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OPINION

That bank deregulation bill

On Wednesday night, the House of Delegates of the Maryland General Assembly passed what appears to be an extremely controversial banking bill. Such banking bill at that time was sent to the Senate for further action.

The banking bill as passed by the House has incurred the wrath of many prominent black leaders in the state of Maryland. In the opinion of many, such a bill will have, in one way or another, negative impact on black access to the credit market in Maryland.

Such wrath indeed has become aggravated morever by the fact that some members of the Black Caucus voted in favor of such a bill, in what appears to be complete disregard of the interest of their black constituents

We believe that a banking bill, which addresses the need to retain a banking industry in the state of Maryland is needed.

However, such an objective should at the same time address the need to provide additional jobs and incentives for the use of blacks in an industry which does not currently employ an equitable amount of black personnel.

We also feel that any increased revenues which may arise from such deregulation, should be used in a manner to stimulate the growth of black banks.

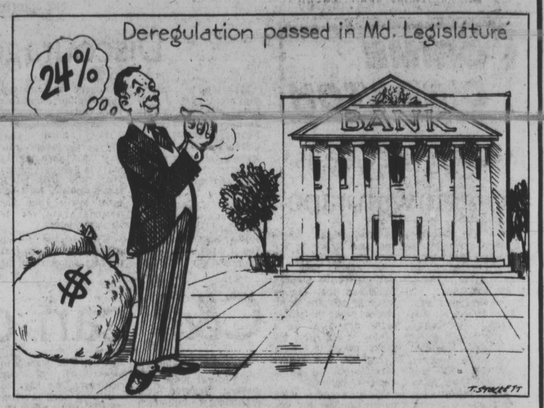
We deplore the absence of any viable cohesive plan of attack by the Legislative Black Caucus to insure the protection of the black interest which are absent in the bill as passed by the House.

We deplore the lack of unity which this banking bill has made all to visible on the floor of the House. And finally:

We object most strenuously to the failure of the members of the Black Caucus to enlighten and inform the black leaders of the state as to the importance and impact which such a bill has on the black population..

We find it inconceivable that the Black Caucus would not at the very least, consult with Cong. Parren Mitchell, a leading and well-known authority and member of the U.S. Congressional Committee on Banking.

In the year which is generally acknowledged as being the rebirth of a credible black political influence in America, we feel that the actions which occurred in the House on Wednesday are indeed disappointing and hopefully, will not be an omen of things to come from our representatives



Parren J. MITCHELL

Haitian refugee situation

For the past 25 years, through military aid, the United States Government has been supporting the Duvalier family's dictatorial control over Haiti, and the secret police's--"The Tontons Macoutes" --exploitation of its people.

The Haitian Government is one of the most oppressive forms of government in the Caribbean Basin. The United States Federal Judge, James Lawrence King of Miami, has characterized the Haitian Government as "the most repressive in the Western Hemisphere."

All forms of democratic expressions are strictly illegal in Haiti; political intimidation and persecution have become a common occurrence.

As a result, two summers ago some 3,000 Haitians left Haiti by means of small hand-made vessels to come to the United States. Many did not make it to the United States' shore. Some drowned at sea, and among the victims were pregnant women.

Those who made it to shore were quickly placed into concentration camps in the United States and Puerto Rico by the Reagan Administration. After a long court battle, brought about by the protests of organizations concerned with the Haitian refugee problem, and by the vigorous work of Reverend Jesse Jackson, Judge Eugene-Spellman of Miami ordered the release of the Haitian people from federal prisons.

These Haitians are now awaiting a final decision from the State Department. This hearing will decide whether they will be deported or granted political asylum.

It should be obvious to the United States Government, that these people cannot return to Haiti without endangering their lives. Clearly, the refugees from Haiti are being treated differently than other refugees fleeing to this country.

The United States has generously extended a helping hand to 1.6 million Indochinese and Cubans, but finds it difficult to assume the same attitude toward a few thousand Haitian refugees. The United States' feeling of apathy toward non-white immigrants must be challenged and erased.

The United States is constantly raving over the roles which the French and Poles played in the American Revolutionary War. Not once, however, does this country mention the role the Haitians played in America's War for Independence.

In 1778, 800 free slaves from Haiti voluntarily came to this country to aid the American in their victory over the British. For instance, the Haitians fought valiantly at the siege of Savannah; unfortunately, their monumental sacrifices have been totally neglected by the current Administration.

Haiti's direct assistance to the colonialists during America's war for independence, however, was only one important event on its illustrious history. Being the first Black Republic in the New World, Haiti has given birth to many influential people:

Toussaint L'Ouverture, Dessalines, Henri Christophe, Bouckman, Boisrand Tonner, and Alexander Petion.

Toussaint L'Ouverture's successful struggle against French colonialism in Haiti, for instance, convinced the French that further military attempts to subdue local independence movements would be futile.

Consequently, rather than fight the American colonialist, the French sold the Province of Louisiana (Louisiana Purchase) to the American Government.

Recognizing the Administration's gross insensitivity toward the Haitian refugees, various Congressional Members have introduced legislation to rectify this situation.

In the 97th Congress, for instance, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm introduced H.R. 3602, to provide for adjustment to refugee admission status of certain Cuban and Haitian nationals presently in the United States.

This bill was designed to force the Administration to redefine the status of Haitian refugees from economic to political immigrants.

The Haitians, as a result of the reclassification, would then have access to resettlement services and other privileges provided under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Unfortunately, although a number of Congresspersons--including myself--co-sponsored H.R. 3602, it was never reported from the Committee on the Judiciary's Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and International law.

Currently, only one bill concerning the Haitian refugee situation has been introduced in the 98th Congress:

H. Res. 44, to recognize the successful resettlement of hundreds of unaccompanied Haitian children.

Congressman Hamilton Fish's bill was referred to the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service's Subcommittee on Census and Population. To date, no further action has been reported.

Be assured that if H. Res. 44 is reported from the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, I will support its passage during the House deliberations. The Administration's blatant discriminatory actions towards the Haitians must be reversed!

Madeline MURPHY

Compassion is a human trait

My mother used to complain, as she got older and her internal parts started to wear out, that people ought to be fixed like automobiles. Just go to the hospital for interchangeable parts and everything would be OK.

However, what with the organ transplants that are becoming more frequent and commonplace, it seems that mother had been prophetic.

And with the recent 110 days of endurance of mechanical heart patients, Barney Clark, before he mercifully succumbed with the final inexorable pulling of the plug, it even becomes a frightening indication of man's quest for immortality.

If these excurations into immortality mean anything, they mean that we will have to put up with excruciating pain, martyrdom, with endless probing, puncturing, jabbing; with tubes coming out of us like spaghetti, prolonging the agony in order to make endless life a fact.

What happens in the meantime to our belief as Christians, of which we prate so much in this society? What happens to life after death, actually escaping from this "veil of tears" into Paradise? Have we come to the place that even that can be either manipulated, or postponed, or with skepticism so rife in the land, not really believed anyway, even though we go through the motions every Easter to have the story retold of the Resurrection?

Perhaps it is backward to say it, but this constant tinkering with the human body is frightening. Because all things are not perfect in this society. There is already much cruelty and butchering in hospitals. So much so that people view the medical profession with growing skepticism and distrust.

Moreover on the other end of the scale is genetic engineering, that will become the panacea of a super race. The hope one should say that will complement the sperm bank for perfect babies, from high IQ adults, made in their own image, without flaws, without disabilities, without social drawbacks, unlike most of us common people.

We see, therefore, considering the imperfection of man in his inhumanity to man, considering the growing acceptance of less strict--ethical conduct, the possibility of a brave new world where it will be commonplace, upon whim, to further experiment on humans as a matter of expediency. Much like was done in the concentration camps of Germany. They even were ingenious enough to make lamp shades of the skin of their victims.

And God forbid that one should be born disabled, with all kinds of complications, because then before any possibility of spending the hundreds of thousands (unlike Barney Clark whose costs were underwritten) to mend him, the easy solution would be to pull the plug.

One can think, however, of many people born with disabilities who made and make the world much better for you and me, not only because we have to care about them but also because they make contributions of untold worth to our existance.

Time will be compassion, will be understanding. Gone will be the notion that we are all fraglile human beings, subject to accident. Rather, only perfection will be the standard for any of us to breathe the same air, walk the same streets.

No longer will the parables of curing or healing by faith be operative, or the basis on which Christianity was founded. The new gods would be the rulers who would tolerate only able-bodied people, trained like robots to do specific jobs, certified perfect at birth by the medical manipulators.

Then would come the scrap heaps of human speciments, no longer useful, not only the elderly, but those who would refuse to follow the prescribed pattern of life, carved out by men and women who would choose to be Gods.

But getting back to Barney Clark, however, one can now consider the monumental profits that can be made by the inventor of the mechanical heart. Because Barney was able to help them discover the flaws by having his mechanical heart replaced at least two times to perfect its design.

As a result it has been suggested by those closely involved in his operation - experimentation, that in the future, the mechanical heart would be used as an interim measure until a donor could be found with a sound biological replacement, raising the hopes of the 60,000 or so already waiting.

But let us not forget that the first donor in South Africa was a colored man, and that human hearts are still scarce.

With the move toward going back to separate but unequal, with remote areas in this country where slavery still exists in the form of sharecropping or peonage, where blacks are still living under pre - Civil War conditions, can we expect that more "accidents" will occur as the boldness for more hearts rears its ugly head? A grisly form of supply and demand? Vampirish in its implications?

We cannot be too complacent, too willing to accept on face value the extremes to which experimentation can move, even to genocide. We must question the motives over and over, on a case by case basis, of those who would relax the ethical standards of the medical profession, who would finally find euthanisia the most direct, most easy solution to the problems of medical inadequacies, racial conflict, or differing ideologies, increasing the supply of human organs.

In a country where survivability is considered possible should there be atomic war, why not?

Most of all we must not become so hardened in our outlook, in our rush to experiment that we forget that compassion alone makes us human as well as civilized.

Letters

The phantom Martin Luther King Blvd.

Dear AFRO:

The insensitivity of which I now speak takes its most blatant form in what can only be called the Phantom Martin Luther King Blvd.

What happened?

Over the past several weeks I have had a need to travel Harbor City Blvd. from its beginning at Eutaw Street to its end at Washington Blvd.

It is clear that the city of Baltimore is proud of this thoroughfare. It is clearly marked, from one intersection to the next, Harbor City Blvd.

Did the powers that be change their minds and forget to tell the Black Community that Harbor City Blvd. will remain Harbor City Blvd.? Has the huge highway sign, reading Martin Luther King Blvd. and shown on a not too recent television newscast, already taken its place among Baltimore's Best.....Mistakes? Could it be that I've missed an entrance to the boulevard?

The subjective reality which I spoke of earlier in this editorial remains as subjective as ever. My personal as well as group sense of worth and pride forces me and other serious blacks to reject the game-playing and the lame excuses of, "There isn't enough money to begin the project, we didn't see it that way," or "we really should have made some public announcement about what was happening."

What is Baltimore trying to say to the Black Community? When does Martin Luther King Blvd become a reality? I know of at least one huge sign that we can begin with. Charm City will surely lose all of its charm if we allow such "IN NAME ONLY" practices to go unchecked.

CLAUDETTE MCFADDEN

Baltimore City Council's president

Dear AFRO:

Amidst last week's tumultous debate on Councilmanic redistricting, one member of the Baltimore City Council, its President, Clarence "Du" Burns, managed to remain above the bitterness swirling about him on the Council floor.

Redistricting being an emotionally charged political issue, complicated by racial considerations, represented at best a no win situation for the Council President.

However, President Burns, demonstrating consumate political skills came through the fray unscathed. By permitting the Council to work its will on the issue, without becoming an actual part of an issue in the debate, President Burns was able to get a Council passed redistricting plan, without being a divisive force.

President Burns should have gained new and greater respect from his council colleagues, as well as the City at large, for the manner in which he presided over the Council's debate.

For those who may have had doubts about President Burns' political skills, the handling of last week's proceedings should provide new confidence.

President Burns has clearly demonstrated that the Presidency of the Baltimore City Council is in good hands.

FRANK M. CONAWAY
Editor's note - Mr. Conaway is a former House of Delegates member from the 40th Legislative district.

Redistricting

Dear AFRO:

The citizens of Baltimore have been subjected to a most undemocratic public display of the City Council trying to redistrict itself. This display was, at best, regrettable.

When a legislative body redistricts itself it results in the best interests of the individual elected persons being protected rather than the people who elect them. This system is self - serving and unfair and should be changed.

Redistricting every ten years is caused by shifts in population from one election district to another. When this occurs, the people should have much more input in the redistricting decisions and not the politicians who want to hold onto their jobs.

There should be open forums for the people to propose redistricting plans to the Governor and the Mayor, BEFORE the Governor or Mayor adopt a redistricting plan for submission to the Legislature or City Council.

Most importantly, the people, local community associations and neighborhood community umbrella groups, such as Harbel and Northeast Community Organization should have much more input into any redistricting plan that is going to effect the election of the Writes. If Barbara Smith is a barometer, he won't get bone of this country and certainly the protests against their communities being split up into two or more elective districts should be heard.

The redistricting plans of the Governor or Mayor should then be submitted to the Legislature or City Council and the people should again have an opportunity to be heard at open public forums on any changes proposed by the Legislature or City Council BEFORE they are put into effect.

This would most certainly be the fair and democratic way to redistrict rather then the debauchery we have just witnessed.

ANDREW JOSEPH BURNS

G. JAMES FLEMING

Zimbabwe and Black America

The independence of Zimbabwe in 1980 as a result of intense struggle, rugged tenacity and monumental sacrifice was an occasion for jubilation and celebration by lovers of freedom throughout the world.

The long, protracted war against the reactionary and racist followers of Ian Smith, in what was then called Rhodesia, resulted in victory and world-wide acclaim for Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo.

The combined and unrelenting efforts and sacrifices of Mugabe's and Nkomo's followers crushed the forces of reaction, recalcitrance and tyranny. Rhodesia, through blood and struggle, became Zimbabwe.

It is a source of sadness that an open and deep rift has developed between President Mugabe and Nkomo. While there have been differences of longstanding between Mugabe and Nkomo, the problem was not of the present magnitude.

It is believed that Nkomo fled Zimbabwe as a result of fear for his life. There is, too, an intensification and exacerbation of the ancient conflicts between the Shona and Ndebele tribes.

President Mugabe is a member of the larger Shona tribe; Nkomo is a member of the smaller Ndebele tribe. The tribal conflicts coupled with the larger and malevolent machinations of racist South Africa and other reactionaries have proven to be calamitous for Zimbabwe.

The situation represents the old game of DIVIDE ET IMPERA (divide and conquer).

As black Americans we are very familiar with the policies and programs of divide and conquer promulgated by the white controllers of power in our native land.

Each of us, given the nature of the crisis in Zimbabwe, must be heard in support of stability and progress in Zimbabwe. We should be insistent in our communications to President Reagan and members of Congress for increased economic support to Zimbabwe.

A central dimension of Zimbabwe's current difficulty is socio- economic and racial. A majority of the wealth, even with independence, is controlled by the white minority population.

Ian Smith, the former racist white prime minister who now serves in the legislature and other white reactionaries within Zimbabwe, and the oppressive and hostile government of South Africa are now committed to a free, united and prosperous Zimbabwe.

In the face of this dreadful state of affairs, Mugabe and Nkomo must subordinate their personal and ideological differences in support of Zimbabwe's stability, well-being and survival.

Zimbabwe is rich in chrome and other valuable minerals. If the short-range problems associated with the social and economic dislocations occasioned by long-term warfare, an equitable and just land resettlement can be effected for war refugees and members of Nkomo's army in the Matabeland provinces, home of the Ndebele tribe, and need economic aid is made available by the United States, Great Britain and other developed countries, Zimbabwe will be able to move forward to serve its people effectively.

A resounding, historic and powerful address delivered by A. Philip Randolph to the National Negro Congress in Philadelphia in 1937 has, even now, 46 years later, tremendous meaning for over 16 million black Zimbabweans and 32 million black Americans and, in fact, all people committed to equality of opportunity, human decency and freedom:

"Therefore with humble pride we cry out of the depths of our souls to mankind everywhere:

Forward with the destruction of the imperialist domination and oppression of the great peoples of Africa!

Forward to the abolition of the fascist rule of Italy over the nable, independent and unconquerable men of Ethiopia!

Forward to the creation of a united, free and independent China!

Forward to victory of the valiant loyalist armies over the fascist brigands of Franco! Long live the cause of world peace. Long live the spirit of world democracy!

Long live the memory and love of the black revolutionist of the eighteenth century, led by Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, Gabriel (Prosser), Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglass!

Long live the valor of those black regiments of slaves and freedmen whose blood and courage made of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation a living reality!

Forward to the unity of the workers!

Forward to democracy and freedom, progress and plenty!

Forward with the torch of education, the instrument of agitation, the weapon of organization to a day of peace on earth and toward men, good will!"

The point is very simple: Black Americans must rally behind our Brothers and Sisters in Zimbabwe, Nambia and South Africa in their hour of great need and travail.

Their struggle for freedom and human dignity must be viewed as a part of our continuing struggle for freedom and human dignity must be viewed as a part of our continuing struggle for equality and social justice.

We must not permit the forces of reaction, division and hostility to deter us in our relentless drive for full manhood - womanhood both in our Motherland and the land of our birth.

Locally, the Citizen's Coalition for Urban Survival's WE REMEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICE was planned for Monday, April 4, 1983 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church (Garrison Boulevard and Liberty Heights Avenue) provides a magnificent opportunity to witness for our glorious heritage and to keep faith with our past.

The illustrious griot, Mary Carter Smith, president of the Citizens' Coalition for Urban Survival and Christopher Providence, chairperson of the WE REMEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICE, are providing strong and imaginative leadership to this local endeavor.

I urge you to support Mrs. Smith and Mr. Providence in this sparkling effort for universal human uplift, freedom and poignant remembrance. Mr. Providence can be reached at 366-3535.

The advent of spring brings a fervent spirit of renewal, hope and radiance. It is to be hoped in this marvelous season of rebirth and revival that we embrace Brothers and Sisters in Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa and in our native land as we push on, as our forebears of yore, heads unbowed and undaunted, in spirit, refusing to turn back in our unceasing struggle for full freedom. The struggle must continue, and we must not turn back.

Tony Brown's Comments

Probability of a Black President

A few weeks ago I wrote an article entitled "A Good Idea About To Go Bad." It examined the possibility of a Black running for the Democratic nomination for president in 1984 to show the party that the Black vote can no longer be taken for granted. Since the article, fears about the Black community missing out on a once in a lifetime opportunity have increased.

Most conspicuously missing is any widespread involvement of the Black community's Democrats, 90 percent of black voters, in choosing a favorite son or daughter. Although what the 25 or so members of the self-ordained planning group are doing in a series of meetings is admirable, it is at the same time, in the long term, destructive to the very idea they are advocating. In selecting a Black to run in a democratically designed electoral process the process and structure they are employing are dictatorial.

Unless there are state and regional elections in which every Black Democrat is invited to be involved, the disunity will overwhelm a good idea whose time is overdue. And unless a significant number of candidates are involved and campaigning, the idea will die on the vine of protectionist opportunism.

Which leads me to Jesse Jackson, the acknowledged front-runner for the job of articulating the political aspirations for the majority of African-Americans. One can conclude that, based on the initial reaction to him as the person to fill this crucial role and his performance thus far, the handwriting is on the wall as it was at King Belshazzar's feast in the Bible: "Thou are weighed in the balance and found wanting."

In a "Speak Out!" feature in The Pittsburgh Courier, eight Blacks were randomly selected and asked who they saw as the strongest Black contender for president. Only two picked Jackson. A similar poll was held in USA Today, a national newspaper, and Barbara Smith of Fremont, Ohio had this to say:

"And I wouldn't vote for Jesse Jackson in a million years. He's overzealous and too flamboyant. I couldn't take him seriously." Jackson said that one criterion of the Black candidate is to articulate Black interests to the interest of Whites. If Barbara Smith is a barometer, he won't get many white votes. Smith is white.

The National Leader, a Philadelphia-based Black paper, quoted Warith Deen Muhammad, Chief Imam and spiritual leader of the American Muslim Mission, as "sharply" criticizing Jackson: "He called Jackson an unsuitable choice, saying Jackson is a Black leader who has been created by the media."

William Raspberry, black columnist of the Washington Post, joined with a media criticism of his own. Citing Jackson as a liability to Harold Washington's campaign for mayor of Chicago, Raspberry quoted a Washington supporter as saying: "Probably the best thing Jesse could do for Harold is to spend more time out of town these next few weeks." Raspberry concluded, "Given Jackson's love of the limelight, that might not be easy to arrange."

Vernon Jarrett, one of the country's most reputable and revered Black journalists, wrote in the Chicago Tribune that "Jackson's thoughtless announcement that he may be a candidate for president in 1984 hasn't helped Washington.... Jarrett also pointed to reports that "Washington is being used to launch Jackson's bid for president."

Another of Jackson's hometown writers, syndicated columnist Mike Royko of the Chicago Sun-Times, remarked in an interview when asked if the PUSH leader was a liability to Washington: "Jackson acts like a jackass...During the election night, he almost pushed Harold off camera. I was surprised he let Harold even get his face on the tube. Nobody really likes a showboat...Yes, he is becoming a liability."

Instead of being drafted, it appears that Jackson is in the draft. The New York Voice reports that some in the ad hoc planning group "would not support Jackson as their candidate. Jackson had disturbed many Black leaders." Milton Coleman wrote in the Washington Post: "Jackson also has burnt several bridges during his career."

Rep. Mickey Leland, chairman of the Black Caucus of the Democratic National Committee, said: "There is fear that Jesse doesn't feel accountable to anybody but himself." There were also concerns that Jackson would be viewed as running "to embellish his ego," the Washington Post quoted Leland as saying.

Rep. Walter Fauntroy said, as diplomatically as Leland, that Jackson, "is not a politician" and "has alienated politicians in many key districts in the Black community." California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown was more candid: "I'm not sure if Jesse's involvement helps the consideration of the idea."

It's a dunk in the sheep-dip for anyone who does not know that the only constituency for the aspiring leader of Black America is his ego's own need for gratification. And, of course, his interest in federal matching funds is another motivating factor. He wants to represent all Blacks but he is attempting to bypass the Black community with his "Black leadership family," as he refers to the 25-member self-selected group.

Why not have regional elections to select from among candidates such as Walter Fauntroy, Warith Deen Muhammad, James Lowery, Louis Stokes, Tom Bradley, Shirley Chisholm and any other Black Democrat? Why not broaden the base of leadership in order to broaden the base of interest and participation, a participation that binds all Democrats who participate to the ultimate winner?

"Now is the time for talent and faces other than known civil rights activists," said The Walter Report of Richmond, Virginia. However, Jackson knows the threat to his ambitions that a truly democratic process can bring. Moreover, the very proposition of Black self-sufficiency in politics has been reduced to Jackson's personal ambitions.

Even the controversial integrationist Carl Rowan called his idol and "all but said, 'Don't do it!'" And Rowan wonders: "Will even Blacks deside that Jackson is on a colossal ego trip -- meaning that for years to come they will view with suspicion his every utterance?"

If they don't, they will be prime candidates for a political Jonestown--and a fresh batch of kool-aid.

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL TV series can be seen on public television Thursday, on channel 22 at 11:30 p.m.

It can also be seen on channel 67, Thursday 11:30 p.m. Please consult listings.

AFRO Survey


Angus Johnson


Cynthia Jones


Ronald Hall


Albert Lucas


John Dorsey


Kathy Brown

This week the AFRO question to the woman and man in the street was, "What do you think about MTA's July rate hike?"

Angus Johnson, 33, postal worker, "I don't think its right. Service is bad in the first place. They're raising fares to finance the subway which really isn't going to help black folks."

Cynthia Jones, 27, correctional officer, "It's ridiculous. The service isn't going to get any better. We can tell that by the last time fares went up. Everything goes up but my paycheck."

Albert Lucas, 41, minister, "I have a split opinion. The fare hike should help MTA which means it can hire more people. But fares are already too high and some people have trouble paying the present fare."

John Dorsey, counselor, "I don't agree with the fare hike. The quality of service is bad -- the seats are dirty, windows either don't open or won't close. If the quality were better it would still be too much to ask $30.00 for a bus pass. It's too much."

Kathy Brown, 24, claims aide, "It's not worth it. You get less service now than before the last fare hike. Crowded, less frequent busses. And the subway isn't really going to help."

Diane Murray 27, claims aide, "Everything is up except my funds. And with the other responsibilities it's just too much. I want to know why they're going up again anyway."

Pearlie Moore, 55, custodian, "I don't like the prices. They're already high enough. It's too tough for poor folks already."

Ronald Hall, 26, laborer, "It's just not justified for the type of service we receive now."

Olen Smith, 35, "It's wrong. It is basically the same for a cab. I think we should vote on the fare increase again. The fare increase won't help me at all. It's to finance the subway.


Olen Smith


Diane Murray


Pearlie Moore

The nuclear freeze movement is politically vulnerable

By Lester M. Cuffie

The present nuclear freeze movement which is really an offshoot of the peace movement of the 1960's has really accomplished a great deal in getting millions of Americans to march behind its anti-nuke banners.

The organizing efforts by the movement's leadership have been quite well received by the American populous at a time when jingoistic forces within the United States are demanding military buildup.

However, the present anti-nuke movement led by the same forces that led the peace movement of the 60's, whites and other middle-class elements of the American society, are failing to include in their demand for a nuclear freeze a radical alternation in U.S. foreign policy.

For instance, while the Nuclear Freeze Movement is demanding a freeze in the building and deployment of nuclear weaponry on the part of the U.S. and Soviet Union, Congress just recently approved the Reagan Administration request for 60 million dollars in military aide to continue to prop-up the military junta in El Salvador which was listed as a human rights violator by Amnesty International.

According to the Committee In Solidarity with the People of El Salvador located in Washington, D.C., Amnesty International has issued daily action alert reports citing large numbers of missing Salvadoran citizens on a day to day basis and the discovery of 20 to 30 slain Salvadorans in the streets weekly.

The assertion that the U.S.S.R. is superior to the U.S. in nuclear capabilities by the nuclear disarmament leadership maybe the result of the middle-class opportunism of the movement's realities of the U.S. connection with the Third World.

The assertion that the U.S.S.R. is superior to the U.S. in nuclear capability is a complete oversight of the historical fact that the U.S.S.R. has been ahead of the Soviets in nuclear superiority for more than 20 years and that present U.S. nuclear technology still far surpass the U.S.S.R.

In conclusion, the lackluster effort on the part of the present freeze movement to attack U.S. military aid to racist and fascist military regimes in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia. Along with the movement's futile efforts to address, the Reagan Administration policy of social-service cutbacks at home for military build-up and increased racism has left the movement vulnerable to conservative rightist forces in the U.S. arguing Soviet threat in the Third World and demanding continued military build-up to support U.S. allies.

This is not to say that the cry for a nuclear freeze is not a valid one when considering all scientific evidence which clearly states that if a nuclear war broke out between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. no country would be the survivor.

However, the inability of, the present freeze leadership to attack U.S. foreign policy and its racist backlash at home has left the movement politically vulnerable and easy to be manipulated by militaristic rightwing forces in the U.S. An indication of this weakness was exhibited in a 1982 CBS public opinion poll which shwed ambivalence on the part of the American people regarding the nuclear freeze issue.

The poll revealed that 72 of Americans interviewed supported a freeze in the nuclear arms race between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. Yet, thesame poll indicated that when Americans were asked if a nuclear freeze on the part of the U.S. would result in the Soviet Union having greater nuclear strength, 60 of those interviewed opposed a nuclear freeze, while only 30 endorsed it.

The ambivalence on the part of the American populous with regard to the nuclear freeze issue maybe the result of not waging a clear attack on the present massive U.S. military build-up in connection with U.S. foreign policy and increased racism at home.