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Guns and schools

Every parent wants his or her child to be safe in school so that the student can receive the best education possible. The educational atmosphere is dampened terribly when students and teachers fear for their safety.

Baltimore City Public Schools have initiated a stepped-up program to eliminate the presence of guns on school property. Last year two students were killed on school property and overall there were 66 incidents involving guns in the schools last year.

Still, that figure was a significant drop from the previous year when there were 122 incidents. School officials have instituted a hotline 396-6888 so that persons who know of individuals carrying guns on school property can call in the information to school officials. The caller can remain anonymous and the conversations are confidential.

Although the notion of anonymous callers accusing people of serious crimes is somewhat distasteful to many people, such measures are necessary in a situation as fraught with danger as reporting on a thug totting a gun in a school.

There will be a media campaign to publicize the hotline and other anti-gun measures and the AFRO supports the effort to provide greater protection for pupils in the city's schools.

Any death is tragic, but the death of a young person who has an entire life to look forward to is even more tragic. Any measure that can prevent such needless deaths and make the schools safe deserves to be supported as long as the rights of the accused are protected.

Get out and vote

On Tuesday Marylanders will decide the direction this state will go in for possibly the next eight years, if the winners are re-elected. It is imperative that every Marylander who is eligible to vote does so.

The entire General Assembly, along with the governorship, and the other top state posts are up for election. Much of the political leadership of this state is changing and this is a particularly good time for the voters to let their voices be heard because there are fewer incumbents who feel capable of ignoring the will of the people.

This chance to vote is one that may not be replicated for many years. It is an election where there is almost a clean sweep of the political slate.

Not only is this election a chance to illustrate an opinion on Maryland politics, it is also a chance to cast a vote on the direction of the nation's politics. The senatorial race in Maryland has generated national interest because President Reagan has thrown the prestige of his office behind Linda Chavez in her uphill battle against Barbara Mikulski.

Mrs. Chavez has used some of the television commercials that have used very divisive and inflammatory images and rhetoric that appeals to the prejudice in many white voters. That kind of campaigning has been rejected by Maryland voters before and in all likelihood Marylanders will reject it again.

It is imperative to send that message and the only way it can be sent is in the voting booth.

Parren J. Mitchell

The wheels of justice

In the last hours of the 99th Congress, a private relief bill which I introduced in January, 1985, was passed by both Houses of Congress and cleared for presidential signature.

This bill, a culmination of court battles dating back to 1972 and congressional action from 1983, sought compensation for damages and other expenses borne by two residents of the 7th Congressional District in Maryland.

These individuals were the innocent victims of an illegal search and seizure and subsequent criminal prosecution resulting from the seizure of heroin planted by a Baltimore City Detective and a former Federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agent.

What makes this case so unique is that everyone who has reviewed the case, including a U.S. District Judge, the Department of Justice, and two standing Committees of Congress agree that these individuals were entitled to some form of relief.

Unfortunately, because all judicial remedies were exhausted, federal relief was the last bastion of hope for these victims of the system we call justice.

The following summation of the facts of this extraordinary case speak for themselves. In August of 1972, a father and daughter were residing at their place of residence when two agents, among others, served a search warrant and proceeded to search the premises. Three grams of heroin were seized and both occupants were arrested.

According to the report of investigation, both father and daughter were taken to DEA headquarters, strip searched, fingerprinted and photographed. Both individuals were charged with criminal offenses.

The daughter protested her innocence at trial, but on advice of counsel, pled guilty to one of the indictments against her and received a suspended two-year sentence. The other charges against her, and all the charges against her father were dropped.

Some six years later, a separate investigation led to an indictment against one of the arresting officers for violations stemming from the conduct surrounding the prior arrest and conviction.

During these proceedings, one of the officers confessed to conspiring with the other agent in fabricating information to first obtain the search warrant, planting the heroin in the residence, and subsequently testifying that they "found" the drugs while executing the search warrant.

Because the two victims of the illegal arrest were not aware of the officers' admission of their guilt until 1978, they were barred by the statute of limitations from bringing action against any party other than those directly involved, namely the two agents who filed the Report of Investigation.

After hearing the facts and making conclusions of law, a U.S. District Court Judge declared "...it is obvious this was a black day in the history of drug enforcement activities."

The Judge returned a verdict against the two agents involved for violation of civil rights and damages incurred.

At the time this judgment was obtained, neither officer had sufficient property nor assets to cover the award, thus, the judgment was a mere piece of paper worth nothing to the Maryland residents.

It is interesting to note that one of the arresting agents had meanwhile resigned and had been found guilty on two counts of possession of a controlled substance (a drug offense) with intent to distribute.

I introduced a private relief bill on their behalf first in 1983 during the 98th Congress and again in 1985 during the 99th Congress.

In response to my bill, the Justice Department, who routinely reviews and dismisses such legislation as inappropriate, found that "the enormous wrong suffered by ... (these individuals) and a realization that absent private relief these innocent victims possess no viable remedy under the law."

While the House of Representatives approved my bill during the 98th Congress, the Senate did not adopt in until it was reintroduced in the 99th Congress.

After intense committee consideration in the House and Senate, the bill was passed less than twenty-four hours from adjournment of this Congress and the end of my career in the House of Representatives.

As stated before, this was an extraordinary case of an agent of the Federal government conspiring with a local police officer in a malicious deprivation of civil and constitutional rights of its citizens.

While the monetary award contained in my bill can never fully compensate for the mental anguish and tainted images imposed upon these individuals, the Congress did finally accept the moral obligation owed to these citizens.

For my constituents, this action by Congress gives personal meaning to the often quoted phrase, "the wheels of justice turn slowly."

Anthony Armstrong

Hearts and heads

Yes, I can understand the attitudes that motivate most of us black folks, because I'm one of us. I know that many of us have a built-in hatred for ourselves; I know that some of us would rather let a good thing die than to allow another black person to have it.

Provident Hospital was such a case. With Provident there were people who could have saved the institution, but instead let it die because they couldn't continue to control it.

The fact that a strong, well managed medical institution, run by and primarily for blacks, was beneficial to all of us didn't enter the thinking of those few of us who could have saved Provident.

If the average black citizen of Baltimore only knew what the would-be elite black citizens of Baltimore were trying to do to them, those average citizens would tar and feather those elitists. It's not a money thing or an economic thing, because between you, me and the lamp post, ain't harcily none of us got no real money to speak of.

It is, however, a social strata thing; and as Miss 'So and So" with her college degree and overdue credit cards, won't speak no more to Bessie who, according to Miss "So and So," only stayed in the projects and had one baby after another.

Mr. "Wants-to-be Somebody" is upset because he spent nine years, after high school, educating himself; and after all that and ten years on his job he still earns less than thirty-thousand dollars.

And here comes this guy with no college degree, and he's talkin bout being the mayor. "Where the hell does he get off thinkin he can be the mayor, and he ain't got no college degree; and I ain't even makin thirty bills a year, and I got two degrees?"

Poor Miss So and So, poor Mr. Wants-to-be-Somebody; they're so frustrated and full of hatred that anvone who they perceive to have done better than themselves is in for holy hell.

Out of their frustration they are quite willing, ready, and able to throw the baby out with the bath water; and only because they feel someone, whom they think shouldn't have, did better, became more successful, than they.

They're not unusual either. Baltimore is full of this type of black person, who is so angry about their own perceived lack of success that they are mad enough to kill. For instance, don't be a welfare recipient and try to get some help from a frustrated social worker; because if both of you are black, look out!

And please don't be a poor elementary school student and have your parent try to get you some special help. In too many cases, when it's black on black, what you'll get is anything but help.

One might expect such negative treatment if they're black and the professional is white, but the treatment that blacks receive from other blacks is all too often much worse.

It's as if we get angry at a welfare mother wearing a prettier dress than ours; after all, "where the hell did she get the money to dress better than me?" It's as if we begrudge those among us who have been able to do something we feel they couldn't or shouldn't have been able to do.

In doing so we deny the one thing, the only thing so many of us had to work with. That is our native ability, our will to work hard, and use our smarts. Things that helped so many of us succeed, in the absence of everything else.

One day some of us got the chance to go college. It was nothing we did ourselves, because so many that trudged and struggled before us laid all the groundwork. Nevertheless, we got our little degrees, and with them we thought the whole world was going to open up to us.

The recruiters would be knocking down the doors to hire us. Well, the recruiters didn't come, and many of us began to seethe with anger and dismay. They couldn't take their madness out on the white man; because they didn't want to do anything to upset him. thinking that if they were nice Negroes he would finally accept them and let them be like him. Additionally, they dared not do anything to that white man because in their hearts they were afraid of him.

Yet, these blacks, hoping to one day to be among the truly middle class, have no such reserve when it comes to treating other blacks like dogs. Out of anger, self hatred, fear of whites, you name it, these blacks were and are determined to make sure that another black never gets ahead of them.

Before they'd allow such a thing, they'd give "it back to the white man. These attitudes are always matters of the heart; they are never matters of the head, because such black people don't even want to admit to themselves just how sick they have allowed themselves to become with envy.

Our Mayor's race is shaping up this way, for far too many blacks. There is a core group out there that would rather see a crippled dog become mayor than to see a man, they feel should never have risen above them, become mayor. They try to cover up their hatred and envy by saying stupid things, "he ain't got no college degree."

Show me a smart politician who cares where you went to school, and I'll show you a monkey who can fly at forty thousand feet. Is our disdain for those of us who succeed against all odds so great that it makes us do things that we know will hurt us?

Are we so envious of another black person's accomplishments that we are ready to throw away everything, in order just to stop that person? Are we so insane as to find all manner of rationale to support doing something we know will destroy the little we've already built?

What's the matter with us? How did so many of us get so far from who we are, only to accept a hollow dream of something we could never be? No, not

(Continued on page 5)

Letters

The Linda/Barbara battle

Linda Chavez's barrage of (divide and conquer) Archie Bunker type monopoly on T.V., and her spewing venom at Barbara Mikulski for favoring forced busing and quotas — per Jesse Helms and Lester Maddox would make Jezebel look like Mary Poppins.

Her assembly line title "Made in U.S.A.," if that is written on her birth certificate as proof of her heritage, my friend and neighbor honeymooned and conceived in Mexico. Should they contact the Bureau of Vital Statistics and inform them to add to their birth certificate "Made in Mexico?" Unless the U.S.A. you speak about is United Surrogate's Alcazar.

When these negative tid-bits sent Ms. Mikulski's ratings soaring faster and higher than Star Wars, she went back to the Washington-based assembly line and returned with a band wagon load of verbal devices to cure the ills of the new generation on drugs because she is the savior.

For this episode (to prove that she is not a racist), she recruits a flock of black and caucasian youths and blames Ms. Mikulski for being soft on drugs, as she puts on her one woman fashion show through the ghetto, covered by Secret Service squads. Come now Linda! We have heard that all is fair in war and politics — but upstaging Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde??

On November 4, 1986, this day will go down in history. When all the votes are tallied, and Barbara Mikulski makes her victory speech with many thanks to all supporters, then perhaps she will say, "And my condolences to the Chavez supporters, then perhaps she committed Hara-Kiri by tossing a mean old Black Caucus boomerang a few weeks ago, and it found its way back to her just as she left the voting booth enroute to the country club." In mourning at the rose garden. Father Meese presiding.

HILTON MILLER

Services for special needs

As students who are receiving Special Education services mature and leave the school system, professionals are finding that their abilities have been enhanced to the point that services are now needed that were not even considered ten years ago. These students have acquired skills that make them more productive citizens.

In March of 1985, the Baltimore County Coalition for Handicapped Persons conducted a study on the need for activity/vocational centers in Baltimore County.

The study showed that over 1,100 individuals were on waiting lists for services, and that at least 70 students were graduating from the school system each year who would be added to that list.

The recommendation was made that monies be made available for additional centers for this population. The voters of Baltimore County have the opportunity to vote in support of Bond Question C, on November 4.

We urge citizens to support the positive advances made in the education of children who are handicapped, by providing the opportunity for appropriate placement after they leave the school system.

JUDY VOLKMAN
Employment Continuum Committee

Samuel L. Banks

Time for critical choices: political races in Md.

The November 4th general election is pregnant with possibilities for increased power-sharing and socio-economic opportunities for black Marylanders, in spite of some political reverses in the recent primary election, to make a vital and pivotal witness for the present and future direction of Maryland.

Black Marylanders constitute 23 percent of the population of Maryland. In this conjunction, we must go to the polls, **rain or shine** to foster and sustain our **human agenda.** The stakes are extremely serious and we must fully assert our manhood-womanhood rights where they count most in a free society: The ballot box.

As black sitizens, in concert with progressive white citizens, we must be about the business, throughout Maryland, of electing capable, knowledgeable independent and human black candidates to office.

A focus of this type, to be sure, does not prevent or preclude voting for white office seekers who have proven track records of **demonstrable and open support for all Marylanders**; especially the excluded, poor and dispossessed.

Insofar as the race is concerned in the 7th Congressional District, I believe that the candidacy of Councilman Kweisi Mfume should go forward on the basis of his present performance, ability and implacable commitment to political, educational and socio-economic empowerment for black citizens; the poor and voiceless.

Councilman Mfume deserves a resounding expression of confidence and support on Tuesday, November 4, 1986. His splendid, compassionate and strong record of service on the Baltimre City Council commends his election. Mfume deserves the opportunity to go forward.

I believe that Congresswoman Barbara Mikulski has earned the right through long and faithful service and support of human and civil rights to be elected to the United States Senate. She is, to be sure, an excellent choice.

Delegate Benjamin Cardin, former speaker of the House of Delegates, is also highly deserving of election in the 3rd Congressional District. He has been very forthright in his support of human and civil rights and educational equity and excellence. He is a marvelous choice.

In regard to the sitting Judges, as I have indicated in the past, **all should be retained.** Each has evidenced the judicial restraint, legal acumen, balance and discernment to be elected. The seven sitting judges have earned the right to be elected.

In Prince George's County, Professor Alexander Williams deserves broad support. He has already made history in winning the Democratic nomination for State's Attorney for Prince George's County over the current State's Attorney, Arthur "Bud" Marshall.

Williams, professor of law at Howard University, has an incisive and capacious grasp of law and is committed to supporting high quality education and a more humane and firm criminal justice system.

He, too, is strongly committed to a coordinated, systematic and comprehensive program to abate and rid Prince George's County of the scourge of drug trafficking and abuse.

Williams has the academic and experiential background necessary to be an outstanding State's Attorney for Prince George's Attorney.

The political decisions made on November 4th will have farreaching and significant implications for political races in 1987 and 1988. **Now is the time to make yourself heard.** We as black citizen must now foreswear extravagant rhetoric, grandstanding and breastbeating.

The time is now at hand, in quiet and serious contemplation, to review the track records and platforms of candidates for office and support our needs and interests, as other ethnic and racial groups do, through a judicious use of the ballot.

Avoid the blandishments and self-serving entreaties and promises of sycophants and political manipulators and **make your own decisions. In the quiet and security of the voting booth, you are "King" or "Queen" for the day. Please do not miss this glorious and priceless opportunity.**

As must be implicit and explicit in this column, given our historic institutional exclusion, subordination and denial as a collective people, it is most important that we as black citizens, turn out in record numbers on Tuesday, November 4, 1986. **You owe it to your self, your children and our posterity to affirm our beliefs through the ballot.**

Historically, as black citizens we have been called upon to make the proverbial bricks without straw. We are now called upon, once again, to vote our numbers and our hopes and dreams.

Sterling A. Brown, professor-emeritus of English at Howard University, provides in his immortal poem, "Strong Men," our sense of daring, power and tenacity in the face of adversity:

"They cooped you in the kitchens,
They penned you in their factories,
they gave you the jobs
that they were too good for,
They tried to guarantee
happiness to themselves
By shunting dirty and misery to you.
You sang:
'Me an' muh baby
gonna shine, shine
Me an' muh baby
gonna shine.'
The strong men keep a-comin' on
The strong men git stronger ...
They bought off some of your leaders
You stumbled, as blind men will ...
They coaxed you, unwontedly
soft-voiced ...
You followed a way
Then laughed as usual.
They heard the laugh and wondered;
Uncomfortable;
Unadmitting a deeper terror ...
The strong men keep
a-comin' on
Gittin' stronger ..."

Tuesday, November 4, 1986, in this memorable and remarkable tradition is a precious opportunity to **get stronger. May the circle and tradition of getting stronger remain unbroken. You can do it.**

MAX JOHNSON:

Political Viewpoint

By Max Johnson

Now that William Donald Schaefer will officially become Maryland's Gov.-elect come Tuesday's balloting - increased spotlighting bathes in-coming Mayor Clarence DuBurns.

City-Council President Burns, amid mounting acclamations centering on his historic move upward to become Baltimore's first black mayor, faces more attention of quite a different note.

Bluntly, city taxpayers will be exhibiting questions of deep concerns over what to expect in his finalizing of the city's upcoming budget — the first major headache confronting him soon after he takes office.

Taxpayers will want to know about the outlook on the coming property tax rate. Department heads, and their affected citizens, will press for inklings as to what extent rising city servicing costs can be met.

High among top priorities in the latter categories are sorely needed increased fundings for Health, Education and Social Services Programs.

These are certain expectations — though incoming Mayor Burns is already reaching for the austerity button.

However, Baltimore's budget is ultimately the mayor's responsibility. He controls the city's Board of Estimates — the final empowering authority.

The Mayor appoints two of the five members on this board — City Solicitor and Public Works Directors to sit with him.

Other two are the City Council President and City Comptroller, both elected independently by city voters - and thus free of the mayor's voting wishes.

Incoming Mayor Burns knows the system well. He won the council presidency three years ago — while he was filling out the term of Walter Orlinsky, previously elected president who ran afoul of the courts.

The Mayor's office, historically, has proven much too frustrating and disillusioning for three of the Schaefer Administration's immediate predecessors.

J. Harold Grady, elected in '59, resigned before completing his four-year term, Theodore R. McKeldin, last Republican to hold the post, had no desire for a second term.

Thomas D'Alesandro 3rd, scion of the politically distinguished D'Alesandro Jr., former longtime Congressman and later city mayor, called it quits in apparent disgust after one term.

Incoming Mayor Burns, however, is a veteran earthy politician - with unmistakable, pronounced grass roots savvy.

So — don't be unduly alarmed if you hear an occasional "Ouch!" emanating from the mayor's office, during the early budget months ahead.

Mayor Burns may be ahurtin' — but he should be able to get up and get a big Band Aid. He'll know where it is— he should have put it there much earlier just in case.

—AFRO SURVEY—

Are you going to vote in Tuesday's election?

Jacqueline Truesdale

Nathaniel Wilson

Al Collins

Gamaliel Harris

This week's question to the man and woman in the street is, "Are you going to vote in Tuesday's General Election, and what are some of the ways you think that the black community can be made more interested in voting?"

Jacqueline Truesdale, 32, customer service representative at Baltimore Gas & Electric, "I'm not voting. Maybe some of the candidates can provide free transportation to the voting places. Maybe the churches can do that too, I do believe in voting, but I haven't done it in five years."

Nathaniel Wilson, 36, U.S. Army staff sergeant, "I don't plan on voting. The candidates have to be sincere and honest with the people. I've noticed that the personnel running for office promise a lot but when they get in, they don't do all they promise because something else comes up."

Al Collins, 35, administrator for the State of Maryland, "Yes, I do plan to vote. I rarely miss voting. I think that people in leadership positions in the black community should do more in convincing them how it relates to them. The leaders are in the position to know how the political process affects the community; they need to do more.

Gamaliel Harris, 19, kitchen manager for a Lexington Market restaurant, "Yes, I'm voting. I'd just tell them...(the black community), to vote. I would plead with them. It would be better for them."

Bonnie Brodnax, 20, retail sales, "I plan to vote, but I'm not sure for whom yet. I think there should be more information on television about all the people who are running. Most of the people don't try to find out about who's running for office."

Brenda Addison, 39, retail sales, "Yes, I plan to vote. With people in office you don't want in, that's enough to make us come out and vote. Young people aren't interested enough.

Fleetwood Hall, 38, MTA driver, "Yes, I'm voting. As more blacks see more of us being elected to office, we will feel we are a part of the process. Kweisi Mfume -- his way of politics -- has brought a lot of people into the process. He and others will be a catalyst for people to come out."

Michael Gambrill, 33, attorney, "Yes, I'll vote. I think a stronger emphasis should be placed in high schools as people approach voting age. We should get to the kids early and have the black politicians come to the schools to talk to the kids.

Bonnie Brodnax

Brenda Addison

Fleetwood Hall

Michael Gambrill

Bloodnotes

R. B. Jones

Narrow straits

I have been told that it is impolite to eavesdrop on other people's conversations and perhaps it is, but I do it sometimes, especially when I am riding the bus or subway because I want to know what people in the streets are thinking about.

Tuesday I was spending a pleasant ride up North Ave., a rare and precious event, surrepticiously watching a very lovely pair of black women, apparently going home from work. They spoke pleasantly about mundane things until we arrived at a bus stop and the two of them spotted a young black mother and her two children.

The mother and her offspring wore long dreadlocks and the two women on the bus shook their heads in disgust. As the bus pulled away, they remarked negatively about how it was a shame that the mother imposed such a hairstyle on her children. They talked about how the children will never be able to get ahead in life because "their hair is messed up."

The women were angrier than the situation warranted. The hostility in their voices and expressions of disgust on their faces could not have been stronger if they had just seen the most vile act of sexual perversion.

"Appearance is everything in life," they said. I was troubled by the conversation and the assumptions the discussion was based on.

First they should not have made the assumption that everyone's livelihood depends on looking "the right way," whatever that is.

They should not have assumed that those little children would have to go out into the labor market and sell themselves as workers. It is possible that their parents might give them a trade that will allow them to be self-employed.

Their parents might have a business that will be inherited by those children. Those children might acquire marketable skills that are so in demand, potential employers will care less about their dreadlocks.

Far too often, we as black people operate with limited assumptions, narrow minds and truncated expectations in life. We have adopted the ways of white folks who are so obsessed with propriety, dressing for success and looking like carbon copies of each other.

Far too many of us wallow in the conspicuous consumption of television shows like "Dynasty" which makes heroes of ruthless, exploitative capitalists. They look "right" and that's all that matters.

President Reagan dresses for success while he calmly discusses the slaughter of humanity with his nuclear toys. He has a tie on and a nice conservative suit so how could anyone think that a man who believes in winnable nuclear wars is mad.

Of course if Reagan did not look right, then it would be another story. Nancy Reagan wears $35,000 gowns while her husband tries to snatch away Social Security checks from the disabled, but Nancy looks "right" as she looks right and so she is not callous and repulsive.

Nancy wears well-tailored suits while she tells little children that the solution to the complex, massive drug problem is simply saying no despite the poverty, despair and alienation that they must live with far too many times. Nancy Reagan must have the answer, after all she dresses nicely and doesn't wear dreadlocks.

I got a great deal of satisfaction out of the astonishment many people felt when some "well-dressed" men used CBS anchorman Dan Rather for a football and a punching bag on a New York street. I did not enjoy Rather's suffering, I enjoyed the amazement in the voices of people who could not believe that men in suits and ties could brutalize someone.

I was not amazed. Well dressed men in suits and ties have been spreading death and suffering in the black community for decades.

Men in suits and ties presided over the lynching of black men and the raping of black women. Men in suits and ties stood in schoolhouse doors to keep black students out. Some of the most heinous crimes in history have been committed by people who dressed correctly and looked right.

The two women on the bus saw the mother in dreadlocks as someone who would never look the way that America says one should look to get ahead.

Even more importantly, the woman with dreadlocks represented the unrepentant black self. Dreadlocks represent a conscious rejection of white beauty standards and a confrontational attitude toward the arrogant assumptions of western culture.

I have ridden the bus through Jewish areas and have never once heard a black person remark about the dress or hairstyles of the Hasidic Jews. I have never heard any black person come back from Pennsylvania Dutch Country and say those people should change their grooming habits so they can get ahead in life.

We reserve our most severe criticism for each other. I hope the mother with the dreadlocks finds much success and happiness in life. She seemed to be very compassionate with her children. I hope those two black women on the bus will somehow learn that everyone in this life will not sail through the narrow channel of Western values.

We should not want to emulate Western Culture too much since properly dressed and coiffed white men caress their Pierre Cardin ties and plot the deaths of Third World hopes and aspirations everyday. Do we really want to become well dressed killers? I hope not.

—Armstrong

(Continued from page 4

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.

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