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WHAT'S INSIDE

Valuation of city assets (Page A-2)

The City of Detroit announced it will begin valuating all City-owned assets as part of an ongoing restructuring process. Contary to what some fear, the valuations do not mean or even imply, according to emergency manager Kevyn Orr, that anything is going to be sold, such as the precious paintings, sculptures, etc. at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Special honor for a special lady (Page B-1)

Ingrid Saunders Jones was recently honored by peers, family and friends at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. For 30 years she worked for The Coca-Cola Foundation in various capacities. A new exhibit there highlights the accomplishments of the outstanding businesswoman.

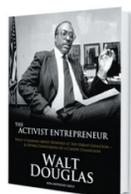


Another March on Washington (Page B-4)

On Saturday, Aug. 24, the NAACP will co-host a sequel to the March on Washington for Jobs and Justice. According to Ben Jealous, NAACP president and CEO, 2013 has shown us that the work is not finished.

Businessman details journey in new book (Page C-1)

Walter Douglas has for decades ranked as one of the most accomplishment entrepreneurs in metro Detroit.



Among his achievements are rising to the position of chairman of Avis Ford and serving as president of New Detroit, Douglas shares his knowledge and details his journey in a just-published book.

Usher's middle name is success (Page D-1)

Singer, songwriter and actor Usher first made his presence known in 1994 and it has been nothing but success since then. In addition to the millions of records he has sold and the Grammys he has taken home, Usher has conquered Broadway.



\$1.00

Color line or colorblind Detroit?

By Bankole Thompson
CHRONICLE SENIOR EDITOR

I've been fending off surrogates from all sides of the political debate and was lately pulled into a conversation where the topic was the impact of race in this election. I find myself, like a surgeon, struggling to decipher whether this election should be about race or Black empowerment.

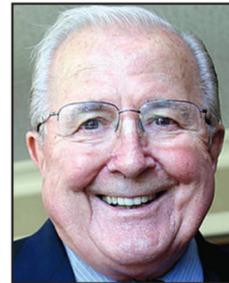
Because common sense solu-



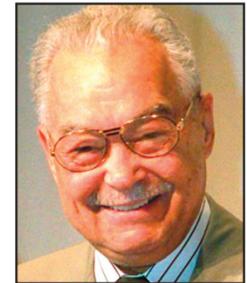
Mike Duggan



Benny Napoleon



Roman Gribbs



Coleman Young

tions and approaches in a political climate ought to empower people, any people regardless of who they are or what their background is.

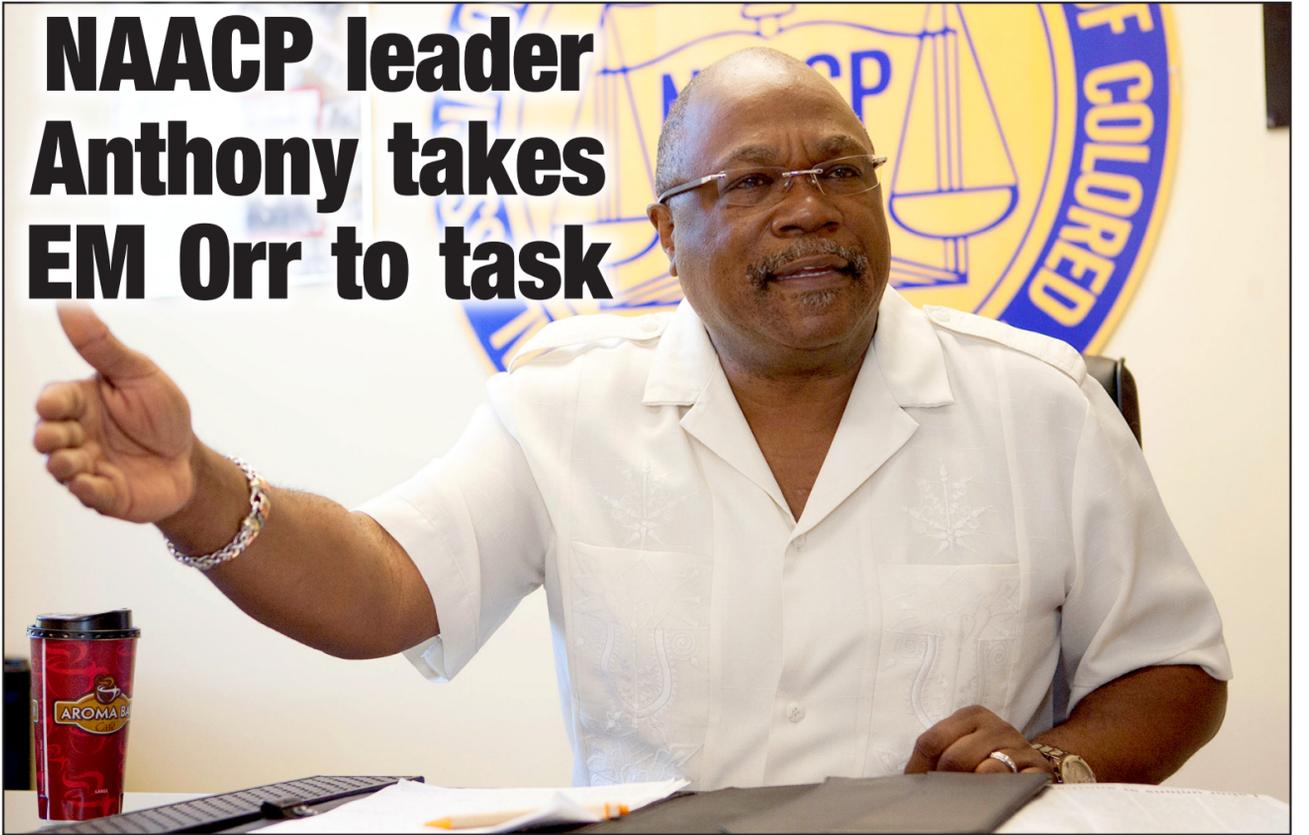
And because Black empower-

ment is the making of choices whether political, economic, educational or social that advances the quality of life of Blacks in a given environment, the elephant in the political room lately has

been race and where it fits in the context of Black empowerment in the hotly contested mayoral showdown where a White candi-

See **COLORBLIND** page A-4

NAACP leader Anthony takes EM Orr to task



REV. WENDELL ANTHONY, president of the Detroit Branch NAACP, the largest branch in the nation, speaks to the Michigan Chronicle at his Detroit office. — Andre Smith photo

By Donald James
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

As president of the Detroit Branch NAACP, Rev. Wendell Anthony has a long track record of fighting against injustices and systems that foster discriminatory practices designed to disempower and disenfranchise African-Americans in Detroit and beyond. Now in his 10th term as president, Anthony and the local branch of the NAACP, the nation's largest, continue to stand at the vanguard of freedom, ready, willing and able to oppose all entities that threaten the rights of African-Americans.

While Anthony continues to lead epic fights on the battlefields of injustice, he and the Detroit Branch NAACP are vigorously battling to rebuff a law in Michigan that has allowed an emergency manager



Kevyn Orr

(EM) to assume full power in Detroit.

A new emergency manager law was pushed through by a Republican-controlled state legislature in 2012, after Michigan voters went to the polls to overwhelmingly voice their opposition to any such law. The hurried-through new

law allowed Gov. Rick Snyder to appoint Kevyn Orr as Detroit's EM. The appointment gave Orr complete control over the city's executive and legislature branches of government.

The local NAACP, as well See **ANTHONY** page A-4

“Mr. Orr's recent comments strike at the heart and soul of all Detroiters. His comments are ones that would be attributed to Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, George Will...even Clarence Thomas has not said that. Now, we (all Detroiters) have a window into the heart and soul of Kevyn Orr. The fact that he can say this to the Wall Street Journal, America's premier bastion of conservative rhetoric, ideas, thinking and policies, is untenable.”

— Wendell Anthony, Detroit Branch NAACP President

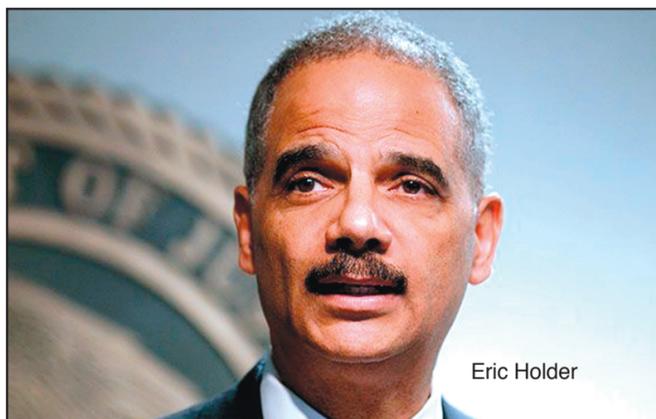
Eric Holder throws down gauntlet on criminal justice reform

By Bankole Thompson
CHRONICLE SENIOR EDITOR

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder sent shockwaves around the country when he told the American Bar Association, the premier lawyers group in the country, that it is time to acknowledge some of the mistakes of the criminal justice system, which has been the bane of cries for reform for decades in the country.

The mass and disproportionate incarceration of people of color in America's prisons has been at the center of calls for reform in the justice system by civil rights groups, leaders of human rights associations, activists, and former law enforcement officials.

But on Monday, Holder, the 82nd attorney general, changed the game, bringing with him major drug sentencing proposals to the ABA meeting in San Francisco where he told the influential lawyers group, no more harsh sentences for minor and non-violent drug offenses. Instead, treatment and community service are options that should be used.



Eric Holder



Carl Taylor



Barbara McQuade



Tony Holt

“We need to ensure that incarceration is used to punish, deter and rehabilitate — not merely to convict, warehouse and forget,”

Holder said in his speech. “We can start by fundamentally rethinking the notion of mandatory minimum sentences for drug-re-

lated crimes. Some statutes that mandate inflexible sentences — regardless of the facts or conduct at issue in a particular case — reduce the discretion available to prosecutors, judges and juries. They breed disrespect for the system. When applied indiscriminately, they do not serve public safety. They have had a disabling effect on communities, and they are ultimately counterproductive.”

Mandatory minimum sentences have been widely criticized by advocates for limiting the discretion of judges in imposing lesser sentences in low level and non-violent crime activities.

This major Justice Department change in policy could be seen as a way to address America's overcrowded prisons.

“While the entire U.S. population has increased by about a third since 1980, the federal prison population has grown at an astonishing rate, by almost 800 percent. It's still growing, despite the fact that federal prisons are operating at nearly 40 percent above capacity. Even though this country comprises just 5 percent of the world's population, we incarcerate almost a quarter of the

See **HOLDER** page A-4

Colorblind

date Mike Duggan came out of the primary heavily leading Benny Napoleon, his African-American challenger.

So if we go by the above definition, which of these two candidates is prepared to advocate Black empowerment in a majority African-American city like Detroit? Which has a plan that enhances the quality of life of people who live in Detroit and pay high taxes and insurance rates, when a few miles away it's a different story, beyond Eight Mile, by the change of a zip code?

In this context a superficial response to these questions would limit one to the narrow confines of our collective wellbeing.

Sound political judgment and race-neutral politics, which should be the hallmark of this general election, is not an indictment on Black mayors who have served this city for only four decades.

In Gov. Rick Snyder's own words, the problems facing Detroit have been brewing for sixty years, long before the advent of Black political leadership.

However, we cannot excuse the failures of those who served this city from Coleman A. Young to Dave Bing. But there were others before them, including Mayor Louis Miriani, who went to jail for federal tax evasion in the 1960s. There is a lot of blame to go around in this election and the state of bankruptcy.

For decades racial politics has been the powder keg for most elections in this town and it is bound to rear its head as we head in early October.

We'll hear from surrogates of the candidates drumming Black empowerment in the context of strongly expressing racial pride by supporting Napoleon, while others will be arguing that while it is significant to express racial pride, it doesn't mean that supporting Duggan, a White candidate, in itself is a bad omen if he has the desire and expressed plan to address the crisis in a majority Black city.

On the one hand there is a tendency to use a historical body of evidence — from slavery to Jim Crow to institutional racism that still lurks behind the façade of some institutions today struggling with the notion of diversity — as a criteria for our political choices, which affirms our empowerment. There is nothing wrong with that because we are guided by the dictates of history.

But it would be a serious error for us to ignore pragmatic and contemporary considerations concerning our present social and economic challenges. Blacks have elected White presidents for decades until President Obama came onto the scene in 2008, so the race question should actually not be an issue. It should be about who has the best plan to effectively deal with the problems facing Detroit.

The debate about weighing the historical body of evidence against our current realities and conditions in Detroit, and placing it at the forefront of the mayor's race played out before with President Obama, where a segment of the Black intelligentsia argued that he must unequivocally demonstrate his "Blackness" by identifying specially targeted Black programs for the Black community.

At the same time, there are those in the Black intelligentsia who argued that Obama should identify programs that benefit not only Blacks but other communities that have suffered similarly to Blacks.

The struggle to balance the scales of justice, economic parity, public safety and full empowerment of Detroiters in this mayor's race where some critics of Duggan



Dennis Archer



Kwame Kilpatrick

Pictured on the front page, along with mayoral candidates Mike Duggan and Benny Napoleon, are former Detroit mayors Roman Gribbs and Coleman Young. Pictured here are former Detroit mayors Dennis Archer and Kwame Kilpatrick.

argue that because of his skin color, he can't define Black empowerment, while some supporters of Napoleon say he can by virtue of his skin color, is nothing sort of a double consciousness.

It will be a dangerous misnomer to solely define candidates and issues through the prism of race. While race rightly remains a subtext of many issues because of history (I don't believe we live in a post-racial America), we must strive to look at the issues that affect us all through the compass of common sense directives.

The preeminence of common sense beckons us to act with basic good sense in our best interest. And we must ask the question in this mayor's race: which candidate has the best interest and is prepared to address the difficult needs that Detroit currently has?

To address those needs and produce common sense solutions, we don't need platitudes and filibusters. We need a program and a plan from Duggan and Napoleon that will move Detroit from its current economic doldrums and the squelchy marshes of dependency and despair to a brand new day of meaningful empowerment.

Because the history of

this city is fraught with pain, along with the success, there are many in this town who have suffered and have witnessed the abuse of political power when it was supposed to serve and protect them.

There are many in this town who are cut out of the dream of a fulfilling life and have now been relegated to economic instability. Some of these individuals are pensioners and retirees whose benefits could easily, by the stroke of a pen, disappear in bankruptcy court. And all of this is happening because of decades of failed political power.

So, Detroiters must search deeply for the best candidate. As Thomas Paine rightly put it, "These are times that try the souls of men." The soul of Detroit is not only been tried but is on trial in this election.

The bottom line is public safety and a depressed economy. Obama got elected largely because voters felt he had a better plan than both Sen. John McCain and Gov. Mitt Romney. He was elected simply on the merit of his vision. But having a Black president is not a cure-all for racism.

The campaigns of Duggan and Napoleon must offer more than just expecting to play to the sentiments of race and racism. These two candidates must show how clearly different each is on the issues and who has the best plan, creative vision and the willingness to listen to many in Detroit whose lives and experiences do not mirror the American Dream.

Let's deal with the candidates on the merits of their program, the content of their character and their passion for public service.

Bankole Thompson is the editor of the Michigan Chronicle and author of the forthcoming 2014 book on Detroit titled "Rising From the Ashes: Engaging Detroit's Future with Courage." His most recent book "Obama and Christian Loyalty," deals with the politics of the religious right, black theology and the president's faith posture across a myriad of issues with an epilogue written by former White House spokesman Robert S. Weiner. He is a political analyst at WDET-101.9FM (Detroit Public Radio) and a member of the weekly "Obama Watch" roundtable on WLIB-1190AM New York. Email him at bankole@bankolethompson.com and visit www.bankolethompson.com

Holder

world's prisoners. More than 219,000 federal inmates are currently behind bars," Holder said. "Almost half of them are serving time for drug-related crimes, and many have substance use disorders. Nine to 10 million more people cycle through America's local jails each year. And roughly 40 percent of former federal prisoners, and more than 60 percent of former state prisoners, are rearrested or have their supervision revoked within three years after their release, at great cost to American taxpayers and often for technical or minor violations of the terms of their release."

Holder, whose remarks were part of his "Smart on Crime" initiative, said he has mandated a change in the Justice Department's charging policies so that certain low-level, nonviolent drug offenders who have no ties to large-scale organizations, gangs or cartels will no longer be charged with offenses that impose draconian mandatory minimum sentences.

"They now will be charged with offenses for which the accompanying sentences are better suited to their individual conduct, rather than excessive prison terms more appropriate for violent criminals or drug kingpins," Holder told the ABA annual meeting.

Holder who prefaced his remarks with what he calls a "vicious cycle of poverty, criminal-

ity, and incarceration traps too many Americans and weakens too many communities," said the justice system actually may "exacerbate this problem, rather than alleviate it."

"The bottom line is that, while the aggressive enforcement of federal criminal statutes remains necessary, we cannot simply prosecute or incarcerate our way to becoming a safer nation. To be effective, federal efforts must also focus on prevention and re-entry," Holder said.

Wade Henderson, CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights called Holder's speech to the ABA "the most significant proposal ever put forth by the Justice Department to reform our nation's disastrous criminal justice system."

"For years, our justice system has treated dangerous criminals in the same manner as non-violent men and women. Instead of appropriate punishment and rehabilitation, the system destroys far too many lives and costs our nation tens of billions of dollars each year," Henderson said. "This has created a modern day caste system in America, where millions of people — mostly African Americans, Latinos, and low-income Whites — are marked with a scarlet letter that erects permanent barriers to getting a job or an education and to reintegrate into society."

In Detroit, Barbara L. McQuade, U.S. Attorney for the



Wendell Anthony — Andre Smith photo

Anthony

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as a large contingent of other concerned community, religious and civil rights activists, believe such an appointment is illegal and unconstitutional.

"This emergency manager concept is more than a notion," said Anthony, from his office. "What's being done with this emergency manager takeover in Detroit is unfair, undemocratic and is a snatching away of our rights, and it's not just a Detroit phenomenon, it's a national strategy that I believe many in the Republican and conservative communities are utilizing to retain and recoup powers from communities of color. They are looking at the growing demographics of Black and Brown people in America and are doing everything they can to hold on to power."

To add insult to injury, Anthony and other local civil rights and community groups have taken exception to Orr's condescending words pertaining to Detroit, shortly after announcing that the city was filing for bankruptcy at his behest. Orr was quoted in a recent Wall Street Journal article as saying, "For a long time the city has been dumb, lazy, happy and rich."

Orr also said, "If you had an eighth-grade education, you'll get 30 years of a good job and a pension and great health care, but you don't have to worry about what's going to come..."

"Mr. Orr's recent comments strike at the heart and soul of all Detroiters," Anthony said. "His comments are ones that would be attributed to Rush Limbaugh, Shawn Hannity, George Will... even Clarence Thomas

has not said that. Now, we (all Detroiters) have a window into the heart and soul of Kevyn Orr. The fact that he can say this to the Wall Street Journal, America's premier bastion of conservative rhetoric, ideas, thinking and policies, is untenable."

Many Detroiters who learned of Orr's remarks, were reminded of negative comments made by Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney at a fundraiser on last year's presidential campaign trail.

"There are 47 percent of the people who will vote for the president (Obama) no matter what," Romney said. "All right, there are 47 percent who are with him, who are dependent upon government, who believe that they are victims, who believe the government has a responsibility to care for them, who believe that they are entitled to health care, to food, to housing, to you-name-it. My job is not to worry about those people. I'll never convince them they should take personal responsibility and care for their lives."

Anthony said that in addition to Orr, Gov. Snyder must also be held responsible for words, actions, and the disrespect for the people of Detroit.

"Orr is Gov. Rick Snyder's man; he is his appointment," Anthony said. "It's really Rick Snyder who is running Detroit. Kevyn Orr is his operational man, but Gov. Snyder needs to check his operational man."

Anthony believes an apology from Orr, or from Gov. Snyder, is not enough, even though the EM recently addressed the brewing issue with a local television reporter.

"He didn't apologize;

he tried to justify," Anthony said. "Mr. Orr just needs to go. We believe that his credibility is gone. How can you manage and reconstruct Detroit when you don't respect Detroit? How can you come into the community and say that you want to work with the community, as if you respect the people, when we have on record that you think we are 'dumb, lazy, happy and rich'? The city of Detroit deserves much better than that because we are much better than that."

The Detroit Branch NAACP has filed lawsuits in federal courts, citing that the EM's presence in Detroit is illegal and unconstitutional, which is resulting in the disempowerment of the people in Detroit. Anthony, senior pastor at Fellowship Chapel, expects some preliminary rulings on the lawsuits later this month, and is hoping that a final ruling comes sometime in October.

While waiting for the court rulings, Anthony vows to continue to speak out to stop discrimination, prejudice, and injustices when African-Americans in Detroit and across the nation are impacted.

In addition to his leadership role with the Detroit Branch NAACP, Anthony is the founder of the Fannie Lou Hamer Political Action Committee, a grassroots activist organization that supports issues and candidates locally and nationally.

He is also chairman and founder of the Freedom Institute for Economic Social Justice and People Empowerment.

From page A-1

Eastern District of Michigan, the DOJ's top envoy welcomed Holder's speech to the ABA.

"The Attorney General's Smart on Crime initiative recognizes that it is time to revisit the policies that have resulted in an 800 percent increase in our prison population since the 1980s, costing taxpayers \$80 billion a year. The initiative seeks to protect public safety while improving fairness and efficiency," McQuade said. "The new program emphasizes prevention and re-entry, and limits mandatory minimum sentences to the most serious offenders, so that defendants who do not threaten public safety are not incarcerated for long periods of time at taxpayer expense. While strong prison sentences are important to deter criminal conduct, these sentences should be reserved for dangerous criminals."

Carl Taylor, Michigan State University Professor of Sociology said the announcement by Holder is long overdue.

"It is a tremendous plus but in my opinion is very late when you look at the state if Michigan where correction is the number one budget item," Taylor said. "We have a very draconian approach to correction. What Holder did is the right way, the right policy...he even admitted that the system is broke and by placing these nonviolent individuals in prison when they come out, where is the infrastructure

that is going to get them employment?"

Wayne State University Police Chief Tony Holt, said the reality and perception of crime, especially in urban cities such as Detroit, is at an all time high.

"For the victims of this reality the bottom line is 'put them away and don't let this happen to me again.' Up to this point we have tried a variety of different programs to arrive at a solution from more police officers on the street to more jails being built," Holt said. "So far the solution have not been attained as we can fill the jails faster than we can build them."

He said he couldn't agree more with Attorney General Holder, that it is time to develop a new law enforcement strategy.

"Being tough on crime does not mean we are being smarter on crime. The attorney general is on target is that we have to examine and develop new law enforcement strategies. We have to double this strategy with expanded and targeted resources to develop sustainable solution to the growing crime problem in America," Holt said. "The key question is how can we move beyond party lines, community mistrust and fear to get everyone to the table to discuss the issue? We can only do so by getting everyone involved working together toward a common sustainable solution. Holder has given us a challenge."