Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Christmas spirit

The singing of Christmas carols, the reading of the Christmas Scriptures, and the bustle in shopping centers are all reminders that this special time of each calendar year is upon us again.

But, it is the spirit of Christmas (as well as of Hanukkah) which counts: the spirit of loving, of caring, of sharing, of forgiving. Distraught families forget old quarrels, children hunt to find just the right gifts for their parents, young hearts beat faster than ever

Of course, Christmas is also a time of receiving, because there can be no giving unless there is, on the other side, receiving. And, among those who receive are always millions of people who would enjoy every little bit of the outward and visible signs of the Yuletide if others did not give. Ideally, givers should be receivers and receivers should be givers!

Thank the gods that several agencies in every city are actively dedicated to seeing that the very needy have a little more than usual for the Christmastide. It is not too late for reach of us to help—help especially for the thousands of children in marginal homes for whom, nevertheless, Christmas should mean joy and merriment.

It is the spirit of Christmas that counts, however. It is this spirit which should be in our hearts this Christmastide Would that this spirit could also take over the thinking and actions of the ruling combines of the world.

New jail — why?

One of the few things we can remember from Harry Hughes' first days as governor was his determination to make the state's penal system a model program.

To that end he named Gordon Kamka, an enlightened prisons administrator, to head the state penal program. A move, incidentally, that this newspaper hailed as quite positive.

Kamka, since taking office, has talked in terms of prisoner rehabilitation, the use of community half-way houses and minimum security community centers as instruments of change for the better.

Obviously this approach has been seen as "molly" molly coddling of "criminals" by some influential legislators who can only see prisons as a place to warehouse people and not as institutions where counter-productive men and women can be changed into productive citizens.

How else to explain Governor Hughes announcement this week that he very much intends for a new prison to be built.

As this amounts to a turnabout from the original Hughes-Kamka approach of innovation (there is nothing new about a new jail as concepts go) we feel the governor must be feeling much heat from somebody somewhere.

The governor and Kamka deny any pressure on them to build more prisons and cite overcrowdedness and court-ordered reductions of inmates per cell totals but we feel that while Kamka has been saying less and less jail, other forces have been crying more and more jails. And the Hughes administration is responding.

We hope it is as Hughes says, the new prison or prisons are part of a forward-looking new plan he and Kamka have devised, and not a giving-in to those elements who think prisons without any rehabilitation effort are the answer.

As the majority of those incarcerated in this state are black, many of them recidivists, we can hardly be enthusiastic if indeed the Hughes administration has gone back to the prisons for prisons sake philosophy of former days.

We keep saying jails are not the answer to our community's problems but our being in jails in such numbers is certainly the point to be made outside the community wish upon us. In any event a new prison as announced by the governor is no Christmas present to black people and at the least it is lousy timing on somebody's part.

More school $

The proposed Baltimore public schools budget for Fiscal Year 1981 is, in our view, not at all satisfactory given the state of need for quality education here.

While Mayor Schaefer and others point to the city's declining school enrollment as a justification for holding school expenditures down, a partially justifiable argument, the budget as currently formulated does not even provide for the inflationary spiral which is currently pegged at about 14 per cent annually with no guarantee that it will not soar higher.

The School Board has approved the school superintendent's budget which seeks an 11 per cent increase over last year.

Dr. Crewe's projections do not keep pace with inflation but he at least goes beyond Schaefer's view of our public education needs. The Mayor, never a champion of education for the many here, wanted the school system to keep its budget increases to no more than 7 per cent, a constriction he has also placed on the fire and police departments and other service agencies.

City schools ran on a budget of $304 million last fiscal year. The School Board has approved a budget of $341 million for the next year but we would not be surprised if the final budget topped the 7 per cent increase Schaefer wants to hold to.

In a public education system where principals and teachers complain that they have no toilet paper for lavatories, where textbooks are being cut back, where all supplies seem constrained as if on a war-time footing, we can only wonder if the fact that the city school population is presently 73 per cent black is not an underlying factor.

Dr. Crewe's proposed budget is quite modest given what the local school system really needs to do an effective job.

Baltimore City's per pupil cost for instructional materials and supplies is alarmingly low in comparison with other jurisdictions Its cost per pupil including all funds is also low

We think the School Board ought to have added much more to Dr. Crewe's total 1981 budget requests.

The state of our local schools is that urgent, we feel, and we do not see any cost-logic or any other kind of logic in a strategy of holding the line on educational expenditures.

It makes no sense in either the short term or long-term to perpetuate a school system that is not fully equipped to give as many of its students the very best training to become productive citizens.

This on-going neglect will be an important determinant in preventing Baltimore from being that great metropolis the present administration says it aims for Baltimore to be.

School Board chairman Mark Joseph, on the budget issue, refers to additional money to come in if the city is successful in its suit challenging the constitutionality of current State aid formulas.

This would be an added windfall but since there is no certainty that the city can make its case we would have preferred that the Board tell the Mayor just how much is really needed without regard to the administration's need to hold the line on costs.

Such a budget would at least graphically illustrate the dimensions of the problem.

BARBARA J. MASON

Turn to holiday's real meaning

As Christmas approaches

By G. James Fleming

The world has been "going to the dogs" for generations. Ever so often, if not every year, the older generation does not know "what is going to become" of the younger ones.

This Christmas finds countless people in this historic frame of mind. As in the past, however, the world just never quite goes to the dogs, and the young, up and coming generation grows up and, in turn, looks down sorrowfully on its minors.

From one generation to another, of course, change does take place and most of us cannot take change, whether we profit from it or lose out because of change—at least in the short run. Somehow, however, the world survives.

While this piece is being written, we tremble because we are well aware that, as 1980 approaches, mankind is more nearly of a mind to destroy his fellows and his world than ever before. Not only "of a mind," but mankind has the weapons for such destruction. To be sent to the dogs would be mild to being bombed into kingdom come, as man can easily do with the arsenal at his disposal.

We tremble because "Peace on Earth" seems so far away, especially as one recognizes that real peace does not mean just the absence of formally declared war. Real peace means, also, the absence of a spirit of war, of the ingredients of warfare, of the weapons of war, and of appropriations of war.

When each jerk of a forefinger could kill only one of the enemy, that was one thing. Nowadays, the pull or push of one finger can kill millions—and there are men (and women, too) ready, willing and able to give the orders to push or pull.

This inclination to violence is also seen in the increase of crime in every country and the increase of suicides in most countries, including suicide among teenagers.

The inclination to violence is also reflected in the resumption of capital punishment—and the sentiment for resumption—in several states that had abandoned this extreme punishment.

So, there is no peace, and it is difficult to sing the usual carols or repeat the Christmas wishes.

But, it was just such a time like this that those who call themselves Christians must work even harder to promote peace, to say to the rulers and the legislators of the world that they must invest in instruments of peace no less than they do in instruments of war and that, together, they must outlaw the modern weapons that spell the destruction of all nations.

Friends and foe agree that, in the next world war, and almost any other war, there shall be no victors, military or civilian.

It was in a time like this that we must strain a point and sing of peace and pray for peace, in the hope that, as we keep our ideals high, we come nearer to making the ideal and the actual the same.

When the first Disciples went to all the world to spread "the Gospel," the known world was in bad shape, according to the theologians (or some theologians). Many of the elders then thought that their world was going to the dogs, and worse. They, too, had their translation for "What is the world coming to?" But, the Disciples went forward, nevertheless, carrying "the word."

Just so must present-day people go forward, pressing for peace and goodwill in all countries and practising brotherhood, fairplay and justice wherever they are.

War will not be given a back seat by private citizens who insist on carrying hand guns and where other settle their quarrels or their "upse a" with killing still others. Crime will not decrease among the poor masses as long as they see white-collar crime going unpunished or under-punished.

As a Christmas gift each to himself or herself, to repeat, we can each labor for peace and goodwill among all peoples. Then, perhaps one of these days, in the words of the Prophet Micah, Nations . . . Shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

DEAR AFRO

Man vs. beast in captivity

Dear AFRO:

My first and last incarceration in this state has shown me that I am to be considered less than a beast. His captivity is mandatory that he lives; mine is mandatory that I survive. Nature dictates, survival is for animals; and living is for humans. Yet somehow we as humans are more than social outcasts or rejects, we are criminals with a stigma less than filth.

The last time I visited the zoo, the beast was being given the best treatment humanity could afford. He is caged in a bigger cage than mine. My cell is 5 by 8, and his is designed for the maximum space needed to afford maximum comfort and exercise.

I lay here in a cell not big enough for one man; yet, two men are living in it. The beast's diet is strictly adhered to, and my diet is overlooked, outrageous, and repetitious. His living area is clean, his exercise area is clean and he is kept clean. My area is tight, cramp, and crowded. My yard and gym is filthy and needs to be fumigated. Like any and all of the other areas, the hospital, main dining room and my travel area are filthy.

The beast was well protected from undue harrassment by the visitors and treated quite well by the zoo keeper. For the keeper is trained by professionals to deal with any and all the caring and treatment of his assigned beast.

My keeper (The Correctional Officer) is indignant and shows a lack of concern for my well-being, even though he is my protector. Is it mandatory that he be trained to care and deal with the different personalities that he is confronted with? Is my keeper allowed by law to treat me as a human being by showing that he is concerned about my welfare, health, and personal needs?

I was curious, and asked the zoo keeper, "If the beast were allowed to mate?" He answered by saying "Isn't that a part of everyday life?" I can barely touch my spouse after she sits down in the visiting room, so conjugal visits are totally out of the question.

But what if the beast was stricken with some type of illness I asked? "Oh, we have trained veterinarians on 24 hour call, who can render medical attention at a minute's notice." The medical privileges allowed for me are ridiculous. If my keeper called the hospital and informed them that I was ill, the first questions asked are who, why, how come, can it wait, or give him some aspirins. I can't become ill after 1 p.m., for I will not be allowed the privilege of sick call.

I then asked, "Who is responsible for seeing that this beast is treated properly?" His reply, "The Greater Humane Society is constantly monitoring us." Who is responsible for seeing that I am treated properly? It must not be an administrator within this complex criminal justice system; surely by now, someone should recognized that my conditions are far worse than that of the beast.

My last and most important question was, "Do you house the beast who is a natural enemy of another beast in the same cage? I knew the answer to this question, but it was essential that I hear the keeper say "No, we do not." I can't count the many times that I have been housed in the same cell with a half-crazed man.

Now that I have had the time to think about it, the beast does live better, and is portected by society more than I. Does this mean in the eyes of this society that I am less than a beast? Think about it, for I have.

LARRY J. WILSON

Dr. Samuel L. Banks

Dear AFRO:

I regret that Dr. Samuel L. Banks apparently construed my comments in front of the School Board to be an attack on the Social Studies curriculum of the school system. I know of Dr. Banks' work and respect his personal dedication

Although I do not collect my impressions from the classroom alone, I have, on at least a dozen occasions during the past year, visited public schools at all levels—to observe and learn. My total perspective, however, is not gained from the classroom, but rather from seeing life in the raw among my constituents and their constituents.

It is unfortunate that Dr. Banks, as a public servant, interposes his dogma, to wit "There is no need to require, given the current requirements in urban growth and United States history, a year's requirement in economics." I thought the discussion was about the feasibility perceived by the community of doing just this.

Dr. Banks, in my judgment, needs to be reminded that the people, after all, are the ones whom all of us serve under the system of government, including education. Thankfully, Drs. Crew and Gist—and, I believe, Mayor Schaefer—know this.

FRANK M. CONAWAY

(Editor's Note: Delegate Frank Conaway along with other members of the Baltimore Business League presented a list of recommendations to the Board of School Commissioners Nov. 29 for an economics course at the high school level.)

Morgan State University

Dear AFRO:

I am writing out of concern for the continued attempts to discredit the leadership, faculty, students and staff of Morgan State University.

During the past ten years, I have been a faculty member at Morgan under three presidents and one acting president. From 1947 - 1961 I was a student at the same institution. I have observed the institution's growth from a small, excellent liberal arts college to a developing urban university serving a predominantly black, but pluralistic student body.

At the present time, the incumbent president, Dr. Andrew Billingsley, is being attacked for his administrative leadership about decisions he has made concerning staffing and about management of the Morgan Foundation. Much of this was prompted by a series of predominantly malicious, unsigned "White Papers" distributed under office doors following a decision made by the president to return the vice president for Academic Affairs to the classroom. Staff changes are inevitable and often unpopular.

The Morgan Foundation funds, like the foundation funds of other universities are controlled by a separate board of directors and enable the president to accomplish some things for the institution not possible if dependent on State controlled funds. An example of this was the European Tour made by the Morgan Choir which moved the university into international focus.

The lack of confidence vote cast for the president, taken on December 15, 1979, was self serving and done by 13 persons, 12 of whom voted negatively and one positively. This was a minority Faculty Senate group although the complete Faculty Senate is composed of 23 persons elected by their respective divisions.

Although many of us disagree with some decisions the president has made, he is far from being an incompetent president, and no one questions his standing as a scholar.

Many believe that the year long campaign to discredit President Billingsley is an attempt at a political takeover of the university by persons not on faculty or staff that would not improve the status of the university.

LaMOYNE M. MATTHEWS

Typing tests

Dear AFRO:

Typing is a technical skill. Conquering the machine known as the typewriter takes time and patience. Once you have mastered the skill, you are ready to seek employment in this competitive field.

As an applicant for a typing position, all odds should be in your favor Typewriters should be in the very best condition. Shift keys should hold and lock; when needed, keys should not get stuck; or be slow to move, ribbons should not be falling off the machine, manual carriage levers should work, perfectly. Other applicants should not be allowed to enter the testing area; if they are late, open or opening doors, talking and strolling in and out of the testing area are distractions that infringe on your right to be tested in a businesslike atmosphere.

Although you may be employed in a quiet area; you should be allowed to test in one. You make a poor showing on your timed writing; and sometimes, it's not your fault.

I am surprised that office personnel allow these kinds of discrepancies to go on. After all, you are competing for a position that will probably have a great impact on your future.

Office personnel have the very best equipment to work with; therefore, applicants should be afforded the same indiscriminate luxury.

BARBARA J. MASON

Pollack and Swisher

Dear AFRO:

Just who is the Federal Court and its jury trying to fool in the Dec. 7, 1979 acquittal of Baltimore State's Attorney William Swisher on the 21 counts of mail fraud and extortion? Swisher was accused of taking kickbacks from the late Jack Pollack in return for political favors. Swisher stated that he received no kickbacks from Pollack, and that he did no political favor for him eventhough he was backed and supported by the Pollack machine during his early career while climbing the ladder to the state's attorney seat.

But I remember Jack Pollack and so do a lot of other black people in Baltimore. Pollack never stopped at anything to get what he wanted. He had judges, politicians policemen and businessmen under his control to keep himself on top.

Jack Pollack never did anything for anyone unless he could get something in return or use that someone for the future. And Swisher was no exception. Swisher got off those charges easily and with a smile. But the truth to the matter is that even though Pollack is deceased, a lot of his racketeering political building still continue on their merry way by keeping the political machine well oiled. And so Swisher and anyone else connected with the Pollack machine will always have money to get them out the hook of any charges. And lots of behind the scene deals will be made in the future also, the same way that the slumlords and Judge Joseph Kaplan defeated Bob Cheeke and all the Baltimore voters who voted for Rent Control.

KARK CROSBY

Langston Hughes

This is an appeal for help.

I would appreciate the re - inforcement of LIVING WITNESSES — anecdotes, reminiscences, impressions — for a "Portrait of Langston Hughes in His Own Works," of those who knew, met, were influenced by, or had any connection whatsoever with him. Thank you.

KATHLEEN A. HAUKE
Department of English
University of Rhode Island
Kingston, R. I., 02881

More letters—

Need better nutrition

Dear AFRO:

Nutrition is a vital area that must be regarded as imperative for the survival of black people in America. Nutrition is actually fundamental in the mental, physical and spiritual well-being of a people.

We have little knowledge of diet, nutrition, physiology, and biochemistry. Most of us, underemployed and/or unemployed, are forced to buy foods that are not necessarily nourishing. Low wages and high prices generally equal inadequate food, resulting in mental and physical incompetence. Those blacks who can afford to buy nourishing food, don't.

We have lost the wisdom of eating correctly that was impressed upon us by our African ancestors, thousands of years ago. Terrible eating habits, in conjunction with distorted taste buds, which have been accumulated throughout the years, is causing the sluggish development of black people.

We are bombarded with poisons, drugs, and bad food. We eat what has been sanctioned by the United States Department of Argiculture, the National Academy of Science, and the Food and Drug Administration. We are taught by biliboards and television commercials, seduced into becoming junk food junkies and food addicts.

Mindless consumers are wandering around in mental stupors searching for what seems the worse food available. French fries, doughnuts, pizzas, sodas and weekend jogging are not the sum total of health. Nutrition is more than tastykake, krimpets and corn chips; more than just frozen pot pies and canned spinach, and even more than the recommended daily allowance.

However, in this country the most popular diet is the most destructive diet. Heavily fried and salted foods, animal, white flour, and sugar porducts will clog and confest joints, cells and artiaries, therefore robbing the blood of important nutrients, particularly oxygen.

Dead foods, processed foods, inorganic foods, over-cooked foods, and chemically treated man-made foodstuffs deteriorate physical stamina, prohibit mental growth, and stifle the spirituality of a people.

We select pig feet over vegetables, bacon over cantelope and potatoe chips over watermelon.

Don L. Lee in a book titled From Plan to Planet writes, "Live vegetables and fruits are laughed at, avoided like productive work and are reduced to the level of fad foods. Our diets for the most part are suicidal and we seek foods that take the least time to prepare as well as consume."

Normally it takes longer to prepare natural meals than conventional ones. Health foods or foods nourishing the blood, giving the body ultimate natural energy, have to be prepared carefully, in a creative manner.

For example, carrot-cabbage casserole, spinach-squash vegetable stew, or millet-loaf, essentially requires more time to prepare than chopped steak, fried chicken, or minute rice. The preparation of food should be a ritual, just as eating it must be.

Finally, we as a people must learn how to "eat to live" and obey the laws of nature. We are out of order with ourselves, as well as the universe. African people are living in unnatural environments that produce unnatural diets, which breed unnatural mentalities.

For black people to deprive themselves of lifegiving substances is inhumane and sick. But circumstances have made us supportive of our own destruction. We are now consuming foods that cause cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, eczema, and arthritis.

Therefore, as people struggling for liberation, we must search for answers that enable us to reach the highest intellectual point, the deepest spiritual plane, and the maximum physical condition allowed by nature.

We must learn a sense of nutrition that harmonizes us with the spiritual and physical order of our people and the world. Black people must achieve a new consciousness for practical principles, while educating ourselves on all levels of human development. The survival of our people depends on the energy that we give to the struggle.

KONATA KAMBUI

No more lies

Dear AFRO:

The crisis that exists between Iran and America will continue until the present leadership here in America reveals the true record of the deposed shah from Iran. The Ayatollah and the Iranian people have accused the shah (Mohammad Reza Pahlavi) of mass murders, torture and robbery during his rule in Iran.

I strongly believe that, if the forty-nine hostages are going to be released unharmed these ?and other serious allegations must be investigated and revealed; the people of America must know the truth before we allow our government to send us off to war. (I would rather die for a truthful honest person)

When men and women assume the role of leaders, the people under that leadership expect truthfulness and honiesty. The Iranian people have posed a normal challenge before the world. Leaders like Idi Amim, Somoza, Nixon and the deposed shah should be taken before a world court and tried; if guilt is established these leaders should be placed in an International Detention Center, any wealth stolen should be returned to the country.

Mr. President, Mr. Congressman, Mr. Senator, and Mr. House of Representative, before you send our youth off to wr, before you send us into another Vietnam, tell the people of America the truth about the Shah.

"No More Lies America"

KENNETH T. RAGIN

Blacks helping blacks

Dear Afro:

Too often we are accused of not doing anything substantial to enhance the pool of black professionals. Other minority race students who have achieved at a respectable level through high school do not have to deal with the financial and social constraints black students often encounter in their attempt to acquire additional training.

This letter is to bring to public attention the contributions made to Morgan State University by a group of local black professional engineers to financially assist our pre-engineering students. This group prefers to remain anonymous; however I am at liberty to reveal the name of their leader. He is Mr. Alexander Dixon, a professional engineer with the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company.

Over the past four years they have contributed $4,410 which has been allotted to nine students who have served the university as tutors and laboratory assistants.

Six of these students are currently in graduate school and one has passed the qualifying examination for the Ph.D. in metallurgical engineering at the University of Missouri.

Words cannot express the appreciation of Morgan State University and the students who have benefited from the contributions made by this group of concerned professionals.

JULIUS H. TAYLOR

Outstanding

Dear AFRO:

Through out the years, the AFRO has provided outstanding news reporting services to the Black community. I wish to respectfully use this opportunity to commend the AFRO for its outstanding coverage of the recent Parren J. Mitchell's Fund Raising Affair at Baltimore's New Convention Center.

More than 1500 persons (black and white) came from all over the nation to demonstrate their sincere approval and appreciation for the outstanding job Congressman Mitchell is doing. This affair was most certainly a news worthy event. However, Baltimore's other major newspapers simply overlooked it or moreover, were so completely out of touch with the black community until they could not perceive nor attach any news worthiness to it.

Congressman Parren J. Mitchell is one of the most outstanding and effective public servants in the nation today, and the AFRO'scoverage of his fund raising afair will serve to enlighten the general public on the work of this most remarkable public servant.

Again, thank you AFRO. Job well done.

ARNOLD M. JOLIVET

Steam on the windows

MADELINE MURPHY

The longer I live, the more like my mother I have become.

And the children, particularly the girls, catch me up short, calling me by the nickname we used to use for my mother. "All right, Modge", they'd chide, whenever I fell into the habit of calling someone who's name I'd momentarily forgotten; "Whosis" or "Whatsisname." Or when I'd get too critical of a boy friend; too bossy with the grandchildren or too pedantic during family spat.

Though these are characteristics you try to avoid, the old expression; "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree" takes on a more personal meaning.

Yet it's at Christmas more than ever that you reminisce. You think of those moments with your own father and mother, in the days of fantasy, childlike wonder and expectation.

And just like my mother I work myself into a frenzy, cooking, cleaning, doing last minute shopping, getting or making unusual decorations, brightening the house into a more festive holiday appearance.

What is missing, however, and perhaps a not too nostaglic miss is getting presents for small children and the frustrations and pain of putting together bikes, baby carriages, electric trains late Christmas Eve with growing anxiety when you can't find parts or read instructions or don't have the proper tools and have forgotten the batteries. Thank God, that's behind me.

Christmas then, with a reluctant petulant mate, became rife with over wrought nerves and nagging.

I suppose, however the most fulfilling and creative part for the woman of the house is cooking Christmas dinner, and my mother was a perfectionist.

She made a production out of it. Also, because my father had taught her how to cook, she was a bit insecure abobout hoh well she had learned and was easy prey to criticism.

Consequently. I never knew a time when she didn't stall before serving dinner.

Yet, her greatest thrill it seemed was to hear my father shout as he'd come into the house, "Boy, oh boy, steam on the windows, there's gonna be a good dinner tonight!" That was a sure sign it would be, too.

However, planning ahead with a freezer today, makes you wonder how she made all that perfection appear on the Christmas table of our childhood from a mere four burner gas stove, undersized oven and kitchen.

One Christmas day, I remember, after we had set the table, my sister and I went with our father who had to referee the basketball game—a great chance to ogle the center of whom I had a monumental crush.

My mother worked at home on the Christmas dinner. A bit of martyrdom pervaded the kitchen when we returned and as she turned to look reproachfully at us, the roasting pan with all that good gravy slid off the stove onto the floor.

As we all jumped back, I wondered how we could ever retrieve any of it. More concerned was I that we save the gravy than whether mother was hurt or not.

Fortunately, she was all right, but flustered, angry, and a bit apprehensive that my father would be furious, for he would be more concerned about her well being, upset nevertheless about her recurring carelessness around the stove, than about the gravy.

We slipped and slid, mopping it up. Mother replaced the pan on the stove while ordering us to put down newspaper—as I've written before, we always saved newspapers.

But mother had to have gravy. We carried the turkey, all the vegetables and goodies, and with usual ritual we sat at our places ready to say grace.

Before carving the turkey, Pop looked up and there was mother with a gravy boat brimming with giblet gravy that she set beside him. By some slight of hand she had made more!

He looked at her smiling for a long moment and then said nonchalantly, "It's sure nice, Modge, to see steam on the windows."

With that, all her anxiety about her clumsiness faded away. She knew with that familiar refrain that Christmas dinner was still the high point and most fulfilling part of her day.

I hope that your Christmas will be equally merry and bright; that we shall see peace and good will toward all men in the coming year.

But most of all I hope you, too, will have steam on your windows!

FOR ALL WE KNOW

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

PREDICTIONS FOR 1980

THE DECADE, according to authorities, will see continued Hard Time which give no real happy picture and result in :

HIGHER PRICES for rent, food, fuel, car gas, clothes and food.

(THE HARDER the times, the more greedy merchants gouge and victimize).

FATTER PEOPLE since hard times strangely cause humans to eat more fat, cheaper foods, rice, spuds, beans and fat meat rather than grow thin because of lack of balanced diet and less food.

WILDER SEX, abandonment of morals, home ties, family and traditional patterns of society.

INCREASED consumption of alcohol, dope and any item which wipes away temporarily the stress, want, sorrow, that poverty brings.

FANTASY, dreaming of what we wish we could have but never can get.

MORE VIOLENCE in literature, stories, newspapers, to give outlet to human revolt against poverty, stress, frustration and anger.

LAUGHTER provoking plays, TV, movies, shows to make people smile awhile

CUTBACK on night clubs, outside entertainment since people just don't have the money.

COLD HOMES as residents move into living in one room, shut off the rest of the house . . . no fuel.

SCHOOLS cutback classroom hours and the entire term to conserve heat and light.

DARK STREETS for conservation of energy.

YOUNG MEN marrying older, established women to "get in out the cold"

MORE DIVORCES, fewer marriages, more living-together couples.

MORE TROUBLE with autos due to "bad gas".

NO MORE night funerals due to expensive lighting and heat.

NO MORE night church services for conservation.

RETURN TO CHRIST, more born-again-Christians and rise of different religious cults for warmth and comfort of the needy and disaster.

MORE SECTS to offer hope for a brighter world and -or fatten the pockets of would-be-prophets.

RETURN TO HAND-CRAFTS, inventing and at home making something out of nothing to get extra change.

RETURN TO READING history, taking trips through books and learning about "the good old days" via literature.

RETURN TO WRITING to document family history and past glories, the good old days now passing forever.

HIGHER RATE OF BIRTHS, more deaths, all due to hard times.

MORE FORGETTING, persons with lower mentality since the mind tends to wipe out unpleasant, unhappy things and sink slowly inside.

LESS AMBITION to achieve as the mind feels there's no use.

TO THE CONTRARY, more genius emerges among a few who seek to push the mind into solving situations, making money, rising above circumstances.

BUT NOW WE GO back to the last moments of the 1970's and to what's up for the present :

THANKS to the 100 Special People of the 1970's who have sent scores of letters. FOR EXAMPLE:

MRS. HELEN V. BENTON says, "It's my prayer that I may prove worthy of the wonderful tribute" and she sent us a tiny little Bible.

BRENT SNODGRASS and Ed Snowden of Bethlehem Steel : "This is a special honor which we cherish very much.

MRS. LILLIAN H. DANTLEY, "The inclusion of my name has just kept me smiling inside myself and feeling extremely happy."

OTHERS sent beautiful Xmas cards and some reveal Like Otto Silva that their families have purchased as many as 25 AFROS to send to other relatives and friends. Some indicate the honor is now listed in their resumes. Several have framed the list to hang in their school room or their office.

WE WILL ANNOUNCE after Xmas the date when all 100 will assemble, get certificates as "Special People of the Decade" and have photos taken. Watch for this later.

DEC.23 at 2 p.m., if you have tots, take them to the 27th Floor of the World Trade Center to hear Barry Louis Polisar's songs for kids and other beings and such as "I eat Kids" and "My Brother thinks he's A Banana" and "Never Put Your Finger in Your Nose". Oh nooooo.

BY THE WAY, I Love My Wife at the Mechanic is funny, entertaining and fast moving, but.... soooo way-out and sex filled you wonder how it is passing the censor board. Nevertheless, the place will be packed we know since folks like that sort of entertainment.

ON THE NUTTY SIDE, the animals at the Zoo announce they had a meeting with the staff and decided unanimously to have a quiet and peaceful Christmas Day at home. And, they state, we'll see you the day after. Heavens above.

MAD AT MAYOR SCHAEFER for not inviting you to his swearing in ? Don't be. He merely put word on the grapevine for all to come since the event was to be "simple and plain".

IF YOU MISSED his Yule Party Dec.20 at City Hall go down there Wednesday Dec.26, day after Xmas, and call for it. It will be there.

MRS. RUTH PRATT, the school's top administrator announces the $10,000 gift of Radio WBAL for clothes for needy school children. She will see that the needs are met through grants that may be redeemed at Hecht's.

TYLERS COUNTRY CLOTHES at Jumpers Mall has donated nearly $8,000 in clothes and merchandise. Now we all can go get our Yule outfits at those second hand stores, the Salvation Army.

DR. HAROLD CARTER'S revival crusade is set for Dec. 30 at 6 p.m. at the Civic Center. The glorious occasion is FREE.

Social Security—a survey

by Dr. Matthew Tayback
State Director of Aging

Several months ago, we promised a series of columns on changing American attitudes toward inflation, mandatory retirement, private pensions and social security. These new findings are based on a national poll taken by the Louis Harris and Associates firm. Mr. Harris revealed his findings before the House Select Committee on Aging earlier this year and in this last discussion of the findings mentioned, we examined the crucial subject of social security.

A large majority of American workers today expects to receive income from Social Security when they retire. However, in substantial numbers, especially among younger workers, there is an increasing lack of confidence in Social Security's ability to pay retirement benefits. More than 8 out of 10 current employees have less than full confidence that Social Security will pay them benefits to which they are entitled when they retire; 42 percent have "hardly any confidence at all," according to Harris' survey findings.

This lack of confidence would suggest increased political pressure on the Social Security system in the future, pressure which will probably take the form of increased demands to use general revenue or other revenue sources to fund Social Security. Indeed, such moves are now afoot in Congress already - not in the future. While Harris found that 45 percent of current and retired employees feel that Social Security benefits should be paid out of Social Security taxes, 47 percent feel that at least part of the money should come from other taxes.

The Harris poll showed that 75 percent of employees and retirees want the system to work as was originally intended — a program to provide a basic level of retirement income that will supplement other retirement income sources. The findings suggest that a way must be found by the government to restore confidence in the Social Security system so that people believe once again that a basic level of retirement income will always be there for use.

Eighty-six percent of current and retired employees feel that Social Security benefits should increase at least as fast as the cost of living over the next five years, while only 9 believe the benefits should remain the same.

Finally, Harris found that a 76 percent majority of current and retired employees believe that Social Security should provide a basic level of retirement income. Twenty-two percent believe it should provide a standard basic level of income independent of pre-retirement income and 31 believe it should provide a basic level of income in accordance with previous income; in other words, a variable benefit. Another 23 percent revealed in Harris' survey that Social Security should provide a basic level of income which would be used as a supplement to other retirement income. This reveals that part of the reason for low interest among current and retired employees in having all retirement income provided through the Social Security system is a hesitation on the part of the public in assigning to government total responsibility for income security in old age.

It appears that Congress and the President have their job cut out for them regarding Social Security - Harris also found only 12 percent of the respondents have confidence that future generations will be willing to pay even higher Social Security taxes.

Thus the consensus at this time is for a social security old age insurance system which provides a basic benefit, variable according to income, but one which allows the individual some freedom to negotiate with his employer for further income or to individually pursue financial strategies best for himself and his family.

'Christmas just ain't what it used to be'

By James M. Abraham
AFRO Staff Writer

"Christmas just ain't what it used to be," said the old man, as he slouched in a seat on the back of the bus. A pint bottle of gin protruded from his pocket, and he had on several layers of clothing.

"Christmas just ain't what it used to be," he repeated, making his raspy voice heard above the din of the whining bus.

In a seat near the middle of the bus, a young couple sat. Their arms, and the floor in front of them, were filled with boxes and bags. It was the night before Christmas, and they obviously had joined the large crowd of shoppers who now filled the bus.

"Shucks," said the old man. "These people out here spending their last nickle on gifts for Christmas, and then crying about it all the way through January."

The young woman sitting near the middle of the bus had been fidgeting with her packages as the old man spoke. Her eyes blazed as she turned around and fired a repiy at the old man.

"So what's wrong with giving gifts to people who deserve them?" she asked. She was extremely pretty, and seemed to shine with a brittle glow. She had silver rings on most of her fingers, and she waved her hands as she talked.

"I mean, really, if someone treats you nice all year, why shouldn't you show them some sign of appreciation at Christmas?"

"You crazy, lady," said the old man. "What you saying is that you got to bust your behind all year to make enough money to buy a gift for somebody that smiles at you or something. I guess the only reason people are nice then, is 'cause they know they'll get it all back at Christmas, huh, lady?"

That guy's obviously intoxicated," said the young man sitting next to the woman. He was a handsome man of about 32, and wore a well-fitting tweed coat and dark leather gloves. His teeth gleamed as he laughed a condescending laugh and pulled the woman closer.

"Well old man," he said with a smirk, "If you're so down on Christmas, then why are you riding this bus then? Why aren't you in an alley or a flophouse somewhere with your type of people?"

"That's telling fam, " said the woman, as she clasped his leather-clad hand and squeezed her packages closer to her.

The crowd on the bus had overheard the exchange, and now most of their heads were turned toward the back of the bus.

The old man sort of pulled his clothes closer around him and said; "Well, young boy, until about an hour ago, I was sitting in a flophouse, in my room, just drinking my gin. You see, I was sitting there, looking out the window, when I saw this light just shining and shining. Boy, that light was so bright, an I could do was put my gin in my pocket and follow it, you know, toward the west? And now, when I finally get off this camel, I'm gonna check out a little stable I heard tell about." Heh, heh, I bet you two don't even know what I'm talking about, do you?" What's he talking about, honey?" the young man whispered to his companion.

"I don't know lover," she replied, shifting her packages so that they were closer to her, "Maybe he's crazy."