For All We Know

By Elizabeth M. Oliver

Highlights of January news

(Ryales Photo)

THE FATE OF THE BLACK FAMILY, is symposium sponsored by the Board of Trustees and director of the Pratt Library to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, had as its subject "Has the Black Family Survived the Civil Rights Movement with panelists City Councilwoman Iris Reeves, Dr. Pauli Murray, author; John Ferron, director, Baltimore Community Relations Commission and Rev. P. M. Smith, Huber Memorial United Church of Christ, attorney and administrator of the Citizens Coalition for Urban Survival. Dr. Irving Hamer, headmaster of the Park Heights Street Academy was moderator.

Distinguished panel discusses the Black Family

The Sun, a Baltimore newspaper, was soundly taken to task Sunday by a panel of experts who by credentials, experience and high academic achievement represent persons in true authority.

The symposium sponsored by the board of trustees and director Anna A. Curry of the Pratt Library, held a capacity audience spellbound as facts and figures flayed the Sun's points on the Black Family as inconclusive, irrelevant and basically unfair.

The matter of the Sun series on the state of black citizens today, came up as the panel discussed the fate of the black family under the title "Has the Black Family Survived the Civil Rights Movement?"

APPLAUSE

Interrupted frequently by sustained applause, the panelists spoke from well prepared papers emphasizing their own long careers as experts:

Dr. Pauli Murray maintained the plight of the black family is not to be separated from that of any other family in that the conditions today are a harbinger and symbol of what has happened worldwide.

Applause came when she noted that white families have single parents in as great a ratio. Emphasizing, she cited the fatherless Kennedy families whose fathers were murdered, John F. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy.

Dr. Murray cited a recent AFRO article (For All We Know) which noted that the imbalance of white men to white females has caused the women to seek black men and the same imbalance among black men now finds a trend of black women to seek white men for mates.

Rev. Dr. Murray, an internationally famed writer, is a retired Episcopal priest, Yale Law School juris doctor with 10 honorary doctorates from Yale, Radcliffe, Dartmouth and other prestigious colleges. She is the Madamoiselle Magazine Woman of the Year as well as that of the National Council of Negro Women and a Hall of Fame member of Hunter College.

Listed in Who's Who, her accomplishments are legend. Her books and articles on the black family and the black woman consume many typewritten pages, are considered "The Bible" of students on those subjects.

NO DIFFERENCE

John Ferron, also a learned panelist, is director of the Baltimore Community Relations Commission a native of Baltimore. Member of a family distinguished through several generations, he recalled the pattern of the black family as "not in such a state as the Sun articles expressed" and no different than other family patterns the way things are today.

Rev. P.M. Smith, of the Citizens Coalition for Urban Survival, attorney, noted minister and lecturer ignored the white family plight and gave the remedy for whatever the black family suffers as, "It lies in what we can do for ourselves."

Claiming there was a time when black persons may have thought, "The other man's ice is colder than our own", he urged, "We must choose a better set of standards, live, be strong and love our own."

City Councilwoman Iris Reeves also accented the high achievements of black citizens which she said are equal if not stronger than others. She contended that a look at realism reveals much more than the negative view.

Dr. Irving Hamer, a Harvard graduate and headmaster of the Park Heights Street Academy, posed the question which brought sustained applause, "What is it about the black family that it is so different that makes it warrant headlines?"

All agreed in these times of crises "a family is a family".

OTHER NEWS

MR. AND MRS. ARTHUR ROSENBOROUGH of Sequoia Avenue have announced the engagement of their daughter Monique Tenera to Rev. Harold A. Carter Jr., son of Rev. and Mrs. Harold A. Carter Sr. of Shiloh Baptist Church. The formal announcement is set for Saturday with the engagement party in the beautiful setting of the bride-to-be's home.

(Ryales Photo)

PRATT LIBRARY DIRECTOR Mrs. Anna A. Curry, received the AFRO's distinguished service award last week. The Enoch Pratt Library System which she has headed two years served 1,540,000 persons in 1983. The 32 branches and the Main Branch (downtown Baltimore) which are under her administration, have 450 employees. Established in 1886, Pratt Library has 2 million volumes and ranks among the top libraries of the nation.

(RYALES PHOTO)

REV. DR. PAULI MURRAY — Episcopal priest, educator, lawyer, author, journalist.

THE SERVICE the Red Cross gave to victims of the Pimlico fire that destroyed scores of homes has been noted in the news stories around the world. The unusual fires set by the explosion of an oil truck commanded headlines second to none of the Yule season disasters but the praises of the Red Cross were indeed noteworthy. Nearly exhausting all its funds laid low by many other tragedies, the local chapters of the Red Cross came through nevertheless and deserved all commendations.

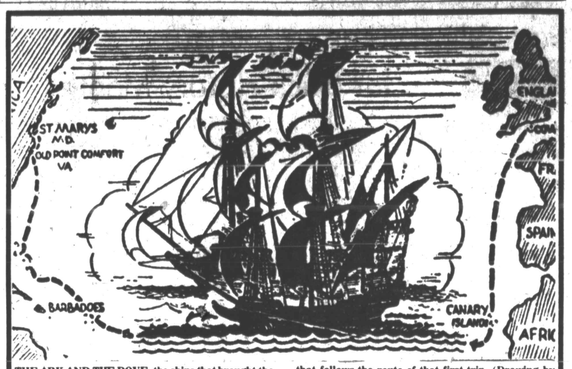
OLD WESTERN HIGH catty-cornered from the Greyhound Bus Station, nearby the AFRO at Center and Howard, will soon become an apartment house with 98 luxury apartments-and-two parks nearby called Centre Plaza.

THE NEW COMPLEX at Lexington and Howard will include offices and take in the present Hutzlers.

A new post office is coming on Lexington St. between Greene and Pearl Streets.

(Joyner Photo)

MARYLAND CONGRESSMAN PARREN J. MITCHELL in Hawaii with a group of six U.S. legislators during the Congressional Yuletide vacation, was guest of Mrs. Marsha Rose Joyner and her husband Kenneth Joyner for a series of receptions and dinner parties.



THE ARK AND THE DOVE, the ships that brought the first settlers to Maryland, are shown resting on a map that follows the route of that first trip. (Drawing by Thomas Stockett)

Black pilot sailed first ship to Maryland

BALTIMORE — John Price and Mathias DeSousa were among the 32 passengers on the two ships, the Ark and the Dove, when they brought the first white settlers to Maryland in 1633.

References to the names and the race of these two pioneers have been found in the 300-year-old provincial court records known as the "Archives of Maryland."

A third black man, Francis Peres, is listed as coming to the colony in 1635.

Of these three black men, DeSousa was most prominent. He was a pilot, a sea captain and a trader.

DESOUSA: A CAPTAIN

In his volume, "Captains and Mariners of Early Maryland" Raphael Semmes, librarian of the Maryland Historical Society, states, "During the fall of 1642, Mathias DeSousa was chosen by Alexander Fulton to go in his pinnance as skipper and trader to the Susquehannocks," now (Susquehanna).

DeSousa was looked upon as a man of much tact and common sense, for after stating that traders from Virginia and other places had treated the Indians in such a way that they were hostile and dangerous, he says that DeSousa was one of the few traders licensed by St. Marys Council to trade with the Indians.

Because of the trouble that other traders had made with the Indians, the celebrated Catholic Father Andrew White, who was regarded as the head of the colony had urged that there be few traders and those permitted to trade be selected with care.

SOUSA HIRED CREW

The account of Semmes, which may also be found in the Archives of Maryland states that DeSousa was appointed by a Mr. Fulton to hire men for the voyage.

One of those hired was John Prettiman, white, a planter of St. Michaels, whom DeSousa agreed to pay 200 pounds of tobacco per month.

The voyage took two months and on the return, DeSousa made a report in which he said that Prettiman helped him save his ships and his crew from destruction by the Susquehannock Indians.

MATHIAS DESOUSA was one of the most prominent of men on the first voyage to Maryland.

THEY LANDED AT ST. CLEMENT'S ISLAND (now known as Blackstone's Island) in St. Mary's County on March 25, 1634. (Drawing by Thomas Stockett)

The above and much, much more will be in the Special March Edition of Black History to celebrate Maryland's 350th anniversary

More than 40 corporations and businesses are combined with individuals churches and other institutions as sponsors of the first complete History of Black Citizens of Maryland.

The Special AFRO edition is scheduled for March printing and slated to mark the 350th Anniversary of the state of Maryland.

A classic edition, the first of its kind, will be published under the direction of the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation, Inc., with Mrs. Mary V. Wiseman, treasurer.

The Foundation is a non-profit, tax exempt group created under the laws of Maryland to provide resources and financial assistance to the Maryland State Commission on Afro-American History and Culture.

The Foundation aided the development of the old Mount Moriah Church into the Banneker-Douglass Museum of Afro-American Life and History at 84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, Md. The state provided over $1 million for the restoration of the historic building.

The Maryland State Commission on Afro-American History and Culture is the only one of its kind in the United States. Carroll Greene Jr. is executive director and Museum curator.

The Special Edition on Black History of Maryland will be circulated to the AFRO's more than 240,000 weekly readers in every state including Hawaii and Alaska. In addition it will go to the U.S. servicemen who have subscriptions on bases around the world and other subscribers in foreign countries.

Extra copies of the never-before Special Edition of Black Maryland History will be available for distribution during the year at the Banneker-Douglass Museum. Also, it will be available for research and reference in public libraries throughout the United States.

The private and corporate sector finds distinct interest in the vast collection of black history since black citizens have played a living part in the economic security and growth of the state of Maryland from 1634 to the present.

This permanent, visable and profitable section of the Maryland population includes registered voters, home owners, and respected persons in all walks of life, in the cities and towns of the 23 counties. Their accomplishments continue to be listed among the greatest in the nation.

The crisp, full-color edition gives accounts of Marylands finest heroes, scientists, statesmen, inventors, musicians authors, educators, lawyers, physicians and craftsmen. The enormous listings assure that Maryland's black citizens have truly made contributions to progress of the state through to the Third American Century.

The Maryland black marketplace encompasses the resources of more than 1,000,000 persons.

Your tax-exempt of the Black History of Maryland publication will insure your corporation will be listed in a distinguished group that has served the past and is linked with the present and future.

ADDRESS: MRS. MARY V. WISEMAN, Treasurer
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AFRO Profiles:

A. Dwight Pettit

By Arthur Johnson
AFRO Staff Writer

During A. Dwight Pettit's college days at Howard University, H. Rap Brown was a fellow team member, and Stokely Carmichael was a schoolmate.

Today, Pettit's outer office photos show him with internationally known figures such as Democratic Presidential Candidate Jesse Jackson, former President Jimmy Carter, Muhammad Ali, late Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, and even in his role as Floor Whip at the 1976 Democratic Convention.

For Baltimore Attorney A. Dwight Pettit politics and trying to effect social change have been commonplace in his life since he was a teenager when "My dad and I were then a team of two to integrate."

The only child of Baltimoreans George D. Pettit, an electrical engineer and scientist at Fort Holabird, and Mildred Pettit, a housewife and beautician, Pettit grew up in the Holabird area and in Turner Station.

When George Pettit was transferred to work at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Dwight Pettit's more than 25 year involvement in the civil rights struggle began. When young Pettit was denied admission to Aberdeen High School because of race in 1958, the elder Pettit filed suit, Pettit vs. Board of Education of Harford County. The Pettit's were successfully represented in U.S. District Court by the NAACP and won the case in 1960 when young Pettit was finally admitted after attending Lemmel Junior High while awaiting the resolution of the suit.

"I was the only black male in entire school," Pettit recalls, "but athletics has a strange way of making a transition among the student body."

Pettit became a member of several athletic teams and school organizations and was elected as the most popular male in his graduating class.

"The barriers were really broken down in two years. Those kids saw black folks didn't have tails and that we could study, perform and achieve."

Despite his newly made inroads against segregation and racial stereotypes, Pettit passed up the opportunity to play football at the University of Maryland, and attended Howard University instead, because "I wanted to get back to a black case. I chose Howard because it had a law school and because of its historical perspective and history of civil rights. I had the opportunity to be totally involved in civil rights and I fell in love with the atmosphere."

While at Howard, Pettit picketed and demonstrated with his classmates and teammates like Stokely, Eldridge and Rap, while completing his major in political science and minor in psychology.

Upon graduation in 1967, he entered Howard's law school, graduating in 1970.

"I loved being at Howard," Pettit says again.

In the ensuing years he was employed as a trial attorney in the national office of the Small Businessman Administration, received a Second Lieutenant commission in the U.S. Air Force, and even handled his father's 1972 case, Pettit vs the U.S. when hsi dad was denied a promotion because of his involvement in the civil rights struggle.

"The case went to the U.S. Court of Claims and was discussed by the Supreme Court," says Pettit who won the case by a 4-3 decision.

The case received national media attention and was the first case to set back-pay standards, according to the attorney.

Another landmark case initiated by Pettit was Pettit vs Board of Law Examiners of Maryland.

"I was upset about the Maryland State Bar. Only one black at a time was being passed." The suit, which alleged that there was discrimination in the bar, was the first case in the country to challenge a state bar, he says.

Although the case was technically unsuccessful, the spotlight placed on the exam during litigation here and in other states caused changes in the process such as a multi-state exam and the admission of larger numbers of blacks to the Maryland bar, according to Pettit.

In 1973 he began 5 years of private practice with Attorney Mitchael Mitchell (now 4th District City Councilman) and in 1978 he opened his own practice which is now located in the rear wing of his Ashburton home.

Besides sitting on the boards of such organizations as Provident Hospital, United Way, Pettit was also president of Monumental City Bar Association for two years.

"I was very very active in the fight for several circuit court appointments, demanding black participation in the judicial system."

In December, he threw his hat in the political ring for the second time (the first was an unsuccessful bid to oust William Swisher from the State's Attorney's seat in 1978).

While his first bid was for the seat of a white politician who was extremely unpopular with the black community, this time Pettit has taken on one of the most respected black politicians in Maryland politics, U.S. Congressman Parren J. Mitchell (D-7th).

"I was always interested in a congressional seat in Baltimore," says Pettit, but word from the political grapevine had it that Mitchell had indicated that he was "tiring, frustrated" and might possibly be retiring.

"Several people in the community called me wanting to know what would my position be based on the information. That was the impetus that gave me the opportunity to give serious consideration," explains Pettit.

Two days before Congressman Mitchell announced that he would run for a seventh term, Pettit held a news conference in his law offices and announced his candidacy.

"Once I made a decision that I was interested in the seat, I didn't think it was in the interest of the community to vacillate (on the decision)."

Pettit stresses that his candidacy is not a criticism of Cong. Mitchell's performance, but "I do hear people saying, 'Go for it!' Not that anyone's against P.J., but certain needs in the 7th District have left voters very frustrated.

"Maybe new blood, new aggressiveness, a new spirit in terms of delivering jobs and services, housing and educational benefits is needed.

"The 7th District, along with the city in general, has the highest statistics in unemployment, and the housing situation is not one of the best in the country. There is no great injection of industry and jobs, but I'm not saying it is the fault of Parren," says Pettit.

Presently Pettit is putting together an organizational structure for his campaign — "studying federal election law which is very very complicated. Before you jump out there and start shaking hands you have to do your homework."

In addition to his private practice and the initation of his campaign, he was recently assumed the vice chairmanship in the state for Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign.

"In one way it (his chairmanship) can be a division of energies, but I see both as being very important to Baltimore City. Let's just say it will be a consumption of more energy."

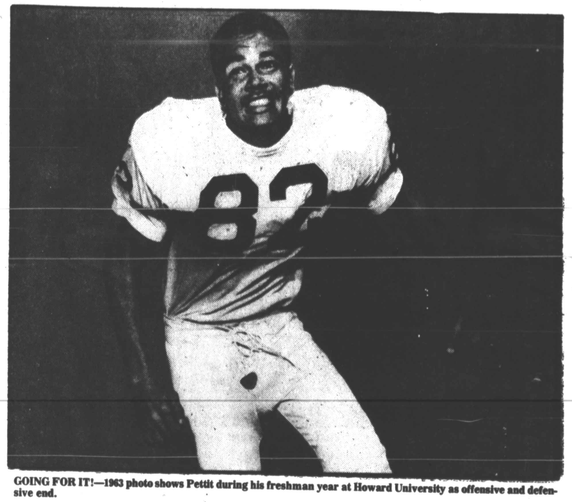
Pettit views the Jackson campaign as "so crucial that it cannot be neglected. I see no inconsistencies in me being a candidate at the same time."

The Jackson candidacy will serve as a "stimulus for disenfranchised people to be awakened and get involved in politics," and place Jackson in a "tremendous bargaining position (at the Democratic Convention)."

After viewing the recent three-hour Democratic presidential candidate debate, Pettit believes "America is ready to respond to him as a legitimate candidate."

Of his own campaign Pettit hopes to dispel the notion that he is criticizing Cong. Mitchell or jeopardizing black possession of the congressional seat.

"We don't have but one Black congressman from Maryland and as long as we don't risk losing that seat, I find no problem whatsoever in people aspiring to succeed or take over from Parren as long as we don't endanger that seat."



GOING FOR IT!—1963 photo shows Pettit during his freshman year at Howard University as offensive and defensive end.

IN NEW YORK with the 53-member Maryland Delegation to the National Democratic Convention in 1976 were Pettit and his wife Barbara. Pettit served as floor whip for Carter forces during the convention.

(AFRO Photo by F. A. Greene)

ALL SMILES—Being a successful attorney, a congressional candidate, and vice chairman of Jesse Jackson's Maryland campaign give Pettit three reasons to smile.

ATTORNEY A. DWIGHT PETTIT and his lovely wife Barbara.

FAMILY PORTRAIT—The Pettit family includes Pettit, Alvin, Jr., 13, Nashisha, 10, and wife Barbara.

JAN