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 (1889-1967) Editor-publisher (1922-1967).

Does America deserve Dr. King?

If any American deserves a national holiday in his name Martin Luther King Jr. certainly qualifies.

Given the struggle for which Dr. King gave his life, however, does American yet deserve such a hero?

Are we far enough along in our struggle to offer Martin to the ruling class for their stamp of approval?

Do we want or need the Congress or the President to legitimize our heroes for us?

History informs us that Dr. King and the thousands of brave black and white civil activists who followed his philosophy of civil disobedience and non-violent protest created their own days!

They created, through direct action, the sweeping surge of changes in attitudes and practices in racist America.

They tore down the segregated public accommodations of the South. They created the groundswell of mass pressure which constructed roads leading toward equal access, equal treatment, in housing, employment, education.

We say "surface" changes because the public, visible symbols and rituals of racism were the most accessible targets for mass demonstrations of disobedience at that time.

Dr. King and his supporters fashioned these pathways toward freedom.

They remain pathways! Not broad highways along which blacks, low-income and other subject peoples within America are racing at breakneck speed to quick personal or collective victories.

Too many of our people are still ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-educated and generally abused to persuade anyone that the sweeping kinds of changes Dr. King sought for this nation are just around the corner.

With a majority America, in the past election, saying quite clearly to us that they no longer feel guilty about what they have done to us thus far and the unstated projection, that they will not feel guilty about what they intend doing to us in the future, should we not be asking ourselves such questions as postulated herewith?

Does America yet deserve such a hero?

There is a revived interest and reverence for Martin Luther King Jr. among black Americans. Hence, this increased call for America to formally include him in its lily-white pantheon heroes.

Our concern is that Martin Luther King's broad vision not be narrowed and institutionalized to a specific day. A great man thus enshrined, encrubbed, and thereafter taken for granted.

Our hope is that all thoughtful Americans keep Martin Luther King's spirit alive by creating days as did he one after the other, in powerful progression that bring perpetual dignity to the lives of all Americans.

As things stand now, we feel, majority America has not in any way earned a hero such as our fallen brother Martin.

He belongs to us and to whoever else is willing to live and die in his spirit.

Stone cold dead for now

Next control, City Council person Howard Mfume, says is a dead issue with that legislative body.

He should know.

In the Council chambers, Mfume dramatically articulated the need of this legislation. Because a majority of the city's voters has reality sought at the polls.

It has improved the young Councilman's political stock with the constituency he is pledged to serve.

HE fought the good fight.

While point control is dead insofar as the Council is concerned, we do not think tenants are going to let the issue die.

1982 is another election year and renters are going to be just as angry then as now given the capacity of some people in real estate.

By then Council-person Mfume may have the votes to win.

World gone mad

British police are confident a quiet, unassuming model husband is the infamous Yorkshire Ripper who murdered 13 women in that section of England over a span of years.

We noted with interest that the latest victim of the Ripper would have been a black woman, a Yorkshire district streetwalker, who was sitting in the car with the Ripper suspect when police pounced.

This is just a grim footnote to a horror that plagued England for so long.

What troubles us is that the manhunt for The Ripper was the most intensive ever mounted in England which has had more than its share of really sick killers and over three years cost the taxpayers over $6 million.

We think of the truly horrible Atlanta mass murders of little black children, totalling 12 victims at press-time, and the enormous sorrow one sick mind or more has brought to that city.

The Yorkshire Ripper wrote notes to homicide detectives, sent tape recordings of his voice to taunt investigators, precisely predicted his murderer, insofar as we know, has said nothing, explained nothing, and even after the crimes finally received national and international attention, has kept on killing.

He, she or them, in Atlanta, will keep on killing until caught.

We draw parallels between a madman in Yorkshire and a similar individual in Atlanta to point out that one sick human being can cause anguish, terror and expense than can literally bring a great city to its knees.

If you doubt that irrationality abounds, read what follows:

UPI reporter Stan Metzler reports from Los Angeles that a woman and teen-age girl were arrested this week in a series of at least 25 random shootings that killed one victim and wounded nine others. Police said the suspects told them they did it because "It was fun."

Officers said the shootings were apparently "without motive except meanness." Lt. Bob Martin said of the suspects, "They're some vicious people.

"They told us they did it because they enjoyed it," Martin said. "They said it was fun."

The suspects, Esperanza Alvarez, 22 of Santa Monica and a 16-yearold girl from the Venice district, were joined in the seven-month crime spree by a man now serving time in state prison, police said.

Police said the man, whose identity was not disclosed, talked to another inmate about the killing of Javier Galvin, who was gunned down last May while standing in the street at the scene of a traffic accident in the Venice area.

After the women were arrested early Tuesday, Martin said, they talked openly about several of the other shootings.

"We're still verifying a lot of the information they gave us," Martin said. "But we've checked out enough to know that most of it is true.

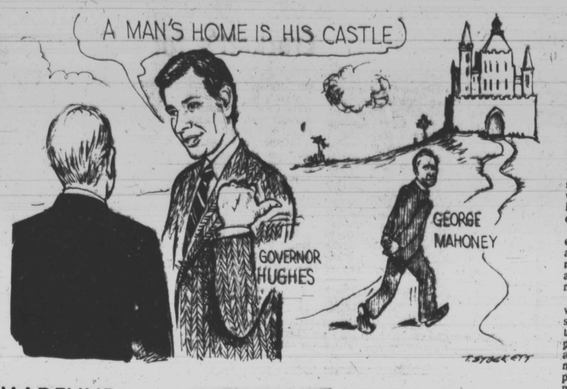
"After awhile they said they couldn't remember any more shootings, but they said they were sure there were more and if we could give them the details they would tell us if they did it or not."

Discussing the lack of motive, Martin said: "It's like you or I might decide whether to go to a movie or go bowling. They decided whether to shoot somebody. It's frightening.

Even the most hardened observer must give pause faced with this news report.

Two young women on at least 25 different occassions deliberately tried to kill perfect strangers. "For fun."

Atlanta, Yourshire, Buffalo Manhattan, sunny Los Angeles Killers, victims. Many races, differing creeds. Madness everywhere!



MADELINE MURPHY

The judicial selection concept

Not electing judges and depending upon a governor's appointment, commission recommendations and senatorial affirmation or rejection is an affront to the voting public.

The constant cry to take politics out of the selection of judges, ignores the fact that politics has always been involved in that selection. The aim is to take dishonest politics out of the selection of judges as we have witnessed under former and recent governors.

Politics and dishonesty are not synonymous. Politics is the American way of life. The only substitution for it is concentration of power in the hands of one man—better known as dictatorship.

Furthermore, the governor, who appoints the commission, also uses valuable patronage to sway particular members of the Senate, and his appointments do not always represent quality.

With that *Tinkers-to-Evers-to-Chance play*, who in his right mind can argue the point that suddenly appointing is less political than electing? Who can say that you get better judges by the judicial selection method than by electing them?

One must ask also: what District Court judges have been removed from the elective process as soon as blacks began winning? We would never have had Joseph Howard, nor William H. Murphy, Sr. and Jr., whose records of performance clearly indicate competency, honesty and fair play, if they had not been elected by the people.

And now that there are six blacks on the Supreme Bench (Circuit Court) why Governor Hughes works so hard to change the process. Is it the racist implication that after a while "Blacks will be running the State?"

Given the minority of blacks on the Supreme Bench and District Court, Governor Hughes' appointments have been less than equitable in Baltimore City where with 60 per cent black population, 85 per cent of those *who approach* the bench are black.

The elective process though painful to some, still provides an opportunity for blacks to blunt the inequity as well as to provide the insight of racial identity, self-image, and role models for our black children.

Nor too many years ago, the people of St. Mary's County rejected a Mandel appointee and elected a native son. The counties historically and presently want a direct input into their judicial selection, as should we in Baltimore City.

Elections also give the populace a prime opportunity to reject judges who are incompetent, racist and inhumane.

There is a present foreboding nature to our courts where the mantle of anonymity rests easily upon the shoulders of those white judges who have little social intercourse with those they adjudge. And in that anonymity also goes the threat of abused power, blatant racism, yet an unscathed reputation before their intimate peers, that reinforces racism and inhumane sentencing.

There is already a dangerous mood in this country that reflects a disdain for the people, that chips away at our right to continue to strenghen a more representative government. We see it in Mayor Schaefer's "shadow" government. We see it in the recent constitutional amendment that removes court clerks from the voting booth. We see it in the increased power of bar associations and governors who want to control the Supreme Bench by lobbying for a narrow parachial slate of "safe" candidates... usually white.

In deliberating this session, the legislature and the black legislative caucus, have a good opportunity to form coalitions with those white counties who reject the judicial selection concept completely. Perhaps they will be able to forge new alliances that will bode well for other democratic endeavors in the ruling of this state.

The farther government is removed from the people, fewer are the checks and balances; more are the abuses of power; and few are held accountable.

This affront to our right to elect judges must not go unchallenged.

After all, it is the people who are the critical linch pins of our democracy.

JUST THINKING

By Al Sweeney

These are the days of wine and rumors in D.C.

As the guard is about to change at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, the "in" crowd is gulping wine, devouring cheese dips like mad and old backwoods Baptist, at a Friday night Fish Fry.

With every swallow of the heady stuff, rumors about who's getting what in the new administration fly like a bouncing ball at a racquet court.

When LBJ was around, the easiest way to kill a potential appointee off was to initiate a rumor about the individual landing a certain job and getting one of the media to print it.

On one occasion, LBJ was on his way to a press conference when somebody pressed into his hand the latest issue of a national publication that listed the name of an individual he was slated to name to head the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

LBJ read it, crumpled the magazine up in his pocket, and skipped the name of the individual that he was about to select to head EEOC. Needless to add, the person never got the job.

The influence of old-line GOP'ers is minimal in the job selection these days.

While there are some persons who are acting pathetic in their quest for a ranking post, there are some Black Republicans not interested.

Constance Newman, who stands high in the esteem of the new administration, is an individual not likely to accept a federal post under any condition.

She has been building a consulting firm that is beginning to turn the economic corner. Newman has been telling friends and foes alike, "don't get my name involved in any of the rumors." Mrs. Newman says she has not been approached, although there are certain people who feel she would be ideal to head the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

If asked to take a federal job, she sweers she'll say "No, thanks."

While many Black Republicans are floating their 171's into the hands of any person breathing with supposed clout, Louis Martin, the veteran old politician, has landed a job.

Martin has retired from active public life more times than a 1940 Volkswagen. He has left the news game twice, retiring once as head of the financially sound Michigan Chronicle and later as head of the Chicago Daily Defender.

When Hubert Humphrey's late challenge in the 1972 presidential race fell short to Richard Nixon, Martin who had served the administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, vowed to quit politics forever.

An 1976 Martin's retirement was cut short when he joined the staff of Senator Adlai Stevenson from Illinois.

Finally, two years ago, President Carter called upon Martin once again to come to the aid of his national party to become a special assistant to the president at the White House.

In the 1980 campaign, the Martin role was somewhat mystic but he did what he was called upon to do and as far as the minority vote was concerned, he delivered, if the proof is in the statistics.

After the November count, Martin stated he was going to finally pack it all up. He was going to retire to a nice quiet spot, write his memoirs, clip his industrial coupons and count some of the old dollar bills he has accumulated.

But, no. Beginning in February, 1981, Martin takes his wisdom, innumerable contacts and Black Experience to Howard University where he will become Assistant Vice President in Charge of Communications.

It appears that Dr. James Cheek, Howard's wily president, who has built a palace guard on the fourth floor of Howard's Administration building that would be the envy of any black ruler, has done it again.

When first approached about the position, Martin protested that he wanted to take it easy and write a book about his varied experiences as a black publisher and politician.

Fate, agreed Dr. Cheeks, where is there a better place to accomplish his literary dream than on the academic atmosphere of Howard University! After all, Howard has laid claim to many gifted authors.

So Martin does not go out to pasture. As Dr. Cheeks uncannily perceived, he will be a remarkable asset for the university at this stage in its history.

Martin was the focal point in President Carter's initiative to provide more federal funding for black colleges and universities. In January, 1979, the president issued an order to all executive agencies to search their funding funnels and come up with more money for the economically - deprived black institutions.

There has been a flurry of activity on behalf of the colleges. Most of the effort was directed out of Martin's White House offices. Martin has been made aware where the funds for educational institutions can be uncovered and with his knowledge of how to use the power sources to surface the money, his importance to Howard is obvious.

LETTERS

Dr. Martin Luther King dared to say no!

Dear AFRO:

When Rosa Parks said no more riding in the back of the bus, other blacks began to say no. They said no to unequal schools, no to unequal job opportunities, no to the prison oppression of the Wilmington 10 and then there was quiet, no more standing up and speaking out as a people.

In the 70s we allowed our movement to be tricked from the streets to the conference rooms. We allowed our movement to be headed up by tricky white folks and to sell out blacks.

Now once again we approach the commemoration of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King and once again we are asking permission of white folks to allow us to honor one of our own.

Since the death of Dr. King there has been the hope to make his birthday a national holiday but we have always gone to the people who were the cause of this murder.

This is insane, to go to your enemy to honor one of your own. Better that 35 million black people say we will not buy anything except food, clothing and shelter until Dr. King's birthday is declared a national holiday; we will only stop with black businesses until we as a people are getting a fair return on our investment in this country.

In Baltimore on Jan. 15, there was a breakfast at the Hilton Hotel at 7 a.m. and then those attending went back to work and forgot about what Dr. King stood for until next year.

Another event was a rally in Washington D.C. on Jan. 19 to march between two dead white racist presidents (Lincoln and Washington) then to (of all things) the White House where five days from then a southern fried Dixiecrat will be leaving to be replaced by a western Dixiecrat on Jan 20.

Some people went to Buffalo, N.Y. to participate in a counter demonstration against the Nazi party, other went to church and all tried to remember how we got to this point in our history.

But how many took this opportunity to stop half stepping by not buying only on Jan. 15, but until we are satisfied that as a people we are no longer under the yoke of oppressive Americanism? How many realized that this is not a one day struggle but a lifetime commitment?

When remembering Martin Luther King remember also Malcolm and Medgar, Sojourner Truth, Garvey and the countless others that have enabled us to be wherever we are today.

Remember that we are a race and we are in a race and there has got to be movement. Remember that 120 to 200 million blacks died in slavery and when calling yourself an American understand that as Malcolm said "If 10 persons are dining and you're sitting at the same table with nothing on your plate you're not dining; you're just there".

Before you take on the label of being an American and send your children 10,000 miles to kill and die, ask for what and like Dr. King and Malcolm, dare to say no.

Let us be the continuation and let not our generation be the one that sold out a struggle that began hundreds of years ago when the first black person was stolen from Mother Africa.

Let not our generation be the one that refused to teach our young what the struggle is still about.

Let's not be the generation that decided some of us were middle class and had made it and some of us were poor and had not made it; those who feel they have made it are dangerously ignorant because they are not white yet in this our racist America.

Better to honor our dead and remember what they lived and died for, than to once a year just go through the motions of continuing the struggle. The thing that makes one man a slave and another free is the ability to say "No" and make it stick.

BOB CHEEKS
DIRECTOR, BALTIMORE WELFARE RIGHTS ORGANIZATION

For MLK: 12 years After

By William A. Curtis

In my country politics is survival
mixed with art.
In the shadow of the people's
mind
A faint call seeps from the dark
like pain from a stickpin sticking in
the skin:
Why do you survive with such
darkness about me?
Is it still midnight?
Our leaders stay young with the
call of bullets—
the poets handed someone
to revel in society's spit.
no intellectuals, no philosophers
years young
in the seventh decade
to tell my people
in my country
life is more than sheer survival,
more than drudgery in a small
space.
more than spit on a dream
deferred.
The poems and writers still at
tea, only vision to honor at the
fringe of reality.
Oh! what circles to the nation!
what squares to the prison, still!
Such freedom in death
That down, down, down
Like a redwood
Beginning to grow against the
blade of practical men
He fell at 39 to the forest with
great men.

Surveys an insult to blacks

The Arbitron company which does radio and television surveys is an insult to the black people at large. In white areas people are sent diaries to record what they watch on television or listen to on radio. In predominantly black areas, we are bugged with phone calls everyday — maybe three of four times a day — till they speak to every one in the household — 12 years of age or older. We are called because it is felt that we are irresponsible and will not return the diaries on time.

This local branch, 4320 Ammendale Road, Beltsville, Md. is run by a bunch of white women.

The main branch is in Minneapolis, Minn.

If you don't believe this have one of your employees get a part-time job interviewing. They are always hiring because people quit so quickly.

GEORGETTE SPELVIN

FOR ALL WE KNOW

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

BISHOP AND MRS. WINFIELD SHOWELL and their five sons and five daughters are busy these days with the most exciting events: the Jan. 24 dedication of Apostolic Towers and the Jan. 31 wedding of daughter Betty.

THE DEDICATION of the $6 million, 150 - unit ultra modern Apostolic Towers at N. Washington and Fayette Streets is set for 1 p.m. at the bishop's church, First Apostolic Faith Institutional Church, 27 S. Caroline St.

FROM 2 to 5 p.m. is the Open House at the 201 N. Washington St. location of the fabulous highrise for the elderly. The units are already full according to Rev. Franklin Showell, the vice president.

Resident manager is Mrs. Maxine Carter.

Bishop Showell is president and chairman of the church's trustee board which forms the corporation.

BISHOP SMALLWOOD E. WILLIAMS is the officiating prelate for the dedication rites. He is the presiding bishop of the Bibleway Churches Worldwide.

NEXT comes the wedding at the church and reception at Martins West Jan. 31. The invitations embossed in gold are a souvenir to keep, simply fantastic.

Betty will be attended by her four sisters, her hustano - to - be's duahgter and sister - in - law; Betty's five sisters - in - law and her maid of honor. The bridegroom will have Bishop Earl Parcia of Wisconsin as best man, seven groomsmen and Betty's five brothers as ushers.

THE CHURCH holds in excess of 1,500 persons. You know it will be standing room only as the unprededented bridal procession goes down the aisle at 4 p.m.

THE BEAUTIFUL couple (both are stunning people) will honeymoon in Florida and Aruba an island in the Carribean before settling in their lovely Indianapolis, Ind. home on Sunset Lane.

THE BRIDEGROOM - TO - BE a widower, is bishop of the Christ Church Apostolic in Indianapolis. His 700 members plan a second reception there late in February. Meantime, many of their kin will arrive in Baltimore in time for the Jan. 31 wedding and reception and seated banquet.

BETTY'S silver, crystal and china patterns are listed at all Hutzlers.

WHAT AN EVENT is the one coming at the Bayridge Inn in Annapolis when the families of Dr. Lillie Mae Jackson, Harriett Tubman and John H. Murphy Sr. get together.

THE BANQUET will witness the dedication of the protraits of each one done in oils by the famed Hughie Lee - Smith. The noted artist will be honored for the fantastic work he has done on the realistic portraits and his long list of other accomplishments.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Carroll Greene Jr. of the Maryland Commission on Afro - American History and Culture and the other commissioners and the Banneker - Douglass Foundation are sponsors. You'll hear more on this later.

SEN. ARIS T. ALLEN, the Annapolis physician and the much - honored Republican official and Baltimore's Mrs. Louise Johnson are prime movers of the Maryland Inaugural Ball set for Jan. 20.

AND, you should see the gold invitations Sen. Allen has sent out to friends who wish to attend ALL the inauguration balls, parties, receptions, events, functions and so forth. WOW!

BEGINNING with the 10:30 a.m. swearing - in of President Reagan and carrying on through the parade (4 hour long) and then continuing for luncheons, parties, receptions of all the GOP Bigwigs in the P.M., if you go, you'll be breathless. The balls at NINE hotels and the Kennedy Carter run on and on past midnite.

DR. ALLEN is sending cars for us working pressfolks. In the Maryland Ball reception line will be John H. Murphy III and GOP members throughout the state.

THE MARYLAND Afro-American History and Culture Commission sponsored the first of the Martin Luther King Birthday affairs last Sunday at Pratt Library with overwhelming success. We have never seen a more delightful crowd—every seat was taken and parents, children, teachers filled the aisles and stood all the way to the rear doors for 120 minutes.

The reception afterwards was hosted by Howard Hubbard and others. Library officials, all simply marvelous until long after dark.

JUDGE ROBERT BELL, Dr. Roland McConnell, chairman and the journalists, Lee Lassiter, NEWS AMERICAN; Mike Olesker, SUN and Elizabeth M. Oliver, AFRO, and a commissioner, spoke. The enthusiastic audience participated. Mrs. Phyllis Hathaway's introduction brought sustained applause.

SHHHHH — The beauty who was with Rockefeller when he died is the sister of the black lawyer Reagan named to his Cabinet. Don't breath a word. It's not published yet.

ILLUSTRIOUS Mary Carter Smith, the African folklorist, historian, philosopher and poetss has an astounding schedule:

Feb. 1 — Cloister's Children's Museum, 2:00 p.m.

Feb. 2— Schools No. 13, Tench Tilghman and 27, Commodore John Rodgers.

Feb. 3 — No. 28 William Pinderhughes and No. 30 George Street.

Feb. 5 — No. 101 Elmer A. Henderson.

Feb.5 — No. 139 Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

Feb. 6 — No. 98 Samuel F. B Morse and No. 157 George G. Kelson Elementary.

Feb. 9 — No. 149 Rutland and No. 143 Robert W. Coleman — (All Elementary Schools.

Feb. 8 — 409 Gallery 5 p.m.

Feb. 11 - through 14 Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C.

Feb. 14 — Evening NAACP Banquet, Centerville, Md.

March 12 — Trinity School, Ilichester, Md.

THE SINGING CABBIE came in with his poem and sang the lyrics dedicated to MLK, Lennon and JFK.

By Patrick Michael Simpson

I MOURNED WITH MILLIONS
I mourned with millions
O'er the death of a man
Who said "Gods work on earth
must be our own"

KENNEDY
But I don't understand
Why the People fail to see
What we saw in him
He wanted us to be

I mourned with millions
O'er the death of a man
Who tried to lead the people
To be free

KING
But I don't understand
Why the people fail to see
What we saw in him
He wanted us to be

LENNON
I mourned with millions
O'er the death of a man
Who taught us all to strive
For peace

But I don't understand
Why the people fail to see
What we saw in him
He wanted us to be

So lead the people
And strive for peace
Cause you know god's work on
earth
Must be our own

DEL. WALTER DEAN is filing a bill to make the "Maryland Special Inaugural Reception" a permanent official event.

"Presently, the Inaugural Committee is hold a Special Inaugural Ball for the newly elected President Ronald Reagan," Dean said.

"This will be second in a series — the first was held for President Jimmy Carter in 1977."

THE INAUGURAL COMMITTEE is a non-partisan, non - profit organization that will sponsor special offical events.

MRS. LOUISE JOHNSON is the founder and chairperson of the Special

The second Inaugural Ball sponsored by the Committee will be held on January 20, 1981, in the Rayburn Building. 7-11 p.m.

Mrs. Johnson has developed quite a program including limousine service from Baltimore to the Nation's Capitol.

Dr. King Sr. hospitalized

Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., 82, was taken to the coronary unit of an Atlanta hospital Wednesday but it was not immediately known whether he'd suffered a heart attack.

A friend of the family said he had been ill from the flu since Sunday.

King's hospitalization came in the midst of a five - day observance of his late son's 52nd birthday.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING SR.

—MORE LETTERS—

Of youth, beauty and money

Know what's wrong with today's society? We've got our standards wrong, that's what! The ideals we've fashioned society after are youth, beauty and money and we couldn't have made a worse choice if we'd tried.

Take youth, irresponsible, lacking experience, knowledge and maturity — but what a heap of responsibility we put on their shoulders!

Everything is youth oriented — T.V. programs, fashions, advertising — we demand so much, we build up such expectations, no wonder they have to take shelter behind the teenage toys of drugs, alcohol and sex. They're scared to death of failing to accomplish those obscure goals before that certain age. Bring on age and experience.

Then, there's beauty — that excludes most of us for a start. Wouldn't it be nice if we could be accepted the way we really are instead of having to spend all that time and those dollars chasing that (for most of us) impossible dream — the flawless face and figure? Are those of us with the extra poundage and balding pates really disadvantaged? Whatever happened to greatness of mind, surely a more solid foundation on which to build our lives and country than on those that are constantly primping?

We all need money, no doubt about that. But why haven't we been taught how to use it? When wages were low we were trapped without it and now we're trapped with it in a spiralling daze of consumerism. We still haven't realized that it's not money or the material goods it buys that makes us happy, but we continue to run ourselves into the ground trying to make as much of it as possible then wonder why our marriages are on the rocks and our children are impossible.

Human relationships, that's where the future is. Take Saturday mornings off, forget the new sofa, take your kids to the movies or cook your spouse a gourmet brunch.

I learned too late — you don't have to!

MRS. W. WALKER

King's last visit to D.C.

Dr. Moon sees dream not realizable today

By Yvonne J. Carter

"I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia
the sons of former slaves and the sons of former
slaveowners will be able to sit
down together at the table
of brotherhood. I have a dream
that even the state of
Mississippi, a state sweltering
with the heat of
oppression, will be transformed
into an oasis of freedom
and justice.

"I have a dream that my four little children will
one day live in a nation where
they will not be judged
by the color of their skin but by
the content of their character."
— Martin Luther King Jr.

"His dream will not be realized in our lifetime," says Dr. James C. Moone, director of African Studies at Georgetown University.

"King had been to the mountaintop from a religious perspective. We are still at the foot of the mountain, but King certainly broke the ice for things to be a lot better," Moone, who marched with King from 1963 to 1968 in the South's struggle for civil rights, adds.

Moone remembers King as a personable, warm individual.

"Once I got to know him, I developed a deep respect for him. He was like a disciple, a teacher. He would get a feel for your opinion and then give you advice."

Moone first met King in 1963 while teaching under a segregated school system in Greensboro, Ga. Both the white and black schools looked alike, but the black school, where Moone taught chemistry, received no apparatus or books. The school's library also was not supplied.

"I took my students to the public library and they refused to allow us to use it. From there we went over to the drugstore and they refused us milkshakes," he says.

Moone contacted the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Selma, Ala. First King's father came, then Martin Luther King Jr. came.

Moone recalls King telling him: 'You're asking me to come all the way over here just to deal with a library. You mean to tell me you can go to the restaurants, the theaters and the stores in this town ... We have to try to break down as many barriers as we can at one time."

King and Moone were successful in breaking the jim crow barriers in Greensboro. In 1964, Moone moved to Washington and taught in the Baltimore and D.C. Public Schools.

"Every summer I worked as field coordinator for Dr. King and SCLC. We worked in Amit County, Miss., then the poorest county in the country with the yearly income for blacks at $600. We also worked in Albany, Ga. and St. Augustine, Fla," he says.

"The Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity and finds himself an exile in his own land.

— Martin Luther King Jr.

Moone's most memorable occasion with King was in the Northeastern Presbyterian Church in Northeast Washington less than a week before King's assassination. King had called a meeting of the various civil rights groups in the District to prepare for the "Solidarity Day" march and the Poor People's Campaign.

Stokely Carmicheal with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNIC); Lester McKinney, the D.C. coordinator for SNIC, Marion Barry; Doug Moore and Julius Hobson were all requested to attend the meeting, Moone recounts.

"The Solidarity Day March was to coincide with the Poor People's March. King had called about 40 or 50 of us together. He called me before the meeting to be sure I'd be there. At the time he was preoccupied with the sanitation workers in Memphis and wanted me and two other top aides to coordinate the march," he says.

Moone remembers Stokely Carmicheal approaching King at the meeting.

"Dr. King, you espouse the non-violent theory. I don't attest to that. But what are you going to do when the police start clubbing us during the march?" Moone recalls Carmicheal asking.

The group was ready to dispel the nonviolent tactics and meet violence with violence. This was the beginning of the split in the movement, Moone adds.

"King told Carmicheal that he had been in the movement too long to become violent. He said he would fall to his knees and pray if the police attacked," Moone recalls King's reply.

Carmicheal asked for a recess to discuss the situation. Everyone went downstairs and King was left alone in the sanctuary. Some left.

"I stayed upstairs with him and the man wept. Nonviolence had lost its momentum," Moone says.

"One of our biggest problems as a race in this country is the problem of disunity. You must understand how this came about," Moone remembers King's assessment of the situation. "Because of slavery we have become traitors of each other. We must learn to give up disunity for human dignity."

"Nonviolence is our testing point. The strong man is the man who can stand up for his rights and not hit back."

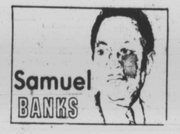
— Martin Luther King Jr.

After the recess Stokely told Dr. King that the group had agreed to support him meaning they were not going to march, but would offer food, clothing and money, Moone explains.

"King really appreciated the gesture. He thanked them and left. The following Sunday, he spoke at the Washington Cathedral. After that he went back to Memphis and I never saw him alive again," Moone says.

"The quality, not the longevity, of one's life is what is important. If you are cut down in a movement that is designed to save the soul of a nation, then no other death could be more redemptive."

— Martin Luther King Jr.



Samuel BANKS

Commemorating the non-violent apostle from Atlanta

Twenty-five years ago, in a nation at war with itself over human rights, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was catapulted to national and world prominence by the seminal and extraordinary leadership that he provided the Montgomery bus boycott. The high intelligence, fierce determination and inspiring resilience shown by Dr. King and his followers toppled segregation on public carriers in Montgomery, Alabama. However, more importantly, it served palpable notice to the notion that freedom is not divisible. The 226 million Americans who comprise our nation are richer and human possibilities more attainable because the brilliant and gentle "non-violent Apostle from Atlanta" lived and worked untiringly among us for social justice.

The recent observances of Dr. King's Birthday, locally and nationally, were inspirational and heartening testimonies of stubborn and persistent refusal of Black America to permit his monumental contributions and towering "Dream" to be thoroughly ignored and forgotten. The efforts of the redoubtable Stevie Wonder in mobilizing and orchestrating the Washington march in support of a national holiday has served as a reconciling- and positive national force.

It is clear that a national holiday for Dr. King must not rest upon mawkish and maudlin sentimentality or feelings of guilt. The essential and compelling basis for recognition must rest, as it does, upon criteria that we as a nation have generally utilized in recognizing outstanding individuals in our nation's history:

1. Unusual or remarkable contribution to the nation.

2. Extent of impact on the nation Dr. King met these criteria fully.

Locally, here in Baltimore, the "Not One Penny" campaign led by Mrs. I Mary Carter Smith, President of the Citizen Coalition for Urban Survival, provided a highly positive and pertinent focus. Mrs. Smith, an outstanding, sensitive and superior griot, folklorist and writer, is deserving of the commendations of the entire community for her selfless and intrepid leadership.

Dr. King was an unusual and powerful force for good in American life. His dedication to non-violent resistance, in a philosophical and operational sense, proved to be a formidable factor in exposing racism, intolerance, and bigotry in our State and Nation. He affirmed the best of the American experience in time of profound travail and disquiet. In spite of personal traducement, hostility, and threats on his life, he remained wedded his belief in non-violent resistance and an unflinching faith that "Unmerited suffering is redemptive."

Over seventeen years ago, at the base of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in a nation deeply polarized, proclaimed his "Dream" to the nation. As a participant in the historic March on Washington, I recall vividly the keen sense of euphoria, vibrancy, and high sense of expectancy that all of us, black and white, experienced as we listened to Dr. King poignantly and piercingly express his hope for the future. In short, the nation was transformed and renewed in terms of the "more excellent way."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an extraordinary and creative personality in the life of our nation. He represented a positive and reconciling catalyst in the midst of enormous upheaval and crisis. Our nation is better and stronger because he lived and had the courage, to the end, to witness for his beliefs.

A national lassitude and dispiriting disquietude now engulf us as a people. The tragedy of the Watergate debacle and related horrors besmirch and cheapen our political institutions; the euphoria of the 1960s that provided hope for the extirpation of racial and class distinctions in our society, and the growing alienation and frustrations of our youth indicate the need for a firm and resounding declaration of support for human values and possibilities.

Our nation now has an auspicious opportunity to recognize an extraordinary American—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His remarkable deeds and contributions command a national holiday on January 15th in his honor.

Urban League asks Reagan help to close economic gap

The National Urban League this week urged the incoming Ronald Reagan administration to heed the racial "storm warnings" of 1980 and act to lessen the economic gap between blacks and whites.

In a 321-page "State of Black America — 1981" report, the civil rights organization said the past year had been a time of increasing racial tension and violence.

"If there is any overall description to give of 1980 as it was in Black America," said Urban League president Vernon Jordan, "it is that it was a year of storm warnings, a year when long simmering problems started boiling to the surface, a year in which all the latent forces of the past decade became fully visible."

"With a faltering economy to contend with, the new administration has proposed to the American people a mixture of reducing government expenses, raising the military budget and cutting taxes, all at the same time," the report noted.

"It is within this proposal that much of the potential danger for blacks and the poor lie, for obviously if budget cuts are to be made, a prime target will be social service programs that serve the poor."

The report specifically called on Reagan to increase federal job training programs, noting private industry has been unable to generate enough jobs to relieve the estimated 25 percent unemployment in the black community.

In an introduction, Jordan said major causes of alarm among blacks are "the rising wave of violence directed against blacks, the ominous growth of such hate groups as the Ku Klux Klan and the Nazis and the apparent inability or unwillingness of the criminal justice system to act equitably when race is involved."

He said racism is once again "becoming institutionalized and there is a direct link between the sophisticates who feel free to make derogatory remarks about blacks and other racial groups and the primitives who kill and terrorize."

The league report expressed openness toward the new administration, noting "there is much in what Mr. Reagan had to say to give rise to the hope that he will understand the special problems of the minorities and the poor."

But the organization said it does not expect any movement toward the center from "the ultra-conservatives in Congress who are already sharpening their axes to cut and slash away at the basic interests of the poor."

JAN