

MELODY MICERE STEWART

In the  
spirit of  
Ma'at



## Learn black history

"If you don't know where you came from, you can't know where you're going." This African proverb reveals the ultimate truth of "sankofa;" you must reclaim your past in order to create your future. Until African Americans acquire general knowledge and a basic understanding of our history, we are doomed to repeat the struggles of our existence in America.

An obvious manifestation of this truth is witnessed in the recent pages of our history, via, Rodney King, O.J. Simpson, the retrenchment of affirmative action and the rash of black church burnings throughout the "new" South.

The need for African American adults to engage in the active study of our history is clearly apparent in the lack of knowledge of African American children. Before the days of integration, black adults continued the oral traditions of our ancestors and verbally passed the history of our people. That history was contained in the stories of "the old days" of segregation, sharecropping and the bravery of those who registered to vote in spite of life-threatening risks.

Those were also the days when the black community was an active reflection of another African proverb: "It takes a whole village to raise a child." Black parents and the black community are still the first teachers of our children; ultimately, it is our responsibility to teach our heritage to our children.

It is indeed a sad state of affairs when, in 1996, black children can't distinguish the deeds of Sojourner Truth from Harriet Tubman and, although they've heard of Frederick Douglass, they don't know his significance to our continuing struggle for liberation. Indeed, many have not heard of Mary McLeod Bethune or Ida B. Wells-Barnett. And, beyond "I have a dream," and "by any means necessary," little is concretely known of Martin King or Malcolm X.

Can you identify David Walker, James Weldon Johnson, Marcus Garvey or Martin Delaney? What about Samuel Cornish, John Russwurm, Richard Allen, Absalom Jones or Carter G. Woodson? We should know W.E.B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, Adam Clayton Powell, Arthur Schomburg and a host of others. These African Americans dedicated their lives and bravely advocated in our behalf and if you never heard of them, you, too, have been mis-educated.

We can collectively blame school systems, or we can take responsibility and rise to the challenge of re-education of ourselves and our children.

# Harris defends Libya deal

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"It may have mentioned Robin Hayes, but did not direct him to send money directly to us." Duke added that the flap had nothing to do with race, but revolved around Harris' role in brokering a deal with a "known terrorist nation."

Harris, 62, said he has acted as "an agent" for the NOI in its bid to receive a \$1 billion donation from Libyan leader Colonel Moammar Gadhafi.

"Currently, I am acting as a representative for the Nation of Islam," said Harris. "It happens every day across the nation, especially in the North."

Harris' role is to plow through bureaucratic red tape that hinders access to the money, which the NOI plans to use to fund black-owned banks and businesses and a charitable foundation.

Farrakhan has said acceptance of the donation will not make him a puppet of the Libyan government.

Farrakhan was also denied permission by the government to accept a \$250,000 prize that accompanied the Gadhafi Human Rights Award. Past winners include South African President Nelson Mandela.

Hindering the application process is Libya's international status. It has been under international sanctions that seriously curtail economic activity and travel for the last 10 years. Libya was named a terrorist nation after the Reagan administration alleged its government was behind terrorist bombings in Rome and Vienna.

The trips raised the ire of some members of Congress, especially Rep. Peter King (R-

N.Y.), who threatened to subpoena Farrakhan to testify before the body.

Harris, who stands to earn as much as \$70 million if the deal goes through, says he became involved with the mission because of his commitment to African America.

He is one of the state's wealthiest black men, with widespread business concerns. "You need specific licenses," Harris said. "Whenever a country is under sanctions, it requires applications based on specific requirements to be submitted to the Treasury Department. It is a long process, that requires many legal documents."

The Clinton administration, recently rejected the application.

"Yes, they denied it," said Harris. "But there are other processes that you can go through. I will discuss them with Minister Farrakhan. I personally think he will receive the grant."

Farrakhan has promised to fight "the mother of all court battles" to get the money.

Harris expressed concern over what he referred to as the disparity between the sanctions against Libya and Iraq, which continues to benefit from its international oil trade despite its possible violations of international human rights initiatives in its policy against the Kurds.

"Whites are still doing business with Iraq. White businesses continue to prosper," he said. "They exploit one issue if blacks are involved in it as opposed to whites. The problem is the Nation of Islam and the amount of money.

"Try to work like white folks," he added. "You wind up with problems."

Hayes has also issued public statements encouraging Hunt to remove Harris from the N.C. Railroad Commission.

"You take a person who is running for governor of North Carolina, who gets advice from Peter King in New York City, there's a problem," Harris said.

The Hayes campaign denies any contact with King.

"I am sure that Rep. King has better things to do than work with a gubernatorial race in North Carolina," Duke said.

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## NOI patrol

Continued from page 1A

ment in New York, which has increased its occupancy rate from less than 5 percent to over 95 percent. Residents there told The New York Times that since the start of NOI security sweeps, the neighborhood has been made safer and drug traffic has all but ceased.

It is that reputation that brought the FOI to the attention of Fighting Back's Donnie Moore.

"The NOI is an effective group of individuals," said Moore. "They defuse situations in non-violent ways. They help by bringing stability. I have tracked the NOI for some time; they have a good record."

Already, FOI members have been successful in patrolling areas on Cummings Avenue.

"There was a lot of talk about the NOI," said Lee Faircloth of Brown and Glen Realty. "We have been working closely with groups and leaders in the community and the police department."

Brown and Glen, which owns or manages several westside units, has entered into an agreement with NOI. In return for a rent free apartment, NOI patrols Cummings Avenue.

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