

Not at all

Death threats against president up 400 percent

(St. Louis American/NNPA) - President Barack Obama is the target of more than 30 potential death threats a day and is being protected by an increasingly over-stretched and under-resourced Secret Service, according to a new book.

Since Obama took office, the rate of threats against the president has increased 400 percent from the roughly 3,000 per year under President George W. Bush, according to Ronald Kessler, author of "In the President's Secret Service."



Obama

Some threats to Obama, whose Secret Service codename is Renegade, have been publicized, including an alleged plot by white supremacists in Tennessee late last year to rob a gun store, shoot 88 Black people, decapitate another 14 and then assassinate the first Black president in American history.

Most however, are kept under wraps because the Secret Service fears that revealing details of them would only increase the number of copycat attempts. Although most threats are not credible, each one has to be investigated thoroughly.

According to the book, intelligence officials received intel that people associated with the Somalia-based Islamist group al-Shabaab might try to disrupt Obama's inauguration in January, when the Secret Service coordinated at least 40,000 agents and officers from some 94 police, military and security agencies.

Fire set at black family's trailer

VICKSBURG, Miss. (AP) - A white landlord and a black tenant are questioning why a black family's rented mobile home was set on fire last week.

Kenny and Lawanda Smith and their children are the only black family in their small neighborhood near the Vicksburg National Military Park.

The Smith's 17-year-old child smelled gasoline and went outside to extinguish the fire.

Doris Hill, the landlord's mother, lives near the Smiths. She pointed out last week where a bottle of flammable liquid had been placed beneath the Smiths' children's bedroom.

Hill said a neighbor, who was not identified, has said he believes the Smiths shouldn't be in the neighborhood. Hill said Kenny Smith is "a hardworking man and should be left alone."

Rev. Ike dead at 74

(Washington Informer/NNPA) - The man who made prayer cloths and a financial interpretation of the Bible a staple of Christian faith, Frederick J. Eikerenkoetter II, died Tuesday, July 28 in Los Angeles from complications resulting from a stroke in 2007.

Known for his garish clothing and jewelry, Eikerenkoetter is remembered for his witty remarks, "The Bible says Jesus rode on a borrowed ass. But, I would rather ride in a Rolls Royce than to ride somebody's ass!"



Rev. Ike

While Eikerenkoetter preached a message of material prosperity to his majority middle-class and low-income African-American flock, his beginnings in Ridgeland, S.C. were humble. He was born on June 1, 1935 to a Dutch-Indonesian father, who was a Baptist minister, and a Black school teacher. He got the "calling" to preach around age 9. Eikerenkoetter said that he felt the traditional Christian ministries were too constricting and instilled poverty among its members by supporting messages of piety. In the early 1970s, Eikerenkoetter's ministry was among the first televangelist shows in the world. He reached millions of households each week. Eikerenkoetter reportedly owned lavish mansions on both the East and West Coasts and estimated his yearly income to range between \$6 and 15 million a year, primarily from donations mailed to the television ministry.

At the height of his success, Eikerenkoetter admonished the faithful that he only accepted cash offerings and did not "appreciate the sound of loose change in the offering plate."

As mainstream preachers, social advocates and the Black intelligentsia rallied against him, Eikerenkoetter's magnetism increased. Even in death, the controversial preacher is viewed as much a huckster as a saint.

Eikerenkoetter's son, Bishop Xavier Frederick Eikerenkoetter III, released a statement shortly after his father's death that detailed his father's wishes that he "carry on his vision as the leader of Rev. Ike Ministries."

Eikerenkoetter is also survived by his wife, Eula May Dent.

California mayor loses flag powers in Jackson move

CARSON, California (AP) - A Los Angeles suburb has stripped its mayor of some power after he ordered the U.S. flag be flown at half-staff to honor Michael Jackson.

Carson Mayor Jim Dear lowered the City Hall flag on July 7, the day of Jackson's funeral, calling the pop star an African-American success story and a world-renowned idol.

Military veterans were upset, and the decision sparked critical e-mails, letters and phone calls to Dear.

Dear then submitted the issue to the city's Veterans Affairs Commission and hammered out a change to the city code that strips him of authority to lower the flag. The City Council approved that change last week.

Dear says if he had another chance, he would lower the city flag for Jackson - not the national flag.

Few black staffers on Capitol Hill committees

BY JAMES WRIGHT
AFRO-AMERICAN
NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Blacks in staff positions on major committees are few, and are generally found on those with an African-American chairman, according to a survey released by the Congressional Black Caucus earlier this month.

The results of the survey were reported by Congressional Quarterly Online and covered committee positions ranging from clerical to professional positions such as investigators, attorneys and chief aides.

It revealed a portrait of staff diversity in the U.S. House of Representatives, an institution that has not traditionally kept records on racial representation among committee staffs. There are four Black chairs of committees - Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) of Judiciary; Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) of Ways and Means; Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) of Homeland Security; and Edolphus Towns (D-N.Y.) of Oversight and Government Reform.

Sen. Roland Burris (D-Ill.) does not chair a committee in his chamber.

Committee staffers make key decisions on which bills



should be considered and the information lawmakers receive on an issue. They also play a role in scheduling hearings on legislation and which witnesses to call for testimony.

Blacks have historically not had committee jobs because chairmen, who select the staffs, often pick people who reflect their



Rep. Lee

views and those they are personally comfortable with. Even when Blacks began to chair committees in the early 1980s because of growing seniority, the chairmen had a small pool of Black professionals to select from because of the lack of experience of Black applicants.

An example of the problem is the racial composition of the Democratic staffs of the House Agriculture and Rules committees. Both have one Black staffer each. The committees chaired by Thompson and Towns have Democratic staffs that are 45.5 percent and 44.4 percent Black, respectively.

The low number of Blacks on White-chaired committees concerns Rep.

See Committees on A8

Trailblazing model Naomi Sims dies at 61

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK - Naomi Sims, whose 1968 Ladies' Home Journal cover shot was a breakthrough for black fashion models, has died. She was 61.

Sims, said by some to be the first black supermodel, died last Saturday of breast cancer in Newark, New Jersey, said her brother-in-law Alexander Erwiah, the president of Naomi Sims Beauty Products. It had been decades since she left the runway to become an author and launch her own beauty empire.

Sims attained success at the same time that the "Black is Beautiful" movement was taking hold, and her accomplishments as a barrier-breaking African-American model helped pave the way for the black runway stars of the 1970s, including Pat Cleveland, Alva Chinn and Beverly Johnson.

Sims often spoke of her difficult start - as a gangly foster-care kid in Pittsburgh who towered over the other children in her school. In 1966, she came to New York City to attend the Fashion Institute of Technology on scholarship.

When she began



Naomi Sims

approaching modeling agencies, she was turned down again and again - with some telling her that her skin was too dark. Instead of giving up, she pushed forward and approached photographers directly.

The approach landed her the cover of The New York Times' August 1967 fashion supplement. She used that photo to market herself directly to advertising agencies, and within a year she was earning \$1,000 a week and appearing in a national television campaign for AT&T. Before long, she was modeling for top designers.

Sims gave up modeling

after five years and launched her own wig-making business geared toward black women. She eventually expanded the multimillion-dollar business to include beauty salons and cosmetics, and she wrote "All About Health and Beauty for the Black Woman" and other books.

Sims was born in Oxford, Miss., in 1948. Her parents divorced soon after she was born and her mother moved Sims and her two sisters to Pittsburgh.

Besides her son, Sims is survived by a sister, Betty, and a granddaughter.

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