

NAACP

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He said the organization had already depleted more than \$10 million in reserve monies left by former NAACP President and CEO Kweisi Mfume. That money had been raised by Mfume during his nearly 10-year presidency. Mfume announced his resignation in 2004, and left the organization in strong financial standing.

Despite the recent financial woes, which are intrinsic to most civil and human rights organizations, Bond has steadily pointed to the social ills of America and the necessity of voter registration as the greatest priority of the organization.

The selection of Jealous means going from Gordon, a corporate executive who had never participated in a civil rights march, to a young, but seasoned civil rights advocate with a background entrenched in the priority issues of the NAACP, including voter registration and education.

"Of the many people that we interviewed, he was head and shoulders above the others for this reason," says Bond. "He has spent his entire professional life working on the issues that the NAACP

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— Benjamin Todd Jealous



holds dear. He has spent his entire professional life raising money for organizations much like the NAACP. He is in sync with the NAACP to a high degree and we are very happy to have him with us... He's a perfect fit for us in every way."

Jealous' election was not without the heated debate that has long been typical of the 64-member board, packed with civil rights warriors from communities and trenches across America. Board members said discussions that started Friday evening continued until the wee hours of Saturday morning.

"There was a great discussion, a great debate on the issues that are critically important to the NAACP," said labor leader Bill Lucy. "And I think those are the kinds of discussions that engender

strong feelings. But, the fact that people debated it out into the wee hours of the morning was a good healthy discussion. The fact is that in the end, there was an agreement on his candidacy and that was a good thing."

Actually, sources said the debate was not all about the candidate. Much of it was about the process. Jealous had been selected unanimously by the organization's three-member executive committee after it had reviewed two other candidates. The three finalists had been presented to the executive committee by a search committee for the selection of one candidate to present to the board for an interview, which sources say has been the normal process for selecting NAACP presidents.

Acrimony had started at previous meetings when some board members pushed to change the procedure, arguing that the board should be allowed to interview all three finalists. Tension continued in last weekend's board meeting as some members said they had been disenfranchised by not having heard the other two candidates, who were Rev. Frederick Haynes, a 47-year-old pastor from Dallas, and Alvin Brown, a former Clinton White House advisor.

The final vote for Jealous was 34-21, according to the *Baltimore Afro-American*.

Responding to a question

about how he will deal with board factionalism that has frustrated other NAACP CEOs, Jealous synopsised his leadership style.

"I'm a team player. I believe that in order to lead in the game, you've got to be completely in the game; that in order to have people to follow you, they need to know that you're willing to follow them," he said. "This isn't a new industry to me, if you will. This is the family, the movement that I was raised in. So, I expect to have nothing but success."

In random interviews with board members, they spoke glowingly of Jealous. Only one declined to speak on the record.

"A lot of folks made a big to do about age," said Lucy. "I think it's a good thing. The energy, the dedication and commitment are those standards that this organization must stand by. From the trade union side, Ben's really strong belief in workers' rights, people to be treated fairly on the job, to receive adequate income and pay and to have a voice on the job, that's what we're all about."

Hazel Dukes, a former national president of the organization, said she met Jealous for the first time last week.

"I've checked with people that he went to school with... I started listening," she said when she heard he was a candidate. "And when he laid out the vision for us and to be his age and that he wants to come back and give back to the community with such passion and devotion, I'm just excited. As a mother, I'm just a proud African-American mom today that a young man who has accomplished so much has come back to work for the oldest civil rights organization with a passion, with love and support."

Maxine Smith, who served as executive secretary

Barack to GOP: Lay off Michelle

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrat Barack Obama has a message for Tennessee's Republican Party: "Lay off my wife."

Obama, his party's presidential front-runner, and his wife, Michelle, were asked in an interview aired Monday on ABC's "Good Morning America" about an online video last week by the state's GOP taking her to task for a comment some considered unpatriotic.

"The GOP, should I be the nominee, can say whatever they want to say about me, my track record," Obama said. "If they think that they're going to try to make Michelle an issue in this campaign, they should be careful because that I find unacceptable, the notion that you start attacking my wife or my family."

He called the strategy "low class."

The video, posted on YouTube, centered on remarks (See Michelle, Page 9)

of the Memphis NAACP for more than 40 years, currently national education chair, called Jealous a "breath of fresh air."

She said, "He has obvious ability and inner feeling like those older civil rights leaders and those older NAACPers like us. It's like he's been on the warfield a long time."

Rev. Michael Nelson of Detroit, says he believes Jealous' age will cause the organization to attract youthful civil rights advocates.

"We do think that with the youthful nature of the new CEO that he will bring the association along in that way and that he will also speak to the issues of youth and young adults," Nelson said. "We want to be sure that we will continue to build a base for the association. And that we're taking in consideration the concerns of young people. That's very important to us."

Rev. Theresa Dear of Bartlett, Ill. agrees: "He represents taking the NAACP to the next level. He is extraordinarily brilliant. And he represents great promise and potential, not just for the organization, but for young

people." Jealous holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Columbia University and a master's in comparative social research from Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar.

By indications, this week, Jealous will also be welcomed back into the civil rights community of Washington, D.C.

Wade Henderson, president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, said Jealous' selection was perfectly timed.

"Change is in the air. We're on the verge of very important change," Henderson said. He was referring to the election of either Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton or John McCain for president. "And I think Ben Jealous' appointment at the NAACP helps to further cement the transition of the important issues that are taking place in the country today... It heralds a new level of leadership for the organization and a new level of cooperation between the NAACP and the established non-governmental organization and the Civil Rights Movement."

Curious George

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can-Americans," Nigut said. He called on citizens not to buy the T-shirts, but stopped short of calling for a boycott of Norman's business or denying him to speak out.

"His speech is protected, but that doesn't mean that it's appropriate and that doesn't mean it's not hateful," Nigut said.

On Tuesday, about a dozen people gathered outside the bar to object to the T-shirt. The protesters said the shirts are racist and they wanted Norman, to stop selling them.

Nigut said he was not surprised to hear that some in the community might have bought the shirt.

"To say that there are a few people in the community who are eager to have that ... I wouldn't deny that," Nigut said, adding that some could've purchased a shirt as a souvenir of the controversy. "But does it reflect what the vast majority of Cobb County residents believe in? I don't think that for a second."



PUBLIC AFFAIRS FOR THE VALLEY'S BLACK ADMINISTRATORS

The local chapter of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators held its Marks of Excellence Scholarship & Awards Luncheon last Friday at the Nevada Partners Culinary Academy Event Center. (Photos left to right) Assistant Las Vegas Fire Chief Bertal Washington presents the lifetime achievement award to retired City Fire Chief David Washington, right. (Second photo) City Manager Doug Selby, right, presents North Las Vegas City Manager Gregory Rose with the Administrator of the Year award. (Third photo) North Las Vegas Police Deputy Chief Victor Dunn says a few words; he won the Emerging Administrator of the Year. Darryle Todd Jr., a graduate scholar recipient with a GPA of 3.81 is joined with Kenthea Fogenay, an undergraduate student who achieved a GPA of 3.64, were presented with additional scholarship dollars for their education.

Sentinel-Voice photos by Marty Frierson