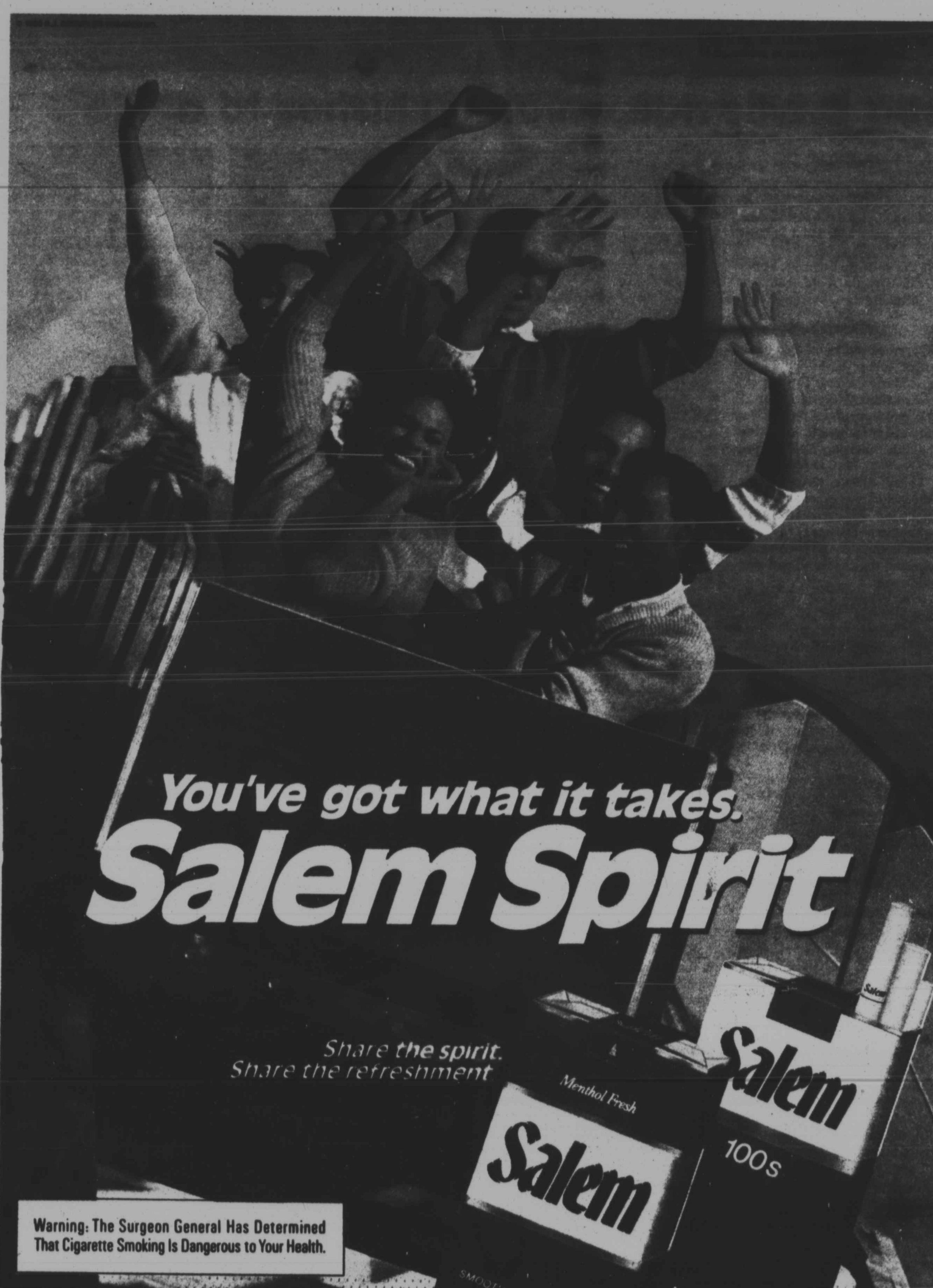

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A legislative report to the people

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Baltimore Afro-American

93RD YEAR NO. 76 BALTIMORE, MD. MAY 4, 1985 40 CENTS

Squeegee task force appointed by mayor

By Racine S. winborne
AFRO Staff Writer

Mayor Schaefer this week appointed a three-member committee, two men and one woman, to review the hotly contested squeegee ban bill and propose an amenable solution to the controversy before matters get any further out of hand.

The three include, City Solicitor Benjamin L. Brown, Bishop L. Robinson, Baltimore City police commissioner and Mary Ann Willen, the deputy director of the Mayor's Coordinating Council on Criminal Justice.

A meeting of the new Squeegee Task Force was reportedly planned for sometime today (Friday), although the exact location and time could not be obtained at press time.

However, in a telephone interview with the AFRO on Thursday, one task force member who indicated that she had no personal views on the bill one way or the other, did indicate that a main committee priority would be to try to respond to the needs and concerns of all of the involved parties.

"There are a lot of recommended changes. We will basical-

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BALTIMORE CRIME SCENE:

Marijuana use declines but cocaine and PCP rising

By Brion Tyson
AFRO Staff Writer

In spite of recent reports of decreased teen drug abuse in the state, drug enforcement officials admitted recently that the overall use and abuse of drugs is a constant problem throughout the area.

Although publishd reports documented that high school marijuana use has declined, local drug officials said that the youngsters make up for it with the use of other drugs.

"It's good that less youths are smoking marijuana, but we've seen an increase in their use of cocaine and PCP," drug enforcement agent Bob O'Leary told the AFRO.

He attributed the constant abuse of these drugs to their low, affordable prices and availability.

"PCP," said O'Leary, "is a cheap, chemical, man-made drug that is usually easy to get and easy to sell. And although we've cracked down on a number of locals, its use has not declined."

O'Leary gave a brief history of PCP traffic in and around Baltimore.

"At one time a few years back, folks would set up drug factories right in their homes, make the stuff and sell it right here in the state. Now that the courts are imposing more severe penalties on illegal drug manufacturers, folks are scared to make drugs in the state. Now, instead of making the stuff themselves, many of the folks who still want the money and the highs go to California to get the stuff."

Drug experts report that PCP is a liquid chemical that is used to treat marijuana or any smokable substance. A few drops of PCP on a marijuana cigarette, experts say, produces a more potent, hallucinatory high. "On the street a PCP joint is worth about $5," O'Leary said.

According to drug officials, cocaine, formerly known as "a rich man's drug," is now more available to the average high school student than ever before. "As a means of increasing their profits and expanding their market, lower level cocaine dealers now break their packages down into smaller bags that can be purchased for as little as $10.

"A few years ago, the smallest amount of cocaine a person could purchase was a gram, and that sold for $100. Your typical high school student couldn't afford it even if he wanted to. Today, it's nothing for a youngster to say, "Let me get a dime or a quarter ($25)," O'Leary added.

He cited the results of a recent study that indicated that 50 percent of teenagers who try cocaine wind up having a cocaine problem later on. "Cocaine is still on the upswing, its use has gone up a full percentage point among youths since last year."

According to O'Leary, Baltimore has been a "serious victim" of heroin abuse in recent years, and in 1984 heroin abuse in the city remained constant. "This is a traditional heroin abuse area, and it doesn't appear to be declining. A large amount of heroin comes into the city from New York. In many cases, dealers travel to the city and bring back large quantities of heroin. Since Baltimore is right off of Interstate 95, it's convenient for these guys to just drive up and come right back," he said.

O'Leary explained, "In Baltimore, heroin is not very pure. Here 2 to 3 percent pure heroin is considered good. In New York, it's about 8 or 9 percent. What a lot of these guys do is go to New York, get a large quantity, bring it back to Baltimore, reduce it, and double or triple their money. If the person is a user, he shoots a lot of the stuff up, and just makes his money back."

According to O'Leary, pressure from enforcement officials helps to keep drugs out of reach for ci-

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David Carroll, president of the 21St Century Labor Council gestures to members of his group gathered at the Fort Worthington Recreation Center this Wednesday.

Labor council still suing Bethlehem Steel

By Tea Montier
AFRO Staff Writer

Attorneys representing nearly 1,000 current and former employees of Bethlehem Steel at Sparrows Point have filed their second appeal with the U.S. Court of Appeals which seeks to overturn a recent ruling made by a local federal district judge.

According to Luther West, attorney for members of the 21st Century Labor Council, the brief which seeks to explain why Judge James R. Miller of Federal District Court should have his ruling overturned was filed on April 8th.

The 21st Century Labor Council was formed to fight unfair racist conditions at Bethlehem Steel during the 1960's. At that time, segregated conditions existed including separate housing, educational and eating facilities for black and white workers.

Blacks on the average were found to make far less than their white counterparts.

According to West, "Black workers were excluded from the better jobs. They could nold no trade jobs. As late as 1976, there were 300 white electricians and only one black one.

"The local labor unions 2609

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Summer lunch program will begin June 24

By Valerie Smith-Madden
AFRO Staff Writer

The Summer Lunch Program which is designed to provide free and nutritious meals to needy children, 18 years and under, will begin on June 24 and will run for eight weeks.

According to Harriett Dawson, coordinator of this venture, the Summer Lunch Program is a "quiet one."

"It's original intention was to be a continuation of the school lunch program," she said.

"About 80,000 children are eligible during the year, but in the summer, at best, we're able to serve between 25 and 26,000. We need more sponsors," she added.

Youths over 18, who are handicapped, or participating in a public or private non-profit school for the handicapped, are also eligible to receive meals.

The lunches provided, meet one-third of the daily minimum requirements as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture,

"The Lunch includes a sandwich, fruit, milk, juice and a snack," said Ms. Dawson.

Dawson said that the lunches, which will be prepared by a local caterer, are actually delivered to each site every day in a refrigerated truck.

Community groups, neighborhood clubs, summer camps or vacation Bible schools with a minimum enrollment of 20 youths (50 percent of whom are economically disadvantaged)

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Lt. Colonel Cates (left) and Mrs. William "Box" Harris (Ivy) congratulate Chris Williams (right) recipient of the William "Box" Harris Award.

State jobless rate drops a fraction

Maryland's estimated unemployment rate dropped from 5.8 percent in February to 5.1 percent in March, 1985 according to statistics released by the Maryland Department of Employment and Training.

Between February and March, Maryland's civilian labor force increased by 8,766 persons, totaling 2,249,906. Employment was up by 23,920 persons at 2,135,618. Unemployment declined by 15,154 persons to 114,288.

Since March 1984, the labor force has swelled by an estimated 47,550 persons with an employment growth of 61,962 persons and an unemployment decline of 14,412 persons.

There was a notable decline throughout the state in claims filed for unemployment insurance, particularly in the construction industry. The manufacturing industry experienced reduced claims in good processing, apparel and textiles, stone/clay/glass products and primary metals.

Fewer claims were filed also in agriculture, eating and drinking places, hotels and lodging places, business services and government.

Seasonal hiring increased in construction, eating and drinking places, hotels and lodging places, amusement and recreation services and agri-business.

Hiring was also noted in apparel and textiles manufacturing, business services, public education and city and county government.

This March's unemployment rate, the lowest for a March since 1974, has fallen by 0.7 percentage points from the 5.8 percent recorded in March 1984.

In February, 41 states registered higher rates than Maryland. As usual, Maryland's unemployment rate is substan-

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LEGISLATIVE VIEWPOINT:

A black assessment of the 1985 general assembly

-by Del. Howard "Pete" Rawlings, Chairman, Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and the Environment.

The 1985 session of the Maryland General Assembly concluded almost a month ago. The intervening time has afforded the opportunity to objectively assess the session; its successes, its failures; and its unfinished agenda. While this session lacked the drama of the fight for the Civiletti school funding and the controversy surrounding the Chesapeake Bay clean-up and pension reforms, significant accomplishments were made that positively impact the black community.

Black legislators strongly supported a 12 percent increase in the General Public Assistance (GPA) grant program to aid needy adults prohibited from working by temporary disabilities (the largest increase in a decade); and a 5 percent increase in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program.

Senators Troy Brailey, Nathan Irby, Del. Clarence Davis and myself played key roles in providing political leadership for increasing the stipend for funeral expenses for the poor.

The Caucus supported Governor Harry Hughes' initiative to create a state clearinghouse for missing children, to allow abused children to testify in court by way of closed-circuit television, and to increase foster care subsidies by 20 percent.

The Legislature also enacted a bill making it easier for courts to attach the wages of people who are chronically late in making child support payments.

Decent and affordable housing for low-income citizens continues to be a major problem, and has developed into a state policy issue. Again, black legislators played a leadership role in this area when Sen. Clarence Blount successfully sponsored a bill that would allow the interest income on "good faith" deposits (made by home buyers and held until settlement) to be put into a Rental Housing Resources Corporation. These funds would help to pay for the rehabilitation of low-income rental housing.

As a result of my advocacy, and that of others, Governor Hughes wrote a letter committing that housing for the poor and elderly would be priority issues in the 1986 Legislative Session.

The Black Caucus strongly supported a telephone lifeline service that is unique in the country. The bill provides that GPA and SSI (Supplemental Security Income) recipients may subscribe to the telephone lifeline service at 50 percent of the cost. The other 50 percent shall be a deduction from the gross receipts tax of the C&P Telephone Company.

This means that an eligible person may subscribe to basic residential service plus 30 local untimed calls per month and pay only 50 percent of the service costs. Once the statute becomes effective, it is estimated that 40,000 Marylanders will be eligible for the lifeline service.

Education remains a high priority of the Legislative Black Caucus. There were important achievements in increased funding for the Baltimore City Public Schools. In addition to the second year funding of the Civiletti proposal, we were able to bring additional funds to Baltimore City, amounting to over $7 million in density aid.

The Community College of Baltimore was the beneficiary of $1.1 million in additional funding. The black legislators on the Ways and Means and Budget and Taxation Committee pushed legislation mandating that a community college receive $115 additional for each student that is determined to be low income

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