

By James Coley
The Seattle Medium

As the National Governor's Association conference held in Seattle carried over into Monday, demonstrators continued to make their voices heard both locally and nationally.

"We're not going anywhere," one demonstrator stated over the megaphone. "We're staying right here."

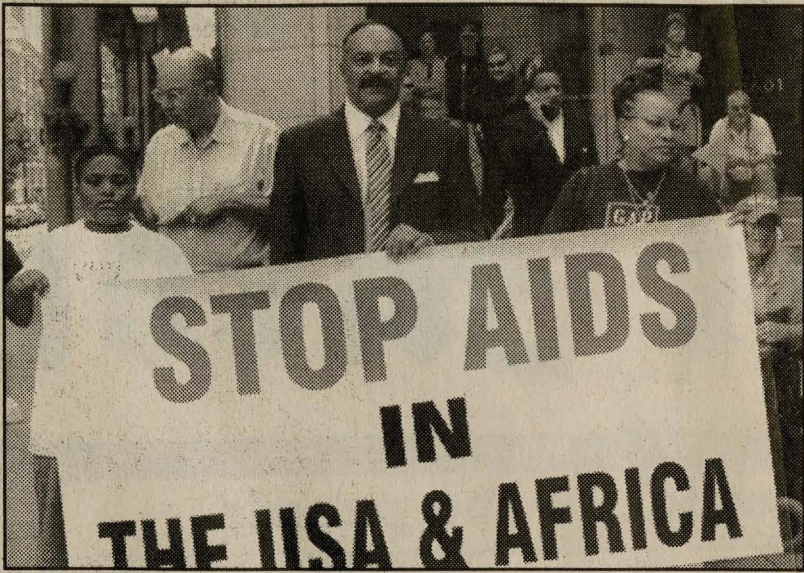
The demonstration was held outside of the Westin Hotel, where the conference was being held. The protesters wanted to address such issues as disproportionate incarceration rates among African-Americans, harmful funding cuts to basic community health services, and continually rising unemployment rates in communities of color.

"We recognize and support the causes and concerns of other communities but when we have a disproportionate number of African-Americans incarcerated due in part to lack of opportunities, the issues we are addressing relate directly to the African-American community," stated Eddie Rye Jr., 1st Vice President of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the National Black Chamber of Commerce.

Rye went on to tell the crowd that, while African-Americans make up only 1.4% of Washington State's population, they make up 40% of the state's prison population. "We're even putting people in jail for very minor, non-violent crimes just because the system can do it; and people don't have the money to fight it. Unfortunately, justice in the United States costs money," he added.

Charles Wilson, Director of CDC Programs at People of Color Against AIDS Network (POCAAN), spoke to reporters about crucial government funding that had been cut from his organization.

"One of the focuses of the protest today is to get the governors focused on the problem of AIDS both locally and internationally. We recognize that funding is limited to



11-year-old Delshawn Staten (left) gets an early lesson in advocacy as he helps hold up a protest sign outside the National Governor's Association conference on Monday in downtown Seattle. Also pictured are Eddie Rye, Jr. (center) of the Black Chamber of Commerce and Pastor Pat Wright (right) of Oneness Christian Center. Photo/Flyright Productions.

the availability of funds, but if we go away, who will be left to take on the problem in our community?" said Wilson.

Wilson also voiced concern over Federal funding cuts to many local, community-based health organizations, and the negative impact that these cuts are having on the communities that these organizations are attempting to serve.

"Personally, I would like to see the governors recognize the need to advocate for continued funding of current programs, to advocate for increased funding, primarily Federal funding, of programs across the country. I would like to see them put emphasis on getting money to community-based organizations that have shown greater success in reaching communities of color and target populations that are impacted by this disease (AIDS)."

Protesters also held signs that read, "Jobs not Jails for Blacks" and "Discrimination is Illegal. Where are all the Black Workers?" while Rye gave voice to the troubling unemployment rate among African

Americans. He told the crowd that there were once 13 black-owned, architectural and engineering firms in 1982, while today there are not even 3. In 1984 there were 28 black-owned trucking companies, while today only 4 remain.

"This is ridiculous," said Rye. "As long as the Federal Government mandates that our companies go through private, white-owned contracting firms in order to get business, the playing field will never be equal."

Rye also cited the significant drop in the availability of jobs to inner-city youth.

"Only a few years ago there were at least 2000 summer jobs targeted towards inner-youth. Now there are barely 200," he stated. "And now another blow has been dealt locally because a lot of our young students would transfer from community college right into the University of Washington. Now they have eliminated the automatic transfer of students from community college to the University," Rye continued.

Katie Mitchell, Program Manager of the Infant Mortality Prevention Program at POCAAN, gave voice to all the issues at hand. "We can't afford any more cuts. These are basic needs. These aren't frivolous things people are asking for. There are serious holes in our system and people are falling through."

The demonstrators stood outside of the National Governor's Association conference, determined to be heard.

"We're here to let the governors hear our voice," Rye told reporters. "The issues that affect the black community of Seattle are issues that affect the black community across the country."

J. D. Mason And Independent Truckers Association Bring Carnival Rides To Soul Fest

Soul Fest will get its rides. Thanks to the efforts of J. D. Mason and the Independence Truckers Association, J. D., as he is affectionately called, got into action Thursday after the carnival that the Soul Fest used for the past six years provided rides at the competition's festival this past weekend.

The carnival had asked Soul Festival to select another date other than its traditional weekend. After Soul Fest changed their date with

city approval, the carnival notified Soul Fest that that date was not available. After months of negotiations, Soul Fest officials learned on last Thursday that the carnival had decided to set up its rides and food booths across town. Normally, it takes five years to schedule a carnival. Soul Fest officials' 'may day' call went out to the carnival industry and found a carnival with no drivers to get the rides to Seattle and on to Idaho. J. D.

Mason and his Independent Truckers Association within hours were ready and within 72 hours ITA had the rides at Franklin High School at MLK and Rainier.

The competition's festival across town was headed by a well-known African American Seattle Police Officer who had also been assigned to work at Soul Fest in previous years.

Soul Fest This Weekend

Continued From Front Page

at Soul Fest is set to be one of the biggest gospel events in the city. This year's line-up includes groups, solos, choirs, and others ready to show their passion for Christ. Kicking it all off Sunday morning will be Church In The Park featuring Rev. Eugene Lewis and the Emerald City Seventh Day Adventist Church. Then festival-goers will be treated to an

afternoon full of great gospel, including both traditional and contemporary music, and genres in between. Capping off Soul Fest 2004 will be the "Gospel Idol" Soloist Competition, where contestants from all over the greater Seattle area will be competing for cash prizes and the title "Soul Fest 2004 Gospel Idol." Soul Fest 2004's Gospel

Extravaganza promises to be one event not to be missed.

Soul Fest will officially begin Friday afternoon with lots of good entertainment, food, carnival rides, and much, much more. With so much planned for this year's festival, there's no place you'd rather be than the Franklin High School Playfield for all three days of Soul Fest 2004.

Morial Rejects Efforts To Divide Urban League And NAACP

By Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - National Urban League President Marc Morial says that while he is pleased President Bush agreed to address his organization's annual convention this week, he disagrees with Bush's decision to skip the NAACP convention.

"I can't speak for the White House. Nor can I speak for the NAACP. But let me say this: I certainly believe that this president and every president should go to and visit the NAACP meeting and visit the Urban League meeting and dialogue with the Congressional Black Caucus," Morial says. "I have fundamental and complete respect for the NAACP as a sister organization of ours."

Morial, celebrating his first year as National Urban League president, did not contain his glee at having landed both Bush and Sen. John Kerry, his Democratic opponent, as convention speakers.

"Few Black or White organizations get both candidates to come to their meetings. That's the thing. Name me another organization, Black or White, that got both candidates to come to their meeting," he says. "For many people who will come to our conference, this is the only opportunity they're going to have to see John Kerry and George Bush in person, in a direct appeal."

Kerry was scheduled to speak Thursday and Bush was set for Friday. The Urban League speech will be the third for Bush; the only conference he missed as president was 2002.

Bush's speech to the National Urban League comes on the heels of major controversy in which Bush

declined an invitation to speak before the NAACP convention for the fourth consecutive year. NAACP leaders say Bush is the only president in modern time to reject speaking invitations from the nation's oldest civil rights organization. Even Ronald Reagan spoke to NAACP delegates.

Some civil rights activists worry that by ignoring the NAACP, Bush is playing one civil rights group against another. As further evidence, they point to the 40th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 last month at the White House. Bush publicly acknowledged Morial's presence in the East Room ceremony, but did not extend an invitation to NAACP president and CEO Kweisi Mfume.

Morial insists that there is no competition between the two organizations.

"We do different work," he says. Morial mentioned that he spoke at the NAACP's convention last week and that Mfume had been invited to speak at the Urban League convention but could not make it.

"The relationship between the civil rights organizations is good. Certainly, the relationships between the leaders are good. But all of us are not going to necessarily walk in tactical lockstep on every issue. Nor should we be expected to," he says.

Morial also said he will resist any effort to pit the National Urban League against the NAACP.

"This is very important. That the focus is not just, 'Well, Bush came here. He didn't go there.' And nobody pays attention to what Bush and Kerry said. Just the fact that they were there is not enough," Morial says. "It's got to be ongoing engagements and an ongoing dialogue. You've got to be fully

engaged. I trust our people to listen and make their judgment when they go to the polls in November."

Morial says he will demand more than just rhetoric from Kerry and Bush.

"I don't want these candidates to come to our conventions and just give some pep talk. I want them to come to our convention and talk about jobs. I want them to talk about their commitments to Urban America. I want them to talk about how they're going to commit resources," he says.

Some political observers are not impressed with Bush's decision to address Urban League delegates.

"I think it's a token appearance. I think it's a slap in the face," says Toni-Michelle Travis, professor of political science and director of African-American Studies at George Mason University in Northern Virginia. "I think that connects with corporate America and business and I think the general Republican philosophy of business and work ethic and all that. And the Urban League shows that connection publicly for him, whereas the NAACP has a different energy. It's an organization that believes very much in pushing civil rights, civil liberties."

This will be the first time in 20 years that Morial, the former mayor of New Orleans, has not been a delegate at the Democratic National Convention. He recognizes that he's in a different role as head of a non-partisan group.

"We will maintain and will continue to maintain working relationships with both sides of the aisle, if you will," says Morial. "This is an institutional commitment that I embrace."

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Kathryne Abad

Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary

Age: 9

Favorite School Subject: Kathryn loves arts and crafts class.

Hobbies/Interests: She enjoys jumping rope, especially jumping Double Dutch.

Proudest Achievement: Doing well at her schoolwork.

Ambition: She would like to be a veterinarian.

How She'll Get There: By getting good grades.

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DOE Might Halt Low-level Waste Shipments To Hanford

By JOHN K. WILEY
Associated Press Writer

SPOKANE (AP) - The U.S. Department of Energy is willing to halt some shipments of radioactive waste to the Hanford nuclear reservation if the agency can agree with Washington state on a schedule to settle a legal dispute, the Energy Department said Monday.

The state wants to ban shipments of low-level radioactive waste from other states to the former nuclear weapons production site near Richland. State leaders contend the shipments violate federal law and a previous agreement.

During a conference call Monday with U.S. District Judge Alan MacDonald, the Energy Department agreed it would halt the shipments, temporarily, once a court schedule is agreed upon.

"What we did was agree to work out a schedule for court proceedings," said Colleen Clark, an Energy Department spokeswoman in Richland. "If we can reach agreement on what the schedule is, we will not make any shipments during that time period."

David Mears, an assistant state attorney general handling the case, said he hoped that a schedule

agreement could be reached as early as Tuesday.

"It's not a major negotiation," Mears said, as it mostly involves coordinating attorney time. "Both sides have committed to try and reach an agreement."

The Energy Department's last shipment of nuclear waste to the Hanford site was in June, when 109 barrels of material from the Rocky Flats nuclear site in Colorado were sent there, Clark said.

The Energy Department contends the shipments of low-level radioactive waste and waste mixed with hazardous chemicals are legal and do not violate

the Tri-Party Agreement, the Hanford cleanup pact agreed to by DOE, Washington state and the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Washington Gov. Gary Locke and Attorney General Christine Gregoire announced Friday that they would seek to amend a 2003 lawsuit to ban shipments of low-level radioactive waste to the 560-square-mile Hanford site, which contains the nation's largest volume of nuclear wastes from the production of nuclear weapons materials.

That amended lawsuit was filed Monday, Mears said.

Last year, the state sued DOE over shipments of transuranic waste: plutonium-contaminated gloves, rags, tools, dried sludge and other debris from nuclear weapons-making.

Low-level wastes include such materials as building rubble, contaminated dirt, tools and clothing that have less radiation than transuranics. Mixed low-level wastes contain hazardous chemicals.

Under DOE's plan, approximately 62,000 cubic meters of offsite radioactive waste, including 20,000 cubic meters of mixed low-level waste and 15,500 cubic meters of transuranic waste, would be shipped to Hanford.

An earlier proposal would have allowed as much as 219,663 cubic meters of low-level waste and 140,435 cubic meters of mixed low-level waste.

For 40 years, the south-central Washington reservation made plutonium for the nation's nuclear weapons, beginning with the top-secret Manhattan Project to build an atomic bomb.

Today, it is the nation's most contaminated nuclear site. Cleanup costs are expected to total \$50 billion to \$60 billion, with the work to be finished by 2035.



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