

President Obama Highlights 100th NAACP Convention with "No Excuses" Address

From Taylor Media Services

The 100th Annual Convention of the NAACP - the nation's largest and most influential civil rights organization - was highlighted in New York City last week by a 'tough love' speech from President Barack Obama. The nation's first African American president urged a "no excuses" agenda on the veteran civil rights organization.

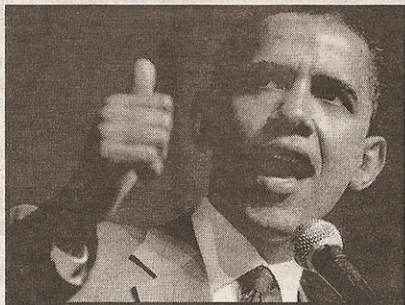
He told the gathering "We've got to say to our children ... you will face challenges that somebody in a wealthy suburb does not have to face. But that's no reason to get bad grades, that's not a reason to cut class ... Your destiny is in your hands." The address was enthusiastically received even though some

delegates had been expecting the president to announce new programs to aid Black America through the current recession.

Meanwhile, NAACP President Benjamin Jealous began the convention maintaining that even in the age of Obama, the nation still needed civil rights organizations such as his. He told those gathered at New York's Hilton Hotel that the NAACP will keep working for social and economic justice saying, "We dream big of a day all kids go to good schools, when all workers have a good job. And when someone says 'Mr. Jealous, your dreams are too big,' I say, 'Read up on the history of the NAACP.'"

The convention heard from a host of distinguished and influential white and Black Americans including the new African American chairman of the Republican Party Michael Steel. He urged the delegates to reconsider the GOP as "an ally" in the struggle of civil rights and social justice. His plea came amid charges that the Republicans are increasingly becoming a party of old white men.

Meanwhile, Jealous indicated a desire to pull younger people people into the aging NAACP.



President Barack Obama



**NAACP President
Benjamin Jealous**