

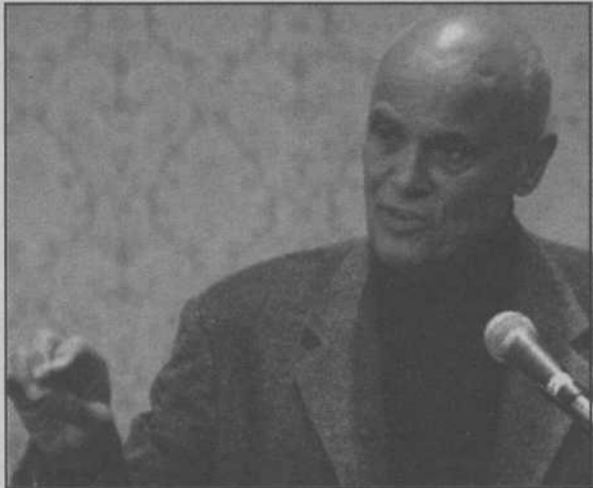
# LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



Entertainer and human rights activist Harry Belafonte speaks during a press conference at the Arts Presenters Members Conference in New York on Saturday.

## Belafonte: Bush biggest terrorist

By Nayaba Arinde  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK (NNPA) — "I don't know if President Bush is the greatest terrorist, I've not met them all, but he's damn sure in the running," as mild- and-gentle-as-you-want-to-be, civil rights activist and beloved performer Harry Belafonte addressed the audience at the Canaan Baptist Church annual King Day celebration.

Introduced by Rev. Al Sharpton, he was a surprise guest speaker at an event attended by ambitious politicians like Democratic New York Senators Hillary Clinton and Chuck Schumer, and higher-office hopefuls like Jeanine Pirro, Thomas Suozzi, Mark Green and Eliot Spitzer.

From Katrina to the occupation of Iraq to the growing prison industrial complex, the 78-year-old former Calypsonian told an audience in awe that "terror is unleashed. The Gestapo is here." Repeating a charge he first made at the beginning of this month in Caracas, Venezuela, when he and Danny Glover and Professor Cornel West met with President Hugo Chávez, with a quiet force Belafonte once again labeled George Walker Bush, the president of the United States, one of the greatest terrorists the world has ever seen.

Far from being stunned, the audience of more than 3,000 hung on his every word and applauded him like he had delivered a grand and honest state address. Politicians, activists, Katrina evacuees, the general public and members of the press stood for the man as he retold stories of his encounters with Dr. King; his last conversation when he asked him why he seemed so out-of-sorts; the wisdom he imparted to the popular entertainer; and the immense national, global and international impact of his life and death.

But it was that when he delivered his no-holds-barred barrage against Bush that Belafonte electrified an audience that had to sit through Sen. Hillary Clinton's obsequious comment: "When you look at the way the House of Representatives has been run, it has been run like a plantation — and you know what I am talking about."

Addressing everyone, but noting the gathering of Gulf Coast evacuees in particular, Belafonte told of how in the wake of the government's abandonment, "a third world country" had made offers of help, only to be refused by the U.S. government. Nonetheless, Venezuela

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## Trail marks city's history

By Tasha Pope  
Sentinel-Voice

Despite a fierce, wintry, windstorm, the unveiling of a marker plaque for the Pioneer Trail took place last Thursday on the grounds outside KCEP Power 88 FM radio station.

The station and its offices are located at the former site of Westside School, the oldest remaining school house in the city. The historic school property, located off "D" Street at 330 W. Washington Avenue, is one of 16 stops on the trail.

The newly completed trail is now open. It stretches 6-miles through parts of the Historic Westside neighborhoods and extends from Las Vegas Springs Preserve, near Valley View Boulevard by the freeway, to the Las Vegas Mormon Fort on Las Vegas Blvd North with marker plaques at each stop along the trail.

Every plaque has the same uniform pedestal design with graphics and text describing the history at each site.

The chief developer, Sam Wright, who was the principal planner for the Regional Transportation Commission



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Dignitaries gather to unveil Pioneer Trail, a six-mile route highlighting historic Las Vegas. L to R: Las Vegas City Councilman Lawrence Weekly, Regional Transportation Commission planner Sam Wright, Kim Russell of the city of Las Vegas Arts Commission, City Councilman Larry Brown and a representative from the Bureau of Land Management.

prior to his recent retirement, was involved from the very beginning of this project.

"My counterpart and I were having a discussion about trails in the area. She mentioned the fact that there wasn't a trail through this part of Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates' community. So, I took on the responsibility of finding a trail," Wright said.

Wright said while he was brainstorming, "I came up with the idea of doing an his-

torical trail," Wright explained.

The cost of about \$365,000 to place markers and signage at each stop was made possible by Bureau of Land Management funds.

Councilman Lawrence Weekly, who attended the ceremony, feels historical paths, such as the Pioneer Trails, are very necessary.

"When you look at the outstanding contributions African-Americans have made throughout the city of Las

Vegas and throughout the state of Nevada, this is vitally important [to have the Pioneer Trails], because today many of our children don't realize [the important history]," Weekly said.

The Pioneer Trail is, in part, a celebration of West Las Vegas, which has been historically the city's oldest and largest African-American community, and the early pioneers who settled there, hence its name.

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## NAACP's Gordon: Seek societal change

By Asmeret Asghedom  
Sentinel-Voice

"...You know, it doesn't make much sense.

There ought to be a law against anyone who takes offense at a day in your celebration..."

NAACP President and C.E.O. Bruce Gordon opened his speech by reading the lyrics to Stevie Wonder's tribute "Happy Birthday" honoring Martin Luther King Jr.

"Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you!" Gordon sang in the rhythmic pattern of Wonder's reggae style version. Gordon told the audience that he had planned to sing that first verse as well, but was intimidated after he heard the talented student vocalists who had performed

earlier in the event.

Gordon, who was the main speaker, along with representatives of corporate sponsor MGM-Mirage, elected officials and performers gathered for a celebration last Thursday inside the Moyer Student Union Ballroom on the campus at University Nevada, Las Vegas, honoring King, one of the most prominent figures in the Civil Rights Movement.

UNLV President Carol Harter and several departments on campus organized the second annual event.

Gordon, 59, explained how King's birthday became a holiday. In the early 1980s, his widow, Coretta Scott King, and Wonder staged two sit-ins in Washington, D.C. Gordon participated in the

protests and remembered those two days as being "cold, dreary and snowy." Nevertheless, the protest was a success and a bill was passed declaring King's Birthday as a national holiday.

Harter spoke of the importance of bringing diverse events to a university campus.

"The whole community is committed to honor [Dr. Martin Luther] King and his contributions to America. Everything that he represented — peace, togetherness and nonviolence — is what the university is also for," Harter said.

Gordon advised students to evaluate their purpose at a university: "If you're just here to get a job, you're

wrong."

He said students should go to college to learn, ask questions, challenge answers and engage in discussions. "Seek social change," Gordon told students.

After retiring from his job as president of the Retail Markets Group for Verizon Communications, Gordon was appointed head of the NAACP in August last year.

"I think that I have something to bring to the mission. I still have the energy," said Gordon, who is among the oldest persons ever to be nominated for NAACP president. He said he looks forward to devoting the next part of his life to the struggle that was heavily active during 1960's Civil Rights Era.

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