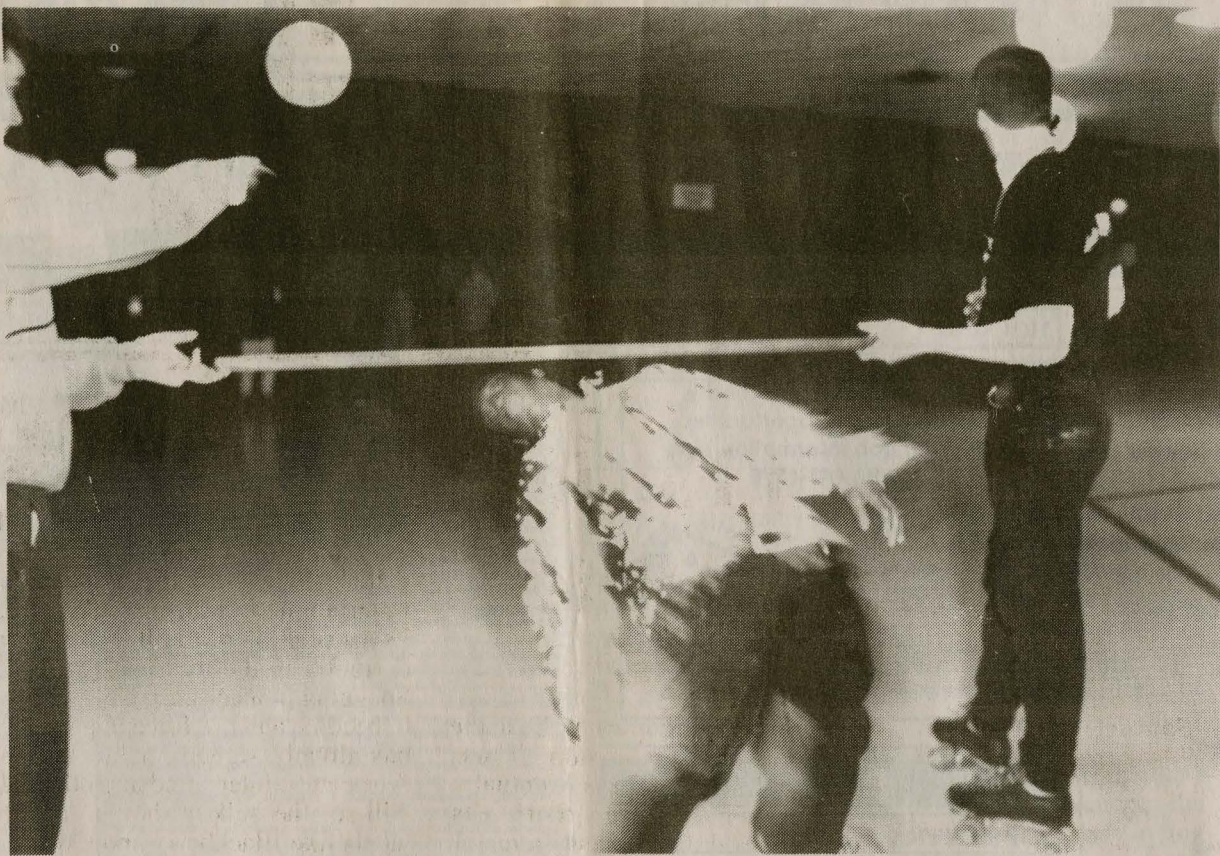


**Farrakhan
Defends Michael
Jackson**
Mama Jackson,
NAACP Join
Defense

By William Reed, NNPA
Saying, "The attack on Michael Jackson is a wicked thing," in a speech before 22,000 people in New York City, Minister Louis Farrakhan recently defended Michael Jackson against charges of alleged child molestation. And on the West Coast, Katherine Jackson and the NAACP joined the growing list of African Americans stepping forward to defend the pop superstar amid the national furor.
Pointing to a cover-up with Jackson as "scapegoat," Farrakhan lashed the media for treating Jackson with a double standard. "You don't handle your own people that way. You cover up the wickedness of your presidents. You cover up the mistresses of your presidents, and the homosexuality of your great leaders," he declared.
"You put the man up to worldwide ridicule, and he's judged as guilty. Michael Jackson is no dope fiend. But he puts his trust in the wrong people who are feeding him morphine and pain killers. Whether you like it or not, I am a defender of Black people. And when I see the world ganging up on Michael, I think it is time for us to say cut this foolishness. Leave that man alone. Stop using him for ratings points on your silly news shows," stated Farrakhan, who was joined on stage at the Jacob Javits Convention Center by Rev. Al Sharpton, singers Johnny Gill and Stephanie Mills, rapper Flavor-Flav, actor Wesley Snipes and radio personality Gary Byrd.
Farrakhan further said, "Personally, I think there's a conspiracy. You want to hang him by innuendo. You want to hang him on the basis of circumstantial evidence. You want to weaken him and make him bow down. But you will find out that there is more to Michael than what you think," Farrakhan said in his two-hour speech.
Appearing on TV's "Hard Copy," Michael's mother Katherine, and bother Jermaine, attempted to dispel what they see as erroneous notions about the reclusive superstar. Mrs. Jackson said, "Michael's appearance makes a lot of people think he's gay. But you can tell when a person is gay, sometimes you look at a person's face and you say, 'On my God, that guy is gay.' Michael is not gay." She wonders why there has not been more investigation of possible extortion by the father of the 13-year-old accuser.
Both Mrs. Jackson and Jermaine said that kids always came by their house and stayed overnight. she said: "Kids slept at the house when he lived at home and nothing happened. We have a guest room. Kids slept in the guest room. Kids slept on the floor in his room. Michael is not the type to do anything like that."
Jermaine Jackson states that Michael, who according to Forbes magazine made \$42 million last year, has been confirmed to appear with the family in Las Vegas on a television special this February. With no mention of the role sister LaToya will play in the special, Jermaine said that he still has talks with Michael and proclaimed, "He's strong. He knows that he's being strong. He has inner strength and God is with him."
Members of the Los Angeles NAACP also held a press conference to say that they too were in support of Michael Jackson. The civil rights group added its weight in lodging complaints against the media for its "mistreatment" of the superstar.
Also, in L.A., prominent Black attorney Johnnie Cochran has been brought in to bolster the Jackson defense team. Cochran has gained a level of stardom himself for his defense of the White truck driver in the L.A. riots, Reginald Denny, and TV star Todd Bridges. Lawyers for Jackson point out that the case is a civil one and no criminal charges have been made against Michael.

Hard Work Pays Off For Youngsters In Black Achievers Program



Doing the Limbo at the Skate King.

Hard work and achievements by young people who have joined the Black Achievers' program sponsored by the East Madison YMCA were amply rewarded recently at an exuberant roller skating party at the Bellevue Skate King. Over 120 youth, mainly sixth-twelfth graders, raced and rolled around the rink from 7-9:30 p.m. Black Achievers' volunteers and some

parents joined in the fun. Games and prizes were part of the evening's entertainment, along with a buffet table full of cheesecake, apple turnovers, double fudge cake and drinks provided by two Eastside Jack in the Box restaurants.
The Black Achievers' Program is comprised of selected employees who are sponsored

by their companies. The program is designed to bring managers and executives together with young people in the African American community. They meet within a model of cluster groups which represent various interests (business, computers and mentors to name a few). When a company agrees to sponsor an employee, that employee agrees to work within a cluster for a



Snacks to keep the energy level up!

minimum of 40 hours during the school year. The company, in turn, underwrites the employee with a \$1,000 donation.

Co-chairs for the Skate King party were Deborah McDade and Ruth Easley. Easley will chair a talent show in April.

Blacks In Government

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the 11th Annual

**Martin Luther King, Jr.
Commemorative Banquet**

"Defining a Dream in a Changing Environment"

When: Saturday, January 15, 1994

Where: Seattle Westin Hotel

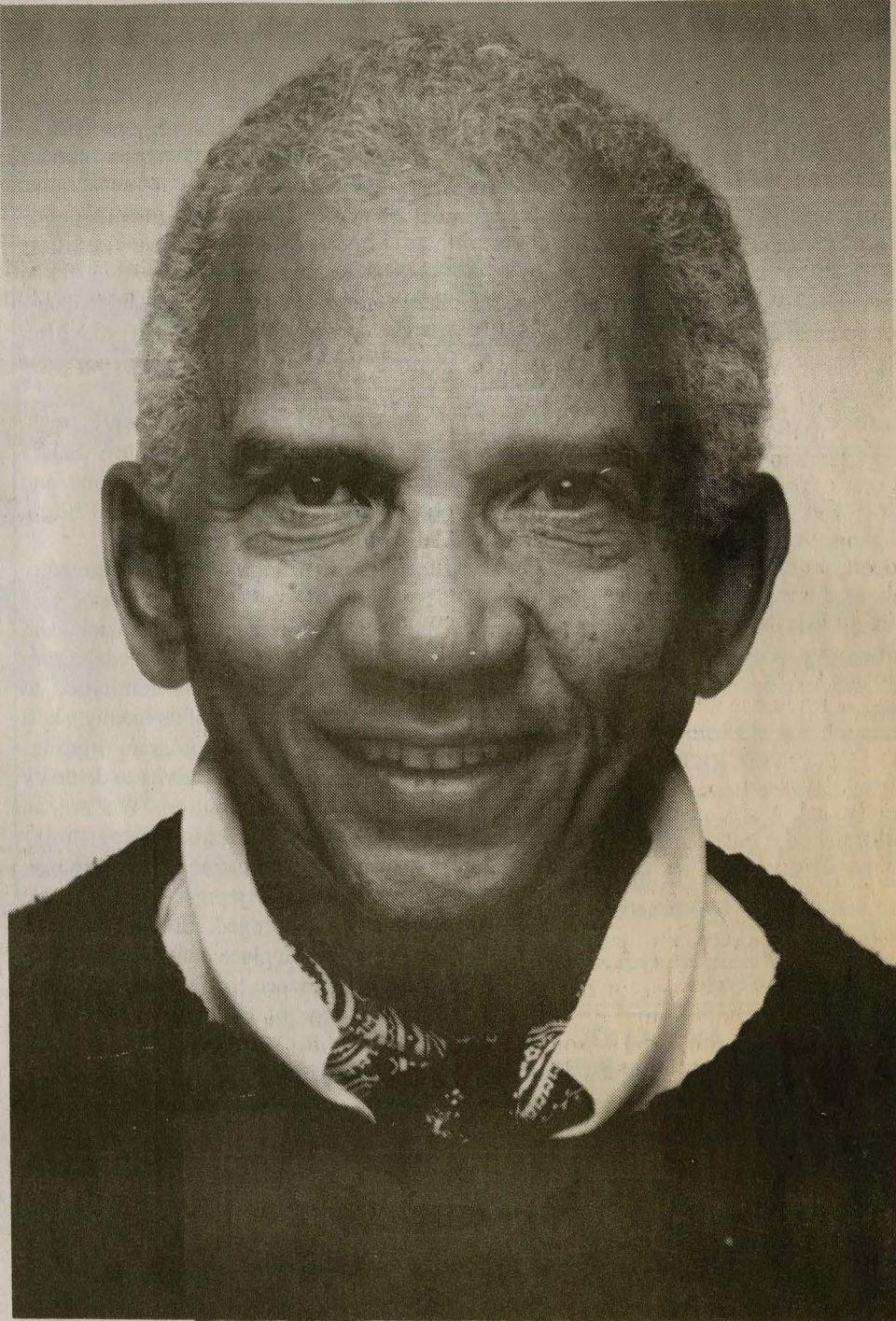
**Time: Dinner: 7:00 p.m.
Gala Entertainment: 9:30 p.m.**

Guest Speaker: Al Freeman, Jr.

**Ticket Information: Blacks In Government
P.O. Box 27113
Seattle, Wa. 98125**

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