CURRENT COMMENT

G. JAMES FLEMING

NOW AND THEN:

Still behind in judges

By G. James Fleming

Don't be surprised hearing charges of "racism" so far as the selection of judges in Maryland is concerned.

The latest reminder is the nominations of the Judicial Selection Commission for the vacancy in the Baltimore District Court created when Judge Solomon Baylor was named to the Supreme Bench (the Circuit Court).

Judge Baylor took the seat of Judge Harry Cole who was elevated to the Court of Appeals, a racial "first" on the state's supreme court.

To hold fast to what blacks had achieved would call for filling the Baylor vacancy with a black. If and when that is lost, blacks shall have also lost a seat on the District Court level.

It is almost unimaginable that in this day, in the year 1978, with the Baltimore population now being about 56 percent black, that any commission or any governor would ignore, or bypass, the black community in filling the judgeships closest to the people.

But, it has happened before down the years; there is historic pattern. And there is only one way to describe the practice: that ugly word "racism."

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We do not write, however, only of this latest vacancy and of the lily - white panel of selectees flushed up by the judicial commission. We point also to the picture of the judicial system, statewide, notably in Baltimore.

Of 22 District Court judges in Baltimore, only three are black. It was four with Judge Baylor.

Of the 22 Supreme Bench judges, only five are black.

In the appellate benches, there is only one black on each.

True to history, it must not be overlooked that, for every gain, blacks have had to mount a fight in order to break down the walls of racism, discrimination and of just being overlooked and bypassed. The only exception, relatively speaking, might be the experience under Mayor and Gov. Theodore R. McKeldin.

Blacks know that when they were the minority in the city's population, they would have been laughed at if they had even dreamed of having a majority of appointments, on any level or every level.

Let us repeat, of 22 District Court judges in Baltimore, 19 are white, three are black. Of 22 Supreme Bench judges, 17 are white, five black.

By way of explanation, some white lawyers (friends) say that perhaps few blacks are selected for judgeships "because there are so few black lawyers in the city."

That's "poppycock," rebut the black lawyers, who claim some 100 or more black lawyers who have passed the Maryland bar or have been admitted to practice in the state, and are graduates of the same quality law schools as their white counterparts.

They consider it a plus, also, that most black lawyers come nearer understanding the problems of the people who make up the bulk of the clientele of the lower courts.

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Believe it or not, most blacks try very hard not to have to charge "racism" about everything for ill that happens to them.. However, the political and economic power structure makes it difficult for blacks to refrain.

The judgeships are glaring examples of "politics as usual" and "practices as usual." Read the names on the several commissions on any level of government. Count the number of black policemen or black police officers (with officer rank) in any city or urban county, or among state troopers.

Look at the heads of public hospitals and medical centers. Inquire into the presidents and chancellors of public colleges and universities. The suggestive list could continue.

Blacks have made progress — inching along progress. But, most of the time, there is the handwriting that, if blacks do not look out, they will easily lose past gains, or their political and economic progress will come to a standstill.

FOR ALL WE KNOW

ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

FRANK COAKLEY, manager, Mondawmin office, Maryland National Bank, is figuring out the interest to come on the $1 million Provident Hospital deposited Wednesday. Receiving the funds from the Mayor and City Council were Md. National's Executive Vice President Henry Baker and Mrs. Lula Weaver, branch officer at the headquarters building downtown.

The non-nonsense cash goes into interest bearing accounts after the Securities Board figures the highest interest. As a witness to the deposit April 12, I judged it an historic moment especially for the young attorneys, Alice Pinderhughes and Russell Frisby. Their legal background documents fill nearly 100 pages.

DR. BERNARD HARRIS on behalf of the medical staff pledged $¼ million more; Mike Mitchell speaking for the City Council pledged also for the government, legal and community organizations.

Present were Provident board members: Director Thomas Chapman and Col. Arthur Hudgins, retired, U.S. Army, the assistant director.

BISHOP MONROE SAUNDERS, back from his church's Caribbean Conference and a leading figure on the Provident Hospital $1 million gift, has his own $1 million deal on the Samuel Ready School and will close it finally next week.

U.S. POSTMASTER GENERAL Emmitt Cooper of the U.S. Eastern Region was here at the Main Post Office Thursday. He's a biggie.

MRS. DELORES STOKES, daughter of our Clean Block's Mrs. Sadie W. Givens, is doing fine at Hopkins Hospital and we're glad.

DR. C. C. ALEXANDER, head of all Maryland Baptists, is honoree of The May 14 banquet given by his native church, First Baptist. An AFRO carrier when he was a kid, he was also a barber at 14 and still is. His Douglass Hi 1937 classmates are Col. Box Harris and Elizabeth Williams, former Eastern Hi principal and more famous folks.

MRS. LILLIAN JOHNSON, mother of Rev. William Johnson of Union Baptist, is an accomplished organist and pianist. Two other sons are Irving, head of a Sparrows Point Union and Capt. James Johnson stationed in San Antonio, Texas.

DR. CHESTER WICKWIRE, chaplain, Hopkins University, gives the invocation at Troy Brailey's affair at Martins West, May 4.

MARYLAND NAACP BRANCHES will hear Eleanor Holmes Norton at the banquet, Hilton Downtown, April 22, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, April 19 is Sen. Verda Welcome's affair at the Blue Crest.

LEON BRIDGES, architect, received the $28,000 contract for the first phase of restoration of Mt. Moriah Church, in Annapolis. Owned by Anne Arundel County, the church is leased for 99 years to the state of Maryland and is headquarters for the Commission on Afro-American History and Culture. It's to be called "Banneker-Douglass Museum of Afro American Life and History."

PARK HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CORP. gets our "No. 1 and Best" citation for service. Its Crime Committee is finalizing the Anti-Crime Project, a new thing which has some innovative concepts dealing with crime. Orginality plus which makes the offender responsible to the community in which he committed the crime. Call Lee Bowman for details, 578-4380.

MORGAN U CHOIR under Nathan Carter presents a sprawling program in Memorial Plaza 12:05 p.m., April 27. That's a real treat.

FRIENDS SCHOOL on North Charles Street wants more black students. Will Melton, director of Development is forming the program. Gordon Stills has been associated with the school nine years.

PIPPIN comes to the Mechanic, April 25. The original cast received five Tony Awards for the giant musical success.

REPEAT, antique lovers, don't miss the Towson State U campus flea market, bear garden, hayride and midway, April 21-23.

A LONG DISTANCE CALL from California declares that a disc jockey who died recently was the victim of foul play. Well and in fine health a few days before, he was in no way "at the point of death" the caller declares. His body reposed at a white mortuary and the whole thing hushed up, the lady said over the wire. We're checking.

ON THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY

LESLIE KING HAMMOND

'Subtle commentary on the social scene'

By Dr. Leslie King Hammond

Dr. Hammond is dean of graduate studies, Maryland Institute, College of Art.

Madeline Murphy Rabb is not your traditional native Baltimorean who moves away and tries very hard not to identify with their "hometown."

On Sunday, April 2, a very special event occurred which allowed Baltimore to celebrate the opening of an exhibition of prints by Madeline Murphy Rabb at the Fells Point Gallery.

The artist is the daughter of Judge and Mrs. William H. Murphy of Cherry Hill. She is an alumnus of the Maryland Institute, College of Art where she obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting in 1966.

After her marriage she moved to Chicago, where she later studied at the Illinois Institute of Technology, earning the degree of Master of Science.

While at the Illinois Institute of Technology she wrote her thesis on "Presensitized Magnesium Plates to Achieve Continuous Tone Imagery." As a result of this study Ms. Rabb "developed a technique which allows a spontaneity and fluidity of line not possible by most conventional etching processes."

The successful products of this research are now on display throughout the month of April.

Ms. Rabb, as any sensible artist should, feels very strongly about her visual statements.

She states clearly that "Body language is what fascinates me. . . trying to capture moments, gestures. . .fleeting impressions of peoples and things. I try to cut through pretension and make a subtle commentary on the social scene."

Several of the people used in her prints are close family members and people with whom she is most familiar with in terms of their movements, gestures and attitudes.

Such works as "Laura" and "Appendage" reflect the use of her brother and sister (Attorney William Murphy Jr. and Ms. Laura Murphy of Washington, D.C.) as models for her compositions.

Most of her visual references are chosen from crowded environments like those of a waiting room in a hospital or cocktail parties. The artist sits among or off to the side of the unsuspecting models while she rapidly sketches their image trying to capture a very precious moment.

These sketches are then transformed into photo - etched and lithographed prints in which she is able to capture the remarkable freshness of the original drawing. Most notable are "Society Women" and "Waiting Room."

Ms. Rabb is a highly skilled artist who presents a wide variety of tones and fluid lines in her prints. This is a most difficult medium to work with and it is rewarding to witness these achievements of such fine quality.

It is clear from this body of work that Madeline Murphy Rabb's discoveries in technique and gestural imagery will provide the viewing audience with many more fine exhibitions to come.

The exhibition will continue until April 30. The Fells Point Gallery is located at 811 South Broadway. The gallery is sponsored by the Maryland Institute Alumni Association Inc. and is open Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.

For more information call 675-6273.

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT AGING

Dr. Matthew TAYBACK

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

As we look back at the development of government involvement in aging issues, three dates stand out.

The original Maryland Commission on Aging was created in 1959. State Sen. Margaret Schweinhaut, commission founder and chairman, recalls that "older people, if they spoke at all then, spoke in a whisper."

Nationwide attention was focused on the special problems of the aged in 1965 when Congress passed the Older Americans Act. This legislation established the Administration on Aging at the federal level and a grant program for projects relating to aging throughout the country.

Services for older Marylanders have expanded significantly since that time.

On July 1, 1975 coordination of the state's various aging programs was assigned to the Office on Aging by the Maryland General Assembly.

The legislature charged this agency with the planning, coordinating and evaluating of all programs and services for the state's elderly — a monumental challenge.

What is the Office on Aging?

The Office on Aging translated that mandate into the identification of three major goals for older Marylanders, and it is here that the heart of our program lies.

The promotion of independent living for the elderly is the primary goal, not only in this state, but for most aging programs. This is being accomplished through a variety of approaches.

Adequate financial support is the basic foundation for independence. To this end, vigorous efforts are being made to promote a sound Social Security program and responsive pension programs within industry.

Also, approximately 200 older Marylanders joined the labor force in fiscal year 1977 through the senior aide program. The aides work part-time in public and private nonprofit agencies across the state.

On another front, the Office on Aging vigorously supports the elimination of mandatory retirement at age 65. We believe the right to work is an inherent right of all adults, regardless of age.

Another approach to independence is Maryland's Title VII nutrition program, one of the largest programs administered by the Office on Aging. It provides inexpensive, nutritionally balanced meals to older Marylanders, with priority directed at low-income and minority senior citizens.

Supportive services — information and referral, health and welfare counseling, consumer and nutrition education, physical fitness programs and other recreational and volunteer activities — also are brought into play at the meal sites.

The second major goal of the Office on Aging is to minimize institutionalization of the disabled aged. To meet this challenge, the state is pioneering a new concept — sheltered housing for the frail aged — providing three meals a day with housekeeping and personal services to those over 62 who have temporary, periodic or long term difficulty with some activities of daily living.

In addition, 11 day care centers [illegible] in part through this office [illegible] solving the state Department [illegible] Health and Mental Hygiene, were in operation during fiscal year 1977 and provided necessary, temporary care during the day for elderly having physical or mental impairments.

And in-home services, offering assistance with meal preparation, light housekeeping, transportation and non-skilled nursing care, have been made available for many members of our frail elderly population to reduce institutionalization. These services, involving the state Department of Human Resources, will continue to receive support from the Office on Aging.

Our third goal is to assure dignified living for older Marylanders. Under this goal are: life support programs, under which volunteers regularly visit nursing home patients; training programs for nursing home staff and a nursing home advocate charged with protecting the rights of nursing home residents.

This represents an overview of aging programs and services here in Maryland. It is important to emphasize that local offices on aging as well as local departments of social service and health are devoting increasing resources to our rapidly growing elderly population.

However, it is even more important that we recognize the tremendous resource this segment of the population itself represents.

Older Marylanders, working in partnership with government, provide the initiative for service and change.

MORE LETTERS

Open taxi market

Dear AFRO:

Del. Arthur Murphy Sr. has been partly successful by sponsoring a bill which has passed in the House to do away with city taxi cab permits. His has tightened the noose to hang and put out of business hundreds of cab owners.

Murphy has been an outstanding lawyer, Governor's aide and legislature representative, but he and the House of Representatives haven't performed their homework in reference to the taxi industry in Baltimore.

First, the idea of the "open taxi market" was first conceived and introduced in Washington by Sen. S. I. Hayakawa. But at least in his bill and in reference to free cab permits the cab owners would receive payments for their permits since they were going to be put out of business.

Murphy sold the House a bill of goods that there aren't but a few black cab owners in the city, when in fact there are now more than 20 percent black cab owners in operation.

The high increase in black owners manifested because the [illegible] owners are going out of business because of inflation (high gas, high liability insurance). Therefore, a permit which sold for $40,000 six years ago is being sold for $7,000 on terms and as little as $3,000 cash.

The bill is also untimely, as the cab business is like all others. Why should our state government pour water on a drowning man? Many drivers still owe the federal government and banks thousands of dollars.

Does the bill place a limit on how many free cab permits will flood the city? This can work in the nation's capitol because they have a tourist attraction. We are a nickel and dime town and that especially goes for tips.

The issue in reality is that we need to improve the calibre of cab drivers, instead of reducing same. A businessman with $20,000 to several thousand dollars invested in a cab will serve the public very carefully.

Let's stop demanding that the color of the cab owner driver will solve any problem.

I hope the Senate will not follow Murphy and the House in Annapolis and put owner - driver out of business.

At present we have enough cabs and not sufficient demands, except for bad and inclement weather or when the cabs are changing shifts.

Murphy also stated that because of a shortage of cabs, blacks are forced to use "hackers." In essence, the people in the ghetto are in a habit of riding with the hackers. We can't get a fare there; the hackers have regular riders and police don't interfere.

The state put the city cab drivers out of the waiting stand at the airport at high expense to the city person arriving having to pay at least four dollars more for the airport cab. If they get away with this Baltimore will have the same gypsy type cab driving as in New York City.

What next? You business men in the cut rate business, no liquor licenses will be required.

We were recently informed that everything is for sale in Annapolis; they re - sold the Continental Can, with possibly a little deal to sell out the city cabbies, so a chosen few can get free cab permits.

JOHN T. BAILEY

Keep Maryland's air clean

Dear AFRO:

I appeal to Acting Gov. Blair Lee's wise insight and integrity to carefully study House Bill 1164. This legislation should be vetoed.

The purpose of the bill is to relax Maryland's air pollution standards to fall in line with those of the federal government. The result, if he signs the bill into law, would mean that Maryland citizens would be subjected to breathing dirtier air and living in a less healthy environment.

As the state's highest elected official, I'm sure Lee has the citizens' health at heart. Should Maryland injure the lifeblood of its citizenry by allowing more polluted air to be inhaled? I certainly hope that such a thought influences his decision to issue a veto.

The American Lung Association of Maryland, in a fact sheet dated March 9, 1978, raises the following important points:

— The Social Security Administration claims that 19.6 million workers are disabled each year because of respiratory diseases, and that emphysema is the second most frequent diagnosis among males of all ages receiving Social Security disability benefits;

— Respiratory diseases are the single most important cause of loss of productive time by the working population and utilize approximately 15 percent of both available physician time and hospital facilities;

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

— Focusing on sulphur oxides, pollutants commonly omitted from oil and coal, the survey states that between $62 and $311 million dollars was spent in 1970 for health care due to these pollutants. It is expected that by 1979, $16.6 billion is expected to be spent for health care resulting from the effects of sulphur oxides.

The questions concerning House Bill 1164 is clear. "Do we want clean air and healthy citizens or should we subject ourselves to the murky prospect of dingy breathing?"

If House Bill 1164 is signed into law, quite obviously this searious question would not be so clear. Indeed, the problem of air pollution would be clouded further into oblivion.

Gov. Lee can take the proper step to keep our air clean. A worthy motto: "Keep Maryland Clean. Keep Maryland's Air Clean"

As an environmentalist myself I seek your leadership with this issue.

LARRY YOUNG

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.

OPINION

Founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1848-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City Inc. Carl Murphy (1889-1967) Editor-publisher (1922-1967).

THE AFRO and the prison issue

When the Concerned Citizens of East Baltimore discovered that Marvin Mandel and cronies were attempting to plunk a new prison down in the midst of its neighborhood, it was understandably outraged.

When it was further noted that the owner of the Continental Can properly where this new prison would be situated was a relative of people in or near the Mandel Administration and would turn a pretty profit on the deal, they were even angrier.

Having no place else to turn they brought their case to this newspaper and we immediately perceived this as an issue of the people against the "bosses" or would - be bosses.

Some of our best friends, out of their own timidity or short - sightedness, warned us we were taking on a "losing" cause, that grass - roots people could not turn the tide against powerful entrenched political power.

And so we went ahead, our philosophy at all times requiring that we move with the people, that we interpret and report the real needs and hopes of the people.

In this case the need and hope of a good many people in East Baltimore, black and white, was that no correctional institution be forced upon them, be arbitrarily thrust in neighborhoods they had worked long and hard to maintain.

Former AFRO writer Paul Evans was with CCEB every step of the way in 1977 reporting on the East Baltimoreans' struggle here at home, in a resisting Annapolis, State House and Assembly, and all the way to the White House where CCEB sought and won federal intervention and assistance in their cause.

Nothing got through in the 1977 Assembly session and when the 1978 term began CCEB was ready for the struggle once again.

For our efforts we were threatened with legalities by people close to the former governor who in turn were convicted of crimes against the state.

We were accused of siding unfairly with these grass - roots folk in their battle.

Incoming replacement for Mandel, Acting Gov. Blair Lee, at first took a hard line. A jail on the Continental Can site. Wiser heads must have counseled Lee to reverse himself on this decision and find another place for the jail. He did and the rest is history.

Continental Can remains the second choice if the Fort Armistead site is unavailable for any reason.

We would not like to think that Lee would change his mind again after the election, if he wins, because he would bring a host of tough enemies down on his head and the political organization of which he is presently titular head.

The people can win, the people can make a difference.

Our bottom line in this prison mess has been that no more jails are needed, despite what our correctional system bureaucrats keep telling us.

Prisons do not do all that much, else the recidivism in this state would be considerably lessened.

If jails as we presently know them were effective then rehabilitation would have the effect of reducing prison populations.

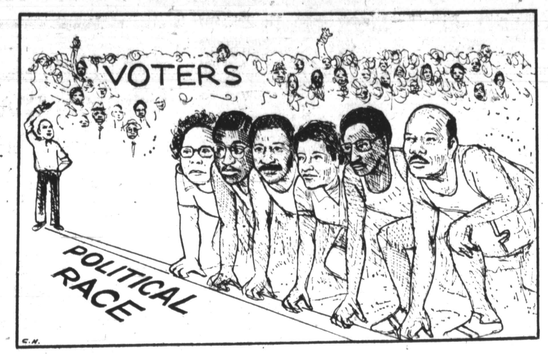
Such is not the case. If Mr. Lee were persuaded that rehabilitation is the answer then he would have forthrightly trashed the idea of new prisons upon entering office.

We think the gubernatorial candidate who thinks and acts: "Jobs, not jails," is the candidate who will make the most sense to the majority of Marylanders.

The real bottom line is, of course, not so much where the prison goes, but the waste of the taxpayers money in building something that simply is not going to work.

Prisons for the dangerous who must be confined, yes, but prisons as human warehouses, as containers of men, mostly black men, who have no opportunities for anything except crime, is madness.

On your mark.....



MAINSTREAM: Part II

MARION BANFIELD

I charge child neglect

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.

Although we talk about children's rights, there will be no rights until we understand the need for a basic respect for children as sensitive human beings.

A family came to my office because a junior high school principal felt that the stealing and lying so characteristic of the three brothers was a symptom of serious trouble at home.

The mother was reluctant to keep the appointment and scolded her sons, saying that their behavior kept her upset, kept her running from one appointment to another, pulled her away from her job as caretaker to the elderly whom she housed.

Her sons sat with bowed heads, having little to say. It was clear that the usual open family discussion which occurs in my office was not about to take place.

The mother said that the eldest boy had been hit by a car twice and she wondered if his brain had been affected. The middle son was a weak follower of his older brother. The youngest was described as mean and evil like his father who was in Jessup for armed robbery.

Yes, they could come back and talk with me. Just don't expect her to keep appointments. The doctor had her on pills for her nerves and people just had to stop making so many demands on her. She didn't see how anyone could help her sons, she had done all she could.

With the return of the boys and two sisters the following week for a family interview, there unfolded a clearer family picture. The mother had been an alcoholic for at least 10 years. She strongly denied this problem. Money was scarce.

When the children were paid for jobs of any sort, they would try to conceal their funds from their mother. She borrowed frequently, repaid the loans rarely.

The children did not want to be placed in foster homes. Our subsequent interviews were based on having them recognize the reality of their mother's illness.

Giving each other emotional support, helping each other was a healthier course than getting even with an unloving, alcoholic, miserably unhappy woman.

(Part III, next week)

WASHINGTON REPORT:

PARREN J. MITCHELL

Work week for a congressman

By Parren J. Mitchell

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

The work done by a member of Congress on a day to day basis is simply not known by constituents. I picked the work schedule for the week beginning April 3 as a fairly typical work week for me.

Monday, April 3: Noon, House in session, Consents and suspensions — The consent calendar was called and four bills were scheduled for consideration under suspension of the rules.

2 p.m., Meeting: Budget Committee, Democratic Caucus.

Tuesday, April 4:

9:30 a.m., Attend press conference - Budget Committee.

10:30 a.m., Meeting: markup FY '79 budget, Budget Committee.

11 a.m., Attend: ceremony and reception

2 p.m., Tenth anniversary passage, National Fair Housing Law.

Noon, House in Session, Suspensions — Three bills were scheduled for consideration under suspension of the rules.

Committee Funds — Nine committee funding resolutions were scheduled for consideration.

1 p.m., Meeting: Julius Johnson.

1:30 p.m., Meeting: Budget, Committee, markup of FY '79 budget.

2 p.m., Meeting: Len Hirsch, Congressional Liaison Service.

6:30 p.m., Attend: Congressional reception, Communications Workers of America.

6:30 p.m., Attend: '78 fundraiser for Congressman Harold Ford.

7 to 8 p.m., Attend: awards dinner, Sigma Delta Tau - legal fraternity, Mitchell honored.

Wednesday, April 5:

8:15 a.m., Meeting: subcommittee on Domestic Monetary Policy.

9 a.m., Meeting: Democratic Caucus.

9:30 a.m., Meeting: Budget Committee, markup of FY '79 budget.

Noon, Luncheon meeting with HUD personnel, Region III and members of Congress.

1 p.m., Meeting: Dr. Robert M. Williams and others, re: AID assistance.

1:30 p.m., Meeting: Budget Committee, markup of FY '79 budget.

2 p.m., Meeting: E. Alan Ball, Communications Workers of America.

3 p.m., House in Session.

Postal Act — The House was scheduled to complete consideration of H.R. 7700, Postal Service Act.

3:30 p.m., Meeting: Ms. Elva Edwards and Lenwood Ivey.

4:30 p.m., Meeting: Ms. Barbara Williams, executive director, Congressional Black Caucus.

Thursday, April 6:

8 a.m., Breakfast meeting with Chairman of Federal Reserve, board and members of subcommittee on Domestic Monetary Policy.

9:30 a.m., Meeting: Budget Committee, markup FY '79 budget.

11 a.m., House in session. International Banking - H.R. 10899, International Banking Act, scheduled for consideration.

1:30 p.m., Meeting: Budget Committee, markup FY '79 budget.

2 p.m., Meeting: John White, National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees.

5:15 p.m., Meeting: Fortune 500 corporations, Committee on Banking Finance and Urban Affairs.

7:30 p.m., Meeting: "The Group", 1903 Bloomingdale Road, Baltimore.

Friday, April 7:

9:30 a.m., Meeting: Budget Committee, markup of FY '79 budget.

9:30 a.m., Speak: Conference on Trade between United States and the Caribbean Basin, The World Trade Center, Baltimore.

7 p.m., Attend dinner honoring Dr. Flossie M. Dedmond, Blue Crest North, 401 Reisterstown Road, Baltimore.

Saturday, April 8:

7 p.m., Speak: Southern University, School of Law, Baton Rouge, La.

Sunday, April 9:

2 p.m., Speak: Department of Political Science and Black Elected Officials, Baton Rouge, La.

Of course, this schedule does not take into account such other matters as: volume of mail to be handled (averaging 2,000 letters per week); volume of telephone calls to be answered (averaging 1,800 calls per week); other meetings of staff with staffs of House and Senate Committees; the crisis situations and the hundreds of other things that come up each day.

Even by starting the work day at 8:30 a.m. and completing it about 10:30 p.m., it's almost impossible to get everything done each day.

LETTERS

End of the Assembly, beginning of the race

"We have observed this session of the General Assembly from a certain objective distance, reporting to you, on those key issues which especially impact on our community and making note as we could of just how the Black Legislative Caucus, our 19 elected officials, were faring in their missions.

We can say now as the Assembly sessions nears its close that our caucus, increasingly, becomes a sophisticated political instrument.

There were some hostilities and frictions smoldering beneath the surface but our brothers and sisters at almost all times displayed a public unity no matter what dissension unsettled them privately.

The caucus is to be complimented for this political acuity. For black lawmakers, outnumbered as they are, to have let their natural differences get aired constantly as had been the mistake in past years, is to have further diluted their value and strength.

This year's caucus deserves high marks for smoothness, a show of unity and day - to - day operational unity.

Now as to the quality of legislation they helped produce and the amount of victories they were able to win for their constituents — well, that is something we are sure is up front in the minds of other aspiring politicians who plan to challenge this year's Assembly incumbents.

We will be summarizing, independently, the work of this year's caucus, and without partisan fervor.

Between what we have to report and what incumbents and challengers have to say about each other, April bodes for some lively political expression.

The race, with the Assembly's end, is officially begun and it is baby - kissing and handshaking time again.

Why doesn't Jackie want to go to school?

Dear AFRO:

Mother: Jackie, get up it's time to go to school.

Jackie: Aw Ma, do I have to?

Mother: Jackie, why don't you want to go to school?

Jackie: The school is sad, the teachers, don't wanna teach and the children don't wanna learn.

Later: Mom and Dad

Mother: Honey, get up it's time for you to go to work.

Father: I don't feel like working today. Honey, call them and tell'em I'm sick.

It is amazing . . .

When a parent doesn't want to go to work he or she can call in sick.

But, what about your child? In order for them to get an education they must go to school. What about your child's school? Is it pleasant, with up - to - date learning materials. Are the personal facilities to your standards?

Anyone interested in the type of facilities in which the student is learning should visit our own Robert W. Coleman School No. 142.

Here the paint is peeling and falling off the ceiling. Plumbing is faulty. The mice are taking over the school. Learning materials are inadequate.

We have tried for funding for a new school. We are constantly given the run - around. If the money is not available for a new school "why can't the money be used for remodeling?"

The state insists that we give the children more play time. If all the time is given to play when will they learn the basics, the three "R's"? Things are so depressing at the old school that parent participation has dropped from 100 to 10 percent.

Most of the parents show no interest in what is happening at their child's school. Learning materials, field trips and any school related programs have been cut. Teachers have to use their own money for these supplies.

We are not allowed to sponsor any activities to raise money yet the government does nothing to help.

They are more interested in where to build the new jail but, if they would build some or renovate some of the schools, we might not need so many new jails.

We are just small voices among many, only two parents among 265. We can't move mountains but, we can make our voices heard.

No one knows how much can be changed at any school, how conditions can be improved and dead weight on staff and faculty be removed. These things can only be done with the full support and concern of all the parents. Please! take an interest in your child's school. LET US MOVE THESE MOUNTAINS!

MISS JEANORA JACKSON
MRS. CONNIE AVERY
volunteer parents,
School No. 142

Controlling our 'turf'

Dear AFRO:

I read G. James Fleming's March 18 column in the AFRO - AMERICAN. Very appreciative of his thoughts and insights.

There are a number of businesses that lend themselves readily to racial" tags. For example, cosmetics such as Johnson's Products or publishing such as the AFRO - AMERICAN Newspapers.

There are others, however, such as consumer goods, where you must appeal to the general market on a very positive and competitive note.

While businesses must be concerned with social issues and live up to acceptable standards and performance, we must encourage companies emerging from the minority community to enter the mainstream.

With this we can still remember from "whence we came." More and more, however, we must not only control our own "Turf" but also strive to become important factors in the general market.

A few of us who have "gleaned" some success are further encouraged by the number of bright minds that are entering the field.

I am sure that, before long, we will see tangible evidence of real progress.

HENRY G. PARKS JR.,
Chairman of the Board,
Parks Sausage Company

New voices, new choices

Is this a trend? A lot of organizations are bringing in white guest speakers to keynote their affairs. We reflected on what this may portend.

Have we run out of our own message - givers? Has black leadership, locally and nationally, run out of things to say or are folks tired of hearing the same old stuff?

Where are our new rhetorical superstars? Jesse Jackson, much in demand, was salvaged this week by a local activist as a "sell - out" so we guess that wipes Jesse out as a banquet speaker in these parts.

Ben Hooks is in demand so much he is probably tiring of the circuit. C. Delores Tucker must be exhausted, as many appearances as she has made on the annual luncheon - dinner - testimonial circuit.

We are just noting all this, mind you, as we have every expectation that new voices, new choices are stirring out there somewhere.

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).

Sincere cooperation needed

Dear AFRO:

The recent controversies over the 10 percent set aside rules for minority contractors have developed into an unfortunate situation.

As an organization, the Baltimore Jaycees have been increasingly aware of the need for cooperation between minority contractors and governmental agencies to insure economic growth for their firms.

Large majority contractors should be willing to give up such a small portion of the annual contract given by state and municipal government in order to help the struggling minority firm.

Many of the black owned contractors are now being faced with a new problem. Having won the 10 percent set aside fight, they now must battle "frot" firms which are in reality majority owned businesses.

The burden must fall upon local government to actively police the passage and implementation of such laws.

Only through true and sincere cooperation and not just lip - service can economic parity begin to take a step forward for black and minority firms.

R. TERENCE FARRELL,
President,
Baltimore Jaycees Inc.

Let's begin our war on crime!

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 .....