

Obama's visit to N.H. sparks frenzied talk

MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP) - Sen. Barack Obama sparked an early frenzy Sunday during his initial visit to the nation's first presidential primary state, but said he still hasn't decided whether to run, despite large crowds that he said have shown his "15 minutes of fame has extended a little longer."

The Illinois senator said he is still "running things through the traps" as he considers whether to join a field of Democrats that's expected to include front-runner Sen. Hillary Clinton and several other more experienced political hands.

"This is an office you can't run for just on the basis of ambition," Obama told reporters at a news conference between packed events. "You have to feel deep in your gut that you have a vision for the country that is sufficiently important that it

needs to be out there."

At every turn in New Hampshire, Obama got encouragement to enter the race. Gov. John Lynch joked that the Rolling Stones were originally the headliners at a state party fundraiser where the \$25 tickets quickly sold out. "But we canceled them when we realized Senator Obama would sell more tickets," Lynch said.

He drew 1,500 Democrats to a the fundraiser and several hundred more at a book signing in Portsmouth. Organizers of both events had to turn away many others who wanted to get in. The media contingent was so large it crowded into a Portsmouth coffee shop with the senator and knocked into tables and chairs as he tried to shake hands with the customers.

History teacher and Democrat Mark Bingham of Alton, N.H., met Obama and

said that despite his inexperience, he could rank among presidents named Lincoln and Kennedy. "It's good to see politics going in another direction," Bingham told the senator.

Obama said he thinks the excitement reflects voters' desire for a new, positive direction in politics that is not about him as an individual.

"I am suspicious of hype," Obama told reporters. "The fact that my 15 minutes of fame has extended a little longer than 15 minutes is somewhat surprising to me and completely baffling to my wife."

Obama's appearance before the state party was to celebrate last month's election, where Lynch won by a record margin and the party took control of both houses of the legislature and New Hampshire's two U.S. House

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Annan

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other country with regard to its policies," spokesman Sean McCormack said. "It's not that person's job."

Annan said last week's report by the Iraq Study Group clarified many issues, but he said the world first needs to find a way to get Iraqis to reconcile with one another.

"We need to be as active on the political front as we are on the military front," he said.

Annan said it was also important to get nearby countries, including Iran and Syria, involved in finding a solution to regional problems.

Annan never mentioned President Bush by name in his speech but drew clear con-

trasts with the Truman administration.

Truman "believed strongly that henceforth security must be collective and indivisible. That was why, for instance, that he insisted when faced with aggression by North Korea against the South in 1950, on bringing the issue to the United Nations," Annan said.

"Against such threats as these, no nation can make itself secure by seeking supremacy over all others," he added.

Annan also called for expanding the Security Council by adding members from parts of the world with less of a voice. He said today's makeup "still reflects the reality of 1945," when the United Nations was founded.

Jefferson wins runoff

NEW ORLEANS (AP) - U.S. Rep. William Jefferson easily defeated his fellow Democratic opponent in a runoff election last week, despite an ongoing federal bribery investigation.

In complete but unofficial returns, Jefferson, Louisiana's first Black elected to Congress since Reconstruction, received 57 percent of the vote over state Rep. Karen Carter, who had 43 percent.

Carter was unable to capitalize on a scandal that included allegations the FBI found \$90,000 in bribe money in Jefferson's freezer.

In a concession speech, Carter embraced family members and pledged to work with Jefferson, especially on the area's recovery from Hurricane Katrina.

"I guess the people are happy with the status-quo," she said.

The eight-term incumbent was forced into the runoff against Carter when he failed to win 50 percent of the vote in a crowded open multiparty primary. Carter had sought to become the first Black woman from Louisiana elected to Congress.

Jefferson described his win as "a great moment and I thank almighty God for making it possible." He called for regional unity to focus on the hurricane recovery and in bringing back evacuees who are still scattered across the country.

His presence in Washington could be embarrassing for Democrats that won control of Congress on a platform of cleaning up corruption. In June, incoming House

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) led a successful effort to remove Jefferson from the powerful House Ways and Means Committee as the probe unfolded.

He was accused of taking bribes from a company seeking lucrative contracts in the Nigerian telecommunications market. He has not been charged with any crime and denies any wrongdoing.

The scandal turned the race into a debate largely divided along racial lines, an age-old dynamic in this city that has intensified since Hurricane Katrina displaced large numbers of Blacks and upended their demographic and political dominance.

Whites, who overwhelmingly voted for Carter in the primary and have been her most enthusiastic financial backers, believed a Jefferson win would confirm this city's image as corrupt and untrustworthy as it asks the nation to fund its recovery from Katrina.

City Councilman Oliver Thomas said Jefferson's victory would make the recovery more difficult.

"People are watching this election all around the country and I can only imagine what they are thinking," Thomas said. "It will be very difficult to go back to them and ask them to trust us with the money we need here."

Carter's campaign spokesperson and father, Ken Carter, said he felt they had done all they could to compete against Jefferson, but regretted the tone of the campaign in the final stages.

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Sentinel-Voice photo by Kathi Overstreet

WEDDED BLISS

Dianna Saffold married Fred Cooks in a ceremony in Las Vegas. Saffold is co-host of the Black Power radio show. Their son, Chandler, was on hand for the happy time.