—Sen. Douglass

(Continued from page 1)

Robert L. Douglass, senator from the 44th district made this point on the current unemployment problem that exists while the state is expected to have a large budget surplus.

The senator, who feels the budget is the single most important issue to come before the General Assembly this session, questioned, "What are we going to do with a $300 million surplus?

"There are a few things wrong in this state that should be addressed such as Medicaid funding of abortions, social service benefits and unemployment."

He pointed out that these are all issues very important to blacks in the community.

Douglass, head of the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, reported that the group recently met with Gov. Harry R. Hughes, asking that social services funding be brought up to 1978 standard.

Current funding, based on a 1967 standard, does not match the enormous cost-of-living increases witnessed over the past 12 years.

"I don't know exactly how much this would cost, but I do believe the governor has the money to do it. He's indicated he'll do something and I'm confident he will."

Legislation that Douglass has sponsored includes a bill that would exclude women from the definition of minority persons relating to purchases by state agencies and give them separate consideration.

Other legislation would provide that an agency of the state may not require bid bonds posted for certain contracts.

Focusing his attention on this area, Douglass not only heads his own business involved in contract bids with the state but also actively works with minority businesses as well.

"This is one problem I'm going to solve before I leave here, provided I live that long," quipped the East Baltimore Senator.

He heads Baltimore Electronics which recently tried for a contract with the state subway system now under construction.

The firm also owns Metropolitan Magazine and has shown considerable interest in purchasing WEBB Radio which Douglass says would undergo certain improvements such as 24-hour air time.

Coming to the state capital in 1974 after serving four years in the City Council, Douglass says, "I like it here a lot better even though it takes me away from my home and business.

As a community leader and businessman, he addressed the issue of the recent boating by stating, "Blacks still seem to have a slave mentality.

"Unless the great white father is looking down over us, we can't seem to police ourselves and supervise each other."

He continued by saying that because of the kind of services provided to those in the inner-city communities, "I don't see any excuse for looting a store in your community that is owned by a black person."

Aside from his duties as Black Caucus chairman, Douglass is also a member of the influential Senate Economic Affairs Committee.

—Sen. Mitchell

(Continued from page 1)

This session Mitchell, in concert with a coalition of black and white senators, led a vigorous fight for passage of the D.C. voting rights resolution.

The legislation, sponsored by him, was overwhelmingly approved in the Senate but defeated in the House.

Had it passed in both chambers, Maryland would have been one of 38 states needed to ratify a constitutional amendment which would give the District of Columbia two senators and at least one representative in Congress.

Known for being outspoken and assertive, the senator from the 25th district has again this year introduced two bills that have been highly criticized and tagged "very controversial."

One bill that he sponsored without success during previous sessions would decriminalize certain amounts of marijuana possession and make it a civil fine.

Another, measure would provide equal enforcement of prostitution laws through arrest of the customers as well as the prostitute.

"This is the only way to crack down on this business," he said. "Any person paying for these services is just as guilty as the person selling these services and should not be able to just walk away."

From a well - known West Baltimore family with a history of pioneering efforts in the civil rights movement, Mitchell says he places constituent services as his highest priority.

He explained, "Representing a district where unemployment is as high as 40 percent, where much of the housing is substandard and delivery of governmental services are limited, I see the power of my office as an important tool in breaking down the walls of bureaucracy for faster, more efficient delivery of these services."

The Senator who reports that phone calls from his constituents alone average 75 to 80 per day," has been criticized and questioned recently by several daily newspapers for his absences from Senate sessions and Judicial Proceedings Committee hearings.

To that he replied, "Other legislators miss committee meetings to try cases in court, trips to conferences and other business related activities and I don't criticize that.

"Each legislator should determine his own priorities, but when certain legislators do this we are under attack. I will never be intimidated by the written words of those who seek to keep us less than.

He is the founder of the State Office of Minority Business Enterprise and is chairman of the Subcommittee on Minority Enterprise and Employment of both the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, of which he is also national treasurer.

Other Mitchell - sponsored bills include legislation to assist adopted persons in finding their natural parents; supplemental assistance for the blind; work - release for state inmates in local jails; elimination of peremptory jury instructions in rape trials; giving financial assistance by the city to Arena Players, a non - profit community theater; and making illegal medical experimentation on prisoners.

—Drug slaying

(Continued from page 1)

Relatives of Miss Tillman told the AFRO she was not employed and has never been involved in drugs. A sister stated that Miss Tillman left home around 7 a.m. March 9 and said she was going to her boyfriend's house.

Police report the victim's boyfriend was interviewed by homicide detectives and released. He had been in another part of the North Avenue apartment house when Ms. Tillman was slain.

Wise, who is confined to City Jail, was named in the "Mexican Connection" dope ring for allegedly selling heroin to Rodney Charles English on July 25, 1978.

He was arrested for the narcotics charges on March 1 and his federal bail was set at $100,000. Wise, of the 5600 block Fairview Ave., was also charged with killing Reid and is being now held at City Jail without bail.

He is scheduled for trial March 27 for charges of distribution of heroin and is also scheduled to appear the same day in Northwestern district court for a preliminary hearing on a first-degree murder charge of Reid.

Wise allegedly received his heroin from Charles Thomas Allen, who is also known as "Slim Charles" and named as a major dealer of heroin who distributed heroin to dealers in Baltimore and regularly obtained kilogram quantities of heroin for distribution from his Mexican connection.

Garcia Gaspar and Jesse Trevino were obtaining large quantities of heroin from Mexico and would distribute the kilograms to Mauro Castro who would allegedly sell them to Allen.

Allen was described by federal agents as a major distributor and dealer of heroin who would obtain kilogram quantities of heroin for distribution.

The narcotics allegedly obtained by Charles was diluted repackaged and kept in a Columbia, Md., apartment until it was to be distributed on the streets of Baltimore.

Wise was named in the indictment as the enforcer and distributor for Allen. He is also accused of maintaining a residence at 1066 Argyle Ave., for the purpose of storing, cutting and packaging heroin he obtained.

In August 1978, Allen met Mauro Castro and secured two and a half kilograms of heroin for later distribution in Baltimore.

Benefit fashion show planned

The Community Neighborhood Association of West Baltimore is holding a fashion show and tea featuring furs, jewelry and clothing at Knox Baptist Church, lower auditorium, Schroeder Street and Edmondson Avenue, Saturday, March 31, 1 to 5 p.m.

The affair is a benefit for a cleanup campaign in the neighborhood.

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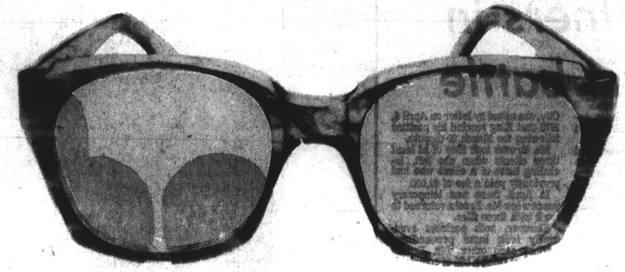
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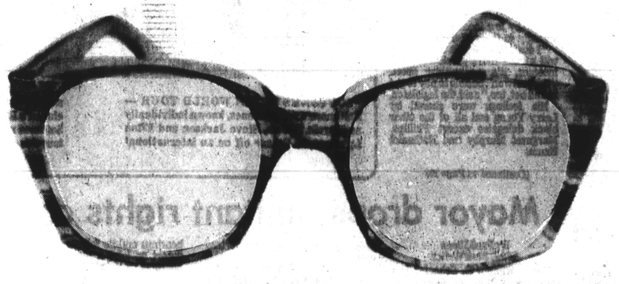
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Court finds Baltimore police dept. practices 'discriminatory'

Black cops' group wins legal victory

By Clarence W. Hunter
AFRO Staff Writer

A black law enforcement organization has scored a major victory against job discrimination within the Baltimore city police department.

U.S. District Court Judge Frank Kaufman ruled late Tuesday that the local police department did discriminate against blacks in its hiring and promotion practices as it related to two written tests—neither of which any longer exist.

Kaufman also ruled that the department's minimum height requirements of 5 feet 7 inches discriminated against women applicants.

The rulings were the result of two suits filed back in 1973.

The rulings were the result of two suits filed—one by the Vanguard Justice Society, the black police group and the Baltimore NAACP—in 1973 and ends over six years of legal haggling between the organizations and city, state and police representatives.

All that remains now is for the federal judge to rule on a settlement for the hundreds of persons discriminated against by the police department. He has ordered written arguments on the question of damages and back pay by April 17.

In his 171 page opinion, Judge Kaufman found that the entry level test used from 1974 through 1976 did have a discriminatory impact on black applicants. He also found the same thing held true for the sergeant promotional exams used from 1973 through 1977.

He said neither test was sufficiently related to the qualifications required to do the job and thus violated federal equal employment opportunity law.

Kaufman added, however that Vanguard "has not established that the defendants (the Department) intentionally engaged in any discriminatory conduct either through the use of examinations or otherwise, and thus have not proven conduct violative of the federal Constitution."

On the matter of height requirements, Kaufman said that the requirement is part of a pattern of international discrimination that effectively excludes most women applicants from the police force.

He found that the requirement that applicants be at least 5 feet 7 inches eliminates 81.8 percent of the women but only 25.1 percent of the men.

Anthony Robinson, the attorney who has been with the case from the beginning said, "We (Vanguard) are generally pleased with the decision. The heart of the case was the disparate impact of the entry level and promotional exams and the height requirements."

Police officers refused to comment until they had time to study the decision.

Robinson said while the court found the argument had merit "we are tasked with the responsibility to fight for a plan which not only prevents further discrimination in the future, but which will also afford meaningful relief to those persons already victims of discrimnatory practices Judge Kaufman found to exist."

"We believe the end, while not yet at hand is clearly and progressively within reach," he said.

Vanguard figures show that the percentage of blacks on the force has grown from 8.7 percent in 1968 to 12.5 percent in 1971, 13.6 percent in 1973 to 14.39 percent in 1978.

Robinson pointed out while the figures show a steady increase it in no way reflects the "growing proportion of the 60 percent black population in Baltimore."

While Robinson was generally pleased with the judge's ruling he did take issue with Kaufman's rejection of the black police group's claim that the department discriminated against blacks in promoting them to position higher than captain.

Kaufman ruled that the organization did not present sufficient evidence that the department has discriminated in the assignment of black officers.

Robinson pointed out that the promotions made above captain, which are exempt from examinations, were not an "objective approach" but were made on the sole discretion of Police Commissioner Donald Pomerleau.

To emphasize his point Robinson claimed that there were no blacks in exempt positions when Pomerleau increased the positions from nine to 21 after his appointment in 1966.

He went on to say that only two blacks were appointed to exempt positions between 1966 and 1970 and only three were appointed in 1972 and one between 1974 and 1975 when he increased the number of exempt positions to 30.

"This is one aspect of the suit that I am not pleased with," he said. "We could appeal the ruling but it would be useless unless someone complained."

Robinson said that before the case went to trial last August there had been extensive negotiations for an out of court settlement.

He pointed out that during the negotiations one city officials want to settle out of court but the other wanted to take the case the entire route.

City Hall sources said that it was Mayor William Schaefer who wanted to settle the case to avoid the legal expense but that it was Pomerleau who wanted to take the case the limit.

Neither man could be reached for comment.

It is unclear what Kaufman's ruling on a back pay and promotion settlement will do to the city's and police department's budget. No one is willing to say at this time.

Robinson also refused to speculate but he did say no matter what the judge's settlement ruling will be in April the department will have to "cough up the money."

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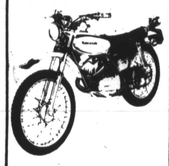
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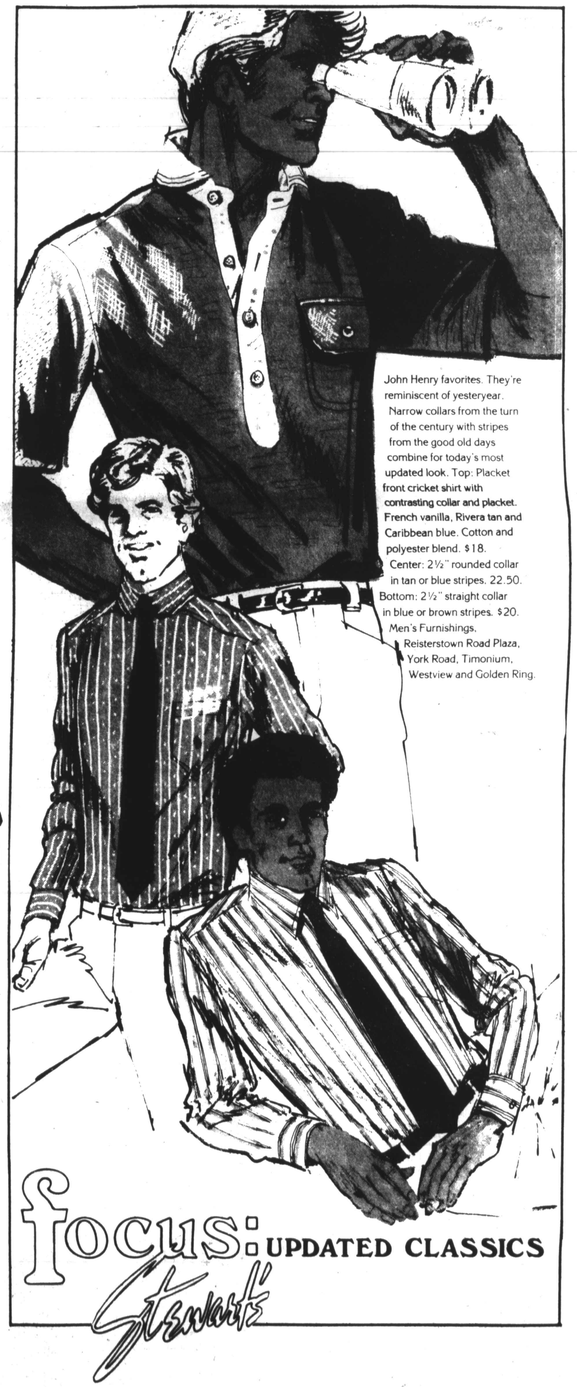
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