CLOSE YOUR EYES AND READ THIS AD.

You've just experienced a part of Tiesa's life. Tiesa's blind. She can't read newspapers, watch television or go to the movies. But with the training and education she receives from The Maryland School for the Blind, she leads a meaningful and productive life. The Maryland School for the Blind is just one of the educational institutions to receive financial assistance from the State Department of Education. In 1984, the General Fund will contribute over 811 million dollars in aid to the State Department of Education. The State General Fund continues to provide over 85% of the operating costs of The Maryland School for the Blind.

In 1984, the public education agencies will spend more than 35 cents of every General Fund dollar and almost 30 cents of every dollar appropriated. Sixty nine percent of these funds is budgeted to the State Department of Education to be used primarily for the support of elementary and secondary education.

Public higher education in Maryland is provided directly by the State at the University of Maryland, Morgan State University, the six state universities and colleges, and St. Mary's College of Maryland.

We hope this opened your eyes to a part of what the General Fund contributes to public education in the State of Maryland.

THIS MESSAGE WAS PROVIDED BY THE MARYLAND STATE LOTTERY.*

MARVIN H. PERKINS, DIRECTOR

*The Maryland State Lottery contributed over 125 million dollars to the Maryland General Fund in Fiscal Year 1983.

SATURDAY LATE CITY EDITION

Baltimore Afro-American

WE ARE NOW IN OUR 92ND YEAR

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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- MARTIN LUTHER KING CELEBRATIONS—Friday Plus lists some of many events this weekend honoring King.
- FIRE TRAGEDY—A picture page the aftermath of one of this years most spectacular fires. Page 24.
- MORGAN STATE U.—New report slams university's fiscal accountability. See column 3.

A tree grows in Annapolis

AFRO photo by P. A. Greene

The Md. Black Caucus dedicated a tree planted in honor of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the State House lawn. Shown left to right: Margaret H. Murphy, Howard Rawlings, Elijah Cummings, Ruth Kirk, Nathaniel Oaks, Clarence Mitchell III, Larry Young, Christine Jones, Clarence Blount, Mary Adams and Nathaniel Exum.

Tree is planted honoring MLK Jr.

ANNAPOLIS — Maryland's Memorial Tree Planting Ceremony in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's 55th birthday was held on the grounds of the State House Thursday morning with Delegate Larry Young (D-39th) serving as master of ceremonies.

"This is a small token of remembrance for the greatest civil rights leader we have known. The goal of tree planting is to underscore America's appreciation for Dr. King's contributions to the nation and a commitment to his dream of a beloved community," said Young.

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... people are homeless following two:

FIRES!

Miracle of Quantico Ave. Tragedy of Pall Mall Rd.

By Tyrone Vines
AFRO Staff Writer

A miracle in the 2500 block Quantico Avenue Monday night saved 13 families from possible serious injury or death in the wake of a six-alarm fire that destroyed ten homes, damaging eight others, and leaving some 30 people homeless. Fire officials estimate the damage to the half city block area at $600,000.

One of the fire victims Bessie Kittrell, 22 years old, moved into 2525 Quantico Ave. only a week ago, who saw the inferno said, "It was like a bomb going off with a big puff of smoke and fire spreading everywhere."

Ms. Kittrell was one of the estimated 30 people who were left homeless after a G & M Oil truck exploded spraying gas, oil and flames onto 18 homes located on Quantico Ave. and Loyola Southway. This street runs parallel to Quantico Ave.

According to residents who saw the truck before it exploded into flames and city officials, the six-alarm fire started in the engine of the oil truck, which was making a delivery in the neighborhood around 10 p.m. Monday night.

Once the fire began to burn a stream of heating oil was ignited by the gasoline causing a river of flames. "I saw the flames and oil rolling down the alley with flames flying as high as four feet. You never expect something like this to happen, and when it does you can't believe it," said Ms. Elizabeth Williams whose home was located at the corner of the alley where flame engulfed gas and oil rolled past burning five parked cars.

Fortunately for Ms. Williams who lived at 2509 Quantico Ave., she had fire insurance to cover most of the damage done by the blazing fire. However, for the other victims of the inferno, they did not have proper fire insurance to cover their loses.

Ms. Sharon Barclift, 23 years old and her husband, Dallas, 26 years old, were among those victims who did not have fire insurance and subse-

Continued on page 2

AFRO photo by P. A. Greene

AMONG THE CHILLY RUINS—Two days after the tragic fires in the 2500 block Quantico Ave., workers from the Park Heights Development Corporation prepare to board up the charred remains. At top. Mrs. Elizabeth Williams stands with her son William Williams outside her gutted home. Mrs. Williams was one of the estimated 30 victims of this six-alarm blaze.

An awful blast brought disaster

By Racine S. Winborne
AFRO Staff Writer

It was a freak accident. One that helped put the 2500 block of Quantico Ave. on the map. A sudden explosion and its fierce chain reaction caused 14 families to flee from their homes out into a chilly late night air.

This reasonably narrow street, off the 4200 unit block of Park Heights Ave., achieved notoriety overnight in one brilliant flicker.

Not Harborplace, or the Science Center or nearby Television Hill, but a sorely depressed neighborhood of sordid eyesores and high unemployment, was the local hot spot.

It became the center of Baltimore's tourist attraction last Monday night when an awful heating oil blast sent streams of flammable liquid rushing down alleyways.

Columbus Brown came uptown from Payson St. for a peek. "I ain't never seen anything like this before. I'm glad nobody got hurt. If it had happened to me and I survived...I could only give credit to God."

After several glances, an investigative tour around the front and the back of the burnt out houses and, a bit of conversation with a fellow adventurer, a harsh noon day breeze ushers him homeward bound.

Today (Wednesday) two tedious days following the inferno, another voyeur hurries off to find a camera. Charles Syndor wants a more permanent record.

Its the kind of stuff folktales are made of and they're best reenforced with pictures. He too has ventured away from his home at 2016 W. Fayette St. to see what all the fuss is about.

Disasters tend to bring out all types of predatory people. The types who grab alternators from GM home heating oil delivery trucks to put beneath their hoods...or so the rumor goes.

An avaricous mind could erect a picket fence and charge $1.50 admission. That might add to the thrill of it all. People could take snapshots and get their clothes smelly just to say they were there. Two men did ask to have their clothes sniffed..."Can't you smell the smoke?"

They're souvenirs beneath them there rubbles. But for now its all free or so it was on Wednesday. House tours were available through any and all of the nine demolished houses and without supervision.

Aligned in a slightly symmetrical slope, each appears like a toy soldier

(Continued on page 20)

General Assembly begins session

By Arthur Johnson
AFRO BUREAU

ANNAPOLIS — Demonstrators led by local activist Carl Snowden rallied on the State House steps; state police paced the black and white checkerboard-like marble floor of the House's lobby; spectators and reporters jockeyed for position in and out of both chambers, and pages such as 17-year-old Lori Daley of Prince Georges County supplied coffee on the first day of the 1984 General Assembly session Wednesday.

Five black senators and 19 black delegates will participate in this session.

Both Speaker of the House Benjamin L. Cardin and Senate President Melvin A. Steinberg agreed in their opening day speeches that the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay, more state aid for public education, and pay increases for state workers are critical issues for the 1984 session.

Although each addressed separate the two legislative bodies in chambers, both legislators addressed the so-called economic recovery being touted by the Reagan administration and economic forecasters.

"Maryland is still rebounding from the nation's recession. The effects of

(Continued on page 20)

LOTTERY

The Lotto Jackpot prize for the drawing to be conducted on Jan. 14 will have a single annuity value of approximately $5,000,000.

The lottery numbers for January were:

PICK THREE

1-2-84	243
1-3-84	120
1-4-84	899
1-5-84	211
1-6-84	700
1-7-84	754
1-9-84	108
1-10-84	180
1-11-84	513

PICK FOUR

1-2-84	8187
1-3-84	8478
1-4-84	9711
1-5-84	1515
1-6-84	7388
1-9-84	3717
1-10-84	2447
1-11-84	3774

LOTTO

1-7-84 05 13 31 32 33 39

SUBSCRIPTION GAME

1-4-84	
6-digit	377779
5-digit	93511
4-digit	8228
1-11-84	
6-digit	740976
5-digit	78502
4-digit	5121

Mfume irks colleagues with postponement call

By Martin Evans
AFRO Staff Writer

Councilman Kweisi Mfume, D-4th, apparently irked several of his colleagues Monday evening when he called for a postponement of next Monday's council session in observance of the late Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. They said the request, which Mfume made on the council floor as the meeting came to a close, caught them by surprise and did not allow them time to consider it adequately.

Mfume could not convince any of the councilmembers to second his motion and it died without a vote.

Later, a number of them said the three-term councilman was trying to railroad his personal preference past the surprised body. They agreed some observance of the slain civil right's leader's life should be made, however.

"If I have to submit it myself, we will have something to commemorate his birthday," council president Clarence Du Burns said after the meeting ended.

Burns, whose sentiments reflected those of several others, said Mfume should have consulted his fellow councilmembers before the meeting to allow them to come up with suggestions of their own and work out particulars.

"He didn't tell a darn soul," Burns said.

Mfume said he did not raise the

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CIVILETTI PROPOSAL 3-A A MUST:

Quality education vs. higher taxes

By Martin Evans
AFRO Staff Writer

After promising to make education a high priority during his campaign for re-election, Mayor William Schaefer is trying to extract the same promise from Annapolis and win approval of the Civiletti Report's recommended five-year, $244 million boost in state aid to schools.

In what has been described as the most intense city lobbying effort in recent memory, the mayor has enlisted the help of a host of state and numicipal executives, education officials and lawmakers to push for the spending hike.

"I've never seen a greater degree of determination on his part," said Janet Hoffman, the mayor's chief lobbyist and 35-year veteran Annapolis observer.

At stake is the quality of education for the city's 112,000 elementary and secondary public school children and the 683,500 school children statewide.

The report, prepared by a governor-appointed panel which released its findings in November, recommended higher state aid to schools to equalize educational opportunities for children in rich and poor counties across the state.

The panel, chaired by former U.S. District Attorney Benjamin Civiletti, urged increases which would raise state spending on education $67 million next year and $244 million by 1989.

The panel also provided a lower spending alternative which would provide state schools with an additional $52 million next year and $190 million by 1989.

Under the higher spending plan, known as 3-A, Baltimore city would receive $23 million more next year and $60.8 million more by 1989.

The lower spending package, known as 1-A would bring only $19.3 million more to Baltimore next year and $45 million more by 1989, increases Schaefer has said are inadequate for the already underfunded city school system.

Schaefer said the city budget already is pushed to the wall and has to look to the state if it is to find more money to fund education.

Schaefer said the fat has already been cut from the city budget and the administration no longer raid other agency budgets to help the education department.

"Some agencies already are right on the brink of being ineffective if we cut them back any further they will lose their effectiveness altogether," Schaefer said Tuesday.

Although Governor Hughes and state lawmakers agree Maryland schools could use more money, the prospect of a tax increase is causing some hesitation among them.

Because several other big ticket projects, including a proposed $39

(Continued on page 9)

State audit lowers Morgan U. fiscal rating

By Paul Evans

Little more than two years after a Dec., 1981 state auditing team rated Morgan State University's fiscal accountability and compliance level as "poor," a just-completed audit has lowered the school's rating to "very poor."

A bluntly-worded, 11-page statement signed by Charles C. Piazza, a certified public accountant and legislative auditor, along with Robert C. Koslowski, also a Certified Public Accountant, and audit manager, detailing the December 13, 1983 assessment, has been sent to members of the General Assembly's Joint Budget and Audit Committee and William S. Ratchford, director, State Department of Fiscal Services.

"As a result, our current evaluation of the university's accountability and compliance level has been reduced from a rating of poor to a rating of very poor," the report summarized.

Morgan officials were quick to comment.

Speaking for university president, Andrew Billingsley, who was out of state, both Abraham Moore, vice president for financial and management services and Dr. Robert Smith, presidential executive assistant, said "The university has an obligation to tell the complete story. The report should not be interpreted as a barometer that the university is doing poorly. The university will be going out both to the legislature and the community and friends of the university to let it be known that the audit report does not reflect the general health and development of the university."

Moreover, Mr. Moore said, "The report does not take into consideration major fiscal management improvements and accomplishments here."

(Continued on page 9)

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