

EDITORIALS & COMMENT

Remember When!!!

"Remember when" anecdotes about the days when a nickel bought a cup of coffee, a subway ride or a giant candy bar have become even more fantastic as the inflation spiral carries us higher and higher into the stratosphere of spiralling prices. Regrettably, Life Magazine has become a "remember when."

We will no longer have LIFE magazine to carry us visually and pictorially on those many, victorious trips both home and abroad as history was in the making.

As it fades away from our news counters one can now recount or "re-

member when" LIFE took us pictorially to all events and especially those more trying times of our present day lives dealing with the havoocs of war, education, sports, crime and poverty among many nations and within our own country. You name it and LIFE usually covered it pictorially.

Perhaps the "remember when" in the future will certainly carry some revisits to the many fine stories, pictorial and otherwise that LIFE Magazine brought into many homes, schools and offices.

Harry S. Truman

History will record that Harry S. Truman, former president and sometimes called that "gusty man from Missouri," will be marked as one who braved the rebuffs of Congress, especially Southerners, as he attempted to correct some of the many injustices that plague Black Americans.

He sought to develop programs that would generate black support and braved the political storms of his time to win important victories for black Americans.

Among Truman's most clearcut orders were his ordering the integration of the armed services by Execu-

tive Order on July 26, 1948; the strong position against job discrimination in federal employment and his strong public admissions that black Americans also deserve equal treatment and emphasis on the right to equal protection of the law.

Truman should be saluted by black Americans for his courage to seek the black vote when most politicians sought to ignore blacks and supported efforts to deny them their right to vote. Some refer to him as the first civil rights activist president, paving the way for the great breakthroughs of the turbulent sixties.

Newspapers... Still A Continuing Dream

As we look to a new year the role of the newspaper is still a continuing dream. We hope that it will always be able to carry the news and recurring news as mankind continues to advance in all areas.

For with a beat-up hand fed press, a couple of cases of type, some newspaper, and a spare "boiled" shirt in his satchel, the pioneer editor hitched a team to his spring wagon and followed the sun. With Horace Greeley's "Go West, young man ringing in his ears, the early newspaperman followed the expanding nation with his portable newspaper. Where the rail ended and a tent city was pitched, he was there, chronicling the happenings at "rail's end."

Now more than ever, the newspaper and especially the black press becomes a chronicle for news and information to the minorities. Too long have only unpleasant happenings been recorded in the media. The black press stays alive as a beacon to guide, inform and tell of outstanding progress among this great minority. It is well for this tradition to be continued and we sincerely hope that it will always be a beacon of light for all people who seek the worth and dignity for all men regardless of race, creed or color.

With "roots" in a community, the newspaperman begins the difficult task of building the communities that they have settled in. As each new civic improvement project evolved — the newspaperman was there—reporting, editorializing and helping to make the citizens aware of the importance of the project. Certainly the press attempted to make all people aware of the many issues confronting this nation and will continue to do so.

Community pride and progress as well as injustices to minorities have

been bannered in bold headlines for all the world to see. Little known facts have been gathered to repudiate the inequities as shown by some media. The apathy was trampled underfoot as the newspaperman pushed, cajoled, exhorted and even shamed his readers into action.

It is thus that our nation was and has been molded by the increasing efforts of the newspapermen and women. For the reader, news is gathered from the printed page at his convenience and can be read and re-read to obtain the true meaning behind any article of importance.

Just as in days of long ago, the newspaper still is the vital community link with the outside world. Community events are covered with a depth impossible in any other medium. Advertising is not an intrusion, but is a part of the whole newspaper. Newspapers touch the daily lives of all of us, and especially our black newspapers who will and should continue to forge ahead for justice and equality due all men.

Today's newspapermen and women are not unlike those of yesterday. Community pride, black pride and progress are still the bywords that many live by. Today's newspaperman or woman is a vital key individual in the community. His advice and counsel are sought on myriad programs. Hours of hard, long work are spent for his fellowman and community, many times without any thanks.

Yes, newspapermen and women have a dream to do as we look to 1973. This dream is for a better America for all people; a better world for all mankind and certainly a world where all of us can someday live in harmony and peace with equality and justice for all on the face of this earth.

Campaign should be continued to abandon new teacher policy

State Treasurer Edwin Gill, a member of the State Board of Education, has some excellent advice for the Board: Reconsider its action in reducing the importance of academic achievement in certifying state teachers.

Gill was present when the Board voted 8-3 to put less emphasis on academic ability and more emphasis on classroom performance and personality traits in certifying that persons are qualified to teach with A certificates in our public schools.

At the time of the meeting, Gill was attending a meeting of the Council of State.

The State Treasurer, whose interest in public education is long standing, points

out that the new certification policies wouldn't become effective until July 1, 1973. Therefore, he notes, the policy could be returned to the present system, which paramounts academic strength.

In discussing the new policy, Gill clearly pointed out its faults:

"I can understand the wish to associate the National Teacher Examination with factors such as professional performance and individual personality traits. . . But I must object to these two factors, taken together, being given greater weight than academic achievements. To give so much weight to these two new factors is objectionable because such factors are vague and unclear, and are arrived at by subjective judgement. For this reason, they are not dependable stan-

dards, being easily subject to whim, bias and other abuses."

This summarizes well the objections to the new policy. The three parts of the certification process carry equal weight. This means that an applicant could fail the academic test completely and still be certified if he received top scores on the other two. Or, which is certainly likely, he could receive a very low score on the academic test, and make up enough points on the other two to be certified. The result might be a teacher with a pleasing personality and a good classroom manner, but woefully lacking in knowledge of what he is supposed to teach.

This new policy was hurried through the State Board of Education without any public hearings. Among reasons advanced

in its favor have been that the present test, which features academics only, is biased against blacks, and that the state would be sued if the policy wasn't changed.

Dallas Herring, the long-time chairman of the State Board, voted against the change, and has been fighting it since it was adopted. He has found a strong ally in Edwin Gill, and the two of them should continue the fight until the academic factor is made at least the major part of teacher certification.

It is nice for a teacher to have a good personality. And, it is nice for a teacher to be learned in how to teach. But, if a teacher doesn't know anything to teach, he will be at a loss in the classroom, and the students will be the real losers.

DO SOMETHING

BLAMING THE POLICE FOR THE ILL-TREATMENT OF BLACK JUVENILES DOESN'T STOP THEM FROM KILLING OLD MEN AND WOMEN. SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING WON'T HELP EITHER.

FACTS THAT ARE NOT FRANKLY FACED HAVE A NASTY HABIT OF STABBING US IN THE BACK.



Idiot's Delight: New Teacher Certification

About the most charitable explanation that can be given of the State Board of Education's decision to lower academic standards for public school teachers is that the board panicked in anticipation of heavier federal insistence on racial balance.

The board, in a pretty much peremptory approval of a plan concocted by the Department of Public Instruction, voted to de-emphasize the National Teacher Examination as the basis for certification. Under the new certification plan, to become effective next July, prospective teachers would also be judged on twenty personal and social traits such as "quality of voice," "oral language skills," "personal magnetism," "willingness to improve," and "empathy for students." All those qualities, of course, are important to effective teaching. Their measurement, however, would be a purely subjective evaluation.

The possibility exists under the new plan that a candidate could win certification without scoring a point for academic achievement. So you could wind up with a successful candidate stunningly equipped to teach in every respect but academic qualification. The possibility is remote but it exists.

Although there doubtless are many other arguments for the new plan, one of its immediate effects will be to make certification easier for graduates of predominantly black institutions. It is no secret that graduates of those institutions invariably score lower on the National Teacher Examination. This is due in large part to inferior academic preparation. Consequently, the door to a public school teaching career is much harder to open for graduates of predominantly black institutions. As a result of that and of desegregation, a racial balance has been impossible to achieve.

The federal government has already demonstrated with legal action against other states that such imbalances will not be tolerated for long. Thus the spur to action.

The only apparent means of

achieving an acceptable racial balance would be to lower the certification standards or to improve those institutions turning out unqualified and minimally qualified graduates. The State Board of Education didn't consider the possibility of improving institutions, possibly because the federal threat seemed imminent while institutional improvement would be a long and costly process, if it could be brought about at all.

The trouble with the new plan, besides the tragic blow it will inevitably deal to public school education, is that it invites rather than eliminates prejudice. The National Teacher Examination is certainly prejudicial, but it is prejudiced against those academically unqualified, not against ethnic groups. Under the state board's new plan, teacher candidates could be disqualified not only academically but because some evaluator decided they didn't have pleasant voices, didn't seem to be personally magnetic, or didn't project a certain empathy for students. Any candidate who prefers that sort of subjective evaluation to an impersonal academic examination probably wouldn't be fit to teach to begin with.

A demand for a racial balance of teachers might well be thrust upon North Carolina and soon. That doesn't mean we have to create a certification farce to satisfy it. We would do just as well, and certainly be more honest, simply to declare all education graduates of every institution in the state automatically certified to teach.

That would make a shambles of teaching as a profession and the educational quality of our schools would suffer measurably, but it would at least preclude that empathy-magnetism-orator nonsense.

The charge can be made that we have some teachers in our schools now who don't teach and some who won't. With the new plan we will also be able to say we have many who can't.

TO BE EQUAL

By Vernon Jordan

The year 1972 ended in much the same spirit of confusion in which it began. It was a year that brought few victories to black people and to other minorities, and some setbacks. It was a year that saw the nation drift, without that sense of purpose that has categorized other, better years in its history.

The mood of drift and confusion was highlighted by a Louis Harris poll that reported early in December that over four in ten Americans "still feel largely alienated toward the system under which they live." The poll found largely numbers of Americans afflicted with feelings of powerlessness and of being exploited.

Such feelings ran strongest among several key groups in the population — young people, union members, poor people, and blacks. No country can afford such widespread alienation, least of all a country with such tremendous world-wide responsibilities and impact as the United States has.

But instead of taking steps to relieve the divisions in our society, many events in the past year only reinforce them. Instead of concentrating its energies on improving education and on creating new job opportunities, the nation became obsessed by such artificial issues as busing and quotas.

Many of the Country's actions seemed out of touch with reality. For example, unsubstantiated reports of racial killings by a black murder gang were headlined for many days a few months ago. We are still waiting for any evidence of truth to such malicious allegations.

But while this was a leading topic for the media, the real truth came about racial violence toward the close of the year when a blue-ribbon investigating panel found that two black youths had been killed at Southern University through the irresponsible actions of police officers. The next day, New York City's Commission on Human Rights reported that there was "a dangerous pattern" of violence against blacks in some sections of the city.

This confirms what obser-

vers have often noted — that the North is showing signs of adopting some of the pathological signs of racism it had long charged the South with showing. In 1972, the biggest outbursts against school desegregation were in Michigan and New York, not in Alabama and Mississippi.

While the nation seems to be slipping away from its past commitment to racial justice, the problems are still with us and are still in desperate need of resolution. I was reminded of how much unfinished business there is still before us while attending the ceremonies and symposium commemorating the opening of the civil rights archives of The Lyndon Baines Johnson Library in Texas last month.

There, many people active in the civil rights movement, in law, the social sciences and politics, tried to assess the accomplishments of the 1960's. Some very great things were done in those few short years — official segregation was abolished, significant economic and political advances were made by minorities, etc. But the atmosphere of the nation has changed so drastically since that time that it seemed as if we were discussing an era long past.

As we enter 1973, I believe there will have to be a determined effort to recapture, if not the specifics, then at least the mood of the 1960's. The new year should mark a new beginning, a rededication to the goals of freedom and justice for all. The spiritual vacuum must be filled by concern for the problems of poverty, of racial disadvantage, and social progress.

The reason for the rift and confusion among so many people is their perception that the society is rigid and unwilling to make the constructive changes so necessary and so long overdue. We enter 1973 divided and troubled but firm leadership, a rediscovery of democratic values, and definite action to deal with our real problems can help turn that attitude around. It's time to start fresh.

Do's And Don'ts



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