Has anything changed?

'New Federalism' hard times rivals the Depression, when soup lines were long for black Baltimoreans

Recent headlines of President Ronald Reagan's "New Federalism" should make AFRO readers questions what it would be like to get "big government off our backs."

Depression era black Baltimore, 1929 to 1935, exemplifies hard times and little or no help.

It is ironic Republican president Herbert Hoover, just six months before the stock market crash wrote the National Urban League in April 1929 saying " the first step toward being a good citizen is to achieve economic independence.

"It is the soil in which self-respect takes root and from which may then grow all the moral and spiritual enrichments of life," he said.

Yet national unemployment during his administration reached epidemic proportions.

By the time of the depression, Baltimore had the fourth highest black population of American cities. Blacks made up 17.7 percent of the city's population by 1930. The decade of 1920 - 1930 saw a 31.2 percent increase in the city's black population.

The seeds for the hard times of the depression already had been sown in that decade. The first World War and floundering economies abroad and at home had sent many blacks north seeking jobs and higher wages.

Consequently, Maryland's counties lost large numbers of blacks to Baltimore.

Jim Crow officially had come to Baltimore by city ordinance to eliminate integrated housing by 1910 and there already had been three attempts in Maryland to disenfranchise the black voter.

Many blacks in Baltimore had acquired trades and crafts such as carpentry, bricklaying, metal trades, building trades and others during slavery.

However, in Baltimore, increasing hostility from white labor organizations and exclusion from apprenticeship programs meant a loss of jobs, loss of skills and a reduction in black visibility in skilled trades.

By 1911, black craftsmen were excluded from the general industrial growth of the city - 1875 to 1911.

As a cheap source of labor, blacks became a buffer between employers and unions. Even when hired as strikebreakers, blacks were dismissed as soon as their purposes had been served.

During the depression, blacks in Baltimore worked in the service trades: shucking oysters, stevedores, dockhands loading and unloading ships, carting merchandise about the city and to other cities as draymen, janitors, porters, streetsweepers, dressmakers, maids, seamstresses, waitresses and butlers.

The depression unemployment situation of blacks was summarized in a memo from the National Urban League to Fred C. Croxton, the assistant director of the President's organization on Unemployment Relief in January, 1932:

"First - Negroes are suffering to a greater extent than others.

"Second - As the first persons fired and the last hired, they have been longer exposed to unemployment than others and as a consequence have used up all surpluses or resources they may have accumulated.

"Third - There are employers who are discharging them in order to make room for white workers.

"Fourth - Negro unemployment situation is too often incidental in our emergency set-ups when because of the very nature of the factors involved, their problems should have larger place and more sympathetic treatment.

According to National Urban League reports, the period of Jan. 1 to Sept. 30, 1930 showed a decrease of 34.5 percent in the number of available jobs for blacks and an increase of 39.9 percent in the number of black applicants over the same period in 1929.

The only vestige of subminimum security for black families became the domestic service employment of women.

The situation had become so serious the Urban League remarked in its 1929 annual report, "the immediate taks has been that of holding old jobs against an "invasion" of white workers.

"So great was the number of jobs customarily held by colored workers that it became necessary to console them with the fact that they were not losing jobs because of race prejudice, but because of economic factors which had forced white workers to compete with Negroes for jobs that were regarded beneath the dignity of a caucasian."

Neither political party challenged the cause of the black American worker to employment, let alone admission to the American Federation of Labor and other trade unions.

The City of Baltimore had no black policemen or firemen. None of the departments of the municipal government reflected the 17.7 percent proportion of blacks in the city's population.

The Republican parth, the party of Abraham Lincoln - the liberator, as he was referred by some, remained the benefactor of the black community in the midst of great economic hardship and little political return.

For three years after the crash of the stock market, Hoover contended the relief of unemployment was a local problem to be handled by state and local governmental resources, supplemented by private charities.

Croxton deplored "the idiotic idea that it was the duty of the government to find its citizens work."

Older AFRO readers will recall there was no welfare agency administered by the city of Baltimore per se. The city was under the Republican leadership of Mayor William Broening from 1927 until 1931.

In the black community, the little help that was available came from private sources. The Community Fund, today it is the United Way, churches, which also were strained during the hard times, social and civic groups such as the NAACP and the National Urban League, YMCA and the YWCA.

Eventually the breakdown of "existing" relief methods forced a modernization of relief machinery in several of the more progressive states, but even this proved inadequate to carry the load.

The states' cries for federal relief grew louder.

Hoover was voted out by the discouraged and frustrated black and white poor alike. The times politically were volatile and in constand metamorphosis.

Blacks turned out to vote, in those places they still could, for Roosevelt with renewed hope. They voted for Roosevelt, the Democrat — the party of the rebellious segregationists of the civil war era.

Roosevelt is best remembered for the social programs that got America working again: the Social Security Administration, unemployment compensation, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Civil Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration.

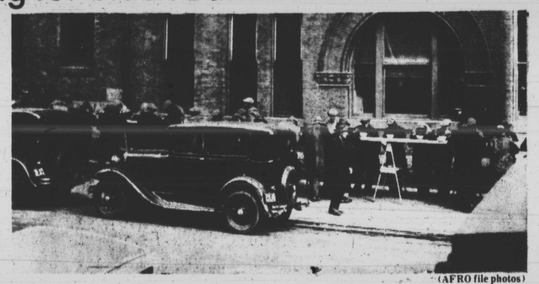
The programs he instituted did not solve all of the problems of the unemployed black populace. There were documented accounts of unequal pay scales, exclusion of blacks from skilled jobs, or refusals to hire blacks in the New Deal Work programs.

Any progress was dogged by racism, since the design of the projects and allocation of funds remained in the hands of state and local government.

The times were so grave for black Baltimoreans that in 1934 blacks made up 40 percent of the relief rolls in the city in comparison to the 13 percent total for whites.

The unemployment in the black community remained so stagnant it was one and a half times that of white Baltimoreans just three years earlier, under Hoover.

Technically, little had changed. Yet there had been a great deal of change. The federal government under Roosevelt had successfully got the country moving again.



BREAD LINES — The AFRO camera captured these grim moments in black history. Pictured above is a long line of black men forming an unemployment bread line February, 1931.

(AFRO file photos)

UNEMPLOYED RECREATION — The above photo was taken January, 1932. Pictured are unemployed men at the No. 2 Frederick Street city shelter.

SHELTER FOR THE UNEMPLOYED — This AFRO file photo was taken more than three years later than the above photos. Black men still are hard hit by the Depression in October, 1935 as they sit, some shyly, and eat at an unemployment shelter.

Consumer prices on the rise

Consumer prices in the metropolitan Baltimore rose 0.5 percent during December and January, a spokesman for the U.S. Labor Departmend said this week.

Al Pasiner, the spokesman, said the modest price rise was led oy the increased cost of housing, transportation, food and medical care. The cost of clothing and entertainment fell during the two - month period, Pasiner said.

Nationally, the consumer price index, a direct measure of the inflationary rate rose .3 percent during January, the latest month for which figures were available.

Cambridge mother jailed for cursing

A judge sentenced a woman to 60 days in jail and fined her $300 for yelling obscenities and making a racial slur against a vice principal at her son's school.

District Judge William B. Yates handed down the sentence Wednesday against Dollijean Reed, 32, of Cambridge.

Testimony in the case showed Mrs. Reed cursed and called James M. Bishop Jr., a "honky" Nov. 2, 1981.

The incident occurred after Bishop, Cambridge Middle School's assistant principal, reportedly told Mrs. Reed another pupil had handed her 12-year-old son a quarter because he was afraid of him.

Mrs. Reed denied Bishop's claim, but two teachers backed his story.

Bishop said the severity of the cursing prompted him to lodge a complaint against Mrs. Reed.

"I've dealt with parents a lot of times, but I've never had a parent curse me like that," he said.

Mrs. Reed was convicted of a charge of creating a willful disturbance in a school. The maximum penalty for such an offense is six months in jail and a $1,000 fine. UPI

Looking for Senior Citizens!!

Want Extra Money??

If you're on a fixed income and need extra money for groceries, clothing, monthly bills or just for a little trip —then you'll be interested in this offer.

You can be an AFRO carrier in any of the following ways:

* In your neighborhood
* In your apartment complex
* In your church

Earn some supplementary income and win prizes while you get to know your neighbors better and a chance for some exercise.

Interested? We'll be happy to answer all of your quessions. Call 728-8206 TODAY! —or mail the handy coupon below

Yes, I'd like to deliver the AFRO-AMERICAN on Tuesday and Friday. Please have a representative contact me.

Mail to Circulation Department
The AFRO-AMERICAN Newspaper
628 N. Eutaw St.
Baltimore, Md. 21203

Name.....

Address.....

Apt.....

City.....St.....Zip.....

Phone.....

The Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN

Chicken and Rice cook-off at Mondawmin Mall this weekend

Chicken and rice fanciers will be cooking up a storm at Mondawmin Mall Friday, Feb. 26 and Saturday, Feb. 27.

WSID Radio and Uncle Ben's Rice are sponsoring a Chicken and Rice Cook-Off, which, should be full of fun, excellent recipes and fragrant arpmas during the two-day event.

All interested parties with chicken and rice recipes have been sending them to the radio station in hopes of winning a vacation for four to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla.

Three judges will choose six finalists from the entries. They will cook their recipes in the Center Court of Mondawmin Mall; Saturday, Feb. 27, beginning at 1 p.m.

On Friday, beginning at noon, cooking demonstrations will be performed by soul food establishments around the city. These restaurants will be preparing their house chicken and rice specialties. Some of which include:

The Red Rooster's Chicken and Rice soup; D'Joint's BBQ Chicken and Rice and the Soul Shack has a secret suprise chicken and rice recipe in store.

Food-a-Rama will be on hand to show the crowd how to master the proper way of cutting up a chicken.

A completely functional kitchen is being made in the mall's center, on the lower level. After the dishes have been prepared, recipes and samples will be given to the crowd.

OUR WORLD

★ PARTYLINE ★ PACESETTERS ★ PEOPLE

Chi Delta Mu hosts annual Founders' Day Banquet

By Pattie Hodges,
AFRO Women's Editor

The Iota Chapter of the Chi Delta Mu Fraternity celebrated its annual Founders' Day at a banquet Sunday, Feb. 21 at Blue Crest North.

The black - tie affair got underway at 6 p.m. with the lively cocktail hour, during which club members (doctors, dentists and pharmacists) their wives and guests chatted animatedly.

During the delicious sit - down dinner, the program began, with Dr. Roland Smoot presiding.

The invocation was given by Dr. Bernard Christmas, chaplain, with a moment of silence being observed by the assemblage in memory of the late Dr. Lonnie Greene, (former grand secretary) of Baltimore and Dr. Rodney Tarrar, former grand president, of Washington, D.C.

Music was provided by the very capable Dennis Fisher Band and before, during and after dinner guests were seen flooding the floor to enjoy dancing their latest to it.

Mrs. Vashti Christmas, president of the Chi wives, gave greetings and congratulations to the members stating "We have loved you every step of the way. Have fun."

Scholarship honoree for this year's Founders' Day was Harry Strothers III, of the University of Maryland medical school, who received his check (to aid with his education) from Scholarship Committee Chair Dr. Ralph Howard.

Guest speaker for the occasion, Dr. T. Albert Farmer, chancellor, University of Maryland (Baltimore) spoke on "Blacks in the Health Profession."

He addressed himself to the aims at the University of Maryland of recruitment of blacks, proper guidance through their chosen medical field, financial assistance to them, and a follow - up program that will insure that they will not leave the state, but remain to serve in this area.

He spoke, with sincerity, about the seriousness of the state of our economy, but with optimism that the goals can be achieved.

He stated: "We must pull together everything that deals with students in health professions to recruit minorities, to develop health programs."

"The worst thing we can do is to start an opportunity and not make certain students get the opportunity to get a quality preparation."

Dr. Farmer even suggested that this preparation start in high school.

He gave great credit to and thanked Lou Murdock for aid in this respect and to members of the task force which is helping to make the goals materialize with valid suggestions and recommendations. His remarks were well received.

(Continued on Page 10)

HEAD TABLE PARTICIPANTS pictured during the Chi Delta Mu Fraternity's Annual Founders' Day Banquet, hosted by the Iota Chapter Sunday, Feb. 21 at Blue Crest North from six until 11 p.m. are (L to R left panel) Dr. James F. Cooper, president Chi Delta Mu and Mrs. Jeanne G. Cooper; (L to R, right panel) Dr. Roland Smoot, emcee; Dr. Bernard Christmas, chaplain and Dr. Frank Sykes, oldest member (89) in Baltimore.

AFRO Photos by Roman Hankewyce

GUEST SPEAKER Dr. T. Albert Farmer, (L) Chancellor, University of Maryland (Baltimore) sounds off on "Blacks in the Health Profession" while Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Reaves (Agnes) on a lighter note, dance to the music of Dennis Fisher.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT — Harry Strothers III (second from R) who received the 1982 Chi Delta Mu Scholarship Award is pictured with (L to R) Mrs. Katherine Perry, Ms. Karen Smith and Dr. Ralph Howard, chairperson, Scholarship Committee.

ENJOYING THE FESTIVITIES ARE (Left panel, L to R): Mrs. Jean Adams, Dr. Curtis Adams, Dr. Thelma Bando and Mrs. Pauline Watts; (right panel, L to R front): Mrs. Lucretia Billups, Mrs.

Gail Gee, Mrs. Dorothy Clinton, and Mrs. Ann Saunders (of Philadelphia); (back row, L to R): Samuel Billups, Dr. Chester Gee, Dr. Shirley R. Clinton and Robert L. Garrison.

CHI DELTA MU GUESTS (L to R) are: Dr. Dave Scott Carroll Marcus, Coris Wiggins and Margie Hall.

CHAIR FOR THE AFFAIR Dr. Luther Mathias (C) is pictured with (L to R): Mrs. Sylvia White, Mrs. Fannie Mathias, Pattie Hodges, AFRO Women's Editor and Pat Matthews, of the Attorney General's Office.

Partyline

Chipperettes are hosted at dinner-club meeting

On Saturday, Feb. 13, the Chipperettes, a social club of more than 30 years standing in Charm City was hosted at a dinner club meeting with guests attending, at the Durley Lane home of hostess Mrs. C. Granville Hillen (Gwen).

The hostess had prepared a delectable menu, and following the club's business session, members and guests were treated to a real feast.

Scrumptuous dinner fare consisted of turkey salad, cranberry mold, peas and carrots with fresh mushrooms, and the 'Piece - de - resistance' — Cajum (a New Orleans rice dish), an old favorite of Louis Armstrong's — which he called "Dirty Rice."

For dessert there was mouth - watering apple cobbler with lemon sauce. There were also many sippables, including iced tea, coffee, country apple cider and cocktails.

Hostess Gwen made certain that members and guests, who played cards afterwards, had a delicious card - game repast also, by providing them with finger - roll turkey salad sandwiches and Smith field ham with cheese biscuits.

Club members attending were Alice Pinderhughes, Agnes Reaves, Vonzella Murray, Hermione Weaver, Pauline Blackwell, Berine Bundara, Ellsworth Rhetta and Arnita Watson, president.

Guests included Mabel Denkins, Lillian Bell, Helena Edmonds, Iris Lloyd, Ada Weaver, Iona Collins, Irma Dancey, Dorothy Woods, Ida Peters, Ruth Dorsey, Ruth Smith, Saretha Greene, Jimmie LaForest, Clarice Parris, Louise Dean, Verniece Hutchins, and Bea Wright, also Florence Ringgold, Janet Woolridge and Edith Fowlkes.

Surprise Birthday Party

On Sunday, February 21, a surprise birthday celebration was hosted for Ms. Barbara E. Alston of Columbia, by her family and friends, who came laden with their favorite covered dishes and lovely gifts for the birthday lady.

Menu specialties featured meat balls, a crab dish, chili, Watergate salad, chicken prepared in many ways and kale - cabbage greens. Barbara had been told by a dear friend that she was being taken to a bull roast at the classy spot — Whitten's Frankford Gardens, at 6065 Moravia Park Dr.

She was extremely surprised as she entered the hall to find it filled with close friends, former neighbors, family friends, in - laws and many nieces and nephews and D. J. music.

Babs' (as she is called) immediate family in attendance included her mother, Daisy D. Scribner, her sister, Audrey M. Gibson and two of her seven brothers, Stanley V. Scribner Sr. and Milton S. Scribner, all of Maryland.

Out - of - town relatives who extended greetings but were unable to attend included her brothers Van L. (of New Jersey), James W. (of Cleveland, OH); aunts Jessie M. Dawes (of New Jersey), Hilda McBurnett (of New York) and Mildred I. Johnson (of Chicago, Ill.).

Special recognition goes to two of Barbara's close buddies — Octavia and Shirley, who assisted the Gibsons and the Scribners in the preparation of the affair and helped to make it a loving and fun - filled occasion.