

# Helms

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I remember as a child repeating the words of adults around me, that I should not go to school with black kids; 10 years later, after having peacefully coexisted with blacks in class and elsewhere, and having black friends, I had *learned* that I had never had anything to fear.

I am convinced that today white and black children, having had contact with each other all their lives, recognize far fewer obstacles between the races than I or my parents did as children. I believe absolutely that the obstacles will continue to fade with each successive generation—that is, unless a reactionary demagogue, who holds or seeks power, uses the mass communications media to try to reconstruct the obstacles. And that is exactly what Jesse Helms is doing.

"Propaganda," says Ellul, "must be based on some truth that can be said in a few words and is able to linger in the collective consciousness." The 15-, 30- and 60-second television commercials, the staple of Helms' campaign, are the ideal megaphones for the senator to call to the hideous monster of racism that lurks in some corner of our collective subconscious and beckon it to the surface once again.

Or so he thinks.

With our votes on Nov. 6, we can reject the *lie*, spread by Helms and his henchmen, that there has been no racial progress. We can reject his view of most people—that they are too lazy, gullible or stupid to know the truth, that people *need* his propaganda. In short, we must disprove the "big lie" theory by voting Jesse Helms, its practitioner, out of office.

We can stop Helms before he does any more damage to our new feeling of community. It will take the combination of Democrats and those Republicans who dislike Helms but so far have not spoken against him out of fear or party loyalty. We cannot be like those Germans who felt superior to Hitler, who merely stood on the sidelines and laughed at crazy old Adolf and his kook Nazis as the shadows of genocide lengthened across Europe.



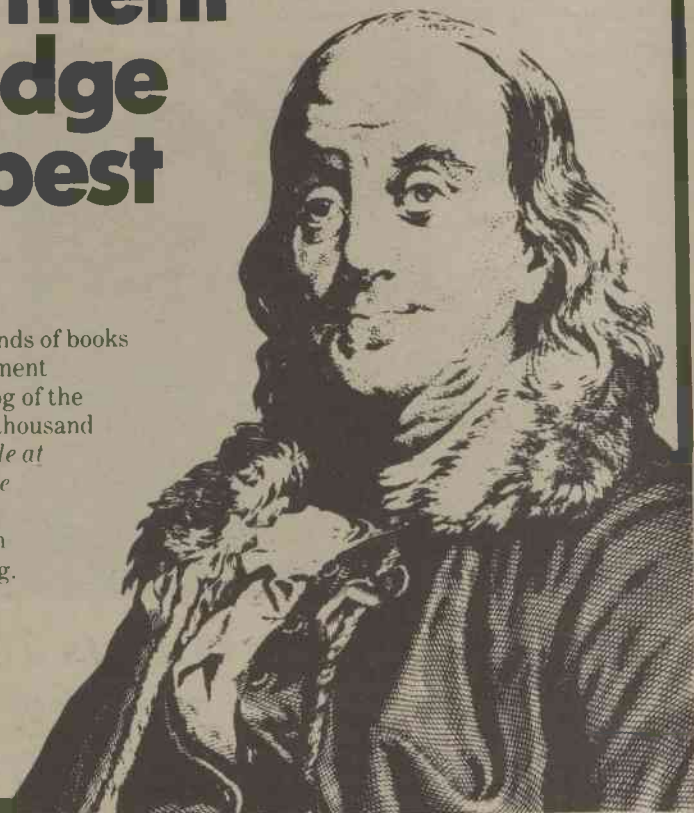
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