

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NAACP SUPPORTS DISMISSAL OF DON IMUS, PUBLIC OUTCRY IS THE
START OF LARGER MOVEMENT TO END USE OF RACIST, SEXIST
SPEECH & IMAGES**

The NAACP commends CBS and MSNBC for removing Don Imus from their networks and also recognizes that further action is needed to eradicate such hurtful speech from our popular culture.

“The announcement by CBS and MSNBC that they will no longer carry Don Imus’ show is a welcome first step in removing this scourge from the airwaves,” said NAACP National Board of Directors Chairman Julian Bond. “Our protests against other enablers – the show’s sponsors and guests -- will continue.

“The Imus controversy has had the unexpected but refreshing effect of reigniting an American conversation about race and the coarsening of our society,” Bond added. “We want to extend the conversation to include the prevalence of bigotry, misogyny and homophobia which cheapens our society, denigrates our population, and marginalizes our people. Whether it comes from so-called ‘shock jocks’, rappers or the non-famous, it has to end, and the NAACP stands ready to assist in the dialogue and the solutions.”

NAACP Interim President & CEO Dennis C. Hayes said: “We will now move from Imus to ‘I must,’ because we each must play a part in attacking racial defamation no matter its author.”

The NAACP was part of a coalition of organizations that participated in the CBS meeting that led to Imus’ termination. Additionally, the NAACP has sent letters to advertisers of the “Imus in the Morning” show, its producers and host stations calling for meetings and asking them to reconsider their support of similar talent in the future. The NAACP also wrote to management of XM and Sirius satellite radio asking them not to become a “safe haven” for racist commentary by picking up the Imus show or others.

The NAACP is also arranging meetings with record company executives to discuss the disparity in the way women are portrayed in varying musical genres.

The NAACP recognizes that when it comes to forming ideas and establishing norms, nothing is more influential than the images and concepts delivered into our lives on a daily basis by radio, television, film and the Internet. Those that are given access to the public through mainstream media must be put on notice that they have everything to lose by spewing racist ideas and rants.

The NAACP believes that racism is taught. Media, particularly television, has proven to be a powerful teacher. When required, the Association directly confronts racism, the use of defamatory language and racist actions.

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors.

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