Baltimore Afro-American

OPINION

founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1840-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City Inc. Carl Murphy (1889-1967) Editor-publisher (1922-1967).

Black History month

On Monday, Feb. 1, black history month begins.

President Reagan has issued a national proclamation denoting this. The annual observance formally begins when the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASAALH) has its traditional kickoff luncheon in the nation's capitol at the Hilton Hotel.

This year's black history month theme, as designated by ASAALH is "Afro-American History: Blueprint for Survival."

More than 500 are expected to attend the Washington luncheon to pay tribute to pioneer historian, Dr. Charles H. Wesley; Dr. Levi Watkins Jr., noted surgeon and Dr. Alrutheus Ambush Taylor, former ASAALH executive whose portrait will be presented.

Similar programs are sponsored in most communities throughout the nation under guidelines prepared by the ASAALH in Afro-American history kits distributed to schools, churches, community organizations and interested persons.

The observance was initiated by the "Father of Black History," Dr. Carter G. Woodson, in 1926.

For years, the celebration was one week in duration and always was the period in February each year that contained the birthdates of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

The period was lengthened to one month in 1976, the American bicentennial year, because of the growing demand by black citizens and others in developing ethnic history.

As part of its contribution to Black History Month, the Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN will publish many articles of historical significance as well as personalized first-hand accounts of great moments in black history as witnessed by AFRO writers past and present.

In addition, there will be a special section mid-February in all AFRO editions devoted exclusively to black history.

The history of black Americans from their beginnings in Africa and their subsequent struggles and triumphs in this land is a rich and stirring saga.

The more we know about our past, the more knowledge and courage we amass to deal with the present and future.

Let February be a time when all of us take time out to reflect on our history and to learn as much as we can about our heritage.

Drinking age limits

The General Assembly is faced with a no-win issue.

At what age should citizens be permitted to drink.

19? 19? 21?

Given the increasing number of alcohol related traffic fatalities, the urge is curb teenagers by making liquor harder for them to come by.

It is an emotional issue.

Young people say if they are eligible for the draft at 18 and thus are expected to die for their country in times of war if need be certainly are entitled to a drink.

The problem, we think, is not the age of a drinker but excessive drinking by citizens of all ages.

Sen. Cornell Dypski, D-Baltimore, said "the kids don't carry a bottle of milk to school anymore, they carry a six-pack."

On the other hand, Sen. Clarence Mitchell III, D-Baltimore, who favors keeping the present 18-year-old drinking law in effect says "it doesn't make sense to tell an 18-year-old he can own property and enter into contractual agreements then turn around and say he can't have a drink ... besides, the bulk of abuse is among older adults ..."

In a society as self-indulgent as ours is presently, we are of a mind that no legislation will curb a national tendency toward increased drug abuse. Alcohol, like cannabis (the marijuana plant), cocaine, amphetamines, or herion, is a drug. Until there is some massive modd of reformation about the problem of drug abuse raising the drinking age or adjusting it, is just applying a band-aid to a deep and grievous wound.

Bar association favors P.G. jurist Chasanow

Dear AFRO:

I sent the following letter to Governor Harry R. Hughes: Dear Governor Hughes:

In the coming decade, the tension between the rights and privileges of American citizens and the power of the State will intensify with continued escalation of serious problems in our society.

The next appointment you make to the Court of Appeals could serve to alleviate the serious ideological split on that court in the area of individual rights.

In view of the critical importance of your next appointment to the Court, we urge you to appoint the Honorable Howard S. Chasanow, Associate Judge of the Circuit Court for Prince George's County.

In his years as a prosecutor, as a private practitioner, on the District Court and on the Circuit Court, Judge Chasanow has shown the kind of sensitivity and respect for the human condition which has earned him high praise from all segments of the community.

This was reflected most recently in his selection, as the Circuit Court jurist most widely respected by the lawyers who practice in Prince George's County.

Known as a hardworking, scholarly, thorough and reliable jurist, Judge Chasanow has not limited his activities to the courtroom. Instead, he teaches at the University of Maryland School of Law and at various judicial educational seminars, and participates on numerous committees seeking to upgrade the judiciary.

Of the three outstanding candidates for this position, we feel he best exemplifies all of those qualities which will serve the Court of Appeals and the people of the State of Maryland for the years ahead.

The Monumental City Bar Association therefore urges you to select Judge Howard S. Chasanow for the most important seat on the Court of Appeals.

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS,
President

Letters

Did Reagan get cold feet?

Dear AFRO:

Remember in the old time movies when the cowboys would drive the cattle in blizzard conditions and Ronald Reagan, cowboy, would ride, exposed, 100 miles into the eye of the storm to rescue a calf?

In the 1982 version, the cowboy will not ride 42 miles in a chauffer driven limousine if a few drops of snow happen to be falling.

It always has amazed me that recent presidents have not recognized they had a microcosm of America in their own backyard — Baltimore. Baltimore should be an excellent proving ground for the firsthand sampling of "what is good for the nation."

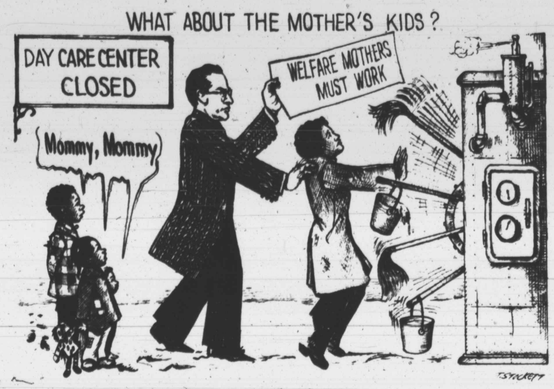
Baltimore is the "largest" industrial city to Washington, D.C. It has one of the country's largest industries - steel. It has a seaport, a large blue collar population, a large black inner city population and mostly, it has initiative and people who want to work.

But instead of seizing the opportunity to personally test the waters, our presidents would rather be armchair cowboys and direct the cattle to the riverbed, not knowing whether their programs (Urban Industrial Enterprise) are solid or whether we will, once again, be skating on thin ice.

Mr. Reagan should not worry about cold feet because after all, he is sitting pretty high in the saddle.

CAMAY MURPHY

WHAT ABOUT THE MOTHER'S KIDS?



MADELINE MURPHY

States Rights again?

Maryland has had more snow than it usually has over the length of what we call a hard winter. And February has yet to rear its ugly head.

Perhaps that Man upstairs is trying to tell us natural disasters show how mortal we are! Reagan take note:

You cannot explode an A-bomb, or send out the troops, the fleet, the CIA, or institute germ warfare to stop the havoc wreaked by that Siberian blast, science fiction and tinsel town solutions notwithstanding.

Speaking of the month of February, known in most black circles as Black History month, oddly the shortest month of the year, why is black history relegated to one month?

Shouldn't it be incorporated in the regular curriculum after all these years, or do the textbooks still gloss over blacks and devote a paragraph or half a page to slavery?

The facts about our most recent history in regard to the civil rights movement are indeed more germaine now more than ever before considering the fact Reagan is intent upon dismantling all the gains we have made in affirmative action, tax exempt status for private schools, whose main purpose is to get around school desegregation.

It is more important now for this generation to know about the struggle:

Who the players were, how they achieved what they did, why they felt it necessary to launch so many demonstrations, risking their lives, for it will be these strategies of the 60's that must be refined for the 80's, if we are to change the tide of the Reagan administration.

We older ones, not anesthetized by assimilation know racism lives and is well, not only in Baltimore, but throughout the country. It is especially alive and kicking in the White House.

Candidate Reagan was endorsed by the Ku Klux Klan.

Right now, with an attempt to turn back the clock to pre-Civil War days, in the areas of labor, education, health, welfare, it might be well to add man's inhumanity to man is resurfacing blatantly in the Reagan Administration.

Although unemployment is rising alarmingly in the blue collar and middle management jobs, even where seniority would have made a difference in better times for whites, will the young among us be able to build coalitions of people who are hurting across racial lines to make the difference for change?

Moreover, with the New Federalism for 1984 espoused in Reagan's State of the Union message, we must realize how important it should be to elect more responsive blacks to the legislature and city council, so an equitable distribution of funds might be assured, and will not depend upon the trickle down theory.

Let us fervently pray, however, New Federalism will be given a swift kick into the circular file.

Had it not been for federal intervention, blacks still would be unable to vote without strigent requirements, without an ability to recite the Constitution verbatim.

Without federal intervention where would we have been without Social Security?

Without intervention of the federal government, who could have escorted our children to school after the 1954 school desegregation triumph?

The list goes on and on.

What is happening in this radical change to States Rights is a return to the 19th century of laissez faire, social Darwinism — the survival of the fittest — open shops, child labor, no protection or fringe benefits and the destruction of hard won rights of unionism.

Trickle down also may be the philosophy of enterprize zones.

For all neighborhoods in the inner city are not ghettos and we should be wary of further deterioration of black residential neighborhoods as enterprise zones proliferate.

What about cheap labor without guarantees of fringe benefits, of exploitation that will continue to make the rich richer; poor poorer?

Will not this be a way, with such high unemployment among black youth, to make minimum wage in these shops inoperable?

Would it be better, also, to continue to support independent black businesses, where the money might be recycled more than once within the black community?

There is a hint of colonialism here that smacks of the kind of paternalism we as a group of people should have outgrown.

A recently released government study computed the cost of labor to be 19 cents out of every dollar made by the auto industry. The strategy now, however, after the unsuccessful strike and breaking of the of the air controller's union is to blame labor for the problems of the economy and in so doing avoid the evaluation of the role corporations, who develop inferior products with built in obsolescence to keep us coming back feeding their stuffed pockets without recourse.

The truly greedy have developed a whole new concept of federal welfarism for the rich and free enterprise for the poor, that everyone parrots as being the American democratic way.

You tell a lie long enough and it miraculously becomes the truth. Carter G. Woodson, in 1926.

But the multiplier affect of lost jobs, thus lost income taxes — lost revenue to the government to balance the budget — lost property taxes, lost reveune to businesses for ailing super markets, clothing stores, makes one realize Reaganism reminds one of the old movie, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington."

With impassioned rhetoric, with a naive belief in the "goodness" of the American people, the hunger, the loss of homes, of dignity of everything the Bill of Rights promises, President Reagan fantasizes suffering people will wait for Reaganomics to work.

With budget cuts in the name of supply side econimics, in grants in aid for college students there also will be fewer scientists, mathematicians and other skilled personnel, who will be needed just to cope with dismantling all these programs that Reagan vows he will turn over to the states.

It is a bit short sighted, with the hawkish view Reagan has of the Soviets, to cut off a whole new generation of researchers, engineers, doctors, teachers, who will not be able to develop his dream of a sophisticated defense machinery.

Nevertheless, there may be hope.

After this recent recess of Congress, when the Congressmen went home, pressed the flesh, and answered the demands of irate constituents, maybe they will not be so willing to continue opportunistically to rubberstamp any more budget cuts affecting the people.

Then, too, it is an election year. Most are vulnerable.

So our role is to keep up the pressure, keep those cards and letters flowing to Washington, to make sure they vote, this time, our way.

For we cannot afford both guns and butter, and butter comes first, now that we have seen a year's affect on the lives of Americans of inhumane Reaganomics.

PARREN J. MITCHELL

Blacks and nuclear holocaust

I recently have become deeply involved in the Maryland Campaign For a Nuclear Weapons Freeze.

Some of my friends have told me that, at a time when black unemployment has us on the rack; at a time of resurgent racism; and at a time of federal abandonment of the cause of black people:

I should not dilute my efforts by becoming a part of the cam paign to put a freeze on the research and development of nuclear bombs.

My answer to them is, "if we had full employment, an end of racism and the full support of the federal government, it would mean nothing to us if a nuclear bomb destroyed us."

Cities where blacks, the poor, and minorities are concentrated, remain the chief targets of nuclear bombs. Let me spell out for you the grisly, terrifying scenario which would follow if a nuclear bomb were dropped on Baltimore's port area.

Dr. Helen Caldicott describes what would happen:

"A 20 megaton bomb explodes with the heat of the sun. It carves a crater about half a mile wide and 300 feet deep. Everything in that volume is converted to radioactive fallout.

"Every human being within a radius of six miles from ground zero will be vaporized, as will most buildings. Concrete and steel will melt. What is left of the buildings will be lying in what is left of the streets.

"Most hospitals will be destroyed: most medical personnel dead or injured. Out of a radius of 20 miles, most people will either be dead or injured.

"There will be tens of thousands of severe burn victims, but there only are enough facilities for 2,000 acute burn victims in the whole United States.

"There will be injuries such as compound fractures, ruptured lungs, and internal hemorrhages due to the overpressure and blast. People standing 30 to 45 miles away, who happen to glance at the blast, would instantly be blinded, since the flash burns retinas.

"The blast will create a fire storm of 3,000 square miles, in which everything will spontaneously ignite. This would create a holocaust fanned by hurricane force winds.

"People in fallout shelters will be pressure cooked and or asphyxiated as the fire uses up all the oxygen."

In one of its hand out sheets, the Maryland Campaign for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze describes the effect on Baltimore if one megaton bomb - not a 20 megaton bomb - is exploded above Mt. Vernon.

"Assuming that a 1-mgaton (medium sized) warhead is exploded above Mt. Vernon — Charles and Monument Streets - -

"Within circle 'a' — One and one half miles from ground zero, all reinforced concrete buildings would be destroyed by 500 mph winds and 20 pounds per square inch (PSI) blast pressure.

"Within circle 'b' — Three miles from ground zero, stone and concrete buildings would be destroyed. Exposed people would either be killed or critically burned.

"Circle 'c' — four miles from ground zero, brick and wood houses destroyed, exposed people seriously burned.

"Circle 'd' — five miles from ground zero, all combustible materials would ignite spontaneously. Entire area burned out.

"Circle 'e' — six miles ... third-degree burns (blistering) of all exposed skin."

Even as horrible is the fate of those who somehow or another manage to survive. They would be walking monsters and their children and children's children would bear physical damage to their gene structure with mutations and incurable diseases resulting.

This should not be our fate. I do not want us to be at the mercy of a madman who might just push the button to initiate a nuclear war.

I urge you to please contact theMaryland Campaign For a Nuclear Weapons Freeze, 2702 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, Md 21218, 366-3758.

Black leaders face tough task in battling Reagan conservatism

By Anthony Powell

Many black leaders have failed to realize that the conservative wave that hit this country last year, sweeping former President Jimmy Carter and other liberals out of office, is fully in power and there is no game plan to offer an alternative to this.

President Ronald Reagan, who finished his first year in office, is a typical Republican president, who believes that the private sector (big business) should be allowed to do anything it wants to better the economy.

If big business does well than their success will filter down to the jobless and the poor. This is what Reagan firmly believes in and won't change his mind.

In his press conference, Reagan asked why the jobless didn't answer want ads that were listed in the daily press: that jobs go begging with no one wanting to fill them. Many of those ads were seeking highly skilled persons which leaves the unskilled without a chance.

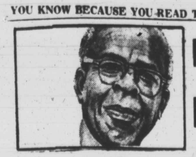
"What we need is to make more people qualified to go and apply for those jobs and we're going to do everything we can in that regard," said the president.

But how is he going to do that? He has cut every major training program that trains the unskilled: leaving it up to the private sector to train and hire the unemployed.

By giving the private sector tax breaks and other benefits, the Reagan Administration believes that this will spur economy growth and produce more jobs.

Black leaders must convince congressmen, senators and the public that this won't work. A person without a job will take any job just to have pocket change, but he is helpless if employers aren't hiring anyone.

Black leaders and other liberals must convince the lawmakers that the private sector will take plants and entire industries out of the country for cheap labor.



G. JAMES FLEMING

FDR remembered on his 100th birthday

That Franklin Delano Roosevelt made an impact on his times and on history goes without saying. No wonder either, every pool of social scientists and political leaders, the world over, always have voted him the most effective U.S. President of the 20th century.

Some hold, from the point of view of impact on history, Roosevelt should outrank George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

Every segment of Americans was touched in some way by FDR and his ideas and programs — directly or indirectly — if only to the extent of his fireside chats which galvanized nearly all of us to our seats.

That voice, opening with "My fellow Americans," will never be forgotten by those who were privileged to hear it.

There are more important reasons for remembering the President who spectacularly completed what Gov. Alfred E. Smith had begun: converting black voters from being predominately Republicans into being predominately Democrats.

He went further and structured a coalition of labor unions, blacks and other minorities and liberals into a bloc, able to pass through Congress the many people-centered pieces of social legislature that have become a part of the American system - at least, until the arrival of David Stockman!

Before FDR, being poor, or physically handicapped, or unemployed was regarded as a sin. And as poor the persons afflicted were not "God's chosen people."

Franklin D. Roosevelt was born Jan. 30, 1882, not with the proverbial silver spoon, but with a golden spoon. Nevertheless, he could be touched, he could be sensitized to appreciate and to feel the plight of the underprivileged.

I remember in 1941 when A. Philip Randolph, originator of the "March-on-Washington" idea, was pressing for an Executive Order outlawing discrimination in the employment practices of war industries and government.

Randolph and his followers had sent out the call for the "march."

At first, FDR reacted like most of big business, big labor and entrenched government regulating employment practices was not the federal government's business.

But Randolph would not be moved.

I was with Randolph, one evening when he was called by the White House. The voice at the White House end, speaking for the President, was Mayor Fiorillo LaGuardia, of New York, a friend of Randolph and one very popular with blacks.

He pleaded for Randolph to retreat, to cancel the march, and to stop insisting the President should take official stand against discrimination in employment.

When Randolph would not budge, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, the President's wife and the white person most admired by black Americans, came to the phone with a similar plea, reminding her listener he ought to trust her because of her unquestioned friendship "for the Negro."

In his well known Oxonian accent, Randolph replied:

"I cannot, Mrs. Roosevelt, my people will not settle for anything less ... I am very sorry."

Roosevelt got the message, but still only issued historic Executive Order 8802 after a member of the group then meeting in the White House - the late Eugene Davidson presented Randolph - refused to go along unless government also was enjoined against job discrimination.

Thus was established the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice (FEPC) which through investigations, public hearings and the issuance of cease and desist orders, made the first official step to outlaw job discrimination against blacks, Jews, Hispanics and other minority groups.

It was a first step which has since evolved into the passage of laws to prevent similar discrimination against women and the aged.

Many blacks came into government service in non-traditional positions during the Franklin Roosevelt administration, several in key positions.

I was regional director of FEPC for the states of Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey when, upon the receipt of complaints and following through investigation, FEPC issued an order to the Philadelphia Transportation a private corporation - calling for the training and employment of blacks as trolley car operators.

When the company made gestures to comply with the order, 6,000 white transit motor men and conductors went on strike.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Some of the "best people," official and non-official, white and black, wanted FEPC to rescind its order, but we stood fast.

Those opposed to our action argued public transportation was so important to the war effort, especially to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, we should not enforce Executive Order 8802 "in this case."

After some days of the strike, in a caucus of 21 top federal officials - in which I felt very much alone - after several hours, I sent a message to the FEPC Washington Office saying "This is it. Ascertain whether the President will support our stand." Then I prayed.

Mr. Roosevelt was on a battleship in the Pacific but after what seemed a long time, the message came he would stand behind us or cease and desist order.

That very evening, 2,000 battle-clad federal troops arrived in the City of Brotherly Love - printed placards and all - and took over the transportation system "in the name of the Government of the United States."

The trolley cars were running again. And six black men began training.

That was the way blacks were able to break into non-traditional transportation jobs and these are some of the several special ways in which I remember Franklin Delano Roosevelt - the revered FDR.

Tony Brown's comments

Mike Wallace's infamous 'watermelons' and 'tacos'

On top of television's detective Mike Wallace's attempts to steer the CBS "60 Minutes" show away from the Haitian government's oppression of its people to insure the security of his relatives comes his monumental "watermelons" and "tacos" blunder.

The words live in the minds of millions of bigots to verify their superiority over blacks and browns.

The buck-eyed darkie with big white teeth with green rind stretched from ear to ear satisfy all of the cruel atrocities heaped upon Americans of African descent.

"Tacos" is a code word for a shiftless Latino "bandit" taken to strong tequilla and short naps in the shade. This vision confines their Americanism to the barrios.

Neither, the stereotypes insist, want anything meaningful from life outside of hedonistic, short-termed pleasures. Meaningful expressions of life are reserved for the Gringos — the white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP).

You wonder if Wallace really understands the cruel hoax he played on blacks and browns was a part of the pathological attitude of bigots, who view him as an African descendant because he is a Jew.

In effect, Wallace called himself a nigger.

Paradoxically, on "60 Minutes" Wallace's bleeding-heart "liberalism" fogged up the screen as he decried the capitalistic system's exploitations of poor Afro-Americans and Mexican-Americans.

But his off-camera stint in a San Diego savings and loan company where his racially disparaging joke — if you want to call it that — was being recorded showed another version of his white liberalism.

And that is the version the minority students at the University of Pennsylvania have decided they do not want for a graduation speaker.

Of course, Wallce never thought people such as Marc Rodriquez, chairman of Penn's Unity Minority Council, would even hear his infamous utterance.

Wallace's new status next to the Grand Klangorous Klutz of the KKK really hurts because he is such a good journalist and a member of a persecuted minority himself.

And why, after he learned a camera crew from San Diego Federal Savings and Loan had recorded his indiscretion, did he try to retrieve the tape?

He admits that was a "lame idea," but said — now get this — that "cold words, taken out of context" would make him "look mean, graceless and bigoted, and I'm none of those things.

If Mike Wallace is not "mean, graceless and bigoted," he will come on my television series and explain why he said about low-income blacks and Latinos, who faced foreclosures and their ability to read lien-sale contracts:

"You bet your ass they are hard to read," and cruelly added, "if you're reading them over the watermelon or tacos."

It is reported witnesses recalled Wallace "thumped a desk with his hand" and "smirked."

I would like to hear the master of the ambush explain that. Wallace who tried to keep this tape out of circulation, prides himself on dirty jokes and Jewish jokes, and, he added, "I'm Jewish."

As I said, that really makes what he did an especially sorry affair. And if he is truly not a bigot, he will confront me on television and prove it.

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL, the television series, will begin on public television, Monday, Feb. 8, on Channel 22, at 10:30 p.m. It also will be seen on Channel 67, on Monday, Feb. 8, at 10:30 p.m. Please consult listings.

Hopewell elections face Civil Rights court action

A black civil rights activist has filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Richmond challenging Hopewell's system of at large elections for its City Council members.

Rev. Curtis W. Harris, a member of the Hopewell Action Council of the Southern Christian Leadership conference, contends in the lawsuit that the at - large method of election unconstitutionally dilutes black voting strength. He noted in the suit that the seven- member Hopewell City Council has been and remains all - white despite the fact that blacks constitute about 20 percent of the city's population.

Harris contends that blacks can only be elected to City Council under a ward system. He wants the court to invalidate the current at - large system and order a change over to a ward system.

Defendants in the case have 20 days in which to submit a response to the suit's allegations.

For all we know

HISTORY AND NEWS

SINCE OUT 90TH YEAR EDITION, we have received more and more history of Baltimore, history that each person should know and record in a scrapbook, history to be long remembered.

THIS WEEK we wish to thank Linwood G. Koger Jr. of 5105 North Park Drive, Pennsauken, NJ who writes the history of the illustrious Wilson family, founders of Mutual Benefit Society and Wilson Park Community.

THIS SUPERB a unt should be recorded in a volume on Baltimore and kept in every library along with our other accomplishments, all an all an unforgettable part of Our Town and its illustrious past.

BUT FIRST

SOME NEWS you need to know includes THE DAY REAGAN BAILED OUT of his trip to Baltimore.

WORD IS the helicopter could have landed at the appointed spot in Druid Hill Park which had been swept as clean as your kitchen floor. 800000 was it that some bad news was received from some nasty, ugly folks who didn't want the U.S. president nowhere near here?

BAD NEWS

BAD NEWS had already been whispered about before the day's agenda. Utterly ignored (we hear) were Councilmen Mfumie and Michael Mitchell whose district is Park Heights.

HOWEVER, EDWARD BUTLER, who got the Park Circle land when it was nothing but weeds and snakes and developed it into a $multi - million, desirable place, was not expected to be present at any of the events in the area.

MAYOR SCHAEFER praised him highly last summer when he opened his Mom's Chicken place beside his already thriving Pascals and Giovanchys. AND Butler still owns many acres there now worth millions.

ASKED what he intended to do if Reagan arrived, Butler said he was going on about his business and forget the snub. Congratulations to Young Butler, a businessman of whom we all can be proud.

WHEN THE CARAVAN of Baltimoreans went down the road to DC and went to the White House instead of Park Circle, Congressman Parren J. Mitchell was begged to "Please come," but he refused. (Real good)

P. J. WAS THE ONE who obtained the millions of dollars for the Park Heights Project and Mayor Schaefer thanked him publically at Slim's Opening last summer.

NOW, many of the citizens feel this Reagan affair that fell through last week was aimed to "hoo in" on the whole thing now it is going strong. (Better keep your eyes open).

HISTORY

HERE is the wonderful story Linwood G. Koger Jr. wrote to us, the history to be remembered.

BY LINWOOD G. KOGER JR

MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY

HARRY O'NEAL WILSON SR. was born Jan. 23, 1873 the early son among numerous sisters: Annie, Minnie, Mary, Maggie, Fannie, Edith. He died Feb. 20, 1939 at 6 p.m. at age 66 of cardiac arrest. His formal education proceeded through the 4th grade. His knowledge of finance, banking, economics, money and insurance was self taught.

His first wife died in 1910 leaving their two small daughters who later became Mrs. Garnet Russell Waller Jr. and Mrs. Linwood G. Koger Sr. respectively.

In 1911 Mr. Wilson married Mary Waller, daughter of Garnet Russell, Waller Sr. leader of the 1909 Niagara Movement progenitor of the modern National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Of the 2nd marriage were born Harry O. Wilson Jr., Garnet Wilson, Owen Wilson and Mary E. Wilson.

His father having died, and in order to support six sisters and his mother, Harry O. Wilson Sr. from the age of about 10, succeeded at a number of enterprises through the 19th century, finally succeeding as a soft sell collector of delinquent bills owed dentists and medical doctors.

FOUNDED IN 1903

IN 1903 he purchased rights to a corporate mutual life insurance charter and founded Mutual Benefit Society of Baltimore City, a mutual life insurance corporation.

Its 1st president was Charles H. Fowler Sr. Its office was located until 1919 in a red brick oblong 4 story building on the northeast corner of Fayette Street and Pearl Street.

THE BANK

IN 1919 Harry O. Wilson Sr. was granted a state banking charter as an individual banker. The bank was established at 407 West Franklin St. Mutual Benefit Society of Baltimore City moved into the same address the same year.

THE LIFE insurance company and the bank and the Helping Hand Savings and Loan Association were separate enterprises at the same address.

The bank was finally liquidated by orderly process at the death of Harry O. Wilson Sr., repaying depositors.

WILSON PARK

IN 1917 Harry O. Wilson Sr. purchased several square miles of land setting astride the then Baltimore County - Baltimore City boundary of the now East 42d Street about a mile west of the Morgan State University campus to be. Mr. Wilson moved his residence to Craddock Avenue there, 2 houses from the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Deaver Smith, Sr. The subdivision plat filed in the land records was entitled "Wilson Park."

IN FEBRUARY, 1939 Harry O. Wilson Sr. was succeeded as president of Mutual Benefit Society of Baltimore by his son, Harry O. Wilson, Jr. who served as president until 1979 when Mutual Benefit Society of Baltimore City was merged into North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company.

BUILDERS

AMONG EARLY long time life insurance agents who worked their hearts out to build Mutual Benefit Society of Baltimore, an all Maryland project, into a million dollar finance enterprise employing 300 to 400 persons at a time were: Lonnie Branch, Harry Butler, Henry Campbell, Samuel and Daniel Carroll - father and son.

Edgar W. Douglass, Julia Eley, John Gilmore, Samuel Harris, Catherine Harris, Mr. and Mrs. John Hebron, J. Arthur Jones, Edwin Kess, Theordore Kess, Isaiah Scott, Mr. and Mrs. Levi Sewell and son, George F. Smith, Samuel B. Smith, F. Cabell Smith, W. Jesse Stanley, Clarence Stewart, Frank Thompson, Perry Tolson, Charles Tolson, William Turks, Evelyn Venable. J. Edward Weaver, Jr. and William P. Wilson (This list is by no means complete.)

AGENTS

A separate list of some Mutual Benefit Society of Baltimore agents who were important to its beginnings by lengthy service, but then used their Mutual Benefit Society experience to succeed at other enterprises were:

Willard W. Allen, founder of Southern Life Insurance Company.

Isaac Bristol, real estate dealer and broker.

Harry Carpenter, Sr. who owned and operated New Albert Hall on Penna Ave.

Herbert Kent who returned to Calvert County Republican politics.

Earl K. Koger, Sr., 1st black licensed Maryland insurance broker.

Robert A. Lee, real estate dealer.

Franklin Fulton and John Fulton, founders of Star Cleaners.

John Spencer, Sr., Baltimore public school principal.

(The above list is by no means complete.)

OTHERS

The hordes of clerks, cashiers and bookkeepers who included the founder's nephews, nieces and 6 sisters should never be overlooked, as also the company printing shop founders Mrs. Shipley and Carroll Jones, nor the 1st custodian, James Carrigan.

George W. E. McMechen was general counsel to Mutual Benefit from the beginning to the early 1950s.

NICE NEWSPAPER

THE LIVELIEST NEWSPAPER you could ever read is the one edited by Gwendolyn West, The Forest Park Senior Center Newsletter, phone 466-2124.

THE 6 - PAGE PAPER on bright yellow legal sized stock jammed full of pleasant things like menues, how to protect your home from fire and history and birthdays and information important for the residents.

Listed are dates from shopping sprees, TV info, meetings, events and entertainment, everything, plus stovetop meatloaf instructions.

THE NEWSLETTER was sent to me by this distinguished citizen:

MRS. RUTH FORSTER

The Forest Park Senior Center has many wonderful volunteers to assist programs.

Spotlighted is a volunteer who has been busy not only at the Senior Center but throughout the city - Mrs. Ruth Forster of Carlisle Avenue.

Mrs. Forster was already involved in various senior citizen activities around the city when she came to visit the Senior Center during our first year of operation.

Although an active member of the Waxter Center, she decided to lend a hand and become actively here.

Being a seasoned traveler, and having accumulated hundreds of beautiful slides, Mrs. Forster volunteered to present a series of Travel Talks and Slide Shows for interested members.

TRAVELER

Not only has Mrs. Forster visited some very interesting and intriguing places, but she is very knowledgeable about customs, geography and culture of those lands.

Among the places she has visited are England, Denmark, Mexico, Thailand, China, Egypt, India and many others. She is presently looking forward to a fishing trip to New Zeland.

Mrs. Forster retired from a teaching career in 1975.

Since that time she has refused to remain still for very long and has, instead, become very active in a volunteer capacity in her community.

She serves on the Maryland Commission for Women; currently for the Senior Advisory Council for the Baltimore City Commission on Aging and Retirement Education; volunteered as proofreader for the city's Department of Legislative Reference and received a Mayor's Citation for her dedicated service; was selected as one of a panel of judges of the Senior Hall of Fame, has twice been selected as Woman of the Year by her church. She recently returned from Washington, D.C. where she was an official delegate to the 1981 White House Conference on Aging.

A dedicated church member, Ruth Forster belongs to Garrison United Methodist Church. She is also an ardent Bridge and Pinochle player and is a member of the Center's Pinochle Club.

BIRTHDAYS

Priscilla Summerville, Callie Hyman, Viola Johnson, Evelyn Allen, Robert Donaldson, Mildred Murphy;

Miriam Wyatt, Phoebe Scott, Eva Grimes, Clara Simms, Thomas Fouse, Elliott Byrd, Tom Thomas, Helen McLaughlin;

James Harrell, Gwen Tano, Dorothy Gantt, Ozella Mayo, LeRay Stokes, Estella Brown, Josephine Murray;

Susan Tittle, Ruth Davis, Jessie Mitchell, Mattie Alexander, Gladys Dorsey, Hattie Hill, Betty White, Sam Williams, Annie Robbins.

Excerpts from Reagan's speech

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Following are highlights of President Reagan's State of the Union address Tuesday night:

— Proposed a "single, bold stroke" shifting $47 billion worth of social welfare programs from Washington to the states over 10 years, together with the means to finance them. Federal government would take over the Medicaid program, state would assume 40 programs including food stamps and aid to families with dependent children, with help from a $28 billion trust fund.

— Promised the State of the Union and the economy "will be better — much better — if we summon the strength to continue on the course we have charted."

— Dismissed calls for a tax increase to deal with the mounting federal deficit, saying, "I will not ask you to try and balance the budget on the backs of the American taxpayers." Said he will seek no tax hike this year.

— Pledged his administration "will not turn its back on America's elderly or America's poor" and declared "out concern for equal rights for women is unshakeable."

— Pledged that unspecified "reforms" in federal entitlement will save $63 billion over four years "without affecting social security."

— Said the federal deficit "will exceed our earlier expectations" and is "still too high" but pined the blame on the recession he said was caused by past administrations.

— Defended his economic policies to date, saying his plan of tax cuts and spending reductions will put the economy back on track and "put us on the road to prosperity and stable growth by the latter half of this year."

— Said his foreign policy is one of "strength, fairness and balance." Declared if the situation in Poland "continues to deteriorate, further measures will follow" and the United States will "negotiate from a position of strength" in arms control talks with the Soviets.