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In Selma, Obama Proved that he is 'Black Enough'

By George E. Curry
NNPA Editor-in-Chief

SELMA, Ala. (NNPA) - Throughout his campaign for the presidency, Barack Obama was dogged by one question: Is he black enough? The question was repeated so often that after showing up late for an appearance at the 2008 annual convention of the National Association of Black Journalists in Las Vegas, Obama said, "I want to apologize for being late, but you guys keep asking whether I am black enough."
After a 33-minute speech Saturday in Selma, Ala. commemorating the Selma to Montgomery March and passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, nobody was asking: Is Barack Obama black enough?

NEW ANALYSIS

President Obama rarely discussed the issue of race in his first six years in office except in reaction to a major racial catastrophe such as the shooting deaths of Trayvon Martin in Florida and Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. or the arrest of Harvard University Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. for breaking into his own home.
On Saturday, however, President Obama seemed comfortable discussing race in public, showing he has a deep appreciation for the accomplishments of the Civil Rights Movement and quoting or referencing the Bible, black spirituals, James Baldwin, Sojourner Truth, Fannie Lou Hamer, Langston Hughes, the Tuskegee Airmen, Jackie Robinson and even his favorite hip-hop artist Jay-Z.
While connecting with African Americans, President Obama also underscored the significance of civil rights warriors making America hold true to its creed.
"As John [Lewis] noted, there are places and moments in America where this nation's destiny has been decided. Many are sites of war - Concord and Lexington, Appomattox, Gettysburg. Others are sites that symbolize the daring of America's character - Independence Hall and Seneca Falls, Kitty Hawk and Cape Canaveral," the president said.



NCCU RETIRES JERSEY OF CELTICS LEGEND, BASKETBALL HALL OF FAMER SAM JONES - Sam Jones with wife Gladys and NCCU Chancellor Dr. Debra Saunders-White (photo by Dyann Busse)

NCCU Retires Jersey Of Celtics Legend, Basketball Hall Of Famer Sam Jones

Nccueaglepride.com
On Thursday, March 5, North Carolina Central University officially retired the jersey and its number of alumnus and Boston Celtics legend Sam Jones during a ceremony between the NCCU women's and men's basketball games against rival North Carolina A&T inside McDougald-McLendon Gymnasium.
Prior to the unveiling of the jersey hanging from the rafters of the gym where he played more than 50 years ago, Governor Pat McCrory presented Jones with The Order of the Long Leaf Pine award, the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a citizen of North Carolina.
One of the greatest NBA players of all-time, Jones played at NCCU from 1951-54 and 1956-57, and remains the school's second-leading career scorer with 1,745 points in four seasons under head coaches John McLendon and Floyd Brown.
Born in Wilmington, North Carolina and a high school graduate of Laurinburg (N.C.) Institute, Jones was chosen by the Boston Celtics with the eighth overall pick in the first round of the 1957 NBA Draft.
His 12-year career with the Celtics included 10 NBA Championships, five All-Star Game appearances and three selections to the All-NBA Second Team. Nicknamed "Mr. Clutch," Jones amassed 15,411 points, an average of 17.7 points per game, 4,305 rebounds and 2,209 assists in 871 contests.
Jones was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame and the NCCU Athletics Hall of Fame in 1984, as well as the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame in 1969. He was selected to the NBA 25th Anniversary All-Time Team in 1970, and was later named among the top 50 players in NBA history as a member of the 50th Anniversary All-Time Team in 1996.



President Barack Obama, center, holds hands with Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., left and Mrs. Amelia Boynton Robinson, right, who were both beaten during "Bloody Sunday," as they walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., for the 50th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday," a landmark event of the civil rights movement. From left are Sasha Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, Mrs. Boynton Robinson and Mrs. Adelaide Sanford. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin).

"Selma is such a place. In one afternoon 50 years ago, so much of our turbulent history - the stain of slavery and anguish of civil war; the yoke of segregation and tyranny of Jim Crow; the death of four little girls in Birmingham; and the dream of a Baptist preacher - all that history met on this bridge."
He made his comments with the Edmund Pettus Bridge, where civil rights marchers were attacked by Alabama State Troopers on "Bloody Sunday," serving as a backdrop.
"It was not a clash of armies, but a clash of wills; a contest to determine the true meaning of America," Obama said. "And because of men and women like John Lewis, Joseph Lowery, Hosea Williams, Amelia Boynton, Diane Nash, Ralph Abernathy, C.T. Vivian, Andrew Young, Fred Shuttlesworth, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and so many others, the idea of a just America and a fair America, an inclusive America, and a generous America - that idea ultimately triumphed."
President Obama also acknowledged the contributions of thousands whose name will never be known to the public yet played a critical role in securing the right to vote.
"As is true across the landscape of American history, we cannot examine this moment in isolation. The march on Selma was part of a broader campaign that spanned generations; the leaders that day part of a long line of heroes. We gather here to celebrate them. We gather here to honor the courage of ordinary Americans willing to endure billy clubs and the chastening rod; tear gas and the trampling hoof; men and women who despite the gush of blood and splintered bone would stay true to their North Star and keep marching towards justice.
"They did as Scripture instructed: 'Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.' And in the days to come, they went back again and again. When the trumpet call sounded for more to join, the people came - black and white, young and old, Christian and Jew, waving the American flag and singing the same anthems full of faith and hope."
(Continued On Page 2)

Ritz-Carlton Charlotte apologizes for charge during CIAA tourney

CHARLOTTE (AP) - A Charlotte hotel has apologized for levying a 15 percent service charge for lounge patrons during a black college basketball tournament last month.
The Charlotte Observer reports it obtained a copy of an apology from the Ritz-Carlton for the charge levied during the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association tourney.
The hotel apologized to any guests it may have offended and said the service fee was not to single out any group or organization.
A patron told television station WBTV about the charge and gave the station a copy of her receipt.
The hotel told WBTV that because of the size of the event, it added the extra charge for lobby beverage servers. But the station said the hotel did not respond when asked if such charges were added for other events.