AIDS IN THE COMMUNITY

By Dr. Barbara Lyles

Death and Dying Part II

The fact that everyone must, ultimately, face death alone should provide no reason and no comfort to health care givers or families, friends or loved ones who turn their backs on AIDS victims.

Inform yourself of the risks and act in a responsible way to protect yourself. This does not mean that you can at any time in the process shun, avoid or otherwise treat the AIDS patient in the manner in which much of the early research suggested was the nature of dying of AIDS.

Recent reports in the newspapers report that we are not dealing at all well with AIDS patients while they are ill; it appears that even in death the AIDS victim and his family becomes the victim of the unprepared and the ill-informed embalers and funeral directors.

It must be remembered that when a person knows that he is dying he develops an especially keen eye for sight. An AIDS victim is especially tuned into situations in which people treat him as though he were a living time bomb.

The time to begin to learn how to be a part of an AIDS victim's support system is now, while you are becoming educated about the risks of present social and sexual behaviors which might well need changing.

Perhaps it might not be a bad idea to put oneself in the other person's shoes.

One might suggest that the best way to know if someone is in pain is to "walk a mile in his moccasins."

Surprising outcomes often come to us when we image ourselves in someone else's place.

Years ago, Stewart Alsop, a syndicated columnist, facing his own death from leukemia wrote a book called A STAY OF EXECUTIVE.

When one thinks of execution, he probably also thinks of a verdict that precedes that execution.

You've probably heard of people with suspected malignancies and serious heart, lung, liver or diabetic problems waiting for test results, lab reports or surgical outcome reports ... i.e., awaiting the verdict. The time between test, surgery, or whatever is probably necessary for accuracy ... one wonders ... we don't have to wonder what the patient goes through while waiting for the "verdict."

Well, the verdict is almost always met by the patient and maybe everyone else that cares about him with DENIAL. Since our focus on AIDS as a killer, let us imagine a person who has been wise enough to get tested, or a person who has had a long lasting period of fever, weight loss, diarrhea, infection of some similar unexplained condition.

Denial soon becomes difficult. The verdict, when it comes labels the problem AIDS. The patient knows that he is facing almost certain death. Only the length of time left to him is a question. It is likely that the people who care about him know too.

The verdict of almost certain death is met with a response of denial. "No, not me." "There is some mistake." "The lab was careless." (all to often this is really true . . . "The doctor has my records mixed up that that sick guy that was in his office before me."

"The doctor miced up the blood samples." This denial is usually shared by loved ones, but the wasting, the infections, the neurological symptoms continue. It is very likely that up to now the person has refused treatment of any sort . . . or only very low level treatment.

Denial finally becomes impossible and the anger sets in. One now begins to rage at God, at fate, at loved ones, at the person who infected him.

It is as though the rage is directed at anyone who is healthy. The agony of the "why me?" questions are now. This anger is handled in many ways. In the case of the AIDS victim, the notion of suing persons whom they believe to have infected him becomes a driving thought.

During the stage of anger, there may come a period during which the dying person many attempt to appeal to doctor after doctor for a lesser "verdict".

With a desperation born of terror and a horrible sense of loss of self and everything vital, both the dying person and those who love him may seek to forestall the dying by promising the minister, God, friends and enemies to be a better human being.

To go to church, to treat people more kindly, to return something once taken from another ... all in exchange for a lesser "verdict".

This is the stage of bargaining.

It is now that the dying person, having exhausted all avenues of escape which appear to be open, must come face to face with the true fact of his condition; now may well be the time when many people slip into a deep depression.

The best hope is that the dying person may pass through the stage of depression. It may well be that the presence of an especially loved person, at this time, may be tolerated and may be able to provide the support necessary to enable the dying person to come out of the depression.

This period is almost surely the most vital time for loving support. All prior stages ... denial, anger, bargaining are gone.

One would hope that each of these stages were met by the people involved with a willingness to talk, to love, to understand. It is further to be hoped that no one during this time was as ill-advised as to suggest to the person who knows himself to be dying ... "that everything is going to be okay." He knows better.

It is now that one can hope that in dying, one can reach down into some wellspring of human strength and summon the faith, courage and will to turn these last few days or weeks into more positive and humanly productive channels.

Now is the time in which everyone concerned can do what is needed to let these final days be a testimony to life, hope and growth.

The dying person who summons the best in him in order to put his affairs in order, to perform his final acts in this world in any way in which his dying will not be without human dignity and without fond memories of better days.

All but the most cynical and jaded among us must certainly hope that even in dying, each of us has the power to accept the fact that a certain destiny was ours.

We had made choices. We had lived and loved. Each of us has an alloted time.

We live out that time in a unique individual whose identity is ours alone; one must be remembered for the uniqueness that is each of us. We must also die.

Can we learn to live knowing that we must die and face death with acceptance?

Death is, after all, an important and continuous part of living.

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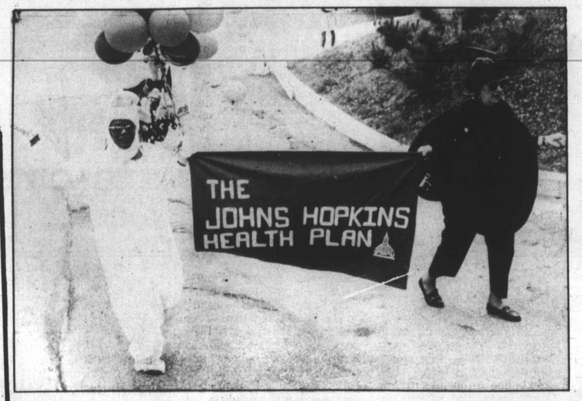

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Caucus elects leader

By Alicia Benjamin
AFRO Staff Writer

The Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, beseiged with problems in the past few months, elected a new chairman at its retreat Saturday at the University of Maryland's Eastern Shore campus.

Del. Curtis Anderson D-44 succeeds Sen. Decatur Trotter D-Prince George's County as the leader of the black legislators in the state.

Del. Sylvannia Woods D-Prince George's County received the second largest number of votes, while Del. Clarence Davis, D-45 was third, and Sen. Larry Young, D-39 came in fourth place.

"We all knew it was going to be a tight race, but I wasn't surprised I won," said Anderson.

Anderson said he thought he would win, even before Young filed an allegedly false report claiming he was abducted from his home. A grand jury found that there was a possible violation of the law in connection with the abduction report, but did not charge him with assault of his former aide, Michael Richardson.

In an attempt to create an alibi for the assault, Young claimed he was kidnapped from his home on June 2, the grand jury found.

Now that the Caucus chairman has been elected, the group can continue with their goals for the 1989 legislative session, said Anderson.

The retreat enabled the legislators to get together to decide which issues they would support during the 1989 legislative session.

The legislators hope to strengthen minority set-aside programs, continue to push for quality higher education, and protect the new state gun control statute.

"I think (Anderson) is a very appropriate choice which maintains the tradition of alternating the chair position between the House and the Senate," said Del. Howard Rawlings, D-40.

"I believe he will do an excellent job as chair as long as he maintains the support of the membership," Rev. Rawlings continued.

Murphy gets talk show slot

WFBR is pleased to announce the addition of Billy Murphy to their talk show line-up. The Billy Murphy Show airs Saturdays from 5 until 7 p.m.

The first black law clerk for a judge of the Court of Special Appeals in 1969, this Baltimore native has left an indelible mark on Baltimore politics and law.

Since 1983, Billy has formed the largest minority law firm in the city. According to the Baltimore Sun, Billy has the highest won-loss percentage of any criminal lawyer in Maryland.

In 1988, Billy was bestowed with the highest rating in ability and integrity by Martindale-Hubbell, the national lawyer rating service.

Only 14% of all lawyers in the United States rate the high marks which Billy Murphy has earned, which are determined by secret ballot of the lawyers in Baltmore City.

Hospital Seeks Junior Volunteers

The Union Memorial Hospital is looking for junior volunteers age fourteen and older for its summer program. The program starts in June when summer vacation beings and runs through the end of August.

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Superintendent

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ing to reports.

The mayor's endorsement, along with backing from local civic and community groups is believed to have swayed the board's decision in favor of Dr. Hunter.

While claims have been stated that the board never met as a group to vote on Hunter. Hollis denies that the decision is based on polling individuals by phone to arrive at a majority.

"Three of the board members were out of town, so how would you have me ask them?" he said.

Hollis praises Hunter as having "unusually sharp vision and ability."

"We thought he was running a model school system in Richmond," he said.

Hunter also has more experience than the other two candidates, Jerome B. Jones and Thomas S. Tocco, Superintendent of Schools in Cobb Co., Ga. according to Hollis.

Hunter has been a superintendent for school systems, Richmond, Va. and Dayton, OH.

He has been assistant superintendent in Seattle, WA. At University of North Carolina, he is a professor whose job is to train superintendents, he also serves on the school board in N.C.

Local groups also preferred Hunter to the other candidates, but some are concerned over what he will face.

"Based on what we saw, we thought he had the greatest potential for leading us," Arnett Brown said. Brown, president of Public Schools Administrators and Supervisors Association (PSASA), added that even though they believe Hunter to be a good choice, he is going to start off with some headaches.

PSASA recently wrote a letter to Mr. Hollis demanding that the board consider the removal of some administrators directly surrounding the office of Superintendent.

The letter charges the assistant superintendent of personnel, chief financial officer, associate superintendent for Curriculum Management, and assistant superintendent for Physical Plant with hindering the efforts of superintendent, Alice G. Pinderhughes.

"If they brought God here, he wouldn't be able to do anything with less than responsible people following surrounding him," Brown said. "One thing I can say about the former superintendent is that she had long patience and long tolerance for incompetence," he said.

Hunter is noted for being a man who will not hesitate to make administration changes when necessary.

Attention has been given to the fact that Hunter twice demoted school administrator, Roy West while he was superintendent in Richmond.

Hunter later left Richmond amid a change in political climate once West became mayor.

In a previous interview, Hunter said that it is the job of a superintendent to properly utilize personnel in a way that best benefits young people's education.

Irene Dandridge, president of the Baltimore Teachers' Union, gave her support to Hunter after interviewing him.

"I thought he had a realistic view of what Baltimore needed and a good grasp of the constituencies that need attention in our school system, Dandridge said.

Dandridge also said thought Hunter to be an expert on educational reform.

Even Social Studies Department head, Samuel Banks (a previous candidate for the position who believed there were qualified local people for the job) pledged his full support to Hunter.

"We should give Dr. Hunter our utmost support, because he will need it," Banks said.

"He got a monumental challenge here, he said.

Banks agrees with the prospect of administrative changes deeming them necessary for Hunter to tackle the challenges of our school system. He said that while some administrators are apprehensive and uncertain of their futures, most are relieved to have a superintendent.

Farrakhan

Continued from Page 1A

him "insane," said Farrakhan. "Moses' teachings were pure. Our (Blacks) practices of today are kind of dirty . . . so the word of God should come to clean up our actions, one for another," Farrakhan said.

The minister said he dislikes the action of people, not their color.

"I don't hate whites or Jews. I dislike the practice of those who exploit. I dislike Jews of Hollywood who depicted blacks and buffoons; pimps . . . I think this is feeding the already manifest hatred of ourselves. I dislike the practices of blacks who exploit our women. I'm not a hater of color. I dislike practices, even of myself, if it's against the common good."

During a speech to an overflowing audience at the Palladium Friday night, Farrakhan speculated about the reluctance of some blacks to attend.

Farrakhan said the Kennedy family grew wealthy with money from whiskey and the U.S. treasury grew as a result of slavery.

"You don't want to leave America and you won't support your black people," Farrakhan said.

Blacks often receive unfair treatment under the law that may lead to the creation of a separate black nation, Farrakhan said.

"If we get no justice in . . . this land, don't call on my son to die on the battlefields of a foreign land," Farrakhan said during the speech.

"Tawana Brawley was raped and ravished and sodomized by six white men. She described them to the FBi and police authorities in New York state. But when they saw the New York state authorities had no heart to prosecute, the DA said there was a conflict of interest."

"They don't want to prosecute their own so the cover up is on," said Farrakhan, who added there can be no justice through a grand jury hearing in the case.

This kind of injustice will lead to serious considerations by blacks to form a separate nation, Farrakhan said.

"I believe in the next 20 years the option of separating is going to be very viable," he said. "After Jesse did all that good work . . . signed up more people to be democrats . . . and they didn't even wish to consider him (for the vice president)."

"Blacks have a role in the political process, but can never be totally free of white supremacy inside predominately white institutions," Farrakhan said.

"I would advise that every black person of age should register. . . should make proper use of the ballot . . . hold persons accountable . . . punish our enemies, reward our friends," he said.

Black politicians are a source of pride but are not a panacea for the entire black community, Farrakhan said.

"You have a black mayor in Baltimore, He's new, but the condition of black citizens has not changed. We have a black mayor in Philadelphia, in Gary, Indiana, Detroit, Los Angeles, but the condition of black citizens in the cities has not changed appreciably," Farrakhan said.

"The masses of black folk felt a sense of swelling pride because one of our own is running the city and running it well," he said. "With the Jackson campaign blacks "Swell with pride, truly that is a great accomplishment, but Jesse's being vice president is not necessarily going to change the condition of the masses of black people; that doesn't mean he'll hold sway over congress.

Presidential candidates should be held accountable to a black agenda before blacks support them, Farrakhan said.

"We have to put before all of them what we want as a people, whether they take Jesse, (they must be) held to the black agenda," he said . . . "If they can put on a yarmulke and go to the synagogue and tap dance for Jews and for the Jewish vote . . . and yet they never come in the black community and address the black masses . . . and we don't make them come."

AIDS

Continued from Page 1A

Kelen said.

"Those women are probably using IV drugs or getting the virus from men who are infected," he continued.

Janet Johnson, patient services coordinator for the Health Education Resources Organization, attributes the high incidence of the AIDS virus among blacks to the growing number of IV drug users in the black community.

Drug addiction is only a symptom of underlying problems among blacks, said Johnson.

Tony Allen, co-founder of Earthtide, Inc., said more black women are becoming infected with the virus because they are sexually involved with male HIV drug users.

HERO and Earthtide are AIDS service organizations located in Baltimore. Earthtide works to serve and educate blacks about the disease.

It is not clear as to whether emergency room patients overall show a higher rate of AIDS virus infection than the general population, according to Kelen.

"We don't really know if the high rate we've found is truly representative of the (emergency room) population around us," he stated.

"It's possible that the rate we got is much higher than within several miles of the hospital or it could be lower," he said.

Trauma patients, those with gunshot or stab wounds, had a higher incidence of infection. The study revealed an infection rate of 13.6 percent among penetrating trauma patients.

But people they did not suspect would have the infection, such as asthma and seizure patients, also were tested positive for the HIV virus, Kelen said.

"At one time we thought we only had to worry about trauma patients but now we have to worry about them all," he said.

Since there is no way to know who is infected with the virus in the emergency room, Kelen advises health care workers to use precautions when working with patients they perceive as having risk of harboring the virus, Kelen said.

Health care workers may use protective gear such as goggles, gloves surgical masks and gowns to protect themselves when treating high risk patients, said Kelen.

The ELECTRICITY IS BACK!

Body

Continued from Page 1A

told them that the other man, Moore, had gone down in the vicinity where they were.

Renaud said they looked around to see if they could locate the other man.

They were unable to see him, so they brought Goldberg to the shore.

A fire department ambulance crew then examined Goldberg and released him. He said later that he was only pretty shaken up.

Meanwhile, the two police officers, Renaud and Stotler wanted to go back out to look for Moore, but the wind was so strong that they decided to wait for the full rescue team to arrive.

The full rescue team arrived with a helicopter circling above while two search boats went into the reservoir. After searching for a while. Moore's body was found. One of the divers said the reservoir was about 25 feet deep.

Moore did not have a life-jacket on when he was pulled from the water, and it was uncertain if he had it on when the incident occurred.

Jim Kapplan, the public information officer for the Department of Public Works said yesterday that both men who were involved in the incident had their life preservers on when their boat capsized.

Kapplan however said that it was not known if Moore's lifejacket was out when he went into the water. He said that an investigation has begun to fin dout why the boat capsized and why Moore drowned despite having a life-jacket on.

NAACP commends Dems on ' fair share' compliance

By Larry A. Still
Capitol News Service

WASHINGTON — Speaking a few weeks before the NAACP National Convention here July 10-16 and the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta July 17-21, an official of the national civil rights organization has given the political party "moderate praise" for achieving full compliance with a "Fair Share" agreement signed during the past year.

DNC officials, including chairman Paul Kirk, have confirmed that over 25 percent of the party's headquarters staff is comprised of black employees; over one-third of the purchases by the organization in 1987 was made from black vendors; over 35 percent of the convention staff in Atlanta are blacks," 51 percent of the Atlanta '88 Convention Committee are blacks; and approximately 40 percent of the nearly one million dollars in convention contracts, thus far, are with black-owned firms.

Fred H. Rasheed, NAACP director of economic development, said "the report from the Democratic National Committee and the Atlanta '88 Convention Committee is in line with our agreement signed by the DNC.

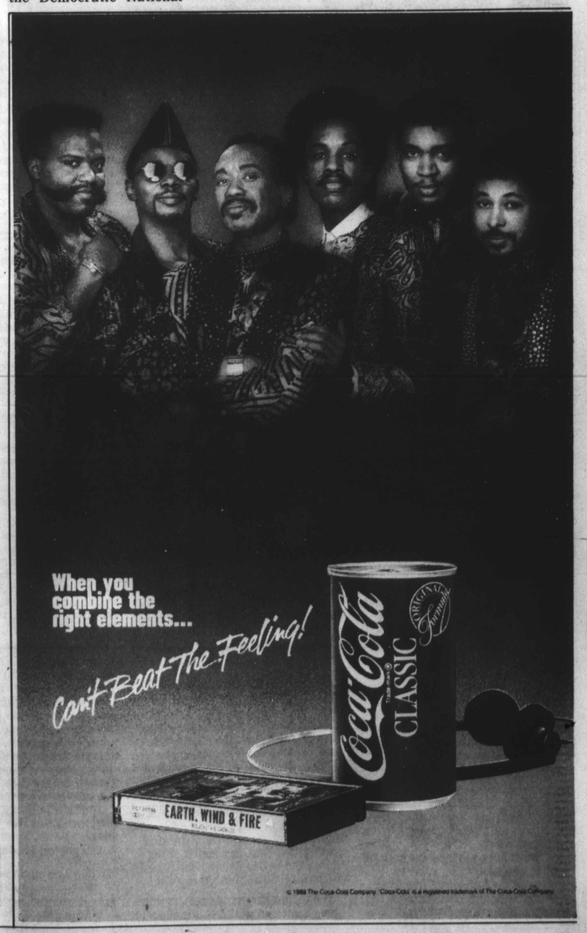
"However, we encourage the Democratic state committees to establish dialogue with local NAACP branches to identify common ground for promoting other potential use of minority vendors. I know these state committees have limited funds, but there is a need for the agreement to be expanded to include these state organizations."

Rasheed added that efforts to get the Republican National Committee to sign a similar NAACP Fair Share Agreement had failed.

In its first report to the NAACP, Rasheed said, the DNC stated that in 1987, the Washington headquarters staff employed 25 blacks out of a total personnel of 91 persons, representing nearly 30 percent. Of the top 10 officials, two are black. Of the 29 persons in DNC managerial positions, 10 are blacks and of the 30 technical/professional staff persons, eight are blacks. The DNC reported that of $150,495.06 spent in purchases in 1987, $48,022.47 was spent with the black vendors.

Regarding the July convention in Atlanta, the DNC reported that 18 of 50 persons hired, to date, are blacks, representing 36 percent. For the Atlanta '88 Convention Committee, 21 of 41 persons hired, to date, are blacks, which is 51 percent, officials emphasized.

In minority participation in the convention contracting program,, $274,788.45 of the $700,989.51 spent for purchases, has been contracted with black vendors, representing 39.2 percent, the party reported to the NAACP.

Chairman Kirk cited similar figures at an early DNC briefing for national black leaders arranged by DNC Black Caucus Chair, C. Delores Tucker, in Atlanta.

Kirk said the DNC was dedicated to the principles of affirmative action and equal opportunity and would live up to its commitments in black and minority participation in all levels of party activities.