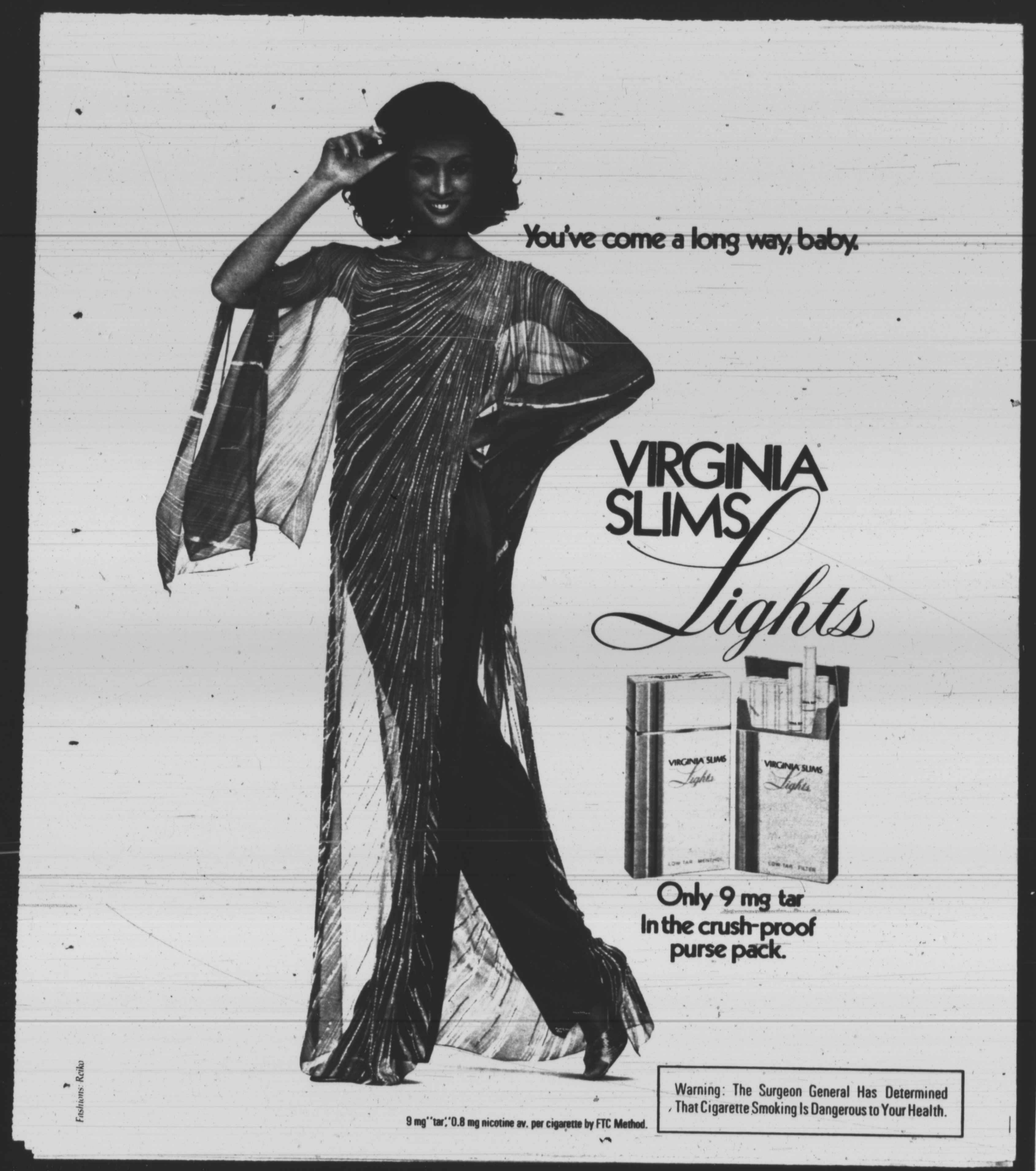

Does U.S. deserve a man as great as King?

See editorial page

Baltimore Afro-American

WE ARE NOW IN OUR 89TH YEAR

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MTA 'weak' security cited in rape of bus driver

(AFRO photo by Roman Hankewycz)

NOT HAMPERED BY WINTERY WINDS — These young girls, Rayshel James, 15 and Tiffany James, 16, don't seem to be affected by the weather as they wheel their bicyles through the street.

No simple 'snowball' case

Trooper's attorney: 'Real story' in Hampden shooting not told

By Sue Williams
AFRO Staff Writer

According to the attorney for state trooper Frazier West, who faces assault charges in the New Year's Day shooting of a Hampden teenager who threw snowballs at him, the facts of the case have been largely obscured by media reports which have linked the incident to the Roman Welzant trial of a little more than a year ago.

Welzant was acquitted of murder charges in the shooting death of 18 year old Albert Cohl last year. The case drew national attention as media reports focused on the apparently senseless motive for the shooting—throwing snowballs.

A bullet from West's gun apparently ricocheted and hit the leg of 17 year old Neil McIntee when the trooper fired his weapon to the ground in an attempt to dispersle the group of teens from throwing snowballs at him and his car.

"West never intended to hurt anyone," explained Herb Singleton, defense attorney for West. "He properly identified himself and pointed his gun to the ground."

"I am concerned that there has been this attempt by the media to link this case with the Welzant case," he continued. "The two cases are decidedly different."

Singleton explained that Welzant intended to hurt his victim. In fact, Singleton said, part of Welzant's defense was that he shot in self defense. There has been no such claim in the West case.

"Welzant never denied that he intended to inflict bodily harm. There is a material difference in the two cases."

"Somewhere in that incident," Singleton continued, "West become e afraid that he would be bodily harmed

"It was clear to the crowd that West was a police officer... he did everything he possibly could to properly identify himself. An arrest of the young man who had assaulted him would not have been possible without the crowd hurting him.

"It is important that the facts be known," continued Singleton, referring to the racial epithets thrown at West as he attempted to get his car unstuck and out of the Hampden area.

"This was a case...of unadulterated racism," he said.

Trooper returning from church

According to a statement given to Singleton by West, the trooper was returning from New Year's Eve services at Bethel AME Church with a date. Because of the heavy early morning snow, West's statement said he took a lot of shortcuts to avoid traffic and bad streets.

Unable to travel the way he originally intended, West proceeded southbound on Falls Rd. Stopping at a red light on the corner of Falls Rd. and Roland Heights Ave., West's statement said he saw a group of young people standing on the corner, but paid them no attention; his car had begun to skid and he was primarily concerned with getting enough traction to be able to move once the light changed.

He had difficulty doing that, however, and as his car skidded towards the curb, the group of young people began pelting his car, a 1979 Corvette, with snowballs. Ignoring it at first, he rolled down the window on the passenger side of the car when his female companion became a little upset by the snowballs.

The statement said that West advised the young people to stop throwing the snowballs, saying that "they did not know who they were throwing snowballs at." At this time, according to the

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36 transit cops to cover 400,000 bus passengers daily

By Pam Widgeon
AFRO Staff Writer

With only 36 MTA transit police officers to patrol Baltimore City and county and the northern part of Anne Arundel County daily, MTA officers report security is "weak."

Officers called the AFRO complaining after a 26-year-old female city bus driver was raped and assaulted in her bus by a knife wielding attacker around 2 a.m. Jan. 13.

According to the MTA transit police officers, there was only "one" officer working Tuesday morning. Bruce Frame, a spokesman for MTA would not confirm or deny the number of MTA officers working for the transit company but stated, "We work very closely with city police and county police and we don't like to advertise our patrolling procedure.

The woman was the third female driver to be attacked at night. None of the other women attacked were sexually assaulted.

The driver told police around 1 a.m. a man between 18 and 20 years old was the only passenger on her bus while at Cherry Hill and Terra Firma Road. The man came up behind her and pulled out a rusty butcher knife.

According to police, he ordered her to pull onto an isolated road near a city dump and raped her on the floor of the bus. The man fled after the attack.

All buses are equipped with radios so a driver can call for assistance. The woman, however, was not able to call for help until the suspect left the bus.

Charles Pettus Sr., president of Amalgamated Transit Union Division 1300 told the AFRO, "Security is very inadequate."

According to Pettus, the woman was working the 9:31 p.m. to 5:17 a.m. shift. Pettus said he has always complained about MTA security.

The woman was examined for lacerations and cuts at Mercy Hospital and released. There are approximately 200 female bus drivers. Frame stated city police were on the scene six minutes after the driver was able to call for help and the MTA officer arrived nine minutes later.

According to Frame, 400,000 citizens ride the bus daily. At night, there are 84 buses in service and 850 in the day.

One MTA police officer told the AFRO, "We are understaffed and four men are now out on sick leave. Vacations are coming up and there are times when there are only three cars on the street.

At AFRO presstime, police report no arrest had been made

Dr. Crew back on job Jan. 19

School superintendent John L. Crew will return to work Monday, Jan. 19 following a recent week's stay in the hospital.

Crew, who was discharged from Provident Hospital last weekend, has been resting at home and will return to his school chief post on a part-time schedule.

He was admitted to Provident Hospital Jan. 5 after suffering with a flu that lingered for several weeks. Crew, 54, has been superintendent of the city's school system since October 1975.

Not enough votes in Council

Rent control—it's dead

By James M. Abraham
AFRO Staff Writer

The death knell for City Council bill no. 283, the rent control amendment introduced in Council by councilman Kweisi Mfume, may be sounding soon, according to that legislator.

"If the bill was voted on today, it would be dead," said Mfume. His bill, which was co-sponsored by councilpersons Mary Pat Clarke, D-2nd and Thomas Waxter, D-5th, is still in the Judiciary committee of the council.

Members of the committee include 3rd district representatives Francis Gallagher, (chairman), Mike Curran, and Carroll J. Fitzgerald, Joseph Murphy and William Myers of the 6th district; Mary Pat Clarke, Victorine Adams, D-4th and Mfume.

The last three are the only members of the committee who are currently in favor of the masure. As a result, if the bill does clear the judiciary committee, it would receive an "unfavorable" report, which would almost assure its rejection by the entire council.

"If it doesn't get through this council," said Mfume, "the only possible thing, (for rent control proponents), to do is turn their attention to 1983...and start looking for the election of councilpersons who will be good for the community."

He added that those who are "beyond the point of rhetoric," should either field their own candidates or try to defeat those councilpersons who failed to back the measure.

When asked if the protracted Council hearings on his bill were a waste of time, Mfume responded: "It kept the issue alive and in the minds of a lot of people. You just can't assume that when you defeat something in court people will give up altogether. Sure we knew it was an uphill battle, we never had the votes, but the fight had to be fought to show people we can't just sit down..."

Bob Cheeks, head of the Welfare Rights Organization and the People's Rent Control Campaign, said that the hearings were nothing more than a "giant pimp game."

"It was a giant pimp game, conning people into believing that City Council cared about anything other than itself and its own special interests," said the fiery activist. "I think that people have to understand the objectives of the so-called public victory of the people on Question K." hearings, which were just another attempt to steal the Nov. 4 ,(1980), victory of the people on Question K."

He also targeted 1983 as the year of decision for both rent control backers and opponents.

"Those people who do not have the courage or competency to bring up rent control in City Council we will just try to put them out of City Council in 1983."

Bill Scrivens, head of the Baltimore City Tenants Association, said that his group is meeting now to determine strategy to continue the struggle for rent control.

"We're not going back to the planning table but just sitting down to see where we are," he said. "I think the mistake people are making is thinking that if rent control doesn't get past the judiciary or the City Council, it has failed. But the issue never died."

So apparently rent control will crop up again in the 1983 municipal elections as the ghost of election past.

"We fought a good fight," said Mfume, "and the fight will go on."

3 more hospitals drop Monumental

By Portia E. Badham
AFRO Staff Writer

Three more city hospitals have joined Provident Hospital in refusing to treat all but emergency patients who belong to Monumental Health Plan.

Officials at Bon Secours, Lutheran and South Baltimore General Hospitals now say they will not honor the plan.

However, officials at Monumental stated that they have not received any communication, either by letter or phone from any other of the hospitals officials stating such a decision.

"No one has talked to me," said Dr. H. Garland Chissell, who is president of the health plan. "I don't know whether they've spoken to anyone else here but I don't think so."

After Provident announced its decision to refuse Monumental egrollees, officials at the health plan issued a bulletin stating that any members needing medical services at the hospital would be given a cash deposit, which is required by hospitals for persons not covered by a medical plan.

Lawrence Payne, acting director of the state Health Department's Medical Assistance Compliance Administration, said Monumental members would still receive primary and pharmacy services.

"According to the guidelines by Monumental, enrollees going to these hospitals will be given upfront money for their medical services.

"If any hospitals call Monumental and get an okay but still refuse patients, I want to know about," said Payne.

He stated that he was satisfed that the members of Monumental would receive the necessary medical care.

"They're going to be seeing doctors, getting medical services and their medicine, so I conclude from that that the patients are not in any danger," added Payne.

The state insurance commissioner did not renew Monumental's license last November because the plan did not meet certain health and insurance requirements. A hearing which could re-instate the license is scheduled Jan. 22.

When questioned by the AFRO, Richard Brooks, deputy insurance commissioner, stated that there would possibly five other health plans in Baltimore city and other areas did also did not have their licenses renewed.

While he would not disclose the names of the plans, he said they had been asked to supply a substantial amount of information which had not been supplied.

To add to the woes of Monumental, a minority-owned health plan now in its sixth year, John O'Rourke, deputy director of the U.S. Office of Health Maintenance Organization (OHNO) plans to withhold the second half of a $2.5 million loan to the health plan because of mismanagement and continued benefits.

Monumental officials maintain that those charges are not true. The health plan has recently been backed by the National Association of Health Maintenance Organizations and the American Association of Foundations for Medical Care (AAFMC).

A national association of independent practice associations, AA AAFMC, sent members to Monumental last week to conduct its own investigations because the association felt there were some discrepancies in the evaluation conducted by OHMO.

The National Medical Association is now is recommending to Health and Human Services Secretary Patricia Harris that the suspension of the federal loan be overturned.

Grand jury releases quarterly report

Child abuse: A serious problem here

There are approximately 180 cases of child abuse in Baltimore per month submitted to various social agencies according to a report released by the September 1980 city grand jury.

Members of the September term consisting of 23 citizens completed their four month term in December. The report released last week states, that while almost 200 cases each month involve physical abuse or neglect another 25 cases per month are of sexual abuse and in either case it is the child who must bear the physical and emotional scars of the abuse.

The report states that abused children are often detected because of which there is no clear explanation and are usually quiet and keep to themselves. They are reluctant to reveal the truth as to how they received their injuries.

According to the report, child abuse occurs in all sections of our society but is most common in homes with divorced or separated parents. The abusing parent is often found to have been an abused child.

The report states that parents who commit child abuse are often filled with guilt and desperately in need of help. The committee recommended that prompt court action be taken to protect the child.

On other concerns, the penal committee of the grand jury stated, "The need to keep juveniles from crimes is becoming more and more apparent therefore, one of the sources to rehabilitation of the juvenile is some type of facility that can meet their problems."

Frank Baker, out-going grand jury foreman, while encouraging every citizen to serve on the grand jury, had some critical words for State's Attorney William Swisher.

Baker stated, "I thought Mr. Swisher would talk to the grand jury the first or second week. It took him three months.

"I think Mr. Swisher should have tighter reins on his attorneys because most of them cannot get to court on time. Their excuses is that the police officers are not here and the witnesses are not on time. I find that to be false."

JAN