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LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

Barn Is On Fire

Last September, President Richard Nixon, on a campaign swing through North Carolina reportedly said in Charlotte that he favored school desegregation but criticized federal agencies which "try to act like local school boards."

To quote the United Press International account, Mr. Nixon said, "It is my view there is too much of a tendency for our courts and federal agencies to use the whole program of what we call school integration for purposes other than education."

The statement was widely accepted in North Carolina and undoubtedly accounted, in part, for Mr. Nixon's carrying the state in the November elections.

That was, however, last fall. This is January and Mr. Nixon has been sworn as President and more importantly, perhaps, to school boards and parents across the country, Robert Finch has been sworn as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

Here is what Mr. Finch says in the latest issue of LIFE magazine on the subject: "Generally speaking I hold with the premise that laws are laws and should be enforced as Congress intended. Local situations do differ and each problem has a different chemistry. There aren't many laws governing social change that can be given blanket endorsement without working considerable, and perhaps unjustifiable dislocation in some areas."

If anybody believes that Mr. Finch has said anything at all, we are not

one of them. The words are so familiar and have been so often spoken in the Johnson years one must assume that nothing has changed. There is no mention of federal bureaus or agencies now. There is no implication that the Nixon administration is going to move with any degree of promptness toward bringing some common sense into the picture of federal domination of local schools.

A late report discloses that Secretary Finch has stopped actions by HEW to cut off funds in Martin County, but if this has any meaning, it has not been spelled out. Such actions have been halted in the past.

What Mr. Nixon needs to do is to make it clear that he federal government is not going to operate the schools of this country beyond the enforcement of the laws of Congress. One has only to look at Franklin County schools to see that bureaucrats have gone far beyond the intent of Congress. Integration is being used now as a key to gain access to other school functions and this danger is no longer a supposition. It is a clear fact of life and the Nixon administration, if it is to be true to those who put it in office, should act firmly and should act at once.

It is time spokesmen for the administration speak in plain blunt terms that all can understand. The mumbo-jumbo is no longer acceptable. The barn is on fire. Somebody needs to bring the water.



"Next, we should decide on the length and width of your confession of grievous sins against Vietnam."

A Start In Franklin

VIEWPOINT

By Jesse Helms

Some of President Nixon's more nagging critics are now complaining that his Inaugural Address contained no ringing phrases that will be remembered by the people. It may be a blessing. Ringing phrases often are followed by hollow echoes, and sometimes tragic ones.

In any case, Mr. Nixon chose to declare his hope for peace on earth and good will among men, a laudable human desire that is neither new nor original. But, for that matter, neither was the spirit of John Kennedy's often-quoted inaugural challenge to Americans that they ask not what their country could do for them. Sadly, history must record that the Kennedy years, and the Lyndon Johnson years that followed, were marked by unprecedented numbers of Americans who not only asked, but demanded, that the government do for them what they should, and often could, have been doing for themselves if they had but tried.

So, glorious political rhetoric - whether in campaign speeches or in Inaugural Addresses - has a habit of falling flat after the festive cheers have subsided and the new President (or Governor) has settled down to a confrontation with destiny.

That is when the mistakes begin. Lyndon Johnson intoned to his countrymen: Come, let us reason together. But then his programs, which he shoved through Congress with the crush of a political bulldozer, proved to be engraved invitations to unremitting corruption, resentment, dishonesty and irresponsibility. This, of course, is surely the last thing that Mr. Johnson intended. His error - and it was a tragically compounded one - was that he misjudged the proper role of government; he tried to assign functions to it which, by its very nature, it could not successfully perform.

And so it may be in the case of Mr. Nixon's emphasis on peace. As someone has said, our new President's emphasis - if he is not careful - may be as misleading as it is laudable. As one reads Mr. Nixon's Inaugural Address, it seems to contain the implication

that peace can somehow be obtained simply because America seeks it anew. The reality, of course, is that there is no hope for early peace unless, by some miraculous circumstance, it should come from Moscow and Peking.

It is commendable, then, for America to continue to hope for peace, but our efforts had better be geared to preserving America - the citadel of what remains of liberty in the world.

As for good will among men, among the citizens of this nation, Mr. Nixon must understand the realities of that, too. Good will cannot be bought from mobs, and there can be no further compromise with them. And if good will cannot be achieved, then the sternest methods of law enforcement should be applied to assure good behavior. Let the revolutionaries sneer at law and order, if they choose, but let them understand that law and order shall prevail. The surest way for Mr. Nixon to promote good will among men is to retrieve this country from the violent and the criminal, and restore it to the decent and the law-abiding.

Perhaps this is what our new President intends. No one should expect miracles in his first days in office, or even in the first weeks or months. But he can start, and start he must:

HE CAN START IN NORTH CAROLINA, BY ORDERING THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TO CEASE ITS PERSECUTION OF THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES IN FRANKLIN COUNTY. He can start in Washington, D. C., by ordering the State Department to reinstate a dedicated public servant named Otto Otepka - the security officer who was disciplined and demoted because he uncovered and exposed security risks in high political places. He can start by returning to the states and local governments their right to run their own schools. He can start by ordering the elimination of fraud and corruption in the give-away programs of the federal government.

There are a thousand ways he can start. And in doing so, he will be creating a renewed unity in this country that has been sadly missing for a decade or more. And in creating unity, he will automatically add strength to this nation's sometimes apathetic resistance to communism, and thus supply meaning to an eventual hope for peace. In that way, the emphasis of his Inaugural Address can begin to come true. It cannot, and will not, in any other way.

any voice in where their children attend school. For the abstract goal of integration, the positive values of community schooling are tossed aside.

In his campaign, Mr. Nixon expressed support for "freedom of choice," and revealed understanding of the national value of neighborhood schools. While Mr. Nixon can't control the operations of the courts, he can move with dispatch to end federal insistence on "racial balance" in public schools.

Under new direction, HEW can take the heat off school boards and inform them that henceforth efficient operation of school systems, and regard for community sensibilities, will receive full backing at the federal level. HEW also can make plain to the public that it is aware of the feature of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits the use of federal funds to bus children for the purpose of achieving "racial balance."

As for the federal courts, perhaps such action on the part of the Nixon administration will restore a measure of common sense to the judicial activists insisting on racial balance. In the American system, the implementation of ideological dogmas is not the proper role of the courts. Let the courts deal with specific instances of injustice, but also let them recognize that the civil rights of parents should be recognized, including the



Cousin Soul Count ain't the brightest of the Count boys by a long shot. Everybody knows I am. But, Cousin Soul bums to Washington ever so often and for some reason, he seems to think this makes him know more'n anybody else about what's going on in the country. He comes back with some of the most shang-shang-along stories you ever heard.

Well, in case I need to tell you... old Soul is back and so I just gotta tell you the latest thing from Washington.

Cousin Soul says they are going to build a experimental city



somewhere in the South - He even said it might be right here in good old Franklin County - but we don't believe this... not for a minute. The federal government ain't never going to build nothing in Franklin. If they wuz, they'd have stopped tearing the place down long ago.

Soul says the city is just going to be for left-handed folks with green eyes. He says others will be welcomed... but only left-handed folks with green eyes can become bona fide citizens. That is, if you ain't got green eyes and eat with your left hand... you can't vote in the elections. And of course, the folks with the greenest eyes will be picked to run for Mayor and the Town Council and important things like that there.

They ain't decided on the name for the place yet... some of the left-handers want it called Lefty City and them with the eyes want it to be called Icy Green City. They 'bout decided to let Orville Freeman name it... if they can find him.

Cousin Soul says there's more to it than meets the eyes - blue or green or whatever color. He says there's going to be factories - mostly making left-handed pitcher's gloves and pink sunglasses. He said he heard one fellow say in a Washington bar that they're gonna operate their own schools in the new city if they can find enough blue-eyed, righthanded teachers. They're picking them this way, says Soul, so's the children can learn something about how the other folks live in case they grow up and want to leave the new city.

But, they're having some trouble locating the place - in spite of Cousin Soul's efforts to help his old home county. It seems some of the planners - having been living in the far left for so long - want to find a location where the sun rises in the west. They claim the western sun makes them green eyes look bluer. Never thought of that - did you?

But Soul says it is all true. He got it right smack off a park bench in front of the White House. He said the fellow told him they're meeting in there right now deciding how much it is gonna cost. Soul said the fellow ought to know 'cause he was sitting there with holes in his clothes and shoes. He musta paid a heap of taxes, Soul said, to of been in that condition.

Soul ain't going back 'til it gets warm... so's I guess we'll just have to bide our time before we get any more straight word from Washington on this newest city. But, you folks be thinking about it. If we can figure some way to move the sun every morning... I know a good pasture they can get mighty cheap. Course it needs a bit of cleaning up before it can be used... but, it can be bought mighty cheap.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

People of Franklin County as well as surrounding counties are often wondering about the feelings and effects of the Vietnam War. I am only one of thousands of soldiers here trying to do his job. We are all fighting for a cause which cannot be described to some, and yet understood by others.

With the many letters and cards from home, it has made life more meaningful and it gives all soldiers something to look forward to when returning home. Morale is the most important factor in any war. Letters of only a few words, mean a special feeling for each and every GI.

I receive the local paper from home with a note inside each paper. This note reads 'I Love You', signed Mother. These words will never be

right to have some say regarding their children's education. "Freedom of choice" is a concept that should find acceptance in all sections of the country and among all racial components of America's population. It is without the blemish of coercion, but simply outlines a school system based on the wishes of parents and the common sense feeling of communities. For American in 1969, "freedom of choice" is right, just and necessary.

forgotten and will always be with me wherever I may go.

Speaking for myself and for all my friends here in Vietnam I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my friends, for all the letters and cards and most of all for the wonderful warm thoughts that were behind each word. I can say these letters will never be forgotten.

My special thanks to each and everyone of you for supporting your husbands and son's in the Republic of Vietnam.

Sincerely,
SP5 John R. Edwards,
805th Trans Co. (Lt. Trk)
APO US Forces 96291

The Times welcomes letters from readers, especially on problems and opinions concerning Franklin County. We do not undertake to edit letters without the consent of the writer, but reasonable length is advised to assure publication.

All letters must be signed and must include the name and address of the writer. The Times will not publish unsigned letters, or withhold names of writers for any reason.

Brighter Carolina Blue

These columns have not always found it easy to support some of the things that take place at the University of North Carolina and have, indeed, from time to time taken opposite sides. Therefore, there is more than a passing degree of pleasure when we find some actions by the Greater University's center post, which we can wholeheartedly support.

Such is the case with Chancellor Carlyle Sitterson's very sensible answer to demands by the Black Student Movement on the Carolina campus.

In the 19-page statement, the Chancellor nowhere applies any degree of discrimination, but does in-

stead exercises an inviable amount of understanding. However, his answers are firm and well placed. The message is plain and clear. He nor the University are going to relinquish control. The operation of Carolina will remain with those entrusted with the responsibility.

In this day when college and university officials are buckling under to even the most asinine demands of minority groups, it is encouraging that UNC, long noted for its liberalism, refuses to do so.

It is a most hopeful sign and somehow the Carolina blue seems somewhat brighter today.

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

Freedom Of Choice

SENSING THE NEWS
By Thurman Sensing

Federal coercion of students, parents and school authorities is eliminated. Experience shows that racial groups, when given an opportunity to express themselves through "freedom of choice" plans, desire to maintain neighborhood schools and traditional lines of association.

In the early 1950s, when the school crisis was developing, organizations such as the National Association of Colored People theorized that mass mixing in education was

the desire of Negro parents. But time has shown the truth to be otherwise. Nowadays, the demand in Negro communities is for "black" schools - schools, that is, in which the faculty and student body are not integrated. In New York City, for instance, the great school crisis of recent months has arisen from the determination of the black community to have black principals and teachers in the Ocean-Hill Brownsville school district.

While thinking in the black community has turned towards decentralization of public education, the federal government has persisted in demanding total integration and the destruction of the neighborhood school concept.

During the years of the Johnson administration, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare established rigid guidelines for forced integration and employed financial pressure to institute busing so as to achieve racial balance in public schools.

As a result, the educational system in many states - and many parts of the country - has been disrupted and community tension has arisen. Strictly educational considerations have been tossed aside by HEW, and integration has become the primary objective of government action. Many fine schools serving the black community, where black students feel comfortable and can best reach their potential, have been abandoned under order from HEW.

The Johnson administration sought the abolition of "freedom of choice" plans, and the federal courts backed it up. The courts seem bent on seeing that parents don't have

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