

# POINT OF VIEW

## THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT

### Another Clinton scandal

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

Having survived the Whitewater, "Travelgate" and Vincent Foster scandals, President Clinton probably expects to shrug off news reports that wealthy Indonesian businessmen have bought influence with his administration by raising millions of dollars for the Democratic Party. It would be a great shame, however, if this latest scandal escapes full public scrutiny. For Clinton's "Indonesian connection" goes beyond the issue of a problematic foreign influence on American elections. Indeed, it



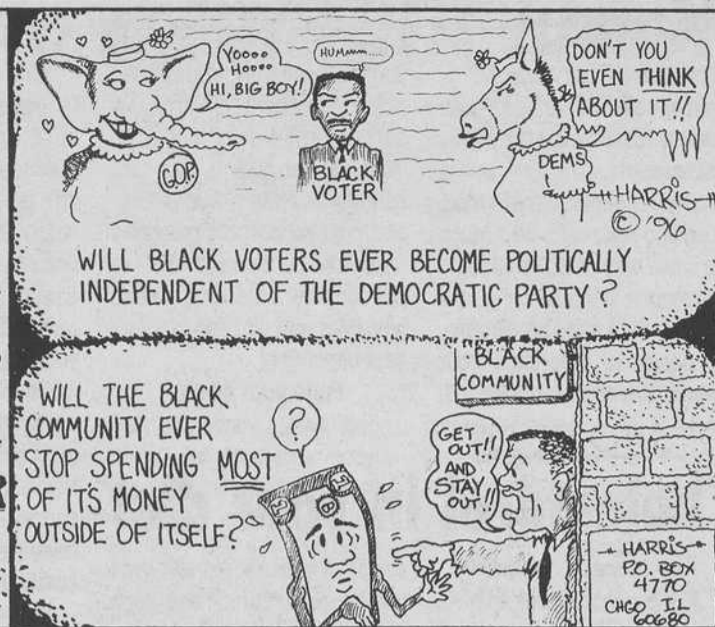
DR. LENORA FULANI

raises the issue of the Administration's corrupt silence on, and complicity with, the horrendous human rights violations perpetrated by the Indonesian dictatorship on the people of East Timor.

Last week, two East Timorese, Roman Catholic Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo and exiled independence leader Jose Ramos Horta, were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to end years of oppression and genocidal violence in their country. The award throws a long-overdue international spotlight on a human rights catastrophe that has festered for over 20 years.

East Timor occupies half of the island of Timor, on the far eastern rim of the Indonesian archipelago, about 300 miles from Australia. In 1974, after 400 years as a colony of Portugal, the people of East Timor were given the opportunity to choose between independence or incorporation into the surrounding state of Indonesia. The dominant political parties in East Timor favored independence. But East Timor's decolonization quickly fell hostage to Cold War tensions. To undermine the independence movement, the Indonesian government (which ten years earlier had murdered half a million Indonesians in the name of "fighting communism"), broadcast propaganda into East Timor, accusing one of the pro-independence parties of communist leanings, and provoking a civil war. Then,

**POINTS TO PONDER BY PROFESSOR #HARRIS#**



under the pretext of "restoring order", the Indonesian military invaded the island in December 1975.

The United States gave the green light to the invasion: a few days before, while visiting Jakarta, President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger discussed the matter with Indonesian President Suharto.

Thus began Indonesia's reign of terror over East Timor. Over 250,000 East Timorese—a third of the population — were murdered by mass bombardments (including napalm) that wiped villages off the face of the earth, by summary execution and massacres of those suspected of resisting, by forcible relocation, and by war-induced starvation.

Once in control of the island nation, the Indonesian government continued its

genocide by forcing birth control on the Timorese, forbidding the use of their native language, and encouraging mass migration of Indonesians to East Timor to displace the native population. High-ranking military officers and their businessmen friends have seized control of the economy, enjoying a monopoly of all important industries, and forcibly "developing" the island by coercing East Timorese held in concentration camps to build roads without pay.

The disappearance of the "communist threat" had little impact on the Western nations' cozy relationship with the Indonesian regime; the discovery of oil in the Timor Sea gave a fresh motive for good relations. When Clinton assumed office in 1993, he inherited this shameful bipartisan foreign policy. But now it appears

that he has brought his own measure of corruption to this sorry history.

According to articles which have appeared recently in the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, a \$450,000 contribution — one of the largest received by the Democratic Party this year — was made by the son-in-law of an executive in the Lippo Group, a conglomerate controlled by the billionaire Indonesian Riady family. Back in 1992, when Clinton was running for election, the Riady family contributed close to \$200,000 in soft money to the Democratic campaign, and were rewarded by having their American representative, John Huang, named Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Economic Policy after Clinton won. In 1993,

(See Scandal, Page 16)

### CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

## Victory in Pensacola

By Bernice Powell Jackson

They were surrounded by toxic wastes in two different abandoned sites. More than three hundred African-American families, who were fighting for their lives and those of their children and grandchildren. The odds seemed overwhelming at times, but the people of Pensacola, FL held out — and they won. The Environmental Protection Agency ruled that they will move 358 families to new housing, the largest environmental relocation since Love Canal in New York and Times Beach in Missouri.



Bernice Powell Jackson

The neighbors of the abandoned Escambia Treatment Company, which had treated the wood for telephone poles, were living next to a 60-foot-high mountain of toxic wastes created by a half-finished EPA clean-up. The dirt in that pile contained dioxin, a potentially cancer-causing agent. And the people were getting sick — with cancer, inflammation of the eyes and lungs and they were dying — stillborn babies and cancer among other diseases.

A second abandoned plant, the Agrico Chemical Company, was located nearby. This plant manufactured sulfuric acid and agricultural chemicals. When it closed in 1975, it left behind its toxic wastes. The community, believing their health to be so at risk, fought for relocation rather than clean-up.

Four years ago the people of these Pensacola neighborhoods banded together and began to organize. Homeowners, tenants and former workers at the plants established Citizens Against Toxic Exposure (CATE) and began to lobby local and federal government officials to do something about their problem. Using President Clinton's executive order on environmental justice as their bottomline, CATE was able to keep their neighborhood's problem on the government front burner. The executive order mandated that federal government agencies pay attention to environmental justice and required that victims of environmental racism be given a voice in the clean-up of their neighborhoods. There are at least 1,300 toxic waste sites located in communities of color across the nation.

CATE hired a scientist to monitor the EPA testing of the toxic waste sites. It lobbied both local and federal government elected officials. It was able to get the EPA to hold a hearing in Pensacola earlier this year. And when earlier EPA recommendations seemed to be leaning toward relocating some of the residents, leaving others behind, CATE was adamant that unless everyone was moved, no one would move. They understood that sticking together was one source of their power.

Some have argued that it was Presidential year politics that is responsible for this significant victory for environmental justice. The citizens of Pensacola, whose neighborhood has been destroyed by these toxic waste dumps and whose health has been jeopardized because of them would probably say the government is just doing what was right. I would say that justice has been served.

### TO BE EQUAL

## My country tis of thee

By Hugh B. Price  
My country tis of thee  
Sweet land of liberty  
Of thee I sing

In the United States of today, millions readily cheer an African-American general whose stellar record in wartime and adroit maneuvering of the corridors of civilian power in Washington have propelled him to the status of a potential future contender for our nation's Presidency.

But in this month when we pay special homage to the service those in the military have given and the sacrifices they've made it is well to remember that for nearly two centuries little honor was accorded those Americans of African descent who had pledged their lives to defend the United States.

Certainly, to many of them, the lyrics of the songs celebrating the freedom American society declared it stood for had an ironic — some would say, mocking — ring. The wrenching truth was that to Black America such words offered the description of not a reality but an ideal: African-Americans intent on serving in

the military often had to fight America's military establishment for the honor of fighting for their country before they could actually fight the nation's foes.

That has changed in the last three decades, thanks to a vigorous affirmative effort by the nation's armed services to integrate their ranks — right up to the very top.

That new openness and commitment is one reason the efforts of African-Americans to reveal and examine and memorialize the military service of their forefathers — and foremothers, who served as nurses and in other positions women were then limited to — have mushroomed in recent years.

For example, more Americans now know of the World War Two exploits of the Tuskegee Airmen, the first black fliers to serve in combat.

Trained as a segregated unit at Tuskegee Institute (now University) in Alabama, they braved the scorn of a good part of the American military command as well as Luftwaffe

bullets to compile an extraordinary record in the skies over Europe: Its fighter pilots, the 332nd Fighter Group, flew hundreds of missions escorting the heavy bombers sent to pound Nazi Germany into submission — and never lost a bomber to the enemy. More than 996 African-American men became pilots through the Tuskegee program between 1942 and 1946, and about 450 saw action in the war; 66 were killed, and 33 were taken prisoner but later



HUGH B. PRICE

rescued. And many of those who returned went on to become pillars of their communities throughout the country.

"We were aware of the burden we were carrying," said veteran Lemuel Custis, during the group's 25th annual national

(See Price, Page 16)

NEVADA'S ONLY AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

## LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE

Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.  
Published every Thursday by Griot Communications Group, Inc.  
900 East Charleston Boulevard • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104  
Telephone (702) 380-8100 • Fax (702) 380-8102

**Contributing Writers:**  
Jackie Brantley  
Carl Chamberlain  
Ron Gibson  
Loretta Arrington Hall  
Barbara Robinson  
Diana Saffold  
Fred T. Snyder

**Photographers:**  
Stacy Banks  
John Broussard  
Jonathan Olsen

**Ramon Savoy, Publisher-Editor**  
**Lynnette Sawyer, General Manager**  
**Willis Brown, Production Manager**  
**Don Snook, Graphics**  
**Ed & Betty Brown, Founders**

Subscriptions payable in advance  
Six months \$15.00 • Twelve months \$25.00  
The rates apply to Continental United States only  
Member:  
National Newspaper Publishers Association  
West Coast Black Publishers Association