

LAW & JUSTICE

NAACP Moves to End to War on Drugs

Calling for equity, justice and effective law enforcement

The NAACP passed a historic resolution calling for an end to the war on drugs at their 102nd annual convention in Los Angeles Thursday.

"Today the NAACP has taken a major step towards equity, justice and effective law enforcement," stated Benjamin Todd Jealous, NAACP president and chief executive officer. "These flawed drug policies that have been mostly enforced in African American communities must be stopped and replaced with evidenced-based practices that address the root causes of drug use and abuse in America."

The resolution outlines the facts about the failed drug war, highlighting that the U.S. spends over \$40 billion annually on the war on drugs, locking up low-level drug offenders

—mostly from communities of color. African Americans are in fact 13 times more likely to go to jail for the same drug-related offense than their white counterparts.

"Studies show that all racial groups abuse drugs at similar rates, but the numbers also show that African Americans, Hispanics and other people of color are stopped, searched, arrested, charged, convicted, and sent to prison for drug-related charges at a much higher rate," said Alice Huffman, president of the California State Conference of the NAACP. "This dual system of drug law enforcement that serves to keep African-Americans and other minorities under lock and key and in prison must be exposed and eradicated."



The FBI and police hunt down suspected drug dealers.

Instead of sending drug offenders to prison, the resolution calls for the creation and expansion of rehabilitation and treatment programs, methadone clinics, and other treatment protocols that have been proven effective.

"We know that the war on drugs has been a complete failure because in the 40 years that we've been waging this war, drug use and abuse has not gone down," stated Robert Rooks, director of the NAACP Criminal Justice Program. "The only thing we've accomplished is becoming the world's largest incarcerator, sending people with mental health and addiction issues to prison, and creating a system of racial disparities that rivals Jim Crow policies of the 1960s."

The resolution will encourage the more than 1,200 active NAACP units across the country to organize campaigns to advocate for the end of the war on drugs.

Hate Crime Killer Dies

(AP)-- A Portland man convicted of murder in a notorious 1988 hate crime has died from complications of hepatitis C.

The Oregon Department of Corrections says Kenneth Mieske fell ill at the Oregon State Penitentiary and died July 26 at Salem Hospital at

age 45.

Mieske was sentenced to life in prison after his conviction for using a baseball bat to fatally beat an Ethiopian student, Mulugeta Seraw, on a Portland street corner.

On Nov. 12, 1988, Mieske and two companions with the skinhead

gang East Side White Pride handed out racist leaflets at Pioneer Courthouse Square. They left a beer party early the next morning and spotted Seraw on a southeast Portland street corner talking to two countrymen.

Mieske and his friends drove up and ordered the men to move. After the two groups of men exchanged angry words, the skinheads jumped out and attacked the Ethiopians.

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