

'F*** All Blacks' targets students

By Evan Barnes

Special to Sentinel-Voice

LOS ANGELES (NNPA) - Concerned students and parents rallied outside Will Rogers Middle School in Lawndale recently to protest members of an anti-Black group that has harassed students over the past few months.

The group call themselves F.A.B., which stands for "F*** All Blacks," and on Nov. 30, one of their members struck a Black student, Ferrari de la Fuente, after she told the principal about the group.

After being called a snitch and other derogatory terms, de la Fuente says one of the girls hit her with a binder and she hit back in self-defense. Both girls were later suspended.

De la Fuente said that six girls harassed her "every day after school, in the morning and during lunch" and despite telling the administration about it, nothing had happened prior to Nov. 30.

"I told the principal, my teachers, my mother and the assistant principal, but they didn't do nothing about it," de la Fuente said.

According to several students, F.A.B. is a group composed of mostly Latinos, with some Asian members. Tanya Howard, de la Fuente's mother, said that she personally addressed several of them after an earlier incident with her daughter.

Howard said she spoke to the school's principal, Theresa Nielsen, several times but after the meetings, the verbal harassments continued.

According to Nielsen, the plans discussed in the meetings were carried out but she attributed the breakdown to students who chose to ignore what the school set up.

When asked about F.A.B., Nielsen said that after talking with several faculty members and doing an internal investigation around campus, it was her conclusion that this group did not exist. And to her knowledge, there were no racial tensions at Will Rogers.

She added that she believed it to be nothing more than an isolated incident between two students, which she attributed to immature, adolescent behavior.

Both girls, not just de la

Fuente, received punitive tickets for battery, and Nielsen said they are welcome to return to school, provided they schedule counseling sessions on campus. However, Howard said when she initially refused to sign the ticket, the entire family was threatened with arrest. They went ahead and signed it with no room to debate it at the time.

She also stated that she planned to transfer her daughter out of Will Rogers. Since the incident, de la Fuente has stayed at home, but the school has tried to keep her academically on track by keeping her updated on homework.

Several of the students who protested said that F.A.B. did exist and they had been verbally harassing Black students since two months ago. As they stood on the corner of 154th Street, they carried signs of protest against the group, calling for the end of racism.

Three of the students came from various high schools and said that action needed to be taken so incidents like these won't repeat in the future.

"If no one says anything, it's going to keep happening," said Kenny, a sophomore from Fairfax High School. He also mentioned that there was a similar group at his middle school before it was broken up by administration.

Black and Latino tensions have been a major issue this year, most notably with several incidents in the Harbor Gateway community earlier this year. As the students stood with their signs, Howard said that she and others scheduled another meeting with the superintendent at the school district office.

The irony of the incident is that despite being targeted for being Black, de la Fuente is half Cuban, something not easily visible from the outside. Her mother also commented that her daughter is a straight-A student who had never been in a fight before.

According to the school's website, the student ethnic breakdown is 66.2 percent Hispanic, with the Black/non-Hispanic population at 16.6 percent, the second highest total.

Evan Barnes writes for the Los Angeles Sentinel.

NY juror: Rift pressured vote

RIVERHEAD, N.Y. (AP) - A juror who helped convict a Black man of fatally shooting a White teenager said he felt pressured by other jurors and the judge to change his vote to guilty during a marathon deliberating session.

The jury convicted John White of second-degree manslaughter Saturday in the August 2006 shooting of 17-year-old Daniel Cicciaro Jr.

White, 54, remains free on bail and plans to appeal. He faces a prison term of five to 15 years. The case drew national attention after defense attorneys argued that he feared a "lynch mob" had come to attack his family when a group of angry White teenagers gathered outside his home. The teens wanted to confront White's son.

Juror Francois Larche, who is White, said he and another juror changed their votes after enduring "a lot of psychological tactics" from fellow jurors during an unusual weekend session ordered by the judge over jurors' protests.

"It was a huge burden to bear," said Larche, 46. "I took a lot of heat," he added in a news statement.

Jury forewoman Maureen Steigerwald denied to the judge that a 12-hour deliberating session on Saturday — the fourth day of deliberations — or the holidays played a role in the jury's decision.

"The jury did a very careful, conscientious deliberate job," she said.

Judge Barbara Kahn said the jury would have to return on Sunday if they didn't reach a decision. Larche stated that the judge told them a mistrial would burden the families and the next jury. "I thought about my family and the families of the other jurors," Larche said. "It was not worth it in the end."

CBC

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or majority women, we have a long way to go. Now, it is frankly innovative and inspiring that America would find its way to possibly selecting someone who has both talent and experience who happens to be a woman, which would make us move to where countries around the world have already gone in selecting women as heads of state," Jackson-Lee said.

John Edwards, a former North Carolina senator, has three endorsements from CBC members.

"Too many women are not getting the healthcare they need," said U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, in a statement posted on the Edwards campaign website.

"John Edwards is the only candidate to outline a specific plan to provide universal coverage and I'm proud to be part of a campaign — the only campaign-with a detailed plan to cover all Americans."

Eight CBC members had not made public endorsements by NNPA deadline.

The 15-15 Clinton-Obama split among the CBC members closely reflects the dividing lines among Black voters, according to polls.



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A poll taken between Oct. 5 and Nov. 2 by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies showed Black votes, compared to Obama, who then had 74 percent. About 10 percent of those surveyed viewed them both negatively.

Voters must decide between two Democratic front-runners in a heated race for the White House, which has been run by Republican President George Bush for eight years.

Most Bush performance approval ratings are under 40 percent. Plus, about 160,000 troops are still stationed in Iraq in a war that more than half of Americans want ended, according to Pew Research opinion polls.

Democrats are banking on these facts to win back the White House.

Leading Republican candidates are former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, former Tennessee Sen. Thompson, Sen. John McCain and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney.

In recent history, Blacks have overwhelmingly supported Democratic candidates for president.

The split between the all-Democratic members of the CBC is as follows:

Endorsing Hillary Clinton are Lee, Stephanie Tubbs Jones of Ohio; Kendrick Meek, Corrine Brown and Alcee Hastings of Florida; Yvette Clarke, Charles Rangel, Gregory Meeks and Edolphus Towns of New York; Emanuel Cleaver of Missouri; Dianne Watson and Laura Richardson of California; David Scott and John Lewis of Georgia; and

Donna Christian-Christensen, V.I..

Endorsing Barack Obama are Scott, Danny Davis, Bobby Rush and Jesse Jackson Jr. of Illinois; Barbara Lee of California; Artur Davis of Alabama; Gwen Moore of Wisconsin; Lacy Clay of Missouri; Elijah Cummings of Maryland; Sanford Bishop and Hank Johnson of Georgia; John Conyers of Michigan; Keith Ellison of Minnesota; Chaka Fattah of Pennsylvania; and Al Green of Texas.

Endorsing John Edwards are: Johnson of Texas; Mel Watt and G. K. Butterfield of North Carolina.

Those who had not endorsed by NNPA deadline were: Eleanor Holmes Norton of D.C.; Jim Clyburn of South Carolina; Bennie Thompson of Mississippi; Al Wynn of Maryland; William Jefferson of Louisiana; Donald Payne of New Jersey; Maxine Waters of California and CBC Chairwoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick of Michigan.

The Clinton-Obama choice is complicated by questions over whether America will really elect Clinton as its first woman or Obama as its first African-American president, while

both race and gender — specifically the Black race and the female gender — have historically been excuses for prejudice and discrimination in America. However, poll readings show both Democratic front-runners as being well ahead of their Republican opponents.

The focus is currently on the state of Iowa and its early Democratic Presidential Primary on Jan. 3 and the New Hampshire primary on Jan. 8. Obama leads slightly in Iowa and Clinton in New Hampshire.

But, pundits predict that Super Tuesday, Feb. 5, will be the deciding factor for who will likely win enough delegates for the Democratic nomination in Denver, Colo., Aug. 25-28. Super Tuesday is when 22 states will hold primaries and caucuses.

Scott says he believes

Obama could win a general election despite racial prejudices.

"If he wins Iowa, he would be favored in New Hampshire, and if he wins New Hampshire, he'll have a lock on South Carolina, which would put him well postured to compete on Super Tuesday, and he'll have enough money," Scott said.

It'll be easier for Obama to win a national election than a Republican, Scott predicts.

"You have the worst job performance since Herbert Hoover. You've got the foreclosures at record highs. You've got the median income significantly lower," he said. "By the time the year is out, if people have a chance to look at the Republican administration, I think any Republican candidate will be hard pressed to do well."

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