Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

Founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1840-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City Inc. Carl Murphy (1889-1967) Editor-publisher (1922-1967).

AFRO war on crime

It is way past time for our community to mount a war against crime but the AFRO - AMERICAN now proposes just that battle.

In Baltimore most violent crime, most street crime, involves black criminals and black victims.

Whites profess fear of this violence though it seldom touches them.

The plain truth of it is we are robbing and stealing from each other.

We are killing ourselves.

Within the space of a week two elderly women, one 69 and confined to a wheel chair, the other a 76 year old grandmother with 39 grandchildren and 41 great-grandchildren, have been murdered in their homes.

There have been no arrests but we know the perpretators are also black.

This must stop.

And we see it as our responsibility as voice of the black community to sound this message. WE, meaning all of us, must move to make sure all citizens regardless of race, age or color, can walk through the streets of this city without fear.

We can exhaust our usual "black" rhetoric about the conditions of this society which push black people into crime, poverty, psychological depression, racism, self - inadequacies growing out of second - class citizenship and on and on.

We are taking the position that no matter what the while majority has done to us it is not enough to turn any of us into killers of our women, children and neighbors.

When whites deplore black city violence we are among the first to throw their criticisms back at them, using the very rhetoric cited above.

But black on black crime in Baltimore is at epidemic proportions and it simply has to stop.

When this newspaper, produced by and for black citizens, and all others interested in our concerns, says black crime against black criminals must be brought to bay, make no mistake — we are speaking for our readers; they want this madness to end, and we are speaking as journalists who must report this awful continuing chain of tragedy and see the incalcuable damage it does to families, neighborhoods, the city as a whole.

Please note that we say this is a community problem. Not a police problem.

For in our judgment for the AFRO - AMERICAN to call for an end of crime and safe streets, our city police department disproportionately white in relation to the city's majority black population, could interpret our demand as an excuse to accelerate mistreatment of black people under the guise of having a "mandate" from the black community itself.

We want this clearly understood; the leadership must come from the commu and the police must be respons to community leadership in this regard.

Further, in the minds of black citizens, well - intended or not, the police department is a negative at best.

When we consider that black crimes against blacks is the justification for increased law enforcement budgets, (where whites get the jobs) we have to say that black crime affords a good living for thousands of whites charged with enforcement of the law.

We do not want any more of this, either.

Therefore in weeks to come we will be asking people from all of this city's neighborhoods to come forward with ideas on how we all can move to drastically reduce black on black crime specifically and all crime in Baltimore.

Tragedy, death, property loss, injury aside — we had all better realize that a city with a crime reputation such as Baltimore has is a city no one will visit, no industry will invest in, no white, black or otherwise will want to raise families.

In short, a city plagued by black or other thugs is a city without promise, economic possibility or much of anything else.

And since we ARE the majority in this city, we will be the ones most affected in the future, as crime most immediately affects us now.

We must stop killing each other.

Let's begin our war on crime!

First step: Join the AFRO War on Crime Advisory Council. Open to all.

Dear AFRO:

I am ready to work to make this a safe city for all citizens.

You can count on my time, ideas and energy.

Name .....

Organization .....

Address .....

Phone .....

Note: All correspondence is confidential. No police involvement. Enclose this form in a sealed envelope address to AFRO War, P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

Lawmaker's pay raise

Members of our state legislature have voted themselves pay raises of $6,000 per annum per member and a daily expense allowance of $50 per day.

This goes into effect next session (1979).

As we ponder the quality and quantity of legislation fashioned by Maryland's senators and delegates, we do not know if these increases are at all justified.

Our problem has always been that we measure what this state needs in the way of legislation that addresses itself to the real needs of citizens with what the State Legislature is able to produce that even remotely attends to the issues confronting each and all of us.

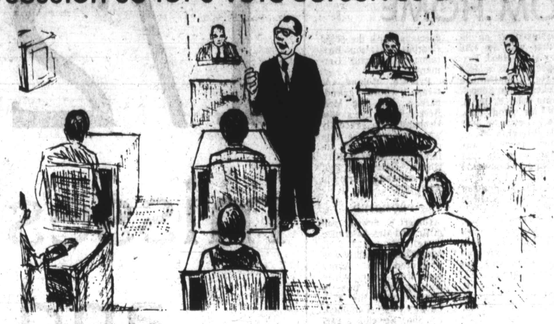
For some lawmakers the winter - spring convening is no more than a holiday away from home. They propose new law, they sleep while legislators more alert ram through measures against the public interest.

Rural lawmakers skillfully sabotage what measures would help urban areas of Maryland.

We do not speak here along racial lines. There are lawmakers of imagination and skill from all groups. Our sense, reviewing the record of the State Legislature year after year, is that these men and women are in the minority.

Our notion is that lawmakers be given pay raises based on the quality of legislation they help fashion. As it stands now, the increased salaries reward mediocrity as well as superior performance. Too many Maryland legislators are grossly overpaid as it is.

"We haven't done anything else this session so let's vote ourselves a raise."



A LITTLE ABOUT A LOT: MADELINE MURPHY

By Madeline W. Murphy

It was heartwarming to see that the Dunbar Chamber Chorus got an official send - off by Mayor William D. Schaefer last week before embarking for Rome and the international music festival.

Not long after I presented their predicament in raising the $14,000 needed to make the trip in my Feb. 4 column, I was fortunate to attend an affair where school and city representatives were in attendance.

Never before from so many diverse quarters had I ever received the kind of concerted interest from Dunbar alumni and concerned citizens that I did at this affair.

And with the proper mix of concerned people, the spark was lit to deal aggressively with the problem of the city's disinterest and responsibility and raising money from a wider source.

This of course was in addition to the parents and school officials who had been struggling through patron and booster tickets from $1 to $25 respectively, to raise the money.

The old saying "You know because you read the AFRO" came through loud and clear on that Sunday!

And although their trip is the culmination of the hard work of everyone concerned — a happy ending — the sad fact is that they must still raise $7,000 more to complete payments for the trip.

To have the distinction of being one of only two groups from the United States who will perform at the festival in itself is quite an honor.

However, to be from Baltimore — "Charm City," "All America City" — and yet have to nickle and dime it to pay for the trip is a sad commentary on the mayor and all his boosterism. Certainly it shows the hollow ring, the tarnished image of his slogans.

How quickly, on the other hand, they can wangle millions from HUD to subsidize hotels in the sports arena complex!

How easily they can sell $1 houses; can risk being labeled the cancer center of the eastern seaboard in their pitch to attract all kinds of industry!

Yet how callously do they give mere lip service (until shamed to do otherwise) to the cultural exchange between young black Baltimoreans and others worldwide.

This from a city, that boasts of Peabody, Baltimore Symphony and Museum, the Walters, Morris Mechanic, Maryland Institute of Art, where it can shell out hundreds of thousands to promote them all in the name of culture.

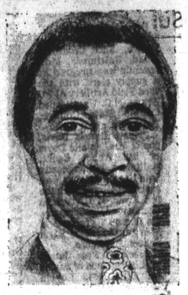
The hypocrisy of this stance should be plain to see, and the mayor's $25 donation at the last minute (no more than many others and I gave early on) cannot salve his conscience nor erase this hypocrisy and denigration.

Only when the bills are paid with the city's wholehearted cooperation and contribution, only then will black people have an indication that their majority population holds value, despite their poverty. And indeed this is a small price to pay for the long overdue proof of the mayor's integrity and concern for black people.

In the meantime, it would be fitting, and forward thinking if alumni of Dunbar would undergird their boasts, pride and personal success stories with money to set up an on - going fund for future opportunities of the chorus.

After all, the Dunbar Chamber Chorus, to black folks at least, is an indication of where we look for the lasting value, the true meaning of "Baltimore's Best"!

WASHINGTON REPORT: PARREN J. MITCHELL



People and the Employment Bill

By Parren J. Mitchell

Mr. Mitchell represents Maryland's 7th District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

They said it could not be done. They said the mood of the country was such that the U.S. House of Representatives would never pass the Full Employment Bill.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other ultra - conservative groups unleashed the full force of its powerful lobbying effort to defeat the bill. Opposition forces in the Republican party called it "socialist five year plan."

Despite this intentional opposition, the people fought for the bill.

From all over the country, individuals and social groups, church groups and political groups kept the pressure on. They wrote thousands of letters to their representatives, they sent thousands of telegrams and made thousands of phone calls.

Blacks in southern states worked especially hard, and, as a result of their efforts, a surprisingly large number of "conservative" Democratic southern representatives were won over in support of full employment.

Then it happened on Thursday, March 16, 1978, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Hawkins - Humphrey Full Employment Bill.

Some compromises were made, some changes were accepted during the floor action on the bill, which now moves to the Senate for action.

One change in the bill has particular significance for me because, among other assignments, I serve on the House Budget Committee. Prior to passage, the House voted to delete provisions which would have given the Joint Economic Committee a prominent role in overseeing the Congressional and Presidential response to the legislation.

Instead of two resolutions, the budget resolution and a separate Joint Economic Committee resolution on economic goals, the House decided to retain the present system of one resolution with the Joint Economic Committee reporting to the Budget Committee.

Press accounts described the rejection of the separate Joint Economic Committee Resolution as a further weakening of the bill.

Speaking about the Joint Economic Committee, the Washington Post reported:

"The House ordered the panel merely to submit its recommendations to the Budget Committee for inclusion in that committee's resolution on the budget, a procedure which insures less visibility for the bill in the future."

In view of these events, the Budget Committee , on which I serve, has a special responsibility. If Hawkins - Humphrey is ignored, it is our committee which will come in for a fair share of the criticism.

In three weeks we on the Budget Committee will be marking up the first budget resolution for fiscal 1979. This will be the first budget resolution to fall within the Hawkins - Humphrey time frame, 1979 - 1983.

As we prepare the budget resolution, the key issues to be considered will be the long - term unemployment prospects for specific sub - groups of the population.

We have asked the Congressional Budget Office to develop three year budget options for reducing non - white teenage unemployment.

We will also be examining the President's budget recommendations for job and training programs.

Evidently much more work will be expected of me and other members of the House Budget Committee to implement full employment in America.

We shall meet the challenge, we shall do the additional hard work. We shall do these things because the people demanded that the House of Representatives pass the bill.

The demand of the people was heard and acted upon. How many of us had forgotten the slogan "Power to the People?"

LETTERS

Disastrous public drinking

Dear AFRO:

It has been some eight months since the judges of the District Court serving Baltimore City decided that ordinance 352 prohibiting drinking of alcoholic beverages on public streets, sidewalks, alleys, etc. was no longer enforceable.

The results of this unfortunate decision have been disastrous to Baltimore neighborhoods.

The streets, sidewalks, gutters, storm drains, door - ways and vacant lots of our city have become giant receptacles for a proliferation of wine, liquor and beer bottles, beer cans and shattered glass, and - oh - yes - the bags they came in.

"Pass - the - bottle" has become the new sidewalk game. Sidewalks, alleys and playgrounds have become public drinking places.

Beautiful Baltimore is being bombed with broken bottles and beer cans.

The police are powerless to act. Street drinkers can drink in front of them — even offer the officers a drink. It is legal. The 21 judges and their chief said so.

Surprisingly, too few of those citizens care are aware of the District Court's decision. But the street - drinkers know what they can do; and the police know what they can't do.

The Police Department's legal advisor, according to a department spokesman, says ordinance 352 is valid. The courts say it is not and, further, the General Assembly should rectify the situation.

Well, the legislative session is almost over. I have heard nothing. Baltimore County has such a law banning public drinking. So do several other counties. Authoritative sources say what happened is a "fluke."

If a rectifying bill is not now in the hopper at Annapolis, then the neighborhood groups of our fair city should be "hopping mad" and ask: "Is this Baltimore's Best"

After eight months of suffering we want relief — a reprieve from being sentenced to deluge of debris.

It is time for groups to form an ad hoc committee, city - wide, create a ground - swell of protest and demand prompt action to restore to us the rights to which we are entitled.

Are we going to continue spending millions of dollars for community improvements with no consideration of environmental conditions?

To begin, let's ask for enforcement of our anti - littering laws (Section 147 of Article 19 of the Baltimore City code - 1970).

Then let the thousands of citizens who care challenge the decision of the 21 gentlemen of the District Court; seek an opinion from our Attorney General, Bill Burch, ask Mayor Schaefer why; tell our councilpersons and legislators what and support Police Commissioner Pomerleau to get the job done.

A "fluke." Enough is enough. Baltimore has been given an indeterminate sentence to a period of hazardous ugliness. We hereby appeal.

STERLING A. PAIGE,
President,
Sandtown - Winchester
Improvement Association, Inc.

Appreciation

Dear AFRO:

Words are mere expression of one's thoughts. But these words, come to you with sincere appreciation for everything, "Thank You".

It was such a pleasure to sell all of Baltimore's concerned citizens out for the kick - off luncheon for "To Your Baby's Health".

Our staff, Central City Marketing, Johnson and Johnson (Disposable Diapers), Ms. Nancy Wilson was very elated to the response who came to our kick - off luncheon!

Again my deepest gratitude to you and "Thank You" for your total commitment to your community.

Sincerely,
Phy Stephens

AFRO credo

A newspaper succeeds because its management believes in itself, in God and in the present generation. It must always ask itself—

- Whether it has kept faith with the common people:
- Whether it has no other goal except to see that their liberties are preserved and their future assured:
- Whether it is fighting to get rid of slums, to provide jobs for everybody:
- Whether it stays out of politics except to expose corruption and condemn injustice, race prejudice and the cowardice of compromise.

DECEMBER 24, 1920?

(From the Papers of John H. Murphy Sr., who founded the AFRO-AMERICAN, Aug. 13, 1892).

Thank you, Rev. Vaughn

(Editor's note: This letter is in response to an article by Rev. Alfred C.D. Vaughn on the Living Church page in the AFRO, March 17. Rev. Vaughn, pastor of Grace Memorial Baptist Church, wrote "How to be an Effective Church Officer.")

Dear AFRO:

Congratulations to Rev. Vaughn! God's richest blessings on you for the article you wrote which appeared in the March 17 edition of the AFRO.

Since I was a teen - ager the points you made have been my conviction also and a young founder brought it to the attention of the pastor and members of the church you now pastor.

My heart leaped with joy and praises to God as I read the article. How I thank Him for giving you the courage to speak out boldly for Him.

May our churches not only believe the points you made but disperse with their fruitless efforts and return to the Business the church was meant to be as a soul saving station feeding the spiritually hungry and the guidance of our daily lives.

God bless you, Rev. Vaughn and make you a blessing to others.

MRS. EURSILLA M. GROVE

CURRENT COMMENT

Sunrise Service praises Risen Christ

'That we may have life everlasting'

MEMORIAL STADIUM — The 1976 Easter Sunday Sunrise ceremonies at the Stadium saw nearly 20,000 persons of all races and creeds present beginning at dawn. Under the Baptist ministers' guidance, the occasion brought believers from the city and surrounding counties together to witness renewal of Christ's teachings.

G. JAMES FLEMING

NOW AND THEN: Legislators worth $16,000!

By G. James Fleming

At least, some are worth the new annual pay which Maryland's lawmakers will soon receive. And we should expect more from them — from most of them.

It is wrong for those opposed to the new pay (a raise of $3,500) to say that the legislators are being paid for just the 90 days when they are in formal session.

Most of the state Senators and Delegates are called upon to work much more. The most zealous and dedicated find that theirs is almost a full time job, all year.

Between sessions their constituents turn to them for an endless number of services; they appear before meetings and conventions; they must keep abreast of what the other two branches of government are doing; they must react to the press and they serve on legislative committees.

To countless people, their "representatives" in the state legislature, as well as on the city and county levels, are more approachable than anyone else!

For those legislators who serve at their highest, $16,000 per year is not too much. For those who are drones, almost any pay is more than they deserve and, it is to be hoped, their constituents will "take care of them" in due time.

These latter include those who are always "too busy" to listen to those who call upon them; those who are always late for roll call or are absent; those who seldom attend their committee meetings or hearings and those whose chief legislative vocation is to manipulate themselves into the headlines and unto the TV.

Paying legislators as much as $16,000 annually may make it possible for a new pool of aspirants to enter politics — a group that could not afford to be law - makers at a much lower stipend.

The higher pay should also make it less necessary, or tempting, for legislators to accept handouts and "freebies", from questionable sources.

It must not be forgotten that part of the reason Gov. Mandel got in trouble was the miserly salary he received as Chief Executive: $25,000. Translated into take-home pay this meant $17,000. We applaud the fact that by recent legislative action, future governors will receive $60,000 annually, beginning next year.

No longer will Maryland be at the bottom of the scale in governors' salaries. It will now be fifth from the top.

We Americans are funny people. We elect various types of representatives — legislative, executive and judicial — and, almost immediately, we turn against them. We say all manner of scathing things about them. We express distrust of them.

Many Americans have questions about whether the rank and file of U.S. Senators and Representatives are worth the $57,000 per year which they receive, just as many Marylanders believe most of their legislators are not worth $16,000.

The resolution, to repeat, seems to be for voters to nominate and to elect lawmakers worthy of their pay, in intelligence, commitment, and integrity, knowing that theirs is an all - year job. In the meantime, ways must be found to bring in line those public officials who collect their pay while not performing their duties.

So far as the Maryland legislature is concerned, for the best, for the most committed, and for the most contributing of its members, $16,000 is not too much.

FOR ALL WE KNOW ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

THE FIRST truly springtime event is the Easter Sunrise Service at Memorial Stadium, Sunday, March 26, The 6 a.m. convocation will witness some 35,000 persons of all races and creeds gathered for prayer and song.

Dr. Alfred C.D. Vaughn, pastor of Grace Memorial Baptist Church, will be the speaker for this third annual rite which draws worshippers from some 200 congregations across the state, Washington, D.C. and Virginia.

BEGINNING at dawn, Baltimoreans will stream from every doorway to be joined by cars, vans, and busloads of the faithful. The caravan will be met on every corner by traffic police on special assignment for the auspicious event. As the sun appears (and it will be pleasant weather) the stadium will glow in colors of the rainbow as the throng fills every seat.

A MASS CHOIR from area churches, all in traditional Easter — hued robes, will be led by Dr. James Allcock of the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Victor Myrick, minister of music at New Shiloh Baptist. (Their rehearsal beginss at 5:30 Easter morn on the reserved section at third base.)

THE FIRST SONG is "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" with the entire stadium standing, singing 'till the very heavens ring. Dr. Harold A. Carter, New Shiloh pastor is presiding. He and Dr. Fred White, who spoke last year, have been working with other congregations and ministers to bring a closer relationship with predominately white Southern and National Baptists.

THE ENTIRE SERVICE will be translated in sign language for the deaf by Mrs. Barbara Woolverton, a volunteer at the Columbia School for the Deaf and Miss Gail Hall, a University of Maryland student.

Col. James A. Watkins has a special police force to stand by for any emergency and escort the offering by official cars to be banked. The collection is for a variety of worthwhile religious projects and charities and the expenses of the gigantic Sunrise project.

THE DATE of Easter Sunday was determined by the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. and always comes according to the decree, "The first Sunday after the first full moon after the 21st of March (the Spring Equinox). Rites begin at the first crack of dawn according to the Christian tradition and follow the belief that the joyous celebration marks the miraculous occasion when Christ arose from the dead "that we may have life everlasting."

EASTER is the highest holy Christian holiday. Following the Sunrise Service, and also by tradition, the thousands of believers will return to their families for breakfast and then wend their way to their own churches for more thanksgiving and joyous celebration.

THE METRO BAPTIST organization includes the following organizations and their presidents:

Baptist Ministers Conference of Baltimore and Vicinity, Rev. William Rivers;

Baptist Pastors Conference of Baltimore and Vicinity, Rev. J. Woodward Kelly Sr.;

Baptist Evening Conference, Rev. John Leary;

Baltimore Baptist Association, Rev. Joseph Giles;

United Baptist Missionary Convention, Rev. C. C. Alexander;

Maryland Baptist Convention, Rev. William Brown.

MAINSTREAM: MARION BANFIELD

Pentagon waste

By Mrs. Marion Banfield
Mrs. Banfield is district director. She hosts "Metro," which appears on WJZ-TV at 7:30 p.m. Saturdays.

Now is the time when there is much discussion about taxes. We need to become more aware of our tax dollars. We need to take more positive action to let our legislators realize that we are dissatisfied with where they send taxes. If you can read this article, you can also write to President Jimmy Carter.

While thousands of us allow ourselves to focus our anger on AFDC funding, we are totally ignorant about or indifferent towards the huge sums wasted through the Pentagon.

While legislators keep us believing that enemies surround us and are ready to destroy us, manufacturers of war materials accumulate millions of our tax dollars. Employees in defense industries fight to maintain jobs dealing with sophisticated means of murdering populations.

I am quoting figures obtained from the December 1977 magazine Peace and Freedom published by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

"One billion spent by the federal government on the military produces 55,000 jobs. Whereas, that same money spent on nurses would produce 77,000 jobs. It would produce 76,000 jobs if spent on housing. If we got serious about teachers, $1 billion would create 100,000 jobs. That, almost incomprehensible dollar expenditure would create 151,000 jobs in Job Corps for young people."

You don't have to be college graduate to understand that workers who produce missiles and bombs and fantastic weapons for killing do not produce anything for ordinary citizens. Foreign government leaders who maintain their positions through their power to use American armaments for killing or threatening to kill their own people or neighbors make first class customers. Defense workers do not produce any of the goods or services that civilians need to survive.

Does full employment cause inflation? Or does the Congress that gives billions of dollars to companies who need not be competitive or efficient as they bloat their profits with the support of what President Eisenhower described as the powerful military - industrial complex contribute to inflation?

I hope you will agree with me that we should be discussing these issues in our churches, in our schools, in our homes, in our organizations.

Let us learn to examine the various powerful people brainwashing us not to seek a variety of reasons for bad use of our tax dollars.

Rep. Parren Mitchell is seeking support for what he calls a Transfer Amendment. He is asking congressmen to vote to transfer 12 billion dollars from the 115.2 billion dollars the president has allotted to the Defense Department. Mr. Carter is so worried about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that he upped the Defense Budget from $105.3 billion where it was in 1978.

Mitchell will be speaking at Levering Hall on the Homewood Campus of Johns Hopkins University on Sunday, April 2 at 7 p.m.

MORE LETTERS

Funding for state elections

Dear AFRO:

Although most Americans are probably brought up to heed the adage that "there's no such thing as a free lunch", until recent years most of us have practiced the self - deception of believing that the cost of running political campaigns wasn't really passed on to the "consumer" of the democratic process, the voters and taxpayers.

The past few years have driven home to most of us the fact that people and organizations which give large donations to candidates expect something in return.

The special favors that these "fat cats" receive in the form of favorable legislation, tax breaks, etc. come out of the pocketbooks of all Americans. In a less direct way, the buying and selling of candidates demoralizes the entire democratic process.

Congress dealt directly with the problem in 1974 by passing legislation to provide partial public funding, on a matching basis, of the presidential race. Despite minor problems, the law worked well, significantly reducing the necessity for the presidential candidates to obligate themselves to monied interests to secure their elections. It remains for Congress to extend such a system to apply to itself.

The Maryland General Assembly has been a little more coy in dealing with the problem of campaign financing. They also passed a public financing law in 1974 which would provide public funds for all races in the state. They tempered the boldness of this act, however, by assuring that adequate funds would not be available for any race.

There are two identical bills in the General Assembly now, S.B. 1152 by Gov. Lee and Sen. Hoyer and H.B. 1894 by Gov. Lee, which would limit public funding to the races for governor, lieutenant gov., comptroller and attorney general and would make sure that funds were available for those races.

I ask every Maryland citizen reading this to pick up pen and paper now and write to one of their representatives in the General Assembly asking them to support these bills. Your local county election board can tell you who your representatives are. The political health corrupting influence of money in the political process presents the most serious danger to this health. Partial public financing of elections is a proven method of countering this danger.

Your letter to your delegates and senator will make a difference.

LEE DAVID PERLMAN,
legislative director,
Common Cause - Maryland

AFRO invites letters

The AFRO welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be brief and must bear the writer's name and address. All letters will be given consideration for publication.