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Provident deadlines

A few weeks ago it seemed that Provident Hospital was emerging from the troubles that have kept it on the brink of closing for most a year. City and state bailout funds were approved and it seemed that the hospital had turned the corner.

Then the registered nurses struck the hospital for reasons that differ according to whether one talks to management or the striking nurses. The claims by the nurses that patients were not getting adequate care because they had to perform an inordinate number of non-nursing duties is exactly the kind of publicity the hospital does not need.

Gov. Hughes has attached certain conditions to the $2.5 million in state aid that is pending. He has set an occupancy rate goal and a merger goal for the hospital that must be met. He has also set a revenue goal.

If the state money does not come through then the city's promised $1 million will not come through either. Provident is still not out of the woods yet.

A settlement of the nurses' strike would help with the hospital's image. Occupancy will not rise significantly with vital employees such as nurses striking over working conditions.

Provident has had enough bad publicity over the past two years without adding any more. An amicable settlement with the nurses would go a long way to building public confidence in care at the hospital.

Guns must go

The most recent shooting at Lake Clifton high school prompted a flurry of anti-gun activity as the city became acutely aware of the number of handguns floating around the streets in the possession of persons without any reluctance to use them.

Handguns even became an issue in the governor's race as Steven Sachs tried to draw Mayor Schaefer out on the issue. The result was unclear but it showed how crucial this issue is to Baltimoreans especially.

The school system is trying to find ways to indict persons attempting to bring guns into the schools and the City Council is wrestling with the issue of stricter gun control.

This issue is a thorny one especially since some members of Congress from western states are trying to get federal gun laws liberalized. The frustration with the complexity of the issue could cause many people who are momentarily aroused to give but this must not be allowed to happen. Human lives are at stake, not to mention the quality of life in this city plagued by violent crime.

Citizens must maintain the pressure for some relief from handgun violence in our streets and in our schools. It will not be easy and there will be impediments from various elements who see any attempt at gun control as an attempt to create a fascist state.

These progun elements can offer no solace when a child is gunned down in school or on the street for a pair of tennis shoes. The guns must go.

Reagan hurts education

For the past five years, President Reagan has attempted, and in some cases succeeded, in reducing our national commitment to education. This year is no different.

The Reagan Administration has proposed a 15 percent budget reduction in federal programs administered by the Department of Education. This reduction in federal commitment to education is accompanied by the Administration's request for an increase in the defense budget.

Our nation became alarmed in the late 50's because we were drastically behind the Russians in space technology, as evident through the Sputnik space launch.

Our federal government responded to that challenge and launched a federal commitment to higher education that permitted millions of Americans to advance their level of knowledge and contribution to this nation during the 60's and the 70's.

The current administration has been getting away at these basic educational programs for the last five years.

The American people are not reading about "Sputnik" anymore, instead they are reading about our foreign trade deficit. Today's world marketplace requires a level of knowledge and sophistication unheard of just a few short years ago.

A direct correlation exists between the number and extent that citizens are educated and our country's ability to compete in the world marketplace.

You need only look as far as your automobile, television set, video recorder, etc. etc. to see the level of foreign technological superiority. Pride in U.S. products requires more than just slogans; it requires a national commitment.

That type of national focus can be greatly stimulated by our federal government. Our nation must demand and support excellence in education.

This is not the time to pass the federal deflating educational ball to already overtaxed state educational systems. This is the time to raise the national flag and rally around this country's education commitment.

The Sputnik satellite has long since gone but the world's technological revolution is still in its infancy. Knowledge will determine the forerunners of this technological revolution as well as the also rans.

The defense of our nation is extremely important, but so is the intellectual development of our citizens. Both areas must hold a prominent place in our federal budget.

KEN HOWARD, President
Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland Association for Financial Aid Administrators

'Calling it like it isn't'

By Carolyn L. Bennett

We Americans are good at calling others to task for misunderstanding the public, but we too must be called to task when we call it like it isn't. Our acts to deceive and cover up our motivations undermine our democracy and our standing in the world, and we must guard against them. These are some of our major ones.

When our rebels overthrow governments, we call them "freedom fighters," not terrorists. When we invade foreign states, we say we are "protecting our national security," not engaging in imperialism.

When we increase our arsenals and propose arming space, we call it "peace through strength," not escalating the nuclear race and preparing for annihilation.

When we fail to hold governments, industry, business and institutions accountable for the products they produce, the welfare of the people they employ and the effects of what they produce on human and natural environments, we call it "getting government off our backs."

When we fail to show compassion, advocate for and secure the rights of the poor, the disabled, the elderly, the deprived and discriminated against, we call it "combatting socialism."

When we interfere in the lives of women, families, relationships and privileged consultations between doctors and patients, we call it "protecting the unborn's right to life."

When children and adults petition for their rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, we call it "socialism" and "government interference."

When we remove or disallow certain material in the nation's libraries, we call it "protecting the minds of our children," instead of censorship.

When governments are on the take, engaging in corruption and other acts of questionable morality, we say they are "responding to their constituency."

Calling it like it isn't is calling it like we see it through our own personal ideologies, prejudices and preferences at a given point in time and according to what we want to do, what we want to conceal or what we want to convince about a particular issue.

It has nothing to do with what is right or ethical or moral. And that's just fine, so long as we keep our prejudices to ourselves and within the context of our

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Parren J. Mitchell — Let the people decide

In the Philippines, the power of Ferdinand Marcos over the people has ended. The power of leadership has shifted to Corazon Aquino, who won the February 7 election fair and square.

In the end, the deciding factor was the Philippine people who exercised their well known right of self determination. A true example of democracy at its finest.

As the situation in the Philippines began to boil over the last several days, there were hopes and prayers that Marcos would not turn his loss of power into a bloodbath.

Reflecting upon past history, one would expect such an epilog to occur; A deposed despot fighting to stay in power, with the U.S. fighting for or against him — to the end.

But this time, instead of lending strong-arm support to our puppet regimes, or engineering flat-out overthrows of the past, it seems that America has finally learned something about dealing with dictators on the decline. We restrained ourselves and allowed the autonomy of the Philippine people to dictate the final word.

We in the U.S. cherish democracy for ourselves and for everyone else. But in our efforts we fail to recognize that our policies do not always foster peaceful methods to achieve democracy for third world nations.

Although the U.S. played a critical role to promote a smooth transition during the downfall of Marcos and the rise of Aquino, consider the drama unfolding in Nicaragua, and similar episodes in past history:

— In Guatemala, in 1954, the CIA engineered a coup where a military regime replaced the Arbenz Government.

—In Chile, the CIA worked to topple the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende.

— In 1960, President Syngman Rhee of South Korea was overthrown with U.S. involvement, only to be followed by years of chaos and conflict.

— In 1963, President Ngo Dinh Diem of South Vietnam was ousted with U.S. involvement, again with dire results.

— In 1979, we helped ease the Somoza family out of Nicaragua. Now, the Sandinista is far more brutal and repressive than Somoza ever was.

—Also in 1979, we helped the Shah of Iran when his rule fell at the hands of the Ayatollah Khomeini an Islamic fundamentalist who calls the U.S. "the great Satan."

In each case, the authoritarian government was less than perfect in supporting U.S. efforts for peace and security. And in each, the U.S. government sought to reduce corruption and foster democracy.

But in each case, the old discredited regime was followed by greater chaos, corruption and repression. And in three cases — Cuba, Iran, and Nicaragua — the new regimes became vengeful foes of the U.S., initiating aggression or subversion against other countries.

Past U.S. foreign policy failed to recognize that most third world countries are traditional societies where kinship, tribe, and class connections tend to prevail over Marxism socialism or capitalism.

In previous episodes, our choice was not necessarily popular among the overwhelming majority of people. Strategic interests were always considered ahead of the people's general welfare. That attitude must not continue. There is more involved in democratic revolutions than strategic interests.

Well known and most universally accepted is the right of nations to self-determination. Our policy falls short of providing nations with the opportunity to exercise this right. We continue to assume that "intervention on our behalf is the only method to foster democracy.

In the Philippines there was a democratic alternative. We had a unique choice between a friendly strongman and a potentially friendly movement led by radicals seeking a revival of democracy. This alternative did not exist in previous situations.

And now we must hold our breaths with anxiety as we face yet another foreign policy decision. President Reagan will soon make his pitch to the Congress when he seeks federal funds for the contras in Nicaragua. Again the popular consensus does not favor U.S. policy.

Our democratic allies in that region urge a diplomatic solution. They fear that U.S. policy will only succeed in exacerbating tensions in that area. They also fear that our strong arm policy will militate against prospects for a peaceful political solution.

The best way to serve democracy in Central America is to promote diplomacy. Congress should restrain from current administration policy and vote against contra support. Let us pray history will not repeat itself with a vengeance. The Philippines should be an example of positive change.

Anthony A. Williams — Smart guns and payback

Get a load of this; for the first time we now have smart guns. Here in Baltimore killing, if it's done with a hand gun, seems not to be killing at all. In fact, if the crime is teenager killing teenager "It isn't a matter of murder but, instead, a matter of hand guns" — no doubt these must be smart guns.

Smart guns must be the kind that just walk-up to you and shoot you, without anyone having to do anything. You know, the kind that shoot you in the street, as you try to protect your mother, in a night club, as you dance with your wife, in your cab, as you try to earn a living, even in your own home, where your only desire is to live in peace.

The gun that killed a high school student recently was, if we can believe the States Attorney, one such smart gun. It appears such a gun is now to blame for a young student's untimely and horribly regrettable death. Damn, these smart guns, they're something else aren't they?

Nonsense, awful, dangerous, irresponsible nonsense! Anyone with a high school diploma, to say nothing of degrees from Harvard, Yale, and Oxford's Rhode Scholar program, should know that it's nonsense — political year or no political year.

I have never in my life known a gun capable of killing anyone. I have, and so have you, sadly, known of many, far too many, people who have used guns to kill other people.

Yet, whether the weapon is a hand gun, a butcher's knife, a baseball bat or whatever; if a person dies because a killer snuffs out their life, the killer, not the weapon, is responsible and to blame.

In short, weapons, particularly guns, don't kill people. People kill people. Are there too many guns You doggone right there are. Yet, we don't convict guns for 'killing or any other crime and, the States Attorney knows it.

Why then would anyone, especially an assumed intelligent person, an elected official, a lawyer too, make such a statement about the death of someone (in this case a person killed in the hallway of a high school); why, would such a person make such an irresponsible statement

A statement that can only add to an already formed attitude, among too many of our citizens, that people don't have to be responsible for what they do, even to the point of killing other people

The answer is two fold: one, the States Attorney must believe such smart guns do, in fact, exist (chuckle, chuckle) and; two, it's an election year.

All jokes aside, the States Attorney knows there's no such thing as a smart gun. For him to make the statement "this is not a matter of murder (even though he might have been speaking in terms of the strictest legal definition of murder per se) but, instead, a matter of gun control" can only be understood in the context of 1986's gubernatorial contest, a contest that's starting to take on the colorations of mania, by Sachs.

I grant you politics is important, all important to some it would seem; however, is anything so important, so to be had, as to make it permissible to play politics with the life or death questions Baltimore, particularly black Baltimore, must successfully answer, if we are to stop the carnage, let alone move ahead.

The answer is no, absolutely no. Nothing is, or should be, more important than the responsibility for life.

But this madness is happening in the case of the smart guns. Let me explain.

We have a governor's race coming-up this year: Sachs against, all indications are, Schaefer.

So far, Sachs has done everything but set fire to City Hall, in an effort to smoke" his opponent out, to draw him into a verbal battle. The mayor is saying he has a city to run, that there are other things he has to do than run around answering Sachs' sometimes vicious barrages.

Sachs needs an issue, something he can begin to use to beat-on Schaefer with. Since no such issue has "stuck" (except Sachs' own albatross of an issue called Savings and Loan), Sachs has told his advisers, including our Harvard, Yale, Rhodes Scholar States Attorney, to find one.

In the black community the designated issue is guns and death; not the people who use these weapons to kill other people, but mind you, guns and gun control.

All kinds of verbal and legislative efforts have surfaced to make gun control the issue this election year in Baltimore, especially among black voters.

The idea is to try to paint the mayor as a man confused if not "soft on gun" laws.

Bills have been introduced in Annapolis, but largely, to gain headlines and to place pressures. The people who have introduced these bills (allies of Sachs) know they have little or no chance of passage.

Passage isn't the intent; the intent is to grab an issue, try to put the mayor on the spot and, ultimately achieve something Sachs hasn't otherwise managed: a creditable race for governor.

Unfortunately, for him, the current state attorney is politically tied, lock, stock, and T.V. commercial (a la Sachs' 1983 commercial in support of then candidate Schmoke) to Sachs.

It's payback time. So to square accounts, Mr. States Attorney is doing a lot and, more dangerously, saying anything he can to advance Sachs against Schaefer. Including making statements like the one he made last week, that a student's death was not a matter of murder but one of gun control.

Don't you see, they're attempting to make the gun the issue, not the people who use them to kill other people. Now really, aren't these really dumb people, as opposed to smart guns?

Samuel L. Banks — Coming MD political races: better get ready

The pace is quickening here in Baltimore and across the Free State in terms of mayoral, U.S. Senate, the gubernatorial and local political races. The time is at hand for all Marylanders, especially black citizens who, in so many instances, react to events rather than to initiate and be proactive, to seize political opportunities for empowerment in local and statewide elections.

Black citizens who comprise approximately 23 percent of Maryland's population, located in the most populous areas (viz., Baltimore City and Prince George's County), can play a decisive and pivotal role in local and statewide elections.

The sheer fact of numbers in terms of blacks in Baltimore (55 percent black) and Prince George's (about 52 percent black) dictates that black Baltimoreans and residents of Prince George's who are entitled to their just and fair share of political power to seize it now.

It is an inescapable and unavoidable reality, given the presence of a corps of highly educated, sophisticated and discerning blacks in both Baltimore and Prince George's that a new day, at last, is upon us.

There are certain political moral and psychological imperatives that black citizens must address forthrightly in Maryland and throughout our nation:

1. Political power has to be seized through the elective process. The truism expressed by Frederick Douglass over 100 years ago remains a constant: "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has and it never will." Where we as black folk constitute a dominant force, we must elect people of our choosing to office.

Moreover, we must insist upon political and moral accountability. Where our officials, black or white, fail to address our felt needs and interests, we need to vote them from office. This, to be sure, is in full agreement with American political tradition and practice.

2. Adherence to a time-honored aphorism: God helps those who help themselves. To this end, we as black people must forswear the romance of rhetoric and perpetual laments about what other people will do or let us do. It is we, as free men and women in a free society, who must determine what we will do or not do.

3. Demonstrate political maturity and decisiveness in our actions. If black people, as the majority population of Baltimore, determines that it wants a black as Mayor of Baltimore, the political clout is available in the city. The political propensities of Mayor William Donald Schaefer should not dictate the political agenda of the majority black population.

In this conjunction, it is heartening in Prince George's County, an overflow crowd of black and white citizens met recently at Prince George's Community College, to endorse the candidacy of Professor Alexander Williams for State's Attorney of Prince George's County.

Professor Williams, an astute, highly respected and erudite Professor of Law at the Howard University School of Law, is a formidable candidate for the office now held by State's Attorney Arthur Dad" Marshall. Professor Williams enjoys broad-based support.

In Baltimore, it is crucial in terms of the forthcoming mayoral race that the majority black population show political maturity and sophistication. A political race for mayor involving both President of the City Council Clarence "Du" Burns and State's Attorney Kurt L. Schmoke is fraught with danger.

A joint race by both would be a compelling invitation for a white candidate to enter the race and capitalize on a divided black electorate. Political reality and the arithmetic of power support a summit conference between Messrs. Du" Burns and Schmoke and their representatives to resolve the emerging dilemma.

The heady and remarkable victory of Mrs. Corazon Aquino in deposing the tyrannical regime of former president Ferdinand Marcos. The overwhelming number of the 35 million Filipinos were united that they would not be robbed of an election by the goon squads and sycophants of the Marcos autocracy.

Their collective unity, sophistication, sacrifice and determination, in the final analysis, toppled the marcos regime. The universal meanings of President Corazon Aquino's ascendancy to power are not lost to those who seek full freedom and power in the world order.

Finally, as black Americans, 38 million strong, we must not permit others to make us national scapegoats for their failures. It is not we who created $200 billion dollar annual deficits or run up a $2 trillion dollar national debt. President Ronald Wilson Reagan and the holders and controllers of political and corporate power in our nation understand this full well.

The "awesome roar of the struggle," as forcefully stated by Frederick Douglass, is now upon us. The time is at hand to get ready and move with vigor, steadiness and determination for our power and control of our collective destiny. If you believe it, you can achieve it. Get your "new attitude" now for full economic, political and educational empowerment.

TONY BROWN'S COMMENTS

Financing your destruction

No, I did not see "The Color Purple" and obviously many who saw it (and gave those who produced the most savage treatment of black men since "Birth of a Nation" another $100 million to produce another one) did not really "see" it either.

And to all of you critics who have written to this paper and to me, you seem to fall into the following categories: frustrated black women, closet homosexual men and closet lesbians and meddling white people. I left one group out: pseudo-intellectual black persons who neither read nor comprehend very well.

Frustrated black women are mad (and I do not mean angry) at the world and seize every opportunity possible to blame all black men for the failure of a few and damn black manhood because they can't find one—or found the wrong one. They then employ the convoluted logic that they are perfect because they have failed and they are women, which is why they are frustrated. That's sexist. Neither do I suggest that all women who enjoyed "Purple" are frustrated.

There are as many black-female tramps as there are black-male bums. There are as many wonderful and healthy black women as there are black men. And most black women and most black men are healthy, in spite of white racism.

If you like movies that exploit your frustration and make you feel good about being frustrated, that's your business. But don't try the martyr bit. I'm not buying.

And for you homosexuals of the closet variety who are making a case for lesbianism in the name of black man-black woman relationships, why don't you come on down front and say what your real motives are. If you sexually prefer men and you feel women should sexually prefer women — say it and stop hiding behind "The Color Purple."

As far as you meddling white people are concerned, I don't give a damn what you think one way or the other about black men, women, children or dogs. You've never suffered one second from this destructive and odious disease — and that's what it is — of WHITE RACISM.

You have not earned the right to have an opinion. But your white arrogance tells you that you can tell us what our family dynamics are. The New Pittsburgh Courier wasted space on a white woman who said that I was hung up on color." "The movie ('Purple') had to do with men and women, not with black men and black women," she wrote.

She lamented that I was going through life with such "limited view." Blackness, dear white lady, never limited me. Rather, knowing my African-self creates my success against the psychological ravages that your kind of logic has tried to effect. While your first sentence admitted that you are white," you condemn me for seeing the world from a black point of view. You're really telling me not to exist.

She is joined in the Courier by a teacher at the University of Pittsburgh's law school with his not white or black gibberish. Because I did not see the film, he says, I am stupid for commenting on it.

"Color," he said is a "winner." Sure is, for racism and exploitation. That's why it wins so many awards.

Did a Jew have to go into a gas chamber to understand Hitler's motives? I know what the $100 million dollars that "Purple" has made at the box office means.

It means more Purples," but no "Blacks." It provides racism with a bank roll, without which it would be impotent. My writings stopped many Blacks from going to see this disaster and I feel good — and black — about it.

Hollywood studios will never co-opt me with crackers and cheese and cheap wine at "press parties." I buy my own, therefore, I say what I want.

Next year, you'll see my first feature movie. Those of you who love "Purple" will hate mine. Yes "closet queens" won't find my heroes looking for homosexual affairs and white folks who prefer us to be white in ideas will be shocked. Men and women will be equally corrupt and equally holy. But I will distinguish between slaves and free men and women.

There are one million of us who escaped the psychological damage of slavery and racism. And quite frankly, for those who don't belong to this group, I don't give a damn what your slave mentality tells you. And as far as whites are concerned, you can keep your black opinions to yourself.

Tony Brown's Journal can be seen on public television in Washington on Sunday, Channel 32 at 8 p.m.; Friday, Channel 26 at 11:30 p.m. and Sunday, Channel 31 at 5 p.m. Please consult listing.

—AFRO SURVEY—

Should metal detectors be in schools and nightclubs?

Brian Tyson

James Craig

Tony Firwick

Beverly Cash

This week the question to the man and woman in the street is, "Do you think that metal detectors should be used in nightclubs and in public schools?"

Brian Tyson, 27, reporter, "Yes, in areas that are known to have trouble with handguns. This should be done to protect the welfare of those who are there for the right reasons."

James Craig, 35, warehouse employee, "I think whatever is needed to protect our kids' school should be used. But, I don't approve of them in nightclubs. Because as an adult you know what type of people go to nightclubs, so you have to use your own best judgement of the ones you go to."

Tony Firwick, 23, laborer, "I think they should be installed for safety reasons. I feel that they really need them in the public school system so that the kids can be safe. I don't think that they are needed in nightclubs because if they are, you lose that elegance of the club."

Beverly Cash, 27, cook, "I think they should be used in clubs and schools because there have been too many shootings in the clubs and schools."

Ronald Jackson, Sr., 38, unemployed, "Yes, because I have kids in schools and if something happened to my kids, I would be ready to kill the whole school. I think they should have more guards in schools, too. I think they should be installed in nightclubs because of the killings in the past few months."

Kenneth B. Jackson, Sr., 32, unemployed, "I think they should be installed in nightclubs and schools since kids are getting killed over stupid stuff (shoes, jackets, etc.). It's uncalled for. As far as nightclubs, yes. Because you might go into a nightclub, and you never know what might happen once you get inside the club."

Officer D. Taylor, 28, police officer, "I think they should be installed in both places. I think kids carry guns and knives to school and something should be done to keep the guns out of the schools. The same thing for nightclubs because people carry guns in nightclubs too."

Bill Mitchell, 27, hotel clerk, "Yes, because of all the crime that has been going on; something has to be and should be done to prevent things from happening in these places."

Ronald Jackson

Kenneth B. Jackson

Officer D. Taylor

Bill Mitchell

R. B. Jones

The Seventh heats up

Hold all bets, the Seventh District Race just had the heat turned up.

The campaign had been putting people to sleep with the mutual admiration society that had been going on among the candidates. They have had the kid gloves on, shadow boxing without effect, but the sudden certainly not unexpected intrusion of St. George Crosse into the race will liven things up considerably.

Despite the fact that he has not filed and rumor has it that he will not decline until the Spring, Crosse has been haunting the declared candidates like the unwelcome ghost of Banquo at McBeth's dinner table. Crosse has been an unofficial candidate appearing at forums and sizing up his potential opponents.

Baltimore like the rest of Maryland is staunchly Democratic, making the two party system something of a joke in this state. However, Republicans who have a charisma that transcends party lines or campaign on the right issue at the right time can win against the odds.

St. George Crosse brings an impressive arsenal to the Seventh District race. First he has name recognition because of his regular television appearances on a local talk show. Second, he is pastor of a church which gives him ready made base of volunteers and potential voters. Third, Crosse has made contacts through his work at HUD and his representation of President Reagan at various functions that will in all probability allow him to raise a large amount of money. The national party leadership might lend a hand since there is the chance that he could wrest a long held seat from the Democrats.

Another factor that helps Crosse is the fact the he ran as a Republican citywide in 1979 and gathered about 49,000 votes. Of his announced or potential opponents at this time only one with wide experience are Dwight Pettit who ran for State's Attorney in 1978 and came in second to incumbent William Swisher and Sen. Clarence Mitchell who ran for mayor in 1971 and did not come within shouting distance of William Donald Schaefer and George Russell.

The Mitchell family name was only worth about 5,000 votes citywide and that does not bode well for a Mitchell candidacy in the 7th district which sprawls from Howard and Baltimore Counties in the west through much of Baltimore City covering large areas of the west, northwest, southwest, east and northeast sectors.

The people in many of those areas feel no loyalty to the Mitchell family at all. To them the member will be just another face in the crowd.

St. George Crosse on the other hand will stand apart from the other candidates. His party affiliation and because his views combine a curious mixture of conservatism and ethnic nationalism that sometimes contradicts his conservatism. It is not easy to pigeon-hole Crosse's views.

In the race his opponents on the Democratic side will have to concentrate on attacking each other while Crosse can use the primary time building his base and lumping all his Democratic opponents together.

By the time the general election came around Crosse could seem like a welcome relief from the Democratic bickering and namecalling. Of course this rosy scenario can only take place if Crosse can steer clear of the label Reaganite.

His president is exceedingly unpopular among black voters and his stint as a presidential appointee binds him to Reagan whether he agreed with all of the president's policies or not. Being branded a Reaganite could be the death knell of the Crosse campaign. It is a heavy burden for him to bring into the 7th District race, but Crosse has some heavy connections.

Crosse will make things interesting. He is an energetic campaigner and a somewhat flamboyant personality.

The other question mark about the 7th District is whether Clarence Mitchell, III will run for his uncle's seat. The recent newspaper accounts of an alleged connection between Mitchell and drug kingpin Lil Melvin is the latest in a long line of accusations and innendoes that have affected Mitchell over the years.

Mitchell supporters swear that the investigation is part of a plot to keep this fiery advocate of the poor and dispossessed out of Congress. His detractors smile smugly as if their criticisms have been proven true.

The former notion is a fantasy. If one looks at Mitchell's record as a landlord, the notion of a staunch advocate for the poor begins to fade. When one recalls his full page advertisements for higher utility bills, the notion that he is an advocate for the poor becomes a cruel farce.

The odds are stacked against Mitchell in the 7th District but he is a fiery orator and he has a large war chest. If he could prevail upon Jesse Jackson to come back to Baltimore to campaign for him he would have a chance to win.

In order to win the race Mitchell must win voters in areas that care little and know even less of his family's accomplishment. He must overcome opponents who will try to project images of fresh innovative leadership and Mitchell may be too much associated with old style black Baltimore politics.

One of the most neglected and crucial questions in the 7th District is who will win a large percentage of the white vote in the district. Crosse's conservative politics will help him a great deal in that aspect of the campaign although, just much of the white vote is still up for grabs.

The race in the 7th District is heating up and I look forward with glee to the bloodletting that is sure to come in this race where so much is up for grabs.

—'Calling it like it isn't'

(Continued from page 4)

families.

The great danger with calling it like it isn't is that we ascend to positions of national prominence, delude ourselves into believing that everyone else should think as we do, and proceed to impose our prejudices on the rest of the nation.

Then it becomes misrepresentation and misuse of power: acts taken not in the interest of the whole nation but in the interest of one person and of a select few, whose absolute qualification for anything is their agreement with the prejudicial view of the person in power. The danger this poses to a democracy goes without saying.

A true democracy requires for its existence free and open discussion, including the balance of opposing views. The opposite of this undermines democracy: shuts off discussion, stifles dissent and the growth of knowledge, stymies the search for truth and the answers to ethical questions about what is right to do in given situations.

The antithesis of a true democracy is totalitarianism: It retards the progress, enlightenment, growth and evolution of a culture and society.

We must guard our democracy. Listen carefully to what people are saying on national platforms, call them to task for their misinformation, challenge their motivations and flawed arguments, and insist that they call it like it is — instead of calling it like it isn't.

Dr. Carolyn L. Bennett is a writer and former educator who works at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and lives in Northern Virginia.

MAR 1986