OF ELECTIONS AND THINGS

1892 in Baltimore: the year of the founding of the AFRO

By BLAINE TAYLOR

According to the 1890 census, Baltimore in the decade of the AFRO's founding numbered 434,439 persons, of whom there were 67,296 black citizens.

1892, like 1972, was a Presidential election year, and politics, more than anything else, dominated the city and state in the year of the first AFRO.

Baltimore, like the state, was and is basically a Democratic-Party-voting with one great exception, the black community, which voted Republican.

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The black community registered and voted Republican from the death of President Abraham Lincoln in 1865 until Franklin Roosevelt's election in 1932.

The main reason for the long history of Republican voting by local black constituencies was that it had been the GOP (Grand Old Party) of Lincoln that had brought about the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves as well as passing the post-Civil War legislation in Congress giving black people the right to vote.

The Depression of the 1920's and 1930's, however, plus the personalities of FDR and his Civil Rights-minded wife, Eleanor, persuaded the black voter to go Democratic, a trend which has continued in Baltimore and Maryland for the last 40 years.

1892, therefore, was still the heyday of the Republicans as far as black voters were concerned.

The first AFRO appeared Aug. 13, 1892, in a summer then, as now, of the political nominating conventions for U.S. President and Vice President.

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June 7-11 the Republican National Convention, meeting in Minneapolis, nominated President Benjamin Harrison for re-election and Whitelaw Reed for Vice President.

On the 21st, the Democrats responded at Chicago by naming Grover Cleveland, a former President, to the top spot again, with Adlai Stevenson of Illinois as his running mate.

1892, like 1972, was also a year of third and fourth parties.

The Prohibition Convention, meeting in Cincinnati June 29, nominated for President John Bidwell of California and Texan James B. Cranfill for the second place on the ticket.

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July 4-5 saw the People's Populist Party in convention at Omaha nominate James B. Weaver of Iowa for the White House with James G. Field as his running mate.

Finally, there was the Socialist Labor Party, again then as now, which met in New York City to nominate Simon Wing of Massachusetts and Charles Matchett of New York.

In the November election, however, only the Democrats and Republicans were of any real significance, as they still are today.

According to Baltimore: Its History and Its People, in the Enoch Pratt Free Library (whose founder, by the way, was a contemporary of the AFRO's founder, John H. Murphy Sr.), "At the election, Nov. 8, Cleveland received in Baltimore 51,066 votes; in the state, 113,366."

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Harrison, the book says, "had in the city 36,492 votes; in the state, 92,736."

Cleveland beat the incumbent Republican President, becoming the first man in Americas history to serve twice as President, with someone else's term in between the two, something that has not yet been repeated.

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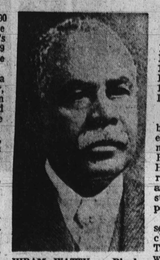
Local politics made the 1890's an exciting decade for black people, as those ten years saw the rise of the city's first black City Councilmen: Dr. J. Marcus Cargill, Harry S. Cummings and Hiram Watty.



HIRAM WATTY — Black City Councilman between 1899-1905. He is also a teamster and a U.S. Inspector of Customs.

Cargill and Cummings represented the 11th Ward, with Watty in the 14th, all in northwest Baltimore.

Dr. Cargill served one term in the Council, 1895-1897, while Watty stayed from 1899 to 1905.

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Harry S. Cummings had the longest record of service there, 1891-1892, 1897-1898 and 1907-1917.

Watty, before entering the City Council, was a teamster and later a U.S. Inspector of Customs.

In the council, Watty was known as a leader of school legislation.

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Harry Smythe Cummings was a lawyer and publicist (writer), a graduate of Lincoln University and the University of Maryland law school.

He was the first black elected City official, and was also a Member of the Board of Managers of the House of Reformation of Colored Boys.

Like Watty and Dr. Cargill, Cummings was a leader in the Council in regard to school legislation, and had the honor of seconding the nomination of Republican Presidsent Theodore Roosevelt.

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Today, there are five black councilmen out of a total of 18.

They are: Dr. Emerson R. Julian, Mrs. Victorine Q. Adams, Mrs. Mary B. Adams (no relation), all Democrats of the Fourth District of Northwest Baltimore.

From the Second District of East Baltimore there are Democrats Clarence H. "Du" Burns and Robert Douglass.

In addition, there is City Solicitor George L. Russell Jr., the first black man ever to hold the post, in which he acts as the city's top lawyer.

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Ferdinand C. Latrobe, a Democrat, was Mayor of Baltimore between 1891 and 1895; Democratic Governor L. V. Jackson left office in 1891, followed by another Democrat, Frank Brown.

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The election of 1895 saw black voters helping to elect a Republican Governor, Lloyd Lowndes, and a Republican Mayor, Alcaeus Hooper, in a complete reversal of the previous election and a dramatic demonstration of black voting power.

This trend would show itself often, especially in the career of Republican Theodore McKeldin, who, with the support of black voters, was twice elected Governor of Maryland and twice Mayor of Baltimore.

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1892 witnessed the founding, along with the AFRO, of the International Longshoreman's Union, an organization containing the city's black stevedores.

Mass transit, still a controversial topic in Baltimore, got a big boost in the 1890's.

Aug. 16, 1890 the North Avenue Electric railway opened for business, followed by the Gilmor St. cable line on Aug. 30, 1892, more than two weeks after the first AFRO edition appeared on Baltimore streets.

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Electric lines replaced cable lines, however, and this development continued all through the AFRO year of 1892.

The Baltimore and Curtis Bay Electric Railway opened May 28, the Pikesville Electric Line on July 25, and the Central Passenger Line on Sept. 17.

In March, Druid Hill Park got its famous statue of Washington, while on Oct. 12 the statue of Columbus was unveiled at Druid Hill Lake.

In September, a mock bombardment was held at Ft. McHenry, says Baltimore: Its History and Its People, in which three ships took part, and in which four men were injured in an explosion on one of them.

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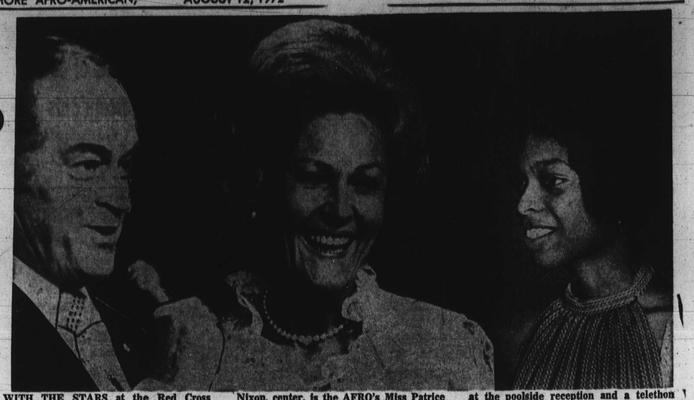
In October, Enoch Pratt deeded the present Central Library property at Cathedral and Franklin streets (then the old Maryland Club), to the Maryland Academy of Sciences. Mr. Pratt died in 1896.

Finally, in 1892, as well as today, fires helped to make the biggest news.

A cotton warehouse fire killed one man, injured five and cost the enormous sum of $500,000 in damages.

As you can see, 1892, the year of the AFRO, was an eventful time.



WITH THE STARS at the Red Cross Celebrity Flood Relief Show with Bob Hope, left, host and Mrs. Richard M. Nixon, center, is the AFRO's Miss Patrice Myers. Miss Myers represented the AFRO at the poolside reception and a telethon that followed the next night

Coed lands job as AFRO reporter

By JACKIE ALLEN

A Carl Murphy Scholarship led to a summer job for 18-year old Patrice T. Myers, of Baltimore.

Miss Myers, a 1972 graduate of Douglas High School has worked on the AFRO city desk as an intern reporter all summer.

With summer jobs scarce, Miss Myers found the opportunity at the AFRO a good one. While at the AFRO she has done a variety of assignments.

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She represented the AFRO at the White House and later was a speaker at an elementary school to tell how a newspaper works.

Miss Myers, the daughter of Randolph and Mrs. Anita Myers will attend Loyola College in the fall and plans to major in mathematics.

A cheerful and ardent worker, Miss Myers has written most of the articles about the weather that appear in the paper. During the aftermath of hurricane Agnes, Miss Myers reported the news of recovery work being done.

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While in high school Miss Myers was editor-in-chief of the newspaper, the Douglass 'Courier,' and member of the National Honor Society for three years.

Her work was outstanding as evidenced by her biography being printed in Merit's Who's Who Among American High School Students and in "Outstanding Teenagers of America.

An active young adult, Miss Myers served as a student page in Annapolis in addition to being a member of the Human Relations Club for two years.

She is the youngest of two children. Her older brother, Louis Myers, 21, is a graduate of Morgan State College.

Both her parents are employed as teachers in the city schools. The family attends Metropolitan United Methodist Church.

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Of her experiences at the AFRO Miss Myers said, 'Newspaper reporting is exciting as well as educational. I've met and interviewed people of various backgrounds and professions. My coverage of stories has taken me from the White House in Washington to the mayor's office at City Hall.

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As of AFRO presstime today Miss Myers had written more than 30 articles. They include "$1.7 billion for Agnes recovery," "Local dockers agree to nix Rhodesian ships," "Who stacked the deck at the hearing on status of Coppin," "$2,105,589 to help all citizens in flood need.

Also "Secretaries raise $3,000 to take courses at CCB," "Murder charge awaits presentence report ruling," "Officer called 'boy' faces dismissal" and others.

"My stay at the AFRO has given me the opportunity and experiences of a lifetime. Newspaper reporting is hard work but it is also exciting, educational and challenging, stated Miss Myers.

'These worthwhile weeks have helped me decide to continue studies in journalism and perhaps pursue it as a possible career.

It has been a pleasure working at the AFRO and thus I hope to return next summer.'

MISS PATRICE T. MYERS leaves the Whie House after attending a press conference on the recovery work being done after tropical storm Agnes. Miss Myers, 18, a 1972 graduate of Edmondson High school is the youngest reporer at the AFRO's Baltimore City Desk.

INQUIRING REPORTER

AFRO readers look thru crystal ball to 2052

This week's question is, "What do you think of McGovern's choice of R. Sargent Shriver for his running mate." Here are the answers AFRO readers gave;

Ronald Swan, 29, student, 829 Harlem Ave., "Well, I think he's a very good candidate because, he's part of the Kennedy clan, and he could gather the party to get more votes. I guess as an all-around man he has the qualifications. I guess he's about the best man that Senator McGovern could pick for the job."

Donald Brown, 18, instructional aide, 971 North Hill Road, "It's alright but it could have been better, the democrats don't have that much."

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Frederic Bullock, 67, retired, 1619 Druid Hill Ave., "Great man! We need him. I just like him. I think he's the people's choice too."

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John Herbert, 47, refrigeration repairman, 5715 Rockspring Road, "It was a late choice but I don't think he could have picked a better person because of the things he has done in the past for the minority groups.

"Given the opportunity I think he could be a great benefit to the Democratic party."

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James Spencer, 45, director, State Research, MSTA, 11F Torlina Ct., "I think that Sargent Shriver is an excellent choice. I think that they will be compatable candidates. He's sensitive to the needs of the kind of people that McGovern says he is going to represent."

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Lenny Meadows, 48, clerk, 311 S. Sharp St., "As a whole I think the choice was a fair selection. I think the job that Shriver did as far as a peace corps coordinator, as far as the other positions which he held within the Federal Government, was a fair to medium amount of what you might call experience as far as handling that position is concerned. I figure that there were other selections that could have been made but it was up to Senator McGovern to make these selections."

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Robert Lockett, 27, assembly worker, 1724 E. 22nd St., "It seems like he's not making too many unwise choices in my opinion."

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Mrs. Caroline Rice, 27, housewife, 3502 Woodland Ave., "I think it was a good choice."

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Miss Denise Powell, 19, student, 3801 Ballard Ave., "I don't care for McGovern so therefore I don't care for Shriver either. I wouldn't vote for him."

1972 City Councilmen

CLARENCE H. "DU" BURNS
City Councilman, (D.-2nd.)

MRS. MARY B. ADAMS
City Councilwoman (D.-4th)

DR. EMERSON R. JULIAN
City Councilman (D.-4th)

ROBERT L. DOUGLASS
City Councilman (D.-2nd)

GEORGE L. RUSSELL JR.
City Solicitor

MRS. VICTORINE Q. ADAMS
City Councilwoman (D-4th.)

Lonely delegate

MIAMI (UPI) — Leon Earles, Florida's only black delegate to the Republican National Convention, says he takes a lot of kidding from the "99 per cent" of his family who are Democrats.

"My son, my daughter, brothers, nieces, nephews, friends — everybody but my wife — they're all Democrats," Earles said.

"My wife and I are the only Republicans in the family. We have had some very, very, very,