

## Eady Seeks Meeting With Gov. Paterson On BUFNY



By Jim Planck

*[Editor's Note: This is Part Three of three in a series on the demise of former local radio station WCKL-AM. The station was purchased by the Harlem-based Black United Fund of New York (BUFNY) in 2002, which was then, says BUFNY founder and Athens resident Kermit Eady, improperly taken over by then NYS Attorney General Eliot Spitzer during a self-promoting campaign against charitable organizations. Eady says the organization and all its assets, including WCKL, was then allowed to fall apart.]*

### **Part Three — Seeking Answers**

CATSKILL — Eady also said that throughout the entire matter, he never met Spitzer.

“I never met the man,” he said. “I’ve written him many letters, but I never got an answer.”

Eady also said that it was difficult to interest political figures in the matter. He said two meetings were held in 2004, but to no avail.

“(Governor) Paterson was the Minority Leader in the Senate then,” said Eady.

He said that as such, Paterson met with him and three others — former City College Professor James Smalls, psychiatrist and community activist Dr. James C. McIntosh, M.D., and National Action Network Attorney Michael Harding — to talk about BUFNY.

Eady said there was also a second meeting, which Vice President Larry Barton was then able to attend, but that neither resulted in any movement towards investigating the matter.

The next year, in June 2005, Eady sent a formal request for public hearings and an investigation into the BUFNY action to both Paterson, who was still Senate Minority Leader, and his counterpart on the other side of the aisle, Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno.

Eady said the requests were not acted upon.

Eady said that early last year, however, Democratic NYC Councilman Charles Barron got involved, and that Barron has been steadily seeking to bring a focus to the matter, including sending a letter in January 2007 to then Governor Eliot Spitzer.

“As you know,” wrote Barron, “in 2003, the Black United Fund was the largest charity in Harlem and was chaired by its founder Kermit Eady.”

“It was involved in 40 million dollars of development, operated 400 units of affordable housing, as well as a radio station, two ATM machines, and two technical centers with services similar to Kinko’s,” said Barron.

“Even in the wake of this success,” wrote Barron, “when you served as the New York State Attorney General, you dismantled the Black United Fund, claiming that you were appointing a new Board of Directors to ‘breathe new life into BUFNY and help shepherd its finances.’”

“As it stands today, however,” said Barron, “the landmark headquarters building of the Black United Fund that was on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard is now a bar.”

Barron and Eady have since spearheaded a petition to “restore and reinstate” BUFNY, originally intending to deliver it to Spitzer, but will instead submit it to Paterson.

Additionally, Barron requested a meeting with Paterson two months ago, in April.

“As you well know,” wrote Barron, “former Governor Eliot Spitzer, as Attorney

General, executed an unwarranted takeover and investigation of Black United Fund of New York, which was never officially terminated since November 2002, nor generated any charges.”

“These abuses have ultimately led to the complete destruction of the organization,” said Barron, “the tarnishing of the reputations of its leadership, and a great loss to the Black community.”

“Eliot Spitzer,” said Barron, “has never had to explain his discriminatory treatment and destruction of BUFNY.”

Barron also noted that back in January, he had requested meetings with both Spitzer and NYS Attorney General Andrew Cuomo “to discuss the destruction of BUFNY, its reinstatement, and its legal status.”

“However,” he added, “the meetings were never held, and, of course, Mr. Spitzer has now resigned.”

“With the above urgent matters in mind,” Barron said, “we are now requesting a meeting with you, as soon as possible, to discuss the BUFNY situation.”

“The black community,” wrote Barron, “by the signing of the petition, has made it very clear that this organization is still much needed and should be restored, and that there are many questions to be addressed.”

Shortly after, also in April, Eady also requested a meeting, in which he noted Spitzer’s investigation of BUFNY and its result.

“These unjust acts,” wrote Eady, “were without any valid reason or cause, and Mr. Spitzer, as (either) the Attorney General or Governor, has never bothered to communicate with the black community — or the community at large — any rationale for his discriminatory actions.”

“With the above truths in mind,” said Eady, “we request an urgent meeting with you to discuss the Black United Fund of New York’s just reinstatement, restoration, and due restitution.”

Among other voices calling for an examination into the BUFNY matter are NYS Assemblyman Karim Camara, who represents Brooklyn’s 43rd Assembly District, and who has informed Eady that he is drafting a letter to Attorney General Cuomo.

Also supporting Eady in the matter is the Reverend Al Sharpton, who Eady said has stated publicly at a National Action Network meeting this spring that he has spoken to the Governor regarding the re-establishment of the Black United Fund of New York, and that the Governor said he was willing to meet.

Eady said that by June 3, however, he had not yet heard back from the Governor's Office, so he telephoned, "and I was assured by his secretary that he would get my message," he said.

"The following day," Eady said, "I did receive a call from the Governor's aide David Johnson, who informed me that Paterson had asked him to tell me that as Governor, he could not do a thing about the BUFNY situation because BUFNY's destruction took place under Spitzer's watch."

"He said I should take my concerns to Attorney General Cuomo," Eady said.

Eady said Wednesday his feeling is that since the position of NYS Attorney General is, in essence, "the state's lawyer," Spitzer's actions as such were "committed by the state."

"Thus," said Eady, "Governor Paterson has the power to bring justice where injustice was perpetrated."

Eady said he still remains hopeful for a meeting with Paterson, in which he, Larry Barton, and Councilman Barron can discuss the issue.

He said he believes the organization should be put back together again, and that those who had their lives disrupted and suffered from its dismantling should be compensated.

"I want the reinstatement of the Black United Fund of New York," said Eady, "and I want financial restitution for the hardship that I received."

Eady said he also wants to see the former radio station brought forth again, noting its purpose remains valid.

"We wanted to teach black communities around the counties what we had learned how to do," said Eady, "which is help themselves."

"I wanted to teach Black communities around the counties how to practice self-help," he said, "to teach them we need to stop begging."

“We’re not anti-anybody,” Eady said, adding that the goal is just to empower the black community, create business and jobs, and employ people.

“We were saying (at BUFNY) we’re going to be a part of what America says we’re supposed to do — and with our own money,” said Eady.

“Even the welfare mom could let a dollar come out of her paycheck to build for her children,” he said.

Responses to inquiry on the BUFNY matter from the Office of New York State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo and the United Way of New York have not yet been received.

Eady currently runs Eady Associates, a business consulting firm specializing in economic development and technology services, and the EmPowerment Institute, an on-line talk radio show.

He has a B.S. in Sociology from Morgan State University and a Masters MSW from New York University in Social Work, with a specialty in Community Organization, of which, he noted, “They don’t give that anymore.”

He began his career in human services working for the City of New York as a case worker, later becoming a manager within the Human Resources administration. He also taught as an adjunct for about seven years at Medgar Evans College, part of CUNY system.

He then served as Director of Admissions and Recruitment for Norfolk State University Graduate School of Social Work for two years, following which he returned to New York City to start Black United Fund of New York.

*Also View [Part One](#) and [Part Two](#) Of This Story On W.E. A.L.L. B.E....*



*Bro. Kermit Eady*

*Kermit Eady is president and CEO of Eady Associates/Empowerment Institute, founder and former CEO of Black United Fund of New York. You can contact him at 917-642-1878 and by email at: [info@kermiteady.com](mailto:info@kermiteady.com). Listen to the Empowerment Hour Online University every Saturday at 6pm EST at [www.blogtalkradio.com/eadyassociates](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/eadyassociates). You may participate in the conversation by calling 646-716-7472.*