—Welfare frauds

(Continued from Page 1)

payment (or fraud) is reported, prosecutors constantly complain that they knew nothing about the defendant, his age or the condition of his health until he comes to trial.

5. In several instances, at least one that this writer can recall) Criminal Court jurists have criticized the department for not "letting the right hand know what the left hand is doing."

6. The DPW has been repeatedly criticized for not keeping a close enough check on the recipients.

7. In spite of the Welfare Department's apparent failure to investigate before asking, the State's Attorney's office has' also been negligent by failing to investigate before they prosecute.

• • •

DESPITE THESE seven apparent shortcomings of these agencies which are supported by the public's taxes, welfare recipients are still being indicted and prosecuted by the same methods.

Taking each of these facts separately, the AFRO leaves the conclusion as to the value of the prosecution to the public.

1. The cost of prosecuting a welfare case was arrived at by estimating the income per hour of everyone involved in presenting and trying the case.

Let the public be reminded that these people are either city or state employees and their salaries come from public taxes.

A breakdown of the 388 cases referred to the State's Attorney's office by the DPW reveals that there are 56 cases yet to be prosecuted.

Cases not to be tried total 129; 189 cases have already been tried.

Of the 189 tried, 17 were stetted (postponed) two were abated by death 15 were found guilty and given probation to make restitution;

Two were guilty with probation without restitution; six were acquitted; two given probation before a verdict.

One made restitution before he was indicted; one found guilty with the sentence suspended generally;

One given probation before a verdict to make restitution; and 128 are waiting for further action.

• • •

OF THE 388 persons referred (all allegedly failed to notify the department of any change in their circumstances) their violations were catagorically recorded by the Welfare Department as follows:

56 were receiving old age survivors insurance; there was a change in the family of 45 of them; 125 allegedly failed to notify a change in requirements; 67 had other employment, and 95 were listed under 'others.'

In an attempt to get the specific amount of money alleged defrauded from the DPW, the AFRO asked a welfare official.

She abruptly replied, "We have no such record."

• • •

A DEPARTMENT official did tell the AFRO that when they refer fraud cases to the State's Attorney's office, they send all information available to the department.

However, on numerous occasions prosecutors say they don't know the defendant's age or whether he is white or colored.

In one case several months ago, a woman was charged with welfare fraud by receiving money from the welfare for two children that the department had taken away from her.

The situation was that the woman had received a check for herself and children from one division of the DPW which obviously did not know that another division of DPW had taken two of her children, just a few weeks prior.

To this situation, the jurist hearing the case replied:

"It appears as though one hand of the department does not know what the other hand is doing."

He acquitted the woman.

• • •

IN ADDITION TO "not knowing," the Welfare has been publicly criticized by a Baltimore Grand Jury after an investigation, for not keeping a close enough check on its recipients.

The current policy of welfare workers is to contact their clients every six months.

The grand jury felt that a twice a year contact was not sufficient to prevent violations and fraud.

They suggested more frequent contacts.

• • •

DESPITE public criticism of the Welfare Department, others feel that the State's Attorney's office is also to blame.

Until recently, the State's Attorney's office never bothered to investigate who it was prosecuting until the defendant was set for trial.

Heretofore, they had been taking the word of the Welfare department.

This situation has been remedied somewhat by having someone screen the cases before they come to trial.

• • •

IS THERE a solution to the problem?

Howard H. Murphy, a member of the State Board of Welfare, said:

"I think it would help if the State Bord would make some kind of rule to give the people incentive to earn more money.

"As the situation stands now ..why would a man want to work if he knows that every dollar he earns will be deducted from his welfare check?

"I think, however, that the city Welfare Department is a contributing factor to these frauds.

"There is such a rapid turnover within the department that many recipients don't know from month to month who their worker is.

"Even if he did notify the department of a change in their situation, there's no guarantee that the notification would get into the right hands."

• • •

SAUL A. HARRIS, State's Attorney, made this comment.

"It's a bad situation..it's actually ridiculous.

"I think these things ought to be handled administratively without bringing most of them to court.

"But the welfare tells me they don't have the power to have those people make restitution.

"As the situation stands now, we have to prosecute a fraud if it amounts to only one cent.

"We don't want to prosecute some of these people, but what can we do."

• • •

MISS ESTHER LAZARUS, director of the Welfare Department said they're doing the only thing they can do.

"When we discover an overpayment, the only thing we can do is refer it to the State's Attorney.

"The law does not provide for restitution through us."

Another citizen who spoke out against fraud prosecutions was Dr. Furman L. Templeton, director of the Baltimore Urban League.

"I am terribly disappointed in the number and kind of prosecutions because I simply cannot believe that the majority of frauds were deliberate or willful.

"I also regret the evil implications that have been drawn from these prosecutions by people in the community who do not seem to understand all the factors that are involved.

"Even though public money is involved, it seems that more excitement is being shown in these cases than in the crimes committed by people in banking, industry and sales fields."

—Appointment

(Continued from Page 1)

on the basis of race, color or religion.

"The moment I started doing that, I would go crazy. I do not propose to do it.

"If you have a good man, send him in and I'll consider him."

• • •

HE SAID that James W. McAllister, the lone member of his race on the staff of assistant State's attorneys, is a "good man," and that he wished he had more like him.

Mr. McAllister was appointed in 1959 by J. Harold Grady, who was State's attorney prior to his taking office as Mayor the same year.

Appeals have been made in the past by the Monumental Bar Association and other interested organization for additional colored assistants in the State's attorney's office.

One such conference three years ago included a Bar Association committee headed by William Murphy, with Linwood G. Koger Jr., Mrs. Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Charles P. Howard.

Since then, a number of assistants have been named to the State's attorney's office.

LAST WEEK, Morgan M. Buchner, a master in chancery for the Circuits Courts in the city died.

Dr. Jackson sent this wire on Wednesday to the judges of the Supreme Bench, who will appoint Mr. Buchner's successor:

"Baltimore branch NAACP respectfully requests your favorable consideration of one of our colored lawyers for appointment to the vacant position of examiner master chancery.

"There are a number of eminently qualified colored practitioners who merit your earnest consideration."

There were four such masters in chancery who are examiners in divorce cases, prior to Mr. Buchner's death.

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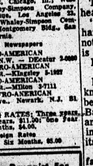

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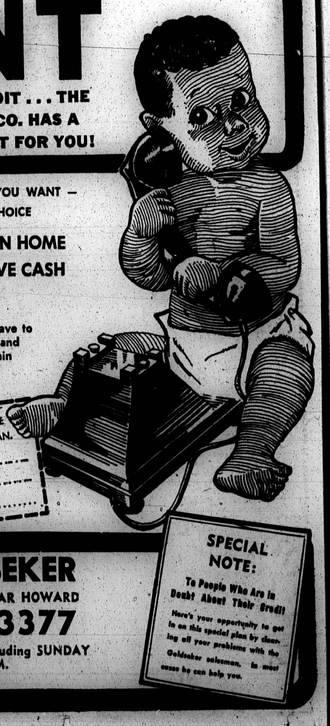

The AFRO goes to City Jail

3 million dollar additions dedicated 636 modern cells in 100-year-old institution, but this is little relief; there are 1427 inmates, 500 over capacity; N.Y. Correction expert points up need for rehabilitation; Jail Board's 1957 regulation to end segregation has not been followed. . .

If you get an opportunity to visit inside a jail or prison, you'll vow to tell young people you know just how harsh punishment can be when you violate the law.

Baltimore dedicated two new wings of the City Jail on Friday morning. Mayor Grady, Harry D. Kaufman, president of the Jail Board, Raughley L. Porter, building construction engineer, were among the participants.

Erected at a cost of 3 million dollars, the new units will provide the jail with 636 modern cells located in fireproof buildings.

But, the additions are just a drop in the bucket to the needs of the overcrowded, ancient (100 years old) institution. It has 1427 inmates. It should have just 895, or less. Even with the new cells, many inmates will remain in cubicles just large enough for their cots. In some cells they will share sleeping space with two and three other prisoners.

Baltimore City Jail appears clean despite the overcrowding, but too many prisoners are unoccupied during the long days, and the longer, lonelier nights.

There are no facilities for rehabilitaton or work for many of them, and little or no hope for the alcoholics, aged etc. who are housed together with the law breakers, because the city has no place else to put them.

THE HON. Anna M. Kraus, commissioner of the Department of Correction for New York City, in her dedication address, pointed up this problem.

Said she:

"We take all the dope addiets, alcoholics and prostitutes, and dump them in jail cells to do nothing, nothing to rehabilitate and train the young and the old. . ."

And, she noted: "It is absurd to think that a warden can be a minister, psychologist, psychiatrist all in one. He can't do it alone. . Warden Price (Charles B. Price) has done such a wonderful job here with this antiquated building. . .

"But, don't lure yourself into a sense of false security that this fine structure will perform miracles without further ado by you the citizens."

• • •

COMMISSIONER KRAUS added: "Only if you relieve your correctional department of those who are not criminals — the old, and aged who need Social Security help, not a jail, but a farm for the aged to finish their life in dignity, and the alcoholics and dope addicts who have no means of treatment inside a jail.

"You can't do it unless an aroused citizenry becomes concerned . . . you need help from hospitals, social workers who will work with the staff here to provide training. We have been delinquent in providing tools to help those who have run afoul of the law. . .

"And we need to sustain the hands of the men who have undertaken the job of working in correctional institutions. . . the job of firemen or policemen is no more soul saving, no more deserving of higher pay than that paid those who work with God in our correctional institutions.

"I speak for the misunderstood and lonely who have made a mistake and deserve another chance. . ."

• • •

MRS. KRAUS speaks with authority. She is a New York University law graduate, was the first woman to sit on the bench in N.Y., serving for 20 years in the Juvenile Court.

In her present post, to which she was named in 1953, she supervises 25 correctional institutions which house 120,000 inmates.

Her budget: $18 million and the departments engaged in a 55-million dollar building program, 'and even when we're finished we won't have enough room.'

Commissioner Kraus looks the part of a woman executive, but she hastens to admit, "It is a great distinction, but an onerous task to be head of a jail system which is the largest in the world."

and, notwithstanding her job of 40 years, "I've been married to the same man, and have two married daughters, and four grandchildren."

• • •

PERSONS MET: Mrs. Elizabeth Morris, matron, and her assistant, Mrs. Bessie Carroll. They were on duty in the section reserved for the 90 women prisoners of all ages, a section which was the only one where there was integration of the races.

Mrs. Geneva Saltus was the matron on duty in the laundry where women inmates service clothes for entire institution.

While many women were at work, there appeared to be no task for several others who sat, around and gazed into space or looked longingly at the television set which was off. ("We only turn it on the evening hours," an official explained.)

• • •

IN THE male section, a guide said blandly, over here, we put the colored. The white are on this side.'

Q— What about the regulation the Jail Board passed about integration?

A— The men prefer it this way.

Q—If they prefer caviar, do they get it? Can the wishes of a man inside the correctional institution take weight over the board's rule?

A—I didn't think about that.

• • •

IMPRESSIONS: The crowded dining area — sign overhead announcing — don't take more than you can eat. . .

Unforgettable — the way waiters picked up the meat from a large pail with their hands, (It was Friday-fish was on the menu), and threw it to fellow prisoners who wanted seconds, much like one throws a baseball.

One waiter wore white gloves; the others we saw did not.

However, the food appears to be well prepared, and the inmates we observed were eating heartily.

• • •

THERE ARE colored and white civilian personnel on duty at the prison, but our tour did not introduce us to any colored men or women who appear to have positions of authority.

Handling a correctional institution the size of City Jail, and as old as it is, must be a tremendous task.

Just look at these figures: The kitchen makes 2200 pounds of bread (1,100 loaves) a day, uses 60 gallons of milk and 1200 pounds of flour to make it.

In a 350 gallon pan we saw makings of one meal — 72 pounds of bacon and 600 pounds of beans. In another, 300 pounds of chicken for noodle soup. It takes 600 pounds of hamburger for just one meal.

• • •

P.S. — A JAIL is a lonely, desolate place. Any place which you must share with 1426 other people must be a hell on wheels.

Tell any young people you meet (majority of most jails' population is made up of teens and the young adults), it is better to obey the law.

Life inside a jail, even one which serves good food, and has ideal recreational facilities, is not like home.—B.M.P.

Baltimore Symphony, Morgan choir praised

By ADAH K. JENKINS

Morgan State College Choir shared with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and soloists the warm and appreciative applause of a sizable audience that braved transportation problems to reach the Lyric Wednesday evening for the first American performance of the concert version of Prokofieff's opera, "War and Peace".

It is quite a feat to depict on the concert stage, without scenery and action, the emotional sweep and power of such a work, which is more a dramatic - musical epic than a traditional opera.

Yet, under the forceful direction of Peter Adler, conductor of the Symphony, a moving and imaginative performance was achieved.

• • •

THE CHORAL portions were not composed as a cleaving to each of the nine acts. Rather, Prokofieff used the choir in the natural portions of this story of the war between France and Russia; such as the scene when soldiers and peasants worked feverishly to build defenses of their beloved country and in the fiercely joyous scene of victory that closes the opera. The choir also enhanced the brilliant excitement of the gala ball in the second scene.

The Morgan choir of more than 100 voices, which is directed by Saul E. Lilienstein, showed thorough and careful training. It is a part of the college Music Education Department, headed by Dr. R. Hayes Strider.

Igor Gorin and Ilona Kombrink, as the leading characters in the tragic love story, were effective both vocally and emotionally, especially in the tender, lyric moments.

In the lengthy role of the general, Kenneth Smith gave a very dramatic rendition. He also replaced Felicia Monteleare, who was ill, as the narrator.

• • •

OTHER ROLES were sung with conviction by Martha King, Bette Hankin, Spiro Malas and Andre Moureau. Alto Prokofieff was a modern composer, he borrowed from the Wagnerian tradition, in that much of the vivid and profound aspects of the opera rest upon the orchestra.

The Baltimore Symphony met this challenge with many passages of eloquence and beauty.

This event was the sixth Wednesday evening concert of the current series by the Symphony. In previous years the Howard University Choir and Morris Queen Chorale have appeared with the orchestra at the Lyric.

Hopkins to open new accommodations

Two new floors of semi-private accommodations at the Johns Hopkins Hospital will be opened to patients on Saturday, Dec. 17.

The new areas — eighth floor additions to the Halsted Surgical Clinic and the Osler Medical Clinic — represent the first major addition of beds at the Johns Hopkins Hospital since the Halsted and Osler Buildings were opened in 1931.

The total project is 99 beds, of which 66 were on the eighth floor and 33 are on lower floors in the Halsted and Osler buildings where porches have been converted to patient rooms.

This adds a total of 55 beds to the Hospital, since the new eighth floors replace the 44-bed Thayer Building which will be demolished soon. The Hospital's bed capacity is now 1,030.

The total cost of the project was close to $1,500,000. This includes the air - conditioning unit which also serves Hurd Hall, an auditorium on the main floor, and which eventually will serve the entire Halsted and Osler Buildings.

Special features of the new eighth floors include: Electric hi-lo beds, each room with connecting toilet, Central showers and bath, Nurse call system from all rooms, toilets and baths, Intercom connecting service areas—doctors' offices, nurses stations, examination rooms, laboratories, etc.

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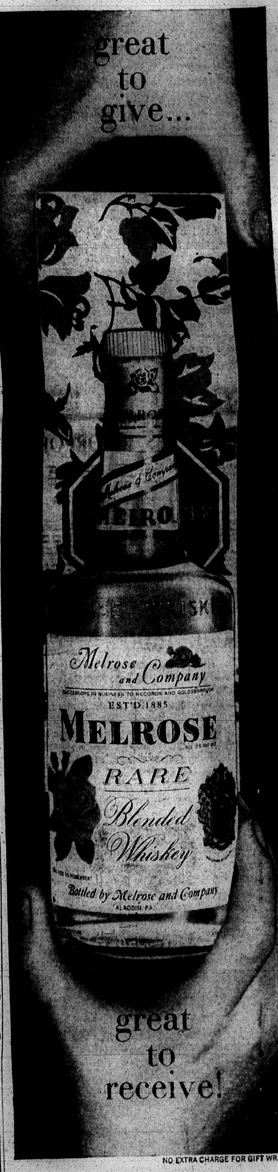

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