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LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

More Than Social Change

All the frustrations felt by school boards across the South were wrapped up neatly in one statement made last week by an attorney for the Franklin County Board of Education. Speaking in federal court in defense of a proposed bond issue for school consolidation and integration, E. F. Yarborough said, "The School Board feels there is more to operating a school system than social change."

No one expected a federal court to listen to this statement and indeed, this one did not. Federal courts and agencies have refused to hear anything but race in our schools for many years.

School boards have been labeled grand rascals and various other less complimentary names. None have been given the remotest credit for endless hours of work and worry and sacrifice. Board members receive a small fee for meetings and it is extremely unlikely there is a member anywhere that serves for the money involved.

School board members serve because of a desire to help educate the children of their unit. Today, they have an impossible job. What's good for public education must play a small second fiddle to the mixing of the races. Social change is foremost in the minds of the powers that be and lowly school boards have little, if any, voice in the matter.

There is, indeed, more to the operation of schools than social change. The schools are operated to educate the children of a community. When anything is allowed to come between

this fact and its accomplishment, that thing is wrong. The mechanics of school operations are staggering. There must be a place for each and every child. A qualified teacher must be obtained and retained for every classroom. Transportation must be found for every child. Safety and comfort and a healthy atmosphere conducive to learning must be maintained.

The Congress should have given a great deal more thought than it did to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and its interpretation by the courts and governmental agencies. It is difficult to realize that any part of the Act was meant to hamper efforts to improve education. Yet, this is exactly what the Act has done.

It has stressed only social change and in the name of social change, school systems have been disrupted, teachers are leaving the profession, parents are dissatisfied and children are getting a less effective education.

It may be possible to have social change and improved education at the same time, although this is doubtful. The point is that the former is overshadowing the latter. Indeed, it is being allowed to completely destroy educational improvements in school systems caught without funds to finance both at once.

There is, indeed, much more to operating a school system than social change. In the years ahead, this nation is going to find this out and the cost to today's young people and to the generations of tomorrow is going to be a high price indeed.

"Well, I'll Be Darned! It Was Already Unlocked."



"Say, Mister... ain't you a county commissioner?"

"Well, yes... I am... and I'm glad to see you... how's your crop coming?... and how's what's-her-name... your wife... never can remember her name... yes... that's it... and you got... let's see how many children now... yes, that's right... yes, sir... I'm sure glad to see you..."

"Well, Mr. Commissioner... I been aiming to come see you... you see, we got this little piece of dirt road runs right in front of my house and I been wondering if maybe you couldn't help us get it paved..."

"Let's see now... you live down there... Well, let me ask you something... What do you think of where the School Board wants to put that building?"

"What building... what you talking about? I ain't heard nothing about it... Guess it's alright if you say so..."

"Well now... you like an intelligent fellow... surely you know that them school people want to ruin the looks of the hill... they want to block out the whole business and make it impossible to ever build anything else up there... don't you know that?"

"Well, yes sir. I guess you're right. I ain't heard nothing about that... But my sister and her husband live down the road about a quarter mile and they're wondering too if you can help us get this little strip paved... it ain't much..."

"Now let me see if I understand you right... You say you think if we let the School Board put that building where they want it... it will ruin the looks of the hill? I want to be sure I get that straight... 'Cause some folks will be asking me about it... Is that what you said?"

"Well, naw, sir... I didn't say it... you did... What I said was that I've got this little piece of road that needs paving... gets awfully dusty this time of the year... and mud in the wintertime... man, you can't hardly travel..."

"Well... just a minute now... Let's take one thing at a time... I thought you just told me you didn't like where the School Board wanted to put that building... and now you say you didn't?"

"No, sir. What I said was that I hadn't heard nothing about it... I don't even know what you're talking about... What I said was that my sister and her husband... they got five kids... live down the road from me..."

"Just hold it a minute. You know being a county commissioner ain't the easiest job in the world... We got to make decisions every day... we make 'em for you... and we make 'em for the school board... if them other departments... it ain't easy... Some folks think we get a gravy train... they think all they got to do is ask... and where's the money coming from? That's what we always got to watch out for... where's the money coming from..."

"We want to do what's right... and we're gonna do what's right... all we want from you private citizens is for you to tell us what you want us to do... We want to do what you want us to do... Now, I'll ask you again don't you think we ought not to allow the School Board to put a building on that pretty hill... and mess it up... Hadn't you rather see us buy a little piece of land and put it somewhere else... where it won't be seen? Hadn't you... just answer me that..."

"Well, sir... if you say so... I still say, I don't know what you're talking about... but I guess it's alright... you ought to know what you're talking about... I ain't heard it mentioned before... Guess it ain't no use talking about my road until you get that business straight, is it?"

"Later, boy... see me later. Got to make a phone call..."

"Hello... I got one. Yes, sir... maddest man I ever saw... he says no, sir don't let 'em have it... put that building someplace else... that's what he said". How many you got?"

Attitudes & Platitudes Jerry Marcus



The Travelers Safety Service



ENSLAVED CAPITOL CALLS FOR SUCCOR(S)

JOHN J. SYNON

ONE RECENT day, Washington's afternoon newspaper, The Star, ran a pitiful advertisement. The ad disclosed the utter bankruptcy of the Democratic and Republican administrations of these 35 years past; our years of decline. It was a full-page spread headed, "An Appeal to the 200 million people in this great nation - all of whom own a share of Washington, D. C."

This is the way it went.

• For weeks now, even the heavens have been weeping at the tragedy that has befallen this once-proud city.

• Where are the tourists?

• Where are the shoppers?

• Where are the school children who came by the tens of thousands to discover their heritage?

• But most important - where are you?

• All 200 million of you. Why are your voices stilled? Isn't this your Capitol City, too?

• Don't you know, or don't you care that the stunned and shattered business community is afraid to act?

• Don't you know, or don't you care that the stricken and heart-sick residents are afraid to act?

• Don't you know, or don't you care that many of your fellow Americans are afraid to open their doors at night; afraid to take public transportation at night; afraid to stroll the streets at night; afraid to do little else but scurry from home to office and back again as quickly as possible?

• Of course you care!

• Then where is your storm of protest? Your outrage? If you fail to voice your concern soon, your share of Washington, D. C. will be worthless.

• Our mayor talks.

• Our police officials talk.

• Our Congress talks.

• Our President talks. But they have failed to dispel the current climate of fear.

• It wasn't too long ago we flew our flags at half-mast. Unless you insist upon action now, we

may have to do it again.

• It is only fair to tell you - your nation's capitol is dying.

THAT WAS the ad, all of it. It was signed by some outfit called The Committee for a Safer Washington, made up, in part by the hand wringers whose stores lie in ashes.

They begin their plea by begging horse chestnuts, pleading for the rest of us to come to their succor. They call us to action though they themselves continue to sit, afraid, by self admission, to do a single thing in their own behalf. They sit there moaning, under a white-capped, black pyramid that the old toad, Earl Warren, did so much to fashion. The pyramid that Lyndon Johnson and his minion, Hubert Humphrey, have done so much to cement into a permanent state of affairs. They sit and want others to rescue them; they bleat as sheep in a pen. And if you go down the voting list of that soul-black town you will find 99 per cent of them voted, repeatedly, for just what they are getting. Where were they when the country needed them, when that nefarious Civil-Rights bill was under consideration?

Where? Coining nickels is where.

BUT WE are coming, anyway, y'all, hear? We are going to help you overcome. We are going to trample out the vineyards where you have stored the grapes of wrath.

You don't deserve succor but we are coming anyway because we are better men than you are.

Leading our parade of liberation will be a graceful, fearless, brilliant man whose clarion call should vibrate even the chords of your mind. We are going to free you, money grubber, just rest easy in your self-wrought chains a little while longer - until November. Listen for the tune, "Dixie".

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WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

I've Had It...

By Bob Roberts of Station of KVI, Seattle, Wash.

There's something that needs to be said about this country. And since no one seems to have the gumption to say it, I guess it's up to me.

I have had it up to here with persons who are trying deliberately to tear my country apart. And it's way past time to throw at me that tired old wheeze about being a Flag-waver. You're damned right I'm a Flag-waver, and I got the right to be the one the hard way.

I have had it with pubescent punks, wallowing in self-pity, who make a display of deploring their birth into a world which - to use their sissy expression - they didn't make.

Well, I didn't make the world I was born in either. And neither did the men I know who are worthy of respect. They just went about and made something out of it.

The men I grew up with were fetched up in a logging camp. They were the immigrant sons of every cast-off race there is. And they didn't have a hell of a lot of knowledge at home to start them off, either.

But I can write you a song about the son of a Po-Valley coal miner who became a nationally-renowned physicist; about doctors, lawyers, teachers, forestry specialists, conservation experts, and men of the cloth - in the Seattle-Tacoma area - who came out of that logging camp. And about the son of a Danish mechanic who is one of the best friends I've got.

So don't give me your whining, whimpering, self-pitying clap-trap about how this country is letting you down.

I have had it with hippies, brainless intellectuals, writers who can't write, painters who can't paint, teachers who can't teach, administrators who can't administer, entertainers who fancy themselves sociologists, and Negroes who castigate as "Uncle Toms" the very men who have done the most to demonstrate to all of us the most important quality in America - individual enterprise and responsibility - Dr. George Washington Carver, Archie Moore, Bert Williams, Booker T. Washington, Roy Wilkins, Justice Thurgood Marshall, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Nat Cole, the Mills Brothers, and their father, and many more.

I've had it with those cerebral giants who think it's smart to invite drug advocates to lecture in their classrooms, and with teaching curiosities like that one in the Mercer Island School District who invited a Black Power spokesman to dispense a lecture on Flag-burning.

I've had it with people who are setting about deliberately to rip up mankind's noblest experiment in decency.

And I'm going to tell you something. If you think you're going to tear down my country's Flag and destroy the institutions my friends and members of my family have fought and died for, you're going to have to climb over me first.

And, buddy, you'd better get up awful early in the morning.

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