

# Annapolis barber takes over as city's mayor

## BALTIMORE

John T. Chambers, an Annapolis barber shop owner, is the first black to serve as acting mayor of the state's capital, following the suicide attempt of Acting Mayor Gustav J. Akerland.

Akerland, who apparently shot himself Saturday, is still in critical condition.

Chambers, 53, who has served on the City Council for 13 years, was the consensus choice of the aldermen to take over as acting mayor.

He voiced surprise and dismay at the incident, as did most others who knew Akerland.

"He has always been fairly intense, but not to the extent that he would take his life," Chambers said.

Akerland, 60, took over as acting mayor March 9, following the

departure of former Mayor John C. Apostol, who moved to Florida.

Akerland planned to continue as mayor until June 8, when the winner of a May 19 mayoral election takes over.

However, Chambers, a lifelong resident of Annapolis, will not be one of those candidates vying for a permanent spot at City Hall. He plans to retire from the council in June.

When asked what he hoped to accomplish during his stay in the mayor's office, Chambers told the AFRO, "I hope to get the budget prepared for the incoming mayor. That's the main thing along with the other duties."

Richard L. Hillman, the only Republican mayoral candidate, wondered whether budget pressures alone were responsible for Akerland's actions.



**John Chambers**

"Something like this should not have put him over the edge," he said. "But it's obvious people are more disturbed than we see." Hillman said he knew there was something wrong with Akerland when he "blew up" at them at a March mayoral candidates forum