Baltimore Afro-American

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History in Baltimore

Some say that this first is long overdue. Others say that it is a red letter occasion that is welcome no matter how long it took. Whatever perspective one has, all must agree that the swearing in of Clarence DuBurns as mayor of Baltimore Monday was a significant day for this city.

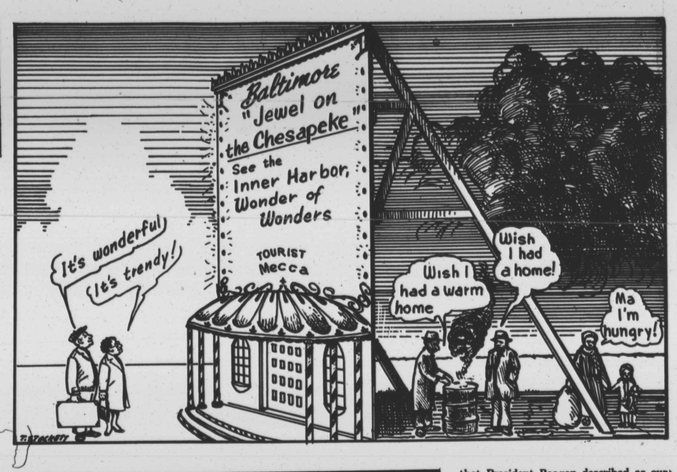
In a sense Burn's elevation to the highest job in the city is a triumph of persistence and of faith in the workability of the political system for blacks. He started from an humble station in life and has achieved a position that decades.

Burns should bask in the glow of his new attainment as much as he can. The reality of what he has inherited can dim that glow rapidly. Baltimore is a city that is rich in resources but poor in cash.

Baltimore has become a haven for the poor of the region while it has watched its tax base and job pool shrink. Baltimore has always been two cities, but the glitter that has been added to the downtown redevelopment areas has made the division more acute.

The task facing Mayor Burns is to set a direction for the city that will make it a viable urban entity going into the 21st Century. This task will be difficult to do in the one year left of the Schaefer term. The question of Burns being elected to a four year term on his own will be contested very hotly in September.

Still, Clarence DuBurns has assured himself a place in history as the first black mayor of Baltimore and no matter what else happens that place is secure as long as there is a Baltimore City.



Baltimore in the 21st century

When the Morris Goldseeker Foundation assigned a study of the future of Baltimore to a policy analyst in Washington D.C., little did it know that the prognosis for the city would be so grim.

According to the report, Baltimore faces the prospect of declining population, continuing flight of the middle-class, leaving the city as primarily a residence for the poor and the disadvantaged.

The decline, as described by the report paints a bleak picture for the city and the metropolitan region in general, is not an inevitability but it is a probability. Older Northeastern cities with few exceptions have declined.

The report also paints a bleak picture for the future of the black community of Baltimore. It points out the low number of opportunities in the city for bright black youths and the report insists that most of them will desert Baltimore for other regions of the country that promise more opportunities.

Despite the gloomy prospects outlined in the report, the future of this city and this region rests in the hands of its people. If innovative, imaginative leadership emerges in the business and government communities, the region's fortunes can be turned around. The report is based on present trends continuing, not on some irresistible force of destiny.

Just as the human spirit can overcome catastrophe and acts of nature that wreck cities and towns a committed, aware population can overcome the ravages of economic and social decline of a city.

Reordering our vision

In his address to the nation Tuesday evening, President Ronald Reagan stepped to the podium with a characteristic spring in his step, a broad brush nestled firmly in his fingers and a veil obscuring his vision.

The eyes that glistened before this historic 100th Congress did not see the social and moral blunders of an administration that is unraveling security for the elderly, creating homelessness for families and obliterating any hope of a viable future for too many young Americans.

The presidential eyes embraced the image of a ruddy cheeked America rolling up its collective sleeves to reduce a staggering budgetary deficit by slashing social programs he regards as boondoggles and fat.

What the eyes ignored was the reality of another America that is lean to the bone, black and crippled by an insensitive domestic policy that discounts its very existence.

As I sat in the chamber as part of this historical Congress, I listened and thought of the other America I know, the painful, hurting one I see as I travel through Baltimore.

That America is a ragtag group of hungry, disenfranchised people waiting on food lines on Franklin Street staring back at passing traffic through haunting spiritless lenses.

That America is jockeying for space in homeless shelters that feature cots as well as cribs, and plays grim host to the elderly, infants and whole families.

That America is witnessing a retreat from the civil rights gains of the past 20 years that have helped balanced the inequities in the workplace, housing and the school room.

The state of that America finds unemployment among black men hovering at an unacceptable 15 percent nationally with the statistics among black youth at an even more devastating level.

A report prepared by the National Urban League informs us that there are hundreds of thousands of black youth between the ages of 18 and 25 in the America I know who have never had a full-time job and are destined never to have one.

Drugs and the jails are claiming many of these young people. Yet the very anti-drug education program for elementary schools that President Reagan described as our "first line of defense" in the war on drugs will be slashed in half just three months after he made the commitment.

The president spoke glowingly of building a better educated, smarter America but his FY 88 budget offers to cut the educational commitment by about 28 percent below last year's level.

This president proved eloquent in restating the problems of this nation. He says he is offering hope. But Americans, particularly Black Americans know the problem. Many of us live it. The nation is not looking for hope this time. It is looking for help. The kind of help that allows us to make decisions for ourselves. The kind of help a federal government should provide.

But this president is in a mindset to overturn gains leaving Black America feeling under seige and the Black family experiencing a crisis that is splitting it apart.

No one is angling for a handout as Mr. Reagan would have us believe the poor are doing. The question posed is how will you help me help myself. Help provide the vehicle for making a better life for myself.

While the developing portrait of today's Black America is one beset with economic, political and social needs, it is also one that bursts with capabilities and strengths.

What is needed to shore up those strengths is leadership that will allow us all to enter the 21st Century with dignity. What is needed to achieve that is a reordering of the federal vision.

Letters

Morgan making progress

As Chairman of the Board of Regents for Morgan State University, I would like to respond to an article in the January 24, 1987 edition in which the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Maryland State Colleges and Universites is purported to have said that he felt Morgan's future to be in doubt.

First, the banner of the AFRO ("Trustee: Morgan State University Future In Doubt") was misleading in that the average layperson would interpret the banner to mean that a member of Morgan's governing board had made the pronouncement. Only later in the article, is the trustee identified as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Maryland State Colleges and Universities.

Further, the article quotes the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Maryland State Colleges and Universities as suggesting that all black institutions would fare better than at present under a central board system. The Morgan Board of Regents disagrees with that broad generalization.

Whether any institution (not just black colleges and universities) would fare best under a single institution board or a central board is related to a number of variables. Among these variables are the powers and authority of a single institution in relation to other state agencies having responsibilities for higher education; the quality and influence of persons appointed to the institutional board; the extent to which these individuals appreciate and identify with the mission of the institution; the institution's base of support as reflected in its alumni, friends in the business community, student population, supply, in local, state and federal government, and relationships with foundations and other phlanthropic organizations.

If a college or university is weak in many of these indices, it may opt for a central board with strengths which would not otherwise be available to the institution. On the other hand, if the institution is strong in many of these indices, the ideal would be a separate institutional board with appropriate authority to govern the institution — a board of individuals whose total interest and effort are directed toward the continued growth and development of that institution.

The Morgan Board of Regents as now constituted reflects such a board. The University clearly has not done as well as we would have liked; however, we do not believe the shortcomings were related to the institution's having a single board. In fact, we believe that as a result of competing interests among the six BTSCU institutions, Morgan has fared better under a separate board than it would have fared with the BTSCU.

It is our contention that the University's mission as an urban university can be realized best under the single institution board concept and that this governance arrangement should continue. Whether a similar structure is or is not appropriate for the other black institutions is not for us to determine.

Finally, Morgan, in the last two years with the cooperation of Governor Hughes and the legislature, has made significant progress in stabilizing its financial situation: acquiring funding for new building construction, renovations and deferred maintenance, and in purchase of equipment.

There is much left to be done because of the neglect in earlier years. We are confident, however, that the momentum we have generated will continue under the new administration since the new Governor has demonstrated traditionally great appreciation for our institution and the importance of its mission.

Francis W. Gates, Chairman
Morgan State University
Board of Regents

Supports Irvin Conway

I'm writing to ask that Mr. Irvin Joseph Conway be nominated to fill the vacant council seat of Mr. Mitchell or Mr. Mfume.

Mr. Conway is a longtime for the civic and community worker and leader. He has worked very hard for the past thirty years in this city for the citizens of Baltimore. Mr. Conway has shown his concern for the welfare and care of everyone in his district.

I know that Mr. Conway will do a commendable job in this important position, and that he will receive the trust and admiration of the constituents in this district.

Darryl Brown

Bloodnotes

R. B. Jones

Mellowing out

Jerry Kramer, the former all-pro guard for the Green Bay Packers during their glory years in the 1960s recently remarked that he knew he was getting old when he realized that three of the reasons he retired from pro-football were no longer the fierce figures he once knew.

He remarked that Dick Butkus, the once bruising and fanatical Chicago middle linebacker, is now an amiable wimp on beer and truck commercials, Merlin Olsen the huge all-pro defensive tackle for the LA Rams is now a mild-mannered flower salesman and Alex Karras the all pro defensive tackle for the Detroit Lions who was compared to a rabid dog for his on-field mayhem is now a marshmallow selling easy chairs.

Mellowing out is the process Kramer was talking about. As one ages, the intensity fades and one views the world with an even-tempered detachment. Things aren't supposed to rile one anymore. Age is supposed to confer on one-th ability to take almost everything in stride.

Someone once said that this even tempered disposition denotes wisdom and maturity, of course in this society it could merely mean that one has administered some self-prescribed depressant drugs.

Age itself however is supposed to confer calm and reflective thinking. I have been told since the hormone level declines with age one is less apt to fly off the handle.

I don't like the idea of mellowing with age. There is a hint of resignation, a kind of surrender in mellowing out. I was told in the 1960s that I would calm down and mellow out when I got older.

In 1966 I read two books that excited me intellectually. "The Black Bourgoisie" by E. Franklin Frazier and "The Autobiography of Malcolm X." The following year I read "Black Power" by Stokely Carmichael and Prof. Charles Hamilton.

Those books gave a form to all the nebulous ideas that had been floating in my head. When people around me began noticing my quoting from "Black Power" when white teenagers were visiting my church to further the cause of brotherhood, people shook their heads and said, "He'll straighten up in a little while, he's just going through a phase."

In other words they said, this boy will mellow out eventually. After all he can't stay crazy can he? Little did they know.

My tenth grade history teacher Mrs. Patelle Harris said that I was going through a phase that many young people go through, having radical ideas and that I would change my mind after I got out of college.

Just as I never got over my crush on her, I never left my radical phase and her prediction no matter how well intentioned, did not come true.

Later my fellow college students declared that I would stop being a fanatical black nationalist when I got out of Princeton and started tasting the fruit of America's pretty but poisonous commodity tree. There was however no right-wing siren, preferably dressed like Eve, in the garden to use her wiles to win me over to conservatism.

If radical beliefs are adolescent and unrealistic then let me stay young forever. If the ability to see alternative ways of life and alternative systems of government are childish then I will stay young forever.

If being a black nationalist, socialist and peace advocate makes one a babe in the woods, then I shall wander the forest dragging my diaper behind me.

Excuse me, my disposable diaper behind me.

As I rapidly approach 35, people keep telling me it's time to put away that "black stuff," get about the business of making money and accumulating things. I suppose they want me to become a dead spirited man aimlessly fingering his posessions like soime senile person randomly caressing rosary beads.

At 35 one is supposed to be established, whatever that means in these days of unstable marriages, no job security and an economy that is performing about as well as a 20-year-old horse in a steeplechase race.

The theory is that the more you have the more you will feel you have a stake in the system. In the 1960s the term was coping. I don't know what the term is now. A good word to convert to usage would be pendletoning.

It would be a perfect way to remember civil rights commission head and his unwavering campaign to turn back the clock on civil rights gains. I think I like the term pendletoning.

In the 1960s they pendletoned a large number of radicals by giving them jobs with community based anti-poverty agencies or government jobs. Of course it was easier to pendleton radicals in those days of economic prosperity.

With the crippled economy the way it is very few radicals will get pendletoned. The only thing left to mellow out radicals with is propaganda. They pour it on thick.

"At your age can't you realize that working within the system is the best way?" "Don't you realize that the days of confrontation are over?" "Racism is almost nonexistent, it's qualifications that count nowadays."

Those words can't mellow out a genuine radical because radicals look for the fundamental, underlying cause of problems, not just the superficial aspect of things.

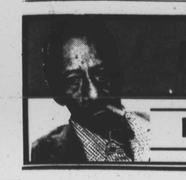
If the system was designed to oppress you then how can you hope to become liberated using that very same system. If the days of confrontation are over why has the U.S. persisted in confronting the Soviet Union for the past 60 years. Everything is worth a confrontation to America except racism.

If racism is no longer extant as some folks would have us believe then they should order some late night pizza in Howard Beach, New York and send some black youths to pick it up. Why not enroll in classes at the Citadel and leave the door unlocked while you sleep. If racism is so much in decline why not schedule an interracial wedding and reception in Cumming, Forsyth County, Georgia.

Don't think you want to do that, huh? I'm not surprised.

Unmellowed radicals keep putting the truth before a people who want to be oblivious sometimes. The warning bell may be harsh and loud, but it is lifesaving.

I don't ever want to be too mellow around beautiful black women and I don't ever want to be mellow about injustice.



Political Viewpoint

Clarence Du Burns officially took office Monday as Baltimore's first black mayor during the immediate aftermath of an area-crippling snowstorm, in what was viewed by many observers as a bright red carpet ride to the municipal elections this fall.

Maryland's new governor, William Donald Schaefer, his predecessor, had already laid out a progressive city legislative program he wants the Annapolis city delegation to press for enactment.

He had presented this batch of bills to the lawmakers, with little if any prior indoctrination of Burns, while waiting to be sworn in office himself.

They covered basically increased aid for education, social services, economic development, crime control, and so on — the pattern being followed generally one way or another these times.

There was nothing wrong with all of this. Baltimore is Schaefer's own very special baby he has nourished to national attention. He just wants to keep his beloved municipality on the upbeat.

Burns, meanwhile, was performing acting mayoral routines. He said Monday Schaefer, whom he called somewhat respectfully, "The Great One," had left him to "mind the store."

So — it would seem Burns takes office with no major city programs of his own to propose for legislative action. Rather, his is still the role of minding the store on those Schaefer has proposed.

Such is not the absolute picture of either Burns or the possible lack of his own mayoral directions.

He revealed quite forceably at his inaugural what he would direct key attention to as his top priority, while working for the Schaefer proposed legislation.

"First on my agenda will be people," he told the assembly of supporters and well-wishers. "I pledge to be mayor of all the people of Baltimore, not just the blacks, not just the whites, but of all the people together."

Burns then carried his intentions along this line further to a bold, progressive plateau.

He said he envisioned Baltimore as a city with all its people together in "one brotherhood," not blacks, not whites.

"We have no room here for two societies," he said. "I need the cooperation of agencies and the people to bring all of us together in one brotherhood."

The mayor added that he would be constantly visiting all neighborhoods in the city at every opportunity to set an example of "togetherness," especially between the people and city hall.

Delivered in one of several diversions from a prepared address, this brief subject was undoubtedly the actual highlight of what the new mayor had to say.

However, in recalling at length about his rise from humble early life to city council election, then as the city's first black elected council president, and now the city's first black mayor, Burns might have touched on the park and city benches but for one thing.

Gov. Shaefer was there on the rostrum with him, and had just given him a warm brotherly love hug after he was sworn in office.

Burns said earlier he planned to have the benches repainted, removing Schaefer's name as mayor and substituting his own.

That sparked some loud objections from a number of political sources, charging he would be using the benches to enhance his campaign toward the November elections.

Nonetheless, the benches are certain to rise again. So, up comes somebody's conciliatory suggestion.

Why not just leave the "Citizens of Baltimore and William Donald Schaefer, Mayor," remain as is, and add "1971-1987."

But add also on a lower panel — "And, Clarence Du Burns, Mayor 1987 —"

That way, nobody could charge Burns with ulterior campaign shenanigans, though he would get the publicity anyway.

The sensitive Schaefer would have his name retained on one of his city-wide pet projects for posterity, and gratefully lift Burns notches higher in his esteem toward campaign blessings.

The whole thing is as simple as that.

Actually, it's such a good idea — chances are they won't do it.

'Purple' exploits King's Dream

"This is a holiday in search of direction and meaning," wrote Frederick Allen in The Atlanta Constitution.

However, an exploitative direction and meaning were given to the second Martin Luther King holiday observance by Hollywood. It released "Color Purple" for the second time to coincide with his birthday.

Amidst the parade and speeches honoring a Black man's achievements, a movie presenting the ugliest, most base aspects of Black manhood is being used to honor his dream of justice.

You can't blame Hollywood, however. There is no interest in the progress of Black people in their ranks or social consciousness — just greed. But you must blame Black people for financing their own destruction.

"In its original run, the film ("Purple") did enormous business with Black audiences," the distributor said. The film made $94,175,554 and Blacks spent over half of it, I estimate.

And the new advertising campaign demonstrates exactly what the producers found out about Black people. "Remember How Good It Made You Feel . . . See It Again."

Hollywood was found that playing on the frustrations of Black women (caused by racism) and finding a scapegoat (Black men) is big box office.

This time, this tragedy will open in 725 theaters; it made over $94 million in only 192 theatres in just 10 months the first time. "We know we're exploiting the Black community, but the sisters love it," one Black "Purple" producer told a friend at a party.

Never in our history has there been a cause that benefitted us to which we gave $50 million. But we will give it up to be defiled. The Hollywood NAACP branch even gave the movie and its producers the Image Award for "positive Black images."

No, it is not Hollywood that perpetuates racism in the movies; it is the Black community itself.

All of us (Thank God!) who are Black are not taken in or being bought off by the "Purple" people.

Conspicuously, when the Los Angeles Sentinel announced "The 10 Most Significant Films of 1986," it did NOT include the genocidal "Color Purple." The criteria, wrote Alan Bell, were not just artistic considerations.

"Being, as it is, an advocacy journal for the Black community, with social, political and ethical perspectives that rank as high as its artistic," Bell said, the list reflected those values.

"Color Purple" by virtue of its destructiveness, anti-Black male imagery (of not just one Black male character, but all Black men in the movie), use of Black collaborators who offered their talents to destroy their own community and the exploitation of the damaging effects of racism on Black men and women, was unfit for the Sentinel's list or any other citation by a self-respecting Black organization or individual.

When you plunk down the price of admission (average cost: $3.76) for "Color Purple," (Blacks buy over half of them), you slap Martin Luther King's dream in the face.

How tobacco firms seduce women

You'll seldom see a cigarette advertisement featuring a housewife or a secretary. The models and settings used in cigarette ads depict women that have arrived, are successful, and are in control.

It's hard to ignore the positive, upbeat messages they send.

What the tobacco companies don't tell you, though, is that the "typica" woman smoker is not the svelte, glamorous professional that their ads display. According to statistics, she is separated or divorced, has had barely a high school education, works in a blue-collar job, and makes less than $10,000 a year.

As men have given up smoking in recent years, tobacco companies have targeted women in an attempt to maintain and increase sales. Women's magazines are flooded with cigarette ads; in fact, many women's magazines depend on cigarette advertising for a major share of their income.

Those same magazines also publish the fewest articles on smoking and health.

The ad spending has paid off. A decade ago 28 percent of teenage boys and 28.8 percent of girls smoked. Today 16 percent of boys smoke, while 20 percent of teenage girls do. Among adult women lung cancer has surpassed breast cancer as the leading fatal cancer.

Experts say that by the year 2000 lung cancer will be considered a women's disease.

On the average, woimen today live seven to eight yers longer than men. If women, especially teenagers, keep on smoking at their present rate, that may someday be reversed.

RICHARD E. INGLISH

Excerpts from the Goldseker Foundation Report

EDITOR'S NOTE: This week the Morris Goldseker Foundation released a report titled "Baltimore 2000: A Choice of Futures." The report was the result of research by Peter Szanton, head of a Washington, DC-based policy and management consulting firm. Szanton was asked by the Morris Goldseker Foundation to compile data and report on the Baltimore of the past quarter-century, identify the social and economic trends that will have the greatest impact on the city's future prospects. Today the AFRO begins a series of excerpts from Szanton's report.

This town is in for big changes. For the last fifteen years it's been pretty clear where the city was headed and who was going to get it there. None of that is clear now. Maybe by the year 2000, Baltimore will have done for its neighborhoods what its done for the inner harbor and downtown. It could be a much bigger success story than it is now. But it's also possible that by then the city will have been gutted — industry gone to Korea and Brazil, port traffic to Norfolk and white collar jobs to the counties, Delaware, the Washington suburbs. Who knows? You just have to hope for the best — and work for the best."

That comment of a prominent Baltimorean poses each of the three questions this book tries to answer. What now looks most likely to happen to Baltimore between now and the year 2000? What goals might the city set for itself to try to improve matters? And what would it take to reach such goals?

The Region

In the Baltimore region—defined in this report as Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Howard — population has grown over the past twenty-five years, though not rapidly. Approximately 1.80 million in 1960 and 2.07 million in 1970, the region's population reached 2.23 million in 1985. Howard and Carrol counties grew fastest in percentage terms (Howard County more than doubled between 1970 and 1985) and Howard and Baltimore counties added the largest number of new residents. But after 1970, the region as a whole grew at only about one-third the national rate. More tellingly, it grew more slowly than the Wilmington, Washington, D.C., Richmond or Norfolk regions. Of its five neighboring metropolitan areas, only that of Philadelphia added population more slowly.

The region's racial composition shifted slightly over the quarter-century. In 1960 its population was 78 percent white, 21 percent black, in 1985, the corresponding numbers were 72 percent and 26 percent. In percentage terms, the fastest growing population groups were Asian and Hispanic; representing less than one half of one percent of the region's population in 1960, they comprised 2 percent of its total in 1985.

Changes in age distribution were much more dramatic. Like the nation's, the region's population aged and diminished birth rates led to sharp drops in school enrollment. From near its historic peak of 539,000 in 1970, total school enrollment (public and private) fell to some 395,000 in 1985.

The City

Population shifts in Baltimore over this period were more ominous. The city's population in 1960 was 939,000. But like many older eastern cities, Baltimore had begun to lose population in the 1950s, principally to its suburbs. The trend intensified during the 1960s, peaking in the early and middle 1970s. Baltimore's population dropped to 906,000 by 1970, to 786,000 by 1980, and to 760,000 in 1985. Out-migration slowed in the 1980s, and by 1980 a partially counterbalancing movement of young professionals into the city had begun, but over the previous quarter-century the city had lost almost a fifth of its population. Of the other regional cities, only Wilmington had lost a higher proportion.

Baltimore's school population had dropped much more sharply. Like the region's, the city's population had aged. Young families with children had been particularly drawn to the suburbs. One result was that Baltimore public school enrollment, 191,000 in 1960, had fallen by 1985 to 108,000, little over half the earlier figure.

Fewer people do not necessarily mean a weaker or less pleasant city. Population decline may relieve overcrowded streets and classrooms and diminish pressure on city services. But the exodus from Baltimore had several troublesome consequences. Probably the least important was political: In 1985, residents of the city constituted a much smaller proportion of the voting population of the region and the state than they had a quarter-century earlier. In 1960, Baltimore held 52 percent of the region's population and 30 percent of the state's. (The city had accounted for 40 percent of the state's population as recently as 1950.) By 1985 the city represented only 34 percent of the region and 17 percent of the state.

More significant than the declining numbers was the composition of the group that moved. It was disproportionately white and affluent. Whites made up 65 percent of Baltimore's population in 1960, only 39 percent in 1985. The shift arose less from black population growth than from a massive white out-migration. The black population had grown from 330,000 to 420,000 between 1960 and 1970, and, more slowly, to 450,000 in 1985. But white population had fallen by more than half — from 611,000 to 296,000 between 1960 and 1985. As a group, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Washington, Richmond and Norfolk had lost 35 percent of their white population between the 1960 and 1980 censuses, Baltimore had lost 44 percent.

The Region

Employment in the region grew substantially over the period — considerably faster than population did, a reflection largely of the rapid addiction of women to the labor force. Regional employment (by place of work) totalled 905,000 in 1960, 950,000 in 1970, and some 1,128,000 in 1985. The fastest rate of growth occurred in Howard County; the largest absolute number of new jobs was added in Baltimore County. Baltimore City continued to provide the largest number of jobs of any of the jurisdictions, though its lead steadily diminished. Significantly, the proportion of Anne Arundel and Howard county residents commuting to jobs in the Washington region more than doubled in the period.

Nonetheless, the region's growth in jobs was not particularly impressive by either national standards or those of neighboring regions. Between 1970 and 1985, national employment increased at more than half again the rate of the Baltimore region, and of the five neighboring metropolitan areas only Philadelphia added jobs more slowly. Employment grew more than half again as fast in metropolitan Richmond, and well over twice as fast in the Washington and Norfolk areas. Maryland generally added jobs, faster than the Baltimore region did, so between 1967 and 1985 the region's share of state jobs fell from 60.5 percent to 53.7 percent.

The nature of the region's jobs changed as rapidly as their numbers, especially in the last fifteen years of the period. The proportion of persons employed by government remained essentially constant between 1970 and 1985 at 24 percent of the total workforce, and the fraction of total employment provided by trade grew only slightly, from 20 to 22 percent. But both service and manufacturing employment provided by trade grew only slightly, from 20 to 22 percent. But both service and manufacturing employment changed radically. Those two sectors had been essentially equal in size at the beginning of the period, providing 22 and 21 percent of the region's jobs, respectively. But services ended the period employing almost exactly two and a half times as many persons as manufacturing: 30 percent (a high proportion of them

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Anthony Armstrong

Jungle Talk Part 1

A man showed up one day with this huge yellow thing, with a big mouth on it. All the animals thought they were seeing a new kind of animal, something they had never seen before.

Across the back of this monstrous thing was the word, written in big black letters, CATERPILLAR. When the old lion, Regene, saw the word on the back of this enormous beast, he turned to his favorite lioness, Bertie, and said, "That sure don't look like any caterpillar I've ever seen in this jungle."

Bertie responded, "For once you're correct, my lordly lion; and because this animal is so strange perhaps we should consult the jungle elders, they might know just what this unusual animal really is." That afternoon Regene gave out with a roar, and throughout the jungle all the other members of the council of elders heard it and came running, swinging through trees, flying through the air, crawling along the ground, and swimming on the water.

So they came, one and all: the birds of the air sent Broad Wing, the highest flying most accurate spearer of fish. A Fish Eagle, Broad Wing could spot his prey from hundreds of feet in the air, and then, on his graceful wings, swoop down to capture it almost quicker than the sound of a bird's chirp could travel from one place to another.

Broad Wing was swift, he was fearless, but like all his species, he was a loner, willing to fish for just himself,never willing to share his catch.

The monkeys, those agile creatures who share the trees with the birds, sent their most acclaimed jokester, Marmi. Marmi was the funniest of them all; however, he never sought danger, and always counselled his kind to lay-back.

Though very witty and charged with the responsibility of teaching other monkeys to follow in his foot steps, Marmi thought no monkey better than he; and he worked hard at making his instructions most difficult to understand and follow. Marmi's problem was that he never wanted anyone, and certainly not another monkey, to ever get what he had.

The animals that run for their food sent to the council the wonderfully fast and ferocious Hector, the most beautiful coated and clear eyed Cheetah in the jungle.

Though able to catch any other land animal, in a relatively short run, Hector could not sustain battle for prolonged periods. He had won his seat in council with such dazzling fetes as reaching 45 miles per hour, from a standing start, in just three seconds, and running at speeds that often topped 65 miles per hour! Hector had few enemies, except those he brought on himself.

The animals that hug the ground issued forth with their most venomous member, the Mamba snake. Her name was Seesafous and she had won the right to represent them all in a battle to the death with a cousin, the Cobra.

So deadly was she that only the most heinous tasks were commissioned to her. While her counsel was most sought in matters of killing, Seesafous was required by all the other animals, big and small, to sit alone at the meeting. For, they all feared her hair trigger rapaciousness.

Finally, came the unusual and thought to be extinct Coelacanth fish. He was part of the council by virtue of his wisdom at staying alive. This fish and his kind had devised a ruse so effective that none were thought to exist anywhere, anymore.

They had done so, some one hundred years ago, to fool man — the greatest animal of them all, and to the Coelacanth and countless other species, the greatest enemy of all animals.

So they all came to this safe place, well hidden beside the waters, to grunt and chirp and hiss and roar, and squeal about this newest and strangest of "animals," with the big letters C-A-T-E-R-P-I-L-L-A-R blazoned across its back.

Certainly, if they could they would welcome it into their community; but first they had to be sure it would not spell them any doom. In the end, their gravest fears would come pushing and tearing by them.

The first animal to utter a sound was the old lion, Regene. In his aged roar way it was clear he was suggesting a drastic plan: "get rid of the thing now." Regene's feeling was, anything to different from all the other animals could not be considered for inclusion in their world.

Marmi didn't want it either, fearing something potentially more witty than himself. Broad Wing had no fear and counselled that all the animals should do as he had done — simply move to places too high for such a big thing to ascend to. His thought was immediately shot down by every animal present, and particularly by Seesafous, who with a low hissing sound gave Broad Wing full fear.

No one had dared to look too closely at the new monster, and so every animal member of the council remained unaware that upon the yellow thing's back sat a man.

This news they got from Bertie who had quietly, and without the knowledge of the lordly lion or any of the other council animals, crept close to and examined the huge yellow phenomenon. A man, she thought. This can spell new advantages or, she feared, new slaughters.

She turned around and started back toward the council, eager to warn them of her new discovery. Just then Mr. Cheetah's son came running to catch her. He stopped her, and she lambasted him for delaying her return, with such important news.

Cheetah, the younger, respectfully roared to her, "Stop, say nothing to the council of what you've seen, I fear they, all proud in their own ways, will not heed such warnings from one they do not see as their peer." The young Cheetah, now seeming wiser than his years, said, "All these animals have their value, all of their ways of solving life's live or die issues. Yet, none of them alone can solve this problem, because none of them is strong enough to lead the other; and they will go off in disarray, each pulling apart the strength of the whole."

Bertie said to the young Cheetah, "Then we are doomed, what shall we do?" The young Cheetah replied, "Every animal has his talent, given by He who watches over all. What we must have now is the animal that can identify all the talents, and find the best way to employ them all. What we need now is a leader."

Stay tuned for the battle now soon to be waged.

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