Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Christmas in a new decade

December 25, 1980 will mark the first Christmas of the Eighties — a decade whose twists and turns no one dare prophesy.

Decades, in and of themselves, are no more than bench marks — arbitrary 10-year cycles which permit historians, economists and philosophers an excuse to tell us where we have been, what we have done and where we are heading.

These scholars get some things in perspective, other trends of a decade they miss by a mile, leaving corrections for still another generation of thinkers.

Meanwhile the rest of us keep pushing along and no matter what manner of good or bad fortune besets us, most citizens of good will make time to observe Christmas in the very best way they can.

This oft course means rejoicing the birth of Christ Himself which of course is the reason for Christmas.

We sense that our fellow Americans might in many intangible or at least not easily measured ways be moving slowly toward a renewed awareness of Christmas as a religious celebration.

No one would seriously argue against the observation that in the years of American plenty following World War II, Christmas for this nation, has been a holiday distorted into an awful caricature of its original meaning.

Christmas has come to be a season of orgiastic consumerism, with the market place at center stage and The Manger shunted off into the wings.

We feel Americans, of all colors and faiths, might even without knowing it, again be approaching Christmas more truly as Christ's birthday and less as an excuse for hysterical spending.

Now we are hardly suggesting as fundamentalists are fond of saying the "Christ" is back in Christmas, because the citizenry is being directly moved by divine inspiration.

No. Hard knowledge prompts our remarks. The money is simply not around for Americans to indulge in the kinds of excesses which have stripped this most sacred of Christian holidays of its real meaning and value.

Even as we write, news comes that President-elect Reagan is seriously considering declaring a state of national economic crisis when he assumes office.

If this should happen it would officially signify what most Americans have known in their hearts and pocketbooks for quite a while now.

The party is over.

America is no longer the goods-making industrial giant of its past. Other nations, Japan notably, are on the rise.

This drop in U.S. productivity, combined with a technology which replaces workers with automation is a two-edged sword which is decimating the incomes of working families.

Even the wealthy are slightly less wealthy these days as inflation eats away profit margins.

If the new president declares a state of emergency he would only be acknowledging what already is reality for too many Americans, particularly blacks.

We are saying two things:

First, Americans, in general, should be aware that those Christmases of our past where the rationale has been "buy!" "indulge" are no longer appropriate expressions of Christ's day, if ever they were.

Second, the years of Yule excess have caught up with us and because of it most of us have less materially.

Which increasingly is making Christians confront themselves.

And for Christians to confront themselves, of course, means to confront the infant Jesus.

There is a marvelous irony in all of this. America which with its genius for salesmanship practically reinvented Christmas must now, in this emerging decade of difficult economic conditions, may have to undo all it has wrought in the name of Christmas and go back to the spirit and intent of the holiday.

If going broke economically or nearing moral bankruptcy can restore America's soul, then this first Christmas of the Eighties will be a tough, but over the long haul, a very good day indeed.

God moves in mysterious ways

and with that concluding truism we wish you a very good and spiritually meaningful Christmas 1980.

More black judges

A glance at our judicial calendar reminds us that Gov. Harry Hughes must soon appoint judges to the various benches of Maryland.

We note with particular warmth that District Court Judge William H. Murphy Sr., who has served commendably in his first term, will be up for reappointment when that term expires on Dec. 31.

Judge Murphy Sr., you will recall, has been a champion of increased participation by black jurists in the judicial affairs of this state. To make his point and ensure increased minority representation at the District Court level, several years ago Judge Murphy sought and won election to the bench. It was an early victory for our community and the concept of judicial equity.

Just this past election, William H. Murphy Jr., following his father's example, sought and won election to the Supreme Bench — again increasing the involvement of black jurists in our state judicial process.

That the state is blessed with such an able father and son team in our judiciary is far from enough however.

Judge Murphy Sr., whom we expect to be reappointed, is currently one of only three black judges sitting on the District bench.

This is a woefully small total seeing the importance of District Court proceedings to our community. Black citizens comprise the majority of plaintiffs and defendants in the District Court system and the fact that only a trio of judges from their own community are there to serve them is disgraceful.

We need more black judges at every level. At the District Court we need the continuing contributions of William H. Murphy Sr., of course, but we also need more appointments.

We hope Governor Hughes will be extremely mindful of this shocking imbalance when he makes his reappointments and new appointments.

Mayhem by handguns

Mayhem in the streets by an almost unlimited and unauthorized use of handguns in the commission of crimes has become an unbridled occurrence. Death by these guns seldom draws a ground-swell of reaction when the victim is black, even if the person involved is prominent. But when a victim is other than black all sorts of emotional reaction is whipped up. Certain segments of the media devote reams of space and time to create sentiment in making the emotional pot boil over.

The recent senseless deaths of John Lennon and Dr. Michael Halberstam are two cases in point. (Both drew tremendous emotional reaction and both happened to be white. Prayer vigils were held for Lennon and there has been renewed effort to get gun control legislation on the books. The gun lobbies are using all of their influence to forestall such legislation with various benighted arguments. It is as if they have taken an oath never to admit an error in judgment.

Passage of legislation to control the availability of handguns would go a long way toward restricting their use in the commission of street crimes and house robberies. At least there would be a delay in putting such weapons in the hands of individuals who only have a sinister purpose in mind. A needless taking of life is tragic regardless of the individual's prominence or influence. The grief is just as great and the void is just as empty.

Love thy neighbor?

MADELINE MURPHY

How to break a union

Right at Christmas, we are seeing an omen of the future.

When we hear the speculations of how the Reagan administration will cut costs, will break the back of inflation, under it all is the real and present danger of increased unemployment.

It is at these times when those hungering for work and subsistance, will become fodder for the corporate interests to encourage right to work laws, but also will be enrolled as unwitting scabs into businesses where lasting benefits in health and welfare, cost of living increases, will become ancient history.

Why should businesses care in the face of spiralling unemployment and a growing pool of eager desperate wage slaves?

The press, having suffered with walk-outs will ultimately take the management position, for they too are in league with the spirit of all other businesses. Consequently they muddle the facts and suppress the worker's point of view with a desperate determination to kill big labor.

And hospitals have become big business, just as hardnosed and cost efficient as steel mills or auto plants. Anxious for profits, they try at every juncture to pass through costs of labor to patients.

Thus, the hospital workers' union, local 1199E, has become victimized by clouded issues that will not help the union to survive.

In a discussion of the Joint Union Management Fund, it should be noted that the trustees of this fund are divided fifty-fifty, with hospital workers as well as hospital management equally represented, nationwide.

And these trustees voted for confidentiality in the fund to protect the interests and privacy of hospitalized workers.

To cut the life blood out of the union, it is easier therefore to assume that there is corruption in the fund, than to talk about why a reduction of 10 percent to 8 per cent of gross payroll for benefits, would not only be a step backward in what the union has negotiated for the past two contracts but would also make union members wonder how well their union serves them.

The fund provides hospital care, doctor's visits, surgical, major medical, disability, eyeglasses, prescriptions, family dental care (where children of the workers are covered.) A reduction would eliminate among other things camp programs, scholarships, family benefits, eyeglasses, prescriptions, major medical and family dental programs, a out blow to the union's survival.

In addition, the $5.30 average hourly wage of hospital workers, mostly women and black single parents, is not an astronomical figure in these inflationary times, where there are two or three children to support. They occupy the lowest rung on the ladder of workers in hospitals.

These hospital workers are the backbone of unseen, yet expected and necessary services, and hospitals would be hard pressed to run with optimum efficiency without them.

And though it is what racism has taught us to expect, the intent to eliminate a cost of living clause of 12 per cent can be tied to the general belief in this country that somehow, blacks don't need as much to live on as other people. This is true when we look at the move to lower the minimum wage for teenagers.

Also, when we hear the doomsayers talk about the break down in the family, especially the black family, it seems, given the plight of the hospital workers, that such breakdown is a self-fulfilling prophecy. As in slavery, we are chattel, easily expendable.

How ironic that the Polish workers have the sanction of the U.S. government only when the unions give the appearance of breaking up the communist bloc, but here on the other hand, the hospital strike reveals the deadly hypocrisy of our human rights protestations.

Against this background, we see that Johns Hopkins and Sinai with all their denials have become the proving ground in this pervasive move mood to break unions, unions which are the only saving grace of black workers.

While our hearts overflow with good intentions, and generous gifts during the Christmas season, let us also give our unflagging support to the hospital workers, if for no other reason than it is in our own enlightened self-interest to do so.

LETTERS

Reservoir Hill Association president responds

This letter was prepared in response to two AFRO-AMERICAN newspaper articles which appeared in recent months that suggested the Reservoir Hill Community Association under my leadership has been unfair to poor residents in our community. Before presenting my argument which will demonstrate that both articles lack factual information or substance, I will provide the necessary background on the mission of the "New Reservoir Hill Community Association, Inc.

Prior to 1976, the Reservoir Hill Community Association defunded by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) because of on going controversey and fighting among community residents. In 1976, black and white, rich and poor residents met to write a new funding proposal to submit to HCD. The funding proposal was intended to recreate a viable community organization which would represent a diversified population. The mission, as stated in the funding proposal, was to create a racially, socially, and economically integrated community. The proposal emphasized our commitment to low income rentals and housing units.

Since 1976, the Community Association has remained true to our original mission. Ninety-five percent of the Block Grant dollar expended in Reservoir Hill is committed to low income housing projects. The current projects which the Association has developed to assist low-income residents include the following:

1. The Home Ownership Service. The service has assisted approximately 25 low-income families to buy homes in the area. The service has also provided low income residents with over $90,000 in emergency repair, down payment and settlement grants;

2. Self-Help Housing Grant - The Association was awarded a $128,000 grant to assist low-income residents in repairing their homes.

3. The Monteray Apartment Building - This project is being developed by the Association, with the assistance of HCD, for low to moderate income cooperatives. The project will cost well over $1 million;

4. The 2000 Block of Linden Avenue - This block is being acquired by the City to be used as a demonstration block for vacant house program, scattered site public housing, homesteading and private renovation. In total, the Community Association under my leadership has supported low-income housing projects which have a total cost of approximately $2 million. Much of the credit must also be given to the so called "newcomers" who gave of their time and efforts to assist low-income residents. None of the aforementioned projects have assisted the so called "rich".

It is ironic that those persons crying foul have individually been beneficiaries of these programs. These same persons have violated the democratic process during community meetings and have sought to destroy the very organization which has worked hard to assist the poor. In spite of these unfair attacks on the association, we remain committed to assisting low income residents.

I will continue to struggle to maintain a democratic process in our community meetings. This means that residents must begin to listen, analyze, even appreciate the desires and activities of groups or individuals who are different from ourselves. Community resident must respect each others differences and at the same time strive to build a common thread.

We must begin to focus on our real enemies — slum landlords, speculators, and Ronald Reagan. Each of these individuals hinder our communities from constructive development.

TONY E. FULTON
Pres. Reservoir Hill Community Association

The Wilmington Ten

When I learned that the 1972 conspiracy and arson convictions against the Wilmington - 10 had been overturned by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Dec. 4, I was elated.

It was a major win, an unsuspected vindication, a blow to officials who pervert our criminal justice system to discredit those who challenge unfairness and work for social reform.

Nevertheless, for the Wilmington - 10 — nine black men and one white woman — the victory was a bittersweet one, for all of them had unjustly suffered years of incarceration in state prisons. Most had been paroled years before this latest decision.

In fact, the most striking feature of the case is the length of time it took for these people to be found innocent despite the overwhelming evidence that they had been framed. Further, extensive domestic and international pressure had been exerted to free these people. Amnesty International declared them political prisoners. In 1977 60 Congressmen petitioned then U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell to urge North Carolina Governor James Hunt to seriously consider pardoning the Wilmington 10. Hunt refused.

Small wonder that throughout the world this case is known as a sad comment on the state of the criminal justice system here in "the land of the free."

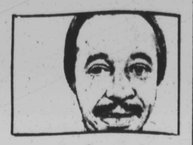
Without a doubt, the Wilmington 10 story shows that we have a long way to go in this country to handle the double standard of justice that's used to punish law-abiding, but vocal citizens, and yet to protect certain criminals who hide behind government desks.

More important than that, though, it shows us that change is possible, and because of that possibility there can be hope. The situation will not improve through wishing though. It will only happen if you get out and attend that march or rally. Or write that angry letter protesting some abuse.

True freedom is rarely freely given. It has to be demanded, and as in the case of the Wilmington - 10, sometimes sacrifices have to be made. But the choice is clear. We can demand and legally fight for our rights and freedom and be victorious sometimes, or we can be always silent and unjustly treated forever.

ALEXANDER K. JONES

PARREN MITCHELL



U.S. Senate encourages the racists

It is now the law of the land that a person cannot be denied the right to purchase or rent property because of race, religion or national origin. The 1968 law remains in effect, but has lacked real enforcement powers.

The House of Representatives and the Senate Judiciary Committee sought to remedy that situation by passing a Fair Housing Bill which would halt discrimination in housing by administrative actions. This is the most important piece of civil rights legislation considered by the Congress since the Sixties.

Despite the fact that the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the House of Representative's version of the bill, when it came to the Senate for action it ran into stonewall opposition.

Opponents to the bill who want to see housing discrimination handled by the federal courts almost immediately started a filibuster (a marathon talkathon) and efforts to invoke cloture to cut off the filibuster failed. A motion to limit debate won fifty-one to thirty-nine, but sixty votes are needed to invoke cloture.

Phenomenal efforts were required to get the bill out of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Floor action was delayed until after the election in November. Finally, on what was scheduled to be the last week of the 96th Congress, when the Senate took up the bill, the filibuster started.

On December 9, the Senate failed to close debate on the measure and it is a dead issue for the 96th Congress.

Throughout the long struggle to get the Fair Housing Bill passed, veteran lobbyist Clarence M. Mitchell played a key role in both the House and the Senate. He is the warrior who never stops fighting, no matter the odds.

The action of the Senate in killing off the Fair Housing Bill is despicable in and of itself, but it is more despicable because of the unmistakable signal it beams to the racists (open and closet racists) in this country. The signal says to the idiots who wear K.K.K. robes, "Look we are with you in spirit."

The signal says to the demented American Nazis "Look we are with you, we too believe in white power. The only difference between us is you say it with slogans and signs, but we say it through the legislative process." The signal is beamed to a climate in white America that encourages the murderously insane racists to kill black men in Buffalo, to shoot black men on the West Coast.

These messages sending Senators would be among the first to scream about violations of human rights in the Soviet Union or in Cuba. But they are also the leaders who fight against the safeguarding of civil rights in America.

The United States Senate, allegedly the greatest legislative body in the world, disgraced itself and the nation by failing to pass the 1980 Fair Housing Law.

Concern for abandoned girl

Dear AFRO:

I've been keeping up on the progress of the little girl found dead.

It's a shame that any one person could just leave a child like that to die.

I am a mother of four, I've raised four children alone and I am only in my thirties, but my love for my children overrules everything in my life.

Why don't the police check all schools in and around the outer rim of Baltimore to find out what child hasn't been to school since the date of her death, even as far as New York. Maybe something will come up.

I am very sorry to see and hear that black persons would do this to their children. It's bad enough that we don't pull together, than taking on native ways.

If no one claims this child, I would. It's bad for this child to be buried without a name or someone to care.

I hope her parents come forward.

MRS. DEL KIN

FOR ALL WE KNOW

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME IN THE CITY

MANY EVENTS free to the public are on the coming calendar so you need not spend to have a nice time.

A BEAUTIFUL occasion is this one:

HAROLD A. CARTER JR., the son of the pastor of New Shiloh Baptist Church, will preach his first sermon, Sunday, Dec. 21, 6 p.m.

Young Carter's call to the ministry can be seen as the outgrowth of sustained Christian development.

For the past two summers he has served as counselor in a Christian camp, Summit Lake, in Emmitsburg, Md.

June, 1980, he accompanied his father on an Evangelistic campaign to Romania.

INTERESTINGLY, in all the 15 churches where Dr. Carter preached, the local pastors and Romanians insisted on Harold Jr. bringing messages and greetings.

His "emerging call" to the ministry had some pastors believing he was already preaching.

With the scheduling of his first sermon, the Romanian Christians' beliefs are gradually proving to be correct!

YOUNG CARTER has taken an active role in the life of New Shiloh, and as a boy was among those fathers and sons who in 1978 founded the Monthly Prayer Breakfast.

Across the years 1968 - 1979, the growing young man seldom missed a prayer breakfast.

He has served as radio engineer for New Shiloh's Radio Ministry. As an engineer, many members have remarked that "Harold never took his eyes off his father!"

HE IS a second year student at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pa. In college he plays on tennis team and sings in both the college choir, and the student sponsored Gospel Ensemble known as THE ANGELS.

DR. AND MRS. HAROLD A. CARTER SR. also have a daughter, Weptanomah B. Carter, who is a third year student at Eastern College. When young Carter told of his call to the ministry, Sunday, Oct. 5 at the 11 a.m. service, he received from the congregation loud and sustained applause.

Members and friends of the church are looking forward to his sermon all the more since both of his grandfathers, Dr. Nathan M. Carter of Selma, Ala., and Dr. T. Robert Washington of Philadelphia, are ministers. In his life of ministry flows a third generation of Gospel preaching. Everyone is invited to attend and support the minister with your presence.

AWARD - WINNING Forest Park Co - ed Chorale, under direction of M's Margaret Lindsay, the Forest Park Concert Band, administrator, alumni, and faculty members will present "Sounds of Christmas" at Forest Park High School, 4300 Chatham Road, on Sunday, Dec. 21 at 5:00 p.m.

Both music groups, the chorale and the concert band, conducted by James Green, will perform appropriate seasonal music. The highlight will be selections from the Messiah.

The Forest Park community as well as the general public is invited to attend what promises to be an outstanding holiday performance.

THE CONVENTION CENTER is host to a new celebration — The Festival of Trees, a tour of yuletide across the continents, featuring trees in the tradition of Baltimore's ethnic communities. Enjoy Christmas round the world with ethnic entertainment and refreshments.

NEW YEAR'S EVE arrives in Baltimore with a spectacular fireworks display and sing - along at the Inner Harbor. Popular music will be highlighted with a barrage of aerial explosions lasting over 20 minutes.

For information call Promotion and Tourism at 685 - TOUR (8669).

SUNDAY, DEC. 28 at 3 p.m., the Handel Choir of Baltimore will present a free program at The Baltimore Museum of Art and under direction of Herbert Dimmock, will perform with the Amor Musica String Orchestra.

Selections include the Hallelujah and Christmas chorus from Handel's "Messiah."

SINE LEADENHALL Baptist is the only black Baptist church in the city whose building is on the National Roster of Historic Places, the congregation feels it a duty to support this request for help.

LEADENHALL Baptist Church on Leadenhall and Cross Streets will join in the effort of preservation of Orchard Street Church with a Phon - A - Thon, Saturday, Dec. 20 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Please call us and make a pledge Saturday 9 to 9 539-9334.

JOIN MAYOR Schaefer in joyful chorus at the Convention Center Dec. 30, 8 p.m. when the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra presents "A Farewell to Christmas: A Neighborhood Sing - Along.

All the city is invited to help make the sing - along a community celebration.

THE FREE CONCERT includes several holiday arrangements as well as selections from Handel's "Messiah" by the Douglas Memorial Church choir and the Senior Choir of Union Baptist Church.

The audience, led by the Mayor is invited to join in the Hallelujah Chorus, and holiday melodies.

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Brailey confined to hospital

Delegate Troy Brailey, D-4D, was the victim of a "slight heart attack" this week and has been confined to St. Agnes Hospital.

Tessie Brailey, who has been married to the legislator for 23 years, said that Brailey has improved, but is still bedridden. She said that doctors expect the 60-year-old legislator to remain in the hospital for the next three weeks.

Mrs. Brailey added that Brailey still has plans to continue in politics. "His mind is still active...all he talks about is coming home," she said.

Brailey was assaulted almost a year ago by a West Baltimore youth who, according to Mrs. Brailey, is still on the streets. She said that Brailey had not fully recovered from the incident prior to the heart attack, and expressed bitterness that the youth was still free.

Cards and letters may be sent to the Brailey residence, located at 2405 Baker St. The delegate is prohibited from receiving visitors at the hospital.

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Vornado AM Solid State Pocket Radio Reg. 4.99. #768 2.99 Batteries not included

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Series 2.99-3.49-3.99
Choose LPs, 8-tracks or cassettes. Many popular artists & titles. Batteries not included.

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Epoch Electronic Digit Baseball #7316 Batteries not included 19.97 Store Stock Only

Keystone Pocket Camera With Built-in Flash 19.99
Reg. 24.99. Easy to operate. Features 400 ASA capability. Batteries not included.

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M&M's 1 lb. Bag Chocolate Candies Plain or peanut 1.77

8 Oz. Dry Roasted Peanuts 1.09 Glass jar

Mr. Bones Rawhide Dog Bones Reg. 1.29 To 3.49 Ea.
• 6-7 97¢
• 8-9 1.47
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All items shown above: not all styles in all stores. Store Stock Only. No rainchecks.

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