Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Juvenile crime wave

Six teen thugs invaded a local church Wednesday night this week, brandished shotguns and robbed law-abiding worshippers as they read the Bible.

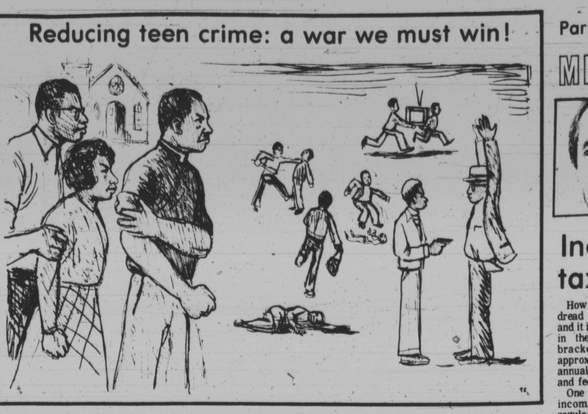
If anyone doubts the grave and immense proportion to which juvenile crime has expanded in Baltimore just keep the above tableaux in mind. Most of us have been conditioned to believe that at least our houses of worship are sanctuaries from the fierce urban storm which swirls all around us.

Nothing is sacred now. What seems to have developed is a generation of our young people which respects no tradition and honors no moral code.

Latest statistics from the Baltimore police department indicate that juvenile crime goes beyond epidemic proportions. Some 46 percent of all crime committed here last year was by teens. Some 18409 juveniles were arrested and their combined criminal histories add up to 47,509 prior arrests. Not all of this ghastly total of juvenile crime can be laid at the door of economic deprivation or joblessness. We think too many parents have either given up on guiding their youngsters down effective paths of behavior or else themselves sanction criminal activities on the part of their offspring.

Something is radically wrong with a community whose crime is almost by half committed by children. The answers must come from home and church. Not that we exempt our educational school but in the last decade public school administrators have increasingly taken the position that the class room is not the appropriate setting for exercises in discipline. We most likely do not agree with that feeling but it is there and so the ball as far as juvenile behavior is concerned is Black Legislators and Schaefer with parents and church.

It is a ball home and church have fumbled.



Sending the 'New' Schaefer a message

Madeline MURPHY

This week black elected officials issued strong demands to Mayor William Schaefer.

They want much more minority equity in city development projects, particularily those funded under bond issues.

They also want the mayor to cease his practice of packing city boards and commissions with the rich, white and affluent and to begin choosing city policy makers from the abundant supply of responsible, articulate and knowledgeable black Baltimoreans.

Schaefer has deliberately structured these municipal ruling bodies in a disproportionate ratio since the day he took office.

Councilperson Kweisi Mfume, one of the two new black members of the council, has called immediate attention to this appointment philosophy of Schaefer's, terming it "racist and sexist."

On the evidence it is a fair assessment.

We would urge all black elected officals to unify on these two important concerns:

There must be black equity in all city contracts and the over 80 percent white and male ratios on city boards and commissions must be reversed and brought in line with this city's real demography.

'Eat it anyway'

Anyone old enough to remember Pearl Harbor, is smitten today with a haunting case of deja vu.

Because the provocation leading to that assault was an embargo on much needed steel by this country against Japan.

Cut off from a prime necessity, the Japanese were provoked into retaliating in an act of war.

We poor slobs—husbands, sons, lovers, brothers and fathers—were the pawns of a high level economic chess game expanding World War II.

Dollars it was then; dollars it is now—the motive behind the Iranian Afghanistan debacle.

For oil, not steel, is the high stake of this chess game, but now with interchangeable partners including the European and Mid-Eastern communities.

And now we see boycotting the Olympic games comes after high level propagandizing on the home front.

For in an election year, when the nation's economy has gone haywire, when a threat of recession means spiralling unemployment at a time when food, gasoline, utilities are at an all time high, what better diversion than the rallying call of patriotism? This is a symbolic gesture to galvanize patriotic unity against an innocuous event—the Olympics—and at the same time identify the enemy.

Television today, the omnipresent expectant mother, has suddenly given birth to a degenerate seed of biased reporting, slanted news stories that conceal the perfidy of U.S. foreign policy, fraught with intrigue, that supports other repressive governments like the shah's, infiltrated by a silent father, known for his illegitimacy—the CIA.

At this rate television should have its tubes tied!

Each time the situation reaches check mate in the case of the hostages in Iran, our moves deftly shift to some other crisis away from the shah, the main piece of the game that must be surrendered.

How long will the American public be duped into substituting easy scapegoats that will plunge us into WWIII?

While the draft seeps again into the public rhetoric, how quickly we have forgotten our police actions in Korea and the long Vietnam War, based upon similar motives attributed now to Afghanistan?

Yet what have we precipitated in our aggressive moves in 1978 in Afghanistan to bring about this brinkmanship?

Answers to these and other questions about our foreign policy in that part of the world are not forthcoming because the State Department, mouthing democratic principles and human rights, cannot afford public scrutiny.

All of the above have to do with black gold; have to do with escalating oil prices; have to do with the shadow government here at home determined to squeeze us dry with higher prices for a profiteering oil cartel eventually cornering the world oil market.

Isn't it frightening that our government in its impotency, can be so easily manipulated by raw power?

Yet in all this danger with diversion, where are the public and political voices of reason? (Campaigning on the safe emotional issues of patriotism, the scoundrels.) Where are those who have knowledge about these dissemblings, who fear another world war?

Who will brake the dizzying roller coaster of hysteria before the minutes run out? Before doomsday?

And at the same time; it is disheartening to raise Muhammed Ali to world leadership, whose pat poetic phrases develop a cult around him, equally deficient in an understanding of world politics.

Listening to his contradictions about the Olympics and the USSR in face of his glowing interviews about that country a scant six months ago; his call to war when his draft resistance was based upon principals of peace his acknowledgment that there are good and bad Moslems, yet giving no assessment of the reign of terror of H. Amin in the Democratic Peoples Republic of Afghanistan, should taint his credibility with most thinking black Americans.

Further his star status certainly runs counter to the statement of his leader, the Hon. Wallace Muhammad, who sympathized with efforts to make Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday, but stated that "The problem with America and the world is that we exalt personalities rather than the ideas those personalities bring."

We, too often, have swallowed the pablum of U.S. propaganda because it is effortless as against chewing over the cantily circulated hard meat and grist of our foreign policy. Digestion is easier with pablum and heartburn can often be a detestible aftermath of incomplete mastication. But we shall have to risk the discomfort and digest the hard facts.

Like we used to say to our children when they refused to eat something that was good for them: "Eat it anyway!"

We cannot, must not, ignore our infamous history.

Park Heights focus

Leo Burroughs Jr., a community worker fired in the Park Heights Community Corporation (PHCC) won his job back following a stormy public meeting last week.

Burroughs had been fired summarily and he sought a public meeting to overturn what he called a "political" termination of his services.

Several conclusions come to mind in the wake of this excitment at PHCC. One is that some PHCC board members, if resentments by citizens at the meeting are an indication, apparently have demonstrated a disdain for the people they supposedly serve. Another is that PHCC's track record of community successes is spotty at best and non-existent at worse.

PHCC operates largely on funds administered through the Department of Housing and Community Development. We sense that HCD has been less than really supportive of PHCC since its inception and has had little real interest in this neighborhood development agency growing to any significant degree. HC officials have, in the past, attempted to document for us the considerable amounts of monies poured into Park Heights but-we see no visible change.

At best, in PHCC, we see a few professional and or administrative staff members drawing salaries, which is fine, we need all the employment opportunities we can get, but we do not see much behind this small payroll for the Heights. What PHCC and the people it serves should do is take a long hard look at the pay masters downtown. The fight obviously is not between a handful of blacks within or on the boundaries of PHCC but Park Heights against HCD. We hope Park Heights residents see the struggle in this context and cease to squabble over 10 jelly beans while downtown diverts the real riches elsewhere.

Infamous moments of the 70's

Just thought I'd recall some infamous racist moments of the 70s in sports:

Lou Brock losing his court case; Catfish Hunter and others winning the same type case. Homer Rice getting the job that should have been given to Eddie Robinson, the coach of Tennessee State or Jackson State.

John McKay not getting the Coach of the Year because of having Doug Williams as quarterback. The amazing number of black quarterbacks who led major white colleges to championships and were switched to other or no positions in the NFL. The amazing number of fifth rate white baseball players who were given jobs as managers and the fantastic black players who were not offered anything.

The insult to Hank Aaron by Sports Illustrated, Howard Cosell and others by comparing Mr. Oh's home run record with Hank's because he eclipsed Babe Ruth. Sports Illustrated, Cossell and other media praising Maurice as an enforcer because he slugged Darrell Dawkins with his fist in the head from the rear and then having Kermit Washington lose a suit because he struck a guy (Rudy T) who was bearing down upon him from the rear in a free for all fight. I ask any reader to imagine themselves in a not or free for all and turning around just n time to see anybody, black or white charging toward them. Would you assume they were peacemakers and shake hands or would you try to hit them with a haymaker? I rest my case.

Cosell's continuous criticism of black running backs failure to produce only because their teammates don't block, thereby getting gang tackled and stripped of the ball but berated as habitual fumblers.

Tom Landry's habit of trying to spotlight Staubach and suppressing players like Calvin Hill, Bob Hayes, Henderson, Dorsett, Duane Thomas, Jeah Fugett and others at the premimum cost of losing key games.

The large number of white third rate footballl players given coaching jobs and the black superstars who were not. Ditto for basketball!

The NFL camera crews who make it their specific goal to ignore the great black college bands and shapely black cheerleaders and baton twirlers to focus on some skinny blonde or white spectator in the stands.

Bill Russell and Lennie Wilkins not getting NBA coach of the year award when they won the title.

Last but not least, White America continues to berate Muhammad Ali for not joining the service although he won his case in the Supreme Court, and yet praise Jimmy Carter for pardoning all the red - neck draft dodgers who fled to Canada and other countries!

NORM E. SHANKLIN

LETTERS

'The black church—still strong and vigilant in our struggle'

Dear AFRO:

Recently I attended a meeting of the Inter-Denominational Ministerial Alliance, and like most people who come to the church I was looking for help.

I was seeking the support of this group of predominantly black ministers for the Freedom Ride to Annapolis on February 5th for support of rent control and support of raising the welfare grants.

Without hesitation this group gave its support. But while sitting among these proud black men, sharing some food and fellowship I was personally overcome with a feeling that this was a place I could allow myself to relax. I found my whole being - my body and spirit being taken over.

While I don't measure myself as devoutly religious I do have a strong faith, but like many people - ego sometimes gets in the way. But on this day, at this time, there was no ego - just an awareness of what we as blacks have come through and what we must do to continue our struggle.

The newly elected president - Rev. Marion Bascom was making his statement and it was evident that he and his colleagues were reaffirming their faith and their commitment to the struggle. I could only cry, not out of any sadness, but out of the realization that the church, the black church as it has always been, is still strong and vibrant in our struggle.

Historically the black community has been and is being systematically attacked through its institutions, families, schools; the black church has not escaped.

Institutions created by blacks to respond to black needs have always been targets of a racist and insane society. The black church served as a means of hope and regeneration to our forbearers, it became the place, the setting, the means that we as a people fought to keep our spirits alive.

For the attack on the black community in whatever form is an attack on the very spirit and essence of our being as a people.

There are those that feel the black church does not meet the current needs of our community such as analyzing our problems and providing leadership and energy to solve these problems.

However, the black church by its very existence has been and is still in objective defiance to this society and has been the foundation upon which we as blacks have launched our many struggles.

The black church has contributed to our people's direction through analysis and understanding, hope through victory and strength through faith.

An accurate accounting of this country's history would show that it was and is the black church that has been the moral fiber to hold this country together.

Not only have blacks benefited from the moral leadership of the black church, but in leading the struggle, the black church has been the institution to confront the dangerous hypocrisy of this nation as a whole.

Leadership - both religious and political - has come from the black church.

We need only remember our dead to understand the role of the black church in the black struggle.

Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Marcus Garvey, Elijah Muhammed, Malcolm X and the Prophet Dr. Martin Luther King. These and many others had their nurturing in the black church.

Yet while honoring and remembering our dead - what about the living? what about now? The black struggle goes on and central in our struggle is our black church. It still produces leaders, locally, the Rev. Vernon Dobson, Rev. John Bryant, Rev. Marion Bascom, Rev. Phillips, and many, many more, nationally, Rev. Jesse Jackson and Rev. Andy Young. Also include the deacons, the sisters and those who model our lives after these products of our church.

It well may be that some feel the black church is not living up to its role but I wonder what most of us have done lately to strengthen this institution.

If change is necessary then one individual cannot affect this change by not standing on the shore and disparaging what is not being done but by jumping in the water and making waves.

The very ripples of these waves will be the gift to blacks yet unborn. From the time of Jesus and the prophet Mohammed; the church has stood in firm defiance of oppressive man-made systems, in defiance of and in acknowledgement of man's inhumanity to man.

The black church, our church, has given and is giving full and unmeasured leadership and hope to black people and to all peoples.

BOB CHEEKS
Executive Director,
Baltimore Welfare Rights Organization

AFRO welcomes letters

The AFRO welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be brief and must bear the writer's name and address. All letters will be given consideration for publication.

U of M veep refutes student's charges

Dear AFRO:

I hope your readers will not accept Douglas Sands' erroneous assertions in his letter which you published on January 12, 1980. His information is inaccurate; the University of Maryland has never proposed a merger with Morgan.

However, Dr. Sheldon Knorr, Commissioner of Education for SBHE did suggest that such a merger might be considered. But, his recommendation was never reviewed with anyone at the University of Maryland. It came as a surprise to us.

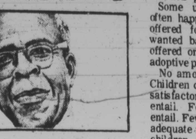
I think it was presumptuous of Mr. Sands to say what he thinks the views of the University are on this matter. If he had taken the time to call me, or President Toll, or any other informed person, he could have avoided the errors in his letter.

It is unfortunate that our relationships with Morgan have been misrepresented. I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Sands. I hope he will give me a call and let me explain the nature of these relationships.

Indeed, I would be happy to hear from any of your readers who may have got the wrong impression from his letter.

ROBERT G. SMITH
Vice President
University of Maryland

G. JAMES FLEMING



On teen-age pregnancies

Unwed mothers and teenage pregnancies go hand-in-hand as one of the serious problems of present-day society.

By "teenage" we do not mean 17- or 18-year pregnant women alone. We are referring especially to hundreds of thousands pregnant mothers who are themselves children, who are unmarried (or could not legally marry), and who have very few resources for parenting.

A Baltimore agency has in its records the case of one 13-year-old who is experiencing her third pregnancy. In one Philadelphia neighborhood "nearly every girl over 10 has been pregnant at least once," according to one knowledgeable police officer.

It is not only the unwed status of teenage mothers which is the problem. To a large extent, these girls or women have no father of the child, or children, to help provide for the baby or babies. Most disastrous of all, many of these teenagers do not want their babies.

Unwanted babies often end up being the children who are abused or neglected, with all that such treatment means to children, both for their present and their future.

Some unwanted babies, most often happily for the babies, are offered for adoption. Many unwanted babies however, are not offered or, if offered, do not find adoptive parents.

No amount of Aid to Depended Children can meet the bills which satisfactorily bringing up a child entail. Few one-parent families entail. Few one-parent families are adequate for the demands of small children, even if they are wanted children.

Sad to say, numbers of these teenage mothers do not stop at one baby. With two or more babies, their problems grow and their babies suffer. Now, it becomes a case of quantity versus quality babies. Often, it is a case of unwanted versus wanted babies.

Several agencies, such as the Child Welfare League of America, located in nearly every state, are organized to help teenage pregnant girls who are not prepared to take care of themselves and their babies, or do not have parents or husbands to help take care of them and their baby or babies. In Baltimore, there is the Florence Crittenton Services, while the Department of Social Services also has a program. Baltimore's Department of Education operates the Lawrence Paquin School, a special high school for teenage mother-to-be and mothers, in the hope that these young people will not be forced to become unskilled dropouts.

Most concerned people point out that communities must start before teenagers become pregnant. There is need for more sex education and marriage counselling in the schools, in churches and in families. Television, also, can help.

In writing about teenage pregnancies, it cannot be forgotten that young women, regardless of their ages, do not become mothers in isolation. There is always a man or a boy involved—intimately involved. The law can "take care" of adult males who are sexually involved with minors. In the case of teenage mothers, however, the fathers are, usually teenagers themselves (when the particular father is known). The plight of a baby, where both parents are earningless, unprepared, and sparsely provided for, is especially bleak.

While society makes some little attempts at making girls aware beforehand of the ups and downs of teenage pregnancy, of all the angles of irresponsible sex, almost nothing is being done for young men and male adolescents. For them there is no pre-sex or pre-marriage counselling, no psychological preparation, no insights into the economic implications of sex and parenthood.

Parents have a speical responsibility, by their own example or directions, by their closeness to their children, by their sharing their children's (especially their daughters' anxieties), and by their having compassion and understanding where they have not been able to prevent teenage pregnancy outside of wedlock (some would say "wedlock or its equivalent").

This is no review of cold statistics. This is a plea for the welfare of babies, unable to make decisions for themselves. Sometimes, babies both in the direction of the newly born and in the direction of their parents.

FOR ALL WE KNOW

City Editor

MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT

THE SWEARING-IN RITES held at the Court House for Judge Robert M Bell were jovial, highly jovial and complimentary to the admirable young man BUT—

THERE'S SOMETHING objectionable about all those swearing-ins and I think it is because of the horrible "greater-than-thou", grandiose appearance of the judges who sit sternly row on row and frown and try to look like they want to send everybody to the gas chamber.

I SAT on the front row in the audience and saw several jurists whom I had known when I was a long time court reporter for the AFRO, looking like "bad guys" now that they have ascended to the Supreme Bench.

AS ORDINARY lawyers, some of them used to beg me to put their names in the AFRO and I have very clear memories of them scratching in every hole at the Court House to get a case that would put their names on the wind, so to speak, so they could make a dent and a dollar as an attorney.

I WAS on the Court House beat 15 years and I can recall some of those jurists who now frown and look mean, as ragged attorneys anxious to get plenty of black citizens' cases. One of them who was termed by a guest at the Swearing-in as "sure must be a hang judge" was in my day at the Court House one of the nicest persons I have ever known.

SOME OF THE JURISTS have merited the term "a 20-year judge"; a jurist who hollers out "20 years" before he even hears the case (so the folks about town tell us here at the AFRO)

AND SO THERE they sat on this occasion when the Supreme Bench is admitting one of the most brilliant and knowledgeable jurists, Judge Bell, who has earned the respect of lawyers and prisoners as well by his remaining humane and not-false in any way.

NOTEWORTHY was the fact that Judge Bell in his speech recalled his arrest when picketing at the protest against a local place of public accomodation which in 1960 refused black citizens even a cup of coffee. Attorney Juanita J. Mitchell represented him as she did most of us freedom riders who were locked up. Humbly Judge Bell thanked her. Knowing him personally through the years, I already knew Judge Bell as one who is never haughty nor filled with pretense.

AT THE DAWN of Black History Month, I felt the black jurists and lawyers who spoke should have grasped the opportunity to say this new jurist from an humble family is making a new day on the bench, one far from the stereotype "bad, mean type", the kind that scare the defendant to death, the kind the prisoner knows will not give him fairness and blind justice.

I HEARD ONE JUDGE quoting Robert Frost and James Michner, both white authors when he could have found just as meaningful quotations from Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, Dr. Benjamin Mays, James Weldon Johnson, Booker T. Washington or Frederick Douglass - at the dawn of Black History Month or on any other occasion — when we could highlight our own scholars.

BUT THEN again, we have come a long way at the Court House. One of the jurists who spoke and has now ascended to a higher bench, literally gave them hell downtown about bias and mistreatment of black persons and his daring and fearless investigations turned things around, exposed much of the "big bad" practices behind the Supreme Bench.

WE PREDICT the new associate Judge Bell on the bench harbingers a new era at the Court House. Some of those others whom we do not exactly trust may bask in his goodness and become healed.

PERHAPS IN THE FUTURE the defendants, prisoners at city jail and in the Pen should be invited to Swearing-ins. After all, it's because they are awaiting trial in such great numbers that we have had to add numerous jurists (at those fabulous salaries) to the Bench.

LOOK AROUND TOWN and you'll see grass growing green as if the earth has started warming up here in January. Druid Hill Park's lawns are looking like the middle of March. Some trees are budding.

HEY- listen to this. A recent story on a bank robbery and the approximate $5,000 that's missing, reminds us that we heard by the grape vine that recently a hearse drove up from the South with over $250,000 cash stored in the tires. Bank robbery money from somewhere down there, on the way to New York.

AND, recently after the death of a Northwest Baltimore bar owner, his son was informed of a $250,000 inheritance ALL IN CASH found in the father's safe. The young man told somebody and it got on the grapevine that he didn't know what to do with it, afraid it was bank loot that had been brought to the bar "to be laundered". WOW. Of course we can't track down any of this. There are toooo many missing links.

THE GATHERING of the great planets around March 11 I told you about— when as seen from the Sun on a certain day, Earth, Moon, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, will lie in a straight line — that's when the world crisis will bring on what could be known as World War III. And, most historians predict that's just about the time. The ancient prophets called the celestial event "the gathering of the gods" and today's wise men are saying something's going to happen because of the "gravity waves" such a gathering radiates.

I HAVE HAD many requests to tell about my Indiana folks who were close to the earth. The occasion came after I told about the teacher in the clothes room at school pouring on coal oil for lice the kids had in their heads.

SMALL TOWN people live by the signs of the moon and they always say cut your hair on a growing moon and it will grow. On a waning moon, it will not. Same way with toe nails, cut them on a growing moon. On a waning moon, they will turn in and give you ingrown nails.

PLAN to go on vacation on a growing moon. On a waning moon there are more accidents. Anything you want to increase (like money) do it on a growing moon. When the moon is waxing, you'll lose. Show the new moon a piece of silver, make a wish and watch, you'll hit the number. On a waning moon, your money will get away from you.

MAYBE ALL this is true since when the moon's horns are pointing up, the moon is then exerting the greatest force away from the earth. This force as you very well do know influences the tides. It is bound to have some effect on us small individuals, our crops and our lives.

IN DULL WINTER months, it's fun, odies of fun to sit in a quiet corner and read about such interesting things. Happy reading to you.

More letters

War doesn't solve problems

Now that Mr. Carter wants not only to boycott the Olympics but to enter the brinksmanship competition as well, he should clarify a few things for us.

Did he propose any boycott when tens of thousands of U.S marines invaded the Dominican Republic to fight the Constitutionalist forces? Did he see any danger to world peace when Mr. Ford seriously defended the overthrow of the constitutional and democratically-elected government of Allende as being "in our own interests," after Mr. Nixon had expounded on the "sandwich" theory of Latin American politics?

When Mr. Carter backed the Shah until the end with substantial military personnel and armament in Iran, and later let him into the country, was he concerned that the U.S. had overthrown the popular government of Iran and had maintained an imperial tyrant for 25 years?

When the U.S. sent hundreds of thousands of troops into Vietnam and dropped more explosive power on that little country than was used in all of World War II, did he perhaps think that that event was in the running for the title of "Most Dangerous to World Peace Since WWII"? Did U.S. sponsorship of the Bay of Pigs invasion cause him no worry? Did he ever have doubts about Somoza?

It would seem that, having been whipped by inflation, Mr. Carter noticed that his standing in the polls became directly proportional to the level of his grandstanding internationally. War doesn't solve my problems, and Mr. Carter won't be getting my vote this year.

LUIS RUMBAUT

Is U.S. turning 'red'

Dear AFRO:

On Jan. 15 I received a letter which read: "What will happen to you if the President of the United States goes on national television some Sunday night to announce the existence of a national emergency?" The writer was Gary North who publishes the remnant review, in Phoenix, Arizona.

North said: "You are henceforth prohibited from making any withdrawals of cash from any bank or savings & loan company, except for 'customary' quantities of money.

The bank will decide what is customary. No checks will be honored by the bank for any 'unauthorized purpose.'

"Ridiculous, you say, ...then why has the government already drawn up the emergency plan which includes all the provisions listed in the 'hypothetical' announcement by the President? And why did the Secretary of the Treasury sign it?"

Author North tells us that when he was employed as a research assistant by a congressman he was given the green light to investigate the whole question of government emergency powers. One of these regulations allows the bureaucrats to do the following:

(A) Control and prohibit all citizens band radio transmissions.

(B) nationalize the machine tool industry.

(C) confiscate "excess and surplus real and personal property" owned by private citizens.

(D) shut down the stock market, freezing all share prices.

(E) ration virtually the entire output of American industry.

(F) shut down every private school in the country and take possession of the building for government use.

It seems to me as though we are doing everything possible to convert our country into a Communist nation. Right?

PAUL CHIERA

Thanks, Urban Services

Dear AFRO:

I would like to commend all of the persons working at all Urban Services agencies on the splendid jobs they are doing with the processing of applications for the emergency fuel program.

No program starts off as a big success, but the problems that did arise were quickly eliminated and maybe in the years to come there will not be any problems.

The poor and elderly needed relief from worrying about how they would keep warm this winter and how gas and electricity would be kept on.

CYNTHIA HENDRICKS

AFRO comment

Let's begin at Lake Placid

With all the noise and ballyhoo being made about a proposed boycott of the Olympics scheduled to be held in Moscow this summer, it seems strange that no one has raised the question of "disinviting" the Russians to the Winter Olympics scheduled for Lake Placid in upstate New York next month.

It also seems odd that the United States just this week allowed, permitted, or what-have-you a 20-member Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) boxing team to leave for a 14-day, three-city exhibition tour in Russia. It is fact that the Soviet Aeroflot jetliner flight from Washington for this group was delayed for more than two hours, but the delay had nothing to do directly with the U.S. position on an athletic interchange between Russia and us.

Indirectly the delay was caused by the refusal of Pan American World Airways employees' refusal to handle baggage and tickets for the passengers of the Russian plane. The employees are members of the Teamsters union whose locals have declined to handle flights of the Russian airline in protest of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

As for the fighters themselves they indicated that they had no qualms about participating in sports in the Soviet Union, a position we think a large number of the athletes involved in the upcoming Olympics might take. However, it still seems strange to us why the United States, while vigorously protesting participating in the Summer Olympics in Moscow hesitates to initiate the protest now by (1) refusing to grant permission for such a group as the boxing team to compete in Russia, and (2) demanding that the Olympic committee "disinvite" the Russians for the Winter Olympics at Lake Placid.

In the case of the boxers, the State Department did ask them not to go, but reportedly they felt that they should not abandon the trip because "politics shouldn't mix with sports" and "all the guys deserve to go because they've been training so hard and so long." These same excuses will be offered by athletes who suggest that the United States forget about the proposed boycott of the Summer Olympics, but they must be dreaming if they are unaware about the mixture of politics and the Olympics. They've always mixed, one way or another, and the United States has always ignored a boycott since 1936.

We have no intention of going into the merits or demerits of the proposed Olympic boycott as we think AFRO sports editor, Sam Lacy, has done a good job on that point. But we are concerned as to why the United States cannot be consistent and make their protest go all the way.

It should be just as unfair, unjust, economically bad, or internationally embarrassing to the Russians to apply pressure now in the Winter Olympics as it will be six months from now. If we are angry with the Russians now over the march into Afghanistan, will our anger be any stronger in July than it is in January.

We think the best thing to do is to begin the protest against the Russians by urging the Olympic committee to withdraw the Russians' invitation to Lake Placid.

'Fighting Preacher' eulogized in Virginia

FARMVILLE, Va. — Dr. L. Francis Griffin has been eulogized here as a leader who meant "more than any president" and a freedom fighter appointed by God "to give liberty to those who are bound . . . and downcast."

More than 1,200 mourners heard the tributes to Dr. Griffin who was known across the nation as "The Fighting Preacher" and "The Prophet of Prince Edward."

The tributes were delivered Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 22, by the Rev. J. Samuel Williams Jr. of Farmville and Dr. W. B. Westbrook of Norfolk at the one - hour funeral at the historic, brick First Baptist Church in downtown Farmville where Dr. Griffin's successful protest rallies against segregated public education drew national attention in the 50s.

Dr. Griffin died of a heart attack at his home early Friday morning at about 5 o'clock. He was writing his weekly column for the Richmond AFRO - AMERICAN when he was stricken. He was 63 years old.

Dr. Griffin captioned his final column "Outrage." Most of his columns championed the cause of the poor and oppressed. This one was no exception.

He expressed the need for blacks to develop "a sense of outrage" against racial injustices. "We have a tendency to grin and bear it," he wrote for the AFRO. "We may have to bear it but we don't have to grin."

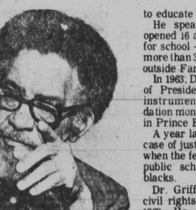
He further wrote that victories for the downtrodden were usually scored by individuals "who possessed a strong sense of outrage."

Dr. Griffin's incompleted column was written in long - hand on a yelow legal pad.

AFRO Editor Raymond H. Boone, upon learning of the death of Dr. Griffin, said "Freedom and justice had no mightier champion" than the Farmville minister and said that the AFRO was proud and honored "to provide Dr. Griffin a forum to tell us what we needed to hear — rather than what we wanted to hear."

Dr. Griffin, a native of Norfolk, volunteered for combat in World War II, earning the nickname of "The Fighting Preacher." Although a Baptist minister, Dr. Griffin became a combat soldier. He said he did so to better understand how warfare affected human beings and to help him develop a philosophy and plan for peace.

The late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called Dr. Griffin "a giant among men" and "a modern social prophet" in tribute to his leadership for quality education in Prince Edward County before the Supreme Court's 1954 decision outlawed segregated public schools.



Dr. L. Francis Griffin

In 1951, when black students walked out of the then R. R. Morton High School in Prince Edward County to protest inadequate facilities, they chose Dr. Griffin as their leader.

The walkout led to an NAACP suit against segregated schools that was the foundation of litigation against the state and county for years.

When the white school board closed Prince Edward Schools in 1959 to avoid - court - ordered integration, Dr. Griffin began efforts to educate 1,700 black students.

He spearheaded a drive that opened 16 activity training centers for school - less blacks and placed more than 300 youngsters in schools outside Farmville and the state.

In 1963, Dr. Griffin sought the aid of President Kennedy who was instrumental in securing foundation money to set up free schools in Prince Edward.

A year later, Dr. Griffin and the case of justice scored a big victory when the federal courts ordered all public schools to be opened to blacks.

Dr. Griffin became involved in civil rights efforts as far back as 1939. He assisted the late Dr. Vernon Johns, former pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church of Montgomery, Ala. who preceded Dr. King in black drives against racism and segregation in Montgomery.

Dr. Griffin was a voracious reader. Shelves loaded with books covered the walls of his living room and other areas of his home.

He frequently came to Richmond on "shopping trips" with his wife. While his wife shopped at downtown Richmond department stores, he would visit the nearby offices of the AFRO and the NAACP, often reminding the leaders of these organizations that greater efforts needed to be made by black people to win freedom for black people. "We nad a good arrangement for our trips to Richmond," his wife, Mrs. Adelaide Griffin, recalled after the funeral.

S.W. Tucker, the veteran NAACP attorney who worked with Dr. Griffin in litigation against segregated schools in Prince Edward, told an AFRO reporter "public education as we know it in Virginia may not have survived if it were not for him."

Jack W. Gravely, executive secretary of the Virginia NAACP that Dr. Griffin once headed as state president, lauded Dr. Griffin for his "stern dedication to the task" and his uncompromising stance "when it came down to truth, justice and betterment of black people."

All 500 seats — except those reserved mostly for the Griffin family — were filled at the church two hours before the funeral began at 3 p.m. Mourners also stood around the walls of the church.

Across the street at Beulah AME Church, another crowd of about 600 persons filled the pews. A special communications system was set up to accommodate these mourners.

Despite a cold, steady drizzle, a constant stream of persons, including school children with books under their arms, came to the church to pay their last respects to Dr. Griffin. The school board had closed the schools for a half day to give the students and teachers the opportunity to attend the funeral. A generous sprinkling of whites was among the mourners.

They saw Dr. Griffin dressed in a pin - striped blue suit with a gold NAACP pin in his lapel, a cross across his chest and an opened Bible in his hand.

An American flag was draped over his bronze casket that was taken from the church he pastored for more than 30 years.

In addition to his wife, survivors include three sons, Leslie Francis Griffin Jr. of Brookline, Mass.; Charles Henry D. Griffin and Eric B. Griffin, both of Farmville; three daughters, Mrs. Naja Denise Johnson of Los Angeles, MRS. Mignon Diane Bailey of Brookline, Mass. and Mrs. Cocheyse Juliette Epps of Jacksonville, Fla.; a brother, Charles A. Griffin, Enfield, Conn., three sisters, Mrs. Susie Bandy, of Bluefield, W. Va.; Mrs. Roxie Ezell, of Charlotte, N.C., and Mrs. Marian Anderson, of Martinsville, Va.