INSIDE THE ROOM WHERE CITY FIGHTS BACK WHEN SNOW STORM HITS

By ROGER J. NISSLY

The small room, walls and ceiling, appropriately, is clothed in white.

Six microphones give it the appearance of a command station—in this case, for snow emergencies.

If a semblance of order was maintained in the city during the havoc of the storm Tuesday, if many buses did get through, if ramps to the expressways were cleared, if fire engines knew which streets to avoid, if you could move at all, the activities that took place in this room were in a large part responsible.

Also if you did not sit forever at a traffic light that was stuck at red, or smoke half a pack of cigarettes behind a stationary truck on a hill, it was due to the snow emergency center — this room—located on the sixth floor of Transit and Traffic headquarters, 401 E. Pratt St.

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THE WOODWORK of the room is trimmed in light green, perhaps a hopeful look forward to spring, but there was no green evident outside Tuesday in the wake of the storm that dumped a foot of snow on the city, closing schools and halting activities for two days.

The six microphones and telephones are parceled out (one each) to the Bureau of Highways, Fire Department, Police Department, Baltimore Transit Co. and two for the men handling communications for Transit and Traffic.

There is space in the square room for little else than the pentagon - shaped cabinet in the center, around which circle the five radio consoles, the only adorning the walls are three maps: one of all city streets, one of 11 parcel districts and one showing "crisis snow routes" (a plan which conditions were not severe enough to call into use Tuesday).

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THE TRANSIT and Traffic radios are linked to 11 roving patrol cars (which report on conditions and trouble spots and check complaints), nine heavy trucks (for towing bottlenecked cars and trucks) and three cranes (for moving tractor trailers).

Reports on what streets are to be avoided by engines racing to fires are relayed to the man in the Fire Department slot, who notifies appropriate stations.

The police representative handles information on illegally-parked cars and bottlenecks police should get.

Example, on a car parked along emergency snow route: "Fix that nice lady up with a ticket." A tow truck will follow.

Baltimore Transit Co. relays reports back and forth on where buses are having troubles, where alternate routes should be used because of tieups.

And the Bureau of Highways man dispatches crews for plowing and salting on the troublesome spots that are reported by the roving patrol cars.

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CALLS FROM the 11 cars break into the room's speakers with all the urgency of battle station reports. The endings of words are customarily clipped.

The most common words are "spinnin'" or "movin'" (usually coupled with not as in "not movin") or "stuck in."

By Tuesday midafternoon, most major jams had been cleared up, the second 12-hour shift of workers was still pretty fresh, and it appeared that the usual five o'clock rush hour would not materialize (most city workers had drifted home during the afternoon).

The calls by then concerned sticking traffic lights, several trucks stuck on hills (one had lost its transmission) to which the cranes, hired for the day, were sent, and Assistant Commissioner William T. Davis, who had headed up the operation for most of the day, could breathe a little easier.

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THE DAY had begun rather ominously, according to an early entry made in the nearby log book for emergency situations:

"7:35 a.m. Many arteries backed up due to slippery day. conditions and abandoned and disabled vehicles. Snowing very hard with high winds and drifting conditions."

The log notes without emotion the effecting of Phase One then Phase Two of the emergency snow plan.

The conditions did not warrant the effecting of "crisis snow routes," in which all effort is directed at clearing only the major 165 miles of streets, as opposed to the 550 miles of streets that were made fairly passable Tuesday.

By 2 p.m., with department stores closed and city offices due to close at 3 p.m. the traffic signals were set for outward flow: "Master controllers" placed in 'Outward 'F' condition."

And at 4:30 the log could note: "Situation normal during p.m. peak. Various trouble spots in all sections of city."

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THE LOG, reserved for emergencies, goes back to May of 1958 when it recorded with equanimity the collapse of the Charles Street Bridge. (The trouble had been detected earlier and no one was on it.)

By 6 p.m. the clipped reports ("He's really stuck, just sittin' there with the wheels spinnin" and "Car 13, Mt. Royal Ave., parkin' violation from Reservoir to 29th") has slowed in intensity.

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AND THE weather bureau at Friendship could assess the damage via teletype: "Snow has ended over Maryland and Delaware and skies should become mostly clear tonight.

"Snow depths around Maryland ranged from as little as two to three inches ... to as much as 13 inches."

It forecast cold weather with diminishing winds lessening drifting and later foresaw a new storm brewing for the end of the week.

And a staff member could recall back in 1958 when the city had not much of a plan for snow (oil trucks couldn't get to houses), and say of Traffic Commissioner Hank Barnes: "You know what my man did? He called out the Army!"

And now maybe Assistant Commissioner Davis could get something to eat.

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AT DUSK, through a window overlooking Pratt St. and part of the harbor, the crew at the console noticed cars having difficulty negotiating an icy bump by the

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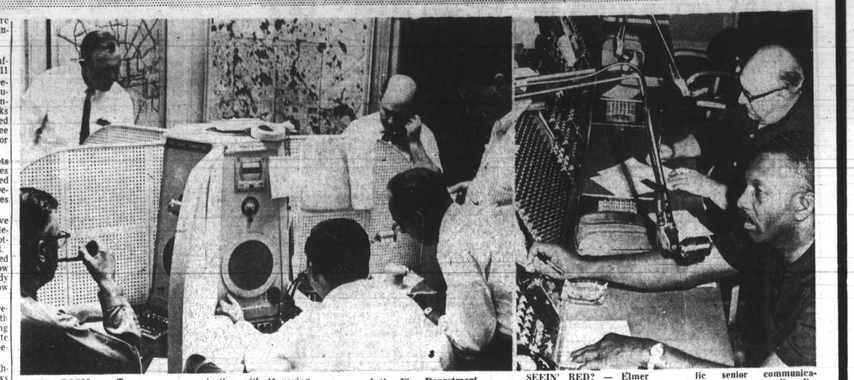

WHITE ROOM — Transit and Traffic Department's snow emergency center is in direct communication with 11 roving patrol cars checking conditions, heavy tow trucks and cranes for moving stalled tractor trailers, and the Fire Department, Police Department, Baltimore Transit Co. and Bureau of Highways.

SEEIN' RED? — Elmer and Harvey "Captain" O. Harris (foreground) and Harvey "Captain" Harold Transit and Traffic senior communications clerks, radio dispatch trucks to remedy sticking or malfunctioning traffic signals.

INGENIOUS REMEDY — Robert J. Smith demonstrates for his mother, Mrs. Edith Seith, his solution for deep snow — wearing two pairs of shoes on each foot, with a plastic bag as insulation.

BLOCKED STREET — It wasn't just the major arteries that produced trouble for traffic on Tuesday. Here, motorist tries to dig out car in akward position on Aiken St. near North Ave. as delivery truck and automobiles wait. (AFRO staff photo by Phillips)

Today is the first Friday of Lent

By ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

Year fell on Feb. 7, Pancake Tuesday.

However, as if receiving a special blessing, Baltimore Catholics and hundreds of other observers of Lent were able to begin the pre-Easter ritual on a sunny day, Feb. 8.

Ash Wednesday was fair and mild and in complete contrast to the day before when 11 inches of snow, high winds and 12 above zero temperatures brought the Blizzard of 1967.

As the weather broke, most of the believers crowded the city's churches throughout the day to receive ashes and hear the ancient reminder: "Dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return."

The weatherman expects the week-end to be fair and cold.

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TODAY, THE first Friday of Lent, members of the Catholic faith begin the fast that continues each Friday through Good Friday, March 24.

The general order from Rome states no Catholic shall eat meat on the Fridays of Lent although churches in the United States were allowed to relax the rule for the remaining Fridays of the year in a recent historic pronouncement.

• • •

SPECIAL LENTEN services are held in nearly all Christian churches at some time during the official period of 40 days.

The 5,000 members of St. Peter Claver Catholic parish will hold Lenten masses each Friday at 6:30 and 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.

The custom of reviewing the Stations of the Cross will be observed each Friday at 2:30 p.m. for children and 5 and 8 p.m. for adults. Lenten masses each Wednesday come at 6:30 and 8 a.m. and 6 and 8 p.m.

Lent extends six weeks through the first day of Spring, March 21, and ends in the triumphant high holy holiday of Easter Sunday, March 26.

The first four Sundays of Lent are followed by Passion Sunday, March 12 and Palm Sunday, March 19. Lent ends officially at midnight Saturday, March 25.

Father Wilfriz des Rosier SSJ, assistant priest at St. Francis Xavier, the oldest Baltimore Catholic parish, explains Lent as "an old tradition to stress the spirit of penance in preparation for Easter."

The imposition of ashes from the burned palms of the previous Palm Sunday is a reminder that the pilgrimage on earth will have an end in death which brings the body back to dust from whence it came.

He states the soul, according to Christian belief, goes on to Eternity.

The 4,000 members of the St. Francis Xavier parish are observing their 103rd anniversary.

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GOING BACK to Tuesday's record snowstorm, the AFRO interviewed two persons out of a score of Baltimoreans who bear the name of "Snow."

When asked what about

(Continued on Page 22)

DRUID HILL PARK played host to several sleighing groups on Tuesday including these members of the Dr. Hollis Seunarine family. In group were Mrs. Grace Beasley, Arthur Seunarine and Barbara Seunarine, holding two-year-old Indra Seunarine.

SNOW FORT —The Williams, Norris and Wiseman youngsters presented this imposing sight to passersby in the 2200 block of Druid Hill Ave. Wednesday afternoon. Representatives of the Williams family included Anthony, 12, Eric, 11 and Anita, 9. The two Wiseman are Vanessa, 9, and Terry Ann, 7. James Norris, 11, broke with his two brothers, who helped organize another fort next to this one. The families live side by side on Druid Hill.

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Easter

MARCH 26th

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Death Notices

HILL — On January 20, 1967 TOMMIE LEE, of 804 Hunter Street, Beckley, West Virginia, beloved wife of Alonza Hill Sr., survived by two daughters, Mrs. Martha LeGrand of New York City and Mrs. Laura Saunders of Baltimore, Md., three sons, Billy Joe Hill of Washington, D.C., Melvin Hill of New York City and Annas Hill Jr. of Beckley, West Virginia, also survived by eleven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren, host of relatives and friends. Interment Greenwood Cemetery, Beckley, West Virginia on January 25.

CAMPHOR — In loving memory of our dear mother, MARY E. CAMPHOR who passed away February 12, 1949.

In memory's lovely garden
Where remembered joy blooms fair
Your memory dearest mother
Is ever fragrant there.

THE FAMILY

Notices

WILL THE gentleman who helped me with my car, on Huntington at 28th Street, Friday, February 3, please contact — 669-6231.

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In Memoriams

BAILEY — In loving memory of my dear husband, GUY R. SR., who passed away February 7, 1961.

I will never forget you,
I loved you too dearly
For your memory to fade from my life like a dream
My lips need not speak when my heart mourns sincerely
For grief often dwells where it seldom is seen.
LOVING WIFE, ELIZABETH H. BAILEY

BRADLEY — In memory of our loved one, SAMUEL H., who passed away February 6, 1962.

We do not forget you, nor do we intend
We think of you often, and will to the end.
Gone and forgotten by some you may be;
But dear to our memory you ever will be.
WIFE, BESS CARNEY And McKELDIN FAMILY

BUTLER — In loving memory of our mother and grandmother, FLORENCE BUTLER, who passed away February 11, 1966.

We often sit and think of her when we are alone,
For memory is the only friend that grief can call its own;
Like ivy on the withered oak, when all other things decay,
Our love for her will still keep green, and never fade away.
DAUGHTERS AND GRANDCHILDREN

DAVIS — In loving memory of my dear wife, EDITH, who departed this life February 13, 1962.

I'll remember you, dear while there's life in my heart,
And tho' God in His wisdom has torn us apart;
In your home up in Heaven you must know that I'm true
To the love and esteem that was all for you.
And I pray that when life for me comes to an end
I will meet you in Heaven, my own dearest friend.
My friend and my sweetheart, my one dearest love,
God keep you and guard you in Heaven above.
Loving Husband, HARRY

DYSON — In loving memory of our mother and grandmother, CATHERINE E. DYSON, who passed away February 8, 1966:

The memory of our mother, oh, it comes everywhere;
It shines in the darkness, and it beams on the air;
It comes in the night, it talks to us through the livelong day;
It comes to us in our daily task, our household work or play;
That blessed, blessed memory, that dear familiar tone,
As her spirit watches still, and communeth with her own.
CHILDREN and GRANDCHILDREN.

HARRIS — In memory of our loved one, JOSEPH E. JR., who passed away February 9, 1961.

Weeping may tarry for the night, But Joy comes with the morning
May those who sow in tears, Reap with shouts of Joy.
And you shall rejoice in the Lord,
In the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.
LOVINGLY, THE FAMILY

In Memoriams

FORD — In loving memory of our beloved daughter and sister, HELEN INEZ, who passed away February 7, 1942.

Her pleasant way and smiling face
Are a pleasure to recall.
She had a kindly word for each
And died beloved by all.
Some day we hope to meet her
Some day we know not when
To clasp her hand in the better land
Never to part again.
Father —
MR. JOSEPH FORD SR. —
Sisters — DORIS and MARLENE FORD —
MRS. ALEASE STOKES
Brother —
MR. JOSEPH FORD JR.

HINES — In loving memory of my dear son, WILLIAM HINES JR., who passed away February 12, 1966.

Those whom we love go out of sight,
But never out of mind;
They are cherished in the heart
Of those they leave behind.
Loving and kind in all her ways,
Upright and just to the end of her days.
Sincere and true in her mind
Beautiful memories she left behind.
Loving Daughter
And Son-in-Law,
CLEM BURNS
ARTHUR BROOKS

WEST — In loving memory of our mother and grandmother, QUEENY, who passed away February 8, 1958:

A happy home we once enjoyed,
How sweet the memory still,
But death has left a loneliness,
The world can never fill.
Loving Daughter,
GEORGEANNA WESLEY,
Granddaughter,
MYRTLE HAMMOND

WRIGHT — In loving memory of our husband and father, BRUCE, who passed away February 8, 1964.

When the evening shades are falling,
And we're sitting all alone,
In our hearts there comes a longing
If you only could come home.
Oft and oft our thoughts do wander
To your grave so far away,
Where we laid you, dearest husband
Three years ago today.
Devoted Wife, VIOLA and Daughter, VERONICA and Sons, BRUCE, LARRY, WAYNE

Card of Thanks

HENRY C. FOSTER

We wish to thank our neighbors and friends for their acts of love and sympathy and floral offerings, during the recent loss of our beloved husband and brother.
MRS. ROSELL FOSTER And FAMILY

Card of Thanks

BROWNE — The family of the late REV. C. EDWARD BROWNE wishes to express its sincere appreciation to all the many friends for their expressions of sympathy and kindness during our dark hours. It is impossible for us to thank everyone personally for we are taking this opportunity to say a grateful thank you.
MRS. C. E. BROWNE and MRS. EVANGELYN B. HARRIS
DOROTHY E. COVINGTON

We wish to thank our many friends, relatives and neighbors for the kindness and sympathy shown, during the brief illness and death of our dear one, and for the beautiful floral tributes and use of their cars. We especially wish to thank Rev. Roscoe Williams, Rev. Mrs. Alston and all organizations and the choir of Orchard Street Methodist Church and Rev. Clinton Coleman and members of Pennsylvania AME Zion Church for their participation in the service and the many acts of kindness.
THE COVINGTON FAMILY
ARCHIE, LEONARD, HATTIE, PATRICIA, LEONARD JR. and GRANDCHILDREN

THE FAMILY of the late JACOB MCCANTS desire to express their gratitude to the many friends, Mt. Olivet Church, Knights of Pythias, Court of Faith Baptist Church and all organizations for their expressions of sympathy in our home and at the church, and for the beautiful floral tributes during his recent bereavement. Also to the staff of the Funeral Home of Mortician William Reese.
THE McCANTS FAMILY
WILLIAM S. WYNN

We wish to thank our neighbors, friends and relatives for their acts of love and sympathy during the recent loss of our beloved husband and son, WILLIAM S. WYNN. Also thanks for the many floral tributes.
THE WYNN FAMILY

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