

Miami to party on Castro death

MIAMI (AP) - The city of Miami is planning an official celebration at the Orange Bowl whenever Cuban president Fidel Castro dies.

Discussions by a committee appointed earlier this month by the city commission to plan the event have even covered issues such as a theme to be printed on t-shirts, what musicians would perform, the cost and how long the celebration would last.

Such a gathering has long been part of the city's plan upon Castro's death, but firming up the specifics has been more urgent since Castro became ill last summer and turned over power to his brother, Raul.

City Commissioner

Tomas Regalado, a Cuban-American, came up with the idea of using the Orange Bowl, noting that the stadium was the site of a speech by President Kennedy in 1961 promising a free Cuba, and that in the 1980s it served as a camp for refugees from the Mariel boatlift from Cuba.

"Basically, the only thing we're trying to do is have a venue, a giant venue ready for people, if they wish, to speak to the media, to show their emotions. It's not that we're doing an official death party," Regalado said Monday.

Former state Rep. Luis Morse stressed the need for an uplifting theme for the party — one not preoccupied with a human being's pass-

ing. Critics have accused the city of dictating where people should party, with many preferring to celebrate on the streets of Little Havana. The city says the Orange Bowl celebration would not preclude that.

"This is not a mandatory site," Regalado said of the Orange Bowl. "Just a place for people to gather."

Ramon Saul Sanchez, leader of the Miami-based Democracy Movement organization, worries about how a party to celebrate a man's death would be perceived by people outside the Cuban exile community.

Sanchez also pointed out that, even after Castro dies, his communist government

still will be in place. "The notion of a big party, I think, should be removed from all this," Sanchez said. "Although everybody will be very happy that the dictator cannot continue to oppress us himself, I think everybody is still very sad because there are still prisons full of prisoners, many people executed, and families divided."

LEGALS

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Bid Opening: FEBRUARY 20, 2007 at 2:00 P.M.
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Rebuilding

(Continued from Page 13) questions about whether the government is committed to helping New Orleans rebuild.

"I hope we get some answers to the questions today because rebuilding the city of New Orleans is not just good for the Gulf Coast or the state of Louisiana, it's good for our nation," Obama said.

Donald Powell, the president's coordinator for the Gulf Coast recovery effort, pledged long-term support.

"President Bush is committed to rebuilding the Gulf Coast and rebuilding it stronger and better than it was before hurricanes Katrina and Rita," Powell told the com-

mittee, but he added that it would take a time to finish the job.

Earlier, a protester shouting "Stand up for Justice" interrupted committee chairman Sen. Joseph Lieberman as he opened the hearing.

The man yelled, "Stand up for justice! We want somebody to stand up for justice!" before a law enforce-

Prop 2

(Continued from Page 13) rious issue," said Driver. "This gives us the time to build the record that we need." She said Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote the full court's decision overturning an anti-gay rights referendum in Colorado in a similar case earlier, and that in this case she feels a majority of the full court will concur to overturn Prop. 2.

Carrie Budoff writes for the Michigan Citizen.

ment officer led him out of the hearing room at Louisiana's Supreme Court building.

"It's hard to come back here more than a year after Katrina... without feeling that emotion," Lieberman (I-Conn.) said after the interruption. "We're here to say that we understand the work is not done, to put it mildly."

Obama

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analysts say the message may not resonate as clearly with Black voters.

"Barack Obama might not be considered a Black candidate for traditional Black voters, given their history," said Ron Walters, director of the African-American Leadership Institute at the University of Maryland. "Obama has talked about America wanting a new kind of leadership. What is he talking about? He hasn't defined that sufficiently."

Still, some civil rights leaders already are claiming him as a major step forward for Black American leadership — even if he didn't spring from their movement.

"Many are anxious to separate Barack Obama's campaign from the civil rights struggle, but that is not true," said the elder Jackson. "It's an extension of our struggle. His running — you could draw a straight line from his campaign to our (voting rights) marches in Selma in 1965."

Yet Obama's background also makes him appealing to Whites, said Carol M. Swain, a law professor at Vanderbilt University. "He's a Black candidate, but he's not into invoking White guilt," she said. "He comes across as a consensus builder."

There have been just a handful of Black presidential candidates. Among them: Sharpton and former Illinois Sen. Carol Moseley Braun in 2004; Republican Alan Keyes in 1996 and 2000; and Democratic Rep. Shirley Chisholm in 1972.

Other Democrats pursuing the 2008 nomination include former Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack, New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson and Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich.

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