

LAS VEGAS

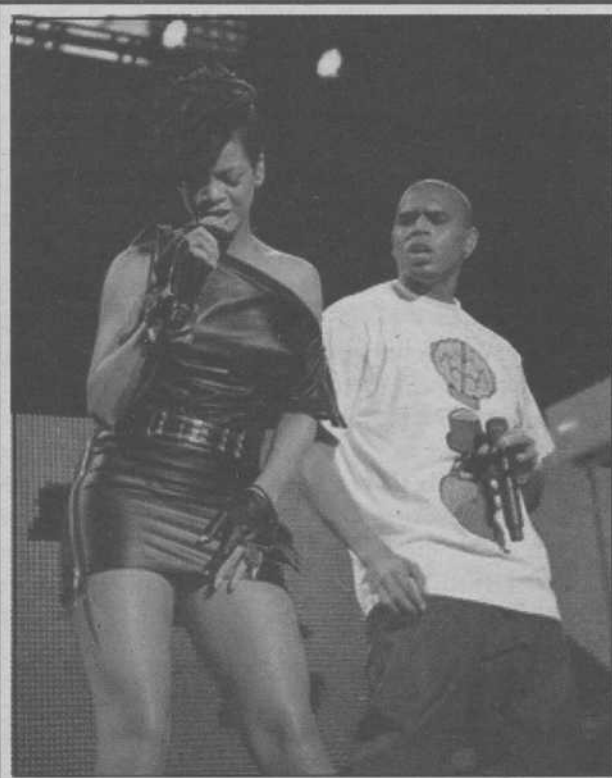
Sentinel Voice

VOLUME 29, ISSUE 42

GRIOT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, INC.

February 12, 2009

"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



In a December 2008 photo, singers Rihanna and Chris Brown perform at Madison Square Garden in New York.

Brown assault case heats up

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Prosecutors said they want more evidence from police before determining whether to press charges against Chris Brown, who's accused in a domestic dispute that reportedly involves pop superstar Rihanna.

Police presented a case regarding Brown on Tuesday, but did not release any of its details, Los Angeles County District Attorney spokeswoman Jane Robison said. She said the office would have no further comment on the case.

(See Chris Brown, Page 3)

Congress OK's stimulus

WASHINGTON (AP) — Moving with lightning speed, the Democratic-controlled Congress and White House agreed Wednesday on a compromise \$790 billion economic stimulus bill designed to create millions of jobs in a nation reeling from recession. President Barack Obama could sign the measure within days.

"More than one-third of this bill is dedicated to providing tax relief for middle-class families, cutting taxes for 95 percent of American workers," said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid at a Capitol news conference where he was joined by moderates from both parties whose support is essential for the legislation's final passage.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Reid's partner in negotiations over more than 24 intense hours, initially withheld her approval in a lingering disagreement over federal funding for school construction. "We had to make sure the investment in education" was in the bill, she said.

Obama, who has campaigned energetically for legislation, welcomed the agreement in a written statement that said it would "save or



Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., speaks as Senators Susan Collins, R-Maine, Max Baucus, D-Mont., and Arlen Specter, right, R-Pa., listen after a legislative compromise was reached on the stimulus package in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday.

create more than 3.5 million jobs and get our economy back on track."

The emerging legislation is at the core of Obama's economic recovery program.

The president's signature tax cut was preserved — a break for millions of lower- and middle-income taxpayers of \$400 per individual and \$800 per couple. That's less than the \$500 and \$1,000 the White House originally sought, although officials

said it would mean an estimated \$13 per week extra per paycheck.

Wage-earners who don't earn enough to pay income taxes would get a reduction in the Social Security and Medicare taxes they pay.

The bill also includes help for victims of the recession in the form of expanded unemployment benefits, food stamps, health coverage and more, as well as billions for states that face the prospect

of making deep cuts in school aid and other programs.

Another provision will mean a one-time payment of \$250 for millions of beneficiaries who receive Social Security, Supplemental Security Income and veterans pensions and disability, according to officials. They added that the measure will include \$46 billion for transportation projects such as highway, bridge and mass

(See Stimulus, Page 2)

NAACP challenges Obama to be rights champion

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Upon its 100th anniversary this week, the NAACP, under the leadership of Benjamin Todd Jealous, set aside euphoria over the historic inauguration of the first Black president and challenged the Obama administration on where he stands on human and civil rights issues as they pertain to people of color.

"We're not simply interested in a bailout for Main Street, it's a good goal. It's a good starting point. But, we want a fix for back street," said Jealous in a telephone press conference leading up to Feb. 12, the 100th birthday of the nation's oldest civil rights organization. "At the end of the day, we are not an organization who's here merely to celebrate any milestone too much. On Jan. 20, we celebrated Obama as the nation's first Black president and first president of color. On Jan.

21, we were well aware that he simply became the 44th president of the United States and all pressures that have worked the agenda



New NAACP President Benjamin Jealous wants President Obama to stump for rights.

of the presidents before him came to bear on him."

He continues, "So, now, we're out there with everybody else trying to make sure that his agenda is our agenda, that his agenda is one of civil rights and inclusion and opportunity for all. And right now there are two things that we're concerned are not getting sufficient attention."

The first issue that he listed was the need for federal enforcement of Black participation in jobs and contracts coming out of the \$827 billion economic stimulus act, that has passed the House and is being negotiated in the U. S. Senate this week.

"White unemployment [stats], since they've been calculated since 1940, have never gotten into double digits. Yet somehow this country finds it tolerable and somewhat normal to have Black unemployment in the double digits," Jealous said.

The second issue is the need for law enforcement accountability — federal oversight and enforcement of police profiling and misconduct, which former President Bush promised, but never delivered in 2001.

"We're lifting this up and placing it squarely in front of the administration and we'll be pushing harder now now that we know who the attorney general is," Jealous said, referring to Eric Holder, also Black. "We have a decade of repressed aspirations since 1999 when candidate Bush promised to end racial profiling and driving while Black, and it hasn't happened yet. But, we also need to see the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act passed. We also need to see real reforms in police officer use of force and training."

Referring to protests in the wake of the in-the-back police shooting of a restrained unarmed man in an Oakland subway, Jealous

(See NAACP, Page 4)