Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Confident caucus

The General Assembly has begun its deliberations and as ever our black elected officials who serve in the State House and Senate find themselves heavily out-numbered.

This does not mean, however, that the black legislative caucus is going to be politically over-run or out-maneuvered.

What we sense each year is a growing confidence in our lawmakers when it comes to making the correct kinds of political agreements to advance our community's agenda.

We are confident that they will prevent the merger of Morgan State University into the insensitive and all-pervasive University of Maryland system which has ground too many aspiring and promising black students into the ground before their potential could either be truly discovered or developed.

We are confident that our legislators will take all necessary steps to ensure that no political redistricting occurs which would dissipate our growing strength.

There are crucial social welfare needs which must be addressed and we are certain the caucus will do all in its power to halt the trend (on the majority's part) toward grievous cutbacks in monies which bring relief to those thousands in our community in need of all manner of human services.

Elected officials serving our community told us they could get the job done and, as all have at least one Assembly session under their belts, we are quite optimistic that this will be.

We look forward to a 1980 legislative session that will be lively as regards exploration of issues and dynamic as concerns enactment of law that will work for our community's good.

We are extremely interested in the kinds of minority economic development legislation and allocations our caucus can shepherd through this session.

We need programs that encourage black enterprise as they also create new employment opportunities.

We feel the time is right to fight such programs through to fruition.

Drug paraphernalia

We said recently that certain state legislators were to be commended for their outcries against the sale of gadgets, novelties and other items in some way related to the so-called "drug culture."

Parents across the state have expressed alarm at shops that display pipes for "pot" smokers, decorative spoons for the pleasure of cocaine users, even comic books that espouse the delights of drug use

While we would not want any retailer's first amendment rights under the Constitution tampered with in anyway, we do decry the fact that impressionable minors can readily and legally purchase all the paraphernalia necessary to use any number of hallucinogenic, depressive or accelerant drugs.

Several counties have moved on legislation to make use of and sale of such stuff illegal so far as minors are concerned.

To date Baltimore has not taken any stand definitively which might be because too many of our young people are already using hard drugs and barring "pot" pipes is pretty much locking the barn after the horse has run away.

Still it was parental concern that got state legislators moving on drug abuse problems in some counties and we would hope that similar parental pressure will make itself felt on our metropolitan area legislators to take a long, hard and active look at drug abuse problems close at hand.

Indiscriminate use of drugs by minors is at the core of much of the street crime residents of our community must suffer every hour of the day.

Any action our political leaders take which gets to the heart of this matter would be greatly appreciated by the constituents they serve.

MLK - a national holiday

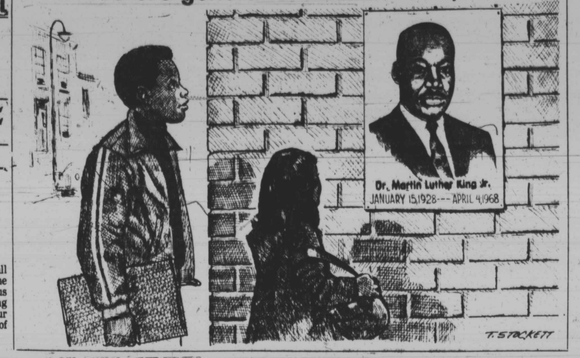
For the tenth time, Congress recently rejected the continuous efforts of some of its more dedicated members to have the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. declared a national holiday. Thus, come Tuesday (January 15), the day will be a holiday here and there, but without congressional and official governmental sanction.

This is shameful! Congress, which at this point in the long fight to have January 15 declared a national holiday in honor of Dr. King seems to be the major stumbling block, should hang its collective head in disrepute. This time Congress used the issue of high costs — money — to shelve the bill, but ironically money has never been a consideration when other holiday bills were approved.

Proponents of the King bill should not be dejected. There will be other opportunities, one of which may come in this term of Congress. Of course, the failure of the bill to pass has been a disappointment to its sponsors and to the thousands of well-thinking Americans whose love and respect Dr. King won during his brief life. It was Dr. King himself who once said: "Truth crushed to earth will rise again . . ." They can take comfort in this oft-stated belief of Dr. King. Time is on their side.

All of us must take the recent congressional setback as a temporary action, a re-group and try and try again. There, of course, are some Americans who are unable to concede that America owes a national debt to Dr. King. It has been a decade since Dr. King walked and talked among us, but it may take some of us a little longer to contemplate where this country might have been racially and humanely if he had not been the man he was.

Let future generations remember proudly



Madeline MURPHY

Let's ring the bells for Bell

The Honorable Robert M. Bell, a young intelligent black District Court judge, was appointed by Governor Harry Hughes to the Supreme Bench of Baltimore the first day of 1980.

No greater tribute can be made of this young man than to say that he is one of the most humanistic judges on the bench, black or white.

His sensitivity and judicial expertise toward the problems of all who approach the bench is rare in these times of hurried verdicts, biased opinions and hostility that oppress the poor and black in courts where justice's blindfold slips precariously.

It is this manner of black man who is needed in twice his number now on the Supreme Bench among the 20 judges where black judges John R. Hargrove, Milton B. Allen, Robert B. Watts, Solomon Baylor preside in the minority.

Governor Hughes' appointments show a cynical avoidance of a grave flaw in the system. That in a city half black, justice is still the slave master syndrome of superiority of one race reigning over another; of helpless blacks who are not sure that judges understand the endemic racism that reinforces the stereotype of inferiority.

These appointments, shrewdly political, satisfy the minorities across the board. Those who can deliver votes in 1982 for a second term, are grist for the mills of Hughes' enlightened self interest.

And though we may fault the governor, we too must share in this benign neglect.

First of all, election of black judges has usually been low on our list of priorities. Once we elect black judges, we are prone to forget them even who they are and where they sit.

Secondly we do not vote in large enough numbers in primaries to make a dent in the polarization where blacks vote for blacks in the 2nd, 4th and 8th districts; whites vote for whites in the 1st, 3rd, and 6th districts.

Further, when blacks move into predominantly white neighborhoods like the 3rd district, they don't always change their voting residences. Therefore it is difficult to gauge our increasing presence in white neighborhoods and our voting strength. Thus we become undocumented aliens. Circulation and rechecking change of address forms must be the initial campaign strategy in this area.

Judge Bell will have to run for election in the May primary this year to hold his appointed seat.

What we do in the way of publicizing this fact, of inviting him to speak at churches, neighborhood meetings, of getting black political organizations to work for his election will have a great deal to do with his success.

The sitting judge principle, where independent candidates are discouraged from running against the appointed judges affords some protection for Judge Bell's election. However, we blacks must also form our own coalitions to ring bells for Bell to guarantee his election.

In addition, gone are the days of elitism where only a few black lawyers were deemed "worthy" of appointment and subsequent election. Times have rapidly changed with a new breed of young black lawyers eminently qualified to become judges.

Therefore, we must also raise money and campaign for other black candidates who will make enlightened long overdue additions to a majority white judicial system.

For the record: The official MSU faculty, student resolution against merger

(For factual data underlying these assumptions, see the "Response of the Faculty Task Force of Morgan State University to the Sun's Editorial Series: 'Higher Education Mess, I-VIII'.")

Whereas, Historically Maryland has underfunded the higher educational programs at Morgan State University and consistently denied the Morgan students and faculty their democratic share of the State's resources;

After over one hundred years of disproportionate funding, today Morgan has nurtured almost all of the black leaders in this State;

The faculty and students regard the position mentioned in the unrevised Byrnes Committee Report "to discontinue Morgan State as a separate segment" as a misguided attempt to eliminate rather than strengthen the quality of Morgan State University;

Centering sole budgetary and programmatic authority in SBHE and divesting Morgan of its segmental independence would undermine and frustrate attempts to provide equal access to educational and social opportunity for oppressed minorities;

The overt racism of the Plessy-Ferguson decision specifically denied the underprivileged black social mobility, the new racism would strip these oppressed groups of the institutional undergirding which they need to stand on their own as productive and contributing citizens—to stand as neither the victims of enforced segregation nor of enforced integration but as the determinants of their own higher educational destiny;

The faculty and students decry the unrevised Byrnes Committee Report's insistence on predictive indices for admissions, indices which test what students have learned instead of what they may learn and which give no weight to the role of character, personality, and motivation in gaining for these citizens an opportunity to overcome the disadvantages imposed by society;

Report's much-lauded Distinguished Scholars Program has had the effect, as demonstrated by recent recipients, of weeding out students from less affluent educational systems in the State in favor of those from the two wealthiest counties in Maryland, Howard and Montgomery Counties;

Racial discrimination in Maryland's system of higher education, despite efforts at integration, is evident in the systematic denial of blacks at all levels, especially in the granting of doctorates and first professional degrees and the granting of equitable salaries, promotion and tenure to black faculty and is evident in the calculated ignoring of the black university and college as a supportive psychological and academic seeding ground of candidates for graduate and professional schools; and

Morgan State University has for one hundred and twelve years of struggle and perserverance taken sometimes poorly prepared students and transformed them into productive and responsible citizens; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that we the faculty and students, having determined that, at present, there is still a need for Morgan State University and for its commitment to providing an education for blacks, other historically oppressed minorities, and other citizens in an emotionally and psychologically supportive, yet demanding, setting, do support all efforts to insure the continued existence and strengthening of both the undergraduate and the graduate programs at Morgan State University as independent entities and do vigorously oppose any proposed merger with the traditionally white institutions in this State;

Resolved, that we do support increased funding for a strengthened and expanded urban outreach program in cooperation with neighborhood leaders in the church, fraternal, and business communities; and

Resolved, that we shall strenuously seek adequate funding for the existing undergraduate and graduate programs and increased funding levels for new graduate programs and for first-class capital improvements and faculty salaries, appropriations befitting a major university with a research, teaching and service mission.

ALVIN THORNTON, Ph.D., President University Faculty State,
RUTHE T. SHEFFEY, Ph.D., Co-Chairperson Faculty Task Force,
BURNEY J. HOLLIS, Ph.D., Co-Chairperson Faculty Task Force,
SHERMAN MOORE, President Student Government Association

LETTERS—

Have affluent blacks deserted Morgan?

Dear AFRO:

Perhaps one of the major reasons why Morgan State University is in a state of financial, administrative, and academic decline is because upper middle class blacks no longer support the university.

This point is especially evident when you realize that .02 percent of Morgan's students families make over $27,000 per year (85 percent of students families make less than $9,000 per year).

There was a time when all blacks had to attend predominantly black colleges and universities because white colleges and universities practiced racial discrimination in their admission policies plus the fact that most blacks couldn't afford to attend them anyway.

Today, quite a few blacks were able to make economic and educational gains during the civil rights era of the sixties and consequently are in the position to send their children to better colleges and universities.

In the process, these blacks have realized that in order to attain any degree of financial or status success in this country, you are going to have to learn to be able to deal with white people. Associating with whites in colleges and universities helps blacks to make valuable connections upon graduation.

Upper middle class blacks have worked hard and overcome many racial obstacles to be in the financial position today to send their kids to college.

They know that today, in an era where practically everyone has a college education to the point that a B.S. degree is almost worthless, where you went to college can influence whether or not you get that job or that offer of admission to graduate school.

They know that the black college or university may not necessarily offer the best education in this country for their kids. They also realize that prestigious white colleges and universities are offering more and more offers of admission to suburban college preparatory black high school seniors.

All of these reasons have caused upper middle class blacks to abandon support for black colleges particularly Morgan State University.

This is unfortunate because it is these black college graduates, with their money and know-how, who are in the best position to help give Morgan State University financial stability and its recognized academic reputation.

DAVID HENDERSON, Freshman, University of Virginia

Billingsley vote 'unjust'

Dear AFRO:

As concerned student leaders at Morgan State University we are appalled at the events that have occurred here recently.

Without condoning any possible administrative wrongdoing on the part of President Billingsley, we oppose the recent vote of no-confidence cast on Dec. 20, 1979 by the faculty of M.S.U.

We feel that the vote taken was unjust, untimely, and undermines Morgan's attempt at maintaining its autonomy.

The present situation at Morgan is viewed by us as just another attempt to weaken, and take control of M.S.U. We've seen these attacks on Morgan's autonomy throughout our college careers.

Needless to say we're tired of them, and wonder just when the issue will finally be put to rest. The master plan by the State Board of Higher Education has indeed struck again.

As educated men and women we recognize the need for black institutions in a truly free society. History has at least taught us this much. We hope the faculty will put aside their grievances and unite to work once again in concert with President Billingsley.

We are proud of our education, this institution and concerned with its future.

So we hope that the faculty will consider the impact of a vote on noconfidence cast for the president. We also hope that they will remember the fact that they are not administrators but teachers and should act accordingly.

RAYMOND PEREZ
LAWRENCE D. McRAE

For Dr. King

HIS LEGACY
A tribute to Rev. Martin Luther King

Dear AFRO:

He offered us love,
And hatred killed him.
He offered us peace,
And war engulfed us.
He offered us brotherhood,
And racists mocked his striving.
His prayers were scattered petals.
Yet he lives on, indestructible.
"I have a dream," he said,
"Freedom!"
Articulating dreams of millions.
And we will follow in the path he blazed!

MARSHALL F. DUBIN

'Deadly driving'

Dear AFRO:

The uproar about the sentencing of Allen B. Cole in Frederick County Circuit Court is another futile exercise. It seems that the pattern of going easy on murder by vehicle is a statewide pattern no matter the location, the judge, or the circumstances.

In another case, last February a driver ran over a pedestrian in Baltimore County, killing him. The vehicle was damaged extensively but the driver kept on going for some miles until apprehended by the police. The driver refused to take the alcohol test. The police report indicates "Driver has been drinking."

The case was tried on Aug. 15 in Owings Mills. The driver was found not guilty on charges of reckless driving and driving while intoxicated. The third charge of "leaving the scene of an accident resulting in death or injury" was held by the judge "sub curia" which means the judge needed more time for consideration of sentence.

There is no doubt the driver left the scene of the accident. Since he was found not to be drunk or under the influence at the time, than he must have killed the victim and left him lying on the road while in complete control of his mental and physical faculties - sober as a judge!

Over four months have elapsed since the day of the trial. The judge is still contemplating. Is it because the judge does not want to be too hard on the "nice young fellow" or because the dead victim happened to be black?

All I know is the driver is still driving legally, the bars are still open and you and I are on the road "unintentional" potential victims!

JOHN DAY

Lessons from Dr. King

By G. James Fleming

The approaching birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., prompts one to look for lessons from his life and works as another way of remembering and honoring the man who stirred the world with "I Have A Dream."

Two thoughts are presented here. The first surrounds the term, "Confidence." The people had confidence in Dr. King. All kinds of people, in all parts of the globe believed in him in a deep, meaningful way. They respected him, of course; they loved him; but, most of all, they had confidence in his unselfishness, his commitment, his devotion to the non-violence ethic, and his concern for the oppressed peoples the world over.

As Americans travelled—in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Soviet Union—the first questions, followed by words of adoration would be about Martin Luther King, Jr.

After he was assassinated, the questions and the adoration increased. It was near-worship of one loved, of one who had set an example that others would strive to follow.

He was the premier example to very many people of what an American could be, at his best (Incidentally, outside of the United States, most commentators, as well as the man on the street, have always believed that the triple assassinations of Dr. King, President John Kennedy and his brother, Robert, were part of a conspiracy).

Dr. King "is no phony" was often said of him while he lived. That, perhaps, is the key to the confidence which the masses had in him. "He rings true" was another estimate. His overtowering excellence as public speaker and his writings undergirded these qualities.

Dr. King was more than just an orator, however. There have been and are, other thundering voices who were not so fortunate as to attract the kind of confidence and the following that he enjoyed.

The other thought of Dr. King has to do with the age-old question, whether issues make the man or woman, or whether the man or woman makes the issues; whether the cause he serves makes a leader great, or whether the leader, because of his own qualities, makes a cause great. In one way or another, in all cultures, this debate has been going on down through the years.

It can never be known whether Martin Luther King, Jr., would have reached his pinnacle if a usually quiet, middle-aged black lady in Montgomery, Ala., had not refused to sit in the back of a bus; and, further, if the first sponsors of the famed Montgomery boycott had not appealed to a young, eloquent Baptist preacher to take over the leadership of the historic campaign.

One thing we do know. Dr. King was ready. By fortune of good family upbringing, by education and experience, and by continuous study, he was prepared for the responsibilities and burdens of leadership, of the crusader, of the challenger, of the provocateur, and of the catalyst of change.

The cause was (1) making the bus boycott a striking success and (2) thereby, eliminating segregation on the basis of race in Montgomery and, hopefully, in the rest of the country.

Martin Luther King did not initiate the boycott. Because he was "ready," however, he lifted it from a local endeavor to a great moral crusade that won the support of men and women, churches and synagogues, rich and poor in the United States and in other parts of the world.

He moved people with his incisive and poetic voice, but he never depended on rhetoric alone. He acted and reacted, he planned the spreading of the movement, he surrounded himself with both dreamers and doers, and he never asked his followers to go anywhere he was not willing to lead—even to the fierceness of Birmingham's bulldogs and to jail.

Perhaps the lesson is that a man or woman of high leadership potential may be lost to history because he or she has not found or created a cause or issue equal to his or her potentialities.

Similarly, many a worthy cause may also be lost because it has not attracted the right kind of leader. Tritely, does a captain make his ship a regatta champion, or does a skillfully constructed ship make the championship captain. Perhaps, it requires a mixture of both.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was "ready" and he found the cause that would use him, and vice versa. Because he could dream dreams and see visions, he could take a local movement and catapult it into national and international significance.

Dreamingly, he could also envision the time when more than bus discrimination would be the issue and when more racial barriers would come tumbling down.

As we glory over the memory of Dr. King, may there be room for pondering over why he enjoyed the confidence of so many, why he touched countless people everywhere, and why he was able to make a little, local movement, a magnificent, historic phenomenon.

FOR ALL WE KNOW

About this and that

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

MARYLAND COMMISSION on Afro-American History and Culture and the Enoch Pratt Library presents at 3 p.m. Sunday Jan. 13 in the Wheeler Auditorium at the Central Library on Cathedral St., the symposium entitled "Look at Civil Rights Activism."

WITH CARROLL GREENE JR. as the commissioner, the symposium marks celebration on the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King with the appearance of Dr. David L. Lewis, the author of King, A Biography and Dr. Louis Harlan the editor of the Booker T. Washington Papers and professor of history at University of Maryland who is the vice-chairman of the Maryland Commission.

Other noted participants will focus on their participation in the civil rights movement in the South at the invitation of Dr. King to place the demonstrations, sit-ins and marches of the King era in historical perspective.

YOUNG PEOPLE who have merely heard of Dr. King should attend this valuable symposium and meet the famed persons who marched with him. It's a great opportunity.

ANOTHER MLK BIRTHDAY celebration is the YWCA's second annual dinner set for Tuesday Jan. 15 at 6 p.m. at the 118 W. Franklin St. building with tickets at $4.00 (call 685-1460) to make reservations NOW. After the buffet comes the program, "Nurturing His Dream to Make It Reality". A good theme since the dream is nearly forgotten. Kids today really don't know. You'd be surprized.

THURSDAY, Jan. 17 about 60 persons have been invited to a coffee hour at Police Headquarters to hear Agent Harlow Fullwood Jr. announce the plans for minority and female recruitment for 1980.

THE 1970 graduating class of Douglass High is planning the 10-year reunion. All graduates are expected to participate. Contact Lillian Minor Greene - 444-8200 or Narie Norris - 944-1139 or 944-5374.

SPRING IS DUE TO COME early this year. The season can come right now if you plant some seeds in your kitchen window. Something which grows quick and with little attention— that's turnip greens. Simply place a turnip in a pretty cup or small dish with some water and presto, in a few days you have turnip greens popping out, the most beautiful green color and a cute little old plant.

SAME WAY with a sweet potato or a yam and soon you have a brilliant green vine. I'm growing my turnip greens on the 27th floor at Charles Plaz downtown in the heart of the city. What fun.

MAKES your heart leap up as you look toward the end of winter with hope. It's also time to get some seed catalogues and dream evenings away on your summer garden. There are many miraculous plants, new ones, out this year like vines that cover your fence or even your house in less than 30 days and bloom all summer until the first frost. Some vegetables will jump up, they claim, in a few days and grow big in time.

GROUND HOG DAY is Feb. 2 and its slated in the almanac as "cloudy" so that the furry animal will certainly NOT see his shadow. This means six weeks until Spring. Anyhow, whether nor not, Spring is due March 20 at 6:10 a.m. March 30 is Palm Sunday and Easter is April 6.

This is an "even" year and Spring usually comes earlier in an "even" year. Also in an "even" year U.S. presidents and congressman are elected. Soooooooo, look for warm weather in March and for Jimmy Carter to return to his chair in the White House. No problem.

FEB. 18 was the date of the 1979 blizzard, the worst in 100 years. Remember? Feb. 18, 1980 predictions claim it will be very cold and snowy but not in blizzard proportions. Heavy snow is predicted through March's early days but "it won't last" since the warming trend is certainly scheduled.

VERY UNUSUAL, these two words don't exactly describe what's due to happen in the sky in March. For the first time in ages all the planets will be gathered in one half of the solar system with the Sun, Earth, Moon, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn all very nearly in a same straight line.

THE ALMANAC says that the prophets of ages ago said when this happens with a gathering of the plants (gods) in the sky, there is some great change due. The prophets today refuse to say what will happen what with the state of the world today.

WAR is possible. Many secretly hope for it but they say out loud that they hope not. BUT, we can be sure that it will not be politics as usual in Washington. March is the month when the sages say Congress will have to "act quickly and decisively" pronto, on-a grave matter — an issue which has been festering for months.

THE EARTH'S people so weary of poverty and problems could hardly ca- care and some await a conflict saying at least there will be jobs and things will look up economically.

More letters—

Iran: 'C'est dommage'

Dear AFRO:

Every indication points to the lugubrious and disquieting fact that the 50 American hostages, at least at this writing, will neither be home for Christmas nor in the forseeable future. Two basic factors account for this troubling state of affairs:

1. The Ayatollah Khomeini, for all of his bluster and obstreperousness, is not in charge of events.

2. The "students" who hold the hostages appear, in fact, to be the real controller of events. The locus of power, especially in terms of the 50 American hostages, resides with this vociferous and mean-spirited group.

The tragedy of this whole affair is that the 50 American hostages, in contravention to the canons of international law and human decency, are being denied their fundamental freedoms.

The decision of the Shah of Iran to locate in Panama removes the paramount grievance, insofar as the American hostages are concerned, for the Iranian "students" holding and traducing them (i.e., American hostages). Rationality, fairness and elemental justice dictate their release.

The French admonition aptly states my view in this season of cheer relative to the continued detention and debasement of the hostages: c'est dommage. (It is a shame.)

SAMUEL L. BANKS

U of M's scheme against Morgan

Dear AFRO:

I have just read of a proposal to merge the University of Maryland with Morgan State University. The University of Maryland has enough nerve and guts to make this proposal a realistic one.

If we hesitate we may as well forget it. The resources available to the Univ. of Md. are numerous and influential. Cong. Parren Mitchell spoke of the University of Maryland's greed that he has known since his younger years. He also urged the black community to use all of our resources to halt this proposal from making any progress.

First, let me explain what I believe to be the University of Maryland's views on this merger. The merger would satisfy the University of Maryland system's dilemma of low minority enrollment. This move could help the University of Maryland stay out of hot water with H.E.W.'s desegregation plans.

H.E.W. has cited the school system for not meeting any kind of minority enrollment requirement and is threatening to withdraw funding from the school.

Also, the public image of the school system is being questioned. It may be felt that the merger with MSU will be looked upon favorably, not that the school system actually cares. What the merger can not satisfy is the racial attitudes present at the College Park campus as well as other University of Maryland campuses. For any school to become a part of the University of Maryland school system will breed and encourage the mentality that exists within that school system.

Let's look at this proposal from another angle. Assume, if you will, that the merger does not occur. Now, do you honestly believe that the tenured faculty at MSU will maintain that status, or that most of the professors there will be retained for any length of time? Surprise!!

After a while, everything will be hello University of Maryland, good-bye black colleges, and black high school graduates will be left with two-year junior colleges.

What? You didn't forget that the University of Maryland is upgrading its admission requirements, did you?

Upgrading, downgrading, regardless of what term you prefer, the effects are still the same. Try enrolling your children in the University of Maryland school system. Surprise!!

DOUGLAS SANDS, JR., Black Student Union president, University of Maryland, College Park

Leading pensioners down Primrose path

Dear AFRO:

The Maryland Retirement System by encouraging immediate action may be leading its members down a Primrose Path to lose benefits which might otherwise be theirs.

I have been inundated in recent days with calls from State employees who are members of the state retirement system who have the impression that they have to transfer to a new Pension Plan by January 1, 1980.

The fact is that people in the old system do not have to do anything, and in a number of cases it is their advantage to stay in the Old Plan.

I think the Retirement System publication which places emphasis on election to transfer is doing a disservice to many state and city workers.

In a publication circulated by the Retirement System the leading notation states: "The State is introducing a new Pension Plan effective January 1, 1980. You have the option of remaining in the old plan (retirement system) or transferring into the new plan (pension system). This report is intended to provide you with information to help you to decide."

Then the bulletin goes on to emphasize options to transferors in receiving their accumulated benefits.

"The fact is, the main reason I see that person should transfer is that he or she is in dire need of ready cash at the moment.

By not transferring, someone close to retirement age will receive more dollars ultimately under the old plan than they would under the new plan.

Also the automatic cost-of-living increase available under the old plan is superior to the limited three percent increase built into the new.

It is unfortunate and short-sighted that many private agents are using the transfer hysteria to write new retirement plans on persons transferring.

I will write a new plan for anyone who really wants one and should have one but, I won't help lead state and city workers down the primrose path to lose benefits to which they are entitled and may remain entitled by not transferring.

FRANK M. CONAWAY, Insurance Broker and Assembly Delegate, 40th District.

By Marion M. Banfield

'Realizing our potential'

As we enter a new decade, we can look behind and see how little progress has been made in the black community toward a feeling of black power. Our members suggest our potential. Our self-image, our feelings of futility, our lack of hope for strength, our lack of dedication for the education of our children keep a veil of uncommitted fog in our physical and emotional lives.

Housing, jobs (which also include positions in industry), education, respect for each other, and self-awareness continue as major, easily identifiable problems.

Who of us would have thought that Cherry Hill and the whole 6th District would have remained so politically unrepresented about black concerns?

What a fine day it will be when Cherry Hill, Fairfield and South Baltimore blacks proudly overcome their inertia and unite to put in office an advocate for their pressing problems. As for west Baltimore, "Du" Burns was right. We "blew it!"

I wonder if I will live to see those of us who lack money realize that lack of money does not mean lack of intelligence, lack of ability to learn, lack of power to be more controlling of one's destiny.

Martin Luther King, Jr. knew that it took more than hymns and prayers to break the psychological and physical chains of prejudice. He read and related that which he read to the realistic racism and hardships of his immediate environment.

Passive resistance was not just the reading of how a little brown man, Mohandas Ghandi, freed the continent of India from the control of the powerful British Empire. Passive resistance was fully comprehended by the moral and political leadership of Dr. King so that he could apply and teach the great strength of that philosophy.

The English boasted that the sun would never set on their empirical holdings. Such boastings are part of past history. Ghandi and Martin Luther King Jr. understood the lasting strength of ideas. Passive resistance and self-discipline are powers superior to "macho"; to armaments.

No military strength on earth can destroy the human capacity to formulate ideas. It was ideas, it was understanding of the human mind and the self-discipline built in faith in human power that has brought the end, or at least the lessening of one sector of humanity enslaving and exploiting another group of humans.

In this decade may we develop ideas for change and survival based on understanding and great potential as thinking human beings.

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT AGING

Hysterectomies — pro and con

Hysterectomies are the most frequently performed operations in America—a fact that has caused no end of controversy in recent years among physicians, leaders of the women's movement, and the public in general.

It is not my intent to enter into that controversy here. I would, however, like to shed some light on the operation which, if present trends continue, will soon have been experienced by half the natural women aged 65 or over.

What exactly is a hysterectomy? A simple hysterectomy is an operation in which the uterus and the cervix are removed. A total hysterectomy is one in which the ovaries and the fallopian tubes are also taken.

As far as operations in general are concerned, hysterectomies are considered relatively safe, having a mortality rate of under two deaths per 1,000 operations.

The fact that they are fairly safe may have helped contribute to their recent "popularity," if I may use such a word.

That fact, however, must never obscure another truth: a hysterectomy is an operation and, as such, it should be undertaken only for sound medical reasons. Sterilization is seldom one of those sound reasons, especially in cases involving older, post-menopausal women.

Sound reasons do include:

—The correction of uterine prolapse, a condition that occurs when the uterus loosens and slips down from its proper position into the vaginal tract.

Uterine prolapse can come simply with advancing age; it is also seen among women who have had a number of children (Pregnancies stretch the ligaments that hold the uterus in place).

—The elimination of fibroid tumors. These benign tumors are rather common and do not always cause problems. When they do, a hysterectomy is usually recommended.

—The treatment of endometriosis (the encroachment of uterine tissue upon surrounding organs).

—The treatment of severe bacterial infections that have attacked the pelvic area. And.

—The removal of uterine cancer. (Since the widespread use of the pap test, which can detect them at very early stages, uterine cancers are not the dreaded life-takers they once were).

We have noted that a hysterectomy is considered a relatively safe operation. Naturally, that consideration presupposes a certain degree of stability on the part of the patient—and here is where the patient's age can become a factor.

Although studies have shown that women several years past 65 can tolerate gynecological surgery quite well, few such operations are performed on women who have reached 75 and over.

On another matter, a reminder that effective January 1, people between 65 and 71 may earn up to $5,000 a year without losing any Social Security benefits. The increase is $500 a year over current levels.

For those under 65, the annual earnings level will be allowed to rise from $3,480 to $3,720 before benefit deductions.

Beneficiaries 72 years old and older may earn as much as they wish and still receive all Social Security benefits.

SPEAKING OUT: Self-condemnation

By Francis Griffin Sr.

At the basis of our quandary as black people in America is our tendency to submit to self - condemnation. This can be traced to the crippling effect of long years of the deliberate miseducation of blacks. We have been exposed to a devastating form of "mind reconditioning" since our forced introduction to "slave life" under English settlers and their decendents in North America. We have been subjected to negative re-education for such a long period of time, we have been damaged immeasurably.

We have been told so long that we had no history, no ancient civilization, inferior minds, that we are not entirely human, it has damaged the mentalities of more of us than we like to openly admit. Far too many of us believe these things to be factual, often without being aware that we do.

The first thing modern - day blacks need to realize is that we are equal to whites — if anything, we excel them intellectually, ethically, morally, and religiously. It is a fallacy to believe that an oppressed, poor people can be the strongest influence in creating and contributing to the shaping of an immoral society.

It should be clear who creates and maintains an immoral society. For instance, who introduced the use of harddrugs and the illegal sale of such in this society? Certainly not the immoral, ignorant, lazy blacks; it is obviously whites who have the money and connections necessary to do so. Who introduced and run crime syndicates? Blacks? Right away, we know the impossibility of such. If this does not get it, recall that John Dillinger, Al Capone, Baby Face Nelson, Dutch Schultz, Charles Manson, James Jones, by no stretch of the imagination could be classified black.

If this is not sufficient, think about Julius Caesar, Nero, Henry VIII, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Adolph Hitler, Richard Milhaus Nixon, Spiro Agnew, John Mitchell. Are they blacks?

This is not to imply that we are not capable of similar acts, but that the cold facts of history reveal that whites are responsible for most of the ill that prevails, and that from this we should learn that all problems are human problems, not problems of a particular race or ethnic group. The dominant group in any civilization or society has to be the cause behind the moral decay of its domain.