Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Pulling the caucus together

Veteran legislator Troy Brailey resigned from the Maryland legislative black caucus last week and set off political shock waves felt in both black and white communities.

The effects of his actions will be felt long after the action itself.

Brailey quit — charging that some of his fellow legislators had veered from their mission of serving black people.

He cited the involvement of black legislators in passage of the increased credit interest rate bill, the Harbor bank deal and the city caucus members' role in the city bond issue fiasco which ended with black demands being crushed by Mayor Schaefer, as the straws that broke his back causing him to withdraw from the caucus.

Brailey's move had much to do with his long-time association with labor and people-oriented causes and it had also much to do with the day-to-day political warfare with which the Fourth District is continually beset.

This is voter turf over which Senator Verda Welcome and William L. Adams have been engaged in battle for almost as long as the War of Roses which beset England for more than 30 years.

Welcome has prevailed and Brailey is second in line under her dynasty with Howard "Pete" Rawlings as the heir - apparent to the throne.

When Senator Welcome steps down Brailey is next in line for her post though we feel even he is reconciled to the ascendancy of the younger Rawlings.

Enter brash, aggressive Frank Conaway who most recently has been aligned with the Metro Democrats of which Mr. Adams is actual and spiritual leader.

His election as the new caucus chairman was something Delegate Brailey, it seems to us, could not accept on any condition. Senator Welcome was even less forgiving, remembering Conaway's role in steering the Democratic State Committee seat held by Dr. Henry C. Welcome until his death away from Senator Welcome to another aspirant more closely aligned with Metro. But Senator Welcome did not bolt.

Couple this with Conaway's less than secret ambition to run for Mrs. Welcome's seat next election and we have all the ingredients for an explosion.

It came. Brailey exited and in doing, the black legislators linen has been aired in public.

This history aside, most injured and insulted by the Brailey defection are many of his fellow legislators and some are, we feel protesting much too much.

Little of what Brailey has charged his co-legislators with is that huge a secret.

Yes, the black caucus has on occassion acted too narrowly.

Yes, the caucus leadership, past and present, has been caught with political egg on its face.

Yes, the caucus has been, on occassion, not as responsive to our community as it ought to be.

Seen in largest context, the Brailey resignation just might have been necessary.

It has at least forced the caucus members to begin to look at themselves in terms of their responsibility and accountability to the community they serve.

It has moved many thoughtful citizens to ask with increasing frequency just what purpose our legislative sisters and brothers serve.

Frank Conaway takes office as the new chairman of the black caucus on July 1.

Given all the circumstances Delegate Conaway has a most challenging task on his hands.

He must be given that chance. He won fairly by a 12-6 vote of his peers beating out Brailey by a resounding majority.

Conaway also has a clear mandate to be an effective, open, up-front caucus chairman because thanks to Delegate Brailey, every one in the state, it now seems, is going to be taking a hard, close look at our legislative representatives from now on.

Brailey has made his point.

We think the statesman-like thing for all involved in this imbroglio to now do is to come to the table and work out those positives that can make the black caucus a most powerful political instrument for all of us.

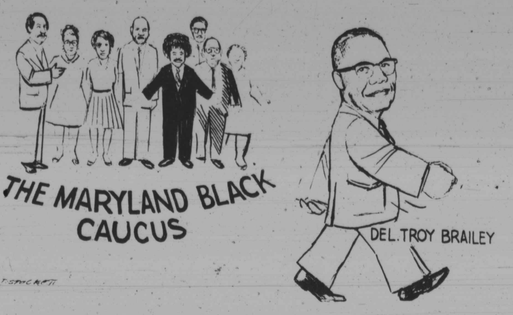
The caucus, for better or worse, is one of the few instruments we have at our disposal.

The challenge now that the Brailey fall-out is scattering is for the caucus to make itself completely viable.

We would take dim view of further defections from the caucus as our community needs no further political fragmentation. This only plays into the hands of white political forces who dearly love the spectacle of us devouring ourselves through silly tribal warfare.

The job now for Brailey, Conaway, Douglass et al is to make this instrument work.

Further divisiveness can only play into alien hands.



LETTERS

—The Legislative Black Caucus—

Sen. Douglass on Brailey's resignation

Dear AFRO:

As the present chairman of the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, I have carefully analyzed the resignation of Delegate Troy F. Brailey and I believe I have no choice but to accept it.

I am accepting it, even though I disagree with his actions, I disagree with the reasons he is using as supporting his actions and I disagree with him when he says he can serve poor black people better outside of the Caucus.

I want it clearly understood that my disagreement with Troy's actions and reasons does not do violence to my views, that Troy has the right to do what he is doing, if he truly feels he can serve his constituency better.

I question his actions on the grounds, that common sense dictates that 20 votes are better than one and 20 people working for a single purpose is infinitely better than one person working alone.

Troy's resignation is raising a lot of other questions that I believe need answering, for I have read his public statements and I do not believe they portray the "real" reason for his resignation:

If Troy was so dissatisfied with my handling of the negotiations with Mayor Schaefer, why didn't he say so then, he was present, as the vice - chairman, at the meeting and he supported the idea of my being the only spokesman for both sides.

Why didn't he resign immediately after the news story about the East Baltimore Community Corporation receiving a $216,000 loan to rehabilitate a property leased from the city. I claim Troy didn't resign then, because he knew that there was no connection between my handling of that incident and the news story.

He knows that I handled that negotiation in the best way possible at that time. He also knew the position I espoused, since he was present at a meeting in my office with several ministers, where I clearly enunciated that position, which I still believe was the best course of action of the Caucus at that time. He also knew that the votes in favor of the Caucus, were not available at the forthcoming city delegation meeting.

After knowing all of this, why didn't he resign then? Troy agreed with all of the things that happened and he supported them and I believe he is lacking in integrity, if he says otherwise, as he is doing at this time.

As I review the issues Troy uses, I see no basis for his resignation, including his not being elected chairman. Troy has not been supported for positions before and he has not reacted in the manner he is now reacting. He certainly didn't resign from the city delegation, when he wasn't re - elected vice chairman, several years ago.

Why is he doing it now?

I maintain that Troy's resignation is an act that is purely selfish and political. His resignation is motivated by 4oth District politics, and it should not be characterized as nothing more than that. I even resent his inference, that he is the only one interested in serving poor black people.

All of my constituents are poor and black, and I try to serve them all. I resent being used and maligned to serve his goals.

In a recent AFRO - AMERICAN column, Troy said I had seven votes for Delegate Frank Conaway. Though I see nothing wrong with this, he is in error.

To say I delivered seven votes, he is implying that I campaigned for Frank to be Chairman. I did not campaign for anyone, even though Senators Blount, Broadwater and I had a conversation about Frank.

The last thing I wanted was for the new chairman to be characterized as my "hand picked" successor. I didn't even talk to Delegates Chester, Douglass or Harrison about the election and I want it clearly understood that I cannot deliver them unless I am able to persuade them to support me.

Our new set of by - laws mandates a secret ballot, so Troy is in error when he implies that Frank Conaway is my "hand picked" choice. In fact, Frank was the only one to ask for my vote, Troy didn't ask.

I intend to serve as chairman until June 30 and I am asking the other members who have not resigned to join me in remaining committed to the Caucus, even though we do not now nor will we in the future agree on all the issues that confront us.

I am also asking that we do not support any efforts to even hint that Frank Conaway ought to step down. I intend to support Frank and I am anxiously waiting for the opportunity to work with him in the same manner he has worked with me.

If Frank asks my advice on what he ought to do, I will advise him not to step down, because he had a clear (12 to 6) mandate to govern the Caucus in the next year. His election was fair and democratic.

If I were asked by other members about resignation, I would advise them, whether they voted for Frank or not, to remain in the Caucus.

It is clear, we are stronger together, than separate. The D.C. Amendment vote indicates what can be achieved if we stick together. Just as the NAACP survived Troy's resignation, we will also survive.

Anytime Troy wishes to change his mind, we will welcome his participation. We should not allow Troy's precipitous act to interfere with our ability to deliver for our people.

ROBERT L. DOUGLASS

Media and the caucus

Delegate Brailey, say what you will, took his case to the AFRO, not to the daily newspapers as some of his fellow delegates are wont to do to curry favor with the white press.

Senator Douglass, as present chairman of the caucus, has done the same thing. (See today's front page story.)

We question the daily newspapers' editorials that, have in recent days, attempted to instruct the caucus on how to conduct its business.

One editorial even questioned the caucus vote that saw Delegate Conaway elected.

We think just who the caucus elects to head it is the caucus' business not the business of white newspapers.

How the caucus works for black people, however, is most certainly our business and most legislators understand and respect our position.

Our other concern is that once we report on political dissension within our family — some of the daily media feel this gives them a license for overkill.

It does not and we deplore this misperception.

Powerful black women

Black women are on the move politically, culturally and in all other aspects.

Important conferences are ongoing this week in our city involving such dynamic organizations as the Delta Sigma Theta sorority, the Black Women's Consciousness Raising Association, New Directions for Women, Les Gemmes as well as a federally sponsored women in business symposium.

Economics, family affairs, self-awareness are among the myriad of themes to be explored.

We salute these groups. We salute our women and urge those who can attend the public portions of these important meetings to come out and lend support.

And to those coming from other communities, our heartiest welcome.

'...child who picks up his toys'

Dear AFRO:

The resignation of Delegate Troy Brailey from the Black Legislative Caucus is a matter of real concern for the community.

The legislative process dictates that no one legislator, especially black, can "freelance" in the Maryland General Assembly effectively and efficiently towards the ends of achieving substantive and significant results for the poor and blacks. Collective behavior, which is not necessarily bloc voting, is a must in the political process.

For example, to get a bill passed through third reader on the House floor, 71 votes are required. This cannot and will not be achieved without collective supports and rapport.

Every legislative caucus, especially the Black Legislative Caucus, operates on the functional principle of democracy. This dictates that a majority rules and there is always the opportunity for constructive decent among members.

However, the prime prerequisite for effective functioning within this framework on an individual basis is a sophisticated degree of maturity.

The resignation of Delegate Brailey seems to be more personal than that of a professional legislator. It appears to have been prompted by personal prejudices, jealousies, insecurities and anger rather than differences on issues, as he has stated.

The use of the "people" versus "personal" emphasis is a convenient means of legitimizing an action for which he might otherwise be subjected to severe criticism.

His resignation can be likened to the child who picks up his toys to go home because the group would not play by his rules.

The community must not be deluded by the smoke-screen of legitimacy with which he has surrounded his resignation.

EDWARD T. MARSHALL

'...we need you, Brailey'

Dear AFRO:

Delegate Troy Brailey's recent resignation from the legislative Black Caucus has left black Marylanders stunned and perhaps somewhat bewildered.

Since its formation, the caucus has served as a vehicle through which blacks have collectively been able to fight discrimination, sensitize issues and support legislation favorable to our community development.

The very premise upon which this organization was built is violated when any member is allowed to seek or promote a self-serving objective under the guise of the purposes of the caucus itself.

As a united body you have certainly gained prominence and the confidence of the community on whose behalf you have operated to date. Now with your imminent departure, the very foundation of the caucus is threatened and the possible disbanding of the organization could reasonably be considered the advent of a darker day in our quest for political and economic parity, upward mobility and communal solidarity — a negative luxury we can ill afford.

We, the black people of Maryland, entrust our legislative livelihood to the auspices of the Black Caucus. Surely, you and the other members realize this, for we truly believe that the majority of you have and still do uphold the well-being of Maryland and the black citizens as a highest priority.

With this in mind, I implore Delegate Brailey on behalf of our constituents to reconsider his decision and consider the rippling effect we will sulfer upon his leaving.

Delegate Brailey, though your allegations raise serious concerns, your resignation will not resolve this issue. Neither the Black Caucus, nor the black community, can afford to lose a member who possesses your integrity, sensitivity, experience, community awareness and community involvement.

We need you and people like you to continue to champion the needs of the black community.

SAUNDRA E. BANKS,
Clerk, Court of Common Pleas

MADELINE MURPHY

Who's going to change it?

Wouldn't you know, while I was on vacation, I found my intrepid friend, Nate, on the porch one morning with my morning paper in his hand.

Overcoming my shock, not losing my cool, I greeted him:

"Well, Hi, Nate, what's new? Thanks for the paper—what can I do for you?"

"Got-any-coffee?" he mumbled.

"Sure, come in."

Now, I'm not a morning person. But I didn't want Nate to bad-mouth me either. So I said to myself, "What the heck, he wouldn't even be patient enough to hear how I can't even make a fist that early in the morning, or how I drop things and can't even get my mouth to working." You see, Nate always has weightier things on his mind.

So before he got his first sip of coffee, he pointed at the paper and looked me dead in the eye, "See how them honkies gone win again?"

"Whatd'ya mean?"

"Well, Mayor Schaefer gotta cash flow problem, he say, and time's comin' to look to the left, then to the right, see who gonna be at they desk tomorry mornin'. . . Layoffs" he opined, as he took a gulp of coffee.

"How you know all this?"

"Feedback" was his terse reply. And as I raised my brow, he nodded knowingly, "Feedback — I get feedback from lots of people, works for the city."

Before I could say anything, he added, "Now's the time to seprate them tax-eaters from taxpayers."

"You don't mean welfare do you Nate?" I quickly asked.

"No indeedy," he reported, "I mean them that lives in the county what keeps their jobs in the city—tax-eaters!"

"You mean, teachers, firemen, police, middle management?"

"Uh huh, and them taxpayers", he raised his voice for emphasis, "that works in the city and lives in the city — can't get out to the suburbs — they's the ones should keep they jobs, right?"

"Can't argue with that."

"Since Schaefer swears he ain't raising taxes, then we who is part of that 're-nay-ssance' should profit from it. If I was mayor," he expounded "I'd jes say to middle management, teachers, police and the like, 'either you pays taxes and lives in the city, or you goes first'."

Having gotten that off his chest, he started on a new tack.

"See how Mandel goin' to prison? He was the one talkin' in East Baltimore, wasn't he?"

"Uh huh."

"Well, mebbe if he sees how easy he gone have it in Allenwood or Danbury or wherever they sends them white collar criminals," Nate took a breath, "he might think about all them bad cats at Jessup crowded together, with no work, no trainin, no nothin' — if you ax me that's how them cats gets bad — they gets 20 years for stealin' a car and Mandel and his cronies gets 4 years for stealin' thousands.

"Don't make no sense to me. We got more cats in prison than most countries in the world anyways."

"It sure is a bad situation," I responded, "anytime you got a classist and racist system that spreads to the jails . . . They call what you're talkin' about warehousing."

"That's it, warehousing!" he agreed.

Nate shook his head in a hopeless way. "Well, "he concluded, "it's just like it always was. If you white, you right—black, you step back. Only thing is, who gonna change it?"

"Not Mandel, I bet!" I said.

With that he put down his cup with a bang, wiped his mouth with the back of his hand and walked out the back door without another word.

G. JAMES FLEMING

Too little, not too late

At long last the Small Business Development and Financing Authority has been funded, thanks to Gov. Harry Hughes and his recently passed budget. After lingering dormant for two years, the authority now has a resource of $2 million and has named an executive director.

The purpose of the agency is to make or guarantee loans to small business people who have been awarded government contracts. It is established in, and as a part of, the State Department Economic and Community Development. This parent agency has loaned the minority-aiding authority $95,689 to meet its operating needs this fiscal year.

While Gov. Hughes provided the very necessary starting funds, credit for the idea of a Small Business Development and Financing Authority goes to the Black Legislative Caucus which shepherded the legislation through the General Assembly and won the additional support needed for passage.

It is not surprising, therefore, that members of the Black Caucus feel that the delay in funding and setting up the authority is deplorable — two years —seemingly an attempt to sabotage the agency before it started.

The Caucus and others also believe that $2 million will not go far, if a really vigorous and meaningful program of undergirding "minority small business" is to be carried on.

But, $2 million is $2 million, and it permits the program to get on track. It also means that the Small Business Development and Financing Authority is $2 million ahead of where it has been since the enabling legislation was passed in 1978.

From here on, the program is the thing. We shall have to look to the director, Norman Holmes, recently in banking in Washington, and the governing board of the umbrella State Department of Economic and Community Development. We shall also have to look to the community and how rational it is in its expectations and its demands of the authority.

First of all, this new agency is not established, in law, to aid black business people only. "Small business" includes all small businesses, however defined, whether conducted by blacks, women, ethnic or religious minorities, or citizens of Asian or Hispanic backgrounds.

Nor, will being poor alone or black alone be the principal qualifications on which the authority will base its decisions.

Rather, if we understand correctly, the best credentials will be experience in business for which support is being requested, or in some related fields, and/or the ability to have already secured a contract.

The authority itself will have a tight wire to walk. It must understand that it is an economic or business agency; not purely welfare.

Yet, on the other hand, it has as much validity and integrity as those agencies —state and federal —which subsidize big business, even the biggest businesses.

If Boeing Aircraft, Chrysler, and the shipbuilding companies — "giants" of industry —are eligible for governing undergirding and support; it makes sense to save farmers every year, it also makes sense to encourage, support and promote the continuance of small business as part of what makes America America.

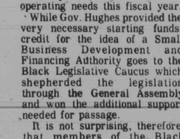
The Small Business Development and Financing Authority needs not, and should not, feel apologetic for its existence. The authority, nevertheless, has a responsibility, perhaps several responsibilities.

Being "too easy" in enforcing its standards and too easily turning itself into a purely welfare agency will not insure the agency's future support, either from the public or from the legislature.

The authority will have to guard itself against those who come with premeditated fraudulent schemes, thus intending to detour funds which should help the more honest and practical, even if less, spectacular, enterprises.

For now, however, the Small Business Development and Financing Authority is a symbol of where the State of Maryland stands in its attitude towards its small business people —a beginning, notably small, but not too late. In yonder years, wasn't there a copybook maxim which said, "It's never too late to do good."

A New Day Begun—By Dr. Samuel Banks



Welcome, Delta Sigma Theta

The regional meeting of the venerable, respected and nationally known "Sisters," of Delta Sigma Theta in Baltimore on April 17 - 19, 1980 at the Downtown Hilton represents a auspicious opportunity and challenge. Baltimore, to be sure, is honored that the leaders of Delta Sigma Theta have decided to hold their annual regional meetings here in Monumental City.

Delta Sigma Theta, since its inception on Jan. 13, 1913 at Howard University has, along with other black Greek - letter organizations, played very significant and pivotal role in providing black leaders in a variety of settings.

Delta Sigma Theta today has the distinction of having more than 650 chapters across the nation and in foreign nations such as Haiti, West Germany and Liberia.

The Founders of Delta Sigma Theta envisioned the organization as "A society to promote high cultural, intellectual, and moral standards among its members, for its own benefit and for that of the larger society."

At the time of its founding in 1913, blacks here in Baltimore and throughout the nation were struggling to overcome a virulent, blatant and overt racism.

Separate but unequal treatment for more than 13 million blacks, in schools, housing, jobs, health care and other public services and facilities had the firm and implacable sanction of the law in 1913.

Sixty - seven years later as our esteemed and highly admired "Sisters" meet here, we are now 30 million strong, but a subtle, intractable and evident racism consigns the overwhelming number of blacks to a separate and unequal status.

Stated another way: Two worlds exist in Baltimore and the United States: one white, one black: separate and unequal.

The lofty and inspirational admonition of Delta's founders in terms of "a society to promote high cultural, intellectual, and moral standards" is urgently needed now in terms of action - based programs to improve the quality of life for a disproportionate number of blacks who remain ignored and excluded from the socio - economic mainstream of Baltimore and the nation.

This troubled, restive and highly balkanized city represents an opportunity for the Sisters of Delta to translate, on a larger and more visible scale, some of their magnificent ideals into action.

The larger question that looms as Delta's regional meeting gets underway: What difference, in the life of the majority black population, will your distinguished presence make?

As broadly educated, informed and influential blacks, there exists the possibility for you to set in motion a process to reverse the psychological, physical, and socio - economic spiral of decline which engulfs most black Baltimoreans and blacks in the United States.

Black voices of rationality, power and persuasion must now be heard in order to abate or extirpate the educational, economic, cultural and political deficits which have, in fact, driven black America to the edge of the precipice.

The burdens that confront you are, indeed, heavy and formidable. So, too, were the vicissitudes and tribulations that your extraordinary beloved founders endured in order to bring you to this place.

We, "Brothers" and "Sisters," come from a people who have, historically, had to make the proverbial "bricks without straw." Remember, we are counting on you to maintain the faith and tradition of your founders through concrete deeds.

Welcome to Baltimore, Sisters of Delta, and may your regional proceedings yield the richest of felicity, inspiration and noteworthy and lasting deeds in the grand legacy of your illustrious Founders.

The late Langston Hughes provides a thoughtful challenge as you meet:

Bring me all of your dreams
You dreamers
Bring me all of your heart melodies
That I may wrap them
In a blue cloud - cloth
Away from the too - rough fingers
Of the world.

Thank you for coming, Delta Sigma Theta. Your presence, in spite of the heavy socio - economic adversities, generates a buyancy of hope, reconciliation and high human possibilities.

We know that you will carry "The Delta Torch" high with dignity, majesty and consummate class.

Straight Talk About Aging

Telephone technology helps hearing-impaired

By Dr. Matthew Tayback, state director on aging.

I sincerely hope that none of you will misinterpret this week's message as a plug for the telephone company. It isn't meant to be that at all.

What I do mean to do is bring to your attention some of the fascinating and helpful devices which telephone technology has devised for the benefit of people with impaired hearing — the elderly forming a significant part of that group.

One of the devices, simple in design and probably one of the most widely useful, is a small wheel which comes installed in the handset. By turning the wheel, a person can amplify the voice at the other end, exactly as he can increase the volume of a radio or TV set by turning the proper knob.

For totally deaf individuals there are phone attachments which convert sounds into a dot-and-dash code. The code is transmitted to the deaf caller by either a flashing light which he can see or by a vibrating disc which he can feel with his fingertips.

Another device, called a watchase receiver, allows a deaf person's companion to listen to the voice of the party at the distant end of the line even though the deaf person is holding the receiver itself. If the deaf individual is a lip reader, his companion can repeat the speaker's words to him. If he is not, the companion can communicate the message by signing.

Many elderly people who have difficulty hearing conversations over the telephone have equal difficulty hearing its ring. Today there are devices to help overcome that problem, too.

One is a special ringer that concentrates all the sound energy into a frequency range which most people with impaired hearing can hear.

A more powerful variation of this "tone ringer," as it's called, is an eight-inch gong whose very loud bass-frequency bell can usually be heard even at considerable distances over high-level background noise.

For people who cannot hear any sort of bell or gong, there is an apparatus called "Signalman." Plug a lamp into it, and it will cause the lamp to flash on and off when the phone rings. If the lamp is off to begin with, Signalman will flick it on when activated by a phone call).

The hearing-impaired elderly are not the only ones who can be helped by new telephone technology. For older people with coordination problems or partial paralysis, there are instruments which permit one-button "dialing" of pre - programmed numbers. The numbers of family members or emergency services can easily be included in the disabled older person's telephone program.

Here, then, is a sample of the devices that are available to make telephone use easier for the elderly. All of them might not be available everywhere in the state. A call to your own community's telephone business office is the best way to find out precisely which services are available where you live.

AFRO welcomes letters

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

FOR ALL WE KNOW

By Elizabeth M Oliver
City Editor

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

WE LEARN to look underneath and behind the news early in school, don't we? At least, that's what is taught in elementary school today.

THEREFORE, adults should take warning and read the printed word carefully, using great wisdom to find the real facts.

THANKS to the AFRO's many readers, we have reliable thinkers writing and calling in on the phone. Thus we get BOTH SIDES OF THE COIN. Not arguing and fussing at all. Just comment which keeps the record straight.

THE ELITE PRESS, the large daily newspapers as termed by the news editors in the Middle East, were several months ago writing the news, twisting and turning it around in the white-American style.

WHAT WAS THE RESULT? The Arabic and Israeli government as well banned the American reporters and in Iran for example, the reporters were thrown out bodily, deported on the spot and, returned home in a jiffy. For a time, until the reporters repented, there was a news blackout and the only way the USA citizens obtained news was by way of newspaper reporters from Italy, France, Germany and Britian.

YOU CAN NOT FOOL the people by reporting news unfairly. The citizens can smell a rat a mile away. Therefore, we realize that news reporting must be fair and square and follow the rule to report the facts only. It is required by law that BOTH SIDES of the news be printed.

NO NEED for some folks to get mad, either.

SPEAKING OF LETTERS, I get quite a few and have very little space to record them these days. However, I can give little jots and small sentences from each one (if I can) now and more later.

MEANTIME, don't be impatient. Wait until next time.

THANKS goes to Sheila Z. Kolman, principal and Mattie Martin, chairperson, Guidance of Hamilton Jr. Hi. who wrote to thank us for the part we played in the March 18 Career Day along with the other representatives from other businesses. We say, "It was fun and invite us again."

THANKS also to the 10 other schools we visited to tell about the Middle East trip we made in the fall. The last school— Rosemont Elementary was one rousing, cheering, lively as a baseball game affair. Mrs. Dorothy Bennett and her faculty mourned the Middle East garments and the ones from China and Africa and literally set the house on fire.

We as guests ate in the cafeteria and such home-cooked food you have never tasted including the veg soup made that morning— for almost 1,000 persons who are in that second largest elementary school in the city.

WE LOOK FORWARD to teaching Journalism on April 30th at Southern High. At the kind invitation of Barbara Smothers we will spend the day (it's called Mini Course Day) at that large school in South Baltimore.

MAY 3 is the date of Walbrook High's honoring Dr. John Wesley King, the late professor of biology in the Division of Natural Science at Morgan.

CATHERINE HOWARD extends us invitation to be there at 12 noon when Walbrook dedicates its School Media Center in King's honor. Dr. King donated his Science Library to Walbrook.

What a wonderful honor that is and thanks to Catherine and Dr. A Anne Emery, principal for inviting us.

ANOTHER INVITATION comes from the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs through Mrs. Edith M. Thomas, president.

The Baltimore club marks its Founders Day Sunday May 4 at Heritage United Church of Christ. We will be there at 4 p.m. to bring greetings Delores L. Thornton is chairperson.

YOU KNOW of course that Saturday April 19 is the Maryland State Conference of NAACP Branches Celebrity Ball at the Hunt Valley Inn from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

GUEST SPEAKER is Dr. Christine King Farris, M.L. King's sister. Don't miss that dinner and dancing until the wee hours. Frankie and the Spindles and a swell dinner are included for $35 (membership is included in this sum. A small $75 includes $50 down on a life membership.

JOE BOND is chairman and Nat K. Smith, president of this statewide group.

HOW ABOUT the invitations Con. Mitchell sent out all in red plush for his open house last Sunday ??? Some 1,000 persons attended and he received well wishes from some 2,000 more who could not attend.

DR. ROLAND PATTERSON now superintendent of a Bronx, N.Y. school district heard from lots of you nice people after we wrote about his success up there. His letter to me today says his next school year will be devoted to making real the policy of providing all children with English and Spanish.

HE SENDS best wishes to all his friends who heard from him through For All We Know.

THANKS to the Methodist Men who are giving me their highest award on April 25. That's the same day I am accompanying my nominee, George Grafton Brown to get the Silver Bowl Award.

THAT NIGHT ALSO we will receive the coveted award from the Malcolm Johnson Scholarship Committee. Thanks to each and every one of them — those thoughtful people. We will be there.

NEXT WEEK we'll tell you about the much-honored Agent Fullwood of the Police Department. Harlow is surely the Man for All Seasons.

ALSO TO COME are the nearly two dozen fine young lawyers who have passed the bar.

TOMORROW, Friday, that is, Mayor Schaefer is hosting an affair for Roberta Flak at City Hall. From 4 until 6 p.m., a reception.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, if you want a job, take your resume to the Convention Center from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and meet with hundreds of employers who are there at the Women's Employment Opportunities Conf.

THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD Service Awards Luncheon with Ivy Harris, chairperson, will have 900 (did you hear that) or more at the Hunt Valley Inn, Cockeysville for a grand affair. Barbara Wiggins of Commercial Credit is speaker. When? Wednesday April 23, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

ALOZO HAIRSTON is guest of honor at the Belvedere 6:30 p.m. April 27.

ALSO a receptibn is being held for George Brown and the other Silver Bowl recipients Sunday April 27, 3 to 5 p.m.

WE WILL take part in the Johns Hopkins University Symposium for selected writers Saturday May 3. I like those small groups that deal with contemporary topics. Helps expand your thinking.

DOUGLASS HIGH GRADS — don't forget the May 17 1st Annual Alumni Day for all grads at the Convention Center.

P.s.—I can not find out if the slayer of Robert Kennedy was Iranian or what. Does anybody know. Ask around. Let me know. I've called everywhere to get the correct nationality and get no answer.

—MORE LETTERS—

'The people must combat housing problems'

Dear AFRO:

I would like to congratulate you and also give thanks. The headline article, "City planning chief branded 'deplorable' inner city landlord," on April 5, was greatly needed to make people aware of the types of people holding various government positions.

How can these people serve the needs of the city on a whole, if in their personal lives they have no compassion, no remorse for their wrong doings? The poor people of Baltimore City are indeed dejected. This story will abet them in many ways. The problems of the slum landlords must be alleviated!

I feel that the city government is very unresponsive to city dwellers, who are not in the higher income brackets. And a high percentage of the city's landlords are "grossly neglectful."

While visiting various properties owned by Charles Colson, and these are just a few: 1306 Wilcox St., 717 E. Preston St., 745 E. Preston St., 710 E. Biddle St., I have seen many housing code violations. Many have no sprouts for drainage of rain water, water stains on walls and ceilings, lack of baseboard outlets, bad roofing, bad wiring, bad plumbing, rotting floors, rat and roach infestation.

Many of the tenants feel that the problems will never be corrected. They find the landlords not responding, the city housing inspectors not coming out to do their jobs, and some not doing their jobs, even after doing an inspection.

Going to court for most tenants is very dismaying. They feel that the courts side with the landlords so what good is trying to fight back?

Adequate shelters for low income people are desperately needed. More fundamental questions about city policy and revitalization plans must be answered.

The city must eradicate the problems of slum landlords, limited information about rent escrow, overcrowded housing court, and the lack of effective housing inspectors. For, little or no satisfaction to renters is being given.

What are the mayor's plans as far as the poor are concerned? Is his main goal displacement of the poor? Why is the city's Passport Program (for Section 8 rentals in the counties) being pushed so hardly? All of these questions and many more must be answered.

The city Planning Commission will have to take into account that the poor and lower-income residents want equal rights. They must stop planning around us.

The Convention Center and other Harbor developments are not helping to solve the problems of housing and lack of jobs that are so greatly needed.

The people must not carry the load, because of poor management and budgeting of city's funding. Positive steps must be taken.

If the city will not make some changes, the people on a whole must combat the problems stated above.

MONICA TOWNS
St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center

'Errors' in AFRO column

Dear AFRO:

I commend Dr. Samuel Banks for focussing on the White House Conference on Families in the April 11 edition. However, it contained errors that did a disservice to your readers.

Dr. Banks reported that the Rev. John Bryant, pastor of Bethel AME Church, who was on the ballot as a delegate to the upcoming National Conference on Families, found little or no support for his parishners who were denied the right to vote at the Baltimore Regional Conference on Families held at Essex Community College. This was simply incorrect.

Dr. Banks was further incorrect in reporting that Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke was the Rev. Bryant's only ally for speaking out against the exclusionary tactics used by the organizing committee.

There were many who were outraged at the proceedings that day. Specifically, members of the Baltimore Welfare Rights Organization, led by their executive director, Bob Cheeks and board member Jowan Daniel as well as Teresa Lansburg, board member of the Maryland Committee for Children and Cindy Moreno, director of the Center for Displaced Homemakers were very vocal. What is more important, they followed through.

Welfare Rights led an appearance before the state - wide White House Conference - Committee about their concerns. It was because of a coaltion, including many other concerned groups that subsequent balloting took place in Baltimore City on March 14.

The attempt to remedy the injustice that took place at Essex Community College did not just happen, Dr. Banks. It was because a coalition of people, black and white, worked very hard to bring about a remedy. They sought no particular reward or credit then or now.

But for your column to ignor or fail to adequately research the facts and report this is not helpful to the tireless efforts of many Baltimoreans who keep the vigil. Further, it is inconsistent with the standards of professional journalism.

JEAN PATTERSON BOONE