Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Impossible policy

One reason the elderly are often duped into buying unnecessary insurance policies is that the policies are almost impossible to understand.

Ron Wyden, who works with an Oregon Association of the Elderly, offered this example of a policy sold to an Oregon woman to cover cancer. It is a 170 word sentence:

"If any insured shall become afflicted with cancer, which is first diagnosed, as herein defined, in the entire lifetime of the insured on or after the 120th day following the effective date of policy shown in the insurance schedule on last page hereof and while this policy is in force and such sickness is diagnosed as provided herein, the company will pay indemnities according to the schedule of benefits, as shown in Part II, for the expenses incurred by the insured, except as otherwise provided herein, within a period of time beginning not more than the maximum benefits, as shown in Part III, for each service or benefit be paid with respect to any one insured, irrespective of the number of cancers or malignant tumors experienced by said insured."

We agree with Ron Wyden. This is nothing but verbal confusion and trickery.

Go, Birds!

The Yankees have their show - boat owner, George Steinbrenner, and short - tempered manager, Billy Martin, plus a cast of pin - stripped millionaires.

Boston has its Fred Lynns, Jim Rices and Carl Yastrzemskis.

Jerry Hoffberger is still looking for a buyer and Jim Palmer still has his aches and pains (physical and fiscal).

But all that trivia must be put on the back burner because the red hot Birds are coming home — more accurately, winging home — three and a half games ahead of their closest rival in the Eastern Division of the American League.

Talk about red hot.

The streaking Birds have won six straight games on alien territory on their latest road trip and are sailing along at sizzling .667 clip, having won 44 games while dropping only 22.

Our Birds will open a three - game, weekend series against Detroit tonight (Friday) and will be doing battle at home until July 1.

We can tell them how we feel about the classiest act in all of professional baseball by pouring into Memorial Stadium by the thousands.

Tradition has it that the team leading the pack on the Fourth of July is in a favored position to take down all the marbles.

Let's make sure they stay on top until the Fourth and beyond by joining Wild Bill and his Section 34 Cheering Squad and root the Birds in.

Yeah Earl, yeah Ken, yeah Ray, yeah Big Foot!

Only Sports Illustrated is backward enough to think we have a no - name team.

Go get 'em Birds!

Science before 6th grade

"In order to interest a student in a science career, he must be reached before he is in the sixth grade." This was the admonition recently given to one and all by Dr. Herbert James, a research scientist for the Xerox Corporation.

Such direction towards science cannot start too early, from everything that Dr. James said.

Noting that "the jobs of tomorrow are in science," he observed that many young blacks are "lost in the shuffle" because they have "so few role models."

Himself such a model, Dr. James' hobby is travelling around the country conducting seminars "helping college students make transition from college to work." His specialty is the conducting of "motivation seminars.

Dr. James' position undergirds the emphasis made some weeks ago at the Aerospace symposium held at Morgan State University, under the joint auspices of NASA, the Baltimore Department of Education and Morgan.

MADELINE

MURPHY

AFRO columnist Madeline Murphy is on vacation. This article by her, is reprinted from the Baltimore Afro - AMERICAN, Nov. 17, 1973 and is as timely now as then

The energy crisis

The nation now faced with yet another crisis, the fuel shortage, has every reason to wonder if in fact this shortage is real, or another cover - up.

For over a half century, oil, gas, (atomic energy a bit later)l and coal have been political footballs tossed around to gain international control over energy markets, by seven major oil companies, who dominate the business — Standar Oil of New Jersey, Shell, Gulf, Texaco, Standard Oil of California, Soc ony - Mobil, and British Petroleum.

Not only are they in the drilling business, controlling from well head to consumer, but they also hold great interests in tankers being built to transport the billions of gallons of crude oil around the world.

Hand in hand has been the U.S. government, which provides extraordinary tax incentives, cheap oil and coal leases on the vast coal lands in the public domain concentrated in Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming and Colarado, where they have controlled production to keep prices up.

Is it any wonder, therefore, why government has been reluctant, to go all out for air quality control standards.

James Ridgeway in his book "The Politics of Ecology," writes, "The government might use these lands to influence the development and transmission of energy according to a public policy.

"Instead under both Johnson and Nixon, the government virtually gives away the land to big oil companies, which squat on it without working the coal . . . through the Interior department's Bureau of Land Management."

Why is coal so important to the fuel crisis? Beacause as far back as 1926, the Germans found a way of making gasoline from coal.

The Germans had plenty of coal but little oil," says Ridgeway. "This announcement upset Standar Oil of N.J. which feared the Germans actually might become set - sufficient in gasoline production and the two giants made a deal promising, in effect, not to meddle in the markets of one another.

"Joint companies were set up for research and patents were exchanged. This led to the Germans getting technical know - how from Jersey Standard that enabled their air force during the Second World War to depend almost entirely on gas made from coal."

And so the culprits in the energy crisis are not the shortages so quickly seized upon to divert, to gain power to build panic in the hearts and actions of the masses, but the major oil companies.

They have controlled the production of natural gas by capping wells, of oil, and of coal by not developing lands leased from the U.S.

They have diversified in cosmetics, fertilizers, plastics, etc., so that shortages are regulated to their benefit and greater profit. And in the meantime, they have lobbied for and obtained quotas on foreign imports of oil to cut down competition.

Against this background, unbridled power, as Mandel and Nixon request, should be stopped at all costs.

"The oil companies, "according to Ridgeway, "want to control coal partly because coal competes with oil and natural gas, but also because they recognize the potential for turning coal into gasoline.

"Gasoline is the major money maker for oil men, and they want to keep tight hold of any development in that field.

"To do so, oil firms buy coal companies; they also lobby hard within the Federal government to make sure development of coal is forestalled."(And at the same time increase the price of gasoline."

Alas, another cover up of the so called energy crisis will not blanket us against the real chills, drafts and discomforts of a long cold winter, nor protect us against impeding gasoline rationing.

This, however, is the price we have paid for non - involvement; greed and corruption in government, which began long before the Nixon administration, but which has escalated at a rapid pace in these last five years.

As we grow more aware that duplicity in government stretches through Congressmen, who are controlled by the oil lobby, to Cabinet members and underlings, with veiled allegiance to vested interests in gas, oil and coal companies, to a President who is merely the last in a long chain of towel boys in the blatant prostitution of our rights, where will it all end?

Meanwhile, the record is clear that coverups, including laundered money, plumbers, dirty tricks, secret donors, have not kept Richard M. Nixon from the "people's business," when one view his national priorities, as they relate to his 1973 vetoes in legislation concerning minium wage, emergency medical service, disaster loan relief, confirmation of budget officer, vocational rehabilitation, water and sewerage supplemental appropriations.

In addition, impoundment or cuts in funds for education, school milk subsidies, Job Corps hospital construction, housing, rural environmental assistance, manpower training and water pollution control.

PARREN

MITCHELL

Recently, the House of Representatives voted on and passed H.R. 2641, a bill to amend section 106 of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 to raise the limitation on appropriations for the United State Commission on Civil Rights.

The measure was passed by a vote of 276 yeas to 14 nays, and I was among those Members who supported it and voted accordingly.

During the floor deliberations, I strongly urged my colleagues in the House to remember the importance of the Civil Rights Commission's past and present undertakings, and recognize the need for sufficient funding of its activities.

I reiterated my support for H.R. 2641 by addressing the following remarks to the Members of the House who were present:

"Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2641. I want to comment very briefly on the importance of the work done by the Commission and the necessity nbt only for its existence, but its expansion.

"It is rather sad, I think, and I would hope that most of the Members of the House would share my sadness, to note that after we have had a series of major civil rights laws and an alleged change of climate in this country, racism and discrimination still are deep and systematic and pervasive in America.

We had the Brown decision some time ago, but in every major city and in every State, most of our public schools still remain pretty rigidly segregated.

If we look at the New York Times for today, on the front page there is a story which points out that, despite the fact we have passed a fair - housing law, housing remains pretty much segregated by race in this country today.

"If my colleagues would look at the mail they receive from the Justice Department, almost every day they will see a notice where the Justice Department is working on cases in which there are violations of public accommodations law, violations of title VII, violations of every major civil rights legislation.

"Just a few short months ago, when I left one of our major cities, traveling north from there, I was in the company of two other people. We drove about 50 miles north of that major city. I stopped to get a milkshake and the others wanted a milkshake, and we ordered them.

"The lady immediately put the milkshakes in cartons to carry out.

"I said "No. We want to drink them here.

"She pointed to a sign. The sign said — and this 50 miles away from one of our major cities — the sign said: 'We reserve the right to seat our customers.'

"It did not matter that I was a Member of Congress.

"In fact, what I am suggesting to my colleagues is that those cases that go to the Justice Department represent only the tip of the iceberg.

"Let me further suggest to you why the work of the Commission must not only be maintained, but expanded.

"I am disturbed, and greatly disturbed, as I think every member of this House ought to be disturbed, by the fact that we see the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan activities in America.

"I thought we had gotten that kind of dominant poison out of the system of this Nation, but we have not.

"If you have been following the news reports, you see in Decatur, Ala., where these fools, who I think are latent homo - sexuals, dressed up in white robes, were attempting to intimidate blacks from having a march; and the blacks have fought back, understandably.

"This Klan is now boasting about the number of chapters that it has, youth chapters, on college campuses and university campuses.

"Surely the work of the Commission is needed more sorely than ever.

"I would suggest that we fight against any attempt to reduce funding for the work of the Commission, not so much just on the basis of the added responsibilites of the Commission in terms of taking care of discrimination against the aged and the handicapped, but the Commission needs to have its funds expanded primarily to deal with this new form of racism that is here in America, this sophisticated, subtle, smooth, I call it velvet racism - that is the kind, that is the kind that is so smooth to the touch, it yields, but it does not confront you, but nevertheless it is there, it is there in every aspect of our lives.

"I would urge that we support the work of the Commission, that we defeat any amendments to cut it.

In closing, let me give the members one other illustration as to why we need this Commission as a watch dog. The genius of America, the genius of America has created several million new jobs over the past 3 years, almost 3 million new jobs. Yet, the black unemployment rate remains substantially unchanged over the past 3 years.

LETTERS

County NAACP prexy urges strong rights commission

Dear AFRO:

As a means of getting Baltimore County Executive Donald Hutchinson to decide in favor of the Human Relations Commission, this organization poses the following facts for his consideration:

1. In view of the subtle and overt discriminatory practices toward ethnic groups in the County governmental structure, alone, for blacks and other minorities, a community council with increased powers is needed.

The obvious advantage of this is that the County can resolve its own problems without state or federal intervention.

2. Your (Hutchinson) stand on not waiting to pay for a Human Relations Commission, because you can rely on the state to take care of Baltimore County's human relations problems is contradictory to the stand that you took with regard to the CETA program.

In the case of the CETA program, you agreed to withdraw from the Consortium primarily because Baltimore County wanted its own CETA program, rather than to depend upon the city for its Prime Sponsor services any longer.

3. The members of this organization as well as many other Baltimore County citizens that we have spoken with about this subject agree that there must be a Human Relations Commission with increased powers to do a meaningful job to correct those persons discriminating as well as satisfy those persons discriminated against.

4. It is time for a black person to head this Commission to include 50 percent blacks and 50 percent whites to deal with problems presented to this county organization.

This opinion is not only a personal one but one that pervades the black community of Baltimore County. The rationale is simple. You know as I do that there is no other ethnic person besides a black person who would have the kind of in - depth feeling regarding black problems. Today black people should also be put in positions here in Baltimore County, to work with and solve problems involving blacks and - or white.

The managerial thinking of having whites or Jews to head each Baltimore County organization, with blacks working for them is archaic, plantational, and unacceptable by black citizens of this county.

Particularly since blacks are in many cases qualified to do whatever job you need done, at levels of excellence which exceeds that of many of their white competitors if given an equitable chance.

The executive director must therefore be black in this organization. He - she should be encouraged by you to pursue with vigor those charges of discrimination made by those discriminated against to the point of resolution acceptable within the law by you and the commission, who I propose should hire him - her.

The executive director must have a staff to do the investigation work, etc. and should include 50 percent blacks and 50 percent white much the same as the Police Department's Affirmative Action group under Captain Cornell.

Still further he - she should report to the Human Relations Commission who in turn would report to you in much the same way as they do it at the state level.

Our advice to you regarding the existing commission is to disband it. Use the existing bill, modified as recommended in this letter, as the justification for forming a new group identified as the Human Relations Commission.

Our research on this matter with existing Community Relations Commissioners revealed the fact that their morale is low, their usefulness has developed to a point of uselessness and uwemingly not one of us Baltimore Countians give a d--n concern about them or the work they were commissioned to do. Nothing could be further from the truth.

My words for this commission are, "The existing Commission is the biggest joke of all Baltimore County commissions and Boards."

We of the Baltimore County Branch of the NAACP would hope that you are committed toward raising the degraded status of this organizational element of the Baltimore County Government to at least that of being effectively functional.

Not to do this will be synonymous to a flagrant act of slapping black people in the face by ignoring their wishes of providing them a lawful outlet for their feelings of being discriminated against.

Not to provide this county with a functionally effective Human Relations Commission could undoubtedly contribute to the types of unlawful behavior patterns demonstrated by people in other neighboring municipalities.

This type of situation need not ever occur in Baltimore County with the type of positive leadership you've espoused. Your decision not to sponsor the proposed legislation that would strengthen the Community Relations Commission or to abolish the Community Relations Commission altogether would, in our opinion, encourage more federal intervention in Baltimore County affairs, thus making your administration less creditable to our ethnic political supporters.

Again, I do not think this is what you're striving for but these are but a few of the consequences facing you at this time. I'm sure others will develop with a stronger impact if you continue with your weak position on this issue. After all, we do expect you to uphold the law and not block it.

I would urge that to implement an effective Human Relations Commission at this time would certainly parallel your stand with the Justice Department on the police matter by demonstrating again that your administration is ready to do the right thing under the law for all peoples of this County without being told to do so.

We stand ready to provide reputable persons who are professionally effective in Human Relations matters when you decide to implement an effective Human Relations Commission with increased powers.

COL. JAMES R. PENNINGTON,
NAACP, Baltimore County branch

Dr. Fleming named to 4th term at MSU

Dr. G. James Fleming was reelected to his 4th term as chairman of the Morgan State University Board of Regents at the board's regular meeting held Wednesday.

Dr. Fleming has been a member of the board since its inception in July 1975, and was for 20 years a member of the faculty at Morgan where he served as professor of political science and director of the Institute for political studies.

Dr. Carroll is deputy superintendent of the city school system and a prominent leader in Catholic educational circles.

She is also a member of the Board of Directors of Loyola College and has served for four years as chairman of the Morgan's board's committee on academic and student affairs. She replaces Mrs. Edna O. Campbell who has served as vice chairman for the past four years. Mrs. Campbell will continue as Chairman of the Board's Committee on Evaluation.

Nathaniel Hoff was reelectd to his 5th consecutive term as secretary of the Board of Regents.

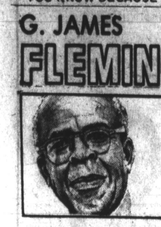
Hoff, who lives in Columbia, Maryland, is an official of the Maryland State Teachers Association, and is an alumnus of Morgan State University.

These officers will serve a one-year term beginning July 1, 1979.

He was warmed against those who want the schools "to return to the basics." Most of the times, he said, these basics - lovers are spokespeople of the "new conservatism." They want to turn black and poor children backwards. They are also men and women who see the old world better than it used to be.

G. JAMES

FLEMING



Don't knock our schools!

Why do so many people continue to knock our public schools? Why do they so easily criticize the teachers? Why do some people so frequently wish for "the old days when . . ."?

We are sure that this column has been guilty in these respects sometime or other. We are pleased, however, that we have also sung high praises to our schools and teachers at other times.

We are on this topic again, thanks to William Greider of the Washington Post (June 8) .who wrote under the heading, "Stop Knocking Our Public Schools."

First, he pointed to several black leaders who are noted for charging that "nothing has changed" in 25 years and who refuse to recognize the progress made by blacks.

Greider is enthusiastic about this "progress" and he gives most of the credit to the public schools.

In 1950, only one out of every four blacks finished high school, he observed; the rest dropped out. Today three out of every four finish high school.

This revolutionary turn for the better means that more blacks will achieve and more will not achieve on the highest levels, as this column sees it. Greider himself says:

"It is a lot easier to provide excellent education if you are only going to educate relatively few children, particularly if they are students who already do well" — when, for instance, only one in every four blacks reached high schools. That goes too, for the prestigious all - black high schools, such as Dunbar in Washington and Douglass in Baltimore.

Looking at the college picture, Greider found that, in 1960 there were only 435 blacks in all the "white" colleges of the South. Today there are over 100,000. These blacks, for the most part, came up out of the public high schools.

"I am sick and tired of people beating up on the public schools," the columnist continues, and those who make "glib generalizations about the hopelessness of our public schools." He added:

"I think it is a form of scape - goating, a variation on the old game called 'blaming the victim.' I suspect some critics use 'public schools' as a new codeword for racial slurs, particularly in our largest cities."

The new Conservatives have contempt for children, "including their own," in the words of Greider.

The Washington columnist argues that American children, today, are better educated than their parents or grandparents and that more of them have had, and now have, the benefit of schooling. He might have added "from the cradle to the grave."

Before or as we beat on the public schools, or as we seek to blame them for the poor level of achievement of our children, we must also think of the large classes most teachers must try to teach; of the noncooperation of so many homes; of the scarcity of supplies needed for teaching; and of the distractions against learning in present - day society. There are more.

This is not to say that all teachers are as concerned, committed and enthusiastic as might be desired by the rest of us. Despite all the weaknesses of man and "the system," however, the public schools have done a job similar to making bricks without straw. They have made a contribution to the development of the nation that only a poet could put in words.

The elitist schools (and the private colleges) could not alone have built the nation's industrial empire; or have evolved our fiscal system; or built our armies, navy and air force; or fed both our own people and many peoples abroad.

So, here's a toast to our public schools and their teachers. They could be even more effective if our parents, our churches, our politicians and our editors helped them more.

Fairfield, USA

By Cathy Pope Smith

Fairfield is a small, residential community in South Baltimore engulfed by railroad tracks, tractor -trailers, coal piles, huge oil tanks and foul odors arising from industrial sites.

[illegible] student was killed by a tractor - trailer — the papers reported that no one was at fault — and, a few months ago, residents were "evacuated" to a nearby school when a train carrying poisonous chemicals overturned.

Fairfield, U.S.A. represents a syndrome in this country, of man's interest in the almighty dollar over his concern for people. Fairfield, as a community, has no stores, shops, movie theatres or health centers. Fairfield does have liquor stores, numerous churches, and an elementary school.

If, for no other reason, this, the "international year of the child" should create an environment that focuses on the life of the child. An examination of what has happened to some children in Fairfield may, perhaps, best - and dramatically explains why the Fairfields of this country must be restructured.

Fairfield has produced students who became officers in the Army, Marines and the Navy. Fairfield has produced students who have gone on to become teachers, opera singers, Ph.D.'s and scientists. There are always the fortunate few who, in spite of their circumstances, escape the emptiness that life has to offer the average child in Fairfield.

Fairfield Case Histories

There was Verdell. Verdell was a handsome, laughing, round - faced youngster of about 12 or 13. He was rather plump, very intelligent and was going places. One morning, early - around 2:40 a.m. — Verdell and some friends were out on a deserted road, playing a car - racing game called "chicken".

Verdell, apparently, was the flagman, for he stood in the center of the road to signal the cars to start. He signaled; the cars started. One driver lost control, or did not see Verdell, and ran over him, crushing him to his death.

Then, there was Austin. Austin was small, very courteous, shy and loved by his fellow students. He was an excellent student, one that others called the "[illegible]." The "teacher's pet" [illegible] who does his work well, and is rewarded by being given the privilege to do special projects for the teacher and students.

One hot, summer day, Austin, like other children in Fairfield, sought relief from the stifling heat and humidity by immersing himself from the factories. Austin and some friends went swimming in a nearby creek. While doing so, Austin went under water and failed to come up. His body was found the following day.

All were not boys. There was one girl, by name of Tamara. Tamara had a smooth, beautiful black complexion. At the age of 13, she had the shape of a mature woman.

Tamara's fate

Tamara was smart and articulate. She was a young woman, so we thought, who certainly would be able to escape the pulsing, magnetic hold of Fairfield. Those who knew her imagined she would become a dental technician, teacher or some other type of professional.

Tamara's seath, at age 16 or 17, was not as easily explained as those of the boys. People whispered about the cause of her death. Since no one really had any facts, suffice it to say that Tamara died. In death, she did not look like the sweet, pleasant - faced Tamara I had known.

In contrast, she appeared to be old, very old and tired. Her death was, perhaps, the most shocking of all, because it was enshrouded in mystery.

I loved all the children. Carmen was, somehow, sort of special. Perhaps it was because he was mischievous. He kept me on my toes. I mean, you had to be really alert to keep pace with Carmen.

He was jolly and filled with fun. He loved living. You've seen those people who get a great deal of joy out of just being alive. Laughter shattered their faces, and their voices had a contagiously happy lilt. Well, that was Carmen.

One night Carmen had gone shopping in Brooklyn. Brooklyn, a predominately white, blue collar community, was the location of the stores, libraries, doctors and lawyer's offices. Blacks who live in Fairfield do all their shopping in Brooklyn. In Carmen's case, something happened. No one is really quite sure what. All that is known is that Carmen was shot and killed, by a white man, on a sidewalk in Brooklyn.

Needed love

Then, there were two boys who were always into something. One of them, Draper, was really "bad". Teachers were afraid of him. But I had taught school in Chicago, and the Fairfield children were angels in comparison.

Draper and I had good dialogue. We talked. Each time he got into trouble, we'd talk, and he'd promise never to do it again. You would have to have understood his home life to concieve the kid himself. He needed attention, and got it in the only way he knew.

There was another kid, Melvin. He was what the teachers called "hyper". He occasionally took medication. At other times, he conferred with psychologists. Someone seemed to care about him. With enough love, he would get through the difficult times — or, so we thought.

Just how Draper and Melvin got together is unknown to me. They were both, later convicted of the shooting death of a cab driver in Fairfield.

There are many more such stories of what has happened to beautiful, young black children who lived and loved in Fairfield. Many youngsters have died physically; others have died mentally, but they all portray a story of life among blacks.

Ride through this area of the city, and see for yourself how man's insensitiveness to others has created this industrially - plagued ghetto. Young women, often children themselves, mothering two or three youngsters.

Generations of families caught up in the welfare cycle that is designed to keep them there, and young men, unable to find jobs, standing around and looking for some place to go and something to do. The sadness that is exemplified by the city's callousness in Fairfield is a reflection of what is happening to blacks throughout the United States.

The city government, working with industry, should take the necessary steps to help Fairfield aspiring homeowners find homes and to construct new housing in the city for people now living in public housing in Fairfield.

When a boy died violently under the wheels of a tractor - trailer, someone was at fault. We all were.

Strong black leadership is needed to help residents of Fairfield and guide the city fathers in helping to restructure the living conditions and lives of the families living in this part of the city.

It would be prophetic if a Fairfield boy or girl could return home and lead people out of the situation that has bound them so hopelessly.

ELIZABETH M.

OLIVER

By Elizabeth M. Oliver, City Editor

THERE IS A beautifully sad song from Fiddler on the Roof which keeps tugging at your memory, goes something like this - sunrise, sunset, swiftly pass the years beinging happiness and tears.

ANOTHER is one sung so often in concerts at my Fisk University which asks, "Where are they gone, the years," a sort of Spiritual in a mournful minor tone.

WHY MENTION THAT? All comes to mind at the events this week, one is the passing of my longtime, dear friend, Anna Mae Hunter.

Not too many years ago when I was a beginning reporter Mrs. Hunter was lively, vivacious and dreaming of founding a home for the blind. I shall never forget her enthusiasm which brought to her enough to purchase the home on Eutaw Place and keep it running.

AS THE YEARS flew by, the AFRO awarded her our highsst honor and kept her publicity going. A marvelous personality, she never gave up although there were times the cupboard was bare.

NOW SHE'S GONE, I wonder why Time erases nearly all that poor human beings try to do and fades away the dreams we all have. It's hard to believe happy days will fade sooner than we think. It's sad to realise thah human beings sink into nothingness.

SO IT IS when I recall the days when Coppin Normal, Demonstration School and Teachers College was the flower of Baltimore education.

Now the sad little building on Mount Street is pathetic and the halls are silent. Such schools as the $multi-million Lake Clifton and fantastic Walbrook High make obsolete such as old Cpppin of yesteryear.

BUT, the years go by, swiftly, silently.

I RECALL when I first came to Baltimore, fresh out of college and just married in 1941 and became a newspaper employee at $11.88 a week, a good sum for a beginner.

My sister - in - law, the late beautiful Mary Thompson Oliver was a teacher at Coppin. Her sisters, the late Gladys Prestwidge, Hazel Barrett and Evelyn Thompson were all in the school system.

Teachers then were a small clan known by every black citizen since the schools were strictly "colored" and under a blak superintendent, Biddy Woods father, Dr. Wood, the superintendent.

EVERYONE belonged to the same clubs and sororities and resided in nearly the same East and West Baltimore neighborhoods. To be a school teacher meant you had a nice salary and dressed nicely, had excellent manners and taught children the good things of life.

COPPIN was a lovely school, humming with neatly dressed children studying "to become somebody." And they did. Many are noted educators now and have made a fine mark in the world.

AUNT FRANK (Miss Frances Murphy) set the pace for dignity and sagerness to learn.

WORLD WAR II came and began a change that made nothing ever the same of the leisurely, gracious and wonderful days. Everything went sky-high in price and even food was hard to get causing the social pattern to change abruptly. The old negibhrhoods began to scatter as citizens moved further out.

Then came integration which ripped apart the old school pattern and although it may be better, friendships of the old close associations (because of segregation) were broken.

I do not want the laws on the books so that we may have a choice if we so wish to intergrate.

HOWEVER, I do believe we need to retain our nearness to each other as black persons so that we will have strength. We need unity to move out into every and any field. Unity is the secret. Desegregation has divided us. Soon, if we are not careful, we will lose our roots.

TURNING AWAY from regrets over the passing of the years and our old ties, thanks to my only child, Marsha, I am beginning the EST scholarship study. Monday evening, administrators of corporations and top executives will gather for orientation at the Holiday Inn.

This is a birthday present from Marsha who took the course in Hawaii. I understand from her, EST opens new worlds and brings glow and soaring enthusiasm. Hope so. At least, I hear that's what EST has done for some of the world's leaders who have graduated.

ANYHOW, I want to add this to my AB and Masters I have had so many years, since I was 18. However, nothing beats the experience you get in the newspaper world.

THIS SPRING alone I have attended nearly 100 affairs and have met what I estimate to be over 5,000 persons on joyous occasions.

The greatest of course is the school kids we have featured each week in the AFRO.

We will begin again the tabloids of each school and name each child in September and go on around the year until next June, meeting them, making them happy because:

SOMETIME IN LIFE, everyone wants his name and photo in the paper. Isn't that right?

BIRTHS, christenings and funerals are highest on the list of occasions people want in ths newspaper.

ABITUARIES give the dead person and survivors, sometimes, the only chance to let others know about themselves. Although no longer living, the dead person wants someone at the funeral, some publicity about his passing and a decent burial.

THAT'S THE SECRET of an insurance company's success and the popularity of "burial insurance" . . . money enough for the policy holder to have a good funeral.

BUT, there is a theory that funerals are NOT for the dead but for the living, so that the survivors may go on in life and "keep on getting up."

WEDDINGS are other occasions when human beings like to "let it all hang out."

Such affairs are literally loved by everyone until they cry and laugh and enjoy the entire event.

HERE ARE some wedding notations from the utterly fantastic wedding program given guests as a souvenir at the marriage last Saturday in a garden in Ellicott City of Gwen Neal and Jacey Bell, (By the way, it was the most beautiful I have ever seen).

WEDDING CUSTOMS— OLD and NEW

Have you ever wondered how our most familiar bridal customs originated? Many of them have their "ROOTS" in folk magic and ancient superstitions. DID YOU KNOW?

TOSSING RICE began in the days when peopl lived off the land and their existence depended upon having a good harvest and enough children to help with all the world.

Primitive peopls believe the bride and groom spread good luck on their wedding day. Anyone or anything that touched them would also be lucky.

So they showered the couple with ripe grain or nuts, wishing a ripe harvest for themselves and a large family for the newlyweds.

Wedding guests still engage in this tradition, throwing rice, wheat, rose-petals, or the like.

BOUQUETS and BOUTONNIERES carried by early brides and bridemaids were made of pungent herbs like thyme and garlic — NOT flowers.

The odor was intended to scare away any bad fairiers or evil-doers eyeing the bridal party, and even the groom wore a few sprigs! (The bride, GWEN Neal, in her wedding, carried in her bouquet one non-flowering sprig of myrtle and one of ivy. It will later be planted at the couple's new homesite, and he crud Jacey wilp have the pleasure of watcying it grow with their marriage.

WEDDING RING in ancient Egype before coins were minted, gold rings were used as currency.

To show that he trusted his wife with his money, the Egyptian husband placed one of these rings on her finger.

The tradition of wearing the wedding ring on the third finger of the left hand dates back to this era.

The ancient egyptians also thought that love traveled to the heart via the vein of the third finger, left hand.

Since the circle - shape symbolizes eternal love, what better place to wear it than on the finger connected to the organ that controls hte and symbolizes love.

JUNE — THE WEDDING MONTH — for centuries JUNE has been considered the most propitious month for marriage.

In ancient Rome, this month was dedicated to JUNO, the goddess of marriage and the patroness of the young. It was believed that a couple who married in June received a special blessing from the goddness.

WHAT'S NEXT

Baltimore's Ruby Stockett member of the family of eight different clans, her husband, brothe - in - law, her brother and two busloads of cousins are in Detroit this weekend and Canada to join the Truesdale Family in a reunion.

The gathering from the 21st to the 24th is at the Hotel Pontchartrain and will see over 700 persons all related from the branches of Barnes, Brevard, Bufford, Cauthen, McGriff, Peay, Truesdales and Vaugh, from all over the USA.

All are cousins and belong to one or the other of the eighth clans who met last year at the Hilton in Baltimore.

The Detroit cousins are hosts this time and the next gathering will be in Washington in June, 1980 after school closes. Mary Truesdale is the Maryland coordinator.

The reunion called "The Cousins" is organized like a business with a national president who is on salary and travels around and around, getting all in shape for the next time.

Whenever the eight clans meet, out come the newspapers, TV and other news people to cover the big story.

MORE LETTERS

Stop Panama Canal 'giveaway'

Dear AFRO:

I wonder how many of your readers know that the Panama Canal giveaway can be stopped? The sellout of the Panama Canal was perpetrated by our U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives can undo this by refusing to appropriate funds for the Canal transfer, and by refusing to agree to the transfer.

Our U.S. Constitution, adopted in 1789, states in Article 1, Sec. 7: "All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives."

Article 4, Sec. 3: "The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States." Congress consists of the Senate AND the House of Representatives.

Transfer costs alone will approximately $4.1 billion dollars and consist of the discontinuance of interest payment to U.S. Treasury at $20 million dollars a year to the year 2000 - $400,000,000.

Expenses for the transfer — $200,0000,000. Toll increases will be a taxpayer expense if not taken as a consumer expense — guaranteed for twenty years by U.S. taxpayers — $744,000,0000.

Canal construction costs shall remain unpaid to U.S. Treasury — $319 million. Loss to U.S. Treasury of untransferred surplus cash now in Canal operating Fund — $70,000,000. All foregoing figures taken from General Accounting Office testimony of Feb. 2, 1979.

Other transfer costs consist of replacing Navy equipment being given to Panama — $150,000,000, and $65 million (maybe more) in costs to the U.S. taxpayers for 20 years in annual military appropriations for services now provided by the Panama Canal Company — $1,300 billion.

These figures are from House Committee Hearings Feb. 24, '79. Then there is the Federal Aviation Agency transfer of U.S. tax paid equipment to Panama effective 10 - 1 - 79 — $5,000, billion (FAA News Release Jan. '79).

Lack of space does not permit listing additional transfer costs, the total of which is approximately $4.1 billion dollars mentioned above. In other words, we are paying Panama to take the Canal, which territory and property is worth $20 billion dollars.

Yet Mr. Carter says "We are not taking any taxpayers' money to pay the Panamanians." The costs are [illegible] densome not only today but your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren will be tied to an eternal and oppressive debt.

Your Congressman can help stop this costly betrayal by the Senate. Deadline is Oct. 1, 1979. Write or call today. I wonder if Mr. Carter is thinking of giving the Naval Base at Guantanamo to Cuba?

JOSEPHINE K. HUNT

Provident salute

Dear AFRO:

A salute to Provident Hospital
May it forever be.
The Symbol of love;
To All humanity.

Many years have passed,
Since (we) were boys.
I remember the Hospital;
We each: Made the Voyage.

May God bless its personnel,
Their service they perform.
With faith and hope:
New life is born.

May it continue to serve
In spirit and truth.
God's blessings be upon it;
God! Will see it through!

ALBERT TAYLOR

MONEY MATTERS

(This is one of a series of articles from the Maryland Association of Certified Public Accountants)

Social Security benefits are the keystone of most retirement programs. Start with those, add private pension payments and perhaps the income from a part - time job and you have the makings of an attractive retirement package.

Because Social Security income is so important a factor in most people's retirement plans, you should, during your working years, be sure your Social Security earnings are being accurately credited to your account.

According to the Maryland Association of Certified Public Accountants, it is wise to check with the Social Security Administration every three years. By mailing in postcard form OAR - 7004, available at all Social Security offices, you can get a report on the status of your account.

The Maryland CPA organization notes that there have been several changes in Social Security procedures and regulations this year. For example: the amount of income a retiree age 65 or older can earn without diminishing Social Security benefits has been increased to $4,500 for 1979.

Furthermore, the exempt amount will continue to increase by $500 a year until it reaches $6,000 in 1982. Also in 1982, the age at which earned income no longer affects benefits will drop from 72 years to 70.

And here's another change. Until this year, a person receiving Social Security benefits whose earned income exceeded a specified amount in one month lost benefits for that month only; they remained the same the rest of the year. Now except for the first year of retirement, the earned - income maximum is no longer applied monthly. It's earned income for the entire year that now determines whether benefits will be reduced.

People just beginning their working years must also concern themselves with Social Security, because they must show their employers a Social Security card before they can start their jobs.

Since it takes several weeks to obtain the card, the Maryland CPAs say it's wise to apply early, especially now that the Social Security Administration has made the card's issuance less routine than it used to be.

Except for young children, applicants now must supply proof of age, identity and citizenship (or alien status). People 18 or older must appear in person.

For people under seven, however, a Social Security card is simple to obtain. Only a birth certificate is required to establish identity.

There's still another good reason for getting your child a Social Security card. According to the CPA Association, more and more parents are putting savings and investments destined for tuition payments in their young children's names rather than their own. That way, taxes, if any, will be payable at the children's much lower rate. In order to set up such accounts, of course, the child - beneficiary must have a Social Security card of his or her own.