

Tape Is 'Bogus'

Says drug video's release is attempt to derail presidential bid

By Curtis L. Taylor

STAFF WRITER

The Rev. Al Sharpton came out fighting yesterday as HBO aired secretly recorded videotape footage from a 1983 government sting showing him discussing a cocaine deal with an FBI agent posing as a drug dealer.

A defiant Sharpton called the tape "a bogus lie" that falsely implies he was a drug dealer and was leaked to derail his potential run for U.S. president in 2004.

"It will take more than a distorted, 19-year-old tape to stop my inspiration to run for president," Sharpton said of the scheduled broadcast of the videotape on HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel." "This is a desperate attempt by some to play tabloid TV with a very old and complex story."

The videotape revisits the minister's past as an FBI informant in the mid-1980s and his alleged ties — which he denies — to Michael Franzese, a former Mafia captain who once facilitated gambling by New York pro athletes.

The firebrand activist minister threatened to sue HBO if the footage did not include a second government tape recorded in the same investigation, which he says exonerates him.

Sharpton's attorney, Michael Hardy, sent a letter yesterday to HBO asking the network to clarify its report and broadcast the second tape.

Ask to comment on Sharpton's statements and threatened lawsuit, HBO spokesman Ray Stallone said: "HBO Sports stands by its reporting."

In the grainy 1983 tape, a cowboy-hat-wearing Sharpton, an unlit cigar in his mouth, is heard to ask Victor Quintana, a federal agent posing as a drug dealer, "So what kind of time limit are we dealing with, with this?"

"The coke?" Quintana asked.

"Yeah," Sharpton said.

At another point, Quintana says he can get \$35,000 for each kilogram of cocaine and "every kilogram we bring in, \$3,500 to you."

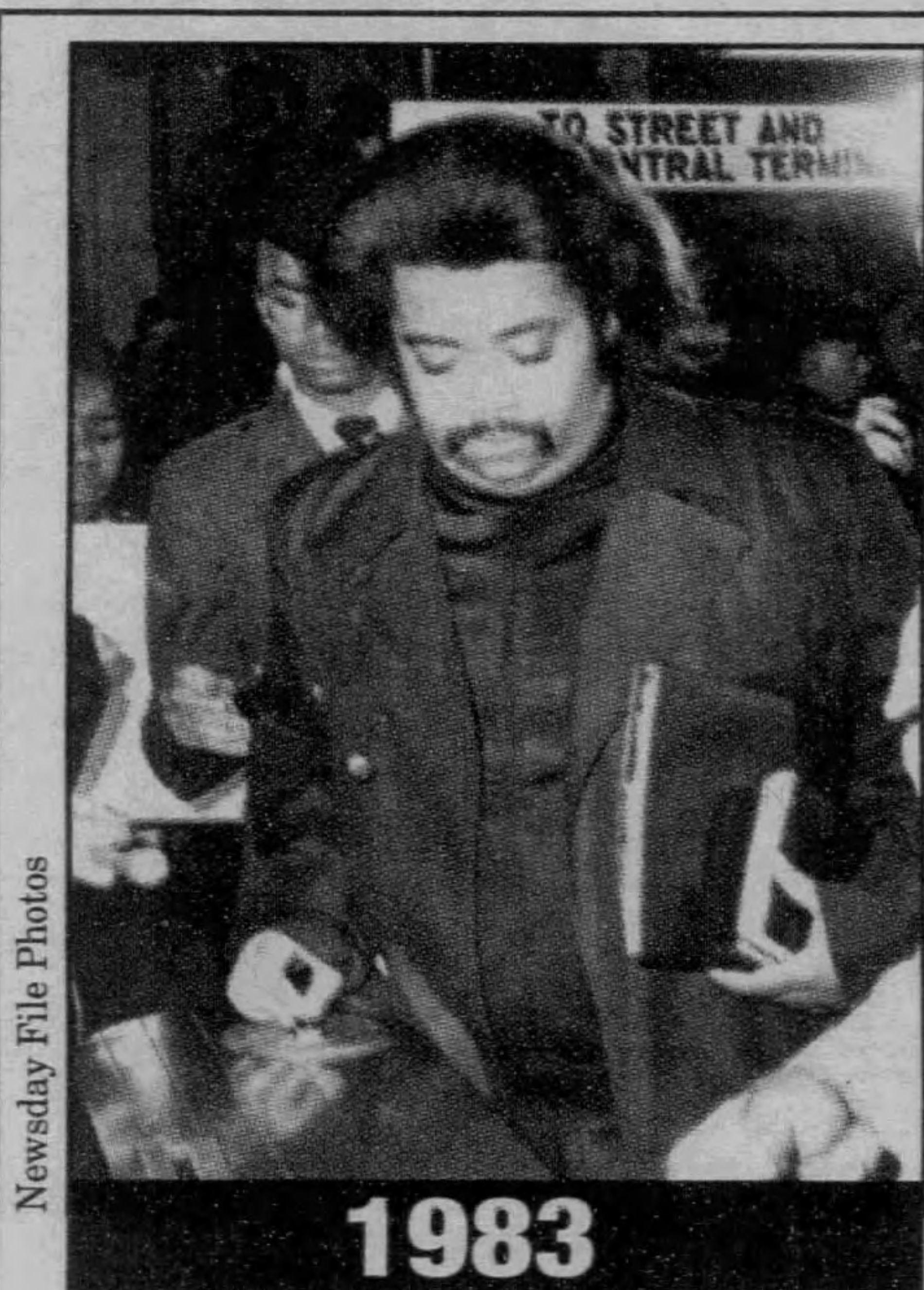
"How does that sound?" Quintana asked Sharpton.

Sharpton nodded his head and then was heard to say, "I hear you."

Yesterday, Sharpton emphatically denied he was agreeing to any illegal deal. This is a "bogus lie they're putting out about a sting that never took place," he said.

"The only thing I'm embarrassed about is that I have to explain to my two teenage daughters why I wore such a cheap cowboy hat," Sharpton said, commenting on the 90-second footage.

Sharpton said he would file a slander complaint today in Manhattan state Supreme Court if the station fails to air both tapes.



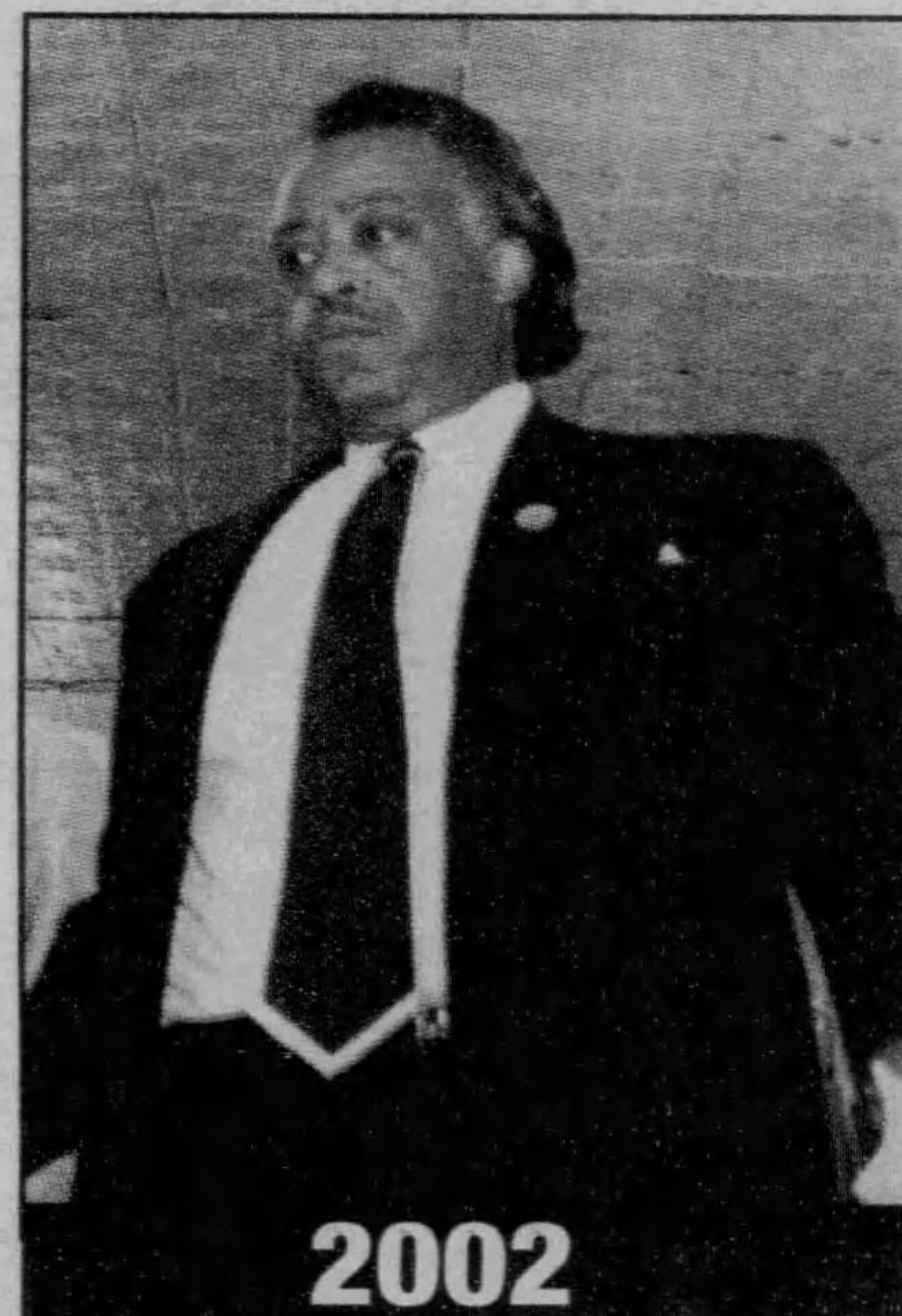
Newsday File Photos

1983

THE REV. AL SHARPTON

Then And Now

The world and Sharpton have gone through some changes in 19 years



2002

To get his calls returned	PROFESSIONAL AMBITION	To be Jesse Jackson, pre-2001
Aspiring street activist	BEST KNOWN AS	Aspiring presidential candidate
Tawana Brawley case	ON THE HORIZON	2004 election
Jogging suits and MLK medallion	WARDROBE	Three-piece bankers' suits
275 or so, and gaining	WEIGHT	230 or so, trying to maintain
Shoulder length, processed	HAIRSTYLE	Graying, processed, but under control
James Brown	ROLE MODEL	Himself

Newsday / Justin Gilbert

In 1988, Newsday reported that Sharpton became an informant for the government when approached with the drug-sting tape.

Yesterday, as in 1988, Sharpton called that charge ludicrous. However, he did admit that he cooperated with federal authorities in a separate federal probe by postal inspectors to close crack houses in poor black neighborhoods.

Sharpton, who allegedly wore a wire, denied informing on civil rights leaders or organized crime figures during his period of cooperation.

The release of the tapes comes as Sharpton has worked hard in recent years to improve his credibility by distancing himself from the Tawana Brawley case.

Several prominent black leaders interviewed yesterday said that airing the footage would have little or no impact on Sharpton's present-day presidential aspirations.

"This doesn't really have any impact on his base constituency," said the Rev. Floyd Flake a former congressman, of the Greater Allen Cathedral. "It really doesn't impact what he does in the black community. It is such an old tape and the actual information has been out there for so long it really has no new impact."

But one political consultant, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said that the airing of the tape virtually ensures Sharpton will remain a long shot to receive the Democratic nomination.

Some Activists Smelled a Rat

By Ron Howell

STAFF WRITER

Even before 1988, when Newsday broke the story of Rev. Al Sharpton's background as an FBI informant, some fellow activists say they knew to stay away from him.

One group said Sharpton tried in 1983 to get them to introduce him to Joanne Chesimard, the fugitive revolutionary known now as Assata Shakur. An ex-FBI agent five years later confirmed to Newsday what the activists had suspected: Sharpton was working with the agency to gain information on Shakur's whereabouts.

"I would equate it with setting up 10 traps a day trying to catch a fox," the former agent, who had been one of Sharpton's "handlers," told Newsday at the time, speaking of the minister's work on the Shakur case.

The wary activists who met with Sharpton in 1983, including photographer Kwame Brathwaite and others well-known in the African-American community, were apparently among the motley group of political organizers, gangsters and others to whom Sharpton cozied up from 1983 to 1985, sometimes wearing a wire or taping their conversa-

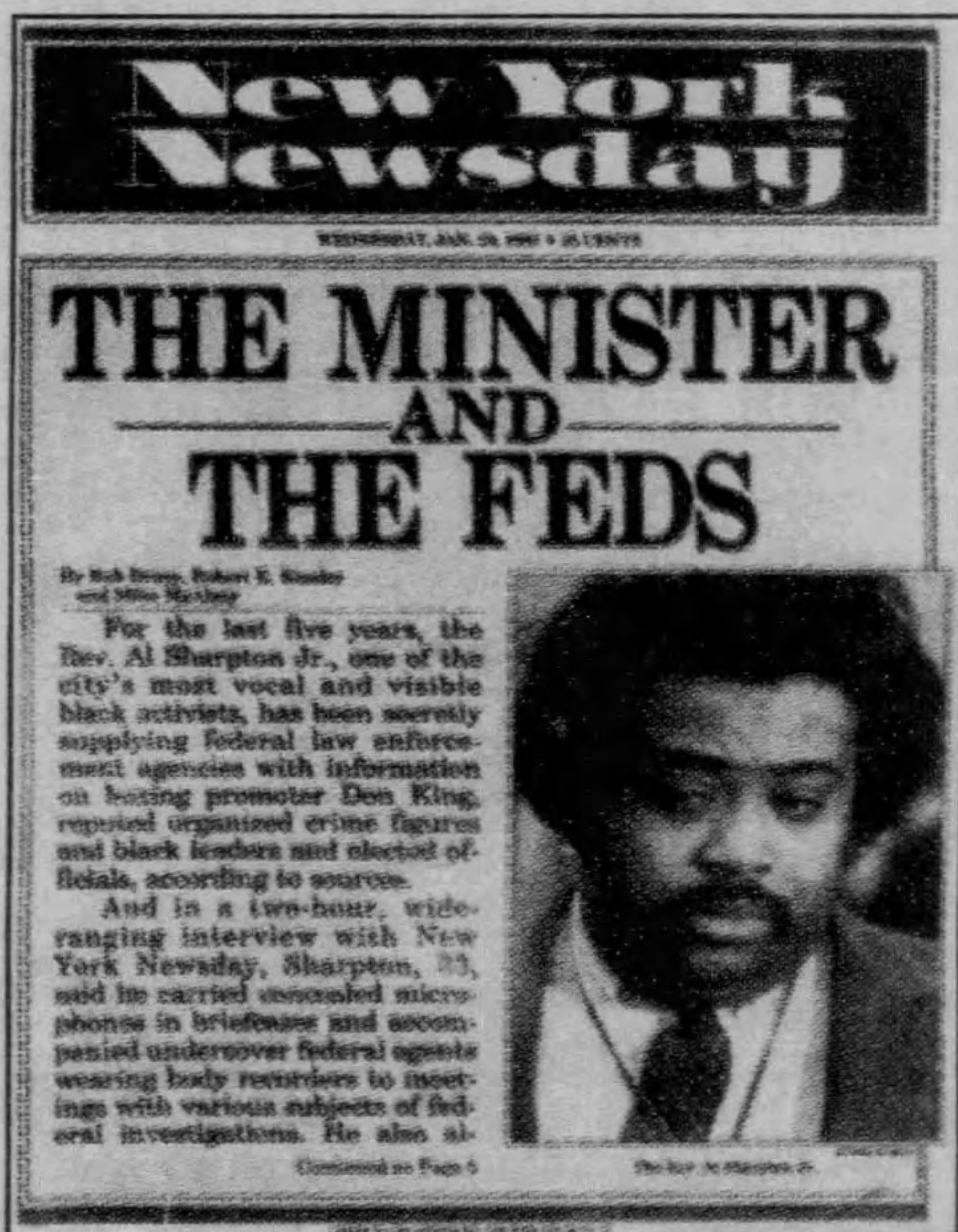
tions on a phone specially placed in his Brooklyn home.

The collaboration between Sharpton and the FBI began in 1983 after agents confronted the minister with information on a videotape, which shows him discussing a drug deal with undercover FBI agent Victor Quintana. Quintana was posing as a drug dealer, FBI sources have said.

The videotape was obtained by HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel," which aired it last night.

Also in that segment, ex-mobster Michael Franzese talked about his ties to Sharpton and described their effort to engage boxing promoter Don King in a money-laundering scheme with Quintana. Neither he nor Sharpton knew at the time that Quintana was an FBI agent, said Franzese, who served time in jail and now speaks out against sports gambling.

Eager to avoid being charged with a crime, Sharpton agreed to supply federal agents with information on King, King's stepson Carl, Colombo crime family mobster Franzese, Genovese crime family members Joey and Danny Paga-



Newsday broke the story Jan. 20, 1988.

NEWSDAY, WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2002

See FBI on A22



For many youngsters, summer camp is a welcome break from school, a place to swim, hike and make new friends. For those with emotional problems or troubled home lives, summer camp can also be a place to heal and grow in a healthy, structured and nurturing environment. Newsday Charities 26th annual Summer Camp Appeal makes that a reality through your generosity. The following are true stories of children who would benefit greatly from a summer they won't soon forget.

Newsday Charities is a fund of the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation. The Foundation will match reader contributions 50 cents on the dollar – up to a total of \$600,000 raised. Because Newsday and the McCormick Tribune Foundation absorb all costs in running the appeal, 100 percent of your donation goes directly to social service agencies that coordinate a child's needs with an appropriate summer camp.

Jennifer

Jennifer, 12, is the youngest of three children. Her mother, a prison guard, was

assaulted on the job and left paralyzed from the neck down. While her older sisters have assumed the role of caregiver for their mother and homemakers for the family, Jennifer is depressed and doing poorly with relationships and in school. Summer camp would provide a wholesome experience for her.

Peter

Peter, 12, took on the job of running his household since his mother became debilitated from severe psoriasis. The oldest child in the family, Peter is doing well in school despite his added responsibilities but he has not had the chance to play with other children. Summer camp would provide that opportunity and give him a chance to enjoy childhood.

Tannisha

Tannisha is a 13-year-old girl with hepatitis C. Since her diagnosis, her friends have teased and shunned her and she has become depressed. She feels her mother and grandmother will not want her to live with them anymore. Tannisha needs some positive reinforcement, something a summer at camp can bring as she struggles with getting better.

Billy

Billy's father recently lost his night job and has become abusive to Billy and his mother. Billy's teacher has asked social workers to look into the family's well being. Billy, 9, feels as if he is caught in the middle and needs a break from the daily bickering. Summer camp would give him a chance to get away and his parents a chance to work on their communication.

Please send donations to Newsday Charities, Newsday Public Affairs, 235 Pinelawn Road, Melville, NY 11747. For more information on how your donations will help children, log on to www.Newsday.com.

Please match my donation and send more children to camp.

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Alzheimer's Study: Delays In Diagnosis a Problem

By Jamie Talan

STAFF WRITER

People with signs of Alzheimer's are going as much as two years without appropriate diagnosis or treatment, and men are getting a diagnosis as much as a year earlier than women. The apparent reason: Wives or female caregivers notice the signs and push the men to seek care.

"Delays in diagnosis is a huge problem," said Dr. Gisele Wolf-Klein, director of education and research at Park-Island Jewish Institute, part of the Long Island Jewish Medical Center. Wolf-Klein and her colleagues reported their findings to colleagues this week at the International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease meeting in Stockholm. "It's a crime. By the time people get into treatment, they've already lost a lot of mental function that could have been stabilized with the new medicines."

The findings are the result of a study of 100 couples who participate in programs at the Long Island Alzheimer's Foundation in Port Washington. Last summer, physician-in-training Kofi Mensah undertook interviews to determine the time span between first signs of memory problems and a diagnosis of Alzheimer's. Husbands of female patients told him it took about two years. Wives of male patients reported it took about half that. Looking back, they said the first symptoms were confusion and forgetfulness.

"If you are starting to treat people one to two years after symptoms begin,

that's a lot of points lost," Wolf-Klein said, referring to the scoring system used by the most common test for the disorder. "Families have to understand that they should seek help earlier rather than later."

Four medicines approved for Alzheimer's boost levels of acetylcholine, a brain chemical implicated in memory and learning. Increased levels have been shown to improve memory and restore the ability to carry out everyday activities. It can keep patients stable about a year, some studies say.

An estimated 4.5 million people have Alzheimer's, and the aging of the Baby Boom is expected to triple the number in coming decades, according to projections from the federal National Institute on Aging.

Results of research presented at the conference included dozens of experimental compounds now in the research pipeline aimed at the disorder's main defect, the build-up of sticky amyloid plaque in the brain. Another drug in development blocks the brain chemical glutamate, which in excess can be toxic to nerve cells.

Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of old age. The risk is about 1 percent at 65 and doubles every five years thereafter, and by 85, half the population has signs of dementia. Yet a survey of primary care doctors found that only 77 percent routinely screen for Alzheimer's, whereas 98 percent reported that they screened for prostate cancer, 98 percent for breast cancer, and 95 percent for cardiovascular disease.

Suspicious of Sharpton

FBI from A5

no, sports agent **Norby Walters** and radical activist Sonny Carson, Newsday reported in January 1988.

Sharpton told Newsday back then that he had also turned over information on alleged election irregularities involving black elected officials, although Sharpton later denied informing on any black activists or politicians.

Sharpton has also said he informed only on gangsters who were hurting the black community, either through drug sales or by scalping tickets to concerts of black artists. Always flamboyant and seemingly able to talk his way out of any situation, Sharpton entered the high life of musicians and boxing promoters decades ago through the man he called his godfather, soul singer James Brown, and through the boxing promoter King.

Newsday's story in January 1988, headlined "The Minister and the Feds," came as Sharpton was serving as an adviser to Tawana Brawley, the black teenager who alleged she was sexually attacked by a group of white law-enforcement officers in upstate Wappingers Falls. In that explosive and racially divisive case, Sharpton was becoming, along with attorneys Alton Maddox and C. Vernon Mason, a hero in the radical black activist community.

Although the Newsday revelations threatened momentarily to derail Sharpton as a credible leader, both Maddox and Mason stood behind him, alleging the disclosures were part of a white conspiracy like the dirty tricks campaigns of the FBI against the Rev.

Martin Luther King Jr. in the 1960s.

Maddox's license to practice law was eventually suspended in connection with the Brawley case, and he now raises money at rallies of followers in Harlem. Mason, disbarred for neglecting his clients, is now a Baptist minister.

"There probably was an expectation that we were calling a press conference to denounce him [Sharpton]," Mason said in an interview yesterday. "But nothing changed . . . And now I would ask, what is the purpose of this [the HBO videotape] coming out in 2002?"

Some activists, particularly those radicals who felt Sharpton had been trying to help the feds find Shakur, continued for years to keep their distance from the reverend. Shakur, who was convicted in 1977 of murdering a New Jersey State trooper and who escaped from an upstate prison in 1979 with the help of armed men, is now living in Cuba.

Carson, for example, was among those hoping other radicals would turn against Sharpton. But months went by, and then years. Sharpton ran for U.S. Senate, galvanizing black communities in the city. He orchestrated mass acts of civil disobedience protesting the killing by white police officers of black immigrant Amadou Diallo. Now he says he is running for president of the United States.

Carson has joined those who do not want to be quoted as saying unkind things about the highly visible minister who worked with the feds.

"I'm going to sit back very, very carefully, watching what this is all about," Carson said yesterday.

Trip Opens With Quite

Posada hit by tossed bat in Yankees' loss

By Ken Davidoff
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cleveland — With little time to think, Andy Pettitte reached into the Yankees' toolbox and pulled out a historic favorite: the backhanded flip.

This flip, however, won't be linked with Derek Jeter's memorable relay from last October. Instead, it will be associated with one of the Yankees' most frightening sights of the season.

No one caught Pettitte's relay because Jorge Posada had fallen to the ground, having been struck by Milton Bradley's thrown bat in the left side of his head. The Yankees' ultimate 9-3 loss was overshadowed by their concern about Posada last night at Jacobs Field, although by night's end, it appeared the catcher would be all right.

"I saw Andy throw it, and I thought, 'Perfect throw,'" Joe Torre said. "All of a sudden, there was nobody there."

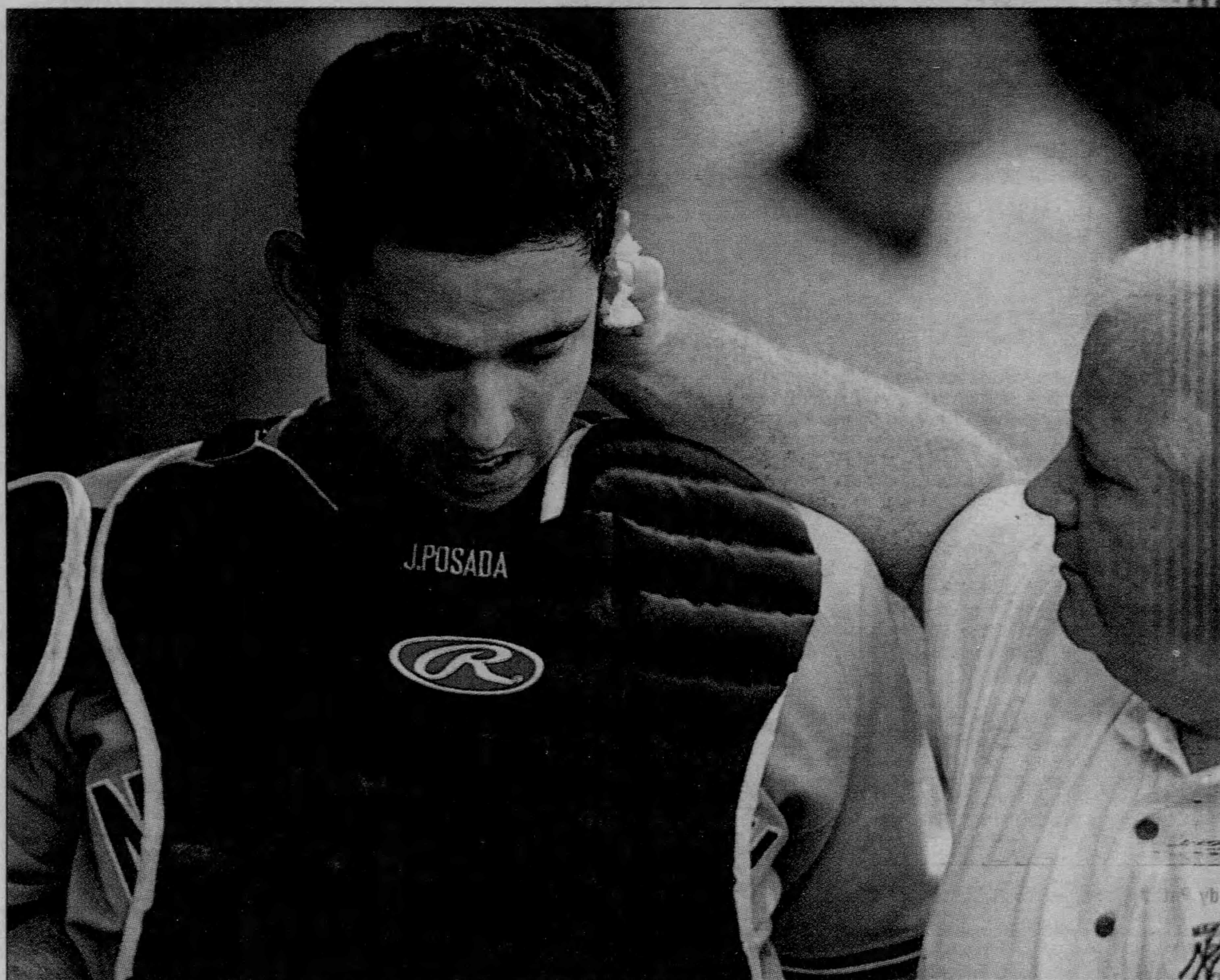
"It's brutal," Pettitte said. "You see him laying on the ground and the blood on his face. It's a scary sight."

The Yankees said Posada had suffered a laceration of his left ear. Though blood was apparent on Posada's face, the Yankees said the catcher did not bleed from inside the ear. The team took Posada to nearby Fairview Hospital, where he received about 10 stitches.

A precautionary CAT scan was negative, the Yankees said. Torre said he thought Posada might have lost consciousness for "a split-second." Torre added Posada could play as soon as tonight, although he indicated it was more likely the catcher would rest tonight and tomorrow's off day before returning to the lineup Friday in Tampa Bay.

Posada, citing a headache, declined to comment following the game.

The play that knocked out Posada gave the Indians a 5-0 lead in a game they dominated. Cuban refugee Danys Baez (8-7) shut out the Yankees through the first eight innings before giving up three runs in the ninth,



Jorge Posada, with trainer Steve Donohue, leaves the field after he was hit by Milton Bradley's bat; he received stitches on his left ear. AP Photo

prompting the Indians to send for reliever Chad Paronto. In addition to Pettitte, Robin Ventura and Alfonso Soriano committed errors for the Yankees.

After the Indians scored three runs in the first, Pettitte kept them quiet until they opened the fifth with consecutive base hits by Omar Vizquel and Ricky Gutierrez. Ellis Burks lined out to Robin Ventura. Then Bradley came up, and on a full count, he tapped a nubber near the third-base line and released the bat behind him. Bradley shouldn't have thrown the bat in such a manner, Torre noted, yet the Yankees manager stressed it was obviously an accident.

Pettitte (4-4), like everyone else oblivious to Posada's fate, chased down the ball and saw Vizquel headed home.

Vizquel and Gutierrez scored to give the Indians a 5-0 lead, and within seconds, Torre and Yankees assistant trainer Steve Donohue were on the field.

With blood trickling down the left side of his face, Posada was carefully turned onto his back and examined further. All of the Yankees fielders anxiously approached their fallen teammate.

After a few minutes, Donohue and Bernie Williams helped Posada walk off the field, and Chris Widger took Posada's place. Widger will likely start to-

night, with Shane Spencer as emergency catcher. "I volunteered," explained Spencer, who said he last caught for Class A Greensboro in 1993.

The Yankees hope to make it through their last 2002 game against the Indians without further injuries. On July 12, Roger Clemens left his start here with a strained right groin and Raul Mondesi crashed into the rightfield wall. Derek Jeter left a Yankees-Indians game July 4 at Yankee Stadium when he sprained his left knee.

"This seems to be the hospital shift against this ballclub," Torre said, finding a smile in the turmoil.

YES VS. CABLEVISION Day 114 of the Season

Today's Game: At Cleveland, 7:05 p.m., YES

On the Field: Indians 9, Yankees 3

State of Negotiations: Standoff continues

Quotable: "Cablevision talks about choice. They say if you don't like the Yankees, why should you pay for them? But we already have programming that we pay for and don't watch. I have five cooking channels and music channels that I never watch, but I pay for them. You can't have it both ways — you're preaching about choices in one area while limiting choices in another. That is not fair."

— *Assemb. Alexander Gromack of Rockland County, testifying yesterday in the Bronx on the YES-Cablevision impasse.*

Team Calls Ex-Mobster's

By Steve Zipay

STAFF WRITER

Former Yankees yesterday denied allegations raised by a former Colombo crime family leader that players threw games in the late 1970s to pay off their gambling debts.

In last night's edition of HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel," Michael Franzese said the Yankees of that era had "gambling issues" and claimed that several players on a team he would not identify placed bets with Colombo bookies. HBO reported the team in question was the Yankees. "They got into trouble, couldn't pay the debt and eventually, I got in-

involved," Franzese said, and players were ordered to miss grounders or fly balls when the game was on the line and to "not perform at the plate."

"The charges made by Franzese are absolutely beyond belief," Yankees spokesman Howard Rubenstein said. "He's a discredited former hoodlum, and it's an outrage that any credence would be given to him with his bad reputation as he seeks personal publicity. The Yankees know nothing about any of these claims."

Franzese, 50, who was convicted in 1986 of racketeering, conspiracy and tax fraud and spent 10 years in prison, said he told the players they had to pay up — or else fix games.