Voting rights denied 700,000 blacks

By James S. Tinney

Special report

WASHINGTON

Many persons, particularly those living somewhere other than the eastern seaboard, remain unaware that nearly three - quarters of a million U.S. citizens have no voting representation in either the Senate or the House of Representatives.

For the 700,000 persons living in the District of Columbia ("Washington" is an unofficial nickname for the nation's capital), the colonial cry of the 1700's is still ringing: "Taxation without representation."

Not even the Voting Rights Act of 1965 — one of the most significant achievements of the civil rights movement — fully enfranchised the District, whose population is roughly three - quarters black.

Voting representation for blacks in the capital has, understandably, been labeled the "impossible dream" by no less an institution than the venerable Washington Post.

Although there have been more than 150 formal attempts to persuade congress to grant suffrage to the city, it was not until 1964 that Washingtonians were permitted to even vote for their chief resident — the President of the U.S.

Not until 1974 could they vote to elect their own mayor or city council.

Del. Walter E. Fauntroy

And still the city is denied its share of two senators and one or two representatives (depending upon the upcoming census count) in the House. Walter E. Fauntroy, always counted as one of the 16 members of the Congressional Black Caucus is actually not even a "representative." Rather, U.S. statutes call him a mere "delegate." He is really a type of ex officio observer — he may speak, but he cannot vote on issues that represent the nation's most populous black city.

"I represent more taxpaying Americans than any single member of this House, and more people than the number who elect 20 senators," laments Fauntroy. "Yet they are denied representative democracy."

The city's size is larger than 10 of the 50 states, yet its people have less control over matters that affect their lives than do either the Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico.

Even with an elected city council and mayor now, the congress and President retain control over its budget, courts, prosecutor's office, police and planning.

Only one vote — that of the President of the U.S. — can over - rule any action the council takes. Not only must the congress approve (or at least not contest) every council decision, but it can revoke what limited suffrage it has permitted D.C. citizens at any time.

Appropriately, Fauntroy has called his weekly telecast in the area by the name, "The Last Colony."

"We preach voting rights around the world," Fauntroy noted, alluding to President Carter's human rights campaign, "except for the nation's capital." He stresses, further, that city residents pay $1 billion each year in taxes to the federal government (a per capita rate of $77). This is higher than the rate in all but seven states.

Fauntroy, also pastor of the New Bethel Baptist Church in the city, has successfully put together a coalition of more than 60 local organizations and 51 national ones, called "Self - Determination for D.C." The coalition was largely responsible for the recent bill which passed the House this month, providing full - fledged senators and representative(s) for the District. (A similar bill failed to pass the House only two years prior.)

Now the senate version of the bill is being championed by a similar coalition of both Republicans and Democrats in that chamber, led by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass) and a surprising ally, Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz).

Even more surprising, long - time anti - civil rights leader, Sen. Stron Thurmond (R-SC), is expected to align himself with the voting representation bill. Increasing numbers of registered black voters in South Carolina are putting pressure on Thurmond in this regard; and strong opposition in his race for reelection is compelling him to court black voters in order to stay in office.

Despite such bipartisan support, however, the bill's chances for passage in the senate are not good. Even Fauntroy qualifies his hopes as being "cautiously optimistic."

An attempt last week by Kennedy to set a 60 - day time limit for the Senate Judiciary Committee to hold the bill without taking action, was denied. Meanwhile, senate hearings on the matter may commence in April.

If the committee blocks movement of the bill by refusing to take action on it before this session closes, Kennedy said he plans to place the House - version resolution directly on the Senate floor anyway. This tactic, which is a diversionary method of bypassing hostile or indifferent committees, was most notably used on major civil rights bills in the Senate in the sixties.

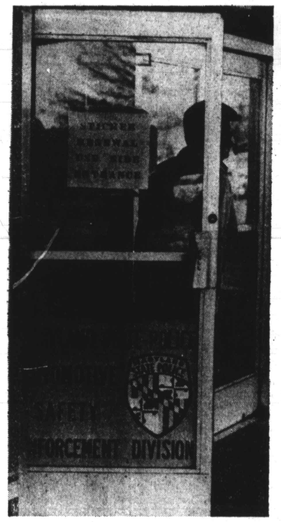
It may become necessary again, Kennedy believes, since the measure is viewed by some opponents in purely racial categories. The senate (more conservative than the House) is not known for favor any additional members in its body anyway, let alone two who inevitably would be both black and liberal Democrats.

Dick Clark, coordinator for Common Cause and the Self - Determination for D.C. coalition, says it is a "political reality" that the new senators would be black Democrats. He adds that anyone who votes against the bill for that reason "doesn't deserve to be in the senate."

Others have suggested that the race factor could work positively for the bill's passage.

If the senate passes the resolution by a two - thirds vote, it will still require ratification by 38 states, within a seven - year period before it could take effect.

Getting 1979 tag stickers at Mondawmin



(AFRO photos by Robin McGinty)

STEP ONE — Find the right door. It also helps to go to the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) offices when they are open — weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

STEP TWO — Stand in line OUTSIDE. Also, bring the MVA tag renewal form you got in the mail.

STEP THREE — Stand in line INSIDE. While you are in line, check your form: Is it signed? Do you have your insurance policy number, the company and your insurance agent's name on the form?

STEP FIVE — The front of the line — finally. Annette Adams and Benjamin Fleet are glad the wait is over. Before you get this far, pay your parking tickets. No license plate stickers will be renewed without verification from the Parking Fund Division that you have paid your Maryland parking tickets.

STEP FOUR — Make sure the form is filled out properly. WWarren Anderson found a seat at Mondawmin to fill out his. And bring your money. MVA will accept cash, check or money order for your 1979 stickers.

STEP SIX — At last, new blue 1979 license plate validation stickers. Ms. Queen Jones, an employee at MVA, gives Ms. Jackie Crosby (R) hers. One other thing — any outstanding inspection tickets must be satisfied by the state police and you must bring proof to the MVA. Now that you've gotten through this process, safe driving in 1979.

Deadline for tag renewal is March 31

MVA offices closed March 24

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Tri-State Elks present 23 women

All photos by I. Henry Phillips

MAKING HER DEBUT — Miss Deborah H. Young was escorted by Edward Harris when she was presented at the 14th Annual Tri-State Association of Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia Cotillion last Saturday evening at the Lord Baltimore Hotel.

The Lord Baltimore Hotel was the scene last Saturday evening for 23 young high school and college women to make their entrance into society.

They were presented at the 14th Annual Cotillion of the Tri-State Association of Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia.

Choreographing the event were Mrs. Nikki Randolph and Mrs. Bernadine Harris.

The 23 women performed an exquisite dance with their escorts. One would have thought the young people danced like that every day because of the ease in which they performed.

The debutantes were:

Patricia Lynette Barbee, Kim Camilla Briscoe, Vanessa Reane Brown, Wanda Rochelle Burton, Wynoka Michelle Burton, Jenean Merdenia Case, Deborah Maria Christopher, Jeanette Rebecca Coleman,

Vanessa Glascoe, Mamie Ruth Hawkins, Linda Gracelon Hopkins, Wanda Eloise Jackson, Audrey Teresa Jones, April Janelle Jordan, Marie Anita King, Valerie Theresa McCoy, Vera Denise Nelson, Petre Lee Price, Robin Tamara Smith,

And Rosalyn Renee Smith, Delese Lynn Spriggs, Patricia Delrene Wall and Deborah Rene Young.

Escorts to the debutantes were William Syndor, James Thompson, John Jackson, Quinton L. Dailey, Wilbert H. Prior, Jr., Kevin Kelly, Charles Roulae, Roger Washington, Jeffrey Walker, Douglass Campbell,

Ralph Deaton, Christopher Curtis, Derick Fallin, Edward Watson, Dennis Randall, Ellis Marsha, Michael Edmonds, Arnold Brown, Bryant Smith, Rodney Smith, Terrance Hopkins, Jeffrey Jones and Edward Harris.

Mrs. Ethel F. Torris was chairperson of the affair.

Other members include Samuel Gaines, Effie Coleman, Julia B. Miles, Beatrice Shockly, Charles Carroll, Shirley Jones, Delores Jordan, Elizabeth J. Roles, Alfredia Fountain, Robert L. Williams;

Flora Lee Davis, Leroy Matthews, Lillian Lee, Mattie Hawkins, Clinton Waller, Jesse Stewart, Callie Coleman, Rosa Lee Hall, James Harris, William Braxton, Warnick Graves and Sidney Coverdale.

Patricia Wall

Deborah M. Christopher

Robin Smith

Petre L. Price

Sigmas in Baltimore

When the eve of Thursday, March 30 rolls in this city will be invaded by members from the east coast chapters of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

Some 300 Sigma men and their counterparts will gather at the Hilton Hotel, downtown to deliberate during their 64th Anniversary, Eastern Regional Conference.

Eastern Regional director, Clayton (Pete) McNeill will be presiding at the confab assisted by other regional officers and Charles B. Wright, national first vice - president of the fraternal organization.

The Honorable James A. Joseph, Undersecretary of the Department of the Interior will address the members at its public banquet during the fraternity's meet. He will address the conference theme, "Sigma: Building Bridges into the Eighties."

Baltimore's Mary Carter Smith, lecturer and griot will be the guest at one of the group's luncheon activities while members from the Baltimore Branch NAACP will lead a luncheon discussion on community action.

James Joseph

Charles B. Wright

Mary Carter Smith

Iotas host 41st Eastern Regional meet

Kappa Chapter, Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc., will host the 41 Eastern Regional Conference Friday, March 31, to Sunday, April 2, at the Holiday Inn Downtown, Howard and Lombard Streets, Baltimore, Maryland.

Conference Theme is "Women: Building For Tomorrow Through Professional Enrichment And Economic Development; Serving Our Community, State, Nation And The World."

The Regional Director, Mrs. Beatrice E. Crawford of Philadelphia, and Kappa Chapter of Baltimore City are expecting delegates from chapters located in Connecticut, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia to be in attendance, in addition to the Lambds (the husbands of the sorors).

On Saturday, April 1, a public luncheon will be held entitled, "Showcasing Baltimore Women In Government" with Mrs. Victorine Q. Adams, moderator and six panelists highlighting the conference theme.

The members of the panel are Mrs. Mary Pat Clarke, Councilwoman from the Second District; Mrs. Clarice LaV. Brooks, Community Relations Specialist, Baltimore Police Department; Mrs. Marie C. Henderson, administrative assistant to the Baltimore County Executive; Mrs. Hilda E. Ford, Director of Personnel for the Baltimore City Civil Service Commission; Mrs. Marguerite J. Campbell, Community Relations Specialist and Mrs. Ethel P. Rich, member of the Zoning Board of Baltimore City.

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CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS — (L to R) Councilwoman Victorine Adams, Mrs. Hilda Ford, head of the city personnel department, Councilwoman Mary Pat Clark Mrs. Clarice LaV. Brooks and Marie Henderson, the Baltimore County exec's special assistant will be program participants at the Iota conference.

tattle-tales

One judge who is up for election has big billboards and his picture in the white neighborhoods but none in his own part of town.

Another judge, they say, doesn't know there are any numbers under 19. Because he went to night school and can't count in the day when he is on the bench, he gives every living soul who comes up for sentencing "20 years."

Lately one Court House office crew held "I Hate The Boss Day" and arrived without saying good morning. Soon, the "You Drop Dead" idea spread throughout the building and folks on every floor left at quitting time without saying Good Bye. All but one sassy secretary. She put a thumb tack in the judge's chair. Sneaky, ain't it?

What official left his Annapolis hotel suite in a blind rage recently because the management objected to his having his male secretary stay overnight? Left without paying and the management said who cares, just be sure you all don't come back.

A new alcoholic beverage made from expensive and rare tea leaves is subject of an extensive advertising campaign angled at black citizens alone. The claim is that black communities have been traditionally noted as leaders in distilled liquor trends. What does that mean? That we drink more booze than anyone else?

Taxpayers express nothing but contempt in their letters of protest over the governor's taking furniture out the Mansion when he moved. They say he should tote it right back or go to jail for theft.

The Pacesetters

Afred P. Schexnayder Jr., joined Somerset Importers, Ltd., in 1973, as district manager, Metro New York. In 1977, he became special accounts manager of the company's Eastern Division.

Alfred P. Schexnayder Jr.

Mr. Schexnayder, who is headquartered at Somerset's Eastern Divisional Office at Lake Success, N.Y., lives in Wheatley Heights, N.Y.

Prior to joining Somerset, Mr. Schexnayder had been with Seagram Distillers Co., New York, since 1967. Starting as a sales representative, he had increasingly important positions since that time, his most recent there being account executive.

Mr. Schexnayder attended Queensboro Community College, N.Y. and the University of Wisconsin.

Somerset Importers, Ltd., a Norton Simon, Inc., company, is exclusive U.S. importer of Johnnie Walker Red, Johnnie Walker 12 - Year-Old Black Label, John Begg and Crawford's Scotch whiskies, Tanqueray Gin, Pimm's, Hine Cognacs, Mandarine Napoleon Liqueur and Aalborg Akvavit. Somerset's American - produced spirits include Old Fitzgerald, W. L. Weller, Cabin Still and Rebel Yell bourbons, Canada Dry Vodka, Canada Dry Gin and Canada Dry Bourbon.

Mrs. Marie Briscoe was recently elected president of Coldstream Homestead Montebello Community Corporation. Percy Davis was president during its first year. Other officers elected by the community meeting were: Curtis Chapman, vice president, Ms. Patricia Silver, secretary, Frederick Harville, treasurer and the Rev. R. Edward Dowdy, assistant treasurer.

Mrs. Marie Briscoe

Board members elected, in addition to the named officers, were: Vernadine Anderson, Norman Lohn, Stanley Santos, Frances Hayes, the Rev. Lynell Carter, Dr. Benjamin Shelton, Wiley Etheridge, Fred Hill, Daisy McLean, Inez Dixon Dorothy Lucas, and Terry Thomas.

The new Board met on March 7 followed by a public hearing at the Baltimore City Council at the CHM office 3220 - A - The Alameda to consider necessary amendments to the act designating the community an "Urban Renewal Area."

Doris Johnson, executive director of CHM has indicated that the Harford Road corridor will receive special help in an improvement effort planned by local businessmen and merchants who meet regularly at the CHM headquarters.

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