OPINION

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)

Suburbs Losing Luster

Baltimore City, like other large cities in the country, will soon see its white population increase and the gasoline shortage is just one more inconvenience that will make this so.

Suburbia, which lured the white masses in the 60's, is slowly being priced too high for the young married and they are leaving parental homes and finding new ones in the city.

William S. Keough, superintendent of schools in New Bedford, Mass., says that "Real Estate Values in some suburbs have skyrocketed beyond the financial reach of young couples who have been adding to the continued growth of the suburbs."

He points out that these high real estate values may lead to enrollment in suburban schools declining and an increase in enrollment in the city schools.

Whether these young couples will increase the polarization in the cities or lead to the races working together depends on what moves city residents make now.

Baltimore is now building high rise apartments for the elderly. Will these quietly be filled with more young white couples? Will real estate agents again steer couples by race into certain areas? Will the Department of Employment Security allow its people to send job seekers out to certain jobs just because they are white?

Will banks continue to allow loans for mortgages and businesses only to whites?

We hear a lot about hidden agendas, underhand deals and what's bad for the community. Community protest meetings, angry phone calls, petitions, confrontations and picketing are not enough to save Baltimore for all of its citizens.

Baltimore City, like any other city, has only so many homes already standing. If the folks who have them realize how valuable they are, they will keep them. But more important is to understand that these present homes, if in good condition, cannot be replaced in today's market under any circumstances.

A Day In Court

Five citizens who are also members of the Maryland State Legislature will take the mayor and City Council into court on March 4 under a show cause order signed by Judge Joseph Howard.

The legislators, Dels. Lena K. Lee, Joseph A. Chester, Frank Conaway, Isaiah Dixon, Calvin Douglass and Loyal Randolph, filed a civil suit Tuesday demanding the mayor and City Council begin forthwith to seriously negotiate a just and equitable contract of employment with the Public School Teachers Association and further commands that the mayor and City Council refrain in the future from breaking off negotiations.

The suit which came as the school strike entered its fourth week was greeted with enthusiasm by the teachers and with the usual shifting of responsibility by the city government.

After four weeks of no school for the city's main resource — the children — most people want relief and this is what these legislators are demanding in this suit. Judge Joseph Howard has ordered the mayor and City Council to show cause on or before March 4 why the relief sought in the suit should not be granted.

The fact that a learned judge like Joseph Howard signed the show cause order means that at the very least these citizens have their feet within the legal doors in their fight to prevent further irreparable harm, not only to the taxpayers of the city, but also to our children.

Court suits have a way of bringing the facts out in front and seeking solutions. It is worthy of special note that Judge Howard did not dally with this suit but set a date immediately for a hearing.

We hope the hearing will be held on March 4 and that from it will come some concrete information and actions — unless, and hopefully this will be the case, a settlement will have been reached before that date.

And Police, Too

We are anxiously awaiting the first step in the citizen's suit against the Baltimore City Police Department.

Further evidence that under Commissioner Donald B. Pomerleau this department still is not sensitive to the importance of fair representation in the high echelon was the recent announcement of promotion of new captains following a shakeup at the Central District.

As of Jan. 31, 1974, here are the horrible employment figures for the Baltimore City Police Department:

Total sworn personnel, 499 black; 520 officers, 30 black, which include 4 lieutenant colonels, none black; 15 majors and directors, 3 black;

17 captains, 1 black; 103 lieutenants, 4 black; 382 sergeants, 22 black;

2,821 patrolmen, 406 black.

This is a bad picture. Only 13 per cent of the officers and patrolmen are black. Sometime back, we expressed the hope that this picture would have been improved before Commissioner Pomerleau and the department were taken to court. We had suggested here that there was need for an equal opportunity specialist working in the department.

There was even hope there would be a closer liaison with the Baltimore City Community Relations Department, under the direction of John B. Ferron, but alas, it has not come about.

Major James H. Watkins of Community Relations told the AFRO:

"To improve the employment in the Police Department a concentrated effort has been instituted by Commissioner Pomerleau, wherein the deputy commissioner of the administrative bureau, the director of personnel along with Major Bishop Robinson, Central Records and Captain McNeil Brockington of the Eastern District have been named to a department panel to study ways of improving the minority recruitment.

"In addition, the Police Community Relations Section has been accelerating the efforts of each officer in the section to carry the word to the community, along with efforts to make a more harmonious relationship between the police and the community."

Major Watkins added, "The Police Commissioner has set up interdepartmental checks and balances to keep minority groups, in the department, once they have been recruited."

We hope Major Watkins' appraisal bears fruit. At present, however, the Baltimore Police Department's ranking administration is woefully disproportionate. To our minds, there is need for more action, less talk.

No Kiss Of Death

Greg Latta is a young man who played football at Morgan State College the past three years.

Away from the sports pages, neither Greg nor Latta is exactly a household word. He is no Leroy Kelly or Willie Lanier or Raymond Chester.

Yet, if he gets an opportunity to continue playing, and improving, he thinks he might have a chance to join that illustrious trio which has given stature to Morgan football with outstanding careers as professionals.

But, since Greg Latta played at Morgan, he was not overjoyed a month ago when he was picked by the Baltimore Colts in the National Football League draft. At Morgan, the young players regard selection by the Colts "a kiss of death." And there is reason.

Despite many unbeaten seasons, numerous conference championships and reasonable success in post-season play, painfully few Morgan athletes have been drafted by the hometown team. And none — has ever been kept by the club.

On Tuesday, Greg Latta revealed that he had rejected the offer by the Colts and signed with the Washington Ambassadors of the new World Football League.

Explaining his decision, the young man declared that the WFL team offered more money and presented a better opportunity for him to play.

Anyway it is dressed up, the statement does not erase the suspicion that Greg Latta, Morgan '74, was ducking "the kiss of death."

Otherwise why would young Latta elect to join a team which as yet has no one to play, no place to play and nothing to play with?

The WFL, as of now, has no schedule. And the Washington team, which only the day before Latta's signing got the name "Ambassadors," doesn't yet have a coach, a lineup or a stadium. Nor does it even own a football.

But to a Morganite, that's better than the Colts.

Maybe City Life Isn't All That Bad

A little About A LOT

You Ain't Seen The Contradictions Yet

By Mrs. Madelise Murphy

The contradictions posed by the present teachers strike bring to mind the picture of the dog chasing his tail.

Part of the problem is that no one so far involved really has the power to change anything, because the Nixon mentality of revenge, turning the screws, has paralyzed, pervaded, every tier of government and has become the sadistic pleasure of the day.

The hollow ring of righteous indignation from City Hall and Annapolis seems heavily interfaced with political expediency, geared to satisfy the racist clamor of Middle America: "Who in hell cares about equitable pay and education for black people anyway?"

Not that the right of teachers to strike is in question, since the cost of living for teachers has risen as it has for everyone else. Not that medical benefits and fringe benefits aren't just as important to teachers as they are to firemen, policemen, other city workers. Not that class size — better working conditions — won't make for better quality education.

But the fall-out of despair that greets many underpaid working parents who must find ways of caring for their children, can't be ignored. National standardized tests in April won't make the gloomy picture brighter!

Then when pay day last Friday showed checks of 36 cents, or a dollar and change, as a result of the walkout, when PSTA makes no provisions for bail, something's going to give.

The improvident teachers who have had better than average salaries, yet can't pay their bills because of the strike; who haven't learned the lesson they teach about "The Grasshopper and the Ant," speak eloquently for the Black Panther's dictum that any change-agent must first develop a serious program of revolutionary self-discipline!

Or conviction and principle go as far as the teacher who had to choose between buying the Cadillac or going on strike and the Cadillac won! Contradictions? You ain't seen nothin' yet!

Then look at the mayor who will not talk to the legislature, the City Council, which will not make demands upon the governor to force him to fulfill the state constitutional obligation to "establish throughout the state a thorough and efficient system of free public schools . . . by taxation, or otherwise, for their maintenance," that heightens the impasse, impotency, lack of convictions of city and state governments. Rather, the mayor whimpers about a rise in property taxes that will also affect the 7,000 striking teachers.

But then one wonders what percentage of them lives in the city, can vote in the city or will vote for creative city representatives from the mayor on down. I said there were contradictions, didn't I?

Perhaps the city should file suit against the state as the state did against the Federal Energy Office, so that the law would be fulfilled, benefiting a nearly bankrupt Baltimore. Bricks and mortars, the governor so glibly ticks off as aid to

Mrs. Murphy

Baltimore, as in the Inner Harbor, will not educate Baltimore's black population any better.

Would that the governor were just as diligent about the plight of Baltimore's school system as he is about his honor in re: the Sam Green trial; or his interest in the Western Maryland bank probe (one of the few Senate hearings he has diligently attended during his tenure).

But then if we want to place blame, the real villains of the piece are the Congress, the Nixon Administration who won't reform the tax structure that puts the squeeze on middle income workers, taxed far out of proportion to ole King Richard and his big money boys. (If ours is any indication — 45 per cent take home pay — raises only make the bite greater).

Now then the fear that rising property taxes will run middle class citizens out of the city doesn't take advantage of the energy shortage (dig!) nor the power of the city to mandate that anyone earning money in the city — teacher, policemen, firemen, city workers, etc. — should live in Baltimore.

No, racist as it is, Baltimore's ostrich politicians want to have their cake and eat it too, and like the floozy in the tent show crooned to the slobbering boobs, "Sur-fer, sur-fer!" Or, like P. T. Barnum — well, you get the picture.

As a friend says, "Sometime things be's that way."

Contradictory!

WASHINGTON REPORT

The Fight 'To Get Us Some Gasoline'

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

I wait in line just like everyone else. I get irritated when some one tries to cut in front of me. Like everyone else, I am angry over the fact that apparently the only persons who seem to know how much oil we have in reserves, and how much we are importing or exporting daily, are those who are a part of the corporate oil structure in America. Because of my special interest in black enterprise, I am sickened over the failures of black businesses caused by the energy crisis.

What should a member of Congress do in this situation? What should John Q Public do?

In response to an angry letter signed by 15 constituents, I sent the following report . . .

. . . As a follow up to your recent letter please be advised of the following . . .

1) Along with other members of the Maryland delegation, I met with the F.E.O. Administrator at 9 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 22. As a result of that meeting, as you now know, Maryland received an additional 8.8 million gallons of gasoline.

2) When the situation first became serious for Marylanders, I took the following actions:

a) Met with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader and the Majority Whip (these three comprise the Democratic leadership in the House) to press for quick passage of an effective energy bill.

3) I also met with the chairman of the House Rules Committee, Congressman Ray Madden, to press for quick effective action and a meaningful energy bill.

4) In addition, I have sponsored or cosponsored legislation to (a) provide for loans to small business concerns affected by the energy crisis and (b) to amend the Small Business Act to provide for direct loans to small business concerns adversely affected by the energy crisis . . . loans to be made at the rate of 4 per cent per annum.

5) I have met and will continue to meet with the deputy director of the Maryland State Energy Office, Mr. Jacobs, to insure that he is getting all the assistance he needs at the federal level.

I have been working on this problem and will continue to do so until it is resolved. In addition, On March 4, I am convening the "Brain Trust" of the Economic Subcommittee of the Congressional Black Caucus which will meet with the Committee for National Policy Review in an all-day session dealing with the Energy crisis and black Americans. Hopefully, a comprehensive, all embracing agenda of strategies, policies and programs will be developed.

Shortly after March 4, I plan to convene a meeting of the national leadership organizations to review the agenda, make substantive changes, if necessary, and move toward its implementation with dispatch.

If you the reader can think of other positive actions I might take, please write me immediately at 414 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

I want to know your opinions about (1) rationing of gas, (2) lifting wage and price controls and (3) whether or not the Federal Energy Office should be kept in being.

All the actions taken to date and those to be taken hopefully will help out.

However, deep in my heart I believe that until such time as we get a President who is not the tool of the corporate oil interests and one who has more concern for the little man and less political obligation to giant corporations, our situation may improve slightly but the "energy crisis" will not be solved.

It's Not A Man's World

By Bernice S. White

Hide! Run! Scream! Strike! These are just a few tips to aid women in the event of a criminal attack.

Even though reported statistics indicate a drop in crime, many women are being robbed, mugged, murdered, and raped daily.

It is time for women to learn something about the art of self-defense. Women have told for so long that they are the "weaker sex," that fighting back doesn't occur to them.

The Baltimore City Police Department has issued a pamphlet entitled "Self Defense Tips for Women," every woman should have a copy.

Listed here are just a few suggestions it gives:

On urban streets, women should keep car doors locked and windows raised so that a person cannot reach in and unlock a door when you stop for a light.

If you are being followed by another driver, make a curb stop where people are standing and let the car pass you.

If the driver continues to follow you, drive to the nearest place where you can get help.

Above all — Don't Panic!!

This column will periodically carry items on self-defense. We would welcome any hints you readers may have.

Please send them to this column at P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Maryland 21203.

How To Get Action

Our democracy can only be as effective as its contact with the people. And that's you.

The legislator who ignores his mail, who ignores his people at home, soon learns his name may be equally overlooked at the polls. He needs you.

How can you help?

Whether dealing with proposals and funding on a state or national level, you must be aware that the first hurdle is in committee. How that hearing goes, what the committee learns, determines how the bill is "brought out" of committee—or if it is brought out at all.

You can express your opinions in several ways:

Personal contact—If you have the time and means, a personal visit to your legislator may be the most effective way to explain your support or disapproval of any bill. The contact can be made through his county office, his legislative office or at group meetings where he appears.

Telephone—Calls to your legislator's office may be adequate if you wish only to identify yourself and your opinion quickly.

Telegram—If you can state your opinion in 15 words or less, send your ideas with your name and address to a legislator for only $1.25. Send a "public opinion wire."

Letter—If you have more to say on an issue and time is not pressing, write it. Try to be as brief as possible and NEVER send a form letter. Your letter will receive much more attention if it makes its point quickly and personally.

Testimony—This requires more: more knowledge, more time, more travel and willingness to speak out.

Informed citizens testifying on causes in which they believe are great evidence of the power of the people—and it can be fun!

NOW and THEN

Caucus Member Threatens To Quit

By G. James Fleming

The rumors we have been hearing about the Black Legislative Caucus are true.

The black members of the State Senate and the House of Delegates are more than split and divided. They are fighting in the gutter.

So much so that one member was on the verge of resigning from the Caucus last week. He deferred his withdrawal only on the advice of a friend who pleaded with him not to further disunity among blacks.

This dissatisfied legislator, however, had already written his letter of resignation. His letter, although unmailed, gives the legislator's bill of particulars.

"Three times now I have been threatened with physical violence by members of the Caucus," according to the Delegate-member of the Caucus.

"I should note that one of the women members has also been threatened by one of the men."

Threats are commonplace, said the complaining Caucus member, together with endless use of four-letter words.

In the unmailed letter, intended for Delegate Lloyal Randolph, chairman of the Black Legislative Caucus, the complainant continues:

"As serious as threats are, what really troubles me is the lack of respect shown by Caucus members one to another. Tempers are continually up at every meeting. Profanity is rampant."

What the Caucus can do to discipline its members no one seems to know. Each member is equal and no Caucus member wants to "wash our linen" for the headlines, according to one legislator.

According to the letter-writer "The entire Caucus knows exactly who the offenders are, yet the Caucus cannot bring itself to censure these culprits for their deplorable behavior."

The disappointed black Caucus member expressed his agreement with a recent article in a Baltimore daily which asserted that the Black Caucus has very little clout, that it lacks effectiveness.

"Just how effective can the Caucus be when contention and bitterness are the rule of Thumb? he asked. Then he offered to go his way alone — until he was urged to change his mind. The letter closed as follows:

"Therefore, I have concluded that I can better spend my time working as an individual, without fear of reprisal. There is so much to be done here for people, and there is so little time to get it done . . . I look forward to 1975, when the composition of the Black Caucus will be changed, then we can, perhaps, work together."

It is not only the letter of resignation that is important here, this column feels. It is the sense of frustration and disappointment in the voice of the black legislator that is important.

He explained "how much we could do" if the black legislators pulled together. He yearned for a program; he deplored selfishness.

But, the protesting member does not want to weaken the potentials of the Black Legislative Caucus; he does not want to split either the Caucus or the state's black community.

He is not hopeless as to the future; it appears; that is why he looks forward to 1975 when "we can, perhaps, work together."

But, as of this moment, there is one member of the Black Legislative Caucus who is ready to call it "quits" because of the internal warfare within the Caucus.

AFRO Credo

A newspaper succeeds because its management believes in itself, in God and in the present generation. It must always ask itself—

Whether it has kept faith with the common people;

Whether it has no other goal except to see that their liberties are preserved and their future assured;

Whether it is fighting to get rid of slums, to provide jobs for everybody;

Whether it stays out of politics except to expose corruption and condemn injustice, race prejudice and the cowardice of compromise: (Dec. 25, 1920)

From The Papers of John H. Murphy Sr., who founded the AFRO-AMERICAN, Aug. 13, 1892.

PAGE OPPOSITE

Baltimore Afro-American

Teachers' Strike Heated Topic

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 P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Maryland 21203.

One Man's Opinion

Dear AFRO:

As a person who has dedicated his life to education, the thought of teachers striking, at first, seemed unrealistic and out of context with our professional ideals. After a careful analysis of the situation, I have concluded that teachers had no recourse other than the position they have assumed.

For those unfamiliar with state requirements, I would like to offer the following information. First, to be a qualified teacher one must have graduated from an accredited college, plus within a 10-year period is expected to plan a program of study that will lead to a Master's degree or its equivalent. At this time, colleges are offering graduate courses at forty-five dollars ($45) or more per credit.

A review of teachers' records at the Personnel Department would probably reveal that most teachers have expended two or three thousand dollars in graduate study.

It would be difficult to name many other positions where one is expected and wants to continue to become better qualified and prepared. In my forty years of teaching, it is a safe estimate to state that 20 years have been spent in graduate study.

When teachers' salaries were published, recently, one student remarked, "and they call that a profession." Many persons with less educational qualifications and preparation make several thousands more a year.

Our elected officials who control the purse strings, ask where is the money coming from? Either they are not qualified to establish a workable budget or do not care about education. In case there is any doubt to whom I refer, this group includes the City Council, mayor, governor, etc. They seem to find money for any other pet project.

Reportedly, some of these officials suggested a 25 thousand dollar raise for the governor, an 11 per cent raise for the next three years for other positions and so on down the line.

These people already receive a substantial salary; however, it is a safe bet that the money will be found.

Several years ago, the news media stated that a 5 thousand dollar raise was being proposed for elected officials who were being paid 30 thousand dollars a year. Nothing more was heard from this; however, reliable sources say that this passed with no fan-fare.

Why is one segment entitled to such a ridiculous increase and teachers must fight for peanuts? I say that the City Fathers are not only insulting the teachers but are calling them "stupid."

This year has been one of educational unrest throughout the nation. Baltimore teachers continued to work, underpaid and with no contract. It seems that concerned officials would have foreseen this situation coming and taken steps to prevent it.

When election time comes and it isn't too far off, the public needs to take a long careful look before casting their vote.

JOHN M. WOOD

About Schoolroom Problems

Dear AFRO:

Perhaps the most important message which needs to be communicated to the community at large regarding the strike of the teachers is the fact that this is a crusade to save education in Baltimore.

Most of the teachers who are manning picket lines before dawn would never have walked out of the classrooms merely for a raise in salary.

Since 1967-68 salaries in surrounding counties have outstripped teacher pay scales in the metropolitan area, yet not until other conditions became absolutely intolerable did classrooms become empty.

At Northwestern High School one history teacher has two classes of over 50 students. This is not an isolated case. Such unthinkable overloads also exist in language classes and totals run as high as 48 in English courses.

Teachers who regularly use movie and filmstrip projectors carry bulbs in their pockets, for wire lights burn out there is no money. They must provide their own; otherwise the equipment is inoperative.

We have a program for our less successful students which we began three years ago. It is experimental and predated the Right to Read program for which it is a prototype.

This enormously successful course has been entirely funded by the two teachers who conduct it. They buy the 50-100 books which the curriculum requires.

In typing classes, typewriters are in such unspeakable condition that approximately 50 per cent are not usable at the present time. In one room, which has 44 typewriters, 32 are more than 15 years old.

In Home Economics classes there are only 12 sewing machines for 37 students. Three teams, golf, tennis and frosh-soph basketball, have been eliminated from the men's physical education program in an effort to economize.

Statistics from 25th Street tend to be fallacious. In computing teacher-to-pupil ratio, librarians, counselors and administrative personnel are counted, thus fogging the real conditions. Also, storerooms, offices and large closets have been used for classes to give misleading and false students-per-room accounting.

The city has many psychologically and sociologically troubled youngsters whom the schools serve. Counselors must be responsible for about 400 young people. Testing and psychological counseling are almost defunct.

It is impossible to secure the regular help of a psychologist despite the fact that in our school alone there has been about one "drug bust" every two days.

Parents are deeply disturbed about the truancy problem which has disturbed the school for several years. Still, the loss of a home visitor and the inadequate pupil accounting personnel makes effective action on any ambitious scale absolutely impossible.

In 1972, a new social studies program was initiated two days before school began in September. Teachers who were to be responsible for this had no training and when they received the syllabus it was incomplete. There were no proved with books until mid October; at that time they were given one set per room so that no book could ever go home.

Two English classes with about 70 students must bumble along with 28 available anthologies. The instructor is not alone in this dilemna.

Evaluation of courses is superficial and seem geared to bear out the opinion of those who design the curriculum. Student opinion is ignored and teacher evaluation is denigrated.

The Right to Read program is one of the great unheard scandals of the system. Last year tests were given so late that they were totally unused. Then they were charted by class. Since high school classes are re-arranged each year, this year's instructor could not find the scores.

Furthermore, the tests are not validated. A Fifth grade word appears on a ninth grade vocabulary test and the same word appears on tests at different grade levels.

The average English teacher was told to administer, grade and chart 8,000 tests. Since administration did not get the manual of the tests out until Christmas again this year, the eight full days of testing was futile.

The same tests which the 10th grade student took last year were readministered in January, further invalidating any results. We do not know if any local money implemented this program, or if it is all federal funds. We do know that this is a cruel and expensive fraud.

For city children, field trips are extremely important, so that their narrow experiences are enhanced. We do not plan them very often anymore. There is no money for buses and substitutes cannot be hired to cover the classes of an accompanying teacher. We have thrown in the towel on such projects.

Nevertheless, teachers who have absolutely no income of any kind from the city of Baltimore, or from their unions, continue to serve the children to whom they are devoted and in whose interest they sacrifice so much.

Plays are being rehearsed, student council affairs proceed, yearbooks are being edited by students and teachers who meet during the strike in churches and other facilities.

Instructors move from picket line to desks and libraries, grading papers, preparing lessons, studying so that they can do their jobs more creatively, more meticulously.

Still, the politicians bleat helplessly and trap school personnel in an effort to invoke civic sympathy, when civic action by these responsible for the dilemma is the only reasonable response to the current hotch.

If you will consider the justification of the strike, we hope that these specific causes for our despair will clarify some of the issues. We are grateful to you for your insight, sympathy and willingness to listen to our cry for help.

GRACE H. WALKER
Member Steering Committee
Northwestern High School

Keep Teaching

Dear AFRO:

Some of your news articles concerning the striking teachers have carried comments from students indicating bitterness at being cheated out of their rights to a productive school day.

We sympathize with them wholeheartedly, realizing that they are in danger of losing whatever ground they have gained this year.

Apparently, each school has a handful of remaining teachers. I wonder if some remedial programs could be initiated during this time to keep the students busy and learning?

Instead of babysitting, the students could be re-learning reading skills, math skills or some other educational matter.

The secret of success is being able to adapt to changing situations. We owe it to our children to keep on teaching.

VERDA F. WELCOME
(State Senator
4th District, D.)

Queries AFRO

Dear AFRO:

Do you know that:

1. The AFRO has not supported the teachers in their endeavor to secure better education for all of the children of Baltimore City?

2. The AFRO has not supported the teachers in their endeavor to secure better working conditions?

3. The AFRO has not supported the teachers in their endeavor in securing an adequate contract?

4. The AFRO has consistently supported (Supt. Roland) Patterson's administration?

5. Teachers are wondering why you have assumed this attitude?

ANNE C. DORSEY
MAMIE B. MILLER

Parents Rallies

Dear AFRO:

The number of parent rallies I attended last week indicated the parents had the same goals in mind.

That is to support the teachers in their attempt to end the strike.

This overflow of unity has not existed since the political "cloud" hung over our city, and we stayed awake long enough to vote into office a black congressman, a state senator and three black delegates in the northwest area. We also showed our political strength in other areas of the city.

Now we have an educational crisis, and I "challenge" the parent movement group to stay united and push for enforcing better housing and sanitation codes, meaningful recreational programs, insure community progress by starting voter registration drives.

This way we can vote more blacks into office who will push for the bread and butter issues that will benefit the black community.

This will create the kind of environment that stimulates learning for Johnny and his parents.

MRS. WILLIE TOMBS

P.S. For the sake of education, I dare you parents to try this.

One Answer

Dear AFRO:

Enough about how much money teachers are losing during the strike. Now how about a good word in support of the teachers.

How many other groups of city workers are required to spend four years in college to get degrees for their jobs?

How many other groups of city workers are required to go on to graduate school and spend their hard-earned money?

How many other groups of city workers, reside in the city, purchase homes in the city, pay property and other taxes in the city, and educate their children in Baltimore public schools?

There's but one answer. Teachers! —

OSCAR SMITH.

Supreme Court

Dear AFRO:

The Supreme Court has ruled school boards receiving federal funds must provide special instruction to children who cannot speak, understand, read, write or learn in English because it is not their native language.

It reminded me of my childhood, when several children came to class not knowing a word of English. No one in authority (teacher, principal or superintendent) assumed responsibility.

But as a classmate, knowing their language, it was my logical duty to explain and act as interpreter. One I recall mutated quite well — he is now a successful attorney.

P. TMJ.

A Column Of CHOICE Smaller Classes

By Marion Banfield

It is to be hoped that after the strike teachers will spend time in deciding more effective means of teaching our children. The call for smaller class sizes certainly seems worthy of trial.

Since private schools stress the importance of small class sizes, it seems unlikely that public schools would ignore this factor.

When the teachers get through picketing, we can hope that they can join parents and administrative staff in serious determination to reduce class sizes.

For years, I have heard some teachers say that if they had a class attendance of 15 in primary grades, they could teach effectively. My teenage clients tell disgraceful episodes about ineffective classes of 40 in high schools.

It's time for us to reduce according to classroom teacher recommendations. They are the ones coping.

Since the office of Health, Education and Welfare is telling the Department of Education to deal with racial isolation, this is a good time to also reduce class sizes.

Parents whose children read well and perform scholastic assignments skillfully are apt to be fearful of low achievers forcing the teacher to change instruction patterns. These parents do not want their children's progress to slow down. This attitude applies to parents regardless of race.

Since teachers are asking for smaller class sizes, this should be arranged, particularly if racial integration is to be a factor. This is because of the racial fears, enmities and doubts with which parents, administrators, teachers and pupils must deal. Racial mix is going to change classroom atmosphere.

That change will be as good as teachers, administrators and parents make it.

Open enrollment has failed dismally in promoting racial integration. Open enrollment has actually been destructive to some black populated schools.

Because of the emotional tensions with which we hope educators will prepare to cope, small class sizes should be a basic element in meeting HEW requirements.

We need all be aware that unless racial isolation is reduced, Baltimore will lose millions of dollars from the federal government. In that case, there won't be a strike. A lot of teachers will find employment outside of the Department of Education, regardless of their skills for any other job market.

Our choice is to face our financial need to deal with the racism of our school system.

Our choice is to deal openly with racial attitudes and plan means of building mutual respect among pupils, among educators and with parents.

Our choice is to recognize that the end of the teachers strike can be the beginning of a more professional concern and involvement with this community.

Call For Unity

Dear AFRO:

Black teachers should unite with parents and look at priorities as they affect the entire black community.

Some of our children are far behind and have far to go educationally. They need their teachers to teach them. They need the skills, concern and love of their teachers. The instructors need the cooperation of parents and students in order to put pressure on the mayor to get the raise which they desire.

However, this support will not be forthcoming if black teachers are willing to sacrifice black children and our black competent, dedicated superintendent, Dr. Roland N. Patterson, for a few dollars.

Our black teachers have kept quiet and looked the other way, while signs blatantly racist, have been waved about and displayed about Dr. Patterson.

Some black teachers are so quick to say that white teachers "are marching by their sides, and it's black and white together." Since when did white people stand with black people "side by side" unless they knew they would get more out of it than blacks? Check it out.

Black teachers must not be guilty of allowing themselves to be tricked into aiding and abetting racism!

We have to keep reminding ourselves that our actions and priorities must be in terms of building strength, harmony and love and intelligent direction within the black community.

CLAUDETTE M. CHANDLER
Parents United For
Quality Education

Who Did IT?

Dear AFRO:

In reference to a story on the life of Miss Jane Pittman I thought that it was very well acted out.

We read and hear so much today about the black man committing crimes and killing each other. Often, is said that they are too lazy to work, too dishonest to be trusted, but after viewing this story about people who only wanted to be honest, educated and free, my question is who taught hatred to the black man?

Who brought violence to America?

Who taught the white man how to be infuriated enough that he would kill his own brother to survive?

My answer is "the white man," "the tall white stallions" and yet today our kids, some of them, refuse to go to school when they have nice schools to attend. They are free to get an education. Why? Because lowest people like Jane Pittman gave their life just so that the black people could be educated.

ELIZABETH KENNEDY

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

All you have to do is write a post card 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: I was standing on the corner of Howard and Fayette Sts., waiting for my bus on Wednesday night, Feb. 13, about 10:45, when all of a sudden a police came up to me and said, "get moving, you can't stand here." Then for no reason at all, he knocked me out into the street, in front of a car.

Fortunately the car was standing still, and I was not run over. I tried to explain to the officer that I was waiting for either the No. 3, 29 or 8 bus, as I always do. I was not involved in any disturbance, and that he had no reason to treat me like that, but he did anyhow.

What can an average citizen do, who works hard everyday like I do? I am nobody in particular, except that I am married and the father of three children. I do have a job and I try to do the best I can.

I work the 4-12 shift in the South Baltimore area. I haven't been in any trouble. I just don't understand a situation like this, when I am minding my own business. Why should someone come up to me and threaten me for no reason at all?

What redress do I have in a situation like this?

W.M.

ANSWER: A spokesman from Police Community Relations told AFRO Line that you should call them at 396-2711 or 396-2712, and an investigation will be conducted.

QUESTION: About 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 15, at the corner of Eutaw and Druid Hill Ave., in front of the AFRO office, a young man was walking down the street.

All of a sudden a police car circled the block, the officer jumped out of the car without his hat, pushed the young man up against the wall, made him hold his hands up, searched him and then ran and got back in the car.

What I don't understand is why this young man should be stopped on the street. I was there. I saw him. He was minding his business.

I thought under the new search and seizure regulations, that a policeman has no right to jump innocent citizens on the street. What about this?

E.P.

ANSWER: Major Watkins requests the writer to contact him at 396-2711 or 396-2712, and he will make every effort to give you an explanation.

(EDITOR'S NOTE): Whenever there is unexplained police action, AFRO readers should get the officer's badge number or car number, the location and time, and report the incident to the Community Relations Section. The phone numbers are 396-2711 or 396-2712.

QUESTION: For Christmas my brother gave me two dresses and a coat that he purchased from a Lexington Street store. When my brother purchased the three items, he said he was told that I could bring any one of the items back and exchange if I didn't like it.

So, I took one dress back to the store to exchange it. It still had the price tag on it.

The lady verified it against their layaway card, plus she remembers my brother picking out the dress.

The manager of the store informed me I had purchased the dress at another store and was trying to exchange it there.

I was only trying to exchange the dress for something that I liked — or to get a credit slip to use when I saw something in the store I liked later. The store refuses to do this. I have written to every agency to get help on this problem, and the latest reply that I have received is that they will exchange the dress for another size if they have one in stock. I don't want another size, I want to be able to exchange the dress for something I like. Because without them exchanging the dress, I'm stuck with a $28.99 dress that I don't like.

Black people are spending a lot of money in this store. Maybe we should boycott the store for a while. What can I do?

MRS. G. J.

ANSWER: Hubert Chadwick, first floor manager, says if you will bring the dress in along with the will call number, he will most gladly check all information against the store files. He says he can not guarantee he will take the dress back since Christmas exchanges were over Jan. 6. However, he states he will need to see the condition of the dress, the book number and the receipt in order to determine what can be done.

QUESTION: I am the mother of three daughters. My ex-husband signed a mortgage on a house for us, but he turned the gas and electricity on in his name.

Since January, I have been battling with him for support. He has not paid the mortgage since August. He is a real estate salesman and also works in a downtown department store.

Recently, Domestic Court ruled in his favor. He got off with only a $30 a month payment for three children and we are forced to live on welfare. What should I do?

ANSWER: The AFRO called Social Services which insists you call their Client Information and Referral Service at 234-2252 and find out who your case worker is.

Tell him the story and in the meantime, contact your lawyer at 539-5240.

50 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)

Inadequate Budget

Dear AFRO:

School Superintendent Roland N. Patterson has presented to the city-fathers a small budget of $240.9 million dollars for 1974-75.

Many citizens feel as I do that this budget should have been increased by 15 or 20 per cent.

If the city of Baltimore and the state of Maryland can endorse over 2 million dollars for a proposed stadium complex, then there should be no reason why the Finance Committee and the Board of Estimates should not support the $240-million dollar budget for our school system.

It is of the utmost importance that parents should be alerted for any and all public-hearings pertaining to the budget and attend in massive numbers.

Furthermore, parents must let their voices be heard by writing, petitioning, telephoning or any other method deemed necessary to get from the Mayor, Comptroller, President of the Council and their individual Councilman the support needed for the budget.

If the Baltimore City Schools are to move forward we must show that we are in full support of Dr. Patterson and his administration. FLOYD ROGERS.

The Strike View From Rock Glen

Dear AFRO:

There are 113 teachers at Rock Glen School who are striking because we believe this is the only alternative left to make others aware of the critical situation existing in the Baltimore City Public Schools.

We have been without a contract since June 30, 1973, and are now waiting for the city to accept the compromise recommendations made by an impartial impasse panel appointed by the State Superintendent of Education.

Teachers are being denied an up-to-date medical plan, two personal leave days with pay and a salary increase which amounts to approximately 12.5 per cent over a two year period.

This increase will not even keep pace with the cost-of-living increase of 18 per cent during the past three years. Comparable teaching positions in the surrounding counties yield substantially higher salaries.

We feel that Dr. Roland Patterson's administration has treated teachers with an extreme lack of respect and professional consideration.

We believe that the policies and attitudes of his administration have resulted in the demise of quality education in Baltimore City Public Schools.

It is imperative that the existing policies be revised and revamped to meet the needs of the teachers as well as the pupils.

The Association of Parents and Teachers of Rock Glen School are aware of our strike position and have demonstrated their support by contacting Mayor Schaefer, members of the City Council, delegates to the State Legislature, Dr. Patterson and members of the Board of School Commissioners.

All of us are convinced that the present educational situation warrants the action we have taken and that our success will improve the quality of education our pupils receive.

HUBERT BURTON
BTU Building Representative
Rock Glen School

WILLIAM W. MacLEOD JR.
PSTA Building Representative
Rock Glen School

YOU Can Register To Vote NOW

Do so TODAY at Supervisors of Elections, People's Court Building, Fayette and Gay Streets, Baltimore. Open daily, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. You can also register by mail. Forms available at all branches of Enoch Pratt Library, Community Action Agency centers and Supervisors of Elections. Next primary election for Governor and state legislators is September 10, 1974. August 12, 1974 is the last day to register.