Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

Founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1840-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City Inc. Carl Murphy (1889-1967) Editor-publisher (1922-1967).

PAGE 4 FEBRUARY 2, 1980

Not enough

We find the proposals by our black elected officials to Mayor William D. Schaefer on increased equity for black Baltimoreans in the areas of involvement in city-let construction and other contracts to be reasonable demands.

Further We find the black legislative caucus' proposal that the M? ayor began to initiate a policy of one-on-one replacement of blacks for whites as board and commission vacancies occur to achieve racial parity within the municipal policy structures to also be quite reasonable.

To tie in these demands with a threat to block passage of city bond issue legislation in the General Assembly, however, the wisdom of hindsight informs us, was not all that smart.

Schaefer has said "no bet" and countered with something which is in the percentage of about 15 percent minority (or in this case) majority participation in city-let contracts.

Some will say this is 15 percent more than we have been getting. Others feel that having not won the 25 percent they asked for, the legislators should have told the mayor to jump in the Inner Harbor.

With a General Assembly which is strongly anti-Baltimore to begin with (the urban-rural schism,) we wonder just how our lawmakers would or could have delivered on their threat.

The community has come away from this encounter with crumbs. Individual politicians may have made their accomodations with the M? ayor in the percentage game played out this week but we do not see how the black neighborhoods of this city have come out ahead.

It is back to the drawing board for our elected officials. They are capable of achieving much more. -BC-

D.C. held hostage

Four Maryland lawmakers who happen to be Jewish have attempted to connect the issue of full voting rights for the citizens of the District of Columbia, a predominantly black city, with the stand some black leaders have taken on Middle East politics.

When a delegation of political leaders from Washington went to a Annapolis a few days ago to persuade the Maryland General Assembly to support the constitutional amendment that would enable D.C. citizens full voting representation, four Marylanders tried to equate the position of the Rev. Walter Fauntroy on Israel, Arab and U.S. relations with the rights of Americans to vote.

The four Maryland legislators took the position that Fauntroy's statements embracing the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab extremist group, was enough to cause them to switch their votes from a pro-Washington full rights amendment to hard "nos".

We find this thinking most regrettable.

For one thing Reverend Fauntroy has a right to any foreign policy position he so chooses just as Americans of all races have a right to a pro-Israel stand if that, in fact, is their honest feeling in the matter.

Fauntroy does not speak for everyone.

For another thing the issue of full voting rights for D.C., the Federal City, is strictly an American issue and should be subject to no considerations from outside these parameters.

Fortunately responsible Jewish leadership has moved to place the D.C. amendment question in its proper perspective.

American Jewish Congress executive director Henry Siegman has said that while he understands the feelings of some of his co-religionists, AJC supports the DC.C. amendment because it is necessary to "enfranchise" the residents of the District of Columbia.

"The misguided efforts of certain Maryland legislators to link these two events are distasteful and certainly do not reflect the position taken by the American Jewish Community" said Siegman.

A sentiment with which we concur.

Youth joblessness is steadily worsening

Madeline MURPHY

Old values in a new decade

At the beginning of a new decade, one looks forward to fresh starts; closer ties with family and friends; deeper understanding of the trials of black husbands; whose stress quotients are higher, tenser than those of any other group.

What disitresses us older parents, however, is the wicked diverting call by that part of the women's liberation movement geared to finding "me"—"doing my thing" to the exclusion of husband and children.

This doesn't really include the monumental role black women as homemakers, mothers and breadwinners must execute patiently on a tight rope of sexual harrassment and racism.

But even more, the development and nurturing of children who must face the same or worse stresses in a life that hasn't gotten easier only more complex, as racism becomes more diabolical and sinister. It is a full time job surely to overcome crises and at the same time reinforce self worth.

What, then, are the priorities in this rat race?

Can black women against this background, really do their "own thing," go their own ways, without destroying that delicate balance between encouraging the fragile egos of black men and strengthening the resolve of often harassed black children?

Can seeking one's identity be done in a vacuum, anyway?

Is their task since the 112 years or more from emanicipation much different today than that of slavery?

Have their duties been lightened or have their burdens increased as their roles have become broader?

And hasn't much of the frustration of being black women been hampered by the anxiety of not being able to take on every opportunity, made them more agitated, unhappy and unbending?

No matter how loud the Siren song becomes as we are lured to the rocks that destroy marriages, children's growth and development, deosn't it still remain that our liberation from hearth, school, church, cannot be accomplished all at aonce?

For the role of black women in the home will always be the focal point. Will always demand our metitulous attention, our inevitable struggle to keep things together, to program our children to survive and prevail.

Certainly we black women must fight on the hustings for equal pay for equal work, for equal rights, recognizing nevertheless that we must bear a life made more difficult.

But even so, our jobs as nurturers, as loving partners, as sacrificial lambs, if you will, do not disappear. They become part of the conflicting signals we shall always hear, that merely stimulate our brains to cope with more duties done more efficiently, more lovingly with more acceptance of our unique and innate ability to juggle them with precision.

Then it would seem that in accepting rather than fighting these responsibilities we no longer reduce our days to excursions into self-pity; our few moments together as wives and mothers into recriminating nag sessions. But rather we lock step together unified to challenge a cruel, unjust world.

If we were to take away those ambitions that mean only material aggrandizement, if we were to value personal growth, mutual stimulation; open communication; if we were to accept the uniqueness of our children what more must we ask of life.

Moreover, too many of our children, being carriers of our own poor self images move into alcoholism, drug addiction, crime, broken marriage, self destruction in the name of doing their "own thing."

Further too many of us ignore our history, thus learn nothing from it, consequently make the same stupid mistakes in each generation.

Finally, all too often we fantasize, believe the superficial, neglect the realistic approach of solving problems. We avoid making those hard decisions with our children required of the here and now.

Our road into the 80s can either be like the road to Hell, strewn with good intentions or it can reinforce old values in the spawning ground of a new nationhood, if we face our tasks resolutely.

Even though the cry "It isn't fair" will be heard by no one, let us be reminded that fairness was never promised as a guarantee for a worthwhile life.

Parren MITCHELL

Takers Wanted

Part 1

This week's column was prepared by Ms. Patricia Ives. Ms. Ives is an employee of the Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, and is presently serving as a Fellow with the House Subcommittee on Domestic Monetary Policy, which I chair.

For the nation's disadvantaged, unemployment continues to be a depressing problem in good times, as well as bad. So far government attempts to reduce employment among blacks and Hispanics, teenagers, Vietnam veterans, ex-convicts and older persons have fallen woefully short. Efforts have been directed primarily at increasing private sector employment of disadvantaged persons than has been done to date.

Back in 1971, Congress created the Work Incentive Program (WIN) to encourage private employers to hire and train welfare recipients without dependent children. This program has been extended to January 1, 1980, and now covers welfare recipients with dependent children. Under WIN, employers engaged in a trade or business are allowed a credit against their tax liability for training or employing welfare recipients and work incentive registrants. However, employers have been discouraged from training or employing welfare recipients and work registrants by the profusion of rules on who is eligible for tax credits, and in what amount, and the WIN program simply has not worked very well.

In 1978, we established two additional programs that provide incentives to business firms to train and hire the disadvantaged unemployed. Now, if only they would! The new programs are (1) the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit Program and (2) the Private Sector Initiative Program. They are aimed at meeting the needs of those in our population hardest hit by unemployment and under-employment.

In the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit Program employers can claim a tax credit for every qualifying worker equal to one-half of his or her first year wages up to a limit of $6,000, and one-quarter of wages paid in the second year.

The Private Sector Initiative Program provides cash payments directly to the employers. Companies can choose either method.

Other proposals such as the Youth Employment Act of 1979, H.R. 4465, are being considered. This legislation would authorize $400 million annually, under the WIN program, to provide up to 50,000 new jobs or training positions for persons who are parents under 22 years old, and in the said of families with dependent children program."

Unhappily, few business firms have taken advantage of the incentive we already provide them to hire disadvantaged unemployed persons. This is puzzling to say the least. It is puzzling because so often we hear business leaders say that "dead-end" public service employment is not the answer to high employment among blacks, Hispanics and other disadvantaged; that the answer is employment in the private sector.

The programs we have passed to date may be flawed, however, in that they all require business to take the initiative in hiring disadvantaged persons. We also must put into effect programs that put the responsibility on unemployed disadvantaged persons to take the initiative in the hiring process. To this end, I am hopeful that in the next session of this Congress, we can examine two new job programs which are under consideration. One is a Youth Investment Program (YIP) for recent and new entrants into the labor force. YIP would provide disadvantaged youngsters with means to increase their human capital, and thereby to enlarge their work and career opportunities.

(Part II next week)

LETTERS

State's college system still segregated, unequal

Dear AFRO:

In Maryland, blacks now constitute over one-fifth of the population and, despite the fact that they attend Maryland colleges and universities in very large numbers, some twenty-six years after the famous Brown vs. the Board of Education Case, their participation in the Maryland system of higher education remains largely separate and largely unequal.

This is apparent not only with respect to options available to black students in Maryland, but also with respect to the paucity of options available to black educators.

The fact that in the governor's new budget we now witness a situation where the University of Maryland-College Park with its very restricted numbers of black students and even more restricted numbers of black educators will reap a funding bonanza while all the predominantly black institutions of higher education in this State (the only ones which hire black educators in large numbers) will in real terms experience budget declines only paints the picture in the most startling hues possible.

For black students wishing to pursue a college education in Maryland, the choice is typically a cruel one of whether to enroll in an underfunded predominantly black institution with an autonomy which is ever clouded or to enroll in a predominantly white institution where the likelihood of their encountering a top-level black administrator or a full-time black professor with tenure (i.e., one with status and power) is only slightly higher than that of a camel passing through the eye of a needle.

Even a disproportionate number of those black professors who do hold secure positions at predominantly white Maryland institutions are restricted to positions having some relationship to "black studies" per se.

It is the University of Maryland-Baltimore County which has a higher percentage of black faculty members than any other "white four-year institution in the State with a whopping 5 percent, and this despite the fact that 20 percent of its student body is black.

More typical of public institutions, however, are the University of Maryland-College Park with only 3 percent of its faculty black, Towson with only 2 percent of its faculty black, Harford County Community College with 1 percent of its faculty black and St. Mary's with 0 percent of its faculty black.

White students who may choose to study at predominantly black colleges in the State are not similarly deprived of self-reflective role models among the professors and administrators.

In fact, except for Morgan, Coppin, and Bowie, every college and university in the State now has a faculty the majority of whose members are white, and even at these three institutions, whites constitute 25 percent, 31 percent, and 30 percent, of the respective faculties.

Actually, there is not one college in Maryland where the percentage of white professors does not exceed the percentage of white students. A case in point is the Community College of Baltimore, where the student body is 77 percent black and where the chief administrator is non-black as is 75 percent of the faculty.

It follows that the only type of integration which has been seriously attempted in Maryland is a perverse type which has left blacks disproportionately under the authority of whites while the reverse is only rarely true.

Although public tax monies in excess of twelve million dollars will also go to 14 private colleges and universities this year, the virtual exclusion of black professors and administrators from those institutions is even more pronounced.

In fact, although it is the Maryland State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) which recommends that appropriation of public funds, it is also the same SBHE which admits that it does not even bother to collect data on the numbers of black professors and administrators employeed by those institutions.

In Maryland, black educators have never been in a position to impact on the education of white students in a meaningful way and as more and more black students venture into predomiantly white institutions with new black professors and administrators, they are having a meaningful impact on an ever diminishing proportion of black students as well.

We must not forget that even the so-called "black-controlled" colleges of Maryland are not ultimately controlled by blacks; they are ultimately controlled from outside by the governor, by the Legislature, or by the various boards and by their funding powers.

It is true, however that of the 44 institutions - public and private - funded by the State, the on-campus administrations of 40 are largely controlled by whites and the on-campus administrations of four are largely controlled by blacks (an extraordinarily interesting proportion in a State where over one - fifth of the people are black).

In fact, even of the four so-called "black-controlled" colleges, it is only the administration of Morgan State University which is not ultimately responsible to a board of trustees or regents most of whose members are white.

Hence, even while there is very minimal black participation in the management of higher education in Maryland, there continue to occur assaults even on this participation.

The latest assaults may be seen not only in the budget of the governor but also in the SBHE plan calling for the merger of Morgan State University.

To the extent that the authorities of this State attempt to deal with such problems as program, duplication, declining enrollments, falling academic standards, and the lack of a first-class university worthy of Maryland's largest metropolitan area without attempting to deal equally forthrightly with the problem of systemic racism and the lack of equal educational opportunity for blacks as students, as professors, and as administrators, they bury their heads in the sand.

As we face the 1980s in Maryland, clearly there must be some immediate attention given to putting in place a system of higher education which supports not only the continuation of full black participation in teaching and management of education at institutions such as Morgan and Coppin, but which also supports and requires its expansion beyond the boundaries of the four traditionally "black" institutions.

While we must continue to insist on adequate funding and meaningful autonomy for such institutions, the thanks of Maryland's black people can no longer be measured in a trade-off which requires our silence about racism within the larger system statewide.

One fifth of the people can not be easily ignored and until we are a part of the management of all the 44 institutions of Maryland which receive our tax money, our struggle is-on-going.

STEFAN GOODWIN, Ph.D., Faculty Senator and Former Head of Sociology Department.

Iranian Quarrel 'Unwarranted'

Dear AFRO:

By referring to the "unwarranted Iranian quarrel with us" in his State of the Union message, President Carter again tried to absolve our government of any responsibility for the Iran cirsis.

But facts are stubborn. The fact is that the CIA instigated the 1953 overthrow of popularly-elected president Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh and put the former Shah into power (the CIA has admitted this).

The CIA trained SAVAK, the Shah's secret police, responsible for murder and torture of thousands and harassment of Iranians in and outside Iran for expressing any criticism of the Shah's regime.

While the majority of Iranians remained poor and illiterate, the Shah lavished nearly one-third of government funds on American military hardware, often used against the Iranian people themselves.

American mult-national corporations flocked to Iran for its cheap labor. Along with Western European companies they helped keep Iran almost totally dependent on foreing imports.

And then the ultimate insult. After warning by the U.S. State Department of possible severe consequences, President Carter allowed the former Shah - Iran's Hitler - into this country for medical treatment he could have undoubtedly received elsewhere.

People, no matter what their feelings about the hostages, should examine the facts and make their own judgements on whether other countries' quarrels with the United States are unwarranted.

ROBERT JACOBSON

City boards, commissions: 80 percent white

No foreseeable change in racist, sexist policy-making structure

By Ann Sagi
AFRO Staff Writer

Fourth District Councilmen Kweisi Mfume and Michael Mitchell have been vocal opponents in recent weeks of Mayor William Donald Schaefer's appointments to city boards and commissions.

They both maintain that the mayor should try harder to find qualified blacks to fill vacancies on boards and commissions.

The state legislative black caucus met with Schaefer this week and bargained their approval of city bond issues in exchange for better black representation on commissions, among other demands.

The AFRO obtained a computerized breakdown of racial and sexual makeup of city boards which shows, as of August 1979, total black participation was 18.8 percent. More than 21 percent of the board members live outside the city limits and predominantly white, affluent areas have the highest rate of representation.

But with the exception of Mfume and Mitchell, none of the other black Council members has voted against any recent white or non-city resident appointments since the issue was raised.

And only one Councilman, Norman V.A. Reeves, 5th District, voiced opposition to an appointment, that of Norman Ramsey as head of the Board of Fire Commissioners, and he voted approval of the appointment.

Reeves said it does not make sense to oppose appointments just for the sake of opposition and "I'm not going to do that."

He does not exactly approve of Schaefer's selections for commissions, but Reeves plans to discuss them directly with the mayor.

Schaefer has gone on record as opposing one-to-one appointments (one black for each white) because it is not "acceptable" and cannot be done.

Even if one-on-one appointments are made, it will not be until 1983 until black representation is 50 percent.

Fourth District Councilwoman Victorine Adams thinks she appointment policy could be improved and that blacks "don't get what we deserve.

"We should have more chances on boards and commissions as well as in the private sector."

Mrs. Adams said she did not join her male 4th District colleagues in voting against recent white appointees because the controversy was raised on the floor during Council meetings.

"Nobody talked with me to say 'Let's do this or let's do that.' I'll go along with anybody if we get together and decide to do something," she said.

Council Vice President Clarence "Du" Burns, 2nd District, said if black participation on commissions and boards is based on a one-to-one ratio, then other ethnic groups will clamour for equal representation.

"That's not the way to go about it. If we break it down to ethnics we're going to get into trouble.

"If we do it on a one-to-one basis, Italians, Poles, Germans and Jews could say the same thing," he said.

Burns feels black Baltimoreans are well represented on the boards "where it's important."

He cited the school board, which has four black males and one black female, and the Planning Commission, whose president is black as are two other male members.

Although he said blacks should have comparable figures to "make sure we get our fair share," he also said racial makeup on commissions is not his "priority. I think it's insignificant at this point."

Finding jobs and decent housing and providing good education are more important, he said.

Burns's district on the Eastside is one geographic area which is poorly represented on boards, as are South, Northeast and Southwest Baltimore.

Statistics compiled by Robert and Regina Bruce, leaders of the Edno r Gardens-Lakeside Civic Association, with the aid of summer youth workers, indicate that white, upper-income areas of the city make up the majority memberships on commissions.

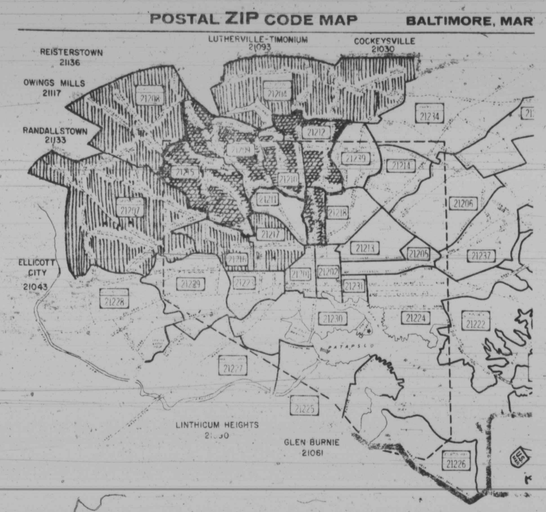
Their conclusion states that if the Northwest area of Baltimore is excluded, non-city residents have more representation that residents in other areas of Baltimore.

Ten zip codes, which encompass such areas as Guilford, Roland Park, Bolton Hill, Mt. Washington, and Baltimore County, account for more than 70 percent of all members studied.

So it is not only blacks who are under-represented, low and middle-class whites are also poorly represented.

It is also noteworthy that raw numbers of black participation may be misleading because in a few instances, one person sits on more than one commission. And three elected officials (Burns, Mrs. Adams and 2nd District Councilman Nathan Irby, who was not available at AFRO presstime) sit on city boards.

Finally, blacks may sit on boards which could be considered having less importance than boards such as Commissioners of Finance, which would increase the numbers but not decision making power.



WHERE 70 PERCENT LIVE — This map shows the areas of the city where more than 70 percent of all city board members and commissioners live. The top five zip codes account for 47.1 percent. The second five extend into Baltimore County.

Low, middle income blacks and whites excluded

G. JAMES FLEMING

War 'just around corner'?

What must a nation, such as the United States, do when and as it finds itself being "squeezed in" by some other nation, or by the rulers of some other nation?

If the squeezed nation is weak—by size or military potential—there is relatively little it can do to repel invasion or attack. If it is militarily strong or strategically well located, it can resist. This is a simplistic analysis for these times, but illustrative.

The question on the minds of most Americans, following President Carter's recent "State of the Union Message," is (1) whether the United States, at the present time, is militarily ready to challenge the Soviet Union, in a place like Afghanistan, and (2) whether our country is strategically well located enough to have an advantage over the Soviet Union, if the two nations should enter into a war situation?

The experts are divided over whether the United States can mount an all-out war against the Soviet Union—the ultimate war situation.

The rest of the nation is also divided as to whether an increased military presence in the Persian Gulf is necessarily the next step, or whether the two superpowers and the Persian Gulf countries should negotiate a treaty which accommodates itself to the rights and needs of all parties concerned.

What the Soviet Union wants most at this time is a warm-water port — the same desires that began under the early czars. Is it absolutely necessary to have a death-dealing war to resolve this quest?

If war is "around the corner," and if the United States, by itself, is not ready, can this nation dependent on its European and Middle East allies? Can NATO be counted on, psychologically and equipment - wise?

Our allies might well ask also, "Is the United States ready?"

It took America four years to equip itself to enter both World War I and World War II. Will we have this much time to launch both men and machines for a World War III?

Many of those opposed to the present rattling of sabres say that any future world war is a "no win" war, that both the nation that is declared the victor and the nation defeated will be wiped out, with much of the rest of the civilized world.

Said in extreme terms: "Whether the Soviet Union takes over the oil fields of the Middle East peacefully (almost peaceful) or whether there is war over threatened take-over, both sides will lose the oil fields."

With the heavy representation of black Americans in the U.S. armed forces, AFRO readers cannot help but be interested and frightened by what is being called "The Carter Doctrine."

Blacks, of course, similar to other Americans, are divided on the new Carter policy, divided as to whether our nation should again be policeman to the rest of the world; as to whether we should intervene in non-American confrontations; as to whether we should risk extending our lines beyond our ability to supply and manage; and as to whether "anything is better than war."

Of only one thing are all Americans certain: Regardless of what happens, from here on, "There is no hiding place" anywhere for any American.

FOR ALL WE KNOW

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

WE WERE HONORED this past weekend by the presence of one of the most interesting personalities in Virginia, Dwight Rodwell of Alberta, Va., a brother of the late Calvin Rodwell, the local policeman, who was murdered while driving a taxi by permission of the department in the fall of 1973.

THE RODWELLS are members of that famed Virginia family which boasts over 2,500 members in Virginia alone. Coming in March will be the dedication of the Calvin Rodwell Elementary School at Hillsdale in Gwynn Oak, and Liberty Hgts. Ave., across from Dyett Funeral Home. The multimillion dollar school is dedicated to Calvin Rodwell.

YOU MAY RECALL Officer Rodwell's funeral was one of the larges: ever witnessed with nearly 200 cars in the procession, police officers from Maryland and neighboring states composing a portion of the procession.

THE GENTLE well-liked policeman was driving the cab during the time when cab robberies were at an all-time high and policemen were put in various taxis in effort to curb the incidents. Officer Rodwell was slain when he picked up a fare at Wilson and McCulloh and drove to the 200 block Aisquith.

A WITNESS said Officer Rodwell was shot after a man ordered him out the cab. The whole town was alarmed at the crime which occurred in October, 1973. Officer Rodwell's wife, Dorothy, and his three children who reside in Columbia, receive his pay check until this day.

HIS BROTHER, Dwight, was also guest last weekend of cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Graves Sr., and brothers Archer Rodwell, a Provident Hospital employee; William Rodwell, a Bethlehem Steel employee; uncles, William Stith, Bethlehem Steel and Jacob Hendricks, retired from Provident Hospital employment.

THE RODWELLS are related to that large family the Stiths, Taylors, Hicks, Blackwells, Johnsons and Shells and others who hail from Virginia roots.

Other relatives include sisters, Mary Alice Griffin, a Petersburg, Va. social worker; Mrs. Doris Shell, a clerk at Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York; brothers Clarence Rodwell, California who is manager at Digital Equipment; Steve Rodwell, an announcer at Radio WSHY in South Hill, Va.;

MOTHER of the Rodwell brothers and sisters is Mrs. Mary Rodwell who resides in Alberta. The deceased father is Willie Rodwell. The children of the deceased brother Calvin are Andre, 19, Dino, 18 and Kimberly, age 14.

UPON CHATTING with School Superintendent Dr. John L. Crew at a luncheon Tuesday we learned that all the Rodwell relatives will be sent invitations to the dedication of the beautiful Gwynn Oak school and will that be some fabulous event.

THEY WILL ARRIVE from all areas of the United States since the family is close-knit. Quite distinguished, the clan includes persons from all walks of life, many distinguished in every field of endeavor. Should the dedication (date not set yet) come near the weekend, I am sure the gathering of the family will be like another reunion, like the one held in the autumn of 1979 at the Convention Center.

THE AFRO will announce the event before the dedication.

The man who brought Dr. M. L. King into the civil rights movement

SAMUEL L. BANKS

By Troy Brailey
Delegate, Ja-D

E. D. Nixon, a well-known pullman porter in Montgomery, Ala. started Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the civil rights movement.

Nixon had spearheaded the Montgomery protest movement since the early 30s. He organized a civil rights organization that was later re-named the Montgomery Improvement Association.

This organization was used as a catalyst for the Montgomery bus boycott movement.

On Dec. 1, 1955, Mrs. Rosa Parks, a seamstress in a department store in Montgomery, was on her way home from work. She was arrested when she refused to move to the back of the bus.

After she was hauled off to jail and booked, Mrs Parks asked the jail officials if she could make a phone call. She was permitted to make one call. Mrs. Rosa Parks called her old friend, E.D. Nixon and asked him to come and bail her out.

Nixon said that he immediately called the jail and asked what Mrs. Parks was charged with. The man who answered the phone said, "None of your g——m business" and hung up.

He said that he called a black attorney, Fred Gray, but Gray was out of town. Then he called a liberal white lawyer, by the name of Clifford Durr, who accompanied him to the police station and they posted bail for Mrs. Parks.

Nixon stated that after Mrs. Rosa Parks informed him of the cruel treatment she received from the bus driver, he decided to organize a boycott against the Montgomery Bus Company.

Nixon said the first person he called was the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, who was an activist and pastor of the First Baptist Church. Then he called the Rev. H. H. Hubbard, president of the Baptist Ministerial Alliance. He said that he also called Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Nixon stated that Dr. King had been in Montgomery only a few months.

After talking to the three ministers and other community leaders, Nixon said that he came to the conclusion that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was the person to assume the leadership of the bus boycott.

He decided on Dr. King for two reasons. First, Dr. King was a brilliant 26 year-old minister with an earned Ph.D. and a very dynamic speaker; secondly, he had not been in town long enough to create much jealousy among the other ministers.

Nixon further stated that when he first approached Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., (who was young and very shy at the time) and asked him if he would assume the leadership of the bus boycott, Dr. King declined.

Nixon stated that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was still his first choice. However, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, indicated that he would be available if Dr. King did not accept, Nixon said.

At a meeting on Dec. 5, 1955, E. D. Nixon asked a friend, Rufus Lewis, to place King's name in nomination to be the leader of the Montgomery bus boycott.

Dr. King accepted and the nomination was carried without opposition.

The rest is history.

Note: Delegate Troy Brailey and E. D. Nixon were both former pullman porters. They worked closely with A. Philip Randolph and often met in his office in New York City.

E. D. Nixon will be the principal speaker at a 25th anniversary observance of the Montgomery Ala. bus boycott sponsored by Leadenhall Baptist Church, 1021-23 Leadenhall St., and the Afro-American Labor Council on Sunday, Feb. 3 at 3 p.m.

A new day begun

A fundamental and tragic factor that has confronted black people historically has been the widespread belief within the majority white society that blacks are not to be taken seriously. Dr. Howard Thurman, a renowned and highly esteemed black theologian expresses the point well:

> Always a way must be found for bringing into one's solitary place the settled look from another's face; for getting the quiet sanction of another's grace, to undergird the meaning of the self. To be ignored, to be passed over as of no account and as of no meaning, is to be made into a faceless thing not a man.

Dr. Thurman, at the beginning of the National Black History Month Observance begun by Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson in 1926, was, prophetically, describing the present state of black America; particularly Baltimore. The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History's national theme, "Heritage for America," has special significance and pertinence for black Baltimoreans.

The New America for most blacks in America reveals a condition of retreat and decline in equal jobs, housing and educational opportunities. Socio-economic conditions among black Baltimoreans are bleak: unemployment among black youths hovers around 50 percent, the highest in the nation; approximately 50 percent of the 450,000 black population are either below the poverty level or exist at an existence at the level of poverty; blacks are disproportionately concentrated in substandard housing; black infant mortality and tuberculosis rank near the top of any nation's cities; blacks and whites live in sharply divided and unequal worlds.

The problems which confront the majority black population in Baltimore are not insoluble. What is required is a decision by Mayor William Donald Schaefer and the City Council to put human possibilities and values before a brick and mortar approach to municipal development. The social and economic problems that weigh so heavily on Baltimore's majority black population must be addressed now. Blacks, too, must be fully involved in the decision-making process in proportion to their numbers.

There is, to be sure, nothing heretical about a group exercising majority control where and when it is in a majority. Black Baltimoreans who constitute 54 per cent of Baltimore's population should now be about this process: Government by the black majority for all Baltimoreans.

The euphemisms "Charm City," "All American City," "B - More," among others, cannot obscure nor diminish the painful and precarious existence that over half the black population endures daily.

The recent paroxysms and consternation shown last February during the "Great Snowfall" of Monday, February 19, 1979, indicates the deep anger, resentment and frustrations of an alienated and growing black underclass in the city and nation.

Rational and thoughtful citizens must deplore looting and deviant conduct, but equally as important, the grim and stark realities that give rise to hostile behavior must also be given urgent and immediate attention.

The kind of mobilization of will and human resources that Mayor Schaefer organized for his aquarium, Harbor Place and more recently, the Baltimore Orioles and Colts, must now be mobilized for human needs and possibilities in terms of schools, housing, health care and jobs.

Additionally, the stultifying placidity and inaction currently afflicting Baltimore's black middle-income residents, must be ended if the majority black residents are to exercise the levers of power and achieve a better quality of life for themselves and their posterity. Too many black middle-income and college-educated are fearful, docile and mute on socio-economic issues of monumental consequence.

Our national observance of Black History Month provides a splendid opportunity for black Baltimoreans to disenthrall themselves and to think and act anew. Dr. Carter Woodson, the venerable and brilliant initiator of Black History Month 54 years later, would be enormously proud.