Conference here calls for summer March on Washington for Jobs

By Elizabeth M. Oliver

Baltimore is preparing to become part of the nationwide Summer, 1975 March on Washington For Jobs now in the planning stage. Spearheading the gigantic effort is the A. Philip Randolph Institute, a national group in 37 states and with 105 chapters including the one in Baltimore.

Norman Hill, director and the 87-year-old Grand Old Man of Labor, A. Philip Randolph, told the AFRO at the convention in Baltimore last week:

"Something has to be done. We will lead the poor jobless to Washington sometime before another foodless, heatless, workless winter sets in.

Mr. Hill said he will get with Mr. Randolph and other Randolph Institute leaders in a New York planning session "and take Mr. Randolph's expert advice as to how we shall move."

Mr. Randolph, Mr. Hill and another great name in labor, Bayard Rustin headed the 3-day meeting and workshop in Baltimore last week.

Concluding the conference attended by some 1-500 delegates was the dynamic AFL-CIO official, Alexander Barkhan who blasted the Ford administration as doing nothing for the unemployed and pulling the cover over its head by saying, "Things are easing up now."

Mr.barkhan said amid sustained applause at the closing brunch at the Lord Baltimore Hotel." Go home and tell everyone who is hungry and out of work and in need of everything the human body and soul needs, that we are going to do something about it now."

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The delegates gave resounding applause and a standing ovation as Mr. Barkan continued to demand the removal of the "Ford bunch" from the White House the next election.

Charging that the nation is in worse shape than ever in history, Mr. Randolph himself urged all persons, the poor black and white alike to band together to remedy "this terrible state the nation is in."

Toward removal of the "Ford Bunch" from the White House and election of officials who will save the nation, Mr. Randolph told the AFRO, "We must have a voter-registration-campaign and then a plan to get out the vote, plans like we have never had before."

He continued to stress the role of the poor black and white "banded together" to obtain the best results.

Mr. Hill heard in private session Sunday moring, the leaders from Atlanta, Ga. who revealed non-union workers brought in by a white New York firm are working for the lowest wage the law allows on the multimillion air port contract.

One of the delegates disclosed, "Atlanta is in bad shape. They talk about crime going higher and higher when the trouble is, our men are out of work.

"They are skilled, union men who should be employed. Non-union men, unskilled and from out of town are in those jobs and take longer. They can only do what they are told. Union men can perform better and shorten the time."

It was decided that the group would try peaceful "Conferences" with Mayor Maynard Jackson and political leaders "instead of taking to the streets and hollering and crying."

The union already has a picket line around the airport, the leaders said.

The Atlanta situation is duplicated in many large cities across the nation where unemployment is high and "people are starving," the delegates asserted.

Walter Waddy, director of Region 4, AFL- CIO spoke Sunday morning to urge unity of purpose and a strong thrust for voter registration and election of the "right" public officials.

AFRO REPORTER Angela Chatman received the following responses in interviews with the leaders.

Interview with Bayard Rustin:

"Racism is a very pervasive thing in America — Something more pervasive is the mistreatment of the working class. The problem is not merely color . . . It is a class struggle.

"The poorest people in the country are not black . . . They live in Appalachia and Vermont and are whites.

"There is going to be a tremendous racial conflict in this country unless we get full employment." He noted that in Detroit while policemen with seniority have been laid off while black policemen with less seniority have been kept on the job to fill racial quotas. He said such a practice could only cause more conflict.

Until Ford is out of that White House, this country will continue to deteriorate."

The real answer is full employment which requires a redistribution of the wealth" in this country.

"We have got to produce the things we need."

His interpretation of redistribution of the wealth is "By giving people services that they do not have to pay for so that their money can be used for the pursuit of happiness and other things." He suggested that the government supply health care, education, rapid transit and child care centers. This would in short, be a socialistic state.

"This redistribution of wealth would be done by providing services that are absolutely necessary."

BILL FOR CONSUMERS — does not have that much faith in the bill. "It depends on what kind of bill you get . . . who you get to write it and what kind of pressure you put on them (congress) to act."

VOTER REGISTRATION FOR BLACK PEOPLE — We must raise the percentage of blacks voting from 35 per cent to 90 per cent.

"Watergate was politically devastating saw blacks. Black people saw men steal millions of dollars and get away with light sentences while they steal a piece of bread and get 15, 20 years." They say "Screw politics . . . it stinks."

"The thing is to use race or ethnic background as a motivating factor to get people to vote."

RANDOLPH INSTITUTE — Mr. Randolph said that every black should be educated." Mr. Randolph fought against the idea of black capitalism."

BLACK STUDIES — "It's the whites who need black studies . . . . Let's get the blacks in the textbooks."

He does not feel that it is his job to motivate white people to join forces with black labors. "I have to say to whites . . . I am motivating blacks . . . You must motivate your people."

WALKING FOR JOBS — Of the proposed new march on Washington, he said, "We must invite other ethnic groups . . . other cultural groups . . . bring as many whites as blacks."

"We have to move . . . .and if no white pressure goes with us . . . we have to move."

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Rustin wants to get money from wealthy people.

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Mr. Randolph has decided that we must call another walk . . . Congress has not improved."

"People must have hope and the Nixon-Ford administration has robbed the minorities and poor whites of hope."

VOTING — "Voting is the only means of getting your bit." Rustin talks of motivating people to see the necessity of voting and applying pressure to politicians but he noted drives any human being to irrationality."

SHORTAGES AND OIL CRISIS — He noted that world policy and shortages will always affect domestic policy." foreign policy is Domestic policy with it's high silk hat on."

"If anybody thinks because I criticize them that I have anything but love for them. . . . they are wrong . . .

PEOPLE WHO ARE VALUABLE IN WASHINGTON — Rustin lists three.

1 Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. — "The most important lobbyist in this country."

2. Barbara Jordon — "The best thing we have in Washington is Barbara Jordan.

3. He also lists Andrew Young

INTERVIEW WITH A. PHILIP RANDOLPH — "I think the Institute has gained some strength in the areas of social politics and organizational influence . . . But when you think of the effort of workers to change the social and economic position you always think of it in terms of economic strength . . . Most unions have lost economic strength."

"Involved chiefly in developing a broader more fundamenal and basic understanding on the part of the black worker and the black community of the value of economic action and . . . a political and economic organization."

GRAND OLD MAN of the labor movement in the U.S. in Baltimore last weekend for the A. Philip Randolph Institute convention, the organization which bears his name, is made an honorary citizen and presented a citation by Mrs. Marguerite Campbell, aide to Mayor Schaefer.
(AFRO staff photo by Benjamin M. Phillips IV)

BY THE WAY...

by Joe Black

One night not too long ago, I tucked my little 5-year-old daughter in, and told her her usual bedtime story.

The one about the wicked witch who gazed into her mirror and asked, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?"

When the mirror answered with a name other than her own, the witch flew into a rage. A rage over her own image. A rage over the realities of self-deception.

There seems to be a parable here. A parallel to the way many Blacks deal with their own self-image today.

So long as the mirrors of our minds reflect the concept that Black is beautiful, we sit back and smile. Get a little more comfortable. And overlook any cracks that appear in that concept.

But the truth is, there are cracks! Cracks that mar and could destroy an overall image.

Our image isn't the fairest of them all, because there's a lot of laziness going on. A lot of dishonesty among ourselves. A lot of finger-pointing at the other guy.

But it isn't Whitey junking up our neighborhoods with trash, bottles, and empty beer cans.

It isn't Whitey who's responsible for our children losing the desire to stay in school and learn the basics of a good education.

Whitey isn't responsible for the high Black-on-Black crime rate.

And Whitey isn't telling Black mothers and fathers to toss off the responsibility of parenthood.

Sure, some of our problems stem from discrimination. But we're also reflecting a lot of problems we're making for ourselves.

So maybe it's time to get out the good old mirrors of truth, honesty, and ambition.

Because, if "Truth is the light that will set us free," then it's about time to take a good, hard look at it.

Seems a fair thing to do.

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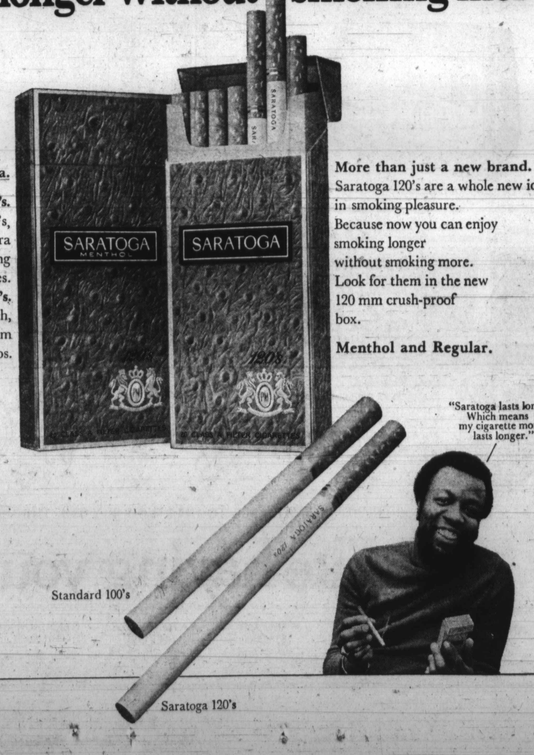

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IRS to verify wives' numbers

The Internal Revenue Service in cooperation with the Social Security Administration, is making a nationwide effort to correct and update some Social Security number files for income tax purposes.

Gerald G. Portney, IRS district director for Maryland and the District of Columbia, indicated that the IRS will send questionnaires to area residents if a spouse's Social Security number is not shown on the income tax return or the number does not agree with the name on the agency's records.

Updating of the Social Security files will help ensure that spouses receive credit for making estimated and other tax payments, and for having filed a tax return.

"Although a taxpayer may receive a guestionnaire," Mr. Portney said, "it will not slow processing of the return or delay any refund due. We are simply trying to validate all Social Security numbers which are used to identify tax accounts."

Many name-number mismatches occur because women who obtained Social Security numbers before marriage did not report the change from their maiden to married names to the Social Security Administration but used their married names on tax returns.

Recipients should not attach Social Security cards or other official documents to validate the information submitted on questionnaires.

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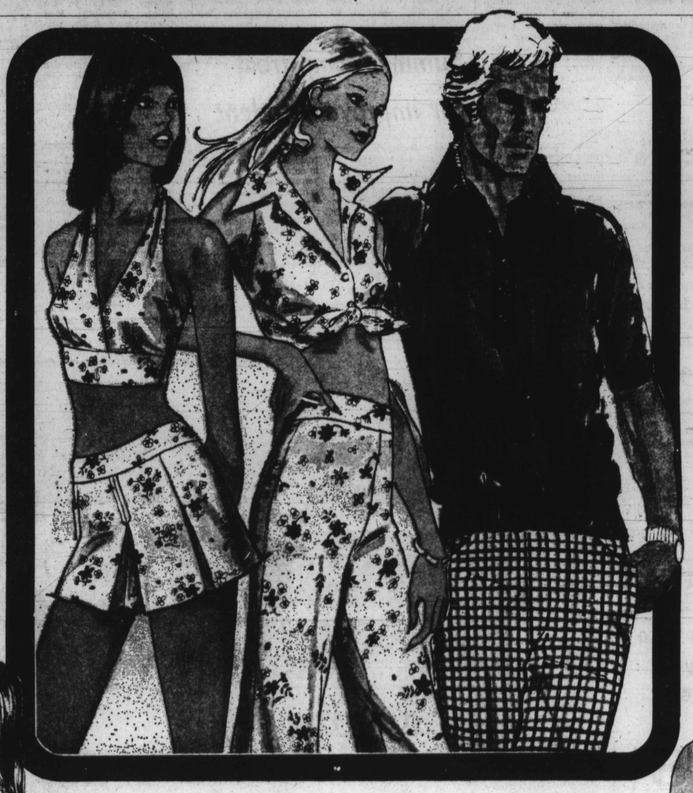

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