

Baltimore mayor's flak: Indictment unfounded

By Sean Yoes

Special to Sentinel-Voice

BALTIMORE (NNPA) — Members of the media crammed into the reception area of the Clipper Mill law offices of Arnold Weiner where embattled Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon made her first press conference to address the Baltimore grand jury 12-count indictment leveled against her last week.

The city's first female mayor, a 20-year veteran of Baltimore politics, entered the reception area flanked by her attorneys Dale Kelberman and Weiner and sat down at a table crowded with microphones and recording devices.

Dixon, looking subdued and somewhat shaken, read a statement that was sent out to members of the media earlier in the day.

For the rest of the press conference, which included no questions from the media, Weiner, a prominent Maryland defense attorney, vigorously defended his client.

"The first thing I would like to say is how proud I am that the lady to my left—Sheila Dixon—is the mayor of my city," Weiner said. "For more than two decades she has distinguished herself as a knowledgeable, effective and dedicated public servant."

Then Weiner offered a blistering indictment of state prosecutor Robert A. Rohrbaugh, strongly suggesting his pursuit of the mayor had become personal.

"I think it's fair to say from all that we've witnessed since 2005 that Sheila Dixon has



Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon

been the state prosecutor's singular personal obsession for the past four years," Weiner said.

"Over a period of almost four years the state prosecutor relentlessly pursued Sheila Dixon and examined every detail of her life — her tax returns, every bank record she has—there wasn't a bed sheet he failed to look under."

Weiner added, "After four years what we see is that he has brought himself and he has brought us back to where he started essen-

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Jackson

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Closer to home for the *Amsterdam News* and other Black publications and media is the evaporation of ads, which come mainly from the automobile industry, Jackson noted.

"Many Black newspapers, members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, are in jeopardy because of the lack of ads and now must lay off or cut-back their staffs," he said.

These are some of the issues that will be taken up at work-shops at the Economic Summit, and Jackson was proud to announce that Sheila Bair, chair of the FDIC, is among the invited speakers. "She advocated a long time ago restructuring over repossessing," he said. Jackson suggested a few things the incoming president can do, including the enforcement of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. "Enforce contracts and compliance... and the Community Investment Act," he said. "The enforcement of all these

would be of benefit to us and the community at large." And what were his impressions of Obama's infrastructure proposal as part of the remedy to the economic crisis?

"It's a step in the right direction," he said. "But it must go deep enough to touch those who are not only unemployed but underemployed... the working poor without decent insurance."

When asked about the current controversy surrounding Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich and his selection of Roland Burris to fill the senatorial seat vacated by Barack Obama, Jackson had no comment, nor would he address the crisis in Gaza, though he did state that the situation over there cannot be ignored. He was prepared, however, to discuss the connection between Obama's rise and the legacy of Dr. King.

"President Barack Obama is the result of 60 years of struggle for civil and human rights in this country," Jackson said. Citing historical events, he began with the Truman administration in 1948, through the courageous stance of Rosa Parks

in 1955, the Voting Rights Act in 1965 and the right to vote given to those 18 years old in 1970.

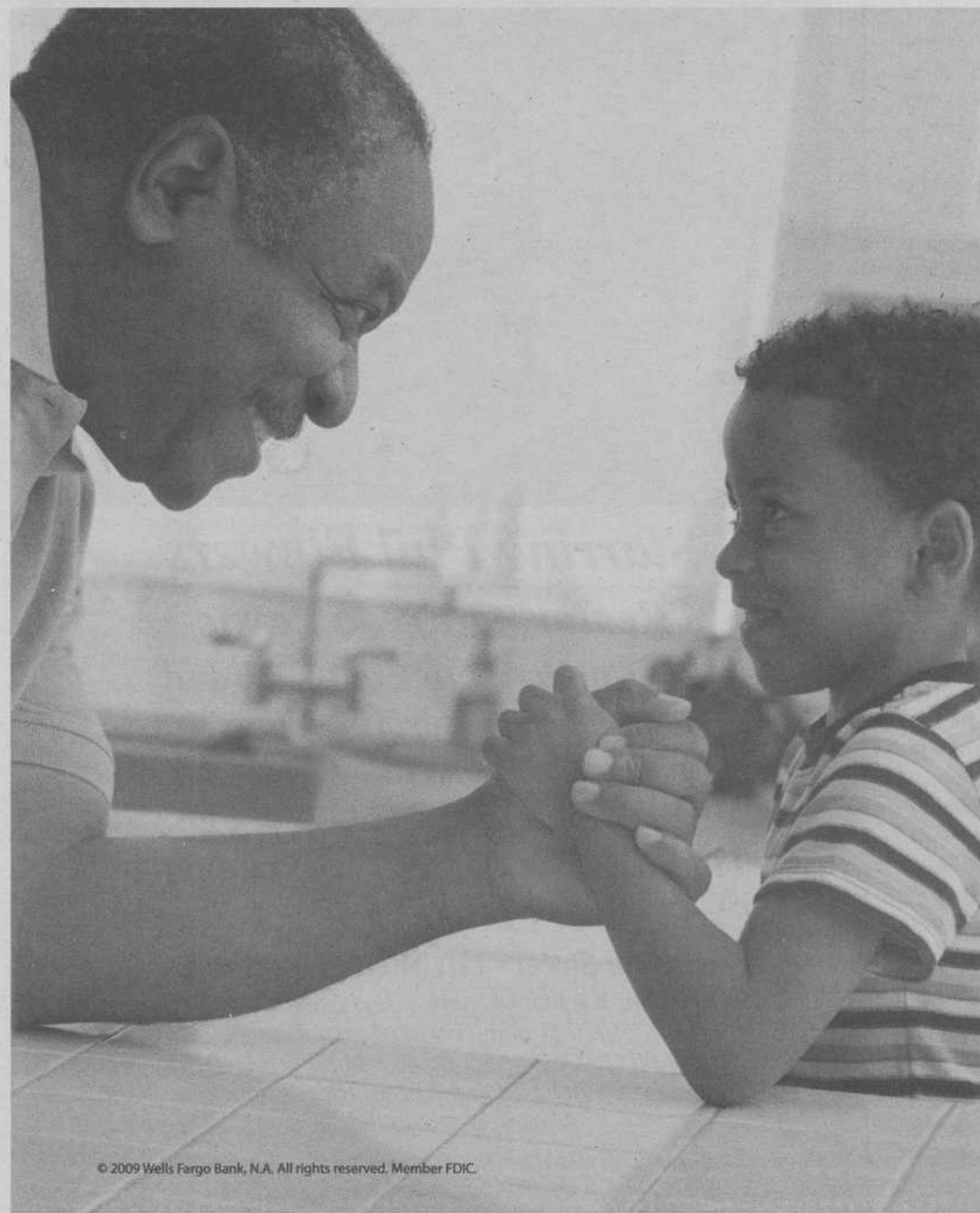
He to be reminded of his own historical bids for the presidency, along with those of Dick Gregory, Shirley Chisholm, and most recently, his friend and colleague, Rev. Al Sharpton.

"It's been a 60-year-old political relay race, and Obama is running the anchor leg to victory," Jackson added. There is sure to be more on Obama and the economy at the summit, whose theme this year is "Fallout from the Bailout: A New Day in Washington."

The conference is from January 13 to 16 at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers, 811 7th Avenue at 53rd Street. For additional information, go to www.wallstreetproject.org.

Jackson Concluded, "Because of the economic downturn, registration for the conference is \$50 plus meals."

Herb Boyd and Nayaba Arinde writes for the *Amsterdam News*.



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