

# Detroit Black Press lambasted

By Bankole Thompson  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

DETROIT (NNPA) - A political advertisement that ran in Detroit's two Black newspapers, The *Michigan Chronicle* and The *Michigan Citizen*, has triggered calls for boycott of those newspapers.

The ad, which accused the media of unfair treatment against incumbent Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and favoring his opponent Freman Hendrix, listed four media personalities, including Mildred Gaddis of 1200 AM WCHB as members of a "media lynch mob" against Kilpatrick.

Bishop Charles Ellis, an African-American who pastors Greater Grace Temple on Seven Mile Rd., supported Hendrix. He called in to Gaddis' show, "Inside Detroit," and said the newspaper should be boycotted for running the ad, according to Keith Owens of The *Michigan Chronicle*.

Gaddis was also a strong backer of Hendrix, the loser of the mayoral race, and attacked on-air anyone who challenged her position. Gaddis, who lives in Southfield, encouraged Detroiters to leave the city if Kilpatrick was elected. Kilpatrick was re-elected

with 53 percent of the vote.

"We owe a debt of gratitude, love and appreciation to the Black Press and it is my duty to fight against tyranny, censorship, fascism and economic subjugation against the Black media," said Minister Malik Shabazz, head of the New Black Panther Nation/New Marcus Garvey Movement.

Upset with the boycott calls, Shabazz led a two-day protest against the Radio One station, which airs the Gaddis show. Cathy Hughes, one of the few African-American media moguls in the country, owns Radio One. The company is headquartered in Baltimore, Md.

"For Gaddis to have her listeners call for the boycott of two of our great Black institutions is insane, and Cathy Hughes should not tolerate this," Shabazz said. "A host on a show can make an endorsement, but she cannot attack other people who disagree with her."

Gaddis called the staff of The *Michigan Citizen* "shallow and uninformed," after the paper led an investigation into Hendrix's questionable financial dealings while he was deputy mayor under Dennis Archer. Last month, "The Michigan Citizen Speaks," produced by this

newspaper's staff, was taken off the air by WCHB.

"It shows a lack of history for one Black institution to call for the destruction of another Black institution," Shabazz said. "We will go after their sponsors if they go after these papers."

With placards reading, "Mildred got to go, Slavery is no more," members of the Black Panther Nation said their protest will continue until the station management takes a position on the issue.

"I think it is outrageous to make the boycott call based on some political decision," said Shaakir Wahab, one of the protesters.

Wahab brought his two young children to the protest march. He said he would stand against any attempt to marginalize institutions that are serving the community and giving people a different voice other than mainstream.

Bishop Ellis, whose church was site of Rosa Parks' funeral, did not return calls for comments for this story.

Shabazz said he is shocked to learn that Ellis also called for a boycott.

"It shows that he has forgotten the legacy of his father. He could not sit in a \$50 million church had it not been for the work of the

Black media," Shabazz said. "Calling on Black people to boycott papers that speak truth to power and him allowing [Rosa] Parks' funeral to be at his church is a sham."

Cliff Russell, host of the American Black Journal on WTWS [Channel 56-PBS affiliate], the longest running public affairs show in America, called the boycott calls "outrageous."

Professor Howard Starks of Wayne State University's department of Africana Studies said that while the lynching ad might raise a lot of questions about whether Blacks at this time should be equating their struggle to times past, boycotting Black papers is a wrong strategy.

"Detroit is over 80 percent African-American in population. Who would a boycott really hurt? The people who will be affected by this are African-Americans," Starks said.

"These papers are the only true voices we have in our community. In a Black city we should be talking about how to stop our papers from struggling financially."

Bankole Thompson writes for The *Michigan Citizen*.

# Churches pressed on organ donation

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) - Worshippers at Black churches in 20 states will be urged this weekend to consider organ donation.

The program, Linkages to Life, is aimed at raising awareness about organ donation among Blacks, who suffer higher rates of diseases that damage the liver and kidneys.

The fourth annual effort will take place over the weekend at nearly 60 churches. Instead of just asking churchgoers to sign organ donor cards, as in the past, speakers from the pulpit will urge audience members to go home and talk about the issue in detail with family, said Victoria Dent, national chairwoman for Linkages.

Blacks comprise 18 percent of U.S. organ recipients, while Whites comprise 63 percent, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing.

Only 12 percent of organ donors are Black, according to Linkages.

Minorities are three times more likely than Whites to have kidney failure and account for over half of the 56,500 Americans waiting for kidney transplants. But they are less likely than Whites to find a good genetic match and spend more time on the waiting list.

Nearly 25 percent of those who died waiting for an organ transplant last year were Black.

Patient Richard Adams, a longtime deacon at Delaware Valley Baptist Church in Willingboro, received a kidney transplant in 2004 after his kidney failed due to damage from high blood pressure and diabetes.

He plans to describe his plight at a church service Saturday.

"I just want to encourage them," Adams said Wednesday. "Coming from a Black environment, we don't like to give up our organs."

# Group: Diddy backed Dems

WASHINGTON (AP) - A conservative organization has filed a complaint against Sean "Diddy" Combs, contending the hip-hop mogul violated election law in his 2004 "Vote or Die" campaign by promoting Democrat John Kerry and opposing President Bush.

The National Legal and Policy Center, which filed the complaint, said Tuesday that the Federal Election Commission informed the group in a letter that it would review the complaint.

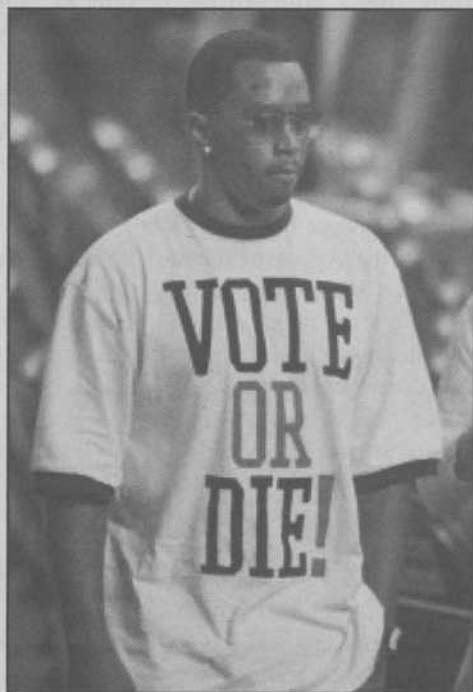
Ian Stirton, a spokesman for the FEC, said the matter would remain confidential until resolved. Stirton said the FEC receives numerous complaints and it would be up to the commission to decide whether to proceed with an investigation or not.

Combs, through his organization, Citizen Change, traveled to several cities last year urging people to sign up and vote. He declined to endorse either candidate during his push to register new voters.

Aboard his private jet, dubbed Air Force Change, he told The Associated Press at the time that "Kerry isn't smart enough" and should be spending more time in the inner city to "see how a young kid is going to school."

As for the president, he said: "You don't see Bush taking the time to go to BET or MTV. Nobody was talking to this community. I deal with them every day."

In its complaint, the National Legal and Policy Center cited "Vote or Die" rallies sponsored by Citizen Change in which actor



Rap mogul, designer, activist P. Diddy.

Leonardo DiCaprio urged the crowd to back Kerry. The conservative group said public record backs its claim that Combs and Citizen Change undertook a campaign to defeat Bush and elect the Democrat.

"We feel these are clear-cut violations," said Peter Flaherty, president of the center.

Alexis McGill, executive director of Citizen Change, said the organization is extremely proud of what it accomplished and hoped that other organizations would embrace its efforts to bring in new voters.

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