Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Reagan and human rights

Human rights is an irrepressible issue that refuses to be de-emphasized or down-played because it is so basic to survival that it touches all areas of our lives. It cannot be ignored regardless of the circumstances.

Apparently President Reagan has found out this nagging fact the hard way regardless of previous racial remarks that seemed appropriate but reflected a cavalier attitude when racial issues were involved. Reagan now says that the United States should not negotiate with countries that persecute their citizens, unless that subject is part of the negotiation. In the process he also deplored violence and terrorism. He spoke before survivors of the World War Two holocaust recently in an emotional speech that showed compassion and understanding for the human spirit and the will to survive.

Previously the president has indicated that human rights would be considered an internal matter and any reference to it would be considered outside interference and therefore offensive in bargaining sessions. The indication to refrain from speaking about human rights has upset not only black African nations, but civil rights advocates here in the states. Very few informed observers can truly deny that Pretoria oppresses its black South Africans in a way that is sadistic and inhuman by its policies of uprooting and house arrests. So far that government has shown no sign of changing regardless of massive international condemnation. Recently South African Bishop Desmond Tutu visited the states and made several remarks considered treasonous by his government. Immediately upon his return, the Bishop's passport was confiscated without any chance to defend himself through legal procedures. And of course, most of us remember the brutal murder of nationalist Steve Biko while he was in police custody. This is institutional terrorism against black South Africans that is unequalled by any other government.

Here in the states, the murder of blacks in Atlanta and Buffalo continue at an unabated pace that shocks the nation and devastates the families involved as well as the entire black community. Both are tragedies of major proportion because no one knows when the "terror" will strike next and wipe out the life of an innocent victim. In Atlanta it seems that every effort is being made to discredit the victims. They are being severly criticized for engaging in chores like odd jobs and being delinquent. We have usually encouraged young people to do odd jobs because it displays initiative and develops independence of spirit. Self reliance is a human trait that has always been cherished and praised under most circumstances.

President Reagan has vast power and influence by virtue of his high office. For example, if he attends church on Sunday morning it is usually interpreted that the president lead the nation in worship. Even though this is a symbolic gesture it establishes a healthy mood for others to follow. The denial of human and civil rights is unacceptable regardless of the local. But it is extremely reprehensible when domestic citizens are exposed as if they were sitting ducks. If the president wishes to reassure the black community and gain its respect it is incumbent upon him to speak out more forcefully about a matter that strike at the very fabric of our society and make his position unmistakably clear minces his words.

Marchers, protest galore

Some black leaders with clout and following in certain communities, over the past year or so, have been calling for "a return to the streets" or a reenactment of the civil rights marches of the 60s. It appears some of their calls have been heeded.

In Washington, the nation's capital, and scene of some of the biggest civil rights rallies and marches, during the past week alone, there have been protests, marches, demonstrations and rallies almost daily. And there are more to come. May seems to have become march month.

Groups have marched and rallied on Capitol Hill, in front of the White House, in front of the District Building, seat of city government, at the Pentagon, in Lafayette Park and throughout many city streets.

Their causes, though varying, have been somewhat interacting. The fundamental thrusts, however, have been to dramatize and bring home forcibly, the deep concern of the nation's citizens and especially those in the Washington area, over the current and anticipated hard times faced by the poor, the aged, the unemployed and the underemployed, resultant from budget cuts and reductions in labor force.

One group held a combined rally to protest President Reagan's budget cuts and Mayor Barry's layoffs of and proposed layoffs of city workers.

There is an old saying that Satan finds work for idle hands to do. Unemployed people, hungry people, will be wont to use their ingenuity to find ways and means to keep body and soul together and this sometimes leads to unsavory pursuits and acts frowned upon by law - abiding citizens.

If the current spate of marches and protests do no more than call attention to this situation, then they will have achieved, if only partially, some of their objectives. It will be left to those who have the authority and the capacity to alleviate hunger and provide jobs to take it from there.

Summer is almost upon us and thousands of young people will be leaving the classrooms to hit the streets also, within the next few weeks, looking for jobs, swelling the ranks of the unemployed. What then? Will there be more and bigger marches?

The summer jobs programs, established by the city government and the private sector, will, we hope, take care of many more jobs for youth this year than in previous years.

It is our hope, too, that those now marching and protesting will have found some palliatives for their gripes by the time the real summer rolls around, so that it will not be long . . . and hot.

LETTERS

Opinions expressed by columnists and in letters to the editor DO NOT necessarily reflect the editorial policy of The AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS.
THE MANAGEMENT.

Minister in support of Mr. Conaway

Dear AFRO:

I am unbelieving and amazed by references in your editorial of April 18, 1981 charging Delegate Frank M. Conaway with disrespect of women in general and Delegate Lena K. Lee and Senator Verda M. Welcome in particular.

Based on my years of contact and work with Mr. Conaway, I have every reason to disbelieve allegations that he is disrespectful to anyone.

I am sorry that you saw fit to say that you had no reason to disbelieve these charges.

REV. ELIJAH McDANIEL

MADELINE MURPHY

Babies don't keep

Sitting in a fast food restaurant a few weeks back, I watched two proud young mothers, eating as their babies were parked side by side next to them in their strollers.

Tiny feet were kicking, hands were grabbing at the air, or missing their mouths. One had almost successfully yanked off her bonnet.

Impetuously, I spoke to them, inquired about the babies' ages (it was plain to see with all that pink that they were girls) and thought: "Enjoy them now. Time moves so swiftly. Those angelic baby faces will never return."

And indeed it is even more poignant when you take a chance journey through the family albums, that the landmarks of evolution from babyhood through adolescence to young adulthood strike you. How precious the journey.

Days, when you were in the midst of changing and boiling diapers (before Pampers or Luvs); sterilizing bottles, fixing formula or nursing (before similac); of being spat upon from indignant turned down mouths, rejecting the first strained spinach or Pablum.

Too busy, on call day and night with sudden fretfulness or fever, that stole time. No time to enjoy. Enjoy the sweet innocence, the awkward grappling for wooden squares and circles, the great juicy kisses of sudden affection. (There's nothing like the tightening embrace of chubby arms encircling your neck!)

First words, turning to jibberish, the discovery of intelligible verbal communication that made you laugh and weep at the same time. This new plateau of growth and understanding that reduced just a tot, the anguish of their inability to tell you where it hurt.

Now that they can, bandaids aren't nearly enough, for their problems are beyond panacess and placebo, their personal anguish too hard to assuage—all the cost of growing up.

Even distance relegates this generation's parents to the same lonely incompetencies of trying to solve monumental first time problems that creep up or jolt them day in and day out in that too short torturous trip through parenthood.

How I regret not keeping a diary even though at the time it was too much for weary fingers, sore back and droopy eyelids! So anxious to get through it and so short-sighted, hurrying them to grow up.

However, we still have the first rocking chair an aunt gave us for the first born. The tradition carries on through our children.

Because a poem I read long ago, trite but true, stemmed from the constant activity, and was memorized against the guilt of the great household disorder of rearing five children.

It goes like this:

"Cleaning and scrubbing can wait till tomorrow...

For babies grow up we've learned to our sorrow...

So quiet down cobwebs, dust go to sleep...

I'm rocking my baby and babies don't keep!"

All of this crossed my mind as I sat in the fast food place.

All of my hopes that this generation of young mothers would take time to smell the flowers.

For I sat there a bit envious, and overwhelmingly nostalgic about yesterdays; about feelings of motherhood; about the bittersweet longing to return to the end of the day's occupation—the children's hour.

PARREN MITCHELL

The week Congress failed the people

I am writing this column on Monday, May 4.

The vote on the budget for fiscal year 1982 will take place on Wednesday, May 6, 1981.

Even though the vote will not take place until Wednesday, I can safely describe this week as the week in which the Congress failed the people it is supposed to represent.

I can safely say this because there were only three major options offered to the U.S. House of Representatives.

The first was the Congressional Black Caucus Constructive Alternative Budget. This budget offered a surplus for F.Y. 1982, full funding of human resources programs and adequate funding for the national defense.

We were able to do this by simply closing up some, not all, but some of the enormous tax loop-holes for giant corporations. The members of the House would not pass this budget, because it was drafted by blacks; they are beholded to the giant corporations; and because they are politically afraid of Reagan.

The second proposition that the House was to consider was the Republican substitute.

Representatives Gram and Latta offered the Republican substitute amendment to decrease budget authority by $23.1 billion, outlays by $25.7 billion, and revenues by $31.1 billion. It contains a $31 billion deficit and a $51.3 billion tax cut for F.Y. 1982.

The amendment increases the national defense function by $6.7 billion to fund increased military procurement, equipment modernization, readiness and personnel.

It cuts the Education and Training function by $3.3 billion in budget authority for such programs as youth employment and training, primary and secondary educational, and student loans.

Health services programs accounts for part of the $1.3 billion reduction in budget authority for the health function.

Reductions in child nutrition programs, food stamps, and housing assistance contribute to the $16.9 billion difference between the amendment and the committee's recommendations for income security.

Certainly any amendment which made deeper cuts in social programs than those proposed by Reagan could not possibly be in the best interest of the people.

The third important option was the House Budget Committee Resolution (the Jones Bill.) This resolution reduces spending from current policy levels by $30.9 billion compared to $40.8 billion proposed by the administration in March.

However, as indicated earlier, the administration's projections have been widely questioned and have, therefore, been re-estimated by the Congressional Budget Office and both the House Budget Committee and the Republican-controlled Senate Budget Committee.

The House committee's re-estimate indicates that the administration's proposals would cut spending by only $26.8 billion rather than $40.8 billion. Thus, based on the re-estimates, the House resolution cuts spending by $2.1 billion more than the administration proposed.

The committee increases defense outlays for F.Y. 1982 $1 billion more than the administration proposed and reduced budget authority by $6.6 billion from the administration's March request.

At the same time, the committee increases funding for education, training, employment, and social services by 11 percent in budget authority and outlays over the administration's request as re-estimated.

This would result in more funding than the administration

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Samuel BANKS

Black Hebrews in Israel: Search for roots

The Black Hebrews in Israel have commanded an enormous amount of attention in the national and international press. The accounts of their pilgrimage from the United States to Liberia and later to Israel have been prodigious and varied: joy and pathos; fact and fiction; faith and indecision; unsteadiness and tenacity.

In the course of my recent study tour in Israel, arranged by the Baltimore Jewish Community Relations Council and the World Zionist Organization, I was afforded the opportunity to obtain a first-hand observation of the Black Hebrews in Dimona, Israel.

It should be indicated that the 2,000 Black Hebrews concentrated in Dimona, Arad and Mitzpe Ramon, approximately 75 miles south of Jerusalem in the Negev, represent a significant enlargement of the 200 Black Hebrews who left Chicago during the period of Passover in the spring of 1967 for Liberia.

The institutional oppression, pervasive racism, urban rebellions, and a desire to return to their spiritual homeland had, in the view of the group's leader, Ben-Ami Carter been the primary determinants which motivated the Black Hebrews to forsake the land of their birth.

The Black Hebrews were in Liberia for two years (i.e. 1967-69). The reasons are varied and not yet clearly understood as to why the group did not remain in Liberia. However, it is clear that in 1969 a contingent of 39 Black Hebrews left Liberia for Israel.

It is this group, enlarged by other followers from the United States, and a high birthrate which accounts for the 2,000 Black Hebrews in Israel.

The overwhelming number of children under 13 years of age was born in Israel. The Black Hebrews' observance of "multiple marriage" (i.e. polygamy) assures an expanding population. Ben-Ami Carter has three wives and 16 children. Ben-Ami Carter supports the practice of "multiple marriage" because it is sanctioned by the Torah.

Saturday, April 4, 1981, the Jewish Sabbath, provided an opportunity as a result of the generous and thoughtful support of Mr. Stanley Sollins of the Baltimore Jewish Community Relations Council, Ms. Janet Sherman of the American Jewish Congress and Mr. Danny Goldberg of the World Zionist Organization in Jerusalem, to travel from Tel Aviv to Dimona.

A five-member delegation consisting of Mrs. Ruth Hurwitz of the Baltimore Jewish Community Relations Council, Ms. Janet Sherman, Mr. Danny Goldberg, Mr. Raymond Boone, formerly with the Baltimore AFRO American and this writer made the journey to Dimona.

Mrs. Hurwitz, Ms. Sherman and Mr. Goldberg were unofficial observers; Mr. Boone and I conducted in-depth interviews over a three-hour period with the Black Hebrews and their leader, Ben-Ami Carter.

The fundamental religious beliefs of the Black Hebrews, as expounded by Ben-Ami Carter, constitute a basis for friction, tension and estrangement from the mainstream of Israel.

Ben-Ami, who indicated to me in the course of an hour interview that he is referred to by his followers as "Aba," (i.e. father), "Ben Ami," and "Master" summarized some of the basic religious beliefs of the Black Hebrews:

1. The Torah is their guide.
2. They are the original and true Hebrews.
3. The establishment of a "Kingdom of Righteousness" in Israel.
4. The concept of wisdom coming through suffering.

Ben-Ami Carter expanded on his prophetic vision and hopes for Israel:

"Our objective is peace unto all men; understanding we are not racists. I do not hate Jews, my future is tied up their theirs, he ancient Israelites were blacks, if that makes me a racist, that's the way it has to be. Israel has to be the spiritual center of the world and not the industrial center. We have taken a terrible beating from the Israeli papers; especially the Jerusalem Post."

The Black Hebrews' tenacious hold to their religious exclusivity and refusal to undergo religious conversion to Orthodox Judiasm have resulted in vehement and systematic opposition to the group in Israel.

In a very gracious dinner meeting hosted by a number of Jewish leaders in Dimona, following our meeting with Ben-Ami Carter, the observation was made that "we oppose the presence of Black Hebrews living here. If such a group had come to Israel and been white people, they would have been thrown out long ago."

One of the grave problems is the lack of direct communication and interaction between the Black Hebrews and their neighbors in Dimona, Arad and Mitzpe Ramon and the Knesset (i.e. the parliament) in the past and present.

The 2,000 Black Hebrews who have now been in Israel for over 12 years constitute a clear and present challenge to Israel's affirmations of equality, social justice and mercy.

The charismatic, strong-willed resolute and compelling leadership of Ben-Ami Carter appears to provide a cohesive and unified direction for the Black Hebrews. I did not get the impression, in spite of the ceremonial fluff and a degree of hyperbole reflected in our interview, that his followers were being held against their will.

In response to a question on the possibility of mass suicide similar to the 913 followers of Jim Jones in Guyana two years ago, if the Israeli government initiated military action against them, he replied that "we are a people who believe in life, and we are determined to remain."

The well-kept brick houses, exhuberant, alert and friendly responses of the children and adults, conveyed a sense of security, peace and well-being. I was highly impressed with the group's alertness, cordiality and friendly outreach.

The Black Hebrews, as indicated repeatedly by Ben-Ami Carter in our interview, are determined to remain in Israel. The residents of Dimona, Arad, Mitzpe Ramon and a broad spectrum of the 3.8 million

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—Black Hebrews

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Israelis are determined that they must leave. The response of the Israeli Knesset to this ineluctable and escalating basis for confrontation was the establishment of the Glass Commission two years ago.

David Glass, a respected and erudite member of the Knesset, was appointed by Minister Yosef Burg to investigate the Black Hebrews and make recommendations as to what actions the Israeli government should undertake.

The Glass Commission conducted an intensive and thorough 20-month study of the Black Hebrews which included interviews with citizens of Dimona, Arad, Mitzpe Ramon, a trip to interview citizens in the United States, two police intelligence reports, local and national, on the Black Hebrews and a review of other materials pertaining to the Black Hebrews.

The suggested options and recommendations of the Glass Commission have been presented to Dr. Yosef Burg. No action has been taken to date. It is highly unlikely that the Knesset will act, if at all, on the Glass Commission recommendations after the June 30th national election.

I was able to review a copy of the summary of the Glass Commission recommendations before leaving Israel. The summary findings of the exhaustive 147-page report depict a number of options and offer basic recommendations. The three options discussed include the following:

1. Maintain the status quo and do nothing. This is viewed as unacceptable because it will exacerbate the situation and lead to confrontation.

2. Remove the black Hebrews from Dimona, Arad, and Mitzpe Ramon and disperse them throughout Israel. This option, too, is not favored because it would conflict with the Black Hebrews' communal (i.e. group sharing) living style.

3. Provide an agricultural settlement (i.e. moshav) for the Black Hebrews as requested by them in 1971. This option has the support of the four-member Commission. Moreover, that the Israeli Knesset provide a special dispensation in order that the Black Hebrews would have certain citizenship rights.

It is believed that the last option represents the basic recommendation of the Glass Commission and has its unanimous support. As a quid pro quo the Black Hebrews would have to cease bringing in followers from the United States and permit those, if any, who wished to leave his group to do so.

It is also significant that the Glass Commission report, in view of widespread newspaper coverage to the contrary, did not view the Black Hebrews as criminally "dangerous or ominous."

However, the practice of multiple marriage remains a vexatious and troublesome concern among Israelis. The Black Hebrews' affirmations of religious exclusivity and multiple marriage are potent and continuing sources of profound ferment and conflict.

Additionally, Ben-Ami Carter stated in our interview that "shortage of food will come at the end of the summer." Inasmuch as the Black Hebrews refuse to undergo religious conversion, they are unable to claim the social, economic and political benefits provided citizens of Israel.

If a shortage of food does occur at the end of the summer, it will be calamitous for the Black Hebrews.

It is ironic that 14 years after the Black Hebrews' exit from the United States, the land of their birth, in search of freedom and their spiritual roots, that their status is precarious. Nonetheless, as was sung by a spirited and talented youth choir in Dimona, 7,000 miles away from the home of their grandparents, "In That Great Getting Up Morning Hallelujah."

I hope that a combination of Hebrew emunah (i.e. faith) and African-American soul will effect a rapprochement between the Israelis and Black Hebrews.

The next months will, to be sure, be fateful, frenetic and fitful. Hope springs eternal that rationality, common sense and compassion will prevail.

Tony Brown's Journal

Don't color Janet Cooke black

When Janet Cooke's fraudulent Pulitzer Prize story was exposed, she disgraced herself, humiliated her family, damaged the integrity of the Pulitzer Prize process, took a chunk of the Washington Post's reputation down with her, deceived those at the Washington Post who believed in her, caused some to debate the future of blacks at white dailies, and precipitated a scandal and a stench that will do great harm to the credibility of all of the press for years to come.

But don't color Janet Cooke black because she is classified as such.

Moreover, she did not, as some suggest, disgrace or in any way reflect adversely on black people or black journalists at white newspapers. As a matter of fact, if The Post's "presiding troika" and lesser editorial "archdukes" had listened to two black staffers who doubted the faked story — editor Vivian Aplin-Brownlee and reporter Courtland Milloy — they would have uncovered the fraud and the integrity of the paper would have remained intact.

The greatest injury Miss Cooke has done with her fabrication is not to the Pulitzer prizes, however, or even to the Washington Post. It is to blacks in newsrooms all over the country." But Roger Wilkins, a black Washington Star editor who sat on the board that awarded Cooke the prize, in making that statement, missed the larger issue and its implications.

Nothwithstanding all of Wilkins' extensive professional plaudits, his support for Cooke's fake story of "Jimmy," an 8-year-old black heroin addict who was shot-up by his mother's boyfriend, allegedly so intense that he was suspected of having a "personal" relationship with the 26-year-old confessed liar. The truth is that Wilkins never met Cooke. And therein, I believe, lies the key to the first journalistic hoax in the Washington Post's 104-year history.

It's my guess that Wilkins, always an ardent supporter of minority advancement in journalism, brought to his judgement visions of a black woman claiming newspaper journalism's top honor. Ironically, Janet Cooke never met Roger Wilkins, probably because he was black.

Janet Cooke did not demonstrate that she was a good journalist, but a skillful hoaxer who understood how to fool "crusty old white editors," along with one black one, while deceiving herself with a neurotic fantasy of being white, a status condition she obviously believes necessary for acceptance. To begin with, her racial needs were the same as the racial expectations of most of the "archdukes and duchesses of the newsroom" who hired her: a safe white racial identity from a good white upbringing.

She faked "their" background, a neurotic way of insulating herself from the horrors of racism by creating the dark-skinned white woman fantasy with "impressive Vassar credentials" in their psyches. Even her life-style reinforced her internal fraud.

"Probably few things could cause more squirming by this woman who spent so much time denying that there was any significance to the fact that her skin was black, who in fact avoided other blacks," wrote Herb Denton, a black national staff reporter at The Post. "Race," he quoted her as saying, "accounted for only about five percent of what she considered important about a person."

Denton's description of Cooke explains why Wilkins' faith in her as a "black" reporter was misplaced. "Like more than a few others in this town, she gave parties and invited glittery people she didn't even know.... Few of the people Janet invited, of course, were black, just a few of the people she associated with in the Post newsroom were black." I suspect that Cooke's editor Milton Coleman, a black man with impeccable credentials, was also guilty of misplaced racial loyalty.

In spite of a thorough 18,000 word critique by its ombudsman, The Post management still failed to understand where and how it went wrong because it refuses to admit what Janet Cooke is and why it prefers "dramatic flair" when "flair" alleges to graduate magna cum laude from Vassar speaking or reading French or Spanish. Would an honest, well-trained, black magna cum laude graduate from predominantly black Hampton University's excellent communications program with two years of experience with the New York Voice, a black weekly, have been hired? Probably not.

Tony Brown was the founding dean of the School of Communications at Howard University. TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL, the television series, is shown every Sunday, on Channel 11, at 3:00 p.m.

ELIZABETH M. OLIVER

For all we know: Highest honors for Cong. Mitchell

City Editor

CONG. PARREN J. MITCHELL last Sunday received one of the most coveted awards in the nation, that of Honorary Doctor of Laws from Lincoln University, Pa., the esteemed institution of higher education founded in 1854.

HIS NEPHEW City Councilman Michael Bowen Mitchell drove the two of them there and it was a glorious day.

Cong. Mitchell, noted now across the nation as the No. 1 member of U.S. Congress, received sustained applause and standing ovations.

THIS IS his 6th honorary degree.

The citation read in part:

"PARREN J. MITCHELL is the son and the servant primarily of the 7th Congressional District of Maryland, which includes two-thirds of the city of Baltimore.

"This district has sent him to the U.S. Congress six times.

"Fortunately for all Americans, he has validated the confidence shown by his district through his continuous efforts in behalf of the poor, the elderly, disadvantaged, and minorities in this great nation.

"The areas, content and direction of his chosen works, bear witness to his avowed and invariant goal for America and its people.

"That goal is to assure to all American citizens opportunities to enjoy the rights, privileges and the means to meet the obligations which derive from the Constitution of the United States.

"He was chosen to the achievement of social, political and economic justice and parity as the vehicle for his assurance.

"HIS 1970 election to the United States Congress from Maryland's Seventh District broadened his opportunities for stimulation of further progress toward his constant goals for his district, state and nation.

"SERIOUS, diligent, and effective in efforts to serve his constituency, he is known for a 14-hour workday, for disdaining the ruffles, flourishes and grandeur of high office and for making himself extremely accessible to his constituents and to black businessmen sprinkled across the nation.

"IN THE HOUSE, he is presently chairman of the House Small Business Committee; senior member of the House Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs Committee and chairman of its Subcommittee on Domestic Monetary Policy; chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing Minority Enterprise and Economic Development of the Congressional Black Caucus, and a member of the Joint Economic Committee and the Presidential Committee on National Agenda for the '80s.

"DURING more than a decade in Congress he has served with distinction as a member of the House Budget Committee, as vice-chairman of the Joint Committee on Defense Production; and as chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

"THIS WORLD WAR II veteran, who still carries shrapnel in his back and leg from combat in the European Theatre, has introduced legislation in Congress which includes the Civil Rights Improvement Act to insure that all Americans have access to the federal court system to raise claims that their federally guaranteed rights have been violated, along with House Resolution No. 288 that would require the commission of a bust or statue of Frederick Douglass to be placed in a suitable location in the United States Capitol Building.

"IN ANTRODUCING this bill he stated that of 631 statues and portraits of distinguished Americans in the building, representing the richness of America's past, a figure representing the Afro-American contribution is conspicuously and shamelessly absent.

"IN 1975 he attached to the $4 billion public works bill an amendment that compelled state, county and municipal governments seeking federal grants to retain minority firms as contractors.

"THIS SINGLE amendment resulted in more than $625 million in business for legitimate minority firms.

IN 1978 he also introduced what became Public Law 95-507, which requires proposals from contractors to spell out their goals for awarding contracts to minority subcontractors. This law provides access to billions of dollars for minority businesses now and in the future.

"CONG. MITCHELL has been elected by the Democratic Caucus in Congress and appointed by the Speaker of the House as one of 11 Whips, thus becoming the first black ever included in the official leadership structure of the United States House of Representatives.

"EVEN during the last week he has sat on House committee hearings taking testimony from witnesses victimized by activities of the Ku Klux Klan and worked to establish the Minority Business Legal Defense Fund.

"THIS FUND will be raised by and from these businesses for their own defense against neglect and discrimination.

"INDEED this son and servant of the 7th District of Maryland, and of the nation, has been a creative craftsman and an impassioned artisan in pursuit of goals of liberty, justice and equality for all Americans.

OTHER NEWS:

MS. SHEILA F. MAITIN is the 1981 LBJ Congressional intern. A soph honors student at Duke Univ., she resides with her parents in Baltimore and is a graduate of Roland Park Country School.

SHE HAS BEEN named as Duke U.'s Angier B. Duke Scholar and when she completes her internship in Cong. Mitchell's office, she will spend the rest of the summer at Oxford University in England.

MAY 8 — The Student Tutorial and Enrichment Program of Coppin College will present Rafiki Productions, a Washington-based modeling troupe in a fashion extravanganza in the college auditorium at noon. The presentation "Africa to a Different Rhythm" is a part of STEP'S cultural enrichment program for student participants this semester.

RAFIKI PRODUCTIONS is exciting theatre as well as fashion! Utilizing music, acting, dancing, modeling and fashion, the company entertains and educates an audience about Africa.

MAY 8 — Coppin will host a seminar on "Parents, Children and the Law" in the Jacobs Office-Classroom Building on the northwest Baltimore campus. The day-long seminar is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MAY 8 — Winners of the Baltimore's Best Creative Writing Contest are due at Walbrook High for lunch at 11 a.m.: Dawn Nicholson, Michonne McCoy, Marlow A. Henderson III, Tangela Rorain, Westley Moses, Leslie Walker, Dorothea English, Chevelle Hutchins, Kirk Rae, Savoy Crymes, Anita Heriot, and Mayer Rus, all public school pupils. Congratualtions.

MAY 8 — At the Hilton, the Awards Night of the Masjid As-Salaam with Minister Yah-Ya Muhammad, head of the Muslim organization which has headquarters on Wilson St.

MAY 9 — Royal wedding of HRH Haile Selassi II in Trneton, N.J.

MAY 9 — The Baltimore Chapter, National Black Media Coalition, will sponsor another in the series of workshops designed to educate the community about the media.

The focus of this next workshop will be on cable-TV and its impact on the black community in Baltimore, "everything you always wanted to know about cable-TV," from ownership and job opportunities, to education and entertainemnt. Come out and be informed, from 19:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. St. Marks Methodist Church, Liberty Heights and Garrison Blvd.

MAY 11 — John Thornton, officer of the Anna Mae Hunter Home for the Blind asks all citizens to come to the banquet at the Fountaine Bleu, 7 p.m.

HE STATES: "The need for the Hunter Home For The Blind is as great today as it was when Mrs. Hunter first conceived the idea.

"Therefore, the Trustee Board of the Foundation deemed it both fitting and proper to ask the friends of the Foundation to join them in this Founder's Day (Memorial) Banquet.

"We will use this occasion to thank the many friends of the Foundation for their financial and moral support and to answer questions that some of the friends of the Foundation are asking, will the home survive."

MAY 14 — Edgewood Elementary School No. 67 at 1900 Edgewood has its May Festival. Go, go, go for a delightful day.

MAY 17 — 50th Anniversary of New Shiloh in Turner Station where Rev. James A. Everett is pastor. The event is scheduled banquet at North Point Gardens.

MORE LETTERS—

League speaks on budget

Dear AFRO:

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization which believes in informed and active citizen participation in governmental issues.

Like citizens throughout the country, we are seriously concerned about inflation and unemployment.

We also realize that the Reagan administration's proposed budget and program reductions represent an attempt to solve our country's complex economic problems.

The League of Women Voters, however finds many of these cuts to be insensitive, myopic and unacceptable. Furthermore, we feel these proposals will neither make America stronger nor restore public confidence in government and its ability to solve our problems.

Backed by years of research, extensive grass-roots support and methodical non-partisan evolution of our positions, the League is well equipped to analyze and criticize budget cuts in the area of human needs, urban needs, natural resources and energy, and in international economic development assistance.

Succinctly put, we feel that drastic reductions in these areas will have a proportionately profound negative effect upon the disadvantaged - mostly needy minorities, women, senior citizens and the disabled, of our country.

Furthermore, we fear that older American cities and towns, heavily dependent upon federal funds for their human need programs, economic development, transportation and energy-related programs, would experience tremendous and quite possibly devastating losses.

When considering the impact these sweeping cuts would have upon Baltimore, in particular, their acceptance becomes even more impossible. The Reagan administration is considering eliminating funds for such programs as food stamps, AFDC and CETA as well as consolidating about 40 social service programs into a single block grant.

Such action would intensify the hardships many Baltimore city families face as so many of them depend upon income maintenance and social welfare programs.

Simultaneously, cutbacks in CETA funding will adversely affect vocational training and employment opportunities presently existing in our city. Wanting our city to continue to experience its healthy Renaissance, we also disapprove of budget reductions in areas of economic development administration, urban rehabilitation and mass transportation.

The League does support some budget cutting and recognizes the need for changes in our governmental spending patterns. Like concerned citizens everywhere, we too are seriously concerned about bureaucratic waste.

However, we believe these reductions should be less drastic in vital areas of human need and better balanced among other budgeted items.

The Reagan administration proposals do not set forth a period of belt tightening shared by all, after which America can again grow and prosper at all levels of our society.

Letters to members of Congress can help prevent approval of the many drastic and unwise facets of the Reagan administration budget.

Hopefully, before it is too late, concerned citizens will "take action" to preserve those programs which preserve vital human, urban and environmental needs.

JUDY SCHIFFER
President
The Baltimore City
League of Women Voters

—Congress failed

(Continued from Page 4)

proposed for primary and secondary education programs, guaranteed student loans, vocational education, and the National Endowment for the Arts and community service programs.

However, the House Budget Committee's add on to human resources programs still represents about an 18 percent cut in social progams.

Moreover, it should be noted that the Committee has accepted a majority of the administration's budget proposals. For example, in its out-year policy choices, the Committee has included, among other things, the elimination of social security minimum benefits in FY 1983; requirement of 20 weeks of work in order to qualify for unemployment compensation; reduction in the middle class "paid lunch" subsidy in the school lunch program by 50 percent in FY 1983 and elimination of the subsidy in FY 1984; and phase out of social security benefits beginning in FY 1982 with the total elimination of the benefits by FY 1987.

On another note, the Committee has also accepted the administration's proposed reductions for rural housing and Small Business Administration loans, and the elimination of the Home Ownership Assistance program.

In addition, House Congressional Resolution 115 does not alter the administration's proposed elimination of the CETA Public Service Employment component, nor does it take any position on the proposal to consolidate many of the education, social and community service programs into one block grant.

While there are other flaws in House Congressional Resolution 115, which confirms my opposition to this measure, let me just also add my disturbance with the Budget Committee's acceptance of the administration's proposals to reduce from twice each year to once a year the cost of living adjustment for retired federal employees.

This will be particularly painful for lower income elderly residents as the cost of other necessities continues to spiral. Too many of the Budget Committee's provision were just not in the best interest of the people.

The U.S. House of Representatives knuckled under to the pressure of the Reagan popularity and the intense lobbying of the White House operatives, but in so doing, it failed the people.

The Congress capitulated to special interest groups which possessed wealth and, thereby, abandoned the traditional Democratic programs which have helped so many of our citizens.

We can attempt to repair the damage done when the authorizing committees and the appropriations committee take up specific bills. However, for now we can safely say "This is the week the Congress failed the people."

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.