

OPINION

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Truth and Justice Denied in Kendra James Case

Blatantly biased laws favor officers in shootings

The following statement is from the Albina Ministerial Alliance, a group of local African-American ministers who reviewed and held public hearings on the police shooting death of Kendra James:

The African-American Community and civil-rights supporters waited 41 years for truth and justice to come in the abduction and murder of civil-rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner in Philadelphia, Miss. That day of justice

finally came for the families, civil-rights workers and supporters of the movement for freedom, justice and equality with the conviction of white supremacist Edgar Ray Killen on June 22.

In spite on the victory, the local African-American community is once again denied truth and justice by the state and federal judicial system. A prior decision by a Multnomah County Grand Jury and a recent decision by a federal civil court jury validate and support the unnecessary use of deadly force in the killing of unarmed mother Kendra James by Portland Police Officer Scott McCollister.

These decisions demonstrate that we have not made as much progress as is necessary in developing a fair, just and equal judicial system for all citizens in

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Portland and America. Persons of color and poor people wonder how long they must suffer injustice and inequality in a judicial system that promotes itself as fair, just, and equal?

While we have many outstanding officers within the police bureau who on a daily basis perform an outstanding job, there

are those who are unfit for the high responsibility of protecting our citizens. When an officer is allowed to call ridiculous belief reasonable belief by merely verbally affirming that he was afraid, we need change.

The laws as written are so blatantly biased and prejudicial in favor of exoner-

ating officers in all circumstances by simply affirming "I was fearful for my life." We need a change!

Although the judicial system denied justice to Kendra James' family, people of color, poor people and the community in general—we must not give up on the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We must continue to struggle each day to create a just and equal society. We must continue to fight for an accountable police bureau, reform in training, policies, investigation and discipline as well as legal changes in the grand jury and deadly use of force laws and juries of peers.

For more information, contact Dr. T. Allen Bethel, president of the Albina Ministerial Alliance at 503-288-7241 or Dr. LeRoy Haynes, AMA vice president.



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Yank the wires out of the wall and calmly go back to sleep?" You see, pain is your nervous system's fire alarm. Pain pills may alleviate the pain but will do nothing to take the stress off the spine

and nervous system. When the body yells, "Fire!" and you experience pain; it is trying to get your attention that it is being injured. When there is stress in the nervous system, this is a serious problem.

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Supreme Court Insult

Bush pick is no friend to civil rights

BY REV. JESSE L. JACKSON SR.

With President Bush's nomination of John G. Roberts, the Supreme Court would have one less woman and one less vote to protect women's constitutional rights to self-determination. A Supreme Court with just one out of nine justices a female and no Hispanic does not look like America. It is an insult.

President Bush is a master of wolves in sheep clothing politics. He gives the impression of moderation, but deep within he is the leader

rightwing direction the nation has seen in over 50 years. Bush's legacy will be one of turning back the clock to the pre-1954 Supreme Court that gave us Brown vs. Board of Education, Roe vs. Wade, and other landmark cases involving the protection of civil rights and liberties.

If confirmed, women everywhere will have even greater reason to be alarmed. Judge Roberts clearly is a vote to overturn Roe v. Wade.

While working under both Reagan and Bush, Roberts was a

progress this country has made over the past 55 years are under attack. With his nomination of Judge Roberts, President Bush signals his desire to stack the courts with justices who are anti-civil rights and anti-workers' rights.

As the radical rightwing rejoices, there is no good news for those who live in America's margins. There is no good news for advocates of women's right to self-determination, for workers and civil rights.

America cannot withstand a radical rightwing conservative appointment to the Supreme Court. We want a Supreme Court justice who is fair, upholds the Constitution and defends civil rights and workers rights.

We want a Supreme Court that models the leadership demon-

strated by the Supreme Court of 1954. I call on Americans of conscience to join us in resisting Judge Roberts' confirmation and bring forth a justice who will take America forward not backwards.

Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr. is founder and president of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, a progressive organization, which seeks to protect, defend and gain civil rights, even the economic and educational playing fields in all aspects of American life and bring peace to the world.

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of the radical right wing in our nation.

With his nomination of Judge Roberts, Bush strikes another blow to America's public policy position and he sets off a new phrase of our struggle for an independent court which upholds the Constitution and protects civil rights and civil liberties.

While Sandra Day O'Connor was a swing vote in dozens of cases that came before the court, Bush's nominee demonstrates his desire to swing the court in the most radical

radical opponent of affirmative action, supporting hard line policies that opposed affirmative action and efforts to desegregate America's public schools. If confirmed, people of color and civil rights will have plenty to fear.

Judge Roberts' law firm was heavily involved in the fight over Florida's vote count and played a major role in the "appointment" of Bush in 2000. Supporters of voting rights, fair elections and judicial independence have much to fear.

The civil rights gains and the

Unequal Access to Health Care

Disparities reflect past injustices

BY U.S. REP. ALCEE HASTINGS

Equal access to affordable and quality health care is a high priority of mine, and the Congressional Black Caucus.

Dr. Ben Carson, the director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University, says that

AIDS, cancer, and many other diseases which are often preventable, treatable, and manageable.

Studies have shown that, had equal health care been available to African-Americans throughout the 1990s, almost 900,000 more African-Americans would be alive today.

In fact, African-Americans are twice as likely as whites to have diabetes, 11 times more likely to get diagnosed with AIDS, and die twice as often from prostate cancer.

And although African-Ameri-

But to do that also mandates that we take it upon ourselves to learn about our own personal health care needs and the needs of our community.

Indeed, just because we did not grow up in households in which access to health education was readily available, does not mean that we have to continue a cycle in which we do not inform ourselves about our health needs and proactively pursue them.

Our community has agitated for civil rights, social rights, and em-

The sad truth is that the African-American community as a whole does not often emphasize our community's health care needs as an essential tool for achieving equality.



birthplace is not a permanent address. Being born on the wrong side of the tracks is not where we are going but rather where we have come from.

Indeed, while the African-American community is today faced with very serious disparities in our access to health care, this does not have to be a permanent fixture of our society.

Many of us and our family members have relatives and close friends afflicted with diabetes, heart disease, sickle cell anemia, HIV and

cans comprise about 12 percent of the population, they represent almost 20 percent of the uninsured.

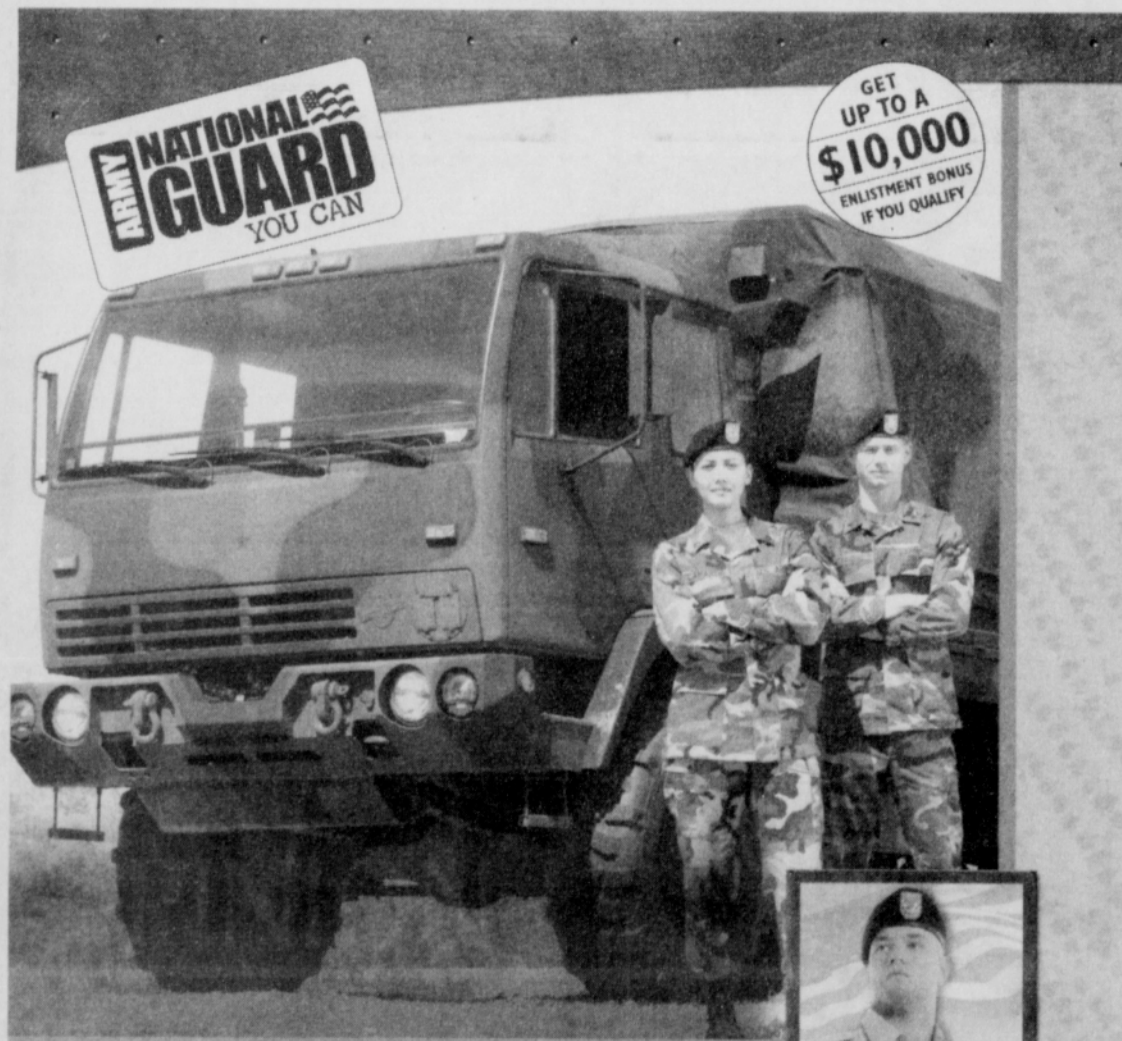
The sad truth is that the African-American community as a whole does not often emphasize our community's health care needs as an essential tool for achieving equality.

This goal requires not only participation from our own community, but also a commitment by our nation's elected officials to ensure universal access and affordability for all Americans.

ployment rights, for access to education and to serve in our nation's military, to elect members of our communities to political office and to participate in every sport.

We must also pursue with equal vigor access to health care that is affordable and excellent, health care that meets the unique needs of the African-American community and that is available regardless of geography.

U.S. Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Fla. is a member of the Congressional Black Caucus.



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