Extension of the Voting Rights Act

The Voting Rights Act is one of the most important and effective civil rights laws ever passed by Congress. As a result of the act, hundreds of thousands of black and Hispanic Americans have been able to exercise the most precious of constitutional rights—the right to vote. Major provisions of the Voting Rights Act are scheduled to expire in August, 1982, unless Congress acts to extend them.

WHAT IS THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT?

The Voting Rights Act was enacted in 1965 and continued in 1970 and 1975 to protect constitutionally guaranteed voting rights which had been systematically denied blacks in the South. The Act also protects the voting rights of Hispanics and other language minority citizens against severe voting discrimination in other parts of the country.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ACT ON THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT NOW?

Key provisions of the Voting Rights Act are due to expire in August 1982 unless Congress votes to extend the Act. It is important for the House to complete action on the bill this year to ensure that there will be sufficient time for the difficult Senate fight.

WHAT ARE THE KEY PROVISIONS OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT?

The Voting Rights Act includes both permanent and temporary or "special" provisions. Among the permanent provisions is a nationwide ban on literacy tests. The most important temporary provisions are:

Section 5, which stops other means of discrimination, such as racial gerrymandering, changes from single member to at - large elections, and last minute shifts in polling places by requiring certain state and local governments — with a proven history of discrimination — to preclear any new changes in voting or election procedures with the Justice Department. Covered jurisdictions must show that proposed changes will not discriminate against minority voters;

Section 203, which requires certain state and local jurisdictions with a concentration of language minority population to provide assistance in other languages to voters who are not literate or fluent in English.

HOW DOES SECTION 5 PRE-CLEARANCE WORK?

A covered state or county which wants to put an election change into effect submits the change, along with background information, to the U.S. Justice Department. Within 60 days (or 120 days in special circumstances), the department responds by "pre-clearing" the changes or by "objecting" to them. If there is pre-clearance, the jurisdiction can implement the change; if there is an objection, the jurisdiction may not use the change.

In the covered parts of the country, any change in voting or election procedure, such as redistricting, annexation, re-registration requirements, polling place changes, new rules for candidate qualification, and any other election change must be pre-cleared under Section 5 to prevent new forms of voter discrimination from replacing those that have been outlawed.

WHERE DOES SECTION 5 APPLY?

Section 5 pre-clearance applies in any state or county in the nation where a literacy test was used to discriminate against minority voters. (The formula used by Congress to determine when a literacy test was used to discriminate was a less than 50 turnout of eligible voters for a presidential election.)

Section 5 covers Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and half of North Carolina. It also covers parts of New York City (including the Bronx) and parts of eleven other states from all sections of the country.

IF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT HAS BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL, WHY DO WE NEED TO EXTEND IT?

There is hard evidence that voter discrimination, though significantly lessened, has not been eradicated. Unlawful changes denying voting rights are still submitted to the Department of Justice with great frequency. In the past five years, 400 proposed changes have been objected to by the Justice Department—no fewer than in the preceding 5 year period. The Justice Department has objected to proposed changes in every state covered by the Act.

It is very difficult to ascertain when a certain jurisdiction is making a good faith effort not to discriminate. There is the danger that many counties and cities have simply been waiting to be excluded from the Act before enacting or announcing discriminatory changes. Objectionable practices in the covered states would likely multiply in the absence of the effective deterrent of Section likely multiply in the absence of the effective deterrent of Section 5.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT PREVENTING SERIOUS DISCRIMINATION BY OBJECTING TO CHANGES SUBMITTED UNDER SECTION 5, THE PRE-CLEARANCE SECTION OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT?

In many cases, Section 5 has been successful even where a law-suit under the 14th or 15th Amendment has been unsuccessful. For example, after an unsuccessful court suit, Section 5 blocked the use of discriminatory multi-member districts in the South Carolina House of Representatives. As a result, the number of black members went from three to thirteen.

In Richmond, Va. and San Antonio, Texas, efforts to maintain white control through annexation were stymied by Section 5. In each case, the annexation was allowed to go through, but the use of gerrymandered at-large elections was blocked. The result was the election of a substantial number of minority representatives in each city, because the votes of minority citizens were not diluted.

ISN'T SECTION 5 CUMBERSOME AND OPPRESSIVE FOR THE STATES COVERED BY IT?

No. The system established by which counties or states submit proposed voting changes to the Justice Department is extremely efficient, simple and speedy administrative procedure. An effective administration process such as the Justice Department's pre-clearance procedures minimizes costs to all parties involved and gets prompt, necessary action.

Even some some opponents of the Voting Rights Act agree that compliance with the pre-clearance provisions is not an onerous task. When weighed against the possibility of an infringement of citizens' fundamental right to vote, it is clear that the expeditious procedures for pre-clearance are well worth the minimal effort required.

SHOULD THE ACT BE APPLIED NATIONWIDE?

Important permanent provisions of the VRA already apply nationwide. The act already allows a court to require pre-clearance in any jurisdiction where serious racial discrimination in voting is proved. Section 5 applies in areas where the specific problems of discriminatory literacy tests and substitute forms of discrimination in voting show a proven history of discrimination.

Also, without a huge increase in the staff and funds of the Justice Department, the only result of nationwide expansion would be to cripple the ability to administer Section 5 at all. As opponents of the bill have admitted, extending pre-clearance nationwide would really be an effort to "love the bill to death."

Extension of Section 5 nationwide would also raise serious constitutional questions. The "substantial remedy" of pre-clearance was justified by the Supreme Court in certain areas of the country based on the "substantial harm" of discrimination that had occurred in those same areas in the past.

WOULDN'T IT BE FAIRER TO COVERED STATES, AND JUST AS EFFECTIVE, TO ABOLISH AUTOMATIC PRE - CLEARANCE AND PROVIDE A COURT REMEDY WHERE DISCRIMINATION EXISTS?

Case - by - case litigation has failed to prevent voting rights abuses in the past. The use of lawsuits and judicial machinery to protect voting rights was tried unsuccessfully from 1957 to 1965. Congress found, and the U.S. Supreme Court agreed, that the litigation process is simply too slow and too burdensome to right so grievous a wrong.

Numerous discriminatory practices would almost certainly be implemented before timely litigation could be concluded. It took 14 years of litigation to force the Mississippi legislature to abandon the discriminatory use of multi - member legislative districts.

HOW LONG SHOULD SECTION 5 BE CONTINUED?

There continues to be a clear and compelling need for pre-clearance. Since one of the most common discriminatory practices is racial gerrymandering, it is especially important that the Act be extended a full ten years so that it will cover redistricting changes that will follow the 1990 census. At that time, Congress will again hold hearings and establish a record upon which to judge whether key Voting Rights Act provisions are still necessary.

Senator Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.) joined by several Senate allies, has been waging a violent fight against anti civil rights amendments offered by Senators Jesse Helms (R - NC) and Bennett Johnson (D-La.) to the Department of Justice Authorization Bill.

The Helms Amendment, which would bar the Justice Department from participating in school desegregation cases, is an attack on the separation of powers and the executive's duty to enforce the law.

The Johnson Amendment, which would bar the courts from issuing certain school desegregation remedies, is an attack on the jurisdiction of federal courts and would open the flood gates to bills undermine the ability of the judiciary to protect constitutional rights.

In addition, the Johnson Amendment contains provisions which would allow existing courts orders "to be reopened" and permanently limit the ability of the Federal Courts to issue orders directly or indirectly requiring the transportation of public school students.

Because of the willingness of Sen. Weicker and his colleagues to engage "in extended debate," there have been no votes on these amendments and the Senate leadership has temporarily deferred further consideration of the matter.

Portrait of Dr. Cobb presented to NAACP

A portrait of Dr. W. Montague Cobb, president of the NAACP and a distinguished educator for the past half-century, was presented by CIBA-GEIGY Corporation to the NAACP on June 29 during that organization's national convention in Denver, Colo.

The portrait of Dr. Cobb was painted by noted black artist Ernest Crichlow for CIBA-GEIGY's Exceptional Black Scientists Poster Series.

A. M. MacKinnon, president of CIBA-GEIGY, presented the portrait to Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP.

Dr. Cobb is being honored in the 1981 black scientists poster series, which is distributed by CIBA-GEIGY to schools, colleges, libraries, civic organizations and other interested groups and individuals.

A member of the Howard University Medical School for 51 years, Dr. Cobb has trained and influenced more than 5,500 students and has written more than 700 published works

Traditional holiday schedule urged

Maryland should conform to the federal holiday schedule because celebrating national holidays on their traditional dates is costing the state thousands of dollars the speaker of the Maryland House said this week.

Benjamin Cardin D-Baltimore said "while I personally think Maryland is right in celebrating holidays on the traditional dates I think it would be in our best interests to go along with the federal government."

The states chief deputy treasurer Edwin Schamel told members of the Legislative Policy Committee that Maryland loses thousands of investment dollars bec ause it insists on defying the federal holiday schedule.

Schamel said when the state government remains open on a Monday as was the case last Memorial Day it is unable to make investments because the New York Stock Exchange is closed on federal holidays.

The state treasury then loses money a second time when it closes on a traditional holiday date while New York financial markets continue to do business Schamel said.

The deptuy treasurer said the Maryland state retirement system is hit even harder than his department by the holiday schedule. That agaceys investment portfolio of $2.5 billion is reportedly twice that of the state treasurys.

Schamel asked the legislators to take steps to remedy "this terrific problem" which he estimates costs the state "tens of thousands of dollars" each year.

Cardin who heads the Legislative Policy Committee said "Schamel is accurate. We are losing investment possibilities with out holiday policy."

"The split in holiday celebrations also hurts us in other ways. Many state employees are taking leave time on the federal holiday so they can be home with their spouse and family. That causes the state to lose two days of productivity instead ofo one" Cardin added.

Cardins committee ordered Schamel to prepare a detailed breakdown of the amount of money lost because of the states holiday policy which has been in effect since 1974.

But state senator Frederick MalkusD-Dorchester said he remains firm in his conviction that Maryland should not adopt the federal calendar for holidays such as Columbus Day and Washingtons burthday.

"Lets not forget the reason for these holidays. Thats paramount. I guess someday well-want to change Christmas" Malkus said.

(AFRO photo by Mark Gail)

CONTRIBUTOR — Serena Mills, a member of the Park Heights chapter of the American Cancer Society, shows off cookbook compiled by ACS volunteers which is now being sold. Ms. Mills proudly pointed out a favorite beverage recipe she had contributed to the book, and said that all the ideas within were "quite good." Book is on sale at ACS offices and from neighborhood ACS volunteers.

UDC receives saving award

An innovative cost-saving approach to new student orientation placed the University of the District of Columbia's University College among 29 winners in the sixth annual cost Reduction Incentive Awards Program, sponsored jointly by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO and the U.S. Steel Foundation.

Brailey asks for probe

Are city buses really that bad?

By James M. Abraham
AFRO Staff Writer

Two weeks ago in the midst of a torrential downpour a reporter gratefully climbed aboard an MTA bus expecting relief from the driving rain.

Imagine his surprise when upon taking his seat he found that he was still being rained on. An escape hatch in the roof of the bus apprently was loose allowing the rain to stream in. As the deluge grew stronger leaks appeared in the cracks around the windows and soon patrons were leaving those window seats tostand in the crowded aisle of the bus.

The air conditioning was broken the windows were steamed up and some boor in the back was busy puffing on a cigar.

Although the cigar was not the fault of the MTA at least the driver could have told the man to put it out. But really all of the above conditions did exist on that soggy bus ride which occurred only a week after the MTA announced that it would be increasing its fares.

But what are passengers to do? Although many of us may have complaints with the MTA who can patrons contact? Who is the MTA accountable to?

Apparently one city legislator has decided to take matters into his own hands.

Del. Troy Brailey D-4b has called for an investigation of the MTA by the legislative oversight committee which oversees the transit administration.

Although the investigation has fot actually begun the legislator said that the probe is contingent on theresults of a meeting he will be holding Monday with MTA officials.

The meeting was suggested by Brailey after he recieved complaints from several bus "drivers who claimed that they were being forced to operate vehicles with faulty tires and speedometers poor air conditioning systems and bad brakes.

Despite theccomplaints by the bus drivers Amalgamted Transit Union local 1300 head Charles Pettus has downplayed the charges and told the AFRO that the matter should be handled in-house as opposed to Brailey's actions.

Late city-ma-coop conference due here soon

Crosse invited to White House

By James M. Abraham
AFRO Staff Writer

There used to be a time during the B.R. (Before Reagan) period when invitations to the White House were common enough items among black community leaders and Democratic party regulars.

However with the ascension to power of the GOP invitations to Washington have been pretty hard to come by for this towns staunch Democratic black leadership.

But such is not thecase for Rev. St. George Crosse. The highly political minister who will be journeying to Washington next week became a GOP standard-bearer back when it wasnt popular and apparently is reaping the benefits of that move today.

Monday Crosse will be the lone Baltimore-area minister attending a special breifing session organized by the Reagan staff for Wasington-area clerical represenatives. The session which will be attended by more than 300 religious leaders and staffers is the administrations first attempt at selling President Reagans economic package to represnatives of various reglious denominations.

Crosse who left the Democratic fold in 1979 to make a bid for the city comptrollers office emerged as the most successful Republican canidate in town despite losing to incumbent Democrat Hyman Pressman.

According to a White House staffer the Monday meeting will consist of a

Speaking at the breifing will be several high-ranking Wgite House officials including Paul Craig Roberts Assitant Secretary of the Treasury; and Robert Carlson Special Assistant for Policy Development to President Reagan.

Crosse is in contention for a Caribbean ambassadorship but according to a White House official that was not a determing factor in his selection as a participant in the breifing.

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Sunday, 26 July 1981 2 to 5 P.M.
Baltimore Hilton Hotel —Francis Scott Key Banquet Room

A Check in the amount of $——— is enclosed for the Best of Stars-81 Awards Program
( ) Please reserve —— Table(s) for ten at $200.
( ) Please reserve —— Place(s) at $20 each.
( ) I (We) cannot attend but wish to contribute to the M.S.I.C. Legislative Intern Program

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Mail to: Maryland Special Inaugural Committee, Best of Stars-81
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OUR WORLD

★ PARTYLINE ★ PACESETTERS ★ PEOPLE

Baltimore Dance Theatre benefit held at Gatsby

BENEFIT FUN — Doing their disco steps to the Gatsby sounds during the benefit held Sunday, July 5, for the Baltimore Dance Theatre at The Gatsby from 9 p.m. until 2 a.m. are two lively partiers and Travis Winkey Models.

AFRO Photos by Roman Hankewycz

By Pattie Hodges
AFRO Womens Editor

The second 1981 fundraiser held to benefit the Baltimore Dance Theatre which is in need of $20000 for its dance tour to Japan this fall was hosted by the Urban Services Agency Sunday July5.

Held at The Gatsby 1800 block Charles St. the affair was indeed a treat for the many gathered there.

Featured were the Travis Winkey Modeling Company which aired short segment of fashions dramatically done by Winkey modelswith Crystal Clear as commentator.

Special highlight and real treat of the evening was the two dances performed by some of the members of the 15-members Baltimore Dance Theatre troupe.

Especially good was their "Percussion Dance" during which they not only danced but used percussion instruments with perfect rhythmn and gusto.

There was pin-drop silence as the dancers with precision and grace went through their paces. They received a standing ovation at the end of their performance.

The group is headed by Ms Eva Anderson who is also their choreographer.

In between performances of the Dance troupe and the modeling segment guests enjoyed cocktails lively conversation and much disco dancing during which they got to show off their own dancing talents.

The affair lasted form 9 p.m. until 2 a.m. Many spent the entire evening there — an evening well spent with

(Continued on Page 12)

BALTIMORE DANCE THEATRE — Eight members of the versatile and electrifying 15 member Baltimore Dance Theatre go through their paces. They performed at a benefit held for them at The Gatsby, 1800 block, Charles St., Sunday, July 5. The troupe, directed and choreographed by M's. Eva Anderson, will tour Japan during the fall. Pictured from (L) are Sharon Henderson, Elona Williams, Jonathan Jones (lead male dancer), Troy Byrd, Yvette Shipley, Towanda Robinson, Melvin Cooper and Marcia Miller.

ENJOYING THE ACTION are Bryant Scott and Miss Karen Scott.

COMING SOON!! Round-up of Clubs

Calling all clubs and organizations! Please send us at once a roster of your new officers a picture of your new president and a brief summary of your clubs last years activities.

It will be published in our AFRO-AMERICAN Anniversary Edition in August.

Dont delay. Deadline is July 30.

Mail information to: Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers 628 N. Eutaw St. Baltimore Md. 21201.

AND ITS FREE!

For further information call Pattie Hodges AFRO Womens Editor at 728-8200 Ext. 272.

Douglass High alumni mark 55th year

MR. AND MRS. MERTON KEYSER enjoy a turn around the floor during the Douglass High School Class of '26's 55th anniversary Dinner Dance held at La Fontaine Bleu, Saturday, June 27.

AFRO Photos by Mark Gail

Douglass High School Alumni Reunions abound in Charm City.

On Saturday, June 27, Douglass High School Class of '26 celebrated its 55th Anniversary with a Dinner Dance at Le Fontaine Bleu, more than 200 alumni and their guests.

J. Hiram Butler, the master of ceremonies set the tone for an enjoyable evening of dining and dancing.

Miss Nellie Buchanan a former teacher who was loved by all the classmates was present as was Dr. J. Clarence Chambers, of Puerto Rico.

Class members participatifg were: Mable Bates, Ella Brooks, Mildred Bryant, Audrey Burke, J. Hiram Butler, Rev. Joseph Carroll, Susie Carter, Myrtle DeCoursey, Osborn Dixon, Margaret Dorsey, Norman Edwards, Mary Gordon, Marguerite Haley, Electra Hall, Mason Hawkins, Lea Howard, George Johnson, Wilbert Johnson;

Also, Loretta Jones, Louise Jones, Alonzo Kelly, Beatrice Lancaster, William Mack, Gabriel Maddox, Charles Mitchner, Mildred Murphy, Milton Parker, Evelyn Payne, Marian Phillips, Marian Ransom, Carolyn Robinson, Frances Stafford, Laura Wheelton, Warren Wilkins and J. Clarence Chambers of Puerto Rico.

The Class '26 has contributed each year, a scholarship, to a deserving student and alumni members visit the various Nursing Homes with gifts for the patients.

On the committee for the reunion were: Carolyn Robinson, Chairman; Evelyn Payne, Co - Chairman; Audrey Burke, Gabriel Maddox, Alonzo Kelly, Warren Wilkens, Osborne Dixon and Mildred Bryant.

DOUGLASS HIGH CONVIVIALITY — Enjoying themselves heartily are (seated) Norman Edwards and Ms. Nellie Buchanan (former Douglass High teacher). Standing are Dr. Gwendolyn Cooke and Kathleen B. Newsome.

CLASS OF '26 ALUMNI from left are Gabriel Maddox, Audrey Burke, Alonzo Kelly, Carolyn Robinson (chairperson); Evelyn Payne, (co - chairperson), Osborne Dixon and Mildred Bryant.

Partyline

Many States represented at Moore-Hill Reunion

By Pattie Hodges
AFRO Women's Editor

It's 'Family Reunion' time again. On Sunday, July 5 the second family reunion of the Moore - Hill families was held at Martin's West from 3 until 7 p.m. Their theme was 'Love in Action.' Many states and several generations of both the Moore and Hill families were on hand for the celebration, with 200 attending

Following the cocktail hour (with open bar) toastmaster John Calvin Burton Jr. officially opened the festivities with a welcome and the blessing done by the Rev. Johnnie Carrington.

Family members and friends enjoyed a delicious fellowship dinner after which Mildred M. Mayo gave greetings. Recognition of family members was done by Sharon Burton.

Out - of - town family members were recognized, with those from North Carolina being done by Cora Hill, from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut by Bessie Davis and those from Maryland and other states by Doris Colburn.

Response to the family was given by Kearney Williams and the parting prayer by Arnettie Nichols. All sang 'Getting to Know You'.

It was a reunion filled with fellowship and high spirits for all.

Baltimore committee members were Mildred M. Mayo, Calvin Burton Jr., Evelyn D. Harlee, Ruth Johnson, Nancy Bryant, Doris Colburn, Sharon Burton, Deloris Wilson, William Moore Jr., and Marvin Battle.

Senior advisors were Arnettie Nichols and Rosa Burton.

White's silver anniv.

The setting was the beautiful - triangular lawn complete with floral decorations at the home of Paul and Joyce Jones, 4702 Post Road. Family members and friends had gathered on June 7 to celebrate the twenty - fifth wedding anniversary of William (Bill) and Shirley White, of Los Angeles, Cal. The affair was a delightful surprise for the couple.

(Continued on Page 10)

MOORE - HILL FAMILY MEMBERS pictured at the second annual family reunion of the Moore - Hill families held at Martin's West Sunday, July 5 are (front row, L to R): Mrs. Annettie Nichols and Mrs. Nancy Moore Sutton, matriach, age 93. Back row, (L to R); Willie Moore, Mrs. Elizabeth Williams and Early Moore.

AFRO Photo by Roman Hankewycz

JULY