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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

## CBC ridiculed on FOX debate

By Ahkiah Allen

Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Rainbow/PUSH Coalition's Jessie Jackson Sr. is among a string of activists denouncing the Congressional Black Caucus Institute's planned presidential debate partnership with FOX News, calling for the decision to be reversed and for presidential candidates to boycott the debate.

"I am disappointed by the Congressional Black Caucus Institute's partnership with FOX," said Jackson in an interview with ColorOfChange.org. "And strongly encourage them to reverse that decision. Why would presidential candidates — or an organization that is supposed to advocate for Black Americans — ever give a stamp of legitimacy to a network that continually marginalizes Black leaders and the Black community? FOX moderating a presidential debate on issues of importance to Black Americans is literally letting the fox guard the henhouse; FOX should be rejected."

This CBC Institute's decision came even after Black members of Congress were contacted through emails and phone calls by nearly 12,000 activists from ColorOfChange.org, an online lobbying group aimed at promoting and resolving issues affecting Black Americans.

The growing criticism is largely in the form of an online petition from ColorOfChange.org. Launched on March 30, the petition demands that the CBC sever its ties with the FOX News Channel. It is also asking that presidential candidates reject the FOX debate in favor of the CBC's CNN debate, which has also been scheduled.

The first FOX News debate will be Democratic candidates on Sept. 23 in Detroit. The second Democratic debate, scheduled for January 2008 on CNN, will take place in South Carolina. The Republican debates for both sta-

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## Host: Imus, Blacks guilty

By Hazel Trice Edney  
Special to Sentinel-Voice  
WASHINGTON (NNPA)

- New York activist and former Democratic presidential candidate Al Sharpton says radio and television talk show host Don Imus should be fired for calling a team of college basketball players "nappy-headed 'ho's."

But, Sharpton, who has also spoken against gangsta rap lyrics that denigrate Black women says Blacks should also be held accountable for allowing it to happen.

"I've called for his termination and announced that we're going to start picketing the station... to the point where Imus publicly called today and said he wanted to meet with me to talk about it. I said the only way I would want to meet with him would be in front of a Black audience," Sharpton said in an interview. "This is blatant racism."

Sharpton said, "The FCC [Federal Communications Commission] ought to take him off the air" and added that he was writing a letter requesting that the agency does just that. But, Sharpton says Black musicians and rappers should also be held



Rev. Al Sharpton, left, and radio personality Don Imus appear on Sharpton's radio show in New York on Monday. Imus went on to apologize for racially insensitive remarks.

accountable for degrading slurs of Black women.

"That's the reason why I thought someone like me could take this on, because I've been critical of that," said Sharpton. "I took on the rappers on that... I said many people are not going to like me jumping on the gangsta rappers. I said then, we're going to give license to Whites to do this. Now that they do it, we don't like it."

On April 4, on his syndicated radio show, "Imus in

the Morning," which airs live on MSNBC, Imus referred to the Rutgers women's basketball team as "some nappy-headed 'ho's," which in gangsta rap lyrics, "'ho's" is commonly used for the term whore.

Imus' slur came in response to his executive producer Bernard McGuirk, who called the team, which has eight African-American players, "some hard-core 'ho's."

McGuirk then took it a

step further, describing the teams in which Tennessee defeated Rutgers in the NCAA women's basketball championship, as "The Jigaboos verses the Wannabes," apparently a take from Spike Lee's movie, "School Daze," which McGuirk misidentified in the verbal exchange as "Do the Right Thing."

Following a firestorm of criticism, Imus has apologized for the remark and

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## Cigarettes dragging Black males to dead end

By Hazel Trice Edney  
Special to Sentinel-Voice  
Part two of a series

Editor's Note: More than a half million African-Americans have died from smoking-related diseases over the past decade. That's enough people to fill the cities of Atlanta, New Orleans, Kansas City, Mo., or Cleveland, Ohio. Yet, "cigarette smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death in the United States," according to the Centers for Disease Control. Then why are so many Black people dying from cigarettes and why is it so difficult to quit? This eight-part series — "Nicotine Addiction" — seeks to explore these questions by featuring real people, real circumstances, and real answers.

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - His body leaning slightly to the side behind the wheel, the taxicab driver asserts his best manners when a customer hops into the back seat.

"I was smoking a cigarette," said the cabdriver politely, wearing a fishing hat and sporting a full white beard. "Do you mind?" He displays a freshly lit cigarette between his fingers.

When the customer nods the answer, yes, he quickly crushes it in the ashtray while flashing a grimacing glance into the rear view mirror.

"Why do you smoke anyway?" the customer inquires.

After a sigh and a five-second pause, the answer comes from the driver's lips as smoothly as his



name.

"No woman. No money."

According to medical experts and tobacco prevention advocates, people who are prone to sociological stress, such as African-American men who daily face the stresses of racism and oppression, may particularly be susceptible to drug dependency, including nicotine, the

addictive substance in cigarettes.

"Nicotine is a drug. So that's how drugs work," said Makani Themba-Nixon, executive director of the Praxis Project, a non-profit organization that helps communities of color advocate for public policies on tobacco and health. "But, also, it's legal, it's accessible, and in our community it's accessible in places where in other communities you can't even buy cigarettes."

From flower shops, to pharmacies, to billboards, to corner stores, cigarettes and cigarette promotions are readily available to new or veteran smokers in Black communities, which are often economically and socially oppressed, Themba-Nixon points out. The condition of

a person's social life can determine how they respond to the enticements, she says.

"Racism is dangerous to our health. And not only racism in the way that we think of it — classic racism — but the denial of opportunities, how it affects where we live," said Themba-Nixon.

"There is something called social determinants, which are things like where you work, where you're born, your social class and stature, how much access and equality you have in your lives. And the research is clear that that actually has more of an impact on your health than your personal habits. And, in fact, it shapes your personal habits. And the research is clear that the greater

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