Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

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Boycott victory

Last Friday the Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN urged its readers and the community at large to either avoid the so-called International Theater Festival underway this week to join the picket lines thrown up by the Coalition in Support of the Liberation Struggles of Southern Africa (CSSA).

With few exceptions black Baltimoreans have responded and have stayed away from this lily-white cultural undertaking, sponsored by the city, because they could see clearly that no blacks were involved in any of the planning or implementation of the project.

The International Theater Festival is just the latest in an endless series of insults to the majority population of this city. It is just another example of the city's white minority sitting down in its lair of privilege and deciding what will be without any consideration, consultation or inclusion of black residents.

The Festival planners took this prevailing racist arrogance a step further and "praise be" it backfired on them.

The cultural elitists who conceived the festival did not know the wrath they would incur when they decided to include the South African drama group, the Baxter Theater, in their week-long program.

They did not know that increasing numbers of black Americans clearly see that the fate of millions of black South Africans **ground under** the apartheid boot of the Afrikaner colonialists directly relates to the racist regime under which minority Americans must live here at home.

Johannesburg, Soweto are not all that different from depressed sections of Baltimore, Manhattan, Detroit and other large U.S. cities where countless blacks are forced to live in ghettos.

To extend arms of welcome in the name of the predominantly black city of Baltimore to a theater group sanctioned by the racist government of South Africa is to show just how insensitive the white elitist class is to the concerns of the majority population.

CSSA was ready and waiting. They organized an effective protest, called for a boycott of the Festival, a position we strongly supported, and mounted so much public pressure that the two black South African actors in the Baxter Theater production refused to go on stage. Their position was correct. They were not about to compound this insult to their black American brothers by trodding the boards.

This action alone ensured that the CSSA boycott was a victory for black activists.

In a related development the City Council, after a week of acrimonious debate on the issue, finally and almost unanimously voted approval of a resolution sponsored by Councilmen Rawlings and Mfume which said in summary that the city of Baltimore would not traffic with South Africa so long as it maintained a policy of racial apartheid.

The mood of black Baltimore must not be misjudged.

In boycotting the festival, in pushing through the City Council condemnation of racism wherever it flourished and the Wednesday picketing of City Hall by the Coalition in protest of a South African bureaucrat dallying with administration officials the message gets louder, clearer.

Unless black Baltimore is consulted on what happens in Baltimore, unless black concerns become the prevailing concerns of this city, then there are now enough politically sophisticated, deeply committed members of our community willing to fight to see that a racist white minority no longer does what it damn well pleases in this town.

The mis-named, ill-conceived International Theater Festival was impacted by a determined group of black freedom fighters.

The CSSA boycott was a victory.

Notice is served on the arrogant white decision makers that their arbitrary and willful disregard of black Baltimore will no longer be tolerated nor will the shuffling and Tomming tactics of those few blacks who chose to be running dogs for these colonialists be suffered gladly any longer.

The festival boycott is just a portent of things to come unless changes come quickly.

COMMENTARY BY G. JAMES FLEMING

Heroin: big business, big politics!

Two weeks ago this column reminded the black community that it was up to all of us to "face up" to what drugs and drug addiction are doing to black young people, especially our young men.

I said that the black family and the rest of the black community had to "do something" because we are in a state of crisis and emergency—present and impending disaster no less than if struck by hurricane, earthquake and flood at one and the same time.

I know, however, that the selling and buying of all kinds of deleterious drugs goes much farther than the pusher; certainly much farther than the hapless youth who is brought into criminal court.

We are not so naive as to think that even killing a pusher or two will put an end to the traffic in drugs, from coast to coast and extending even to the islands of the sea.

The drug traffic is big business and it is big politics—local, state, national and international politics. It has been said before, but it is worth saying again, that there could be no drugs being sold, rather freely, if some powerful people in very high places were not winking at such traffic, or profiting from the same.

It is very difficult for the man-on-the-street to believe or understand, that his nation—a "super power" — has been powerless all these years to break the back of the commerce which everyday unloads soft- and hard drugs into the United States by boat and by air, and worth millions of dollars.

Neither can this same man-on-the-street understand why the real giants of the drug business can operate so shamelessly and successfully, despite the U.S. Coast Guard and the Navy, despite the Border Patrols, despite the Drug and Narcotics Service, and despite the FBI.

On the state and local levels, the average citizen also believes that similarly "very important people" are permitting the drug traffic to flourish, in exchange for political support or for more material reward.

It is hard to believe that the vast and costly American network of law enforcement, of men and machines, is so impotent!

Saddest of all is the fact that, nowhere, is any organized and sustained attack being made against the entrenched forces which control the shipping and distribution of drugs and the marketing of drug-promoting devices.

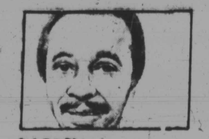
What black political organization (or politician) has put its political party "on the spot" in reference to the widespread and growing drug toll on young blacks?

What ministerial aggregation has declared war on members of their congregations and on the politicians who court their support, on behalf of cleaning up the conditions which are condemning our young people to disastrous futures?

When last has a group of black Congressmen or state legislators sought an audience with the president or a governor to demand that government unleash its many powers against the killers-by-drugs— both the mighty and their underlings?

Voters and their representatives must also fight such foreign policy practices as the United States may engage in, which permit "friendly" nations to export death-dealing narcotics to this country, in exchange for their promised support against the spread of communism.

Piddling non-essential matters are keeping black activists and their leaders busy—while most remain silent, or compromising, on perhaps the most important challenge to black people—how to save their young people from the death sentence of drugs.



PARREN MITCHELL

Voting Rights Act (Part 2)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Last week Congressman Mitchell began alerting AFRO readers to the need to mobilize to fight to retain all provisions of the landmark 1965 voting rights act passed by Congress in 1965.

In this second installment of his report, Mitchell examines the details of this freedom-giving legislation.

Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act applies to any state which has previously used a literacy test to discriminate against minority voters. These are: Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and half of North Carolina. Section 5 covers Alaska, Arizona, a part of New York City, and small parts of eleven other states from all sections of the country.

While our own state of Maryland is not included in Section 5 coverage, it is no secret that the seats of several minority legislators are threatened by the aforementioned types of voting or election procedural changes.

Obviously, Section 5 is aimed at a type of problem, and not at a particular state or region. It is designed to prevent backsliding by the states that had "their discriminatory literacy tests blocked by the original Voting Rights Act.

Needless to say, in order to avoid the use of substitute methods to discriminate in the face of the Section 4 literacy test ban, Section 5 is a safety, preventive device.

Along with your defense of the constitutionality and necessity for the Section 5 provision of the Voting Rights Act, please do not hesitate to respond with a decisive NO! When asked if this provision has been cumbersome or oppressive for the affected states. The pre-clearance procedure is simple.

In brief, your explanation of the pre-clearance provisions and government action should focus on the following breakdown: When an affected state is planning a change in its election or voting procedures, it submits such a change, by mail, to the Justice Department or the U.S. District Court.

The change is accompanied by certain required information necessary to allow the Department (or Court) to evaluate the proposed change. (Even the most conservative persons who have appeared before the House Judiciary Committee during Voting Rights Act extension hearings have admitted that it does not work a hardship or burden on affected areas to provide this information.)

When the submission and accompanying information are in, the Department (or court) has only 60 days in which to decide, although it can extend that 60-day period once if it believes that more information is needed.

Specifically, the submitting jurisdiction is guaranteed a decision in a maximum of four months. No travel is required, nor are there any required hearings or presentation of witnesses. In many cases, the initial submission is the only contact between the submitting jurisdiction and the Justice Department.

In other cases, there are letters or telephone calls between the Department (or Court) and the submitting jurisdiction all within the 60 or 120 days.

Failure by the Justice Department to act within the 60 or 120 day period renders the submission automatically free from the Voting Rights Act (Section 5).

Moreover, any comparison of the minimal cost involved in this procedure, versus the burdens to states if individual legal actions were substituted will substantiate the cost effectiveness of the Justice Department intervention.

It is critical that you organize very early to ensure that Congress extends the Voting Rights Act provisions which will expire next year. The percentage of minority elected officials remains disproportionately low throughout this nation.

Moreover, as we all know, the old tricks involved in redistricting, re-registering, and annexing to hide purposeful attempts to dilute minority voting power have certainly not disappeared.

Start NOW to contact all members of Congress to urge them to support the Rodino - Mathias measure to extend the Voting Rights Act!

MADELINE MURPHY

I remember Pop

I suppose in a small town, it was easier for a father, who was a school teacher to have more time to devote to his children.

Every day after school in the late spring and early summer, we have our father at home to teach us about planting, about that special exhilaration of the first radish leaf, or the "hummers," the name he would give to the bugs that zoomed, and flitted around our back yard.

We would sit on clear summer evenings to get the "sea breeze from the gutter to gate at the big and little dippers, the Milky Way, Orion and the evening star, while we would greet the mixed groups of Italians, Jews, blacks and Cheswold Indians as they would stroll back and forth up the hill to the park or the reservoir, or who would stop to chat.

Yet to disabuse you of the idea that I thought these were the best of times, we did indeed have neighbors, whose single parents, worked in the WPA sewing project, or whose fathers now unemployed, ran the numbers to make a living for their families.

But all in all, there was a peaceful and loving atmosphere to our neighborhood. Everyone knew each other, watched over each other, where locks on doors usually malfunctioned more often than not and no one used them anyway.

However, this piece about fathers especially and what we saw as kids was the active participation of fathers in the social lives of their children.

If there was a dance, they would be the chaperones. If there was a teenage party in the home, his friends and their wives had a party not too far away in the dining room, or kitchen where they could keep an eye on us, inquiring from time to time about stragglers on the sun porch, in the yard, or on the steps.

They'd even come in and dance, so that a continuity of generations was an accepted fact; not a gap. No unruly boys lasted for a minute in these surroundings; for my Pop was known to threaten a thrashing if they didn't behave. Looking back it was this sense of boundaries that made us feel secure.

He taught all the kids in the neighborhood to swim and many were the summer afternoons when more than fourteen of us piled into his car for an afternoon at the swimming pool.

But what was most poignant about my relationship with Pop was the first year I was married, living at home, while my husband was in the service. The greatest gift he thought he could give me was a night at the circus in the BOX SEATS. (Heretofore we had sat in the bleachers on hot dusty summer afternoons; this was luxury).

He knew how petrified I had been of heights all those years when we had climbed to get a better view at the top. In fact, I had to be carried down because I was so afraid of falling through the cracks, or was still mesmerized by the nightmare of the night before, where I had been devoured by a lion under the bleachers.

(How he would have hated the demise of the Big Top!).

Dates were in groups with boys whose parents he knew and then curfew was at eleven. He was there to enforce it when we returned. I cannot remember a night out that he wasn't sitting in his favorite chair when I opened the door.

His reputation in the town was far flung. One boy who came to call when he was out, was so petrified that he sat by the door with his coat in his lap waiting for Pop to return, knowing he'd demand that the boy leave! (He didn't, however, which surprised us all.

Later, if the boy had a car, he had to ring the bell and ask for me before I could go out. Heaven forbid if he honked his horn!

Pinochle was his favorite card game and he would often make up the fourth. But gin rummy came next and while I waited for my first child to be born, we had a running nightly game up until the night before. Then, even though the hospital was across the street, he drove me over and waited for his grandson to be born.

It is at the time of Father's Day that I remember so many of the wonderful moments with Pop: running around the track at the stadium every Sunday morning; learning to like lobster at his favorite seafood house in Philly; seeing the tears in his eyes when I married, not wanting to let go; listening to the opera every Saturday afternoon; goading him to talk about his youth and his college exploits; hearing the post mortems with the coach about the high school football games; watching him play the piano—only on the black keys—and making us march when we were children up and down the living room into the dining room out to the kitchen. (HE only knew college and martial tunes!).

And Christmas, especially the year he got the alcohol steam engine we thought was the most marvelous invention. We would line up the dining room charts to simulate a train and imagine long exciting trips as he'd call out the stations, while we made choo-choo sounds. Rides through the country, the fireworks on the fourth of July.

But always the support and the sense of security and confidence, I felt knowing he was there when I needed him.

Yes, maybe they were the good ole days, and maybe that part of them should return today, if we really are concerned about the stability of the family. Because nothing can replace the strength and sensitivity of a doting father.

LETTERS

Supports Parkington tenants

Dear AFRO:

This letter is in response to a letter published in your paper (Letters, 6-5-81). It stated the unfair treatment the tenants of the Parkington Apartments received when they had their day in court.

We at the Hilton Village Apartments have compassion for the tenants there, because we find ourselves in a similar situation.

At present, we have not gone the route of the courts.

We are still working within the framework of what's available to us, by means of building inspections etc.

When things like these are allowed to continue, we as tenants wonder why the courts are so lenient with those landlords, especially when they themselves are familiar with the plight of the complex dweller.

When the laws and justice are as one-sided as this as far as decent living conditions are concerned, we begin to wonder where do we go for help when we find ourselves in a given situation.

We here empathize with Parkington tenants and pray that your tenant association continues to strive for decent living conditions there.

It has been called to the public's attention in a most efficient way the need for decent housing for many people in the city of Baltimore.

Yet landlords for most part take advantage of many tenants in the same manner as what's happening at Parkington.

When applying for an apartment, we are checked for job references, credit references etc.

Yet there is absolutely no way to my knowledge that we can find out beforehand what type of landlord we are getting.

If there is a way, it escapes me. If efforts have been made to this effect, then I apologize. Many tenants find themselves in those unwholesome living conditions and there seems to be no escape. For some reason over which many of us have no control we find ourselves trapped in a prison without walls.

Again, I ask what are we to do? Where are we to go from here? We as tenants must find a way to unlock these doors and escape the unfair practices of the landlords.

After reading in the AFRO the article concerning the plight of the residents of the Parkington Apartments, I had to let them know that we do sympathize with them.

MRS. NANCY HOLMES BAXTER,
Former Secretary
Hilton Village Tenant Association

Delegate Dixon's foresight

Dear AFRO:

There has been a lot of favorable publicity in the daily press concerning the passage of a bill in the Maryland Legislature prohibiting membership fees on credit cards.

The articles failed to give the name of the sponsors of this bill. Several years ago, Del. Isaiah (Ike) Dixon, Jr. (D. 38) foresaw the possibility of banks and other financial institutions charging credit card holders a membership fee and sponsored bills to prohibit this charge.

Delegate Dixon was also a sponsor of H. B. 27 which passed this session prohibiting these fees.

The banks fought long and hard against this bill; but, in the last days of the session, the bill passed overwhelmingly.

Delegate Dixon's accomplishment should not go unnoticed.

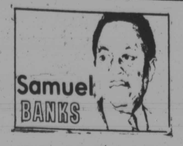
ALAN T. FELL
Commissioner of
Consumer Credit

Douglass High thanks us

Dear AFRO:

The Frederick Douglass High School Alumni Association wishes to extend to you a big "thank you". The reunion of all reunions was a success. All members and helping hands send a big "thank you"; because in so many ways, you did it again for us.

TWILAH M. SCARBOROUGH



Samuel BANKS

Billy Graham post mortem

The Rev. Billy Graham Crusade has come to Baltimore and gone, but the ponderous and vexatious socio-economic problems, rigid racial balkanization and crisis of the spirit remain.

It is highly unlikely, given the current and deep-seated racial and class cleavages that separate blacks and whites in Baltimore, that the minority white population will seek to know and accord the majority black population equality of treatment as suggested by Billy Graham.

It, too, is unfortunate, in view of the media pronouncements that Rev. Graham had agreed to come to Baltimore, after a previous declination, because of the glowing reports that he had received germane to Baltimore's excellent racial amity and goodwill and economic progress.

This "confidential" information was allegedly given to him by a local committee of ministers. It represents, in reality, arrant and unmitigated nonsense. Then, too, it indicates that the local committee of ministers, if they provided the "glowing" report on socio-economic conditions in Baltimore, are woefully out of touch with socio-racial realities of Baltimore.

While it was encouraging to have Rev. Graham come to Baltimore to proclaim the "good news," it would have been more reassuring and inspirational to hear Rev. Graham discuss and take an unequivocal stand on the socio-racial inequities which divide Baltimoreans and citizens throughout the nation.

Regrettably, the evangelical track record of Rev. Graham does not support a demonstrable stance against racism, sexism and religious bigotry. The Baltimore Crusade did not offer palpable evidence that he would become more active and involved in the continuing struggle to rid our nation of racism, sexism and religious bigotry.

Baltimore, with its ancient racial dichotomization, growing Klan activity in and around the city, exclusion of the black majority from the socio-economic mainstream of the city and a profound crisis of the spirit, represented a most propitious place for Rev. Graham to become a "doer of good works" rather than simply an exhorter or proclaimer.

In this way, I believe, for the excluded, wretched and despised blacks and poor whites in Baltimore, Rev. Graham would have provided contemporary meaning and vitality to the high calling read by Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has annointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (i.e., Luke 3:18-19).

The Rev. Mr. Graham and his polished and adroit ecclesiastical entourage have come and gone, but very little, including the enormous malaise and crisis of the spirit, has changed for the better.

Monumental City remains rife with socio-economic and political problems; Detroit and Baltimore have the ignominious distinction of leading the nation in youth unemployment; city officials have lent their support to an International Theater Festival, including the desegregated Baxter Theater troupe from the racist, apartheid Republic of South Africa, without any direct involvement of the majority Black population; well over a third of the 450,000 black residents are confined to substandard and deplorable housing; "warehousing" and overcrowding continue in the city's and state's penal institutions; the Argentine "Libertad" vessel is welcomed to Baltimore in spite of the well-publicized record of bestial treatment of Jews by Argentina.

These issues, among others, indicate an urgent need for a contemporary theology of liberation, hope and survival. Rev. Graham has come and gone, but human uplift, jobs for the jobless and human possibilities need to be affirmed and implemented.

In terms of a clear and present local dimension, the blatant and colossal inequity, spiritual and secular, of a minority "dictating to" a majority in Baltimore must be corrected if social justice is to prevail.

Again, as I suggested in my last column, the black middle and upper income groups, abject, passive and pusillanimous at present, must some how summon the strength and will to lead; to take charge.

The inimitable Frederick Douglass set a direction over 124 years ago in a impassioned speech in New York that has compelling pertinence:

"Let me give you a word of the philosophy of reform. The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims have been born of earnest struggle.

"The conflict has been exciting, agitating, all-absorbing, and for the time being putting all other tumults to silence. It must do this or it does nothing.

"If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation are men who want crops without thunder and lightning.

"They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and phusical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing with a demand. It never did and it never will.

"Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both.

"The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress."

The Rev. Mr. Graham has come to Baltimore and gone, but the awful socio-economic and political struggle continues. Baltimore still awaits a loving, caring and humane application of the "good news."

Tony Brown's Journal

How blacks ambush blacks

In part I of this two part series I described how Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS) restored Title III funds which are the second largest source of funding for black colleges. The funds had fallen under a senate committee's budget ax but restored when it was learned that the president had issued a written statement, last September, explaining his commitment to black colleges.

My praise for this cunning maneuver went to Mel Bradley, the highest ranking black in the White House. However, Bradley was the recent victim of a Washington Post reporter who is black. I was critical of the way Dorothy Gilliam described his role in this matter and how her reporting demonstrated a loose regard for the facts.

Coiled in pretended innocence, "Ms. Black" turned the knife slowly: "Along with a small group of other reporters, I met recently with Bradley to try to measure his influence. Bradley seemed unable or unwilling to tell us anything he has done that has made much of a difference."

And then, true to form, she lurched: "If Bradley is helping make policy, it is hard to see where."

She then pulled out her old bogeyman theme: "Social unrest." She suggested a long hot summer as the logical conclusion to budget cuts; a few weeks ago she wondered about a student fire next time when Howard University's president James Cheek invited Vice President George Bush as the commencement speaker. Of course, that never materialized. And if there is social unrest because of budget cuts, how does Gilliam account for riots when the budget was being increased?

Gilliam's last cheap shot was Bradley's office location. She measures his influence by yards and feet from President Reagan. One cannot help but wonder if she would fail as an editor at The Post because her office wasn't close enough to Publisher Donald Graham's.

But to know the truth of the matter is to compare the article written about the same dinner meeting by Barbara Reynolds of The Chicago Tribune. "Instead of focusing on civil rights, the Reagan administration intends to aid the nation's blacks by fostering minority business and easing unemployment, Mel Bradley, the highest ranking black in the White House, said.

"We will aid black America by putting people to work and making them self-reliant,' Bradley told the Tribune.

"The administration has been harshly criticized by black leaders who fear Congress will cut back on fair housing, voting rights, and equal employment guarantees.

"Answering this criticism, Bradley stressed Reagan's commitment to fair employment practices.

"There will be no turning back of the clock on this,' he said."

Reynolds went on to report that Bradley said that Reagan was moving to increase federal dollars going to minorities and the retention of a threatened minority set-aside program. Bradley was also quoted as saying that blacks would be appointed as deputy directors of the program.

In a story based on the same meeting, Dorothy Gilliam could only report half-truths and her personal biases. She forbids reality to invade her sacrosanct black worldview. Her own beliefs and personal prejudices expressed themselves as a denial of what are obviously reportable facts.

And if Bradley has no power, why is Gilliam seeking him out for dinner and reporting on his mindset, a mentality and a political ideology that she obviously abhors. Moreover, in spite of her misgivings, Bradley is wielding power.

Jet magazine Washington Bureau Chief Simeon Booker reported during the same week: "Give White House aide Mel Bradley credit for leading the fight to save the 8-A program in federal contracts. Insiders say that the senior policy adviser discouraged the Reagan people from wiping out the minority enterprise program. . . ."

But Gilliam said: "If Bradley is helping to make policy, it is hard to see where." Granted the media has a liberal can't, but Gilliam seems to over work it.

Could it be that she has lost a grip on both her role as a black and as a journalist?

Her posture is to glare accusingly at other blacks and sanctimoniously preach from her typewriter at The Post where she receives a healthy bi-weekly stipend. While proclaiming her virtue — a dubious one derived from her ability to use a white establishment power base in a tenuous coalition — she denigrates and ter orizes her own people.

Many blacks in D.C. are afraid of the editorial dangers of crossing her. The security of her hegemony, however, goes to the extent to which the Post "stands by" her. In the meantime she flagellates her prey: "...many blacks appear to have forgotten what 'the struggle' was all about."

Since she is sitting in judgment of other blacks, one might ask by what authority. What has this well-off middle-class employee of one of the nation's most powerful white newspapers done to earn her lofty status as a black-leader ideologue?

What movement has she led? What demonstration did she plan? What chances has she taken? How many lawsuits has she filed to get other blacks into the broadcast or print media?

To my knowledge, Dorothy Gilliam's total contribution to the black cause is a combination of inaction and verbal and grammatical salvos at other blacks who speak up and take the chances. At best she is only adequate at biased second guessing.

She has structured a situation that makes her a part of a black cause, but with no obligation to further it, just to destroy those who want to.

Washington Post Co Chairman Katerine Graham and Washington Post Publisher Donald Graham revealed a variety of corrective actions in response to Janet Cooke's fabricated story of a young black heroin addict. The Post plans to make contributions to D.C. organizations that work on drug-related problems.

But there is an editorial narcotic dispensed only by blacks on The Post, namely, Dorothy Gilliam and Herb Denton. Is The Post going to do anything about this kind of dope that kills the soul and mind first?

This specious intellectual genocide subjects blacks to a new bondage and the black journalistic overseers become manacles trying blacks to their own oppression.

Moreover, more is at stake here than blacks disagreeing with other blacks. Credibility is a newspaper's lifeline and in a city that is 70 percent black it must be faithfully served by the truth.

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL, the television series, is shown every Saturday beginning August 29, on WBAL-TV 11 at 2:00 p.m.

By Elizabeth M. Oliver
City Editor

THE INTERNATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL has kicked up a lot of dust here. We do not need any such disturbance in these critical times. Evidently the uncalled - for events are the result of the sponsors failing to use careful planning. What a shame!

Here is a letter from Toni Prestbury which shows how the disaster of the whole thing is causing more and more disgrace. Just look at this:

DEAR EDITOR:

It is not pleasant to feel that you have been left out. This is how I feel about the Baltimore International Theater Festival.

I was born in Baltimore. I was born black. I am a part of Baltimore. We who are black comprise over fifty percent of the population of Baltimore.

Yet, as far as I know, we were not invited to participate in the planning of the festival. The Arena Players were not included.

I READ that Laura Simms, a Caucasian storyteller from New York was brought in and part of her program was described as, "the African story of Magoolie, where the whole audience joins me in a chorus of finger - snapping and song."

No feeling against Ms. Simms. But we have, in Baltimore a black storyteller of international renown.

Mary Carter Smith has been invited as storyteller to the University of Dijon in France, and to be a part of Festac in Nigeria, to name a few places she has appeared abroad.

SHE HAS been recognized by our own Mayor Schaefer with a citation telling of the good she has done in the Baltimore community as a storyteller.

When she appeared in the auditorium at the Baltimore Art Museum there was standing room only as those from tots to the elder listened attentively to her songs & stories from many lands, and joined her in some stories and songs that included the audience.

THESE ARE some of the reasons I feel that we have been left out of the Baltimore International Theater Festival.

Toni Prestbury
483-5617

HERE IS SOMEONE you should meet and get to know better. YAHYA B. A. MUHAMMAD, leader of the Muslim faith. Located at the 516 Wilson St. Masjid, he is a delightful personality.

YAHYA MUHAMMAD, age 43, was born in Abbeyville, S.C to a family of five. His family moved to Newark, N.J. six years after his birth. He grew up in Newark attending elementary, junior high and Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts.

After completing his school years he was given a position with General Motors Corporation.

He was one who constantly searched for religious understanding. You would find him often talking with older people, especially his grandmother about their understanding about God and religion. Even though he came from a family whose religious background was Baptist, he visited churches of all denominations, searching for the one concept or way of life that really fit his nature.

One day he was told by an aunt and a cousin to visit Muhammad's Temple of Islam (as our houses of worship were then called). This was the turning point in his life, at last he had been blessed to find the faith that he'd been looking for.

He accepted the Al'Islamic concept as the very first He accepted the Al'Islamic concept at the very first meeting that he attended. Studying the religion with vigor and enthusiasm he moved up in responsibility very fast.

At the young age of 24 he was appointed to the position of Captain of the Newark Masjid, which made him the youngest person to hold such a responsible position in one of the largest Masjid in the country. He served in that capacity for more than a decade. During his service there he was instrumental in helping to establish many other Masjid, from Patterson to Asbury Park, N.J.

IN 1975 he was asked to transfer from Newark to Baltimore and assume the same duties here. Shortly after relocating to Baltimore he was appointed southeastern regional consultant to the Supreme Captain, a position which covers Maryland to North Carolina. His responsibilities were helping the members in this region with reorganization and propagation of Al'Islam.

He holds a broker's license in Insurance and a Real Estate saleman's license.

He is a family man, the husband of Azizah K. Muhammad and the father of seven children.

HIS GREATEST area of concern is bowed with churches and community groups in uplifting fallen humanity to a place of dignity and responsibility.

THE BALTIMORE Regional Chapter of the American Red Cross is offering free introduction to sign language courses for adults and children. The courses, sponsored by Youth Services, teach survival sign language and basic deaf awareness.

Adult classes for those 12 years of age and older will meet Wednesday evenings, 7:00- 9:00 p.m., from July 8 through August 16. Children will meet on Saturday mornings, 10:00 a.m. to Noon, from July 11 through August 8.

The courses, taught by trained Red Cross volunteers, are free of charge and do not require a text. All those interested should register by June 28, 1981. For additional information and registration, call Youth Services at 467 - 9905, ext. 306.

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.

From a little boy

Please love me Daddy
I am you
By the hand of God, I was created in your loins
Please love me
Don't stay away too long, Daddy
I'm sorry to cost you so much money
I'd eat less and wear old shoes
You don't even have to buy me a Christmas gift
But please, Daddy, love me
Every time I see Granny, she tells me how much I look and act like you
Do I Daddy, do you think so?
Oh, I'd like to be so much like you when I grow up
Black and tall and strong
You can play all the sports
You drive that big, pretty car
And you seem to have so many girlfriends
Even Mommy still likes you
There's only one thing about you that I would change
I'd love and cherish every little boy and girl I had
I'd come and see them
I'd talk to them and take them out
But most of all.....most of all
Every time I see boys, I'd tell them how much I love them
I'd love my little girls and boys just like I love you, Daddy
Please love me, Daddy
I love you.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY
FOLAYAN

MCEA personnel note

Dear AFRO:

The Maryland Classified Employees Association (MCEA) must respond to your article in last Friday's AFRO concerning the political maneuvers in the city's 41st Legislative District.

In that article, your reporter identified Nathaniel T. Oaks as an official of the M.C.E.A. To set the record straight, Mr. Oaks is no longer affiliated with the Association. During his tenure with M.C.E.A., Mr. Oaks was a paid staff member, not an elected official.

The Maryland Classified Employees Association respectfully requests that the AFRO correct this misinformation in your next publication.

JOSEPH ADLER
Acting Executive Director

Escalating hospital costs

Dear AFRO:

The rate of escalation in hospital costs continues to be a focus of public interest and concern. In Maryland the effort to hold down hospital costs predated most voluntary efforts.

The Maryland hospitals, under regulation by the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC), have managed to keep the increase in hospital costs in Maryland well below the national average every year since 1974.

The success is due to the cooperation of all parties involved: the Hospitals, Blue Cross, Medicare, Medicaid and other payors for hospital services. But more can be done! We, at the HSCRC, believe that the public can take a more active part in health cost containment by being informed consumers.

We are in the process of writing a "Consumer's Guide to Maryland Hospitals." However, we believe we can do a better job with public input. We would like to know what type of information members of the public believe would be of value to them when they require hospital services.

We have in mind preparing the guide in three parts:

1. Listing — hospitals' names, locations, telephone numbers and available services.

2. Charge information — including approved charges for services such as emergency room visits, clinic visits and daily hospital rates.

3. Diagnosis and procedure information — including average lengths of stay and average charges for common diagnoses and procedures.

We are also considering including information such as whether or not patients should expect separate bills for services provided by physicians selected by the hospital and whether those physicians accept payment in full directly from Medicare and Blue Shield.

These are samples of the information we expect to include. We hope AFRO readers will tell us what information would be of interest to them as potential patients.

Suggestions and comments should be mailed to:
Arlene Stephenson
Research Statistician Health Services Cost Review Commission
Consumer's Guide to Maryland Hospitals
First Floor - O'Conor Building
201 West Preston Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

ARLENE STEPHENSON

Move the money!

The Operation BUILD survey of local banking institutions and their collectively shameful records of refusing to grant home mortgages in predominantly black neighborhoods is one of the finest demonstrations of community service we have seen in many a day.

BUILD's indictment and exposure of racist banking practices is a commendable exercise in research.

Having brought out the statistics which clearly show the banking community's utter disregard for the aspirations of black would-be homeowners, BUILD is now engaged in discussions with several banks to persuade them to begin investing money in homeownership in black neighboorhoods.

We understand that BUILD is a coalition of area church groups who emphasize Christian love and understanding in the examination of socio-economic problems.

Just the same we quietly suggest that BUILD not waste an inordinate amount of time trying to get racist banking establishments to mend their ways.

We lean toward the counsel of black bank official Gaines Lansey who said the sure way to free up money for black home ownership is for black Baltimoreans to take their money out of racist banks and re-deposit them in the two black savings and loan associations now operating in our city.

"Move the money," says Lansey and we hope the BUILD leadership looks closely at this very pragmatic approach even as it tries to get white banks to make their mortgage policies more equitable.