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All Eyes on Annapolis

With the opening of the Maryland General Assembly on Wednesday, our state capital is alive again. Parking is at a premium and facilities are taxed because the state's 188 lawmakers and their staffs have begun their annual deliberations.

The 47 senators and 141 delegates represent Baltimore City and the 23 Maryland counties. A decisive role will be played by the Legislative Black Caucus, headed by Baltimore City's Senator Clarence W. Blount. Its membership includes the 24 black members from both houses.

Key item on the agenda is funding for education. The Caucus already has expressed support for the Civiletti Commission plan which would earmark $77 million more next year alone for the state's public schools, with Baltimore City and the poorer counties receiving larger shares to correct past inequities.

There is similar interest in additional monies to enhance Community College of Baltimore and the state's traditionally black colleges, including Morgan State University, which has never received sufficient funds to attain true university status.

More aid for welfare recipients, particularly dependent children, a proposal to remove Circuit Court clerks from the elective process are other critical topics. Black voters will watch the latter closely since they secured such clerk jobs only through the ballot box.

Lawmakers will consider cost-of-living increases and pensions for state employees. And there is the much-heralded clean-up of the Chesapeake Bay, with environmental experts predicting a $15 million bill to remove the mud and slush.

Legislators will define their strategies after January 18, when Governor Hughes presents his 1984-1985 budget. In his state address, he will reveal which proposals he favors and how he would pay for them, with or without a tax increase.

Then, the legislators will buckle down. They will study and debate the issues, and, hopefully, resolve them before adjournment on April 9.

AFRO readers can help them meet the deadline to their satisfaction. All committee meetings and sessions of both houses are open to the public. Gallery seats are on a first come, first served basis.

Notice of committee hearings is posted in advance. Sessions' agenda is available to the public and additional information can be secured through a toll free number — 841-3810.

Citizens have a responsibility to attend sessions of the legislature, buttonhole their representatives, and lobby for bills they approve or disapprove.

Most elected officials welcome visits by their constituents. They learn first-hand whether their legislators are regular and prompt in attendance, and how they deliberate and vote on issues affecting them which could become law three months from now.

Miracle on Quantico Ave.

City Fire Department officials and the oil company owners are mystified by the cause of the oil truck explosion in the 2500 block of Quantico Ave. in northwest Baltimore shortly before ten o'clock on Monday evening.

Eleven two-story brick homes were gutted and 13 families left homeless in the six-alarm blaze which destroyed six parked cars. The area resembles a war zone.

This spectacular blaze differed from two recent fires in the city in which 12 persons died. There were no injuries or deaths on Quantico, which many call a miracle because of the intensity of the fire. Some 157 firemen were called before flames were under control three hours later.

As in the past month's fires, residents in the Pimlico and Park Heights areas near Quantico have rallied to help the homeless, providing food, clothing and housing. And many credit the quick thinking of the 27-year-old truck driver, Manuel Henderson, who alerted residents, called firemen, and helped evacuate residents.

G and M Oil Co. would be the first to admit to a miracle on Quantico. Their longtime customers would support the theory that someone special was watching over them. They point to the fact that ever since its founding 50 years ago, G and M has served the community, maintaining fuel oil accounts with churches — like Bethel AME, where 1,200 subscribers benefit from reduced fuel rates — and Catholic Charities, which helps people of limited means get service.

Just last month, Rudolph Gustus, founder and president of the black-owned company, was named Businessman of the Year by the Baltimore Marketing Association. It cited him for organizing the firm which now employs over 100 persons, and for his civic and community work, particularly maintaining special Sunday hours to accommodate small churches in our communities.

This week, following the pattern he has established from the beginning, G and M was on the scene at Quantico helping residents find temporary housing.

MLK View on Peace

(Martin Luther King, Jr. — Jan. 15-1929-April 4, 1968)

Sunday, January 15, 1984 marks the 55th birthday of slain Civil Rights hero, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His "I Have A Dream" speech is well known.

We reprint herewith an excerpt on his views on peace from his book, "Why We Can't Wait," published in 1963, five years before he was gunned down by an assassin's bullet: —

. . One aspect of the civil rights struggle that receives little attention is the contribution it makes to the whole society. The Negro in winning rights for himself produces substantial benefits for the nation. Just as a doctor will occasionally reopen a wound, because a dangerous infection hovers beneath the half-healed surface, the revolution for human rights is opening up unhealthy areas in American life and permitting a new and wholesome healing to take place.

Eventually the civil-rights movement will have contributed infinitely more to the nation than the eradication of racial injustice. It will have enlarged the concept of brotherhood to a vision of total interrelatedness.

On that day, Canon John Doone's doctrine, "no man is an island", will find its truest application to the United States.

In measuring the full implications of the civil-rights revolution, the greatest contribution may be in the area of world peace. The concept of nonviolence has spread on a mass scale in the United States as an instrument of change in the field of race relations.

To date, only a relatively few practitioners of nonviolent direct action have been committed to its philosophy. The great mass has used it pragmatically as a tactical weapon, without being ready to live it.

More and more people, however, have begun to conceive of this powerful ethic as a necessary way of life in a world where the wildly accelerated development of nuclear power has brought into being weapons that can annihilate all humanity.

Political agreements are no longer secure enough to safeguard life against a peril of such devastating finality. There must also be a philosophy acceptable to the people, and stronger than resignation toward sudden death.

It is no longer merely the idealist or the doom-ridden whacko who seeks for some controlling force capable of challenging the instinct mentalities of destruction. Many are searching. Sooner or later all the peoples of the world, without regard to the political systems under which they live, will have to discover a way to live together in peace.

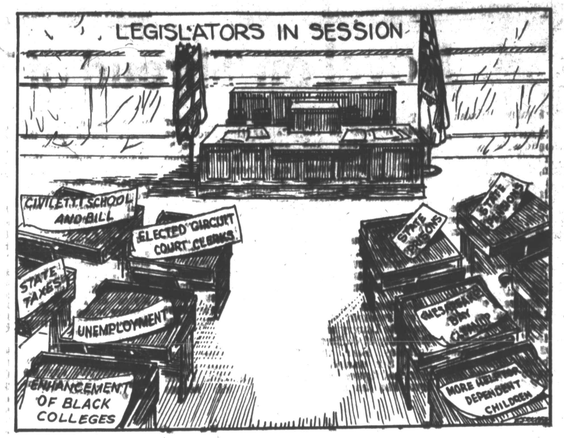
Man was born into barbarism when killing his fellow-man was a normal condition of existence. He became enslaved with a conscience. And he has now reached the day when violence toward another human being must become as abhorrent as eating another's flesh.

First '84 AFRO Baby

Our extra special New Year wish goes to Vanee Andrennetta Johnson. She was the first baby born in the city, weighing in at 8 lbs., 6 ozs., at 12:01 a.m., at Provident Hospital in northwest Baltimore.

Because she was a first and the first birth reported to this newspaper, she qualified for the AFRO's $25 cash prize. A year's subscription has been given her parents, Andrew and Linda Johnson, and her picture was published on the front page of our first issue of the year.

There are other firsts for our AFRO baby. She is the first girl in her family. We join her parents and her brothers, Vandre, 10, and Vance, 3, in wishing her a long and productive life. We hope she'll keep in touch with us through the years.



Parran J. MITCHELL

What Jesse's triumph revealed

For many months to come, the nation, indeed the world, will be talking about Rev. Jesse Jackson's magnificent diplomatic feat. He, indeed, is the hero of the hour.

Quite apart from the Reagan administration's rather cavalier handling of the Jackson mission initially, which caused quite a bit of egg on the face when Rev. Jackson succeeded, there are several interesting observations to be drawn from the rescue mission.

First, it appears that the Reagan administration, following the poor path of past administrations, does not have a foreign policy for Africa. It will rely solely on military intervention and the flexing of military muscle.

I remember so well participating in a meeting, initiated by Congressman Charles Diggs of Michigan, with then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Under sharp questioning, Kissinger finally admitted that the Nixon administration did not have a comprehensive African policy. Those of us in the meeting asked: "How is it possible to have an Asian policy; a European policy; a Latin American policy but none for Africa?" Mr. Kissinger, at the close of the meeting, stated he would try to develop an American policy for Africa. I do not believe he ever did.

Second, it is clear that the significant breakthroughs for Blacks in the Diplomatic Corps achieved under President Carter have been wiped out. Few, if any, Blacks serve in high diplomatic posts in this Reagan administration. Like prior administrations, save for Carter's, Reagan and his people do not realize that many, not all, Third World nations, notably the Black African nations have a feeling of kinship, perhaps even an affinity for Black Americans. Mayor Andrew Young, when he served as America's Ambassador to the United Nations, won for this nation an increased respect from the nations on the African continent. By the way, Andrew Young came closest to building an American policy towards Africa. The framework for that policy had been put together, at least in part, by Clarence Mitchell, Jr., during his period of service as an American delegate to the United Nations.

Finally, the Jackson triumph has made it patently obvious that America should never simply abandon the efforts to solve crises around the world by diplomatic negotiations — by continuing to talk even with those who appear to be intractable. To abandon normal diplomacy, to abandon talks with foreign powers, leaves only military options to be pursued, and these options have never secured a lasting peace nor have they reduced international tensions.

Rev. Jackson, thanks for bringing our patriotic young Lieutenant home from Syria, but also thank you for revealing some rather serious flaws in Reagan administration will learn from Jesse Jackson's victory.

Letters

UMAB Medical system/hospital

Dear AFRO:

I am writing to correct the erroneous information published in the article, "Labor Official Says: 'If University Stop, Goes Private Longtime Black Workers May Suffer.'"

The University of Maryland Medical System Hospital will enter a bill into the Maryland General Assembly to change its governance from an agency of the state government to a private, non-profit corporation. As stated in the article, the move will give the Medical System administrative flexibility enabling it to get funds from the private sector for needed renovations, and to purchase equipment.

This proposal would in no way jeopardize the employment security of University of Maryland Medical System employees. There are no layoffs anticipated and all employees maintain the protection afforded to them under the law by their State employee status particularly since Medical System employees remain within the University.

Separate governance will in no way impact on the tradition of community care. In fact, the legislation includes a statement of the mission of the Medical System, a major portion of which is a provision for health care for the community surrounding the hospital. Secondly, the legislation specifies that the maintenance of affordability is a major condition for transfer of assets to the new corporation.

The union indicates that the move will cover hospital deficits if it remains public. This is untrue. The legislature no longer provides operational or capital funding for the University of Maryland Medical System and has indicated that it will not provide any more funding in the future.

The article incorrectly states that certain classified employees will be contracted out to the private corporation on a year-to-year basis. This is false. All University of Maryland Medical System employees wishing to maintain their state status will maintain this indefinitely. Moreover, the legislation spells out the fact that employees choosing to stay state employees may maintain this right as long as they maintain their employment within the Medical System.

As far as providing care to the poor, the article does not discuss the issue of indigent care in Maryland, which is available in all hospitals through a component in the rate structure of the Health Services Cost Review Commission. All hospitals are allowed a percentage of their budget for this uncompensated care. The University of Maryland Medical System is no different than any other hospital nor will it necessarily differ in its ability to continue to cover a percentage of persons who have no source of payment.

JOANNE SHUPERR
U of M at Baltimore Medical System Hospital

Operation life

Dear AFRO:

On January 1st, State Senator John Douglass began the new year with a proposal to use the involuntary labor of welfare recipients in the Baltimore City Public Schools as security guards, cafeteria workers and janitorial aides. Dr. Anne Sizery of Superintendent Alice Kimberhughes office also appeared on the program and concurred with this dangerous plan.

Their proposal is a form of workfare which has already been proven to victimize both the employed and welfare recipients wherever it has been instituted. Recipients are forced to work below minimum wage without any job protection or benefits, thus displacing employed workers and reducing wage scales.

Workfare attacks both employed and unemployed. It attempts to pit each against the other in competition for a diminishing number of jobs. This is why it has consistently been opposed by both labor unions and welfare advocacy organizations as a form of involuntary servitude.

The Douglass-Sizery proposal will certainly meet such deserved opposition. Not only does their scheme contain the standard objectionable features of workfare, it is also put forward to legitimize the continued decay of public education in Baltimore. This would be its effect if the proposed program were to be implemented. It is thus an example of the problems concerned in education with which the Schaefer administration began its new term of office?

ANNIE CHAMBERS
Executive Director Operation Life

G. JAMES FLEMING

Lessons from Jesse Jackson's Humanitarian Pilgrimage

With the first waves of congratulation and celebration over, the very successful pilgrimage of the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson may be examined, to find the elements and ingredients which went into it, or which preceded it.

Lt. Robert O. Goodman, Navy bombardier shot down by Syria, has been freed; the world of television has fallen in love with his family and his parents, and the entire nation has had a "lift" out of what was once "Mission Impossible."

But, is there anything to learn from this "Let's-keep-our-fingers-crossed" effort?

First, it took courage on the part of Rev. Mr. Jackson, once the idea struck him—that spirit of "Nothing ventured, nothing gained" which, incidentally, he has demonstrated before in less spectacular projects than his trip to Damascus.

Countless men and women are struck with challenging ideas from time to time but, because of their fear of failure, of what might happen, they never followed through; they never aimed for the mountain top.

Fear and risk, or fear of risk, are twins. Risk looms in everything anyone attempts or does, but it is a 2-way street—the risk of achieving some great objective or the risk of falling flat on one's face, making a "fool" of one's self by over-reaching, to quote a term used by one editor.

Unfortunately, too many of us are more paralyzed by the fear of risk than we are stimulated by the risk of accomplishment. There are few who do not have a list of ideas and plans that never left mind or paper.

wearing as he does the several hats of clergyman, civic organizer, "race leader," and political candidate, the risks were great, the most disastrous, at this time, being his failure to bring about the release of the imprisoned Lt. Goodman.

In addition, His Majesty's opposition role as a Democratic Party protagonist would have been torpedoed; he most certainly would have lost attractiveness as an income-earning public speaker, and he might never have achieved his greatest ambition of becoming the unquestioned successor to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on whose staff he once served.

These characteristics—judgements— are often missing from the plans of many aspirants to leadership, even when they appear to be blessed with courage and other qualities.

Then, there is judgement. Mr. Jackson, regardless of some of his platform histrionics, is not quixotic or suicidal. One can be sure that he gave questioning thought to his first ideas of a "moral" and "humanitarian" mission to Damascus; that he had adequate research done; that he did a lot of "Feeling out" before taking the plunge to seek audience with President Hafez Assad of Syria. He also meditated and prayed. He next recruited his "brain trust," colleagues who had joined him at other times.

Another lesson from the Jackson mission is a lesson for the powers-that-be in government and the private sector. The daring and successful trip of Mr. Jackson is a reminder (if reminder be needed) that there is a largely ignored reservoir of training, of skill and of potential among Black Americans.

As might have been expected, however, those who saw the "humanitarian pilgrimage" only as an unofficial interfering nuisance, made much of the fact that Mr. Jackson could not boast of any formal training in diplomacy and no experience in official foreign policy matters. The truth is, for those seeking the truth, that Mr. Jackson has more of the necessary experience than most of the politically-appointed U.S. diplomats have had down the years. In his push for better employment and business opportunities, he has certainly shown that he has effective talents at negotiation.

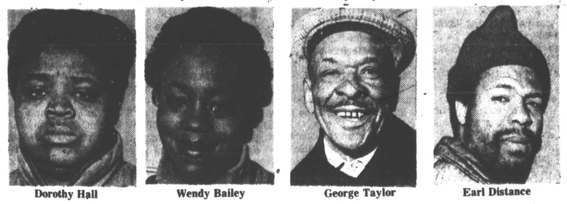
Another refresher for leaders—big and small— is the fact that leadership calls for versatility. There are times for oratory, times for name-calling and accusing and, for some, time for calling down the wrath of the gods. But, there are other times.

Rev. Mr. Jackson has shown that he is aware of the differences, in his gracious restraint in accepting credit for the release of Lt. Goodman; in his insisting that "there is enough credit for everyone to share," and in his warmly thanking President Reagan for not blocking his mission and for making available to him the resources of the State Department, both in Washington and through the U.S. embassy in Syria.

Lt. Goodman, in his release from POW imprisonment, handled himself like an officer and a gentleman, in the best sense. He was high-class all the way—and the Rev. Jesse Jackson was equal to his charge.

AFRO SURVEY

Do you have a fire escape plan?



Dorothy Hall — Wendy Bailey — George Taylor — Earl Distance

This week the question to the man and woman in the street was, "Do you have a fire escape plan?"

Dorothy Hall, 40, daycare worker, "No. We don't have one; however, I do think having one is important. You could be in the back somewhere and trapped and not know what to do. It's for that reason that I think there should be several of them."

Wendy Bailey, 20, student, "Not really. We do have a smoke detector. Having an escape plan is a good idea because it keeps you from burning to death. I just never thought about having one. I guess I'd jump out of whatever is closer to me."

George Taylor, 66, retired, "No. We don't have one. I don' think having one in a two story house is necessary, especially since I have a porch on both levels which could serve as escape routes. I can go either way, even jump out of a window and not get hurt too much if necessary."

Earl Distance, 27, cook, "Yes we have one. We don't practice it much. Just looking at what's been happening throughout the city, you can tell that one is needed, but I guess people just don't really think about devising one."

Mary Woods, 22, data transcriber, "I never gave having one much thought even though I think it's important. There's always a chance of a fire. An escape plan would help avoid panic. I just would try to figure out what to do when and if that moment arrived."

Russell Keene, 32, salesman, "Yes, we have a fire escape plan, and we do practice it occassionally. They really work, especially if you can continue to practice it regularly. I have a roll up ladder that can just be tossed out as well."

Maurice Brooks, 39, liaison, "Yes, there is a plan in our house, a pretty good one too. We have smoke detectors and all. We don't dry run it, but we orally discuss it. Such a plan is important. If you look at the statistics on damage done by fire, one could see it's good to have an escape plan."

Stephanie Brooks, 35, inspector, "Yes. I have a plan. I tend to go out the bedroom window right across the front porch. Fires are dangerous and serious. I'm aware of what's been happening around town lately. That's enough proof for me."

Mary Woods — Russell Keene — Maurice Brooks — Stephanie Brooks

PLAIN TALK: about diabetes

By Derrick Matthews, MD

Diabetes is a disease that most people have some vague familiarity with but usually an incomplete understanding. They know that it is associated with "sugar" in the blood, usually too much, but then people develop their own ideas about how that extra sugar gets into the bloodstream.

The full term is Diabetes Mellitis. It is the name of a condition wherein the pancreas, an organ in the body does not produce enough of a substance called insulin to process the body's glucose stores.

What causes diabetes? It is known to have a vague familial disposition, but a direct genetic cause is not known at this time. Studies are currently underway to link some cases of diabetes with certain viral illnesses. These studies await confirmation by other researchers.

Even if the link is shown it will probably still have a genetically related factor. Certain chemicals which can poison the pancreas, including excess alcohol, have also been implicated as causes of diabetes.

Approximately 1-2 out every 1,000 Americans has diabetes. The ratio is approximately the same in black Americans according to recent studies. The juvenile or insulin dependent form of diabetes accounts for about 15 percent of these cases. There is no statistical difference between males and females nor among various socioeconomic groups.

Overall there seems to be a greater frequency of first time diagnoses in the winter than in the summer. Whether this is because of the increase in viral infections in the winter has yet to be determined.

On the simplest level the aim of digestion is to break down food into building blocks (proteins mainly) and energy sources (fats and carbohydrates).

Most energy sources are ultimately processed into a simple sugar called glucose.

Glucose is not available in the market but is actually the form of energy storage which is carried around in the bloodstream. The pancreas manufactures a substance called insulin which helps get the glucose from the bloodstream into the cells of the body where it is used as an energy source.

If the pancreas does not create enough insulin to move all the glucose into the body's cells then the glucose level in the bloodstream starts to rise. This can result in serious consequences if not corrected.

Diabetes has two major forms. Non-insulin dependent diabetes occurs more frequently in adults in the later years, is usually very gradual in onset, has less debilitating symptoms and can often be treated with diet alone. Insulin dependent (juvenile onset) is the type that occurs more frequently in children. It requires insulin in the treatment. It can cause severe problems if untreated, even death.

The earliest symptoms of diabetes are polyphagia (frequent eating), polydypsia (frequent fluid intake), polyuria (frequent urination), and weight loss. These are all direct results of the increased glucose in the bloodstream (and decreased glucose in the cells).

As the glucose starts to rise above a certain level the kidneys start to remove it in the urine. It takes extra fluid, however, to do this. Thus the kidneys cause the body to urinate more frequently. This can result in weight loss and ultimately dehydration. Because of the extra fluid lost in the urine the body needs more fluid to replace what is lost. Thus the person starts to drink fluids more frequently. The cause of polyphagia is more complex. Because the insulin does not move the glucose in the cells of the body they become "starved". The body starts to crave more food to ease this feeling of "starvation". Thus a person with undiagnosed diabetes will eat more. The person loses weight as the body starts to use its own stores to provide energy to function. The symptom of frequent eating can be somewhat confusing to people. Because they see a person who is eventually diagnosed as a diabetic eating frequently they think that the excess eating caused the diabetes. In children, however, frequent eating is not a cause but an early symptom of diabetes. Diabetes is thus a condition which is characterized by a high level of glucose in the bloodstream due to a lack of insulin which is produced by the pancreas. There is a characteristic tetrad of frequent fluid intake, frequent urination, frequent eating, and weight loss which should raise a high index of suspicion. While there are a lot of theories as to the ultimate cause of this condition investigations have not defined it as of yet. (to be continued).

DERRICK K. MATTHEWS

War, economic resurgence, marriage, life itself; all these matters can be reduced to only a few basic strategies, if anyone is to win at these or any other of life's endeavors. Regardless of the matters at hand, understanding that their success is dependent on the understanding and proper execution of certain age old principles is the crucial first step toward victory.

East Baltimore's rebirth is a case study in how to apply the elements of success to the comeback of, in this case, an urban environment that for a long time seemed mortally wounded. The factors fueling the resurgence were and are internal to and external to East Baltimore.

This is true of any situation because life does not go on in a vacuum and forces are always changing and shifting in their relative importance, one to the other, and to the larger "outside" world.

For East Baltimore and its efforts at new-life, the larger outside factors can be summed-up as the economic, legal, and racial facts of life; and the degree to which they exerted themselves in the late fifties, early sixties, and beyond, to the present day, on the people who live in East Baltimore and on those people who live somewhere else but have definable interest in East Baltimore.

The internal factors involved in the renewal of this piece of American city turf are economic, legal, and racial too, but one must add to these a political component and the mysterious to understand factor of leadership. With these elements present and with the fortuitous blessings of timing, the stage was set in East Baltimore to wage a war for control. What was needed was someone who could take the elements and deploy them to victory. For, it is one thing to have the elements of victory; it is another thing, entirely, to be able to use them to win.

Someone; a leader, was now required to make a potential victory a victory in fact. East Baltimore had such a leader and he was blessed with a core of officers almost as skilled as he. The strategy that produced the East Baltimore victory was a child of economics and political guerilla warfare. When the enemies of East Baltimore were advancing, the Easterners, under their brilliant leader, would retreat to fight another day. When the enemy retreated, as he was often lulled to do, the Easterners advanced and harassed him.

When strong, the Easterners gave the intentional appearance of being weak. When weak, they mustered the ability to look strong. In confabs with the enemy

East Arising

By Anthony Armstrong

where some would have tried to impress with how smart they were, the Easterners would appear to be dumb. In matters that they were not supposed to know anything about, the Easterners made sure they were well informed and fully aware.

The Easterners made sure they knew themselves and the enemy; the enemy, on the other hand, was often so arrogant that he never saw the need or value to learn much about them. Beside, the enemy believed he had excellent spies, then, because he had always had excellent spies before. The Easterners' leader, knowing this, discovered who the spies were (in East Baltimore enemy spies were and are relatively easy to know). Those he could make counter - spies he did; those he could not were either fed false information (the Easterners are better at this than anyone) or were eliminated from any position where they could learn anything that might help the enemy.

The Easterners leader knew he could eventually gain victory in his efforts to free East Baltimore from economic and political control by outsiders because he was smart enough to learn how the enemy had freed himself of his economic and political imprisonment, many years before.

He knew that if he repeated what they had done, the way they had done it, that he too could enjoy the same success they had managed to produce. This was so because the system of "getting-up" had not changed; only the players had.

So, the Easterners, under their general, laid their plans. Plans that were based on the rightness of what they were doing; plans that had the support of the people. They worked tiresously night and day, using timing and events in the most opportunistic way; knowing that war is based on deceit and opportunity.

Because they knew their terrain, psychological and otherwise, the Easterners knew when to move in the wide, as well as the narrow, passages of the minds of the people. The Easterners and their leaders had wisdom, sincerity, courage, and the singleness of mind to stay on track. Also, they were incorruptable largely because their dreams of victory were bigger than their pockets.

Lastly, they knew who and when to fight, how to use their forces, and how to maintain and develop the resources they needed to go on fighting. And they understood money.

NAACP REPORT:

Adequate funding for Morgan U.

By Magdalene Fennell

President Reagan has concluded that discipline, not money, is needed in our schools. The Civiletti Commission reached the opposite conclusion and presented two plans for making per pupil expenditures in the city equal to those of the state's richer subdivisions.

During his 1983 campaign Mayor Schaefer indicated that if reelected, he would make education one of his priorities. With local, state, and national leaders taking a look at our schools, 1984 promises to be the year of educational reform.

The NAACP hopes that reform will take place not only at the elementary and secondary levels but at the higher education level, as well. This, too, is the hope of groups like The Friends of Morgan Legal Defense Fund. Both they and the NAACP consider the university's most pressing need to be adequate funding.

The Friends of Morgan Legal Defense Fund is an organization composed of a cross section of Marylanders interested in seeing Morgan move forward. Orginally, the purpose of the group was to support Morgan through lobbying, recruitment, and fundraising.

Convinced, however, that the state will continue to deny Morgan adequate funding, the Friends of Morgan have amended their purpose. Now their "primary purpose is to raise money for the promotion, investigation, and legal prosecution of class action matters emanating from a failure of the State to provide equal educational opportunity to Morgan State University."

In a press release last November, the Friends cited funding inequities that make legal action necessary. Over the past few years only $700,000 has been spent to enhance black colleges and universities. The State Board of Education recommended that approximately 10 million be budgeted for that purpose.

As a result of an NAACP suit in 1969, the State of Maryland was found to have a dual system of higher education. It was ordered to submit a five year plan for desegregation of that system; Nevertheless higher education in Maryland is still segregated.

A fact sheet distributed with the Friends of Morgan press release accused the Governor and the General Assembly of using the Full Time Equivalency funding formula to destroy Morgan. Under this formula a student must carry at least 12 credit hours with no remedial courses to be classified as full time. In addition, two part time students with no remedial courses equal one full time student. Because Morgan takes students from disadvantaged backgrounds, many of them need remedial courses. These students are not considered in the funding formula even though they may be taking 12 or more credit hours.

Since the faculty is counted according to the number of full time students, the Morgan faculty is reduced. Classes are overcrowded and teachers are overworked. Despite a request from the Office of Civil Rights that the Full Time Equivalency funding formula be set aside for black colleges and universities, the state continues to use the formula. The state also ignored the Federal Government's recommendation that Morgan be awarded the sole engineering school in the Metropolitan area.

Not long ago the opportunity to desegregate higher education in Maryland presented itself when the State Board of Higher Education recommended that Morgan be given a Bachelor's degree program in civil and electrical engineering. Such a program in the City would attract non black students, provide Baltimore residents access to engineering, and increase the number of black engineers. The opportunity evaporated in November when SBHE caused the Friends of Morgan to change course. "It is our position that unless the Governor and the General Assembly follow the recommendation of the SBHE and give "highest priority" in fully funding the establishment of an engineering school at Morgan State University, we will have no choice but to seek legal redress."

Here's what the friends of Morgan suggest you do to support Baltimore's black university: know the facts about Morgan; share the facts with friends and organizations to which you belong. Write the governor, the members of the General Assembly, Maryland's Congressional delegation, and Attorney General Stephen Sachs; request full funding for Morgan. Encourage family and friends to explore Morgan's curricular offerings. Invite a speaker from The Friends of Morgan to make a presentation to your community. With the help of alumni, students, Faculty, and other concerned citizens, 1984 can become the year of adequate funding for Morgan State.