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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Farrakhan: Blacks must unite

By Ashahed M. Muhammad
Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW ORLEANS (NNPA) - Beyond egos, competing agendas and differing ideologies, the Black Nation should unite behind common principles to more effectively serve the needs of Black people, Min. Louis Farrakhan said during his keynote address wrapping up the State of the Black World Conference II on Nov. 23 at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

"We have witnessed history being made and the history making event has placed on all of our shoulders a heavier responsibility," said Farrakhan. "I always try to see the hand of God in things that are happening so I can give the thing that is happening the proper respect," said Farrakhan, adding that despite the fact that he cast his vote just before dawn on Nov. 4, he was "in doubt" that America would elect a Black president until late in the evening. Farrakhan said Obama's victory is a sign that "God has not forsaken us," and "is giving America a chance to redeem herself."

"This is why I see Barack Obama as a mercy from God to the United States of America and a troubled world," said Farrakhan, adding that America is in a fall

from the pinnacle of power.

In a wide-ranging message also dealing with the state of Black leadership, organizations and the slave trade, Farrakhan's words brought laughter at times. His stern words and guidance caused deep contemplation

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and reflection throughout.

The SOBWC II was the first major gathering of Black leaders, thinkers, activists and scholars since the historic election of America's first Black president.

Despite a severe economic downturn — and the typical financial challenges faced by many Black organizations — committed grassroots activists and legendary pillars of the Black Nationalist community made the journey to New Orleans, the symbol of Black suffering and poverty which came to the world's attention after the devastation of Hurricane

Katrina.

Citing the recent collapse of several banking and financial giants, the "begging with a tin cup" by the "Big Three" American automakers — General Motors, Chrysler and Ford — and the fact that America is \$10 trillion in



debt, it is clear that the wealth of America is, in fact, being touched.

Farrakhan chided the crowd for always being victimized by those who consistently work to "destroy our meager efforts for (financial) independence" with a system of laws to keep Black men and women as share croppers. The enemy kept Blacks picking cotton using education, labor laws, other legal shenanigans and actual lynchings to prevent "true emancipation."

"No one can dig America out of the abyss of economic collapse" due to the wrong

headed policies of the Bush administration.

"You are the only people who seek political strength on the basis of nothing," said Farrakhan noting that the Italians, the Irish and the Jewish people all established economic power then began to exert political power. He said every time we achieve one milestone, whether it is education, business ownership or voting, Black people collectively still end up in a bad condition primarily because we need to "flush out" envy, stupidity, ignorance, jealousy and envy among our people.

New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin sat in the front row and listened intently nodding in agreement many times during Farrakhan's message of self help and responsibility.

"I think it is tremendous what he said," said Nagin. "We as Black leaders throughout the country need to come together in unity to inspire our people to be positioned for all of the opportunities the president-elect is going to bring us. Forcing us to think differently and to get off of our duffs and move the state of Black America forward, and I got it. I received it."

"The State of the Black World Conference is the conference," said Nagin. (See Conference, Page 2)

Ex-councilman wins NAACP job

Special to Sentinel-Voice

One-time Las Vegas City Councilman Frank Hawkins has become the newly elected president of the NAACP-Las Vegas Chapter.

When the votes were tallied, Hawkins overwhelmingly defeated Andrew Brewer, the current president and Richard Boulware, the second vice president.

The former Las Vegas City Councilman who represented the Historic Westside for four years in the '90s will now try to revive the civil rights organization in Southern Nevada.

Hawkins is looking forward to January 1 to take the reigns of an organization that's been overlooked and underworked over the years.

"I've been busy, spending a whole lot of time studying and researching the ins and outs of the oldest civil rights organization," said Hawkins. The NAACP will be celebrating its 100 year anniversary.

The NAACP was formed in 1909 by a group of Black and White citizens, appalled at the injustices that some Americans suffered solely because of their race. It is still the largest and most influential civil rights organization in the country.

With an emphasis on making the organization transparent, his first promise is to get the finances straight.

Hawkins wants an outside financial firm to review and audit its financial status.

Looking for old, new and current members to roll up their sleeves and participate in the process of policy and procedures, rules and bylaws, Hawkins wants the NAACP to regain its respect once again.

The one-time Super Bowl winner is executive director of the Community Development Program Center of Nevada and is not known for patience when there is work to do. However, he intends to have an open mind and give it his all, observers say.

Contact the NAACP for more information on how to join or get involved. The office is located at 3340 S. Topaz Street, Ste. #150. The phone number is (702) 638-1300 and fax number is (702) 369-1342. The email address is naacplv@embarqmail.com.

Holder viewed as steady choice on justice, rights

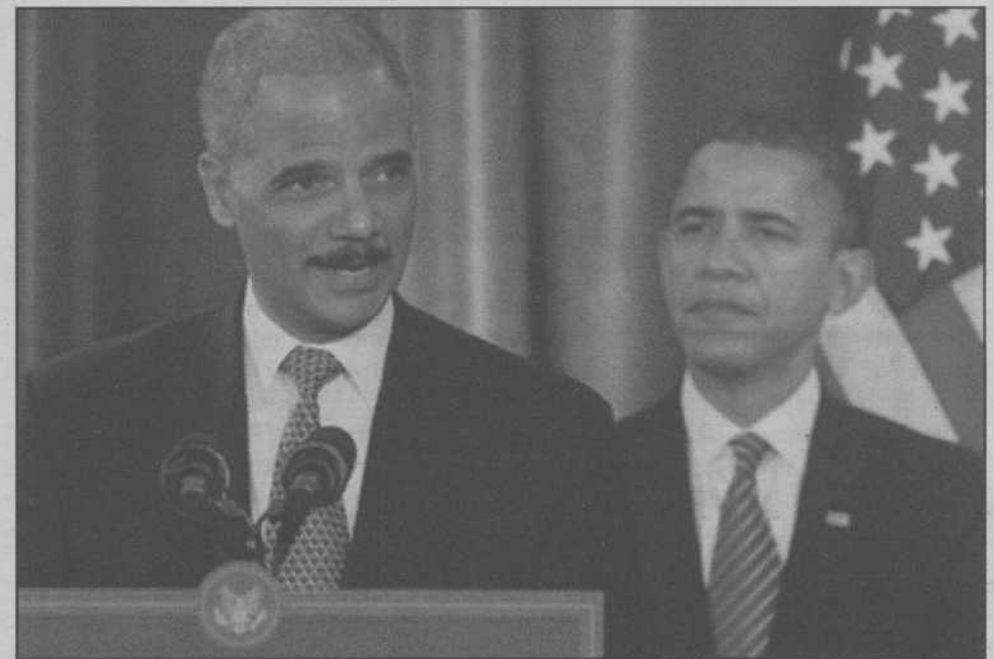
By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Civil rights leaders across the nation are characterizing the nomination of former Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder for the spot of U.S. attorney general as a "bold choice" for prospective upgrades in civil rights and criminal justice laws that have long hindered Black progress.

"President-elect [Barack] Obama has made a bold choice in nominating Eric

Holder as the attorney general," said Charles Ogletree, Harvard Law School professor and director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice. "Eric brings nearly three decades of public service to this enormous task and will usher in a new appreciation for civil rights and dignity and respect for individual liberties. I applaud this decision and so should anyone deeply concerned about the fair and rational application of the rule of law."

The slot of attorney general, among the most important top nominations to be made by the incoming president, oversees the U.S. Department of Justice. The DOJ deals with a variety of issues, including public policies under the Civil Rights Division that disparately affect Black people. They include affirmative action, racial profiling, police misconduct, hate crimes, judicial discretion in mandatory minimum sentences, the death penalty and (See Holder, Page 5)



Attorney General-designate Eric Holder speaks during a news conference with President-elect Barack Obama, right, in Chicago on Monday. Holder is seen as a competent leader.