

# Bush Skips NAACP, Kerry Promises Dialogue

President accused of dividing America by race, wealth

(AP) - Democrat John Kerry, taking advantage of a spat between the NAACP and the White House, accused President Bush of dividing America by race and wealth, and promised as president to represent "all of the people."

"The president may be too busy to talk to you," Kerry told the partisan crowd at the NAACP convention in Philadelphia Thursday, "but I have news for you: He's going to have plenty of time after Nov. 2."

Bush rejected an invitation to address the NAACP. He has not spoken to the civil rights group since the 2000 campaign, when the NAACP National Voter Fund ran an ad that portrayed Bush as unsympathetic to the dragging death of James Byrd in Texas.

Since the campaign, leaders of the NAACP have called Bush an illegal president, compared his anti-abortion views to the Taliban and called his trip to Africa a photo-op. A Bush spokesman blasted the NAACP on Thursday.

The president "has many friends who belong to the NAACP and respects their proud history of championing civil rights," White House communications director Dan Bartlett said. "Differences of opinion and opposing views are of course part of the national debate. Yet the current



Presidential Candidate John Kerry greets NAACP delegates.

leadership of the NAACP has clearly crossed the line in partisanship and civility, making it impossible to have a constructive dialogue." "Despite the current

leadership's intolerant views, President Bush will continue to reach out to members of the NAACP and African-Americans from across the country," he said. Bush addresses the Urban League, another civil rights group, this week.

NAACP chairman Julian Bond poked fun at Bush for refusing to address the group because of its criticism.

"If he didn't go anywhere people criticize him, he'd never leave home," Bond said, drawing laughter.

In Washington, Bush's education secretary, Rod Paige, took aim at Bond and NAACP president Kweisi Mfume for what he called "hateful and untruthful rhetoric about Republicans and President Bush." At the convention, NAACP officials have described some black organizations

as mouthpieces of white conservatives and have said Bush's education law disproportionately hurts minorities.

When Kerry took his turn on stage to the soul anthem "We are Family," he said, "I will be a president who is truly a uniter, not one who seeks to divide one nation by race or riches or by any other label."

He noted the high unemployment rate for blacks, and said Bush had not done enough to improve education, the economy and civil rights for all Americans, including blacks.

In a foreign policy tracked closely by blacks, Kerry said as president he would use "the full weight of American leadership" to help stop genocide in Sudan. A spokeswoman said that could include military force, but not as a first step.



Whoopi Goldberg

## Goldberg Angers Corporate Sponsor

(AP) - The Slim-Fast diet drink company has dumped Whoopi Goldberg from its advertising because its executives were unhappy with remarks the comedian made at a recent political rally that mocked President Bush.

"We are disappointed by the manner in which Ms. Goldberg chose to express herself and sincerely regret that her recent remarks offended some of our consumers. Ads featuring Ms. Goldberg will no longer be on the air," Slim-Fast general manager Terry Olson said in a press

release. Goldberg participated at a recent Democratic fund-raiser at Radio City Music Hall in New York. At one point in a speech mocking the Bush administration, Goldberg used his surname as a sexual reference.

The event raised \$7.5 million for the John Kerry-John Edwards presidential ticket. Both Kerry and Edwards attended, but neither commented about the jokes made by the celebrities toward Bush.

Slim-Fast Foods is based in West Palm Beach, Fla.

## African American is Keynote Speaker for Dems

Delegates nearly 40 percent minority

Barack Obama, Illinois state senator and the Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate, will deliver the keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention on Tuesday, July 27, before a delegation comprised of nearly 40 percent minority representatives.

"Barack is an optimistic voice for America and a leader who knows that together we can build an America that is stronger at home and respected in the world," said Democratic Presidential candidate John Kerry. "He understands the importance of building an economy that lifts



Barack Obama

up families and expands opportunity, and I'm honored that he has accepted the invitation to deliver the keynote address."

"I am honored and humbled to deliver the keynote address at this year's Democratic National

Convention and look forward to sharing with America the hopes and dreams of so many people throughout Illinois that I have met during this campaign," said Obama. "America is excited about the new direction our country

can take under the leadership of John Kerry and John Edwards, and I am ready to work with them to make it happen."

Obama will talk about his hope for America and the new direction for this country the Kerry-Edwards ticket offers. He will speak to the need for a stronger America that puts jobs, families and communities first. He will also highlight the importance of Americans dedicating their lives to serving their community and their country.

According to statistics compiled by the Democratic National Committee, 39 percent of the 4,341 delegates to this month's convention in Boston are minorities. More African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics will attend the Convention than ever before.



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