Baltimore Afro American

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May we let our light so shine, that it will illuminate that which is good and beautiful and magnify our Father which is in Heaven.
CARL MURPHY, (1889-1967)
Editor-Publisher, (1922-1967)

'73 Going; '74 Coming

As 1973 fades into history and 1974 approaches, the AFRO wishes it honestly could attempt to assure its readers that the worst is behind us and good things lie around the corner.

Matters simply are too unsettled for that type statement from a responsible publication.

Whenever an effort is made to determine where the nation stands and what its leadership is thinking, we come face to face with idiotic, frustrating and unbelievable bits of high-level play-acting.

For example, a group of important Republicans met with President Nixon recently and came out with the story that Watergate was not mentioned; they said they discussed the state of the economy and the effect it might have on the 1974 elections, and, they were smiling and acting as if they expected the statements to set everything all right with the world.

The AFRO allows some leeway for politicians to say what they think they have to but that was too much after a meeting with the President of the United States.

All this newspaper can see right now is that 1973 politically has been a horrible year for the country though blacks as a group have made voting and election moves ahead in many areas.

We are in the middle of an energy crisis which is going to have an impact not yet assessed by the White House, or if so, not yet to a degree which would permit sensible action to be taken.

What can be said about the crisis is that it is going to cost a lot of jobs, keep the cost of living escalating and continue the inflation spiral.

The only sure thing we know you'll be able to do in 1974 to help better the national picture is to get ready to vote some of the smiles off the faces of inept, pompous, two-faced, callous politicians who lead the nation from one mess to another and come up with jive public relations gimmicks rather than answers to problems.

On a personal basis you have to keep pushing ahead for yourself, your family, your community and the nation.

Despite the dark clouds hanging over 1974, there could be some bright spots. To take advantage of them, in fact, to make sure they materialize, you and yours will have to be in there pitching.

As a group, we've seen hard days before. That's not to suggest more of them should be welcome. But as 1974 approaches, it looks as if we'll all be better off if we don't take anything for granted, look for more surprises, keep a smile nearby and don't miss any chances to make your feelings known — especially along about primary and general election time.

Try your best to make it a prosperous and happy year.

Real Meaning Showing

Finally, the mad season has come and gone.

Each year, there is an ever-broadening urge to commercialize the celebration of the Divine Birth. The high-pressure sell, the frantic buy, the coercive exchange of worthless bric-a-brac combine to present a counterfeit spirit of sharing in the name of Christ.

Each year, however, there is evidence that the true meaning of Christmas — though overshadowed by toxic revelry — is not entirely lost.

The church philosophy continues, with the various faiths observing in their own way. And, no matter the rites, they all converge at the end in tasteful and reverent tribute.

Happily, this Christian awareness also is on the rise. So, the light shines through.

In growing numbers, organizations and individuals are taking cognizance of the importance of fellowship and love, and the meaning that the Yule conveys. New Programs are cropping throughout Maryland in general, and in Baltimore in particular.

Toys-for-tots and clothes-for-needy projects have long been conducted on an admirable plane. Lately, professional sports organizations have seized the idea of making contributions in the names of media friends.

The Baltimore Orioles this year prorated money the club usually spends for gifts and forwarded it to charity as donations from sportswriters and sportscasters.

In Los Angeles, the former ownership of the Baltimore Colts did the same, with UNICEF — the caretaker of the world's did the same, with UNICEF — the caretaker of the world's children — as recipient.

For an even longer time than the United Fund and UNICEF have been in existence, Christmas has been marked by the generosity of Baltimoreans through the annual Mrs. Santa Program, anchored by the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers.

In the eyes of the Almighty, the spirit of love and brotherhood begins with compassion for the humble and the meek. So, the light shines through.

From Her Heart

Because freedom of choice and independence of thought and action are cornerstones of the democratic system Americans cherish, Mrs. Anna Clinkscales certainly isn't going to lose her citizenship for having presented President Nixon several thousand signatures urging him not to resign.

Said Mrs. Clinkscales of the special Christmas gift to President Nixon: "It really comes from our own hearts and we really believe in you as President of the United States."

It's Impossible to know whether Mrs. Clinkscales considered her petition a Christmas season example of turning the other cheek to a powerful politician who frequently has booted her people in the pants or if she's truly all that choked up over her belief in Richard Nixon as President.

If we're to take the busy Baltimore woman at face value, her action was not politically motivated.

We don't see Mrs. Clinkscales as one of those bandana-type Aunt J's who would do almost anything for some cheap publicity.

So the AFRO, which had kept a fairly close watch on President Nixon's record regarding civil rights, human rights, schools, preventive detention, anti-poverty programs, inflation, living costs, snubs of African leaders, selecting of corrupt public officials, stacking of the Supreme Court with conservatives, paying taxes and raising election campaign funds, illegally impounding funds for various programs, supporting racist minority governments in Africa, etc., frankly finds it a little hard not to believe that Mrs. Clinkscales has some expectation of something special in the back of her mind.

We'd be reluctant during this season of goodwill to suggest that people no longer do good things without selfish reasons, or, that some such people at times render their good deeds without having thought at all about the political implications, or worse, that could be read into their efforts by millions of onlookers.

We'd like to know more about what it is Mrs. Clinkscales feels in her heart for President Nixon and why she so deeply believes in him as President.

Enough AFRO readers also have expressed an interest in hearing from Mrs. Clinkscales about her belief in Mr. Nixon that she is invited herewith to talk about it in our pages anytime she chooses to do so.

Grim Reminders

Every year during the winter months there are a series of horror stories telling of poor people burning to death in cold houses. Often the great majority of the victims are poor.

The Orlando, Fla. story over the weekend that told of a mother and five mentally retarded children perishing while huddled together under a bed is a grim reminder of the human misery the poverty-stricken must suffer — even up to and including their lives.

In this case, the family's lights had been off a month because it had not been able to pay. They had tried to get by with candles.

The AFRO mentions what happened to this family, not because it is the worst thing that has befallen poor people this winter, nor because it is likely to be the worst case, but in the hope that in time the nation's leadership will see the need of taking action to end these kinds of atrocities.

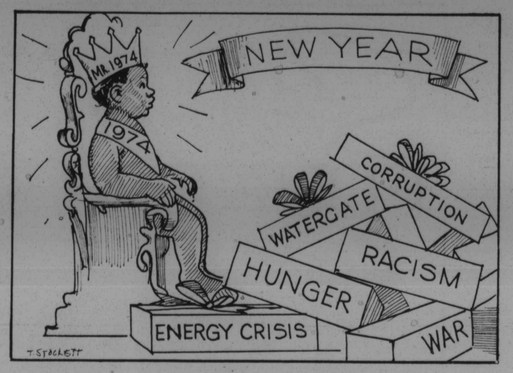
It is unnecessary for any American to go to bed hungry or to sleep cold at night in this wealthy nation. All that is necessary is for our leaders to come up with a program that will assure every family a minimum income level.

Always there is the cry of socialism. But it is heard only when the plight of the poor is at stake — not when we want to bail out the railroads, big farms or giant plane builders, etc.

The winter atrocities, as guaranteed as taxes, tell us that in many ways the United States fails to provide a quality of life for many of its citizens which is good enough to assure them a normal life span.

That should be a matter of concern. The weekly toll of poor people who perish in winter fires due largely to their low status on the economic ladder must be a reminder to all that we have not yet done what we could or should.

'Looks As If I'm Inheriting An Interesting Year'



A little About A LOT

New Hope, New Beginnings With New Year

By Madeline W. Murphy

The past year has been no bed of roses for any of us. But it did teach us to be more vigilant about our government. To know is worth a thousand guesses. To know gives us a new beginning. To learn, to act and to be the people we have survived to be, makes us strong and indomitable.

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois wrote in an editorial in the Crisis, 60 years ago: ". . . Continual social insult is powerless against those who refuse to be insulted. . . . What can America do against a mass of people who move through their world but are not of it and stand as one unshaken group in their battle? Nothing. The yell of the segregationist is the last scream of beaten prejudice. After that American civilization will be compelled through long centuries to tear down the walls which they are now building around the finest and most gifted single group in its poly-glot population."

Mrs. Murphy

Those prophetic words 60 years ago, are finding truth today.

For who would imagine that one insignificant (to the whites) black man would open up the whole depravity and craven debacle of Watergate, tearing down the walls of deception, stealth of power and corruption?

American civilization was compelled to face the blinding light of truth, of revelation, as the result of an act by a man who was merely doing his job.

What, indeed, can America do against one unshaken group in their battle? If we believe "nothing," then we must become as this poem on a "Shades of Black" greeting card, received at Christmas:

"In this world of hate and fear
All men should stop to reflect
Upon those things worth living for
Upon those things we neglect.
Let us join our hearts and souls
And banish all trouble and strife
Let us live like the Brothers we are
And return to the basics in life."

Then and only then will the New Year bring us new hope and new beginnings, a hope that must be translated into our hearts and minds to "tear down the walls," so that all men might taste freedom, for in truth, freedom is the lone basic in life!

NOW and THEN

S-S-I Program Spells Happy New Year

By G. James Fleming

SSI will spell "Happy New Year" to hundreds of thousands — perhaps millions — of Americans: The aged poor, the blind or the permanently handicapped.

"SSI" stands for "Supplemental Security Income," a new program of the federal government which upgrades our nation's concern for those in need. The government announcement reads:

"These payments . . . . will be made to people 65 or older who have very little money coming in and not much in savings or the assets (things you own). People under 65 who are blind or disabled also will be able to get supplemental security income payments if they need this help."

Dr. Fleming

This program, which begins on Jan. 1, 1974, is and is not, several things:

1. It will be financed and administered totally by the federal government, through the offices of the Social Security Administration; but, it is not part of Social Security. It does not affect the Social Security insurance funds.

2. It takes over and replaces some public assistance programs (aid to the aged, the blind and the permanently disabled) which, to date, have been jointly financed by three levels of government — federal, state and local. It does not touch other categories. AFDC (Aid to the Families of Dependent Children), for instance, remains as it is now.

3. SSI will guarantee a minimum of $130 monthly to a household of one person, and $195 to a married couple, in the cases it covers, wherever they happen to live, whether in town or country, in Connecticut or Mississippi. While this will sound like nothing to readers in Maryland, New York or California, and to those in metropolitan cities, it will greatly increase the monthly income — and buying power — of thousands upon thousands of the aged poor, the blind poor and those who are poor because they suffer from some physical handicap.

There are some rural counties in the land where some aged people have income as low as $59 a month.

4. The SSI program is dedicated to insuring a higher minimum for those hardest hit by poverty and other handicaps. The law, however, prohibits any state from reducing its present aid to meet the SSI minimum. A state may, however, add to the federal income.

5. The records of those persons presently served by local (city and county) departments of social services or departments of welfare, will be transferred to the Social Security office covering their geographical area and all checks will be mailed by and from the Social Security Administration, beginning after Jan. 1.

6. SSI permits a recipient to have partial income from part-time employment and to "supplement" such earnings with SSI. On July 1, the SSI minimum will rise to $140 for a single person and $210 for a married couple.

This new SSI program should mean more milk and meat, more balanced meals and even better housing for those to be benefited. It will increase the total income of large segments of the population, especially in the more depressed areas where the poorest blacks, Spanish-American and Indians live.

From the point of view of taxes, SSI lifts from the backs of the local and state governments the fiscal responsibility of carrying major public assistance costs for the aged poor, the blind and the handicapped.

This happy take-over by the federal government is only the beginning. There is much national sentiment for the federal government's underwriting and administering of all assistance programs.

Just last week, the Sherbow Commission of Maryland recommended that the state take over its now decentralized welfare system, both as to financing and administration — in toto.

But the commission pointed out that this transfer should be considered only one steps towards a federal welfare program under which all assistance programs will be operated and financed on the federal government level.

The local subdivisions and many states just cannot afford the increasing demands of caring for those who cannot work and those who cannot find work.

SSI may be forerunner to such a nationwide system of public assistance.

Whether benefiting from SSI or not, to all its readers this column wishes a healthy and prosperous year in 1974.

'Kiss Incident'

Kisses are supposed to have all kinds of power, but the Navy insists one planted on a white woman during a demonstration in Charleston isn't going to force the dismantling of a key phase of its race relations program.

The "kiss incident" developed when Charles H. King Jr., director of a pilot project for civilian employees, put a bit too much emphasis into a kiss given a white assistant for a sensitive white lady and others in the Dixie Navy yard.

It is well and good that the Navy insists it will not curtail the program among its military personnel. It is unfortunate that the incident has resulted in a suspension of the project among civilian workers before its value could be tested. Obviously, there are quite a few Navy employees in Charleston who are in need of race relations development.

From a distance it is impossible to say whether kissing is a beneficial part of such a program. But it should not be ruled out without something more to disprove its value than the displeasure it causes a few irate whites whose first lesson might have been that the "victim" of the kiss apparently suffered no ill effects.

Whatever decision the Navy makes about its "kissing incident," that most backward of all the services must assure there is no decline in the emphasis it places on its race relations programs. The Navy has good reason to be pushing hard in this area.

Death Row Growing Again

Death rows are beginning to grow crowded again with 37 sentenced to die in time to spend Christmas there, according to the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ.

The commission takes a dim view of the development and would like to see the death penalty outlawed in every state that has passed new ones since the 1971 Supreme Court edict striking down executions.

Twenty-one states have passed new death penalty laws. In one, North Carolina, 18 persons face the gallows. Fourteen of them are black, meaning that the states still are following the same old pattern of uneven justice that led to the outlawing of the penalty. By and large it is reserved for blacks and poor people of any race.

It is unlikely any state actually will attempt to execute anyone until after the U.S. Supreme Court has another chance to rule on the legality of the death penalty.

From what we have seen, the inequities still being maintained in the new laws, indicate the "outdated and barbaric" practice will not be restored by the Supreme Court.

While we agree with the commission's executive director, Dr. Charles E. Cobb, that the politicians and general population should take immediate steps to do something about the 37 inmates on Death Row, it is our guess that this is only wishful thinking.

But it is important that groups such as Dr. Cobbs continue to press the issue and the immorality of state-sanctioned murders until the Supreme Court has another chance to clarify further this crucial question.

Washington Report

Wansley Case: Justice Fails

By Parren J. Mitchell
(D-7th District-Maryland)
U.S. House of Representatives

The distinguished jurist, Roscoe Pound once said, "It is a common experience that criminal prosecutors may have partisan politics behind them, and out of this experience has arisen a fear of oppression through the criminal law." How prophetic are those words when applied to the case of Thomas Wansley. Jackie Hess, of my Washington Staff, worked on this case.

My letter to Governor Holton of Virginia, spells out "oppression through the criminal law" in the Wansley case:

"Dear Governor Holton:

"I would like to add my voice to those before you today, in support of the vital necessity of establishing in this country the equal treatment of blacks under the law.

"The situation involves a young man, Thomas Wansley, who has become the victim of repeated and flagrant miscarriages of justice within the Virginia Judicial System. In 1962, Mr. Wansley was arrested on three counts: rape of a 59-year old woman, rape of a woman in her 20's and theft of $1.37.

"I need not tell you that had the defendant been white instead of black, the theft charge would have been dropped immediately; had the plaintiffs been black, it is doubtful that any charges at all would have been brought.

"The events preceding Mr. Wansley's first trial included pre-trial publicity based on racial slurring and 'red baiting,' including the slandering of Mr. Wansley's lawyer, William Kunstler. Mr. Wansley was subsequently delivered two death sentences for the rape charges and 20 years imprisonment for the $1.37 theft.

"This, despite the fact that the 59-year old woman testified that she was 'not too sure' that Wansley was her attacker. In subsequent trials, more facts came to light. The rape charge involving the younger woman was dropped entirely. In addition, when the U. S. District Court overturned the 1967 conviction, presiding Judge Merhige cited the following obstructions of justice which had dominated the case:

"1. Carter Glass, the editor of the two leading newspapers in the City (Lynchburg), responsible for prejudicing the public, witnesses and jury alike, had former Congressman William Tuck solicit information on Attorney Kunstler from the files of the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

2. Thomas Wansley had initially been interrogated by a juvenile probation officer for five hours without benefit of Counsel or parents present. At that time he 'confessed' to having had sex with the younger woman, but, he stated, on a consentual basis (this was the case later dropped). This 'confession' was illegally applied to the second rape charge and used during trial in adult court. Not only should this jurisdictional transfer have been declared illegal, but the Court should have acknowledged the violation of the legally stated purpose of juvenile court investigation, which is to pursue the 'interests of the individual.'

3. The Constitutionally mandated 'jury of one's peers' was denied in every trial Mr. Wansley had to repeatedly face an all-white jury. I need not remind you that historically, white juries have viewed rape cases involving a black defendant and a white complainant in a non-objective, non-judicial manner.

"Since 1962 the American society has undergone much social change. I would like to think that Thomas Wansley was a victim of 1962. However, the recent decision by the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals demonstrates how little we have actually moved ahead.

"As Governor of the State of Virginia, you understand the absolute necessity, for the welfare of a state or country, of alleviating potentially explosive racial tensions. The Wansley case has come to national attention. Many people are watching to see if a Virginian Governor will grant justice to a black man who has been consistently denied it. It is my hope and my belief that you will have the courage to do this."

Dear Reader, the process in the Wansley case was sickening. Perhaps we shall correct the system but what of the man — what about Thomas Wansley. Who will have the temerity to speak to him concerning, "Equal Justice Under The Law?"

The Senate Acts

The United States Senate by a 54 to 37 vote has taken a step toward repealing the Byrd Amendment and restoring "the United States to its position as a law-abiding member of the international community."

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, the gallant Minnesota Democrat, deserves great credit for the success of this forward step because he cracked the whip and demanded that the Nixon Administration give more support than the usual lip service in helping round up needed votes.

To its credit, the Nixon Administration did help with the votes.

Now the battle will come in the House of Representatives. There the Congressional Black Caucus will have to carry a heavy share of the burden.

Because of the Byrd Amendment, the U.S. has been the only country (formally in violation of the United Nations' 1968 Security Council resolution ordering economic sanctions against the racist Ian D. Smith regime in Rhodesia.

The Byrd Amendment permitted the U.S. to import chrome ore and other metals the senator argued were essential to this nation's security. Facts presented by the U.S. government show such imports are not essential. Further, the U.S. is in such good shape that it has been releasing some of the imported metals from its stock-piles.

It is intolerable that the United States government should stand in violation of its international treaty obligation in order that it be able to show special kinship with a racist government. That really was the aim of the conservatives who strongly supported the Byrd Amendment after it became generally obvious there was no security measure at stake.

U.S. courts have held that the United States has been in violation of its international agreements.

As a leader of the world community, this just cannot go on.

Baltimore Afro American

Our Readers Say

Readers are invited to submit letters for publication. All letters must be signed, but signature will be omitted if requested. Letters should be no more than 200 words in length. Address them to "Our Readers Say," Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN, P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Maryland 21203.

Jessup Jaycees Program

Dear AFRO:

The Jessup Jaycees Crime and Correction Committee is unlettered in the regimentation of jurisprudence, however it is with intense involvement that the application of law is phenomenologically applied in all degrees by these tyro paraprofessionals while incarcerated.

Many cases have been won in the criminal and federal courts by this committee, thus it's been discovered that law governs all events seen and those unseen.

I wish at this point to enter a plea in defense of the ex-offender against whom a great many accusations often are made either in print or in conversation.

These accusations fall under two heads. If the ex-offender seems to have no definite objective in returning to the community, he or she is strongly suspected of not wanting a job. If for any reason he cannot be suspected of this intention, then his alleged motives are considerably more sinister. Many Marylanders believe that the art of denying an ex-offender his full citizenship is not indigenous to this State, and that in this nation it has been perfected to such a point that to practice it has become a reflex with the future generations. This process is called "Keeping the criminal in check."

There are perhaps various reasohs for this curious phenomenon, which we will explore at another time. But what more must an ex-offender do after applying himself as progressively required?

There are laws which punish people for being what they are. These laws are in fact made by frightened men; frightened by the wickedness they see in themselves and surmising that what they see is universal.

ROBERT L. HARRELL Jr.
Public Relation Director

Upsetting Incident

Dear AFRO:

I would like to call your attention to an incident which occurred on Dec. 3, 1973. Three boys attempted to assaulk a man and his son while they were waiting for the No. 23 bus.

From six to eight police cars and a patrol wagon responded. Once police jumped out of the car and started firing at the boys without saying a word. One boy was shot.

While this was in action a young boy had walked his cousin home from St. Edward's church where they play basketball. He had just left the 2500 block of Franklin Street and was on his way home to the 2700 block of Lauretta Avenue, which is just two blocks away, when he was stopped by several policemen without being asked his name; where he was going or anything.

He was handcuffed, pushed and shoved into the patrol wagon. He was then taken to Western Station and put with the other boys who had attempted the assault. His father went to the station to get his son out. All the policemen said was "this is nothing to get upset about; just keep calm."

In my opinion this is a matter to get upset about.

(NAME WITHHELD)

Community Meet

Dear AFRO:

On behalf of the administrative team and the arrangements committees which made it possible for the eighth annual convention of the National Community School Education Association which convened recently in Baltimore, to be a success, I take this opportunity to thank you for your editorial in the Dec. 1 issue of the Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN.

From the beginning of the emphasis in Baltimore education circles, upon community education, the AFRO-AMERICAN has joined in making this facet of education a reality.

Members of your staff, members of your family worked on committees and served in training sessions to help develop cadres of leaders among community and professional people.

These people are still forging ahead in the arena of community education and with the help of institutions such as the AFRO-AMERICAN will make Baltimore stay in the forefront in this field. Thank you again for your support.

(Mrs.) PEARL C. BRACKETT

A Column of Choice

It Takes More Than Wishes

By Marion Banfield

During this season there are always wishes to find peace, to seek a new year of better living.

When we read of killings, of fighting, of abusing trusts, an end of year weariness makes us wish away all this wretchedness. But it doesn't go away.

Wishing perhaps needs to start inside each of us. Peace is no distant, foreign land affair. Peace is a feeling within.

In praying for peace, in hoping for peace and even actively seeking for peace we are apt to overlook the peace that we need within our own families, within our own office buildings and in our classrooms.

A child cannot know inner peace whose mother constantly rejects with the shout, "Get out! I'll be glad when you're 18!"

A boy choked with anger when his father threatens taking him to juvenile court so he can be placed away from the family.

A wife and a husband destroy inner peace in each other as each hurls insults of revenge.

The sarcasm of a teacher cuts the self-pride of a child and leaves a wound to fester even more hate.

The angry outburst, the defiant gesture, or sullen silence of a student can push a teacher too far away for there to be peace.

As we face the end of a year which history will record in shame, in anger and yet perhaps a new awareness, the new year offers choice.

There is choice for members of a family to meet each other in a room, seek for acceptance and forgiveness in each others eyes.

Even the bad weather will give vacation from each other at work so that we too can meet each other in the New Year and choose actively and consciously to try to be a source of peace.

Communication about which we talk so much can give us a choice for better relationships or for more hatred. We each have choice with each other.

By what choices will each of us be remembered next December?

And by the way, many thanks to Dennis Minor of the 500 block of Baker St., who was kind enough to bring ashes to get my car off an ice spot. We need more such young men who will choose to help a stranger.

The Demanding Mistress: Miss Heroin

So now, little man, you've grown tired of grass,
L.S.D., acid, cocaine and hash;
And someone pretending to be a true friend
Said, "I'll introduce you to Miss Heroin."
Well, honey, before you start fooling with me,
Just let me inform you of how it will be.
For I will seduce you and make you my slave:
I've sent stronger men than you to their graves.
You think you could never become a disgrace
And end up addicted to poppy-seed waste;
So you'll start inhaling me one afternoon;
You'll take me into your arms very soon.
And once I have entered deep down in your vein,
The craving will nearly drive you insane.
You'll need lots of money (as you have been told)
For, darling, I'm much more expensive than gold.
You'll swindle your mother, and just for a buck,
You'll turn into something vile and corrupt.
You'll mug and you'll steal for my narcotic charm,
And feel contentment when I'm in your arm.
The day when you realize the monster you've grown,
You'll solemnly promise to leave me alone.
If you think you have the mystical knack,
Then, sweetie, just try getting me off your back.
The vomit, the cramps, your gut tied in knots,
The jangling nerves screaming for just one more shot.
The hot chills, the cold sweat, the withdrawal pains
Can only be saved by my little white grains.
There's no other way, and there's no need to look,
For deep down inside you'll know you are hooked.
You'll desperately run to the pusher and then
You'll welcome me back to your arms again.
And when you return (just as I foretold),
I know that you'll give me your body and soul;
You'll give up your morals, your conscience, your heart;
And you will be mine until death do us part.

— ROBERT L. WILLIAMS
for the MAN ALIVE program's December
Dolly Bulletin

IF YOU Ask ME

Mrs. Moss

AFRO LINE IS AN AFRO community service to help you solve problems, whatever they may be.

All you have to do is write a postcard to AFRO LINE, AFRO, 628 N. Eutaw St., P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

In addition to stating the question you want answered, include your name, address and telephone number.

QUESTION — In your last week's AFRO, Dec. 22, I enjoyed two Christmas stories. One of them was entitled, "Will Still Will Be Merry," by Michelle Lynn McRae. The other one was called, "A Christmas Story," but it had no name on it. Who wrote it? I enjoyed it very much.

S. T.

ANSWER — The two stories referred to above were entered in the AFRO's Annual Christmas Story Writing Contest, which was open to all AFRO employees. The first prize of $50 was to Mrs. Gertrude M. Steele, administrative editorial secretary and author of the story entitled, "A Christmas Story." Miss Michelle McRae's "Yule Still Will Be Merry" won second prize of $25. She is the assistant to the woman's editor. See accompanying photo.

QUESTION — I live in the area of Gwynns Falls Junior High School, 1125 N. Hilton, and am interested in children receiving an uninterrupted education.

I have found that children who are in school are harassed by those who are outside the building yelling obscenities, breaking bottles etc., and when you call the police, nothing happens.

Are the policemen afraid to patrol this area? Are the security officers in this school afraid to make an arrest?

Those disruptive children belong in some school or at home or on a job and I'm going to solicit friends' help to keep an eye on this area during the night. — J. J.

ANSWER — When informed of your complaint the school's principal, Isaiah E. White, emphatically denied the charges and bluntly said: "He's a liar, whoever made that complaint was lying and just wants some publicity.

"If anyone would know what was going on, I would know because I'm there when they (the students) come and I'm there when they leave.

"If the person was so concerned and if his complaint was so valid he or she would have come to me. This school . . . is open to the public. I run this school . . . so the person who made the complaint should come to me first, if he or she was serious."

QUESTION — Two Saturdays ago a detective called my home and asked to speak to me. I wasn't available so he left a number for me to call.

When I called him back he asked me to come down to the station. He took me in a room and informed me that I was being charged with armed robbery ($350). I have been unjustly accused and I go to court 12-18-73. What can I do? — W. H.

ANSWER — We are advised by officials within the Police Department that upon being charged with the crime your first step should have been securing the advice of an attorney. If you have not done so by now, a defense attorney will be appointed for you.

As for the charges themselves, the officer said: "The unjustness of the charges (as well as compensation for time lost) will be determined by the judge.

"Once a person is charged the judge must then decide guilt or innocence."

According to the officer the manner in which you were arrested-charged was merely a different investigatory method used by police to avoid making false arrests.

Evidently, the detective wanted to talk to you personally before placing charges. Now, you must await the final decision of a judge.

WINNER — Mrs. Gertrude M. Steele (L), holding $50 check, and Miss Michelle McRae, $25 winner. See accompanying AFRO-Line.

camp. She lives in Dundalk and is now a student at the Northfield School in Massachusetts.

Also here from a distance was Paul Entes of Anenta, N.Y. He was a counselor who will be remembered for his guitar playing.

Staff leaders, Miss Pauline Edwards, the brilliant Morgan State College student who was in charge of the girls' program, and the Rev. James N. Caldwell, who directed the boys' program, were also about.

Other staff members gathered, included Roxanne Neal, Michael Valentine, Jean Cohn, Robert L. McCullum, Iantha Darden, Lornita Bradford, Mary T. Keets, Lois Merritt, who was the nurse, Munzio Tazwell and her brother Damon, Glen C. Gordon, Theodore Rich, Dorothy Edwards, Lydia Bailey, Charlayna Newton, Terry Howard, Paul Atkins and Kim Corprew.

Cuff Note: Miss Corprew, a Northwestern High School student, is headed for the Sahara Desert shortly, with her father, who is a film producer. She will assist in making a documentary there.

You can see how our youngsters get around and do such marvelous things.

Yes, the years do fly. It seems only yesterday but the calendar shows it was 10 years ago this week that this writer stood at the altar at St. James Episcopal Church to become Mrs. A. Paul Moss.

Sometime back, a group of us who have wedding anniversaries at this time of the year, were discussing how we might observe them. But, two weeks ago this writer ended up in the hospital to have cataracts removed from her eye, and we had a change of heart about what we would do.

We talked it over with the head of the house and that's how we ended up standing at the altar at St. James Church again yesterday (Thursday), to renew our vows.

We pulled out the pictures of 10 years ago and was perfectly amazed to realize that the daughters Marie, now 24 and Mrs. Marie Cooke, the AFRO women's editor, and Faye, now 26 and Mrs. William Lowry, Enoch Pratt librarian, were in their teens and now are both married and grown.

Not to mention the daughter Rachael, now 18 and a freshman at Virginia State College, was only waist high and that her young friends who put flowers on their wrists and walked with her are also now grown and college students.

Or, our son Benjamin who was also just knee high then, is now almost 21 and a third year student at Morgan, as well as AFRO photographer.

Time does fly, but renewal of vows like this gives one a chance to say "Thank You" to the man upstairs for making it all possible, particularly for this household which has prospered and grown, and kept its feet on the ground largely because the man of the house is an exceptional person.

Cuff Note: More Christmas time wedding anniversaries celebrants: Mr. and Mrs. Walter Dixon (Chinky); Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Wright (Bea); Mr. and Mrs. Vancey Whitaker (Helen); Mr. and Mrs. Robert Matthews (Vashti); Mr. and Mrs. John H. Murphy III (Alice); State Senator and Mrs. Clarence Blount (Gordine).

Good news about good neighbors. Home from Provident Hospital in time for the holidays was Mrs. Pearl Shipley, long time member of Sharp St. Methodist Church. Hellos to her at 1945 Edmondson Ave.

Also home from Hopkins, Mrs. Randolph Tucker (Bea), the Social Security worker. Your cards will reach her if addressed to 506 Robert St.

Continue prayers for Mrs. Maritta Hatton Daniels, who remains ill in Provident Hospital, Intensive Care section. She is the mother of Samuel T. Daniels, grand master of Maryland Masons.

Orchids, Orchids, Orchids to Dwight Pettitt. He is the handsome young Baltimore lawyer who won the court fight to have his father's civil service job upheld and back pay due him. It happened this way.

Back in 1958, the senior Alvin Dwight Pettitt qualified for supervising engineer at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds.

Nonetheless, despite his qualifications, despite his veteran status, he was passed over for further promotion and increment.

Alvin Dwight Jr. decided to repay his father for his long fight for civil rights and as soon as he finished Howard University Law School, he took over the struggle which had been begun by NAACP lawyer Juanita Jackson Mitchell.

Thus the court victory last week.

You have to be inspired if you talk with Pettitt Sr. and Jr. Both are clean cut American citizens, 6 ft. tall, and even though they don't say it in words, you can see both are proud of each other.

The senior Mr. Pettitt, now 51, will be remembered as the parent who filed suit in 1958, when Alvin Jr. was just 13, to compel the Harford County Board of Education to admit his son to Aberdeen High.

It was there that the Junior Mr. Pettitt went on to play football (end) and after graduation went on to Howard University Law School, where he finished in 1970, passed the bar in 1971. Before setting up office here in Baltimore, he was district attorney with the Small Business Administration in Washington.

Of the court victory he won for his father, young Dwight said: "I am very elated. The decision will provide remedies for thousands of other black employees and prove to them the Equal Opportunity machinery will no longer be an exercise in futility."

His dad said, of course he is very proud, but he has no plans for using the back money which the court had ordered he paid for him. His main interest, he said, is to complete his 30 years in government service.

Alvin Pettitt Jr. also did service as public defender here in Baltimore where he is one of 23 on the staff of Norman Yankellow with offices in the Equitable Building.

More on the Pettitt family. The wife of Mr. Pettitt Sr. is Mrs. Mildred Miller Pettitt, formerly a resident of Turners Station, but now a beautician in Aberdeen, where the family has lived for over 20 years.

Cuff Note: The Senior Mr. Pettitt's parents are still living and they are mighty proud, too. They are Abraham and Nina Pettitt of Dillsboro, N.C. He is 84 and she is 82. Isn't that grand!

Mr. Pettitt Jr. is married to Mrs. Barbara Moore Pettitt. They make their home in the Bonnie Ridge Apartments. She is a French teacher in the Washington, D.C. schools. They have two children, Alvin Dwight III, 3, and Nihisha, 6 mos. old.

More Cuff Note: Mr. Pettitt Jr. comes from a large family. His brothers include Argel, Haze and Abraham Pettitt, all of Baltimore; Eassas, John and Donald, all of Philadelphia; Willard Pettitt, Newport News, and a sister, Dorothy Thornbrook of Louisville, Ky.

The Pettitts are long time members of the Bethel (United) AME Church, where Mr. Pettitt Sr. served a number of years as vice president.

More Cuff Note: Mr. Pettitt Jr. and a number of other young people have established a new law firm in downtown Baltimore. Affiliated with them are Michael Mitchell, Airie Davis and Roberta Gill.

More Cuff Note: Watch out for these young people. They are going places. Forgot to mention that Atty. Pettitt and others have filed suit against the Maryland State Board of Law Examiners. Ken Johnson, the NAACP attorney, is co-counselor. You will hear more about this later.

More New Year Prayer thoughts, also from the papers of Carl Murphy — Oh Lord, we come to the end of the year and pause for a moment of thanks and of meditation in which we wait Thy blessing, the easing of our burdens, and this fellowship as we pray together. Lord, all of us want this to be a better world. Help us not only to live in such a world, but to help in creating it. Amen.

New Citizens Department: It's a 6 lb., 11½ oz. girl for Mr. and Mrs. James Baskerville (Marlene). Born on Friday, Dec. 14, at St. Mary Desert Valley Hospital, in Apple Valley, Calif. She is the first grandchild of Mr. and Mrs. George White (Bernice) and Mrs. Mildred Baskerville. The proud great-grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Smith.

Happy birthday to these good neighbors born Jan. 1: Mrs. Margaret E. Robinson, Mrs. Elaine Butler and Arnold Morgan.

80 YEARS AGO — "The interests of the Afro-American population of Baltimore are identical and any faction of the race which fosters strife to gratify its own selfish ambition, should be classed with the enemy."
(From the AFRO-AMERICAN, April, 1893)

What Do You Know About Christmas?

The day in December that marks His birth
Has so much meaning and so much mirth,
For Jesus became a man of all time
Who brought us a message that never shall die
Was Jesus born hundreds of years ago?
Do we keep Christmas the way it should go?
For Christmas means worship the Son of our Savior
By showing His goodness by our behavior,
What should we do to set Christmas part?
Honor and keep His love in each heart,
It was love and goodwill that He brought when He came.
It was "peace on earth" that came with His name
All of these years are the wish of our Lord;
May we strive to live in one accord,
For He came to show us right from wrong,
Let us honor His life in word and in song.

by BERNICE BRANFORD LEWIS

Did Jesus have the finest of clothes?
They were only clean pieces of cloth, you know
Was He born in a place where a king had stayed?
It was only a stable where animals lay,
Were His parents people of great renown?
They were the nicest people that could be found
Was Bethlehem an outstanding place?
It was a small town with people of grace,
Was His bed a manger made of wood?
It was supposed to hold the animal's food,
Did the angels sing in this lowly place?
Did a bright star shine on Jesus' face?
Did the shepherds fall on their knees to pray,
To the wonderful Baby born this day?
We can say "yes" for these things are true,
And they have meaning for me and for you.
For God sent His Son to show us the way,
And to guide our lives through the night and day.