

Yahwehs Gain Support On Capitol Hill

The Senate Judiciary Committee, the congressional panel that catapulted into national prominence during the recent Clarence Thomas confirmation, and a member of the Black Caucus, are looking into the prolonged incarceration of jailed black religious leader Yahweh Ben Yahweh.

The investigation is the result of the Nation of Yahweh's intensive lobbying of congressmembers, nationwide media attention, and the collection of more than one million signatures on a petition regarding the plight of the Black Hebrew Israelite leader.

Yahweh is being held in jail without bail following his arrest last November along with 16 temple members as part of a three count federal indictment charging 13 homicides and two attempted murders. Yahweh and his followers have maintained their innocence since the arrests, charging a U.S. government conspiracy against their religious group. The trial, originally scheduled for May 1991 in a Florida federal court, then rescheduled for

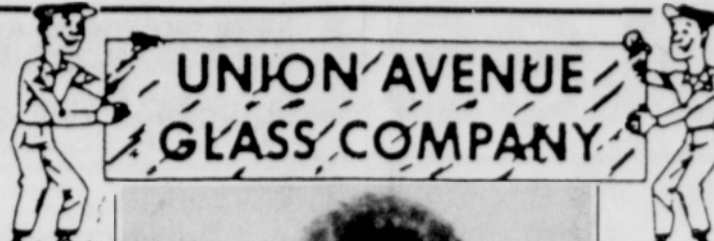
September 1991, has again been rescheduled for January 1992.

Yahweh is being held under the Bail Reform Act of 1984 which mandates that a suspect can be detained without bail if the court considers him a threat to society.


Black Caucus member Rep. Mervyn Dymally (D-CA) has assigned a staff attorney to review the use of the Bail Reform Act against Yahweh.

The Yahwehs' national lobbying, media and petition campaigns, calling for justice for Yahweh, have focused on former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall's decision that "pretrial detention erodes a detainee's right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty." Marshall also wrote that "pretrial detention as applied to certain situations is unconstitutional."

"My client is innocent," said Yahweh lead defense attorney Alcee Hastings, mirroring Marshall's opinion. "All that we are asking for is a fair trial before an important judge and 12 reasonable men and women."



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West Coast Black Publishers Association WCBPA Heads In New Direction



The West Coast Black Publisher's Association has elected Bernard V. Foster president for a two-year term effective until October 1993. Foster, publisher of both Portland and Seattle editions of The Skanner, said he is taking the organization in a different direction.

"We have been the recorders of history," Foster said. "And although what we're covering is not changing, we're going to focus primarily on our readers, our trade association, the markets we serve. I want to refocus our energy on the business aspect of the

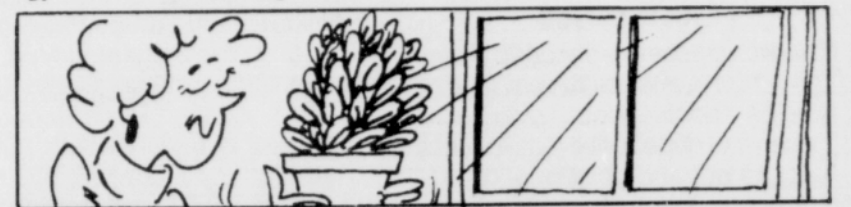
industry."

He said that major newspapers have always recognized the business aspect of their industry, and although more of them are beginning to concentrate on the minority aspect of journalism, "we understand each other better than anybody else. I think they still misunderstand and misinterpret because they don't have the same views or concerns."

Dr. Ruth Love, former superintendent of the Chicago School District, has been elected vice president of the organization. Foster said that her expertise in the school system would benefit the WCBPA tremendously.

The WCBPA is a trade association composed of 22 member newspapers in 18 markets throughout the Western United States with a total readership of about 1.2 million loyal readers. It celebrated its 20th anniversary during a three-day convention held in Los Angeles, Calif. from Oct. 17-19. States covered includes California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada and Colorado. Convention keynote speaker was California Speaker of the Assembly Willie Brown Jr.

Other elected officials include Hardy Brown, second vice president; Virginia Taylor, secretary and Brian Townsend, treasurer.



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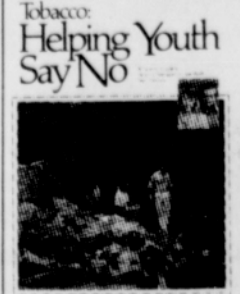
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