

# Mandela Stirs Hope In Message At Yankee Stadium

NEW YORK (AP) — A Haitian immigrant, the granddaughter of a slave and a youth group from an impoverished section of Brooklyn shared Nelson Mandela's message of hope and equality in the top rows of Yankee Stadium.

"What better place for them to be?" asked Dan Esquelin, a volunteer who brought 15 boys and girls, age 7 to 16, from the Buskwick Youth Council to the Rally last Thursday. "They don't have to see just the drugs and the dope and the shooting in the street. They've got a better role model here."

Malar Wigfall, 14, clearly agreed. Mandela, he said, "is important to me. I learned something tonight — you can change things."

Nearby, Norma Leveridge, a Head Start director in the Bronx and the granddaughter of a South Carolina slave, raised her fist and joined the audience in singing Nkose Sikelele Africa (God Bless Africa), the anthem of the African National Congress.

"This is a prayer to Africa," she said, adding: "Even in this age, with all the problems we have, with drugs and racial tensions, there's still

hope."

A few rows up, J. Klebert Obas, who came to New York from Haiti "to get a better life - like everybody," proudly held in front of him a 4-by-4-foot painting he had done to sum up his thoughts. A vulture on the canvas represented the South African government, he said, while a dove represented peace. The road between the two birds was covered with blood.

Obas and thousands of others had \$5 and \$10 seats so far from the stage that Mandela, his wife, Winnie, and musical performers looked no taller than a fingernail.

But the enthusiasm they generated was gigantic. Spontaneous cheers of "Man-del-a" and "Keep the pressure on" went up again and again amid a sea of "Free South Africa" posters in the ANC colors green, black and yellow. Tiny ANC flags were pinned to dreadlocks, elegant coiffures, baseball caps and straw hats alike.

There was also dancing in the aisles, thanks to Salsa singer Willie Colon, folk singer Tracey Chapman and Calypso singer Mighty Sparrow.

Caught up in the fervor, the 71-year-old freedom fighter merrily waved his fist and bopped to the

crowd's rhythmic clapping.

The good feelings even spilled over into the normally tense subways as thousands lined up to take trains home. Unlike the shoving matches that typify rush hour, crowds jamming the platforms near Yankee Stadium calmly entered the trains, carefully avoiding nearby toes and apologizing to each other when they bumped.

Said one strap hanger: "This is probably the only time everyone on the train has been nice."

Mandela came to the stadium following a rally in Harlem where

crowds filled streets, balconies and fire escapes to experience a little bit of history. Malcolm X's widow, Betty Shabazz, wept as Mrs. Mandela embraced her.

Earlier, Mandela had taped a question-and-answer session moderated by Ted Koppel. The last person Koppel called on was 8-year-old Bernard L. Charles III, who told Mandela, "I am very glad you're free. If there's anything we can do, just send us a post card, and we'll do anything we can do - even raise money."

## Mannerist, Musician, Or Muse?

NEW YORK (AP) — Is Miles Davis a muse, a mannerist or a musician?

The question's been asked in the jazz world for years. Sometimes he's more of one than the other two, but on the opening night of this year's JVC Jazz Festival he played a bit of each role.

As muse, he drifted dreamily across the stage, nodding on his trumpet. As mannerist, he committed such no-nos as playing most of the set with his back to the audience. As musician, he engaged his players in conversation that ranged from intimate to vigorous.

Davis and his six-piece band entered August Avery Fisher Hall cooking and left the same way last Friday night. The audience stomped and howled for more but what they heard was what they got. Besides Miles Davis and the Miles Davis Band had a late show to play.

Davis, who's passed beyond the legend stage to the cult figure level might appear indifferent to his audience, but never to his music. His duels and duets with saxophonist Kenny Garrett and lead bassist Joseph Foley McCreary were the highlights of the evening.

Hiroshima, an American band with some Oriental affectations, played the first half of the bill at a highly amplified level that often drowned out whatever musical effects were intended.

The JVC Jazz Festival, sponsored by the Japanese electronics firm, runs in New York through June 30 and then moves on to Saratoga Springs, N. Y.



GETTING READY TO PLAY — Dr. George C. Dobnam is shown examining participants in St. Augustine's National Youth Sports Program. Left to right are Jamal Perry, Tyrone Fowler, Sedrick Evans, Dr. Dobnam, and Reco

Bares. The youth could hardly wait to complete their physicals so they could begin playing basketball, soccer, tennis, softball and volleyball. They are looking forward to the swimming classes at Chavis Park also.

## Inmates Racial Slurs Lead To Assault

MARSHFIELD, Mo. (AP) — Racial slurs led to the sexual assault of one inmate and the beating of two others by their cellmates at Webster County Jail, Sheriff Bill John said last week.

The inmates were watching the NBA finals on television last Tuesday night when derogatory remarks allegedly were made about blacks, John said.

"They were watching the Portland Trail Blazers and the (Detroit) Pistons. Racial slurs started over that," John said.

After the game ended, three white inmates allegedly woke a sleeping black inmate and began beating him, the sheriff said. The television was turned up to drown out the noise, John said.

The jail trustee, sleeping in a nearby

cell, told the inmates to turn down the volume and then probably shut his door, John said.

One of two white inmates who tried to break up the fight was forced to perform sex acts on the three attackers, the sheriff said, and the second white inmate was treated for bruises, an injured eye and several loose teeth allegedly suffered during the attack.

## Black Nun Leads Richmond Parish

RICHMOND, Va. — Mercy Sister Cora Billings, director of the Diocese of Richmond's Office for Black Catholics, has assumed an added title of parish pastoral coordinator and is believed to be the first Black woman in the United States to hold such a position.

Sister Billings will do almost everything but celebrate Mass and administer the sacraments at the largely Black parish in Richmond.

"It's a great responsibility, a great challenge. But I'm the kind of person who realizes that anything I may accomplish I cannot do on my own," Sister Billings told Catholic News Service June 4, the first day of her new assignment.

A non-resident "priest moderator" from a Richmond parish will handle sacramental ministry at the parish and collaborate with Sister Billings, she said, "but I will have the most responsibility."

Sister Billings' open-ended parish assignment is the first to come from a Richmond diocesan policy enacted last October to make non-ordained parish leaders a central feature in serving a growing Catholic population with fewer priests.

Rural areas in the diocese, she said, had traditionally been "where the community gathered with a lay person as a leader" to stave off a priest shortage. Hers is the first application of the policy in an urban area of the diocese.

Father Mattias Newell, former pastor at St. Elizabeth, a 219-member parish in a middle-to lower class section of Richmond, left diocesan service to join a Benedictine

monastery.

Would the parish have had to shut down were she not named pastoral coordinator? "When I look around the other dioceses, that's the pattern I see," said Sister Billings, a Philadelphia native who has worked in the Richmond diocese since 1981.

"I don't think that would have been the case here."

She said Richmond Bishop Walter F. Sullivan "asked me would I be willing to do it. I thought about it, I prayed about it. I thought it would be something I'm capable of doing."

Sister Billings, 51, will continue two or three days a week in the Black Catholic office in Richmond and spend the rest of her time at St. Elizabeth, but cut her involvement in campus ministry at Virginia State University in Petersburg, Va.

Sister Billings said she recognizes "every day" that the eyes of Catholics nationwide may be on her, yet she sees importance in being Black, being a woman and being a religious in her parish position. "All of the above," she said with a laugh.

"I see it as a way of encouraging others for women to be leaders...for Black women, African-Americans," Sister Billings said.

If someone like her is not there "for people to look at and see as themselves, they're not even encouraged to go out and try something," she said.

The average American eats 3.1 pounds of fresh strawberries and one pound of frozen berries a year.

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