Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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County injustices

Cornell Estes, 16, has just emerged from an experience so horrifying we marvel that his spirit remains so positive.

On the false testimony of a 13-year-old companion, like himself a resident at a Methodist home for juveniles in Baltimore County, young Estes was tried by a Baltimore County grand jury for the murder of a Social Security employee.

Sentenced to life imprisonment, the youth was into the 15th month of this sentence when county authorities secured his release — admitting off-handedly that the arrest of two other suspects indicated that Estes, as he had always maintained, was innocent.

This of course will not restore those 15 wasted and brutal months young Estes suffered in the Hagerstown correctional facility.

Nor does his release explain just how it is that a young black boy could be railroaded into a prison for the length of his natural life without any protections rising up at any point in our cherished justice process (so-called) to save him from this terrible injustice.

We think Estes' case is just the latest example of how black people are regarded, treated and ignored by the 94 percent white population of Baltimore County.

A county judge has ordered an inquiry into just how Estes was wrongfully prosecuted, found guilty and imprisoned.

We do not expect much from this investigation.

We recall this newspaper's expose of the notorious Green Card situation wherein black youths in the County were issued identification cards by white police officers much the way passes of transit are issued to blacks in racist South Africa.

Those officers, as we recall, were sent to human relations workshops as punishment, when every indication is that they should have been dismissed from the County force.

As the Estes case indicates a similar unfeeling and racist approach to the investigation, prosecution and administration of justice in the County, we do not expect that the special prosecutor to be appointed to this miscarriage of justice will linger on the root causes.

We do hope some accountability comes out of the investigation.

We would strongly urge that young Estes, through his legal counsel, demand proper compensation for his ordeal.

We will follow the special prosecutor's efforts closely as this sort of indifference to the lives of black citizens seems endemic to ostensibly "all-American, true blue" Baltimore County.

If the county administration were at all concerned about the sanctity of its law enforcement and legal systems it would also order a study of police procedures on the part of the county law enforcement workers.

To our knowledge county investigators have never closed certain homicides involving black citizens.

The unsolved deaths of James McAllister, prominent local attorney; school teacher Sondra McMeekin; businessman Allen Phipps and Social Security employee Phyliss Greene, to name four notable recent instances, all of whom were murdered in Baltimore County, are unofficially termed by county homicide investigators as "open."

To be more exact about these tragedies, our information is that the killers in each of these tragedies are known to the County police but for lack of certain evidence these cases cannot be closed nor justice done.

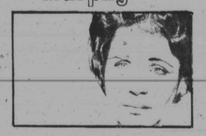
Seeing the Cornell Estes incident in full perspective we say now that crimes in the county where blacks are either the perpetrators (so-called) or victims are handled with the same indifference and ineptitude.

We think a special prosecutor appointed by a county judge paid by the county to investigate judicial and prosecutorial mishaps in said county is an inappropriate response.

"Justice", Baltimore County style, when we add the rising incidence of Klan-style criminal activity also there, gives cause for investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Nothing less is going to make a difference.

Madeline Murphy



Woodlawn mess

The Social Security Administration headquartered at Woodlawn just outside the city is perhaps the single largest federal government employer with its many thousands of workers.

For sometime now veteran black employees at SSA have complained to us that there has been a definite erosion of morality and ethical standards at this federal agency.

Their concern, generated we know out of racial pride and a sense of assuring positive futures for our young people, centered on the behavior of too many younger black workers coming into careers at SSA.

Sexual misadventures (including wife swapping, group sex), drug use, extra-marital relations are all part of the bill of particulars.

Just as seriously racial discriminatory practices in staffing, promotions and just plain bureaucratic ornerriness are also alive and (drever spawned and re-spawned at Woodlawn and other SSA facilities.

Much of this behavior can of course be explained by the very hugeness of SSA. In every barrel there are some rotten apples.

But with the arrest of SSA workers this week on drug-related charges by county and federal police, everyone can see that Woodlawn, described by many of its employees as "Peyton Place," has gotten out of hand.

The incoming Social Security commissioner has issued a directive that the past excesses of some SSA workers will no longer be tolerated.

It is a statement of leadership long overdue but welcome just the same.

The larger point is that taxpayers are hardly in a mood for government employees to be partying, getting high and pursuing who knows what other lusts on our tax dollars.

We cannot do too much about how private enterprise lives its life but we sure as hell can insist that employees of the U.S. Government work at maximum efficiency and not transform our agencies into illicit pleasure gardens.

There are too many decent, law-abiding, self-respecting federal employees of all races and creeds at Woodlawn and other government agencies who make important contributions to serve our community to let this measure be tarnished by the sub-human, ignorant and criminal actions of a few.

Government workers must be above reproach and those who cannot meet the standards of ethical conduct must be rooted out. It holds for Presidents (witness Watergate) and it holds for file clerks as well.

Norman, where are you?

Dear Norman Reeves:

Remember when I wrote about you in the AFRO on Aug. 18, 1979, and suggested that "Ambition, anxiety and downright fear of failure can finally make us choose to be less discerning, less critical, less skeptical, less perceptive of how short term gains may mar long term commitments, with alliances that require pay-back in subtle and insidious forms to political mentors"?

Well reading the recent news article about your silence in City Council since you have been elected, with a resounding number of votes, made me break into my vacation to write about my concerns again.

Especially am I concerned that you have fallen into that tempting tender trap of thinking that silence is somehow golden, on issues that affect black people; that might disrupt your alliances with powerful backers.

No matter how inconsequential things may seem, like black representation on boards and commissions particularly in the unpopular is miniscule when compared to the need for blacks to have a spokesman when outnumbered on all sides. How else can black people know what you are doing and what your stance is on key issues?

1. Increase power through alliances and coalitions. Again, with the breadth of your support, inclusion of that support to undergird legislation, neutralizes the kind of "nonperson" category that white councilpersons invoke when blacks don't play the game opportunistically.

5. Support black nationalism. We've got an awful lot of catching up to do before we deny the fact that racial identity is the only way we can break the back of the system that is racist, for it is this very nationalism and ethnic pride that has put most white councilpersons in their seats today.

All of this, however, is written in the best of spirits, in the desperate desire to see the struggle of blacks help them not only survive, but prevail.

Norman, please help us in this long and bitter struggle.

We want to find out where you are, and then we want to be included in so that we can help you, in the realize that our confidence in your brain and ability is not in vain.

Sincerely yours in truth, love and liberation,
Madeline

G. JAMES FLEMING

Needed: acceptable blueprint

What a great day it would be for the United States and the world if a roundtable of men and women could sit together for a week, or a month, or even a year and produce the working plan that would put an end to gallopping inflation and to threatening depression — — a plan acceptable to everyone, acceptable even to the myriad of "experts."

No such prospect is in sight, however, unless the major powers decide that war is the only rational route to full employment and to a correction of most peacetime malfunctioning.

Short of war there is no blueprint. No blueprint for a peaceful world, with no one exorbitantly rich and no one beastly poor; no blueprint for a world where all those willing and able to work can find meaningful work; no blueprint for a world where the political struggle for power is not often the main force in economic decision-making.

When it comes to the "free world," there seems no hope of unanimous, or near-unanimous, acceptance of any one blueprint. There are too many interests, too many constituencies, too many theories; perhaps even too much freedom.

Nothing wrong, of course, with a variety of interests, constituencies, and theories; certainly, nothing wrong in a democracy. There is a price to pay, however, because, regardless of any plan which is developed and proposed, there is vigorous opposition from all quarters to some aspect of the plan, and from some areas to all of the plan.

Even among enlightened and honest men and women in every country there are grueling differences as to what is "essential" for a nation to support in its national budget. In the Carter new program of economic discipline, defense expenditures are not really touched. This position reflects the temper and tempo of most outspoken voices in America at this time, that the country should be militarily "prepared." At least, this is the White House interpretation of what "the people" want.

On the other hand, the nonmilitary items, the historically non-traditional items, are slashed. For the 1981 fiscal year, there are substantial cuts in funds for economic development conservation, revenue sharing, welfare reform, and mass transit aid. The president also promised to decrease the federal payroll by 20,000 jobs.

In keeping with his administration efforts thus far, the president also expects to make savings through the abolition of waste in the federal establishment.

There are also differences of opinion as to whether restrictions and burdens have been placed on the right people and those best able to carry the burdens.

Who will suffer most from 10 cents per gallon "fee" (surtax) on gasoline? Who will be most inconvenienced by tightening the use of credit cards and other consumer instruments? Who will be affected most by limited expansion of social welfare programs? Who will benefit most, or least, from the balancing of the budget?

Most people will agree that, at least in the short run, those who will suffer most and benefit least from Carter's proposed economic reform, are those who have always suffered in the competition of the constituencies. Take revenue sharing, for instance. If the federal government cuts, or heavily reduces, that program and its funds to the cities, many upward-improvement projects in schools, community centers, and health centers will have to be closed. If basic educational grants are eliminated, some children of the poor will never be able to obtain a college education.

But there is the long view. If inflation is halted, if the national debt is reduced, and if the unemployment picture can be improved, without war, everyone stands to gain.

President Carter is in the position of "Damned if I do and damned if I don't," because no where is there, or can there be in the United States, a blueprint acceptable to all, for dealing with the important and dire problems of the nation.

—LETTERS—

Mysterious behavior of PHCC officials

Dear AFRO:

How many of the Park Heights Community Corporation's PHCC staff members have been mysteriously tossed to the wolves? The first brought to my attention was Anibal Bruisueno, former director of the PHCC Anti-Crime Unit.

The latest, to my knowledge, is Leo Burroughs Jr., community organizer. Both men are unusually intelligent — leaders who are aware of, and sensitive to the problems and pressures that are effecting the poor and black families in the Park Heights community.

Both men are stable and their integrity has been impeccable. These men are, or should I say, were, an asset to the community. Yet, both were mysteriously given the old heave-ho by PHCC.

It seems to me that some clarity is in order. Why are two people of this caliber no longer around to share their talents — to render a needed service to the community?

Burroughs was fired by PHCC last December for a lame reason. I suspect that the real reason was that he got involved with the People's Campaign for Rent Control. You see this might have created fear that such involvement would put the corporation on the spot with the Schaefer administration.

There is also the possibility that he was fired because he had been critical of a questionable and inadequate administration at PHCC.

He was given a (open) hearing on Jan. 17, 1980 at PHCC headquarters and was reinstated. However, in just one week Burroughs was notified that he was suspended with pay, pending a hearing of grievance he had filed charging the PHCC Executive Director Melvin Jackson with constantly harassing him.

March 13, 1980 was the date the board of directors of PHCC held a (closed) meeting to hear Burroughs' grievance against Jackson. Burroughs was fired.

Why was the hearing closed? Are not such meetings supposed to be open to community residents? If not, why not?

Why does a community corporation like PHCC shut its community out? Since the money that really created it is from taxes the community has paid? The existence of PHCC and the existence of similar agencies ultimately depends on the peoples' taxes.

Is it not the people who voted to elect executive board members? It is not the peoples' tax money that pays for the ongoing programs, projects and services?

Is it not the peoples' tax money that provides PHCC salaries?

If so, then why closed meetings such as the one held on March 13, 1980?

You, the Park Heights Community have the right to know, and you should take steps to find out. Closed meetings show the lack of a sense of accountability to the people and rob them of an opportunity to be responsible and to be involved in their community. They also prevent the people from being determiners of their own destinies.

The time is now for the PHCC heads to stop the political intrigue. It is time that they scrap those tactics that have recently stimulated the notoriety in the press. It is time to mold together and rise above personalities for a greater good. It is time to stop being the instruments of outside bureaucrats and politicians who care little about whether we rise or fall, live or die.

It behooves you Big Dogs at PHCC to stop acting like the high and the mighty. You are expected to be servants of the community. This is tremendously important to the life and to the future of Park Heights.

Stop the intrigue. Stop the asinine bickering. It is time to get down to task of directing your energies toward the needs and demand of the Park Heights community residents.

Deacon Americus Roy,
St. Ambrose Church

Josiah H. Henry Jr. —lifetime of splendid service

Josiah H. Henry Jr., lawyer and civic leader, being buried Saturday, 11 a.m. from Bethel AME Church leaves a legacy of firsts in the black community that young men today will be hard pressed to better.

Born Aug. 2, 1896 in Cambridge, Md., his father had the biggest coal and wood yard in town. Josiah Sr. also had a livery stable of 26 horses and all the Henry boys — there were two brothers, Louis and Leon, both undertakers) were introduced to business at an early age.

Not only did Josiah hack down at the wharf but at 17 he was the owner of a profitable confectionery business in 1913, earning $20 a week, which was enough to take care of a large family in those days.

He came from a political family and his uncle Levi Henry was a city councilman for many years in Cambridge, Md. His father was a state central committeeman as was his mother, Mary Wheatley Henry. His mother was a Grand Worthy Matron of the Eastern Star and vice president of the American Legion Auxiliary.

When Josiah Henry Jr. moved to Baltimore after his college days he organized and incorporated the first black Democratic Club in Maryland.

He was the first to organize blacks for public housing. The result—blacks secured the first housing project in the South, the Edgar Allen Poe Homes.

He represented Elmer Henderson in a case against the railroads and segregation in dining cars.

He was the first to institute suit against the University of Maryland and won the suit requiring them to admit blacks on the same terms as whites.

His other firsts were formidable. Josiah Henry was the first black Justice of Peace at large in Maryland. He was former executive secretary of the Governor's Commission for the state and first to run for statewide office on the Democratic ticket, wide office on the Democratic

Josiah Henry was Exated Ruler of the Elks for 12 times; Assistant Grand Legal Adviser of Elks, trustee of Morgan State College, 30 years, former member of the board of managers of Druid Hill YMCA.

And, he was a member of the Colored Businessmen's Exchange, a veteran of World War I; attorney for the Walter Green Post of the American Legion; Prince Hall Mason, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Afro-American Order of Owls, a Galilean Fisherman and was actively interested in the Association for the Handicapped.

Josiah H. Henry Jr. was genuinely interested in people and served his city and state with genuine commitment as a successful lawyer and concerned citizen.

SAMUEL L. BANKS — 'Sharply divided worlds'

In 1960, the Ford Foundation, a group committed to intergroup and interracial understanding, published a work, "Toward Equality," that described the socio-economic condition of more than 200,000 blacks in Baltimore prior to the Brown school decision of 1954.

"The Negro in Baltimore at the close of World War II was confronted at nearly every turn by Jim Crow. His new earning power did not bring the conveniences, opportunities, and pleasures to which he was entitled. White and colored men had worked together under the barrier-breaking demands of the war effort as machinists, welders, assemblymen, riveters, and wire drawers, they, and their families lived in sharply divided and unequal worlds.

In point of fact, most black Baltimoreans are excluded from the socio-economic mainstream of this city. A review of the municipal centers of power reveal the following: (1) the mayor is white; the president of the City Council is white; 12 members of the 18-member City Council are white; the major boards and commissions are headed by whites; the Chamber of Commerce and Greater Baltimore Committee are overwhelmingly white.

Power, in short, in a city where blacks represent a majority of the 839,000 residents, is firmly in the hands of the white minority.

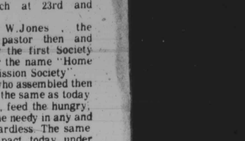
The mayor, to a substantial degree, treats the majority black population with contempt and derision. Black middle income residents are in large measure contributors to the impotency of the majority population and the mayor's studied neglect and indifference because of their passivity and dreadful failure to identify with and support their impoverished "Brothers" and "Sisters" confined to the core of the city.

It is clear that here in Baltimore that the "sharply divided and unequal worlds" will not come tumbling down until black Baltimoreans become their own advocates. Frederick Douglass eloquently and pithily states the case:

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters."

Baltimore, particularly black Baltimore, would do well to heed Douglass's sage admonition.

FOR ALL WE KNOW



By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

FEAR HAS CAPTURED every citizen simply over the high prices which keep going higher almost every moment. Actually, all merchants and landlords are hiking everything up quickly before controls are placed by the government.

DESPITE widespread public frustration over inflation and wasteful government spending, public officials and voters pay far too little attention to the Federal subsidy system which gives each subsidy to a particular group.

AS AN EXAMPLE near home, subsidies in the US economy will raise the cost of milk in a few days to an extra 5 cents a gallon, a horrible thing.

I AM A MEMBER of Common Cause, a national "watchdog" kind of group which monitors Congress and everything else.

EXAMPLE - CC finds that Five Arizona beekeepers collected from 1967 to 1974 over $1 million for dead bees. EXAMPLE - Investors get $364 million annual bonus for investing in "irreplacable natural resources" like sand, gravel and oyster shells. EXAMPLE- Some of the nation's largest landowners are receiving what amounts to free irrigation water valued at $1540 per acre.

SUBSIDIES are not direct grants from the US treasury but are tax benefits, subsidized interest rates or economic regulations that do not show up in the Federal budget. The particular group which gets benefits works hard to get the subsidy and to maintain and increase it.

THE POLITICAL CLOUT that backs subsidies is wielded by those who directly benefit from them. A raw example Common Cause points out was exposed in the Watergate scandles. Nixon's White House meeting with MILK producers to discuss higher dairy prices support and dairymen's political support for his 1972 campaign was successful for both dairymen and Nixon.

SUBSIDY goes on all the time in Congress. In the absence of an anti-inflamatory constituency, politicians resort to logrolling, trading a vote for a beekeeper's subsidy. Logrolling came from; Civil War politician Simon Cameron's "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours."

ONE OF THE MOST complicated regulatory systems in the US economy raises the price of milk we purchase at the grocery store. The Dairy Lobby which contributed over $1 million in 1976 and another in 1978 to Congressional candidates is one of the most powerful groups in Washington.

THE VOICE of the large dairy cooperatives drowns out the weaker voice of consumers who struggle to meet grocery bills. Under the dairy price support system the government buys butter, cheese and nonfat dry milk if the market price falls below a certain target level.

AND LOOK at this — It is estimated that the Administration's decision to set dairy price supports at 80 percent of parity will send milk prices up at least 5 cents a gallon THIS SPRING.

NOTE. Parity is a mathematical formula used to compare prices farmers PAY AND THE PRICES THEY RECEIVE. Parity is defined according to the price ratio that existed for farmers from 1910 to 1914 — a good price period for the USA.

ON TO HAPPIER things—SUNDAY is the day Ebenezer Baptist Church marks the 80th anniversary of its Senior Missionary Society, organized in 1900 in Baltimore at the same Eastside church at 23rd and Guilford.

REV. JOHN W. Jones, the founder, was pastor then and Martha Winder the first Society president under the name "Home and Foreign Mission Society".

MEMBERS who assembled then were dedicated the same as today to visit the sick, feed the hungry, administer to the needy in any and every way, regardless. The same tremendous impact today under Bettye Graves the president carries the message and the duties of Christians everywhere.

OTHER OFFICERS are Josephine Monroe, Elizabeth Robinson, Vice-presidents; Zelda Cheatham, secretary; Mildred Harper, financial secretary; Irene Thornton, treasurer, Evelyn Burton, chairman of Activities; Gwendolyn Ferguson, Junior Missionary coordinator.

SUNDAY'S PROGRAM highlights include the Rev. Haywood Hendricks of Zion Union Church, Brunswick County, Va., as guest speaker. With him will be his congregation and choir and bus loads of friends all of whom are members of the USA largest family, the Shells, Stiths, Blackwells, Taylors, Hicks, Roans, Lamberts, Rodwells, Andrews, Christophers, Johnsons, Bridgeforths and all the other branches.

FROM NEW YORK, Knoxville, Philadelphia and New Jersey will come more and more to equal a big family reunion. The variety program will include both the pastor and his wife, the Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Poole. Dinner will be served to include all the delicious dishes those Virginia families are noted for.

SUNDAY'S theme is "We have come thus far by faith" Everyone is welcome to enjoy this great Spring day.

Year of the Family, By Marion Banfield

Similarities, differences between Equador and United States

A few days ago as I looked out of a window at the Colon International Hotel in Quito, Equador, I thought of Druid Hill Park. Sunday is family day in that park with trees perhaps even older than some of the magnificent trees in our own park.

Families acted as we do in Druid Hill Park with some cultural variations. Grandmothers presided over the food containers. Mothers and fathers balanced children on new two-wheel bikes. Soccer was the prevailing game. I saw no baseball or football.

Lovers strolled hand in hand or with their arms around each other. Babies had an extra bonus. They are tied on their mothers backs occasionally even up to 3 years of age. And no one seemed to be jealous get much affection, so did those South American little ones.

I noticed a more open show of affection between mothers and sons below teen years. Mothers hugged and kissed their little sons more than I have noticed our expressing such tenderness.

Large families are common. The Catholic church is predominant and so are large families, particularly among non-urban peasants.

We visited an Indian village where children were counted in the hundreds. Imagine! We were guests in a family where the mother had given birth to 17 children, only five of whom had survived.

Sanitary conditions are poor so infant mortality is high.

There has been much racial mixture for centuries. Indians have facial features and straight hair similar to American Indians. There have been blacks in Equador preceding the Spaniards and slavery of the 16th century in nearby territories. The people are handsome. Peasants tend to be small.

When our tour bus broke down and we rode in a public rural area bus, tall Americans had physical problems in either standing or sitting.

Families have been thriving in the high mountains of Equador for centuries. Their hygiene standards are far different from ours. Their interdependence in high isolated mountains has to be seen to be believed.

Some of our children ought to be able to see primitive people. They would never complain about not wearing the latest style tennis shoes or not having money to see a show at the Civic Center.

Race prejudice, etc. — I prefer the U.S.A.!

Mrs. Banfield is director of Family Life Education of the Family and Children's Society.

The importance of good taste

By Dr. Matthew Tayback, State Director on Aging

With age, an individual's senses of taste and of smell diminish. The taste buds on the tongue and the olfactory bulbs in the brain do degenerate over the years. The process is gradual—often beginning in the late '30s or early '40s —but it is quite real.

The result is that eating becomes less pleasureable—so much so that, in many cases, older people eat irregularly, only when they are acutely hungry.

Or they eat terribly unbalanced, unnutritional meals consisting only of those foods with the strongest flavors.

Or, in a misguided attempt to enhance the taste of a meal, they use monosodium glutamate (MSG) in large amounts. Sodium, of course, is a major ingredient of salt, and that makes MSG a less than desirable component of an older person's diet. The use of spices and herbs can be substituted for salt in low sodium diets and meet the objective of enhancing the flavor of foods.

What can be done to make eating more enjoyable for older people with sensory impairment?

Commercially, work is being done with simulated odors (aromas, of course, being part and parcel of any food's "taste"). In this process, natural molecules are mixed together and added to food to heighten their appeal.

But what can be done on a daily basis in the home?

For one thing, older people can be encouraged to chew their food thoroughly and to switch around from food to food as they eat. Thorough chewing breaks down the food so more of its molecules come in contact with the taste and smell receptors. Shifting from one dish to another accents contrasts among tastes and prevents the receptors from tiring of just one.

In addition, meals can be planned so they are visually attractive. As any gourmet cook will tell you items of different colors and interesting shapes increase interest in any meal.

Textural variety, too, is often appreciated by older persons. It can partially compensate for losses in the sense of taste and smell—and it's very easy to achieve. If, for instance, you're planning to serve carrots and mashed potatoes, you can prepare raw or steamed carrots sticks rather than boiled, buttery slices. The inability to chew raw or lightly steamed vegetables may be an additional problem. Taste can then be enhanced by using sauces and glazes on fully cooked vegetables.

The loss of these two sensory acuities can cause people to lose interest in food. With some individuals, however, the losses have something of the opposite effect. Such people will literally stuff themselves with food, overeating until they finally achieve enough flavor impact to satisfy their sensory needs.

Over-eating or under-eating — either one is a problem. Fortunately, solutions to both can be approached through the application of a little imagination and encouragement.

—MORE LETTERS—

City officials apathetic toward education?

Dear AFRO:

I read with amusement recent article in a daily newspaper in reference to the "raise" in pay given to substitute teachers. It is like a slap in the face to many of the fine and reliable citizens who have for years provided this essential service to our school system. In addition, I fear that unless the rate of pay is increased, the problem will become even more critical.

The school system strives to provide a cohesive and on-going educational program for its youngsters. Teachers provide lesson plans for per diem absences, and department heads and senior teachers assist substitute teachers who serve in long-range positions.

However, if there are no substitutes available or willing to accept a position at such a low rate of pay, the children, as usual are the losers.

Public School Administrators and Supervisors Association, PSASA, conducted a survey on this problem. Ninety schools responded, representing a 46 percent return. Ninety-two percent of the schools responding confirmed having a problem. The greatest number of teachers absent in one day from one faculty was 43, which represented 41 percent of that faculty.

The greatest number of classes unable to be covered in one day at one school was 35. These are very disturbing statistics and it is obvious how any school program would be weakened.

Of the 29 suggestions offered by school principals, the most often repeated was increase the pay of substitute teachers. It is vital that the community support the superintendent in his attempt to achieve this end.

MAURICE S. DORSEY, PSASA

NNPA honors former publishers

WASHINGTON

At a National Press Club luncheon held here last Friday in observance of Black Press Week, plaques honoring two late distinguished editor-publishers were unveiled for enshrinement in the Black Press Gallery at Howard University.

The two were Dr. Chlan B. Powell, who took over the helm of the New York Amsterdam News in 1965 after co-ownership since 1936 and continued until his death in 1977 and William A. Scott, II founder and editor of the Atlanta Daily World and a combine of "world" papers which periodically covered as many as 50 southern cities. Mr. Scott died in 1934.

Replicas of the enshrinement plaques were presented to the heirs of the honorees. Mr. Powell's widow received a plaque of her husband and C. A. Scott received one of his brother, W. A. Scott II.

JUST THINKING

'Mary' triggers mass reaction

By Al Sweeney

In this business, you never know what turns on a reader.

This writer doesn't attempt to be a wise pundit. That's left to the heavy thinkers. Inform and entertain, that's how I view my contribution.

The late Charlie Loeb, one of the deans of black journalism in Cleveland way, told me when I broke into this business many years ago, "If you write something that doesn't make someone happy or someone angry, you have failed."

In my younger sardonic days, my typographic darts upset many persons. It got so bad, that Charlie Loeb cautioned, "maybe I should have added that a writer should strike a balance. Don't make everyone mad."

A few weeks ago at our Black History Month presentation and its tribute to Black Women in History, we churned out a piece about a real person, whom we gave a fictitious name "Mary."

"Mary symbolized that plight of many black women in federal service, who are victims of institutionalized racism that keeps black employees mired in the bowels of the Civil Service plantation.

"Mary decided to fight the system by using the established procedures to obtain justice.

She encountered all the subtleties and overt acts employed by the protectors of the status quo to intimidate civil service vassals.

The airing of "Mary's" plight resulted in an unprecedented wave of letters-to-the editor of this newspaper. The reaction was surprising because an ethnic trait among the brothers and sisters is not to react in writing. Orally, yes.

Editor Art Carter and this writer, of course, were overwhelmed it became apparent that black employees at Smithsonian had enough and "Mary's" actions triggered them.

Not only has the AFRO's news department swung into action with follow-up stories, but several radio stations and the television news staffs have suddenly warmed up to the situation. "Mary" has been revealed as Marjorie Lucas. And the plight of black colleagues has hit the fan.

Disturbing is the recorded reaction of Smithsonian's EEO officer, Will Douglass, when asked to comment about "Mary's" charge of harassment he pleads, "no comment."

In discussing the plight of blacks at Smithsonian he doesn't deny that blacks are not to be found among the upper job echelons of Smithsonian, he kisses it off with a cavalier "the employment pattern reflects the rest of the country."

The folks working at Smithsonian insist that their Equal Employment Officer is "part of the problem." His comments to the media don't seem to belie the feeling.

In many agencies, it appears, that EEO officers play the role of the "spook by the door." And as the Rev. Knighton Stanley, pastor of Peoples Congregational Church describes the "spook by the door," they sit to keep other brothers and sisters out.

They haven't learned the lesson preached by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, the celebrated politician, educator-lecturer that once a black gets through the door, the fortunate person should turn around and extend a hand to help his brothers and sisters enter.

Many become blockers, many gratuitously hinder the upward mobility efforts of other blacks.

Let me hasten to add however, that there are many EEO officers who don't fit the mold.

An EEO Officer can only go as far as the leadership of his agency will permit. A committed agency administrator will support a strong EEO Officer and much can be accomplished.

This was shown at the Department of Transportation during the days of Secretary John A. Volpe. In a single year, Volpe increased the number of black supergrades at DOT from zero to 15. In that single year through affirmative action DOT went from the worst record in federal government to best at hiring blacks at executive level positions.

In fact, the number increased to 21 when Volpe was unceremoniously transferred from a cabinet post to an ambassadorship. Under his black cabinet successor the number of black supergrades decreased.

Which was not a strange phenomenon.

It had been Volpe's belief that if a black person were placed in a managerial position he would push for other blacks to move up. He just wasn't really aware of the fact that persons like White House aide, Louis Martin, who spends his waking hours finding jobs for blacks, is a minority among the minority.

In the Smithsonian situation, the executive EEO officer would use the attendant publicity to get a job done. He would not be a butter for wrong but an advocate for employment justice.

The successful EEO officer doesn't have to be abrasive or come thrower to get a job done. If adroit, sensitive and opportunistic, the dedicated EEO officer can turn adversity into a plus for his agency and his brothers and sisters.

For instance, a trio of blacks who have joined Louis Martin in opening opportunities for blacks and other minorities in the federal establishment are Interior's Jim Joseph, USDA's Joan Wallace and Labor's Ernie Green. They are strong supporters of their agency EEO officers.

Joining their ranks of equal employment opportunity champions is DOT's newly-installed deputy secretary Bill Beckman, who told Transportation's executive in clear, unmistakable terms, that the underrepresentation of minorities in certain agencies must improve or else.

Beckman, it is said, also called in the EEO officers from DOT's various components to indicate his displeasure at the prevailing opinion among DOT's minority employees that the only aggressiveness displayed by them was ordering their secretaries to make coffee and keep the greenery in their swank offices watered. He wondered what they were doing about improving DOT's tarnished EEO image.

Reportedly, he wondered aloud whether in their survival efforts they had been on the job too long and become too complacent. The array of EEO officers, it is said, sat silently and soaked it all in.

The lack of responsiveness has not been explained. However, they did what most habitues of Washington do. They called a caucus. Nothing damaging was discussed in the caucus. EEO survivalists are pros and are aware of the leaks that would report directly back to Beckman. But, they did caucus.

The current EEO officers, civil rights directors or whatever they are called are direct descendants of Dr. Bethune's race relations advisers. The first to build a black bureaucracy was Dr. Frank Horne at the old housing administration. He was the architect of the black federal professional for racial problems.

Some 40 years ago, the black elites holding racial advisers jobs were GS-11s or GS-12s at most.

Today, they have reached the GS-16 and above level or qualify for the elite SES (Senior Executive Service) rank created by Civil Service Reform.

Meanwhile, the status of the mass of black federal employees remains the same.

So, some things do change. But, for the better? Ah! There's the question.

To hate no more

I once allowed myself to hate

To feel anger, wrath, hostility;

But hate is such a sick disease

That soon I started hating me.

I hated those who spoke the words

That hurt my feelings, hurt my pride.

I hated all who did me wrong,

But hate just ate me up inside.

Then, one day, in a private hour,

I saw my foes weep bitter tears.

Then I knew they too had sorrow

And they, like I, had pains and fears.

Compassion and pity now stand guard

When hate comes knocking at my door.

Since LOVE has come and purged my heart,

I know that I shall hate no more.

JOSEPH WEBB