HOMECOMING FOR THE LATE N. C. WEBSTER

Whereas this newspaper in no wise condones the activities which resulted in the trial and sentencing of the late Nathaniel Claudius Webster, former bursar at A. and T. College in Greensboro, we must, in the interest of history, record that prior to the chain of events which led to his illness and death, he made a positive contribution to the extracurricular life of the institution which he did much to make nationally known.

Coming to the college as a young man, he served as bandmaster, but he will be best remembered for his contributions as chairman of the athletic committee. His vision and know-how built the Greensboro college's athletic program to a point that for many years commanded the largest crowds in Negro competition. And though he was frequently hailed as a promotional wizard, few are those who publicize the constructive and humanitarian things that he did for hundreds of A. and T. students who experienced trouble getting an education. Honors came to him in 1952 in the form of honorary membership in the Letterman's Club and earlier in 1950 when former students elected him to honorary membership in the alumni association.

Death has closed the colorful career of N. C. Webster, a kindly little man with a twinkle in his eye who was always sympathetic to the nation's press. He never complained when the press, of necessity, reported his change of fortune. Like the athletes he loved so well, "Nat" Webster could take it. And though death has closed his personal career, there still remains an air of mystery about the circumstances at the institution which permitted irregularities of the proportions which laid at Webster's door. Death has closed Nat Webster's career, but there will be those who for many years will wonder whether there are others whom he could have named as accessories or perpetrators of the alleged crimes which surround his name today.

Ironically, Mr. Webster returned to Greensboro on the eve of Homecoming, a season of the year to which more than half of his life had been dedicated to popularizing among his student friends. It was a sad homecoming, but to those faithful numbers who attended Episcopalian rites for the dead and saw his interment, it was a Homecoming which was successful, because it was filled with people. So, Nat Webster will live in the minds and hearts of many people who he befriended and helped. The Supreme Judge of the Universe has decided his final appeal. Perhaps mortal jurist may one day reopen the strange turn of events that spotlighted Nat Webster alone.

DURHAM WELCOMES THE STATE NAACP

All Durhamites who believe in equality under the law will join this newspaper in its welcome of the State NAACP branches here for their annual meeting October 21-23. That this organization which has done so much to protect and to advance the civil rights of some minorities among us has also protected the civil rights of the majority is not often understood by the organization's detractors. Perhaps it should be recalled that one of the compelling reasons for the abolition of Negro slavery was that the existence of the institution of human slavery endangered the freedom of white men and women. In its dedicated fight to obtain first class citizenship for colored Americans, the NAACP, which significantly had dedicated white citizens among its founders, protects the freedom and rights of all Americans.

The only method which the NAACP has used to obtain full and equal rights for its members has been the lawful use of the courts of our land. This is in keeping with the highest democratic traditions of our country. It has not resorted to terrorism, it has not condoned violence, it has imposed no economic sanctions, and it has consistently tried to avoid demagoguery. Its lawyers have used as their only weapons the Constitution of the United States of America. Informed legal authorities say the NAACP's success with its civil rights crusade is a landmark in human relations in the U. S. A.

As a publication which has used its columns for nearly half a century in this crusade for FULL 14TH AMENDMENT AMERICANS, this newspaper is proud to recall that some of the crusading spirit which today marks the NAACP program started in Durham. We refer specifically to the case of Tom Hocutt, a young Durhamite enrolled at what is now North Carolina College at Durham some years ago. Before the day of graduate and professional school opportunities for the state's Negro citizens, Hocutt applied to the UNC School of Pharmacy. He thus became the first Negro in U. S. history to test the validity of the South's practice of excluding qualified Negroes from state-supported graduate and professional schools. That case was not immediately resolved in Hocutt's favor, but the case set the stage for what is now becoming known as an "Age of Civil Rights Litigation." A direct outgrowth of the Hocutt case was the State Legislature's adoption of the Murphy plan to set up improved graduate and professional schools in some of the state's Negro colleges. Those institutions provided valuable if not totally adequate stop-gap opportunities in a transition period. Other states soon followed suit.

And Durham has been the scene of other important civil rights litigation — the law school case, the public schools case, and Durham provided the plaintiffs in the now famous case currently on appeal by state authorities for admission of qualified Negro undergraduates to any and all state supported institutions.

There appears to be something in the spirit of Durham that love liberty and equality under the law. The list of men and women who have contributed to this spirit would be a long one. Significantly, however, the NAACP's present chairman of the Legal Redress Committee, C. O. Pearson, as a young lawyer, represented Hocutt. And he also served recently as chief counsel for the youths who today are attending UNC.

Pearson and his associates, including the distinguished Judge William H. Hastie, then also a fledgling lawyer, made legal history of a kind that provided precedent for other Southerners "similarly situated" to Hocutt to provide the legal dynamite to explode the specious Southern doctrine of "separate but equal." Today that doctrine stands in legal disrepute. Its chief adherents now are the irresponsible, the irreligious, the insincere politicians who peddle prejudice professionally, and the sectionally insane.

So, this week as the NAACP meets in Durham, a city in the New South of the 14th amendment variety, this newspaper, while fully recognizing the insidious, cowardly, and unpatriotic activities of individuals and groups who would kill freedom under the guise of a white supremacy banner, is confident that the rightness of the NAACP's cause will prevail. The crusade, which the NAACP has sparked, we believe, will be a rallying point for all people everywhere to look with pride upon the great and courageous experiment of the real American people to bring forth a new heaven and new earth in our Southland. In this spirit, the justice-loving people of Durham will welcome the NAACP and wish it success in the difficult period that lies ahead for the ungodly and the unwary.

"A NEW LOOK" IN HUMAN RELATIONS FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION AND OTHERS

An editor, recuperating from illness, has ample time to read the day's news and to give almost leisurely study and time to some trends that fit into rather clearly defined patterns represenetative of the attitudes of this 20th century spectacle of THE AMERICAN.

A friend of ours tells the familiar story of the difference between the "100% American" and the "200% American." The "100% American," according to our cynical friends, "hates merely Jews, Negroes, and Catholics." On the other hand, he says sarcastically, "The 200% American" hates the whole damned human race." We'd really like to think that there are species of Americans who are on the opposite side from both the groups listed by our friend. A look at the news last week was not reassuring on this point.

Take, for example, some news stories emanating from the American Legion's annual meeting in Miami, Florida. At one session, this gathering of predominantly World War I "daredevils" killed a thoughtfully prepared report that said there is no basis for the inspired charges that UNESCO is communistic, atheistic, and working for world citizenship and world government. At another session, a presiding officer refused to entertain a constitutional amendment calling for equal rights for colored and white Legionnaires. The chairman alleged the constitution provided equal rights for for all members and said the amendment was unecessary.

The spokesman for the amendment, Zack Alexander of Charlotte, was quoted by a press association dispatch as raising this pertinent point: "Maybe the Legion constitution guarantees all men equal privileges but the fact remains that Southern Negroes aren't getting such privileges." Alexander said in this state Negroes don't have a voice in selection of a commander and they must "accept" the rulings of the "separate" white unit.

If Mr. Alexander's charges are true, and no one has come forward to refute them, it is obvious that American Legion members in North Carolina are unAmerican in their approach to organizational problems. But both instances involving the American Legion also raise anew the question asked by a visiting minister at Duke University last Sunday. The topic of the clergyman's sermon was "Fit to be Free."

The visiting speaker at the respected Duke Chapel Sunday morning program, the Rev. Albert Outler, professor of theology at Southern Methodist University, used as his text the King James version equivalent of Galatians 5:13: "For, brethern, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love, serve one another." The preacher didn't quote the next verse, as we recall, but he might well have done so: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shall love thy neighbor as myself" In essence, what we got out of the cleric's sermon, among other things, was the burning question, applicable to our fellow citizens of all races and creeds," "Are we fit to be free?"

U. S. Attorney Herbert Brownell, Jr., speaking last Sunday night at the annual dinner of the Interfaith Movement, Inc., in New York, said that "a small crust of freedom to a few" will not sustain the American way of life. In a speech (see front page) described as one of the strongest civil rights speeches by a member of President Eisenhower's cabinet, he appealed to the states and individuals to join in making freedom a "living reality" and create a "golden age of civil rights."

Castigating "hatemongers" who apply the "whiplash of intolerance" to minority groups, Mr. Brownell said "This infamous fraternity of professional bigots are just as determined and as destructive as communists and fascists (American Legionnaires in this category, please note) whose foreign counterparts have so clearly proven that their ideology does not include a belief in universal civil rights." With insight unusual for a white American, Mr. Brownell added, "There are bloodier punishments than segregation, but few more degrading."

And as Mr. Brownell denounced segregation, some un-American administrator at Duke University proved his point against the 20th Century type American bigot of the pseudo "egg head" variety. The "egg head," we take it, is an intellectual, a species that ought not to be a rarity on the campus of an institution with as much financial backing as our city's Duke University. The Duke student newspaper and a local daily say some Duke white students wanted to invite some North Carolina College Negro students to attend a play at Duke and to pay for admission. This is in no way contrary to the policy, for example, of the Duke lyceum series, which through the years has provided splendid if segregated opportunities to some interested Negro citizens, to hear the annual concert series in Duke's Page Auditorium. The administrator, anonymous, vetoed the plan. We hope the istrator was an underling, an insecure, temporary occupant of some responsible administrator's post in his absence, aware that the criterion for admission to almost any event in the vicinity of North Carolina College's Negro community would not be the color of one's skin, but one's ability to buy a ticket. Ironically, Duke's famed program of intercultural relations is a sham, a hoax, and a fraud upon American democratic practices; and the perpetrator of the embrrassment upon the students should be removed from office and divested of his authority to deal with the public on the basis of his inept handling of a simple case in human relations.

Duke University officials who may be interested in maintaining the lily-white complexion of their enrollment should be concerned with flagrantly publicized instances of racial discrimination. Existing as it does in the Civil Rights-conscious atmosphere of the Durham community, Duke University might well start planning for the time when the spotlight of law suits shifts to private institutions enjoying considerable tax-exempt status. It ought to be sobering to responsible administrators to recall Mr. Brownell's recent statement that "Continuing Federal interest remains in the implementation of the (U. S. Supreme) Court's findings." In his speech before the Interfaith Movement, Mr. Brownell stated unequivocally: "Segregation has been abolished in the Nation's armed forces and projects maintaining segregation practices are denied federal financial aid."

In a comment appropriate of the Duke University stupidity and the Sunday preacher's common sense Christianity, Mr. Brownell concluded: "If tolerance can not be found in the schools and churches, in the shop and market place, it will nowhere be found. It will not exist."

Intelligent Southern white people who are interested in preserving Southern institutions are falling victims to their prejudices when they permit outworn creeds and practices to obscure the vision of the Federal government's handwriting on the wall. Like it or not, segregation as a way of life is on its way out. No amount of temporary economic sanctions or threats of personal violence will long withstand the determined effort of an alert Federal government to enforce the elementary laws of justice and equality provided by the Constitution and reinforced by the U. S. Supreme Court.

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RACE HATRED MUST BE ELIMINATED

Spiritual Insight

"CROWD PLEASER"

BY REVEREND HAROLD ROLAND

Pastor, Mount Gilead Baptist Church

"Pilate wishing to satisfy the crowd...released Barrabas, Jesus he delivered to be crucified..." Mark 15:15.

Pilate made a shameful choice in heeding the crowd rather than right and truth. Too often we too are tempted to do the same thing in the midst of life's great choices. Often we must decide between being a crowd pleaser rather than to do what is right. We bargain our peace of conscience for the acclaim of the multitude. We will sell our souls for the applause of the mob. We will walk the low way with the mob rather than the highway with righteousness and truth. Pilate rejected goodness and embraced the evil. "Pilate wishing to satisfy the crowd released Barrabas... Jesus he delivered to be crucified..."

To his eternal shame, Pilate sold Jesus down the River. He tried to save, glorify or dignify Barrabas. But wrong can never assume the status of dignity and respectability. Dress up wrong all you want to and wrong is still wrong. He who stands for right can make his choice before the crowd speaks.

It should not be hard to decide between Jesus and Barrabas. Have you ever had to decide between Jesus and Barrabas? What is the difference? Jesus is the essence of goodness and nobility! Barrabas is the symbol of a degraded humanity. It is all right to be a crowd pleaser provided it can be done in honor and self respect. Pleasing the crowd is all right if it can be done in righteousness. He who sells his soul to please the crowd is guilty of moral degradation. He who chooses a Barrabas and rejects the Christ is guilty of the most shameful moral cowardice. If there is a choice of being a crowd pleaser and being right-right should always win.

He who pleases the crowd at the expense of right is a shameful creature. The unrighteous crowd pleaser must suffer the pains of an outraged conscience. The unrighteous crowd-pleaser cheapens himself in his own eyes. He loses his self respect. He loses face morally. In the great social struggle of this hour for decency and justice we are tempted on every side to become morally degrading crowd pleasers. Let's not stand with Barrabas and Pilate. Let's choose to stand with Christ for dignity and justice for all men.

Let us refuse to stand with the Pilates of our time who release Barrabas and crucify anew the Christ. Let's stand courageously for right and resist all temptations to become cowardly crowd pleasers.

Life Is Like That

BY H. ALBERT SMITH

JUSTIFIABLE ANGER

There is a place for anger in our daily scheme of things and the social system in which we live at this present time. For with this system there is something radically wrong. And that is so evident that even the way faring man though a fool cannot escape it. Indeed, he cannot, because he is the constant victim of the pressures of injustice and man's inhumanity to man.

MAY SEEM STRANGE

Now, it may seem strange to find in this column an endorsement of anger, especially in the light of certain biblical injunctions. One of these advises, "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath." Another cautions: "Make no friendship with an angry man." The Book sets forth that "an angry man stirreth up strife," and gives graphic examples of anger manifestations harmful and destructive. In fact, one can use that book to make out a good case against anger.

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

We can also do that from our personal reactions to certain situations and incidents which we have either experienced or heard about. I recall a personal reaction induced by a reckless taxi-driver who turned a corner to nearly run me down a couple of years ago and topped it off by directing some vile language at me. A momentary anger welled up in me and exploded in a verbal barrage that I quickly squelched because it suddenly dawned upon me I was about to "hurt" myself.

DEATH INDUCED

I cite a tragic case in which anger literally killed a woman. She was suffering from hypertension and had been warned by her doctor to avoid any excitement. Something occurred one day which she did not like. There followed an angry outburst of temper that proved as fatal to that woman as a pistol shot. Anger, we might therefore conclude is a bad thing.

BIBLICAL SUPPORT

But, as we read the bible, we find much that supports the thesis that anger may serve a good purpose and has a legitimate status in our emotional life. That anger, however, is not the raw biological feeling of the animal or the blind fury that temporarily deprives a man of sanity or a bitterness which crystallizes into a fixed vindictiveness and a flint-like purpose to harm and destroy. For such an anger, we can find no brief either in Scripture or common sense.

DISPLAYED BY JESUS

The anger which I condone and defend is commonly defined as righteous indignation. It is a quality of spirit that cannot tolerate wrong and injustice. It is even attributed to God. We see it displayed in a most dramatic manner in Jesus' cleansing of the temple. An angry Christ, beholding God's House turned into a house of merchandise, with a scourge of small cords made by his own hands, drove covetous merchants and beasts from the temple, as he tipped over the tables of money-changers and shouted:

"Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

AN EXPERIENCE RELATED

Some thirty odd years ago, the renowned and eloquent Miss Nannie Burroughs spoke to a group of us students at Virginia Seminary. She related an unpleasant experience that she had on her way from the nation's capital to Lynchburg, Virginia where the school is located. She was riding in one of those dirty, dingy Jim Crow coaches reserved for Negroes in those dismal days when race hatred was so bitter that lynchings were common, sometimes involving burning a Negro at at the stake.

AN IMPOSED INDIGNITY

Miss Burroughs went on to tell how the dirty little coach was crowded with passengers, some standing, some sitting. A white conductor, heavily weighted with a superiority complex and "attended" by the inevitable Negro porter, had for his use two of the few seats in the coach. In the non-descript group, there were much loud talking, laughing and eating. It was an imposed situation that embittered any intelligent Negro, whether he was educated or not, and left him often burning in the heat of the hot rage of baffled frustration.

Sitting a few seats forward from Miss Burrough was a woman busy with her snuff. She opened a window and spat. Said Miss Burroughs, "The wind caught that nasty spittle in its cruel fingers and threw it through the open window where I was sitting and into my face." The lady painted a graphic picture.

And, then, she added that her anger flamed into a white heat. She stated further, "I was so angry that had I died then I would have gone to hell." Subsequently, after some reflection, I could not string along with her view.

STATED MY OPINION

Several years later, I met Miss Burroughs here in Durham, and reminded her of the occasion on which she had made the statement about going to hell. And then I told her that it was my opinion that she would probably gone to the place she mentioned if she had died at the time without being angry. I made that statement then with all seriousness; and, during the quarter of a century since, I have had no reason to repudiate it.

Deliver me from that man who has the type of love that robs him of the power to become angry; who has so much religion nothing anybody does or says can make him angry.

(Continued on Page Seven)

REMEMBER: WE NORTHERNERS AREN'T BLAMELESS

In the town of Sumner, Mississippi, United States of America, a jury of 11 white men brought in a verdict of "not guilty" after 68 minutes in the jury room, freeing two other white men who had been accused of murder.

A polio-crippled adolescent boy of 14 had been the murder victim because, the prosecution charged, he had whistled at the sight of a pretty young woman who entered a store. He was a Negro, the woman was white. And that, in the code by which members of the Mississippi jury live, was the unpardonable crime--the assumption by a colored human being of equality with white human beings.

One of the defense attorneys who knew what manner of men composed the jury expressed his confidence in an acquittal during his summation.

"...every last Anglo-Saxon one of you has the courage to do it." he said. He was right.

A man of a different stripe was the special prosecutor, also a Mississippi white man, who pleaded with the jury to consider only the necessity for dispensing justice. He said:

"Gentlemen, we're on the defensive. Only so long as we can preserve the rights of everybody--black or white--we can keep our way of life. Once we get to the point where we deprive any of our people of their rights we are all in danger. Emmett Till down here in Mississippi was a citizen of the United States; he was entitled to his life and his liberty."...

Another white Mississippian with a conscience is William Faulkner, the writer, who expressed his deep shame at the crime committed in his home state.

The brutal murder of Negroes in the South is the extreme manifestation of racial discrimination, but it is by no means the only one.

Every restrictive covenant in a real estate agreement--written or unwritten-has a close kinship to lynching. Every resort to the Negro sterotype in entertainment characterization of the Negro as a childish, happy-go-lucky, crap shooting, razor-wielding, immoral individual also runs in the lynching family.

Every time a Negro is denied absolutely equal or employment opportunities, every time he is forced into a slum ghetto for denial of opportunity to live elsewhere, he is being lynched a little bit.

And these more subtle forms of the lynching credo deposit the shame of racial discrimination right onto our own doorsteps—we who are white Northerners and who shudder at the thought of murdering human beings because their skins are darker than our own.

What are we going to do about it?

How are we going to convince the colored peoples of Asia and Africa—a solid majority of the earth's population that racism is not part of the American way of life? How are we going to win them to our side in the political competition with Communism for their support?

Certainly not by shrugging off what happened in Sumner, Miss., and what has happened far too often to colored peoples in our country.

Westport (Conn.) Town Crier-Westporter-Herald