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OPINION

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
JAN. 14, 1929 - APRIL 4, 1968
REMEMBERING THE MAN WITH A DREAM
TSTOCKETT

Much ado about nothing

We were unsettled last week when the local daily newspapers headlined Sen. Clarence Mitchell III as being "probed" and charged with questionable real estate practices.

As we read the daily media accounts we were struck by the inclusion of totally inaccurate information about the Senator and the timing of the allegation as such a negative story.

Legal counsel for the Senator has asked the Attorney General's office, specifically chief counsel Dennis M. Sweeney, to promptly dismiss all of the complaints against Senator Mitchell.

Counsel for Mitchell raises these points:

1. The salesman who worked with the Senator's firm and was responsible for the faulty sales procedures was an experienced and successful real estate agent associated with Senator Mitchell's company for approximately five years.

2. During this period, Senator Mitchell had no way of knowing that the salesman might be dishonest or might engage in illegal acts such as obtaining money from clients under false pretenses.

3. The first knowledge that Senator Mitchell received that the salesman might be stealing from clients was when Senator Mitchell received in August, 1981, a complaint from two customers.

4. Immediately upon receiving this complaint, Senator Mitchell took action against the salesman, including removing his real estate license and terminating his relationship with the firm.

5. Thereafter, Senator Mitchell, to the extent of his resources, sought to identify and to assist persons who had been cheated by the salesman.

Senator Mitchell, we would readily admit, has made his share of political mistakes and this newspaper has been quick to take him to task.

Be we can only wonder about the reasons why the daily media broke a negative "news story" about him on the eve of the opening of the General Assembly, particularly since the charges against Senator Mitchell had been made much earlier and had been under investigation for more than four months.

We can only conclude the daily press sought to embarrass Mitchell as he was about to assume chairmanship of a very powerful Senate committee.

Our feeling is that certain powerful whites cannot abide the thought of an experienced, articulate black legislator coming finally into power.

This time the daily press tried to pillory Senator Mitchell in a situation that really appears to be much ado about nothing.

State Senator Clarence Mitchell III

The meaning of January 15

Congressman John Conyers of Michigan will once again introduce the bill he sponsored every year, but without success, to make Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday.

Conyers feels confident that the bill will pass in the U.S. House of Representatives this year. "We feel very good about the increased support that is almost certain to accrue because of the midterm elections," he said.

What the legislators should understand is that Dr. King's birthday touches the heart not only of Black Americans, but also all those who want to see a just and truly democratic society.

January 15 also symbolizes the struggle waged and blood shed over the last two decades and many decades before that to raise the nation's consciousness of the race issue.

Dr. King's dream is far, far from being fulfilled. The day he foresaw when all Americans will live in a just society is no where in sight.

But, the members of the U.S. Senate and the House should realize that Dr. King gave his life so that these ideals could be a reality not only for Blacks but also for all Americans. When you free one, you free all. When you oppress one, you oppress all.

Declaring his birthday a national holiday is the least they could do, if nothing else, to give people the hope that these dreams will one day be a reality.

These both were history making events, regardless of color, which drew the top officials from the governor, the chief judge of the Court of Appeals, to judges of the courts, to City Councilpersons, as main participants in that event.

Certainly no appointment in Hagerstown in regard to sludge removal, could have been so important as the event that was witnessed by more than 2,000 people, most of whom were black Baltimoreans.

It was an event that also was history making in the light of changes in the structure of the courts after 150 years, where all the clerks were consolidated, where future workers would come under state civil service.

Perhaps this galling affront and dimunition of power of political bosses, may have caused the snub.

The clerks' offices were used for patronage plums and kept lily white until 1970 and then the move began to consolidate the courts so that blacks would be unable to get elected. But Saundra and the black community fouled that up, now didn't we.

And though Mayor Schaefer said he would rather have been at the swearing-in, complaining that he was just one person and could not be all places at once, we have noted in the past he has snubbed us many, many times, sending his black deputies to issue proclamations, ignoring our importance, despite the fact we are the majority population.

It this does not send us a message about where his loyalties lie, what he arrogantly considers to be important, then we have become too comfortable with a type of Dred Scott dictum, a slave-master syndrome that dictates we have only as much power or rights as the mayor might be willing to bestow upon us.

It boils down to how much we are going to take and how well we shall use our power in the case of re-districting now and in our vote in the Primary Election of 1983 to make some changes that long are over due.

Madeline MURPHY

No rights

Twenty years ago, there was a conscious effort by city officials to include a cross section of the community in the development of redistricting of City Council.

The then Morgan State College was used as the meeting place for people to discuss the need to draw proper lines for the benefit of the city and blacks.

Even then, however, the lines were drawn so that the black vote was contained mainly in the fourth district and with a possibility of some representation in the second.

Since that time, the population has grown to be more integrated in more districts of the city and the dilemma, especially after the victories of Kurt Schmoke, Saundra Banks and Mary Conaway, we have put whites in the position of being not only the minority in fact but also the minority who come out to vote.

Therefore, Joan Bereska, "Assistant Mayor" and Mayor William Donald Schaefer are in a stew about how this new plan, to reflect the 1980 census and constitutional directives of "one man, one vote" can be jumbled up to keep the dwindling powers of the white community in a city gone 60 percent black, safe at least until the 1990 census rolls around.

Glaring inequities have been seen in the lack of representation in the 6th district; the spare representation in the 5th and in the 3rd where there is none.

Yet housing patterns have changed considerably since 1970, despite the mayor's regentrification of the core of the city.

What sickens many of us, who have gone without representation in the history of Baltimore City — the 6th district, in particular — is the smell of back room politics, boss ladened, smoke filled rooms where we are voted for, rather than be given the right to vote as is our due.

However, it is up to the Council, especially the right thinking Council persons, to stop being so darned cagey.

It is up to them to use their muscle, muscle that almost has atrophied, because of the restrictions already imposed upon the power of the Council by the City Charter; as well as those self-imposed restrictions that have nothing to do with the greater good of all the citizens of Baltimore.

But the City Charter gives power to the City Council to make the final decision, to either enact its own re-districting Plan, or to allow the mayor's plan to become law.

If the Council fails to act within 60 days after Feb. 1, the mayor must submit his own plan to the Council.

We must look closely in the next two months at the Council's actions and be prepared to do something to reject a plan that would dilute or deny the rights of blacks, if the plan is drawn in such a fashion as to completely fragment our rights to equal representation.

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act bars any such measures that would dilute the voting strength of blacks and other minorities.

Armed with our briefs, and with the provisions of that act, we must be prepared to fight for our rights if they do in fact become abridged.

If we rely upon Mayor Schaefer to do our thinking for us, then we have not noticed his attitude toward blacks in most recent glaring snubs;

The swearing-in of both Kurt Schmoke, State's Attorney for Baltimore City, and Saundra Banks, new chief of the Circuit Court.

Parren J. MITCHELL

Fight for Dr. King's dream

This week our hearts are uplifted as we commemorate the birthday and memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Our desire and unyielding willingness to keep striving for economic parity, equal opportunities for all citizens and the fulfillment of a dream will replace racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination with a real chance for our future generations to be afforded advancements based on merit and character.

It is refreshing to know we are starting the year with a renewed commitment to Dr. King's dreams and the hopes which his works instilled in those who pursue better lives for their communities and families.

Let us look at this beginning. We are welcoming four new black members of Congress, bringing the total number of Congressional Black Caucus members to 21.

This body of legislators remains our primary vehicle for the introduction and enactment of legislation at the federal level.

Of equal importance is that each Caucus member heads a braintrust which is a team of, experts and other citizens interested in impacting legislative and policy decisions throughout various areas.

For example, there are braintrusts on criminal justice, the aged, communications, energy and education among others. I chair the braintrusts on housing and economic development, as well as one on minority business enterprise.

Through these teams, all citizens, per their interests and concerns, are able to make recommendations to the members of the Congressional Black Caucus with respect to legislative, regulatory, administrative, local and national priorities.

We also are welcoming a boost for minority businesses this year.

During the closing hours of the Congressional lame duck session, my amendment to the Surface Transportation Act was incorporated to assure minority business participation in this multi-million dollar gas-highway repair initiative.

The act was signed into law on Jan. 6 and we are initiating steps to monitor its implementation.

Among other things, we also welcome this year a renewed fight to declare the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King a national holiday.

The members of the caucus remain 100 percent supportive of the King Holiday legislation, and Rep. John Conyers plans to reintroduce the bill when the 98th Congress reconvenes during the week of Jan. 25.

Let me encourage you to gear up and once again start pouring letters into the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee's Subcommittee on Census and Population.

The address is A601 HOB Annex 1, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Your letters should be simple, urging the subcommittee move expeditiously to support the Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday bill.

Later this year, as you follow the progress of the legislation, you should encourage your churches, schools, civic and neighborhood groups to write to all House and Senate members in support of the measure.

Your lobbying strategies also must be employed throughout the year on all critical legislation which impacts your communities and families.

Truly, any impact on policy making results from constant monitoring, awareness, throughness and doing our homework. Through unity, tenacity and a true commitment to necessary changes we can make the dreams of Dr. King a reality.

Letters

Prison slavery:

Mitchell column upsets reader

Dear AFRO:

I am very concerned about Congressman Parren Mitchell's Jan. 8 article on prison slavery.

Is he saying that his voters are largely from criminal type [illegible] to support a prisoners' rights group?

What does this teach our black youth? That they can do crime — (which is mainly directed to other blacks) and have the same rights as the black or white victim, who is hard working and supporting self or members of his or her family.

I know now too many blacks and white citizens who are afraid to leave their homes for fear of being mugged, raped, killed or beaten.

I wonder how victims of such crimes and their loved ones, some who are damaged physically and emotionally for life — and a slave forever to their aftermath of the crime fell about this.

I can tell you how whites feel about this. I am not white, but I have many white friends and Tony Brown's Journal is right — the sleeping giant may sleep no more and we need the support of the white liberal.

The Congressman should throw his effort to the black family and youth — to keep youth out of jail - a preventive measure.

Like Mr. Mitchell said, "there are many blacks in prison and they are not majority political prisoners," these are people who have done violent crimes mentioned above mostly against the black community.

The black community must get its act together and stop the wasted potential we have in our black youth.

The black parent must take more responsibility to help their children overcome any barrier be it constitution, white racist, school work, negative peer group pressure and other outside negative forces.

I hope we wake up before it is too late.

HENRY THOMPSON

Leap backward by Hayes and Reagan

Dear AFRO:

It was in 1877, with the election of Rutherford B. Hayes, as a result of a compromise with the South that we observed the political rights of Negro citizens were "literally stamped out in all the Democratic controlled Gulf states."

Furthermore, northerners and members of the Republican party, for the most part were no longer interested in the civil and political rights of blacks, but in big business, the tariff and monetary problems.

In the meantime, the president, the Supreme Court and the Congress did much toward aiding the South in restoring white supremacy. Although Hayes did almost nothing to protect their rights.

As a direct result of the federal government's not protecting the constitutional rights of blacks in the 1870s and the 1880s, Negroes were discriminated against at the polls, in education, housing and jobs in every state of the union.

Because of this neglect, Frederick Douglass encouraged Negroes to organize and fight for equality and their constitutional rights in all aspects of the nation's life.

Today, the Reagan administration Negro process in civil rights, social and economic rights have been deteriorating, thus there is a great need on the part of Negroes and other minorities to develop new strategies to maintain and later to enhance their civil rights.

DR. ISAIAH A. WOODWARD
Professor Emeritus of American and European History
Morgan State University

AFRO welcomes letters

The AFRO welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be brief and must bear the writer's name and address. All letters will be given consideration for publication.

SAMUEL BANKS

Challenges, opportunities for 1983

There is a collective view of thoughtful and rational observers in the Monumental City that 1983 was one of the enormous socio-economic devastation and strain for the majority black population and the poor.

As we prepare for the challenges, opportunities and vicissitudes of 1983, it is painfully clear human opportunities as expressed in jobs, housing, education and health care will worsen before they improve.

Grim and troubling evidence of this was depicted in the recent labor statistics released by the U.S. Department of Labor which show more than 12 million Americans unemployed and 1.8 million "discouraged workers," a euphemism for persons who have ceased looking for work, without employment.

In the face of the deplorable and troubling plight of the majority black population here in Baltimore, as is largely indicative of urban centers across our nation, two recent developments were occasions for jubilation and exaltation.

The first of these was the extraordinary success of the Baltimore Branch, NAACP and Maryland Conference of NAACP Brances' annual Jubilee Day observanced on Sunday, Jan 2, at Bethel A.M.E. Church.

An overflow crowd numbering in excess of 2500 persons packed Bethel A.M.E. Church to participate in the Jubilee Day services and to hear the distinguished keynote speaker, Dr. James E. Cheek, President of Howard University.

The Rev. Dr. Marion C. Bascom presided with deftness and elegance; the Rev. Dr. John R. Bryant, pastor and host for the Jubilee Day observance, provided a spirited and evocative opening prayer.

Powerful and moving statements in support of full freedom and human dignity were made by Enolia McMillan, president of the Baltimore Branch, NAACP, Nathaniel Smith, president, Maryland Conference of NAACP Branches, Bernard Jones and Ms. Reneed Jones, students at the Carver Vocational-Technical High School and the Honorable Parren J. Mitchell.

Each of them, in his or her inimitable way, affirmed the necessity of equality of opportunity, dignity and human possibilities. It was a joyous and illuminating event.

The stirring, poignant and lofty address of Dr. Cheek proved to be sobering, direct and highly inspirational.

His message centered on the need for the United States to unyoke the burden visited on black people through the historic progression of institutional racism, exclusion and denial.

Dr. Cheek said with refreshing clarity, probity and directness an urgent need:

"For the First Emancipation was the burden of the white man, and that is why it remained only a proclamation. But the Second Emancipation is the burden of the black man, and that is why it must be made a reality. If we do not assume this burden, then who will?"

Jubilee Day provided splendid relief spiritual uplift and a timely sense of renewal, buoyancy of hope and fellow-feeling. It was a luminous event in the life of this city.

The spirit of Jubilee Day must be preserved and extended in the ongoing struggle for social justice and equal opportunity here and across our nation.

The installation of Saundra E. Banks as Clerk of the Circuit Court of Baltimore and Kurt L. Schmoke as State's Attorney of Baltimore, too, were historic and inspirational.

More than 2,000 persons, black and white, filled the War Memorial auditorium to witness the installation of Mrs. Banks and Schmoke to their high offices.

The elevation of Mrs. Banks, Schmoke, Mary Conaway, Register of Wills, among others indicate that politics will not be the same in Baltimore.

The majority black population, belatedly, has come of age. It must also be borne in mind that there is nothing heretical or subversive about a majority of people exercising the levers of power to befit all people.

The Banks, Schmoke and Conaway victories indicate, when intelligence, thoroughness and dexterity are utilized, able black candidates can achieve the goals that they set for themselves.

The city is fortunate, indeed, to have exemplars of their sagacity, ability and character as leaders.

The euphoria associated with Jubilee Day and the recent political victories has now diminished. The challenge for all of us now is to face the awesome and continuing struggles for social justice and equality of opportunity here and throughout our nation and the whole community.

It will not be easy, but, then, the struggle for full and equal participation of black and non-white people in the American body politic has never been easy.

We must for the sake of our posterity continue to press forward in the face of institutional denial and exclusion.

The "If There Is No Struggle There is No Progress" address given by Frederick Douglass on Aug. 4, 1857 in Canadaigua, N.Y. still has compelling pertinence and value for us as a black people as we confront a more insidious and pernicious manifestation of racism in the American body politic.

"The general sentiment of mankind is that a man will not fight for himself, when he has the means of doing so, is not worth fighting for by others, and this sentiment is just. For a man who does not value freedom for himself will never value it for others, or put himself to any inconvenience to gain it for others.

"Such a man, the world says, may lie down until he has sense enough to stand up. It is useless and cruel to put a man on his legs, if the next moment his head is to be brought against a curbstone.

"A man of that type will never lay the world under any obligation to him, but will be a moral pauper, a drag on the wheels of society, and if he too be identified with a peculiar variety of the race he will entail disgrace upon his race as well as upon himself...

"The poet was as true to be said, 'Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow.'"

The luminous examples of Jubilee Day and the Banks, Schmoke, Conaway victories provide a welcome surcease and inspiration in the Monumental City amidst all the trials and tribulations.

All of us must now be about the pressing business, individually and collectively, of freeing ourselves.

The question of the death penalty

Commentary

By Del. Elijah E. Cummings

As she sat on death row, she recently said I would rather face immediate death than live a life of imprisonment.

These were the words of a young woman who was convicted of murder and sentenced to death in the Maryland gas chamber. Other inmates under similiar circumstances failed to share this young woman's feelings.

Maryland's General Assembly, which went into session this week, undoubtedly will have to address the question of the death penalty. As a member of the Judiciary Committee of the House of Delegates, I share with you my views.

Capital punishment is unusually severe, inflicted arbitrarily, and does not serve any penal purpose that is not served equally or more effectively than life imprisonment.

Therefore, these death sentences constitute cruel and unusual punishment in violation of the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments. Thus, the death penalty is unconstitutional and should be abolished.

Capital punishment is administered with such capriciousness and rarity that it creates a substantial risk of being inflicted in an arbitrary and discriminatory manner.

Presently, there are 1,137 inmates on death row. Yet, in the past seven years, only six men have been executed from the 38 states which endorse the death penalty.

Are these unfortunates more deserving of death than the scores of others condemned?

The facts show that all of the inmates on death row are guilty of criminal homicide, except one man who is guilty of forcibly raping a minor.

The numbers show clearly that the death penalty still is being inflicted in a "wanton" and "freakish" manner.

Though, the Supreme Court overturned the entire prevailing system of capital punishment in the 1972, Furman v. Georgia case, in order to prevent arbitrary application, it has not worked.

The death penalty still falls disproportionately upon the poor, the uneducated and those of minority groups.

Race is the most substantial and consistent basis for the differential treatment. Blacks constitute almost 43 percent of the inmates on death row, but account for only 12 percent of the overall population.

Post Furman studies still show gross racial differences in the likelihood of a death sentence.

The race of a victim plays a more dominant role than that of the offender. If the victim is white there is a much greater chance of the offender being sentenced to death.

Therefore, black offenders with white victims are most likely to receive the death penalty.

The death penalty is not only implemented in a discriminatory manner but it also is imposed by fallible judges or jurors. Sometimes the death penalty is wrongfully inflicted.

These judicial miscarriages have occurred quite recently. The New York Times in 1975 reported that in 1974 Sie Dawson, a black man, was wrongfully executed for the murder of a white woman and her child.

Dawson's confession was made after spending several days alone with white officials. The worst part about this story is that not only was he innocent, but he was known to be innocent (the woman's husband committed the murder.)

The death penalty is too final an act to be in the hands of ordinary men. The state has no right to take the life of another. The right to terminate life belongs to God, and him alone.

Capital punishment also reflects a barbaric atmosphere which demoralizes the general public. The state sets a bad example when it takes a life, because a precedence is established for justifying killing.

The death penalty perpetuates and encourages a disrespect for life. This, of course, is not compatible with the values of a civilized society.

The possibility of reformation and rehabilitation obviously are destroyed due to this vindictive type punishment. These men will never have the opportunity to repent and possibly one day contribute to society.

While this reformation takes place, society could be amply protected by a life imprisonment sentence. We must look beyond mere retribution and towards redeemption.

To produce the best results for society, we must implement methods such as reformation and restraint.

There is no empirical evidence proving that capital punishment acts as a deterent. In fact most homicides and other serious offenses are committed by emotionally unstable people.

They do not consciously think of the possible penalties while under extreme fits of emotional stress. Nothing will deter the act if the emotional stress is violent and strong enough.

Many people mistakenly believe the cost is greater to keep a murderer in prison than to execute him. The truth is that the cost of the trial process for a capital punishment system is much greater than for a system without one.

In other words, "It's cheaper to keep her."

In Maryland, the lengthy legal review, without unusual delay, would take five to eight years, from original sentencing until the actual execution.

Presently, there are nine blacks, out of 12 men and two women sentenced to die in Maryland. However, any one of them could demand execution and start the death process again.

Maryland's gas chamber has not been used since the 1961 execution of a man guilty of a series of rapes and murders. But, the state legislature has come up with numerous proposed bills to broaden the death penalty in order to encompass more people.

As Maryland law now stands, a defendant convicted of first degree murder, can choose either a judge or jury to decide the case.

The death penalty is imposed when it is decided whether the "aggravating" circumstances (the reasons why the death penalty should be used, e.g. the defendant committed murder while in jail) outweigh the "mitigating" factors (the reasons why the death penalty should not be used e.g., the defendant never previously found guilty of a crime of violence).

Presently, there are 10 "aggravating" circumstances and only eight "mitigating" factors. In other words, there are 10 good reasons to kill and only eight good reasons not to kill the first degree murderer.

At least 12 of the bills to be proposed will add an eleventh aggravating circumstance, and

(Continued on page 22)

Elizabeth M. OLIVER

FOR ALL WE KNOW

Highlights of this week's news

FORMER DEL. LLOYAL RANDOLPH is back from Hopkins Hospital to recuperate at home, 3400 Woodbrook. A fine gentleman and astute politician, Del. Randolph (once a Delegate always a Delegate) is fondly thought of and admired by scores of persons. He has our best get - well wishes.

THE LATE MISS ANITA WILLIAMS is sorely missed by all Baltimore and especially the Catholics.

WHEN CARDINAL SHEHAN - went to Rome to receive the Red Beretta at the Vatican, he sent for Miss Williams to jet there to witness the ceremony from the front row.

She was sooo thrilled and came home bubbling with joy at the reception she received from the Pope and all the high ones of the Catholic world. She brought my daughter a crystal rosary blessed by the Pope.

IT WAS BECAUSE OF of Anita that so many of us entered our children in the Mission Helpers Day Nursery during W.W.II. She was the first in history to see that Catholic child care was free from discrimination.

ALTHOUGH Anita had pure white skin, she was dedicated to her race. A fashionable, pleasant lady she was always devoted to her church and the causes of her faith.

JOHN WESLEY CHURCH

BIG DOINGS are going on at John Wesley Methodist Church up there at the top of North Avenue. With Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Calvin P. Crosson and that fine congregation at the helm, look for the place to blossom out like a flower when Spring comes.

DID YOU SEE THIS

BALTIMORE SCHOOLS' Christmas program on TV was so great it ran cold chills down my spine. I was so proud.

The scenes were magnificent. The orchestra of black and white children, frocked in yellow jackets, missed not a note and the music was mellow and wonderful.

WHO IS THE DIRECTOR? I want to know and who arranged the orchestration? It was the best I've ever heard - the arrangement Jingle Bells.

AND, the School for the Arts presentation of the Snow Scene from the Nutcracker Suite, the ballet, was superb.

THE ALL - CITY CHORUS, you should have heard them, the lady director in white and the pianist and the soloists sing "Oh Come Let Us Adore Him." Regardless of season or time, I'd like to hear the All - City Chorus again.

SEN. MITCHELL'S PARTY IN ANNAPOLIS WEDNESDAY

Sen. Clarence Mitchell III, Del. Elijah Cummings and City Councilman Mike Mitchell entertained over 400 at a plush reception on the Senate Building's 3rd Floor.

SEN. MITCHELL says his Peoples Demo. Organization will repeat the affair complete with an educational tour of the General Assembly before the 90 days end April 11. Special event for school children.

THE CROWD was so packed and jammed, it was impossible to move anywhere in the State House, in the House of Delegates building or the Senate Building.

YOU HAD TO drive and drive around the circle and then end up parking at the Stadium and taking a shuttle bus to the State House. I estimate at least 6,000 persons were on the scene.

MITCHELL'S 39th District folks (some had never been to Annapolis) included persons from Flag House, Lafayette Courts, Latrobe Homes and others in his new South East Baltimore area.

Guests included Attorneys Clarence and Juanita Mitchell and State Central Committeeman Clarence Mitchell IV and Central Committeewoman Aileen Fisher, Atty. Joyce Ellis, Robert Turner, Johnnie Mae Thompson and Blanche Williams, Peoples Demo Org. officers. Others filled four buses and vans from various churches.

JACKSON - GARRETT GRAND BABY

ELATED are the Jackson and Garrett families at the birth of the first grandchild, Lujuan Joy Garret.

The pretty little girl (7 lbs. 9 oz.) was born Jan. 11 9:30 a.m. at Hopkins where her mother Joyce Jackson Garrett is a RN. Her proud father is Lewyn Garrett, son of William B. and Mildred Garrett, the Postal greats of Local 202.

Lewyn is an attorney with the Mitchel, Mitchell and Mitchell firm. The new youngster's other proud grandparents are Mary and William Jackson of Pomonkey, MD. Lucky Lujuan Joy.

IS THERE ANYONE who is not crazy about their grandbabies? My heart beats faster when I stop to think that within a few days I will get to see mine in Hawaii. Although they are great big kids and they laugh and call grandma (me) old fashioned, I still live for the moment I will see them again.

OPEN is a grandmother's wish that she could turn time backward and find them babies again, ready for bed in pajamas with feet and bedtime stories. Anyhow, when I get off the plane and hear them say, "There's Grandma," I'll be awfully happy.

GRANDCHILDREN have no concept of age nor time. All grandparents, they think, were born before the Civil War.

And, did you know that they live in dread of the day when Grandma or Grandpa will die? They all feel that day is "pretty soon." They look at me real funny and whisper, "Grandma, don't ever grow old."

I was walking on the beach one day with my grandson Chris who is quite a deep thinker. He picked up unusual shells, gave them to me and astonished me by the thoughts he has on life and time, the future and the past.

THE PAST is marked by what they learn in history books like the Civil War and JFK assassination. The future is all bound up in," When I grow up and start to make a living for myself."

THE PRESENT is school, friends, travel, hobbies, laughter and music.

THEATRE PROJECT

THEATRE PROJECT's new music theatre presents five concerts the weekend of Jan. 20, 21, 22 with showtimes at 8 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday and an extra 10 p.m. show Friday and Saturday nights . . . all at 45 W. Preston St. Call Carol Baish, 539-3091.

THE JAN. 20 - 22 weekend will close the Afro - American Brazilian Suite by Abdu Raschild Yahya in African, Brazilian and North American rhythms. Simply fabulous. Go, Go, Go.

ALICE WEST

A FOND FAREWELL to the late Alice Mabel Tyler West whose funeral was at St. James Episcopal Dec. 20, Fr. Wilsor officiating.

You will remember Alice as the 1973 Golden Age representative at the White House Conference.

RECALL she always had a kind word and such courteous considerate manners, a true lady. She was an ardent St. James Guild member. Born in Baltimore Feb. 4, 1901, Alice would have been 82 next month. Her parents were the late Basil and Alice Tyler.

DORA BACHUS SURVIVED BY 100

JOURNEYING 250 miles to Colerain, NC for the Dec. 31 last rites for Mrs. Dora Bachus were her great niece, Mrs. A. C. D. (Lillian) Vaughn and great - great)- nieces and nephews, Lynette and Cassandra Vaughn and Jenifer and Dodd Perry.

IN ADDITION TO THE Baltimore greats and great-greats, Mrs. Bachus is survived by four generations including 10 of her 13 children.

Counting the grands, greats, great-great, grands and nieces and nephews, she is survived by nearly 100 close kin.

MRS. VAUGHN reveals that the funeral at the First Baptist Church in Colerain was like a family reunion with many relatives from across the nation she had never met.

Mrs. Bachus, the daughter of John and Fannie Holley Mizelle, was born in 1981 and would have been 92 Feb. 22. Her husband was James Bachus.

Surviving are five sons, James Bachus and Charlie Bachus of Colerain; Madison Bachus, Clinton Bachus and Grant Bachus all of New York City;

Five daughters, Mrs. Fannie Davis, Mrs. Vivian Spruill, Mrs. Alma Wiggins and Mrs. Marie Moore all of New York City and Mrs. Evelyn Powell of Colerain;

Two brothers, Joseph Mizelle of Powellsville, North Carolina and Lorenzo Mizelle of New York City;

Tony Brown's Comments

Millions of reasons for Black History

There are those who will shake at the idea of celebrating February as Black History Month. Of course, if you tried to explain the necessity of motivating Black people with a sense of their past accomplishments, the same skeptics would laugh in your face.

But there are many who know otherwise. Take "We the People Organization," for example. Stanley Mackey, at 423 St. Marks Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11238, says that his group is dedicated to acknowledging and finding resolutions to the problem of segregated history for mass being used in the New York City school system.

"People" wants to desegregate the history curriculum of the New York City school system. "We believe that the standard history books used in New York City elementary and secondary schools gives an incorrect view of blacks in the annuls of American history.

"The Board of Education has acknowledged the problem. It has endorsed and purchased copies of Golden Legacy Magazine (paperback books centered on Black achievements) and 'Great Negroes Past And Present.' While this can be seen as a good move which possibly instilled faith and self-esteem in many Black children, at the same time it is wrong (maybe illegal) to have two sets of books, cover the same time periods, in the same country being placed in one book or another depending on the color of one's skin.

"This situation constitutes a segregation that cuts far deeper into the minds and hearts of little Black and White children than the racial complexion of a school could ever reach. Most White children don't get exposed to positive Black achievements, thus allowing some never to realize that Blacks, like everyone else, have earned a place in history and are worthy of their respect."

Avery specific example of how damaging the lack of your historical legacy is to your psychological development came to me in a letter. Let me share some of the thoughts that I received from James L. Christian of San Diego, California. He wrote about the television program that we presented, spotlighting the amazing young Black chess champions. He explained, "Chess has been an interest of mine for years now. I just wish programs like yours existed when I first started playing this wonderful and fascinating game.

"I remember the first tournament and the last one I entered at the ripe old age of 15. This tournament was the 1972 San Diego Junior Open for kids under 21 years-o-age, and it so happened that I was the only Black to enter. I did fairly well for a first-time participant by drawing two 'A' players. I was the talk of the event since nobody knew of me, plus I stood out by being the only Black.

"People at the chess club said that I had a great potential. But I great potential. All I understood at that time was that I was the only Black and felt nervous and out of place. Now I regret never playing in another tournament until I was in college, and my reasons for not playing in tournaments are quite senseless to me as I look back retrospectively. I enjoy playing this game of chess and would like to see more Blacks participating.

"Therefore, I praise you for your effort to expose our culture to excellent chess players such as Baraka Shabazz and the 'Bad Bishops' as stars well respected by chess participants as myself.

Stories like mine probably exist by the millions, but the important point to be made is that our people have to understand their potential to accomplish great things in fields not yet populated by our people."

Yes, Mr. Christian, stories like yours run into the millions—lost African Americans believing that their past is something to be shunned, rather than embraced. James Christian and millions of Black people present millions of reasons why we need Black History and Black History Month,

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL TV series can be seen on public television Friday, on Channel 22 at 11 p.m. It can also be seen on channel 67, Friday, at 11 p.m. Please consult listings.