Baltimore Afro-American

Founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1840-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City
Sub. Carl Murphy (1889-1967) Editor-publisher (1922-1967).

OPINION

School board suit

AFRO goes time word came that the Baltimore Board of School Commissioners filed a legal suit against the State of Maryland, more specifically the State Department of Education.

We have all similar suits filed in recent years by school districts within the states of Texas, California, New York and Washington.

It is no secret and hardly Maryland the thought of a city or county suing the state strikes us as almost necessary.

Based in some of what this unprecedented (for the Free State) litigation is all about.

Baltimore City, with Somerset, Caroline and St. Mary's Counties has concluded that it gets much less money from the state for each public school student within its jurisdiction than do other jurisdictions.

The per head pupil cost varies, under the State Department of Education's formula, from a high of $3,105 for affluent Montgomery County to $1,487 per child in Baltimore City.

Obviously the state formula is wacky and penalizes children who live in districts whose governmental budgets prohibit a maximum dollars per child contribution to public education.

What our School Board seeks is equity and is maintaining that an urban center like Baltimore is far less able to kick in as much money for public education as do richer areas in the state. Metropolis like Baltimore have a lot more expenses, by the very nature of city life, than outlying jurisdictions.

Our School Board wants the State to make the necessary adjustments so that children living in the city will not be punished because the city cannot kick in as much for education as other localities can afford.

The School Board's law suit also seeks additional money for children of deprived backgrounds who that say can get compensatory educational assistance to overcome whatever learning disadvantages may be attached to their being poor.

Such legal moves have been successful in a few other states. Our board of school commissioners feels it is time to correct these inequities. They have been joined in their fight for legal redress by other governmental structures within Maryland.

The fight has begun. The name of the game is to get the courts to rule that all students have the same amount of money invested in their public instruction, no matter where they live. Additionally, that where children need more educational stimuli the money be available for them as needed.

We think the Mayor, the Board of School Commissioners, and our Department of Education leader ships are to be congratulated for having the guts to tackle the problem of educational funds disparity head on.

We hope they get their day in court rapidly and that whatever jurist hears the case decides in favor of all the children of Maryland rather than those who have all the educational money advantages to begin with.

This legal action is bold, innovative and probably the only logical way to get the state of Maryland to begin distributing educational monies in a way that guarantees equity and considers deep needs.

Grand Jury

The grand jury was established centuries ago in England to serve as a buffer between the citizen and an overzealous prosecutor. But, as this venerable institution evolved in the United States, it has come down through the years as a rubber stamp, an instrument of prosecutors.

For this reason, the grand jury has come under harsh attack and an angry for reform of the grand jury has launched. Currently the Committee for Grand Jury Reform which has been the vehicle for the citizen and an grand jury reform is seeking to get nationwide support for the issue.

In Congress, Rep. John Conyers, D., Mich., a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, has introduced a bill to reform the grand jury system and CGJR backs the Conyers' bill. A study of the bill and how it will affect the judicial system will come later, but for the present we say that reform of the grand jury is long overdue.

The grand jury and how it works has been under severe criticism for several years, and at one point William J. Campbell of Chicago, who served many years as the federal bench, came to the conclusion that the grand jury "has outlived its usefulness."

Also last year, the California Supreme Court, in a 5 - 2 decision, ordered a basic reform in the system. Judge Stanley of ruling, writing for the majority, said: "We conclude that an accused is denied equal protection if he is indicted and then deprived of a preliminary hearing." On that basis, the court held that indicted defendants are entitled to preliminary court hearings before they can be tried.

In most cases now, defendants are given preliminary hearing and if the hearing results in a finding of guilt, they bring him to trial a trial date is set. In such hearings, the defendant is represented by a lawyer, who has the chance to examine prosecution witnesses and call other witnesses in behalf of his client.

On the other hand, if the district attorney chooses to seek a grand jury indictment and the indictment is returned, the defendant goes to trial immediately unless his attorney can persuade the judge that the evidence is insufficient.

The issue here is that the defendant has no right to appear or be represented by counsel before the grand jury, and consequently may not confront and cross - examine the witnesses against him, object to evidence introduced by the prosecutor, make legal arguments or present evidence to explain or contradict the charge.

Conyers' bill would eliminate this discrepancy, thus it is a worthy objective.

Representation for Washington

Dear AFRO:

I read an editorial in a local news paper, "D.C. Is Not a State," with immense disappointment and incredulity.

The 800,000 residents of the District of Columbia, notwithstanding the atavistic and recalcitrant editorial, are observing of and should have their complete representation in both houses of Congress.

The local paper speaks of the longstanding "federal arrangement (as) not one to be lightly tinkered with" as if the process of amending the Constitution is sacrosanct. The fact, since our establishment as a nation in 1789, that we have added only 26 amendments indicates that we are not a nation of constitutional tinkers.

It is patently indefensible to aver that consideration of full voting representation for citizens of Washington, D.C. is tinkering with the Constitution.

A clearly delineated process, going back to our inception as a nation in 1789, is prescribed by the Constitution for clinges deemed appropriate by the Congress and American people.

There is no justifiable reason, unearthed to date, as to why the 800,000 citizens of Washington, D.C. should not have the same voting privileges as 220 million of their fellow - Americans.

The ways mentioned by the paper viz., make the Delegate in House a full Representative; District could become a state residential and commercial parts of the District ceded back of Maryland; cede the District residents back to Maryland for the sole purpose of voting) are convoluted, demeaning and amorphous.

Historically, our nation has affirmed the primacy of human freedoms and full voting representation. The 800,000 citizens of Washington, D.C., belatedly, are entitled to full voting representation now.

In accord with the principles of fundamental fairness, decency and equity, I hope that Gov. Harry Hughes will use the power and influence of his office, and the Maryland General Assembly will promptly ratify the proposed D.C. Amendment.

SAMUEL L. BANKS,
Coordinator of Social Studies,
Baltimore City Public Schools

Christianity vs. communism

Dear AFRO:

You cannot fight a man on his own ground or vie for victory, (unless) you have something that is superior to what he has.

The communist affords the west or world its greatest opportunity (challenge) to affirm the true meaning of righteousness. The west, or world has only one recourse to survival.

You don't fight fire with fire, but with truth. Not evil for evil — unless it is a greater evil.

Christ even prayed for His executors. Are we any better than Christ? He died, whereby the world might know the value of truth.

Out of love, Christ came to save each people as the communist. Christians are to let their light shine — that others might see their way.

If we don't, the blood of others will be accountable to the Christians and we all could perish together.

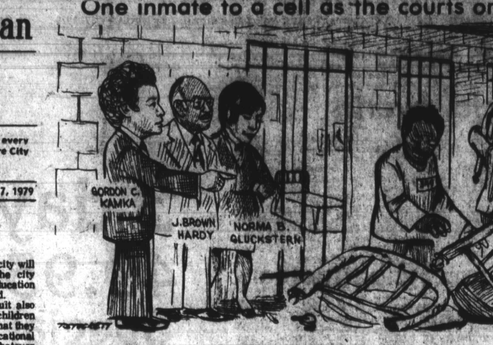
Yes, we are our brother's keeper. That is the meaning of why God asked Cain, where art thy brother.

Don't let God have to ask America where art they brother — Martin L. King, John F. Kennedy, and many others.

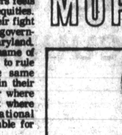
The nations are to get down upon their knees and go to God in penance, to ask for giveness for their sins, past and present before we can cast stones at other nations.

ALBERT TAYLOR

One inmate to a cell as the courts ordered



MADELINE MURPHY



Minority appointments

There still seems extant among us, that virulent syndrome of self - hate that shows itself to be endemic among the black members and women on boards and commissions which deal with minority appointments.

Recently, the paper quoted two women, members of the 11 member U.S. Circuit Court nominating committee.

One, Mrs. Kathleen Carter, said, "Our problem with any minority applicants — and I'm including women here — is that our system is such that we have been shut out, and from having been shut out, we don't meet the criteria."

She concluded, "We know there are many qualified women and blacks who with the NEXT FIVE TO 10 YEARS (my italics) will be eligible."

At this juncture, remembering Clement Haynesworth, one wonders how much the criteria for applicants: "12 to 15 years of legal experience with "substantial" experience in several areas such as appellate law, trial work, teaching writing or law reform activity" are merely exclusionary and used only to deter capable women and blacks from applying.

Also, how much minority members of the commission take the responsibility to challenge the so - called qualifications to make them compensatory, for this is also the role of minority members on any commission.

Since she and Mrs. Eileen Stein, a Silver Spring lawyer, seem to have been actively seeking nominations of qualified female and minority candidates for the U.S. Circuit Court judgeships, little public attention has been shed upon this recruitment effort.

Black lawyers, who are quite qualified, who have been in practice for 15 years, have developed expertise in a number of fields, and should be used as that cause.

So often we fall into the trap of agreeing with white rules, that it's "a shame" that none are around without looking to the very professional groups like Monumental City Bar Association for assistance, to provide curriculum vitaes and resumes of lawyers who would be willing to submit applications to the commission.

Nevertheless, five names must be submitted to President Carter through Sen. Paul Sarbanes, by March 23, for each of the three new seats for Maryland, North Carolina and West Virginia on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in Richmond.

Since the commission will meet in North Carolina from Feb. 15, through 17, in Baltimore from Feb. 22, through 25, time is very short to submit the names of blacks and women who will qualify, so let's get crackin'.

Recently at the World Peace Council Conference in Berlin, the German Democratic Republic, a nation with a social program was given honorable mention for its birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Many delegates from varying countries spoke in praise of his universal effect upon the consciousness raising of under - developed countries, notably African nations under the boot of racist oppression. Also his early denunciation of our involvement in the war in Vietnam, which led to the Nobel Peace Prize.

But, Leon Hall, representing Coretta King and the Martin Luther King Center for Social Change, in his rhetorical remarks about the black non - violent movement of the 60s made the shocking statement that blacks in the United States were better off than five or six years ago.

He further extolled the administration of President Jimmy Carter in his work toward racial justice for blacks. This statement was made while Carter's release of Patty Hearst after only 22 months imprisonment was front page news, and was being compared at the conference with Ben Chavis of the Wilmington 10, who must serve the remaining three years of his sentence.

Further, Hall apologized for Carter's inaction in South Africa with the remark, that "Carter was elected ruler, not a part of the situation."

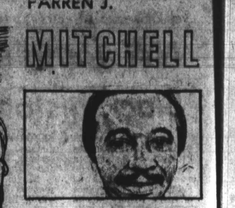
He stated that the president was against apartheid, while at the same time blamed the "military - industrial complex" (not foreign or racial) on Carter by (the way) for the imperialism wrought upon Africa by the United States.

Evidently from this unshakable faith in President Carter, Coretta Kingbas, perhaps through some guid pronos, made a decision early in the game, to campaign for Carter's re - election.

When one recalls Dr. King's struggles, it is hard to accept this capitulation (without even consistently (as loyal opposition) taking a hard nosed objective appraisal of Jimmy Carter's hard line against full employment for blacks in favor of fighting inflation; social programs that now are being reduced in funding in favor of an arms race that takes 13 percent away from these social programs, but will not make a dent in the dismal black unemployment rate.

Ah well, of such things personal King - doms (no pun intended) are perpetuated!

Mrs. Murphy is a commentator on Impact News on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. on WEAA - FM.



FARREN J. MITCHELL

'I just wish I could die'

He was a small man whose eyes on the edge of his chair in my office. He is 73 years old.

"I have worked hard all my life," he said. "I have never been in any trouble with the law, and I have never caused anyone any trouble. But now I have to go around borrowing here and begging there just to try to live."

He looked me dead in the eyes and said, "I have got my pride you know, Mr. Mitchell."

Then he burst into tears, his slight body shaking and said, "I remember when I was a boy hearing old people say I wish I could go on home and now I am old and I just wish I could Die."

He receives Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) in the amount of $252. a month. That sum is supplemented by $13 a month in food stamps, giving him $265 a month on which to live.

However, he is ill, suffering from high blood pressure, an enlarged heart and hypertension. He has three prescriptions that must be filled each month, costing $25 a month. Most times he has only enough money left to spend $13 a month on his prescriptions, getting about half the medicine he needs.

Medical assistance

When he applied for medical benefits in 1977, from the state of Maryland Medical Assistance Program, he was denied but cannot remember the reason for the denial.

He had come in to see me, frightened over some forms he had received which he thought meant that he would lose his food stamp benefits. My office will work with him to to get medical assistance, and there is no danger of his losing eligibility for food stamps.

I save him some cash to purchase his prescriptions for this month, which he at first refused to accept, referring to his pride again.

After we had finished the second phone calls on his behalf, he said that all of his family were gone, with the exception of his grand nephews and nieces from who he borrows to pay for food and medicine during the month but always repays them when he gets his OASI check.

"Can't you see I am just getting deeper and deeper in the hole," my friend said. I walked him from my office to the elevator, he thanked me for attempting to help him and then he started to cry again.

Softly, but with great feeling he said, "I wish I could die, I can't kill myself because that would be wrong, but I wish I could die."

Human tragedy

How many times a day is this human tragedy acted out in Baltimore and in other parts of the country? It is not just the wornout little 73 year old man and other senior citizens, it is also blacks who are unemployed and struggling just to stay alive.

Construction of the new Hyatt Hotel in Baltimore's Inner Harbor will begin next month.

"I wish I could die."

In Colorado and Wyoming the states are feeding herds of deer and elk threatened by snow and intense cold.

"I wish I could find a job."

The military budget must be increased by at least 3 percent, states the Administration.

"I wish I could die."

We must fine the money to save the Orioles.

"I wish I could get a job, get the chance to live."

Wrong priorities

All that I am trying to say is that at every level of government our priorities are wrong and because they are there is human suffering and human want. If President Carter's grim budget remains unchanged there will be more suffering and misery.

Every economist of decent reputation agrees that the President's budget will increase unemployment, the only question is how much? The only addition is that it will be blacks who will bear the brunt of increased unemployment.

The nation is in the throes of conservation and the lack of real priorities in spending is accepted, I believe, by the vast majority of Americans how that lack is creating festering sores of anger, and frustration in pain.

American wealth is so great that no young black person should have to say, I want to work, I want to live but I can't find a job," nor should any senior citizens in this country ever have to say, "I want to die."

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

LETTERS

History — the torch for the future

Dear AFRO:

The lock and chain that invisibly bonds the future of Bilalian Afro - Americans can only be open and removed by the "keys" (knowledge) of our glorious past history.

The month of February has been designated as Afro - American History month. It is imperative that Bilalian Afro - American men and women, young and old become aware of past contributions and achievements made by the descendants of African slaves.

Dr. Charles Drew was one of the most important medical researchers during the 20th century. Dr. Drew's pioneering contributions to the science of preserving, transporting and transfusing blood and blood substitutes (blood plasma and serum) helped to save thousands during World War Two and millions since.

His thesis "Banked Blood, a Study in Blood Preservation", earned him the rare degree of doctor of science in medicine, and became overnight the authoritative work in its field.

Mary Bethune was a teacher, administrator, school founder, social leader, political consultant and federal executive.

In 1904, Sister Bethune became aware of an urgent need to provide educational facilities for hundreds of Afro - American railroad workers children in Florida.

Sister Bethune resigned her position, moved to Florida with $1.50 and founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute.

Today Bethune Cookman graduates number in the thousands and include many of the nations most prominent black leaders. (taken from "The Negro in History", by Raymond W. Lenoy.)

After the death of Mansa Musa about 1336, the empire of Mali was into decline and was gradually absorbed by the growth of the last and greatest of the ancient black Sudanese empires, Songhai.

Within 150 years, Islamic Songhai had expanded its dominion over a territory larger than all of western Europe and rises to a rare height of civility.

Askia Mohammed Toure, the consolidator of Songhai's empire and the designer of the ultra - efficient bureaucracy, was unquestionably the greatest African ruler ever to have emerged in the western Sudan.

Almost single handedly, this brilliant and progressive leader built an empire of such high purpose and organization that even today it is regarded with awe by scholars who look into history.

The sum of Askia's achievements is so great that we can offer no more than partial indexing here.

He divided the empire into provinces and appointed a governor to oversee each; created ministries of finance, defense, finance and commerce and agriculture, established a system of uniform weights and measures; instituted an equitable scale of taxation, initiated laws to regulate trade, banking and credit and decreed the open tolerance "Foreign elements" such as whites, Christians and Jews.

These are only three of the "keys" (knowledge) that will unlock the invisible chains that bind our future development and unity as a nation of people.

Knowledge of self was denied our ancestors, but it won't be withheld any longer from their descendants!

KENNETH T. RAGIN

The case for increased public assistance funds

Dear AFRO:

Gov. Harry Hughes is presently being requested to include, in the state's supplemental budget, a sum of $10 million to be used to increase public assistance grants throughout Maryland.

The case for support of this request has been well documented and, I believe, extremely persuasive. But, for practical purposes, the issue may best be understood by an awareness of some simple arithmetic.

A typical family of four receives a monthly grant of $267 plus food stamps averaging $120 per month in value. If one then assumes that this family will pay $150 per month for rent, heat and electric, they will then be left with a net of $237, or $1.80 per day, per individual.

With this money they must buy all food, clothing, non - prescription medicine and miscellaneous necessities.

Impossible? Not really, if one is willing to accept a diet which can forever destroy a child's physical development, clothing which can be so inadequate that children often are ashamed to go to school, and, finally, a sense of hopelessness on the part of many recipients that must be considered a major ingredient in the apparent intergenerational nature of many of our serious and costly social problems.

How wise it would be if we could make that timely investment which might provide chances for developing child at a time when that chance can be effectively used.

I hope that Gov. Hughes will look with favor upon the supplemental funding request, for, surely, it represents an issue of major importance to all of the citizens of Maryland and not just those who must, unfortunately rely upon public support.

CHARLES F. OBRECHT,
Chairman - Advisory Commission,
Baltimore City Department of Social Services

AFRO welcomes 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.

G. JAMES FLEMING

Mayor Barry and secretaries

It augurs something or other but, so far to the good, that the first complaints paid the new mayor of Washington, D.C., were in appreciation of his "laying the law down" to those civil servants who answer telephones and receive visitors.

Mayor Marion Barry will not solve all the problems of the District of Columbia by his edict. It will not balance his budget; it will not reduce crime; it will not improve the District's public school system, and it will not guarantee uncorruptible personnel.

But, thousands of people, of all ranks, rejoice that, from now on, the voice of the mayor at the end of the line will be friendly and pleasant, with a heavy touch of professionalism.

Mayor Barry called on his department heads to insist on such friendliness and professionalism. Certainly, he made plain, he does not want persons seeking information to be given the "short shrift," much less insulted.

He wants a spirit of helpfulness from his administrators to the public — often a near - helpless man or woman, or even a child.

The mayor spoke as though he knew what he was talking about. He must have been "snapped at" or "bitten" in those faraway days before he became "His Honor." (Some executives are also guilty of being the "snapped" kind, if their paths are crossed on the telephone).

The saddest part of uncouth behavior by secretaries and other clerical people, via the telephone, is that their victims have often been - "snapped at" four or five times before, in their attempts to find their way through the labyrinths of government and other institutions.

Often, too, the caller might have been given the right directions or the right information, the first time, if someone had cared enough to spare a few seconds.

Then, there are the secretaries who "grunt" and those who use an understandable secretary - ese instead of English.

Turning from the telephone, there are those secretaries, clerks, receptionists and bank tellers who insist on chewing gum throughout the day. There are also receptionists who are downright discourteous. These, too, may take a hint from Mayor Barry.

Let it be shouted, however, that "Some of my best friends are secretaries, receptionists and bank tellers." More importantly most of these supporting professionals are just that — professional.

They are friendly, pleasant, and helpful. They take pride in their work and are not "lovers' pigeons." They know they are sharing in accomplishing the objectives of their office or agency. Said more elegantly, they know they are sharing in the work of creation and building.

More than pleasant and helpful, most secretaries and receptionists are also efficient. How efficient often depends on the standards of their boss or their office.

If an employer is careful about his selection of his staff, if he invests in in - service training, and if pay and working conditions are right — all these qualities will be reflected in the behavior of his secretaries and related personnel.

Many are the executives who admit that they would fall "flat on my face" if it were not for their secretary. Countless are the VIPs who boast of how they are treated in some front offices.

One state cabinet member once boasted that he looked forward to visiting a certain office "because the secretary - receptionist there always acts as if she has been waiting just to welcome me . . . "

Most secretaries, underpaid as they usually are, and expected to be 57 varieties of supervisors as they must be, would need no "laying down of the law" by a Mayor Barry or anyone else. They are pleasant, helpful — and capable.

But there are the others — and they are not all in the District of Columbia.

Information for taxpayers

Benefits to aid older Americans

Of all the federal tax breaks, preferences, and other advantages for special groups, among the most popular are the tax benefits for older Americans.

To qualify you need not be rich or poor; employer of employee; homeowner or renter. You just have to be age 65 or older.

There are actually several tax breaks for persons 65 and up. The broadcast concerns the requirement to file a tax return: single people 65 and over are not required to file at all unless their income for 1978 was at least $3,700.

For married couples filing joint returns the limit is $6,200, if both are at least 65.

Every taxpayer who has ever dreamed of how it would feel to skip the filing process can appreciate this. Bear in mind, though, that the only way to get a refund is by filing.

So, if you have had any tax withheld from money you received in 1978, you should file for a refund even if you are age 65 or older and not required to do so.

For older Americans who DO have to file, there is still some good news.

Extra exemptions

For example, there's an extra $750 exemption, over and above the regular $750 personal exemption to which each taxpayer is entitled. A couple with both members 65 or over gets an automatic reduction to income of $3,000 (through their personal exemptions.

By the way for federal income tax purposes, a taxpayer is 65 on the daybefore his or her 65th birthday. Since a person's filing status is determined by the situation of the last day of the tax year, a taxpayer whose 65th birthday falls on Jan. 1, 1979, can file as if he or she were 65 during 1978.

Obviously this does not apply to many people, but if you are one of them it's a nice piece of information to have.

Retirement, which in this society often begins at 65, usually is thought of as a time of leisure.

Many people who have raised a family in a large house find that when the kids are gone they really aren't interested in raking leaves and cutting the grass. It's a time when it may make sense to sell the house and look for something a little smaller, maybe even with maintenance provided by someone else.

Here's less another tax benefit for older Americans — and some not as senior.

Home sale benefit

To ease the bite on the profit that results from the sale of a home, persons 55 years or older may be eligible to exclude $100,000 (50,000 if married filing separately) of the gain from the sale of their home.

The only conditions are that the sale must be after July 26, 1978, the home must have been owned and used as your principal residence for at least three of the previous five years, and you only take advantage of this benefit once.

The new exclusion is available to those who qualify even though they took advantage of the old exclusion that was based on the selling price of the home and applied to sales made before July 27, 1978.

Credit for elderly

Another way for older Americans to reduce their taxes is through the "Tax Credit for the Elderly."

While many persons 65 or older might not consider themselves and their peers "elderly," the fact remains that the credit can reduce their income taxes by as much as $375 for singles and $562.0 for married couples. Because it is a credit and not a deduction, this amount is subtracted directly from taxes owed.

To qualify for the credit for the elderly you need to be a U.S. citizen and have taxable income from any source.

It is also possible to qualify if you are under 65 provided you are retired and receiving taxable - retirement income, such as from the federal government or from a school system.

The IRS will lend a hand computing the credit if you supply the information they need by filing a filled - in Schedule R or RP with your Form 1040. You cannot file the Form 1040A and receive the credit.

Other deductions

Much of the income received in retirement years is completely free from federal income tax, including social security payments. Railroad retirement benefits also are non taxable, and are exempt from a general welfare fund such as payments for blindness.

Premiums you pay for Part B of Medicare (the portion deducted from your Social Security checks) are deductible if you itemize; so are other medical insurance premiums.

The premiums are totalled and one half, up to $150, is deductible outright. The balance is lumped in with other medical and dental expenses and is deductible when these expenses total more than three percent of your adjusted gross income.

For retirees receiving taxable pensions, Form W — 4P has been designed to provide for withholding at the source of the payments. This practice can help the retiree avoid having to pay estimated tax payments during the year.

Free pamphlets

Several publications distributed by the IRS are available free to taxpayers with income tax questions. Those of interest to older Americans include:

— Publication 17, "Your Federal Income Tax;"

— Publication 523, "TX Information on Selling or Purchasing Your Home;"

—Publication 524, "Tax Credit for the Elderly" and

— Publication 554, "Tax Benefits for Older Americans."

These and many more free publications are stocked in most IRS offices, or you can order them by using the mail order form in your tax package.

In addition to the booklets and IRS help, older Americans are offered free tax help by many community organizations and national retirement organizations. A local senior citizen's center or your IRS office can steer you to ward several such services.

—MORE LETTERS—

Remembering Abbie Mitchell, Lafayette Players

Your story in the Jan. 30 issue on the great Abbie Mitchell was a beautiful tribute to the memory of a real great lady and marvelous performer.

It was my privilege to see her with the old Lafayette Players at the Howard Theater in Washington in 1917 — when I had just arrived there to take a clerkship in the Provost Marshal General's office, General Enoch Crowder in charge, directing the first draft in World War I.

My immediate boss was Col. John Wigmore, dean of the law school at Northwestern and a recognized authority on the rules of evidence.

Sundays — the Howard offered the spectacular "Supper Show," really an afternoon performance, presenting an augmented orchestra matching any in the big time Broadway movie houses — this one under the direction of the musicians' musician Marie Lucas.

It was "spelled" by Louis Thomas Quintet - performing in a box off stage, rocking the packed house with "Dardanella" and "The Vamp."

But back to Miss Mitchell. The Lafayette Players that week were presenting the opera "Faust" and Abbie sang "Marguerite" absolutely divinely. And that other master of the stage, Clarence Muse sang the male lead "Valentino."

Believe it or not the company did itself proud in the "Kermess" with the beautiful waltz and the male group the "Soldier's chorus." No one told me — I saw and heard them.

Many years later, when on the Our World staff doing a story on Harlem the last of the old Lafayette Players were brought together for a picture with the "Tree of Hope" stump in the foreground and the old theater in the background.

The photographer, Wil Blanche, was overwhelmed hearing the perfect diction of Miss Mitchell and her old friend Susie Sutton — the first time they had seen each other for years — and how they chattered.

Well, Blanche agreed to take the ladies home — he had a big car handily — Miss Sutton lived in the Bronx — so Wil took the longest way possible to reach her apartment — meanwhile telling me to shut up so he could relish the beauth yof their diction.

On our way back to Miss Mitchell's apartment on Manhattan Avenue, a studio where she presided during vacations from Tuskegee, she gave great - cut opinions on the current actors — Lena Horne among them. (Too bad Cicely Tyson and Leslie Uggams couldn't have seen this lady — she was an actress from whom they could learn much.)

That was the last time it was my privilege to see Miss Mitchell.

During the Depression, when the new Harlem branch Y opened, it was the center of everything in Harlem, one of the dormitory residents was the great composer Will Marion Cook — well up in his years but still lively and composing music.

Other residents called him eccentric — perhaps he was I remember him fuming over some white whippersnapper asking to be taken to Mr. Cook's office. He said, pointing to his curly head, "Here it is. Really sir, my hat is my office." He wasn't an easy person to know and otherwise wit.

I guessed these notes would be interesting. Keep up the good work — some of us appreciate it. All the best.

ALVIN L. WHITE

Park Heights thanks the AFRO

Dear AFRO:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your response in covering our demonstration held on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 1979, against the sale of the product "Rush" to our Park Heights youth and all the juveniles of the state of Maryland.

We regret that our demonstration schedule was shortened, due to the rain, and we failed to meet most of the news media and the press, who had braved the weather to be in attendance.

Thanks for your cooperation and interest in our community problems.

REV. ELIJAH B. McDANIEL

ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

For All We Know

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

WE HAVE NEVER seen in recent times over 1,200 wedding guests at one time! This was the number of persons who witnessed the marriage of Marie Elizabeth Murphy Phillips - Cooke to the Rev. Ronald E. Braxton, pastor of Allen AME Church, Feb. 3. Marie, the AFRO newspaper chain's women's editor, is granddaughter of the AFRO founder.

EACH GUEST was served at the reception which came after the rites in the main auditorium at the Prince Hall Masonic Temple.

The magnificent occasion was highlighted by the reading of the vows by the Rt. Rev. Henry Wendell Muph, presiding bishop of the AME Second Episcopal District who was assisted by three other ministers, the Rev. Henry Berlin, an AME general officer, Rev. Walter C. Davis, pastor of St. John's AME, Norfolk, Va. and Rev. Agnes Alston of Baltimore.

Rev. James Blake, a classmate of the bridegroom gave the sermon at the Sunday, Feb. 11 Allen AME services which witnessed the bride joining her husband's church. Rev. Blake came from his Greater Zion AME Church in Charleston, S.C. just for the service.

During the services, word came of the death of Phillip Woodson, a Concord Baptist member, whose wife and 19 members of his family belong to the newlyweds' Allen AME church.

The Rev. and Mrs. Braxton immediately postponed their honeymoon so that they could be present for the funeral Wednesday. The Allen AME members gave them their trip to the Virgin Islands and they are now there at last.

Dedicated couple

A gracious and passionate young couple, they are dedicating their lives to the Inner City and its residents. Marie will aid the Aller. Missionary Society in its outreach and bring blessings to everyone without thought of gain.

WHOM DO YOU KNOW who would at such a young age dedicate their all to humanity? I can think of no words to express how we all feel except: Surely goodness and mercy will follow them all the days of their lives and they will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

BUT, how else should this beautiful young couple see things? They both are humble heritage. Our Grandfather Murphy was a whitewasher who worked hard. He was a Bethel AME Sunday School superintendent when he founded the AFRO.

His father, Benjamin Murphy, was the Bethel bell ringer and Benjamin Murphy before him was the church secretary and of no great wealth at all.

MARIE'S father's side, the Phillipses: Frank Phillips Sr. taught Sunday School at Allen AME and all the family was born in the 1100 block W. Lexington St. where the church is located. As children, they went to Allen.

Rev. Braxton's heritage is also humble. He reveals his mother worked for $15 and $25 a week to support her children who now have earned master's degrees.

THE WEDDING WEEKEND saw the Braxton, Phillips and Murphy families gathering for dinner Saturday. The occasion became more meaningful by the presence of the church family joining the sitdown affair. The Allen ladies prepared the superb menue including homemade rolls.

The picturesque three - day affair ended at the Sunday services when the newly weds joined hands at the altar to pledge to love each other and the church.

IT ALL filled me almost to overflowing tears. We do so much need beauty and humility these days. I was happy to have a small part with an orchid for Marie and altar flowers from me and John Oliver, my brother.

Clay Florists, my neighbors, did more than could have been expected at a mere token price after I told them of all the romantic implications of the wedding weekend.

The owner, member of the third generation of the Clay family in 100 year old firm, has served our inner city churches and weddings over many decades. He'll see that needy mourners have flowers for their deceased loved ones.

A sum of $100 goes to the bride if a divorce comes too soon. The friendly florist begins his day with a prayer.

Anniversary

FEB. 26, a week from THIS COMING MONDAY is the Grace Memorial Baptist banquet for the anniversary of the church and the pastor, Rev. Dr. A.C.D. Vaughn.

It's at the Lord Baltimore and over 1,000 are expected. Better get your tickets quick for this best event of the season. Only a week left.

CONGRATULATIONS and birthday wishes to Mrs. Nora Bennett who celebrated her 88th birthday Feb. 15 at St. James Terrace. She received a greeting card from President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter and many, many more best wishes.

Her daughter - in - law, Mrs. Dorothy Foster Bennett, is principal of Rosemont Elementary School No. 63 at 2777 Presstman St. We plan to visit there for pictures and story March 7.

Dorothy's mother, Mrs. Dora Evans Foster was 74 year's old Monday. All the children and grands gathered at Faith Baptist to celebrate the occasion, indeed a beautiful one.

Memories

HISTORY IS EVERYWHERE. While riding in Checker Cab 101 the other evening, I chanced to talk with the driver, Leander Street, uncle of Bailbondsman Elzie Street, who used to play golf with our Uncle Arnett Murphy.

Mr. Street used to be a bus boy at the old Emerson Hotel and revealed that the building formerly at Baltimore and Calvert was built by Alfred Vanderbilt who also owned Bromo Seltzer. He was a rare honeyman and the grandson of Captain Emerson, the builder of the Bromo Tower with the bottle on top.

VANDERBILT loved corn sticks and his hotel served them along with biscuits in small hot boxes like little ovens.

The best cook Baltimore ever knew was Captain Brown who was termed a traveling captain. He was much in demand, since he could prepare any delicacy in the world anyone could ask for.

AH ME! Many memories come when I recall the life of Rabbi Israel Goldman. His funeral services were held Feb. 11.

A jolly, wise and humble person, he joined every civil rights crusade in the Baltimore area in the 1950's and 1960's and went to jail along with the protestors of all nationalities.

Farewell to Rabbi Goldman comes from many black citizens who knew him as a man who gave the message of his day and rose to defend the cause of equal rights.

THE LAST total solar eclipse of the century occurs Feb. 26. In Maryland the eclipse will cover 60 percent of the sun. The 12:10 p.m. eclipse will see the moon at its minimum with more than half the sun covered.

The moon will then slowly uncover the sun until 1:26 p.m. when the sun is again in full view.

The total eclipse will not be visable here. Only in the Rockies and into Central Canada will the sun be hid year old firm, has served our inner city churches and weddings over many decades. He'll see that needy mourners have flowers for their deceased loved ones.

A sum of $100 goes to the bride if a divorce comes too soon. The friendly florist begins his day with a prayer.

Anniversary

FEB. 26, a week from THIS COMING MONDAY is the Grace Memorial Baptist banquet for the anniversary of the church and the pastor, Rev. Dr. A.C.D. Vaughn.

It's at the Lord Baltimore and over 1,000 are expected. Better get your tickets quick for this best event of the season. Only a week left.

CONGRATULATIONS and birthday wishes to Mrs. Nora Bennett who celebrated her 88th birthday Feb. 15 at St. James Terrace. She received a greeting card from President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter and many, many more best wishes.

Her daughter - in - law, Mrs. Dorothy Foster Bennett, is principal of Rosemont Elementary School No. 63 at 2777 Presstman St. We plan to visit there for pictures and story March 7.

Dorothy's mother, Mrs. Dora Evans Foster was 74 year's old Monday. All the children and grands gathered at Faith Baptist to celebrate the occasion, indeed a beautiful one.

Memories

HISTORY IS EVERYWHERE. While riding in Checker Cab 101 the other evening, I chanced to talk with the driver, Leander Street, uncle of Bailbondsman Elzie Street, who used to play golf with our Uncle Arnett Murphy.

Mr. Street used to be a bus boy at the old Emerson Hotel and revealed that the building formerly at Baltimore and Calvert was built by Alfred Vanderbilt who also owned Bromo Seltzer. He was a rare honeyman and the grandson of Captain Emerson, the builder of the Bromo Tower with the bottle on top.

VANDERBILT loved corn sticks and his hotel served them along with biscuits in small hot boxes like little ovens.

The best cook Baltimore ever knew was Captain Brown who was termed a traveling captain. He was much in demand, since he could prepare any delicacy in the world anyone could ask for.

AH ME! Many memories come when I recall the life of Rabbi Israel Goldman. His funeral services were held Feb. 11.

A jolly, wise and humble person, he joined every civil rights crusade in the Baltimore area in the 1950's and 1960's and went to jail along with the protestors of all nationalities.

Farewell to Rabbi Goldman comes from many black citizens who knew him as a man who gave the message of his day and rose to defend the cause of equal rights.

THE LAST total solar eclipse of the century occurs Feb. 26. In Maryland the eclipse will cover 60 percent of the sun. The 12:10 p.m. eclipse will see the moon at its minimum with more than half the sun covered.

The moon will then slowly uncover the sun until 1:26 p.m. when the sun is again in full view.

The total eclipse will not be visable here. Only in the Rockies and into Central Canada will the sun be hid

By Marion M. Banfield

The Year of the Child — Part III

"If someone hits you, hit them back!" is almost a sacred rule in some homes.

Confusion develops when the adult hits the child but the child can't hit back, when the bigger sibling hits the smaller one and finds out that physical strength is a force with which one must reckon.

Violence on a small scale is what some parents encourage because they haven't taken time to discuss relating to each other on a basis of respect.

I encourage parents and teachers to discuss hitting at the beginning of a pattern of violence. If mothers practice hitting as their major attempt at punishment and control, then violence is what their children will use as their means of communication.

There is tragedy in the puny boasting of poor, depressed, barely surviving men and women as they continue the punishment and abuse pattern in which they were reared. They boast that their parents beat them so that was right. After all, parents know best.

As the song says, "It ain't necessarily so!"

We can help our children to understand that peaceful brown men have destroyed powerful perpetrators of violence and evil.

Mahatma Ghandi broke the powerful British Empire's hold on India.

Martin Luther King, Jr. used neither physical violence nor verbal abuse to disrupt the power of racial abuse in America. Dr. King is the symbol of good conscience and justice for the world.

Both brown men are models of greatness.

To be non-violent means that one must use one's intelligence as well as feelings in developing and using one's self in a good way with other humans. That includes one's child and family among humans to be respected.

Sadly, there are religious groups whose approach to human relationships is based on the man-made idea that we are born unworthy of respect.

That view gives satisfaction to those who glory in exploiting the guilt they instill in others, the power of self - righteousness they exert over the feelings and minies of those who enjoy self debasement.

In this year of the child, it is a time to examine the religious atmosphere to which we expose our black children.

If our children must be considered little sinners, forbidden to question ideas and philos