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Rev. William Barber, state president of the NAACP, delivered a letter to the general manager of WRAZ, the local FOX affiliate in Durham Feb. 26. The letter was to ask for more inclusion of African Americans in the editorial offices of the New York Post and other NewsCorp entities. The Post published a chimpanzee that was killed by two white policemen and said the killing would stop the federal economic Stimulus Plan offered by President Obama. Holding a image of the cartoon if Rev. Rachel Green, member of the executive committee of the Durham Branch of the NAACP.

NAACP Protests NY Post Cartoon Nationwide

By Eric Mayes

Special to the NNPA from the Philadelphia Tribune
PHILADELPHIA (NNPA) - The NAACP is calling for News Corp., which owns the New York Post and recently published a political cartoon - artwork many said was racist - to hire more minorities to ensure such an incident never happens again.

"We hope that Mr. Murdoch will make good on his apology and agree to make the needed changes in the newsroom and its policies," said Benjamin Jealous, president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Rupert Murdoch, owner of News Corp., has apologized for the cartoon.

Nevertheless, protests were planned at Fox News television stations in dozens of U.S. cities on Thursday because of the cartoon that critics said likened a violent chimpanzee to President Barack Obama.

The cartoon featured Travis, a real-life chimpanzee shot recently by police in Connecticut, near New York, after it had attacked a woman. In the drawing, two policemen stand over the chimp's body - one says: "They'll have to find someone else to write the next stimulus bill."

J. Whyatt Mondesire, president of the state and Philadelphia NAACP chapter, along with his members, were seen marching at the corner of Third and Market streets at the local Fox station on Thursday, with signs protesting the New York Post's controversial cartoon.

The national civil rights organization said demonstrations were scheduled in more than 50 cities - including New York, Boston and Baltimore - to protest the Feb. 18 cartoon.

The group also decried what it called "racial insensitivity" and lack of diversity at the paper and the Fox News station.

Jealous said Murdoch had not gone far enough.

"We welcome Rupert Murdoch's statement that the New York Post will endeavor to be more sensitive to the communities it serves, but unfortunately his apology fails to answer how the Post will do so," Jealous said in a statement. "Mr. Murdoch could resolve this unfortunate situation in 15 minutes by meeting to develop substantive measures to ensure that this type of incendiary incident does not happen again."

Representatives for the Post and Fox News did not immediately respond to phone calls from the Associated Press.

A spokesman for the Fox Networks Group, which runs the local TV affiliates, declined to comment.

According to Jealous, the NAACP received more than 20,000 e-mails demanding that Murdoch apologize.

On Feb. 24 he did so.

"Last week, we made a mistake," Murdoch said. "We ran a cartoon that offended many people. Today I want to personally apologize."

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Black caucus presses Obama on priorities

By Ben Evans

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Barack Obama reassured members of the Congressional Black Caucus that he's on their side and will do what he can to support the group's left-leaning agenda, lawmakers said Feb. 26 after an hour-long session at the White House.

Nearly all the group's 42 members attended. Noticeably absent was Illinois Sen. Roland Burris, Obama's replacement who is fending off calls to resign.

The lawmakers - all Democrats - said the reception was a welcome change from the tenure of former President George W. Bush, who held several cordial meetings with black lawmakers but rarely agreed with them on substance.

"There is no comparison," said Rep. Elijah Cummings of Maryland. "(Obama) basically assured us that having been a member of the Congressional Black Caucus ... that he gets the issues and will do everything he can to work with us."

Lawmakers said they presented Obama with a wish-list covering a broad range of topics, many of them economic issues affecting their districts.

They pressed Obama to focus on hiring more minorities to federal jobs and helping small and minority-owned businesses get government contracts. They also discussed creating a health-care safety net and addressing medical disparities among minorities.

Lawmakers expressed continued concerns about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and proposed forming a national task force for improving education in low-income communities.

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas said the caucus made its priorities clear but is

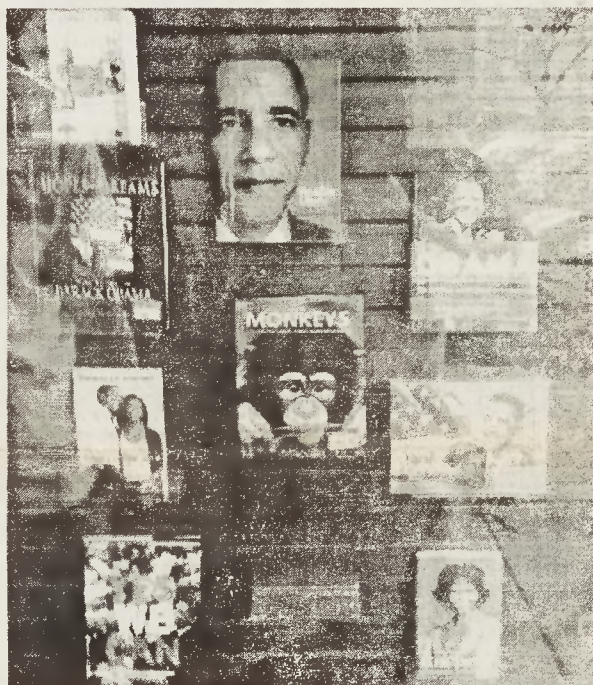
"not unrealistic about what a president can do."

Cummings said some of the proposals don't involve additional money. For example, he said Obama talked about using the bully pulpit to encourage minorities to get more health screenings.

Although Obama was a member of the caucus during his Senate tenure from 2004-2008, he has never had a particularly close relationship with the group. Accommodating its full agenda could cause problems for the president's effort to build a moderate political coalition.

But caucus members said it's their job to make sure he remains focused on the hardships facing their districts, many of which are poor urban areas with high unemployment.

"Everybody's pulling together," said Rep. David Scott of Georgia.



A book display in a Coral Gables, Florida Barnes & Noble had a display of books on President Obama and his wife. According to Barnes & Noble management, a customer placed a book on monkeys in the display. Below is their explanation and apology, this picture had been circling on the Internet.

"Barnes & Noble would like to publicly apologize for what happened in our Coral Gables, Florida store. We believe that a customer played a cruel joke and placed an inappropriate title in the front window of our store, where we were featuring books written by or about President Obama. We want to assure our customers that the book placed by someone other than our booksellers was never intended to be included in our display and was removed as soon as we became aware of the situation. We are looking into it and are taking the steps necessary so that it does not happen again. From time to time customers will move titles from one area of the store to another. In this particular case, we do not condone whatever message may have been intended with the placement of this title in our Presidential display. It certainly was not part of our merchandising and we regret that we didn't see the placement of this title immediately.

Mary Ellen Keating, Spokesperson
Barnes & Noble, Inc.

Durham Native Wilbert 'Bill' Tatum - 'Black Press Giant' Dies in Croatia

NNPA

NEW YORK (NNPA) - The New York Amsterdam News has announced the death of 'Black Press giant' Wilbert "Bill" Tatum, publisher emeritus, CEO and chairman of the board of the newspaper that is in the midst of its centennial celebration.

Tatum, 76, died in a hospital in Croatia on Wednesday evening, February 25, after a brief illness.

His wife, Susan, and family were working to bring Tatum's body back to the U. S. from Croatia, a country in Central Europe. His daughter, Elinor Tatum, publisher and editor-in-Chief of the nationally known and respected weekly newspaper, has expressed her gratitude for the outpouring of support and condolences from leaders in the Black Press, political, public service and Black leadership communities across the nation.

"He was much loved and greatly respected in the Black community and in the media world in general. An international traveler, Bill Tatum saw it as his ambition, mission and accomplishment to grow the Harlem-based New York Amsterdam News into the world-renowned publication that it is today," states the official announcement on www.amsterdamnews.com.

Ms. Tatum, who was named editor-in-chief in 1997, assures readers that the paper will continue in its outstanding tradition of service to the local, national and international community to keep 'The New Black View' in the forefront.

As funeral plans were still incomplete at NNPA deadline, salutes were being echoed across the nation for Tatum, who during his tenure, expanded the readership and influence of the Amsterdam News, New York's oldest Black newspaper.

"The Black Press has lost a giant," says Dorothy R. Leavell, chair of the NNPA Foundation. "The death of Wilbert Tatum reminds me of his call for integrity in our own industry as well as the public. Wilbert's presence and wisdom will be missed by me and so many others that he influenced in his journalistic and activist-inspired leadership."

NNPA Chairman John B. Smith Sr., who has known Tatum more than 30 years, describes him as "a true and stellar newspaperman, who personified fairness, justice and determination to better the 'beloved community. He made certain, throughout his four decades at his publication, to

[write] truth-to-power editorials to advance the African-American diaspora, in particular, and the nation and world, overall."

Tatum, highly esteemed as a businessman as well as a publisher and civil rights leader, gained respect from every facet of society and across political lines.

Democratic Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, a former New York senator, said, "Bill was a dear friend, an inspiration, and a leader among journalists and indeed throughout his community. As the longtime publisher of the Amsterdam News, New York City's oldest African American newspaper, and former Deputy Borough President of Manhattan, Bill's leadership and advocacy on behalf of civil rights, his community, and journalistic integrity is an inspiration to all of us."

Republican Mayor Michael Bloomberg, with whom Tatum frequently sparred, saluted him in a heartfelt statement upon his death.

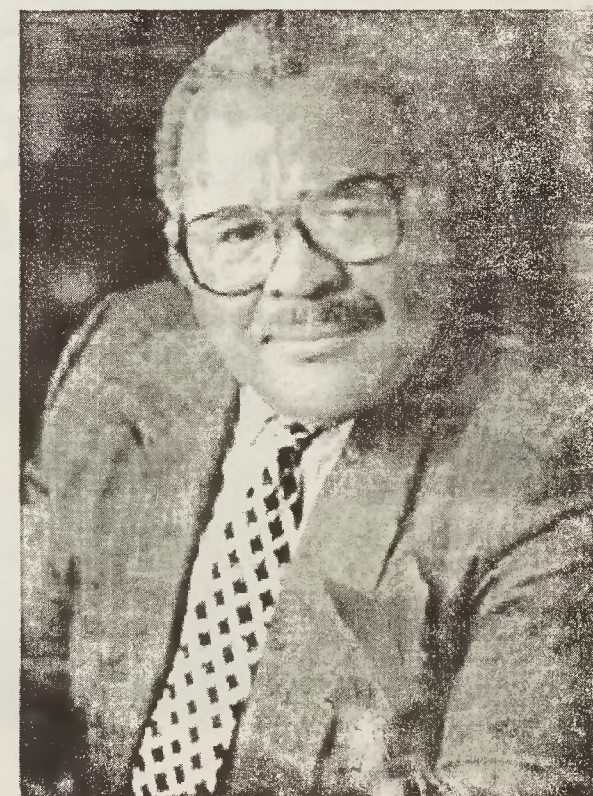
"It's a big loss for a paper that has been influencing and reflecting City politics for over 100 years now," said Bloomberg. "Bill helped build the company into a major employer in Harlem, but the paper's voice really was heard across the city - and, on many occasions, around the world. He covered issues of concern to African-Americans in ways that other media outlets did not, and he gave many young writers opportunities they might not otherwise have had."

From politicians to civil rights activists, Tatum carried major influence.

New York Action Network President Al Sharpton described Tatum as "an iconic and vitally important figure in both journalism and civil rights. I first met him when I was a teenager involved in civil rights work in New York and have known him over 30 years," he says. "His courage, his tenacity, his sagacity, and his advocacy are unparalleled in African-American journalism. We have lost a great advocate, a penetrating writer, an unmatched institution builder, and for me, a great friend and father figure."

The Amsterdam News was founded in 1909 as a Black-owned and operated institution. In 1996, Wilbert Tatum bought out the last remaining investor. Though he stepped down as publisher, he continued serving as the publication's publisher emeritus, CEO, and chairman of the board.

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TATUM