

# Point of View

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## TO BE EQUAL

# The Taller Tale Of The Tapes

By Hugh B. Price, President,  
National Urban League

For the past year and three months, Americans of all hues have been captivated and riveted their television sets by a phenomenon known as The People of Los Angeles vs. Orenthal James Simpson. While some view this trial as a journey into the darkest corners of American racism, most have simply dubbed it "The Trial of the Century." Those who have incorporated the trial into their daily lives, and built their schedules around it, have been shocked in recent weeks, as have most decent citizens, by the taped rantings of the prosecution's star witness, and discoverer of the infamous bloody glove - former Detective Mark Furhman.



HUGH B. PRICE

Under a blistering cross-examination by long-time legal stalwart F. Lee Bailey, Detective Furhman swore under oath to the judge, jury and the broad American populace that he had not uttered the notorious "N" word in ten years. However, investigators for the defense team had discovered a series of taped interviews given by Detective Furhman to noted North Carolina screenwriter Laura Hart

McKinney, where he not only uses the "N" word forty-one times, but boasts continually about planting evidence in order to insure convictions, and tells of his outright disdain for inter-racial couples.

If that's not enough, Furhman also tells Ms. McKinney about an incident where he actually squeezed the scab wound of a man in his custody in order to obtain blood samples to present to a prosecution team involved in a criminal case.

These revelations are revolting and disturbing to say the least. Are we to believe that Detective Furhman was simply boasting? Or could his words and actions be indicative of a deep-seated contempt by others in the L.A.P.D. for the basic constitutional rights of the American citizens. If the Furhman thought process represents even a tiny portion of L.A.'s police department, then certainly it is no mere understatement to say that the rights of African Americans and others of color have been savagely stepped upon.

I call upon U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno to convene a federal grand jury to separate fact from fiction. Certainly, the need to know whether Mark Furhman represents an L.A.P.D. norm, or is simply an abbreviation, will be key in determining whether innocent people are harassed in violation of their rights or, worse, railroaded into prison without due process.

There are two basic questions to be investigated by a grand jury:

was there viciously discriminatory treatment of blacks in L.A. in violation of the equal protection clause? Second, was there outright abuse of the right of Los Angeles citizens to due process?

The potential violations revealed by the Furhman tapes include:  
\*Denial of equal protection of the laws, as evidenced by the apparent differential treatment by race of innocent citizens, detainees and arrestees.

\*Detention and arrest of blacks without cause, in denial of due process of law.

\*Unwarranted, excessive and outright criminal brutality toward blacks, in violation of the prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment of prisoners, not to mention of innocent citizens and detainees not yet charged with crimes.

\*Apprehension, interrogation and brutality toward detainees in violation of their Miranda rights.

\*Unauthorized, unwarranted and unconstitutional searches and seizures.

\*Fabrication of evidence by police in violation of constitutional guarantees of due process of law.

The American people must remember the axiom of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which Furhman and his ilk have casually forgotten: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

## CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

# Saving A Culture That Could Save Ours

By Bernice Powell Jackson

African Americans and native Americans share a common history of oppression in this country. While our stories are not the same, there are many shared themes and shared outcomes of that history. So it's not surprising that we have come

to common solutions to our problems.

One solution can be summed up in the Akan word "sankofa"—going back to our roots in order to go forward. In other words, we must reclaim our past in order to make progress as a people.

Another solution is that

education can play a liberating role for our people and is critical to the revitalization of our communities. Living in a nation where information and the access to it promise to be the key to survival in the next century, both Native Americans and African Americans must find a

way of equipping our children to be a part of that future economy and that world.

For Native Americans the intersection of these two solutions is found in the American Indian College Fund (AICF). Modeled on the older, highly-successful United Negro College

Fund (UNCF) The AICF was established in 1989 by the presidents of the American Indian colleges. The American Indian College Fund now includes 29 two and four-year colleges with 15,000 students, located on or near reservations in 12 midwestern and western states. The AICF raises funds for these institutions which are used to provide scholarships and student aid as well as to strengthen Native American studies departments and to begin to build endowments for its member institutions.

These are some of the nation's newest colleges, serving



Bernice Powell Jackson

some of the nation's poorest people. The first tribal colleges were founded during the movement of Native Americans for self-determination in the 1960s and 1970s. They were founded by Native American

(See Civil Rights, Page 4)

## THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT

# Congratulations Minister Louis Farrakhan, Black Independent!

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

The Million Man March on Washington, D.C. has the potential to be a very historic occasion for the Black community.

American political life is in a total upheaval. It is critical that a strong statement be made by us about our vision for ourselves and our country in the midst of that instability and ferment. That Minister Louis Farrakhan and Dr. Ben Chavis have asked all march participants and supporters to assert the political power of the African American community by registering to vote as independents, not only strengthens the statement of the march, but helps to further connect Black people to the

emerging American independents movement. In 1988, Minister Farrakhan and I began an intense dialogue on the importance of the independent option for our people. We stood together in Atlanta that summer publicly urging our political independence, as the Democratic Convention displayed its utter disrespect for us, and Jesse Jackson sealed his fate by refusing to break with the Democratic Party. Now the call for the Black community to register and to vote as independents has even greater urgency.

While the last minute decision by Rev. Jackson and Rev. Al Sharpton to endorse the march

is a welcome one, I am concerned that the pro-independent cutting edge of the march will be muted by Rev. Jackson who is, after all, a committed Democrat. If the Black community has something to atone for, it is, in my opinion, our blind loyalty to the Democratic Party. And if the Million Man March is in any way manipulated by Black Democrats to reassert our servitude to Bill Clinton and the Democratic Party, then we will have allowed a very positive and empowering process to be undermined.

There are similar dangers in some of the responses to the potential independent presidential candidacy of Gen. Colin Powell, a candidacy made



DR. LENORA FULANI

all the more imminent by polls which show him winning the White House in a three-way race with Clinton and Bob Dole and by Ross Perot's announcement that he is forming a national third party for the 1996 elections.

In last week's edition of the New York Amsterdam News, publisher and editor-in-chief (See *Blk Empowerment*, Pg 4)

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