

Before coming to New York, Rabbi Kelman was a Rabbi in Toronto for nine years. He received Smicha in Toronto, as well as a B.A. and M.A. in Oriental Languages from the University of Toronto. In addition, Rabbi Kelman was a chaplain in the Canadian army during World War II.

Rabbi Abraham Kelman is the founder and Dean of Bnos Leah Prospect Park Yeshiva. Since its founding in 1952, the school has provided thousands of youngsters with a strong secular and Jewish education. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Rabbi Kelman, Bnos Leah Prospect Park Yeshiva has seen its enrollment rise to more than 1,300 students. He is also the Rabbi of the Yeshiva Congregation of Prospect Park.

Rabbi Abraham Kelman is the author of a number of books such as "Prospectives on the Parsha." He was instrumental in organizing the Prospect Park Nursing Home, a nonprofit facility in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn dedicated to meeting the needs of our senior citizens.

Rabbi Abraham Kelman has long been known as an innovator and beacon of good will to all those with whom he has come into contact. Through his dedicated efforts, he has helped improve my constituents' quality of life. In recognition of his many accomplishments on behalf of my constituents, I offer my congratulations to Rabbi Abraham Kelman on the occasion of the Rabbis and Congregations of Flatbush and Vicinity's Annual Breakfast on behalf of the Ezras Torah Charity Fund.

EXPOSING RACISM

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 1999

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to document and expose racism in America, I submit the following articles into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

FLORIDA TO BECOME BATTLEGROUND STATE ON RACIAL, GENDER PREFERENCES

(By John Pacenti)

MIAMI—The California businessman who plans to launch a ballot initiative to abolish state-sponsored racial and gender preferences in Florida attacked Gov. Jeb Bush on Monday as a purveyor of racial politics who is "sicking his attack dogs on me."

Ward Connerly, a black conservative Republican who has been successful with similar propositions in California and Washington, said a poll he commissioned found 80 percent of Floridians support his proposal.

Lawmakers, though, are a different story. "Florida doesn't need somebody from California to come here and tell it how to write its Constitution," said U.S. Sen. Bob Graham, D-Fla.

Connerly said politicians, particularly Republicans, are afraid of offending black voters. He described campaigning in black churches, like Bush did, as playing the "race card."

"That is saying I want your vote on the basis of your skin color, on the basis of your ethnicity," he said.

Bush met with Connerly in January and later wrote a letter to him saying he felt a ballot initiative targeting affirmative action would be divisive. The governor refused to answer questions on the matter Monday.

"His goal is to build a consensus around issues we should be focusing on—and those are education, fighting the drug war, protecting the developmentally disabled," said Bush's press secretary Nicole Devenish. "His focus is not going to be on this political debate right now."

Connerly said Bush is behind a concerted effort to keep the initiative off the Florida Ballot.

"I can overcome the obstacle of the sitting governor of my party who is siccing his attack dogs on me and his party against a proposition I believe in," Connerly said. "I believe the establishment is wrong, is dead wrong on this issue."

Connerly, who also made announcements in Jacksonville and Altamonte Springs, said he plans to get one or more initiatives on the November ballot next year or 2002.

"It's like an old car. It's got a lot of mileage on it and it's ready to sputter out any minute," Connerly said of affirmative action. "I think we should give it a graceful retirement and find a way of getting some new wheels that solves some real needs."

He said that economic-based affirmative action should replace the race-based preferences that has spilled over into private businesses and caused so much resentment in the workplace.

"We are talking about getting rid of the marginalization that flows from race-based affirmative action," Connerly said ". . . it is all over America."

Connerly, a member of the University of California Board of Regents, would need to gather 435,073 signatures to put the measure on the Florida ballot.

Rev. Jesse Jackson, who was in Miami to talk about AIDS in the black community, said Connerly was "trying to peddle fear" and is going to have trouble without Bush's support.

"Gov. Wilson in California cooperated with Ward Connerly," said the Rev. Jesse Jackson. "It seems like Gov. Bush will not. Florida must avoid the mistake made by California."

Washington Gov. Gary Locke, though, opposed a Connerly-backed measure in 1998 and it passed with 58 percent of the vote.

ALLEGED WITNESS TO ATTACK SAYS STATEMENT COERCED

(By Tammy Webber)

CHICAGO (AP).—The man prosecutors once described as their key witness to the 1997 racial beating of a 13-year-old black boy now claims his rights were violated during police questioning.

Richard DeSantis, 20, is charged with obstructing justice after disappearing for eight months as prosecutors tried to build a case against three men charged with beating Lenard Clark into a coma after he wandered into their predominantly white Bridgeport neighborhood.

His disappearance forced a five-month delay in the trials before prosecutors decided to proceed without him. One defendant was sentenced to eight years in prison for aggravated battery and committing a hate crime, while two others accepted plea agreements and got probation and community service.

DeSantis on Monday claimed authorities coerced him into signing a statement and would not allow him to speak to his attorney despite repeated requests.

The statement, therefore, should not be admissible in court, said attorney James Cutrone, who was not DeSantis' attorney at the time he signed the statement.

Cutrone said if the Cook County Judge Robert W. Bertucci grants the motion to suppress the statement, the county should drop its case. Testimony is scheduled to continue today.

Under questioning Monday, DeSantis said several portions of his signed statement are

incorrect, including where he allegedly told police he saw three friends beat Lenard.

He described being held for questioning for more than nine hours at the police station, where he claims he was interrogated, put through a police lineup and told that he was lying when he said he did not witness the beating.

He said he signed the statement because police allegedly told him he could go home and would not be charged if he did so. He testified it was also after he heard his attorney's voice in the station but was not able to see him.

"I thought after I heard (the lawyer's voice) . . . and they didn't let him see me, I thought they could do whatever they wanted to," he said.

John O'Malley, his attorney at the time, also testified that he was at the police station for more than two hours before he was able to see DeSantis—and after DeSantis signed the statement.

But under questioning by Assistant State's Attorney Robert Berlin, DeSantis conceded that authorities let him read the statement and make any changes before he signed it.

Frank Caruso Jr. received an eight-year sentence after being found guilty of aggravated battery and committing a hate crime, but innocent of attempted murder. Victor Jasas, 18, and Michael Kwidzinski, 21, received probation and community service after accepting plea agreements.

Clark, now 15, cannot remember the attack. All three defendants were accused of knocking Clark from his bicycle, then kicking and pummeling him until he was unconscious.

RACIAL ATTACK

DARIEN, Conn.—A white businessman accused of stabbing a black man in the face with a pen on board a Metro North train has been given special probation in the case.

Kevin Keady was arrested by Metro North police June 28, 1996, after he allegedly hurled racial slurs and his fists at Michael Moore on a train.

Keady allegedly used a pen as a dagger to slash Moore's face. Moore's nose was broken and he received stitches to repair a torn ear lobe, said Moore's attorney, Charles Harris. Keady was charged with intimidation by bigotry or bias and second-degree assault.

A Superior Court judge last week granted Keady accelerated rehabilitation which is available to first-time offenders who face charges that could result in prison time. If the defendant successfully completes the two-year probation, all records are erased.

Keady denies the charges. He claimed Moore and others attacked him and uttered bigoted remarks. He filed a civil lawsuit against Moore in July 1998.

Moore also has sued Keady. A Superior Court judge awarded him a \$150,000 lien on Keady's home in Darien, ruling that there is probable cause that Moore could win at least that much. Moore's suit seeks \$15,000 in damages for claims of assault and battery, false imprisonment and intimidation based on bias or bigotry.

Keady's next scheduled court date is March 9, 2001, after the completion of his special probation.

NUMBER OF BLACK APPLICANTS TO UW LAW SCHOOL PLUMMETS

SEATTLE.—The number of black applicants to the University of Washington Law School has plummeted since a voter-approved ban on public affirmative action programs.

In the first round of admissions since the initiative became law in December, the number of black applicants was down 41 percent

from a year earlier. Applications from Filipinos and Hispanics also are down, by 26 percent and 21 percent, respectively, while total applications were off 6 percent through March 5.

Although too early to say what this year's entering class will look like, university officials say the new figures may confirm their fear that the law prohibiting race consideration in admissions will make the university's population less diverse.

"One possibility has to be that Initiative 200 has caused a chilling climate in which minority men and women are reluctant to apply for fear they won't be welcome at the university," President Richard McCormick said.

"The applications are the material with which you have to work, and if minority applications are down, it doesn't help with respect to the recruitment of a diverse class," McCormick said.

But the man who ran the initiative campaign took a different tact.

"I think it shows that the word is getting out on the street that the use of race-driven admissions is becoming a thing of the past," John Carlson said. "Students are more apt to apply to schools that match their skills levels."