

An activist in Los Angeles protests cop's racial profiling.

Groups fearful of new powers

By Charlene Muhammad
Special to Sentinel-Voice

LOS ANGELES (NNPA) — The American Civil Liberties Union has called for federal inquiries into news reports that by the end of summer, the Department of Justice will issue new guidelines unleashing the Federal Bureau of Investigations to investigate Americans based on racial profiling and without any evidence of wrongdoing.

The Attorney General Guidelines are policies that regulate FBI investigations. The Associated Press reported in early June that new guidelines being crafted by U.S. Atty. Gen. Michael Mukasey would let agents open terrorism investigations, gather and store data on people to build a profile of traits that collectively can be deemed suspicious.

In addition to race and ethnicity, two other factors that would trigger a probe by the FBI are travel to countries or areas tagged for terrorist activity and having access to weapons or military training, the AP reported.

Critics argue the revised guidelines provide a gateway into unbridled surveillance and harassment of innocent people, as evidenced by the proposed Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which will allow government eavesdropping and provide a shield to telecommunications companies utilized as aides in the process.

President Bush signed the bill into law July 10.

Calls for a Congressional Investigation

Some say the issue is when, not if, the new policies will be enacted, and civil liberties groups say that consistent, widespread efforts to avert them are crucial to maintaining freedom.

Law enforcement experts say some basic freedoms Americans enjoy that will dissipate under Mukasey's plan include being able to take pictures or video footage with no apparent artistic value, drawing diagrams and taking notes, taking measurements, expressing extremist views or simply getting out of your car.

In a July 9 letter to the chairmen and ranking members of the Senate and House Judiciary Committees, the ACLU urged lawmakers to vigorously investigate reports

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McCain must visit hood

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Now that Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama is back in the U.S. after a rockstar-like tour through the Middle East and Europe, Republican presidential hopeful John McCain ought to take a tour on soil that is foreign to him — through America's Black neighborhoods, ravaged by drugs, poverty and violence largely because of historic racism and economic bias.

That's the sentiment of some international and African-American affairs experts, who say Obama trumped the McCain campaign with his trip last week that included stops and meet-

ings with troops and world leaders in Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, Israel, the West Bank, Germany, France and Britain.

"My advice, really, and it's very serious advice to McCain, is let us let you replicate trips to the ghettos of America," said Clifford Alexander, who more than 30 years ago became the first Black secretary of the Army in the Carter Administration. "Go there. See what's going on there. Let us have you go to some of the schools in America. See the deficiencies. See the holes in the ceiling. See the fact that teachers have to end up supervising people rather than teaching people because of the inadequacies in the numbers of

teachers.

"This is what he needs to do," Alexander continues in the interview with the NNPA News Service. "All of this talk about you've got to go to Iraq, go to your cities."

Obama was seen on the world stage greeting troops, shaking hands with leaders from Iraq's military commander, Gen. David H. Petraeus to Afghan President Hamid Karzai, speaking to a cheering crowd of 250,000 in Germany and even sinking a three-point basketball shot in Iraq.

The tour that started Monday, July 21, was perceivably even bolstered among Republicans as he was accompanied by Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel of Nebraska,

the second-ranking Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee. Hagel has not formally endorsed Obama, but was with him as he met with Petraeus, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki and with Afghan President Hamid Karzai. Democratic Sen. Jack Reed, a member of the Armed Services Committee, was also at his side in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Obama, early this week, was leading McCain among national registered voters by a 49 percent to 40 percent margin in a Gallup Poll taken July 24-26, nearing the end of his tour and released last weekend.

While Obama was away, (See McCain, Page 5)

House issues slavery apology

Special to Sentinel-Voice

The House apologized Tuesday to Black Americans, more than 140 years after slavery was abolished, for the "fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality and inhumanity of slavery and Jim Crow" segregation.

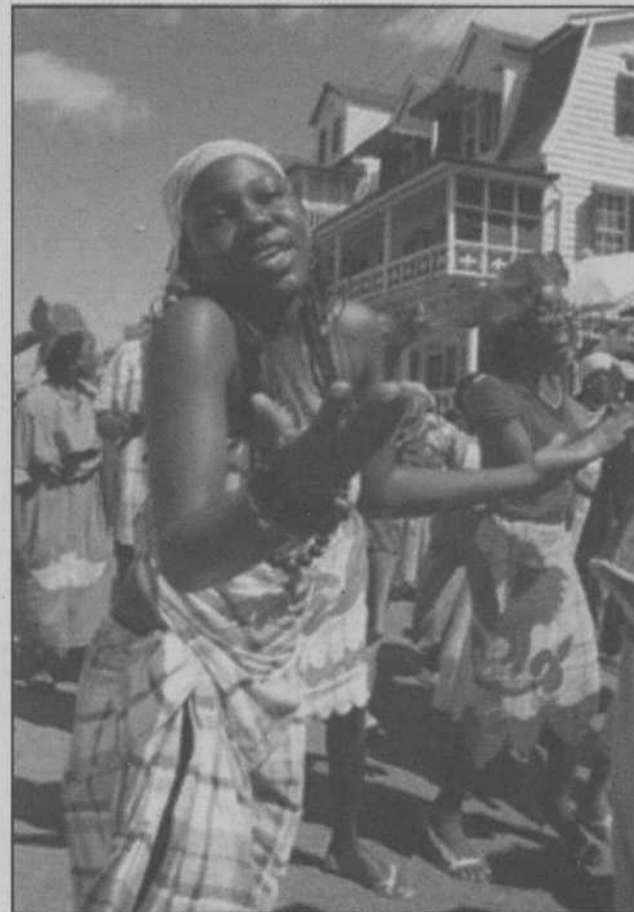
The resolution, which passed on a voice vote late in the day, was sponsored by Rep. Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.), a White Jew who represents a majority-Black district in Memphis. Cohen tried unsuccessfully to join the Congressional Black Caucus this year.

"I hope that this is part of the beginning of a dialogue that this country needs to engage in, concerning what the effects of slavery and Jim Crow have been," Cohen said. "I think we started it and we're going to continue."

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) is considering introducing a companion measure in the Senate, he said.

Cohen faces a tough fight against airline lawyer Nikki Tinker, who is Black, in the Democratic primary Aug. 7.

His measure was co-sponsored by 42 members of the



Surinamese descendants of African slaves participate in a street celebration of the 145-year anniversary of the abolition of slavery in Paramaribo earlier this month. Though the Dutch abolished the slave trade in 1818, slavery was only halted permanently in this former Dutch colony 45 years later on July 1, 1863. Local organizations demand an official apology from the Dutch government as well as payment to compensate for the years of slavery.

Congressional Black Caucus, including Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.), the House majority whip; Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.), chairman of the Judiciary Committee; and Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-N.Y.), chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. None of those caucus members has endorsed his re-election bid.

A total of 120 lawmakers, including two Republicans, co-sponsored the resolution, Cohen said.

In February, the Senate apologized for atrocities committed against Native Americans, and the body apologized in 2005 for standing by during a lynching campaign against African-Americans throughout much of the past century. Twenty years ago, Congress apologized for interning Japanese Americans in concentration camps during World War II.

Congress has considered a similar apology for the slavery and Jim Crow eras, a gesture long sought by African-Americans. Such efforts were always bogged down by concerns that the apology

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