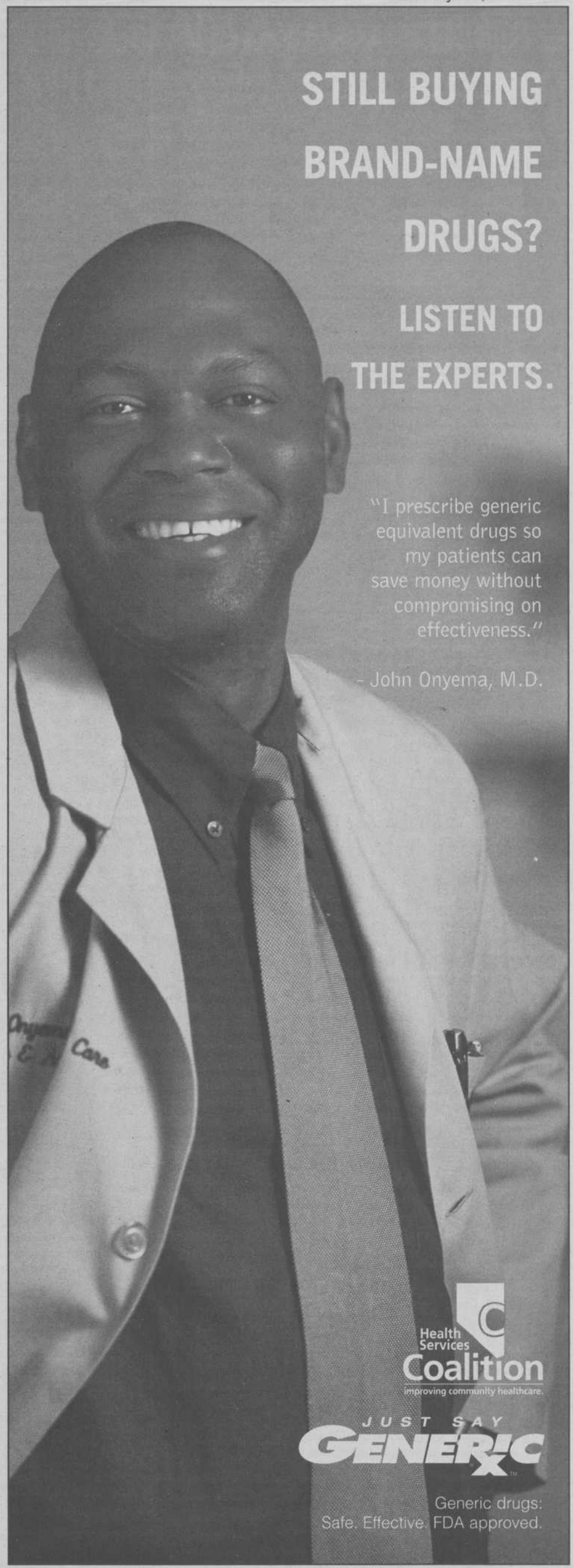
Project outreach worker Anthony "Tone" Walls said he doesn't know of any instances where someone has "taken out" his cousin because they were in rival gangs.

"Maybe for some other stuff," he said. "Every situation is different. Some families can handle it. Those sisters, though, I never heard of anything like that. That's unfortunate there. That's hard."

Mary Volkar, a therapist at the Center for Victims of Violent Crime, agreed with Thompson's traumatic grief analysis and said untreated, this kind of trauma can also manifest itself violently.

"And because with friends and family members it is often unnamed and unacknowledged, they are forgotten victims," she said. "They can't sleep, can't eat, have memory problems and exhibit outlandish anger. And where does it manifest, at work, in school? Unfortunately, this problem is more common than people believe—or want to believe."

Christian Morrow writes for the Pittsburgh Courier.



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