—City's dullest election

(Continued from page 1)

Perhaps the almost assured return of Mayor William Donald Schaefer to office for another term has taken the steam out of the political battle.

And on that score, let it be noted that while many black politicians said Schaefer was vulnerable on a number of community issues such as black employment, housing, health and community development, no one of them had guts enough to challenge him.

Voters perhaps sensing that no one was going up against Schaefer — that no black politician was willing to go for all the marbles — lost interest early on.

It is one thing to try and unseat an incumbent mayor — that is the kind of challenge black voters might have welcomed — another thing to shoot for lesser office.

The candidates are lackluster but numerous.

There are 29 black candidates running for either a city council seat or one of the three top city - wide positions.

No one of them has been able to light a fire under the city's black community as George Russell, Milton Allen, Joe Howard and others were able to do in past campaigns. Generating a huge black voter turnout necessary to score important victories is the name of the game. This time around no one knows how to play the game.

Part of the problem, political observers say, is the quality of the low - keyed campaigns being presently conducted by the candidates. The general plan of action seems to be that they will all come to life in the final 21 to 30 days before election day. The risk here is that potential voters have been so bored thus far, that they may not respond to the last minute blitzkrieg.

The campaign of John Douglass for city comptroller is a case in point. Until recently Douglass has been conducting an extremely low - keyed assault on voters.

So tepid has been Douglass' style that Wally Orlinsky, city council president, wouldn't come out and say "I endorse John Douglass", but did say he had problems with some parts of the Douglass campaign.

Doulass denies this pointing out that his campaign has been well - paced and controlled. Supporters say he is constantly out talking to people telling them to get out and vote.

Vote for what? is the question in many residents' minds. Douglass and other candidates have not made the issues abundantly clear.

Another problem is the lack of black political unity in Baltimore. This has been a campaign of personalities rather than issues. At no point has there been concerted effort to get a few good black candidates in a strong position to win. Rather than have the serious contests overrun with candidates.

There have been some attempts to raise issues. The only positive thing thus far is the uniting of all black political factions behind the Douglass campaign. This unity, however, did not come soon enough.

Personality conflicts continue to plague our community.

Fourth District powers, William L. "Little Willie" Adams and Sen. Verda Welcome, because of their historical differences, could not agree on a unified ticket. They did try briefly to reconcile.

And in the 5th District, Anthony Robinson, Earl "Coach" Banks and Norman Reeves cannot agree on a unified slate despite announcements that there will be such a slate.

Voter registration campaigns have fallen short of goals. Everyone is for them in theory, but no political group has delivered new voters in sufficient numbers to turn political fortunes around in the 5th.

Political observers have expressed despair that issues are not being talked up.

At the recent Black People's Assembly, sponsored by Rep. Parren Mitchell, problems of unemployment, juvenile crime, maintaining the black family, proper community health care, neighborhood and community development and the displacement of black families, education and energy assistance for low income families were discussed and given high priorities.

Not a candidate in this election is making a loud enough noise on these topics. Schafer's predicted easy victory is proof enough.

Some major candidates are talking about these issues: Kweisi Mfume, Anthony Robinson, Agnes Welch, Marguerite Campbell and Phyllis Douglass. Tut they are challengers who are up against said incumbents who are taking a "laid back" attitude and running on their "names" rather than on performance or programs.

Some candidates like Earl Koger, John Bailey, Antonio Smith and Zatella Giles put some of these issues into their platforms but their voices are not widely enough heard to carry needed weight.

There is no major issue to surface thus far that can get black voters really interested in this year's election.

The rent control issue could unify the community and generate excitement but not many candidates black or white have taken a public stand on the matter.

The campaign plods along and will soon be over. If no one comes to life politically nothing will really have changed for the black community. Which makes this election both dull and tragic.

Swisher wins trial delay

City States Attorney William Swisher has won a three-week delay of his Sept. 11 trial on mail fraud and extortion charges, but U.S. District Judge Alexander Harvey II warned defense attorneys that the new Oct. 2 trial date was a firm one.

"We'll start this case October 2, there will be no further continuances and thats it," Harvey said, somewhat annoyed after granting the defense's request for a delay Tuesday.

Harvey cut the requested six-week delay in half and firmly said that would be no further delays in the city prosecutor's trial. He also told Swisher's defense attorneys that if they had not filed so many pre-trial motions, they might have had the time they needed to prepare the case.

Swisher is charged with 22 counts of mail fraud, extortion and tax evasion. He is accused of extorting nearly $4,000 in contributions for his 1974 election campaign in return for dropping a criminal investigation of a former city official.

The indictment charged that Swisher entered into a corrupt relationship with the late James H. "Jack" Pollack, an East Baltimore democratic political boss, to extort the funds.

Swisher also faces a separate trial for other tax evasion charges.

Attorney Aubrey Daniels told Harvey the delay was needed because of the massive amount of evidence in the case.

"Its humanly impossible to complete this investigation by Sept. 11," Daniels said. "Our law firm has done everything it can to prepare for trial Sept. 11. They are trying to interview hundreds of witnesses."

Harvey asked defense attorneys, "If you didn't spend so much time filing motions, don't you think you might have more time to interview witnesses?"

Harvey told Daniels he did not want to see any more defense motions "unless something very extraordinary happens."

—Gilliam, questions

(Continued from page 1)

AFRO efforts to interview him at noon Thursday were also unavailing, a hospital spokesman declaring that Shock Trauma is off - limits to all but members of the patient's immediate family.

Joe Gilliam Sr., the athlete's father, flew to Baltimore Monday but reportedly returned to Tennessee State, where he is football coach, after doctors were certain his son would recover.

Because Gilliam had previous arrests and convictions on narcotics charges, both city and county police were inclined to regard the Monday attack as drug - related.

This theory was strengthened by the arrest of two suspects who were alleged to be under long surveillance by police narcotics agents. Also by the reported discovery of a white powder commonly used to dilute heroin and cocaine in Gilliam's apartment in Pleasant Oaks Rd., Hillendale.

One of the two men charged in the assault was found to be carrying a "sizable quantity" of heroin and marijuana at the time of his arrest, police said. Timothy Matthews, 19, of Baltimore, was charged with attempted murder and possession of marijuana and heroin.

Matthews' younger brother, 18 - year - old Warren, was charged with assault and malicious destruction of property. Two other men are still being sought in the case.

The elder Matthews was held at the Western District Jail on $100,000 bail. The younger brother's bail was set at $50,000.

It is noted that the powdered elements police say they found at Gilliam's residence is not an illegal substance . . . SAM LACY.

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Inmate preaches trial sermon

An inmate who is serving a 40 - year sentence at the Maryland Penitentiary says, "I've been running from God for a long time.

"I got tired of running and I am now serving the Lord. God has been good to me and he has blessed me."

Larry Thomas, who has been confined to the Maryland Penitentiary for nearly a year preached his trial sermon August 5 at the Penitentiary. "Be Not Conformed to This World. But Be Ye Transformed by the renewing of your Mind" was his theme.

Speaking to nearly 100 inmates who attended the Sunday services with the Rev. Macie Tillman, chaplain of the Penitentiary who presided, Thomas told the inmates, "There are many people today who are just one day Christians. They feel that they can do anything they want to do during the week and on Sunday morning be holy.

According to Rev. Tillman, Thomas is not the first inmate to preach a trial sermon at the penitentiary. A group of inmates who are serving life sentences and are known as the Tillman Gospel Singers participated in the services.

Members of the group are Ira Avance, Hardy Herring, Neal Span, Charles Wilson, Earl Boxley, Thomas Gaither and Ricky Harris.

—Life

(Continued from page 1)

The AFRO had learned the couple had been separated for two weeks. Some 35 hours prior to the slaying he had been charged with disorderly conduct and given a two month suspended sentence and placed on 36 - months probation.

ARAB-AMERICAN FESTIVAL

The Arab-American community in the Washington Metropolitan Area is sponsoring the first Arab-American Festival on Saturday, Sept. 1, from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Washington Mall, east of the Lincoln Memorial, beside the reflecting pool.

The festival will feature a colorful program of Arabic music, singing, folk dancing and belly dancing as well as Debke (Arabic folk dancing) lessons. Music will be played by bands from the Washington and New York areas.

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PDAO neutral on Welch, Mfume

Mitchell, Young forces divided on candidates

After the voting, Delegate Larry Young was clearly upset.

He had just witnessed members of the People's Democratic Action Organization (PDAO) decide whether they were going to endorse the candidacy of Kweisi Mfume or Mrs. Agnes Welch for the third slot on their 4th District slate or remain neutral.

With slightly more than 30 members present and their leaders namely Sen. Clarence Mitchell and Councilman Michael Mitchell, strangely absent, the organization remained as expected neutral.

You could see the despair on Young's face.

Young, who heads the Citizen's Democratic Action Organization (CDAO), an offshoot of PDAO, had arrived midway through the Tuesday's meeting.

Just last week his group endorsed Mfume for that third slot on their slate by a substantial majority after being divided for several seeks whether to endorse Mfume or Mrs. Welch.

Both CDAO and PDAO had already endorsed Mitchell and incumbent Victorine Adams.

As a result, the AFRO reported in its Tuesday, Aug. 21 edition that if PDAO remained neutral as was expected, a serious rift would develop between the Mitchell's and Young's organization.

As a member of the PDAO's board of directors, the meetings moderator asked Young if he wanted to take over "this crucial part of the meeting."

Young replied that he did not pointing out that he and the Mitchell brothers had been trying to meet for the last three days in order to resolve the endorsement without success.

The meeting continued.

Afterwards Young was asked how serious the rift was and if he intended to make a clean break with PDAO and the Mitchell group.

Young refused to comment.

He was also asked if the present rift would affect his campaigning for Mike Mitchell.

Young said he fully intended to campaign hard for Councilman Mitchell but pointed out that he intended to work just as hard for Mfume.

—Trash drivers strike

(Continued from page 1)

If BFI accuses an employee of doing something wrong, like stealing, that's final. He would be fired. Seniority would mean nothing.

"What good is having something in writing if it doesn't protect the workers?" Cremen said.

An attorney for BFI said he does not share Cremen's opinion of the wording of the contract. Charles Mooney said terminated workers could appeal the decision through a grievance procedure according to the terms of the contract.

The striking drivers are peeved because BFI advertised for "permanent" replacements to fill their jobs.

Cremen said 90 percent of the recently hired drivers are white. Mooney disagreed, saying the ratio is 50 percent white, 50 percent black.

Now that replacement drivers have been hired, it could be difficult for Local 311 members to get their jobs back once the contract dispute is resolved.

Mooney said union members will be placed on a preferential hiring list if they are "still deemed employees by the company.

"All striking employees who have done nothing during the strike to render themselves not employees, in accordance with the law, would be placed on the hiring list," he said.

Replacement drivers will keep their jobs, Mooney said, because it would be "less than honest if we discharge them to bring back a striker."

Meanwhile, Local 311 members on the picket line say their shrunken incomes have forced them to adjust.

Charles Nathaniel, 56, said he is trying to cut back on everything "to make ends meet. This strike has made it pretty rough."

He said although his savings are getting low, he will try to hold out until the strike is settled. But he doesn't know how much longer he can hold out.

Reddick Ricks, a 24 - year employee of BFI, spends his days walking the picket line and waiting. "I'm going to keep waiting unless they fire me," he said.

"The biggest change in my life has been no money," said Dewey Barham, a 15 - year BFI employee.

WALKING THE PICKET LINE — George Courtney, Wilbert Savage, Reddick Ricks and Andrew Ragsdale (L to R) picket Browning Ferris Industries, located near Rosedale on Pulaski Highway. The men are members of Teamsters Local 311 and have been out of work since July 6.

Baby Puma Escapes

A 60-pound baby Puma slipped from his cage at The Baltimore Zoo Wednesday but was captured three hours later on Zoo property after he was shot with a tranquilizer gun, zoo officials said.

Zoo officials said the Puma was discovered in a thicket about 100 yards from his cage about 11:45 a.m.

"We have checked his cage and the cage is secure so we have no idea at the moment how he did get out of the cage," said Linda Mumma, a Zoo spokeswoman.

The puma escaped sometime between 5:30 p.m., Tuesday and 8 a.m. Wednesday, when he was discovered missing, she said.

The animal was shot with a dart containing a tranquilizing drug and taken to the zoo hospital, officials said.

The six-month old puma has been at the zoo for several months after it was purchased from the Denver Zoo.

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