## **BLACK PRESS EXCLUSIVE:**

## Detroit Mayor Kilpatrick: 'I will be vindicated'

By Bankole Thompson Special to Sentinel-Voice DETROIT (NNPA) —

Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, under fire in a text message scandal and a \$9 million settlement suit in a whistleblower trial, says he will come out of this victorious. Kilpatrick was charged with perjury and other offenses related to publicized text messages that prosecutors say contradicts his sworn denials of an affair with his chief aide.

Asked why he shouldn't resign in the face of what is going on, Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick told Michigan Chronicle Senior Editor Bankole Thompson in an exclusive interview recently that he will be cleared of his legal and political troubles.

The following are excerpts from that interview:

Michigan Chronicle: How has your family been coping with all that is going on?

Kwame Kilpatrick: Well, you know, you just heard me on the phone. My family is excited. My kids are excited. They go to their basketball games, go to school every day. My sons have impressed me the most during this period. They are standing being themselves, going to school every day, doing their projects, they're doing great.

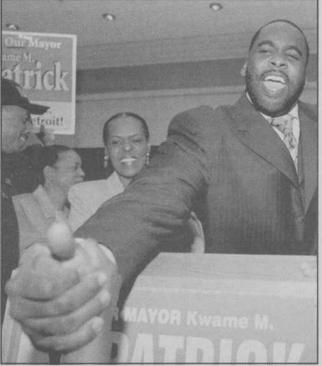
You know my wife,,, you know she's been fantastic. Going through this has been a real transformational experience for us.

MC: You have said — get my family out of this and deal with me. — Most people say it comes with the territory.

KK: Well you know, I think what comes with the territory is respect. The Detroit I love is a city of mutual respect. You respect your neighbors, you respect the people down the street, the people at your schools, but you always respect the people's family. It's kind of an unwritten code in this community. You know if I was mad at a particular person, I wasn't ever mad at his mother (laughs) or his sister or his brother. We have a city that really abides by family rule because we are a big family. So that feeling of mutual respect is not part of the territory. We've kind of being morphed over the past few weeks into something else. This environment that's been created is not a Detroit environment. This is something different. So I ask people to continue to respect

MC: Who created the environment that we are in

KK: Well, certainly you know I would say that the catalyst for it... and I have



Sentinel-Voice file photo

Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick promises that he will be absolved of perjury charges tied to an affair with an aide.

said this before, I made mistakes during this period. I think everybody has. I made some significant mistakes as mayor of the city of Detroit that are being recognized now. I've said I'm sorry. I've said I'm sorry to my wife, to the people of the city of Detroit. But enough is enough. We've gotten to a point where enough is enough. Now what you have, it's not even about text messages. It's not about the mistakes. Now there is an environment that's been created with things that

are not researched, data that is not factual, things that are just put out there and not looked over. This guy Douglas Johnson that filed a recall petition not from Detroit, a number of felonies that's never been... you know there's now to me a tremendous tenacity around. - let's just see how much we can throw out there - instead of - let's look at the facts, let's respect the environment we're in. - The kind of thing that's going on now, I don't think we as a city have seen

before

MC: How would you rate your support where we are now? Is it 60-40 or 50-50?

KK: I have no idea. You know I'm insular. What I mean by insular is I do what I do in Detroit. I don't shop outside of Detroit, I don't really eat a lot outside of Detroit. My family, 95 percent of them, are here in the city of Detroit. And so I get a lot of Detroit love. I feel the Detroit love. I feel it from my senior citizens. You know, over the course over the last months, I've not been inside. I think that's one of the biggest misconceptions, that's another thing... presentation. My senior leadership meeting, which had 300-400 senior citizens in it. Love... you know I've had ecumenical meetings; it's been love. I've gone to several churches across this city; it's been love and prayer. You know, I had a meeting this weekend. We're continuing to meet. Small business meetings, large business meetings, community meetings. And so I don't know. Around 2001 I was polling at 10 percent and we won. 2005 I was polling at 21 percent and we won. I think that the support is something that's built, there is a trust relationship which is why I think people are so angry

MC: I'm looking at the gravity and severity of the issues now

KK: I think what people have to look at... and I heard a preacher say this the other day is... you know I think what Detroiters do, and thank God I'm a Detroiter, is they

don't, we don't as a community judge people on one event in their life. And so I believe that over time when this community is allowed to heal, to reflect, to seriously engage the issues and look at the facts I will be vindicated first of all. I will be politically vindicated, I will be legally vindicated and then people have the opportunity to look at what this city has done. I mean no one else was talking about the kind of things we talked about in that State of the City. And no else can do it right now.

MC: What critical achievements have you made? There are critics who say that does not matter at this point.

KK: Well, I think we've moved this city financially into a place where we can compete every year for solvency. When I got here you know receivership was the word of the day, every day for a couple of years. In 2002, the Super Bowl came up in four years. We had to move very aggressively to fix streets and streetscaping.

MC: Who would you support for the Democratic nomination?

KK: At this point I'm trying to support Kwame Kilpatrick. I've been like that for a while now. I think everything in me is telling me to just focus on Detroit and what we have to do to ready ourselves for a new administration. It's going to be a new administration no matter what we get.

MC: In your state of the city, you used the n-word. At

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## Mayor

(Continued from Page 1) charges against Kilpatrick and Beatty on Monday.

Kilpatrick's lawyer Dan Webb is a former U.S. attorney known for his three-hour cross-examination of former President Ronald Reagan in the Iran-Contra scandal. Webb won a conviction, later reversed, against Admiral John Poindexter on charges linked to the scandal.

Webb also was the chief defense attorney in the corruption trial of former Illinois Gov. George Ryan, who is now in prison.

Webb says the release of the text messages violates federal law.

"Under the Stored Communications Act they absolutely should not have been produced in civil litigation," Webb said Monday. "Because of that, everyone who sees them is clearly tainted because the initial production was illegal."

Miami criminal defense lawyer Milton Hirsch said Webb's effort to bring the 1986 act into play is a good move. "He's a very fine lawyer," said Hirsch, who specializes in defending public corruption cases. "There is very little law on this, but I think it's a motion worth filing. It could make good law and could establish an important point."

Kilpatrick and Beatty denied having an intimate relationship when they testified in the police officers' lawsuit.

"Mayor Kilpatrick, during 2002 and 2003, were you romantically involved with Christine Beatty?" asked Mike Stefani, who represented the police officers.

Kilpatrick's response: "No."

Beatty said "no" and rolled her eyes when asked if she and the mayor were "either romantically or intimately involved" during the period covered by the case.

Text messages published by the *Free Press* told a different story.

"I'm madly in love with you," Kilpatrick wrote on Oct. 3, 2002. "I hope you feel that way for a long time," Beatty replied. "In case you haven't noticed, I am madly in love with you, too!"

On Oct. 16, 2002, Kilpatrick wrote Beatty: "I've been dreaming all day about having you all to myself for 3 days. Relaxing, laughing, talking, sleeping and making love."

The messages also included dialogue about where to meet and how to conceal their trysts. Hirsch, however, said the messages may not be enough to prove perjury.

"The world is full of people who are in the habit of exchanging salacious phone calls, e-mails and text messages," he said. "It doesn't mean they are having an actual relationship. Did they say (under oath) they didn't have physical sex, or have no personal relationship or interaction, at all?

"If the witnesses testified 'we have nothing but a business relationship, we scarcely even talk about anything besides business matters," that's a different matter," Hirsch said.

Sex is not the only issue surrounding the text mes-

sages. The prosecutor's office filed an investigative report that included an excerpt of a text message from Kilpatrick asking members of his staff for help in explaining the departure of former Deputy Chief Gary Brown, one of the former officers who sued.

On June 24, 2003, he wrote: "We must answer the question? Why was Gary Brown fired. It will be asked, I need short, powerful answer ...I just need a good answer. Whatever it might be."

During the whistleblower suit, Kilpatrick said Brown was "un-appointed."

"He was not fired," he testified.

Perjury, under Michigan law, is defined as "willfully" swearing falsely while under oath and is punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

A 2004 Michigan Supreme Court ruling could help prosecutors' case. Reversing more than 150 years of precedent, the court said prosecutors don't have to prove that a lie was material to a case.

