Baltimore Afro-American

# OPINION

founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1892-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City Inc. Carl Murphy (1926-1967) Editor-publisher (1922-1967).



## Racism in state govt.

An extremely capable young black state employee has successfully pursued his complaint of discrimination because of race against a powerful agency of Maryland government.

Ralph Hughes, a career worker with the state Legislative Reference Department, found himself in the hellish situation far too many blacks in both public and private sector jobs find themselves in: over-looked, by-passed and short-changed as far as career advancement is concerned.

Unlike far too many of us Hughes did something about his mistreatment.

As a result, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, hearing and evaluating evidence regarding his grievance, found that indeed the department for which he worked had practiced a policy of under-hiring minority applicants and stymying their efforts for advancement.

Hughes has been awarded a pay increase and cash settlement based on the length of time he was denied career advancement.

This is an important decision for black Marylanders.

The recent survey by Delegate John Douglass, D - 6th, on black employment in state agencies indicates that Maryland has a long way toward an equitable hiring and promotion policy where black workers are involved.

We do not doubt for a moment that many more qualified black state workers are languishing in the kind of limbo Hughes found himself in.

His victory should give hope to all others who have stood quietly thus far while others were given advancements, upward career opportunities because of their race.

We cannot expect the private sector to vigorously pursue affirmative action policies if the government of this state persists in racist employment policies.

Hughes stuck to his guns despite tremendous pressure. He was given strong backing by Sen. Clarence Mitchell III and veteran civil rights warrior Juanita Jackson Mitchell.

We strongly hope others who have legitimate grievances about racism in government come forth. We are pledged to support them as are political forces such as Sen. Mitchell represents.

Enough is enough as Ralph Hughes decided. Having decided, he went on and on.

## Excessive police force

We have learned that the police officer who handled a Baltimore school teacher and her sons with such fury and disdain is no stranger to confrontations with black citizens of this city.

We understand, further, despite police department protestations to the contrary, that other officers privy to the mistreatment of this respected citizen gave versions of the incident at variance with that supplied by the white officer in question.

Whether these contradictory reports will ever be forthcoming is doubtful: the police department being known for its habit of cleaning up after erring officers no matter how wrong they might be.

Given this background, we approve the decision of a citizens group from the neighborhood in which the school teacher and her family reside to press for an inquiry into the unfortunate situation.

Police officers who are not able to handle certain kinds of citizen confrontations with courtesy, tact and sensitivity are no credit to the force.

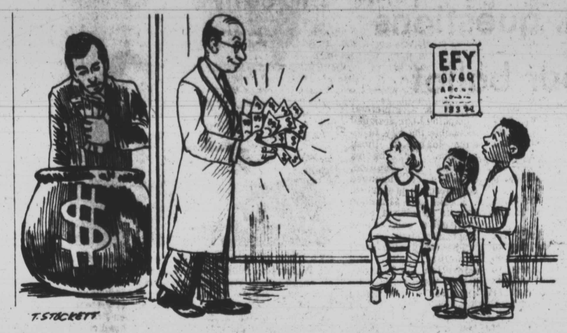
We hope the police officials with jurisdiction look into this matter with the same kind of thoroughness they brought to the McGee incident.

If law-abiding, essentially peaceful residents say a cop habitually abuses his authority, the Department ought to take a long, hard look at said officer.

We all have enough problems without having to suffer a super-mach get-tough-on-all-blacks man with a badge and a gun.

No white-wash on this one, please. Excessive force is lousy police practice and the Commissioner down to the last foot patrolman know this to be the truth.

## Hughes releases health $ for welfare kids




## MADELINE MURPHY

## After all I've done for you

My maternal Aunt Dede, who was generous to a fault with trips, clothes, books and money, often attached an invisible string whenever she wanted some return for her largesse (investment).

Often it was voiced in injured tones if she suspected in any way a reluctance on the part of the receiver to respond in the affirmative.

"After all I've done for you" became the plaintive come-on for favors when we grew older and were able to knit, sew, crochet, bake, clean or type.

For the guilt and sense of obligation of this recrimination became heavier-burdens to carry than fulfilling the request for service, especially when mother's response to our complaints, even when it involved her, parroted Aunt Dede's defense.

Yet on the other hand mother steadfastly admonished that "virtue was its own reward" when we expected returned favors from her. She adamantly proclaimed that we only did what was expected of us.

And so we lived in contradiction. On the one hand we knew that if we accepted gifts we would have to pay and pay and pay. And on the other hand when we did kind deeds or went beyond the call of duty, virtue was then its own reward.

Little tribal customs like these often ramified within me to such an extent that when I am prone to expect measure for measure, Mom's admonition about virtue's reward wins out, so repelled am I by the carrot on the stick philosophy.

But doesn't this idea permeate the whole world of American politics?

Taken even further is the old axiom that one rewards his friends and punishes his enemies.

In addition, it is not too unusual to even hear this "after all I've done for you" refrain from former white civil rights activists.

It would seem to me, however, that any white liberal who feels deeply about the plight of blacks, would work to change the unbalanced, biased position of blacks, based upon his or her Judeo-Christian belief. One would think here also that the greatest benefit that would come from any such activity would be the movement of blacks into the mainstream of life — the reward of virtue.

Further, to believe that no man is an island, whatever good that has been done, spills over to those who have helped make that good come true.

For those who are not so repressed, often are subject to the same repression in the future. Hitler's reign taught us that.

The domino effect of the golden rule benefits them in the long run.

Part of the problem when white liberals become involved in civil rights has been this constant reminder of obligation.

"After all I've done for you" carries with it the superior attitude of the charitable alms giver. As if to say: "If it hadn't been for me, where would you be today?"

Fortunately, this patronizing attitude was halted in the '60s because the new wave of black activists were all too tried of what was called the "Pepsi generation" who did good deeds among us, yet ignored the hard work required to suppress racism among their own kind.

The sad effect of this abdication is that racism today, though more subtle, is just as damaging.

For example, ". . . the jobless rate for blacks last October among high school drop-outs was 31.6 percent compared with 16.4 percent for whites . . . for high school graduates the figures were 21.3 percent and 8.5. Among college graduates fully 17.1 percent of blacks were unemployed against 4 percent whites . . . . Young blacks with college degrees were jobless at a higher rate than young whites who hadn't completed high school," according to the Wall Street Journal, Sept. 8.

Coupled with this is the added threat to all of us, black and white, liberal or conservative, of increased crime, family breakdown and disproportionate economic hardship.

It is plain to see that our liberal friends have not done their job in their own communities, in the places of power; in industry; in the political arena.

When we see the state of today's schools, the lack of quality education across the board, it is obvious that our liberal friends have abdicated their role of fighting racism. Most have either escaped to private schools or those who have remained find us expendable in the political grist mills of impotent school boards.

Thus, for the sake of survival in this snake pit of liberal indifference, we have had to develop a contradictory nature that emerges with symbolic smiles, symbolic verbiage, symbolic festures designed to get us over without threatening our fragile, tenuous existence.

No wonder then that blacks resent the suggestion that because white liberals have worked under great sacrifice for civil rights that forever after we must pay homage to them.

For enforced gratitude will never goad us into returning the favor, whatever it might be. After all, given our history as blacks in this country, they have only done what was expected of them.

## PARREN J. MITCHELL

## Christian publication rates Mitchell an eight

Rep. Paul Simon, a friend in Congress, was rated zero by "The Christian Voice." His response to that rating has been modified and adopted to fit my case, in which I received a rating of eight.

Various organizations give ratings to members of Congress and members of the state legislature, and frequently the ratings are totally meaningless, taking a few votes out of hundreds or thousands, and judging an entire record on those few votes.

A perfect example of the problem is a rating by "The Christian Voice" on "moral issues."

Their "moral issues" are items such as whether a member voted for or against "creating a Department of Education, "no" being the morally correct vote according to them. Another example is a constitutional amendment to "prohibit the busing of children to a school other than the one nearest their home." In this case if you did not vote for this amendment (which would have halted many excellent school programs) you are listed as having cast an immoral vote.

My total on their list — out of a possible score of 100 — is eight. A Methodist minister in Congress, Rep. Robert Edgar also got eight percent; Rep. John Buchanan of Alabama, a Baptist minister, got only 29 percent; and Rep. Robert Drinan of Massachusetts, a Catholic priest, got a moral rating of zero.

While Rep. Richard Kelly of Florida, the member who has admitted taking $25,000 in the ABSCAM scandal, got a moral rating of 100 percent.

The people who run "The Christian Voice" have a right to their opinion on creating a Department of Education, for example. But to say that those who don't agree with them are immoral suggests that they may understand little about both Christianity and politics.

The nearest scriptural base for a "rating" that I can recall is in Matthew 25, the judgment day scene, where Christ lists the questions we will be asked: Did you help the hungry? Did you give water to the thirsty? Did you provide clothes to those needing them? Did you take care of the sick? Did you show concern for those in prison?

Did any of the items which "The Christian Voice" uses as a check list reflect these concerns which Christ mentioned? Somehow they "improved" on that almost 2,000-year-old list so none of the original concerns were reflected.

A statement has been put out by the national presidents of three Lutheran churches: "It is arrogant to assert that one's position on a political issue is Christian and that all others are 'un - Christian', 'immoral', or 'sinful'.

There is no 'Christian' position; there are Christians who hold positions . . . to describe one group's political position as "The Christian Voice' . . . is wrongly judgmental. It is also an afront to other religious advocates whose religions hold social justice as a social form of love of neighbor."

I respect and understand those who disagree with stands I take. Sometimes I have to struggle within myself before taking a position.

However, I have little sympathy for those who equate their position with God's position, who in a simplistic and non - scriptural way confuse both theology and politics.

Most of the national organizations concerned about social justice, consumer protection and equality under the law rate me very high. By way of illustration I was deeply honored to receive on June 16, 1980, the Philip Hart Public Service Award for distinguished service in the House of Representatives on behalf of consumers. The award was given by the Consumer Federation of America.

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# LETTERS

## Rehabilitating incarcerated people in our best interest

Dear AFRO:

The Maryland Penal System as it presently operates is little more than a holding pen for thousands of persons tried and convicted for having breached the laws of this state. It is a system which suffers from political chicanery and public apathy.

Yet the Maryland Correctional System stands to become, if it is not already, the largest producer of dangerous and insensitive individuals in this state. The reasons are many, but certainly topping the list are racism and the shallow emphasis on, and commitment to, the rehabilitation of those incarcerated. Arguably, the latter exists because of the former.

Maryland's prison population is more than 80 percent nonwhite. In 1979 Maryland incarcerated 53.4 white citizens per 100,000 whites in the population and 656.7 black citizens per 100,000 blacks in the population, more than 12 times the proporation of blacks as whites. This disparity exists even though the majority of those arrested are white.

As a result of this gross disparity, prisons, expecially in "the free state," have come to be regarded as black institutions and as such are treated with disdain.

I have always believed, and have never hesitated in espousing my belief, that if whites were incarcerated in the same numbers, when convicted, as blacks, we would see a greater concern for the conditions of prisons and the deleterious effects they have on their residents. We would be more demanding of our elected officials to make prisons more humane.

We as a society would undoubtedly be more insistent on the promulgation and implementation of programs designed to rehabilitate, and in many instances habilitate, those who are incarcerated.

Although never recognized by the U. S. Supreme Court as a constitutional right, rehabilitation has always been postulated as a reason for incarceration. Yet little more than lip service has been devoted to this concept. Most would argue that justice has been served when the defendant is convicted and sentenced.

I urge that justice is truly served when the convicted and sentenced defendant, after having paid his debts to society, is returned to the streets with the necessary accoutrements for a trouble-free civilian life.

For what sense does it make to incarcerate a person just to have or her return to the streets more dangerous insensitive than when he or she entered?

In the findings of fact in the overcrowding cases at the Maryland Penitentiary and at the Maryland House of Correction, it was found that psychological services are quite limited, opportunities for vocational and rehabilitative training are quite limited and the incidence of prisoner idleness are quite high. We are fools if we believe that a person can be incarcerated in deplorable, degrading and debilitating conditions for years and then return to the society to live happily ever after.

The absence of viable rehabilitative programs in our penal institutions is exacerbated by this state's reliance on incarceration as a means of punishing convicted persons. Depending on whether or not local jail populations and confined juveniles are included in the counts, Maryland incarcerates at a rate that places us fifth or eighth nationally.

Last year the Governor's Task Force on Prison Overcrowding pointed out that the state incarcerates almost twice as many persons as the average incarceration rates of her four border states, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia and West Virginia.

With such heavy reliance on incarceration and so little reliance on rehabilitative programs after incarceration, again I argue that the Maryland Correctional System stands to become, if it is not already, the largest producer of dangerous and insensitive individuals in this state, and we will all have to pay for such.

We will continue to pay $12,000 a year per individual every time he or she is returned, after having been released, and having committed a new offense.

We will have to continue paying AFDC to the family whose father or mother is returned after having committed a new offense, and we will pay for medical expenses or property damages as a result of the acts of one, who after having been released from prison, uses on the streets the barbaric tactics learned in the institutions.

Nevertheless, and not withstanding all of the above, the governor of this state declared this spring that construction of another prison located in Baltimore City is planned. This decision reflected a nonsensical approach to resolving the problem of overcrowdedness in our prisons.

It also represented a massive retreat from the progressive corrections philosophy which Gov. Hughes proclaimed to be a major component of his administration. If the present and past is any indication of the future, the long range effect will be that more people will be incarcerated, more people will be forced to survive in outrageous conditions and more dangerous people will be returned to the communities of this state.

Without further analysis it is patently clear that this state's correctional approach is destined to fail in its purpose. Should this state fail to reverse its direction continuous flow of releases who are unequipped to provide for themselves and their families and who are very likely to find themselves in the same no-win position that conceivably gave rise to their original incarcerations.

We are faced with a great challenge. This challenge involves laying aside our emotional feelings and realizing that as much as we may hate demanding the humane and rehabilitative treatment of incarcerated people, it is in our best interest. Should we fail to meet this challenge, many of us will pay a price much greater than any out-of-pocket loss.

WARREN A. BROWN
Attorney-at-law

## Support for Hughes, Kamka

Dear AFRO:

It is clear that some prison officials can't tolerate success in calling for the dismissals of department heads, Secretary Kamka and Commissioner Goodlander.

Over the years in the Maryland penal system the much apparent changes needed were not implemented until Mr. Hughes took office and appointed Gordon Kamka to make these changes.

The bureaucrats who wanted new jails, but not in their counties, are receiving what they ask for since jails are now being built. Union members (prison guards) asked for more help last year after the 30 men broke out of the House of Correction at Jessup, additional manpower was hired.

Now, someone still wasn't satisfied in that it is proposed that Gov. Hughes should survey the prisons on his own.

As we recall, a task force appointed earlier in the year by the governor conducted surveys and the findings was submitted for which appropriate action is being taken as cited.

In summary, what Gov. Hughes should do is fire those who oppose him since this is what it amounts to inasmuch as Mr. Kamka and Mr. Goodlander are doing what they are asked to do or they would have been long gone.

WILLIAM CRAIG BARNES,
JACOB BRACEY,
LEROY HALL,
RALPH DAVIS

## Telethon was great success

Dear AFRO:

Again this year we are pleased to report that our annual Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon has been a great success!

In Maryland $756,655 was pledged. This amount does not include "fishbowl" cash donations made at the two television stations.

Nationally the pledges were $31,109,787. Both the Maryland and national figures far exceeded last year's amounts.

With the Muscular Dystrophy Association's heartfelt thanks to you and the thousands of people who made this truly amazing success story possible, be assured that this tremendous effort will hasten the day of genuine progress towards the prevention and cure of the muscular dystrophies and the 40 other neuromuscular diseases.

GARY ULRICH,
executive director,
Maryland chapter
Muscular Dystrophy Association

## NEW DAY BEGUN

## Samuel BANKS

One of the great tragedies of American life is the widespread "warehousing" and incarceration of our citizens, disproportionately black, Hispanic and poor, because of a failure of our nation to provide equality of opportunity for all 225 million citizens who comprise the United States.

Overcrowding in the nation's penal institutions, the absence of genuine and human programs of rehabilitation and the failure of the nation to provide facilities and care which afford inmates decent and proper care represent a national calamity.

To the extend, in the most prosperous nation in the world, that we permit fellow-Americans to be treated with contempt, hospitality and gross idignity, involves us, too, in a conspiracy of silence and inaction.

Maryland, it should be noted, has the ignominious and appalling distinction of being among the top 10 states in the nation. In point of fact, Maryland was ranked in December 1977 as having the fifth highest per capita incarceration rate (i.e., 197 prisoners per 100,000) and ranked 16th in crime rate and 18th in total population.

Another way of viewing the grim and depressing statistics is that out of every 100,000 black persons in Maryland, 656 are in prison compared to 68 of every 100,000 white persons. It is estimated, given the bleak socioeconomic conditions confronting black youths between 16 and 25, approximately one-third of them will be incarcerated before 1981.

It is most heartening, against this background of human misery and travail, that the Prison Alternatives Council Inc., under the chairmanship of Sampson Green, a highly respected and veteran stalwart in the struggle for human rights in Baltimore and Maryland is sponsoring a most important conference tomorrow Sept. 13, from noon until 5:30 p.m. at the Prince Hall Grand Lodge, 1307 Eutaw Place.

The Prison Alternative Council represents a broad-based group of citizens committed to the improvement of quality of life both within and outside penal institutions. The conference theme, "A Gathering for Justice: Insiders and Outsiders Explore Prison Problems," should serve as a basis for a fruitful and productive meeting.

Guest speakers will include Rep. Parren J. Mitchell, Abdi Al Jamil and the Rev. Maurice McCrackin who are well-known leaders in prison reform.

Citizens who care about eliminating the brutal socio-economic conditions in Baltimore and Maryland which lead to a disproportionate incarceration of blacks and the poor can now strike a blow for human uplift and decency by their presence.

The time has come to end the human warehousing and blighted opportunities as reflected in the excessive and burgeoning penal incarceration of blacks, Hispanics and the poor.

The Prison Alternatives Council's conference, Saturday, Sept. 13, at the Prince Hall Grand Lodge, from noon until 5:30 p.m., focusing on the topic, "A Gathering for Justice," constitutes a shining and historic event and opportunity in the life of Baltimore and the nation. It is deserving of the unstinting support of all who value the primacy of human life and human uplift and possibilities.

The Biblical admonition, "By their fruits ye sall know them," has meaning for all who care about enlarging and strengthening the human condition. The time is ripe to strike a blow for justice and freedom through your presence and support at this conference.

## Strike a blow for justice

# —MORE LETTERS—

## 'We must show renewed unity'

Dear AFRO:

Thecent unfortunate incident involving a Baltimore City educator and her family will probably be greeted with momentary outrage, a law suit and community concern. Not that these actions are wrong, but for so long they have been only par for the course.

In order to create more respect for our women and children within look only at ourselves in terms of continual infringement of that respect.

Both outrage and concern need to be positively channeled into effective alternatives which kept negative police actions at a minimum years ago.

Many have often spoken to the need of banding together, not as a mob, but as a dedicated and determined force of individuals who are not afraid to uphold that which was so evident before—black pride.

We've talked about civilian review boards, etc., but the only kind of gathering which will effectively negate the police atrocities is one that includes a cross-section of blacks throughout this city who will have the courage to say enough is enough.

As taxpayers we are actually paying policemen to harass, harangue and demean not only ourselves but also our women and children.

I've heard of biting the hand that feeds you, but do we have to feed the hand that bites us? We have tried many alternatives but we have not tried working together without factionalism.

Years ago when racism was as rampant and as open as it is now, we had no choice but to band together, trust one another and work in unity to further our cause.

Our backs are pressed so hard against the wall now until our circulation will eventually become seriously impaired, weakening us further.

Perhaps we need an "Enough is Enough" day to show our renewed unity. Perhaps we need to feel the precious fire of pride burning again within our hearts and minds. Perhaps we need to finally wake up to the realities of the atrocities.

If we don't, the beat will continue to go on...and on...and on.

LAWRENCE H. OUTLAW

## Leaders 'don't understand our needs'

Dear AFRO:

It should surprise no one that the present political leaders of Baltimore are a total failure. Everyone knows that.

Every time you pick up a newspaper or turn on the TV there is talk of improving the downtown area, such as the Inner Harbor and Lexington Market.

It is clear to us that the political leaders of Baltimore don't really understand the needs of the black community. When you isolate yourselves from us, how can you say you understand the problem?

Concerned citizens must step forward with their talents, patience and humanity and put a stop to this foolishness we are going through.

The will to do will spring from the knowledge that you must do, and that you can do. Only then will the vicious cycle that claims a little more of us each day forever be halted.

I can recall a time when the question was asked, when will Baltimore have a black mayor or (the state a black) governor. The question was actually taken as one big joke! So therefore no one paid any real attention.

Your neglect, your callous unconcern, your unyielding adherence to negative ideals, your constant refusal to offer any assistance or involvement can only make the situation worse.

We as human beings must get up off our behinds and start working together in various programs, setting an example and providing the direction we badly need.

Then perhaps through your own efforts and support you can better the situation.

MICHAEL A. EDWARDS

## Thoughts on Schaefer, the stadium

Dear AFRO:

"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." John F. Kennedy.

"Nothing from nothing, leaves nothing." Ghetto expression.

It seems to me that Edward Bennett Williams has spent most of his wealth purchasing the Orioles. His investment proved to be a success because he did it on his own merits.

Looking at this year, "The Great Chase," a midway success, Mr. Williams, did you have the same joggingshoes last year? 'cause I'm telling you, the Orioles should do it again this year. Good ol' Steve Stone.

Mayor William Donald Schaefer and the Department of Housing and Community Development's commissioner Brodie have probably picked ideal building site.

I am employed by both of the concerns above. You know what? I have trouble obtaining film and a camera to record housing code violations in my district.

Baltimore is almost spanking brand new, in large, thanks to our beloved "Willie Don."

The Honorable Mayor Schaefer and his council own at least 200 properties that are not inhabited, much less rehabbed. Our downtown streets house at least 100 homeless men, 20 homeless women and one infamous "bag lady."

What is happening in a city of progress and new life? Times are changing, the "space age" is approaching. Where has human kindness laid down its warm feelings?

Baltimore will be getting more out-of-city and out-of-state visitors when the Convention Center starts to function. "Annie, get your guns!" 'cause inflation is steadily rising. They got more bricks in Baltimore than bread.

The homeless of Baltimore cannot eat bricks, concrete and scaffolds. Mother Nature has a way of controlling pain and suffering, sometimes called a catastrophe.

For instance, last winter, a homeless friend died because he slept on a cozy manhole that later emitted steam while he was fast asleep.

But who am I — "Hey, Robert! You going to the central office to pick up some Polaroid type film?" How stupid of me to ask, "Rob-O! Since they don't have gas, I'll use the $5 for this camera that it took me a half hour to borrow." "Solitaky Pardno!"

I wish that I could see the mayor today. Your Honor, if you would just sit down and talk with me for 30 minutes, maybe I won't feel so bad because I have the stadium solution. And not enough money to see it through.

My proposed plan would have HUD smiling, the Department of Social Services grinning and that man in the White House, down the road a piece, thinking about a new home for our champs.

Maybe the other cities will follow suit. First of all, your patent will be the grandest stadium of all times. My plan will create more jobs but only on a small scale.

Only you, Mayor Schaefer could start a national health plan by cleaning up the Baltimore Bums (sounds like "Bad News Bears") and makin' Baltimore a better place in which to live.

ALBERT MULDROW and
ADRIAN MULDROW

## Carter, the debate

Dear AFRO:

The members of the Baltimore Civic Interest Group have sent a letter to President Jimmy Carter asking him to include John Anderson in the Sept. 21 presidential debate.

We are also asking all citizens of Maryland to send a card or letter to President Jimmy Carter asking him to include John Anderson in the debate with (Ronald) Reagan and him.

We are not supporting any presidential candidate at this time.

We remind Mr. Carter that he accepted an invitation from the League of Women Voters to participate in a League-sponsored debate. So we call on him to live up to his promise.

IRVIN J. CONWAY,
Chairman, Baltimore Civic
Interest Group

## 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

BEST WISHES go to our Jewish friends on the occasion of their high religious holidays, Rosh Hashanah, which began at Sundown Sept. 11 and Yom Kippur which begins at Sundown, Sept. 20.

SUNDAY, Sept. 14 is a great day for our AFRO founding family. The occasion for celebration is the baptism of our newest member, Shannon Elizabeth Murphy Braxton, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Ronald E. Braxton.

Proud father is pastor of Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church. Mother is our cousin and former AFRO Women's Editor Marie Phillips Braxton.

Marie is daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Paul Moss (Bettye Murphy). The blessed day will culminate at the Moss residence on Forest Park Ave. as the grandparents receive friends in honor of their first grandbaby.

BUT FIRST is the Holy Sacrament of Baptism at beautiful Shannon Elizabeth's father's church at 11 a.m. presided by Bishop John Hurst Adams. The location is 1130 W. Lexington St.

HOW TIME FLIES. Just a few days ago it seems, Marie was one of my daughter Marsha's bridesmaids. And then, as the years came and flew away, Marie became an AFRO editor. While still writing the society news, she studied and became an ordained AME minister.

WE WERE present at Bethel AME when she gave her trial sermon.

BIG BETHEL was crowded as Marie's many relatives and friends attended the evening services.

THE WEDDING which joined Marie and Ronald was at the Masonic Temple and throngs gathered at the reception.

The parents, already the happiest persons we know, are now beaming as they cuddle pretty Shannon Elizabeth Murphy Braxton, their first born.

ISN'T it good to know of such a bright, sunny event?

THE SAME DAY, Del. and Mrs. Frank M. Conaway are entertaining the Maryland General Assembly's Black Caucus members at their residence. Also invited to the lavish affair are many notables and folks from the top shelf.

The 5 to 9 p.m. occasion will be in the usual Conaway fashion with literally everything tasty served so guests will not mind missing dinner at home.

A WEDDING we missed (on account of vacation) was the 6 p.m. ceremony Aug. 30 at Bethel AME which joined Yvonne Davis and Anthony Wayne Robinson.

The beautiful reception was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Robinson on Denlyn Rd.

The invitations were a soft blue with real violets on the cover. How lovely everything must have been. We wish the newlyweds, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Robinson, every blessing.

ENCLOSED in triple envelops, edged in broad gold borders and printed in gold is the invitation we received to a Sept. 20 wedding set for St. Joseph's Catholic Church, East St. Louis, Ill.

The elegant outside envelop lined entirely in gold contains not only the invitation but also the RSVP card, the reception announcement and the small stamped return envelop also in raised gold.

QUITE LIKE the newlyweds - to - be, the plush affair bids you come to the formal wedding of Miss Jerry Eileen McHugh of Largo, Md. and East St. Louis Mayor Leon N. Perry.

The 5 p.m. event is announced by Jerry's father, Flanders Jerry McHugh of Largo, Md. The reception is scheduled for Sept. 27, 1 p.m. at the Washington navy Yard Officers Club, Crystal Room, 9th and M St., S.E. Washington, D.C.

SINCE we can not go to E. St. Louis, Ill. for the wedding rites, we will certainly be at the reception. Best wishes go to the charming couple, the most vivacious and talented folks ever.

PS — I hope to see photos of the wedding. I can't even imagine the stunning gown Jerry Eileen will wear. Aristocratic Leon, I am sure, will look like a king. Both the bride and groom - to - be look like movie stars anyway.

BETTER JOIN the Baltimore crowd of smart folks going to the Congressional Black Caucus Awards Dinner. This affair - of - the - year is Sept. 27 at the Washington Hilton in D.C. and there is no way to describe it nor the crowd of 2,000 arriving from all over the nation.

IF YOU CAN rustle up $150 per ticket, make the sacrifice so you can see in front of your very eyes such world - famed personalities as Cong. Parren J. Mitchell, his noted family, all the Congressional Black Caucus members and the stars of stage, screen and TV.

LAST YEAR, we met Mr. and Mrs. Cassius Clay (Ali, the boxing champ), Cicilley Tyson, Grady, Red Foxx, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Ambassador and Mrs. Andrew Young, etc.

AND, let me tell you, the loveliest frocks were those worn by Mrs. Young and Mohammed Ali's wife. You never saw such creations and designers' one - of - a - kind dresses.

THERE will be fashionable ladies and gentlemen also at the Kennedy Center Gala Concert, Friday, Sept. 26 (tickets $30 each) and at the $100 per VIP reception.

BALTIMORE fans in the P. J. Mitchell "cheering section" include so far his family, Freedom House members, Museum members, local college presidents (everyone of them), an interracial circle of supporters, Col. Michael Lorenzo, the Lawson Vessells, Herbert Graves, Earl Williams, Nathalia Ramsundar, Marsha German, Ken Joiner of Hawaii; Geneva Puryear, Dorothy Bennett, Edward Butler, Dr. Dan Nicolas and children.

CONG. MITCHELL'S supporters in fact, account for hundreds of the guests as the various black organizations and unions send representatives from across the land.

OFTEN, the guests bring their families and even college and high school kids just to see the array of stunning guests you only read about.

Present from every state will be white senators and representatives and their wives, all the white and black mayors and other distinguished officials.

YOU WILL gasp as you see coming down the steps to the vast ballroom such persons as Alex Haley, Sen. John Glenn, the astronaut, Arthur Ash, Dick Gregory, Liz Taylor and husband Sen. Warner. There just isn't room enough to tell it all.

EVERYBODY tries to "get on that boat" when it goes out.

See you there.

## Mel de Rutledge Jr.

## Urban America Housing Report

### Wise house buying

## Now you're the owner

possible for you to buy and renovate the second house by obtaining an FHA - insured mortgage loan'in an amount that will include the necessary repairs. The FHA commitment will be based on the value of the house as improved.

When you become the owner of a used or new home, you agree in your mortgage to keep the property in good condition. This is only common sense.

Why sacrifice to buy an expensive house and then allow it to lose value through your neglect? Regularly put aside an amount for annual upkeep, allowing for the fact that maintenance costs will vary from year to year.

A house is a complicated mechanism and you can't expect to know how to keep everything in good working order. If you are handy with tools, you may be able to do some of the repair and improvement work.

But don't tamper with expensive equipment and appliances unless you are sure that you know what you are doing. You may void the warranty on such equipment if you attempt to do repairs yourself. When the plumbing, elctric, or heating system needs more than minor repairs, it's time to call in an expert.

Keep all the guarantees, service agreements and instructions that come with your various appliances in one safe place. Read the instructions carefully before you operate any appliance. If anything goes wrong that you cannot correct, call the local utility company or the servicing agent.

### Trade and renovate

If you decide to trade your present house for an older house that needs repairs, it may be possible for you to buy and renovate the second house by obtaining an FHA - insured mortgage loan'in an amount that will include the necessary repairs. The FHA commitment will be based on the value of the house as improved.

### Money troubles

If you encounter temporary financial problems that will prevent prompt payment on your mortgage, inform you lender immediately. Don't delay.

Often, if your payment record is a good one, an arrangement can be worked out to help you through your difficulties. If your lender will not offer your assistance, contact the nearest HUD - FHA office. They may be able to help.

Don't forget that once the closing has taken place YOU must continue to make payments according to the terms of the mortgage, no matter what defects you find in the house or who is legally responsible for correcting them.

### Straight Talk on Aging

## Problems with the digestive system

By Dr. Matthew Tayback, state director on aging

Ulcers have no monopoly on the discomfort they can bring to a person's digestive system. That's especially true if the person in question is up in years.

As is the case with so many other physical problems (GI) gastrointestinal complaints seem to appear more frequently after age 50 or so.

Because of that, it's wise for older people to know something about the GI problems that can affect them.

First, understand that not all GI complaints have physical causes. Some can stem from undue emotional stress — stress that often arises with worry about retirement, family illness or death, and changes in income.

According to Dr. Marvin M. Schuster, of The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine: "Besides stress, the overuse of alcohol and drugs — even aspirin — and a poor diet can lead to GI symptoms. Physicians see many, many patients whose GI problems are 'functional', not organic".

Dr. Schuster also says optimistically, "When these patients fully and accurately describe their symptoms, they can usually be helped to feel better".

There are, of course, many purely physical GI problems. One of the most widespread is diverticulosis, a condition characterized by the protrusion of tiny sacs through the muscular wall of the large intestine. Nearly one in four Americans over 50 has this condition, though it may cause them no trouble at all.

Trouble starts when those little sacs become infected and inflamed (the condition has now developed into diverticulitis). Here, treatment becomes necessary. Antibiotics and bedrest can usually do the trick, but surgery is sometimes indicated.

Apart from diverticulitis, the GI system is vulnerable to other "itises". The stomach may succumb to an inflamation known as gastritis; the small intestine and the colon may be afflicted by ileitis and colitis, respectively. All require medical attention.

There is another GI complaint — much more common than those just mentioned — that in many cases should prompt older people to seek the advice of their doctors. Usually, though probably because the condition is so commonplace — they don't. The condition, as you may have guessed, is constipation.

Again according to Dr. Schuster, "One problem involves definition, since ideas vary concerning the proper frequency of bowel movements. It is not necessary to have one bowel movement every day. In fact, three or four bowel movements a week are 'normal' for some patients".

"Concern over irregularity", he continues, "can lead to self - treatment, and this is why laxative abuse is common. Such overuse . . . is the most common cause of diarrhea in senior citizens, especially women. It may also lead to further constipation and an unhealthy reliance on laxatives".

Many physicians seek to reduce their patient's laxative reliance by putting them on high - fiber diets, rich in unprocessed bran.

For the proper treatment of GI problems, even severe constipation, see your doctor.

And for more information about gastrointestinal disorders, write: The Digestive Diseases Information Center, 4340 Rockledge Drive, Suite 200, Bethesda, Md.

S E E P