Baltimore Afro-American

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Pride of Baltimore

A tragedy at sea always grips the human imagination. The oceans of the world are so immense and the largest aircraft carriers are mere specks on the sea despite their being floating towns with populations numbering in the thousands.

Sailing vast oceans in large ships is precarious enough, but sailing in a replica of a clipper ship is a venture that is still fraught with danger.

The loss of the sailors on the Pride of Baltimore is a very tragic event, one that dampens the spirits of the city. Despite the fact that the black community had misgivings about the ship when it was first built.

Sailing ships have a very tragic role in the history of black people and the clipper ships which the Pride of Baltimore was a replica of were used in the slave trade.

Clipper ships were very fast and could elude anti-slavery patrol ships. However, they were even more cramped for space than the older slave ships.

We mourn along with the rest of the city the loss of the sailors representing Baltimore. Our feelings over the loss of the ship are more ambiguous.

Memorial Day

Memorial Day will be celebrated this Monday and the meaning of the holiday will have more than its usual poignant meaning. It is a day set aside since the American Civil War to pray for peace and to decorate the graves of the war dead.

Prayers for peace are very appropriate at this time. America and her allies are embroiled in terrorism and counter-terrorism. This country is supporting insurgents in Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Angola and conflicts in those regions could draw this country into a broader and more costly conflict if foreign policy is not handled with the utmost care.

This world could use every prayer for peace that can be lifted to the heavens.

Perhaps it is fitting that there is now more than one Memorial Day. The federal government has celebrated the day as the last Monday in May since 1971. However many states celebrate the holiday on its traditional date.

Two days dedicated to peace and remembering the cost of war is a good thing, however it plays havoc with family observance because some persons will be off from work on the federal day and others will be off on the state holiday.

There were practical reasons on both sides of the issue of moving the federal observance, but a uniform celebration of the solemn occasion would bring the entire nation together to reemphasize the need for peace.

Parren Mitchell

Although Parren Mitchell's decision not to run for reelection was not unexpected, the community pressure exerted on him was tremendous and many believe that he had been persuaded to postpone his retirement for two more years.

He has served the black community both locally and nationally better than most and he has stood fast in the battle for human rights in this country.

Parren Mitchell has gotten bills passed that will bring millions of dollars into the black community. He has become an expert on minority business programs and he helped found a Minority Business Legal Defense Foundation.

For 16 years he has fought the good fight and if he feels that he should retire from the rigors of Congress, he leaves with the love and gratitude of his faithful constituents who backed him time after time.

Good luck PJ in your future endeavors and we know that we will still hear your voice in the chorus of champions of justice.

Letters to the Editor

Test of political skill

The decision of Cong. Parren J. Mitchell not to seek re-election clears the air for what could be an unusual opportunity for testing political skills and for building stronger political organizations in the 7th Congressional District.

Each of the five official candidates, and more to join, will have to reach out and form political ties stretching beyond not only the customary East side or West side of Baltimore.

The successful candidate will be the one who is best able to build bridges across the hereto rival sections of the city. In no small measure, this will be important for the mayoral elections.

Competition by its very nature is expected to generate rivalry but that rivalry should be governed by the rules of fair play and political decency. Organizations and voters are expected to rally around the candidates of their choice and to vigorously support them.

The talk about the 7th District becoming divisive is speculative. Candidates for the congressional seat will be expected to conduct their campaigns on a high plane, and if not, each will be accountable to the voters.

A measure of the political maturity of the voters in the Seventh will be the extent to which the winners in the primary elections will be backed in the general elections.

After all, if the voters in the Seventh do not like the performance of the person elected to Congress in 1986, then choose someone else in 1988.

HERBERT H. LINDSEY

Social services and problems

The Baltimore City Department of Social Services handles many cases during the year. Given the daily increase in Protective Service cases, and the limited resources available, it's surprising that they are able to protect as many children as they do.

Many fail to realize the stressful situations that workers encounter daily in dealing with mothers, fathers, boyfriends, etc. There is also the ordeal of removing children from the only place that the children may know as home.

Do you think workers enjoy separating families? However, they realize that it must be done as a last resort if the lives of innocent children are to be saved.

Workers within the Protective Services Units are committed and devoted employees. They recognize the limitations of the program. Their response regarding Myeisha would probably be to remind people that they did not kill her.

More resources must be made available through the State if the agency is expected to more effectively intervene in problem families. The numbers are just too high.

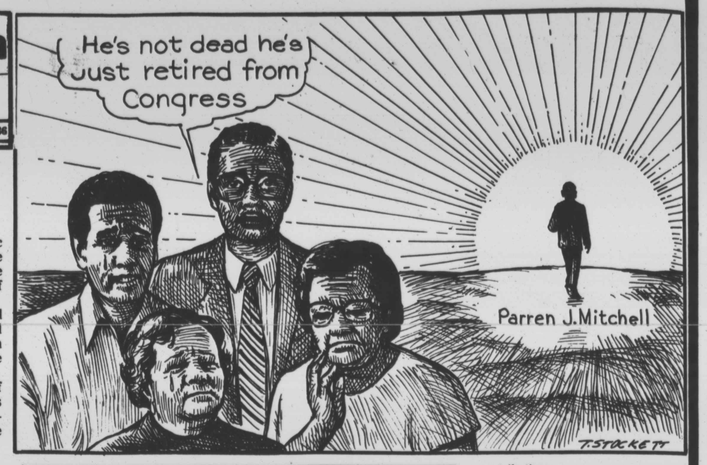
Secretary Massinga stated that more workers were needed. Thirteen existing workers are being reassigned. Good, but will that solve the problem?

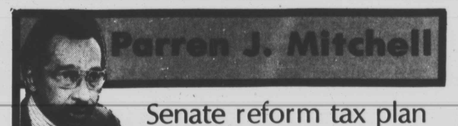
Of course not. We must reduce all caseloads to a manageable level. Even then, be careful who you blame for tragedies that may be beyond anyone's power to prevent.

The real focus should be to alert the public, state legislators and state administrators of the danger that many children face daily and report all incidence of suspected child abuse.

Secondly, we must all combine our energies to develop and provide the resources that are needed to help these children. Until all citizens become committed and demand changes in the violent way that adults treat children, we will read about a Myeisha Jenkins again.

CECELIA CARROLL, LCSW





Senate reform tax plan

THE SENATE TAX REFORM PLAN

Capitalizing on the momentum of the Senate tax-overhaul bill--which passed the Senate Finance Committee with a unanimous vote on May 7--the Senate will likely begin floor debate early next month. The proposal unites curtailment of legal tax avoidance with large reductions in tax rates.

The House-passed version of a tax bill also cuts tax rates and curtails tax breaks, but offers a larger average tax cut to all individual tax payers at 9 percent while the Senate Finance proposals offers an average of 6 percent. In both cases, the difference is made up by higher taxes on corporations.

Provisions that are included in both the House and Senate version, which I appreciate the most, include the exclusion of roughly six million low-income workers from income taxation and the imposition of a minimum tax on corporations which would insure that all corporations pay their fair share of taxes.

Major provisions of the Senate tax bill that are likely to be most important to the typical taxpayer include:

* **INDIVIDUAL RATES.** Replaces the existing 14 tax brackets ranging from 11-50 percent with two brackets--15 percent and 27 percent.

* **STANDARD DEDUCTION.** Sets the standard deduction allowed those who do not itemize deductions at $3,000 for individuals, $5,000 for joint returns and $4,400 for single heads of households. The existing standard deduction is $2,480 for individuals and single heads of households and $3,670 for joint returns.

* **PERSONAL EXEMPTION.** The existing $1,080 personal exemption for taxpayers and dependents would be raised to $1,900 in 1987 and $2,000 in 1988. The exemption would be phased out gradually for individuals with incomes between $87,240 and $127,240, for married couples with incomes between $145,320 and $185,320 and for single heads of households with incomes of between $111,400 and $151,400. Individuals who can be claimed as dependents by other taxpayers would not be allowed their own personal exemptions.

* **EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT.** Retains the current-law earned income credit for poor persons, but increases the benefit.

* **ROUNDING.** Adjusts downward to the nearest $50 the standard deduction, personal exemption and rate brackets, and possibly the earned income tax credit, when indexed for inflation in future years.

* **TWO-EARNER DEDUCTION.** Repeals the deduction now allowed married couples filing joint returns. The deduction was designed to eliminate the so-called "marriage penalty," which caused working couples filing jointly to pay higher taxes than if they had been able to file separately as single taxpayers.

* **INCOME AVERAGING.** Repeals the ability that taxpayers with fluctuating incomes now have to average their incomes over a period of years to reduce their tax liability when they have a large increase in income.

* **ELDERLY AND DISABLED.** Retains current law allowing a 15 percent tax credit for individuals aged 65 and over, or those who have retired on permanent and total disability.

* **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.** Taxes all unemployment benefits as income. Currently, such benefits are taxed only if the benefits, in combination with a taxpayer's adjusted gross income, exceed $12,000 for individuals and $18,000 for joint returns. Workers' compensation and black lung disability payment would not be subject to tax, as under current law.

* **SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS.** Retains current law governing the taxation of scholarships and fellowships. Generally such amounts are not taxes for degree candidates.

* **STATE AND LOCAL TAXES.** Retains full deductions for state and local income, personal property and real estate taxes. Deductions for state and local sales taxes would be eliminated.

* **CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.** Allows the deduction now allowed those who do not itemize deductions to expire at the end of 1986. Itemizers would continue to be allowed to deduct charitable contributions.

* **ADOPTION EXPENSES.** Retains the existing deduction for up to $1,500 of adoption expenses for handicapped or other hard-to-place children.

* **MINISTERS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL.** Allows ministers and military personnel receiving tax-free housing allowances to deduct mortgage interest or real property tax payments.

* **MEDICAL DEDUCTIONS.** Increases from 5 percent to 10 percent the amount of adjusted gross income that a taxpayer's medical expenses must exceed before such expenses may be deducted.

* **CHILD CARE.** Retains the current child and dependent care tax credit of up to $720 a year for one dependent and up to $1,440 for two dependents.

* **POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION CREDIT.** Repeals the existing $50 credit ($100 for joint returns) for contributions to political campaigns and certain political campaign organizations.

* **INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS (IRAs).** Restricts the current deduction for IRA contributions to those taxpayers who are not covered by employer-provided pension plans, including 401(k) tax-deferred savings plans.

* **401(k) PLANS.** Reduces the maximum elective employee contribution to a tax-deferred savings plan from $30,000 a yer to $7,000.

* **FEDERAL RETIREES.** Eliminates a provision in current law allowing public employees to receive tax-free pension benefits until the benefit payments exceed the total contributions made by the individual to the pension plan. Instead, the tax-free portion of the benefits would be spread out over the retiree's life expectancy.

* **EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.** Makes permanent the exclusion from taxable income of employee education assistance and adjust the current $5,000 cap to rise with the Social Security wage base.

We can expect many changes to the Senate Finance Committee bill through amendments on the Senate floor as they debate the bill. Still even further changes will occur when the Senate and House meet in conference to work out the differences in their two plans.

While the fate of a tax-overhaul bill is uncertain at this time, pressure to restore fairness to our current tax system and the need for increased levels of revenues to reduce the current budget deficit will keep the momentum going and undoubtedly bring some changes in the very near future in our current tax system.

Goodbye Pride

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. (Book of Psalms, (07:23-24)

The earth is three fourths water; that water sustains us, that water humbles us. "To all the people of Baltimore; everything herein is a long way from home, kin and the Inner Harbor; but I hope you can enjoy some of my odd journeys, if only in the oceans of your mind."

Sailors speak of things only those who go down to the sea in ships can truly understand. Mostly, though, they speak about the sea; the remarkably clear and warm sea, the rise and fall of the sea; the welcoming ways of the sea; and the sea as an ultimate resting place.

No place on the water, anywhere in the world, has stored-up more stories, for the ears of eager boys and the half frightened half longing hearts of those women who too serve by waiting, then the fabled Bermuda Triangle.

Connect the lines between Miami, Bermuda, and the eastern most tip of Cuba; therein the waters hold fear and mystery for some seafarers and, depending who's talking, just another part of God's awe inspiring wonder that is the sea.

One thing is for certain, the only predictable thing about the sea is its unpredictability.

Wind is usually the undoing of ships at sea; big ships, small ships, all ships. The sea makes them collective equals before its majesty. Sailors use something called the Beaufort Wind Scale to describe the characteristics that can change a calm, mirror like sea into one whipped-up to hurricane fury; where the air is full of foam; the water completely white and driving with spray.

Where seeing anything becomes almost impossible and, every chore is done to the din of a prayer. These are the seas the crew of The Pride of Baltimore knew, as they sailed the oceans blue on behalf of this, our fair city.

The wind saunters along between one and three knots (a knot is a measure of both distance and time; signifying one nautical mile, 1.15 land miles, per hour); the water is calm, the air light. Some ripples form in the water, they look like scales but they have no foam crests.

Short of sheer carelessness, seas such as these could cradle a baby asleep and not a wink of rest would be missed. At four to six knots a light breeze can be felt. The breeze kicks the water into small wavelets, though still short these become more pronounced.

The crests that do form have a glassy look about them, yet the wind is still only a breeze and the crests do not break. These seas will ventilate the scalp and caress you in their pleasantry.

From six knots to as many as twenty-seven the breezes blow ever more noticeably. Sailors classify them as such: light breeze, moderate breeze, gentle breeze, then strong breeze. By the time the winds hit 27 knots large waves begin to form; white foam crest are everywhere and, spray begins to fly like the water coming through the wide open nozzle of a garden hose.

This is no lawn being watered, however; this is the start of something big. It is the next series of weather conditions that we need to understand if we are to know, to feel, the sea in her violent posture, the sea like she was when the Pride went down.

Not only can the sea become very violent; the changes can happen in less time then it takes to remove the wrapper from a stick of chewing gum. It is this aspect of sailing that, at once, can make one know why the sea was so hypnotic, in the first place and, questions one's sanity, in the second.

Though never underhanded, for the sea builds in stages even though the sailor is not always aware of their coming progression; the open waters are frequently unforgiving.

It's near gale conditions. The sea heaps itself at you and, white foam begins to be blown in streaks, as it breaks from wind tossed waves. Depending on the wind and water temperature the foam can feel like showering under water that comes at you too fast, or it can feel like being cut by flying glass.

The direction of the wind causes more troubles; in your face it's blinding, at your back it pushes you regardless of whether you wish to be or not. At 34 to 40 knots, representing a wind speed of almost 50 miles an hour, gale conditions present themselves.

The waves become moderately high and have ever increasing length; the edges of crest begin to break into spin-

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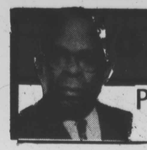

Parren Mitchell continues in his integrity

Parren Mitchell stands as tall and strong as he has ever been.

He was tempted to run again, for a ninth term in the U.S. House of Representatives, after he had announced his firm retirement, to take place at the end of this year. His better judgment, however, prevailed. He will retire. His integrity triumphed.

A terrific "draft movement" had been mounted, and all over the Seventh Congressional District appeared placards, in deep red, shouting "Run, Parren Run." Some of the "draft" seems to have been manipulated, but not by the congressman.

The decision not to run was not an easy one. Although he did not have a stomach for a primary fight against some of his old and loyal friends, and no heart fr campaigning in the general election, nevertheless, because he is a political person and a Mitchell (and the latter is very important), he had many sleepless nights, it is to be presumed.

There are so many angles.

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Twenty-four years ago when Sen. Clarence Mitchell was first elected to the General Assembly of Maryland, he told the Institute for Political Education, Morgan State University, almost verbatim, the following:

"We Mitchells are the colored Kennedys. When we face a situation or a problem, we call a family meeting and, whatever decision is made, each of us follows it."

Some friends of Congressman Mitchell were afraid that a "family meeting" on whether he should retire or not at the end of the year, might have decided along the lines, of the placards, that he should change his mind and run for another term.

If such was the decision, this time, at least, Uncle Parren did not follow the wants of the family.

It is no secret that Senator Mitchell who was, naturally, expected to succeed his uncle, as Representative from the 7th District, is having some embarrassing interludes with federal investigators. As this proceeds, it may prevent his running this year, as he will have other business to look after.

If the congressman had returned to his seat (and his high seniority), it was hoped that he might hold the place for his nephew if, as and when the present set of circumstances blows over.

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The nationally revered congressman is "Mr. Clean", both to his local constituents and to a large following throughout the nation. Of him it could always be said that "he walks in his integrity." No corruption, no scandal has ever been connected with him.

He has always given the main business first priority, yet he has always found time for the causes and the people movements that needed assistance, and he has travelled, far and wide, wherever his experience, his expertise and his speaking abilities might help.

As far as anyone knows, he has always been satisfied with his salary and the other legal amenities of his office.

If he now wishes to retire, to take life at a less demanding pace, he ought to be permitted to do so--to take leave of the 24-hour per day pressures of Congress--the extra pressures of the 1980s.

The time does come, or should come, when the health and life of a family member, or of a "leader", should be given the highest importance, despite competing dreams of a dynasty and its perpetuation.

How to insure that his successor will be worthy to wear the shoes of Parren Mitchell is a responsibility for the voters of the Seventh District on Primary Day.

Thanks, largely to the model that the congressman has been, the field is full of aspirants for the opportunity to "serve their people" and city in Congress (at $75,100 per annum and a cornucopia of perquisites).

At the United Nations

Terrorism hurts African tourism

By Arnold de Mille

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. — The attack on Libya is still echoing in the halls here at the UN headquarters - in fact, around the world. It is particularly loud among the people who are promoting tourism in Europe and the African countries which depend heavily on tourists for a hunk of their economic existence.

At first, it was the representatives here at UN headquarters who voiced the fear that the situation between the U.S. and Libya would create a climate which would frighten Americans away from European airports and the Mediterranean. Next came reports from travel agents in key cities that European and Middle East cancellations were as high as 90 percent.

Two weeks ago, at African Travel Association's 11th Annual International Conference held in Atlanta, Ga. the echo was also loud and clear. The conference was held in the U.S. for the first time. Former UN Ambassador Andy Young, now mayor of Atlanta, was host. Some 350 delegates from 52 countries and representatives from 30 nations participated. Kenya alone sent 42 representatives. Kenya's Minister of Tourism was elected president of the association.

The black African nations participating were Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Malawi, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, and Zimbawbe; also participating was Egypt.

The representatives of all of these countries publicly denounced terrorism in any form. The Commissioner of Tourism for the Cameroon declared: "Terrorism is contrary to what we are trying to promote in Africa. We are trying to promote peace, understanding and goodwill. These can be accomplished trough travel, through meeting people in different places."

Many at the conference expressed great concern over the fear of terrorist attacks at European airports, particularly in cities like London, Paris, Madrid, Frankfurt, Rome, Amsterdam and Athens. Terrorist strikes at any of these airports will hurt tourist business in Africa, the Africans claim. Anyone from the U.S. going to any black African country has to pass through one of those airports.

A representative from the Kenya Tourist Ministry said he regrets the Libyan attacks by the U,S. It will have some effect on the tourist business in his country but it is too early to say how much. Tanzania's representative said she, too, is not sure what impact the Libyan-US situation will have on his nation yet, but Nigeria is certain they will feel some degree of effects.

A group of about 10 members of the New York Chapter of the African Travel Association decided to take advantage of an "offer" by Air Atlanta to fly down to attend the conference. We were told that we would be paying only one-quarter of the regular scheduled fare. It sounded good. When asked for seat assignments, we were advised that we would have to wait until we checked in at the airport.

Well, upon arrival at the gate, one by one, we were then advised that we were traveling on "stand-by" tickets and had to wait until the regular passengers had been accommodated. Nothing had been said about "stand-by" status before then.

At that point yours truly became unhappy, annoyed and upset over the thought of not getting on the flight. What was most frustrating was that others on stand-by who came after me were being called and sent on board. By the time my name was finally called, I was ready to fight.

But then - it was worth the "stand-by" status, the anger, the wait and the frustration. The flights—both ways—were smooth, the food was delicious, the drinks were as many as one wanted and the flight attendants were lovely and pleasant. And what surprised us most, Air Atlanta's founder, Chairman of the board and chief executive officer is a young black man 33 years of age.

—Goodbye Pride

Continued from page 4

drift. The foam comes now as do well directed knives, hurled in the direction of the wind and anyone or anything in its way.

Like a marching army the wind blows ever stronger; it's up to strong gale force now. Waves are high, the foam is now in dense streaks. Crest of waves begin to topple, tumble, and roll over. It's almost impossible to see, even in day light. The sea is a rage. Now the storms really blow.

Mind you, this can happen in the time it takes you to read the words of this sentence. Winds are more than 60 miles per hour. Batten down the hatches, that is, if you have the time! The sea is all white, the tumbling of the water becomes shocklike. Little, if anything, can be seen.

The storm grows violent with especially high seas. Small to medium-sized ships might, for the first time, be lost behind waves. Here, the waves crests are blown into froth. Forget about seeing. Only one more condition can be had: hurricane.

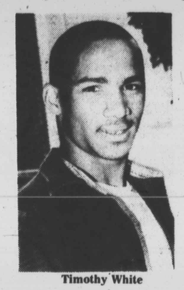
The wind is at 75 miles per hour; it could go to 100 or more. In this the Pride is at the total mercy of the Lord-Thy-God. The sea is a driving torrent of white spray. The decisions are quick ones now. They will, with luck, save you or something else. Good-bye Pride.

—AFRO SURVEY—

Should Sugar Ray Leonard fight again?

Grover Robinson

Kirk Bailey



Timothy White

Matiel Morgan

This week the question to the man and woman in the street is, "Should Sugar Ray Leonard fight again?"

Grover Robinson, bricklayer, 46, "I don't think so. He might think his eye is well enough, but all it takes is one more blow and he's blind - look at the fighter Howard. Sugar Ray has had all his glory."

kirk Bailey, bricklayer, 26, "I don't think he should. But then it's been said he has been fighting even before he was able to walk, so fighting is his life. He has enough money to retire, so it couldn't be the money. It has to be the challenge."

Timothy White, construction worker, 19, "I don't think he should fight. He has a bad eve. He has a family. He might make it through, you couldnever say in fighting. The more I think about it I would fight for all that money."

Matiel Morgan, painter, 20, "No, Sugar Ray is no match for Hagler. I don't think he should fight; he'll probably get whipped. Also, with his injured eye, it is not worth it."

Howard Spinney, entrepreneur, 23, "We as Jehovah Witnesses don't follow boxing. We have nothing against boxers as people but the sport is too violent."

Annette Smith, examination technologist, 39, "No, he has a bad eye. Chances are the person he's fighting will know how to get to that eye. He should leave well enough alone. He has enough money."

Debbie Sydnor, unemployed, 22, "No, I don't think so. He might damage his eye worse than it already is. He has enough money. He should be with his family instead of fighting."

Karen Davis, secretary, 18, "No, he has too much going for him. Why fight and damage his eye again. He can go into other things such as commercials. He has proved his point and has plenty of money, so why?"

Howard Spinney

Annette Smith

Debbie Sydnor

Karen Davis

Bloodnotes

R. B. Jones

To debate, or not

Arrogance is a terrible thing, it gives one illusions that one is much greater than one truly is. It makes one think that one is omnipotent when one is in reality quite powerless. It has been the downfall of many figures who dared to try dominate the world stage and it has been the downfall of glorified black politicians.

The democratic process, in the infrequent times it is employed in the world, works against the arrogance of one person becoming a danger to society. That is why democracy is hated by dictators.

Dictators are egoes run amok and out of control. They see the world from one perspective and that is through their own eyes filtered through self-interest.

Dictators seek to distort the world to fit their own image. They seek to attribute things to themselves that they have not done. Some of them think that they are more important than the people who make up society.

Anti-democratic egotists do not want to be challenged and they do not want to be questioned. They take any disagreement with their pronouncements as a personal affront.

If the above description even vaguely approximates the mayor of this city and non-debating gubernatorial candidate it would seem that the democratic process, such as it is in Maryland is in danger.

Mayor Schaefer, whom I refer to as King Willie Don I for the sake of accuracy, has declared that he will not debate his Democratic primary opponent Attorney General Steve Sachs.

King Willie Don I has dismissed primary debates as superfluous. They are only occasions for good speakers to show off according to the monarch and are not necessary for the democratic selection process to work.

Even in these days when there are fewer and fewer kings in the world, the monarch of Baltimore acts as though elections and candidate comparison are mere formal exercises and have no bearing on who becomes the governor of this state.

Perhas King Willie Don I agrees with the "Sun King" Louis XIV of France who said, "The state is me or I am the state." I do not claim to be a French translator.

It is obvious that King Willie Don I thinks he is above the mere citizens of Baltimore since his name is first and in larger print than the phrase "Citizens of Baltimore" painted on all municipal property, it seems.

This is a dangerous illusion that he is trying to carry beyond the city's borders. After all the king has a huge war chest and wealthy, powerful friends and a mostly cowered city that fears King Willie Don I and his legendary temper and vindictiveness.

Many people feel that King Willie Don I is afraid to debate because he can not measure up to Sachs as an orator. Others feel that he is afraid to debate because he is vulnerable on a number of issues such as education and housing deterioration in the city. Some say he does not want to debate because he has no ideas about the state's future other than handing over Maryland to developers and tourist predators the way he has done to Baltimore. Others say he is afraid to debate because he represents a return to the old style of Maryland politics, the "old boy network."

I think there is some merit in all these assertions but the bottom line is probably that the man has ruled in a basically autocratic way so long he can not deal with the idea of some irreverent, intellectual lawyer, treating him harshly in a situation where he has to defend his policies. He cannot stand the idea of meeting Steve Sachs on even ground, acknowledging him as a peer.

King Willie Don I has pretty much had his way in this city, instilling so much dread in some city workers that two of them told me during the 1983 election they felt that they would lose their jobs if they did not support and vote for the king.

Being questioned by a snide and sarcastic Stephen Sachs about the glittery shell of the Inner Harbor that tries to mask the massive problems that have not been a priority of the king would be a rude, rough experience he could not endure.

After numerous offers to debate, King Willie Don I stands fast. His attitude reflects an attitude of "Damn the democratic process; on with the coronation."

I am not endorsing Sachs but the words he spoke at a Citizen Democratic Action candidates forum Tuesday evening were significant." If a debate is good enough for the U.S. Senate race, good enough for the attorney generals race, and good enough for the Congressional races, if debates were good enough to elect John Kennedy President, why aren't debates good enough for the governor's race.

"If you don't have what it takes to face your opponent then you don't have what it takes to face the problems of the state of Maryland."

It seems the king thinks he can hide behind his pile of money and his vague television commercials implying that working late in the throne room necessarily means that he is working in the interests of the citizens of Baltimore.

When King Willie Don I commercials talk about his doing for the state what he has done for the city a chill goes through me. I prefer to live in a democracy, even one that is as severely limited as this one, and the king's refusal to participate in the free discussion of ideas and a battle of wits with his opponent implies that he disdains the former and is deficient in the latter.

The election has a long way to go and a refusal to meet his opposition in debate will erode confidence in the king. Jimmy Carter in 1980 disdained debating his opposition far too long and when he did he was revealed as a man on the defensive.

King Willie Don I will eventually have to debate Sachs and when he does it may be too late to salvage his carefully crafted image. All the money and the whiskey trains sponsored by the Blacks United for Schaefer, a group that is strangely silent these days as well they should be, may not be enough to save his candidacy.

The monarch may have subdued the spirits of many Baltimoreans but there are people beyond the city borders who may not be intimidated by the king's fierce reputation Debates anyone?

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.

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