

# Truth replica set for Capitol

By Valencia Mohammad  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

For more than 10 years, the late C. DeLores Tucker, president emeritus of the National Congress of Black Women and other Black female leaders worked tirelessly for Sojourner Truth to be included in a portrait statue in the U.S. Capitol that included suffragists Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Now, Truth will get her long overdue honor.

Legislation has been passed making Truth the first African-American woman honored in such fashion in the U.S. Capitol building.

"How she could have been left out of the original artwork was astonishing to many Black women," said Dr. E. Faye Williams, national chairwoman, National Congress of Black Women.

"Sojourner guided many of the women suffrage leaders and spoke many times to galvanize support. But see how God works. Now she

will have her own bust."

To correct the oversight, a bill was sponsored by Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) and Rep. Diane Watson (D-Calif.) that called on the Joint Committee on the Library to accept the donation of a statue depicting Sojourner Truth to be displayed in the U.S. Capitol Building. The bill was approved December 2005.

U.S. Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) and Arlen Specter (D-Pa.) sponsored the legislation in the Senate. The bill was approved unanimously by the Senate in December 2006. It has now become law.

"It is past time that we honor a woman who, despite all of the hardships she faced, was a tireless advocate for women's rights. Sojourner Truth deserves to be represented in the United States Capitol Building along with others who have been recognized for their work in the women's suffrage movement," said Clinton.

According to the law, the Joint House-Senate Committee on the Library accepted the donation with the understanding that private funds be used.

The law also requires that the bust be in a suitable permanent place no later than two years after the date of the enactment of the bill.

Others who gathered to pay homage were Dorothy Height, president emeritus of the National Council of Negro Women; Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation; Kim Gandy, president of the National Organization for Women; award-winning actress, Cicely Tyson; and Dr. Thelma T. Daley, past national president of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and current president of Women in the NAACP.

"Finally, we are setting the record straight. Sojourner Truth will have her well-deserved place as a leader for women's suffrage in the U.S. Capitol Building," said E.

Faye Williams, president of the National Congress of Black Women.

A portrait of the freedom fighter stood next to the podium as the dignitaries continued to recognize her greatness and fortitude against insurmountable odds.

"I am always reminded how many great people's lives, their stories of courage and conviction, are lost in the midst of history. We are grateful that someone like Sojourner Truth emerged to be recognized and now can be remembered. She has a lasting place in the hearts of Americans who care about human, civil and women rights, freedom, justice and equality," Clinton said.

Others agreed that this was the appropriate time.

"Black women were there leading the fight for women's suffrage. How could it take so long to get a statue of a figure to correct history?" Smeal said.

"Truth has prevailed," (See *Sojourner*, Page 6)

# Obama nixes Clinton spat

WASHINGTON (AP) - Fresh off a spat with rival Hillary Clinton, Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama says he'd like to see an end to the "tit-for-tat" that dominates politics.

The Obama and Clinton campaigns fired off dueling press releases last week over a top Hollywood donor who was a supporter of Bill Clinton but is backing Obama in this race.

The Clinton campaign demanded that Obama return DreamWorks studio co-founder David Geffen's money after Geffen criticized the Clintons as dishonest, among other things. Obama declined, and his spokesman criticized Clinton in return for accepting the support of a South Carolina lawmaker who said Obama can't win because he's Black.

Obama told donors at a Houston fundraiser that the nation will remain at a standstill "if we continue to engage in small and divisive politics and tit-for-tat."

"Our country is at a crossroads right now," he said, citing problems in Iraq and domestically with education, energy and health care. "It's not as if we don't know what the solutions are. What's missing is the inability of our leadership to develop consensus."

Obama was speaking to about 300 people gathered at the Communication Workers of America union hall last Thursday. Although the event was advertised as requiring a minimum \$100 contribution, lower amounts were accepted at the door. The campaign would not say how much Obama raised at the event. He also visited St. Louis earlier in the day to raise money.

# Farrakhan

(Continued from Page 1)

them to act on their own: "To hell with a husband who doesn't want to do right. To hell with a wife who doesn't want to do right."

To people of faith who are at one another's throats, he called for unity: "How come we, the people of God, cannot embrace each other?"

Farrakhan, who has delivered a message of Black pride for decades, did not repeat previous incendiary remarks about "White devils" or Jews, whom he has called "bloodsuckers" who prey on African-Americans.

He said he is not anti-White, anti-gay, anti-Semitic or anti-American. He said those labels were produced by critics "in hopes that somebody would rise up to kill me."

Eyes twinkling, Farrakhan engaged in rhetorical jousts — sometimes quietly, other times in a shout — with his audience and the sizable media contingent, very much the man who said after organizing Washington's Million Man March in 1995: "To some I'm a nightmare. But to others I'm a dream come true."

Detroit is where the Nation of Islam got its start, in 1930. Members of a crowd that flowed to the Detroit Lions' indoor stadium on an icy afternoon to celebrate the group's Saviours' Day said



W. Deen Mohammed, facing, and Louis Farrakhan embrace and kiss at the annual Saviours' Day gathering in Chicago, where Farrakhan reaffirmed his pledge to reconcile his breakaway movement with orthodox U.S. Muslims. It was Farrakhan's last speech.

they came in the expectation that this would be Farrakhan's final big speech.

Facing serious abdominal surgery, he recently handed control of the group to an executive committee, fueling questions about his future and speculation about the organization's prospects without a leader as contentious or charismatic.

City employee Terrell Williams paid \$57 for his seat. By way of explanation, he said, "Look who's speaking, though."

Morris Hartman, a retired factory worker, said: "He's done more to bridge the gap and bring people together than any so-called leaders. I

think he has had more influence on our race than anyone in America. He has allowed people to examine themselves, to see where they're at."

The Farrakhan faithful, who had waited through 90 minutes of various speakers and an insistent fundraising pitch, responded with loud cheers and camera flashes to the leader's arrival. He stepped across the stage wearing a tailored suit and a warm smile, and spoke for nearly two hours in a voice that rose and fell with a preacher's cadence but never flagged.

"Don't fall asleep on me," he chided. "Don't run out on

me. I want you to think. Think!"

The world, he said, is in terrible shape, "and it's getting worse by the day."

Farrakhan criticized Muslims in Iraq for the deadly sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shiites. He blamed the Bush administration for igniting the bloodshed but said it is time for followers of the prophet Muhammad to live as he had and for Christians to live more as Jesus did.

"Our lives are full of praise, but our hearts are far removed from the prophets that we all claim," Farrakhan said. "That is why the world is in the shape that it's in. If we would live the life that Jesus taught, live the life that Muhammad taught, we would be in tremendous condition."

Farrakhan returned repeatedly to Bush, demanding to know why the president should not be impeached. He called him "warlike" and said the decision to invade Iraq was dreadful. He said the administration manipulated intelligence to fool Congress and the American public.

Iraq was so weak after a dozen years of international sanctions, he said, "it was like Muhammad Ali fighting a quadriplegic."

Farrakhan, who quoted liberally from the Bible and the Qur'an, drew a rumble of approval that built into cheers when he said: "Be not deceived, for God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, the same shall he also reap."



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