

### Farrakhan still not welcome in England

LONDON - The government won an appeal last week to ban Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan from Britain on the grounds that his political views were a threat to public order.

Three judges sitting in the Court of Appeal said the government's decision to ban the activist was based on fears that his "notorious opinions" might provoke disorder.

Last year, High Court Justice Michael Turner had ruled against the ban, saying the government failed to establish "objective justification" for excluding Farrakhan.

The government appealed and said it had good reasons to bar Farrakhan from entering the country.

Monica Carss-Frisk, an attorney representing Home Secretary David Blunkett, said at a hearing last month that he was "well known for expressing anti-Semitic and racially divisive views, particularly at a time of political unrest in the Middle East."

Ruling in favor of the government Tuesday, the three judges said the government ban took into account tensions in the Middle East and the risk of public disorder prompted by a visit by the Chicago-based activist.

Blunkett welcomed the decision and said Farrakhan's presence was "not conducive to good public order."

Farrakhan's lawyer, Nicholas Blake, told the appeal court that his client had become a spiritual and political voice of the African-American community in the United States since the ban was imposed in 1986.

"It is absurd to say that this is a man who is a rabble rouser. He has never been convicted of any disorderly conduct and neither has anyone who attended his meetings," Blake said.

Blake said Farrakhan had taken his message all over the world, to Commonwealth countries and even to Israel. The only country he had not been allowed to visit was Britain.

The ban was imposed first in 1986 by the government of then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Successive administrations have argued that they were entitled to continue the ban because of fears that Farrakhan's presence could lead to public disorder.

### African-American Museum Commission gets funding from Congress

Georgia congressmen have moved closer to the possibility of a museum honoring African-American history and culture on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Congress has allocated \$3 million for a commission to study the museum proposed between the Washington Monument and the Capitol.

Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) and Sen. Max Cleland (D-Ga.) are combining efforts in the House and Senate for the creation of the museum.

The 23-member commission will consist of well-known academics, historians, entertainers, sports figures and philanthropists. The group will have from six to nine months to come up with a plan for the museum. Congress, however, could extend the life of the commission.

"I really feel very good," Lewis told reporters. "It really seems like a dream that's coming close to reality."

Lewis, a former member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and a Freedom Rider during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, has been pursuing the creation of a museum since 1988 and has frequently encountered opposition.

Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) once warned that building a museum honoring African Americans would open the door to "every other minority" asking for a museum of their own.

Lewis says one possible site for the museum is the building that houses the U.S. Forest Service.

### Sharpton close to making decision about 2004 election

NEW YORK - The Rev. Al Sharpton said he is "a lot closer" to declaring a run for president in 2004, saying he will assess his prospects in 20 key states and make a decision by the end of summer.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Sharpton described a cross-country itinerary that has him traveling five days a week, including a speech at the National Press Club in Washington last week that he's billing as a significant policy address.

Sharpton, 47, said he would run if he can put a campaign structure in place in states with early primaries, and get on their ballots.

"Being that they are frontloading the primaries, it works to the advantage of people who are already well known," Sharpton said. He all but ruled out a run as an independent, saying he does not want to play third party spoiler by siphoning votes from Democrats. "I'm not shutting the door (on a third-party bid), but I'm close to shutting the door."

Sharpton's strategy is to cobble together a block of minorities and liberals who believe the Democratic Party has drifted to the right. His platform, which he outlined during the AP interview, includes:

- Creating a federal law banning racial profiling, which he calls "lazy law enforcement." He said his position on profiling is unchanged since the Sept. 11 terror attacks.
- Changing election laws to address "voter disenfranchisement" in the aftermath of the 2000 elections.
- Opposing what he called U.S. military "aggression," and cutting the Pentagon's budget. To fight terrorism, he said, he would rely on diplomacy and better intelligence-gathering.
- Opposing oil exploration in Alaska and advocating research into alternative fuel sources. Sharpton also advocates tougher auto emission restrictions and tighter clean air standards.



Sharpton

# McKinney seemingly weathering storm over her Sept. 11 comments

BY HAZEL TRICE EDNEY  
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WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Cynthia McKinney steps to the edge of the aluminum stage on the Washington Mall as some 10,000 sign-waving, pro-Palestinian peace activists applaud and cheer.

The Georgia Democrat is in her element. Her broad smile belies the scorching controversy surrounding her.

"You go, girl!" shouts a white woman, kneeling on the grass as the five-term congresswoman begins to speak.

She talks to the crowd for 10 minutes about issues ranging from the need for America to internationally "act in defense of the weak," to the "questionable legitimacy" of the Bush White House. But conspicuously, she makes no mention of her controversial accusations of prior knowledge by the Bush administration of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, comments that for weeks have drawn blistering personal and political criticism.

As McKinney leaves the stage, she is shielded by security guards. She shuns reporters - including NNPA's Washington correspondent, whom she has repeatedly promised an interview on the issue, but canceled each time.

McKinney recently told Berkeley, Calif., radio station KPFA-FM that there ought to be



Rep. Cynthia McKinney speaks to reporters in front of the Supreme Court in 1996.

an investigation into whether the Bush administration had prior knowledge of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and whether associates of the administration benefited from the war against terrorism.

"There was adequate warning. There were people who failed to act on the warning. And that's what ought to be investigated," said McKinney, Georgia's first black woman in Congress. "What did this administration know and when did it know it about the events of Sept. 11? Who

else knew and why did they not warn the innocent people of New York who were needlessly murdered?"

She pointed out that former President Bush, the president's father, sits on the board of the Carlyle Group, among America's largest defense contractors. After the terrorist attacks, Congress approved a \$40 billion defense-spending budget through fiscal year 2003.

She speculates: "And, so, we get this presidency of question-

able legitimacy requesting this nearly unprecedented amount of money to go into a defense budget or defense spending that will directly benefit his father."

But McKinney offered no proof.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution editorial page editor, Cynthia Tucker, who is black, lit into McKinney:

"This lunatic theory has been circulated (by conspiracy theo-

See McKinney on A10

## HUD urges 'compassion' in one-strike evictions

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WASHINGTON - Housing Secretary Mel Martinez, in a letter to local public housing authorities, is urging the use of "compassion and common sense" before evicting a family from subsidized housing units in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to uphold rules that force families out for drug-related activities.

The justices' ruling upheld the household responsibility clause, which affects all members of a household when one member or even a guest is found possessing or using drugs. This clause - a so-called "one-strike" rule - is explained in the lease agreements signed by public

housing residents. Housing and tenant rights advocates have decried the policy as too harsh and unfair because there is no similar punishment for others who may receive federal benefits.

Martinez says in his letter that the rule is an important enforcement tool to protect the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of housing authority residences, but should not be applied rigidly. About 3 million people live in public housing.

"The enforcement of this clause is left to the discretion of each public housing agency; however, I would like to urge you, as public housing administrators, to be guided by compas-



Martinez

sion and common sense in responding to cases involving the use of illegal drugs."

Martinez's letter says, "Consider the seriousness of the offense and how it might impact other family members."

"Eviction should be the last option explored, after all others have been exhausted."

The letter is being received favorably.

Catherine Bishop, a staff

attorney for the advocacy group National Housing Law Project, says she was pleased that Martinez had penned the letter. "I think he needs to go further, though," she said. "This letter is a good step and I hope Mr. Martinez doesn't think it is the last step."

Bishop said that if HUD is really serious about helping tenants, it would also point out where housing authorities haven't been compassionate and fix those areas, too.

Housing authorities are evaluated and receive points for the number of people they have evicted, but they are not evaluated on whether they were firm and compassionate.

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