Baltimore Afro-American

Founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1840-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City, Inc. Carl Murphy (1889-1967) Editor-Publisher (1922-1967).

Changes

As the year 1985 comes to a close, some realities stare black Baltimoreans in the face. The retirement of Parren J. Mitchell in 1986 will leave some mammoth shoes to fill and the scramble to succeed him will give an indication of the caliber and the character of black politicians in this city.

If Parren's successor is picked without the black community becoming more divided politically than it is now it could portend good things for the community in the municipal elections the following year.

The year long crisis that has affected Provident Hospital has illustrated ominously that inertia in politics and economics is fatal to institutions in the health care field. It also made very plain the increasing cost of poor leadership. Hopefully the salvaging of the hospital with name and mission fairly intact will continue into the next year.

1985 also saw some indication that the community has finally decided to tackle the issue of crime in the streets. The Stop The Killing Campaign raised the issue of youth violence to the top of many people's agendas. There was also a campaign to get pushers out of various communities that showed some success as people showed an increased willingness to finger pushers who had been operating with impunity in their neighborhoods.

Hopefully these positive trends will continue and make 1986 a much better year than 1985.

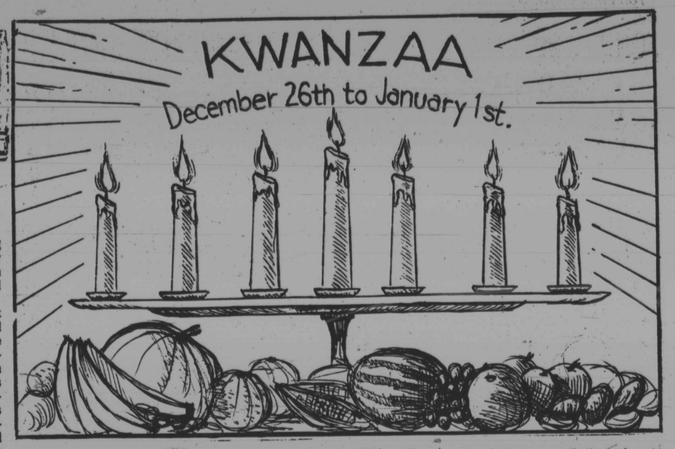
Kwanzaa

The holiday Kwanzaa has been steadily grown in popularity since its creation by Dr. Maulana Ron Karenga in Los Angeles in 1966. He developed the holiday as an alternative nonheroic holiday for black people in America that was derived from harvest festivals in Africa and molded specifically to meet the need of reinforcing the Nguzo Saba or black value system that he developed.

Part of the beauty of Kwanzaa is the fact that it emphasizes black unity and development. It is a holiday that does not interfere with anyones religious beliefs or celebration of other holidays.

Kwanzaa is also a time for reevaluation and rededication to the struggle for black liberation. It is a time for reflection on the black heritage.

Kwanzaa also emphasizes creativity and the precious legacy that children are. It is a time of hope and rejoicing. From a small celebration at the US Organization's headquarters in 1966 to a holiday observed around the country by millions of people, Kwanzaa has come a long way and its message of Umoja (Unity, Dec. 16) Kujichagulia (Self-determination, Dec. 27) Ujima (Collective Work and responsibility, Dec. 28) Ujamaa (Cooperative economics Dec. 29) Nia)Purpose, Dec. 30) Kuumba (Creativity, Dec. 31) and Imani (Faith, Jan. 1) hopefully is being heeded more and more.



Parren J. Mitchell

The tax bill

On Tuesday, December 17, during the eleventh hour (literally), the House of Representatives approved the most sweeping overhaul of the income tax system in more than 40 years.

Not only was this legislation of historic proportion, but more amazing is the fact that there was no recorded vote.

When House Speaker Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill, Jr., declared the bill approved by voice vote, a procedure usually followed by a demand from the opposition for a roll-call or recorded vote, there was silence in the chamber.

The only reasonable explanation behind such a move would be that, essentially, it gives the members an option to say they were either for or against the bill without any recorded proof to the contrary.

Before the bill came to a vote in the House, there were the traditional quarrels that the Democrats had removed too many incentives to save and invest from the business community, and that the President and the Republicans simply wanted to cut taxes for the rich.

While many members have individual problems with the end result, most agree that restoring fairness to our current tax system is a priority. The question that remains is how is fairness interpreted by 435 members of Congress.

Some highlights of the House version of the tax bill include a replacement of the current 14 tax rate brackets with 3: 15 percent, 25 percent and 38 percent.

The bill would raise the personal exemption, currently $1,040 for taxpayers and dependents, to $1,500 for those who itemize their deductions and to $2,000 for taxpayers who use the standard deduction form.

The proposed elimination of deductibility for State and local taxes, which drew a lot of criticisms, was discarded and will remain fully deductible, as would charitable contributions for those who itemize their deduction.

Charitable contributions, however, will only be deductible for non-itemizers next year who contribute more than $100.

Employer-provided fringe benefits, including health insurance premiums, would remain untaxed, but unemployed compensation would become fully taxable, a most regrettable situation.

Tax deferred Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) would continue to be deductible for contributions of up to $2,000 per year for one worker and $250 for a nonworking spouse.

The bill has many other provisions, some of which I disagree, but those I appreciate most include the exclusion of roughly 6 million low-income workers from income taxation, and the minimum tax which insures that all corporations pay their fair share of taxes.

The fate of the House-passed version of the tax bill is still uncertain in the Republican-controlled Senate, where it must now go.

Senator Bob Packwood, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, predicted shortly after passage in the House, that his committee will produce a similar bill even though the President has indicated strong objection to major features.

Chairman Packwood said that he will hold hearings in January and February of next year and begin writing a bill in committee in March.

If the President keeps the pressure on the Senate to enact a tax bill, and there have been reports that he is planning to address the issue of tax reforms in his State of the Union address in early February, this nation could possibly have a new tax system by 1987.

No one knows what may come out of the Senate, but attacks have already been made on the $2,000 exemption for taxpayers who do not itemize deductions and the top personal tax rate of 38 percent (the President had urged 35 percent).

This continuing series of columns of tax reform will alert the reader of all developments in the coming months. Please stay tuned, the best (or worst) is yet to come.

JUST THINKING:

1986 should bring change

By Al Sweeney

It will be three years from now that life in your nation's capital will change.

Over the last forty years, the White House at 1700 Pennsylvania Ave in the District of Coulumbia has been the home of presidents responsible for revolutionary, social and economic changes in the United States.

There was the "New Deal" of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.: the post-World War II days of Dwight D. Eisenhower which ushered in the Warren Court that fashioned the biggest civil rights triumphs of the movement: the short-lived Camelot days of John F. Kennedy, ended by an assassin's bullet, and the civil rights legislative victories of the early years of Lyndon B. Johnson.

LBJ's social civil rights victories were tarnished by a controversial Vietnam War. It was those of a political paradox that a Martin Luther King, Jr., rose to international prominence for his nonviolent philosophy and his commitment to world peace which virtually ostracized him from the black VIPs in LBJ's inner circle for his opposition to the Vietnam War.

Dr. King, as we all know, also was struck down by an assassin's bullet. Than came the Richard Nixon years. Ironically, he was a president whose lifelong dream to become president ended in a nightmare. His occupancy in the White House was dramatically cut short by the legendary Watergate Scandal.

Gerald Ford completed Nixon's second term, but was shunted aside by the voters for Jimmy Carter of Georgia. Lackluster and caught in the winds of philosophical switch came the Reagan years.

For all of the criticisms of his government policies among the public, the white public that is, he is one of the most popular presidents of all time, according the pollsters.

From FDR through Jimmy Carter, black politicians during the reigning party, whether Republican or Democratic, had a direct access to the man in the oval office. Today no black person can make that claim.

There is Mel Bradley with a suite in the Executive Office Building: Legre Daniels, holds a paid post at the Republican National Committee, and Samuel Pierce, Jr. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, is a member of the Reagan Cabinet. There is the National Black Republican Council sustained by one of any black political organization and a money-ladened Council of 100 Black Republicans composed of wealthy holders of federal contracts who have reaped financial gains.

Yet, none of the aforementioned "so-called" powerful black GOPers have front door access to the White House.

Remember that only one year has passed when black voter registration in this nation reached an all-time high.

During the presidential nomination race of 1984. Blacks flocked to the registration stations in support of Jesse Jackson's amazing campaign.

Optimism soared and the mystique of Jackson caused some concern in many quarters. We all know what happened. One-tenth of any population or any movement without supporting coalescence is bound to fail when polarization sets in.

The Jackson movement ran all over the local politicians who held the city halls of Detroit, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. The established black Democratic elected officials in Congress ducked on the presidential nomination race.

That was 1985 and what's his name — Walter Mondale went down to a disasterous defeat. The Democratic party with its huge superiority in voter registrants was torn asunder.

Everyone is looking towards life in the USA after Reagan in 1988.

To succeed the "Great Communicator" or the Rupublican side, there are many national possibilities to succeed Reagan. Each one has a black advisor working towards making overtures to the black voters in the upcoming presidential sweepstakes of 1988.

The leading GOP candidate is Vice President George Bush. Akron's minister-politician-businessman, Thad Garrett and Arthur Fletcher, architect of the Philadelphia Plan for hiring Blacks, will play leading roles in the Bush efforts.

Although a loyal Reaganite, the vice president is not going to ignore the black electorate. In fact, recently he made a surprise Sunday visit at a D.C. Baptist church and participated fully and confortably in the service.

Running number two in the early entrants in the upcoming nomination sweepstakes are Jack Kemp, the New York Congressman and ex-football star, and Robert Dole, the Senate Majority Leader.

It is generally conceded by concerned neutral Blacks that Dole is most respected of all of the GOP political leaders. Shrewd and pragmatic, Dole attempts to do all that he can for the so-called "cause" and knowledgeable observers who are aware of the limnitations under which he operates.

Leroy Toombs, wealthy Black Kansas contractor and Trudi Morrison, the assistant sergeant at arms of the Senate will play pivotal roles in his quest.

Morrison was a casualty of White House reorganization and Dole rescued her to one of the highest paying governmental jobs. Connie Mack Higgins, a veteran politico along with Stan Scott, a former White House aide, will play instrumental advisory roles in Jack Kemp's campaign.

In the wings, if the front runners fade, Howard Baker, ex-Senator from Tennessee who gave up his majority leader's post to build a structure in a bid for the presidency may emerge as the GOP candidate of 1988.

Ed Reddick, the police sergeant who was on the scene of Dr. Martin Luther King's tragic assassination, was a member of Baker's staff and will play a campaign role. And what about the Democratic candidates, you ask. Only Gary Hart is a name with recognition. There are more black Democrats with national name recognition than there are whites. Black politicians such as Bill Gray, the current hot item on the speaker's circuit because of his role as chairman of the House Budget Committee: Congressman Parren Mitchell, Louis Stokes, Bill Clay, and Ron Dellums are recognizable individuals as are Mayors Coleman Young of Chicago, Tom Bradley of Los Angeles, Ernest "Dutch" Morial of New Orleans, and Andrew Young of Atlanta. These are good, Black vote recruiters, but hardly presidential timber.

At this point, the man that the Democrats must turn to, if they want to recaptured the mansion on Pennsylvania, is still unidentified. His identy may first out of the picture in the early part of 1986.

Anthony Armstrong

The color purpose

First there was Miss Winfrey; Beverly Burke took her place, when Oprah, feeling increasingly limited, decided to leave Charm City in favor of the winds of Chicago.

Miss Winfrey blew into Chicago, the nation's third largest TV market, with the force of a wind that blew then Chicago daytime TV idol, Phil Donahue, right out of his premiere role and, into New York City.

Donahue said his departure had to do with his desire to be near his wife, comedian Danny Thomas' daughter, Marlo but; as much as that, Phil left Chicago because Oprah Winfrey came to Chicago.

Beverly Burke came to Baltimore and, between you and me, it looked as if the station had gone out and attempted to find a clone of Miss Winfrey. Beverly looks like Oprah, talks like Oprah, dresses like Oprah and, like Oprah, is now long gone from Baltimore Television.

In the high-powered world of television, faces come and go with the swiftness of Neilson ratings and, when it's just competition at the root of the changes, viewers understand and say, "That's life."

Like Miss Winfrey, Miss Burke will get another job somewhere. What, however, do the changes in the employment status of two black professionals and a seemingly remote happening, the production of a highly-touted feature film, say about the overall status of blacks in America today?

The film is "The Color Purple;" Steven Spielberg's and Quincy Jones' production of the Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, of the same name. Our point is not the film itself, nor how any individual feels about it; remembering that all Italians didn't like the "Godfather," every Jew was not crazy about "Exodus" and, every kid didn't like "E.T."

In the movie, as in the book, "The Color Purple;" we have the oft recounted black stereotypes; the almost too strong black woman, the cruel worthless black man and, to add a newer now spoken problem, the black woman on black woman love affair.

There is the poor suffering black girl, the dancing, the singing and the feeling of "Oh, not again.

But getting back to Oprah and Beverly and, the connection they have to a movie; again, we seem to have gotten all twisted-up one more time in a situation where our status, as a people in America, and our lack of meaningful control of anything, individually or collectively, has worked against us.

As good as Miss Winfrey apparently is, as a TV personality, her ability was not enough to "save" her from, even, a sugar-coated hatchet, in Baltimore.

The fact that she moved to a more vaulted status, in Chicago, is little comfort; because nothing changed regarding her ability to ultimately control her professional destiny.

Miss Burke, far less esteemed in the rough and tumble of bigtime TV is gone and, it would appear, her ability to design her life is more circumscribed than Miss Winfrey's.

As to the movie, though Miss Walker exercised measureable influence over what it would finally look like, here too the control was that of Spielberg's.

Whether movies or jobs or attitudes, of the larger society about us; the story that so often get's told is someone elses story - or I should say someone elses opinion of our story.

We can scream all we want about what is being done to us, in every aspect of our existence in America but; the fact is we are not in any position to change much of it, because we don't control any of it.

We don't control any of it because, instead of making the movies, we only buy tickets to see someone else's make. Instead of controlling any aspect of the mass media industry, by and large, we just buy the soap they sell during commercial breaks.

Some groups have protested the end product of "The Color Purple," saying it, again, portrays us in negative ways. The most negative thing about this "finger in the dike" attitude is that, once more, people, us, who won't repair our own attitudinal dikes are always screaming, "the dike is broken, the dike is broken."

Not only do we not want ante-up to repair the dikes but, we stand befuddled when no one else comes to fix them. Whether Oprah Winfrey was forced out in Baltimore, or whether Beverly Burke didn't clone well enough, or whether "The Color Purple" is racist or not is not the issue.

The color PURPOSE is the issue; when we change ourselves, we will change that.

Samuel L. Banks

Welcome New Year with Jubilee: witness for dignity

The National NAACP's observance of Jubilee Day provides a marvelous opportunity for black Americans and interested white citizens to stand up for freedom and human dignity for all Americans.

Locally, the Baltimore Branch, NAACP, under the steady and resolute leadership of Mrs. Enolia P. McMillan, plans its observance of Jubilee Day on Sunday, January 12, 1986 at the Brown Memorial Baptist Church at 4 p.m.

The Brown Memorial Baptist Church, under the astute and sagacious leadership of Rev. Dr. Douglass Miles, is located at 3215 West Belvedere Ave.

The chairman of the 1986 Jubilee Day committee is Dr. Calvin Burnett, the perceptive and redoubtable president of Coppin State College.

Dr. Burnett is assisted by a broad base of knowledgeable and committed leaders in Baltimore and throughout Maryland. The Honorable Parren J. Mitchell, leader extraordinaire, will be the principal speaker.

Your participation in the Jubilee Day observance on Sunday, January 12, 1986 would provide a splendid opportunity to convey, collectively as a community, a resounding, visible and towering thank you to Congressman Mitchell and signal to Baltimore and our nation that our faith in the historic and necessary mission of the NAACP remains strong and vibrant.

We need to pack Brown Memorial Baptist church for the preservation of our freedom and the extension of social justice and equality of opportunity. Your presence will be a powerful and majestic affirmation of hope and human possibilities.

I am counting on you, and expect to see you at Brown Memorial Baptist Church on Sunday, January 12, 1986 at 4 p.m.

What, then, is the historical significance of the NAACP's annual observance of Jubilee Day.

In terms of the historical perspective, the battle of Antietan (now called Sharpsburg) in September, 1862 provided a basis for cheer for Union forces following a series of defeats by Confederate forces under the leadership of General Robert E. Lee.

President Abraham Lincoln, our 16th president, used the occasion of the "victory," some historians viewed the battle as a stalemate, to announce to the Confederate states that he would issue a proclamation setting free the slaves if the seceded states did not return to the Union before January 1, 1863.

Inasmuch as none of the Seceded states returned to the Union, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863.

This document, theoretically, provided "freedom" for four million slaves who were in bondage in the Confederate States. In point of fact the Emancipation Proclamation did not free any slaves because the union forces did not control the confederacy.

The Civil War dragged on until April, 1865. The Thirteenth Amendment, passed by Congress in 1865, abolished slavery throughout the United States.

Although Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation did not free any slaves, it, nevertheless, had immense psychological value and provided a moral dimension in terms of why the Civil War was being fought.

Today, 122 years after the promulgation of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, black and white Americans remember its significance and celebrate freedom.

Finally, the success of Jubilee Days depends upon you. I urge you to clear your calendar now and make plans to be present at the Brown Memorial Baptist Church on Sunday, January 12, 1986 at 4 p.m.

In addition to showing our solidarity, unity and pride as black Americans, it will be a glorious opportunity to show our appreciation and thanks to Mrs. Enolia P. McMillan who has struggled, at enormous sacrifice, for freedom and equality of opportunity for over 50 years.

As both the local and national president of the NAACP, Mrs. McMillan is an inspirational exemplar of hope, tenacity and boundless spirit.

If you genuinely believe in freedom, equality of opportunity and social justice, you will be present at Brown Memorial Baptist Church to witness for yourself. I expect to see you in person. Always remember: Freedom is Costly.

AFRO SURVEY

How are you going to bring in the New Year?

Ann Walters

Edward Muhammad

Daniel Muhammad

Andrea Cook

This week the question to the man and woman in the street is, "How are you going to bring in the New Year?"

Ann Walters, 24, assistant marketing manager, "I am going to be in Puerto Rico, drinking champagne, eating grapes, and being with my family."

Edward Muhammad, 29, retail store manager, "In contemplation, trying to serve Almighty God Allah to see that black people have freedom, justice, and equality."

Daniel Muhammad, 27, self-employed, "At how focusing on the teachings of the Honorable Ellijah Muhammad, as we are reminded by Minister Louis Farrakhan, that I might be prepared for the trials and tribulations placed upon black people for Allah's glory in the end."

Andrea Cook, 21, barmaid, "I'll be working — working and having fun."

Theodore E. Brown, 55, legal assistant, "At home."

Donnie Parker, 21, pro boxer, "Having fun in Atlantic City, spending money."

Gregory Tucker, 27, substitute schoolteacher, "I'll probably spend the New Year with a young lady and my family."

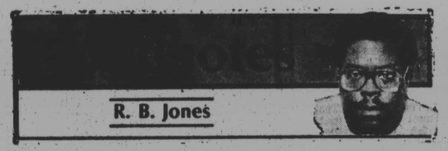
Sylvia Kyler, 40, "A couple of friends have invited me to some parties. I'll share the passing of time with them."

Theodore E. Brown

Donnie Parker

Gregory Tucker

Sylvia Kyler



R. B. Jones

The Donaldson fiasco

Most of us assume that public officials elected or appointed somehow become superhuman after taking office. Almost automatically such individuals become immune to human weaknesses and are suppose to withstand temptation and fend off the greedy tentacles of corruption.

This, of course, is naive because such individuals become much more exposed to such temptations and often succumb. Financial gain and power are the motivating influences as we have seen recently in many of our so-called trusted leaders.

The list is long if we start with the Watergate fiasco under former President Nixon, This was the worst political scandal of the century, yet more than ten years later most of the culprits are enjoying financial success and at least semi-respectability.

Seemingly there are no barriers to their so-called rehabilitation. The current administration has had its share of "appointed" public officials who have abused their power of office. The list in this respect ranges from selling influence for jobs and accepting loans, acceptance of unauthorized gifts to divulging pertinent information to former employers for personal benefit.

Recently former Cong. Charles Diggs was cited for drunk driving and all phases of his misconduct while in office were dragged out in explicit detail. Diggs was convicted on charges of mail fraud and filing false pay vouchers. The Michigan Democrat was guilty of wrongdoing and paid his price to society, yet the drunk driving incident unearthed all of the gory details as if his exemplary public service had never happened. Almost at the same time a U.S. senator was charged with drunk driving and there was hardly a ripple in the media.

The case of Ivanhoe Donaldson, a former deputy D.C. mayor, is no less odious because it is another example of an individual who abused the powers of his office for petty gain. Donaldson, of course, was an adviser and close personal friend of the mayor. The two had fought valiantly and brilliantly in the civil rights movement against racial discrimination.

Donaldson was a brilliant political strategist and of course planned most of the mayor's political campaigns. When the mayor took office it was more than appropriate that Donaldson would be a power in the political hierarchy of the local government. This gave him tremendous influence over other officials because he was the mayor's right-hand man, so to speak. But this powerful position exposed Donaldson to the use of almost unlimited D.C. government. The guilty plea came after Donaldson had left the government to work for a private firm. With his drive and acknowledge ability, Donaldson could have written his own ticket. Now his career is shambles. His sentencing is scheduled for next month.

But much more important than the felons of Watergate, Diggs or Donaldson is the effort of their actions on our youth. Many youngsters will be our leaders of tomorrow and when they see venal public officials conniving and scheming to gain power and influence, these young people will think it's all right. The motto will be anything goes as long as you don't get caught. All kinds of devious methods are okay to reach a distorted objective.

Thuggery and robbery are almost common practice and even gruesome murder as in the Fuller case that deprived that family of her guidance. The values of these young adults become blurred and warped when they see individuals who have had the best advantages of attending prestigious schools and later obtain power and influence, then later commit gross wrongdoing and often get a "slap on the wrist." This distorts the real world for many youngsters who often cannot distinguish legitimate methods from devious practices.

Donaldson, like the Watergate thugs and others in high places, should pay for his misdeeds, even more so than the ordinary individual who has had less advantages. The damage done to the psyche of our youths is immeasurable. A black leader should always remember that his image has a powerful influence on the minds of our future leaders. These young adults could easily think that being "slick" is acceptable and pass this warped concept on to their offspring.

A letter to the black politicians

Although this letter is addressed to black politicians I do not want my ministerial friends to feel left out because frequently you become involved in politics, with very mixed results I might add.

I have used the term politicians because both groups grasp after secular power with such ferocity and shamelessness sometimes that it is difficult to determine who is who.

Ministers and politicians complement and compliment each other so frequently and well that they often seem to be creatures cut from the same egocentric cloth.

Yet they bear great responsibility and perhaps a monumental ego is needed to even take up the tasks of leadership. The responsibilities they bear in these days when the black community is beleaguered on all sides by problems of a complex and deadly nature, is daunting, but that is as it should be since the benefits of their positions in society give them access to such abundant spoils.

Like it or not, politicians and preachers represent a large part of the elite in black Baltimore and so they also share the mantle of leadership.

We as a community are at a crossroads. Since 1971 we have been in a position to make deep inroads into the power that controls the municipal government of this city, yet we are as powerless in a real sense as we were when we let the golden opportunity of the 1971 election slip through our fingers.

We are a majority in the city and a minority in the city council and the ranks of city officials at the highest level of government. We are a national embarrassment and a local joke as white people snicker at our lack of cohesion and clout.

Our king and would-be emperor treats the supposedly venerated members of your ranks with indifference and contempt. He has slowly strangled the school system, with the help of eunuchs and handmaidens until it has become for many black youth a place of miseducation and disillusionment which many of them leave for the uncertainty of Baltimore's mean streets before their education, such as it is, is completed.

Where have you been? Sleeping the sleep of the contented or feigning sleep to mask your fear or complicity?

Our communities have been infiltrated by merchants of another hue who are making tremendous profits off our people while governmental agencies that purport to aid blacks get started in business drown aspirations in red tape, delay and inertia.

Do these groups that you supposedly oversee ever really reach out into the black community? The response I hear says no. They seem to be part of that click some have formed to strangle initiative of those not initiated into your click. Or perhaps they exist to mask the mediocrity that riddles your ranks?

Where are your training grounds for young aspirants to political activity. Aside for your moribund clubs which teach obedience, expedience and contempt for the masses, where can the young go to learn about the possibilities inherent in political struggle and not the shrinking lot of activity you restrict yourself to?

There are a few politicians who are exceptions, but a few are not enough.

Have you ever heard of community organizing? Not organizing for the questionable purpose of your reelection but for the empowerment and democratic action of communities. Most of you regard the people as a faucet to turn on at election time and off during your term in office. I know an aroused and informed public is not easily manipulated, but if you cared for this community in a real sense you would work to bring this about.

When we speak about the alienation of our youth and their lack of hope can you speak without blame? What examples have you been? I am not speaking of television images or grainy photographs in newspapers but people visible and active in the community year round.

One of my fondest hopes is to see members of the clergy and the political pantheon of self-promotion experts stage a march against fear walking unguarded through the city of Baltimore at night.

Then they could really relate to what the voters and congregants feel each day while they are trying to survive in the inner city. It would be a grand gesture of solidarity with the people. Of course angels would be watching over them.

This march would show just how much impact these politicians have on the community. Perhaps I ask too much.

I will ask you to do something less taxing on your small store of courage.

I am asking you to prove me wrong. I think most politicians are self-serving individuals who only believe in the principle of winning the election regardless of tactic or cost. I think the ones supposedly representing black people in Baltimore are for the most part lazy and incompetent. However, I will bow to evidence to the contrary. I will recant if you do these simple things.

First run an issues-oriented campaign in the 7th Congressional District. Next organize an effort that will result in increased black representation on the city council from the Sixth, Third and Fifth Districts. Not only must these new council people be black, but also committed. Win the mayoralty, Presidency of the City Council and Comptroller's office.

After the above are completed, appoint more blacks to leadership positions in city government. It is our turn as Harold Washington said in Chicago. And don't listen to any pleas from whites about keeping the issue of race out of elections. White people inject race into everything when it is to their advantage. Check to see how many whites vote for the most qualified black candidates and how many vote against that candidate for no other reason than race.

Time is running out because of the steady pace of gentrification in the city and if you black politicians blow the chance for black empowerment in the 1980s the chance may be gone for this century.

If you blow this one no amount of contempt will be equal to what you deserve.

Happy New Year!

AFRO welcomes letters

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