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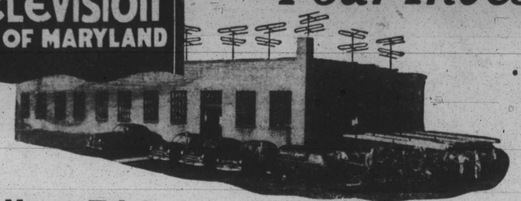

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Civil Rights Fighter Worthy of Honor

Each year, the Sidney Hollander Foundation honors a person, agency or group which has rendered outstanding service toward equal rights and opportunities for the colored citizenry of Maryland.

Our nominee for this year's award is Philip Perlman, Solicitor General of the United States.

Mr. Perlman is a former Baltimorean, whose accomplishments for Maryland and the entire nation in 1949 have established him as an important figure.

Not until his action in the successful restrictive covenant cases had a Solicitor General of the United States appeared in the nation's highest court to present a brief as a friend of the court and to argue that the 14th Amendment means what it says on the question of civil rights.

Mr. Perlman argued that since no State may enact discriminatory laws, no court may enforce them.

After Mr. Perlman spoke, there were other briefs, pro and con, but all other arguments were anti-climactical.

Since the covenant case, the Solicitor-General has filed briefs in the following cases:

(1.) The Henderson case, involving the right to eat in a Pullman diner without being screened from other passengers;

(2) The Sweatt case, involving the right of a colored petitioner to enter the University of Texas Law School; and

(3) The McLaurin case, which challenges the right of the University of Oklahoma to set apart educational facilities for a colored student in a particular institution.

In his arguments, Mr. Perlman has the support of Attorney General Tom Clark and the President of the United States.

It should be noted, however, that in the Henderson case, he argues against Federal attorneys for the Interstate Commerce Commission, which upholds segregation. Government attorneys, therefore, are chief counsel on both sides of the issue; but Mr. Perlman chose to throw the weight of his great office on the right side.

These three briefs, together with the restrictive covenant cases, are the strongest indictment of race and religious discrimination that have been heard in the Supreme Court since Justice J. M. Harlan's famous dissent in the case of Plessy vs. Ferguson back in 1896.

Mr. Perlman's actions are of particular significance to Marylanders, first, because the Henderson dining car case was instituted by a Marylander, and scond, because the education cases tie in definitely with our campaign to open Maryland's State-supported university to students of all races.

Contributions' Significance Great

The expected victory in education in the Supreme Court will bring our local fight to a successful conclusion, just as the Supreme Court decision in the restrictive covenant cases paved the way in Maryland for a fairer distribution of available housing facilities.

Since Maryland, along with all other States in the nation, benefits by the comprehensive actions which Mr. Perlman has taken and is continuing to take, we feel that he fully qualifies for an certainly merits honor by and in his own State of Maryland.

D'Alesandro Speaks Out in Support of Housing

Taking a positive stand, Mayor D'Alesandro is urging the City Council to stop dilly-dallying and pass the bill which will help promote the city's public housing program.

Known as Ordinance 1772, the bill would make it possible for the Housing Authority to begin construction of three low-rent projects, so that families now living in blighted areas will have some place to live when the slum clearance program begins.

Naturally, real estate interests, which long have been gouging the public with exorbitant rents, oppose expansion of public housing. It seems also that there will always be some agitation against new housing sites, no matter where they are located.

Realizing this, the Mayor speaks for the city's general welfare when he tells the Council to pass the bill and let the housing program get under way.

Review of Benson's Biased Views Still Makes Bad News

Speaking at the Urban League's silver anniversary dinner, this week, Dr. Paul F. Douglass, president of American University, Washington, read a letter in which F. Murray (Social Pleasantry) Benson, a trustee, objected to the admittance of colored students to the university.

The AFRO exposed this letter in a story five years ago, shortly after it was sent to Dr. Douglass.

Mr. Benson, in rejecting application of the color ban at the university, stated that there is no "divine sanction of the social comingling of the races."

He contended that "the Methodist Church, like the State, owes an equal opportunity, including education, to all men, regardless of race," but that these opportunities can be afforded in "separate places," which would make everyone happier.

On a wave of public indignation, civic and educational organizations wrote to the Governor demanding Benson's removal from office as chairman of the State Parole Board.

The Governor refused to take action, maintaining that Benson expressed only his private opinion on the university issue and was not acting in his official capacity as a State employee.

During the war, Mr. Benson came into public disfavor because of a statement that a large number of colored people were "idly roaming the streets, engaging in social pleasantry," which, he held, was proof that war industries needed no more workers and therefore there was no need for adequate housing for them.

At that time, Mr. Benson was city solicitor, a position he held when he led the court fight against opening the city's golf courses and parks to all citizens.

Mr. Benson's long and unchanging record of biased opinions and discriminatory viewpoints was recalled to our mind when Dr. Douglass reviewed the American University incident.

We raised the question then and we raise it again now: Can this type of person administer justice properly in the public office he holds?

State Police Adopt New Safety Program

Maryland State Police have adopted a new program of installing safety slogan signs on the rear bumper of their patrol cars. The slogan for this month is "Safety—Dim Lights."

Pupils' Inferiority Feelings Analyzed

By AUDREY WEAVER

A small news item, this week, carries colossal portent.

A survey conducted by the Purdue Opinion Panel shows that 28% of a group of colored teenagers queried as to whether they felt that colored people were inferior to white people, answered "yes."

Although 72% replied in the negative, it is incredible that in this era of common scientific, sociological and psychological knowledge, that so large a percentage of school pupils could believe that they are inferior to people of another race solely on the basis of color.

The youngsters polled were in the 9th to 12th grades. The white teen-agers' figures were almost identical with those of the colored pupils, 29% believing in the superiority of their race and 71% saying "no."

Taken regionally, more of those from the South believed in the inferiority of colored people than those from the other areas (East, Midwest and Mountain Pacific).

With free schools and compulsory education so prevalent in the nation, all children should know that they are not inferior to anyone because of color. But the important thing in this case is ferreting out those reponsible for 28% of any group of colored youths believing in their inferiority.

Surprised at the high percentage, one local educator expressed the opinion that the figure should have been in the neighborhood of 5%.

Several other well-educated persons say that they are surprised that the figure was as low as 28% considering the conditions under which these youngsters are born, reared and educated in this "democratic" nation.

Movies with "white heroes" only and which show tan actors only in stereotyped roles; teachers who are forced to teach a dual democracy; prevalent slum dwellings, jim crow on numerous fronts, and second-class citizenship in general are blamed for this low merit rating.

Two recent high school graduates who proudly insist that they know all races are equal, explain that they can easily see how colored youngsters grow to believe that they are inferior.

Their own particular experiences led along that path, they declared, adding that they attended dilapidated schools which had been discarded by whites; were denied chances to engage in certain recreational activities which they like, and finally were warned by their school advisors that it would be folly for them to follow the paths of study in which they were interested because positions in those fields were not open to colored persons.

"The problems of life are solved by those who feel them," the president of American University declared in a talk here this week.

With that as a premise, it is up to all of us who feel the race situation keenly to make a concerted effort to repair the damage already done by white supremacists with their persistence in implementing the non-scientific racial theory.

And while battling for civil rights on the legislative front, leaders must now realize that they, also, have a big job to do in steering the future generations' thinking away from the channels of inferiority and into the right direction.

Unions Outgrowth of Medieval Guilds

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the seventh in a series of articles about employment designed to give information that will be useful in getting and keeping jobs. The main emphasis will be on jobs in the Baltimore area, but some space will be devoted to employment on a national scale.)

By CHARLES K. ANDERSON
Howard University Field Work Student
Baltimore Urban League

The forerunners of labor unions in the United States were the medieval guilds of Europe. These guilds were based on a feeling of scarcity of opportunity.

To protect their interests, the guilds brought influence upon the Government to forbid anyone who was not a member from practicing a trade, and through their strict apprenticeship, regulations and restrictions of "foreigners" from other cities, they saw that too many did not become guild members.

The earliest labor organizations, and some of the strongest today, were established in the skilled handicraft trades. The first such organizations in this country appeared among the carpenters, shoemakers, printers and tailors in the East Coast cities during the 1790's.

The conflict of interests between skilled craftsmen and the mass of semi-skilled and unskilled wage earners led in 1881 to the formation of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, which in 1886, became the American Federation of Labor.

Exclusion of Some Led to CIO

The beginning of the AFL resulted in the exclusion of an ever increasing number of industrial workers from the benefits of unionization.

The various times it made efforts to organize particular groups of factory workers, it received lukewarm support and at times opposition from its affiliated craft unions.

Since the beginning of the labor movement, there have been differences of opinion as to whether unions should be organized along occupational or craft lines, or whether they should be limited to the industries concerned.

As a result of this controversy, the Congress of Industrial Organization was formed. This organization includes most or all of the employees within a plant or industry, regardless of occupation.

12 Have Restrictive Clauses

The CIO included a non-discriminatory clause as to membership at its beginning and has striven to live up to it. The AFL has a general policy of no discrimination but it is unable to control the affiliates which comprise its membership.

At least 12 American unions specifically exclude colored workers from membership by provisions in their constitutions or rituals.

Four of these—the Wire Weavers, an AFL affiliate, and the Train Dispatchers, the Railroad Yardmasters of America, and the Railroad Yardmasters of North America, which are unaffiliated—are of no appreciable importance in barring colored from jobs since none of them has a membership exceeding 3,000.

The other eight exclusionist unions have a great influence on job opportunities for colored workers, for they include some of the largest and more influential organizations in the American labor movement.

Jim Crow Locals Another Answer

These include the International Association of Machinists, the Railroad Telegraphers, the Railway Mail Association, the Switchmen, all AFL affiliates, and the Locomotive Engineers, the Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, the Railroad Trainmen, and the Railway Conductors, the independent railway brotherhoods.

In addition, seven others usually refuse admittance to colored by tacit consent. Ten others permit them to join and give them the privilege of paying dues, but limit their participation to "jim-crow" auxiliary bodies which in one way or another prohibit them from a voice in the affairs of the union.

Public Pays for Increases

Unions have come in for both praise and criticism in the past few years. By use of collective bargaining, they have refused to work for wages that were too meager to insure their members adequate incomes.

After granting a raise, management in turn usually increases the cost of their products to the consuming public. In some instances, management and unions have not been able to reach a mutual agreement, so strikes have followed.

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics groups the major causes of work stoppages into five main categories according to the issues involved: (1) wages and hours; (2) union organization, wages and hours; (3) union organization; (4) other working conditions such as seniority, work load, shop rules, etc, and (5) inter-union and intra-union matters, including sympathy and jurisdictional strikes.

The industrial world, as such, is very dependent upon other related industries, so that a strike in one field has drastic results on workers in another. Over a period of time, related industries are forced to decrease their working force and eventually forced to cease operations.

Points in Favor of Unions

1. They present a united body to bargain for the improvement of wages and working conditions of the working classes.
2. They have increased the earning power of their members.
3. They have increased the job security of their group.

Criticisms Against Unions

1. They call strikes that jeopardize the welfare of large segments of the population because of the interdependence of the industrial world.
2. They tend to dominate the persons that own the industries.
3. Some small groups of skilled workers of another race may profit from exclusionist practices by enhancing their monopoly power.

Urban League Director Defends Community Audit

By ALEXANDER J. ALLEN
Executive Director
Baltimore Urban League

The significance of the AFRO-AMERICAN's editorial of Feb. 18 lies in the definition of the term, "blighted area."

The AFRO apparently understands it to mean an area in which every home is sub-standard, largely because of neglect by tenants or owners occupying the property.

As a matter of fact "blight," as defined by the City Plan Commission and the Urban Redevelopment Commission of this city, is a complicated concept arrived at by correlating some 10 different factors at varying rates of incidence.

It does by no means reflect upon every structure in the area and frequently includes homes which would meet every standard of good housing. The term is one applicable to an area, not to individual houses.

Designation Often Helpful

Furthermore, the purpose of designating an area as blighted is frequently to prevent deterioration or depreciation of good housing in the area which is being threatened by harmful influences.

It is essential to understand also that the causes of blight are complex and go far beyond the control of any individual or any small group of individuals. There is, therefore, no basis for shame or sense of insult on the part of persons living in area designated as blighted.

In fact, it has not been unknown for citizens to seek such designation as a means of obtaining the help of governmental agencies in combating harmful community trends and influences.

Admits Statistics Outdated

The AFRO editorial is of course correct in its assertion that certain housing statistics used in the Urban League Community Audit are drawn from the City Plan Commission's 1945 Survey on Residential Blight and that certain colored neighborhoods have expanded since that time.

It is in error, however, in its assumption that the picture today is "quite different" and in its suggestion that there was an intention to distort on the part of either the Urban League or the Baltimore Sunpapers.

The League used the latest information available on the subject. Misunderstanding would have been avoided if the source of the housing statistics had been specifically indicated, as was done under certain other topics.

However, the audit's introductory section states "the facts cited are drawn from the official reports of municipal and State agencies and the published surveys of reputable research organizations."

Obviously not all these studies were done in January, 1950.

Blighted Areas Still Timely

It is true, as the audit itself points out, that certain colored neighborhoods have expanded since 1945, but there are no dependable figures on this expansion.

There have also been other compensating factors which have prevented the picture from changing as much as it might first appear it has.

The AFRO uses the estimate of 6,000 families or 20,000 persons having moved into new areas since 1945.

Assuming that this is a reasonable estimate, it is necessary to recognize that the non-white population of Baltimore City has increased by more than 20,000 persons since 1945, according to Health Department calculations.

This means that the non-white population of blighted areas has not materially decreased, despite improved living conditions for some 6,000 middle-income families.

Attacked Deplorable Conditions

The central fact which the Urban League sought to make in the audit and of which the statistics were only illustrative is that Baltimore has the worst housing conditions of the nation's 10 largest cities.

It also sought to emphasize that conditions among colored citizens are considerably worse than those among any other segment of the community.

The AFRO-AMERICAN, the NAACP, the Citizens Planning and Housing Association, and the Urban League have worked together for many years in efforts to remedy that condition. The battle is not yet won. This is no time for misunderstanding between allies.

Review of Benson's Biased Views Still Makes Bad News

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We raised the question then and we raise it again now: Can this type of person administer justice properly in the public office he holds?

Speak Your Piece

Unpunished Criminals

Dear AFRO: I have always been interested in the welfare of our youngsters.

The "shoot'em-up" movies, the 10-cent comic books the Boston farce (Brink's money firm sold-up) and now the $16,500 Morgan College debacle are sure to play havoc with our youth.

I am the father of three children, all boys, and every day since the bold gunman staged their daylight robbery at Morgan, my boys have asked me, "Dad have they caught'em yet?"

Sons "in the Middle"

You see, my boys are kind of in the middle. In the movies they see the bad men caught, but in realistic episodes of crime, the culprits are too often never brought to justice.

For the sake of my kiddies and young folk like them throughout the world, I hope that the persons responsible for the Morgan "steal," and other offenders of law and order are meted their warranted justice.

—VERNON L. STOKES

Retired Principal Busy

Dear AFRO: Thank you for publishing my short history of the Banneker School.

I am now thinking of writing a pamphlet, not a book, on "My Forty Years in the Baltimore Public Schools," which I hope to finish in a year.

— JOHN W. WOODHOUS

Pupil's Hope for Future

Dear AFRO: I was impressed by a History Week poem which should encourage everyone to work hard for success in life. I do hope that someday we will not have a History Week and that all races will be equal.

HILDA L. COATES
Grade 9, School No. 137

Huggins Disgusts Reader

Dear AFRO: I was reading in the AFRO about Captain Emerson's latest "find," Lee Huggins, who has been doing free police work for the vice squad. I think you should call him Emerson's latest snake.

That man is no more of a private investigator than a ditch digger. Since when can a person appoint himself an investigator?

I also think that it is very bad to have a police department so stupid that it cannot find out things for itself. It also makes a bad mark against the colored authentic investigator.

Qualifications Necessary

I am one myself, with offices in Washington; but we don't stoop that low to "stoolie" for the police.

A real investigator is trained better than the average detective in finger-printing, civil and criminal investigation, handwriting, typewriter investigation, firearms identification and police photography.

So if he is an investigator, he should work at that and stop being a common "stoolie."

— H. M. WASHINGTON

Sen. Commends League

Dear AFRO: So impressed was I with the success of the Urban League interracial youth meeting at Polytechnic Institute, last Friday, that I thought it should be brought to the attention of our people generally as an example of what can be achieved in this field through the right kind of effort and co-operation.

Accordingly, I was pleased to bring it to the attention of the members of the Senate and am gratified to report that the Congressional Record of Feb. 20, 1950, includes the report.

SEN. HERBERT R. O'CONOR

No Holmes Fan

Dear AFRO: I hope that the Rev. M. E. Holmes never gets on television. It's bad enough listening to him, but to see it on the screen would be the world's worst.

As for Mr. Lee, they should ship him back to Chicago. All that screaming on the air is a disgrace.

— (Mrs.) MADGE KELLY

If You Ask Me

By B. M. Phillips

Any day in the week, the phone on a city editor's desk rings and the voice on the other end of the wire anxiously inquires:

"I took out a marriage license yesterday and I'd like to keep it out of the list you print in the AFRO. What do I do?"

Or, "We just got a divorce in Judge So and So's court today. We want to make sure it won't get in the AFRO," and so forth, ad infinitum.

Puts One on His Toes

In both of these cases and in many others like them, the parties concerned have taken the very steps to make sure notice will be taken of their marriage and divorce.

The fact that Mary Jones and John Smith have some special reason for wanting a divorce or marriage kept out of the public print is all the more reason that a wide-awake reporter or city editor would want to report it.

After all, the job of a newspaper writer is to report the news as contained in public records. If it's there on his beat, he'll turn it in or else he may be out of a job.

Best Way to Get It In

Moral: If you get a marriage license or divorce or land in court and don't want it in public print, for goodness sake DON'T call a newspaper office giving all the details and asking how to keep it out.

Ten chances to one, yours may be the case which appears dull and repetitious and will be deleted on general principles and/or for lack of space by the city editor himself. Your call will only serve to focus attention on it and you'll surely be in print!!

Birthdays

Who is this world of ours their eyes
In March first open shall be wise,
In days peril shall be wise,
In days of peril firm and brave,
And wear a Bloodstone to their grave.

—Selected

The AFRO extends congratulations to these persons who celebrate birthdays this week:

Feb. 24—Samuel B. Owings, 911 N. Carey St.; Mrs. Bruce H. McDonald, 315 W. Fayette St.

Feb. 28 — Samuel A. Haynes, 617 Avondale Rd., South.

March 1—Mrs. Claudine Campbell, 1021 McDonough St.

March 2 — Miss Margaret Jones, 1232 McKinsey St.; John H. Murphy 3rd, 6038 New Edmondson Ave.

March 4—Miss Margaret Truman, 638 N. Carey St.; Miss Jeanne L. Parrott, 2131 Druid Hill Ave.; Mrs. Susie Fenwick, 1413 Myrtle Ave.; Miss Emma Thomas, 1609 Madison Ave.

War and Peace

By NATHANIEL HOFF
First Prize Winner in Mexican History Week Contest

I have seen the march of brave men
Across the sands of death
I have seen them protrude their eyes
And partake their last life's breath
I have seen their tortured faces
When danger lurked nearby;
I have seen the bleeding soldiers
Grope toward the nebulous sky.
I have seen their tortured moments
When only their souls lived on.
And have seen their shabby bodies,
Ripped, beaten and torn.
I have seen the littered battlefields,
With their debris of human frames;
I have seen Hiroshima
Go up in a puff of flames.
But now the war has ended,
Many cities are silent tombs;
And from this chaotic destruction,
The flower of peace slowly blooms.
Peace is the brotherhood of man,
Justice to set men free,
Equality for one and all;
Everlasting liberty.
Peace is the soothing hand of God,
The gentle passion of the soul,
The blushing brightness of the sun;
The world as one great whole
Peace is the worthy contructor of men,
the builder of towers tall,
The tranquil reign of love supreme;
Freedom of one and all.
For peace is the freedom of men,
The eraser of hate and strife,
The foundation for a unified world;
The pedestal of life.

Your Child's Teacher

To Mrs. Sadie Maddox, one of the secrets of good teaching lies in giving the child another chance.

Over a period of time, this teacher at Banneker School No. 113, feels, a child will be able to develop some talent, and not become a round peg in a square hole.

Helping him develop is a duty which requires both patience and teaching skill. The child must not be made to feel that he can concentrate on one phase of his school work to the neglect of another. Mrs. Maddox tries to lead him to see that it is necessary to be well-rounded to be socially efficient. A superior effort on the part of his sixth grade teacher, "Nothing is too great for her to do for a child." Charity and musical activities are a part of her life. She is secretary of the Prayer Will Circle, Order of Moses, and Progressive Mount Olive Lodge, a members of Waters AME Church and an alto and soprano of Progressive Mount Olive Choir No. 1.

MRS. SADIE MADDOX

One of her hobbies is writing poems and plays, but mainly for her own pleasure. The other is sight-seeing, a hobby in which she can indulge during the numerous trips she takes with the Mount Olive Choir.

Helps in Dramatic Work

At Banneker School she has served on nearly every committee during the years she has taught there. Now she is general activities chairman.

In addition to her many activities, she is known in the community by the excellent dramatic program which she presents annually for the Christmas party of the Eastside Community Committee.

Mrs. Maddox is the wife of John Maddox. They live at 2020 N. Smallwood St.

She lives by the philosphy which she daily instills in her pupils: Be so busy making friends that you have no time to think about enemies.