OPINION

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Some concerns for '79

For Baltimore in the coming year we fervently hope that the city government working closely with the business sector and public and private sector organizations makes the massive unemployment that so grips Baltimore, particularly in our community, its first priority.

Of course we know that the Federal, state and municipal agencies responsible for reversing such mind-staggering joblessness will move only as they are moved by public pressure.

The situation must be reversed and this newspaper pledges to keep speaking to the dimensions of the problem: What must happen, certainly, is that the leadership of our community must again, in such times of crisis, come together in the most thorough kind of coalition to deal with this problem.

Further, in 1979, black Baltimoreans need to collectively analyze and act on a related bread and butter issue, that of land.

As reported here, the city in its need to improve its tax base is aggressively seeking the return of the majority middle class to central city neighborhoods.

This is an admirable undertaking if provisions are made for the low-income families displaced in neighborhoods where such up-grading is accelerating.

In 1979 we would urge homeowners in our community to hold onto their land and resist flight to the counties. This city is improving and we think it sound economic sense to preserve what we have rather than sell out to the increasing numbers of outside speculators who are buying local properties by the block (perhaps this is exaggeration) and developing them to the point of astronomically high resale value.

In other words when you move you are apt to lose.

A third concern we should all be sharing as the new year begins is the need for political unity within our community as we near a time when black people will administer the city.

The historic and tragic split between our political leadership east and west in the city continues but must be breached. So long as it continues the imminent realization of a black mayor and majority black city council is delayed.

That this is the political reality of the Eighties is not in doubt — that factionalism postpones, is postponing our assuming leadership is an important consideration in any collective political strategy we undertake.

Finally, as we take focus on the new year, a renewed commitment to excellence in our public school system must be forthcoming.

Our study of national high school test scores for students not only in Baltimore but across the board nationally shows that we are not producing citizens, through our methods of public instruction, that have a command of our language, our science and other of the basic skills that enable each to move as far ahead as individual initiatives will carry them.

We strongly feel that some of the more esoteric avenues public education is taking short-change our young people.

Time-proven disciplines are breaking down. We do not expect enough of our youth and slough them off with programs of "permissiveness." While we deplore the increasing disruptiveness of classrooms, we throw up our hands and say we no longer know how to control our offspring.

In the eighties we see a need for parents, teachers and administrators to regain control of a situation too often out of hand here and nationally.

An insistence on excellence on the part of teachers, pupils and parents, a spirit of new reawakening in Baltimore, is the absolute first step in a winning program of public education.

Black equity

Rep. Parren Mitchell's concerns about the degree of black involvement in the Rouse Company's marketplace to be constructed in the Inner Harbor are valid.

Mitchell, before the Board of Estimates this week, said that while he had every faith in James Rouse, the firm's president, he would have wished for a formalized affirmative action program that spells out just what slice of the economic pie will go to minority construction firms and other contractors and what percentage of the jobs generated by Harborplace will be going to blacks.

Rouse, with the agreement of Bruce Alexander, his company's chief officer for the implementation of the minority program, told the Board of Estimates that he could assure black citizens of the following:

1. Twenty-five percent minority employment.
2. Ten percent of construction dollars to minority contractors.

Further, says Rouse, the number of minority entrepreneurs operating in Harborplace will be "very significant."

Just the same said the congressman he would have preferred a formal agreement to what Rouse is assuring.

This newspaper, from the outset, has insisted that black equity be of highest priority in the development and operation of Harborplace.

While we are well aware of Congressman Mitchell's tremendous workload we do wish he could have escalated these concerns much earlier.

But we are optimistic that Rep. Mitchell will continue his watchdog role in this project that augurs so much for the revitalization of downtown Baltimore.

All involved must be held to the mark.

Senseless murder

Were it an AFRO news vendor, we could not be more outraged.

William Shafer, a young white man of the Patterson Park area, and a newspaper salesman familiar to customers at his post on the corner of Patterson Pk. Avenue and Monument Street was murdered by two thugs on Dec. 24 as he sold the city's two daily newspapers.

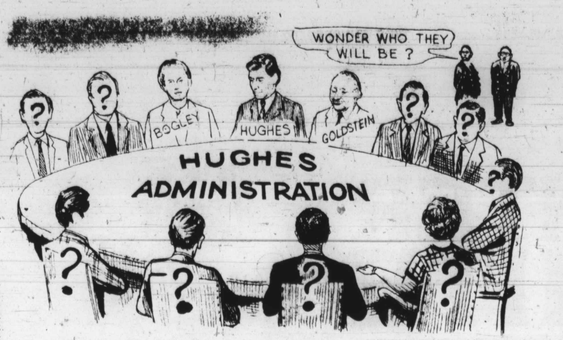
The Sunpapers and the News-American have both offered rewards for information leading to the apprehension of the parties responsible for this tragedy.

News vendors do not handle large sums of money and while murder is even reprehensible, not to be correlated with dollar totals, the thought of homicide for pennies is even more repugnant.

Few pennies is what young Shafer was killed for as he worked to give citizens the news they need to know.

This contempt for human life, so much a part of the urban experience in these times, cannot go unchecked.

We hope all citizens cooperate in bringing William Shafer's slayers quickly to the bar of justice.



A LITTLE ABOUT A LOT: MADELINE MURPHY

Mrs. Murphy is a commentator on "Impact News," radio WEAA-FM, every Tuesday at 5 p.m.

Universal peace must prevail

At the beginning of the New Year, when resolutions burst impulsively from our lips, with the first thrust of determination to follow through perhaps our most important active involvement should be toward insuring and strengthening peace throughout the world.

For lately, with the hope: "The greatest picture ever made," a war picture, full of gore and violence, is being advertised on television.

As if war is man's natural pursuit, late shows are reviving the oldies but goodies, circa World War II.

Yet, benignly, on the news we hear about the difficulty between the United States and Soviet Union in arriving at mutual agreement on the terms of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II).

In the background, however, this country is still aligned with the repressive forces of the Shah of Iran, despite a shutdown of the black gold — oil — we'd just love to get our hands on, where everyone managing and operating the oil companies is American, but is still threatened by the rebel's hit list — "Get out by February 1, or it's curtains!"

Then our recent opening of diplomatic relations with the Peoples Republic of China that will line the pockets of Coca-Cola, Ramada Inn, and aspirin companies — superficial red herrings masking China's ambitious arms race.

Therefore it would seem on the surface that with past history: our assignations with the corrupt government of Korea; South Vietnam; our active undermining of Chile's Allende; Nkrumah of Ghana, and so many others; that this country's sudden love affair, marriage if you will, with the Peoples Republic should be suspect.

Because the Chinese delegation from its beginning membership in the United Nations, at the 28th Session of the UN General Assembly, opposed the non-use of force in international relations and permanent prohibition of nuclear weapons.

How soon we have forgotten that callous, ominous, threatening radioactive cloud as the result of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, by the Chinese, despite the outrage and protests of world peace groups and affected nations throughout the world.

In subsequent sessions of the General Assembly, China opposed a reduction in military budgets of member countries by 10 percent and opposed use of part of those monies saved, to help developing countries.

Later, China opposed adoption of a definition of aggression; prohibition of nuclear weapons tests; opposed banning military or any other hostile use of the environment.

China opposed the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations; abstained from voting on draft resolutions for general and complete disarmament; opposed prohibiting the development and manufacture of new kinds of mass destruction weapons and new systems of those weapons; and opposed banning chemical and bacteriological weapons.

China's incursions into Burma, Vietnam, India and other Southeast Asian countries is buttressed by its overt influence upon the over 20 million Chinese (some of whom are wealthy merchants) living in Southeast Asia, using them as a nationalistic force, perhaps even developing future agents provocateur in an outward thrust to unify Southeast Asia.

But who dares speak of hegemony?

Further, with China's deep interest in our technology and that of Western Europe, all of the talk about domestic trade is merely salve covering the cancer of arms buildups that fatten the avaricious munitions merchants.

Probably with past history as prologue, they may be fanning the smoldering flames of hate, ideological, and racial disorder.

Consequently, it will be up to all of us, the people who are concerned about survival, to fight for peace.

We must watch closely the nations who threaten that peace, who look upon the neutron bomb as the "clean" bomb, who would save buildings that are the bank rolls of the powerful, while destroying those among us all who are expendable — all the while intoning the Orwellian words "War is Peace!"

Our goal in 1979 should be that this kind of destruction and holocaust on this earth should never happen again; that only peace shall preserve for our children, our grand-and great-grand-children, a world where universal friendship shall prevail.

It will happen only with our active mobilization, pressuring and awareness, the new vanguard of peaceniks — 1979!

MONEY MATTERS

Holiday hints

This article comes from the Maryland Association of Certified Public Accounts.

'Tis the season to be jolly, and employers who are planning holiday office parties to add to the merriment of the season can take added comfort from the fact that, under most circumstances, such festivities represent a deductible business expense when they are given for the benefit of employees.

That bit of good news is a gift from the Maryland Association of Certified Public Accountants, who wrap it up prettily by adding that the cost of presents given to employees is also deductible.

But only up to a value of $25 per person, the CPAs say, and it is advisable to remember that both employee and spouse count as one "person."

As with every other business expense you plan to claim, the CPA Association says, it's important to keep receipts and careful records of office party and employee gift expenses.

Cash bonuses given employees are deductible business expenses, too, according to the Maryland CPA Association, but they are considered taxable income for the recipient and are therefore subject to withholding.

The Maryland CPAs have some other holiday-time tips. For one, they say, be careful with "store money."

Some large retailers, the CPAs explain, have adopted the practice of offering merchandise certificates, typically in increments of $100, to their credit card customers in the holiday season. The certificates can be "spent" just like cash, but only, of course, in that particular retailer's store.

Using merchandise certificates in place of your credit card may save time on the check-out line, the CPAs admit, but remember that your accountant will be charged for the full value of the certificates regardless of whether you actually "spend" all of them. Be sure to return unused certificates for credit.

Holiday shoppers sometimes get careless with gift certificates and merchandise certificates, the Maryland CPA Association notes. Losing them, however, is just like losing cash, so take the same safeguards with them that you would with the dollar bills they symbolize.

And here's one last year-end reminder. If you have plans to open a Keogh plan this year, but haven't done so yet, time is running out.

Even though contributions can be made into the plan right up until the time you file your 1978 federal return (no later than April 16), the plan must be in effect no later than Dec. 31.

And when you plan your gift list this holiday season, do not forget charitable, religious, educational, scientific or literary organizations.

Gifts to most of them are deductible for tax-filing purposes on a dollar - for - dollar basis against adjusted gross income. (Naturally, you will want to make sure your favorites are, in fact, IRS-qualified to receive tax deductible donations.)

And remember, the Maryland CPAs say, careful records of your contributions — whether they be in cash, property, or volunteer efforts that entail personal expense — are absolutely essential to insure your getting the full tax advantage to which your charitable activities entitle you.

How large can your charitable donation be?

As large as you care to make it, say the Maryland CPAs—but, they add, $3,000 is the most you can give to any one recipient during a single calendar year without having to file a gift tax return with the IRS.

Of course, your charitable gifts need not take the form of cash.

When you donate personal property instead—items such as used clothing, so, or furniture—the CPA Association emphasizes that you should not be embarrassed to request a receipt for your own records.

The approximate fair market value of such items is just as deductible as is cash, say the CPAs, but it is still up to you to be able to prove that the donation was, in fact, made.

Sometimes it is not easy to define a charitable contribution, especially when you yourself receive some value in return for your gift. In cases such as those involving theater parties, balls, or charitable auctions, for example, some or all of your expenses—the "value received"—will not be allowed as a deduction. The sponsoring charity should be able to tell you what percentage is deductible, the Maryland CPAs say.

If your vehicle is used for charitable work, keep track of your out - of - pocket expenses for gasoline, oil, tolls, and parking, and log the mileage as well. You are entitled to deduct either actual expenses or a flat seven cents per mile, plus tolls and parking fees, according to the Maryland CPA Association. (You may not, though, claim any deduction for the value of your time or services.)

In some cases, special tax rules apply to contributions. Here are a few examples of such instances: your total contributions exceed 20 percent of your adjusted gross income; you claim the value of gifts of appreciated property, or of the rent-free use of your property; or, you claim a deduction for bargain sales to charity.

In those cases, the CPA Association advises, it would be wise to consult—in advance—IRS Publication 526, or obtain assistance from your own tax advisor.

—LETTERS—

'Black is still beautiful'

DEAR AFRO,

Happy New Year to you and your great staff.

I really hope that the New Year will bring all of your readers a touch of happiness, wealth, health and a big smile.

It certainly has been great reading the headlines in your paper this year and poring over all the good articles about our mighty black race.

Seeing millions of whites clamor to the museums this year to see the relics of our late brother, King Tut helped make me understand just how much blacks are admired and copied by other races.

Knowing that Ali is still the greatest and that our other brother Anwar Sadat received the Nobel Peace Prize makes me sit back and smile with confidence and pride in being A 'Lady of Color.'

How great my family felt when you reaffirmed the fact that Jesus Christ was also a man of color. In fact every man worth gathering or talking about has always been a man of color.

Voting in every election since the age of 21 I rejoiced again in 1978 while casting my precious vote for the winning Rep. Parren Mitchell and defeated Dr. Allen.

Even though I was plagued by 'Street Corner' nuts from other political organizations, I stood firm in the belief that black is best.

We lost our Sen. Brooke and hundreds in Guyana to the foul play of a sick society. We must remain alert on guard this coming year.

The same people that killed King, Kennedy, Malcolm X, 900 in Guyana, Bruce Lee, Lumumba and many others will still be seething with hate and jealousy.

We must respect each other and our selves in order that we are divided no longer. We must stop calling in the cops for every little incident in our homes.

We are strong, proud people with much wisdom and can handle flammable situations better than many of the average cops.

AFRO, please remind your readers to stop killing their beautiful brothers and sisters since there are so many other factions that want to do the same.

Please remind your readers also that 'Black is still Beautiful.'

MS. DONNA SELLERS

Enough about Carter's malady

Dear AFRO:

Give me a break!

I pick up a local daily newspaper a few days before Christmas and what is splashed on the front page — details of President Carter's physical condition, an ailment that is not only highly personal but one which makes most people slightly queasy, to say the least.

I really don't need all the gruesome details and his treatment methods and schedule.

Granted, the President of the United States cannot even sneeze and his family members cannot cough without the whole world knowing, as evidenced by former First lady Betty Ford's cancer operation.

The very nature of the position and the power it includes forces the First Family into a fishbowl where privacy is nonexistent.

And, agreed, the status of the President's health is a concern all Americans should share.

But please, can't the line be drawn somewhere? In a delicate situation such as this, must the public share every twinge of discomfort?

Give the guy a break. After all, millions of Americans suffer from this same malady and they would rather not have the subject brought up.

T. C. CARLYLE

How to be the life of the party and stay alive

Holiday parties are being planned everywhere. In an effort to help hosts and hostesses "keep the party alive" and reduce the number of traditionally critical alcohol-related traffic accidents, food should be served to slow down the absorption of alcohol into the body at those festive occasions which include alcoholic beverages.

The best way to avoid the possibility of drunken driving after a party, is to take some practical steps before the party begins. As the host or hostess, through careful planning, you can lessen the danger of alcohol abuse by the refreshments you serve, and the way in which you serve them.

Always serve food with alcohol. Tasty snacks are not only a delicious addition to any party but can slow the rate at which the body absorbs alcohol.

High-protein snacks such as cheese and meats are especially good because not only do they stay in the stomach longer but tend to slow the rate at which the body absorbs alcohol.

Party cheese suggestions include an assortment of fresh cheeses with crackers, cheeseballs, cheese dips, cheese fondue and cheese pizza.

A simple, easy and inexpensive high protein appetizer to serve with alcohol is hard-boiled, pickled or deviled eggs.

Hors d'oeuvres with meat can include ham or sausage, biscuits, Swedish meatballs and broiled chicken livers. Bite-size pieces of cold cuts are a good budget suggestion. If you have a little more to spend, sliced beef or turkey is good, as is seafood such as shrimp, lobster and crab meat with a dip.

A tray of crisp raw vegetables such as carrots, celery, cauliflower, radishes and even squash with a protein dip like cream cheese or sour cream is also good party fare.

Have several jiggers at the bar, so mixed drinks can be measured. Guests will be less likely to drink to excess if standard size shot glasses are provided . . . this will also help save on the liquor bill too.

At an informal party, guests will probably mix their own drinks. If a jigger is handy, they may use it rather than pouring what seems to be the "right amount." Also inexpensive self-measuring one-ounce spouts can be purchased and placed on bottles. Guests will be less likely to drink to excess if standard measures for drinks are used.

If you serve an alcoholic punch, make it with a non-carbonated base. Alcohol is absorbed by the body much faster when combined with a carbonated mixer such as ginger ale. Fruit juice or tea is a preferable base for party punches. You should not rush to refill glasses before they are empty.

Under normal circumstances, the body can absorb about one drink an hour. Although you want your guests to enjoy themselves you don't want them to overdo it. Don't rush to refill glasses the minute they become empty. Many guests accept drinks they really don't want to avoid appearing rude to the host. By engaging an over-imbiber in conversation, you can slow down his drinking.

Appreciation for compassion

Dear AFRO:

Many times in the news we read only of the unpleasant and detrimental aspects of nursing homes.

This letter, however, is being written with an entirely different viewpoint.

Nearly four years ago, due to poor health, our husband and father had to enter the Spring Grove State Hospital, Tawes Building.

During all this time he received the best medical care possible from the doctors, nurses and the entire staff of Spring Grove, Tawes Building.

They went far above and beyond the call of duty in caring for Leo J. Vogelsang.

Words cannot fully express the care and compassion that the staff showed for the family as well.

Mr. Vogelsang passed away this week, and this letter is one small way of showing our appreciation to the entire staff at Spring Grove, Tawes Building.

THE FAMILY OF LEO J. VOGELSANG

G. JAMES FLEMING

NOW AND THEN

Looking at the New Year

By G. James Fleming

It is a fascinating guessing game, wondering what any new year will bring to the world, to this country, or even to each of us as individuals. What are the prospects for 1979?

As to the future, no one seems wiser than the other. As to war, the state of world finances and world politics, the uncertainties of nature, and the quality of man's humaneness to fellow-man, we are equally ignorant or equally "shaky" in our knowledge or our ability to predict. Most of us would not wager on one side or another.

But, there are some things which man—mere human beings—can influence or can do.

1. Parents can decide how much, and what kind of, love and affection they must and will give to their children, or whether they will give none at all.

2. Young men and women in high school and college can choose whether to apply themselves to their studies or whether to fritter away their time and their opportunities.

3. Police and courts, and those above them, can take a stand on whether to give drug importers and pushers a free hand or whether to banish them where they can no longer destroy the nation's youths and their children yet unborn.

4. Those who profit from supplying developing nations with instruments of war have it in their power to decide if there is not "another way."

5. Those peoples who are oppressed can decide whether to "like it that way" or whether they will support the organization laboring for their liberation.

6. Those in developed countries must decide whether, as to salaries wages, prices and profits, they will kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, or take a route of moderation that will benefit all, rather than only the few.

7. Similar to Item 6, other sectors of the society must decide when a college's enrollment is large enough; when military might is great enough; even when "progress" is enough.

8. On the simplest levels, each of us can commit ourselves to keeping our home-place clean and attractive, whether it be a landscaped mansion; a cottage, a rowhouse or an apartment.

Even public housing projects would react, upwards, if more of their managers, staff and tenants decided affirmatively on their own anti-cluttering and anti-pollution campaigns.

9. In politics, a particular concern of this column, all adults have responsibilities: To decide to register and to vote; to support politics both as volunteers and with our money; and to make ourselves available for public office, as members of stipended commissions, as members of the judiciary and as elected officials.

Those elected and selected to serve have the additional responsibility of committing themselves to serve the public good, the interest of the people, of deciding to "feather their own nest," or of submitting themselves to the dictates of some political machine.

The list could continue. What we are trying to say is that, in 1979, each of us has the opportunity to make decisions, as to ourself and our country, despite all the uncertainties of life and despite the countless matters over which most of us have no control.

In many ways an individual, or organized individuals, can stand up to the powers, or the discretions, of big business, big labor, big government and Mother Nature.

If most of us could arouse ourselves in the areas outlined above, 1979 would, indeed, be a happier year than we have had in a long time.

Happy New Year!

MSU prexy concerned about education funding cutbacks

Dear AFRO:

One of the major problems for Maryland and the nation at large is the extent to which minorities and women are still systematically barred from high level positions in the scientific, professional and managerial occupations.

This is due, in part, to the historic exclusion of these groups from graduate and professional training programs.

Speaking to this issue, Judge John Pratt, of the Federal District Court in the District of Columbia, in a 1973 ruling in the now famous Adams vs. Califano litigation, summed up the matter as follows:

"Perhaps the most serious problem in this area is the lack of state-wide planning to provide more and better - trained minority group doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professionals."

In the State of Maryland, the problem is equally severe. The State Board for Higher Education, while reporting that nearly 22 percent of the State's college enrollment is black, up from 13 percent in 1970, also reported on the paucity of blacks in graduate and professional schools in this state.

"Predominantly white graduate and professional schools have not attracted a larger proportion of full-time black students since 1974 when such records were first kept.

"The total number of black graduate students in these schools was 444 (6.8 percent of the total enrollment) in 1974 and was 448 (6.6 percent) in fall 1976."

The State of Maryland has taken two important, though modest, steps since 1975 designed to correct this imbalance.

The first is a modest graduate fellowship program for minority students and white students.

The second was the decision to expand Morgan's graduate and professional programs. Thus, Morgan, already the largest and most consistent producer of black graduate and professional students in the state and the second largest among all black universities in the nation in the production of master degrees, while also being the state's most integrated university with a white minority ranging between 25 percent and 30 percent, took up an expanded role in this state with its new urban - oriented mandate supported by the 1975 and 1978 General Assemblies.

Even so, however, in Maryland, as in the nation as a whole, with the laudable exception of the University of Maryland Law School, the flow of minorities into scientific and professional fields has not kept pace with the demands of justice and equality.

Little wonder that in Maryland, as in the nation at large, blacks, who account for 12 percent of the population (20 percent in Maryland) still account for less than 4 percent of any of the major scientific and professional fields.

For women, the pattern of exclusion, if less severe, has nevertheless been discriminatory on its face. Thus, women, who account for over 51 percent of the population, account for less than 10 percent of the employees in most of the scientific and professional fields and are grossly underrepresented in high level faculty and policy positions in this state.

Minorities and women have lobbied long for some corrective action at the federal level. And it was with a great deal of hope that we witnessed the establishment in 1976 of the Graduate and Professional Opportunity Program in the U.S. Office of Education.

This program provides fellowship and institutional support to enable minorities and women to be trained in a wide variety of graduate and professional fields.

The program got off to a small but promising beginning.

During its first year of operation a total 3.1 million dollars was appropriated which allowed 350 minorities and women to pursue graduate studies at 50 predominantly white and five predominantly black universities.

They entered a wide variety of fields, including mathematics, the natural sciences and such professions as law, health, architecture, engineering, communications, forestry, international affairs and business.

Altogether, 27 percent of the new graduate fellowships went to black men; 25 percent to white women; 18 percent to black women; 17 percent to other minority men; 12 percent to other minority women; and 1 percent to white men.

The second year the program was increased to $8 million, which allowed for 500 additional fellowships. And the U.S. Office of Education, the universities and the affected groups looked forward to a doubling of the funds to 16 million dollars for the coming year.

Minorities and women at three Maryland universities — the University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins University and Morgan — stand to benefit enormously from this program.

Now, however, comes word out of the Office of Management and Budget that the program has been cut back to last year's appropriation level. This is another instance of a non short - sighted and self - defeating public policy.

The Department of HEW has still not given up on efforts to restore these funds. Secretary Califano and Assistant Secretary Mary Berry are leading the fight within the Administration to convince the President to restore these funds.

One hopes that the President and the Congress will listen to three outstanding Marylanders — Parren Mitchell in the House, Stuart Eizenstadt in the White House and Robert Embry in HUD, who keep insisting that domestic programs designed to enhance human development should not be sacrificed in the otherwise necessary and laudable fight on inflation.

If funds must be shared from the federal budget, as obviously they must, then shave a few billion from the defense appropriation and allow the critical and fledgling programs of human development to take hold.

Budget specialists often need a great deal of guidance in order to realize that the greatest resources of the nation are its human resources.

And that the struggle for justice and equality must be assigned the highest priority — not the lowest — in enlightened public budgetary policy.

ANDREW BILLINGSLEY,
President of Morgan State University,
Member of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

FOR ALL WE KNOW

ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

By Elizabeth M. Oliver

THE WEEK AFTER CHRISTMAS — Toys broken, kids crying, teens bored with disco - ing from house - to - house, longing to go back to school and mom and pop are worried from over - spending.

Tired of turkey, the family's appetite returns to fish, kidney stew and other un - fabulous dishes. The tree is sagging and some of the lights are blown.

LOOKING over a stack of presents and cards, you discover plenty of the friends you gave gifts didn't think of you.

AND, most of all the foolish things you did get left you broke and with a hangover.

NOW you realize once and for all, unless you did something rewarding like giving to someone in great need, Christmas (without Christ and soul) has backfired on you.

NEXT YEAR, you'll remember that in order to have a good feeling the week after Christmas, you will have to feed and clothe a poor kid or help a blind person and cut back on what you do for yourself.

HUMAN BEINGS are made that way, blindly getting, buying and wanting and then afterwards, deep down inside wishing they had not, they get to reflecting on the better side.

NEVERTHELESS, we don't think the time will ever come when we get tough with Christmas, cut the crazy gift - getting and for at least this one time, do only what forwards brotherhood and good will.

LOOKING JANUARY square in the face, there is one thing sure that lines up with death and taxes, the General Assembly opens Jan. 10 for 90 days.

This is the time when a group of elected officials gather in Annapolis to make the laws which govern all the citizens of the state.

The folks who sit in the General Assembly are the governor, the senators and the members of the House of Delegates, the people YOU voted for in November.

A FUNNY THING has happened. The Office of Management and Budget that the program has been cut back to last year's appropriation level. This is another instance of a non short - sighted and self - defeating public policy.

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ANDREW BILLINGSLEY,
President of Morgan State University

On the General Assembly and pull the covers over their heads.

BUT that's not the way. Each citizen can watch his lawmakers closely, go down to Annapolis and raise the devil to make them pass legislation that will benefit everybody. If they don't, you can threaten to take a stick and run them out of the Senate and the House.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY meets to make laws for the people. The voters should breathe down their necks to get something done about jobs, education, rent, health and welfare. Lord knows we'll need it, what with DEPRESSION upon us and prices and rents going up, up, up.

FOR EXAMPLE, Del. Troy Brailey has filed a Rent Control Bill. If he gets it to rolling along OK, landlords will hustle down to Annapolis and try to stave any such legislation off. That's so they can continue to raise YOUR rent whenever they please.

WHEN THAT TIME comes (and it will come) citizens should flood Annapolis day and night and cry out loud like mad.

Bear down on the representatives your votes elected and don't let them betray you. Stick to them like flies and make them do whatever it takes to pass a Rent Control Bill . . . or any other bill that will help you to live like a human being.

Keep an eye on them and watch like a hawk.

IF YOU DON'T, there will be no need to scream and holler and get bent all out of shape AFTER the Assembly closes down. The time to get bad is BEFORE.

THE BEST Yule card we received is the one from Singleton; Dashiell and Robinson, that nifty group of black lawyers who are really on the ball.

It says: "Kindle the desire to unfold the ancestral record of untold greatness and mystifying thoughts. Deeds and Glory belong to you and are with you. Annunciate and proclaim your historical presence. Quiet. Peace. Kwanza."

STUDY THAT passage. Isn't it nice?

IN CASE IT SNOWS and you have long afternoons at home, find an easy chair and read something uplifting. Should you be unable to travel to some far off land, go away through imagination for a visit via a book on an African country or some enchanted island.

ABUNDANT LIFE books by the dozens are at the library and there compose the section which is most popular.

EVERYONE is searching for a way to live more deeply and prosper. I suggest you go to the Christian Science Reading room on Charles near Saratoga. You're welcome to sit in that beautiful living room and read every day. It's quiet and lovely and full of the miraculous books of Mary Baker Eddy.

ONE LADY we know, Miss Ora Young, the Home Ec teacher at Catonsville Junior High and strong Freedom House supporter, reads, studies and concentrates in her free hours and follows a pattern of thought which she says brings about miracles.

For years, Ora has done wonders at school, home and in the inner city for the benefit of all persons.

Recently she was an outstanding member of a group of 3,000 who arrived from every state to attend the Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Okla. four - day seminar.

The knowledge she derived resulted in "spiritual enrichment and educational advancement" and she says she learned how to look for miracles, expect them and watch them come to reality.

EVERY YEAR will become a better one than the last one if you try. God gives wisdom and ability to think and forge a way for yourself.

WATCH your friends around you. They are thinking and hunting and finding their own way and won't tell you what they're doing. Therefore, to put it very simply, you go ahead and do the same, quietly planning for yourself a good life.

ESPECIALLY recommended is this formula for young people. Stay out of the street. Find quiet hours. Read and study you will study - and graduate. Equip yourself for a good life and go after it no matter what the "crowd" is doing.

Many teens are doing just that. The main branch of the Pratt Library has crowds of them waiting outside the door on Sunday for opening time. And they stay until closing time, every day. Adventure and inspirational books go out by the thousands.

Idle New Year's Resolutions like not to eat candy or to "behave" are useless. Make resolutions to better your life and keep them. Happy New Year and a wonderful journey on down the road.

LAST THURSDAY was "Career Consciousness" day at the Bernard Harris Sr. Elementary No. 250, designed to make students aware that they should be thinking about their careers now.

Students reported interviews with their families. Some presenting their parents: Mrs. Jessie Lank, a bowling alley mechanic, mother of Sybil Leak; Mrs. Ida Roman, a cook, mother of Tanya Roman and Mrs. Mae Williams, counselor for the Urban Services Agency, mother of Erica Williams.

Arnold Mitchell, a karate teacher and father of Jodie McCrea was unable to attend.

EX - COLT Lenny Moore and Bob Smith of WJZ - TV were guest speakers, both of whom thrilled the audience.

OTHER students participating in the assembly were Angela Cox, Sinorya Sellers, Kevin Woodson, Amira Dudley, Kimberly Myles, Carlos Green, Damon Peterson and Terri Hutton.

Mrs. Elaine Davis coordinated the program assisted by Mrs. Pearl Dotson, Mrs. Maxine Trammell, Ms. Jacqueline Bowser, Ms. Janet Smith, Ms. Barbara Kilgore, Mr. Frank Pryor, Mrs. Audrey Taylor, Mrs. Beverly Wilson, Ms. Kathy Warren, Mrs. Elizabeth Tolson, Ms. Pamela Maddox.

Mrs. Ruth P. Brown is the principal and Charles J. Burke, assistant principal.

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT AGING

Dr. Matthew TAYBACK

Recently, a conference was held in Baltimore on the subject of hypertension (high blood pressure), a condition which has yielded remarkably well to recent research and preventive medicine.

During the course of this conference, Dr. George Entwistle, professor of preventive medicine at the University of Maryland, presented a paper on Hypertension in the Elderly, which includes information of interest to all concerned with the health of senior citizens.

Dr. Entwistle reports that there are two principal types of high blood pressure, classical hypertension and pure systolic hypertension.

Research on hypertension

In classical hypertension, the person involved has an elevated diastolic pressure, that is above 95 millimeters of mercury. This form of hypertension increases in prevalence as one advances in age from 20 to 50 years.

Surprisingly this type of high blood pressure is found less frequently among persons over 65 years. One adults approaching 80 years. One could speculate that this is due to the fact that those who survive to their seventies are more likely to be individuals with normal levels of diastolic blood pressure.

Although there is a leveling off of classical hypertension among those age 65 and older, mortality rates from hypertension related diseases (coronary heart diseases and stroke) do increase remarkably as one moves through the 70s and 80s.

It is reasonable to conclude that hypertension is a significant condition for the elderly. And one for which control should be sought.

In this regard, at least two studies indicate that illness and death associated with classical hypertension can be reduced significantly by medication.

Detection and treatment of diastolic hypertension is thus a basic component of preventive medicine for the elderly.

Pure systolic hypertension, Dr. Entwistle reports, rises markedly as individuals move through the sixth, seventh and eighth decades of life. This condition is defined as a high systolic blood pressure, 160 millimeters of mercury or higher accompanied by a relatively normal diastolic pressure, 95 or less.

Several studies indicate that persons with pure systolic hypertension when characterized by a systolic of 180 or higher are likely to have a higher risk of stroke and heart disease than individuals with normal systolic pressures.

It would appear desirable to control this condition. Unlike classical hypertension, there is no systematic body of evidence which points to a successful specific therapy. Nevertheless, some physicians will wish to use available means of intervention based upon individual experience.

As new knowledge develops on physical conditions of special interest to the elderly (such as Dr. Entwistle's), it will be reported on the premise that an informed individual is one who can act constructively to protect his health.

—MORE LETTERS—

America, a religious enigma

Dear AFRO:

America claims to be against Communism because Communists are supposed to be against Christianity.

Yet, when I look at America I find no Christianity. I find no freedom of prayer in schools and other public places. I find no freedom to display Nativity scenes in most public and government areas. I find among many who call themselves Christians no real belief in the existence of Hell or in punishment for sins.

On the other hand, I find in America a freedom of sexual perversion and permissiveness. I find a freedom of the strong to exploit the weak. I find a freedom of racism, hate, and oppression (as exemplified by the KKK and the American Nazi Party). I find among the worldly a freedom to deny the godly their freedom to practice their faith undisturbed (as exemplified by the "Freedom From Religion Foundation").

So, it is no accident that the word, "Christ," in "Christmas" has been X'ed out, altering the word to now read, "Xmas."

And so, the only semblance of Christianity which Americans oftentimes use as proof of their religious freedom is their freedom to attend church. But this meager defense is meaningless, also, for even Communists attend church.

Religion, therefore, is not the true basis for America's displeasure with Communism; and neither the slogan which adorns its pledge of allegiance, "In God We Trust," nor the one which adorns its pledge of allegiance, "one nation, under God . . ." means that the United States is a Christian culture.

America's gods, therefore, can only be its money and itself—a false religion; and it despises Communism only because it fears the loss of those two gods.

F. GREGORY

Selling the O's

Dear AFRO:

Here's a case of screaming when it is just about too late.

Everybody in this city is up in arms because the Orioles might be sold and moved out of town.

But the attendance figures have fallen so much, all those people who are screaming about it must have been asleep during the season when they should have been at Memorial Stadium.

If they had put their money where their big mouths are last baseball season, they might not have reason to be bent out of shape about the impending loss of the Orioles.

L. Q. HERBERT

Inmate blasts AFRO, commutations

Dear AFRO:

Hey, AFRO, how about spelling out your reasoning relative to the kind of articles you are looking for, particularly from within state prisons.

For you have consistently rejected articles sent to your paper by me.

I would conclude that my mentioning of names and offenses without satisfactory evidence or corroboration legally prevent the appearance of my letters in your papers.

But I have many copies of letters I have sent to you which had no names, yet you apparently rejected such articles, leaving me quite paranoic to say the least.

I have been noticing the type of letters you have been publishing. They are usually very shallow, or apparently written by very young prisoners who lack the educational articulation to properly inform the public.

Look at the letters "INMATES WANT PUBLIC TO KNOW", appearing in the AFRO - AMERICAN December 16, 1978. This article was signed by "John A., Benjamin L., Wilbert B."

I really appreciate these youngsters and what they are trying to do. But like so much of the information coming from this paper, it is crude, shallow, and highly selective.

Do your editors feel that your clientele are such unintelligent people that such articles as the above serve them best? Or is there a more natural reason?

I am an inmate who has served over 29 years in this "rotten" prison system. I know as do many of my contemporaries that it is important that someone expose the treatment, conduct, and - or behavior of these correctional officers to the public.

We hope that you the news media make the minimum contribution, not to us, but to the citizens you are obliged to inform.

When you print half truths or inarticulate truths, you are not serving anyone. You are taking away the effect of the good and poor letters.

For it is time the "black public" face up to the realization of our different kind of "Jimmy Jones" trick on weak, emotionally injured black people going unchecked in Maryland prisons.

We prisoners, because we are human beings, are the responsibility of the public you serve.

And we call upon the public to look into the prison situation from an inmate perspective.

Come see for yourselves. "Brockbridge Correctional Unit" during its "construction" fraud and talk to the inmates. See how they are forced to live under inhumane conditions.

Then you will see that "CHRISTMAS COMMUTATION", and those abbreviated releases of Maryland prisoners, evidently based on the "extension" granted Maryland by the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, representing an extension of the admitted unconstitutional overcrowding Maryland state prisons.

NAME WITHHELD

Send letters to the AFRO

Address all letters to City Desk,
Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN,
628 N. Eutaw St.,
Baltimore, Md. 21201.
Please include name and address.