John J. Oliver, Jr.
Chairman of the Board Publisher
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Editorial Page

The Afro-American

"There are two prescriptions for success — Faith and Industry"

John H. Murphy
1840-1922

Two deaths—two lessons?

Twice in the past two weeks, youths with a lifetime of achievement ahead of them have been struck down. Police are still searching for the murderer of La Tonya Wallace, the 11-year-old who was found slashed and strangled to death Feb. 4.

And yesterday the family of Rico Marshall buried the talented high schooler, who allegedly died after swallowing a potent cocaine derivative to avoid arrest by suburban Washington police.

Both deaths serve to remind us of how close danger lies; and of how fragile our existence can be.

But more importantly, what are the lessons we learn from such untimely deaths?

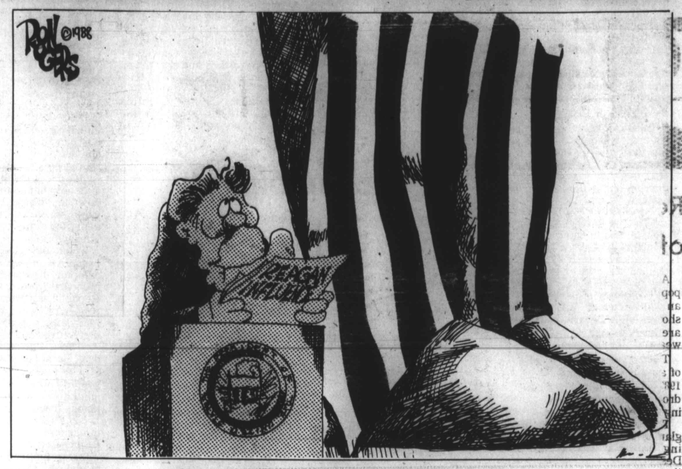
Police and community residents are working hard to improve the safety of the Reservoir Hill community. Down in Washington, parents are organizing a drug war to shut down stores which sell drug paraphernalia.

But more is needed.

At home and at school, we need to be about the business of educating our youth to the harshness of the world around them.

There are good things out here, and all of us can share in the bounty of the community. But there is also pain and suffering in the world, some of which is avoidable.

It is too late to play "maybe" games with La-Tonya or Rico. It is too late to speculate what would have happened if they had chosen a different route, or listened to a different voice.



Math-science Mecca?

At first glance, the idea of an educational Mecca, a math-science high school for promising young scholars, appears to be a good idea.

But there are several caveats we must mention.

As former school board president and current school board member Bailey Fine observes in this edition, such a school should not flourish at the expense of one general educational excellence.

Although Gov. Schaefer claims money to start the school will not come from existing educational resources, such a school would eventually have to share the same pot the rest of the state public schools draw from.

The proposed school could drain resources already urgently needed here in Baltimore and elsewhere.

A second question concerns a possible "brain drain" which could result if large groups of students opt to attend the special school.

Already schools in Baltimore are being stripped of the best and brightest students who are attracted to the "magnet schools" offering specialized curricula.

Will the math-science high school exacerbate this trend?

The third question concerns admissions — who picks who gets into the school?

Will Baltimore and the black community get its fair share of places for its talented students?

Let them run

Probably no other facet of our society has as large a bearing on us as the judicial system. Whether we are forced to plead our case at the bench or if we get a simple traffic ticket, the system of laws which govern us are an intrinsic part of our lives.

Currently there is a move afoot to take away from the citizens of the state the right to elect judges. If Gov. Schaefer's proposal becomes law, we must be content with judges appointed by a panel few of us are familiar with.

Under the current system, an appointments panel reviews candidates, then selects a man or woman to replace a vacant position on the bench. When the term of the new appointee expires, he or she has to run for office.

This system, we think, is an adequate mechanism of checks and balances. The appointments committee, comprised in part of lawyers, know who has the judicial temperament to judge effectively.

Our Readers Write

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. Write
The AFRO-AMERICAN
628 N. Eutaw Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Death penalty strong medicine

Dear AFRO:

In the Jan. 30th edition of the AFRO, I read an article expressing an opinion on the death penalty as it is imposed on blacks.

The article's headline read: "Death Penalty Hurts Blacks" and the quote of that title was attributed to Del. Frank D. Boston.

I would like to take exception to that analogy and offer one of my own.

"Keeping the Killers alive hurts blacks more."

In the Feb. 6th edition of the AFRO, there is an article describing the brutal murder of an 11-year-old black child.

On Monday Feb.1, a funeral was held for a 22-year-old black male shot in the back because someone wanted his jewlery.

Each and everyday you can be confronted with stories of violent killings and in most instances they are all senseless and abrupt ends to the lives of young blacks.

These deaths are as final as the death penalty Del. Boston spoke of.

When I am told that arrests and sentencing of blacks are are done at a disproportionate rate, I ask are the lives that they take disproportionate?

Blacks are killing blacks at a rate that could spell extinction of the race if we are not careful and do what is necessary to stop the slaughter.

I'm a frim believer that the penalty should fit the crime. I do not say that every killing justifies the death penalty. However, I am saying that if one wantonly and mercilessly kills, then that person should die.

My only fault with the death penalty is that is not swift and exact.

Because of the numerous and lengthy appeals and re-appeals, the sentence is watered down to a mere trickle. By the time appeals are run through, society has had time to cool and in most cases forgive.

Yet the victims are a long time dead and their survivors are deprived.

If we sincerely want to save the children today then we must kill their killers.

To quote a criminal who has shot and has been shot at — "If people don't think that the death penalty is a deterrent, then they're lying. A lot of guys in here (jail) talk about it and are scared of it. It's a deterrent to me. I don't want to die."

Benjamin Prestbury —
Baltimore

Deltas praise AFRO

Dear AFRO,

May I express my gratitude for the very skillful and thorough coverage of the Baltimore, Maryland Alumnae Chapter's celebration of Founders Day of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

All of the sorors and friends have been exceptionally pleased and hope that you will express these sentiments to the staff that was involved.

REBECCA E. CARROLL,
Chapter President
Baltimore

Against the NEA

It's time that society stop giving my black brothers and sisters handouts in the form of affirmative action and start giving them what's due them as fellow Americans, the tools to survive and prosper in our competitive society.

The primary tool that is due them is a quality education for their children. This will never happen as long as the National Education Association has a stranglehold on government at all levels in our society.

The primary goal that we must shoot for is to have our legislatures again outlaw "civil service unions." This is the only way we will rid ourselves of the most hideous evil in our society, the Na-

CORNELIUS U. MORGAN
Baltimore, MD

The cycle of oppression

By F. Gregory Newton

The pages of history do in fact turn back upon themselves. And so it is with black American history. It was the "Reconstruction Period," (from 1865 to 1877), a period of 12 years, in which black Americans enjoyed a political power they had never enjoyed before, nor since. During this period most of the Senators and Congressmen from the south were black. It was Hiram Revels, from Mississippi, who was the first black U.S. Senator (1870-1871). He completed the term of Jefferson Davis, a white southerner who left the Union to become President of the Confederacy.

The "Reconstruction Period," therefore, was the equivalent of the "Civil Rights Era" estimated to have existed from 1968 to 1980 — again, a period of 12 years. It was the era in which black Americans enjoyed "affirmative action" and the "Voting Rights Bill," and the "Civil Rights Law," guaranteeing blacks equal protection under the law. It was, therefore, a time very much like the "Reconstruction Period."

Following the "Reconstruction Period," America entered the "Post-Reconstruction Period," in which the Ku Klux Klan was born and black Americans were the subjects of violent attacks and lynchings by white America; And they were divested of those political gains made during "Reconstruction."

Like the "Post - Reconstruction Rights Era" that white hate groups again emerged, with the re-birth of the Ku Klux Klan, and scattered incidents of black lynchings and race riots.

Witness the case in Alabama in 1987 in which a black youth was kidnapped and beaten to death by a group of whites. His body was then hung from a tree. When apprehended, one of the murderers gave no excuse for the killing, except to say it was done simply to send a message to black people that the Ku Klux Klan is still alive.

The next historical phase following the "Post-Reconstruction Period," was the "Pre-Civil Rights Period," in which the open lynching of blacks by white mobs was largely replaced by the arbitrary killing of black citizens by white police officers, with impunity. They killed for any excuse that suited them, without the fear of being punished.

Likewise, the society at the time of this writing has entered into the "Pre-Civil Rights Period's" equivalent — the "Pre-Holocaust Era," if might well be called. For again, as with the "Pre-Civil Rights Period," the white police force has resumed the random and arbitrary killing of black citizens, and again, with impunity. Witness that pattern of police brutality and killings which has occurred over the past few years, in Baltimore, and elsewhere:

DATELINE: March 20, 1980 — in a pizza shop on Erdman Avenue. THE CASE: Ja-Wan McGee, a 17-year-old black youth is wrongfully shot and paralyzed by a white police officer of 10 years — Stephen McCowan, 33 years of age. REASON: He thought McGee was about to rob the shop. RESULT: States Attorney William Swisher, refused to prosecute the officer. The white owner of the "Irish Pub" on West Chase Street, praised the officer and started a defense fund on McCowan's behalf.

Also, Millard Rubinstein, Special Counsel for the city police, stated: "The city is not obligated to pay any settlement reached in that case . . . So we've already won that issue."

Yet, on March 25, 1987, the Baltimore Board of Estimates readily agreed to pay $30,257.00 in legal fees to a white officer, Robert M. Berger, who sued for the right to do a "Black Face" act, an impersonation of Al Jolson, and an insult to the black race.

DATELINE: July 13, 1983 — on Harford Road.

THE CASE: a black motorcyclist, Booker Lee Lancaster, is wrongfully shot and killed by Daniel Shanahan, a white off-duty officer.

THE REASON: The motorcyclist allegedly punched Shanahan after Shanahan pulled alongside Lancaster and berated him for making a U-turn in front of the officer's car.

No badge was shown; and it was the officer who started the altercation. Further, no threat was made on the officer's life. THE RESULT: The testimony of the black witnesses to the incident was thrown out by the court because it assumed the blacks were biased in favor of the dead black man. Thus, the denial of eyewitness accounts to a crime on the basis of race is a denial of democracy. The first trial ended in a hung jury when the lone black jurist voted "guilty." A second jury, purged of the black jurist, acquitted Shanahan of that murder.

DATELINE: January 16, 1985 — at the "Class Act" Clothing Store, on East Monument Street.

THE CASE: Charles Edward Cook, a 19-year-old black errand boy, was shot and killed under mysterious circumstances by Melvin A. Ritchie, a white officer. None of the employees in the store saw the shooting, it was reported, and the officer refused to give a statement to the press.

THE RESULT: The State's Attorney, Kurt Schmoke, refused to prosecute the case.

DATELINE: May 12, 1987 — a row house in the 1700 block of East Chase Street.

THE CASE: Jarrod T. Clayton, a 20-year-old black youth is shot, and burned to death by Baltimore police in a siege of the house.

Yet, the police would not allow his relatives to attempt to talk Clayton out of the house; and they did not wait for the youth to either exhaust his supply of bullets, or to fall asleep before storming the house and before setting the house afire.

RESULT: Again, the State's Attorney refused to prosecute the case.

DATELINE: October 17, 1984 — The Maryland Penitentiary.

THE CASE: Leslie Vass, a black 27-year-old man was acquitted of the crime of armed robbery after serving 9 years wrongfully in prison for a crime he did not commit.

He was convicted of the crime on July 2, 1975.

RESULT: His prison record was not expunged, and he was not able to attain employment because of that wrongful police record, which the state refuses to erase.

This is odd in view of the fact that the youths who burned Kevin Archer — a Johns Hopkins University student who protested South Africa's apartheid on that campus — had their criminal convictions thrown out by Judge Martin Greenfield, even though they were guilty.

His reason for doing this was because the judge did not want to ruin their lives or their good names with a police record.

Yet, an innocent man, Leslie Vass, was refused that same right.

DATELINE: Nov., 1987.

THE CASE: Employees at the downtown Social Security Complex in Baltimore, witnessed police officers accost a black man, handcuff him, make him lie on the ground, and then begin to kick him in the face and stomach, while an officer stood on his legs.

THE RESULT: The case has not been prosecuted to this date, although Social Security employees are bringing suit against the police it was reported.

DATELINE: Nov. 9, 1987, 3600 block of Reisterstown Road, THE CASE: Joan Davenport, a 38-year-old black woman, is shot in the mouth by police after an all night siege, in which the woman, obviously mentally disturbed, shot at the police occassionally, while asking for beer and apples.

Witnesses to the incident stated that the woman could have been captured without being killed or shot in the mouth so savagely.

THE RESULT: No charges were brought against the officers.

DATELINE: December 7, 1987 — 2000 block of Rayner Avenue.

THE CASE: John Randolph Scott, Jr., a 22-year-old black male, was shot and killed by a policeman, but not with the officer's official gun.

The weapon was not found; and the question of why the man was shot emerged.

The officer stated that the man was a suspect in a stolen car case. This has not been proven.

THE RESULT: No charges have been filed against the officer.

Thus, America appears indeed to be near the final phase of its second cycle of oppression, as yet un-named. Will it be called, "The Holocaust?"

Page Opposite

Kweisi
Mfume
Member of Congress
Seventh District
Maryland

Regaining control of the schools

A Chicago elementary school with a population of 1,000 students recently held an "open house" for parents. Five showed up. In Detroit, metal detectors are used to stem the flow of lethal weapons into classrooms.

There were over 1,600 reported cases of assault in New York City schools in 1987 and, in Baltimore, our school dropout rate neared twenty percent during the 1986-87 school year.

The aforementioned are just a few glaring examples of the problems plaguing many of our urban schools. Desperate situations call for drastic actions and, as educators wrestle to regain control of the schools, much of the attention has been focused on the principals.

The most controversial of them all is Joe Clark of Eastside High School in Paterson, New Jersey. Known for his baseball bat and bullhorn, Clark received national attention for having expelled hundreds of students who he described as "hoodlums, thugs, and pathological deviants."

Having raised a few eyebrows himself, Northwestern Senior High School principal, Boyce Mosley, strongly agrees with Clark's assertion that order must be established first if there is to be a good learning environment.

While he would never brandish a baseball bat, Mosley explains that "... kids respond to strong authority figures . . . strong but compassionate."

He also concurs that the second priority is to develop a curriculum that meets the students' needs, and that the educators' energies must be channeled to those students who are interested in learning.

The appropriateness and effectiveness of some of Joe Clark's strategies are debatable. Eastside High's math scores have risen, but reading scores still rank the lowest in the nation. Still, educators generally agree the leadership of the principal is the key to the academic success of our children.

In 1985, Claire S. Dorsey was honored with proclamations from the Governor of Maryland and the Mayor of Baltimore for what was described as her "passion for excellence" when she headed James Mosher Elementary School.

Currently the principal of Cross Country Elementary, Dorsey respects Clark and Mosley's contention that "you can't save everybody." But, as a result of many years of experience with young children, she has an ecletic approach to discipline and firmly believes that "... there is an innate quality in every child that can be salvaged . . . anyone who can love can learn."

Joe Clark, Boyce Mosley, Claire Dorsey, and all other principals have the same goal in mind: providing the best possible learning environment for children to excell. But they can't do it alone.

Getting parents more involved in the education process is an essential part of putting any school on the right track.

Towards this end, Mosley and Dorsey have challenged parents to sign "contracts" with their schools.

Varying in design, such contracts would require parents to attend every PTA meeting, visit the schools once a month, or sign daily reports on their child's behavior or academic progress.

Other strategies being implemented by principles include incentive awards for high achievers; having the academically advanced tutor the less able; allowing businesses and community groups to "adopt" area schools; recruiting retired citizens to serve as volunteers; establishing alternative programs for those who cannot adjust to the standard classroom setting; and staging encounter groups between students and ex-offenders.

The positive results of many of these endeavors have been overwhelming.

The paraphrase a cliche, maybe it really is the "principal of the thing." I encourage all parents and concerned citizens to get to know the administrators, teachers and student leaders of their neighborhood schools.

The essence of the American Revolution was a struggle about time — time for the people to think things through, to decide for themselves. America's revolutionaries, 200 years ago, wanted time to think without the oppression that hangs over the society when the free thought of the people becomes ensnared in the organized pressures of the powerful.

And so, no other nation in the world chooses its leader the way we do. No one can say our system isn't distilling.

The way we choose our Presidential candidates relies on the principle of reduction; it's a whittling process.

The candidate left standing after all the whopping is done becomes his party's nominee.

The nominating process is borne in the desire to take our own good time making-up our minds. All that time has to be supported by tremendous resources — money is chief.

The nominating process is variously flawed, in some ways making it democratically impractical and nowhere near free.

Campaigning for President of the United States is totally dollar sensitive; and a candidate's chances of winning his party's nomination bears a direct relationship to the dollars his candidacy can attract.

Money alone, however, assures far less than timing, uncontrollable events, and just plain luck.

The driving force of money is always going to reveal far more about the candidates' fund raising prowess than about their respective abilities to be President.

Americans grudgingly accept the fact of astronomical campaign costs. Public funding of Presidential campaigns seeks to balance the campaign money realities; and to retain some virginity in the process we set campaign spending limits via federal law.

The spending limits really act only as speed bumps in a parking lot do — slowing things but causing no interruptions in the flow, in this case, of political money.

So where is the candidate left who can't raise the huge sums needed to mount, as Jesse Jackson says, "the fifty-state marathon" that is the Presidential Olympics? There is no other candidate running who has a more natural constituency than Jesse Jackson.

Mr. Jackson has the single largest natural base of any of the other candidates.

That base is a completely national one too; more so than the farmer base, more than the "bright-collar" base (that's a 1988 term to describe the new class of "information" workers that so greatly influenced the New Hampshire primary results), more than the labor base, more than the elderly base, more than the "conservative" or "liberal bases.

Similarly, Massachusetts Governor Dukakis has a natural base among his fellow Greek-Americans. compared to blacks they constitute significantly smaller numbers, yet they've come together around their Hellenic pride in another Greek to insure that he will have enough money to not only carry their banner, but to carry it high. Maybe all the way to the White House.

It amazes me that Mr. Jackson can be so genuinely positive as he stands before the network news cameras exhorting his troops, "On to the South and Super Tuesday."

When in the very next breath he just as cheerfully accounts, "We spent 48 thousand dollars in New Hampshire and our coffers are 500 thousand to the good, for the fight ahead."

Five hundred thousand dollars — why, Pat Robertson and George Bush, alone among the candidates, will each spend that much in one state, South Carolina.

We'd expect Vice President Bush to have the kind of financial firepower that his campaign has long shown (in fact, Mr. Bush's campaign stopped raising money about three weeks ago, saying they had already managed to amass enough).

Pat Robinson had built a huge Christian broadcasting organization that relies heavily on contributions, so his fundraising abilities surprise no one.

Pete Dupont, of the Delaware Duponts, is a very wealthy man in his right; and though there are limits on how much of his own money he can spend, I'm sure he has enough friends to insure his campaign's solvency.

Bob Dole is the master of political funding; and many people think he is truly electable, for that reason alone Mr. Dole will have sufficient money.

Yet, other than Mr. Dukakis none of the candidates likely to still be in the race by convention times have anything like the natural constituency of Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Dukakis has more money than anyone other than George Bush; but Jesse Jackson has none, and this from the largest natural base of all the serious candidates.

That's correct — Mr. Jackson is clearly a "serious" candidate. This has to be qualified, however, as a political pronouncement, because although everyone agrees Mr. Jackson is a "serious" candidate fully 75 percent of people asked don't believe "America is ready to elect a black man President."

Even if Jesse Jackson can't be elected President, there is reason to believe he could become the Vice Presidential nominee, especially if the Democratic convention deadlocks. Such a scenario only takes on galvanizing proportions if Mr. Jackson can get to the convention in somewhat the same money position as will Mr. Dukakis. The Vice Presidency, a politically doable thing, can only happen if Jesse has no money worries.

This possibility looms large: the Democrats, seeing that their likely nominee could become another Walter Mondale, will opt to draft New York Governor, Mario Cuomo. To make the deal work Jesse Jackson must "play" his delegate-card for the New York governor.

Political Consultant
Anthony
Armstrong

The way we choose

AFRO SURVEY

Linda Harris

Denise Dorsey

Cindy Carroll

Denise Brown

What will you give up for Lent?

"What are you giving up for Lent?" was this week's question to the Man on the Street.

Linda Harris, 47, editor.

"I would give up sugar and white flour. I would give these up because they're not good for you anyway."

Denise Dorsey, 34, graphic artist.

"I would give up soft drinks, because you're to give up something you love. Plus, it would help me to switch to a healthier drink."

Cindy Carroll, 35, log analyst.

"I'm giving up eating junk food, because it's bad for the body . . . makes me chunky!"

Denise Brown, 26, artist.

"I'm giving up junk food. It's not good for me anyway. Bad for the diet."

Jim Roberts, 44, director, corporate relations.

"Eating excessive junk food. Make sure I eat the right kind of foods."

Cheryl Lynn Williams, 29, office assistant.

"I would like to give up my time. This will be used in helping other people. This is the best thing I can do, besides money."

Ida Tanner, 60, housekeeper.

"I would give myself more to the Lord. I'm not into material things. My life is already dedicated to the Lord."

Waleta Eberhardt, 23, payables clerk.

"Probably chocolate. I eat it about everyday. And I think it would be the appropriate sacrifice."

Jim Roberts

Cheryl Lynn Williams

Ida Tanner

Waleta Eberhardt

Samuel
Banks
Educator

Education for liberation and power

One of the cogent, compelling and central facts which should come through very clearly and palpably during this month-long concentrated study of black life and history is the monumental and unswerving passion that black Americans have for education.

Even during the bestial, debasing and heinous system of slavery, our forebears, in spite of legal and violent measures put in place to prevent them from reading and writing, the fierce and burning desire for learning could not be extinguished.

The leaders of the slavocracy knew full well that once black persons were able to receive education that there was no way to maintain black persons as chattel or property and in a state of degradation and shame.

The vile obstructions, floggings, maimings, disfigurement, torture and, in some instances, death could not deter our forebears in their intrepid and unrelenting quest for education. The minds of black persons, through it all, were stayed on freedom and education.

A crucial and urgent task for over forty (40) million black citizens today is to regain, sustain and extend the love and passion for learning as did our gallant, heroic and remarkable forebears.

One of the signal and extraordinary achievements of black citizens today is that each of us is a rich benefactor of a group that endured, survived and never internalized or accepted a base and atrocious system which denied its fundamental humanity and worth. **This towering, majestic and inspirational legacy must be taught to black children, youths and adults in the present and future.**

Education is power and a vital and formidable element in transmitting racial solidarity, pride, history and achieving socio-economic, educational and political sufficiency and parity.

It is not enough to assert, as many brothers and sisters are wont to exclaim: "Everything is going to be everything."

The reality if that "everything" is going to be unmitigated disaster and pain unless one's mind finds release through serious and deliberate study and analysis of ideas to define self and purpose in a world at war with itself.

The time, in short, has come to declare a moratorium of self-imposed ban on extravagant and reckless rhetoric, grandstanding and extravagant pontification and to use education as a vehicle for positive change and uplift.

In terms of how I define liberation, I mean, within an educational and societal context, having self-discipline, the ability to think issues through critically and analytically and having the intestinal fortitude, clout and knowledge to act responsibly and rationally.

Education, for me, that counts is a process that engages one's mind fully and causes him/her to be a change agent for himself/herself and others.

The operative principle is simple and longstanding: "TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN MUCH IS REQUIRED."

Courses of study, textbooks, visual materials, under caring, rigorous, imaginative and well-grounded teachers, administrators and curriculum supervisors and specialists and supportive parents must be directed toward the freeing of minds and development of autonomy and independence in students.

A process of education, in my view, away from this proposition, is not education for autonomy but education for passivity, ennui and docility.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, in his prophetic and incisive work, **The Mis-Education of the Negro**, published over fifty five (55) years ago, stated the case eloquently and aptly:

"The problem of holding the Negro down, therefore, is easily solved. When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his 'proper place' and will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary."

FEB 1988