

President gets warm welcome at Black Expo

Many of those who applauded Bush's speech voiced skepticism over his sincerity

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) – The audience was cordial and the reception polite, but President Bush drew some skepticism Thursday for telling a predominantly Black audience that his administration was committed to leaving no American behind.

"The content of the speech was very good," said Ray Anderson, an operations manager at DaimlerChrysler Corp. in Indianapolis. "But I'm hesitant to say I've seen action that represents what the speech contained in it."

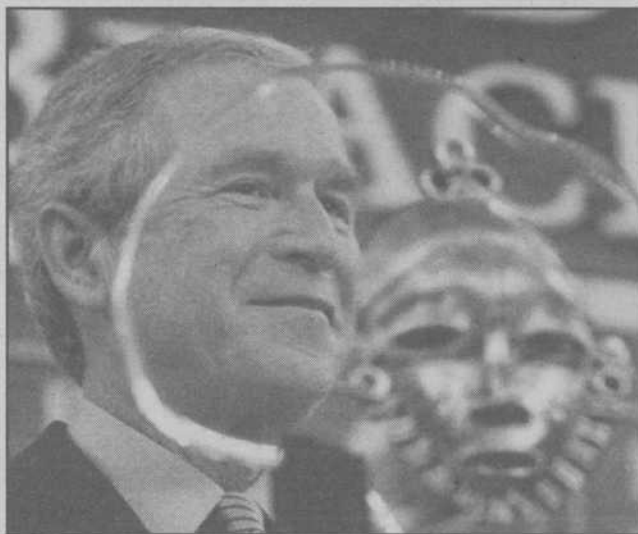
Bush spoke to about 3,000 people at an Indiana Black Expo luncheon at the RCA Dome, the first sitting president to attend the organization's Summer Celebration. He tailored much of his message to the Black community and the event it-

self, saying they shared many of his goals for expanding opportunities and prosperity.

"I appreciate the fact that you (Expo) provide scholarships, support programs that are transforming local communities, and as a result, you're lifting up thousands of citizens," Bush said.

For the fifth consecutive year, Bush declined an invitation to speak before a convention of the NAACP, which is meeting in Milwaukee last week. The White House cited scheduling conflicts, but the organization has been highly critical of the president.

Some Blacks in Indiana suggested that he was speaking at Expo because it promised to be a friendlier crowd, and indeed, the president received a warm reception



President Bush received the Black Expo's Lifetime Achievement award during his appearance at the Indiana Black Expo Summer Celebration in Indianapolis last week.

Thursday. Bush was greeted with a standing ovation, and the crowd applauded several times during his half-hour speech.

He touted efforts to grow

the economy and improve home and business ownership among all Americans, including Blacks. He also took credit for narrowing the gap in test scores between Black and White elementary school students, according to test results released Thursday by his Education Department. It was a message that resonated with some in the crowd.

"Improvement in education, health, employment, home ownership – those are

all things that Black Expo believes in – and the president looks like he did his homework and knew what to say. I think the audience appreciated him for that," said Charles Green, an administrator for Fort Wayne Community Schools.

Bush received the Expo's Lifetime Achievement award for supporting AIDS research, backing efforts to help offenders re-enter society after being released from prison and other issues affecting minorities.

Gov. Mitch Daniels, who served as Bush's first budget director, had encouraged the president to attend the luncheon. Daniels, his wife Cheri, and Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman greeted Bush at Indianapolis International Airport and rode with him downtown.

Daniels said he was pleased Bush spoke of No Child Left Behind, the education law the president signed in 2002 that requires frequent testing of students to chart their reading and math skills.

Bush said the law was

helping to close the achievement gap between White and Black students.

"He wanted to rally support for the principles of measurement and of making sure that we zoom in on minority populations, disabled populations and the ones who had been left behind before," Daniels said.

Bush started his speech by recognizing several dignitaries, including Rep. Julia Carson, a Democrat whose liberal policy stands and feisty, no-nonsense personality make her popular among many Blacks in her Indianapolis district. Bush said Carson flew to Indianapolis with him aboard Air Force One.

"Now, if you've never had a visit with Julia," the president said, pausing for the laughter, "she's got a lot of wisdom. And she's not afraid to speak her mind. She kind of reminds me of my mother."

About 50 protesters gathered outside the stadium for Bush's visit. One held a sign that said, "Black Expo sells out to corporate cronies."

Racist beating in New York has races tense once again

By Nayaba Arinde
Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK (NNPA) - On the Fourth of July, as some folks prepped their barbecue and others unfurled their flag, Reverend Al Sharpton organized a vigil at Jamaica Hospital for the 22-year-old man recently beaten by three Whites.

Unfortunately, for its residents, Howard Beach is a name synonymous with racial tension in New York City. So, when news broke on the morning of June 30 that Glenn Moore was battered with a baseball bat in the largely Italian neighborhood, it stirred up memories of the horrific 1986 racial attack against three young Black men that left one dead.

In the energetic throes of an election year, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and city leaders scrambled quickly to classify the beating as a "hate crime" that will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. At press time, 22-year-old Moore, a Queens resident, remained in Jamaica Hospital after suffering a fractured skull.

Queens Borough President Helen Marshall said that shortly after the June 29 assault at 3:00 a.m., she stood in the 106th Precinct, "with the mayor and law enforcement officials to condemn this crime and reiterate that bias crimes cannot be tolerated."

She said, "Queens is the world's most diverse borough, where our schoolchildren speak more than 100 languages."

Moore was in Howard Beach with two friends, when they were allegedly attacked by three White men yelling racist slurs. He was beaten with a metal baseball bat, allegedly wielded by Nicholas Minucci, 19, accompanied by two other White men. During the attack, the assailants reportedly took Moore's earring and sneakers. In the alleged assailants' car, police recovered a metal bat and sneakers. Although cops called it a "hate crime," police also claimed that Moore's friends told them that they were in the area looking to steal a car, but later decided against it. In the Black community, this claim was met with eye-rolling by some, disbelief from others, as well as "what-did-they-expect?"

remarks.

Mayor Bloomberg responded, "I don't even know if that's true," adding that there was not any evidence that the alleged assailants had knowledge of this.

"Even if they did, we do not allow vigilantism in this city," he said. This case was nothing "other than a racially motivated attack."

Betty Dopson, of the Committee to Eliminate Media Offensive To African People, was incredulous about the claim. "Where did it come from that they were out there to steal a car? Three Black men go to Howard Beach, the most racist area in the city, to steal a car? That's absurd. This is just a media assassination of their reputations. Since when do you try and make excuses for this type of behavior?" she contended.

Far from canvassing the neighborhood looking for a car to pilfer, Moore's family said that not only had he lived in that very neighborhood, but he now lives 11 blocks from where he was beaten and that he was returning from visiting his baby daughter. His father, who reportedly owns a car dealership, said that his son had baby clothes in a bag and no "tools to steal a car."

Retired detective Mark Claxton, of 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement, also questioned the car theft report, saying, "We don't know if this media report is true or not." However, he added, if it is true, "Everyone engaged in criminality should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. But you cannot be arrested for criminal thought."

Police Commissioner Ray Kelly reported that Minucci admitted that he took part in the attack. He was arraigned June 30, charged with two counts of assault with a hate crime tag, robbery and criminal possession of a weapon. Detectives also arrested Anthony Ench, 21, who allegedly used Minucci's car to corner Moore, kicked and cursed at him, and stole his Air Jordan sneakers. His lawyer maintains that all his client did was watch. However, Queens D.A. Richard Brown's office charged him with assault and robbery as

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