

Haiti's future lies in people

By Maxine Williams Webb
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - With 80 percent of its population living in abject poverty, Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. About half of the residents are illiterate and two-thirds of the labor force is without formal jobs. But Haiti is rich in history. Led by Toussaint L'Overture, nearly a half million slaves revolted against French colonists in 1804 and became the first Black Republic to declare its independence.

Now, more than 200 years later, there is a connection between Africans who were taken from the Motherland to Haiti and those who continued on the trip north on slave ships, settling into what is now the United States.

Starting this week, Ron Daniels, a New York-based human rights activist with the Haiti Support Project, plans to lead a delegation of African-Americans to Haiti on a five-day mission aimed at encouraging Black investment in Haiti and promoting

tourism.

Daniels planned a similar trip in 2004 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of independence. But, because of political turmoil, Daniels did not complete his mission.

"Now that there is a democratically elected government in Haiti, we fully expect that conditions will be conducive for the project to move forward to honor the pledges made during the 'Cruising Into History' pilgrimage. We will complete the journey we started in 2004 and officially launch the Model City Initiative at that time," he explained.

The plan is to establish a five-year project working with the Local Development Committee of Milot, which will be the "accountability partners" connecting the group with the pilot project. The key will be to draw potential investors and supporters, like the ones on this mission.

"We want engineers to come. We want people who are doctors to come, dentists, sanitation people who know

how to do different things to come and do brigades in this place," Daniels says. "We believe that in five years you can see a measurable, quantifiable difference. That's why we say a model city."

There's no question that Haiti, a country slightly smaller than Maryland, with a population more than 8 million, needs plenty of help. While political leaders come and go, the problems remain constant. And that's what Daniels wants to address.

This trip will help to bridge some of the gaps left open from the past governments and dictators who have kept Haitians severely oppressed — denying them basic civil and human rights and leaving them to flee the country as the only refuge for

their survival.

Because Aristide was ousted, with the backing of the U.S., some supporters of Haiti feel that groups such as the one being lead by Daniels shouldn't be doing anything until Aristide is allowed to resume his role as head of the government.

Others, however, say that now that Haiti has a democratically elected president, Rene Preval, who won with 51 percent of the vote, international efforts to help the tiny nation should be increased.

Daniels says he understands the misgivings around Aristide's forced exit, but he must look to the future. Daniels stated, "It will be a Caribbean power once it gets on its feet."

Bush: U.N. must help Darfur now

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Bush said Monday the United Nations should send a peacekeeping force to the troubled Darfur region of Sudan as soon as possible without further delay.

"The United Nations can play an important role in helping us achieve our objective, which is to end human suffering and deprivation," Bush said as he dispatched special envoy Andrew Natsios to the region. "In my view, the United Nations should not wait any longer..."

The Sudanese government has thus far resisted mounting international pressure to accept a U.N. peacekeeping force in Darfur. Bush contends the U.N. should deploy such a force anyway. Natsios said he had been going to Sudan for 17 years and "I know leaders in all regions of the country and I'm going to use those contacts and that history to move this process along."

"I think what our objective is, is not just to have a temporary fix for two months, but to try to deal with the root causes of this so we don't have another fourth war in five years, should we end this one successfully," Natsios said in an Oval Office session with Bush and reporters.

Unit

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be a lodge for long."

A separate Masonic organization, the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, is composed almost exclusively of Blacks and has chapters all over the country, including Alabama.

A poll published Sept. 10 showed Riley, who is seeking a second term, with a 21 percentage point lead over Baxley, 55 percent to 34 percent.

The poll of 500 likely voters was conducted Sept. 5-7 for The Birmingham News, WBRC-TV and WAFF-TV, and has a margin of error of 4 percentage points.

Your Horoscope Says... Oct. 5-Oct. 11

ARIES

Move slowly concerning relationships this week. People are a little edgy and they don't know exactly where you are coming from. Make full explanations. Don't assume that they know what's on your mind. Most of all, stay positive no matter what.

Soul Affirmation: Clinging to the old will inhibit my growth this week.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 8, 20

TAURUS

You can't be right all of time. Instead of always trying to be right, try to find the logic in other's viewpoint whether you happen to agree or not. Endear yourself to a loved one, real soon, by really listening to what they have to say. Don't be so stubborn that you deny yourself what you really want.

Soul Affirmation: I celebrate with those around me.

Lucky Numbers: 19, 27, 34

GEMINI

This week is a good week to dump any extra baggage that has been pulling you down. You have too much potential to throw away and waste your time on issues that will amount to nothing. Stay focused on your goals. Meet and spend time with people who will be able to help you reach them.

Soul Affirmation: The word is in me. I bring it forth.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 27, 44

CANCER

Your spiritual vibes will give you insight on a situation that's been on your mind. Share your thoughts with someone close to you. Spend time with friends and family that will provide support and guidance when you make an important decision.

Soul Affirmation: I enjoy looking down the road of life just in front of me.

Lucky Numbers: 30, 40, 55

LEO

Your careless ways with money are going to be apparent this week. Financial mistakes you've made in the past will be especially painful. Don't conceal the pain from yourself. It is a warning that you should take steps to prevent future financial crisis.

Soul Affirmation: I let my friendships guide my way.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 22, 35

VIRGO

Take advantage of the great weather and spend time outdoors enjoying and relaxing with Mother Nature. Learn a new sport, and spend time with family and friends. Don't take travel matters into your own hands. Seek a professional who will be able to plan a wonderful vacation for you without breaking your bank. Cook up some goodies for your loved ones.

Soul Affirmation: I change who I am by changing where I am going.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 12, 23

LIBRA

Stay positive. Don't let negative people get inside your head. You know that things will work out well. Ease rapidly away from anyone who is a naysayer. During the week, things may seem hard at times but soon life will be filled with fun. Enjoy!

Soul Affirmation: The slowness of my week gives me time to refresh my energy.

Lucky Numbers: 15, 26, 36

SCORPIO

The bond that you established with your spiritual side works well in your relationship with a special person. Speak of the reality of the intangible qualities of life. Your lover will understand. Keep attention on the financial matters you've been dealing with.

Soul Affirmation: I obey the rules this week and avoid hassles.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 14, 24

SAGITTARIUS

The link that you've established with your spiritual self will be strengthened by the people who come into your life this week. This week is a week for seriousness about a relationship. Discuss your deepest thoughts with others. They'll understand and thank you for sharing intimate parts of yourself.

Soul Affirmation: Faith keeps me calm in the storms of life.

Lucky Numbers: 44, 49, 51

CAPRICORN

You've done some of your own love homework. Hopefully, you've had an opportunity to learn a new way of seeing the world and in that way you've found a way of loving that is more natural for you. The combination of sexiness and joyful focus can create you a wonderful love experience.

Soul Affirmation: I get joy from giving good things.

Lucky Numbers: 11, 17, 37

AQUARIUS

Share in the glory of your friend who has been recognized for outstanding work. Plan a small get-together to celebrate the occasion. Your time will come, and you will be placed on the pedestal. Your intimacy radar is sensitive. Watch out for a new romance that might come along. Expect the unexpected. You will be pleasantly surprised.

Soul Affirmation: Love is easier than breathing.

Lucky Numbers: 16, 30, 50

PISCES

You've done a lot of things in life that no one has agreed with at the beginning. Finding agreement this week will be difficult, but it should not deter you from moving forward. Feeling sorry for your loneliness will discolor what you are doing. Be happy that you are alone.

Soul Affirmation: I get joy from giving good things.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 10, 31



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