OPINION

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Who's for US?

Seemingly on the spur of the moment this newspaper asked the contenders for the office of governor of Maryland to flat out tell us what they would do for black citizens if elected.

This is a valid question we hope you will agree.

Hey Blair, Ted, Glenn, Walter, Harry, Louise... if we vote for you what will you do for us?

Us meaning the thousands of AFRO readers plus thousands more black voters whose ballots tip the scale toward victory or away from it for any candidate for statewide office.

Us not meaning necessarily what you are going to do for Congressman Mitchell, or Senators Blount, Welcome or Douglass or Delegates Young, Webster et al but us. Not William L. Adamson or the Concerned citizens of East Baltimore.

Us meaning the 40 per cent (a modest estimate) of the 18 - 26 year - old black citizens unemployed or non - employable.

Us meaning the hundreds of minority state government employees, as devastatingly documented in the John Douglass report, who are bypassed, frozen and otherwise kept from moving ahead in the state's personnel force. Not to mention the countless number never hired in the first place.

Us meaning the thousands of black children whose public school instruction suffers because of the state's miserliness when it comes to diverting needed monies to metropolitan Baltimore.

Us meaning the thousands of black families in need of public assistance because of that horrible unemployment rate cited above at the mercy of a state department of human resources which in turn is so gutless it permits the governor's budget analysts to determine social welfare policy and its translation into money and food for desperate people.

Us meaning a state prison system whose population about all black and male is controlled by a white bureaucracy which prospers because of the socio - economic racism that sends so many black men to jail in the first place.

Us meaning the thousands of families in substandard housing.

Us meaning the many upright black families terrorized by neighborhood crime which in turn is allowed to run rampant by a law enforcement establishment alien to the communities it supposedly serves.

We could go on but by now you know the "us" we mean.

Our reporters began asking this pragmatic question Wednesday, August 16, in preparation for this Friday's edition.

Candidates, what are you prepared to do for us?

As you can anticipate, the standard response of press officers for all candidates was "We'll get something to you."

We find it of immense significance that one month before the primary election the candidates who want to lead this state view the concerns, problems and needs a black Marylanders as a set of circumstances to be dealt with only when directly queried by this newspaper.

One day, come the millenium most likely, a political leader will emerge in this state with vision enough and courage enough to say to all people, "here is what I stand for, here's what I would do."

This current line - up of candidates hardly suggests what we, Us, hope for and need.

If ever the homily "... he (or she) will grow in the office if elected" is to be fulfilled this is certainly one election year that needs our must intense prayers if Us is to be helped in any way.

Choosing sides

Our independence and non partisanship is in full ascendancy which is why we only judge the Congressman Mitchell may have his reasons for that early committment to the candidacy of Blair Lee that should in no way be binding upon the rest of us.

As stated above, no candidate as they say in sports has "showed us much of anything" that relates directly to our community's self interest.

Mr. Mitchell, able politician that he is, has in this campaign cited as a proper and loyalist Democrat rather than gadfly, choosing to stick with the known Lee (already in the chair) rather than the problematical Venetoulis.

Other politicians, notably Councilman Clarence Burns, rarely in agreement with Mitchell on anything, likewise have inclined to Lee.

This commitment of politicians to one or another banner carrier is a complicated process.

Some of it has to do with what is in the best interests of the politician's constituency, much of it has to do with the individual politico's survival which is not always in the best interest of his or her constituency's survival.

We think we are all sufficiently sophisticated enough to appreciate that when two such worthy antagonists as Mitchell and Burns agree on a candidate, some of it is based on what these two men perceive as being good for Us (that word again!) some of its rests on what is best for them.

Us and them in politics, the black vote not always monolithic, in this context is not necessarily inseperable.

Which applies also to the commitment of William L. Adams, always a vital force in Maryland affairs, whose Metro organization also has tapped Lee as its favorite. Again this is a traditional form of side-taking.

Conversely, Ted Venetoulis lays claim to the lion's share of the state's "labor" vote. And if recent polls are to be believed the Venetoulis candidacy has just about closed the gap with front - runner Lee.

This gets tricky. Black Marylanders are a substantial force in the state's labor movement which means a goodly number of Us could turn out at the polls to vote "bread and butter" rather than along personality lines.

Which is to say Venetoulis through union support could sweep up enough black working folks to offset the traditional pattern of our voting for those our "favorites" favor.

And Maryland, further being a state where bizzarre politics is the watchword, could just as well rise up the primary Democratic victor's hopes falsely only to crush the Democrats come November with a presently sleeping blunt instrument called J. Glenn Beall and Aris Allen.

Let us ruminate on this while we await some word from any candidate on what they intend doing for Us!

Druid Hill Park

It has been delightful to see the countless families enjoying magnificent Druid Hill Park day after day, especially on weekends. This is a great triumph for West Baltimore and for the city at large. Neither would abandon this very beautiful "oasis" to rowdies, or worse. Many a city or county would like to have a Druid Hill Park right at the front doors of or a stone's throw from, most of its people.

Playing the game

More politics.

We know how the game is played but that does not mean we like the game.

Or perhaps the game is fine but the rules need changing.

One rule change is long overdue: to wit - when a white politician, any white politician, deputizes a black politician to garner our votes for his or her candidacy, we ought to have a clear sense of what specifically has been negotiated between the principals.

For that matter when a black politicans delegates white supporters to corral white votes citizens ought to be privy to the agreements behind this arrangement.

Anything less than this accountability leaves voters in the plight of an unwiting bride or groom who has not been consulted regarding his or her marriage.

Too often have voters wound up in unwiling nuptials with Dracula or his daughter, much too often those voters have been black.

Rule change, okay?

A LITTLE ABOUT A LOT: MADELINE MURPHY

By Madeline W. Murphy

Don't steal our votes

Back in 1948 or thereabout, as part of a voter registration drive the NAACP used to go into the bars on Pennsylvania Avenue, begging the patrons (regardless of their varying conditions) to register to vote. They'd practically drag some cajole others and give up a few. But even then, they'd corral busloads and haul them off to the Supervisors of Elections. No ground was left unturned.

In those days, we had no idea, however, whether voters were really registered or thrown into the trash can — racism, fear and envy being blatantly evident.

Then the time arrived, after much pressuring, to set aside days for registration in markets, department stores and for one day from 12 to 8 in each neighborhood.

But (through that period, it always seemed it was made difficult by the powers that were, to just exercise this right freely — rarely pleasantly — especially if you were black. There always seemed to be a begrudging attitude as if it was a right that was too good for us.

Then came the civil rights marches and more relaxed attitudes, with blacks now part of the process, where registration drives, especially during presidential election years, were well financed and orchestrated.

Now it was a fact of life that urban centers burgeoning with blacks could be the fine deciding balance between success or defeat.

Also during that time, blacks became more ambitious, unwiling just to be the pawns for white candidates, now anxious to represent their own communities. The worm had turned. It can be proclaimed here, with much personal pleasure and enlightenment, that without the Political Institute at Morgan College and Dr. G. James Fleming's leadership, few of the hopefuls learning the nuts and bolts of political involvement would have eventually succeeded.

This was new unplowed ground, fertilized with facts, techniques, precinct building and organizing that nurtured fledgling candidates who sprouted all over black neighborhoods, strengthened by the growth Dr. Fleming patiently cultivated, year in and year out.

Now we have registration by mail, through legislation brought about by our black senators under Sen. Verda Welcome's leadership. Now the announcements on the media warn that there may be more registered blacks than whites in Baltimore — a city that once ignored and stunted our political evolution.

It almost makes us hopeful that the worm has really turned: that all this laudable activity to get more of us registered will help us elect a larger black representation in proportion to our population and voting strength.

Is it too much to believe that hope will spring eternal with good reason?

Shall we put effort now into educating voters that the main event — the primary election — is worth the painstaking preparation of the NAACP and countless other groups?

Now, shall we guard wisely against the corruption of election day?

Because no matter how many we register, or how many votes, our results may be stolen from us in those quite (from noon to 4 p.m.) hours, in out of the way borderline or white precincts, where machine politicians, controlling the judges, will pull levers to their heart's content, voting the dead and disinterested, and parlay enough bogus votes to assure their candidates' success.

(An old southern racist expression appropos of this fear comes to mind: "N---r, you don't vote, you are voted!")

As the racist hysteria builds over who will live in the city, thereby control it; as the fear runs rampant that by our numbers our power will increase, let us not be caught unawares on election day.

Vigilance, by way of poll watchers and challengers will strain the volunteer corps of candidates, unless they train and prepare now for the eleventh hour, with huge numbers of dedicated astute workers.

How much easier it is to be ahead before the fact with careful, diligent watchfulness, than afterward during all the turmoil and backbreaking labor of a recount.

For it must be remembered that a recount merely does just that. It does not match signature cards against those signatures of the people who voted.

Beware.

The forces of corruption have stolen many an election.

Don't let it happen this time.

LETTERS

Help the firefighters

Dear AFRO:

The Baltimore City Fire Department has been repeatedly awarded for being the best fire department in the United States. We are proud of this recognition and don't take this award lightly.

We realize that our hard work and risking our lives has truly helped to save lives and protect the citizens of Baltimore.

Now, we are asking the citizens of Baltimore to help us.

We are seeking to place the question of binding arbitration for fire fighters on the November ballot. Binding arbitration is not a revolutionary or even new idea. It works well in many other cities.

It is a realistic and fair way to help insure continuous fire protection without a strike or job action and provides a salary for our fire fighters which is fair.

The concept of binding arbitration is very simple.

It requires that once contract negotiations have deadlocked, the fire fighters and city must sit down and have their differences resolved by an independent board of arbitrators whose decision is final.

Under our plan, either the last offer of the city or the fire fighters is accepted. This encourages both sides to present realistic plans in the hope that their proposal will be the one accepted.

It also insures that each side will only ask for what it believes is fair. Binding arbitration is now approved in 14 states and has been beneficial to the cities as well as the unions without increasing the tax burden to citizens.

Without binding arbitration, once contract negotiations break down, we risk the chance of the contract running out and a possibility of a job action or strike.

Baltimore has lived with this system for a long time. It's time now for the system to work for Baltimore.

WE BELIEVE IN BALTIMORE TOO!

Edward C. Heckrotte Sr.,
President,
Baltimore Fire Fighters Local 734

Praise for Provident

Dear AFRO:

I, Thomas T. Ross Jr., a resident of Baltimore, currently a patient at Provident Hospital located in the city of Baltimore have some thoughts I would like to present in an open letter to the people of this city and this state. Part of the inspiration for this letter was prompted from a poem by George Williams Childs I read in a book entitled "Friendship". Following is a small portion I would like to share with you.

"Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them.

"The kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say them before they go. The flowers you mean to send, use to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them. If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away full of fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection, I would rather that they bring them out in my weary and troubled hours and open them that I may be refreshed and cheered when I need them.

"Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand. Postmortum kindnesses do not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers cast no fragrance backward over the weary way".

I have been guilty over the years, as many of my friends and relative have also been, of saying — "If I am ever ill do not take me to the slaughter house" — meaning, "Don't take me to Provident Hospital." I have been here now, almost three weeks and I would like to publicly apologize to all of the people who work here. During this time I have been treated with such love, such kindness, such professionalism that my heart is filled.

From the young man who comes in with a mop and a smile and says "Good morning" to the lady who comes every morning, after having worked two jobs, and inspires me by saying, "How are you feeling?". To the lady who has drawn blood from my arms and made me not afraid, the professionals, the para - professionals and the people who are here, my heart felt thanks.

I should like all who read these words to know that if I survive my current illness and if I were to become ill again, I would want to be brought to Provident Hospital before any other place.

THOMAS T. ROSS Jr.

Venetoulis responds

Dear AFRO:

I want to take this opportunity to let you know personally what the government of Baltimore County is doing about the alleged "green card" incident in Woodlawn reported in last week's AFRO.

I want you to know that outrageous activity such as this will not be tolerated by our Administration.

The chief of police has been instructed to take personal charge of a full - scale investigation to determine if the charges are true, and if they are, to find out exactly who is responsible.

We expect swift, strong disciplinary action to eliminate this isolated incident and to prevent its occurrence ever again in this county.

THEODORE G. VENETOULIS
Baltimore County Executive

AFRO invites letters

The AFRO welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be brief and must bear the writer's name and address. All letters will be given consideration for publication.

CURRENT COMMENT

WASHINGTON REPORT: PARREN J. MITCHELL

Mr. Mitchell represents Maryland's 7th District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Does military-industrial complex rule the Congress?

On Aug. 8, 1978, the U.S. House of Representatives voted on Defense Appropriations. As usual the military Bill was bloated. It appropriates 119 billion dollars, which is 24 percent of the total budget for fiscal year 1979.

During the course of the debate, I argued against the full funding figure.

The following are excerpts from my argument:

Mr. Mitchell of Maryland: Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment as a substitute for the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. Mitchell of Maryland as a substitute for the amendment offered by Mr. Harkin: On page 88 after line 13, insert the following paragraph:

"Of the total budget authority provided for in this act, for payments not required by law, one per centum shall be withheld from obligation and expenditure: Provided, that of the amount provided in this act for each appropriation account, activity and project, for payments not required by law, the amount withheld shall not exceed five per centum."

Mr. Mitchell of Maryland asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. Mitchell of Maryland: Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to reduce the Department of Defense appropriation bill for fiscal year 1979.

The effect of my amendment is to reduce the military appropriation by an amount that represents less than 1 percent of the total appropriation bill. It is my intention, with this amendment, to preserve the fiscal integrity of the Congress by reducing military spending by less than 1 percent. In arguments offered on the floor of this body, my colleagues identified excessive Federal spending as the nemesis in the fight to control inflation.

These arguments prevailed as the Labor - Health, Education, and Welfare appropriation bill was reduced by nearly $1.4 billion; the legislative branch appropriation bill received a 5 - percent reduction; the State, Justice, and Commerce appropriation was relegated a 2 - percent across - the - board reduction, while the Public Works appropriation was reduced more than $200 million.

It is clear that the message of the Congress to the American people is excessive Federal spending and waste in Government is partially responsible for escalating taxes and double - digit inflation. There is no better example of excess and waste as the military appropriation.

There is not a member of this body who has not been victimized by Pentagon public relations. Inevitably, around this time of year, the public relations machine cranks out propaganda on job loss in your district associated with military spending reductions. I submit to you that the military department, by statute, is to provide for the defense of the country and not for the employment. However, the DOD, through its major contractors, intimidate our voting sensibility. Pentagon public relations and the military industrial complex are basic contributors to the perpetration of waste and excess in Federal spending.

Mr. Chairman, we have seen the efforts for a 2 - percent cut being made in the past. We have seen that they have failed. I am offering what amounts to less than a 1 - percent cut. It is eight - tenths of 1 - percent in the substitute amendment. I am offering it for one reason: I want to test some things. I want to test the strength of the military - industrial complex. I want to test the strength of those who are committed to curbing Government spending. Third, I want to test whether or not this House is willing to vote for a total reduction of $1.06 million - plus in a less than 1 - percent cut in the military budget of eight - tenths of 1 percent.

The vote on my amendment was 136 for, 222 against. I raised the question, "Does the Military - Industrial Complex Control the Congress?" Judging by the vote on the Mitchell Amendment, apparently it does.

G. JAMES FLEMING: NOW AND THEN

Pope Paul and 'the Church'

By G. James Fleming

Not only Roman Catholics, but people of all religious persuasions, have been moved by the death of Pope Paul VI and his very colorful last rites.

Some were moved, negatively, feeling that the prolonged exposure of his body was overdone for a religion that believes that "God is a spirit . . ." and contrary to the wishes of Paul himself. (Some people, of course, have always been negative to anything Roman Catholic.)

There are many thoughts over the passing of the 262nd Pope. Indeed, anything said about the papacy can be proven true or untrue. The same for the Roman Catholic Church, and no less for all other religious organizations.

The Roman Catholic Church and all other churches (by whatever name designated) have supported war, and blackets remember, especially, that the then Pope blessed the flags of Mussolini's armies and airforce as they left to invade much weaker Ethiopia during World War II.

Other denominations, however, also blessed the armed forces of their countries, furnished them chaplains, and paid homage to those of their membership who enlisted in the respective armed services. The Roman Catholic Church was not unique.

In the United States, many black Roman Catholics, for years, fretted with their hierarchy for accommodating themselves to racial discrimination; for refusing to admit blacks (even black Catholics) to many of their institutions of higher learning and to most of their orders.

Some Roman Catholic churches, even in the North, steered their black communicants to all-black congregations. In New York City, a nun or a priest would ask a black "Don't you know where St. Benedict the Moor is?"

Even worse, most Roman Catholic bishops refused to accept black priests for service in their dioceses. These black priests, mostly trained in an all black seminary in Louisiana, usually ended up in Trinidad and other West Indian and Caribbean areas.

Dr. Thomas W. Turner, distinguished professor of biology at Howard University and then at Hampton Institute, and who died a few months ago as a revered Catholic layman, needed "the Church" for 50 years trying to get it to change its ways. In latter years, it did change outstandingly and, about three years ago, signalized this change when Catholic University bestowed its honorary Doctor of Science degree on Dr. Turner in his 90th year. He died in his 101st year.

There is another side. Most Roman Catholics and non-Catholics remember "the Church" for its parochial schools all over the land — schools always more effective and more productive than the public schools.

These Catholics, and others, also remember that when they and their children were in trouble they could always find a Roman Catholic priest to go with them to the police station or to the courthouse, while the Protestant church was closed and most of its ministers were not to be found nearby.

Those who have traveled in Africa also remember that, even when they have had negative waves, they could not overlook that, wherever Roman Catholic priests and nuns were located, there were, also, better schools, and there were clinics and hospitals, and native priests—and now even bishops and cardinals.

It will take another column to deal with "What We Can Learn From the Roman Catholic Church." For now, as we think of Pope Paul VI, we join his world-wide flock in praying, "May he rest in peace."

FOR ALL WE KNOW: ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

LIFE'S SAD MOMENTS—We should be grieved over the shooting death of the little girl who was sitting on the steps of her family home. This wounds us all. Why aren't we all crying?

ALSO, we should weep for the family of Rufus Tate who died far away from his home, family and friends. The survivors receive our deepest sympathy for the man who cried out in his last moments for help and received none and died in pain, alone.

AND, we feel extremely saddened at the disappearance of Mrs. Gwendolyn F. Stanback July 12. Her family has been in pain and sorrow too long and worse still there is the suspense of not knowing whether she is dead or alive which is horrible.

I know the family, the Williamses of Arbutus. Her uncle Joshua is owner of Western Star Cemetery. Her father is highly respected. She was his only child.

I HAVE attended and written about wedding anniversaries and graduations and important events of the family over the years. A brilliant group of citizens, they are. Gwendolyn played the piano and sang beautifully, a talented and pleasant, gentle personality.

She met Stanback, her second husband, at the hospital when she was working there and he was a patient. He fell for her and they were married, her second marriage. Her first husband is deceased.

Life has not been easy for her. Once when she was driving her car, it collided with another and the passenger in the vehicle with her was killed. It took five days to find the driver of the other car who finally gave himself up. At the time, she was confined to the hospital gravely injured. Our condolences go to her family and grandmother, Mrs. Mable Scott.

KENNETH WILSON'S yacht basin is booked up for the season, over 200 of the luxury ships were in port last weekend for the German Festival.

Next are the Jewish Festival Sept. 3 and City Fair event Sept. 13, when the beautiful people again gather in the Marina from Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Eastern Shore and Washington and Columbia and as far South as Florida.

AT OUR Indiana home, we were reared on German recipes with dumplings in greens, beef stew, chicken stew and everything else. Last weekend's festival reminded me of those days as the Germans served even our delicious fried dough. We think chicken and dumplings and blackberry stew and dumplings are typically "us" but they're really Deutch cooking ... dumplings even in peach rolly - rolly.

ATTY GENERAL Burch, in endorsing Gov. Lee, turned all his old workers over to him. He said so at the Jon Oster banquet Monday night. Could it be that the Lee opponent from Balto. County is nipping toooo close at his heels? The word that Agnew has sent Venetoulis a good piece of campaign change has been denied.

HOWEVER, Jon Oster is way out there in the lead for attorney general to succeed Burch. At the super fine buffet at Martin's West were "everybody" including the leading black and white money people. Burch is destined for the U.S. Senate next election.

LATEST member of the Mitchell family to enter politics very seriously is Mrs. Nannette Mitchell, wife of my physician, Dr. Keiffer Mitchell. She's a consumer specialist and was on the attorney general's staff two years working under Jon Oster.

Now she's Jon's campaign coordinator and on his staff as such. Great credit goes to Nannette who brought out the unprecedented crowd to Monday night's fete.

AMONG THEM were William (Little Willie) Adams who had a beautiful lady on his arm; Kenneth Wilson, the Arnold Jolivets, Judges Milton Allen and Sol Baylor, City Solicitor Ben Brown, Diamond Cab's owners, Al Weinstein and Dave Riddick; Inez Chappell, all Freedom House officials, Juanita Miller and daughter, Roxanne; Harry Hughes who is running for governor and Steny Hoyer, running for lieutenant governor and Saundra Banks, the only woman ever to run for clerk of the Court of Common Pleas;

ALSO, CLARENCE MITCHELL JR. and his famous wife, the lawyer Juanita Jackson Mitchell. By the way they're marking her 30 years as practicing attorney and their 40 years marriage in September.

CONG. MITCHELL, fogged in by weather at a speaking engagement in Richmond could not get back home Monday.

ALSO, on the Jon Oster scene were Del. Loyall Randolph, Del. Larry Young who is the Lee coordinator, Frank Conaway, the ex - delegate who is up for re - election and Del. Pinkney Howell, the pleasant and smiling person who never forgets the people who elected him in the first place.

NANETTE was active in the campaign which resulted in Charles Robb, wife of Lynda Johnson (Lyndon's daughter) becoming lieutenant governor of Virginia. She and Lynda are close friends and Nanette was asked to come back to Virginia (her home) to actively seek support for the election.

JON OSTER did not bore folks with a speech. He was at the door thanking everyone for helping. His fine manners are greatly noticeable and he has a winning smile.

THE TALK of the buffet for Jon Oster was about his opponent Steve Sachs' wife and the way she did Dr. Roland Patterson at his trial in Baltimore some years ago. Evidently folks don't forget.

LESSON NO. 1 — A candidate should teach his wife to never do anything to deprive him of public official votes.

WOLFGANG MIMMS, New Subiaco, Ark., is a Benedictine monk at the Holy Redeemer Monastery on Battery Ave. here.

Clothed in flowing white monk's robes, he was like a beautiful picture from a book of the Middle Ages when he appeared at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen last week.

He is writing a book on black Catholic contributions. Remember, in school we learned how the Catholic monks preserved all literature and history during the Dark Ages?

SINGLE-SHOOTING are the candidates who slip out at night and nail up their own posters and circulate their own leaflets, forgetting their team mates.

AT SALIMA MARRIOTT affair at Slim Butler's fabulous disco on Park Circle, Sen. Verda F. Welcome Delegates - to - be Howard Peter Rawlings and Rev. Olin P. Moyd were in the receiving line.

The Sunday evening fete for the team resulted in hundreds of young people dancing to the music on glass floors and among the 500 or more flashing ceiling lights of rainbow shades.

AND, have you seen Slim in that fantastic white suit and his men at the door in white Rajah-type jackets and turbans? Wow! That's REALLY something.

Inside you never touch the floor. Everything's gorgeous carpets, even the Fox Holes the spectators sit in. And the sliding board bit, the fountains that pour fruit juice. It's surely an out - of - this - world place.

BUT, leave it to Slim who also has the Riviera, that's not all. There's more to come, mirror lined walls, every inch and another huge room for slow dancers, that's to come next week.

THE HENRY MCNEIL TURNER SOCIETY of Bethel AME had the orator and moving speaker, Cong. Walter E. Fauntroy of D.C. Sunday plus Cong. P. J. Mitchell to stir the crowd into self pride.

A very much - needed thing, it was, as both spoke out frankly about our lack of self respect, our stigma of inferiority and jealousy, "pulling each other down."

Fauntroy said Uncle Tomism is actually a form of self hatred and lie blasted our upper - class folks who are ashamed of slave heritage and deny everything that is black.

ATTORNEY Dwight Pettitt introduced Dr. Turner and the rest of the wonderous program was given in speeches and ceremony by the pastor Rev. John Bryant and the African dancers. It was a grand occasion.

BETHEL'S family reunion is set for Aug. 19 at Gunpowder Park. Swimming, games, singing, good fun are in store. Members will bring food and shre it. Call 945-0171 for information.

THE REGULAR Bethel Sunday bulletin is a book of information in itself. Nothing is left undone as it lists the sick and shut - ins, the coming events, announcements and all about the Food Buying Club and Outreach Program. One coming concert is by Oprah Winfrey in drama and song Oct. 15 at Morgan U. Tickets are $12.50.

We're happy to see Bethel has a Prayer Box in the vestibule and a bin of food donations for the needy. That's a powerful church. Young Rev. Bryant and his wife are following in the footsteps of his great parents, Bishop and Mrs. Harrison J. Bryant.

MORE LETTERS

MCHR replies to AFRO story

Dear AFRO:

The July 25 article by Fred Hines alluding to a "staff war at MCHR" is inaccurate. Further Mr. Hines reports several allegations against a division director of MCHR, Ms. Esther Levin.

As chair of the MCHR I feel that I should at government to correct some false impressions that may have arisen owing to some inaccuracies in the article.

I would first like to say that I am unaware of any "staff war brewing." In fact I will go further and say that this is not the case. I am not saying however that the entire staff is satisfied with everything happening at MCHR, but things seem to be much more relaxed than I have seen during my three years as a commissioner.

Mr. Hines alleges that unnamed sources say that Ms. Levin is responsible for firing at least 6 blacks, that a case is pending against her and that the commission had to spend $10,000 in 3 years on outside attorneys for her.

The facts are as follows:

The executive director has sole responsibility for dismissals. Two of the individuals named never worked for Ms. Levin.

The MCHR is governed by the State Department of Personnel rules regarding hiring and firing. A number of persons who have been terminated from this agency have grieved under these rules. In every instance that this process has been completed, the MCHR has been upheld.

As for "the Commission having to spend $10,000 in three years on outside attorneys for her," this may be a great error. The Commission did hire an outside attorney to represent itself in some cases where grievances have been filed and some of these cases had nothing to do with Ms. Levin.

Additionally it is quoted that Mr. Jacob Edelman was responsible for Ms. Levin's employment. Also in the article, St. George Crosse is identified as one fired by Ms. Levin.

Ms. Levin began her employment at the Commission three years prior to Mr. Edelman's appointment as chair of MCHR. St. George Crosse was rejected by the executive director during his probationary period.

The article is also incorrect when it speaks to the list of names "sent by acting Governor Blair Lee III." I personally delivered the list to Annapolis and at the time the article was written the list was still with me in Glenarden. It was delivered several days subsequent to the appearance of the article.

I hope no one gets the impression that I said mass resignations would occur if Ms. Levin is appointed Executive Director. Nowhere did I suggest this. I repeat, however, to respond to the question by Mr. Hines, "what effect would seventy-five percent resignations have upon the agency?", that the agency would be in deep trouble. But this is only a common sense answer.

In conclusion, I think the article was somewhat misleading and we were sorry to see the media depict us in this light. We have every reason to believe the agency is functioning better than it has in the past years. Not only are we operating more smoothly but we are carrying out our charge.

I ask you to please accept this letter in good faith and kindly give us a chance to show what improvements have taken place in recent months.

We would also like to thank you for taking an interest in this agency and it is our hope, desire and intent to make the entire State of Maryland proud of the Maryland Commission on Human Relations.

James C. Fletcher Jr.
Chairman
Maryland Commission on Human Relations

Congratulates AFRO

Dear AFRO:

Please allow me to convey to your paper the sincere congratulations and best wishes of the Maryland Nurses Association on the occasion of the celebration of the paper's 86th anniversary.

Your paper has served the community in an exemplary fashion and you have every reason to be proud of its record.

LYNELLE KING, R.N., M.S.
Associate Executive Director

Sen. Sarbanes on the AFRO

Dear AFRO:

I want to join the entire Baltimore community in extending my warmest congratulations upon your selection for a Baltimore's Best Award. To have been chosen for this award is a deserved recognition of your extraordinary commitment to Baltimore and its citizens.

I believe the service you have contributed to Baltimore has been responsible, in large measure, for the physical and spiritual renaissance which has earned our city national and international recognition.

As your United States Senator, and as a fellow Baltimorean, I want to express my own deep appreciation for your efforts and interest in our city. Your concern and activism inspire us all to reaffirm our commitment to a Baltimore that is Best because it reflects the finest in its people.

PAUL S. SARBANES
United States Senator

BOOK REVIEW:

Reed's autobiography drifts into black American history

By Valerie Whitney

"I expect this installment of an autobiography of my mind to receive the same kind of response as my fiction and poetry. Controversial. Stir things up a bit. Wake America from its easy chair and can of beer . . ."

This is from **Shrovetide in Old New Orleans** by Ishmael Reed. Doubleday and Co., Inc. 1978. 293 pgs. $8.95.

Ishmael Reed is an original in the true meaning of the word. While others write autobiographies tracing their lives from day one, Reed digs into his inner being and comes up with a history of black Americans.

Shrovetide, the title essay is a witty, easy to read piece on the influence of Hoodoo or Voodoo as it is more commonly known and the Mardi Gras in America. There is no set pattern to Reed's thoughts and he drifts from New Orleans to Harlem to Chester Himes to Haiti to Josephine Baker.

In between, he talks with artist Betye Sarr and writer George S. Schuyler, two very interesting pieces whose fault is that they wander off a little and may leave the reader a little confused.

Not to be overlooked is his discussion with Max Bond and Carl Anthony, two black architects, who share their views on the impact of culture on the design of a building.

The next occasion you have to visit Williamburg, Va. you might pay special attention to the buildings, which according to Anthony have a definite African background.

In midst of book reviews, conversations and other essays, Reed holds an interview with himself.

This reveals more the traditional aspects of an autobiography. Reed comes across as a very complex man, while remaining quite simple. Reed speaks of censureship and lack of money or backers, problems common to black artists as a whole.

Most of the material found within the book was written between 1971 and 1977. The time period is only a formality when one considers the subjects as a whole.

I liked the book. It reminded me of the sixties, a time when black writers and poets were almost being devoured by their audience. When if you didn't listen to Nikki Giovanni or Don L. Lee or didn't read Majors or Williams, you weren't really involved, you were not relevant.

Reed's last essay, entitled, "The World Needs More Guys Like Pee Wee" is disturbing. It centers on the problem of black on black crime - the reason why, "He was a black man, standing erect, and tough, making space for himself in a world hostile to black men . . ." and its use as a form of black genocide.

There is hope according to Reed. Early in the book, in an essay on "Images and Money" he declares the best way to do something is to do it yourself. If we want to end this self - destruction, then it is time to stop putting our money in the hands of the numbers runner, whose return to the community is almost nil.

We should strive to become the bank president and not just the depositor. If you are an avid fan of Reed's, then this is one book that you certainly will not want to miss.

MAINSTREAM: MARION BANFIELD

Mrs. Banfield is district director of Family and Children's Society.

—Any teacher who has black students in class, be it all black or racially mixed, has an excellent focus for September 1978.

The August issue of Ebony magazine is a special issue on "The New Generation."

It is the most relevant, the funniest, challenging, inspiring issue that I can recall having read. There is no aspect of our lives that is omitted: sexual, religious, educational, economic and social.

"An Illustrated Guide for the Older Generation" by Louie Robinson is as amusing to read as are the illustrations. Robinson is funny, but he really gives a good "guide." Robinson guides the generations of ages 18 to 30. Many thousands read the guide.

Lerone Bennett Jr., senior editor of Ebony, puts the "new generation" in a perspective which ought to give the old and new among us plenty to think and talk about.

When Bennett appeared on WMAR's "Two's Company" recently, the public response indicated that this gentleman is as dynamic and relevant in personality and speech as he is as a writer. He gets us to realize the psychological difference between us older ones and those who have never seen a sign "white only".

Baltimore's own Joan and Richard Tyson have an article on sexuality.

"Many will rely on their own mothers to care for their babies" is a true description of hundreds of irresponsible teenage pregnancies. The Tysons point out the tragedies frequently resulting when sexual partners fail to use birth control until there is a real home for a baby.

"Young unmarried women need to take contraceptive responsibility when engaging in sexual intercourse" is a statement that needs to be heard and understood. This is a sound basis for discussion in home, church, school, street corner and jail.

Too many babies grow to be miserably angry adults because their mothers were not guided by that statement which is an indication of maturity.

I suppose the new generation will gradually believe the psychiatrist Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint who stated: "The escape that drugs provide is short - lived and must be repeated again and again, inevitably leading to addiction and habituation. Drugs offer no solution to personal or social problems and soon become self - destructive to the individual, family and community."

The trouble is that so many kids figure they are too smart to get hooked.

The Roper poll found that 58 percent of the new black generation expected to be far better off 10 years from now and 32 percent felt they would be somewhat better off.

These figures are proof that we are getting to like ourselves more. Any relief from self - hatred is welcome in the black community.

Rev. Jesse Jackson's challenge should be memorized as a relevant motivator for our mutual responsibilities in the struggle for survival.

Rambling through August Ebony

Where were the whites?

Dear AFRO:

Sunday, July 30, I attended a Revival Crusade at the Civic Center. It was conducted by a black minister with thousands of black people present.

I have attended a number of revivals at the Civic Center and elsewhere conducted by white ministers. There were many blacks and white present.

Not so this time.

I don't think a dozen whites were there. Being so unusual for this type of service, I took special note. The same is true in the business field.

It doesn't matter to God who brings His message, a black or white servant. God wants His word preached to people. All people.

True Christians should gather together to hear God's word, regardless of race. There will be no segregation of race after death. There will be a separation of the saved and unsaved.

To Revival Crusade was GREAT, GREAT, GREAT. I say to everyone — Look to Jesus. Not man. Jesus will make everything all right.

MRS. ODESSA TROY