"I am a man of peace: God knows how I love peace. But I hope I shall never be such a coward as to mistake oppression for peace."
— Hungarian Freedom Fighter Kossuth

OPINION

Baltimore Afro-American

FOUNDED Aug. 13, 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr. 1848-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN Co., of Baltimore City Inc.

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)

A4 JANUARY 4, 1975

Pomerleau's spies

If Police Commissioner Donald D. Pomerleau has an explanation for what appears to have shaped up as one of the most heinous crimes ever perpetrated against the citizens of Baltimore by an official of the law, then he must lay it out plainly and in detail.

For a man who came to Baltimore to help clean up corruption in the police department, Commissioner Pomerleau seems to have lost his sense of direction somewhere along the way.

His secret Inspectional Services Division has been plundering across constitutional rights of Baltimore citizens in the fashion of a racist, gestapo police.

Gov. Marvin Mandel, who appoints the police commissioner for Baltimore City, has requested by Jan. 7 a detailed report on how extensive the surveillance has been "for activities that fall outside the normal range of intelligence work as it is understood to apply to behavior, or suspicion of behavior, of a criminal nature."

The kind of report that Gov. Mandel has requested can go far in his determination of whether it is time to bring in a new police commissioner, but there is reason to demand further action and disclosure about the extent to which illegal surveillance has been conducted on Baltimore citizens. This is especially true when many of the targets have been blacks, some of whom do not fall into the category of activists, militants or suspected criminals.

There must be grand jury or special grand jury hearings into this matter. There should be a special prosecutor. There must be high-level black involvement in the study of the racial implications of the secret surveillance of what on the surface largely appears to aim at "just the blacks." We must have no whitewash, not even at the statehouse level.

Is it not significant that police department requests for ISD funds to keep Pomerleau informed on "the status of . . . racial matters within the community" hummed through City Council, the Board of Estimates and the mayor without challenge?

We are fully aware of the need for surveillance of the type generally conceded to be permissible in criminal detection cases. And, as two Supreme Court justices held just a few days ago, it now is deemed necessary in many instances to do preventive type checks in non-criminal areas.

No Baltimore citizen wants the police commissioner to be asleep at the helm.

Nor does any Baltimore citizen want a police commissioner who will set loose in the city the kind of fear, distrust and terror that unhampered spying creates.

A thin-skinned commissioner overly sensitive to personal criticism can destroy a city as quickly as one who is corrupt in other ways.

Frankly, we are disappointed in Commissioner Pomerleau. We have not expected race-tinged, gestapo tactics from his police force. To the extent that at least a degree of this obviously has reared its ugly head, he must accept the full responsibility.

Until Commissioner Pomerleau has his say and the record is clear without a reasonable doubt, the AFRO has not joined in the calls for his resignation or firing. What is clear now is that Commissioner Pomerleau has to go far to make any explanation he comes up with an acceptable one.

Don't rape the public

Senator Verda F. Welcome may be able to provide some relief for victims of rape by in some way limiting the extent to which courtroom lawyers are permitted to delve into irrelevant facets of their sex life.

But we think the senator would do well to rethink her proposed bill that would permit judges to close rape trials to members of the public and press.

Senator Welcome's thinking is that a rape victim has suffered such a traumatic crime that public review causes further pain and discourages prosecution in such cases.

No question but that a great deal of anguish accompanies trials involving rape.

But that cannot be allowed to curtail the public's right to witness its public officials reaching just decisions in such cases. The history of rape cases and the dual standards of justice often employed in decisions and sentences, force us to speak out against star-chamber justice.

At a time when the public demand is for more open handling of its business, legislation asking for more off-the-record criminal court trials seems to be a step in the wrong direction.

Rape is not the only crime that goes unreported for various reasons. One of the real needs in this sensitive area is to have more women recognize the fact that rape must be reported and the guilty prosecuted if the penalties against this vicious crime are to have a deterring effect.

Secret trials for rape victims would do far more damage to the criminal justice system than it could accomplish on behalf of rape victims.

The idea should be dropped. If it is not, then the proposed bill must be killed in the General Assembly.

'Be sure to see if I'm mentioned'

What policemen advise women to do in rape attempt cases

By H. J. Heller

Women are "screaming like hell," using karate chops, blowing whistles, taking self-defense courses and carrying weapons in the fight against the rising incidence of rape.

Additionally, police are conducting classes and using decoys in an effort to apprehend rapists.

Are these techniques succeeding?

A survey of a number of American communities by UPI indicates that despite increasing awareness of the problem, a solution is still relatively remote.

Even policewomen assigned to special task forces are having their problems.

In San Diego recently police, using a policewoman as a decoy, caught a suspect.

"But," said homicide Lt. Ed Stevens, "she could have been Tarzan of the Apes and she still would have been knocked on her butt and had her neck stretched. Because that's what happened. She was knocked down and stomped despite several policemen rushing to her aid."

Stevens recommended women facing an attack should "scream like hell." If that fails, he added, "they should bide their time till they find an opening to escape and then split."

The "scream" and "split" theme was echoed in Los Angeles by Noni Frantz, a sergeant with the Los Angeles County sheriff's department, who added some refinements of her own.

Miss Frantz' advice is to resist in every way — scream, kick, bite, claw the eyes and take off at a run if possible.

She says she tells women to use any weapon at their disposal from a knife to a gun if they feel their life is threatened.

Above all, Sergeant Frantz warns, don't cry or plead. "It makes the rapist feel like King Kong."

Police generally are dubious about karate and the other so-called martial arts.

In Carbondale, Ill., Police Chief George Kennedy said courses given to women on self-defense do not include karate and judo instruction.

"I personally feel that karate and judo give women a false sense of security," said Kennedy. "I think a woman's best defense is a good set of lungs and being able to give a proper gouge or kick if need be."

The Carbondale courses for women demonstrate how to administer kicks to the groin and treading on insteps as well as eye-gouging.

Police Inspector James Crowley, of San Francisco's sex crime detail, said there was no record of a rape victim using martial arts against a rapist, or of a woman carrying a knife or gun to ward off an attacker.

"Women have been sold a bill of goods on martial arts courses," Cowley said. "You can't take a 90-day course and be good at it. But there are many men who will run if a woman screams . . . the best thing is to run if possible or draw the attention of witnesses by screaming."

Sgt. Glen Griffitts, head of the Portland, Ore., morals details said he could recall only one case in which a rape suspect was shot. The mother of a 14-year-old girl, who was raped, shot the assailant not fatally, several days later.

A recurring theme appeared to be the participation of women's groups in anti-rape classes.

In Philadelphia Pat Nicholson, coordinator for Women Organized Against Rape said, "Women are feeling anger after an incident rather than a feeling of shame and guilt . . . more women want to take revenge through prosecution."

"I don't think women are using guns and knives so much," she said. "But they're becoming smart enough to carry a sharp object in their hands . . .

"A lit cigaret has been, as far as I've heard, the best threat in discouraging an attack. A woman I know who was grabbed told her assailant, touch me again and this is going to go in your eye. He fled."

Reports from other areas:

— In Utah, women are being offered seminars in prevention and self defense but nothing as sophisticated as karate lessons are underway.

— In Sacramento the county sheriff's department for several years has been sending women officers into the community to discuss rape and how women can protect themselves. In one case a woman was attacked in the bedroom of her home and drove off the assailant when she cut him with a knife.

— In Las Vegas, with the third highest rate of rape in the nation, homicide detective Karen Good said she believed that the incidence was high because more cases were reported. She said none of her case victims recently said they attempted to fight back.

Similar reports with variations came from Chicago, Tulsa, Kansas City, Mo., Minneapolis, St. Paul, Salem, Ore. and Indianapolis, among others.

Rape has been known since the earliest history of man and has been variously regarded as a misdemeanor, a felony or even tolerated.

Now, although women in particular and the public in general have become more aware of the problem, the diversity of the replies elicited from police authorities and private groups indicate that a solution is still far in the future.

Now and then

by G. James Fleming

Police black lists must be opposed

"Enemies Lists" or "Black Lists," compiled by the authorities against law-abiding Americans, must be fought and opposed wherever and whenever they appear, or whenever there is even suspicion of the existence of such lists.

If "righteous indignation" were ever justified, it is in reference to such listings.

This is not to say that police departments will not "bore from within" or underwrite stooges and informers — just as nations plant their spies and conduct endless espionage, nation against nation.

All of us Americans, for instance, support a gigantic international spying organization, costing millions of dollars every year — the CIA.

Some experts say that the police in large cities just cannot perform their duties without using normally underhanded and questionable methods, including employing former criminals to frame others of their kind and also, sometimes, innocent people. Sometimes policemen are used as "plants."

Be that as it may, the rank and file of Americans cannot take, lying down, the kind of police operation recently revealed in Baltimore City.

Through a special bureau, the Inspectional Services Division (ISD), the local police department has been shown to be accumulating secret "spot reports" on black politicians just as it has long been suspected of keeping track of those considered "subversives." The local police, reportedly, also has its "Enemies List" of black ministers, their views and their movements.

A 1971 written document, submitted to the police commissioner, outlines what transpired at a campaign debate between two black candidates for mayor. The candidates' names, those of other participants on the program, some members of the audience and a summary of the speeches given, were recorded.

One victim of the report has called for a grand jury investigation of the police commissioner, with a "special prosecutor" in charge.

Some persons named in the "spot report" have taken it lightly ("a tempest in a teapot"), pointing out that it was a waste of the taxpayers' money, since their lives are open books, anyway ("This is the kind of information they could get simply by asking the parties or reading the newspapers)."

But, we need to take a second view of these lists.

Are they ever authorized just for fun or mental exercise?

The answer is "no." We have only to recall how Adolf Hitler and Senator Joseph McCarthy utilized their lists.

In the case of Hitler, to use the extreme, men or women on the lists, disappeared in the night, singly and, eventually, by the thousands.

In the case of McCarthy, hundreds of decent men and women — guilty of no crime — found themselves embarrassed, their homes destroyed, their jobs lost. Newspaper editors found themselves shielding their editorial teeth. Schools and colleges were frightened.

What was first considered to be only the work of a crackpot or an overzealous politician, became weapons in the hands of all kinds of bigots and little Caesars. Employers used the lists for "getting even," with union activists, while conservatives of all brands used them against dissidents and nonconformists. Informers were enthroned.

It is because "Black Lists" and "Enemies Lists" always get into the wrong hands and get used for destructive, evil purposes, that their existence must be fought. In fact, the process must be nipped in the bud. They are aimed mostly against intellectuals, labor unionists, challengers of the status quo, courageous clergymen and, sooner or later, against anyone or groups that dare to speak out, to disagree, to be independent.

These lists have no respect for the civil rights of those listed, they ignore constitutions, they turn their backs on fair play, they increase power in the hands of the Machiavellis.

Wherever police black lists become a way of life, that people is on the way to becoming a police state, or has already achieved that stage.

That reality explains why there was such national outcry against the Nixon "Enemies List." That is why, in Baltimore, there must be outcry — and more — against the so-called "Spot Reports" and other secret devices and listings against local citizens, including politicians, ministers, editors, labor leaders, public speakers and others who utilize their constitutional rights of freedom of speech and press, freedom of assembling and freedom of petitioning their government.

A little about a lot

by Madeline W. Murphy

Police surveillance didn't just begin

The meeting hall became crowded. It was in a community church where the minister had involved himself in the life of the city.

Many of the faces were those of familiar activists, sprinkled here and there with strangers. The activists had weathered the recent civil disturbances of '68 and the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King's murder.

Now they had assembled to plan for the ouster of Commissioner Donald M. Pomerleau, whose latest outrage had been to use police dogs in a black neighborhood. These dogs had gone amuck and the leg of an innocent woman had been badly mauled and maimed by one of them.

As the meeting was called to order, one of the voices was heard over the murmuring, calling the attention of the chairman, demanding, "Until these tape recorders are banned, Mr. Chairman, there shouldn't be no meeting."

The demand was put to a vote, and the tape recorder voters, far outnumbering those without them, voted down the demand.

Fifteen minutes after the meeting had adjourned, the commissioner called a high ranking black bureaucrat demanding to know how the bureaucrat dared to criticize the commissioner, and when the bureaucrat denied that he had, the commissioner played back his own words, recorded by one of his agents, over the phone.

Other paranoid harassments perpetrated by this commissioner continued:

There was always a green panel truck outside the church for the Saturday Black United Front meetings, held at this same church, photographing the participants.

In the same year, this writer was helping to organize both a tenant and welfare-rights organization in Cherry Hill. During one morning meeting, with VISTA volunteers, police from three police cars invaded the church demanding to know if there were Black Panthers meeting there. Being dissatisfied with the volatile answers they received, they followed up this confrontation with an inquisition lasting two to three weeks by plainsclothes members of the Inspectional Services Division (ISD).

At St. Vincent De Paul, facing Central Police Station, a too cooly dressed stranger, decked out in plaid bermudas, sports cap, knee hi's, tried to disrupt a community meeting dealing with a community newspaper and a citywide tenants organization. When he was questioned closely he became rattled and fled across the street to the sanctity of his lair.

Anyone who has had experience in civil rights organizations over the past 10 years, can spot (almost smell) these storm troopers in a meeting very easily, since most of the same ones rotate from meeting to meeting, are either silent and watchful, carry notebooks, tape recorders or cameras, or are so vocal and ultra revolutionary that they provoke irrational reactions that sidetrack the agenda and disrupt the meeting.

Next time you have a meeting, carry your camera and take their picture. You'll see how they shy away. Demand to ban tape recorders, make them show their credentials. In most cases informers and double agents are cowards and cannot stand being on the defensive.

Also we must reveal these people, by printing their names and pictures and circulating them among our groups.

We alone are at fault, for not having done more to stop this harassment some time ago, when Soul School, the Black Panthers, Angela Davis and Rap Brown were under attack.

Can you believe now that no one from the most establishment black to the most outspoken black is safe? Picking off the leaders, blackmailing them, emboldens the police to attempt to quiet all of us, to take away our constitutional rights.

Unless we begin to organize even with the fired striking police, those persecuted by the ISD; unless we reveal the cowardice of the governor and mayor when confronted with the firing of Commissioner Pomerleau — for, he may be blackmailing them — we have only ourselves to blame, for the increased illegal tactics of the police.

How interesting that this country is so vigilant about Soviet Jewry, while it permits this kind of persecution to go rampant here at home.

There are none so blind, however, as those who will not see.

Switch to Ali

Heavyweight Champion Muhammed Ali, once prosecuted by the Federal Government for defying the draft, was a welcome visitor at the White House recently. Ali received a red carpet tour of the nation's capital, including a refreshing chat with President Ford.

As things turned out, at the White House, Ali, true to form, got in one of his jocular asides, telling Mr. Ford that he might be competing for the White House job sometime in the future.

Of course, it was all in jest but the fact remains that Ali has so captured the imagination of the public that he could quite possibly be elected to some high office if he chose to run. Maybe not the Presidency, but certainly a post of lesser importance, especially in his hometown of Louisville.

All of this points up the new approach in America. Times have changed. Besides the White House stop, Ali was given the VIP treatment on Capitol Hill where he was a guest of honor at a reception sponsored by Sen. Walter D. Huddleston, D., Ky., in the Senate Office Building.

The treatment accorded Ali was in marked contrast to the government's action in 1967 when the champ was indicted and tried on charges of refusing induction as a draftee.

Ali was found guilty and given a five-year prison sentence but the Supreme Court threw out the conviction against him on the grounds some of the evidence used against him was obtained by unauthorized FBI wire tapping. Ali, as a member of the Black Muslims, declared his opposition to the Vietnam War and declined to join the army.

He was stripped of his heavyweight title because of his draft defiance, avoided by boxing promoters, and put on the shelf for the duration of the undeclared war. He suffered in the popularity poll, but exhibited extreme patience and stood his ground.

Little by little he regained the top ranking he had enjoyed in the sporting world, and climaxed his comeback with his championship triumph over George Foreman in Zaire last October.

This week Ali was elected "Fighter of the Year" by the Boxing Writers' Association. He will be 33 years old on Jan. 17, and is only the second heavyweight in history to regain the world title. Floyd Patterson was the first.

What intrigues us, however, is how swiftly the fortunes of Ali have changed in a few years. So, loved or hated, he has to be admired by kings as well as the common folks. He is a remarkable character.

Thoughts of the Founder

"Local men and women who are interested in the problem of the delinquent and dependent child should have the support of the entire race."
— May 2, 1914

J. H. Murphy

The AFRO stands for

Equal justice, not only in theory, but in fact before courts.

Adequate black representation on all public boards and commissions of Maryland cities, counties and the state itself, including colleges and universities.

Extensive and meaningful black political power.

Equal job opportunities in fact as well as theory.

Equal housing opportunities in fact as well as theory.

Black judges on all benches of the city, county and state courts.

A black owned and operated taxicab company.

A black owned and operated bank.

A black majority on Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners.

Smile

"My topic today," said the psychology professor, "will be the lie. How many of you have the 21st chapter of the text?"

Nearly all the students raised their hands.

"Good," said the professor, "You're just the group I want to talk to. There are only 20 chapters in the book."

81 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)

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.

(December 24, 1920)

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

AFRO readers RAP

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 300 words in length. Address to "AFRO Readers Rap," Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN, P. O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Maryland 21203.

Sneaky and subtle racism?

Dear AFRO:

I was greatly appalled and disappointed by the Tuesday, Dec. 24 issue of your paper.

What shocks me is the inconsistency of your beliefs. You are appalled by racism and if there's a slight hint of it, there are big headlines. I remember reading many a story of undocumented and nameless accounts of such. But, this is not the point.

My contention is that you are perpetuating racism in a sneaky and subtle way. How? Look at the first page of the issue in question. What do you see? "The white couple" or "black and white team," or "black boys and white girls." These classifications are readily found throughout your paper.

I say its "racist" because it classifies people according to their color and sex. This is an effective way to create and perpetuate stereotypes. By means of your unprofessionalism, you defeat your own purpose.

Therefore, I demand a retraction and an apology. If this is not in order, I will immediately file a complaint with the Justice Department and the Civil Rights Commission.

Oh yeah, since it's so important to you, I'm "white." I invite all comments.

IRA KATZ

People ignored

Dear AFRO:

Rep. Bella Abzug, D-N.Y., voiced some significant thoughts before House Judiciary Committee (hearings) in opposition to the confirmation of Rockefeller on Nov. 27. Later, on the House floor (Dec. 19) she said:

"We have so distorted the meaning of the 25th Amendment that it is unrecognizable. The 25th Amendment never contemplated a situation in which there would be a non-elected President appointed by a self-impeached President who then sought to appoint a non-elected vice president.

"Speaker after speaker has justified support for Rockefeller's confirmation on the grounds that strength is needed in the executive branch of Government. In effect they are seeking to imbue the office of the vice president with wholly new meanings and function . . . What they are seeking to do here today is to virtually nullify the action they took with respect to Ford only yesterday, for they insist that they must put into power a strong acting President to bolster or replace President Ford. This we have no right to do. This happens to be the right of the American electorate." (Con. Rec. p. H 12425)

Many congressmen got large numbers of letters opposing the nomination.

This is the fourth time that voters have sent a message loud and clear to our lawmakers. This correspondent asks: Has there ever been, in history, an instance where the vast majority of our legislators have so glaringly ignored the people's wishes?

PAUL CHIERA

Thieves thwarted

Dear AFRO:

Christmas came early for me. On the evening of Dec. 10., while awaiting an approaching No. 51 bus, my purse and a small bag of groceries were snatched.

A lady motorist responded immediately to my cries of help by calling to me to get into her car for a pursuit of the three boys. When we had reached an area in which the boys could have lost us, there was this gentleman walking toward us with both bags.

The lady motorist proceeded to catch the No. 51 bus and retrieve another package that had been dropped. The bus driver had yelled for me to go on and had assured me he would get any other package dropped. I was driven home. Nothing was lost.

Here are three people in whom our city can be proud. I'll ever be grateful to them. Let it be known that recently, a member of the motorist's family was publicly cited for foiling another purse-snatching. I wish to publicly express my profound gratitude to these three persons.

I also hope that you will allow me this forum to let all Baltimore know of their good deed.

CLARICE F. LEE

Mrs. Santa aids

Dear AFRO:

I have been informed that through efforts of the AFRO's Mrs. Santa, children (and Christmas presents for them) were sent to Community College of Baltimore on Saturday, December 14.

We at the college are extremely pleased that you selected the presentation, "Amahl and The Night Visitors," as the occasion for this excellent project.

Please share with your associates our sincere appreciation for being able to share in this opportunity for enriching the lives of these boys and girls.

HARRY BARD
(President.)

To Mrs. Santa

Dear AFRO:

I'm writing this note of "thank you" to Mrs. Santa because if it was not for your helping my children and me, we would not have had a nice and wonderful Christmas nor dinner.

The money I received from my pay check all went towards paying my rent. With help from the Social Service my children and I will not be put out.

I want to thank you again for coming to me when I needed your help. May God bless you and your helpers always, and keep you safe from all kinds of harm, We all need you.

MARY E. DILL
and FAMILY

P.S. Merry Christmas Mrs. Santa and a very, very Happy New Year. Keep happy and smile always.

Mr. Bumble's prayer

Most wonderful Father, if it is Thy gracious will, grant us strength to withstand the crosses that we must bear in the coming year. In Thy precious son's name we pray. AMEN.
(Submitted by Mrs. Elaine Hughes).

Share your favorite prayer with the AFRO's Mr. Bumble, P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

Informative

Dear AFRO:

The very informative story written by Ms. Angela Chatman on the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and the Nation of Islam was most interesting.

I would like to commend the AFRO-AMERICAN and Ms. Chatman for a well written and unbiased look at the Muslim program, especially the fish program. We have received an overwhelming response from AFRO readers about the fish.

RONALD 10X LA SAINT

Story complete

Dear AFRO:

I found the article on my father in the Dec. 21 edition of the AFRO-AMERICAN revealed a most complete story of his deeds, and accomplishments in the community.

Your kind words of my father were a real tribute to him. While reading this article I could envision my father and also saying to myself how proud I am to have been his son.

Many thanks and may God bless you.

MARCD. RASH

Lovely article

Dear AFRO:

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for the lovely article about my father. It was so tastefully written, that I framed it and placed it on my wall.

Again many thanks for your kindness and thoughtfulness.

HERB RASH

Thanks children

Dear AFRO:

With all the violence taking place daily, I hesitated to answer my doorbell on Sunday about 7 p.m. — but after summoning up courage to open it I was pleasantly surprised by a group of neighborhood children with burning candles singing "I Wish You A Merry Christmas."

I thanked them personally but I think they deserve a public thanks, and recognition, especially since we seldom read about the good children are doing today.

MRS. THELMA DERRICKS

REGISTER TO VOTE — Now is the time to get on the books so you can vote for the next mayor and city council persons to represent YOU. Register to vote now at Supervisors of Elections, People's Court Building, Fayette and Gay Sts. Office open Mondays through Fridays, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Next primary election for mayor and city council is Sept. 2, 1975. Get ready to VOTE now.

The Soviet Union-'a people of good soul'

This is the first in a series of four articles by AFRO columnist Madeline W. Murphy, which were published first in the national editions of the AFRO in May and June of this year, but because of space limitations were not printed in our Baltimore editions.)

By Madeline W. Murphy

In August 1973, I was part of a seven member delegation led by George B. Murphy Jr., that visited the Soviet Union.

The highlight of the 15-day visit was the rededication of the mountain in the Tien Shan range in Kirghizia, named in 1948 for Paul Robeson. Mt. Robeson is well known to most of the citizens of the USSR because of Robeson's international activism for the oppressed people of the world.

It was during this trip that a presentation would be made to the Kirghizian Friendship Society, a lifesized portrait of Paul Robeson, executed by an artist member of the delegation, Prof. Bertrand Phillips, acting dean of the art department of Northwestern University, Chicago.

We were also anxious to meet Soviet citizens of African origin in Abkhazia, as well as Afro-Americans and their descendants living as citizens in Moscow.

Our trip traced an irregular trapezoid of 6,000 air miles from the northwestern city of Moscow, southwestward to Sukhumi, Abkhazia on the Black Sea, then back northwestward to Leningrad near the Bay of Finland, the northernmost city of the Soviet Union, and finally back to Moscow, and home.

The people showed a naive curiosity and unfamiliarity with Afro-Americans yet they were friendly, helpful and polite.

Surprisingly, we learned that the words "soul-folks" and "soul" were not original expressions of Afro-Americans. Since ancient times Abkhazians have been calling their country "Apsny", which means "land of soul," and the name they call themselves, "Apsua," means "people of good soul."

A story was told of an African descendant, who lived to be 140 years old. She remembered hearing how her father and uncle, guards on a merchant ship from Africa, were attacked by Abkhazians and taken prisoners. Later they were given the opportunity to remain or return to Africa.

They chose to stay when they found out there were other Africans living in the mountains and small villages of Abkhazia, who practised Christian and Moslem rites of their homeland.

Presently there are about 300 people identifiable as descendants of African origin, living in the Republic of Abkhazia, part of the larger Republic of Georgia.

Because Sukhumi is an ancient city with a history of over 3,000 years, the first African settlers assimilated with the Abkhazians and so black descendants are hard to find. Many of them are considered white Africans since they still retain the features of Ugan dans.

Our first stop was in Sukhumi, Abkhazia, a sub-tropical republic with the climate and terrain of Florida. Though there were many people of dark swarthy skin, Arabic in features and coarse texture of hair, we were con-

gynecologist, works in a maternity hospital in Sukhumi. Her cousin, Shamil Chamba, is a bus driver and they both are married to Russians.

Nutsa's father, Shirin Abash, and his brother, Saaban, before the October Revolution of 1917, worked as shepherds on Prince Abashindze's estate and lived in poverty. They took sides with the workers and peasants in their struggle against the tyranny of Tzarism after the revolution, Shirin helped organize collective farms and was elected the first chairman of the collective farm board in Adzyubzha.

He was married to an Abkhazian woman, Her sister, Kompich, was Shamil Chamba's mother.

Nutsa and Shamil resemble Afro-Americans and were it not for their language, Russian and Abkhazian, easily could have been mistaken for members of our delegation.

Their summer home is in a compound of others and looks like the modern ranchers seen in suburbs of Baltimore. They garden, picnic and do most of the things we do. Their children, now in their teens, are preparing to go to the university, all expenses paid, and were away at a pioneer camp during our visit.

Both families joined together to prepare a lavish meal for us and were very happy to see us. They were curious about how blacks fared in the U.S.

Because our trip was history-making in the Soviet Union, we were accompanied by a television crew and Slava Tynes, editorial writer for Novosti Press, Moscow, who is the son of Afro-American, George Tynes, now a citizen of Moscow.

Out trip from the collective farm village of Kabyu to the collective farm of the Kondzh Ogly family was all up hill into the Caucausus Mountains. This family of African descent, raised corn for cattle, fruit, vegetables, grapes and tobacco. The tobacco is of such excellent quality it is exported all over the world, even the U.S. The farmers can either choose to work for the collective or on their own individual plots. Women over 55 are retired on a pension.

The Kondzh-Ogly family works for the collective and receives monthly wages of 70 to 75 per cent of the expected in-

come, which is their guaranteed payment.

The remaining 30 to 25 per cent is paid at the end of the year year depending upon gross receipts. If they over produce they receive monetary bonuses, and if their work is of excellent quality, they are honored with trophies and medals.

They are entitled to pensions, vacations and social security which are subsidized by the state and the collec-

lived in a village in Batumi, near the Turkish border in Abkhazia.

The national meal included an African steamed soft dough; white like cornmeal, a huge round loaf served individually to everyone.

It was called "managa," and was eaten by tearing off bite-sized pieces, rolling it in the right hand and dipping it in hot spicy tomato sauce. It was a heavy

TOASTING THE FAMILY at feast at the home of Nura Kondzh-Ogly of African descendant. Left foreground: Ms. Mary Ellen Bell, Chicago; William Johnson, Washington, D.C.; Victor Linwood, Interpreter; Mrs. Louise G. Murphy, giving toast; chairman of collective farm; chairman Gudauta District Soviet; right; Natalia, Nura's daughter, and in rear left, Sergei, brother of Nura and an African descendant.

tive.

We arrived at the farm in the late morning heat.

The home, called "Nura's" house, since she is head of the household, had the look of Swiss chalet, with weathered grey siding on the upper story of the two-story structure.

The slate peaked roof, the decorative azure railing around the second story porch, the blue dormer windows and pots of red geraniums on the porch and the gold wild flowers close to the house, gave it a story book quality.

All the members of the family, with Nura in the lead, rushed to greet us. Nura was short, plump and brown-skinned, barely 5 feet tall. Her brothers, Voldya and Sergei, though a bit more restrained, smiled and seemed eager to meet their long lost "soul brothers and sisters."

Neighbors and relatives came down the road, up the hill, carrying chairs, tables, plates, bowls and glasses. Much preparation had gone into cooking an authentic native meal.

Steaming chunks of meat, goat and beef, sides of steamed liver, chicken, no parts of which was wasted, were carried from the smoke house to the table under the trees and if we had not heard the unfamiliar sounds of Russian and Abkhazian, or seen the predominantly white skin, we would have thought we were back at a family reunion in Maryland.

Nura's two sisters soon appeared from another farm, Zina, 61, brown-skinned, was five years younger than Nura, an the eldest, Antiga, merely 4'10" tall and 68 years old, was darker than either of them. A brother, who was absent, was said to more closely resemble his African forefathers.

Nura said her mother was black and that others of her mother's coloring

bland tasting bread.

We had learned in Moscow and Sukhumi, that Russian meals will last for hours, with their interminable courses of food, interspersed with toasts. This meal followed the same pattern.

According to the chairman of the collective farm, the family would be moved in the fall to any plot of ground they wished to have closer to the village, and their home would be made into a museum commemorating the migration of Africans to Abkhazia.

As the meal finally ended, a young girl of the family brought out her accordion and began to play folk songs. The men led the dancing and drew us into the ring to join them.

Then Antiga, the eldest sister, came forward to dance with Louise. Cameras began to click, flash and whirr, as Antiga executed sprightly bird-like graceful steps. She made intricate hopping, swirling motions, hard to follow.

The most amusing were the little boys of 7 and 8, who flung off their shoes and with serious expressions, ground heels and toes into the grass, swirling, hunching their shoulders, swinging their arms, shoulder high, popping their fingers to the accelerated beat of the Russo-Mideastern temp, Laughing and clapping by standers added to the merriment.

This was a fitting finale to our visit withthe African descendents of Abkhazia. (Next A towering peak in U.S.S.R. honors Paul Robeson)

Afro-Line

AFRO-LINE is an effective 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, 628 N. Eutaw St., P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. in addition to stating the question you want answered, include your name, address and telephone number.

SPECIAL NOTE: You may also report errors in news stories, request corrections, complain or inquire about AFRO news stories and policies by contacting AFRO-Line by phone or letter.

Weekdays call 728-8200, Extensions 64 or 58, between hours of 9:30 and 4 p.m. and talk in person to AFRO-Line service.

Your report will get prompt attention by top management or the AFRO news department.

Or write, AFRO-Line, P. O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. 21203 or drop in to see AFRO-Line at 628 N. Eutaw St.

QUESTION: Here is a copy of a letter sent to the Board of Education, Baltimore City concerning a policy now in effect in most of our schools.

I feel most parents are unaware of the existence of this policy.

Dear Sir:

"Is the decision to suspend students from school due to lateness a policy made by the Department of Education or a policy initiated by school administrators? Whichever, it appears to be unjust and to the students' disadvantage.

First of all, I realize a part of a child's education is to learn to adhere to rules and regulations. Moreover, I can understand that the purpose of such a rule may be to call the tardiness to the parents' attention.

However, I feel this is somewhat drastic. Once, to suspend a child from school indicated serious problems. It now appears a child can be suspended for "any reason."

Second, with the implementation of HEW's mandate into our school system which has resulted in some children now having to catch two to three buses in order to get to school, this policy is ridiculous.

Is the MTA service such that the schedules set by the transit company for specific stops at specific times are rigidly followed each and every day?

To send a child home after arriving at school is to deprive that child of 'one day's education because of lateness — to send him home before notifying the parent that he is being sent home is irresponsible.

When I was in high school, if a student was to be sent home, the school official was required to talk to the parent or another responsible adult to inform them of the action being taken and also to insure safe transportation back home.

Since it appears this policy is in effect in most of our schools, a re-evaluation should be made in this area with consideration given as to the best interests of the student.

This entire matter was brought to my attention by a friend. However, since I am a working parent of a school-aged child, I am seeking detailed information concerning this policy.

(Mrs.) BARBARA L. PARKER

ANSWER: AFRO-Line spoke with Earl R. Jones, administrative assistant to Superintendent Roland Patterson. He advised that the facts outlined in your letters are not entirely true.

He added that "It would have to be a lot more than just simply tardiness involved."

AFRO-Line suggests notifying the parent involved that the School Board at its Nov. 14 meeting dealt with the new suspension, disciplinary removal policy.

This policy will spell out quite clearly, I think what the principal will or won't, can or can not do, Mr. Jones Mr. Jones told AFRO Line.

WHERE TO CALL FOR HELP

HOT LINE — 539-5151 for abandoned vehicle; dirty yards; garbage collection; street lights, street repairs.

POLICE — Emergency — 222-3333; community relations, 396-2710.

SERVICE — Ambulance, 396-1111; bad food, 394-4424; animal removal, 396-0218; fire, 685-1313; defective sidewalk, 396-3188; rats, 396-4418.

INFORMATION — City Jail, 396-5211; transit and traffic, 396-3049; drug abuse counseling, 383-2720; job, 383-5468; legal aid, 539-5340; rumor control, 837-1188; rape center 366-RAPE; pension reform bill, 962-3916.

MAYOR'S STATION — Govans, 396-6684; Greater Homewood, 396-6689; Northwest, 396-0024; Steuart Hill, 396-6207.

FOOD STAMPS — 234-2251.

You and your welfare

The Baltimore City Welfare Rights Organization is concerned about the recent proposed Federal Regulations Law which would allow the welfare agency to reduce the present advance notice period of cutoff or reduction from 15 to 10 days.

There will be a public hearing on the proposed revision on Jan. 8 at 2 p.m. at the Social Service Administration, located at 1315 St. Paul St. WRO feels that 10 days is not sufficient time for the client to respond to whatever action is being taken against him. Some of the reasons being:

a. Not knowledgeable of the time the worker can be contacted.

b. Not knowing who your worker is

c. Not being able to understand why action is being taken against the client

All welfare recipients and concerned citizens should be present to express their views with respect to the intended action.

Q. Can the Welfare Department suspend or cut-off my check without prior notice?

A. A written advance notice of termination, suspension or reduction has to be sent at least 15 days prior to the intended action pertaining to the basis for the proposed action. Also the client's representative (legal counsel, friend or other spokesman) shall be given opportunity to discuss his situation with the local department staff, obtain and explain and present information pertinent to the proposed action.

Q. I have heard of the term "fair hearing" used. Could you explain what this term means?

A. Any applicant or recipient or his representative may request a hearing by giving a clear expression, oral or written, that he wants an opportunity to present his case to a higher authority.

Please submit all questions to: Ms. Rudell Martin, c-o Baltimore Welfare Rights Organization, 29 N. Fulton Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21223

(Since the availability of space is limited, we regret that we can not answer all your questions. Please feel free to visit our office anytime between the hours of 8:30-4:30, Monday through Friday.