

# Chicago Fire Department Radio Slurs Bring Call for Change

## Accused of culture of racism

(AP)—A string of racial slurs broadcast over Chicago's fire department radios has City Hall in an uproar, and the mayor is calling on firefighters to break their silence and identify the culprits.

City Council members, meanwhile, are demanding reforms to

end what they say is a culture of racism in the department.

Amid the controversy, a black fire battalion chief received a death threat, and an outspoken black alderman said that he, too, had been warned against criticizing the department.

At least five racial slurs have been heard over the department's radios since February. The firefighter accused of making the first slur Feb. 2 was given a 90-

day suspension and was transferred. The department's internal affairs division is investigating the other slurs.

Mayor Richard M. Daley has called those responsible "cowards," and urged firefighters to identify the offenders "because this is not good for their profession."

At a City Council meeting last Wednesday, Alderwoman Freddrena Lyle proposed the city

create a citizens' oversight board for the fire department. The mayor called it a good idea.

"I think there's a family atmosphere that makes it almost incestual," Lyle said. "We want to change the whole attitude in the department."

Alderman Ed Smith received an anonymous postcard last week that read: "When the riot you are trying to start begins you better make sure all the fire fighters

around your house are black — so you get the flames out."

And Alderwoman Emma Mitts said she received racist voice mails after demanding the transfer of a firefighter accused of a racist comment.

In addition, Battalion Chief Nicholas Russell, president of the African American Fire Fighters League of Chicago, recently received a threat that talked about a battalion chief being shot and

left in a shallow grave.

The department has a history of racial issues and court intervention.

The federal government sued over alleged discriminatory hiring and promotion in 1973, a time when blacks and Hispanics made up fewer than 5 percent of the uniformed employees. Court orders settling the case required Chicago to hire and promote more minorities.

## Store Stays Open as Moving Plans Made

Ken Hatch, the owner of Ainsworth Drug, 3002 N.E. Ainsworth St., wants customers to know he is open for business and will remain open as plans inch forward to move to another location.

Hatch estimates it will be the end of May before he is ready to move to a building being renovated at

7027 N. Interstate. He said the Ainsworth store would remain open in the meantime.

The pharmacist has operated Ainsworth Drug for 11 years, but the store has served the Concordia Neighborhood since the 1940s, providing a convenient location to many long time residents.

## Correction: TD Jakes Due in April

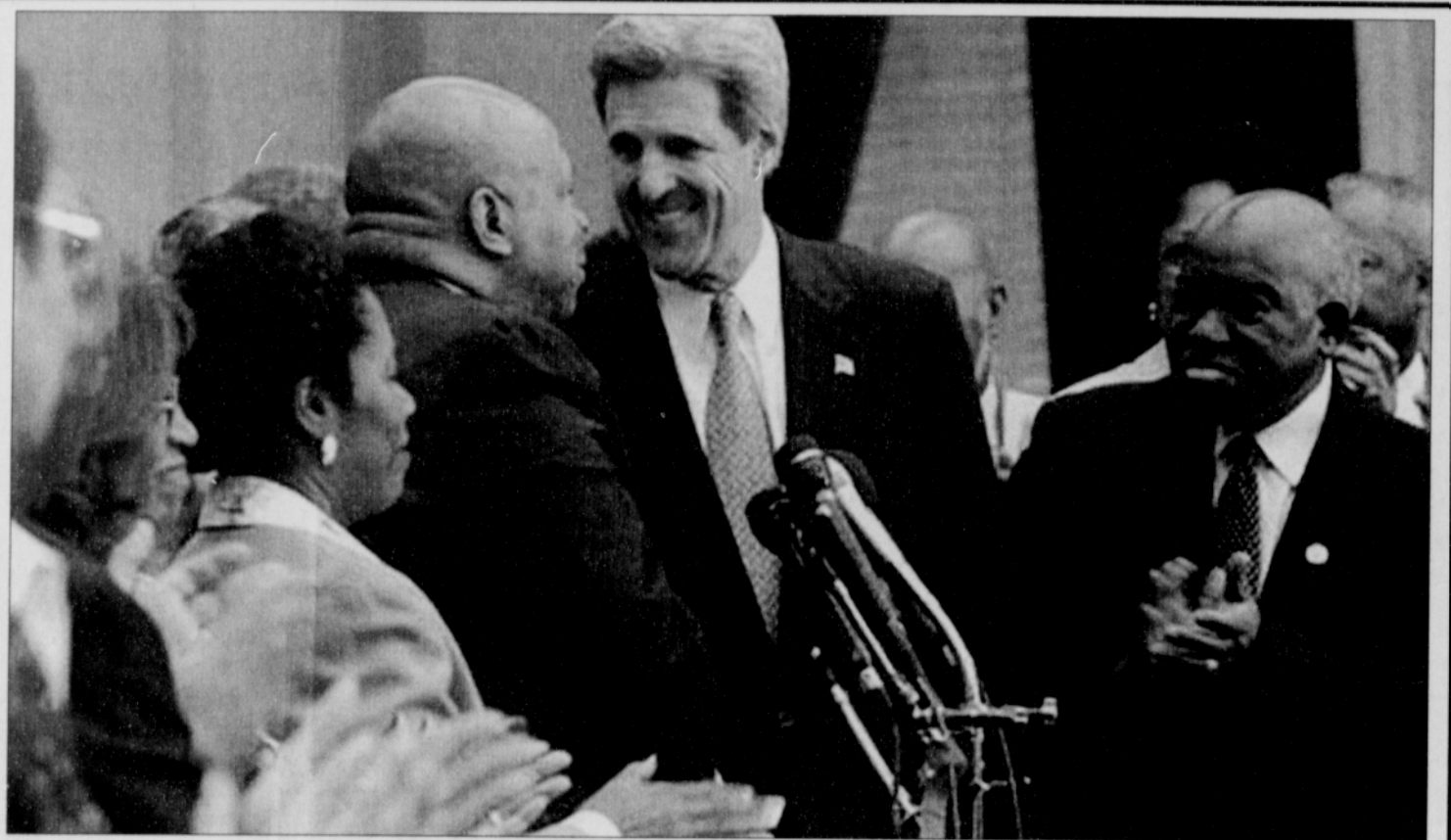
Evangelist T.D. Jakes is not scheduled to make a presentation this week at a Portland conference honoring black woman, but instead will be the featured attraction during Portland Crusade at Memorial Coliseum on April 2 and 3.

The dates correct information in last week's issue about the African American Chamber of Commerce's annual event titled "Never Underestimate the Power of a Black Woman" at

the Oregon Convention Center on Friday, March 19.

The power of a black woman conference will include keynote speaker Patricia Russell McCloud, nationally-noted orator, educator and motivational speaker, recognized by Oprah Winfrey and many publications from coast-to-coast.

Tickets for both events are limited. For more information, call Roy Jay at the African American Chamber of Commerce at 503-244-5794, extension 45.



Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, including caucus chairman Elijah Cummings, D-Md. (left) and Rep. Major Owens, D-N.Y. (right) pledge their support Thursday to John Kerry, D-Mass., saying they plan to work closely with the presidential candidate and involve minorities in his campaign. (AP photo)

## Black Caucus Supports Kerry

(AP) — Black members of Congress expect to confer regularly with Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry and help him plan campaign strategy and involve mi-

norities in his effort to unseat President Bush, an official of the Congressional Black Caucus said Thursday.

Kerry met privately for 45 minutes with caucus members

as he spent the day on Capitol Hill shoring up his support among congressional Democrats.

Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., chair of the caucus, said

after the meeting with Kerry that caucus members were encouraged "this will be an ongoing relationship. ... It is clear we are all about the business of building America."



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**Real People, Real Advice**  
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### Dear Deanna!

My girlfriend's attractive, nicely shaped and has a great personality. I don't understand why she wears so much weave. Her natural hair is nice and long but she still glues, sews and patches all that fake hair in her head and I can't stand it. She said she's tired of me complaining about it. How can it make it clear that I want her weave less? --James; Chicago, IL

### Dear James:

Men often complain about hair weave because they can't run their fingers through it. If the weave looks nice and can fool somebody you have nothing to gripe about. You don't need to make anything clear except the compliments when the weave looks good and if it looks bad to you, hand over the cash for the beauty salon. Leave the issue alone, because like the hair weave, you're an accessory that can be replaced.

### Dear Deanna!

I'm obese and considering the stomach stapling surgery that's going around to help lose weight. I'm also scared because people say my stomach will control my eating the rest of my life. I've talked to friends who are having complications and say they

shouldn't have done it. How do I decide on the surgery or not? --Missy; Orlando, FL

### Dear Missy:

You need discipline. Get off your lazy behind and exercise, go on a diet and adopt a healthy lifestyle. Why should you pay thousands of dollars for quick surgical weight loss when you can invest a few hundred and do it yourself. If you don't have a thyroid problem, health or genetic issue you can shed the weight the same way you put it on. Over a period of time! Hook up with your physician and lose weight the right way.

### Dear Deanna!

I just finished high school and I don't want to go to college. I worked as a stripper my entire senior year and now I want to do it full-time because I can make more money. My mother's having a fit and my dad is going off on me. Why can't they understand I can make more money now than with a college degree? --Anonymous; Los Angeles, CA

### Dear Anonymous:

Sounds like you bumped your head on the stripper pole. Your parents are right in their feelings because they probably sacrificed and went without things to save for your education. You are very childish in your thinking. What happens in two years when you're 20 years old looking 40, run down, and tired? Right now you make a dollar per song and if you think you'll make less with a degree, I suggest you wake up and come back to the real world—fast.

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