

Control the mind; mold the opinion and you can capture the soul. In other words, as Thomas Paine once said, "The pen is mightier than the sword."

African Americans through the ages have been taught to obey authority and hate or question each other. The mainstream press will slant the news against us. It will take our leaders and make them appear shady and delusional.

Oh how quick they are to even name who our leaders should be.

If we depended on AP, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, etc. to describe what takes place in our world we would be a race of mass confusion.

We just can't trust them alone.

Thank God that for the last 180 years we have had our own news outlet. The word describing activities in our communities and around the world faithfully is reported in the Black news media.

We get it as it is and understand what it means.

As the old saying goes, "If it is in Jet, believe it".

Jet and other weeklies such as the Chicago Crusader, Washington Informer, Los Angeles Sentinel, Amsterdam News and even our daily, The Chicago Defender, describe the activities that go on in our communities.

Looking at family memorabilia about the Tuskegee Airmen project exposes that all of Black America was kept aware of the progress via the Black Press. 95% of all the exposure came through the network known as the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

The NNPA kept us informed and followed the experiences of our first air warriors.

Oh it was a proud moment in the vast and rich history of African Americans.

The biggest proof of the importance of the Black Press was best exemplified with the overwhelming success of the Million Man March. While the mainstream media vilified the march's visionary, Minister Louis Farrakhan and his able assistant Ben Chavis, the Black Press along with Black Radio got the message out.

It ran free ads and editorials about the planning and logistics.

I remember the evening before all of the cable news shows said it was going to be a flop.

"At most 200,000" exclaimed Juan Williams on the now defunct Cross Fire.

"Who wants to see Calypso Louie" he continued with his vilification of Minister Farrakhan. I went and a house full of my cousins from California went with me.

We got there at 5:00AM and there were already 150,000. That number swelled and swelled and by noon there were more than 1.6 million Black men standing in place seeking atonement and swearing to a purer lifestyle and protection of the Black family.

How many souls were saved at that event?

Most likely every one of the 1.6 million. It was massive and one thing for sure – I became a better husband and father.

We 1.6 million are grateful for the moment and owe much gratitude to the Black Press for delivering the word and helping to pull off the most remarkable event ever held on the Washington Mall.

Let me also exclaim THANK YOU MINISTER FARRAKHAN!

Don't let anyone around you under estimate the power of the Black Press. It is a modern day drumbeat that delivers the word that no other medium can.

You just can't trust all that the mainstream press will print.

Editorial liberties and literary malfeasance do exist and will sneak up on you in a heartbeat. A prime example was last week at the NNPA Press Week dinner.

The NNPA awarded the Honorable C. Ray Nagin, Mayor of New Orleans, its prestigious Newsmaker of the Year Award. Mayor Nagin was eloquent in his acceptance speech and gave the audience an update on the rebuilding of his city. It was positive and upbeat for all who were there.

Two days later, the Washington Post painted a totally different picture of the event.

Never did they say he was given the prestigious award.

The article insinuated that his speech was full of accusation against the white establishment and was at best a racial commentary laced with victimization.

The Post insinuated but then the New Orleans Times Picayune stated it as fact.

Luckily, the Mayor and I were holding a press conference in New Orleans on the day of the Times Picayune assault. The press conference turned into an exchange about the accusations. We did a pretty good job clarifying and rebuking the “hit” against the Mayor by the Washington Post and then the Times Picayune.

A tape of the speech eventually emerged on the Internet and it vindicated the Mayor.

My people if you want the real story get it from your Black Press. Don't think that the story written by the mainstream is pure, true and has your best interest at heart.

Support the Black Press.