

## Before It is Too Late

Probably the best picture, or certainly the most informative words we have read or heard on the question of equality or the lack of equality for black teachers comes in the form of a recently written letter to the editor of the CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, one of North Carolina's largest daily newspapers, by a white teacher of the Charlotte School System.

In words more forceful than we are in position to write or utter on this most perplexing and most momentous question now facing this state, in the treatment or policy it is presently maintaining toward or for Negro teachers, Mrs. Retta W. Gray had the following to say in her letter which we are taking the liberty to republish below in the place of our editorials for this week:

**To the Editor**  
Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
June 16, 1969

Dear Sir:

In your editorial this morning castigating North Carolina's Negro teachers for failure to accept the NEA compromise on merger you asked the following questions:

'Are Negro teachers fearful of the more stringent competition with white teachers? Do they believe that a racist attitude will always dominate selection of officers and committee members?'

As a white teacher of ten years experience I would like to answer NO to the first question. The worst black teacher is no worse than many white N. C. teachers with whom I have had contact. The best are every bit as good. As a member of NCTA I answer YES to the second question and offer the following by way of illustration:

I have been librarian this year at South Albemarle Elementary School, working in an integrated faculty with an all black student body. I have observed that my Negro colleagues were, on the whole, as well prepared, creative, and able teachers as my white colleagues. In fact, the poorest teachers at our school were not black. My principal (black) was a good administrator as I have ever worked with. (I've worked with five). The school, much of it built since the Brown decision, was in excellent condition and well equipped.

But South Albemarle School is now closed; its pupils next year will be crowded into two of the city's four other elementary schools, necessitating a tax supported building project in the near future. Neither the principal nor any PTA leaders were consulted when the decision was made to close the school. The superintendent asserts that HEW demanded that the school be closed, although communications from HEW deny this.

The black teachers, with one or two exceptions, to this day have not been officially informed where they will be placed next year, although most know from various white teachers throughout the system who seem in full possession of that informa-

tion. The principal, who, with a M.S.E. degree in administration and 17 years in that capacity, ranks near the top of the list in experience and who is on continuing contract, was offered for next year a one year contract which assigned him teaching duties with the possibility of assisting the junior high principal part time. He refused it and turned to NCTA for help and guidance.

If this story were unique I would have no reason to tell it here. Unfortunately, it is typical of the whole of North Carolina. In 1966, there were twenty-eight (28) Negro educators in the Albemarle City School System. This year there were sixteen (16). The proportion of black teachers in Charlotte, I am told, has declined at an even higher rate. Ditto, the state.

I was born and have lived all but two of my thirty-six (36) years in the South, but I have never observed such insidious racism as I have witnessed in North Carolina. Most people are not so blatant as the sweet faced lady who sat down beside me in Freedom Park, pointed to some black children playing nearby and remarked, 'I hope they burst their brains out!' Many, in fact, have stated to me that they think it's terrible that our school is being closed. But they will not lift a finger or a voice to protest. Teachers are perhaps the worst. They, who should look for light, are filled with myths and prejudices. And when the party line is stated, they will not dissent.

I've learned, just a little, this year, what it's like to be black. And if I were a black teacher in North Carolina I'd go to whatever lengths necessary to be sure that there was an organization to protect me from the prejudices of my white colleagues. Today, the only organization is The North Carolina Teachers Association.

Very truly yours,  
(Mrs.) Retta W. Gray

That Mrs. Gray had the courage to speak the truth about the distressful situation now existing so widely in the school system of North Carolina is a testimonial of her personal courage as well as a distinct contribution in the efforts now being made to bring about better race relations in the state.

Concerned Negro citizens of North Carolina are hoping and praying that intelligent and fairminded white citizens of the state will move into the situation before it is too late and widespread pandemonium breaks loose in the state. Certainly it should not be expected that concerned Negro citizens of North Carolina should stand by and see many of the state's best principals and teachers butchered up solely because of their race.

We suggest to Governor Scott the appointment of a high commission on education composed of an equal number of members of both races and that the commission be vested with the authority to deal with such situations to the fullest extent as those referred to in Mrs. Gray's letter.

## A Decision For History



IT WAS THE HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS THAT STRIPPED POWELL OF HIS SENIORITY AND CHAIRMANSHIP

JUDGE WARREN BELIEVED POWELL WAS PUNISHED UNCONSTITUTIONALLY IN PART, PERHAPS, BECAUSE POWELL WAS UPPITY AND BLACK, SO HE INTERVENED AND LEFT THE BENCH WITH...

G. HES RESTON  
NEW YORK TIMES

HE FOUGHT FOR THE RIGHT OF THE BLACK COMMUNITIES TO ELECT AND SELECT IT'S OWN REPRESENTATIVES.

## To Be EQUAL

By  
WHITNEY M. YOUNG

### Tribute To Earl Warren

THE WARREN ERA of the Supreme Court came to an end with the retirement of the man whom future historians may well decide was the greatest Chief Justice of them all. The nation owes a debt of gratitude to Earl Warren. He led the High Court in a period of national change, and he made it a leader in bringing about that change.

Because of his decisions, the evil network of Jim Crow laws that made a mockery of American justice was stripped away. The law was a trap to ensnare the black, the poor, the disadvantaged. But through the decisions of the Warren Court, the law became a haven and a refuge instead of an instrument of oppression.

The bigots and the Birchers reviled him. Highways were defaced by "Impeach Earl Warren" billboards. It is sometimes said that a man is known by his enemies, and Earl Warren's enemies were of the kind any decent man would hope to have. When you are attacked by the Klan, you know you are doing something right.

Chief Justice Warren will probably be remembered best for one of the most momentous decisions the Court ever made. In 1954, he delivered the decision in a case prosaically called Brown vs. Board of Education. The original suit was brought by a man in Topeka, Kans., whose eight-year-old daughter was denied entrance to an all-white school near her home and made to travel to an all-Negro school.

"Separate but equal" was the law of the land since the Court approved official segregation back in 1896. The Court was then in the hands of racists, and a whole series of decisions allowed governments to segregate Negroes and deprive them of their rights.

#### School Decision In 1954

But in 1954, Earl Warren delivered the decision that overturned segregation in the schools. "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal," he said, and victims of such segregation are deprived of the "equal protection of the laws." School segregation was now unconstitutional, and with that decision, we might mark the start of the modern civil rights revolution.

But perhaps Justice Warren's greatest contribution in that case was not his decision itself, which might have been written by another. It was his brilliant exercise of leadership, for the Chief Justice got a unanimous court to join him. The vote was 9-0. Had it been 5-4 or even 7-2, the full moral weight of the decision would have been weakened.

His long service as Chief Justice brought other decisions that served democracy. For most of our history city-dwellers were ruled by unrepresentative state governments whose legislatures were weighted in favor of rural areas. In 1962, the Court issued its one-man, one-vote doctrine which overturned this and led to reapportionment that ensured more democratic elections.

#### Decision On Criminal Cases

Among the more controversial decisions were those involving criminal cases. The "law-and-order" crowd is very vocal about how the Warren Court has "weakened" the police. But what actually did it do?

It said that a man has the right to be silent and not to confess. This is in line with the Constitutional requirements against self-incrimination. It doesn't encourage criminals, it just ensures all men their Constitutional right to silence while at the same time removing the temptation of police officers to get easy confessions with a rubber hose or third degree treatment.

Another important decision affirmed the right to a lawyer in serious criminal cases. Since when does this basic right frustrate justice? Accused persons who were poor and couldn't afford legal defense wound up in jail, guilty or innocent. Now an accused poor person has the right to defend himself.

There were other important decisions, too. This genial man helped to make the law a more humane instrument of justice and he led the High Court through the period of its greatest glory. As he goes to his well-earned retirement he takes with him the thanks of a grateful nation.

#### pointed him general editor of

Doubleday and Company's series intended for use in high school English and social studies - President Kennedy appoints Dr. Franklin to a three year term on the Board of Foreign Scholarships (Fulbright grants) and he was reappointed by President Johnson.

In 1965 Zenith Books publishes classes.

A popular history for teen age students, "Land of the Free," has been edited by Professor Franklin in collaboration with John Caughey and Ernest R. May.

"Anyone walking down Times Square can see why New York is in need of a great moral and spiritual awakening."

**MORE F111's**  
The Pentagon is planning to ask Congress for money to buy approximately 60 more models of the F111 fighter-bomber. The supersonic F111 has suffered 13 crashes since the plane went into service 26 months ago.

**WARNING TO REDS**  
President Nixon stated recently in a news conference that if the current enemy offensive in Vietnam continues the attacks can not be tolerated and will bring "appropriate response."

**MEANY ON INFLATION**  
George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO told Congress recently that labor would not accept an attempt to solve inflation by creating "a growing army of unemployed." He said if the new administration curbed price increases it would entail a rise in joblessness.

## Do's And Don'ts



Tell Her She Can... And She Will!

### --Clinic

(Continued from front page)

to Robert Jones, a medical student at UNC.

The clinic will continue to operate as usual on Monday evenings using the Edgemont Community Center as a temporary facility until a new permanent location in Edgemont can be found. The medical, dental, nursing, and other health science students at Duke and UNC who have been staffing the clinic have expressed shock on learning of the clinic's destruction but are anxious to continue their work in Edgemont. Many Edgemont residents, both white and black, who felt and expressed that the clinic was "the best thing to ever happen to this community," have offered their services to help restore the clinic.

The police and fire departments who are investigating the fires have not yet expressed an opinion as to their origin though the possibility of arson has not yet been ruled out.

### --Student

(Continued from front page)

"Of the 10 seniors I nominated," commented Congressman Addabbo. "Harris maintained one of the five top scores in the competitive Civil Service exam. I submitted his name to officials at West Point, and military personnel there made the final selection."

Harris was voted salutatorian by his 106 senior classmates for Deleahanty High School commencement exercises held June 13.

A devoted athlete, Harris says, "I want to try out for the Army football team, but I'll have a lot of competition; 80 percent of the Plebes will be high school varsity lettermen, and I've never even played. New York high schools usually don't have football teams."

Harris was sports editor of Delescope, Deleahanty's school newspaper and was on the staff of Senior Snoop, the school's weekly news of student council activities. He participated in basketball and handball intramurals, and was active on the bowling team.

"We at Deleahanty are quite happy, but not at all surprised. We knew he had the stuff to make," said Patrick Servillo, senior class advisor to Harris, upon learning of his appointment.

### --Beauty

(Continued from front page)

newest methods in all areas of beauty culture.

The convention will see over one thousand beauticians converge on the Ben Franklin Hotel eager to learn more about their trade and profession, the second largest Negro owned business in the U.S.A., and to prepare themselves for a much better performance and service.

Noted leaders in other areas will speak to them on matters pertaining to their profession and other matters. Dr. Whickam will report on the progress of construction of their million-dollar building project which will house the national offices, the museum and the laboratories of beauty culture research.

### --Meet

(Continued from front page)

Monday meeting by Aaron Henry, president of the Mississippi State NAACP, and George Wilkinson, president of the In-keepers Association of Jackson.

Three mass meetings were held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights at 8:00 O'clock in the Jackson City Auditorium. Plenary sessions and workshops were held daily in the Masonic Temple at 1072 Lynch Street. Two convention banquets were held Thursday and Friday at the Heidelberg, the official convention hotel.

Youth sessions were held in the College Park Municipal Auditorium. Regional and other group sessions were held in various hotels and in the Paramount Theatre.

### --Bond

(Continued from front page)

soners were booked on the "riot" charge and held under \$50,000 bond each.

Dr. Abernathy went on a fast in protest, and from his jail cell vowed that SCLC would remain in Charleston until the strike is won. The SCLC staff added a new demand to the Charleston movement: dropping of the charges against Dr. Abernathy and the others, and their release from jail.

After a visit to her husband in jail, Mrs. Abernathy called the charge "outrageous" and said that Charleston authorities had shifted to a course of "reckless police repression"

### The Carolina Times

Published every Saturday at Durham, N. C.

by United Publishers, Inc.

L. E. AUSTIN, Publisher

CLARENCE F. BONNETTE, Business Manager

J. ELWOOD CARTER, Advertising Manager

Second Class Postage Paid at Durham, N. C. 27702

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$5.00 per year plus 15c tax in N. C.) anywhere in the U.S., and Canada and to servicemen Overseas;

Foreign, \$7.50 per year, Single copy 20c.

PRINCIPAL OFFICE LOCATED AT 436 E. PETTIGREW STREET, DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA 27702

## Off the Hook!

