

AFRO endorsements

None of what we say here will have meaning unless all of us determine to exercise our right to vote on Nov. 6 as Baltimore holds its general elections.

In the primary election held in September we saw just how disastrously things turned out politically for our community because of the poor turn-out of black voters.

The bid of Del. John Douglass to become city comptroller was thwarted because of his scant participation.

In the 5th District at least one more Council seat could have gone to a black candidate had the turnout been greater and had black voters moved in a spirit of greater unity.

Only a strong outpouring can turn the tide.

With this urgent plea that all qualified voters go to the polls as prelude we present our endorsements of candidates and position on ballot day issues.

Schaefer for mayor

We endorsed William D. Schaefer for the post of mayor in the September primary and we support him in the general election.

His Republican opponent, Samuel Culotta, has addressed key issues and is to be commended for introducing substantive matters into an otherwise lack - lustre campaign season.

Just the same our feeling is that Mayor Schaefer should be returned to office for a third term.

We said on the eve of the primary election that Schaefer "has shown qualities approaching genius at marshalling often diverse and warring elements of this city into a collective machinery that is causing the very face and soul of Baltimore to be radically transformed."

We also noted that "if Mayor Schaefer has a place in this city's history it is as the political leader who, as the turbulent Sixties began, was able to convince this often apathetic, bedraggled metropolis called Baltimore that it has a future — that it was not a sprawling second - rate industrial backwater town, but a city of great beauty, great potential and great people."

We said on the eve of the primary election that Schaefer "has shown qualities approaching genius at marshalling often diverse and warring elements of this city into a collective machinery that is causing the very face and soul of Baltimore to be radically transformed."

We also noted that "if Mayor Schaefer has a place in this city's history it is as the political leader who, as the turbulent Sixties began, was able to convince this often apathetic, bedraggled metropolis called Baltimore that it has a future — that it was not a sprawling second - rate industrial backwater town, but a city of great beauty, great potential and great people."

We said on the eve of the primary election that Schaefer "has shown qualities approaching genius at marshalling often diverse and warring elements of this city into a collective machinery that is causing the very face and soul of Baltimore to be radically transformed."

We also noted that "if Mayor Schaefer has a place in this city's history it is as the political leader who, as the turbulent Sixties began, was able to convince this often apathetic, bedraggled metropolis called Baltimore that it has a future — that it was not a sprawling second - rate industrial backwater town, but a city of great beauty, great potential and great people."

Crosse for comptroller

It does not trouble us that St. George Crosse, the Method ist minister-activist, recently switched from Democrat to Republi Republican party affiliation.

We support his candidacy for the office of City Comptroller because we know his committment to our community is total and i Rev. Crosse feels that he can be most service to us as a GOP st ndard bearer than so be it.

We are impressed by Crosse's energy, optimism and instenc that city-wide office holders be as concerned about the needs o the great masses of citizens as they are about procedural matte

Crosse is a man of intelligence and humor. He is correct insist that the City Comptroller's office be an instrument for the people and that the office be used to ensur e that the needs and problems of the people be heard.

Hyman Pressman, the incumbent, preteeds to this view but a recent media reports indicate Pressman has favored certain spec interests in the administration of his office and often has p against the little people he would have us believe he champions

Pressman has done next to nothing for our community, if want to be parochial about things, and on that basis alone we u his defeat.

On the larger issue, effective representation of all the p people, Pressman again is a disappointment.

He has been a personality in Baltimore politics quite a sp now - ??bag of tricks.

New blood is needed in the comptroller's office and Rev. Crosse is our best hope for new energy and vision in this impor ant city post.

Candidates for council

Walter S. Orlinsky has skillfully managed to make and keep friends in all parts of the city and has been an influence for good in our City Council as its president.

Orlinsky, himself, admits that our City Council is often an impossible agent of municipal government, a madhouse too often, yet and still, in his post as president he had done much to keep our Council sane and responsible to citizens' needs. He has done a good job and should be returned. As he faces no opposition this is a certainty anyway.

Our choices for City Council follow.

We must note that we strongly urge all 5th District voters, regardless of party affiliation, to vote for both Norman V. A. Reeves and Carl M. Adair. Adair, a Republican of uncompromising integrity, would provide the 5th District along with Reeves, with two black councilman of excellence.

Reeves and Adair! We endorse no one else in the 5th District.

Hard times

Not a sound, not even a whisper!

Last Friday we reported the grim news that Baltimore had the fifth highest incieence of black unemployment in the nation's urban areas.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Baltimore unemployment among blacks now stands at 15.6 per cent. White joblessness, on the other hand, has dropped from 5.8 per cent to 4 per cent.

Twelve per cent of black men and 13 per cent of women in our community were without jobs in 1978 compared with 2.3 per cent and 4 per cent for white men and women respectively during this same period.

This is nothing short of catastrophic insofar as we can determine.

We would not want to think that ours is the only voice raised in horror and alarm.

Our community has reached economic disadvantage comparable to the Depression Thirties and we notice no mobilization within our community of sufficient intensity to bring the plight of our people to dramatic center stage.

Hard times are upon us and it required the kinds of drastic action and political coalitions that served us so well in the Fifties and Sixties.

These conditions affect all of us and there can be no burying of black heads in the sand.

G. JAMES FLEMING



Next Tuesday's opportunity

We wish it were otherwise. The truth is, however, that only a handful of all registered voters actually vote in local elections — unless there is some bitter, very bitter, controversy to be settled.

Even important referendum questions often fail to attract the stockholders of democrary — the voters. The only election treated worse than a local general election is a primary election, on every level.

Americans just do not take popular elections seriously anymore. They seem to feel that their neighbors who run for public office, especially local office, are either each as good as the other. As is often said, voting is mostly a case of "Tweedle-dum or Tweedle-dee."

National elections do not fare much better, so far as the proportion of voters are concerned. Only 35 to 65 percent of all possible registered voters actually cast their ballots for President.

With municipal elections around the corner in Baltimore (next Tuesday, Nov. 6), it is to be hoped that we can reverse the past pattern and turn out in large numbers, in every district, to vote for mayor, for president of the City Council, for city comptroller, and for 18 members of the City Council.

Washington and the White House are important but for resolving the day-to-day ups and downs of city living, it is the local government which must serve the men, women and children within its boundaries: schools, hospitals and public health, recreation, cleaning streets and sewers, overcoming crime, and a hundred other needed chores and necessities.

For all the foregoing reasons, there ought to be a meaningful rushfnet voters to the polls next Tuesday when Baltimoreans have the opportunity and privilege of electing a new and Republican mayor or to tell the incumbent Democratic mayor whether the people love him as much in 1979 as they did in 1975.

Mayor Shaefer should not win by near-default. He should be given a resounding vote of confidence or be warned of what may happen to him and his party in 1983, or even before.

The real opportunity (or opportunities), for change lies in the races for City Comptroller and for a second City Council member from the 5th District for comptroller, the challenging candidate is the Rev. George I. B. Crosse, who seeks to unseat Hyman Pressman, who is closing 16 years in his pivotal office. Rev. Crosse, too, is running a campaign, as a lawyer and former insurance salesman, and has been active in civic affairs for years. He has the endorsement of three major newspapers. "It's time for a change," the times seem to say where th comtrollership is concerned.

In the 5th Councilmanic District Carl Adair, businessman and educator, and a Republican, is challenging four other candidates and hopes to win the seat lefft vacantt by Councilman Reuben Capoan, or to topple one of the two incumbents — Councilwoman Rochelle "Rikki" Spector or Councilman Thomas Waxter.

At present, the 5th in Northwest Baltimore, has no black boice in the City Council. Adair and Norman Reeves, another educator and businessman, hope to correct this lack of representation. Both of them can be elected in what is bound to be a spirited contest.

The Baltimore election, in other districts, was settled in the September primaries, more or less. But, this year there are Republican candidates in every district 8 the first time in more than 30 years. This means that the voters can make a choice between two councilmanic aspirants of both major parties.

Our political informers also remind us that Samuel Culotta, Republican candidate for mayor, is putting up a fight as he has never done before in his two earlier tries to reach City Hall

If there should be a significant Republican breakthrough in Baltimore next week, the story will go from coast to coast, and itqwill be analyzed seriously in the White House, in the office of Senator "Ted" Kennedy, and in thehheadquarters of the two national parties.

Such Republican victory, even an unusually good showing, would be the first electoral signal of how the country might vote in the Presidential election of 1980. Baltimore's returns might only be a feather in the wind, but it would not be taken lightly by the political powerbrokers.

Although there is still some pessimism in high places of the state Republican Party, what happens in Baltimore on Tuesday and how it happens, depends on every registered voter — regardless of his party affiliation. And, lest we forget, in this election, a voter may cross party lines and vote for any candidate of his choice.

Madeline MURPHY



General election, with tongue in cheek

In an off year election, without the razzle-dazzle of a presidential, senatorial or congressional race, there is a ho-hum attitude on the part of most voters about the general election.

The most excitement this year was the see-saw race at the end of the democratic primary between Kwiesi Mfume and Mary B. Adams.

For his first try, he surely must have set some sort of record, as a winner!

The most rewarding was the head and shoulders showing of Norman V. A Reeves in the 5th District, above the crowd and it was much deserved. But we must not rest on our laurels.

The most disappointing was the less than spectacular showing of John Douglass for comptroller.

The most devastating was the lossby Tony Robinson in the 5th district.

But considering how political fortunes are made, youth, determination and a mature evaluation of his campaign won't make his theme song "The Party's Over" more like "Maybe this time" in '82 or '83, whatever.

What we must remember, nevertheless, that despite the dullness; despite the previous disappointments; lack luster, anti-climatic tone; we must vote predominantly Democratic state, thus were shoo-ins in the general, it is not so this time. A FEW Republicans deserve our immediate attention.

Starting at the top, you have to give St. George Crosse's strategy credit in assuring that a black citywide candidate would run in the general.

No matter how opportnistic his sudden switch from Democrat to Republican seemed, we all know that neigher party should command blind allegiance considering how blacks have been and are being shafted by both. Just for his guts, St. George gets my vote.

Pressman, as showman, poet, buffoon and car huckster has taxed my patience over long.

Of course in the 4th District it is important to really give Mfume a landslide vote.

It will be interesting also to look over all the ballots of the various clubs.

Word has it that one club hasn't decided on a third spot and as quid pro quo,city Hall (Schafer) is paying for its ballots to insure that it not mention Question K and that it will endorse all bond issues.

And since Question K is poison to slum lords, landlords and the like, who howl about property values being deflated and abandoned housing proliferating, who can explain what actively destructive culprits have alrpady made most areas of the inner city wastelands, with thousands of boarded up houses and empty lots, where white flight didn't have rent control to blame.

But such is the value of logic to those high rollers and their more than $200,000 slush fund to hoodwink the voters.

The real fly in the ointment is what the choice of commissioners for rent control will be left up to that august body, City Council, not unknown for its own special interest patronage. That's why this council election is so important. Three new faces may make the difference.

In the 5th District, after that insulting daily morning paper endorsement, and after viewing "Freedom Road"', blacks should be angry as hell and single shoot Norman V. A. Reeves and Carl Adair.

It seems the editors in their racism could excuse Waxter's lack of support from other council members; Rikki Spector's ineptness; but felt Adair wasn't "worthy"!

I'd like to know, how many insults does it take for us to make a change?

So far as I'm concerned, any charter amendment that fives the mayor more power or bond issue that gives those quasi-public corporations of his more money should automatically be defeated.

His imperial mayor is long, long overdue for a few major setbacks. Have you got the strength to do it?

If for no more than that, I'd suggest voting against Question J and for Question K, for what else can we do? Except try to get Sam Culotta elected mayor!

A grsly choice.

And for an afterthought in the 2nd district Mary Pat Clarke has really exploited the black voters in her ambitions for the mayoralty in 1983. Hasn't she become dispensible where the majority of the voters are black in the 2nd?

With all this, are you really ready for the 1980 presidential election?

Wow! All the political prostitutes will be crawling all over us and more's the pity!

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

LETTERS

Why Baltimore needs rent control

Dear AFRO:

Baltimoreans are being swamped with propaganda against Question K (rent control), which will be on the ballot Nov. 6.

Hardly a day passes when our mail isn't loaded with newsletters and sworn affidavits, hardly an hour passes when our favorite TV or radio programs are not interrupted by commercials all denouncing rent control, all showing its dire effects; i.e., deteriorating neighborhoods, lack of job prospects, increasing real estate taxes.

Let us look at some stark facts.

The deteriorated neighborhoods already exist. Why do they exist? Because absentee landlords and real estate speculators have bought up, literally, entire blocks of homes in the past; have kept them for years, constantly raising the rents, refusing to make necessary repairs, paying off the bureaucracy, the inspectors and some judges to lay off until they have milked the properties dry.

Then these properties, entire city blocks in some instances, are abandoned. The real ownership of these properties is hidden by such a mass of dummy corporations that the city has to take them over, board them up or demolish them at the taxpayers' expense.

The dollar-a-house project was a desperate atempt by the city to salvage something from this despicable situation.

How is this campaign being paid for?

To the tune of over three quarters of a million dollars it is being paid for by real estate interests with money it has gouged from the public in the past and which it fully intends to gouge out of the public in the future.

Will people refuse to invest in homes or rental property because of Question K?

No way. The high interest rates of from 13 to 15 percent, set by the federal government, is the single most effective deterrent to home buying and real estate development.

Don't let these people fool you. Without rent control, you, the renters will be paying this 15 per cent and substantially more in order to live in a home or an apartment.

And you will be stuck there. The high interest rates will make it next to impossible for a family of working people to buy a home.

Rent control will deter the real estate interests from shifting the entire onus of higher taxes and interest rates to the renter.

Why are most of our politicians against rent control?

The answer is quite simple. Real estate interests represent enormous wealth.

It takes a great deal of money to campaign for election and to stay in office.

Renters and small home owners do not finance campaigns, nor do they slip money under the table in brown envelopes to make it profitable for a politician to stay in office.

If the rent control bill is defeated there is no question in my mind that the end result will be ever-increasing rents, more deteriorated neighborhoods, higher property taxes and an increase in sleazy politicians who buy the public vote so that their votes can be bought by moneyed interests.

ROBERT E. DORSEY

Pastors support rent control

Dear AFRO:

The pastors of the parishes of the Northwest Urban Area's Catholic Churches wish to offer the following statement regarding the rent control issue, Question K, on the November 6 ballot.

As pastors, we face the serious challenges of ministering to persons affected by the results of our present economic conditions. Daily we meet persons who must choose between food, fuel, or shelter.

Our Northwest Urban corrdiro is experiencing increased crowding, and "doubling" or "tripling" of families into formerly single family units, with all of the resulting social problems coming from highly impacted neighborhoods. Our elderly citizens live on their fixed incomes, but in no way are they "fixed" in living out their years of retirement in peace; fear and poverty are often their companions. Our fixed income families continue to fall behind in the simple desire to live in a normal life.

Housing is a cornerstone to stable family and community living. This rent control bill, not while perfect, does offer relief where it is most needed. It saddens us that so much monty is poured into defeating this bill, when such concern that is being spoken "for the people" but "against the bill" could have been channeled to aid the most needy of Baltimore City, who are also a part of Baltimore's Best.

We would like Baltimore to be best i justice—best in housing—best i compassion for th poor—best in walking the second mile to look out for "the least" in the city. We have painfully seen just the opposite.

Our laws do not protect the tenants. The Courts historically have not alleviated the problem. The poor, particularly the black poor, will suffer the most. And they are our parishioners.

We call on all citizens of the city to support the passage of Question K, and recommit themselves to adequate and affordable housing for all our city's citizens.

Father Edward Miller,
Area Pastor, Northwest Urban
Areas Catholic Churches

We need to win question K

Dear AFRO:

I'm urging you to get out and vote FOR Question K on Tuesday, Nov. 6. Rent control is a more important issue than you might realize. It's clear the need is there.

Human beings are going to be literally freezing this winter because there isn't enough money to pay for rent, heat and food. Rent control can hold down some of that cost, the rent.

William Worthy, in his excellent article (Oct. 3 AFRO) on the Baltimore rent control fight, spoke of the million dollar campaign of the Baltimore power elite basically trying to tell us they know what's best for us.

Your vote for Question K could bring about a strong shift in political power in this city. If Question K passes, a coalition of church, civic, union and tenant groups interested in improving housing conditions will have won the election.

Rent control will be made to work in spite of landlord threats. Irresponsible landlords can be squeezed out of our neighborhoods and we can use millions of dollars in City loan money for residential rehabilitation to turn tenants into homeowners.

Question K helps us; it hurts speculators and rent gougers. So get out and vote next Tuesday.

RALPH MOORE
St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center

What happens to children when parents go to jail?

By Vincent Taylor

When people go to jail what happens to their children? That was the issue at a two - day conference conducted recently at the National Institutes of Health General Office in Bethesda, Md.

The conference, entitled "Incarcerated Parents and Their Children," was an innovation. It was the first time that experts from so many diverse fields met to shed some light on the obscure and often ignored issue of the children of inmates.

There were over 30 participants, all experts, and many black. There were lawyers, college professors, criminologists, and social workers; there were psychiatrists and counselors, researchers and sociologists; there was a warden and even a judge.

And their words were heard. The audience numbered more than 100 and many of them had credentials that matched the participants. Many of the observers and participants came from Baltimore and the District of Columbia but a substantial number were not from this area. Some came from as far away as the state of Washington.

2-day conference at NIH examines issues, problems

The participants read aloud studies they had conducted on prisoners and their children. Although there were some cases where similar studies produced different findings, many of the experiments had similar conclusions.

Generally, most conference members believed that the separation of an inmate from his or her child had detrimental effects on the child and that in many cases, contact between the two parties should be increased. The participants charged that prisons and correctional institutions could do more to strengthen ties between inmates and their children.

Poor visiting privileges, an unsuitable environment in which to receive visitors, lack of counseling services, and the geographical isolation of prison facilities were recurrent findings in many studies.

Participants pointed out that women convicted in the District are often sent to prison in West Virginia, 300 miles away. If that woman's child or children live in the District, then a round trip for them to see their mother is a major expense and inconvenience resulting in less frequent visits.

Participants said that visiting areas in most prisons are unsuitable to see one's children. Many prisons have visiting rooms which have walls with thickly screened openings or walls with bullet - proof glass windows, through which inmates and their visitors must communicate.

One conference member recounted an incident in which an inmate's child had to be held up to the bullet - proof window by an adult in order for that child to see his mother. The participants viewed such conditions as unacceptable.

Who should take care of the child of the inmate if the other parent is unavailable or financially incapable of doing so? Most participants agreed that the best thing is to rely on the extended family, and if possible, not to uproot the child.

Results of the conference members' studies indicate that it is not uncommon for a mother and her child to actually move in with her extended family if her husband goes to jail.

Such a situation is a double - edged sword, however, because, although the woman receives some financial and sometimes moral support from the family, she often loses her social independence and it's not unusual for squabbles to break out about how her child should be raised. One suggestion to remedy this was to have the state pay a monetary compensation to the families of prisoners.

Statistics and theories abounded and debates flourished throughout the conference, but the centsal issue stood before the audience cold and naked when a panel of five ex - and current prisoners recounted their dealings with their children.

One of these panélists was Eddie Harrison, who is currently president of Justice Resources, a criminal justice consulting firm in Baltimore. He was charged with murder and incarcerated for eight and a half years before his conviction was overturned and he was released.

He said that not until recently, did he realize the impact that this had on his son, who is now 19 years old and has had jail experience. Harrison read aloud a report his son wrote which stated, "I (Harrison's son) was unsupervised most of the time so staying in the street was my major interest."

Harrison said when he was released from prison, he and his son were estranged. He had been away for almost half of his son's life. He said his son "being told 'this is your father' is like pointing to any man on the street and saying 'this is your father'."

Harrison said his son's first conflict with the police was a result of Harrison's jail experience. Harrison said that his son felt a sense of vengeance and anger when his son confronted the police.

He said his son was trying to follow in his footsteps as a lawbreaker. "He was almost proud to be there (in prison)," Harrison said.

"The guards were making it easy for him. He was in the same wing, area, talking to the same guards (that Harrison had). I would rather him feel very uncomfortable," said Harrison. "I don't like the idea that people ought to accept imprisonment."

Separation of son from father ended in prison for son

Hazel McFadden, another panelist, is currently serving a three - year sentence. She's also a mother. "It's hard for a mother to be incarcerated for so many years and pick up where she left off," said McFadden. "Before I was in jail, if I told them (her sons) to squat, they'd squat. If I told them that now they'd say 'Hey lady who are you (to tell me that)."

Such accounts are depressing but there are some progressive programs around now and there appears to be hope for the future. Some programs are providing weekend passes for inmates to spend some weekends at home and there are a few programs sprouting up around the country that provide apartment - type facilities for inmates to stay in with their families a few days when the families visit.

One of the more impressive programs mentioned at the conference was the Women's Residential Center in San Jose, Calif. Twenty - six women inmates live there instead of jail. They reside in an apartment - like structure with their pre - school and pre - elementary school children and are supervised by counselors. There are no bars and no fences.

The children and their incarcerated mothers live a relatively normal life. The women work, their kids go to school, and such an environment eases the released prisoner into society with a lot fewer coping problems than if she had been released from the standard penal institution.

Conference members made it clear that correctional institutions don't deserve all the blame. Racism, unemployment, overcrowding, and housing problems were cited as strong factors contributing to lawlessness and ultimately incarcerations.

The conference was sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. It was the brainchild of Velma LaPoint, a research fellow at NIMH.

LaPoint was satisfied that the conference achieved its purpose. "The conference has sensitized people to what the issues and problems are," said LaPoint.



"I'll toss it to him and he'll toss it to you, and you'll toss it to me and...!"

For All We Know



Elizabeth M. Oliver

CAIRO - October 18 - Our group including seven U. S. newspapermen, editor and me representing the AFRO and other black U. S. newspapers have been royally received by the people of Cairo, the administration and the staff of the U. S. Embassy here.

We arrived October 12 and leave Oct. 20 for Athens, Damascus, Jordan, Israel, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. We are making arrangements to talk with the PLO in Syria on this fascinating journey. We have found it is to the advantage of the readers we serve to learn about all sides.

Last night we were guests of honor of Ambassador Alfred Atherton and First Secretary Alan L. Gilbert in the $1800 a month apartment overlooking the Nile River where he and his wife reside. Rent here is far beyond belief.

Our hotel, the Nile Garden, overlooks all the wonders of the ancient Nile River and it is glorious to walk to the patio from my bedroom and see that historic and beautiful waterway, t life of Egypt and the Arab world.

The reception especially for us, had as guests all the important people of the news media, the U. S. government and we are to be page one in magazines and newspapers.

The day after we arrived "last Sunday) we were escorted to the pyramids and sphinx by one of the authorities and I had at last realized a childhood dream to see these wonders of the world.

Notes from the Middle East

There are no words to describe the enormous monuments which date back 5,000 years and still stand as mankind's most mysterious architecture. We were also guests at the site a few nights later to witness the three great pyramids and the sphinx aglow under the heavens. With sound and music the drama told 5,000 years history and included the role of Cleopatra, Nefertiti, Julius Caesar and the other famed persons of history.

Everywhere we see statues of Nefertiti who as you know was beautiful black woman, statue in amber, marble, copper, some with precious stones.

Nowhere is there the "ugly American" image. The local press reported page after page of photos and stories on Rev. Jesse Jackson with great praise and he was areceived royally by President Sadat, given his plane for his inward journey.

Dr. Addison Richmond, Jr. of D. C. who is the third highest ranking official at the American Embassy told me he walked with Rev. Jackson through the streets of Cairo and the people came in throngs to shake his hand and touch his cheek.

The local press has also published warm and grateful stories on Ambassador Andrew Young and I have heard him referred to only under his title. Although he has resigned they say "once an ambassador always an ambassador."

There is no feeling that Cairo is "in the eye of the hur ricane" which has brought the attention of the world of Egypt and the Arab world. We do not feel that we are on top of a "tinderbox" question although we do indeed walk and talk with care. No doubt this is where the action is" since Israel is at odds with all the Arab nations, especially Palestine.

We naturally will report the Israeli side fairly when we see for ourselves and I do mean it when I say the editors of the white press here with me are after the right answers.

They are the finest men I have ever met and they treat me with every courtesy, a sort of "mother hen" attitude. I am not allowed to go shopping without them and I am the first con sideration when we are going to appointments. In fact, they have made a pet of me and I am enjoying being pampered. Most of all, they sample the food before I eat. Lee Densmore, our tour leader, carries my bags and worries and worries and worrie fearful I will get lost.

It has been the talk of the town about me traveling around with seven men who are not my race and they have been proud that I look fashionable and speak well addressing an assembly.

They credit the fact that a black American journalist in the group brings them to top shelf attention.

We have visited all the fashionable dining places, a different one each night. The restaurants are plush and guests dress for dinner which incidently is usually at 10 p.m. or later.

After the lavish reception at the Gilbert residence, we dined until midnight at the Swiss Aire, a fine restaurant with waiters bowing from the waist. Dinner in the Arab world is a vitual. Most interesting dessert is lemon sherbert with bodka. The pace we frequent most is also with a Swiss atmosphere at the foot of the pyramids where I had Italian spaghetti with sauce like my grandson Elmer W. German likes to make.

I have met several black diplomats besides Dr. Richmond Jame Eighmie, a Harvard grad, is the commercial attache and ver officer from Kansas City.

Eleanor Hicks is the deputy in the political section, from Cincinnati, Ohio, expects her parents to arrive in November. Get this —she was formerly the consul to the principality of Monaco, spent three years on the Riviera and in Monte Carlo, ran the consulate and lived in the villa which overlooked the Mediterranean, entertained 4 guests one duly 4. At the reception held here in Cairo for us visiting journalists, Eleanor was one of the most popular.

Eleanor sends regards to Ambassador Clinton Knox who retired from his post in Haiti. Clinton is the husband of Clementine Murphy, sister of AFRO board chairman, John H. Murphy,III

JUST THINKING

Big loss to Black Press

By Al Sweeney

It gets rougher and rougher to turn out these columns.

As the sands of time trickle through life's hour glass, I can't help being aware that the grim reaper is breaking up that old gang of mine.

To put it another way, it was in the mid - 1940s when a group of black journalists, denied entry into the National Press Club refused employment because of their race with the major dailies, founded the Capital Press Club.

It was organized at a popular U Street bistro, called John Carter's Capital Pleasure Club. Back in the 1940s, as oldtimers will tell you, U Street was the swingingest street in the U.S. — maybe the world.

At the initial meeting of black journalists were: Al Smith, correspondent of the Chicago Defender; J. Hugo Warren, manager of the Washington Bureau of the Pittsburgh Courier; Ted Poston, information officer with the World War II's Office of War Information; L. Herbert Henegan, USDA information specialist; Sherman Briscoe, USDA information specialist; Ralph Matthews, and Art Carter of the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers.

The symbol "30" has been used by newsmen to indicate the end of a news story. I guess it could be applied to persons in the trade who have pounded out their final story.

In that sense the roll call of deceased founders of the press club would include: Warren, Poston, Henegan, Matthews, the host John Carter, and finally, last Saturday, Sherman Briscoe.

I don't believe that there is a single individual who believed in the cause of the Black Press more than Briscoe. He spent his entire life, whether in government or in retirement, championing the cause of the Black Press in his own inimitable low - keyed way.

And because of his deep - seated belief, he was one of the few charter members of the Capital Press Club who remained active over the years.

Some young sharpie would see in the Capital Press Club leadership an opportunity for self - aggrandizement and I have watched many members use the CPC office to advance their personal cause.

But, not so with Briscoe. He served as president of the organization and remained active after his term was over. Something that very few of the 16 or more presidents of the press club can boast.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association owes whatever success that it has to Briscoe's undiminished belief in the Black Press.

As an executive secretary of the NNPA, he made very little money. In fact, he often spent his own funds to keep the organization alive.

Outside of the NNPA members and persons associated with the Black Press, Briscoe remained unknown, although he had been executive director for many years.

Men like Carlton Goodlet, John Sengstacke, W. O. Walker, Garth Reeves to name a few of the presidents of NNPA, became nationally known because of Briscoe's promotional abilities.



SHERMAN BRISCOE

Working with W. O. Walker, he established a memorial to the Black Press at Howard University. He enhanced Moss Kenrick's idea of a Black Press Week by developing packages for the black publishers to use as promotional material for the annual press week observance.

A native of Greenville, Miss., Briscoe was employed by the Department of Agriculture as an information specialist for 27 years retiring in 1968. He joined Agriculture upon the recommendation of Claude Barnett, the founder and operator of the Associated Negro Press service.

Barnett was a special adviser on minority affairs to the secretary of Agriculture. And one of his suggestions to Henry Wallace, the then secretary, was to hire a colored (as they were known 37 years ago) writer to turn out special articles for the colored press.

Briscoe was national news editor for the Chicago Defender, when he decided to become a bureaucrat. Prior to his Defender stint, he published a newspaper on Monroe, La.

He published in the Deep South during the lynching era of the 1930s. Briscoe could tell some frightening stories about white mobs playing jury and executioner

It was the lynch experience that was responsible for Briscoe's passionate support of the Black Press. He remembers when black newspapers were banned in many southern communities.

Persons selling Defenders, Couriers or AFROs in the South were subject to reprisal. Briscoe was an eyewitness to it all.

In addition to his work with NNPA and the Capital Press Club, Briscoe was active with the NAACP and the YMCA. Year after year, he was out front raising membership funds for the NAACP branch.

He wasn't one of those persons who griped about what the NAACP was not doing; what the NAACP should do. He was active and tried to do his best to support the cause and was never critical of the leadership. Always supportive.

I can recall a few years ago, Briscoe'd led the Capital Press Club in getting out what he called an "In" book. It was a directory of the many social clubs in D.C. and designed to tell about listed club's community activities.

It was a highly successful promotion. It meant a lot financially to the Capital Press Club. But, unfortunately the idea dimmed because it was a one - man effort.

Briscoe taxed his fragile health by doing everything to produce the mammoth enterprise. He gathered the ads, wrote the copy and even handled all of the details for an annual awards fete.

But, that was the way he was. He never counted the cost. If he had an idea, he would carry it out, while others stood by and watched.

And so it was with the NNPA's national office. The annual conventions are productive because of Briscoe. The cash awards that go to outstanding writers, photographers and editors of the Black Press are available because of Briscoe's creative promotional talents.

The annual directory of the Black Press is a Briscoe effort.

I understand that friends of Sherman Briscoe are going to establish a journalism memorial fund in his name. And well, they should.

Briscoe touched many lives. He was active on many fronts. But, he wasn't the fun - loving gregarious type. The best way to sum the Briscoe philosophy of living is to pilfer words from the Sinatra song:

"But, most of all
I did it my way!"

—MORE LETTERS—

Blacks and the GOP in '80

Ever since Franklin Roosevelt's administration, black people have been the stepchildren of the Democratic party. They have been treated like stepchildren to be sure. Democratic candidates, knowing, they have the constant allegiance of the black vote, have nothing to do come election season, but flock to black neighborhoods like swallows returning to Capistrano. They get much publicity. They come slapping a few backs, making passionate speeches rapping the world for man's gross inhumanity toward man, and promising to relieve the suffering borne by blacks due to past and present injustices. They get over every time.

There is a law of nature that states moderation is the best policy to take on any subject. Indeed, in light of past Democratic control of the black vote, this law should be heeded by black people, as a guideline for a political strategy in the upcoming 1980 elections.

The Democratic party prides itself on being the "working man's" party. So true, the working man works for them. The votes keep coming. In a small gesture of paternalism, Democratic administrations create, or promise to create, new social welfare programs that, in fact, only serve to keep black people dependent on the system. We must relinquish these chains of social and political welfare.

On the other hand, take the Republican party. They are the "fat cats," alienated and isolated from the larger mass of mankind.

It is this horrid concept of the Republican party with which we have allowed ourselves to be conditioned, that causes us to think "good" whenever we hear the word Democrat, and somehow, somewhere along the way equate racism, lack of concern, and unemployment, with the Republican party. We continue to build lopsidedly on the Democratic bandwagon, leaving ourselves without the leverage and political bargaining power inherently available to interest groups within the framework of a two - party system.

The Republican party, just getting around to seriously trying to attract black voters, must come up with an even more attractive program to get black votes over to its side. The situation holds the true seeds of political power for black people. It is here now, that we need to build for ourselves a strong political strategy and foundation.

We must be open - minded and attentive to both parties, and all candidates this coming election year. We can quickly weed out the false programs. As opposed to voting merely party affiliation, we must vote with the program most benefical to black people, not the party, not the man.

JESSE BATTLE JR.