OPINION

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AFRO war on crime
Part III

By way of quick review, three weeks ago we called for a war on crime — specifically for black citizens to stop robbing and killing each other — for our community to take the leadership role in significantly reducing the harm we bring down on each other.

We asked for and are receiving significant community response.

Last Friday we felt encouraged to set down some of the philosophical undergirding we saw as necessary if we are to proceed with any reasonable expectation of success.

Before anything else, we said, if **crime against ourselves is to diminish we must begin to tell ourselves that black lives are as valuable as any other lives.**

We repeat this tenet for emphasis.

We suggested that the criminal justice system in Maryland and across the land could immediately be of immense assistance in helping those black and despairing Americans who do not perceive of themselves as of value.

The courts could do much to reshape lost feelings of self - worth by a simple expedient — ending those endemic racist attitudes that, permeate all of our courts:

Attitudes whereby the punishment for blacks taking the lives, earnings and property of other blacks is less than that meted whites who transgress blacks, whites who transgress whites and blacks, God help them, who transgress whites.

We called for judges at every level of our court structures to stop this racist idiocy of handing down lesser sentences for black - on - black crime.

We see the idea of having to pay as great a price for criminal acts against blacks (of all stations) as a revolutionary one but the first step that must be taken. We place that responsibility on our judges.

Our notion is that all judges within our share of communication be closely monitored by citizen volunteers who will transfer lawyers as to their (the judges) decisions on violent crime.

Of our elected and - or appointed jurists we must ask the hard question: In your administration of criminal justice how much value do you really place on black life and possessions?

It is our sense that perpetrators of black - on - black crime are in and out of penal institutions in a loose, casual process of recidivism that has its roots in a collective feeling among them that harming their own racial brothers and sisters "ain't no big thing."

An attitude that in turn has its roots in America's historic contempt for its two subject peoples, blacks and native Americans (Indians).

Also to be considered if we are to accomplish our goals is a considerably more sensitive issue simply because it is "all in the family" that complexity of questions falling under the broad rubric of black crime, black youth, black parents and black responsibility.

In his stage drama "Tabernacle" several seasons back black playwright Paul Carter Harrison attempted to dig away at this question. His three young black men committed murder, spontaneous, no question about it, straight ahead murder!

As they talk to each other on the cell block, of their dreams, their rage, their crushed hopes, Harrison, to deliberately shock us into dealing with a crucial issue has actors dressed as women parade across the stage below the prison and in sing - song black version of the ancient Greek chorus, repeat mechanically:

"Don't harm our sons, they've done no wrong.

"Don't harm our sons, they've done no wrong."

We sense this refrain, repeated so many times throughout the play until the audience realized the absurdity of the situation and tittered with nervous laughter as the artists's, the black artist's, device to make us ask: Hey, black mothers, black fathers, what really is harm? What really is wrong?" and what is your true position in all of this?

While racism is at the heart of black - on - black crime, make no mistake, but the solution must come from our collective and loving hearts.

If we are, stop us from killing each other an essential part of the challenge is our facing the fact that so often have we abdicated parental responsibility and in a very tragic sense not passed on in sufficient intensity that tribal truth of our African forebears who knew that to murder one of the tribe was to murder all of the tribe.

Or more simply to kill a brother or sister is to kill yourself, black folk.

We have not passed this knowledge down as we should.

But we must. If we are to persevere!

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.

Provident's future is now

There is good news from Provident Hospital this week. New board president Rosetta Sands informs one and all that this city's oldest predominantly black medical institution is embarking on a five year fund - raising voyage.

The money goal is $3.5 million and this fund, Ms. Sands reports will be used for modernizing equipment and for "other needed capital improvements in the hospital."

Provident's board, its new president states further, is launching this campaign after an "exhaustive study of the hospital's continuing program of improvement.

President Sands has assembled strong leadership for this ambitious undertaking including such able citizens as Sen. Clarence Blount, Ms. Alice Pinderhughes and Dr. Saul Perdue among those in key roles.

We urge every Baltimorean to give as much in the way of money and support as is individually or collectively possible.

The continuing growth of Provident should be everybody's business.

"Sorry to see you guys go, but we have to keep the tax rate down."

MAINSTREAM:

MARION C. BANFIELD

By Marion Banfield

Mrs. Banfield is district director of Family and Children's Society. She also hosts "Metro," which appears on WJZ - TV at 7:30 p.m. Saturdays

This newspaper's recent editorial focusing on the necessity for the black community to exercise more conscious control for our well being is timely. I plan to make my contributions by writing a few articles focused on family problems.

Although there is much concern about child abuse, we need to continue to be aware of the helplessness of children. There is frequently a thin line dividing child abuse from child neglect. Since child neglect can result in a human being growing up to be also hostile, non - trusting, self - hating and unable to fit comfortably into our cultural setting, I see no reason to be less concerned about child neglect.

A nine - year - old girl was recently brought to my office by Family and Children's Society because the child was a serious behavior problem at home and school. One of the first questions I often ask is, "What is the child's reading level?" This mother, as with the majority of mothers, did not know on what grade level the child was functioning.

This little fourth grader could not read the sentence, "I like to run fast. Clearly, this little girl had been neglected. The question then became, neglected by whom?"

Mother was smartly dressed, quiet, almost too quiet! Father was driving around in a Cadillac, dressed in expensive finery, focusing on the only important person in the world — himself.

The little girl, Lisa, was dressed no better or worse than the majority of her classmates. She had obviously been given good physical care.

A telephone call to the school revealed that school personnel had recognized that Lisa had a serious learning problem two years ago. Neither personnel at Lisa's school nor from the office for special services had been able to persuade either parent to give written permission to have Lisa placed in a small, specialized class where she would get the attention which she needed.

Lisa's father gets around to visiting with her about three times a month. It just depends on what he is most interested in at the time. He didn't keep his promise to take her to the circus because he had forgotten that he was going bowling. He gave that explanation the Sunday after the circus had left town.

At home Lisa is the scapegoat blamed by her two older brothers, mother and grandmother for the family's tensions. Lisa is too loud, too lazy, too big a tease, too ill - mannered, too much of a bully.

Lisa has not been given the schooling which is available and necessary for her growth because her self - centered father boasts that his family members are college graduates and no child of his needs special education. His mother shares similar feelings, although less vehemently.

I charge child neglect.

(Part II, Next week.)

LETTERS
Genetic reserarch concerns

Dear AFRO:

Recent publicity has caused a number of concerned citizens in our community to question the local March of Dimes Chapter about our national genetic services programs.

Particularly, they inquired about the pressure being brought to bear on the March of Dimes by anti - abortion groups to terminate support of these programs.

The purpose of this letter is to respond further to these questions and provide additional information abut The National Foundation's overall programs and objectives.

Anti - abortion groups had nothing whatsoever to do with the March of Dimes' decision to phase out its support of genetic services programs. As a matter of fact, some anti - abortion groups recognize the benefits of genetic research and prenatal diagnosis, including amniocentesis, that shed light on genetic disorders and improve the quality of life of the newborn child.

The philosophy of The National Foundation in funding medical service programs has been that the FUNCTION OF A VOLUNTARY HEALTH AGENCY IS TO PROVIDE INITIAL SEED MONEY NECESSARY TO DEMONSTRATE THE NEED FOR AND VALUE OF NEW SERVICES, not to fund programs in perpetuity.

This intent is clearly stated in National Foundation Policies and Procedures Governing Medical Grants, a booklet originally printed in 1971, which is sent to all grantees upon approval and renewal of other grants. Section D, "Term of Grant," reads in part:

"Within a reasonable period of time, a grantee institution is expected to assume financial responsibility for the activities supported under a grant, thereby releasing funds on a continuing basis to enable The National Foundation to encourage new and pioneering endeavors. In no event may funding exceed five years for a medical service program which remains substantially unchanged in focus and objective."

The March of Dimes has had many changes in its programs over the years. Initially, the emphasis of the March of Dimes was on research and care of polio patients. Later, the emphasis was shifted from respiratory and rehabilitation centers.

Beginning in 1958, the emphasis shifted again to birth defects treatment and evaluation centers.

For the past several years, we have been supporting genetic services programs and newborn intensive care and perinatal outreach programs.

Our current programs express our concern about the loss of life and permanent damage of newborns. We are providing funds to support prenatal and perinatal health services. We intend to increase our efforts to improve the nation's record of fetal and neonatal morbidity and mortality by additional funding, organizing community action and developing innovative educational approaches.

For 1978, the National Foundation has committed $2.5 million for 82 genetic services grants. We are projecting grants of $2.2 million for 80 genetic services grants in 1979 and will accept new applications for grants during the phase out period.

In addition, the National Foundation will continue to support research grants in genetics.

The National Foundation is deeply concerned about the National Genetic Diseases Act (Public Law 94 - 278) passed by Congress in 1975 which expires in 1978.

Funds authorized for genetic services in 1978 totalled $30,000,000. To date, however, only $4,000,000 has been appropriated.

We urge others who share our concern about the government's failure to appropriate the remaining funds to express their feelings to their congressional representatives.

If additional appropriations were made genetic service programs could be continued at the level necessary to meet the needs of our nation.

Finally, the National Foundation's five year limit on funding is not "cast in stone." Extensions beyond that period will be considered if the grantee can demonstrate than an extension is needed as a temporary expedient in anticipation of alternative sources of support.

The "seed money" concept comes from the philosophy that relatively small sums of money can generate new approaches to problems and create a "multiplier effect."

When a program's effectiveness has been demonstrated, massive funds beyond the foundation's means may be made available from other sources to expand the program for the benefit of all.

JAMES F. DONOVAN,
executive director,
Greater Baltimore Chapter,
March of Dimes

War against drugs, too

Dear AFRO:

The war against crime would mean war against the drug traffic that has manifested in the black community.

We must take firm committed action against the known drug pushers that we see everyday selling drugs to our children.

We must stop and honestly see the drug pusher for what he really is (inhuman). We must admit that the pushers contributes nothing towards our intellectual growth — (drugs deaden the mind).

We must also admit that the pushers have no respect and see no value in human life — he sells drugs to nine years olds.

We can stop the drug traffic and the pushers by letting these criminals know that we as a people respect human life and we as a people will no longer allow anyone to come into our community and exploit us for financial or material gain.

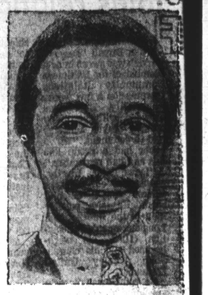
We can stop crime once we realize that crime only grows because we sit around and do nothing. We must also realize that our children cannot contribute to the development of society or the future with a druged mind.

Warning to all rapists, thieves, pushers and other criminals — the war against crime could be dangerous to your freedom.

KENNETH T. RAGIN

WASHINGTON REPORT:

PARREN J. MITCHELL



Fair Housing Law anniversary

By Parren J. Mitchell

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

April of this year will mark the tenth anniversary of the passage of Title VIII of the 1968 Civil Rights Act. This landmark civil rights statute is known as the National Fair Housing Law.

Under Title VIII, discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of just about all of the housing marketed in the United States is expressly forbidden. The language of this law is clear and unequivocal.

Yet today, tragically, despite this law, discriminatory practices such as steering, redlining and person-to-person discrimination still exist in the sale and rental of housing.

In 1977, for example, the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development received more than 3,000 complaints of housing discrimination.

State and local civil rights and human rights agencies receive at least twice this many complaints each year..

Housing discrimination against single women and women heads of families is a trend of which experts say: "We have just begun to see the tip of the iceberg."

Daily, my office receives reports from the Department of Justice from all over the country which read like the following examples:

March 17, 1978 — "The Department of Justice filed a civil suit today charging an apartment locator service in Oklahoma City, Okla., with refusing to tell blacks and certain nationalities of apartment rental vacancies . . .

"The suit charged the defendant with violating the Fair Housing Act of 1968 by refusing to inform apartment seekers, because of their race, sex, color, or national origin, of vacancies in certain buildings . . .

"The firm's records were coded to show the restrictions or preferences purportedly imposed by landlord . allegedly including such terms as 'No Is' (meaning no blacks) and 'No Camel Jocks' (meaning no Iranians or Arabs)."

March 9, 1978 — "The Department of Justice obtained a consent order today forbidding a mobile home owner in Toledo, Ohio, from discriminating against black renters."

Jan. 23, 1978 — "The Department of Justice filed civil suit today charging the owner and manager of an apartment complex in Houston, Texas, with discrimination against black prospective tenants . . . The practices include refusing to rent to blacks and discriminating against them in rental terms and conditions."

The problem is as much one of enforcement as it is a problem of public education. Many people simply do not know that a National Fair Housing Law exists. And if they do know of the law, they are unsure of its provisions and of its application to their private and professional lives.

This year, the Department of Housing and Urban Development will undertake a major effort to inform private citizens of their rights and responsibilities under the national Fair Housing Law. The Congress can join in this effort by setting aside some time in April to commemorate the passage of the National Fair Housing Law.

On Tuesday, April 4, I introduced a concurrent resolution aimed at such recognition and additionally, calling on the Congress to reiterate itself to the promulgation and practice of the letter and spirit of the Fair Housing Law so that fair housing will become a right that can be realized by every American.

That's the very least that this Congress can do! We all know, however, that action speaks louder than words.

G. JAMES FLEMING

NOW AND THEN:
Harlemites owning Harlem

By G. James Fleming

So soon after our column on black owned businesses being sold to, or bought by, white - owned corporations (AFRO March, 11), we've come across a recent example of business changing hands in the other direction.

This time it is the Washburn Wire Company which has been acquired by the Harlem Commonwealth Council Inc., a community development organization in New York's Harlem. The buying price was $5.5 million for the three - block - long plant on the Harlem River.

More important than the mere buying, however, is the fact that, six months after the acquisition, the new owners have bagged a $14.3 million contract to produce pre - stressed steel tendons and anchor shoulders for the North East Corridor Improvement, a project authorized by Congress under the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act and signed by President Gerald Ford.

This contract is very important because the Washburn Wire Company (now renamed Washburn Wire Products) was on the way out of business, about to be closed down by its parent body, a Rhode Island corporation. Its employees had dwindled to 13, as of June 1977. A month ago, its work force had risen to 165 and may be 200 by now.

The Harlem Commonwealth Council (HCC) has tried its hands at other enterprises in Harlem, readers of this column may recall, mostly by buying long established businesses. Here is a sample of what it now owns:

The Shultz Manufacturing Corporation, which it bought three years ago, and which last year had $3.8 million in sales of fixtures to supermarkets. The company now employs 140 men and women year round and is the largest steel plant in Manhattan.

The Acme Foundry, which makes bronze and aluminum castings including ships' propellers. The company expects to have sales of $3 million this year.

Ben's Lumber Yard, dealing in lumber and other building materials and with about $3 million in sales.

The Shultz company has been located in Harlem for 50 years, the lumber yard between 15 and 20 years; and the foundry 32 years.

Branching out, the Harlem Commonwealth Council, according to James H. Dowdy, its president, now also owns most of the commercial real estate in the 125th street corridor of Harlem, and is planning a major shopping mall and a 500 - car garage.

Other black entrepreneur groups are also owning slices of the pie in black - dominated and historic Harlem. For instance, blacks now own the Apollo Theatre.

The Council does not try to buy "Poppa and Momma" businesses. Rather, it gives technical assistance to them, when called upon to do so, in the spirit of "out of little acorns fall oaks grow."

In each case, where HCC has bought a business, it has been able to increase the number of minority workers, without dropping the senior and experienced help already employed. This procedure has given the new owners the advantage of "teachers" for the new apprentices to be brought in. It has also ensured seasoned manpower.

The Shultz corporation had only two percent black employees three years ago; now it has 55 percent.

Washburn Wire, under its old ownership, had "never heard" of a black metallurgist, but HCC found one, Dr. Nathaniel Quick, who now heads the company's interracial research department. Shultz recently also hired two master electricians, both women.

HCC is committed to "affirmative action" (Should it be "affirmative action in reverse"?). The council is not forgetful of the fact, for instance, that Washington Wire has a "bright future" largely because of a law which mandated that 15 percent of construction contracts be awarded to minority firms — 15 per cent of a total of $1.75 billion in funds to rebuild the nation's railroad system.

Both Dowdy and Isaiah Robinson, chairman of the HCC board, are determined to keep Washburn "competitive."

Recently, Dowdy said: "What is important is to maintain the high quality level of production that long has been synonymous with operations at Washburn."

The men and women who guide HCC are optimists. A better term would be "responsible optimists." They look before they leap, they respect feasibility and analytical studies (Vice - president George Spriggs studied Washburn Wire and thereafter recommended its purchase). They keep up with the laws, regulations and practices governing their several enterprises; they are willing to pay for "brains"; and they believe, like Booker T. Washington, in letting down their bucket where they are.

They also believe that it is not a sin to sell and buy or to make a profit. They also know that "You can't win them all."

FOR ALL WE KNOW
ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

By Elizabeth M. Oliver

PEOPLE, PEOPLE, PEOPLE

BRYAN RAWLINGS, son of Police Sgt. Mercedes Rankin and grandson of the late Del. Calvin Douglass, graduates in June from Northland College, Ashland, Wisc., as a psychology major and Most Valuable Player in basketball.

A regular on the college honors list, he is a Barr Memorial Scholarship holder for academic and athletic excellence. President Ford signed his "sports ambassador" certificate which is one of many honors he has received. His career continues in June as he takes an important post in a mental health clinic.

PORTIA BADHAM, one of the Arena Players' stars, a guest of some movie greats on Malibu Beach, Calif., recently auditioned at Warner Brothers for a part in Haley's ROOTS II. Proud are her parents Mrs. Ira Adams and "Blue Top" at the Red Rooster here.

THE EARL WILLIAMSES back from a Caribbean cruise, have loads of Haiti and Jamaica photos to show guests who often assemble at their beauteous Talles Rd. home — which by the way is now the center of Baltimore County non - partisan political affairs. Member of the Jimmy Carter national steering committee and the 51.3 Women for Carter Club, Juanita is noted in a glamorous photo in the Journal and Guide with famed James Earl Jones. Hubby Earl is a local public school resource teacher.

WILMER S. HUNT JR., HEW Rehabilitation Services commissioner, is keynote speaker for the April 10, 11, 12 Conference on Under - education and Under - employment of the Deaf at Cross Keys Inn. Call 323 - 0500 for info.

DR. MATTIE JULIAN BROWN and husband Dr. Warren Brown, Mrs. Rosearie Julian, wife of Dr. Emerson Julian, Mrs. Elizabeth Julian White and Postal Alliance Executive John W. White Jr., members of the famous Julian clan, were guests at the recent lawyers' banquet. Including Dr. and Mrs. James Julian of Baltimore County, this is one of the nation's most prominent families. Another brother was the late Dr. Percy Julian who for many years was known as "the greatest living scientist."

WALTER SONDHEIM, Inner Harbor development chief, as treasurer of the United Negro College Fund is making the Baltimore appeal for funds. Tax free gifts may be addressed to him at P.O. Box 1483, Baltimore 21233.

IRVING P. MCPHAIL, MSU education professor, speaks on "Beyond Black English" April 13 in the McKeldin Center on campus. It's about Ethnography Communication in the Urban Classroom with all invited to attend.

HOUSEWIVES, veterans, high school seniors ready for college at Coppin will be instantly admitted "on the spot" April 26. For info call 383 - 5990.

NANI A. PALKHIVALA, ambassador of India, is guest speaker at MSU Honors Day Convocation, 10 a.m. April 13 in the Murphy Fine Arts auditorium.

SENIOR CITIZENS are set to join the 35,000 walkers in the March of Dimes event which begins 8 a.m. April 16 in the Inner Harbor. Call 752-7600 to register.

BISHOP MONROE SAUNDERS returns from his Caribbean Conference next week in time for his April 15 birthday and settlement of the priceless Samuel Ready School property now owned by his Apostolic Faith Church.

CONG. P. J. MITCHELL is keynoter at the 9 a.m. opening of the April 7-8 Regional Meeting of the American Society of International Law which deals with US - Caribbean Basin Trade's economic and legal aspects at the World Trade Center.

MARSHA ROSE GERMAN, assistant to Honolulu Mayor Frank Fasi, received the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii distinguished service award at the recent annual banquet.

DEL. TROY BRAILEY is honoree at the May 4 Citizens' Committee Salute at Martin's West. Labor Leader Ray Clark chairs the event with reservations at $15 per. Rev. William Rivers is co - chairman.

HOWARD H. MURPHY, AFRO veteran of over 50 years service, is the ADA Roosevelt Day banquet honoree 7:15 p.m., April 16 at Martin's West. Call Hannah Waskow, 462-6435 for reservations. Member, official and now ADA president emeritus, Murphy has an enviable record of nearly 50 years in Baltimore community service.

ELVA EDWARDS, the Urban Services executive, is busy these days with the Orchard Street Church preservation group affairs and the Church of the Holy Trinity April 27 meeting to make the Rosemont area more livable. Over 12,000 citizens reside in the area around the Lafayette and Wheeler church location. The Civic Center fashion show for Orchard Church is Sunday.

MARY HYMAN, Marge Vogele and Mary Guillory led the effort which resulted in the tremendously successful YWCA luncheon honoring Baltimore business women Tuesday at the Belvedere grand ballroom. We received the certificate and gift as did the 54 honorees who hold executive posts in Baltimore's leading firms, Vivacious Julia Montgomery Walsh, board chairman of the D.C. investment firm she owns with her sons, as main speaker urged women to command high posts "even if you have to start your own company."

The hand - made awards were designed by Lynn Perlin of the North Area YWCA Artisans Guild. Greater Baltimore YW president, Gwen Brooks, presided with the distinguished council as hostesses for the reception.

MORE LETTERS
TV brainwashing

Dear AFRO:

"Just thought you'd like to know I really enjoyed the articles on TV brainwashing. I'm so glad you're monitoring the junk they put on TV about black people and then putting it in the AFRO.

I watch TV quite a bit and read other newspapers also. I can only say that CBS and the Sunpapers must be brothers in racism. Both of them go out of their way to make black people look like idiots.

I believe if we stop kicking ABC, CBS and NBC in the head for producing stupid black shows, we could channel our kicks to the pitiful black "n—" that glory in starring in grinning Sambo roles.

Why not publish the names and addresses of "big headed" black stars like J.J.? I am sure the general public and white audiences would like to write letters of protest to dummies like grandma in "Baby, I'm Back" and "The Jefferson's" flap - jack - mouth maid.

The black race has got to purge itself of fools who would do anything on and off TV for a dime. People like screaming Traxana Beverley and her group should have been run out of town by black women and men.

By the way, did you see "SST Death Flight" on ABC? I thought it was a good movie until the end because I like to see white people panic and argue among themselves.

When black Brock Peters, representing WHO, came on board the SST with a case of white peoples' virus I almost flipped off the sofa. Then, when he informed the pilot of this fatal African Senegal flu, I almost choked to death. Lord, if any flu came from Africa, it came out of white South Africa. Anyway, I know it scared a lot of white and black people from visiting Senegal or any part of Africa.

Last year thousands of Americans took chartered flights to Senegal. Millions of dollars were spent there and I don't think "whitey" liked it. Our government would much rather see Americans spend their money in Europe. Of course, no charter flights this year to any part of Africa. Talk about propaganda — TV's the political tool.

People like Brock Peters should be boycotted by blacks — just because of the ignorant role he played.

After awhile the public will think the plaque and other white miseries originated in Africa.

I do wish your column was on the front page so all blacks could get a little insight on such sorry, freaked-out shows written by whites like "Cindy," "King," "Jeffersons," "Good Times," "Baby, I'm Back," "What's Happening" and their freaky specials.

Keep on looking and listening for us. I know what's happening even to those racist Saturday cartoons. How about Tarzan, pure white trash, Lord of the jungle. God forbid.

Let our black kids know no cracker could survive in our lush jungles. Jungle rot and parasites would eat them alive.

D. SELLERS

Dirty air

The role of polluted air in causing and aggravating lung diseases is becoming increasingly well documented, and the health costs of air pollution are soaring.

A recently issued report, "Cancer in Baltimore" released by Mayor Schaefer's Committee on Environmental Matters Pertaining to Cancer, pointed out that Baltimore City is the city with the highest cancer death rate in the United States.

Although the committee agrees that environmentally induced cancer is an important component of the problem, it pointed out that existing data were only sufficient to describe the problem, but doesn't provide a full explanation of the specific causes. Whatever the specific cause, we cannot afford the risk of weakening air quality standards in an area such as Baltimore City.

The Lung Association is also opposed to eliminating any short - term standards for pollutants. Concentration of pollutants during certain weather conditions within a relatively short period have created episodic effects and headlines as in Donora, Pa., in 1948.

It is often due to these short - term concentrations of air pollution that people with existing respiratory diseases suffer acute attacks which further aggravate their condition.

It is these acute attacks which make respiratory disease the single most important cause of loss of productive time by the working population and utilize approximately 15 percent of both available physican's time and hospital facilities.

Air pollution costs taxpayers at least $10 billion in the United States each year, according to a survey entitled Health Costs of Air Pollution, recently compiled by the American Lung Association with a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

SAMUEL ACREE, PRESIDENT,
American Lung Association
of Maryland

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, 1930)

(From the Papers of John H. Murphy Sr., who founded the AFRO-AMERICAN, Aug. 12, 1892).

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT AGING
Dr. Matthew TAYBACK

By Dr. Matthew L. Tayback
Dr. Tayback
is state director on aging

A 20-year-old housewife with a love of the theatre regularly visits a retired actor in his 80s.

A former seamstress mends clothing for a woman in her 90s.

A young mother brings her children to talk and play with an elderly gentleman who has become their substitute grandfather.

Everyday, these scenes and countless others like them are being played out in nursing homes across Maryland thanks to a relatively new program that focuses on the personal needs of those patients who are without friends or family.

The life support program began in 1975 by enlisting the aid of volunteers to make regular visits to the institutionalized elderly. On a one-to-one basis, the volunteers offer companionship, help with letter writing, take the older person for walks or on shopping trips, perform grooming services and demonstrate arts and crafts among other things.

In essence, the volunteer serves as a bridge between the community and the institution, enabling older residents to renew and regain contact with the outside world.

At present, six separate groups are participating in the life support program through the use of funds allocated by the Maryland Office on Aging. Just this summer, Baltimore County joined the list which spans Washington, Carroll, Montgomery, Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties along with Baltimore City.

All six programs are seeking to fulfill the same goal: to encourage community, civic, church and youth groups to establish and-or enlarge their volunteer activities to include the nursing home facility.

Each volunteer receives some orientation in order to know what to expect from older patients. And in order to insure maximum compatibility, volunteers are carefully matched to the nursing home residents. Volunteer coordinators keep in constant touch with their workers, offering advice, support and continuing education in the area of aging.

The offer is this: you work for free, but transportation is provided should you need it. If not, as is the case with most volunteers, mileage reimbursements are paid for the use of private automobiles. And the volunteer decides how much of his time to commit, although he is asked to devote a minimum of one hour a week on a regular basis.

Volunteers functioning in groups are also playing a major role in the life support program. Civic organizations take residents out of the nursing home to attend special community events. High school theatre groups give performances. And homemaker clubs supervise arts and crafts sessions, helping residents make articles which the homemakers then sell for them in the community.

Nursing home administrators are very receptive to the life support program, seeing it as a successful approach in reducing the boredom and loneliness that often accompany institutionalization.

The volunteers also benefit from the program, finding it a rewarding way to fill unused hours and to fulfill the Golden Rule.

To learn how you can help, contact the Maryland Office on Aging.

Life support

AFRO tour

Dear AFRO:

Thank you for the patient and thorough presentation given the students of the Baltimore Experimental High School on their tour of the AFRO - AMERICAN building.

The students gained much from the experience, which served as a topic of conversation for several days.

They particularly appreciated your attention to their questions and the opportunity to speak with Mr. John Murphy III (AFRO chairman of the Board).

Thank you again.

MS. LAURA MALICK

It isn't funny

Does this strike you as funny?

At the same time the city's Board of Estimates voted to spend $61,893 to replace 3,030 seats at Memorial Stadium to make baseball fans happy . . . and $68,910 for 13 art works to decorate the City College campus—

The same Board of Estimates was being told by Douglass Tawney of the city's Recreation and Parks that in order to reduce his 1979 budget by one million he proposes to:

Not open 24 summer playground programs to save $31,000.

—Halt activities at city swimming pools a week sooner than usual

—Close aquatic programs provided in public schools during the winter.

—Close 18 night centers for basketball leagues that now are open in public schools for three hours weekday evenings from now to March.

—Cutting the labor force by 50 employees to save $570,000.

Doesn't it seem odd that we're decorating schools and limiting the use?

And isn't it funny that we're building seats in Memorial Stadium while locking kids out of much needed summer programs?

ANN SMITH

AFRO invites letters

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