Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Keep Wilson Park as it is

An AFRO reader in a letter on this page - this edition - makes some telling points about the housing controversy still boiling in Wilson Park.

And the most telling point in her very thoughtful correspondence is the plan to open up acreage within Wilson Park for "mutual housing" is of questionable benefit because "mutual housing" is "designed to exploit people of modest income."

The reader supports her statement with the facts that mutual housing as proposed for Wilson Park is offering $2,000 membership fees, $250 to $350 rental fees plus utilities and most significant of all, the tenants get no equity in the property for which they pay.

Her conclusion is "some segments of the citizenry of Baltimore have been programmed to believe home ownership for them is a hopeless feat."

We concur.

The letter in its entirety is printed on this page.

Also, on the subject of Wilson Park, proponents of the mutual housing plan, none of them whom live within Wilson Park so far as we know, have tried to make the issue one of haves versus have-nots.

They show ignorance of local black history. Wilson Park, save for the wealthy Wilson family (from whom its name derives) has been a community of home-owners who truly came up the hard way. They are plain folk, mostly, not a bunch of super elit bourgeois fighting poor but worthy would-be home-owners.

It has not been very many years ago that Wilson Park was almost a rural community with small barns, woodsheds, outhouses, hard-working folk. They remain as do their descendants.

This is not a class clash as some would have it.

This is a fight of a community trying to preserve its sense of community and self-determination and not be dictated to or over-run by people not truly committed to the idea of black home ownership.

If mutual housing is all that hot let it begin in Fells Point, Bolton Hill or Homewood.

If it works there then mutual housing might be a viable program for Wilson Park and other neighborhoods.

Older people air their views

There is a growing tendency to shove individuals aside after they reach a certain age that has been determined by their peers in the work place. The most prevalent excuse for this callous treatment, aside from racial or personal bias, is that the older worker has passed his peak and has become too rigid to adapt to modern methods and the result is that his output decreases which in effect impedes production. He is a hindrance to his younger counterpart.

This mode of operation is extremely costly because it sacrifices knowledge and skill that has been learned over many years of experience which would substantially benefit management of any firm or organization. This experience could be passed on to the younger employee and save time and expense in training the new worker. The older employee would feel a sense of usefulness and be vitally involved. In short, he would still be a part of the operation without his pride being jeopardized.

The White House Conference on Aging has been useful because senior citizens had an opportunity to express their views on issues that directly affect them. The advanced age bracket cuts across racial and social lines and most of their problems are similar in nature that need to be brought out in an open forum if solutions are to be found. Health and financial needs are two of the most pressing problems facing most of our elderly. With few exceptions, most individuals in this category rely on fixed incomes and face economic hardships due to an inflationary spiral that shows no signs of a letup in the foreseeable future, despite predictions of soothsaying economists.

To ease the burden some elderly people go and live with their relatives while those in poor health have to be hospitalized or put in rest homes. Regardless of the financial circumstances this group mostly depends on Social Security benefits and is extremely concerned about cuts in social programs proposed by the Reagan administration. They see this as an ominous threat to their right to enjoy living standards that they have worked so hard to obtain often through grueling sacrifices. They contend that it is difficult to understand why so much emphasis is put on some programs while those affecting welfare and well being are being cut to the bone. The assumption is that they are expendable and unimportant in the current political setup.

However, any conference of this kind has some beneficial effects even though it fails to solve all the woes and ills that beset the particular group involved. It affords older citizens an opportunity to air their grievances and let policymakers know of their dissatisfaction. If they remain silent, chances are that decisions will be made without taking their plight into account. Our older people deserve the right to live with dignity and security and should not be disregarded just because they no longer are an active part of the work-a-day world.

BLACK STATE LEGISLATORS MEET IN BALTIMORE — MAP OUT NATIONAL POLITICAL AGENDA — COULD BE LIKENED TO FOUNDING FATHERS BACK IN 1776

MADELINE MURPHY

If we do it together

The way I feel right now is like a cartoon by Jules Feiffer that goes something like this:

The first figure of a man says, "what I don't know doesn't hurt me." Then he looks at a newspaper and says, "what I do know ALWAYS hurts me."

As the gloom around him deepens, he continues to read aloud, "the latest thing that gives cancer ...the latest nuclear scare ... the latest economic crisis ... the latest move in the arms race ... the latest political assassination ... the latest sexual breakthrough."

He walks away to a pessimistically gloomy exit, concluding, "no wonder reading levels are down."

However, now that the Thanksgiving week is over, with the leftovers, either fed to the family ad infinitum or scraps given to the dog and cat, who with fat stomachs and indolent eyes, bask in the sun in various stages of contentment and repose, I have time to reflect upon what really happened in our household.

Around the table on Thanksgiving Day sat the four siblings of my husband, all in various stages of their 70s, some bright and talkative, especially one who talked even while eating, because it seemed he had not enough time to say all that he had to say.

And well there might not be, since one of his younger cousins had died that morning.

Some were in various states of amusement over a private family joke. One sister, who lives in Canada, found it emotionally and culturally shocking this re-entry into the real world of politics, racism and profanity.

I glanced at the youngest daughter, the one who finds the family fascinating, who felt I needed help among the swirl of cross talk, amid the alien world of close family loyalty, that guarded jealously its clannishness, its relivery of having made it this far, fit and mostly healthy, being here to once more tell old tales and regale in old revelries.

As I looked around at their remarkable fitness, their intense interest in the world today, I thought well this is indeed a time to be thankful.

For in their family runs the thread of independence, of having a foundation of business people, who had developed enviable reputations, for good or ill, in the black community, who still are intensely concerned that that influence continue into the fourth generation.

No generation gap here. No pride in wisdom of age so much as a desire to pass it on, to let the young people make mistakes, but to encourage them, nevertheless.

It was a ritual they returned to the next day in Monigomery County on Elton Farm Road to visit with old friends and family, sticking close to the roots of their beginning. For the Howard family was the mainstay in years gone by — such as the country mouse and the city mouse — of city relatives, bringing wagon loads of food in the fall to tide them over for hard, spare winters.

At the home of one family cousin, they saw many pictures and artifacts dating back to the 18th century that gave them a renewed strength in their roots.

Certainly, these siblings have had their problems, as have we all, but it is the indomitable will, the understanding that past is prologue, the desire to hold on to old values, accepting new values tentatively, but open to finding out how they meshed into their way of doing things.

It is this unthreatened openness, yet this clannishness, this curiosity, yet this cautious venturing forth, this ability to be optimistic that was most certainly repeated in hundreds and thousands of black families across this country this Thanksgiving.

It is their will to survive, that will pull us through, that must give us strength, Reaganomics notwithstanding.

It is their unwillingness to accept physical frailty, to keep on keepin' on that inspires the young ones in the family, but mostly amazes them when they see so much stalwart determination.

And most of all, it is these "senior" - how I hate that word - citizens, whose times had been much more tense than ours, much more deprived than ours in the vein of material comforts, who stand as beacons to those of us even less "senior" in age, that might bring us back to reading the newspaper, that might inspire us to begin to do more for each other, that made Thanksgiving not only a time of thankfulness for our own little selfish worlds, but also will motivate us to face the world, unafraid.

For here they were, these survivors in a hostile environment, standing as tangible evidence we can and must indeed make life better, if we do it together. Madeline Murphy's commentaries can be heard every Tuesday evening, during the 6 p.m. newscast on WEAA-FM Radio.

LETTERS:

Grits for Thanksgiving

Dear AFRO:

I am doing what I have done for the past 50 years, and that is to read the AFRO. My mother would send me one each month and three or four of them at a time could have reached me sooner if she had given them to Ollie Stewart or Vincent Tubbs.

I keep forgetting which one, but that was long ago.

What I am reading in your (our) newspaper is all about Thanksgiving with their way-out dinners and full bellies. To name a few:

The Justice, Unity, Generosity and Service organization's national gathering with all of them smiling faces and well fed looks.

The Southern Baptist overstuffed brothers and sisters and at the top of the pile was the Pratt family, which reminds me of my Thanksgiving.

Here is how I spent it, because at 61 and three-fourths years of age, I was chopped off the welfare roll. Please take note of my Thanksgiving recipe:

½ box Quaker Grits. A dash of salt and as much water as you wish because the soupier, the better.

Make as sweet as your sugar will allow. Damn the eggs, cause you do not have any and you do not have any oleo either. Now go and eat and be glad you are an American.

Now how was that for a holiday feast? Almost as good as that possum I had when I was a little pickaninny, but 52 years in lower West Baltimore can make you tough enough to take anything.

If I have to get on my knees and beg tomorrow morning for a food stamp, there will be an old Born Again Hoodlum and oh yes, I did manage to get four pounds of chicken backs Friday to go with my leftover grits.

GEORGE WILSON PARKS

'Buy black newspapers' campaign big success

According to an exclusive report by Minority Market Trends (MMT), a 12-page monthly newsletter which examines minority spending patterns and influences which stimulate consumer preference, the recent "Buy Black Newspaper" campaign, sponsored by the Black-Owned Communications Alliance (BOCA), received unprecedented support, reaffirming the traditional role of Black media as guardians of the public interest.

is promoted as "the key to America's multi-billion dollar market."

Designed to provide marketers with substantive insights into the $200 billion market which includes Black, Hispanic, Asian-American and other minority consumers. The publications' editorial coverage is slanted to demonstrate the relationship of marketing to minority publics, thereby providing marketers with a useful planning tool.

"Black newspapers are one of the most effective means of communicating to Black consumers," explained MMT publisher Sam Tucker. "The results of our survey are further evidence of this fact." Tucker recommended that national regional and local advertisers include Black media in their marketing plans to achieve favorable consumer response.

MMT, published by TMS Communications of Washington,

The benefits? of mutual housing

Dear AFRO:

I have difficulty dealing with and accepting the debauchery and the exercises in futility encountered in the Alameda Place controversy.

Why deny the proletariats of Baltimore City the opportunity to purchase homes at Alameda Place?

Why should people remote to Wilson Park decide something that is inappropriate for them and their community, is good for another section of Baltimore City?

Despite prevailing high interest rates and high cost of housing, why has low interest rates combined with other financial factors made affordable housing available for some facets of the Baltimore citizenry and denied to other facets?

Mount Winans has provided new colonial townhouses with a purchase price of $45,000; $500 down at eight percent interest. The monthly payments are as low as $330.83.

In Mount Winans Neighborhood, Harbor Homes is constructing new homes for about 33,000, with a $500 down payment. The total monthly house payment is about $360.

In Northeast Baltimore, Highgate Village Development has 3-bedroom, 2-bath houses with a down payment of $3,800; a maximum mortgage of $38,000 and monthly payments from $330 to $390.

The Rosemont area of West Baltimore plans newly, extensively renovated houses that will be available for purchase from $38,000 to $40,000 with $3,000 down.

In July, Baltimore City raised $60 million in relatively low interest funds through its bonding authority to finance its mortgage loan program. This program, supposedly provides loans at rates lower than those on the open market to enable private citizens to buy residential property in Baltimore City.

The low interest rate is 7.5 percent to eight percent for some sections of the city.

Mutual housing, designed to exploit people of modest income while it is being promoted to aid the proletariat priced out of affordable housing. Mutual Housing is offering: $2,000 membership fee; $250 to $350 rent which is expected to increase, plus utilities; no equity.

The benefits of Mutual Housing are questionable.

The bottom line is some segments of the citizenry of Baltimore City have been programed to believe homeownership, for them is a hopeless feat.

This is what some of the bureaucrats desire to articulate. The same procedures employed to aid the financially elite to purchase new homes could be extended to the people of modest income.

A councilman or elected representative of any given domain is duty bound to articulate the wishes of the majority of the constituents of that domain candidly and unbiasedly to the assemblage designated to render a decision on any particular issue.

Now is the time for City Hall to implement the tenets of a democratic government. Time is overdue for the mayor and city council of Baltimore City to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with their God.

VIRGINIA P. WHITE

PARREN MITCHELL

A Look Back at Thanksgiving

When I first went to Congress, I promised to have my bonus, dinners with those incarcerated persons, as often as I could.

At 11:30 a.m., Thanksgiving Day, I arrived at the Maryland Training School for the Thanksgiving meal. The boys ranged from 12 years to 19 years of age. Their offenses ranged from running away from home or a group home to robbery with a deadly weapon.

I moved from table to table just chatting with them.

A 12-year-old black youth, institutionalized for breaking and entering, told me he had been in trouble several times before. An 18-year- old white youth, institutionalized for drunken driving on a revoked license, explained to me he was an alcoholic, who had started drinking at age 13.

By the time he was 14, the youth said he preferred to drink a six pack of beer for his breakfast, rather than eating food.

"If I could go without food and drink as much as I wanted, I would be happy," he said.

These young people have committed offenses and should be punished, but as I talked with them at their tables, I kept asking myself, "Can they be saved or are they now doomed to a life of crime?

One youth brought me a piece of sweet potatoe pie in his hand, no plate, and said I could have his desert since he did not want it. I thanked him, but declined the pie.

As I was leaving to get into my car, two youths yelled across the quadrangle, "thanks for coming to have dinner with us, thanks for coming, come back soon."

Perhaps these youths can be saved from a life of anti-social behavior, but it will take a herculean effort on the part of society and I do not think society is prepared to make that effort.

Far too many of us now are prepared to support new prisons and heavier sentences, rather than to expend the tax monies required to save some of them.

On the half-hour drive back to the city, I felt depressed and disturbed. Where have we gone wrong? Why did we go wrong? What can we do to make it right again? How can we re-instate positive values, positive principles, positive self-attitudes?

At 1:30 p.m., I arrived at City Temple Church, Dolphin St. and Eutaw Pl. Each year, under the leadership of the pastor, the Rev. W.W. Fayne, this church feeds several thousand persons Thanksgiving dinner.

I have worked my way up, because this Thanksgiving, I was allowed to serve ham, turkey and macaroni on the plates, in contrast to last year, when I was allowed to serve only the gravy and the greens.

As I stood there serving the plates, I thought about the women who probably had cooked all night and now either stood in line to serve plates for three hours, or took plates to the tables.

I thought about the men, who constantly kept the place clean while the dinner was in progress, and who carried the heavy containers of hot food to the serving tables.

No one who came in was denied, senior citizens, the destitute, alcoholics and drug addicts, the mentally ill who walk our streets...all were served.

The more I thought, the more I realized although this society has lost something, we also have retained something. The men and women of City Temple Church were acting out some of the oldest values of mankind:

"I was hungry and ye fed me," "Do unto others as you would have them do unto to you."

They were responding affirmatively to the question: "Am I my brothers keeper?"

When I finally sat down to eat dinner with the Mitchell clan at 6 p.m., some of the depression from the earlier part of the day still lingered, but remembering City Temple Church, I knew all of us had something to be thankful for. There are lots and lots of people who still care.

Tony Brown's Journal

A tradition has been saved

"Tony, have you ever seen anything like it?"

"I have not," I admitted.

My confession was made to Dr. Joseph B. Johnson, president of Grambling University. It was made in response to the Bayou Classic, the annual football grudge-match between Louisiana's two black educational powerhouses — Grambling and the nation's largest black college, Southern University.

A football game it was, but — to me — the emotional depths reached could not be stirred by the rivalries of Ohio State and the University of Michigan or the Rose Bowl or the Sugar Bowl.

Frankly, they mean very little to me.

In fact, they represent little more than paid black gladiators defending white tradition. The Longhorns of Texas are black, the Razorbacks of Arkansas are black, the Sooners of Oklahoma are black and — are you ready for this — the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame are black.

They are inner city and rural blacks breaking their legs and arms for a tradition they do not understand or care about. It is nothing more than a ritual of mutual exploitation.

But the 1981 Bayou Classic — 80,000 cheerful, exuberant, fantastically beautiful black people (all of the rumors you have heard about how beautiful Louisiana black women are, is absolutely true) breathing soul into the Superdome in New Orleans — not only stands for a people's resistance to oppression, but projects their commitment to survive by self-help and self-determination.

I felt I would burst with pride, a pride that America rarely provides for my true identity. From the unreal marching bands of Southern and Grambling, the bands' dance teams at halftime, to the singing majestic woman, who soloed free-of-charge in the bleachers, everything that black people have been, are or ever will be was in New Orleans' Superdome on Saturday, Nov. 21, 1981.

Grambling's President Johnson and his wife were honored by a duet of "Endless Love" for 26 years of marriage and football great Willie Davis, A Grambling alumnus, and I were honored during the halftime blowout between the two great marching bands. It was all — almost — too much for my nervous system.

I also knew this annual football game hosted by Grambling gave its president a welcomed diversion from the last few years of fighting the forces which advocated the elimination of both of Louisiana's black colleges.

It was Dr. Joseph Johnson's common sense and resistance to the so-called "integrationists" that helped save higher education for future generations of Afro-Americans in Louisiana and America.

Only a few months ago, did the Louisiana Coalition for Black Colleges and Dr. Johnson succeed in stopping the court action aimed at merging both of the state's black colleges extinct.

There at the Superdome, I could visually see what I viscerally understood that we would have lost. It was a celebration of life, not a football contest.

On the field, however, it was all the Southern Jaguars clawing the Grambling Tigers for their second win in 10 years and two out of the last three. At the end of the first half, Grambling went ahead 20-16, striking for two quick touchdowns within 30 seconds.

But the second half was all Southern and when the final gun sounded and the dust settled, the scoreboard read: Southern 50, Grambling 20.

There were some happy Southern alumni, students and fans in Bayou Country that day. Grambling fans retorted: "Wait until next year."

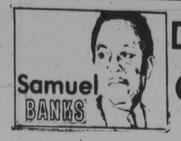
I cannot wait. But it will be my consolation that Grambling and Southern will be there next year and the Bayou Classic tradition will be there with black people with names such as DeJoie, DuBois and Rousseau.

The long-stemmed dance teams — Grambling's "Orchesis" and the "Dancing Dolls" of Southern — and old friends passing the cup of love and strangers becoming friends because of THE common bond — also will be there.

I wish every black American could be there next November and see exactly how beautiful we are.

I cannot wait for that either.

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL, the television series, is shown every Saturday, on WBAL-TV (11), at 2 p.m.



Samuel BANKS

Do you hear what I hear: Christmas 1981

The haunting tune and lyrics associated with the "Little Drummer Boy" have become known universally during the Christmas season. The song offers a poignant spirit of human renewal, hope and optimism for the future.

It provides a comforting assurance the immortal meaning of Christmas can provide a beacon of uplift and solace for the present and future.

Even in the midst of the spiritual promises of Christmas, the awesome travail and adversities which impinge upon blacks, Hispanics and the poor, occasioned by Reaganomics and socio-economic retrenchment, have created a veritable cauldron for this Yuletide season.

Christmas 1981 reveals a litany of horrors and immense suffering: people across the country having to make agonizing choices between heat and food; rising evictions because of inability to pay rent and foreclosures because of delinquent mortage payments.

Towering unemployment among black youths in urban centers; a deepening malaise and dispiritedness exists among blacks, Hispanics and the nation's poor that conditions will worsen for them; an overall aura supportive of national meanness and racial hostility and division.

What are the "sounds" you hear during this Yuletide? Do you hear the cries of hunger and anguish in Somalia, Bangladesh and throughout most of the Third World countries?

Do you hear the cries of the poor and hungry in Watts, the Hough district of Cleveland, Harlem, and in the urban centers of our nation?

In the midst of the great suffering affecting blacks and the poor, the towering tragedy, is there are far too many who claim to see nothing, hear nothing, and feel nothing.

The depth and breadth of the suffering which engulf the poor of our nation and the world dictate a moral and ethical imperative for those who have plenty to share with the destitute.

There cannot be a sense of tranquility and human renewal when a segment of the community is bereft of hope and vital resources.

People across the country, black and white, are wrestling with escalating utility bills and some, most unfortunately, are wondering if they will be able to survive the rigors of a frigid winter.

On Tuesday, Nov. 25, 1981 the Rev. Reginald M. Green, of the Walker Memorial Baptist Church and members of the Men's Christian Fellowship, in the course of delivering our eighth annual Thanksgiving food baskets, got a first hand glimpse of the profound suffering, pathos and anguish occasioned by the disproportionate number of black families in our nation's capital.

We observed decrepit and deplorable housing units not really fit for human habitation; worn and tired looks of pain and despair of those who greeted us; the gaunt and dispiriting demeanors of children and adults in need of nourishment; bleak and dank hallways and corridors; in short, massive human suffering in the most affluent nation in the world.

Nonetheless, in spite of the monumental problems and suffering, there existed a spirit of hope and cheer. We were greeted warmly and enthusiastically as we delivered our baskets.

All of us, more fortunate by the grace of God, were inspired by the recipients of our humble gifts who, through it all, "keep on keeping on."

There is, to be sure, greater suffering throughout our land at this festive time of the year than in the last decade. This is particularly true for blacks, Hispanics and the nation's poor.

However, troubles are not new to 31 million black Americans. A people who survived slavery, Hoover's "Great Depression," daily and persistent institutional racism will, too, survive the meanness and callousness of Reaganomics.

Christmas 1981, though hard and difficult for so many of our brothers and sisters, find us a proud and resilient race of people wedded to the power of faith through deeds; power of right over might; power of hope over despair. And above all, determined to be fully free and insistent and firm in the ancient belief:

PEACE ON EARTH AND GOOD WILL TO MEN.

May Christmas and the New year yield the greatest happiness, joy and tranquility for you and the members of your family.

There also is another vital and critical component of Christmas 1981: The urgent need for participatory involvement. Notwithstanding the abundance of churches, temples, synagogues and other places of worship in Washington, Baltimore and other urban centers across the nation, there are still far too many hearers of the Word and Non-Doers.

Baltimore, during Christmas 1981, mirrors, to an overwhelming degree, the stark, desperate and wretched state of a disproportionate number of 31 million black people and 25 million poor people excluded from the socio-economic mainstream of the United States.

In Baltimore, for the overwhelming number of the 450,000 black Baltimoreans, a majority of the city's population, the enchanting and exquisite shops and boutiques, the luxurious and resplendent Hyatt Regency, newly opened, the gentrified housing now dotting the city's landscape and the comforts and amenities of Guilford, Roland Park, Homewood, Bolton Hill and other affluent communities are distant and ancient possibilities.

Christmas 1981 finds more than one-third of black Baltimoreans in the worst housing stock and trying to survive in decidedly separate and unequal worlds.

This situation will continue beyond Christmas 1981 and the forseeable future until black middle and upper income Baltimoreans overcome their pusillanimous posture towards Baltimore's white minority and forswear syncophany, dissembling and ceremonialism in order to carry the favor of whites in positions of power.

Some major developments here in Baltimore and across the nation which serve as moral and ethical imperatives for direct citizen involvement:

Jo-Wan McGee, a young man with high hopes for his future, remains paralyzed as a result of the precipitous and reckless action of a former detective, now dismissed, with the Baltimore Police Department.

Haitians, unlike the Cubans who preceded them, are being driven by force back to Haiti.

"Reaganville," a tent community erected on Thanksgiving Day in Lafayette Park across from the White House by the D.C. Community for Creative Non-Violence in order to feed and provide minimal shelter for the destitute and dispossessed in DC., was dismantled the day after Thanksgiving by the United States Park Police.

Christmas 1981, then, for black Americans and the poor, is a troubling and enevating antithesis: love and hate, poverty and plenty; hope and despair; joy and sadness; unity and division, power and powerlessness; renewal and defeat; light and darkness.

The supreme task for all of us, amidst the buoyant, hurried and irrepressible, spirit of Christmas is to work, without ceasing, to transform the tentative antithesis into an energizing vibrant and redemptive synthesis.

A synthesis of love and hope and immeasurable human possibilities transcending race and class.

Christmas 1981 poses this marvelous and wondrous challenge for all of us to look, as Emerson wisely observed, "on the sunnier side of doubt."

Finally, there can be no neutrality Dante reminds us that "Hell is full of people who in times of crisis retire to neutral places." Each of us now Christmas 1981 be about the business of affirming human hopes, dreams and possibilities.

A final admonition is provided by an anonymous writer:

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence - Talent will not, nothing more common than unsuccessful men with talent—Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not; the world is full of educational derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan, "press on" has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

Believe deeply in the Spirit of Life. Love your brother as Yourself. Always come together in Times of Strife. Keep your Honor if nothing Else. Brothers and sisters Peace and Power.

Warmest greetings of the season: Merry Christmas and Happy Kwanzaa.

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

BUZZING with excitement and overflowing with parties and merriment, the Hyatt Regency had this week the most distinguished, liveliest and jumpingest crowd seen in recent times — the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

HANDSOME national president, State Sen. Clarence M. Mitchell III, the inspiring young legislator who traveled the nation putting the organization together from scratch, was probably the most visable, tall as he is.

BUT, when you couple him with beauteous Attorney Joyce Ellis, that's what everybody is talking about. What an attractive twosome, talent, legal brains and good looks.

OTHER distinguished personalities were there by the dozen and included Dr. Aaron Henry, former president of the Mississippi State Conference of Branches; member of the National NAACP Board of Directors and now the dynamic representative in the House of the Mississippi State Legislature.

ALSO SEN. BILL GREENE of the California State Legislature and of course Maryland's Legislative Black Caucus president, Del. Frank M. Conaway and Del. Troy Brailey, the Baltimore labor chief and former chairman of the Baltimore NAACP Labor Committee.

DEC. 15 - THE 90TH YEAR EDITION

CAN YOU IMAGINE trying to pack 90 years of history in a few pages? It's impossible.

Soooooo, when the AFRO's 90th Year Edition, PART I comes out Dec. 15 in the Tuesday paper, you'll get just a taste of what's to come in PART II.

MOST PEOPLE do not know how 90 years ago looked nor what things were like then.

THE VALUE of the PART I 90th Year Edition is that you get a glimpse of 1892 and the years we call Long Ago and Far Away.

IN FACT, it's hard to recall at this very moment the Good Old Days when everyone had a job and a chicken in every pot.

IT IS HARD to remember when rent was below $100 a month and you never thought you'd have to pay $200 a month for a small apartment. $600 a month for gas and lights was unthinkable.

TODAY, we fear, is teaching us to eat less and less and that shopping for second hand clothes is a way of life for rich and poor.

What we are really afraid of is that we'll get used to it and never return to a worry free, pleasant comfortable life. Anwoe is us.

HOWEVER, the 90th Year Edition PART II may possibly show the brighter side of life which is predicted as coming in February, 1982. Folks say Reagan has to turn things around and soon — or else.

NEWS NOTES

The Emerging Black Consciousness Perspectives on Black Supremacy," will be the topic of a talk by Judge William Murphy Jr. of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City at the University of Baltimore Langsdale Library Auditorium, Maryland Avenue and Oliver Street.

The second presentation in the UofB's "Civil Rights Lecture Series" the lecture will be held on Saturday, Dec. 5 from 7 to 9 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

Also scheduled to speak, on "The Status of Civil Rights of Civil Rights Litigation," is Anthony Robinson, a partner in the law firm of Singleton, Dashiell, and Robinson.

OPENING DATE for "Annie" and the Enchanted Prince has been postponed until Jan. 7 1982.

This exciting original - playing the whole family can enjoy will run Thursdays through Sundays at 8 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 3 p.m. in the Little Theatre on the Morgan State University Campus, Jan 7 through the 31st.

For all we know

AN ITEM? Popular couple seen about town during the convention National Black Caucus of State Legislator is Attorney Joyce Ellis and State Senator Clarence M. Mitchell III, the national president of the caucus. Photo by Byales

Dec. 15th the AFRO's 90th

DEC. 15 the Tuesday AFRO will carry the Special AFRO 90th Year Edition in full color. The historic edition is dramatic with photos and stories over 90 years and is PART I of two editions celebrating the AFRO's 90 years. PART II comes in August, 1982 when the AFRO marks its 91st birthday and then enters its 91st year of publication.

RYALES PHOTO

JOSEPH GOLDMAN, a 44-year employee of the AFRO, is head pressman and an example of the longterm employees who have helped the AFRO live on through these 90 years of publication.

Tangle of triple tragedies

By Andrew Billingsley
MSU President

The problems of youth unemployment, youth crime, and the crowding of our jails and prisons, must surely be among the most pressing social problems facing the black community today.

Just as I began writing this sentence, the phone rang. It was a friend calling to say as she went into her suburban bank the day before, she found herself in the midst of a bank robbery.

One of the young black youth robbing the bank said to her firmly as she entered the door, "Come on in lady and keep still and nobody will get hurt," brandishing all the while a lethal weapon.

Four times since January, she said, this has happened at her bank.

"I grew up in the ghetto, but in all of my 4C plus years, I have never had an experience like that," she said.

It is more than frightening, it is a cycle of tragedy in which everybody looses and the society reels under the weight of its own carelessness, avarice and greed.

Consider the problems facing young black men and women out of school and out of a job. The unemployment rate in the nation hovers around eight percent, representing the highest level of unemployment since the mild recession of six years ago.

Among blacks, the unemployment is twice as high. Among black youth, it is higher still. In many urban communities, more than half of the young blacks between 18 and 22 are out of school and out of work.

As a sociologist and a teacher, it is clear to me this is not a personal, individual matter. There are no jobs for large numbers of uneducated, unskilled, inexperienced young job seekers. The society has thus failed these young people.

The problem of unemployment is staggering and very difficult to conceive in all its dimensions. When we calmly say unemployment reached eight percent of the labor force, we are simultaneously saying more than eight million American women and men have no visible means of support.

These are adults who cannot support themselves, cannot pay taxes to help support the rest of society, cannot afford to get married, provide for the health and safety of their families.

During the past three months of July, August and September alone, more than a million persons were added to the unemployment roles. Now in the richest nation, the world has ever known, this is a social crime of the highest magnitude. It breeds individual crime as surely as night follows day. It produces what the social planners call "social dynamite."

A few years ago, one of students at Morgan was walking back to campus alone from a nearby shopping center, after cashing his check. He was accosted and killed during mid-afternoon by two black youth.

On Nov. 25, 1980, an able, serious and talented student, Glen Harrod, 20, was killed in an apparent robbery while working at a local McDonald's restaurant.

Again a group of black youth were implicated.

A while back, I was invited by psychiatrist, Dr. Alvin Poussaint, and journalist, Bryant Rollins, to join with a group of black leaders to share some views about a national effort to address the wasting of our black youth, especially young men to the triple forces of unemployment, crime and corrections.

I cancelled attending this session, in order to attend the funeral of one of our most distinguished graduates, a physician, Dr. Lawrence Phillips, who had been murdered. Again as the suspects were rounded up, unemployed youth were implicated.

Finally, in the past few days, a local food store assistant manager was murdered under most bizarre circumstances. As the suspects were rounded up, unemployed blacks were prominent.

And what will happen to these young men when they are arraigned, tried, and possibly convicted. Will they be subjected to programs of rehabilitation which will return them to society as constructive, reformed, contributing members of society?

But this is not a local problem. Many communities are faced with this tangle of triple tragedies. And it surely cannot be solved by local action alone. But this tangle of pathology is so pervasive that every effort, including the most private and local, which can shed further light on it, is a step in the right direction.

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