

## Some Innocent People

By HUGH B. PRICE  
PRESIDENT  
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

To understand why the February shooting death of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed West African immigrant, by four white New York City police officers has generated an intense outcry across the country against police misconduct, one need only have read two stories in the New York City newspapers.

One was that recently a white police officer had pulled over the chauffeur-driven city car carrying Rudy Washington, the city's only black deputy mayor. Apparently, the officer was unaware that Washington was a top city official.

When Washington asked why they had been stopped, the officer reportedly said, "Shut up. I don't need a reason to stop you. I am a police officer."

When Washington persisted, the officer responded, "I ask the questions. Not you."

Later, when a higher-ranking police official happened by, recognized Washington, and told the officer who Washington was, the officer replied that he had acted because Washington's car "looked very suspicious."

The other story appeared in the April 4th New York Times. It reported that many whites in upstate New York express little concern that the New York City police may be violating the civil liberties of thousands of African Americans and Hispanic Americans.

"If you've got police doing all this undercover stuff to clean up the streets," said one man, the owner of a bakery, at a political rally in Troy, N.Y. for New York City Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, "some innocent people might get hurt by it. But over all, it's going to do some good."

Some innocent people might get hurt. Who, I wondered, are the "innocent people" that man was thinking of?

Actually, of course, I don't wonder. I know whose rights he would surrender.

This man's name isn't important. It's his attitude that's dangerous.

For that same willingness to consider people who happen to be "colored" guilty until proven innocent is at the heart of the "racial profiling" which not only makes them targets for arbitrary stops by police on city streets and interstate highways, but has also contributed to the deaths of several civilians under controversial circumstances.

This is what the voluminous testimony of blacks and Hispanics in New York and elsewhere has shown.

This is why the demonstrations in New York City over the police department's stop-and-frisk policy and last weekend's march against police misconduct in Washington have been necessary.

And that is why the congress should approve the Traffic Stops Statistics bill Representative John Conyers (D.-Mich.) will propose next week. That legislation would enable federal officials to accurately assess the extent racial profiling plays in police traffic stops.

Its passage would send a much-needed concrete signal that such practices will not be tolerated.

The time for such signals—and concrete action—is at hand, as the racially and ethnically diverse coalition which has formed around the police-misconduct issue has urgently declared.

We have pointed out that these violations are as wrong-headed in terms of effective policing as they are wrong in terms of civil liberties. The success in reducing crime enjoyed by cities which have embraced the community-policing approach—which strives to make citizens allies of the police—show that is the most effective way to cut crime.

In response, Attorney General Janet Reno has accelerated the pace of her department's enforcement activities and reached out to civil rights and law enforcement groups in a search for solutions. The President himself announced several new initiatives during a recent weekend radio address.

But those initiatives must be much bolder in order to force the fundamental reforms in police policy and practices that treat people of color as second-class citizens and lead many of them to view all police with distrust.

The President should convene a one-day White House Summit this spring to underscore the administration's determination to seek constructive solutions to the festering problem of police brutality and abuse.

President Clinton needs to act as boldly on the police issue as he's done in re-nominating Bill Lann Lee to head the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

In fact, it would be a surprise if Lee did gain "permanent" status. The Republican-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee has twice blocked Senatorial approval, and will almost certainly do so again. If it does, Lee, who's been acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights since last year, can continue to occupy that post—where he has served admirably—on an "acting" basis for the rest of Clinton's term.

Nonetheless, by pushing the Lee nomination again, the President has substantively and symbolically declared his intention to continue to press for racial and social justice.

It's that combination we need on the police-misconduct issue in order to refute the glib and dangerous idea that it's okay for the police to run roughshod over the rights of "some innocent people."

## President Clinton Attends The Ron Brown Portrait Unveiling

President Clinton joined Commerce Secretary William Daley, Mrs. Alma Brown and Michael and Tracey Brown, in the unveiling of Former Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown's portrait, in the Herbert Hoover Building Auditorium at the Department of Commerce.

New York artist Steven Polson created the official portrait of Ron Brown. The image is another historic addition to the department's portrait and photograph collection honoring its former Secretaries. The collection is on display in the hallway outside the office of the Secretary. The portrait will be on display

for two months in the lobby of the Department of Commerce and will then be hung in the Secretary's corridor.

Secretary Brown was the 30th Secretary of Commerce and the first African American to serve in the post. He died on April 3, 1996 on a trade mission to Croatia and Bosnia.

In addition to Mrs. Brown, and Michael and Tracey Brown, members of the Ron Brown family in attendance will include: Tami Brown, Michael's wife; Morgan and Ryan Brown, Michael and Tami's young sons; Dorothy Arrington, mother of Alma Brown; and Gloria Carter, mother of Ron Brown.



Photo: Sharon Farmer, White House Photo Office  
From left to right: Commerce Secretary William Daley, Alma Brown, widow of Ron Brown, President William J. Clinton, Michael Brown, son of Ron Brown, Morgan and Ryan Brown, twin sons of Michael Brown and Tami Brown (not pictured) Tracey Brown, daughter of Ron Brown.

## "HB 3197"

Governor John Kitzhaber made the following remarks regarding HB 3197 at press conference. I'm here today to express my strong opposition to HB 3197. This bill is framed as a measure to prevent discrimination in employment, education, contracting and minority business development. Make no mistake about it — it's real purpose is to prevent state government from moving forward to ensure that all Oregonians have equal access to meaningful jobs, a college education, and opportunities to contract or provide other business services.

Although racial and ethnic minorities have made some progress over the last decade, they continue to

experience a quality of life far below the norm, as evidence by rates of infant mortality, unemployment and incarceration significantly above state and national averages; and by life-expectancy and high school graduation rates below state and national average. HB 3197 will further exacerbate those inequalities.

Shortly after becoming governor I signed Executive Order 96-38, because I was convinced that achieving gender and ethnic equity was unfinished business that must be completed. Therefore, today I reaffirm this administration's, and I believe this state's, commitment to the principle of race, ethnic and gender equity...

and I will continue to implement non-discrimination and affirmative action policies where applicable.

I firmly believe that the principle of equal opportunity, embodied by affirmative action, is essential to guarantee all Oregonians equality in education, employment, contracting and opportunity to provide business services. The increasing diversity of Oregon's population demands that we renew and extend these efforts. By doing so, we will maintain our economic viability and provide a high quality of life for all our citizens. Let us not forget that this diverse population will carry the burden of Oregon's economic well being.

JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL IMAGE CHANGERS

PRESENTS

"Keep It Real"

Thursday, April 22nd, 1999  
7:00 P.M.

Jefferson High School  
Auditorium  
5210 N. Kerby  
\$2.00 Donation

"Keep It Real" is a  
dramatic musical play

Written by Renee' Watson.

For more information, please contact:  
Robert Thomas  
(503) 283-5749

## ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

### A Time For Better Understanding Of Drinking Problems

State and local professionals in alcohol prevention and treatment are asking Oregonians to help reduce the state's alcohol abuse problems, particularly among young people. Underage drinking often contributes to crime, auto crashes, lower grades, drownings and suicides.

State alcohol prevention and treatment experts say increases awareness can help reduce incidents such as the melee in Seaside at the start of spring break.

Gov. John Kitzhaber has proclaimed April as Alcohol Awareness Month in Oregon. "I ask parents to join me in making it a priority to talk to kids about the dangers of alcohol," says Barbara Cimaglio, director of the state Office of Alcohol abuse among young people, and we must also keep reaching out to adults with alcohol problems so they get the help they need."

Kitzhaber and Cimaglio have made reducing underage drinking a priority. A special governor-appointed task group is preparing

recommendations to reduce underage drinking, such as improved enforcement of existing laws on alcohol use and increasing the price of alcoholic beverages.

Kitzhaber is urging parents, teachers, religious leaders and others who deal with young people to redouble their efforts to help get messages to young people about the dangers and consequences of alcohol use.

Various treatment providers and organizations plan special information and activities, such as alcohol screenings on April 8. Following are several places with activities and information:

Bridgeway, 3325 Harold St. NE, Salem, will do confidential alcohol screenings on April 8. Walk-ins are welcome from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and phone calls will be handled from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 1-800-822-6722.

The Oregon Prevention Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking, Portland, has information for youths and parents. Call (503) 279-9209.

Oregon Partnership, Portland, for information and treatment referral.

Call 1-800-923-HELP.

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, inc., New York, has a variety of information. Call (212) 206-6770.

Alcohol is the most-abused drug among young people in Oregon and the rest of the nation. Alcohol use is twice as popular as marijuana among college students, and several times more popular than cocaine. Following are statistics selected from several sources showing how serious the alcohol problem is among youths.

According to the 1998 Oregon Survey of Student Drug Use, 43 percent of 11th graders drank alcohol in the previous 30 days. Among 8th graders, the numbers was 26 percent.

In 1996, more than 2,300, or about 40 percent, of the motor vehicle crash deaths for youths between 15 and 20 were alcohol-related.

Nearly one-third of the nation's high school seniors has had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row within the past two weeks.

Drinking alcohol at an early age,

especially before age 15, is a strong indicator of future alcohol abuse problems and/or addiction.

The average age when 12- to 17-year-olds say they first try alcohol is 12.8.

A 1996 survey of college students found that 33 percent of all 19- and 20-year-olds consume at least four alcoholic beverages on an "average" night, and 20 percent have six or more drinks.

A 1991 study found that "A" college student averaged 3.6 drinks per week, while "D" or "F" students averaged 10.6 drinks per week.

More than 60 percent of male college athletic team members and more than 40 percent of female team members report binge drinking (the consumption of five or more drinks in a sitting) in the prior two weeks.

Of young males who drowned, 40-50 percent had consumed alcohol prior to drowning.

In a study of suicide by youths, drug and alcohol abuse was the most common characteristic of those who attempted suicide.

## Helping Our Economy

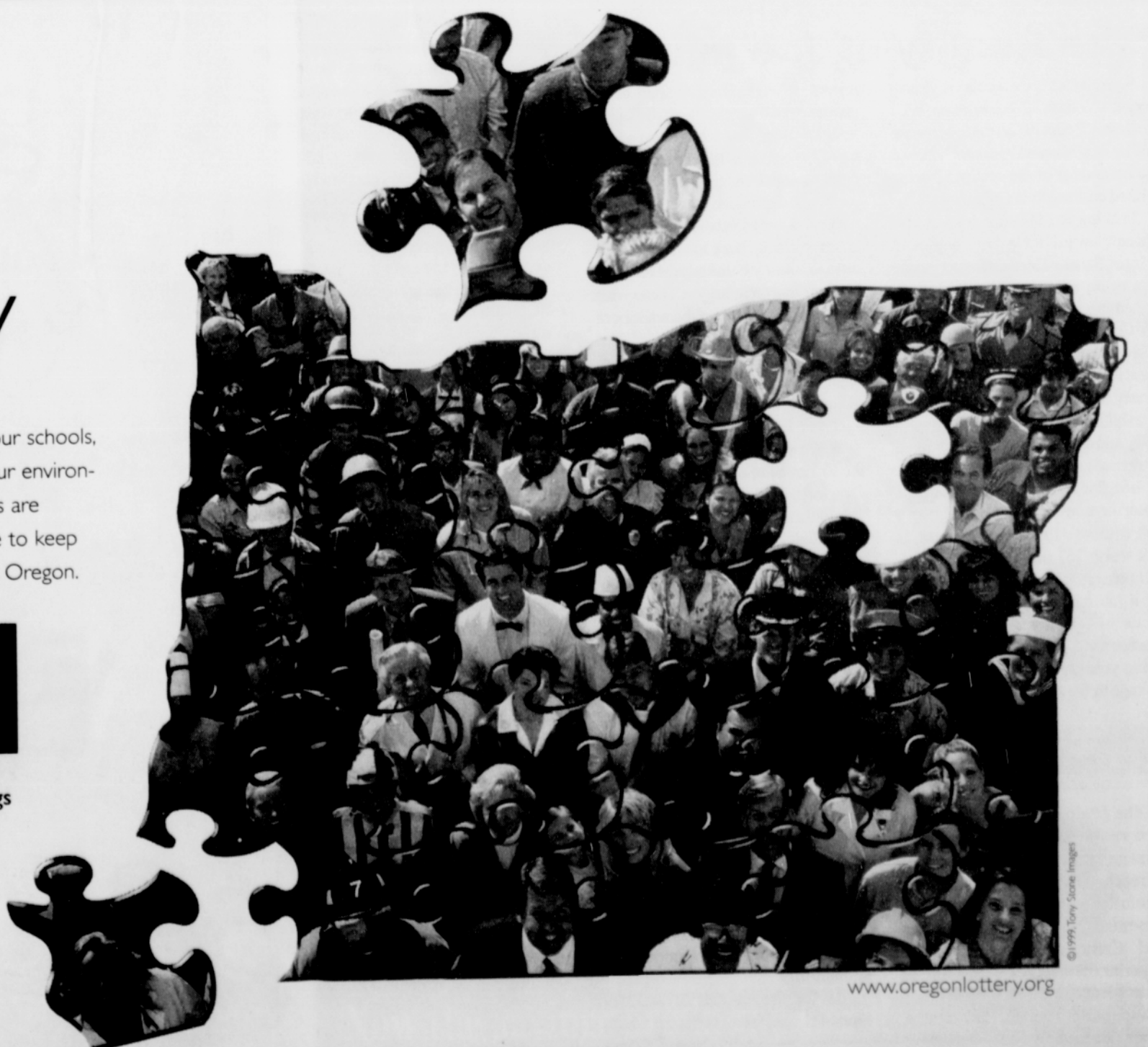
When Oregon's economy was lagging in 1985, the people of Oregon voted to start a state lottery, and use the profits for economic development and job creation. As Oregon's needs shifted, the people voted to allow Lottery dollars to help fund schools. Last year, as attention focused on parks and salmon, Oregonians voted to use a portion of Lottery funds for this cause.

In the past 14 years, over \$2 billion has been returned to Oregon to support these

valuable resources: our schools, our economy, and our environment. Lottery dollars are working everywhere to keep Oregon feeling like... Oregon.



It Does Good Things



www.oregonlottery.org