

Black mayors agitated about progress of relief

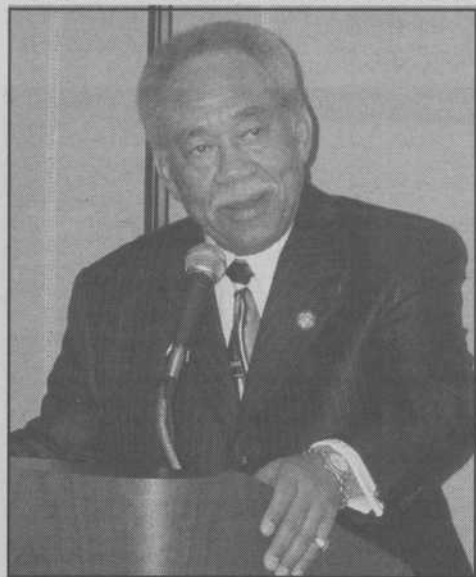
By Lés Pierres Streater
Sentinel-Voice

Forty-five members of the National Conference of Black Mayors embarked on a weekend of planning and strategizing about the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that devastated the Gulf Coast and Southwest Regions of the United States in the past three months. On Dec 2, a greeting reception for the 45 Black mayors was held at the Flamingo Hotel and Casino and was spearheaded by State Senator Steven Horsford, Las Vegas City Councilman Lawrence Weekly, and County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson-Gates.

The national conference consists of 542 Black Mayors from 27 states, representing constituent populations ranging from less than 300 to over 2 million people per city. The NCBM utilizes meetings and conferences to bring its membership into direct communications with public agencies, firms and individuals offering beneficial services, products and programs for training about municipal management and community development.

Addressing the audience was Mayor Roosevelt F. Dorn, from Inglewood, Calif., organization president.

Dorn stated: "We're very pleased that the organization is being hosted by the Senator [Horsford], the Councilman [Weekly], and the Commissioner [Atkinson-Gates] along with Harrah's here in Las Vegas, all because



Sentinel-Voice photo by Lés Pierres Streater

Mayor Roosevelt Dorn of Inglewood, Calif., addresses his constituents of the National Conference of Black Mayors during a recent planning and strategy retreat in Las Vegas.

Mumia obtains case review

By Herb Boyd
Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK (NNPA) - It was good news for Mumia Abu-Jamal. An order was issued recently from the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit that it will review critical issues pertaining to Mumia's case.

The three claims being considered are whether Mumia, who was convicted in 1982 after he was charged with the murder of a police officer in Philadelphia, was denied his constitutional rights by the prosecution's

trial summation, as well as by peremptory challenges during his trial, and whether he was denied due process during the post-conviction proceedings as a result of alleged judicial bias.

These claims, according to Mumia's attorney Robert Bryan, who has been defending him for the last two years, "are of enormous constitutional significance and go to the very essence of Mumia's right to a fair trial, due process of law, and equal protection of the law under the Fifth, Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S.

our Executive Director Vanessa Williams is a product of Las Vegas, and we all are very proud of her. We are doing the things to shake the trees in Washington, making this organization a power that needs to be recognized in the United States. Serving 30 million people, we have a right to be heard by others. All the mayors are working together to do those things that are necessary to have African-Americans receive the things that we deserve in this country."

Elaborating on the organization's work to address issues affecting the Black community, Dorn said, "We must create jobs and hope for our young people so that they see a future for themselves. That is our number one objective for this organization."

Marilyn Murrell, Mayor of Arcadia, Okla., for the past 18 years, and President Emeritus of the NCBM, gave further insight to the gathering of the mayors.

Murrell said: "This is an exciting organization because we have open membership regardless of the size of the city. My city has 275 residents; however, I have issues facing me as those other mayors with populations of thousands and hundred of thousands of citizens. We are able to share resources with one another and work to improve the condition for the people we represent."

The conference will address the disparities that we face from the lack of adequate support that we have been given by the federal government and what we need to do to assist our evacuees who have left our regions along with getting more technical assistance to rebuild our cities and communities."

The organization realizes that more efforts must be undertaken by the mayors to build the infrastructure of the various cities represented by Black mayors along with increasing the revenue base and building up economic development.

The group is concerned that those displaced evacuees across the country receive adequate housing, jobs, and educational resources for the children of displaced families, along with rebuilding the cities, many of the families were forced to flee from due to the devastating hurricanes.

These disparities in the delivery of services and support by the federal government to the Gulf and Southwest Regions of the United States will not go unchallenged, according to the mayors. They insist that the federal government be held accountable for its actions or lack thereof.

Constitution."

The opening briefs are due to be filed by January 17, 2006.

In a widely disseminated letter, Bryan added that racism played a critical role in Mumia's conviction. "The record establishes beyond question that racism is a major thread that has run through this case since Mumia's 1981 arrest, and continues to today," he wrote.

"Another claim relates to the guilt phase," wrote Bryan, who is based in San

(See Mumia, Page 5)

Black caucus to oppose judge Alito confirmation

WASHINGTON (AP) - While they don't have a vote, the House's Black members — all Democrats — don't want to see Samuel Alito confirmed as retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's replacement on the Supreme Court. The one Black member of Congress who does have a vote, Democratic Sen. Barack Obama of



Illinois, hasn't made up his mind about the New Jersey jurist picked by President Bush for the job.

The Congressional Black Caucus, which includes 42 House members as well as Obama, will announce Thursday its opposition to Alito. It also opposed the nomi-

nation of now-Chief Justice John Roberts, but waited until his confirmation hearings to announce that position. Alito's hearing begins Jan. 9.

President Bush nominated the 55-year-old federal appeals court judge on Oct. 31. If confirmed by the Republican-controlled Senate, Alito would succeed retiring Justice Sandra

Day O'Connor. She has often cast the swing vote on abortion, the death penalty, affirmative action and other contentious issues.

"The members of the CBC are concerned about Judge Alito's opinions, many

(See CBC, Page 12)

Detroit mayor recount starts

DETROIT (AP) - Workers began a hand recount Thursday of ballots from last month's mayoral election, a week after a panel approved the request by Freman Hendrix, who lost to incumbent Kwame Kilpatrick in the original tally.

Hendrix, a former deputy mayor, asked for a recount of the entire city's votes last month, saying he suspected fraud. Hendrix, 55, had been ahead of Kilpatrick in polls and came in first in the August primary, but then took 47 percent of the vote to the incumbent's 53 percent in

November. Kilpatrick, 35, had argued against the recount, saying it would cost the cash-strapped city \$500,000 or more. Alyce Smith, chairwoman of the Wayne County Board of Canvassers, has said that it would cost \$200,000 to \$250,000. The board unanimously approved the recount request last week.

By law, officials must complete the recount in 30 days. The official results have Hendrix losing by nearly 15,000 votes.

The Justice Department is investigating allegations that

some votes in the Detroit election were cast in the names of dead people and that City Clerk Jackie Currie improperly helped incapacitated people vote by absentee ballot. She has denied wrongdoing.

Three other races are also getting hand recounts: a school board race, a city council race, and Currie's city clerk race, which she lost.

The counting is expected to go on seven days a week, though Smith said a break would be taken for Christmas Eve and Christmas.

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