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).

Privatization—can it work?

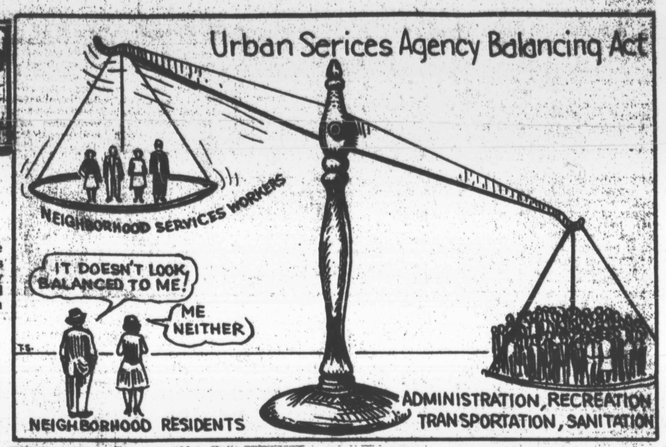
In an era when federal government and many other levels of government are abdicating their responsibilities in favor of letting private enterprise or private philanthropy do the job.

There are many arguments pro and con for the process of privatization as it is called. Arguments on both sides can be persuasive, but the bottom line should be whether the government which takes resources from the citizenry in the form of taxes has any responsibility to provide for the general welfare of the people.

A bill has been introduced in the state senate that would allow Juvenile Services to place young people who need help in private organizations. Hopefully this bill is not a first step in a process whereby the state will farm out its troubled youth to institutions concerned with profit.

Children, no matter how much trouble they are represent possibility. They represent hope for the future. They are often difficult and exasperating, but just as the state has acknowledged the fact that it owes young people an education it also owes them help in times of crisis.

Privatization must be considered very carefully before it becomes law in the state of Maryland.



Urban Services and the budget

When the Urban Services Agency laid off 21 workers recently because of federal budget cuts dictated by Gramm-Rudman budget constraints, shudders went through the workforce?

Lay-offs are always traumatic at any workplace and usually there are two ways that people are laid-off fairly, by seniority, except in cases of affirmative action and by the necessity of the worker's skill or training.

Much of the chagrin of many USA workers and some community residents, all the layoffs took place in the neighborhood operations unit which oversees the neighborhood centers.

All the workers were directly involved in working with the poor. This is a very strange way for an anti-poverty agency to determine its staff cuts.

If the agency's purpose is to fight poverty and provide direct and indirect assistance to the victims of poverty than any staff cuts that are made should be done with the primary objective of the organization in mind.

This present situation is similar to a general voluntarily withdrawing soldiers from the line in the midst of a battle to perform ceremonial duties in the rear area.

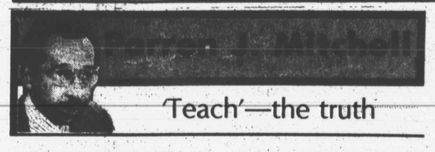
Certainly there were ways to spread the cuts throughout the agency: Urban Services runs a number of programs that have less merit than the neighborhood centers which handle a wide variety of services from emergency food to energy assistance.

With more and more people unemployed and homeless the administration would do well to look at nonessential programs such as Cultural Arts and Youth Services recreational programs rather than the bread and butter services provided by the neighborhood centers.

The union representing the workers has cried foul and so far this paper has found no evidence to disprove its claim that the layoffs which have affected people with as many as 17 years of experience and seniority with the agency eliminated experienced workers while persons in other parts of the agency with less seniority are protected.

AFRO inquiries have not been met with forthright answers generally and often statements from one agency will conflict with others. The situation reeks of insensitivity to the workers and indifference to the community residents who depend on the USA neighborhood centers for vital services and information.

If cuts must be made, let them come from administration or programs that duplicate services provided by other city agencies but keep the centers staffed as fully as possible, they are lifelines for many Baltimoreans.



'Teach'—the truth

The Reagan Administration, in an attempt to launch another attack on separation of church and state, has submitted an educational "voucher" program to Congress.

The Equity and Choice Act or TEACH, would convert the current Chapter One program into a tuition voucher program.

A voucher being a check written by the government to parents of school-age children which could be "cashed in" at the public or private school of the parents' choice.

The legislation's seeming purpose is to create more choice in education and increase competition between public and private schools. In fact, the proposal is yet another effort to direct public funds into private schools.

Federal law requires public school districts to insure equitable participation in remedial education programs by private school students.

Under the Chapter one program, the federal government had paid for public school teachers to teach remedial classes in parochial and other private schools in many areas of the country.

However, a Supreme Court decision on July 1 struck down direct government aid to religious schools for remedial education and many school districts were forced to find alternative ways to provide remedial classes (per federal law requirements) for students attending religious schools.

In the wake of the Supreme Court decision, the voucher proposal has become a priority and is actually an alternate route around constitutional mandates against government aid to religion.

With a voucher program, tax money would be going to religious schools indirectly through parents. Supporters see that the courts would not be able to so easily strike down such a plan as a violation of church-state separation.

The most insulting thing about this proposal is that it is presented as a plan designed to help improve the educational chances of poor children.

After five years of slashing food, housing, health care and education programs for the poor, the Reagan administration now attempts to portray themselves as the friend and supplier of opportunity for the poor and disadvantaged children who cannot afford private or church schools.

The poor have never before, during the Reagan presidency, received so much consideration. This proposal is simply a sham designed to take scarce federal dollars from the free public schools to benefit parochial and private schools.

What parent earning $12,000 to $14,000 a year will be able to use a $600 voucher toward tuition when that amount represents less than 20 percent of what it costs to educate a child in the average public school and no more than 15 percent of what the better private schools charge in tuition.

And aside from the tuition factor, many poor students, particularly in inner city neighborhoods, would be restricted in their choice of schools for lack of mobility.

Then if mobility were not a problem, parents would still be unable in most cases to send their children to other public schools because most do not have open enrollment policies.

With vouchers, there is no accountability of the funds, which would make it more difficult to determine whether children are getting the remedial services they are entitled to.

Also, schools that receive no other form of Federal aid, but do receive vouchers, would not be considered recipients of Federal aid and therefore would not be subject to requirements normally applied to such recipients, such as non-discrimination on the basis of sex or handicap.

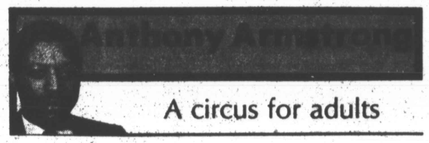
A movement toward the privatization of education is cause for much alarm for those concerned with the quality of education for minority students. For too long we have seen the lack of adequate and equal financing of public education.

If there were any actual concern for poor children, on the part of the Administration, there would be proposed increases in the Chapter One allocation instead of an attempt to subsidize parochial schools.

The remedial programs for disadvantaged children have never been adequately funded. In fact, past budget cuts have chopped more than a half million children from this program since 1980.

This present proposal will do nothing more than continue to hurt the public school system while fabricating a new financial link between government and private schools.

As Michael Resnik, associate director of the National School Boards Association stated, "This bill is a Trojan horse."



A circus for adults

Ah, the circus. A time of fun and frolic, a time for all to be kids again. The circus has always been one sure way to have the purest fun, because the circus allows everyone to be, for a while at least, almost anything they want to be, including clown, elephant, ringmaster or whatever.

But alas, people, in their unique way, can make for a circus at almost anytime they choose. Probably, though, the best circuses at all aren't for little kids and, grown-ups remembering what being a kid was like.

The best of all circuses are our American style elections, where clowns do show up, elephants throw their weight around, and almost anybody, whether insider or not, puts on the coat of the ringmaster.

Amelican elections turn everybody into instant political experts. As confused as it all is, it is still the best electoral system in the world but buy it sure quickly becomes more headaches than dragging six excited kids to any Ringling Brothers Circus.

1986's elections, more than usual, are shaping up to be the circus of all circuses. When all the cheering crowds finally go home, what we will be left with, are the people who will lead Maryland for a long time to come.

Thus, 1986's elections will be among the most important, in Maryland, in decades. But, for as many seats that are on the block I believe that Maryland voters will not see as much major change as so many open seats might indicate.

Yes, there will be some new people in new offices but, there is not going to be that many surprises.

On the surface, many of the races have already produced candidates who, unless they slip into deep dark holes, will emerge victorious. Those races right now would seem tobe that for Governor and for the U.S. Senate.

Politicians don't like the "front-runner" position too much but; most people would agree that Mayor Schaefer has a growing lock on the State House and, that congressman Mikulski is an increasing favorite to be our next U.S. Senator.

In politics, however, if you can see it, then what you see probably isn't what is. What's the old phrase: "Stay out of the kitchen of restaurants and out of the smoke filled rooms of politics, for if you go either place what you'll find will turn your stomach."

This phrase cannot be anymore true of politics in general than it will be of 1986 politics in Maryland, particularly in the black community. Our circus array, if it wasn't shaping-up to be so sad, would be funny, funny, funny indeed.

First, in East Baltimore, now State Senator Irby and his cohorts, with the help of their outside moneyman, are going to try to complete the destruction of twenty years of political progress.

In just four years the people of East Baltimore have seen their once vaulted political apparatus turned into something far less effective, because Irby, by his defection, signalled to the political world that East Baltimore was open to scalawags and carpetbaggers.

Irby is doing fine; the people of East Baltimore, however, are again having to fight anew for their political well being.

Although the excitement is about 1986, the real objective is 1987 mayor's race. What is developing is a "Stop Da Burns at any cost, but stop him" campaign.

The people behind it are not people who have the interest of many voters at heart; again, what is at stake are some old political wars not yet ended and the ego maniacs of some people who think Da Burns has too much power.

In this regard don't be surprised to see a situation develop that could, again, prevent a black man from becoming Mayor of Baltimore in 1987. When this mess unfolds don't look for white men under the covers, look for blacks.

To help you, remember back to the race of mayor between George Russell and William Donald Schaefer. In that race Russell had a real chance to become the first black mayor of Baltimore.

Do you remember who got into the race (another black man) to stop George? If you do remember, don't be surprised to see another person with the same last name as George's other black opponent, enter the 1987 race for mayor.

Politics, ain't it fun? No, Politics is a most serious business that to too many cases we, in the black community, have entrusted to too many people who could care less about you, Mr. and Mrs. Voter.

Yet, it is said "if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." The under-the-cover politics shaping up are going to be very hot; here comes a circus for adults.

Letters to the AFRO

Plaudits for G. James Fleming

As a regular reader of the Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN I wish to make the following statement regarding the G. James Fleming column, Dr. Flemings' articles are thoughtful and reflective. His writings afford new insight into the subject he is discussing. I find his column informative, interesting and well written.

"Now, you will forgive me as I confess that I was extremely well pleased with the G. James Fleming article in the March 1, 1986 column entitled "Alice Parham, Patron Saint of Morgan State" because that column was about me. Thank you for printing the article.

I will continue as a regular reader of the Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN, which true to its great history, continues to be a priceless service to its community.

ALICE W. PARHAM

Recreation and Parks puzzle

I was relieved to read in the March 4, 1986 "Politics '86" column that Ms. Bachus S. Winborne stated the fact Counsilman Kweisi Mfume had filed for the 7th Congressional seat in Washington, D.C. on December 12, 1985.

In her February 22, 1986 column, she had given many the impression Mfume may not be a serious candidate, because he had not filed. What she failed to state was whether she had tried to reach Mfume to verify if he had or had not filed.

While there has been a lot of publicity given to remarks Mfume made January 21, 1986, when he said he had heard allegations of sexual harassment in Baltimore's Department of Recreation and Parks, I have not read anywhere that the information Mfume requested from the city parks director, Chris T. Delaporte, had been sent.

The mayoral committee, headed by former Circuit Court Judge Robert Watts, stated in its report that complaints of favoritism and cronyism in hiring within the department should be looked into.

Many have said that it was a mistake for Mfume to have made the remarks about sexual harassment, but none have said, including members of the City Council, that favoritism and cronyism is not a serious problem in the Department of Recreation and Parks.

Hopefully, the information Mfume requested will be sent to him, and the public will receive the full story on promotion and hiring in the Department of Recreation and Parks.

RODNEY A. ORANGE

Reaching out for protection

I was in a Pawn Shop in the Park Heights area to price a speaker for my son's stereo. There was a young man ahead of me who was attempting to pawn a late model T.V. set.

There were two salesmen in the shop who were visible and when the first of the two approached this man, asked to help him, and began to examine the set, he stated he needed at least $50.00 for it.

The salesman responded, okay. He then requested I.D. (driver's license). This was produced, and all the necessary paperwork was documented (including numbers of I.D. from rear of the T.V. set), and the address and name of the young man.

When the salesman went to the rear of said shop to get the money, the other salesman probably the owner, came forward and inadvertantly began to examine the T.V. set.

During this examination, it was noticed that there was a social security number engraved on the back of the set.

The initial salesman had documented said number on his paperwork, but in this salesman's effort to insure the article was in fact the property of the young man who brought it into the shop, he compared the SSN to that on the driver's license.

In finding it different, he asked the young man, was the set his. The response was yes. He then asked was it purchased new and by whom.

The answer was, he purchased it from Sears about 8 months ago (North Ave. branch at Harford Rd.) and it was new when bought.

He then told the man it couldn't be his set because the SSN printed on the back wasn't his and that he could get into trouble for trying to pawn it.

The young man grabbed said set from the counter and in leaving said, "You haven't been questioning articles before, why start now" The salesman tore the paperwork up and went on about his routine. (Note: Sears North Ave. is closed).

I ask you and your readers, why go thru all the trouble to mark, record and label our personal property in an effort to secure it when there are businesses out there where these articles are sold

Continued on page 5

G. James Fleming

Those Howard County student statistics

It has not been pretty reading. It has been deeply disturbing to learn that black high school students in Howard County bring up the rear in every level of state and national testings, compared with other ethnic groups, and also behind white students.

No opportunity here to lay the blame on segregated schools; or decrepit, rundown and poorly equipped buildings; or second-hand textbooks. Howard County's schools are integrated, all pupils are being taught English, science, mathematics, languages and other subjects by the same teachers.

Nevertheless, in these tests, given on an ethnic basis for the first time, the pattern of achievement is the same: blacks at the bottom of the ratings, 1) Asians, Hispanics and American Indians (the three lumped together), 2) whites and 3) blacks, as reported by Dr. Michael E. Henry, superintendent of the Howard County schools.

This column, all other media and countless organizations have been pointing out, for some time, the reasons for the persistent low achievement on the part of black students.

First and foremost, the same old story: Poor or too late family support and encouragement for learning, and not giving books and education the first priority in the family. Others may add long years of faulty nutrition as the culprit in slow intellectual achievement.

The poor schooling of parents themselves is also a handicap. Many parents are not in a position to give aid to their children in any school subject.

There is nothing stopping these parents, however, from "laying down the law" that, as long as their children are living under their parents' roofs, they must attend their classes, they must do their homework, and they must read, read, read.

This pressure on young people, all expert studies have shown, must begin as early as possible — from the cradle days; at least from the knee-high days.

The picture is not all discouraging, thanks to the gods. The same Howard County statistics show that county students, blacks included, scored above their grade levels on the nationally standardized California Achievement Tests.

Even more impressive in the 11th grade, all student, again blacks included, showed a proficiency of 12th grade, plus, in each section of the language, math and reading tests.

Another sign of improvement is the scores for tests given in reading where 94 percent of the black students passed, although 98 percent of whites, and 99 percent of Asians and Hispanics (taken together) topped the ratings.

For the county as a whole, although Howard's black students are, on the average, receiving lower test scores than whites, Asians and Hispanics, they generally are scoring above the national norm for all students," according to Dr. Maurice F. Kalin, assistant superintendent for planning and support services.

This is a very important revelation: Black students "are scoring above the national norm for all students" (norms having been set in 1977). This finding helps to prove that well paid teachers, good teaching and learning conditions, better living condition at home, and family stability — over time — will have positive results.

This statement is made because Howard County is largely the City of Columbia, where the annual income of blacks is relatively high, where the community is supportive, the family is rather stable, and where there are already many achievers.

On the other hand, Howard County and Columbia have a large proportion of families where both parents are working; often, high school children also hold jobs. These circumstances may create a situation where there is less time and less energy for parental enforcement of rules about "homework," and other school responsibilities.

The Howard County report is disturbing, but it is not funereal. As parents, pupils, the community, and — thankfully — the school system address themselves to the obvious challenge, the "disturbing" of 1986 may be more encouraging in the immediate years ahead.

P.S. Special attention should be called to the fact, above stated, that there are, altogether, only 5 percent of minority students, other than blacks, in the Howard County high schools. For statistical purposes they are lumped in the study as "Other." There were no separate scores for Asians, Hispanics or American Indians.

Reaching out

(Continued from page 4)

for profit or gain.

That salesman knew it was more than likely that set had been stolen, but even more upsetting is the fact he had all the information necessary for reporting and tracing, but merely tore it up and discarded it into a trash container.

I guess I could go on and on with questions, but you know the questions, and probably some of the answers.

In the meantime, I decided to leave, simply because I refused to purchase any article even having a small chance of being stolen property, but in doing so, the salesman gave me one heck of a look. One which seemed to say, I should report you to the police, because you are acting suspicious by leaving so abruptly.

It is obvious that many of us in the mainstream of society are just willing to accept, therefore allowing those who are corrupting our communities to indirectly becoming pocketed by our silence.

The unprotected is you and me, those who struggle to acquire things in life through honest ventures, but who's reaching out to protect us and ours? Who? It surely isn't someone named "Look The Other Way!!"

D. J.

Tony Brown's Comments

Free will against racism

If you're typical, you do not believe in astrology, but you know your astrological sign.

And you probably do not want Americans dying in a war in Nicaragua. However, Reagan administration officials have warned that American troops may be sent there if congress does not allocate enough aid for the "contra" forces.

This affords us an opportunity to test astrology. The government is saying that it is ready for war. In fact, astrology articles published in March were written months ago and they predicted that the United States government would behave this month as though it had a chip on its shoulder — and was willing to have it knocked off by "anyone who comes along." And it did.

Terrorism, of a particularly gruesome type, against Americans is also likely. It will, say the pundits, precipitate this American militaristic notion. To make matters worse, America's allies will once again behave as though nothing had happened.

Why such a fateful forecast? The stargazers blame this foul mood on Halley's Comet, called "the witch of the skies." It made its first close approach on November 27, 1985; the next one will occur on April 11, 1986.

The last time Halley's Comet visited earth was on April 10, 1910. A tide of disasters followed. While governments fell in Belgium, France, Austria and Italy, the Mad Mullah rose in Morocco. There was a naval mutiny in Brazil; 200,000 died in the Messina earthquake, 60,000 perished in the Siberian plague; and 100,000 washed away in the Yangtze flood. Oh yes, King Edward VII died.

Included among the sinister influences of the April visit is a potential space or aerial warfare, an American government that continues to spend more while professing to spend less (you don't need astrology to tell you that), financial trouble for Libya and "the fires of hate" and fear consuming South Africa — especially Johannesburg.

Individually, you should be most affected if you were born near March 31st or October 12th. There could be arguments; the advice is not to make enemies. Social relations, the experts say, are being tested. If you were born near January 9th or July 2nd, forced changes such as evictions, job transfers or moving can be blessings in disguise.

The "witches" blessings (sort of) may fall on those born near January 1st or Near July 11th. You may be tested for endurance, status or security. If you pass, it could mean a promotion; if you fail, a past crime or blunder may be exposed, and you will pay for it.

Of course, whether these acts of fate occur or not, freewill acts upon fate either to reinforce its influence or to reduce its effect on our lives. The manner in which we individually choose to meet Halley's Comet's sinister promises of terrorism, war in Nicaragua or being evicted from our home is up to us.

Look for the unsettling influences to intensify on April 9th at the eclipse and on April 11th when the earth meets Halley's Comet. But look to your self — your own free will — to make the difference.

Now suppose "the witch of the skies" was racism and you were you. Would you stay in second place because of the devious influences?

Or would you use your God-given free will and break its hold?

You can test your free will this April 11th (my birthday) for openers. It will show all of us what kind of shape we're in to deal with racism.

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL, the television series, can be seen on public television in Washington on Sunday, Channel 32 at 8:00 p.m.; Friday, Channel 26 at 11:30 p.m. and Sunday, Channel 31 at 5 p.m. Please consult listing.

—AFRO SURVEY—

Do you participate in Lent

Romaine Williams — Caroline Williams — Morton Brown — R.B. Jones

The question to the man and woman in the street for this week is, "Do you participate in Lent?"

Romaine Williams, 21, manicurist, "I don't participate in Lent as of yet. If I did, I would give up smoking."

Caroline Williams, 35, legal assistant, "I do participate. I plan on giving more of my soul to the Lord and to the uplifting of His Kingdom."

Roberta Moses, 36, financial service representative, "I am a participant in Lent, but I am not giving up any material things. As I have been taught, sacrifices are not necessarily material, but things such as the sins that we commit must be given up."

Morton Brown, 56, file clerk, "I am participating, and I am giving up smoking."

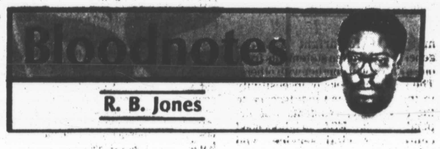
Phyllis Barham, 24, clerk, "I don't know anything about it. I have been asking about it, but I haven't found any basis for Lent in the Scriptures. So, I am not participating this year, but I do love the Lord."

Calvin Payne, over 21, court reporter, "No. I am not participating in Lent this year. But, in God be the glory. If I were participating I would give no me[illegible]

R.B. Jones, 14, writer, "Most Protestants do not participate in Lent. Many people give up things that are not real sacrifices: chewing gum, etc. What is that doing? I would give up something that is truly detrimental to one's spiritual health such as drinking or taking vengeful acts against people, etc.

Annie Foutz, 50, accountant, "I don't participate in Lent. I don't feel it is necessary for me to do so. If I were to participate in Lent, I would give up sweets."

Phyllis Barham — Calvin Payne — Roberta Moses — Annie Foutz



R. B. Jones

The Good, the bad and the ugly

Now that Wilson Goode's appointed commission has released findings that soundly condemn his handling of the MOVE siege the question must be asked does a black mayor really make that much difference in urban politics in this country?

Goode was elected mayor of Philadelphia during a surge of black political activity and electoral victories nationwide. The euphoria that swept the national black community was high as Chicago elected Harold Washington and Philadelphia elected Wilson Goode.

Of course Baltimore with its obsolete and ineffective black leadership failed to elect a black mayor in 1983, but many here save the victories to the north and west of Charm City as prophetic signs of things to come to pass here.

As much as I hate to be a bearer of bad tidings I must say for the record that electing a black mayor will not mean any significant change in the lives of the vast majority of the black residents of Baltimore.

Dr. Maulana Karenga in the 1960s defined blackness as "color, culture and consciousness." All three of the elements are needed if the individual is to make a significant contribution to black life.

Most black politicians do not fit the three criteria because they only have the genetics. They are for the most part ignorant of their own culture and they lack the consciousness to chart an independent political course.

A black political who lacks consciousness, sees his secondary objective as remaining in the good graces of his or her party. Of course with any politician the primary objective is to remain in office.

The conscious black politician has as a secondary objective, representing the interests of the larger black community first and then the rest of society.

Because many black voters do not force black politicans to be conscious and accountable to the people who elect them, they generally serve the interests of the ruling elite of their jurisdiction.

Many black voters mistakenly believe more black faces in high places will mean a change of circumstances but it will not. No more tragic illustration of this fact could be found than, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Philadelphia.

In Los Angeles California they have a black mayor, Tom Bradley who was a policeman for over 20 years. Bradley was elected by comfortable margins and he is a staunch partyline Democrat.

Yet, this popular black mayor had to put up with a police department whose white officers have a history of brutalizing citizens that goes back further than The Watts Riot of 1965 which was one of the most severe of that entire troubled period of history.

Two years ago LA police officers were killing numerous black men with a choke hold during the arrest process. The police chief said that the hold didn't snap the necks of "normal people" and that there was something wrong with black physiology.

Bradley was stuck with the embarrassment of an openly racist police chief despite the fact that he was the mayor.

In Atlanta, the first black mayor Maynard Jackson was saddled with an racist police force that was noted for its brutality and insensitivity to the black community. They were defiant toward the mayor and his black police chief, yet it was sanitation workers, mostly black who sided dubiously caused by Jackson when they went on strike.

When the horrible series of murders took place in Atlanta four years ago, the police force performed dismally. The arrest and conviction of Wayne Williams did not dispel the notion that a black-led city administration was indifferent to the murders of black children and adults. In the final analysis Maynard Jackson appealed to the blacks who placed a great deal of hope in his election, powerless to govern.

Wilson Goode is just the latest example of the limits of power of black mayors.

They are limited not just by their lack of consciousness which would make them think of the interests of the black community first, but they are also limited by entrenched, white power structures that resent the black chief official and try to limit his or her accomplishments.

Goode inherited a police force with a reputation for racism and brutality that was well earned. He inherited a police force that had it in for MOVE because of a shootout with the group some years before that killed a policeman.

When the confrontation came to fruition last year the police and fire personnel took advantage of their opportunity for vengeance. They dropped a bomb on a house they suspected of containing flammable materials and ammunition.

The explosion set off a fire that destroyed 61 homes when fire department personnel who had been praying earlier for the MOVE house to burn, stopped and let the fire rage. The fire raged and many proved it burned to the ground killing 11 people. Five of those killed were children.

Goode's apologized this week over the incident, but his statement reek of equivocating: political double talk. His remarks were chillingly reminiscent of a military commander in Viet Nam who said "We had to destroy that village to save it."

Wilson Goode said "In attempting to rescue a neighborhood, it was destroyed by fire." He also said "To say that I am sorry, for lives lost, for homes destroyed, for damage to our spirit, somehow can never be enough."

What should he start on doing enough is for Goode to resign from office. Talking about his sorrow and how the incident pains him means nothing as he continues to hold the office he so obviously acted capable of handling.

Forgiveness of the incineration of human life without actual as a deed [illegible] would overseeing the plan and making the final decision. He brought us to the rear and then tried to smooth over the dreadful consequences of his abdication of authority.

Wilson Goode knows as does every other black mayor of a major city knows that the only reason the MOVE house was bombed and allowed to burn unattended. Mad bombs there were black "militants" in the house.

The racism involved in that decision and Goode's failure to exact retribution for the usurpation of his authority illustrates the ugly truth that black mayors in major cities are tied hands to intervene on behalf of black residents against ruling elites who still control their cities.

The lesson should not be lost on Baltimoreans who are clamoring for a black mayor. If the mayor is not backed by the black elite, cultivated and disciplined then the black voters in this city in 1987 may end up trading a white oppressor for one who looks like them, but represents the interests of the people he or she supposedly displaced.

AFRO welcomes letters

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

1986 MAR