

Democratic Candidates Address Inequities

Debate raises black community issues

(AP) -- If Bill Clinton was the "first black president," his wife and Barack Obama are vying to be the second.

Obama, the only black running for the White House, came into a debate at predominantly black Howard University Thursday night with the crowd on his side, chanting his name as all eight Democratic candidates posed for pictures on stage. But Hillary Rodham Clinton appeared to win many of them over in an impassioned performance that addressed their anger over inequality.

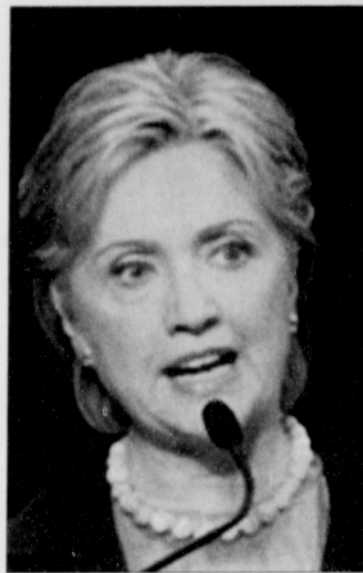
"If HIV/AIDS were the leading cause of death of white women between the ages of 25 and 34, there would be an outraged outcry in this country," Clinton said in the biggest applause line of the night, bringing audience members to their feet.

Black voters are a loyal base

for Democratic candidates, which was why all the presidential candidates were sure to take part in a debate focused entirely on issues facing the black community. Polls show that blacks are closely divided between Obama and Clinton, with other candidates gathering less support.

Democratic strategist Donna Brazile, who served as Democrat Al Gore's campaign manager in 2000, said the debate gave Obama an opportunity to introduce himself to many black voters who aren't familiar with him after he served just 2 1/2 years in Washington. "He didn't knock it out of the park," Brazile said, adding that Clinton was a standout.

"She clearly understood that these issues deserve urgent attention, and she connected on that," Brazile said of the New York senator.



Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y.

She also is married to former President Clinton, so wildly popular among black voters that novelist Toni Morrison dubbed him "the first black president" in a 1998 essay.

While the two previous debates focused largely on Iraq, there were no questions about the war this time. Some candidates injected Iraq into their an-



Democratic Presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., greets a crowd of supporters as he arrives for a televised Democratic presidential candidates debate at Howard University in Washington, D.C. (AP photo)

swers, saying they would use the money spent on the war on domestic priorities and winning applause for the promise.

The debate's moderator, Tavis Smiley, steered the candidates to other issues that matter to black America. In turn, the candidates said those issues mattered to them.

"This issue of poverty in America is the cause of my life,"

Edwards said.

Said Obama: "It starts from birth."

Obama, who is the son of a black Kenyan man and a white Kansas woman, shared a bond with the largely black audience that no other candidate could claim. All the candidates decried the Supreme Court ruling earlier in the day that rejected school diversity plans in Seattle

and Louisville, Ky., saying it turned back the promise of integrated schools that the court laid out 53 years ago in its landmark decision in Brown v. Board of Education.

Obama offered himself as a powerful example of a beneficiary of Brown. "If it hadn't been for them, I would not be standing here today," the Illinois senator said.

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Presidential Candidate Speaks at Benson

Fills school auditorium

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich made a point out of visiting Benson High School Sunday, a campaign event that packed the Benson auditorium.

Campaign officials said the northeast Portland school was selected as the site for the rally to highlight Kucinich's commitment to diversity.

The Ohio Democrat sees the nation is at its strongest in diverse neighborhoods like those that surround Benson, where there are many kinds of homes, businesses

and other uses mixed together. He envisions such neighborhoods across the country working together towards a peaceful and sustainable world.

He also finds a place for Oregon's rural areas in his worldview, pointing out the positive attributes of Portland's burgeoning farmer's markets.

"You see in some of the farmer's markets throughout the state that people in the cities are able to gain access to the agricultural production of the nearby communities, and that's really important because it enables the saving of fuel," he says.

Curbing gasoline consumption is key for Kucinich since he sees the war in the Middle East as a war



U.S. Rep. Dennis Kucinich

for oil. Campaigning heavily in Oregon, which was one of the few states where he won a sixth of the Democratic primary vote in 2004, he

hopes to be in a stronger position to push for environmental innovations and subsidies as U.S. President.

"Oregon understands 'green,'" Kucinich says. "It's a very beautiful and green state, but neither Oregon nor any other state will be able to protect itself if there aren't national policies with international participation to save the globe."

But don't label him left-of-center, or he will remind you of the direction that the country's outlook is taking.

"Every position that I've taken in the last five years is supported by the mainstream of America, whether it's getting out of Iraq or providing health care for all," he says.

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This public service announcement provided by the Portland Observer Newspaper.



First iPhones Bring About Buyer Frenzy

(AP) -- Techies, exhibitionists and luminaries — even the co-founder of Apple and the mayor of Philadelphia — were among the inaugural group of iPhone customers.

The latest must-have, cutting edge piece of techno-wizardry went on the market for the first time Friday.

"I just love getting new stuff," said retiree Len Ederly, who arrived at 3 a.m. to be first in line outside an Apple store in Cambridge, Mass. "It's the best new

Surrounded by cheering Apple Store employees, one of the first iPhone buyers leaves the store on Fifth Avenue in New York.

thing that's come along in a long time. It's beautiful."

Even Steve Wozniak, the ex-partner of Apple CEO Steve Jobs, showed up at a Silicon Valley mall at 4 a.m. aboard his Segway scooter. He helped keep order in the line outside the Apple store at Santa Clara's Valley Fair Mall.

Wozniak said the device would redefine cell phone design and use.

"Look how great the iPod turned out," he said.

Apple is indeed banking that its new, do-everything phone with a touch-sensitive screen for telephone calls, Internet, email and music will become its third core business next to its moneymaking iPod music players and Macintosh computers.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

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School Assignment Ruling Denounced

The National Urban League and its affiliates in Louisville and Seattle expressed dismay in the 5-4 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that struck down the use of race in school-assignment plans.

Last week's decision striking down school-assignment plans in public schools in Seattle and Louisville sets a very unfortunate precedent that could end up legalizing re-segregation nationwide by raising the bar for achiev-

ing racial diversity, said National Urban League President and CEO Marc H. Morial.

"The nation's highest court seems hell-bent on penalizing communities such as Louisville that have made great progress in breaking down racial barriers and found a consensual and voluntary way to maintain racial diversity in their schools, giving all students — not just ones in affluent neighborhoods — greater ac-

cess to quality education," Morial observed.

Seattle Urban League President and CEO James Kelly said the decision "will not deter our efforts in Seattle to ensure that every child gets an equal chance at an equally good education. Our nation cannot expect to get to that goal in one-size-fits-all plans so we must continue to persevere and formulate the best solution possible for our own communities."

Libraries Make Reading Fun

Kids are keeping track of their reading time on game boards to earn prizes and other incentives this summer at local branches of the Multnomah County Library.

Last year, nearly 57,000 kids and teens participated in the Summer Reading program which en-

courages students to keep reading when school is out, strengthening skills learned in the classroom that can be lost over the summer.

The library hosts fun Summer Reading events throughout the summer, everything from Pirate

Maps to Swing Dancing to Bicycle Maintenance for Teens. Caregivers can win prizes for pre-readers, too, by reading to them.

Learn more at the Summer Reading website at multcolib.org/summer.