Baltimore Afro-American

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# Ballot Endorsements

The AFRO encourages all of its readers to think carefully about all the questions on the November ballot. Many of the questions, if adopted, would make significant alterations in the life of this city. They should not be taken lightly.

We urge readers to vote YES on all the loan questions. On the highly controversial Question P, for an elected school board, the AFRO will state its position at a later date.

On Question M, we urge our readers to vote YES. We feel that a minimal residency requirement for City Council persons of one year in a particular district before running for a council seat is reasonable and will prevent persons with no knowledge of the district from representing it at City Hall.

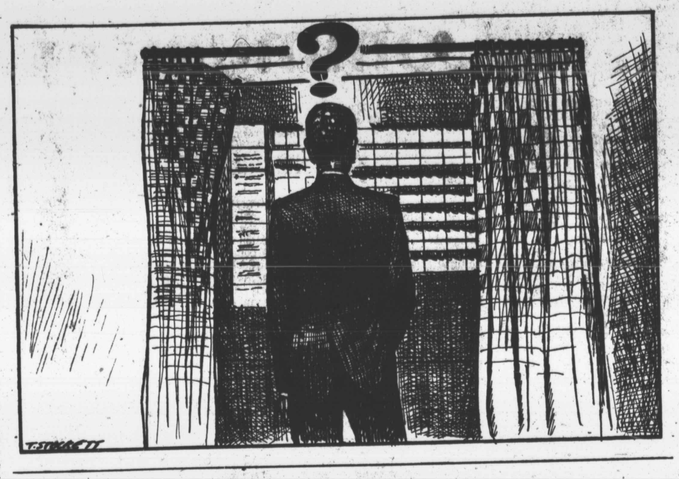
The AFRO urges readers to vote NO on Question N. The present charter provision that states that a person must be a resident of the city for ten years before becoming mayor is too long a time, but the amendment offered by this ballot item for a single year of residency becoming mayor is too brief. A happy medium can be found that will ensure that someone with a working knowledge of the city will be elected.

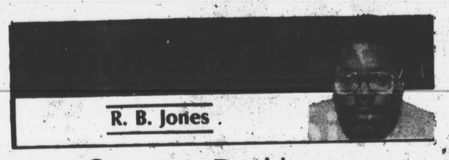
The AFRO urges readers to vote for Question P which will end the requirement that money for sports complexes in Baltimore limited to use at Memorial Stadium. If Baltimore is to continue to be a major league sports city, it will have to face the fact that a new stadium is needed.

Question Q is a charter amendment that would have the present six council districts broken up into 16 single - member districts. Proponents say that it will improve representation on the council and give citizens more input by making their councilpersons more accountable.

The AFRO urges its readers to vote NO because the gerrymandering process could result in less black representation in the council than exists now. The mayor would draw up the plan and the present council would have to approve it. Presently, blacks who are a majority population in this city have only six of the council seats, and they could easily be outvoted if a harmful plan was brought to a vote in the council.

Whether a reader agrees with this paper or not, the AFRO urges him or her to exercise the precious right to vote.





R. B. Jones

## Crossover Doublecross

Treachery is an ugly thing. The names of traitors have come to us through history epitomizing contempt and dishonor, such as Benedict Arnold, Quisling and now the latest edition, Blacks for Reagan.

Black people in this country have suffered countless betrayals, ranging from the slaves who informed on Denmark Vesey's slave conspiracy to blacks who acted as informers and provocateurs in black organizations during the civil rights and black power eras.

There are countless traitors in the way of black progress today. Some of them are national figures such as Warith Muhammad, leader of the American Muslim Mission and others are local, such as Operation Crossover, now known as Black Marylanders for the President.

Warith Deen Muhammad recently endorsed Ronald Reagan for reelection. His endorsement of the incumbent is not surprising to those who have observed his career since he succeeded his father as leader of the Nation of Islam.

He inherited the leadership of a religious black nationalist organization. The Nation os Islam had built up an economic base under his father, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, encompassing a meat packing plant, printing facility, farms, bakeries, restaurants, supermarkets and a fish import business.

The Nation of Islam had its own religious ideology, tailored to what it perceived to be the needs of black people in America and it had its own program for black liberation. It taught that the establishment of a separate black nation, composed of five southern states, was the answer. It taught self-reliance and pride. The Nation of Islam taught that America's history of oppression precluded any show of patriotism.

All that changed under Warith Muhammad who set the organization on the path of conformity. Conformity in America means being acceptable to white folks and non - threatening. He had the organization, which was then called the World Community of Al-Islam in the West, celebrate the American Bicentennial. He called it World Patriotism Day.

If our slave ancestors or his own father were capable of looking down on such a slight they would have yelled shame. It was a pathetic sight to see an organization that was originated because of the ruthless oppression of black people in America's inner cities, celebrating the freedom not of black people, but of their former slavemasters and present oppressors.

The final destination on the road that Warith Muhammad has his once proud organization on; is; right - wing, neanderthal politics. Supporting Ronald Reagan is logical to Muhammad because many observers feel that a conservative tide is sweeping the country. He has shown no imagination and the unimaginative can easily support Reagan.

Warith Muhammad is betraying his people, because Ronald Reagan has done easily verifiable things to harm black people in general, and the most vulnerable blacks, poor women with children and the elderly, more specifically. Warith Muhammad is betraying his fellow Muslim brothers by supporting a president who has pledged unqualified support to Israel, the country responsible for the displacement of his fellow Muslims who are Palestinians.

Locally, the betrayers of black people call themselves Black Marylanders for the Presidents. They mumble nebulous generalities about how the president's policies will benefit blacks through the recovery. They claim that welfare handouts are sapping the initiative of the black community. Strangely enough, when Chrysler, Penn Central Railroad or continental Illinois Bank need some handouts these black fiscal conservatives don't say a mumbling word.

It is absurdly obvious why blacks should oppose Reagan's reelection. He didn't know racism existed when he was growing up in the mid - west during a time when the Ku Klux Klan wielded enormous power in that area and lynching was a frequent occurrence.

Years later, Reagan is surprised that anyone would become angry because he wants to give tax exemption to schools that practice racial discrimination. He failed to recognize his own cabinet member, "Silent" Sam Pierce at a White House function, mistaking him for a black mayor.

The members of Blacks for the President should be leery of supporting the man simply for his lack of intelligence and awareness. It seems that they are not perturbed by the village idiot being elevated to the post of keeper of the nuclear arsenal.

The only logical explanation for the formation of Black Marylanders for the President is an attempt to snatch a few crumbs from the presidential spoils system. The members are primarily from the black bourgeoise that tattered but pretentious clique that E. Franklin Frazier excoriated thoroughly. Their self - debasing support of an enemy of humanity is another vindication of Frazier. The sad part is that they will in all probability derive very few spoils from their betrayal.

The Republicans are not even dangling a small rotted carrot before their black supporters the way the Democrats often do. They offer obscure promises and wonderland inspired, cartoon colored illusions. They are in all probability sneering among themselves at the willingness of some black people to betray themselves for nothing down and no rewards per week.

If one is running from a vicious dog, it is not very healthy to run into a dark cave inhabited by a real grizzly bear. Going from the indifferent Democratic Party to the openly hostile Republican Party is not smart politics. Perhaps an independent course is best for black people's future. Of course traitors seldom think of the future.

## Letters on School Board

Baltimore City residents are being hit with the heaviest propaganda campaign by opponents of the elected school board measure since the Baltimore power structure unsuccessfully went all out to defeat the rent control referendum five years ago.

A major goal has already been achieved by the coalition of parents, teachers, community organizations and grass roots activists supporting the elected school board: the awakening of interest and involvement of Baltimore residents in one of our most important institutions, the public school system.

There are real issues to be examined confronted, and decided on. Unfortunately the official opposition to Question P has done nothing to advance either the debate or people's understanding of the issues, choosing instead to create straw men and repeat one false argument after another.

The people of Baltimore are getting a lot of scare tactics and sand thrown in our face. We deserve better.

One of the major phony issues endlessly repeated is that an elected school board will inject politics into what is now an appointed school board supposedly untainted by political considerations. Is this really the issue?

For anyone even slightly familiar with how the appointed school board works, what its policies and priorities are, who and how someone gets appointed (or removed) by Mayor Schaefer, to suggest that the school board is not already deeply embroiled in political considerations is naive at best, dishonest at worst.

Let's have some respect for the intelligence of the voters of Baltimore and deal with the real issue.

The reality is that the appointed school board is an instrument for the policies of the mayor. His priorities are its priorities. Since 1974, there has been a 17 percent cut in the city budget for education. Spending per pupil declined by over $5 from 1979 to 1982.

It is no wonder that teachers have had to supply materials to students out of their own pockets, while their pay slipped from 6th in the state to 21st over a ten - year period. And the threatened closing of Eastern High has more to do with catering to the needs for stadium parking than with any need to close down an already over - enrolled school.

How come there was not one single opposing voice on the appointed school board? Where were the advocates for more money for the schools while the city budget was being slashed? Did the "politics free" school board do anything but go along with the man who put them on the school board?

What were David Daneker's qualifications when Schaefer chose him as school board president in 1980? By his own admission, he did not even know where the board of education was located when he took the job.

And does not the recent appointment of Robert Walker as president have more to do with the political considerations of keeping Esskay Meats from leaving Baltimore, of which Walker just happens to be vice - president?

Another straw man is the argument that the proposal for an elected school board does not include the power to tax, to raise money for the schools. But neither does the current appointed board, which groups like the Baltimore Teachers Union which hypocritically use this argument, support.

The reality is that very few elected school boards have the power to tax, and is not the main consideration in voting for an elected school board.

Baltimore needs an elected school board because it needs a body that would be free to act as an advocate for education — for the students, for the teachers; for the parents — for the community.

A body of people who would have to go before the people of this city, present their views, and be accountable to those who elected them.

A body of people that would be free to stand up to wrong policies and priorities of an administration, and free to support those that advance public education. An elected school board would guarantee representation from each part of the city, unlike the current board which has no member from the 4th District, the most heavily black populated district in the city.

An elected school board would also be steeped in politics — but it would be the politics of the citizenry, and would be taken from the back room and put on front street. An elected school board will by no means solve all the problems of education, which in many respects go beyond the city of Baltimore.

But it would put the people of Baltimore into a position where they could do something about what they do have control over — the local running of the schools.

CITIZENS UNITED FOR AN ELECTED SCHOOL BOARD
LeRoy H. Nichols
Teacher in Balto. City
Keith Brooks
Citizens United for Elected School Board

## More letters against Question P

Consider change if the benefits outweigh the risks. Unfortunately in the case of Question P, the proposed amendment for an elected School Board of Commissioners for Baltimore City Public Schools, has far more risks than benefits. At risk, to name a few, are the educational successes of our children, a racially-balanced school board and the economic revitalization of Baltimore.

The democratic process of elections as practiced in the United States works, moreover, a vital part of that process is appointments. A city that does not learn from its mistakes is doomed to repeat them. Over one hundred years ago, the electorate of Baltimore City thought that an elected school board was bad for Baltimore, that is why they changed it to an appointed system.

In their efforts to correct what they saw as a problem, the electorate painstakingly wrote in the current amendment "In the selection, of the members of the board and in their action in the administration of the public schools, ecclesiastical and party ties shall not be regarded, so that the public schools may be entirely out of the field of political and religious differences and controversies."

The current method for selecting our School Board is a sound system. Although not perfect, it has not been tested to its fullest extent. This system can be improved with the use of an advisory committee made up of representatives from various community organizations, with an interest in education, playing an active role in the search for qualified candidates.

In the appointed system for selecting a Public School Board of

Continued on page 5

## My job as a journalist

Many Black editors, publishers and public relations people opened their mail last week and found, accompanying the regular Essence magazine press release, copies of a personal letter addressed to me from Audrey Edwards, editor of Essence.

Among the phone calls I received, there was surprise, but mostly befuddlement. "Why," one editor asked, "Would anyone disseminate this kind of nonsense about you along with a press release?"

I can only speculate that someone wants the Black Press to assume the risks and print as fact what could possibly be legally volatile.

But it is having, among some anyway, the opposite effect. One record company executive, angered that someone has sent him this personal attack, was outraged at the back door backstabbing. One editor of a Black publication told me that along with his "Tony Brown" letter and the unrelated Essence press release, he received another letter from Essence's lawyers challenging his use of an unsolicited Vanessa Williams picture accompanying an Essence press release. He's thoroughly confused.

I certainly will not repeat the questionable and debatable remark of Edwards, promoted by my disagreement with the magnificence of Vanessa Williams' ethics. However, I will say that I wish me fight with the magazine and respect the right of the management to support Vanessa Williams or Donald Duck, if they choose.

Moreover, I don't write a column to gain consensus; I write to express my opinion. Some agree and some don't. Ronn Trice of D.C. did not agree with me and said so. He was appalled" at the "garbage" I wrote and I had "hit rock bottom" he said. He had also written previously to Newsweek to praise his queen's exit as Miss America.

On the other hand, most of the readers I've heard from come closer to the views of Marla Bailey of Oakland's California;

"While the dear sisters at Essence magazine have chosen to overlook some of the major flaws in Vanessa Williams' character, I am proud that you, as a black journalist, were the first to write a valid critique of the dethroned queen.

"As a black journalist student, I applaud your magazine for taking on the Vanessa Williams controversy, instead of ignoring it as the other black publications have."

I would hope that Essence would adopt a more prudent respect for an honest exchange. I simply disagreed philosophically with the magazine's editor-in-chief, Susan Taylor. Circulating personal attacks will neither deter me nor cancel my constitutional guarantees of free speech. Although I could repeat allegations about Essence's affairs, I see no useful purpose being served by doing so.

However, I will say that I wish me fight with the magazine and respect the right of the management to support Vanessa Williams or Donald Duck, if they choose.

Moreover, I don't write a column

**Shocking is an inadequate word to explain this S&M or bondage scene. It appeals to the most extreme and perverted sexual desires in this increasingly pornographic society. The picture that Essence makes tame, the lesbian love poses of the prior two editions.**

The picture of her kneeling body, hands handcuffed above her head with leather sado-masochistic harness on her nude breasts and in her groin area was more than enough to convince me, once again, just how off-based Essence's defense of her ethics is.

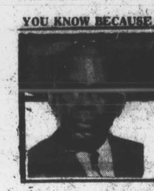
The occasion of my seeing the latest published pictures was my TV interview with Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione; I was investigating whether or not he exploited her ("Did Penthouse exploit first Black Miss America?").

In the course of the upcoming program, I ask Guccione to give —no strings attached—Vanessa Williams a million dollars. Although I am no fan of what she has done, I feel that the wealth (about $70 million) Vanessa Williams will generate for Penthouse with the three issues she appears in entitles her to at least $1 million for services rendered.

My investigation also proved Williams' argument on one point. Therefore, in the interview, I clarify that although she posed in explicit lesbian love scenes that there was no actual sexual activity and that Vanessa Williams is not a lesbian. Foolish, perhaps, but a heterosexual at heart.

Williams has sued one of the photographers of one of her nude scenes (she admits signing a model release to permit the latest pain - pleasure pictures) for a portion of the Penthouse payment and rights.





## Miracle of Miracles needed in election

Surprises and miracles never cease! And remember 1948!

Nineteen, forty-eight when Harry Truman retired to bed, sure that he was defeated by Thomas Dewey for the presidency, only to awake the next morning to find that he (Truman) had been elected — and Dewey, the favored by the polls, rejected by the voters.

In politics miracles and surprises do occur, but they do not occur very often, however.

With the last of the debates over — "debates" that were not really debates — Ronald Reagan is not as far ahead of Fritz Mondale as he once was, but he is ahead just the same. Moreover, he has held a commanding lead all during the campaign.

As the candidates take this home stretch, it seems that only a last - moment, and widespread change of mind on the part of American voters, will be able to make Mondale the winner on November 6. But miracles do happen and men and women — voters — can make them happen.

Besides the presidential election on November 6, in every state and in the territories there are campaigns for various political offices. Some have reached the furious stage; a few are the quiet ones.

Maryland will not be choosing a governor or members of the General Assembly. Here the important business will be whether the state can be kept in the Democratic column, as it normally is, or whether Maryland's voters will cross over to the Republican column and give Reagan and Bush the majority of the State's votes — as the polls have predicted.

The congressional contest of most interest to AFRO readers is in the Seventh District, where Parren J. Mitchell is running for his seventh term in the House of Representatives, and where he has already chalked up many firsts because of his seniority. Congressman Mitchell has no real opposition and is expected to be reelected in a landslide.

In the Second Congressional District there is the storm and fury of old - time campaigning as the veteran incumbent, Clarence Long (Dem. 2d) fights to hold his seat in the House against Helen Delich Bentley, Republican, who is making the third attempt to unseat him.

In the Third District Barbara A. Mikulski, a vice - chairman in the Mondale campaign, is a restless contender for her constituents and expects to be returned to the House of Representatives for fifth term.

In Baltimore the most excitement is over the ballot proposals, especially a number that would rearrange the racial distribution of political power in the city.

For instance, Question P would amend the City Charter to require that members of the School Board be elected, citywide, rather than appointed by the mayor.

The city is divided on this question. The experts and the general intelligence, nationwide, support the side which holds that the most efficient and non - political boards are those where membership is by appointment.

Question Q requires that City Council members be elected from 18 separate, one - person districts. This would give representation to some pockets of population that are now lost in the present six three - member districts; at the same time the plan would, or might, lead to more political divisionism in the city.

One proposal, Question O, would repeal the prohibition against using public funds to construct a sports stadium other than Memorial Stadium.

A majority for this proposition would allow the city to build an enclosed, modern sports complex, with adequate parking space, elsewhere in the Greater Baltimore area, thus allowing Baltimore to be competitive for big-league athletic franchises.

There are several other ballot questions of interest and concern to AFRO readers, too many for this space but which should be MUST reading (a good summary appears in the AFRO, Oct. 13, 1984).

Finally, and most important, BE SURE TO VOTE NEXT TUESDAY. NOV. 6.

## Anthony Armstrong Selling to blacks

For years there's been a rather hot battle among people whose job it is to devise marketing strategies for selling everything from alcohol to housing to the black consumer. "Experts" have determined that there are some very different impulses and desires that must be met; first, to attract blacks to a product and, then, to get us to buy the particular item.

One locally - headquartered fast-food chain worked for months to develop the most appealing commercials to blacks, in its effort to sell its fried chicken. It decided, after spending about $600,000 (and that's a very small amount compared to other companies in the fast food industry), that the success of its commercials hinged on the different perception black consumers placed on the word "hello," versus the word "hi."

"Hello" won out. Another firm thought that sucessfully marketing to blacks depended greatly on how much the firm could make what is a black-owned and operated company look like, in the words of the firm's president, "a white business."

Billions of dollars a year is spent by large and small companies all over America and the world on the studies, surveys, and test models of schemes for profitably selling their products to the black American consumer. This market is estimated to be larger in spending dollars than the entire gross national product on the country Canada. This black market, some contend, is the most fickled and difficult in the world to sell to. Apparently, however, the black market with its millions of consumers is only fickled about certain products.

Somehow, a number of marketers have discovered our secrets. We buy, for instance, about thirty percent of all the potato chips made in this country. We buy, and I assume drink, about one-third of all the whuskey sold in the United States — good whiskey as well as the "rot gut" stuff. We almost "choke on Coke" and other soft drinks to the tune of clearly thirty percent of all the soft drinks sold in America. We buy a disproportionate share of hair care and skin care products, not the least among them hair straighteners and skin whiteners. Our homes are filled with every imaginable variety of cheap, exciting - looking art - everything from paintings on morbid looking velvet to African statues that are made to look a hundred years old when, in fact, they were most likely just made last week somewhere in someone's garage.

We buy a disproportionate number of automobiles selling for $20,000 and we purchase most of the expensive - priced, not necessarily top quality, clothing sold in the country.

Marketers, it seems, have learned that they can sell us a product if it is very sweet, very salty, very shiny, or very "hot" black. They have learned that to be successful in selling some products, especially expensive ones to blacks, they have to appeal to the "I want to be white" syndrome in our psyche. Product - marketing people have also learned that if the product is something cheap, it can be sold to us using the concept that blacks must change to something "new" everyday. We are told we must have every new pair of jeans, every new record album that's produced (that we quickly discard, and every new gold fingernail.

Marketers of products to blacks also know they can sell us all manner of junk by appealing to our sense of guilt, at not being able to buy our little "Dante" or little "La Futoya" everything he or she may want. "To hell with the gas and electric bill, I've got to get my child that — whatever that is."

Whomever said it was tough to sell to blacks? Whomever it was just doesn't know where our "hot" buttons are. It is not the job of marketers to offer us only the best and most useful products. It is their job to sell us something — anything. It is our job, however, to beware of what we spend our limited money for and how much value we get for our huge collective dollars.

Marketers and merchants do us no favors when they sell us the best available at the lowest price. Instead, we do them the favor by selecting one merchant over another. We can't blame people for trying to sell us everything imaginable, most of which we don't need or really want.

In the world of the buyers' mind, who knows what makes him or her tick? The hard job doesn't seem to be figuring out what we will buy or why we buy it. By now many marketers have stopped asking, they just sell us the expensive, the sweet, the salty and, what shines.

## —Against Question P

Continued from Page 4

Commissioners, the democratic process is preserved through our elected officials. The appointed process, specifically allows for more refinement and consideration of the many factors that make Baltimore the unique city it is. It also allows for the direct users of the public school system to have more of a say than an elected system would.

We must not allow a poorly written and not very well thoughtout amendment designed with questionable motives and offering no discernible solutions to the real problems in education to become a part of our City Charter. Vote No on Question P.

IRENE B. WILLIAMS

## AFRO SURVEY

### Do you think a black person can be elected mayor?

Mary Crawley

Eddie Clark

Arnez Gibson

Wanda Gass

This week the question to the man and woman in the street was, "Do you think a black will become mayor of Baltimore?"

Mary Crawley, 58, cook, "Yes, I think so. Some of the politicians in the city are making good leverage. I think Kurt Schmoke is a fine example of what I am talking about. He has made lots of gains, and I think he is qualified."

Edward Nelson, 38, unemployed, "Yes, I just got the feeling we are going to have a black mayor, and I think it will be Kurt Schmoke. He is the next one in line. He has the support of both black and white people, and you saw when he was running for his State's Attorney's position how much support he got."

Arnez Gibson, 34, cashier, "No, I don't think we will have a black mayor anytime soon. Schaefer is not ever going to get out of office. The last election proved that a white will stay in the dominant position."

Wanda Gass, 26, computer operator, "Not any time soon. There is too much racism going on and progress is very slow for blacks in Baltimore. Everytime one attempts to progress, he is knocked down."

Jerome Montague, 43, chef, "Yes, we will have a black mayor soon. The population indicates that. There are more blacks in the city. If we get the right black person like Kurt Schmoke, he'll win, and we will have that black mayor. Schmoke attracts both blacks and whites to his side."

G.L. Drummond, 37, unemployed, "Yes, the population is a hint. There don't think we will have a black mayor anytime soon. Schaefer is not ever going to get out of office. The last election proved that a white will stay in the dominant position."

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G.L. Drummond, 37, unemployed, "Yes, the population is a hint. There are so many people eligible for the job including Schmoke and DuBurns. The offices they hold now place them in good positions to try for the office."

Eddie Clark, 35, lawyer, "Yes indeed. It is inevitable. The cities always get turned over to us after they have gotten everything they could. The Mitchells, Jacksons or Murphys are good candidates, I think, for the position."

Billy Sconiers, 36, accountant, "There is a large black population here and eventually that population will stick together, and we are going to want to have our own part of the action. Sure, there will be a black mayor. I am optimistic. Parren Mitchell is my choice."

Jerome Montague

Gil Drummond

Eddie Clark

Billy Sconiers

## More on elected School Board

### Letters to the Editor

Your Editorial Board has supported the proposed city charter amendment to provide for an elected School Board. I am writing to urge your readers to seriously consider the arguments for voting against the proposed charter amendment.

I am sure we all agree that the city school system is far from perfect. There are many respects in which improvements are needed. However, it is my view that an experiment, such as an elected school board, should not be undertaken unless there is some reasonable basis to believe that it will be an improvement.

When we experiment with the school system, we are experimenting with the education of our children, and we should approach the question carefully. I do not believe that an elected School Board will be an improvement over the appointed School Board. In fact, there is substantial reason to believe that election of the board will be detrimental.

During the years that I have been acquainted with the School Board, the appointed system has produced capable appointees with a desirably broad range of backgrounds. For many years the black community membership of the Board has fairly reflected the racial population of Baltimore. The appointed board also has reflected the socio-economic range of persons with children in the Baltimore City schools. The appointed board has not been plagued with special interest group captives. No School Board member has operated as the persistent advocate of some narrow point of view. Consequently, the board has been able to make hard — sometimes unpopular — decisions for the greater good of the entire system. As money has become tight, classroom teaching has been given priority over non - educational services such as free buses, and under-utilized school buildings have been closed resulting in total savings of more than $1.5 million per year to be put back into better programs and teachers. Such decisions were possible because appointed School Board members have not been parochial in their loyalties, but have recognized that their first obligation is to use resources for the education of all students.

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Election of School Board members also will mean that the process will become substantially more politicized. Undoubtedly, many of the elected School Board members would be using the School Board to attempt to launch political careers. Many elected members will have "political obligations" to those who supported them. Within the board, political factions or alliances may develop.

Nor does election of the School Board necessarily offer parents a greater voice in the selection of School Board members. While there are some 430,000 registered voters in Baltimore City, at most 60,000 - 70,000 of them are parents of public school children. Thus, in any election, parents would be outnumbered five or six to one by non - parents. Candidates running on an "economy in education" platform may well be able to appeal strongly to this non - parent majority.

In sum, I believe that the election of School Board members is a dangerous experiment because one can readily foresee many negative implications. These negative implications could well threaten the successes which have improved Baltimore public school education.

As an alternative to an elected board, I suggest that parents organize themselves to more effectively suggest first - class candidates for appointment. To my knowledge, there has never been any organized effort by parents to influence the appointive process.

David C. Daneker

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Daneker is the immediate past president of the city's Board of School Commissioners.

## Another letter supporting Question P

Almost 60 percent of the Baltimore population is black and over 87 percent of the city's school population is black, but Baltimore has yet to have a black school president.

Most of the school board is composed of middle - and - upper - middle income individuals, both black and white.

An elected school board would provide an opportunity for black working class, as well as white working class, persons who together make up over 90 percent of the city's population to run for office, as well as to vote for individuals who help make policy decisions over their children's education.

As we look at the city's expenditure over the last 12 years we see the expenditures for education has taken a back seat to economic development and corrections. Economic development goes into building the downtown area of the city.

Unfortunately, Harbor Place benefits the rich and the tourists, but not the majority of people who live and work in Baltimore.

Baltimore ranks number eight in having the worst poverty of the major cities in America. Too often when you combine poverty with lack of adequate resources for education you get joblessness and a high crime rate.

Baltimore ranks number two in violent crimes in the nation. More spent for education would not necessitate as much expenditures for corrections. It does not go unnoticed that over the last 12 years the school population has drastically changed complexions. It is almost 87 percent black and less is being spent proportionately for education.

An elected school board would not cure the ills of the school system, or would it guarantee a representative and responsive school board member; however, it is an enhancement of democratic rights for black and working class populations of the city.

We submit more politics would be taken out of the school board if it was an elected one. The composition of the appointed school board over the last 12 years would reveal this fact.

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