Baltimore Afro-American

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A center for latchkey kids

With the high rate of child disappearances and crimes against children in general, the opening of the Latchkey Center will enable some parents to breathe a little easier while at work.

The center provides a safe place for children to go before school and after school when they would ordinarily be alone in the house.

The children participate in organized activity and are fed while at the center. This environment is a 100 percent improvement over being forced to fight the fear that many of these children experience while home alone, and the danger that they create when they attempt to cook meals for themselves.

The center is funded by the city and by private sources and the center which just opened can be a model for the creation of numerous centers around the city. The number of Latchkey children in the city is great enough to support many such centers.

With the proliferation of single parent families and working mothers, this kind of facility must become a priority. There are numerous buildings in the community that can be utilized for a modest cost.

These include churches, recreation centers and school buildings, If the safety of our children is really important then Latchkey centers will become as commonplace as the neighborhood school.

The city council returns

On Monday the Baltimore City Council begins again and some new issues and some leftover issues will in all probability cause quite a stir in the council.

The Gay Rights Bill is still in committee and the issue still unresolved. It is very doubtful that the activists in the Baltimore gay community will let the bill stay in limbo.

In all probability, during this city council session, the cable TV issue will be voted on since negotiations between United Cable and the city have been going on throughout the summer.

Another pressing matter the council will have to vote on, is a proposed executive hotel and conference center to be located in Coldspring Newtown. The UDAG deadline is at hand and the council has a week to vote on this controversial development.

Two voter initiatives on the ballot are sure to affect the city council. A ballot item, calling for the election of city council members from 18 single member districts instead of the present method of electing three from each of the six districts, has stirred bitter opposition among council members.

Some council persons have said that the single member plan is a Republican smokescreen to get some representation on the council. Others say that it will encourage provincalism among the council members instead of a spirit of cooperation.

Also on the ballot is the issue of an elected schoolboard. Presently, the mayor appoints schoolboard members and the city council approves them. If this initiative passes the city council will be spared this burden.

It's back to school time

This past week saw the reopening of public schools and in a sense the reopening of the national debate on education. A television network devoted all three of its prime time hours plus an hour of late night time to an indepth discussion of the state of America's schools.

A national report, heartily endorsed by the president earlier this year, said that the nation was at risk because of the poor state of public education. This report heightened the level of debate over the status public education.

A commission on the state of education in Maryland made a comprehensive report to the governor earlier in the year, and some of its suggestions were adopted. One of them was the need for increased funding for education, especially in those school districts which are relatively poor.

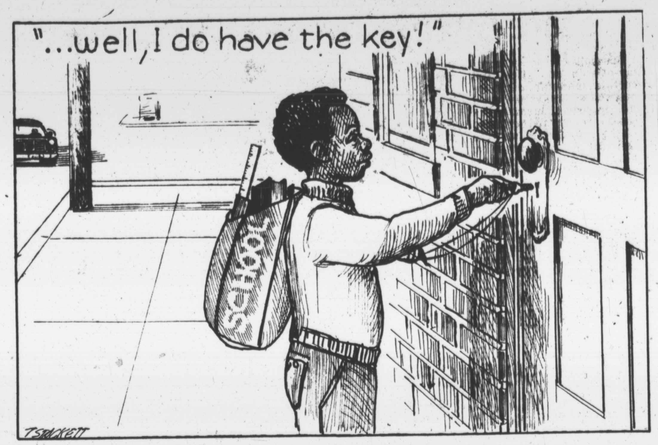
The need for money, for teacher salaries, supplies, equipment and the latest teaching aids, is of paramount importance to school districts with shrinking tax bases like Baltimore.

Of course, discipline, student motivation, teacher competency and parental involvement are crucial to educational excellence, but without equal funding for the education of well-to-do and poor children, the public school system will also be a cast system.

This must not happen.

AFRO welcomes letters

The AFRO welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be brief and must bear the writer's name and address. All letters will be given consideration for publication.



Parren J. Mitchell

Election year economics

Many people believe the performance of the economy during a presidential election year is often decisive in determining who gets elected in November. The economic issue, on the surface, appears to strongly favor the Republicans this year.

One might ask why the economic issue is seemingly favorable to Reagan'? The reply would be that four years ago inflation was high and unemployment was rising.

This summer, inflation is much lower and the number of jobs is rising, except for blacks.

Reagan would have you believe that the economy has grown much faster during his administration than during the Carter years.

However, we will discover before long that the growth of the U.S. economy during Reagan's four years in office will be almost the same as the growth achieved during the previous four years under President Carter.

If this is so, one might ask, how Reagan could make the economy the focal point of his campaign? The answer lies in the old cliche, "timing is everything."

Because the most recent behavior of the economy is, as most studies indicate, foremost on the mind of the voter, these facts sealed Carter's fate in 1980 and may help Reagan, though I doubt it, this November.

One must, then, draw the conclusion that fighting inflation is economically costly, but not politically injurious if it occurs early during the President's term in office.

My response to all of this is "Let the voter beware." While there is a present surge of economic growth, just how long will it last?

Perhaps Reagan really has found a way to set the American economy on a wholly new course. Then again, maybe he has merely had the good fortune to run for reelection during a time when big deficits fuel the economy and generate jobs, and just before the less welcome time when we began to see an increase in the inflation rates.

Even if we proceed on the assumption that the economy is on a new productive course, I would ask who has received the most benefits, and who has been hurt the most under the Reagan policies? Some people refer to it as the "fairness" issue.

Since the Lyndon B. Johnson social programs of the early 1960's, there has been a fairly durable balance among economic masses in this country.

During the Reagan administration, however, the balance has been tipped in favor of the rich, and the distance between the top and the bottom of the income scale is now widening for the first time since the 1920's.

The tax cuts pushed through Congress in 1981 by President Reagan have clearly benefitted the wealthy. On the other hand, his budget cuts lowered the boom on poor people who are defenseless against economic disruption of any sort.

Figures from a recently released Census Bureau report indicate that the number of households with incomes above $50,000 have grown by 18 percent during the last year.

Responding to this report, my good friend Cong. Charles Rangel said, and I agree that "... the Reagan policies are reverse Robin Hood policies . . . take from the poor and give to the rich."

During the president's nomination acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention, he challenged the wisdom of the American people when he confidently declares that the number of people living in poverty rose faster during the Carter administration than during his own.

We all know how good Reagan is at using figures in a dubious fashion to exaggerate the case, but I took exception to this statement that there was no "appreciable" rise in the number of households falling below the poverty level last year.

The increase in the number of persons living in poverty rose to something over 900,000 last year, which is not everybody's idea of a negligible increase, especially if you happen to be included in that number.

Reagan apparently believes that specific Federal programs that attempt to help the poor are misconceived, and will trap them in their poverty forever. They are better served, he argues, by a strong economy, or to use his analogy, "a rising tide lifts all boats."

I have heard it said that a rising tide lifts all yachts for wealthy folks, which is probably a more accurate statement.

The so - called "supply side" economic formula put forth by this president was supposed to provide powerful incentives for saving, investment and production, which would produce years of rapid economic growth without inflation.

Meanwhile, if the poor lost some of their government benefits, he would argue, they would be better off in the long run as they share in the recovery brought about by his policies.

Any casual observer would have to say that there is no sign of it so far, and the poverty numbers are warning against any great reliance on that principle. As for business investment, savings and consumption, they are all just about where they were four years ago.

The inflation has come down during the president's term of office, but I would hasten to add that record rates of unemployment, which is the price that America has been asked to pay, is much too great a sacrifice.

In addition to unemployment, the American people especially blacks, have been asked to accept a more hazardous environment; extension spending cuts in federal programs benefiting children and the elderly; and unfair share of the federal tax burden falling on middle and lower income persons; higher state and local taxes to compensate for federal tax hikes in the future if these deficits continue to be neglected.

While the President talks about cutting domestic spending to balance the budget, he makes no reference to exactly which program(s) should be cut.

The only program cut — other than defense — that could make a real difference in reducing the federal deficit are those entitlements that receive widespread support from the American people such as Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare.

Because the president says with great assurance that there is no need to raise taxes to pay for these popular programs, his position, then, must be that things will work out somehow, although he is vague on the details.

One editorial writer said it best when he wrote, "Four more years of that is like riding over Niagara Falls in a canoe — an interesting experience but one not entirely free of certain risks."

Anthony Armstrong

Far too easily

The amicable sweet and smooth break-up of modern love affairs occurs these days only on television. Someone always feels (s)he has given more than they got back. Someone, it never fails, is always angry when the relationship ends.

Talk of the real reasons for the collapse of the relationship is usually never part of the final verbal war waged on each other by the wounded, and now, ex-lovers.

Times like these are times to hurt or times to be hurt, whatever your pleasure. There never seems to be a last word. Nobody, particularly the person feeling most infringed, is willing to be the next to the last person to stop talking.

The super cool people - those who are never affected by anything in life except the effects of the lies they tell themselves - fume inside until the very last minute only to explode in the eleventh hour, with the venom from their hurt and the regret at not having said whatever they now admit should have been said all along.

Even after the separation is a *fait accompli:* after his clothes are removed from the closet, after pledges are made verbally assuring that one's wishes for the other person are only for the best and;

Even after that lie and after the final accounting of any and all shared funds, loans, or credit cards - after all this one of the parties still has to find one more way to have one more thing to say.

If this most recent break-up is only the latest of a number of such experiences the parties, no matter how self confident, will begin to find, against their best efforts to the contrary, that they just can't avoid the self esteem destroying questions about their failures as people.

This vividly reminds them of the mistaken choice they made in the first place. No matter how long the relationship lasted; all but the very first days of it rewind in their heads, reminding them that the reasons they used for coming together in the first place would never stand-up against the test-of-time.

Had they been honest with themselves, had they possessed the courage of self, the strength of ego needed to say "no" back when they first got started, they would have never come this far.

In doing so they now are faced with the fact that they've been travelling a road made of nothing but balloons.

The way she looked, the job he had, the feeling that maybe, just maybe, "I can change this person." The simple fear of being alone - personal things not straightened out long before, with just themselves - now appear again and linger in their minds like smoke rings. How many times will they do this to themselves?

Like religion, we use our love like opium. It hides our fears at examining ourselves. So we profess to give our love to another before we give our love to ourselves. It is a martyr's love not based in giving, based instead in getting all, in exchange for a few emotional trinkets that almost anyone would be willing to give up.

We say, "I love you" far too easily. After all, "what's love got to do with it" anyway? What's two more broken hearts going to be but a spit in the ocean? So we go on spitting and spitting and, hoping that we can make our television debut different from the rest.

Samuel L. Banks

Labor Day postscript

The tumult, merrymaking, extravagant rhetoric and political posturing have all now, mercifully, come to a blessed end. Our recent Labor Day observance showed stupendous and historic socio-economic gains for the white majority society.

In this conjunction, over 107 million Americans are gainfully employed, the highest in our nation's history, and the Gross National Product, sum total of goods and services produced in a calendar year, is over two trillion dollars.

However, amidst the historic economic break-throughs, there was large-scale structural or long-term unemployment among a majority of black and Hispanic Americans.

Black and Hispanic Americans continue to represent a majority of the 8.5 million Americans who remain unemployed. The situation, according to leading economic indicators, is worsening for blacks as the majority white society prospers.

A well-known black spiritual reminds us: "I'm so glad troubles don't last always." Troubles, however, in reality, can be interminable or of long duration if people don't act singly and in groups to end them.

Black Americans, as other ethnic and racial groups in the past, must forge strategies for enhancement and empowerment.

We have the ability and human resources to develop a grand design for the salvation of our people. We must now surmount internecine conflict, the romance of rhetoric, petty bickering and jealousies and the fear of risk-taking to do what is necessary, within our legal framework, to have our share of power.

Essential in this process is a mobilization of will and resolve.

I am emboldened to suggest a five point program that I believe will be enormously important in advancing the socio-economic interests of Black people locally and nationally. The fundamental elements are as follows:

1. Believe you can make a difference If you believe and work to make a difference in the quality of life in your community, you will tend to make a difference. It is crucial that we as black Americans believe in ourselves if we are to overcome societal exclusion and denial.

William H. Grier and Price M. Cobbs, in their celebrated Black Rage, make a potent and timely observation:

"*Black people have shown a genius for surviving under the most deadly circumstances. They have survived because of their close attention to reality. A Black dreamer would have a short life in Mississippi.*"

The centrality of their (i.e., Cobbs and Price) thought is we must learn to believe in ourselves.

2. Become an active participant in the total life of the community:

Not only must you register to vote but you must be persistent in urging, inducing and persuading your family, relatives, friends and associates to register and vote. Failure to register and vote means, in practical terms, that you do not count in the American body politic.

If you play no part in the political process in regard to selecting the persons who represent you on governmental bodies at all levels (i.e., local, state and national) you are left out of decision-making. A voteless person remains a voiceless person.

The quality of life in the community, for better or worse, will be determined, to a large degree, by the extent of your participatory involvement. Avoid the evasion of letting the proverbial John or Mary do it for you. Act Yourself.

3. Support black organizations that work for black economic, political and political empowerment.

As you support such black organizations as the NAACP, Urban League, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and People United to Save Humanity, you have a basic right to see demonstrable evidence and witness of these organizations in support of Black interests, aspirations and needs. You should insist upon organizational accountability as a basis for your support.

4. Insist on the highest quality of education at all levels (i.e., elementary-secondary and higher education)

We must not permit an erosion or diminution or our historic passion for education. High quality education is necessary for effective penetration and competition in the socio-economic mainstream of our nation. We must, in addition to formal schooling, make full use of libraries, churches, civic groups, sororities and fraternal groups and dialogue at home in family settings to stress the significance of education.

5. Share your talents and skills with others:

As Black people, marginally situated in our society, we have, as in times past, a special obligation to help others. This imposes a special obligation on black professionals and skilled workers to give more of their time and resources to help the black impoverished and excluded. We must, in spite of debilitating circumstances, do more to help ourselves. Again, black professionals must be in the forefront of this effort.

Are you contributing to our troubles' through inaction, whimsicality and the perpetual romance of rhetoric? How are you, in fact, working to improve the quality of life of your community economically, politically, culturally, ethically and educationally? It is time to get serious.

PLAIN TALK

by

Derrick K. Matthews. M.D.

Animal bites

"Dog Bites Man" rarely raises comment when run as a newspaper column." "Man Bites Dog" is sure to gain attention as a headline. More importantly, however, is the occasion when "Human Bites Human," for this is the more dangerous bite.

Approximately one percent of all emergency room visits nationwide are caused by bite wounds. Between 1 and 2 million Americans experience human and animal bites on an annual basis. More human than rodent bites were reported in New York City in 1978 and 1979.

Bites occur not only from dogs but also cats, rodents, venomous snakes and wild animals. Dog bites are the most common animal bites. Most victims are young males; peak incidence is in the summer, and between 1 and 9 p.m. The majority occur from pets known to the victim.

Bites occur in several different ways. They can be puncture wounds, crush injuries, scratches, and deep cuts. The majority of dog bites are fairly superficial and require no further attention.

If there is no penetration from the bite, there is no risk of infection. A bite from a large dog, however, can cause a significant contusion and should be treated as such. Ice should be placed on the wound and signs of bleeding under the skin should be looked for.

Infection from a dog bite or domestic animal bite can occur from normal germs in the animal's mouth or from the bacteria that happen to be on the skin at the time of the bite. Although scratches can be of some concern, puncture wounds become infected more frequently on the average.

If the skin has been penetrated, the status of tetanus immunity should be checked. In young children they should be up to date with their shots; otherwise they may need a booster. In older children and adults, tetanus immunizations should be given every 10 years on a routine basis. If a bite wound has occurred, however, a tetanus shot is needed if there has been none in the past 5 years.

Rabies is a concern with any animal bite. For this reason the health department has certain guidelines for the care of animals after bites.

If the animal is a known pet, then it must be held by the owner for a quarantine period of 10 days, regardless of its rabies immunization status. Routine care is given to the bite wound. A police report also has to be made on the incident.

If the animal is a stray dog, careful attempts should be made to track down and have the health department trap it for a ten day quarantine.

Any wild animals such as raccoons or bats are assumed to have rabies unless proven otherwise. When one has been bitten by these, and any other suspect or positive animal, rabies vaccination is necessary as soon as possible.

Treatment of rabies after symptoms have developed is rarely successful. Through new and more refined techniques, what used to be a painful 21 shot series has been reduced to 5 days maximum.

Human bites are more dangerous than animal bites. The germs in human mouths can cause more serious and chronic infections than animal bites. If there is skin breakage, attention should be sought from a docter or hospital.

Interestingly enough the majority of human bites occur from people who know each other. The most common day of the week is Saturday, particularly Saturday night (which is no surprise!).

Human bites fall in two categories. On some occasions there is a deliberate clenching of teeth on human anatomy. The other type of bite results from a clenched fist injury against the teeth of another person.

Human bites almost invariably require antibiotic treatment. If left untreated they may progress to a point that they may require hospitalization and intravenous medication. Complications such as septic arthritis and osteomyelitis (bone infection) occur much more frequently with human bites.

Bites come from all different species and may require special attention for various specific illnesses. The most dangerous animal bite is Homo Sapiens and needs special attention.

AFRO SURVEY

Your feelings about the South Africa situation?

Vivian Turner

Calvin Hill

Charles Daniels

Mike Jones

This week the question to the man and woman in the street was, "What are your reactions to happenings in South Africa?"

Vivian Turner, 30, salesperson, "Blacks should definitely be able to vote there. They have no say in what's being done at all, and it is affecting them. The blacks there are indeed justified when they riot and protest. I think the United States should help. They intervene in every other country's problems."

Calvin Hill, 50, mortgager, "It's deplorable. Anytime a minority can control a majority the way it's being done there, it's deplorable. That is slavery. I am all for the United States becoming involved, but then why would we? We are one of the people trading with them. But if we urge other countries to stop and place sanctions, something might happen.

Charles Daniels, 49, laborer, "Blacks in South Africa surely aren't being treated fairly. In my opinion, the United States is just as much to blame. They are helping Europeans by supplying army supplies undercover. They are endorsing the government's actions.

Mike Jones, 37, financial analyst, "It's deplorable. The minority rules the majority. Riots there are justifiable because blacks are being excluded from a system that is controlling their lives. That's terrible. Now while I don't personally put a lot of responsibility on the United States to do something about the situation, I do think the United Nations should be directly involved, even if it means cutting some economic aid to the area."

Carl Johnson, 39, gardener, "I feel the United States should do something to help the people over in South Africa. Without any question, there should be blacks as well as any other race participating in the election process there."

Isabelle Johnson, 36, clerk, "It is really bad in South Africa. They should picket and keep picketing. Meanwhile, the U.S. should step in and do something to help the blacks there."

Keith Birckhead, proof operator, "The U.S. should help overthrow the government. It is pretty obvious that blacks aren't allowed to vote, and if this country is about human rights as it insists, then such a move is definitely in order."

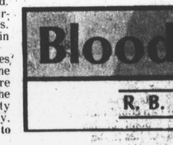
Ernest Eley, 28, probation agent, "It's horrible. Do you know our tax dollars are subsidizing the South African government? I think we are very much involved with keeping that system up. The riots are justified. The people have to have some kind of rebellion. We had ours, especially in the 60's."

Carl Johnson

Isabelle Johnson

Keith Birckhead

Ernest Eley



Bloodnotes

R. B. Jones

Remember Jesse and Louis

The prospects for a Democratic victory in November are neither dim to any but the most irrationally optimistic member of that party. It's obvious that they have the wrong candidate, the wrong platform and the wrong strategy.

The Democrats have swallowed the notion that a great conservative tide has crested in American politics and any who oppose it will be drowned. Consequently, the Democrats have tried to be more conservative than their opposition in campaign issue emphasis and platform rhetoric.

For black people in America, any conservative administration in power is harmful. The presidency of Jimmy Carter is viewed with rosy nostalgia, not because he was a liberal, but because he was less heavy - handed and less obvious than his successor in his budget cuts. He also provided more appointments in the federal system to placate the black bourgoisie.

Still the Carter Administration and its predecessor, the Nixon - Ford Administration were conservative and black people felt severe blows from the deteriorating economy.

Conventional, business as usual, politics have not seemed to work for the masses of black people in this society. Voices have been raised that seemed to suggest that a new approach was in order, but they have not made the final call for a new day in black politics.

Jesse Jackson called for the formation of a black political party at the Gary Indiana convention of the National Black Political Assembly in 1972. That meeting saw over 2,000 delegates from around the country meet to map out a political strategy for black people.

The assembly refused to endorse Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm for president because she was running in the party mainstream.

The Gary gathering hesitated to form a black political party, despite Jesse Jackson's rousing call. They also refused to endorse any presidential candidate. Jesse went on to support McGovern's disaster - bound candidacy.

Jesse Jackson ran for president in 1984, attempting to enter the mainstream of the democratic party. All he got for his trouble was a chance to address a prime time national audience and more racist, condescending media treatment than has been seen by this observer since the heyday of black militancy in the late sixties. The party reaction toward Jesse Jackson has gone from fear and loathing to relief and contempt.

After Jackson's conciliatory efforts within the party went unrewarded, his friend and supporter Minister Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam declared that he would not support anyone for president.

Farrakhan had only recently registered to vote for the first time this year in order to support Jackson. It must be assumed that he is a registered Democrat.

This is a strange turn of events for Farrakhan since he made the motion for an independent black political party to be formed at the 1983 convention of the National Black Political Assembly in New Orleans. The motion was seconded by Rev. Ben Chavis, formerly one of the Wilmington Ten political prisoners.

The new party was formed, but the two proponents of independent politics with national name recognition and sizeable constituencies did not help build it into a national force. They preferred to work in the Democratic Party, much to their own chagrin and disillusionment.

As the party of Farrakhan and Jackson heads for its November debacle, they must think long and hard about where they will stand after the election.

If Reagan wins by a landslide, the party will probably become even more right - wing. Perhaps, then these two leaders will embark on the road to truly independent black politics.

NNPA FEATURE

CAPITAL COMMENTS

by John W. Lewis, Jr.

The economic and political independence of black leaders and organizations has always been a crucial element in the struggle for freedom and justice. The man who pays the fiddler calls the tune.

We would have taken a few steps on the long journey to obtain justice in America if our struggle depended on funding from America's establishment institutions. Jesse Jackson's determination to continue the independence that has been a vital part of his campaign for the presidency, in spite of tempting alternatives, should be applauded.

"We are closing down our presidential campaign, and we do not intend to ask anyone else to pay off our debt," Jackson said recently in a post-Democratic National Convention speech. "We are going to retire our own campaign debt of approximately $500,000.

"We must launch our own independent voter registration drive among still unregistered youth, women, Hispanics, blacks and poor people throughout the country. And we must fund it ourselves."

In his necessary spirit of independence, he has said that he will not accept any job with organic ties to the Mondale-Ferraro Campaign. "The Rainbow Coalition must be self-supporting," Jackson said. "The Rainbow must be economically independent."

"We can't ride to freedom on Pharaoh's chariot. Our competitors can't finance our army."

Jackson plans to establish the Rainbow Coalition as an independent political organization - "a political arm for progressive politics in 1984 and beyond." He will not actively campaign for the Mondale-Ferraro ticket, he staunchly maintains, unless the Democratic presidential nominee sends a "message that will motivate our people..."

The Rainbow Coalition collected 3.5 million votes, 21 percent of the total primary votes cast. Jackson won four states - South Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and the District of Columbia.

He took second place in Texas, Tennessee, Maryland, Kentucky and Arkansas. He finished a strong third in New York, California, Illinois and New Jersey.

Jackson won approximately 60 congressional districts - about 30 in the South. He won 465.5 delegates votes in San Francisco and in tthe process was responsible for registering a record number of new voters.

SEP