—Black investors

(Continued from Page A1)

(with fellow-Philadelphians Bill Cosby and Julius "Doctor J" Erving), and Beatrice Foods entrepreneur Reggie Lewis;

Also Kenneth O. Wilson, Inner Harbor Marina owner; Willie Adams, businessman; William March, mortician; Osborne Payne, McDonald's franchiser; Allen Quille, parking lot magnate, and Otis Warren, wealthy real estate developer.

The group began speculating on the possibility of buying into the Orioles in midsummer when it was revealed that then owner Edward Bennett Williams was in deteriorating health from cancer.

Monthly discussions were held with the number of participants increasing at each meeting.

They were encouraged by reports from Hoffberger, who had been a close friend of Williams and his wife.

According to him, assurances were given that he and his associates would have equal opportunity to bid on the O's.

Hoffberger's report to the group also stated that Commissioner Peter Ueberroth and several clubowners were not only agreeable to such a deal but were openly enthusiastic about the prospect of black owner participation.

The result is that EBW's widow, Mrs. Agnes Williams and at least one of her seven children, Tommy—an Orlando (Fla.) TV weatherman—sold out to a lily-white conglomerate which implies no commitment whatsoever to black inclusion.

Members of the purchasing group are New York investor Eli Jacobs, Orioles president Larry Lucchino, former Peace Corps director Sargent Shriver and the latter's son, Robert, described as a New York venture capitalist.

Orioles manager Frank Robinson heads up a group of former and current players pressing for this same kind of black involvement.

That the club he works for has slammed the door on any hope of recognition, must certainly be a shock to him.

As well as to black fans who had begun to return to Memorial Stadium turnstiles.

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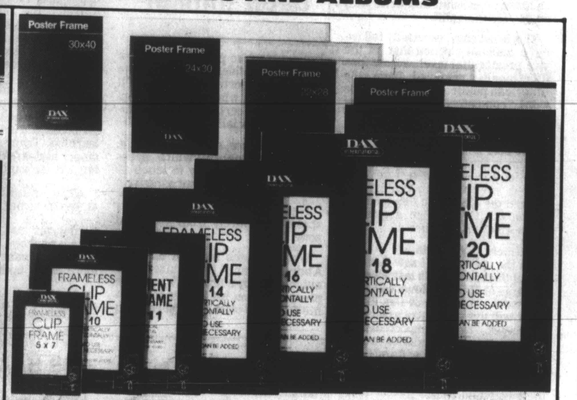

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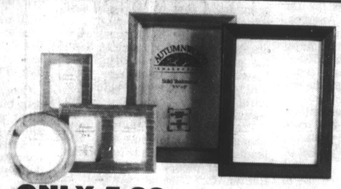

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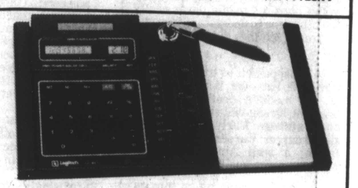

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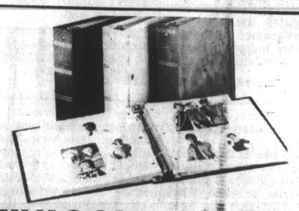

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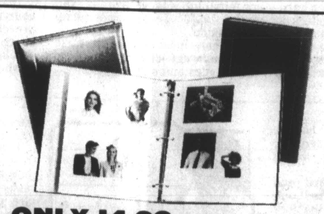

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QUENTIN LAWSON:
In Search of Educational Excellence

By Charles H. Brown
AFRO Staff Writer

To be the best takes planning, patience, persistence and precious time. To promote the best takes foresight, a far reach and a forum for change. In Quentin R. Lawson, both being and promoting the best have found a hero.

As vice chairman of Maryland's Commission on Higher Education, Lawson shares the responsibility of refocusing the mission of the state's university system.

The Commission, chaired by Henry Bhutta, is charged with ridding the system of unnecessary duplication in the state's colleges and universities, of inciting excellence and of reformulating higher education as an institutional serum for the regions ails.

"It's been the long term feeling that it's archaic, it's not meeting the needs of the citizens and the needs of the business community," Lawson said in a recent interview. "It's a weakness in the Baltimore area."

When Lawson speaks of strengths and weaknesses he speaks from the vantage point of experience. A career educator, Lawson has taught in school systems from Halifax, Virginia to Harford County, Maryland.

After receiving his bachelor's degree from West Virginia State College, Lawson took his first position as a teacher in Halifax at the age of 22 for three years.

In 1953 Lawson migrated to Baltimore where he taught in area public school sytems before becoming an administrative department head in 1956 and a vice principal at Lombard Junior High School for one year before going on to head the Project Mission program.

Charged with the identification and development of future and emerging educators, Project Mission helped to develop Lawsons overview of the School system and its problems.

"...we recognized the needs of urban education," Lawson said. "Many were underprivileged, many were underclassed and many of them had remedial education needs. It took a special talent so we developed a special curriculum."

Further rounding of Lawson's education came through his serving as Mayor Schaefer's educational consultant in the early 70's and then the city's Human Development Director under Schaefer through 1981.

Lawson then became Vice President and Executive Vice President of a private firm that acted as a consultant and a contractor to state and local governments nationwide on a variety of social issues.

In 1987 Lawson founded the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA). An organization whose primary mission is to develop black managers and to promote their number in the public administration field, a number that Lawson says is getting alarmingly low.

There are over 400 city and county manager positions in the country, Lawson said. In the 60's blacks held 49 of those jobs. Today only 26 of those same positions are held by blacks, Lawson added.

A variety of reasons exist for the diminishing numbers, including the more lucrative private industry, but the importance of a stake in these halls of municipal power should not be overlooked, Lawson feels.

One of the ways to address this concern is through NFBPA's membership of over 1300, including policy level administrators in control of over $118 million dollars in local government budgets and through a strengthened more focused educational system capable of laying the groundwork for careers in public administration into the next century.

Which brings us back to the Commission.

"Governor Schaefer implemented some long term recommendations with respect to overhauling the system of higher education," Lawson said.

"The purpose is to strengthen every school within the system and to ensure that each has an area of distinction, a mark of excellence," Lawson added.

One method of restricting schools to their elected tracks is through capital appropriations. For example, given the University of Maryland's extensive engineering programs other universities may experience difficulty in getting funding for similar degree programs.

"If other schools applied for the (identical) programming it would be denied," Lawson said. "It just would not receive the funding."

The mission of the Commission at once raises questions regarding the independence of universities such as Morgan State and the University of Maryland - Eastern Shore (UMES).

The fear is that such control will deny the schools the ability to determine course offerings in areas that both address the peculiar needs of these historically black campuses, as well as permit access to potentially lucrative high technology fields.

"It may appear to be faulty, but in the long run it is going to strengthen Morgan, it is going to strengthen UMES, because it will force them to look in the mirror and to develop a strategic plan to make Morgan State unique," Lawson said. "We are all going to have to put our resources into achieving that quality."

As an example Lawson points to Coppin State College as a school that has found its niche.

"One of the things that Coppin State College has done over the past 10 years, even with the competition . . . the leadership has looked at the mission and tried not to compete with the world," Lawson said.

"The capital programs are good. enrollment is up," Lawson added. "Coppin has worked with youngsters who may have been problematic, may need some suring up to get in, but once that is done they've gone on to become fine professionals."

Lawson is one of only two blacks currently on the Commission, the other being Osborne Payne, who after an early career in education founded Broadway Payne, Inc., a fast food franchise chain.

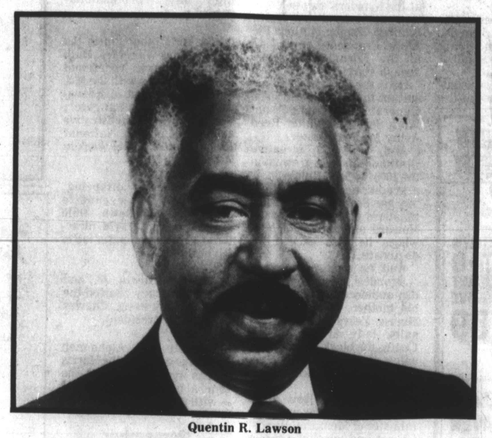
Lawson, who also head the Commission's executive search committee, says that a third black educator, Dr. Robert Albright of Joshua Smith College in Charlotte, North Carolina, is one of three finalists for the post of Commission Secretary, the person responsible for operational functions of the committee.

When Lawson is not seeking excellence in the classroom or as an administrator he is probably seeking it out in the form of antiques, of which he is an avid collector.

For proof of this Lawson mentions his 1931 Graham automobile which is in the process of ongoing restoration.

"Do you know what a 1931 Graham looks like," Lawson asks knowing that not many people do, or if they do they haven't seen one lately.

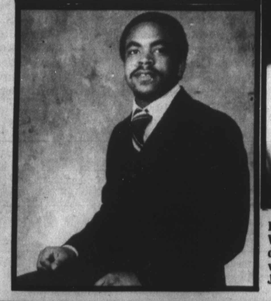
As fine a car as it is it's doubtful that Lawson, who travels roughly 100,000 miles per year will be using it for business trips.



Quentin R. Lawson

Lawson conferring with "60 Minutes" anchor Ed Bradley and former D.C. City Director Elijah Rogers.

Virginia Lt. Governor Doug Wilder, Maryland Lt. Governor Melvin Steinberg and Quentin Lawson at the kick-off of NFBPA executive training program which Lawson founded.



FAMILY ALBUM — (Clockwise from top) Wife, Louise Lawson, a C&P employee; daughter, Dr. Rosilen Lawson, a veterinarian; and son, Quentin R. Lawson, Jr., a draftsman.