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 (1922-6967).

Brailey's resignation

It is with respect we report the resignation of Troy Brailey from the Maryland legislative black caucus.

Brailey, a veteran, in the struggle for our community's rights and needs, must be taken seriously. We are certain that his action has caused him untold agany.

Brailey, in essence, has said publicly that he finds the legislative black caucus wanting as an instrument of political effectiveness in our community.

He is saying that certain of our elected officials are putting their own interests ahead of the needs of our community and are engaged in the kinds of political dealing that are good for them as businessmen and women but not necessarily good for the greatest number of black people.

These are serious charges and they raise significant moral, ethical and political questions.

Has the black caucus gone far afield of its original purpose? A purpose we have always assumed has been the unification of black elevted officials on issues of major interest to our community and the effective advocacy of said issues in the Assembly where our state laws are made?

Has the caucus, as some of its detractors maintain, become indeed a vehicle whereby certain politicians advance themselves financially with scant regard to the people?

A look at certain events unfolding in the Assembly over the past session indicate that there is some substance to Brailey's concerns.

Black votes proved the winning balance in the increase of credit interest rates.

In exchange black legislators are crowing that they won a charter for Harbor National Bank. Long-deferred because its sponsors could not raise the money required to begin, Harbon now will in time be the second black owned bank in this state.

One of the officers of this new bank is a relative of a black elected official which presents a possible conflict of interest. In any event this just cannot be overlooked.

Nor can we overlook the fact that the Harbor charter came only after the credit increase measure was defeated on first hearing.Banking interests came to black leaders in all desperation — not attrium.

Then the banking commissioner consented to grant the Harbor charter as a result of the questionable negotiation the banking commissioner was forced to resign this week thus dramatizing the fact that the Harbor deal was is smelly one from beginning to end.

While we need a black banking institution, it comes at too high a price

It is this point that Delegate Brailey is raising. What good is a bank when its price is more interest on everything citizens of this state must buy.

We think everyone can understand the price we are going to have to pay in the following simple terms:

From now on, when you buy a car, home, food, fuel, furniture, clothing and luxuries, it is hoped anyone can afford such these days on installment purchase plans your monthly interest on these monthly payments is now at an all-time high.

For this you can thank the state's black lawmakers whose votes turned defeat of this bill into victory.

In exchange you will get a bank touted as being black owned, when indeed white money is also being committed, that will hire a few employees, will not be competitive with existing banks because it begins in a state of undercapitalization and whose profits, if any, will go to a select few.

The great majority of black Marylanders will, of course, not be able to invest in shares of stock.

Whether Harbor will be able to grant mortgage loans to black citizens who want to purchase homes in the city is a question not to be answered in the foreseeable future.

When you measure this bank's current value against the higher costs all citizens must now pay when they buy on credit, Harbor cannot be trotted out by our lawmakers as a deal struck in the best interests of the black community.

A good deal for a few is the very best we can make of this situation. Hopefully, it can be improved.

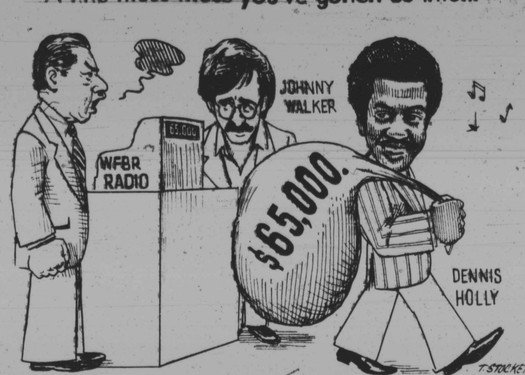
Harbor is the latest of a series of negotiations made by the legislative caucus, or in its name, we find questionable as to total judgement.

The Brailey resignation, we are sure, will create shock waves throughout the city.

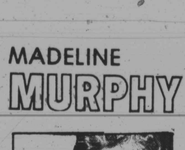
As that fall-out begins we can only hope that the remaining 19 members of the black caucus make every attempt to correct any drift toward black legislators regarding themselves as a privileged elite responsible only to themselves and the voters who sent them there be damned.

This latest session of the Maryland General Assembly has not been a good term for black Marylanders.

In the meantime our legislators have much to do. If the Brailey resignation brings everything out on the table then it will have been a good thing for the caucus, a good thing for our community.



MADELINE MURPHY



Share your ideas

Now that I'm back from vacation, I have found, I have had a great deal of time to think.

The one constant theme in being a writer or radio commentator is that you can stop thinking, keeping up with the news.

More often than not your brain, the one thing you would like to put on hold, becomes more active. Ideas seem to multiply until your brain seems to burst. One hand has to struggle with the other, to keep from grabbing a pen or pencil and as with any obsession, (and writing is one) — the writing hand usually wins the battle.

Perhaps, with all the griping about writer's block, the weekly grind, I must admit, I like what I do and have done for more than 13 years when I began writing regular letters to the editor of the daily papers, news magazines and Sunday papers.

This, incidentally, is a great exercise in writing short, concise essays about how deeply you care about an issue.

However, the point of this column is to encourage you readers and listeners to begin telling the establishment the politicians, how you feel about certain important issues.

We, as a group, don't write often enough, nor realize what impact a letter has upon not only the editors of the papers but also upon the shrewd politicians who want to be popular with the populace.

The April issue of a local magazine that features Mayor William Donald Schaefer, indicates how quickly he calls the complainants about their problems in their neighborhoods.

I'm not too sure how he responds to AFRO-AMERICAN letter writers, but perhaps you might try writing your complaints in this paper to test his sensitivity toward 60 percent of the Baltimore population.

Further, there are many opportunities on local television to not only write but appear on short segments that are public service spots.

It seems at present one can make book on which one of the "regulars" appear. It's either Samuel Banks, John Wheeler or Booty Adams! We just need a bigger variety of speakers.

Also, CBS-TV has a monthly program at 11:30 p.m. called "Your Turn" on which viewers are interviewed about their praise or criticism of a variety of CBS programs.

In particular — "60 Minutes" gets wide coverage, since it is the most biting, oftimes biased, and barb ridden in regard to public figures, the industrial-complex, Third World nations as well as races of people — ours, mostly.

But more to the point, it is not easy as a writer to write week after week without hearing from readers. It is like yelling into the wind, or more concretely living in a padded cell.

Rarely does anyone take time to call the s...'' or even better write a letter.

The purpose of any article is to provoke thoughtful comment, to play in the cracks of the piano keys, if you will, composing, perhaps a new perspective, a different view that is either acceptable or commonplace.

To twist and turn an idea as if it were prism to catch the many facets of an idea so that a new light upon complex or even simple problems is shed.

Opinions are constantly open to challenge. It is opinion that keeps a barber shop lively and buzzing, a beauty parlor tantalizing, a corner checker game or pool hall, or bus ride adventurous.

As the world becomes more unbalanced between the haves and have-nots, we have-nots are required to think through many problems from inflation, to learning to make do, from oil shortages, multi-national corporations, to war over oil.

What a better world it could be if readers do more sharing of their ideas, writing, speaking, rapping in print, over the air, or on the tube to keep our brains directed toward solving our problems.

If you get the impression that no one's really doing anything the way you think it should be done, or saying what should be said, don't just keep it to yourself, share it!

If you believe people in print, or TV aren't telling it like it is, they won't do any better, unless you write them, talk back, share your thoughts.

Well, anyway, feel free to write to me.

Share your concerns, criticism, and, human being that I am: — kind words! I'll welcome them

G. JAMES FLEMING

Union comes to shipyard

If you have ever lived in the Norfolk-Hampton-Newport News area of Virginia you know of the Newport News Shipbuilding Company (the Sparrows Point of Virginia).

It is the largest privately-owned shipbuilding corporation in the country; it is the largest private employer in Virginia; it employs nearly 16,000 technical, maintenance and office workers; and it has been a leader in building some of the largest and most prestigious ships — military and commercial.

For most of its years, the shipyard has also been a non-union operation. Instead, it has supported a "company union," named the Independent Peninsula Shipbuilders Association.

In the days before welding was introduced into the technology, the shipyard was a showplace for tourists who came to see black riveters fabricating the hull of ships, to the rhythmic sound of hammer on rivet. The black riveters used to put on "quite a show" as they also made ships possible.

When welding first came, however, only whites were permitted to be welders or to train to become welders. This went on for some years; but this discriminatory interlude has passed and blacks are now working in all phases of the shipyard, from the office upward and downward, in the largest private employer of blacks in Virginia.

What is behind these musings is the news that, at long last, the Newport News Shipbuilding workers are being represented by an honest-to-goodness labor union, the United Steel Workers of America — for better or for worse.

By vote of 4,939 to 1,646, the shipyard workers gave the 32-year-old steelworkers its first major contract in the shipbuilding industry and, undoubtedly, also gave a shot in the arm to all unionization efforts in the South.

Under the newly-negotiated contract, wages for the shipyard workers will jump from 29 to 60 percent. As reported in last week's AFRO, the first class specialists pay will go from $7.61 to $9.86 per hour and the hourly wage of a third class helper will go from $5.06 to $8.12.

Union officers are delighted and have already started organization drives in shipyards, north and south. They see the lot of shipbuilding workers greatly improved in the years ahead.

All of which highlights the fact that labor unions have become increasingly more powerful in the American society since World War II or really, since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt — both economically and politically.

Politically, numbers are on the side of unions. They represent more than numbers, however. They represent numbers organized. And, still a step further, unions represent organized numbers with sophisticated, smart and often wily leadership. Such kinds of numbers spell political power.

Economically, unions also represent power — in the treasuries they amass, in the tangential organizations they support (such as COPE), and in their bargaining positions which may increase or reduce production and, therefore, the cost of everything union and non-union men and women buy.

By the demands and pressures on political leaders, labor unions can bring about decisions and programs which may be either for the public good or which may be inimical to the best interests of the nation and the best interests of the common people, in the long run.

Unions, no less than management, can tilt the country in the direction of heightened inflation and recession or vice versa.

Labor, like management, cannot afford to be smug about its responsibilities. The old thinking and the old cliches about "downtrodden, oppressed workers" just do not ring true any more for unionized workers — white-collar, blue-collar, or no-collar.

Big Industry, with its extraordinary earnings, as in the case of the oil conglomerates, may have a major responsibility to the society, but so does Big Labor.

LETTERS

That Mitchell press conference

On a related political matter we are hard put to understand just why Rep. Parren J. Mitchell held a press conference on Good Friday, the Chief agenda item of which was the issuance of press statements by a businessman involved in a fatal shooting incident.

The congressman has explained that the Howard County NAACP requested that he call said meeting and that he so accommodated them.

In turn Howard NAACP officials blasted Howard County police for questionable and possibly racially motivated actions.

These are serious concerns. Our feeling is that the Howard County NAACP should have aired these concerns separately.

Under law, one homicide occurs it is in the strict province of the police and the courts. For the protection of both the victim's survivors and the defendant's rights, statements outside the judicial process are to be avoided.

We do not feel that combining charges of police behavior with an ongoing judicial proceeding was appropriate in this regard.

Nor do we feel our 7th District congressman should let his office be used for matters distinctly separate from the responsibilities of said office.

Unanswered questions

States Attorney William Swisher has found that the police officer who mistakenly shot Jawan McGee in the back in a pizza parlor was not criminally negligent.

Pending the police department's own investigation not yet completed, Swisher's announcement leaves us as much in the dark as before.

Not long ago a black officer was discharged from the force for using excessive force on a spectator at an Orioles game. The event was recorded by TV news cameras and this documentation had much to do with the officer's dismissal.

We think the just action in the McGee incident would be a police decision that would separate the officer who shot McGee from the force.

An error in judgement, be it prodding a noisy Oriole fan or mistaking an unarmed teenager for a would be robber, remains an error in judgement. Fortunately or fortunately, police officers are permitted few such miscalls.

Our suggestion seems more than fair considering the community outrage over the McGee incident.

Is AFRO 'Zionist,' 'Christian' or what?

Dear AFRO:

Elizabeth M. Oliver's article of March 29 on Jerusalem during Easter is a masterpiece of Zionist and Christian propaganda that erroneously likens the struggle of Afrikan people in America to the British and American conspiracy to establish a refuge for the Jews from Nazism using Arab lands and ejecting the Palestinian people from their own country.

Contrary to Ms. Oliver's claims, Israel is not a "democracy" just ask any Arab who still lives within its boundaries. Israel does not "welcome" persons from throughout the world." Just ask those Afrikans from the United States who claim to be Jewish but who are denied rights of other European Jews in Israel obviously because of their race.

Israel is a racist and imperialist state carved out of Arab Palestine and designed to give the Europeans a foothold in the strategic Middle East.

No amount of propaganda from the likes of Ms. Oliver and other apologists from Zionism can change the fact that the Palestinians with the help of all progressive people will one day return to their homeland.

MAURICE FRANCOIS
Marion Ill.

Good die young, Uncle Toms live forever

Dear AFRO:

For past history, I have concluded that the good do die young, while Uncle Toms seem to live forever. The Toms betray their people to the enemy.

Leaders with sincerity for the welfare of their people tend to get murdered or character assassinated before their philosophy matures to its fullest, and the people are left aimless once again. Martin Luther King — murdered. Malcolm X — murdered. Paul Robeson — character assassinated. Marcus Garvey — character assinated and exiled. W.E.B. DuBois — character assassinated.

Where in 1980 can we find men who are men with hearts as big as these great men of the past? Past leaders never betrayed their people to the decadent values of a declining order.

At election time, society bumps up on its soapbox and declares the black church exercise a major leadership role for the African-American masses in the United States. I humbly question the validity of this claim.

Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary (Unabridged Second Edition) defines leader as (1) a person or thing that leads; directing, commanding, or guiding head, as of a group or activity. (2) a horse harnessed before all others in the same hitch or as one of the two in the foremost span.

Vulturous politicans enjoy the political ignorance of our people. If the black church is sincere in helping the masses correct political choices, then develope a concrete political program to raise the political mentality of the African-American masses, and then, in the name of God, carry it out.

This is 1980, not 1850, and time is fast running out for us. The Klan and Nazis rise, the Zionists dictate self-defeating foreign policy on government leadership, the FBI increases domestic spying, and three presidents shall be elected this decade.

We are in real danger. The political card game comes to a swift close and these players go for all the stakes.

But us?? We?! Do we have eyes? Do we have minds? We hesitate like adolescents to accept the stakes for their real worth to us as a people.

The Klan and Nazis hate us. The domestic spys would frustrate any attempt for any type of non-Tom unity.

And those next three presidents?? Well, they will take us for political chumps, just like the present one, as long as we continue to play game like suckers. We are in real danger.

The betrayal continues like a thirsty dog, and the right wing takes command of the air.

WILLIAM ALLEN CURTIS

A New Day Begun—By Dr. Samuel Banks

Delegates to family conference

The hostile, demeaning and insulting treatment that was accorded the Rev. John Bryant and other city residents at the recent regional meeting to select delegates for the White House Conference on Families provides contemporary and painful evidence of the studies neglect and disregard for blacks and the urban poor.

The decision of the Maryland State Advisory Board, in the absence of a concrete monitoring mechanism, to ensure that all regions in Maryland were, in fact, informed was a dreadful mistake.

Consequently, approximately 10 percent of the 3,000 people in attendance were rendered mute-unable to voice their concerns or vote.

The situation was compounded further by requiring a Maryland's driver's license, a voter's card or a Department of Motor Vehicle identification card. The real tragedy is that the Baltimore City delegation was not informed of the requirements.

It is to the great credit of the Rev. Bryant that he had the courage and sagacity to address forthrightly the excluding and denial of the Baltimore City delegation. He was not, as alleged by the regional leadership, present "to cause trouble."

It is highly significant that the issues of fairness, equity and a democratic process affirmed by the Rev. Bryant were vindicated in the decision of the State Advisory Board to hold a second "supplemental election."

The Rev. John Bryant's tenacious, redoubtable and compassionate concern for the 300 excluded delegates at the meeting is an occasion for commendation and jubilation. He has given fresh and vital meaning to the ancient Biblical admonition: 'Faith Without Works Is Dead.'

The White House Conference on Families is a highly important and critical conference. The essential focus of the White House Conference on Families, fulfilling a pledge made by President Jimmy Carter nearly four years ago, will emphasize the status of the American family and strategies to improve it.

All 220 million Americans need to be aware of and involved in the conference deliberations through the selection of representative delegates.

No one particular orthodoxy, religion, race or sex is to dominate the White House Conference on Families. Marylanders, in particular, should be deeply interested and concerned because it will be one of the three conference sites.

There is, unfortunately, a troubling and inexplicable aspect of the cavalier, caustic and venal manner the widely respected and admired Rev. Bryant was treated at the first meeting.

Officials from Baltimore, except for Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke who was present, the broad range of thoughtful and rational black and white civic and religious leaders in Baltimore, and his beloved Bethel AME were excreciatingly silent.

In short: Everybody went fishing.

The message is unmistakable for black Baltimoreans. Whenever esteemed, knowledgable and respected black leaders are lampooned and subjected to invective in the larger community, it mirrors a contempt and disregard for 450,000 black Baltimoreans.

It is high time that this institutional nonsense ended.

—MORE LETTERS—

Vietnamese street children need us

Dear AFRO:

As human beings, we have to care what happened to Vietnamese-American war babies. As a nation, we have to face up to the fact that those children represent one of the great tragedies of our time.

Yes, we wish it all didn't happen, but it did. All too often, even the American G.I. who fathered the child pretends it didn't happen. Sometimes even the Viet mothers have forsaken the children and wish it didn't happen.

We must find out more about what has happened to the children of the war — the legacy left behind after April 30, 1975, when the American forces pulled out.

There are an estimated 6,000 Vietnamese-American children in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), mostly street children.

The government of the new Southeast Republic of Vietnam has been most uncooperative. It appears that incredible as it may seem the Vietnamese seem to be planning to use these children as diplomatic pawns in the negotiating game.

The existence of children born as a consequence of war is nothing new.

But the sudden withdrawal of Americans from Vietnam created circumstances that are unlike any previous war situation. A significant number of the offspring of black American soldiers are among the most ill treated, unfortunate and maligned of the war babies.

Their treatment and suffering is a national disgrace that borders on mid-evil savagery. The existence of a hidden Vietnamese American legacy has turned into a moral dilemma of unbridled discrimination against mother and child.

It is a dilemma that has been tinged with a special kind of fear for the war babies of black G.I.s.

After the departure of the Americans, the new government denied all the mothers the opportunity to work, even denied them rice rations for their children. Thus, the mothers turned to the streets and have taken the children with them. No one cares. Non-fiction becomes a horror tale, a litany of neglect of children, the world, and maybe God, has forgotten about.

Although it is the professional policy of the officials that all children are to receive benefits of an education, these children are unofficially denied any schooling since the takeover by the North Vietnamese.

But a ray of hope, no matter how dim, does exist. For there are still occasional conversations between the United States and Vietnam.

In May 1979, a formal agreement was signed that guaranteed family reunions through the United Nations. The U.N. High Commission has urged both the United States and Vietnam to cooperate. Vietnam has been asked to provide more data and a name listing. The United States has been pushed to admit more of these unfortunate persons for humanitarian reasons.

But in spite of this signed agreement the Vietnamese still will not let an American official land at the airport to confirm identities. Rep. Stewart McKinney, R-Conn., has introduced a bill into the House that would raise the immigration status of American-Asians in Vietnam. The State Department is prepared to go even further and prime the pump and get orderly departure efforts rolling. As a result of the persistent efforts of Bill Kurtis, Chicago TV newsman, the State Department has recommended to the attorney general to waive the formal immigration requirements, thus necessitating far less stringent documentation for entry.

A new sense of responsibility must well-up in the American people. One that will respond to injustices and inequities daily affecting the "flesh and blood" victims of a war who are now condemned to live their existence out in the streets of Saigon unable even to go to school all because they bear traces of the wrong face — the American face.

To neglect and do nothing to alleviate the suffering of these unfortunate souls does disbonor to our proud heritage. It's a national stain upon the honor of this nation, a situation that cries out for justice and compassion.

Surely, this must rank as one of the great tragedies of our time that governments everywhere are trying to pretend it doesn't exist. But it does exist and involves flesh and blood victims, not unfeeling statistics to be counted up by unfeeling computers and graphed by unfeeling bureaucrats.

It's an ugly reminder of an ugly war we don't want to be reminded of.

I am certain sensitive journalists and TV reporters such as Bill Kurtis are not going to let this deplorable disgrace be "swept under the rug" and ignored . . . and neither are we.

FREDERICK L. JONES
Executive Director
National Black Veterans Organization.

Hughes 'could care less' about prisons

Dear AFRO:

As an inveterate reader of your publication, and one who feels that it is the most informative publication to date, and beyond question suitable for anyone's time and money, I find myself astounded and overwhelmingly pleased with the honesty and clarity that you are putting into your articles concerning the Hughes administration's seemingly apathetic attitude toward finding an adequate solution to the controversial prison crisis here in the State of Maryland.

Though in many ways I am a critic, I find it extremely difficult to elaborate on the train of conflicts and contradictions that Gov. Hughes has been implementing into an already ill-founded penal system.

However, as an inmate of the Department of Corrections and one who is forced to endure the shocks and strains of Gov. Hughes' 18th Century decisions, I am compelled by force of will and true self-determination to speak on behalf of myself and all other brothers, both black and white, who are a product of this institutionalized madness.

First of all, it is obviously clear that modern penologists and penology textbooks like to advance the idea that prisons are asylums, places for the mentally ill, irresponsible individual.

If this is true, then what do we say about these asylums since none who leaves them is ever cured, that four out of every five inmates that are released usually return in less than a year.

Do we continue to investigate the inmate, or should we investigate the system that released him, knowing in advance that he was not prepared for society? I feel that the system should be investigated.

It is obvious that we do not need more prisons within this state. The ones that we already have are not doing us any good and to build more would be adding insult to injury.

The question of effective rehabilitatory programs cannot find its answer in the building of new prisons.

I am confined to a prison 24 hours a day and I can tell you from personal experience that Gov. Hughes' decision to build new prison falls very short of what is actually needed to put an end to prison overcrowding.

What is needed, however, is Gordon Kamka's policy suggesting smaller, community-based penal institutions. If this could be achieved, it would indeed serve as a great step in reducing the overcrowding of these penal institutions.

But until this becomes a reality, we can look forward to many more years of prisons, and no hope for the convict.

Seems to me that Gov. Hughes couldn't care less — what do you think?

BARRY S. ADAMSON

Calling City College alumni

Dear AFRO:

Baltimore City College can be critical to the continued need to improve public education in our city. The support of the alumni of the school is vital.

Several City College alumni have, therefore, spearheaded a reorganizational meeting of City College Alumni Association to help generate that support.

With more alumni than any other Maryland high school, it is nearly impossible for us to get the word of this reorganization to everyone unless we can count on the support of persons such as you.

Your help will be appreciated greatly.

THOMAS C. Shaner,
acting secretary
City College Alumni Association

FOR ALL WE KNOW

M. Oliver By Elizabeth M Oliver
City Editor

DEL. ISAIAH DIXON JR. recently received the Private Property Week Award presented by the Maryland Association of Realtors.

In recognizing Del. Dixon, James A. Harrison ,president of the Maryland Asso. of Realtors said," Del. Dixon is one of the key mebers of the Maryland General Assembly who recognizes that the rigbt to private ownership of real property is really the foundation of our economic syste and of individual liberty."

This is the first year the group has selected members of the General Assembly for the unique private award and 14 members were so honored this year.

DEL. FRANK M. CONAWAY never missed a session of the General Assebly and he has set another record, SEVEN of his bills have been passed and await Gov. Hughes signature.

IF PERSONS about Baltimore want to moan and groan , aybe they'd like to shut up now.

HB 193 prohibits horse racing on Sundays except Ocean Downs; HB 165 prohibits advertising for " work at home" unless there is actualy pay for doing the job. Many people advertise for work at home jobs only as an opportunity to sell something.

HB 1178 deals with the motor vehicle installment sales agreement disclosure— that is when a dealer is going to receive a portion of the finance charge on a motor veh.contract, it must be disclosed in the sales agreement.

Auto dealers have been receiving rebates from financial institutions when the customer could get a cheaper rate by dealing directly ith the bank.

HB 1105, Business Opportunity Registration- informs tbat in 1978 consumers were swindled out of over $1 million by organizations such as carpet cleaning, exterminators, cosmetics etc. with the promise of little work and large profits.

This bill would require all operators to register with the State Security Commissioner of the Attorney General's office and post a bond of $50,000 and subit financial records and a complete explanation of what business opportunities they are offering.

HB 1179- Credit Unions Closing - brings credit unions under the same provisions that govern banks.

MAY, the most delightful of all months, has soooo many interesting events and here are a few of them :

THE BALTIMORE CONNECTION, a unique view of the historical, social cultural and economic relationships , provides an opportunity for you to explore the dynamics.

The special event comes May 22 at 9 a.m. and extends to 4 p.m. and includes coffee and Danish , a guided tour of the city plus talks by some noted folks including Dr. James Lewis of Morgan and Dr. Katherine Lyall of Hopkins.

A DELICIOUS seafood luncheon will be served in the Constellation Room of the World Trade Center. No Charge. For info, call League of Women Voters, 889-5353 between 10 and 2.

ANOTHER EVENT I dearly love for grandeur and knowledge is the one held each year by the Johns Hopkis University Center for Metropolitan Planning and Research and the Maryland Port Authority . It's called Seminar and Dinner devoted to the Port of Baltimore: Private Unders Perspective.

FIRST we attend a seminar at the World Trade Center and hear from the experts on world trade and the Port of Baltimore. Your meet persons of all races from nations which trade With Baltimore or use the Port.

THIS IS WHERE you really learn countless things and hear from speaker from across the globe.

AT 4 p.m. everybody boards the Port Welcome for a cruise comple-te with cocktails and hors D'oeuvres and the most interesting persons you could ever meet.

AFTER THE CRUISE just when dusk comes on the Bay, the boat sails into the plush Dundalk Marine Terminal and you enter the spacious dining room where hundreds of tables are set for a real banquet.

EVERYONE has received his table assignment prior to the event and you are seated with enjoyable companions from all walks of life.

LAST YEAR each table was centered with African violets, the kind that ramble and vine and you can take them home. Then comes the dinner with several courses and a very elegant menue and dessert.

The banquet plus the speaker lasts until 9 p.m. and then comes the boatride back to the World Trade Center. On deck you can see the skylin- all lit up and sparkling like a great big city.

IT IS REALLY a mini-vacation with lots of glamour and you feel like you have been out of town. This is my third year to attend.

I'll never forget Dr. Steven Muller's address one year when he warned that Baltimore trade can not progress unless we learn that this is one world. We must respect all people regardless of color or race or nationality, he said.

MAY I marks the opening of Fiddler on the Roof at the Mechanic and you you'll enjoy that. I am anxious to hear those lovely songs, Sunrise, Sunset, etc., soo pretty and lingering.

SUNDAY May 4 is the best of all, the 6 p.m. Convention Center testimonial for Dr. Chester Wickwire, the Hopkins Chaplain, that great guy who has been a part of every civil rights movement in Baltimore since those days when to show color or face was not good.

DR. WICKWIRE has been a leade..regardless of race, for human rights since I can't remember when. If the cause is just, you may expect him on the front line "on't care if nobody else shows up".

I AM WILLING to bet that this will be the Convention Center's largest and most appreciative crowd.

MAY 17 is the Douglass High School General Alumni banquet at the Convention Center and that gala affair will see ALLLL the grads returning including those folks like Cab Calloway and Eubie Blake.

Used to be that everybody had to finish Douglass— before intergration— and if you should attend this event, you'll see some great and famous folks, the best in the business. Don't miss.

MAY 25 is the banquet honoring the grandest lady, Josephine Ora Young and if you don't know her, you have missed something. She is the most entrancing person and there's no way to list all she has done for humanity. She's a jewel.

THERE'S LOTS MORE in May and we'll examine the calendar again before the month arrives. Meantime, Happy April and gardening. I'm planting parsley, onions, tomatoes and petunias. How about you??

Have a safe, enjoyable trip

By Dr. Matthew Tayback,
state director on aging

It's that time of year in Maryland. Still occasionally chilly and damp. Between seasons. A good time not to be here if one has the money and the freedom from day-to-day obligations to be elsewhere.

And there are plenty of elsewheres! Some are sunny and warm. Others beckon with off-season rates and attractions free of summer-time mobs.

All in all, it's a time when many older Marylanders board plane or cruise ship for places afar. If you plan to be among them, there are some very important things to think about before you go.

Foremost, I suppose, are matters of health. If, for example, you regularly take medication, be sure to pack an ample supply in its original container. Take along an extra prescription from your doctor, too.

And don't pack your medicine in your suitcase; carry it in your hand luggage so it will be available in the event you and your suitcase are parted.

If possible, tuck an extra pair of eyeglasses in with your medicines. After all, you do want to see the sights.

Before I get too far away from medicines, let me suggest that you get and wear a "medical alert" bracelet or pendant if you have allergies, suffer reactions to certain drugs, or have other unique medical problems.

If you are going abroad, you should determine what services your health or medical insurance will cover while you're outside the United States. If your policy does provide coverage — out of the country, carry either an identity card or the policy itself with you.

You should know that Medicare does not pay benefits for hospital or other medical expenses incurred outside this country (although certain exceptions are made in Canada for U.S. residents who live near the border).

Whether you're going abroad or not, it's a good idea to prepare a list of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of next-of-kin, other family members, or close friends — anybody, in other words, who should be contacted in case of medical emergency or accident. Obviously, the names should be different from those of your traveling companions.

Another list you should prepare is one that describes your itinerary in detail. This one, of course, you should leave behind, with friends, relatives, or neighbors. Should an emergency arise at home, you can be made aware of it immediately. Furthermore, you won't go through your whole trip worrying about whether something catastrophic is happening back home.

Two more bits of advice . . .

Don't pack too much, and don't do too much.

Toting heavy luggage isn't fun even for young travelers, so don't overdo your packing. Wash-and-wear and permanent-press clothing can considerably reduce the chances of your throwing your back out of whack while struggling with a weighty suitcase that vanity has prompted you to stuff with a change of costume for every hour of the day.

Doing too much is a trap for most travelers. It's particularly dangerous one for seniors, whose stamina and endurance simply aren't what they once were. Remember, if you don't try to do everything, you'll far more likely to enjoy the things you do.

Bon voyage!

Solution to crime: more men in blue

Dear AFRO:

Although many would be optimists continue to preach and prove via impressive figures that there is a reduction in crime, I feel that the average citizen does not agree with this polemic of idyllic optimism.

Let's face it: When citizens are afraid to walk, shop, and go out at night, this must prove that a real crime problem does indeed exist.

Many have come forth with sound and realistic ideas, most of which have amounted to naught. Few things would reduce hard crime as would the return of the foot patrolmen. Many citizens who grew up among these knights in blue can attest to their effectiveness.

Yes, the foot patrolman or blue knight on foot would cost much money; however, compared to what crime costs the citizens, the cost of the return of the foot patrolman would be a drop in the bucket.

Why then have these blue knights on foot been relegated to cruising in their dirty, untidy patrol cars, getting fat in the process?

Perhaps with progress many experts in law enforcement felt that the day of the blue knight on foot was a thing of the past. Today many of us are realizing that some of the old-and trusted ideas were good.

Therefore we should demand that money be found to return at least a limited amount of foot patrolmen to the beat. The return of the foot patrolmen will be a signal to many lawbreakers that the police will enforce the law because they will be at the cement level where most of the action takes place.

As for juvenile harassment, with the return of the foot patrolmen this harassment will fade into the night. Policemen on foot not only can be seen, heard, and even feared, but also they get to know the routine on the beat.

I say to one and all: Let's stick a hole in crime by writing our legislators and leaders and demanding that money be allocated to return foot patrolmen to the streets.

If money can be found to litter with crazy designs the once beautiful scenic view of city hospitals' grounds with its lovely grass, then surely money can be found to return the blue knights on foot to the street.

When the men in blue return to the streets, crime will fade into the night.

JOHN A MICKLOS

Spread commission membership around

Dear AFRO:

Although I have extreme respect for Bishop Winfield Shqwell and his ability to serve outstandingly on special city boards and-or commissions, it is disconcerting to read that as soon as he completes service on one city board (fire), he is then appointed by Mayor William D. Schaefer to serve on another (jail board).

One is forced to query: Does Mayor Schaefer have a list of competent African-Americans from which he could select competent candidates for public service?

Doesn't he know that there are many African-Americans who would serve, if asked?

I believe community service opportunities should be spread around. The benefits accrued from a more embracive approach exceed those of the mayor's apparent "in crowd"-"closed" one.

As a member of two active groups, one service and the other political, I shall see to it that names of competent African-Americans are submitted to the mayor for future use. I challenge other predominantly African-American groups to do likewise.

DR. CARMEN MAY COOKE