Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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The Douglass report

—it proves our power—

Baltimore has the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of other large metropolitan cities such as Washington, D.C., Detroit, Newark, Atlanta, and Los Angeles who have elected black mayors.

Not only could Baltimore, which is the eighth largest city in the country, have a black mayor but other top ranking elected officials as well, if black citizens would join forces to become a strong voting unit.

According to several political analysts, the link to blacks getting their rightful territory in City Hall is to stop the "footdraggin'" that has existed over the years and make a strong concerted effort to get out the black vote.

"If we get enough registered black citizens to vote, we can do anything in this city," asserts Juanita Jackson Mitchell, veteran NAACP voter registration crusader.

"We're like beggars sitting on bags of gold."

Recent figures released by the State Administration Board of Election Law point out the need for a change of emphasis on strategy in the black community as it applies to the election effort.

For years, every effort to make the vote of the black community felt at the polls, either on particular issues or to elect black candidates, has been preceded by months of voter registration activity. After having achieved this, exhausting manpower, most black organizations have gone home feeling the battle was won.

Little did they know that the battle was actually lost and much of their effort was to no avail. For as fast as they were adding black registrants to the books, others were being purged for failure to vote or failure to report a change of address.

John Douglass, member of the House of Delegates, from the 45th district who is running for city comptroller, states, "Some of us, like myself, who have been involved in the election process, for years have been trying to convey this message, but few have been listening. A review of the registration activity of the city election board for 1978 will bring home this message."

During 1978 new registrants in Baltimore totaled 45,602, more than 41,000 of those coming through mail registration. Informed sources report that roughly 80 percent of all new registration is black.

However, while those 45,000 people were being added to the books, 62,897 were being removed. Almost 58,000 of which were pulled because they had not voted in the last five years. An analysis of the locations of those removals suggests that about 80 percent of the removals were blacks.

"For the critical reader, the pattern should be clear, as fast as we add to the registration rolls, others are removed for failure to vote," reports Douglass. "A continuation of this process will yield us no gain.

"And we will continue going around and around in circles without having an impact on city policy."

When questioned as to why blacks have little interest in voting and city policy, Dr. C. Vernon Gray, head of Morgan State University's political science department, told the AFRO, "The loss of confidence among black people is due to the political system's lack to respond realistically to their needs."

He explained that increasing problems of high unemployment, inadequate housing and health care and the assaults on affirmative action programs have caused a loss of confidence in general among both blacks and whites in their political leaders.

Reports Douglass, "What is needed in black Baltimore is an exclusive focus on getting out the vote. With about 55 percent of the registration now black, we clearly have the numbers to win, we simply need to convince blacks that 'we gotta play to win.'"

Comparing politics to the lottery, Douglass feels that you must put something in, in order to get something out of the political system.

With the mayoral race just a few months away, some sources say it's too late for a strong black candidate to run and win but the possibly is good for the '83 election, if a well-planned campaign is started now.

For the city-wide election which occurs on September 12 the deadline for registration and change of address is August 13. Anyone wishing to register for absentee ballot must do so by September 4.

In order to change your party affiliation, you must register for both the primary and general election by May 10.

We commend Delegate Douglass for pulling together this voter data. We thank him for sharing it with us.

School of the arts

New opportunities will be presented to the young people of Baltimore come next September, when the School of the Arts throws its doors open as part of Baltimore public school system. This is another forward step for our city, an excellent way of spending the money we pay in taxes.

The School of the Arts will have a full high school program, but with emphasis on the arts —music, painting, sculpture and the rest.

It will be a specialized institution open to all who have unusual commitment to the fine arts. Its potential is great as a civilizing dimension in a city that wants to be "the best."

Not every graduate will become a member of the Baltimore Symphony or be admitted to the Maryland Institute of Arts, but what a stimulus to live in a city which considers it of topmost priority to give an opportunity to those who have special talent in the arts.

An extra "lift," also, knowing that this new emporium of learning (in the old Alcazar building) will ask for talent in some one of the arts as the only key needed to open its doors and that it will not be barred to any such applicant because of his or her race, religion, color, national origin or sex.

Gratitude from Rosemont Elementary

Dear AFRO:

We, the faculty, staff, students and parents of Rosemont Elementary School No. 63, wish to express our sincere appreciation to you and your staff for the excellent coverage given to our school in the March 31, 1979 edition of the AFRO.

We feel there were many important aspects of the article. The title, "Happiness is Rosemont" reflected the true spirit that exists here at School No. 63.

The identification of Rosemont as a Title 1 School, the various activities pictured, and the individualization of instruction clearly showed the variety in our program.

Mr. Glasco Ryales id an excellent job in taking the many pictures. The rapport that he had with everyone was very impressive.

We believe that there are many positive outcomes from the AFRO's coverage of our school. Pride was instilled in our students, parents and staff members who saw or read the article.

The article helped to develop a personal awareness and positive identity for each child. The children either saw their pictures or their names in print which boosted their self esteem. They felt very important.

The children further saw the importance of education and of attending school. Feelings of self respect and dignity were fostered.

We are proud that the AFRO's coverage let the Baltimore community know so much about what our school has been doing. This will continue to encourage community - school involvement. The community was made aware that our school is doing "its job."

Again, "Thank You." You and your staff are doing your part in aiding the mayor and others in making "BALTIMORE, THE BEST."

THE STAFF OF ROSEMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL No. 63
Dorothy F. Bennett, Principal,
Frances Parks, Assistant Principal

MADELINE MURPHY

Part II

Taking more than our share

We live in a confusing, brutal society, where the gap widens daily between the haves and have nots.

Yet we are partners in this disparity because we have brought the nightmare that life on the other side of the tracks is ours for the taking, others be damned; that the grass is greener over there by the country club, no matter how much cow dung clutters our way and soils our ankles.

Not resisting, however, that the love of money underscores the wealth addict's belief that "although money can't buy happiness . . . lack of it can purchase pain."

But without feeling the plight of our brothers and sisters deeply, or understanding our recent history, we lose the bonding it is meant to reinforce.

No one of us wants to endure more pain. Pain remembered as poor, deprived children. Pain confined to the terrifying, first realization of white racism.

Yet being a closet addict, as Philip Slater suggests many of us are in his article, "Wealth Addiction," Quest Magazine, is the most painful.

It perilously weakens us beyond helping anyone — even our children. It deadens our sensitivity so long as "I got mine, you've got yours to get by some hook or crook" is our creed.

I remember during World War II, an upper middle class friend hoarded canned goods, canned milk especially. The cans rusted and burst before she had need for them. But even so she felt no remorse that she had deprived someone else, who had a greater need.

Yet, Slater suggests that the poor who are deprived, appear to be like tolerant parents of a greedy child — "wisely recognizing his inability to control his impulses at such an early age."

He relates further that a recent man - in - the street interview asked the passerby if he resented people with great wealth. "All of them answered in the negative, arguing either that the wealthy had earned their wealth or that it was stupid to be resentful of a group one hoped one day to enter!"

But where is that bridge, where is the path that leads to this so - called idyllic future? Because as we have seen in the former article, and as Slater says, "Money is (the rich man's) narcotic; they have to take more than their share, for what they have isn't satisfying if others have it too."

Part of this desire of blacks to become part of the haves, is the pressing need for acceptance by the ruling order. Particularly is this seen of those who become prominent, members of boards of prestigious institutions, because in becoming part of this group; one then takes on its trappings, its reflected glory, separated only by a mythical barbed wire fence that painfully close out the less desirable — the poor have - nots.

Taking on these trapping of the in group goes hand in hand with intolerant attitudes toward the outsiders. Happy now to be accepted, these haves accomodate to the ideas and suggestions that foreclose any opportunity for the have's to participate. They are ripe only for manipulation and exploitation, and as Slater suggests are usually willing victims — tolerant parents.

There are many examples, however, of where this addiction leads. One recent tragedy would be the life and death of Howard Hughes. He was not only addicted to wealth but ultimately addicted to drugs.

Added to this general discomfort are the hours and days needed to care for the expensive cars, the burglar systems to protect the jewels too valuable to risk wearing, the furs that must be stored, the summer homes secured, the boats and yachts that must face drydock and paint every year. The list goes on.

Finally material things take us over and we no longer have time to do anything else except provide, as Slater suggests "janitorial services for pleasure sources that are rarely or never used."

So when we are tempted to catch the golden ring, to take more than our share, we might just want to ponder the pain and fleeting pleasure of it all.

Rather we might have time without these things to spread a little more love and caring around, maybe learn from our history that that's how we've made it so far.

Mrs. Murphy is a commentator on Impact News on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. on WEAA - FM.

PARREN MITCHELL

Federal budget, Baltimore's fate

In January, the President submitted his budget request for fiscal year (FY) 1980 which is to begin Oct. 1, 1979 and end Sept. 30, 1980.

Because the U.S. Constitution states that only the Congress is allowed to make law and draw money from the Treasury, President Carter's budget is not binding.

President Carter seized the opportunity to justify the largest military budget in the history of this country, even greater than the height of our involvement in Vietnam, by inciting a fear in America.

In promoting this fear the President was able to justify a 13 percent increase in arms procurement; full scale production of an air launched missile; a new aircraft carrier and more nuclear submarines to increase the military budget by $11.3 billion. (If you could spend $1 million every day, it would take 2,740 years to spend $1.0 billion).

All of this was done at the same time he was in negotiation for Part II of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT - III) with the Soviet Union. It seems readily apparent to me that you do not initiate peace or scale down nuclear armaments by building your military arsenal.

That, in my estimation, is an indication of insincerity to the Soviets and reflects on the virtues of America. Moreover, this tempo suggests that the Administration is not prepared to take a step towards peace and consequently is satisfied with the "paranoia promotion."

Another tempo setting trend in the President's budget is derived from Proposition 13. The television and radio media have attempted to raise the intent of a California based tax proposition to a national referendum against federal spending.

The consequence of this trend could impose severe cuts on human survival programs in the black community of Baltimore simply because the programs, such as low income housing assistance, public service employment programs, housing rehabilitation, employment and housing programs for the elderly are termed discretionary programs, and hence are more subject to cuts and, or, elimination.

Another 16 percent of the budget must be spent this year for commitments and obligations from previous years. For example, it takes approximately six years to build an aircraft carrier, consequently those funds expend in each of the six years.

The 26 percent or $123 billion remaining is called discretionary funds. Of that discretionary fund 58 percent goes to the military which we know will not be reduced but will be increased. This leaves only the human survival programs left for reduction.

In the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), public service jobs program, there is a proposed 187,300 jobs loss that will provide nearly 300 less jobs in Baltimore. There is also a proposal to reduce the summer youth program to 1,185,000 summer jobs last year, because Baltimore had a 39 percent youth unemployment problem. If the proposal of the Administration prevails Baltimore could loose nearly 1,100 summer youth jobs.

In housing, a major problem in the Baltimore area, tradeoffs develop between the lowest income and the lower income public housing dwellers as a result of underfunding. If there is not enough funding, the managers of public housing projects are faced with a choice of cutting back on maintenance and services or increasing the rental income.

Because of rising operation and maintenance costs our housing projects are currently faced with minimal maintenance upkeep, there is no way to reduce services more.

Therefore, underfunding forces project managers to collect more money by selecting higher income tenants or charging more rent to those who can least afford to pay. In either case the outcome is in violation of the intent of the law, a law I helped draft which is intended to serve the lowest income people.

It's essential that you understand the budget process so that you will know how to impact upon it and how it impacts upon you. I shall work fiverishly to block any reductions that impact upon the poor, the elderly and the racial minorities.

Because of the climate, tempo and mood of the country, it will be a difficult task to perform but nonetheless I shall make every effort to provide jobs, housing and social service programs to the people of Baltimore.

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

—LETTERS—

Praising AFRO coverage of tenants' needs

Dear AFRO:

The AFRO is to be highly commended for the excellent coverage of the issues significant to poor people in Baltimore.

Specifically, when 13 ladies from the Johnston Square area of East Baltimore "sat in" at the Housing Commissioner's office to demand a decent place to live, Fred Hines of your staff was there and he did a fine job of reporting the issues and events that took place.

The other major newspapers were also contacted about the action: poor people, in need of decent, affordable housing, making their needs known by taking their concerns directly to those responsible for helping.

And what made the sit - in circumstances newsworthy is that up until the Johnston Square tenants took the initiative, it was widely accepted that the direct action tactic (made famous in the sixties) had become passe in Baltimore and elsewhere.

But the AFRO not only reported the return of grass roots movement for social justice, it supported such efforts in an editorial; its headline "The People Are Moving."

The other major newspapers in the city imply with their lack of coverage an unconcern for the needy's quest to obtain safer, sounder places to live.

Perhaps they do not fully appreciate the housing dilemma faced by the poor.

According to the Housing Department there are approximately 70,000 substandard housing units within the city limits and there are only about 60 housing inspectors responsible for being on top of the most negligent private landlords. Based on the numbers alone it's an impossible situation.

Therefore, tenants who are tired of hassling with private landlords (despite the best efforts of the city, Legal Aid, Welfare Rights, St. Ambrose Housing and others) turn to the city for a nice place to rent.

But that is where the other aspect of the dilemma presents itself: there are officially 28,000 families in line at the Housing Authority for either a public housing unit or a Section 8 rent subsidy.

And so poor families in the city of Baltimore are caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place.

And what aggravates the problem further is that the city government seems to be going all out for the middle and upper classers who are hoped to be returning to Baltimore.

Only the AFRO can see the irony of the revitalization effort taking place in the city: luxury hotels, a convention center, harborside marketplaces and the like (mostly for the benefit of tourists) while citizens who have lived here for many years must contend with rats, leaky roofs, non - functioning furnaces, uninsulated windows and doors and plumbing and electrical systems in violation of the housing code.

There seems to be a contradiction. The city is not doing its job for the poor.

But hope springs eternal. As an organizer, I have taken much encouragement from the responsiveness of the East Baltimore tenants, who have taken the time to help themselves.

And I have also been sustained by the coverage done by the AFRO through Fred Hines. But the sitters - in are trying to say and do something gigantic.

They are trying to get the system to care for the most needy elements of the population; the sitters - in are going against the grain of a conservative time and they are going right to the powers that be.

They know what they are doing. As quoted from Frederick Douglass, says it best, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress . . . Power concedes nothing without a demand . . . If we ever get free, we must pay . . . ."

A heartfelt thanks to the AFRO for being around and serving all aspects of the black community.

RALPH MOORE, Jr.
St. Ambrose Housing
Aid Center
Johnston Square

Brodie 'aggressively' seeking funds

Dear AFRO:

During the past weeks several groups of East Baltimore residents have met with several representatives of Department of Housing and Community Development, including myself, to make known their concerns about the need for more public housing.

As we indicated to them and we want your readers to know, the DHCD is aggressively seeking all available funds to provide additional housing for low - income families (including public housing) and every penny received is spent.

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City owns and operates 16,381 units of public housing. It spends more than $24 million per year to manage these units.

The city also has received 2,000 slots of Section 8 Housing (managed by private developers) for low - income families.

As a result of our efforts an additional 860 slots were granted recently under the Neighborhood Strategies Program for housing in communities of Barclay, Greenmount West and Poppleton.

While we are proud of this record, there is clearly a need for additional improved housing opportunities. The long waiting lists for all subsidized housing programs attests not only to the need, but also to the quality of the housing which is provided.

Housing is provided on a first - come, first - serve basis with the exception of those families who are in bona - fide emergency situations. Families with emergencies are given the first appropriate units that are available.

We are again reviewing our definition of emergency to make sure that it is absolutely fair.

While we share the concerns raised by those residents who have visited with us, and recognize that some of them do have legitimate emergencies, we also must point out that those individuals without legitimate emergencies will be asked to wait their turn for available housing.

M. J. BRODIE,
Housing and
Community Development

G. JAMES FLEMING

Miss, Mrs., Ms., person

I suppose I am a "chauvinist" something or other, although I am really not. There is no way, however, of stopping people from calling names.

I managed very well with "Ms." where it was required or exacted. There seems to be some logic to it, especially where a woman was no longer married but also was not a "Miss."

When "living with" became popular in the United States, without benefit of marriage, it appeared that this was another case where "Ms." might be an easy way to old - fashioned respectability.

I have never been against the Lucy Stoners. I have always thought that married women, especially professionals, should be free in the choice they made as to the name they preferred to be known.

I have never objected to working beside or under women, and one of the most effective managing editors I knew, in my earlier newspaper days, was a woman, Thelma Berlack Boozer, then of the New York Amsterdam News.

Some of the best autoists I know are women. I don't believe that all secretaries should be women and I once had a most efficient male stenographer.

I do not think I am a chauvinist . . .

All this notwithstanding, I have lots of trouble with "chairperson," especially when use of that term is insisted upon by certain persons for both men and women.

"Chairperson" is bungleome, much worse than the dual "chairman" and "chairwoman."

By the way, I have never had any objection to the use of "chairwoman." At least, that was an exact description.

Somewhere, I have read that, if it must be "chairperson," then it can't be "human" but must be "huwoman" for females, or perhaps it will be "huperson" or, perhaps "humanperson."

Worst of all, the appellation ventured for separating the sexes is the use of just "Chair" to designate man or woman who is presiding. It goes something like this:

"Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to present Ms. Elizabeth Plushbottom, the 'chair' of the evening."

It sounds queer and it exudes an ugly image.

All of this is being written tongue in cheek. I know that how a person is designated (or not designated) can have significant meaning in a society, psychologically and practically.

Until recently, among most people, it made a great difference, in standing, in credit rating, and in moral respectability, whether a female (Do I have to say "feperson"?) was a "woman" or a "lady."

Black males in the United States know there is (or was) a difference in their status when they were called "Boy" while white men were addressed as "Mr."

Black women pined for centuries when they were never called "Miss" or "Mrs." even if they were school teachers or senior citizens.

West Indians who went to New York in the years before World War II, suffered as their mainland black brothers would call them "Monkey Chasers." Similar anecdotes can be related, for different periods, about Quakers, hillbillies, "Poor Whites," and others.

No one likes being "called out of his name," or being given a label which somehow, insults him or her or sets him or her apart, as different or inferior.

I sympathize with the Women's Liberation Movement. I join them in wanting equal opportunity for women, before the law, in industry and in the household.

I hope, however, the women will understand some of us (including some women) who find it difficult to shift gears easily.

I hope they know that we men love and respect them, even though we must cast our ballot against calling anyone a "chair," just to avoid saying "chairman" or "chairwoman."

YESTERYEAR: Hub of 'The Strip'

This is the way the intersection of Fremont Avenue, Dolphin St. and Harlem Avenue in west Baltimore looks today. In earlier times it was hub of a black neighborhood that produced some of the city's most prestigious and accomplished residents. Many still live in the area. 'The Strip' fifth annual reunion, bringing countless present and former residents of this area together again, will be held at the Civic Center Saturday night, April 28. Notes on the affair and the people of this community will be in next Friday's AFRO.

ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

City Editor

For All We Know

ONE OF THE MOST important happenings of our day occurred at Coppin State College April 23 when the Seminar on "Reflections of Occupational Safety and Health Education and Training in the Academic Structure" occurred.

THE REMARKS Sen. Charles McC. Mathias Jr. made as he helped launch the new program on Industrial Safety and Hygiene were about what he termed "The Future".

INDEED we must look to the future at the dawn of the 1980s and I wonder if we as black people are watching closely and planning like others.

A few years ago, the Orientals laid their plans, got their money together, were trained on how to capture black people's money in the U.S.

And then they arrived in every large city, infiltrated our communities — all this while we slept. Suddenly they were in every corner store, catering to us and grabbing our dollars.

WHAT LONG RANGE plans do we have to get on top the world of tomorrow?

I quote here what Sen. Mathias reveals Coppin is doing "To move out boldly to meet the future." This is an important speech made on an important occasion:

CHARTERING UNCHARTERED PATHS

Sen. Mathias: I am always glad to be associated with an organization that moves out boldly to meet the future and that's what you are doing here today at Coppin.

There is a very interesting organization in Menlo Park, Calif. called the Institute for the Future which devotes itself exclusively to charting the uncharted paths of tomorrow. I'd like to read you what they say about the future, because the needs they identify are the very needs you are addressing.

They write: . . . We live in a period of rapid and vast change. As change quickens in tempo and widens in sweep, the risks and opportunities that confront us call increasingly for expanded efforts to lead the course of events, rather than be led by them.

An awareness of the future has thus become more important to the present than ever before, and the responsibility of those in private and public life who hold the public trust has now grown to include an obligation to shape their decisions as fully as possible by such an awareness.

THE CURRICULUM Coppin has today has been shaped by such an awareness, to actually train students for jobs that are yet to be filled and, indeed, in most cases for jobs that are yet to be created.

As of Jan. 31, 1979, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) budget office reported that 61 authorized positions for health inspectors remained unfilled.

And a current study predicts that government and industry may need to hire more than 500 trained health professionals annually from 1981 through 1985.

Yet, only 75 to 100 college graduates who enter the job market each year are qualified for these jobs.

IN ADDITION, if OSHA continues to press companies for safer working conditions, industry's annual needs could jump to 590 between 1981 and 1990.

Meanwhile, it is estimated that demands for industrial hygienists may soon outstrip the supply by a ratio of five - to - one. And, of course, a professional hygienist needs two or three technicians on the job.

BRIGHT JOB PICTURE

WHAT WE SEE here is a very bright job picture. But just compare that picture with these facts:

— there are now more than one million young people in this country under 22, who have left school and are not working;

— in Maryland unemployment between the ages of 20 and 24 hovers around 11 percent statewide and 14 percent in the Baltimore Metropolitan area, and

— among non - whites of the same age group in Maryland, the percentage of unemployed is much higher — about 24 percent statewide and 32 percent in the Baltimore Metropolitan area.

IT'S OBVIOUS from these figures that somewhere along the line we've failed a lot of our kids. It seems to me that this failure goes back a long way.

OVER THE PAST 200 years, this country shifted from an agrarian to an industrial society, but our educational system was late in detecting the trend and still hasn't responded adequately to the changed nature of our society and the new demands of our economy.

As Lyndon Baines Johnson astutely pointed out some years ago:

We have entered an age in which education is not just a luxury permitting some . . . an advantage over others. It has become a necessity without which a person is defenseless in this complex industrialized society.

IN OFFERING a Baccalaureate degree program in occupational safety and health, you, here at Coppin State, are looking the future straight in the eye and you are giving young people the opportunity to equip themselves for it. You are giving them the defenses they need to deal with the complex industrialized society Lyndon Johnson described.

WHEN YOU DO this you are doing something else, perhaps even more important. You are giving them liberty.

Fifteen years ago when we passed the great Civil Rights Act of 1964, we thought we had broadened liberty for the American people and we did. We broadened it.

BUT WE DIDN'T really bring liberty to anyone. What we brought was opportunity, a greater opportunity for liberty.

But what good is a legal right if you don't have the money to make good on that right? Of what value is equal access legislation if you can't buy a meal, because you don't have a job to make the money to buy a meal?

In the Congress we can legislate the right to do a job, but that's a pretty hollow right unless there are jobs available and unless the people who need them are equipped to do them.

IN THESE DAYS of high unemployment, when college graduates are pounding the streets looking for decent jobs, industrial hygiene is a wide open field and the pay is good. It's still a relatively unknown field too, which is why you deserve so much credit for staking out a claim to it.

—MORE LETTERS—

UMBC alumni — 'pitiful legacy'

Dear AFRO:

I remember way back when (about five years ago) I found myself as a participant in a 10th floor takeover of the administrative building on the UMBC campus.

It was an impromptu, unorganized, meaningless effort that was poignantly exemplified by smiling, nonchalant students — many were there just to be a part of the group.

In my crowded surroundings, I realized that it was a long jump from the 10th floor, that the minor skirmish we had with the campus police on the 10th floor could have evolved into a major altercation in a tight, compact area, that the students were becoming increasingly paranoid about the news development concerning cameramen setting up long - range visual equipment and state troopers gathering outside.

The only thing we accomplished was safe, escorted, uninterrupted passage from the 10th floor via the underground tunnel, walking through puddles of water, some kiddingly making references to Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.

Subconsciously, I said, "Now I must be slipping. I could've showed my support without getting involved in such a reckless venture."

Reading about a similar incident ("Students Protest at UMBC, AFRO - AMERICAN, April 10, 1979) with the smiling faces, even the same AFRO - AMERICAN faculty - staff representatives, I must confess that we AFRO - AMERICAN alumni, the hundreds of drop - outs, and the "weeded out" faculty and staff, left a hell of a pitiful legacy.

T. T. O. ADEBOYE

Praising Dr. Hammond

Dear AFRO:

I read Dr. Leslie King Hammond's column of April 6 with great interest.

It is especially relevant to know that our history for artistic contributions goers back to our "roots" in America, including Baltimore.

I shall stay in tune with your column to keep abreast of our heritage.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS MORRIS

Helping others

Dear AFRO:

The East Baltimore residents would like to commend Mrs. Thelma Tucker, Mrs. Loretta Carrington and Mrs. Lula Shavers of the Fountain Baptist Church for their good deed.

Their Social Action Committee gave away thousands of dollars worth of new and used clothes to needy people for Easter.

They made many needy people happy and proved that somebody cares.

Reaching out and helping people in the community is their goal.

We thank them a million times. Keep up the good work, beautiful black sisters. May God bless you.

MRS. KATIE WILSON

Defending the AFRO

Dear AFRO:

After reading the letter that Mr. Charles Dugger wrote ("Deceptive, negative journalism?", April 21, 1979), I feel I should make a comment.

News in all forms should be printed, especially the front page. Of course there are some readers who just read the front page, as well as others who may only read their favorite section.

If Mr. Dugger is familiar with all the latest happenings here in the city, he would have known that Phyllis Hyman was appearing here in our city at Painters Mill and she whole - heartedly deserves front page coverage.

Crime prevails in all cities and it is going to be printed whether it is on the front, middle or back page!

I have to admit that the AFRO "tells it all" and I feel all kinds of features should be printed and not kept hidden.

Mr. Dugger had some interesting points and it is citizens such as he that make reading the AFRO that much more interesting.

ROBB BROWN

Park Heights thanks Conaway

Dear AFRO:

We, the members of the Park Heights Anti - Crime Consortium, wish to extend our sincere appreciation to Delegate Frank Conaway for introducing HB 1815 - "Control Dangerous Substances" and HB 1816 - "Control Dangerous Substances - Emergency Measures."

We realize that introducing bills late in the legislative session is a major achievement, but to have a bill passed by the General Assembly, is a greater achievement.

It is through combined efforts like this that our area will become a better place for all.

Again, thank you very much for your efforts, and we will be looking forward to continued cooperation like this.

REVEREND ELIJAH McDANIEL,
Chairman, Park Heights Anti - Crime Consortium

LESLIE KING HAMMOND

Day for women, poems for new men

This weekend's activities offer some constructive and sensitive options to be considered. The 1970s has largely been a period of reflection for the black communities of nation.

The turbulent and violent years of the 1960s left blacks with the realization that while there were certainly an unlimited list of causes and grievances, the solutions and achievements to be effected and retained would be an awesome task to accomplish.

It is now fairly apparent that education and a deeper sense of self - awareness, among many other things, is without a doubt critical to the survival and quality of life for blacks in this nation.

This Saturday and Sunday, two very different events, but yet, very necessary in their design, will take place with special emphasis for men and women.

The Moorish School of Law and History No. 13 Inc. is sponsoring a circle of One Second Women's Day on Saturday, April 28 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. This year's theme is "Education of Self and Family."

The topics to be covered will include nursing, law, banking, art education, media, freelance art, science, decision making, early childhood education, administration, counseling, simple exercises to relieve tension and how to start a school.

The career day self - awareness workshops are "designed to promote stronger communications among women," as well as to develop a deeper sense of self worth. This day - long event also hopes to explore different fields of expression, share experiences "in whatever spiritual or political spheres of activity toward a unified community and nation."

Sheikess Nikki Jones - Bey has organized and coordinated what will prove to be a vitally important contribution for our community and especially the black women of this city.

The conference fee is $6 which includes a vegetarian lunch, equipment and materials. The Moorish School is located at 519 N. Howard St. Anyone seeking more information can contact Sheikess Jones - Bey at 523 - 8700.

Many of you readers may have never been to a book party or even a poetry reading. A rare treat is in store for you on Sunday, April 29 at the Gallery 409 located at 409 Charles St.

A book party is a cause for celebration and in this case Baltimore City has a rare jewel in its midst. Peter Harris will present a reading of works from his newly published book, "Six Soft Sketches of a Man: Poems for New Men."

This collection of works is like a breath of fresh air. There have been great arguments concerning the oppression of all peoples, particularly minorities and women.

But how many people ever stop to consider that men, both black and white, have been forced into a mythical role of what a MAN is supposed to be.

Hence, society has created a human being who is handicapped as a total person by a mere sexual designation. Men are forbidden to express their more inner feelings at the cost of being labeled as weak or "womanly." A strange contradiction to say the least.

Peter Harris shows us the way "New Men" think, feel, love, laugh, cry, get angry and live. Harris' works are full of the aggressive confidence of a man who is exploring the purpose of life and living.

In the history of this country there has been a serious misconception that "mother hog" is an art form only women possess. Somehow the male is left out and worst, not allowed to fully participate in this special, magical, caring process of child care and development.

In the title poem of this collection, "Six Soft Sketches of a Man," Peter Harris eloquently and passionately dispels this traditional stereotype with this first passage to his poem:

"I blow puffs of air into my son's face and splat it fat wet kisses on his balloon cheeks. His chubby fingers explore my lean hand. He grabs my hairs when I'm naked, pees on me if I let him go bare. I don't get mad. He's just a baby, new, like me. We're both uncaring, except, at this moment, for each other."

It is fairly obvious that Harris has brought us to a higher level of concern — that is the art and responsibility of "fathering" and more importantly — parenting.

This is but a small example of a rich, diverse and fruitful selection of poetic works and statements from a very young author. It is clear that Peter Harris is an artist and a "new" man unafraid to express and share his inner self with us.

In his growing and learning, discovering and sharing is found the liberating strength of the new men and women black people must become to insure the quality of our survival.

The poetry reading will take place on Sunday evening from 6 to 9 p.m. Other poets joining in the celebration will include Melvin Brown, Fred Hines, Avon Bellamy and Otis Williams — each a "new" creative, strong and supportive element of this community. This celebration is your celebration too! Dr. Hammond is dean of graduate studies at Maryland Institute, College of Art.