Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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It should be no surprise

With some amusement mingled with much sadness we noticed other news mediums marveling at the fact that some 20,000 plus Baltimoreans, most of them black, lined up to apply for a scant 100 jobs.

We have been saying for much longer than we have wanted to that Baltimore's job picture is among the bleakest of any American city. Especially for us.

That's anyone should profess amazement at so many people seeking so few jobs in turn amazes us.

The dramatic outpouring of job-seekers beginning Monday of this week at Federal agencies downtown is a mighty portrayal of just how bad things are and just how desperately most of our community wants honest, dignified toil.

Perhaps some have not wanted to see or know this reality because it is so awful a truth.

Rather Baltimoreans have let themselves be blinded by a constant bombardment of messages, most of them we are sorry to say, from the media which would have us all believe something that isn't so.

In constant self-serving television commercials, we are treated to a montage of Baltimore scenes suggesting everything is either already rosy or fast coming up roses.

We have idyllic cinema scenes showing little black kids gazing up at news helicopters as if the Lord Savior himself was about to descend from the heavens.

We have the Softones, a black vocal group, singing a rythmic hymn of praise to a white weather broadcaster the subliminal message being that this guy somehow brings something good into our lives when in truth he would not bring in a drought.

We have the Mayor, the Comptroller, Wild Bill Hegy whose importance to Baltimore we have never fully understood, ditch-diggers, butchers, candlestick makers all singing about how wonderful Baltimore is but as much as we love our city, we have the persistent nagging doubt that all this movie messaging is so much bushwah.

We have much to praise about our city but we mightily suggest that those 20,000 folks out lined up for jobs represent additional thousands more who if they had meaningful employment or any jobs at all could join the chorus of happy faces of whom visual media keeps bombarding us.

With all the media hype of Baltimore, those thousands standing in line may have come as a surprise to some but not to us.

On the waterfront

Our congressman Parren Mitchell held an unusually positive and informative press conference here a few days ago.

He reported that little progress had been made in providing black longshoremen equitable work time on the docks despite court orders stipulating otherwise.

He told us again that minority contractors are just about frozen out of the Ft. McHenry tunnel project and that state officials who can do something about it not doing much of anything.

Now what we see is that Mr. Mitchell, having given the community this valuable information, needs some more commitments from blacks in the labor movement and in the minority economic development sector as well.

It may be said that we are all really behind our legislator but we detect a whole lot of foot dragging.

The congressman is telling us what is going down that is not in our best interests and too many of us are still on the sidelines cheering him on but not getting into the struggle beyond some slight lip-service.

No law-maker can do it all by himself.

We need some new kinds of coalitions, some men and women willing to go out on the point and we need to perk up those groups that are just standing around waiting for miracles to happen.

Please register

This is our continuing reminder to all citizens that they must, if they have not already, register to vote in the upcoming Presidential election in November.

You have until October 6 to sign up as a registered voter. Walk or run to the Board of Election Supervisors at Fayette and Gay Streets and register. Or get forms from the NAACP or Enoch Pratt libraries. Your vote will determine what kind of government we will have over the next four years. Rather than cry after the voting is over, register so that you can have a hand in determining the outcome.

What price unity?

Dear AFRO:

Many comments in reference to the recent NAACP Unity Banquet gave accolades such as: exciting crowd," "tremendous crowd," a beautifully mixed crowd," and "wonderful crowd" the only problem is that for so long there has been no "s" on the word crowd.

Year after year we have one big crowd in support of each other but then sadly; the need, the excitement, and the challenge become lost for another year.

In order to make a crowd meaningful there must be an "s" on the end. Only through plural usage will "crowd" move from meaningless to meaningful. The "s" adds consistency, desire, and motivation, as well as an offense instead of a defense.

If those of us who heard Dr. Sam Yette heard him correctly, there would be no doubt as to both our purpose and our agenda.

Unfortunately, we cannot have unity banquets very often but each of you can have one everyday within your homes, with your families and loved ones. Pride in oneself comes also when you learn to love each other. Remember this: holidays come once a year, but life and its struggles are continual.

LAWRENCE H. OUTLAW

Penal system

Dear AFRO:

The purpose of this letter is to provide a more descriptive idea of what is really happening in the Maryland penal system.

As a prisoner, I share with all of those interested in the concerns of the overcrowded correctional institutions. More ideas must develop in terms of establishing positive and viable programs to assist the "first offender" and "nonviolent offender".

With the enormous influx of persons coming into the correctional system, it is highly necessary that emphasis be placed on rehabilitation in order that a decrease in recidivism be noticeably apparent from a statistical viewpoint where parolees, ex-offenders and the likes are concerned.

Moreover it is just as necessarily important that prison officials (Correctional Officers) become more directly involved with the inmates they control. Evaluations and recommendations from these officers should be mandatory since the prisoners who committed violent crimes, the repeaters that is, perhaps would standout among the others (first offenders and non-violent offenders) and may not merit early release (parole) or any other favorable consideration based on the correctional officers' evaluations and recommendations to the prison administrators heading the chain of command and have the last say.

In summary, unless members of the free society, prison officials and public officials all work together to properly address the existing problems and not bypass them (problems) the deterrant (prisons) for lawbreakers will remain the means of captivity only until the lawbreaker is free again to break more laws.

WILLIAM CRAIG BARNES

MADELINE MURPHY

By Madeline W. Murphy

A friend, former Baltimorean, after an absence of 12 years, remarked how the smell and look of decay permeated old Baltimore neighborhoods, formerly well kept. The Cavernous blocks of empty boarded-up properties, chain-link fencing out derelicts, squatters and the like, also hemmed in rats, disease and desultory abnadonment.

She remarked as she encountered an empty open air "living room" on the edge of vacant lot, peopled with dozens of young unemployed black men, replete with raggedy sofa, overstuffed chairs and makeshift card table, how like a scene from Jamaica. Near a shopping center were occasional card tables set up by food and bake sale vendors.

On the eve of the Annual Congressional Black Caucus Dinner that brings forth celebrities; 8,000 or more groupies; middle class voyers; as well as serious concerned activists; the state of the black condition fairly screams its alienation, anomie and disorganization.

At the height of black political gains, stretching from the Congress to federal district judgeships, from black mayors south, east, north and west; to black state legislators, black councilmen; black middle managers in government; Cabinet officers too; runs the lateral escalation of riots, irresponsible, brutal, police shootings of blacks, dislocation of tenants and homeowners without due compensation or adequate relocation.

Added to this is the hunger, joblessness and disillusionment of those very blacks we urge to vote on November 4.

Here in Baltimore, the status quo illustrated by Harbor Place, continues to propose bond issues and referendaithat either will ultimately be controlled by quasi-private city corporations, who will feel no obligation to, nor sympathy for, that "other Baltimore," caught in the morass of abandonment and benign neglect; or will dilute as in Question 2, the opportunity for blacks to be elected as court clerks.

Incidentally, this Question 2 proposal proposes to consolidate the administration of the courts under one "Super" clerk. It forecloses any future possibility of blacks achieving equality by political candidacy, the operation of a court system that overwhelmingly adjucates predominantly black criminal issues.

But what blacks question today is, have we been unwittingly included within a system that systematically discriminates because of race against us, in the rosd rocky and long when each and every black either must file suit for redress of his grievance or just give up?

upward mobility, fallen obligingly into the trick bag of middle management that is also a buffer (as LBJ proposed) between the have and have nots keeping most blacks a permanent under class?

These and other issues must not only be addressed by the Black Caucus workshops, but also the implications of the growing frustrations of these alienated blacks who might make the Miami riots look like a picnic.

If the typical Miami rioter was 27.8 years old, single, a school dropout, blue collar worker, earning less than $10,000 a year; dissatisfied with a rundown neighborhood, poor housing conditions, what does this portend for the thousands of mirror image urban centers nationwide?

In Miami 51 percent of riot participants said that blacks would gain more by the riot than if it had not occurred.

Alarmingly this is plainly a rationale for working outside of the system.

And though that conclusion is questionable, at least the riot propelled attention from the Carter administration, for whatever good or evil might have resulted.

Yet with the new proposals under the Carter economic renewal program, the question is whether throwing more money at problems is really the solution. Have pilot job training programs really succeed or merely perpetuated "revolving doors" that lead in a circle of training and retraining without jobs?

Rather than tax cuts, what we need is a revision of how we view welfare and family maintenance. What is wrong with family maintenance income, as in the banking industrial European nations, that provides subsidies to every family and those who don't need it to the government form of taxes?

Rather than these monumental patronage programs for the cities that have not reduced unemployment, isn't it time to scrap them as ineffectual and send subsistence checks, above the poverty level, to those who need it?

What say you Congressional Black Caucus?

In or out of the system?

LETTERS

Some proposals on improving state penal system

Dear AFRO:

Recently there has been much ado about something in Maryland prisons.

The orders by three Federal Judges to eliminate the double celling of inmates in two state prisons and two Grand Jury reports not only force us to re-examine Maryland's incarceration policies but it triggers a re-examination of the total philosophy, effectiveness and efficiency of the criminal justice system in Maryland.

Marylanders are now faced with a number of painful questions: Should our prisons and jails rehabilitate or punish? Are Maryland's prisons effective? Is our criminal justice system efficient? Does it protect the public?

Asking these questions is far easier than accepting their answers. Research has found that, in fact, prisons are not rehabilitative. They do little to reduce crime and offer little, if any, support to the offender who has served time and returns to society.

If we release offenders incapable of living independently, working or supporting themselves without resorting to breaking the law, then all of us have failed.

Thus we have helped neither the offender nor the community - essentially we have punished both. This punitive philosophy causes our prisons to be ineffective and costly, not only in tax dollars but also in human potential.

How than can we realistically believe that Maryland's prisons are effficient? They clearly are not and this is evidence overcrowding, a desperate need for physical renovations, and a lack of adequate health services and other rehabilitative programs.

Deeply concerned with these facts and wanting to deal with the situation, the Governor's Task Force on Prison Overcrowding proposed alternatives for short-term, nonviolent offenders. The proposals include:

1. Community correction centers which would accept short-term nonviolent offenders and would concentrate on preparing the offender to re-enter hisher community.

2. Expanded parole and probation policies for offenders serving sentences of 2 years of less.

3. Methods of restitution in which offenders would work to compensate victims or perform community services.

4. A system of neighborhood courts which would be quasi-judicial in nature to arbitrate disputes which now end up in courts.

These proposals, if implemented, would be a start at making our prisons a feasible, effective and efficient means of incarceration. So why are the legislators and the public dragging their feet in supporting these alternatives? Some say the reason is fear, and it is real and understandable.

To overcome this fear, we must first educate ourselves and learn the strengths and weaknesses of our laws and resources before we can make education decisions. Unless there is a concerted effort to deal with the public's awareness of this issue, alternatives to incarceration will never be a success. The success is dependent upon the attitudes and services of both legislators and the community involved.

The Maryland Conference of Social Concern, in cooperation with others, is committed to educating the public in the area of corrections through educational publications, forums, monitoring legislative bills and compiling information of existing correctional services throughtout the state for professional and public use.

The safety of the citizens of Maryland should receive as much concern and consideration by Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Gordon Kamka, as the issue of corrections.

Maryland prisons and its criminal justice system must be effective, efficient and secure.

The citizens of Maryland have to be educated as to the widespread misconceptions of crime, but they must also be assured by their leadership that violent offenders will not be on the streets. The Maryland Conference of Social Concern expects and believes that Secretary Kamka can be a leader in both corrections and public safety.

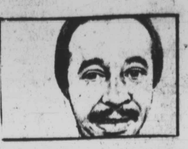
We applaud and support his efforts to improve the prisons and criminal justice system of this state but we urge him to be a strong and sensitive leader in the area of law enforcement. If there is a lack of leadership in either area then these past few months will have been much ado about nothing.

RICHARD E. ULLRICH, Chairperson
Corrections Committee, Md.
Conference of Social Concern

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.

PARREN J. MITCHELL



GOP mumbo jumbo

I know many of you watched the recent Republican convention on television. Although the nomination of Ronald Reagan came as no surprise, Republican convention delegates unveiled a party platform which could only be called dangerous, inconsistent, and irresponsible.

The platform calls for "less government interference" in the lives of all Americans. Yet it calls for "military superiority" — another term for reductions in social programs and a return to the draft. Instead of reducing the role of government the Republicans would increase it in the form of conscription for all eligible American males.

There are other serious discrepancies in the Republican party platform. Republicans say that they want less government. Unfortunately, they want to eliminate government in those areas which provide relief for the poor, the elderly, and the disadvantaged.

The Republican platform calls for a tax decrease of $140 billion over the next three years, accompanied by a $100 billion increase in defense spending.

The result would be whopping inflation and the elimination of virtually every social program currently available through the federal government.

The economic policy of the Republicans is utterly absurd. In many areas of concern - inflation, jobs, industrial development - the Republican platform seeks what it considers the only solution to America's problems: cut taxes to stimulate business production.

This single-minded proposal ignores the root of our social problems. For example, the platform addresses the problem of black unemployment by stating that tax cuts would stimulate industrial expansion which could then stimulate the job market.

This is a warmed over version of the old "trickle-down" theory of economics which has never worked in the past. In addition, a tax cut could not provide any guarantee that those newly created jobs would go to minority communities.

Why aren't black youths hired by many white employers? It is because employers are willing to pay a price for discrimination. In their view, it is better to hire a unskilled white at $5.00 an hour than a black at the minimum wage. Therefore, there is no reason to suspect that white employers will use the tax cut to provide additional job opportunities for the underprivileged.

Moreover, the Republican party platform does not even mention the need to train minority youths, so that they may have skills with which to enter the job market. This means that, although they may be fortunate enough to obtain jobs, black youths will be kept in unskilled low-paying positions because of discrimination.

The Republicans fare poorly on other issues as well. They address the welfare problem by stating that the federal government inadequately administers this ofttaulted program. They would prefer to return welfare administration to local governments and "charities." I need not tell you that this proposal would be catastrophic for minorities if implemented.

In short, the Republicans party platform offers Blacks an empty alternative; its implementation would be a giant step backward, from which blacks may never recover.

If you have heard anyone asserting that Ronald Reagan is not the ogre that liberals often maintain, or that voting for presidential candidates doesn't make any difference, guess again; then read the Republican party platform. It is a blueprint for disaster!

G. JAMES FLEMING

More on the coming election

By G. James Fleming

It may be easy to project how the presidential campaign will be proceeding. It is not easy, however, to predict the outcome. At this writing, no sane novice (or even a "pro") would bet on who the winner will be.

This may be one of those years when nothing will go "according to Hoyle." This may be one of those years, few in America experience, when the popular vote will not determine the president and when the House of Representatives will be compelled to fulfill its constitutional obligation to choose the president, as has happened three times in the nation's history.

Depending on one's interest, it is comforting, or distributing, to say that no Third Party candidate "has a chance of being elected president." But, what has not happened, can happen, as everyone knows, especially in the era of electronic manipulation.

Once upon a time, one could glibly say (and the textbooks chronicled it) that "No Catholic can be elected president . . ." John F. Kennedy, however, was elected president in 1960. This possibility that the time has come for a Third Party candidate, or an independent, to win, is what Congressman John B. Anderson is counting on.

Those who use the 1948 election as a frame of reference know, of course, that Harry Truman was returned to the White House, despite the fact that two Third Party candidates ran against him: The Progressive Party, whose standard bearer was Henry Wallace, and the States Rights Party, led by J. Strom Thurmond, the latter now a Republican senator.

Despite this split in the usually Democratic support, and with Thomas E. Dewey as his Republican opposition — despite the polls which predicted his defeat — Truman won, both by the popular vote and by the electoral college vote. The latter vote was:

Truman	303
Dewey	189
Thurmond	39
Wallace	0

If President Carter looks only at the Truman experience, he will feel very encouraged, perhaps optimistic. The year 1980, however, is different from 1948.

This year the polls are much more reliable; the solid coalition of labor, Jews and blacks is not solidly behind the Democratic ticket and Carter's personal following, especially among blacks, has also been eroded.

Now, unlike 1948, there is widespread unemployment; there is two-digit inflation and the American dollar is no longer the premier currency of the world.

Most people, to put it mildly, are also confused — rightly or wrongly — over the foreign policy of the Carter administration, both before and since the imprisonment of the U.S. diplomats in Iran — the hostages.

All these realities of 1980 make the coming election different from that of 1948.

So far as black Americans are concerned, it is largely a matter of whether they want to risk their future, and that of the nation, with the Democrat Jimmy Carter, or with Republican Ronald Reagan, or Independent John Anderson (onetime Republican) — each with his past and his record.

This is an academic or moot question, however, unless black persons of voting age register to vote and actually vote on Election Day. These votes will make the difference, not only for Carter, but also for many members of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives.

It must be known by now, as Congressman Parren Mitchell reminded AFRO readers two weeks ago, that members of the Ku Klux Klan and their like-minded supporters, are going to vote next November in such numbers as they have not voted before, at least in many years.

Several fundamentalist and conservative religious cults have also pledged themselves to defeat and unseat all the liberal and pro-civil rights senators and representatives.

These enemies of freedom, justice and democracy are going to vote. Neither cold, nor snow, nor rain will keep them from going to the polls. No lip service to Carter, for instance, will be worth a tinker's dam, unless we place our ballot where our mouths are.

A liberal dilemma

Judge Joe Pines and friends go campaigning

By James M. Abraham
AFRO Staff Writer

On the wall of Judge Joseph Pines' private chambers at the old Courthouse-Post Office building on St. Paul St., hangs a poster which states reads; "You have not convinced a man because you have silenced him."

The quote reflects an individual with an open mind, and Pines recalls the prices he has been forced to pay for his tolerance.

"I remember once a Cardinal and I had to go out to Baltimore County to testify in favor of an open-housing ordinance. We were spat upon, we were stoned, and the only thing I could think was that it all looked like Nazi Germany. That was the worst day of my life," he said, shaking his head.

His days as an advocate are over now, as his functions are proscribed by his current position as a judge on the city's Supreme Bench.

But his empathy toward those who approach his bench are a reflection of the spirit which moved him to play a leading role in the civil rights agitation of the Fifties and Sixties.

"I don't know black justice or white justice. Color does not enter into my decisions," he said.

When asked why blacks are largely on the receiving end of the criminal justice system, Pines paused for a moment, then answered.

"Basically, I think that it's not an economic problem," he stated. "I think you'll find that from an economic standpoint those who are econimically deprived are those who have the most contact with the criminal justice system."

But Pines feels that there must be a solution to this problem.

"I'm trying in some way to break this cycle," he told a reporter. "I'm trying to see that the ex-offender will not be put back out on the street without the where - with - all, to become a useful citizen again."

He said that he is currently attempting to locate possible jobs through various agencies that he can refer ex-offenders to, in an effort to give ex-convicts a chance to earn a living as a deterrent to crime.

Pines and Judge Elsbeth Bothe, who is also seeking to retain her seat on the city Supreme Bench, both barely held their positons during the May 14 primary.

Both feel that the black vote is essential in order to win in November, and a reporter asked Pines why local attorney William "Billy" Murphy was not added to the four-man "slating" ticket in order to give it more attractiveness in the black community.

"I think I can stand some shoring up in the black community," he said. "The ticket as a whole didn't do that well."

He was correct. In most black precints polled by the AFRO, blacks voted overwhelmingly for the three blacks in the race; Judge Robert Bell, and attorneys Alonza Hairston and Murphy. Chief Justice J. Harold Grady was the only non-white to score substantially in the black community.

So whynot pick up Murphy?

"We're running under the sitting judge principle," he explained. "Part of that principle is that we can't back any other canditates or politicians. They can adopt us, but we can't endorse them."

Judge Bothe, however, has decided to take matters into her own hands. She has received the support of a group called "Friends of Elsbeth Bothe," which has been soliciting funds from various sources for her campaign.

Both Pines and Bothe apparently suffer from an image problem. Despite their achievement in the field of human rights, a "black" campaign organized by Murphy torpedoed any changes they may have had of capitalizing on their previous accomplishments.

But Pines hopes for different results in November. "The voters have a wider range then they have from," he commended. "They can take all the sitting judges plus one more slot."

Originally five judges filled the slate, but Judge M. Albert Figinski lost his seat in May, primarily because the only district he showed real strength in was the west Baltimore area where he grew up.

Bothe and Pines have been targeted by the other candidate running who is not a judge, former city councilman and current attorney Tom Ward.

Ward has publicly stated that he is "going after" the aforementioned justices, because he feels that they are the weakest of the four.

Pines admits that it is difficult to mount a counter - campaign against Ward.

"It's awkward running in a robe," he said metaphorically. "You are prevented by judicial ethics from doing what your opponents can do."

—MORE LETTERS—

State supported educational opportunities

Dear AFRO:

As you may be aware, students from Maryland can participate in a number of educational programs in other states currently unavailable in Maryland at the undergraduate, and professional levels.

These programs are available to Maryland residents at in-state tuition rates through interstate agreements established between the State Board for Higher Education and other states.

During this year, Maryland residents can enroll in professional programs in veterinary medicine, optometry, osteopathic medicine; a number of graduate programs — including coal processing research, physical therapy, and radiation chemistry; and a number of undergraduate programs — including hydrotechnology, environmental health, and extracorporeal circulation technology.

As the state agency responsible for these interstate agreements, the Maryland State Board for Higher Education would appreciate your cooperation by informing students of access to these regional programs.

LUCIE LAPOVSKY
Director, Division of
Finance and Facilities
State Board of Higher
Education

FOR ALL WE KNOW

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

BEAUTIFUL Shannon Elizabeth Murphy Braxton was christened Sunday at her father's church, Allen AME at 1130 W. Lexington, and afterwards her mom and pop, Rev. and Mrs. Ronald (Marie Cooke) E. Braxton greeted scores of relatives and friends.

The reception at 4 p.m. was hosted by Shannon's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. A. Paul (Bettye Murphy) Moss at their Forest Park residence.

Shannon Elizabeth Murphy Braxton not only has grandma Elizabeth Murphy Moss bearing her name but also several others of the family, Mae Elizabeth Murphy Dyson, Elizabeth Murphy Oliver, Clemenitine Elizabeth Murphy Knox, to mention a few of the cousins.

POISED and gracious as any lady could be, Shannon who is barely two months, sat in her godmother's lap taking all the grand affair in her stride.

THE PRINTED baptismal leaflet arranged by Bettye Moss outlined Shannon's roots on both sides of the family, the Murphys and the Braxtons, in such an enchanting way it is indeed a keepsake.

AN ARRAY of guests from all along the East Coast attended Shannon's debut, a fete quite in keeping with the lovely way the Mosses do things. Mother, Marie, wore the softest of pale pink frocks while her tiny daughter was the cutest in white and eyelet.

LAWSON VESSELLS and the magic of his piano-playing will be featured Sunday, Sept. 21, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Carroll Mansion. 800 E. Lombard, sponsored by the Peale Museum and the Amrican Federation of Musicians Local 40543.

OCT. 3 is the date long to be remembered by the illustrious Julian family.

"TIS GOLD DAY at DePauw University in Greencastle, Ind. and the highlight will be the dedication of the $multimillion new DePauw University Science Center which is named for Dr. Percy L. Julian.

The oldest brother of the Julian clan, was before his death, known worldwide as the greatest living scientist. He lived his childhood in Greencastle, went to school there and after he earned degrees in the United States and abroad, returned there to teach.

Present on the scene will be sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Julian White and husband, Johnny White, the retired Postal Alliance official; sister, Dr. Mattie Julian Brown and husband, Dr. Warren Brown; sister, Mrs. Irma Dungee Julian Raybon and husband, Jesse Raybon.

Among the grandchildren will be Mrs. Bettye Stuckey.

Dr. Anna Julian, Dr. Percy's wife and their children will arrive from Chicago.

Mrs. Roseearl Julian, wife of another brother, the late Dr. Emerson Julian, their children and the children of Baltimore's beloved Dr. James Julian will also be present. Dr. James has not yet decided to attend due to a busy schedule.

AMONG those receiving invitations to the stellar affair is John J. Oliver, AFRO president, also a DePauw graduate and Rector scholar.

MRS. BEATRICE NAOMI FRANKLIN LEWIS celebrated her 80th birthday on Sept. 8. She was the first newsgirl to sell the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspaper on the streets of Baltimore in the early 1900s at the age of 11 years.

Mrs. Lewis, affectionately known as "Miss Bea" (by many) had a widely-spread paper route and excelled in sales.

This year, Miss Bea is happily spending the week of her birthday visiting the new shops in Harbor Place, and revisiting the areas where her paper route took her in the early days. She was escorted by her daughter, Serena G. Mills of Baltimore.

BEATRICE H. HALL, president, YWCA of the Greater Baltimore Area and Jane T. Christie, YW executive director, will attend a seminar for presidents and executive directors of Metropolitan YWCAs in Seattle, Wash., Oct. 1 through 4.

Presidents and executive directors of 30 YWCA's and the national board YWCA will convene to discuss major problems facing large urban YWCAs in 1980.

The seminar will also include strategics to overcome these problems, including programming, membership, finances and leadership.

SEPT. 13 at 1:30 p.m. a luncheon was given in honor of Mrs. Johnnie Mae Thompson by Mrs. Ethel Jones at her home on Flowerlsin Road.

Mrs. Thompson received a citation for her contribution to the civic welfare of the community from Mayor William Donald Schaefer during ceremonies at City Hall on Sept. 10.

She was surrounded by many friends who worked with her in the late 1930s in the NAACP. Some guests in attendance were Mrs. Susie Murphy, Mrs. Temple Allen (Edith) and Mrs. Dora Caldwell.

The menu included Ethel's specialties, Maryland fried crab cakes, glazed carrots, fresh string beans, homemade cole slaw, homemade rolls, which many feel are the best in the world.

COMING Friday, November 14 is the date you should mark right now on your calendar for the Lillie Carroll Jackson Museum Banquet. It will be at the Blue Crest North and considered the opening event of the winter season.

For tickets call the Museum for Viola Jackson or Ardell Vessells, 523-1208 or write Jesse B. Gladden, Banquet Committee chairperson, 3505 White Chapel Road, Baltimore, Md. 21215.

It's not too early to plan since (as you know) the stores are already shelved with Christmas and Thanksgiving things and the year is swiftly passing.

KROMAH GALLERY announces the winners among nearly 100 contestants for inclusion in the Kromah Black Arts Calendar for 1981.

VISUAL ARTS — GRAPHICS — Cynthia Baskerville, Camellia Blackwell, Jerry Prettyman and Luis Flores.

PHOTOGRAPHY — John Mayden and Phil Street.

SCULPTURE — Joseph Molluna and Teddy Shannon.

CRAFTS — Joyce Scott.

PAINTING — Pontella Mason, Ancha Debela and Nathaniel Gibbs.

POETRY — Leroy Williams, Annette R. Stockett, Patricia R. Edges, Fannette H. Thomas, Melvin E. Brown, Myra Jo Arvin, Deborah Blackwell Gregory, Edward L. Murray (In Memoriam), Sheila Green, Isisara B. Pratabula, Hazel A. Keys, Darlene J. Milling-Bey, Richard Ackley, Mandy I. Bynum and Abdul J. Mahdi.

An Artists' Ball will be held soon and all of the works of art will be displayed there.

Gail and Ernest Kromah, owners-founders of Kromah Gallery and Mary Carter Smith, cochairperson, thank all who submitted.

JUST THINKING

—Super event for the black bourgeois—

By Al Sweeney

The big event among the Black Bougeousie, as the eminent E. Franklin Frazier characterized the more fluent persons of color, will be held in Washington, D.C. next weekend.

Commonly known as the Congressional Black Caucus Weekend, the annual affair is an excellent example of what my good mentor Dr. Frazier called "conspicuous consumption."

If you haven't been privileged to read Frazier's classic spoof on the behavior of affluent blacks, you should. It provokes comment and considerable disagreement.

However, if you read it with understanding, I feel that the Howard scholar has a message that defines the behavior blacks and the penchant of those with a few bucks to purchase and indulge in the finer things of life.

The Congressional Black Caucus Weekend is a current example. The 4,200 seats at the annual banquet which costs $150 a plate has been soldout for weeks.

The annual fashion show sponsored by the spouses of the Congressional Black Caucus members at $30 a ticket has been sold out. Only the Kennedy Center Gala, another $30 a ticket event featuring Roberta Flack and Bill Cosby with special $100 tickets for those wishing to attend a reception for the entertainers have a few ducats to sell.

Get out your computer and put it to work and you will arrive at the obvious conclusion that CBC events will grow nearly $800,000.

If that isn't "conspicuous consumption," nothing I can fathom is.

There will be some phonies — believe me they are as phony as they come — lampooning the whole production as obscene. They will shed the crocodile line that at a time when many blacks are mired in economic deprivation, there are some blacks living the good life.

These critics are chronic complainers. You can bet most of the persons shedding the crocodile tears and curbstone opinions have less empathy for the plight of the poor then the sponsors of the CBC weekend.

There is a segment of the critics who shed the tears out of their failure to land a ticket to one of the affairs. There is another segment that has nothing positive to say about anything. The church, the civil rights organizations, black politicians, black business, black professionals, black educator, black — you name it — come under the verbal assault of these bitter folk.

And, of course, there is another segment, honestly confused, but sincere in their criticism.

Anyone who is a regular reader of this column is well aware of where I stand. I have nothing against the "good life," eltism or any of the other elements of pleasant living.

My parents and the parents of many of the persons who will attend the caucus bash worked like hell for their children to enjoy a better life than they encountered.

Living a fantasy is not that bad. When I carried white folks golf clubs on the golf course during 90-degree plus weather, I dreamt of the day that I would be playing the golf course and enjoying the same privileges. And why not?

In college, many classmates and I worked evenings in hotel dining rooms. Some carrying heavy trays and waiting tables to enhance our meager college tuition funds. After all the while, all of us dreamt of the day that we could enter the same dining rooms through the front door and not the servant's entrance.

One of the persons who waited tables at the Dayton Hotels is currently mayor of the town. Another, Frank Bolden, who recently retired from the D.C. school system as director of health and education, lived long enough and amassed enough funds to go first class in the same hotel and many others around the country.

It was not so many years ago that black reporters, including this one, had to cover the Southern front while sleeping in some of the worst fleabag joints that were passed off as hotels.

One of my colleagues, who had to suffer such discomforts, was complaining about the $80 a day room in a New York hotel recently. His complaint was that the air conditioner was responsible for his catching a cold. All I could say to federal employee Herb Mangrum, and an old AFRO reporter, now enjoying living in the Hyatt Houses, the Marriots, and the Waldorf Astorias, "ain't it tough."

Historically, the brothers and sisters have done their thing in flamboyant fashion. There was a period in the Black Experience when the Elks Clubs were found in every town where blacks congregated and were the center of social activity.

During the Joe Louis era, the biggest splash of national black affluence was played by the sporting crowd, as the numbers backers were called, at Harlem's old Theresa Hotel when the Brown Bomber fought in New York.

The line of Cadillacs in front of the Theresa and down 125th Street in Harlem were impressive. The numbers kings showed off their Cadillacs that were all colors from snow white, gold, maroon, lavendar to bright orange.

Conspicuous consumption, therefore, among blacks is as ethnic at chitterlings, greens, black eye peas and ham hocks.

So, the criticism that I have of those living the "good life" is not of the life that they have earned but their failure to look back and help others find their way.

And this is where the superficial critics of the CBS weekend have missed the point.

By using the funds amassed out of the weekend, the 16 caucus members have put together an effective civil rights research organization.

The legislative brain trust hearings held on Friday, September 26, if they follow the past form, are an invaluable sources of current information on the status of black in the areas of housing, health, minority business development, aging, in the corporate world, science and technology, communications, education, employment and criminal justice.

Out of past hearings legislation has been sponsored by members of the caucus and enacted into law. The successful minority business legislation, sponsored by Parren Mitchell, came out of past hearings.

The Hawkins Full Employment Bill got its impetus from past congressional caucus weekends.

The increase of minority-owned radio stations over the past ten years was aided greatly by the caucus hearings and the manner in which the caucus used its oversight responsibilities with the Federal Communications Commission.

The pressure on the White House for domestic programs, the pressure on the Justice Department for a stronger position in the Bakke Case are just a few examples of a responsive and effectfve black caucus machine.

There may be many things wrong with our black elected officials. They may be tempermental. They may be seemingly aloof. They may operate as individualists and loners. All of the criticism might be true.

But, when it coems to the critical issues involving blacks as members of the Congressional Black Caucus they have closed ranks and operated as a machine.

The decade of social legislative achievement by the Congressional Black caucus can't be matched, with the exception of the social legislation pushed by Rep. Adam Clayton Powell during the years of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The caucus headed by Cardiss Collins, including Bill Clay of Missouri; Gus Hawkins, Ron Dellums and Julian Dixon of California; Louis Stokes of Ohio; John Conyers of Michigan; Bill Gray of Pennsylvania; Parren Mitchell of Maryland; Charles Rangel and Shirley Chisholm of New York; Mickey Leand of Texas; Melvin Evans of the Virgin Islands and Walter Fauntroy of the District of Columbia represent the only civil rights wheels in town.

So, let's keep it greased. It takes more extravaganzas such as the upcoming one starring Gladys Knight and Pips, let's drink to it.

The re-election of President Carter rides on the size of the black turnout in the Congressional districts of the members of the House from California, New York, Illinois, Ohio, Missouri and Texas.

The entire 16, which includes Congressional Delegate from the Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia, are from states with a total of 249 electoral votes.

In 1976, a check of the balloting reveals, that Carter won the White House by picking up 297 electoral votes to Gerald Ford's 240.

A swing of the 27 electoral votes picked up by Carter in Pennsylvania and the 25 electoral votes won in Ohio could have cost him the White.

Take any combination of states with electoral votes of 30 or more would have made the difference in the 1976 race.

If the polls are currently correct, the black vote is vital in the huge electoral staces to outcome of the 1980 campaign.

With this in mind, the upcoming Caucus Dinner ought to provide an insight into the enthusiasm of the black voter in the current campaign.