

editorials

In Perspective

by Addison Sweeney
Staff Writer

Frankly, I'm sick of the media making biased commentaries on political elections. The media hurts candidates by manipulating facts and swaying the public with their early public opinion polls, opinions of "respected" journalists and "experts" in political science.

A good illustration of this phenomena was the Jesse Jackson case. It was little action on Jackson's part and a whole lot on the media's part which made Jackson appear to be a threat to everyone and anyone in the country during the his presidential campaign. Like Jackson's opponents, the media seemed to be hoping that Jackson's campaign would not last the first primary.

Even before Jackson announced his campaign, the media put up barricades: time is against Jackson. I heard everything from "it's too late to begin a campaign" to "it's not time for a Black man to run for president."

Then when Jackson decided to run, the media asked questions like "is he a serious candidate," and "why doesn't he elicit the support of 'established' black leaders like Andrew Young and Julian Bond."

To make matters worse, Jackson's "Hymie" and "Hymietown" remarks were aired, unethically, during the early crucial New Hampshire primary. With lengthy coverage of the remarks, Jackson lost support jeopardizing his ability to get matching funds.

Simultaneously, Jackson's friendship with Muslim minister Louis Farrakan was publicized as some new event. Jackson had known Farrakan since the 1960s when Farrakan was first spouting his anti-semitism, Black homeland and female submissiveness rhetoric. The media focused on the "Hymie" remarks and Farrakan's unsolicited support of Jackson to play up the already wide gap between Jews and Blacks in the democratic party.

Of course, by the end of the primaries, Jackson's "Hymie" remarks could still be found in print and on the airwaves daily. He had taken a beating; but despite the folding of other democratic nominee hopefuls campaigns, Jackson was still in there.

This of course forced the media to analyze Jackson's situation. Dubbed the Jackson Factor, newspapers and television stations said: "Jackson's gonna be M-A-D at the convention." Everyone was ready for Jackson to storm into the convention, demand his own personal platform and if unsatisfied, split the party.

Needless to say, the public, by this time, was "surprised" to see Jackson so calm and intelligent at the convention.

I don't want to imply that Jackson is or was the only candidate whose's received this kind of treatment from the media; there have been many others.

What makes me angry is that the media is so unfair about it. After all, Jackson's "Hymie" remark lasted three months during primaries. President Ronald Reagan's Bomb-Russia-Today "joke" gets less than three weeks of coverage prior to the main election and is quickly forgiven and forgotten.

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