

Farrakhan speaks out on Katrina relief

By Cash Michaels

Special to Sentinel-Voice
WILMINGTON, N.C.

(NNPA) - The controversial leader of the Nation of Islam has issued a warning to government officials and relief agencies that they will not prevail in blocking the NOI from lending assistance to those being sheltered in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

"There is red tape, but I'm going to serve notice on these places that you're not going to tell us that you're going to keep our people," Minister Louis Farrakhan defiantly told reporters at Union Baptist Church in Durham.

"We're coming to get our people, whether you want to give them to us or not. We'll

"We're not slaves, this is not a plantation. You're holding them. We appreciate you're feeding them, clothing them, but don't tell us that we can't take them into decent, clean homes, and give them a start. We will not hear that."

— Louis Farrakhan
Leader of the Nation of Islam

take them." The Chicago-based Muslim leader was reacting to how the NOI's assistance was rebuffed in Phoenix, Ariz., where 2,000 Katrina evacuees were sent after being airlifted from a devastated New Orleans.

"We're tired of this kind of behavior," said Farrakhan, his voice rising. "We're not slaves, this is not a plantation. You're holding them. We appreciate you're feeding them,

clothing them, but don't tell us that we can't take them into decent, clean homes, and give them a start. We will not hear that."

Farrakhan added that "I won't condemn" the relief effort from various governmental and charitable agencies "because God knows our people need everything that they can get."

But he cautioned that just as racism is clearly evident

at all levels of society and in every institution, it is also in the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and many of the charities that are assisting Katrina survivors.

Farrakhan said that with the American people generously contributing almost \$800 million to help the hurricane relief effort, an oversight committee must be established in order to make sure that that is, indeed, where the money is going.

There was controversy after the 9/11 terrorist attacks when the Red Cross grudgingly admitted that much of the donations it collected to aid the families of the victims, was actually going into
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Nation's crime rate now at 30-year low

WASHINGTON (AP) - The nation's crime rate was unchanged last year, holding at the lowest levels since the government began surveying crime victims in 1973, the Justice Department reported Sunday.

Since 1993, violent crime as measured by victim surveys has fallen by 57 percent and property crime by 50 percent.

That has included a 9 percent drop in violent crime from 2001-2002 to 2003-2004.

The 2004 violent crime rate — assault, sexual assault and armed robbery — was 21.4 victims for every 1,000 people age 12 and older.

That amounts to about one violent crime victim for every 47 U.S. residents.

By comparison, there were 22.6 violent crime victims per 1,000 people in 2003.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics said the difference between the rates in 2003 and 2004 was statistically insignificant.

Murder is not counted because the bureau's study is based on statements by crime victims.

In a separate report based on preliminary police data, the FBI found a 3.6 percent drop between 2003 and 2004 — from 16,500 to 15,910. Chicago was largely responsible for the decrease.

The survey put the rate for property crimes of burglary, theft and motor vehicle theft in 2004 at 161 for every 1,000 people, compared with 163 the year before.

Many explanations have been advanced for decline in violent crime, including the record prison population of more than 2 million people, the addition of 100,000 police officers since the mid-1990s and even a deterrent effect that terrorism might have had on street crime.

"Success has 1,000 fathers," said Mark A.R. Kleiman, an expert on crime control policy who teaches at UCLA.

Kleiman said the victim survey probably does not take sufficient account of a growing problem with gang violence that has been widely reported across the country.

The leveling off of the crime rate also should be viewed as disappointing, he said.

"My sense is that complacency is not justified. This rate means we're down to about twice the level of crime when I was growing up in the 1950s," he said.

The Justice Policy Institute, which advocates alternatives to incarceration, said the report offered good news and further reason to "begin investing in community-based policing and local organizations that succeed in increasing public safety."

The National Crime Victimization Survey is based on annual interviews by Census Bureau personnel with about 150,000 people at least 12 years old.

The FBI does a separate crime study based on reports
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White lawmaker likens Black peers, KKK

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - A White Tennessee lawmaker lamenting his exclusion from the state's Black Legislative Caucus claimed Tuesday the group was less accommodating than even the Ku Klux Klan.

"My understanding is that the KKK doesn't even ban members by race," said Rep. Stacey Campfield, adding that the KKK "has less racist bylaws" than the Black lawmakers' group.

The freshman Republican from Knoxville was rebuffed

earlier this year when he asked for the Black Caucus' bylaws and inquired about joining. There are 18 Black state lawmakers in Tennessee.

Caucus chairman Rep. Johnny Shaw, a Democrat, dismissed Campfield's request and called him a "strange guy" who was simply interested in stirring up trouble.

"He is using this as a joke. This is an insult coming from him," said caucus member Rep. Larry Miller, also a

Democrat. "Why he chose to focus on the Black Caucus, I have no idea other than he is crazy and a racist."

The 37-year-old Campfield defended himself Saturday in a message on his Web journal, or blog, under the heading "I too dream."

The long excerpts from the Rev. Martin Luther King's famous 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech infuriated some readers. It prompted Campfield to ban reader comments after some of the angry postings included

death threats. Experts on race and hate groups said Campfield hit a nerve when he used King's words to take on a Black institution. It's the same tactic White separatists often use, said Mark Potok, director of the Intelligence Project at the Southern Poverty Law Center.

"Very typically these days we see White supremacists, hate groups, trying to use the words of King and other civil rights leaders to try to advance their agendas," Potok said.

Daniels resigns as N.Y. secretary of state

By Talise D. Moorer

Special to Sentinel-Voice
NEW YORK (NNPA) -

Freeing himself of potential restrictions to his own political aspirations should he decide to run for governor of the State of New York, Secretary of State Randy A. Daniels, a key advisor to Governor George Pataki, has announced that he's resigning from the post.

Daniels had postponed this decision until after his task of coordinating the state's response to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts was completed.

In his letter to Pataki, Daniels, the highest-ranking African-American in state government, said that he considered it an honor and privilege to have served in the governor's cabinet.

In the letter, Daniels specifically referenced the success of comprehensive security guard audits, and helping to oversee the provision of equipment and training to first responders to deal with weapons of mass destruction

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— Robert Ryan, senior advisor to the exploratory committee

following the Sept 11th attacks.

With Pataki announcing earlier this year that he will not run for re-election, some have suspected that Daniels will run.

He is an attractive candidate to many, particularly because he is African-American. H. Carl McCall, the former state comptroller, was the last African-American to run for office. He was solidly defeated by Pataki.

Daniels has assembled an exploratory committee to assess a likely run for office and is expected to make a formal announcement after the mayoral election in November, according to Robert Ryan, senior advisor to the exploratory committee.

Ryan said that Daniels will spend the month of October traveling around the state to meet with several civic and political leaders and then make his final determination whether to run at the appointed time.

"By stepping down as secretary of state, Randy Daniels comes one step closer to deciding whether he will run for governor," said Ryan.

"He's lived for a quarter of a century in Harlem and was instrumental in the rebuilding of the village. Daniels understands the problems and concerns of the community and would be a great advocate for them in Albany."

If he decides to run, Daniels would be the first

African-American to run on the Republican line for such a statewide office. New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, a Democrat, has already announced that he will run in next year's race.

"Randy Daniels has been a trusted advisor willing to take on all the challenges and assignments that promote economic development, protect our environment, and improve public safety in New York," said Pataki, who is speculated to be interested in running for president in 2008.

"While he [Daniels] is moving on from his position as secretary of state, I am pleased he will continue to serve as vice chairman of the SUNY Board of Trustees, and am confident he will continue to play a productive role in building stronger communities and a stronger Empire State," said Pataki. "On behalf of all New Yorkers, I thank him for his leadership and service."

Talise D. Moorer writes for the Amsterdam News.

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