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OPINION

Harassment is a common thing

It is common practice for the white power structure to make wholehearted attempts to discredit any black leader they feel is a threat to their continued position of power and influence.

The FBI tapped the telephones, and kept a dossier on the private life of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Marcus Garvey was spied on, and charged with misuse of company funds as a way to destroy the organization he built up.

Cong. Ron Dellums was alleged to have been involved in the so—called "drugs on Capitol Hill" scandal.

He was absolved.

State Senator Clarence Mitchell III was accused of violating real estate practices regarding escrow funds of clients.

He was absolved.

Then State Del. Frank Conaway was accused of malfeasance in the administration of his insurance business.

He was absolved.

Now, it would seem that a program of harassment is underway to discredit mayoral candidate William Murphy, Jr. It appears extremely coincidental that the income tax liens, which have been under negotiation for some period of time, surfaced just three weeks prior to the primary elections.

The entire situation appears to become even more questionable when coupled with the "well—publicized" C and P company turnoff of Murphy for Mayor campaign headquarters' telephones. And on the same day that the tax liens were made public.

Until all the facts are examined, voters drawing any conclusions as to the exact fault of Judge Murphy would be extremely unfair——not only to him——but also to the black vote.s of Baltimore who need to be able to exercise their judgment on September 13, free of any unsubstantiated charges.

The need of the black voters to maintain an open mind on these controversies, is based on the solid lesson which history shows us. A large number of modern—day black politicians are often deemed to be fair game for discrediting tactics of this nature.

KEEP YOUR MIND OPEN!
DON'T BE MISLED!

NAACP REPORT: HRC lottery plan superior to governor's

Last year Congressman Parren J. Mitchell issued a press release asking the Maryland Commission on Human Relations to investigate employment and contracting patterns and practices of the Maryland State Lottery Commission.

In response to the Congressman's request, the Commission conducted a study and discovered that a pattern of discrimination favoring white males did exist in the agency. The commission then developed a plan to give minorities and women their fair share of lottery jobs.

When the negotiating parties has constructed an agreement that all were willing to implement, the governor threw a monkey wrench into the deal. He directed Martin Funchk, head of the Maryland State Lottery Agency, not to sign the agreement. Some weeks later Mr. Hughes unveiled a plan of his own, a plan that has caused frustration and dismay among the very people it is supposed to benefit.

Without a doubt the Affirmative Action plan developed by the Human Relations Commision is superior to that proposed by Governor Hughes. It is one voluntarily and cooperatively drawn up by the Human Relations Commission, The Maryland State Lottery Agency, and the Maryland State Department of Personnel. Each party approved the provisions of the agreement. The governor's plan lacks input from at least one of the parties involved in the original agreement.

The HRC plan provides for the orderly employment of qualified minority persons and females when job openings occur at Grade Level 14 or above. It also establishes an employee training program directed at upgrading the skills of employees. Persons successfully completing such training programs would be able to substitute that training for experience or education or both.

In contrast the Hughes plan calls for the reconstitution of vacant positions and the pursuit of recruitment efforts with the view toward filling these positions with females or minorities. It includes no training program, and the "aggressive recruitment" to be undertaken is not spelled out. In addition, the plan is extremely vague regarding qualifications to be met by prospective employees.

The governor seeks instant remediation of past acts of discrimination in hiring by the lottery through the creation of five new positions. And whether or not the Hughes plan provides the opportunity for females and minorities already working for the lottery to qualify for the positions being created, is questionable. The governor's plan deals not at all with job descriptions and job related qualifications.

On the other hand the Human Relations proposal calls for a review by the Lottery Agency of all job classifications at Grade 14 and above to determine if the qualifications for particular jobs "are in conformity with the Uniform Guidelines of Employee Selection Procedures published by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission." Following that review all non job related qualifications would be eliminated.

By creating five positions with the stipulation that these positions be filled only by women and minorities, the governor leaves the state of Maryland extremely vulnerable to a reverse discrimination suit by white males. Emmett Burns, regional director of the NAACP, has accurately described the Hughes proposal as a "band-aid approach."

Unlike the chief executive's plan which appears to be a one-shot deal, the tri-agency agreement drawn up by the Human Relations Commission provides for an ongoing program of affirmative action until "the proportion of minority employees at Grade 14 and above in the Agency equals the proportion of minority persons in the portion of civilian labor market in Maryland who identify themselves as Professional, Administrative and Sales Workers (taking into account commuting patterns in the work location)."

The NAACP joins countless others in asking the governor to withdraw his proposal and accept the "Agreement for Affirmative Action Plan" drawn up by the Human Relations Commission. The Association also urges its members and supporters to write Gov. Hughes requesting implementation of the HRC plan without further delay.

LETTERS

Public views officials with critical eye

Dear AFRO:

One of the most intriguing campaigns during this election, is the mayoral campaign. As this political scenario unfolds, and campaign efforts increase, the public will be swept up into the final scenes with fierce intensity. While demonstrations of loyalty and support climax to a feverish pitch, the real issue will be obscured.

There are three characters in this drama: the incumbent, the challenger, and the public. The role and goal of the first two characters are obvious while the role of the latter is blurred because one major issue remains unexamined. This issue affects all Baltimoreans, especially those who have been lulled into a false sense of security and illusionary comfort.

If we accept as given that William Donald Schaefer has been an excellent mayor and Billy Murphy is a competent and qualified challenger, we brush aside campaign rhetoric from both camps and examine an underlying issue that is more important than a choice between experience and inexperience, new buildings, the future, or past.

In fact, we would argue that the real issue does not focus on the qualifications or limitations of either the incumbent or the challenger, but on the people of Baltimore City, and their perception of their elected officials. This issue alone will be the determining factor as to which lever will be pulled for the mayoral candidates on election day; and that issue is how the public perceives the mayoral candidates.

Public perception plays a major role in the way an elected official performs his functions. If the public views its officials with a critical eye, if it constantly forces the official to improve his performance, if it constantly updates the agenda of its leaders, the public is assured of officials committed to serving its best interests, and an administration that continues to grow throughout its tenure.

When a mayoral challenger unseats an incumbent, the public's eye places him under a microscope. His every action is scrutinized by the public, especially the media. During this time, the public has a reasonable perception of the new administration's strengths and weaknesses. But too often, when an official has been in office for several terms and accomplished goals that are readily visible to the public eye, the public becomes comfortable, less critical, and its willingness to challenge a successful and popular leader diminishes. As the leader's list of accomplishments grows, the security blanket becomes even more comfortable until the public finally is either afraid to pull the blanket away, or permits itself to be lulled to sleep. It is then that government responsibilities become "theirs" instead of "ours".

Therein lies the danger; a danger for the City, a danger for the public, and a special danger for the elected official. When such a situation exists, the public is to blame for permitting it to develop. Often the public's perception of a leader's capability, contributions and long list of accomplishments forces the leader to assume a pedestalic stance, while the public rubber stamps his programs and actions. When public perception deteriorates to the point that it is rubber stamping the title of mayor to an official's name as well as to his programs, it is time to effect a change in its perception or in its administrative leadership.

Unfortunately, this rubber stamping process exists in our city government. Many people have begun to overlook the short comings of our mayor to the point that such issues as education, including the appointment and control of the School Board, the creation and complacent acceptance of a shadow government, the lack of emphasis on minority business development, and among other issues, failure to develop more realistic job creation programs instead of depending on temporary federal dollars that generated funds for dead-end jobs. When the funds were terminated, so were the jobs.

The mayor via extremely effective promotional programs has become so synonymous with the name, Baltimore, that large segments of the public are ready to blindly sanction any project-program he promises to deliver. For many, voting for him has become a tradition, while others vote the way many people shop; looking for a name brand and fancy packaging. The city can no longer afford the luxury of either of this type of voting.

The title of mayor is not a given; it must be earned daily. It does not become a permanent attachment to an individual's name because of his accomplishments. The public is the only watchdog and provides the only assurance that he will earn the right to this title. To ensure this the public must be free and encouraged to question, probe, and be free to honestly, critically, and objectively examine the mayor's goals and programs and then expend the necessary effort to demand that these goals and programs are in line with the needs of the city and its people.

Every administration, regardless of its degree of effectiveness will meet some of the important needs of the city, and fail to address others. When this occurs, it becomes the responsibility of the public not to overlook the chief administrator's shortcoming, because of the accomplishments of his administration, but demand and push for the official's growth.

Some years ago, Baltimore required a person with vision who could direct our city from the blight of urban decay to national prominence. This awesome task required the skills of a flexible individual who would be relentless in his efforts to make Baltimore an example of hope to other urban areas. Thus, the public elected William Donald Schaefer, who in keeping with the task, performed his job well. He performed it so well that somewhere along the way, the public, listening to the promotions, imagining by public relations experts, while watching brick and mortar replace urban blight, forgot the underlying issue that early on was a major part of the "elect Schaefer for mayor" campaign.

Once again, the city is at a crossroad and must elect a leader who can direct it through the problems of the eighties. The incumbent performed his duties as he was supposed to. That was the reason he was elected. As in the seventies, the 80's require a change agent; one with a new way of thinking, one who is willing to explore new directions, and pursue new courses of action. Will the public demand that the mayor rise to the occasion, or is it time for the public to elect a new change agent?

FRANK B AND EDNA H. DAVIS

Watchdog over city funds

Dear AFRO:

Having a black in high political positions can be an asset if he is not owned by the mayor. The race for comptroller has to be looked at on works of Freeman and John Douglas.

Forgetting about race; Hyman Pressman has done an excellent job of being "Watchdog" over city funds. He deserves to be voted into office again.

John Douglas is owned by the mayor and has long been a part of the Eastside group that has mismanaged many funds in the Eastside Medical Center, fired black workers and showed a lack of management.

Black people have not forgotten this and all his talk about being qualified is baloney. Putting in John Douglas is a mistake. He cannot run the comptroller office adequately. Being black will not help him.

AMY GRAHAM

Du Burns did it the hard way

Dear AFRO:

Clarence "Du" Burns is a living example of that well known phrase, "you can make it if you try."

Like Harry Truman, he did it the hard way.

In our competitive world one needs all the education and degrees possible.

However, without scholastic achievements and degrees, Mr. "Du" Burns has climbed the political ladder all the way to President of the City Council.

Voting for Mr. "Du" Burns will be a signal from the public that there is appreciation, respect and admiration for many of us who are not the proud owner of degrees.

Mr. "Du" Burns has earned the respect of his peers and deserves to be President of the City Council.

He believes in the system and works within it to accomplish what he believes is good for the people.

He has political skills, legislative knowledge and has years of civic and community related experiences.

His relentless struggles to improve: education, job opportunities, health care, the city tax base, fire and police protection- the list goes on and on. These are the real reason he should be retained.

The Mayor, whom ever he will be, will need the expertise of "Du" Burns to help shape responsible legislation for the continual growth of our great city.

During these trying times we should be conservative, we should go with experience and vote for one Clarence "Du" Burns.

INEZ A CHAPPELL

A House divided

Dear AFRO:

A house divided upon itself will not stand. I am talking about the division of the black community in Baltimore over the upcoming election. We are the only ethnic group that are not sticking together.

The Hispanics, Jews and the Orientals all support Schaefer. We will always be the lowest man on the totem pole if we don't learn how to pull together. We do not support our black politicians, our black businesses or our black organization.

I am tired of the raw deal our school system gives our children. We parents invest 13 years of our children's lives in a system that is not preparing them for a place in the work world. We can not afford to send our children to private schools as some of our fellow citizens, and the present administration does not even care enough to raise the money to keep the last few teachers from being layed off.

I am also tired of the rats. I have been informed that they have discontinued the rat traps in the projects. They are just using the rats multiply as they please, and not do anything about it.

I am also tired of the boarded up houses. I have been told by someone from the homestead office that houses that are repossessed by the FHA in certain areas of the city are not put on the open market for sale, but are turned over to homestead.

Those homes are insured by the government so they take our tax dollars and pay off the mortgages and then board them up. Hampden, Waverly, Highlandtown, Curtis Bay have few boarded houses. This is done to keep down the black voting strength. We are enticed to move into government subsidized luxury housing in the county to dilute our vote in the city. We had better get our act together or we will have no one to blame but ourselves. We are our own worst enemy.

MARY AIKENS

Come out and Vote

Dear AFRO:

On the 13th of Sept. I am asking all of the people to come out to vote. Don't worry about what people are saying concerning William Murphy just come out and vote. Don't turn anyone away who comes to vote. Sometimes the machines are broken. People have no excuse for not voting, because there is always someone there to help you in the booth.

HERBERT PARKER

G. JAMES FLEMING — God, weekends, holidays and students

"Whatever else you do, remember that the gods created weekends and holidays for the special use of students and scholars." This is the admonishment I give to those young people who, at this time, of the year, seek advice on how "to make it" in college and save themselves from becoming casualties of higher education. I have told this to students for many years, even before I became a college teacher. Increasingly, I find myself also telling it to young people still in high school. Recently, when I spent a weekend with the Swarthmore College Upward Bound Program, the 60 young earnings seemed most interested in how "to make it" in college, although I was invited to speak on quite a different subject. They listened, as I gave my usual spiel, about weekends and holidays, then they offered their rebuttals, mostly in questions: "Do you mean we should be bookworms and not have any fun when we do not have classes?"

"Isn't social life part of a college education, the people you meet, the fraternities and sororities....?"

"Suppose we want to go out for athletics and other activities?"

"Suppose we have to work weekends....?" Ad infinitum. I countered, smilingly, that I was aware of all the extra-curricular temptations and believe that some activities are educational (Several of the students already know that I had been a college debater and editorial writer on the school paper). What I really want these young people, young children and "sometimes adults" to recognize is that experience has shown they cannot filter EVERY weekend and EVERY holiday, away from books and still "make it," commensurably. It is another way of saying that students must learn, not only to budget their money, but also to budget their energies and their time. They must decide, also, that their education is the No. 1 priority in their lives—not only through verbalisms but through deep emotional and moral commitment. Education requires no less than the same kind of enthusiasm, dedication and exertion given to football or basketball, to video games, or to wine, women and song (song in this day being bellowing TV or radio competing with study). ——

When young people allow me, I suggest that they, together with their teachers and parents, must rediscover that "home work" is a very necessary and essential part of schooling. There is not enough hours in a school day or a school year for a teacher (Even a very good teacher!) to inject every necessary thing in a student or bring every necessary thing out.

Furthermore, as they experts have pointed out down the years, most education is self-education. It comes through reading, through repeated laboratory experimentations, through tackling endless examples in science and mathematics—and then more reading. The new technologies help, but they only help.

It is on the relatively free weekends and on the holidays that students can catch up on what they missed during the past week or weeks, that they can review what they think they already know, and that they can organize and write those dreaded papers which are so important to all education and for experience in handling the language.

Part of the tragedy of the present times is that society is no longer losing only those young people who are naturally limited. It is also losing too many of those naturally well endowed but who have never been taught how to discipline themselves, how to budget their energies and their time, how to put first things first.

For those young people willing to cooperate with the educational process, as a starter, I repeat, "The gods created weekends and holidays for the use of students and scholars." If they are squandered, there will be a day of reckoning.

Monumental Bar Association & Judicial selections

Dear Governor Hughes,

This letter is in response to the recent nominations by the judicial nominating panel for the Court of Special Appeals. It is difficult to believe that some have called for the non-election of judges in this State in reliance upon judicial nominating panels. This is especially true in light of recommendations recently made by the nominating commission as to the Court of Special Appeals.

While there has been some delay on our part in writing this letter, it in no way should be taken to denigrate the concerns of black lawyers and the black community as to the actions of that panel. We are concerned about the Commission's failure to recommend two black applicants notwithstanding the candidates' respective impeccable credentials, abilities and character.

As you know, a vacancy will be created on the Court of Special Appeals when the Honorable Judge David Mason retires. Among those who applied for his seat, is another distinguished black jurist, the Honorable Judge Robert M. Bell. Many lawyers feel that Judge Bell is perhaps one of the most brilliant jurists currently sitting on the bench in this State.

Judge Bell's non - recommendation by the nominating panel is particularly curious. He is a Harvard law graduate and serves on the District and Circuit Courts of Baltimore City. He has received the highest recommendations possible from various bar associations. Nonetheless, the nominating panel failed to recommend him while advocating others who fared less well in their evaluations by bar associations. Some of these recommended, hard no judicial experience.

Additionally, another black candidate, David B. Mitchell, esq., has an excellent reputation for skilled advocacy, character and demeanor. It is our understanding that he also was found qualified by the various bar associations which reviewed his questionnaire.

The motivations and factors considered by judicial nominating commissions in making recommendations have always been questioned. Unfortunately, those doubts and concerns are only reinforced by the recent recommendations for the Court of Special Appeals.

While race should never be a factor for excluding able applicants, it is a proper factor for including otherwise fully qualified candidates. This seems particularly true as to the Court of Special Appeals which will no longer reflect a cross-representation of this State's citizens if appointment is made from the list as presently constituted.

As black attorneys and citizens, we are constantly in contact with others who say actively aware of judicial recommendations. Dismay and disillusionment are running high now in our community. Many members of our race and profession doubt the validity of the panel's recommendations, particularly in its failure to recommend Judge Bell. Because the Judges of the Court of Special Appeals do no fun for election against challengers, our concerns are heightened. We are fearful as to future recommendations for the Circuit Courts of this State if the electoral process is changed for those courts.

We recommend that the selection process be reopened. We suggest that the Commission begin its deliberations again. This time, we hope that all fully qualified candidates will be recommended. If only that much is accomplished, the new list will surely include members of the black race.

THE MONUMENTAL CITY BAR ASSOCIATION
M. BERNARDINE MYLES, President

Washington AFRO-AMERICAN to mark its 50th year

The Washington AFRO-AMERICAN will celebrate its fiftieth year of publication in the District of Columbia metropolitan area next month.

The AFRO's Golden Anniversary edition is scheduled to be published on Sept. 24, with the Special Edition including a number of historical facts about a half century of journalistic progress in Washington.

The Washington AFRO-AMERICAN, winner of more than 30 top journalism prizes in the NNPA Merit Award competition in 10 years, is a twice-a-week publication, with editions published each Tuesday and Thursday.

The Washington AFRO is part of the historic AFRO-AMERICAN newspaper chain which publishes nine editions with major papers in Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Philadelphia and Newark and Headquarters in Baltimore.

The AFRO chain is now in its ninety-second year of publication, with the Washington AFRO a half century old.

The Washington AFRO had its beginning as a once-a-week publication in 1933 when the AFRO chain opened offices in the Nation's Capital in the 1200 block of U St., NW. As the paper progressed and grew, offices were moved to 1800 Eleventh St., NW, and in 1947 the Washington AFRO expanded to twice a week publication. Six years ago the AFRO office moved to the present location at 2002 11th St., NW.

At the time of the AFRO's beginning in Washington, there was evidence of gross segregation, housing and educational discrimination against Black citizens with virtually no political imput in the city government.

The AFRO followed an editorial policy to rid the city of these wrongs against Black citizens, and the AFRO has been in the forefront of the fight to make Washington truly the Nation's Capital ever since.

At the time of the AFRO's beginning in Washington, the Great Depression was in full bloom. The city was a separate town for the races as far as living and housing conditions were concerned, many jobs were denied Black people and the school system was a jim-crow operation.

The AFRO adopted the slogan. "You Know, Because You Read the AFRO," and kept its readers abreast of all things involving Black citizens through the Hunger March, the Bonus March, World War II, the post-war Federal Employment Practice Commission activities, the sports revolution in boxing, baseball and basketball, the fight for veterans' rights, Korean War, the famous 1963 March on Washington, and the hectic civil rights marches and protests of the Sixties.

The AFRO's policy then, as now, is to expose corruption, condemn injustice, race prejudice and the cowardice of compromise, and to applaud achievement. It has always maintained a policy of fighting to rid the city of slums, improve residential housing, gain good employment for all, and obtain and maintain equal educational opportunities for all.

In doing this, the AFRO has exerted every effort to improve the editorial content of its product and produce a newspaper with topographical excellence and makeup that would make reading and pictures clear. This involved progressive layouts, sharp action photographs and attractive headlines which attracted the attention of discerning readers.

The Washington AFRO present publisher and editor is Arthur (Art) M. Carter, who began his newspaper career as a general reporter with the Washington AFRO and later served as national sports editor, war correspondent, assistant managing editor and managing editor of the National AFRO prior to assuming his present post in 1970.

AFRO Survey

Do you think the liens against Billy Murphy are politically motivated?

Blondell Scott — Ron Johnson — Tracey Crews — Joseph Perry Sr.

This week the question to the man and woman of the street was, "Do you think the liens against Billy Murphy is politically motivated?"

Blondell Scott, 31, BWI employee, "To some degree, yes. I do wonder if it's really true. I think it came about to affect him politically; I mean, that's what you do, bring up someone's past to get to him. Murphy is new and wants to prove himself. This could hurt him and really affect his campaign."

Tracey Crews, 20, salesperson, "No. I believe IRS is treating him as they would anyone else. Everybody has the right to his own opinion, but I think it's legitimate. He's a black candidate and so many people are convinced already that there are going to be attemts to discredit him."

Leonardo Brown, 24, student, "It's political. In fact, it was timed. I'm sure of it. No matter though, I'm still going to vote for the guy. It seems they're just trying to find something against him."

Joseph Perry, Sr., 48, engineer, "It's peculiar that this would come up before the election. I think politics is involved."

Michelle Harper, 19, salesperson, "I think it's politically motivated because he's black trying to run for mayor, and they are just looking for reasons to make people look down on him."

Ron Johnson, 18, student, "Sure it's political. It just came up. They took all this time to decide to bring it up."

Daryl Thomas, 21, disc-jockey, "A lot of people don't want to see him in office. I think there is politics behind it. Anything will be done to block progress."

Alexzine Young, 36, nurse, "Of course it's politically motivated. He's running for an elected office."

Daryl Thomas — Alexzine Young — Leonardo Brown — Michelle Harper

Lonesome Victories

By Michael S. Weaver

The odyssey of the young, slave girl Phyllis Wheatley, a poet who achieved some prominence in colonial America after learning the English language in sixteen months, is a startling paradox.

Born in Senegal before being sold into slavery, Ms. Wheatley's work has been compared with that of such notable contemporaries as Alexander Pope. Her life with its literary transcendence constitutes one of the first in a long and rich history of individual achievement in black history, a history rife with contradiciton and paradox.

At any one time in this history, so much has been said to be true, so much to be the fault of nameless culprits, so much to be possible, and yet the quest for a resolution and a definition of problems in the black community persists.

Ms. Wheatley wrote poetry which she hoped might win positive critical attention. Following the norms of meter and rhyme, shunning the controversial subject of slavery, the "Sable Muse" endeavored to pursue the dignity of accomplishment in poetry. She did what no one thought an African could do. The prevailing set of expectations for slaves was set much lower than a world class poet.

Many individuals of the race have taken their single lives to etch a page in the continuing case for the humanity of black people; a case that draws its arguments from as far back as the supposed antediluvian enlightment.

Now the yields of this case are essentially the same as they were in the eighteenth century.

We are empowered now, as before, to look into the eyes of a child and affirm his chances for the good life provided he can summon that Herculean energy and make manifest his own good fortune. It is not an enviable inheritance.

The contradictions in black life are everywhere apparent — in the economic struggles pitting a Lilliputian assortment against the cosmos of American capitalism, in the inverse relation of general well-being to political ratification, and in the illusion of consensus given by the mass efforts of a group of people still debating their cultural roots in an effort to determine whether they are a group at all.

For the young, black person who wants to make his life a testament to black humanity, the procedure has not changed. After carving an adequate working space amid all the emotional conflagration around him or her, this person finds that the manner and method of accomplishment is pretty much prescribed.

There the adherence to above average requirements for decorum and taste nearly preclude the spontaneity one would expect from such a freedom to accomplish. That spontaneity one would expect from such a freedom to accomplish. That spontaneity, which is so vital to artists especially, can be had many times only after a quantum leap in sensibility which renders one unintelligible to those in the general milieu.

Richard Wright, the novelist and author of Native Son, took himself to this creative space overlooking his personal Canaan, and received his set of tablets. His poetry, fiction, and non-fictional accounts written for the Federal Writer's Project have made the literary mantle envisioned by Wheatley.

Zora Neale Hurston, who fought adversity all her life and died under pitiable circumstances, went to the edge also to receive her parceled vision.

It would seem that time might begrudge such an outlay of energy and increase the allotted happiness, but it has not been so. This personal achievement is perplexing as much for the utter fact that it has been done in an impossible set of realities as it is for the dismal realization that this legacy has failed to provide blacks with a sense of continuity.

With such a history of oracular dispensations, superficial treatments should have been precluded by the workings of so many deific forces in the black community. Yet those superficial abatements continue, as it seems that hard times will not produce that sudden realization for blacks of their humanity, of their inherent humanity.

The single strivings go on. The individual glories are chiseled out. Now when science is offering a new set of beliefs for man after three thousand years, a vindication of sorts, now the paradoxical nature of black life persists.

For young, black people this quizzical state is most imperative. The teenagers and children will be the young adult and adult segments of the population in the next century, the millenium that is promising technological innovations that rival the better sci-fi cult movies being released now.

If they are to do more than merely survive in the new age, the energy, the integrity, the compassion of a man such as Langston Hughes will not suffice. They must go to the oracle overlooking Canaan in groups of five and ten, and not by singular appointment.

In a recent issue of Smithsonian magazine, there was an article concerning the new protein technology which some scientists see as possible. That technology would produce machines of flesh capable of producing exact copies of themselves.

In the same month I read an editorial which dealt with the rapid erosion of hard-won gains by blacks in income, housing, and education. That editorial commented on the fifty percent unemployment rate among black teenagers. Unemployed, uneducated black youth and machines of flesh are not compatible. They may even be mutually exclusive. That prospect is frightening.

Whole and significant progress is certainly preferable to mere survival, but mere survivel is all that black people will get on the basis of single achievement that leaves no groundwork for viable efforts of whole groups of black children.

COMMENTARY

Poetry and Black life