

Editorials & Comments

Desegregation Could Hamper Blacks?

Desegregation, while insuring black parents that the education their children receive is indeed of equal quality and while insuring black parents the facilities used are of equal quality, has been questionable in giving blacks a sense of responsibility and in building leadership abilities. The responsiveness of the children to this quality education is sub-par. The long range result of all this could very well lead to people without a voice.

The all black school though under facilitated, though under financed, and even though overpopulated, had its good points. It contributed to the relationship between child and school, child and teacher, and school and community. The black children participated in those extra-curricular activities which help form a well-rounded, well-educated student. Your classmates were more than classmates, they were friends. The teachers felt obligated to the students and the parents because they were not only known as school teachers, but neighbors as well. The school was a part of the community and the community responded by making use of the school's facilities and programs.

Now, however, with blacks leaving their communities and becoming a minority in another community school, all this is lost. Blacks have lost being student body presidents, class officers, school paper editors, and other meaningful positions. Black females are now thrust into a new standard of beauty as they no longer are chosen homecoming queens. Miss High School, or "Miss" whatever. Blacks have given up their identities, their characters, and their personalities for the sake of desegregation. With no active part in the school, the whole school spirit is lost and hence apathy prevails.

Not only is the black student made to feel left out by his peer group, but also by the predominantly white

faculty. Teachers are human and they suffer from human weaknesses as do we all. They have prejudices and shortcomings as do we all. Unfortunately, black children are the ones to suffer from this human inadequacy. Consider this true account for example. A black student who attended an integrated school in Delaware was counseled against going to college. Instead the white counselor insisted upon trying a trade. The student knew of no reason for this advice but he did know of several white students who were not as accomplished as he who were persuaded to give college a try. Fortunately, this student and his parents ignored this attempt at character assassination and the student finished college. He is presently an executive accountant for a large computer firm in Pennsylvania.

It is not this staff's intention to denounce the hard labors put forth into desegregating our schools. Nor is it this staff's conviction that separate but equal schools is the answer to everybody's problem. But it is strongly held that schools and churches are foundations of neighborhood and without a strong foundation nothing can stand.

To use schools as testing grounds for how society should be structured is hazardous. To have children injected into a pseudo-environment for six hours a day, five days a week for about 32 weeks, then brought back to reality for the remaining time is like treating cancer with aspirin. It's not fair to the children. A much simpler solution would be to force neighborhoods to integrate. This way schools are again communal institutions. The races would become knowledgeable of each other fears, tensions, and hostilities would be removed. Individuals could again become associated with the schools. Easy solution - hard to implement? Because well, "There goes the neighborhood."

Police Brutality Rising??

We felt that when Congress passed the history-making civil rights laws in the 60's, that we had won the battle. We knew the war was still on and we had to watch with diligence, due to the fact that eternal vigilance is the price of freedom. We also felt that the badgering, beating and butchering of persons being interrogated and arrested by law enforcement officers would be a memory.

We abhorred and detested the killing of officers on the least provocation. We hoped that suspects would cooperate with officers when they had reason to be stopped and questioned by them. We deplore killing, whether it is done by suspects or by officers. We feel that both have rights that each should respect.

We have become terribly disturbed about the high crime rate and join law enforcement officers in their efforts to bring it down. We become more disturbed when we get reports, coming from Hamlet, Durham and the state's Correctional Center, saying women are the targets of inhu-

man treatment by law enforcement officers. We do not understand how officers do not have enough training to perform their duties to overcome their thirst for blood, or don't have enough use of the English language to refrain from cursing.

We got a report of an officer telling a suspect, after he told him he was under arrest for being drunk, while sitting in a car, even before he had tested him in any way, that he was resisting arrest.

This is designed to awaken drivers and riders to the full sense of their responsibility, while on the highways of our state and the streets of our cities and towns. The way to avoid trouble is to stay away from trouble. It appears that police officers spend more time molesting and harassing people than they do apprehending purse snatchers, tracking down bank robbers, or catching murderers.

We say to underprivileged people that we have not won the war against hate.

**BLACKS WHO WANT TO FIGHT
CRIME BY BLACKS AGAINST
BLACKS MUST NOT BE
INTIMIDATED.**



We Must Not Become Spectators To Our Own Doom

REPORT FROM



Washington



The Panama Canal

By Congressman Jim Martin
9th District, North Carolina

For a couple of years, negotiations have been under way between the United States and the Republic of Panama regarding the future status of the Panama Canal and the Canal Zone. The Panamanian government seeks control of the Canal. Rumors have circulated that U. S. Department is considering meeting the Panamanians at least half way. I, for one, oppose any U. S. surrender of control over the Canal to Panama. An overwhelming majority of the respondents (74 percent) to my 1975 questionnaire apparently feel the same.

Some history should be mentioned in discussing this issue. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, there was a thriving commerce, by land, across the Isthmus of Panama (then a state of the Republic of Colombia) and across Nicaragua and Mexico. Goods and passengers seeking a shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific sailed for a Middle American port, crossed over by land to an opposite port, and sailed away. That was a pretty cumbersome business and for years there was a dream of a canal across Central America. In the late 19th century, the French made a deal with Colombia involving French construction of a canal. Engineering problems, malaria, and yellow fever brought that effort to a failure. Then we came on the scene.

For years, there had been a secessionist movement in Panama; local political and business forces sought independence from Colombia. Colombia's geographic position in relation to Panama made it possible for Colombia to control the situation in those days because travel was only by ship.

In 1903, the U. S. (seeking a canal) and politicians in Panama (seeking independence) got together. With U.

S. Naval vessels in port, Panama seceded from Colombia. The new Republic got instant recognition and signed a treaty with the United States that remains the basis for our presence in Panama today.

The treaty grants the United States "in perpetuity" uninterrupted rights over the Canal Zone. Under the treaty, the U. S. exercises all authority we would have "if it (the U. S.) were (the) sovereign". These words are critically important. Panama granted this country the power and right to govern the Canal Zone just as if it were the District of Columbia, and to do so permanently.

On the basis of that agreement, Americans, have spent over \$6 billion to build and maintain the Panama Canal. We built it. It is our responsibility.

The 10 mile stretch of Canal territory is among the world's most strategic waterways. Seventy percent of the traffic through it represents traffic between U. S. ports. Its strategic importance to connecting the Fleets of the Atlantic and Pacific cannot possibly be overstated. This whole hemisphere depends on it. If we give away our rights, we have no assurance the Republic of Panama will permit our ships to continue to use it. We have no assurance they won't block it when it suits their purpose. We have no assurance they will protect it from sabotage - or even maintain it.

It may be argued that the founders of Panama sold out. If so, they got a very good deal in the process: independence, recognition, and a boost to their economy. The Republic of Panama may well deserve better consideration. But the security of this country and the Western Hemisphere demand that we not give away the Canal or the Zone.

TO BE EQUAL



VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

Crime Code A Danger

Revision and reform of federal criminal laws is long overdue, but the proposed new federal criminal code represents a major threat to civil liberties.

A federal commission, back in 1971, proposed pulling together the vast body of federal criminal laws into one criminal code that would reform and relax many existing statutes.

But from that promising beginning has come a suggested criminal code that Congress will deal with this summer. Under the pretense of reform and revision it contains provisions that reflect strongly hawkish law and order views at the expense of precious constitutional guarantees.

Although the Supreme Court has ruled the death sentence unconstitutional as it is applied by the courts and is now considering whether to ban it entirely as a constitutionally-prohibited "cruel and unusual punishment," the suggested new code would restore the death penalty.

While the original commission recommended relaxing many laws, the code lengthens prison sentences for some crimes. This, at a time when many people are questioning whether longer prison terms have any effect on the crime rate, and when prison terms in this country are already much longer than those elsewhere.

In the wake of the Watergate scandal that demonstrated the dangers inherent in federal police powers, the code would actually extend authority for bugging and wiretapping. It also contains provisions that would have made it impossible to prosecute some of the officials convicted of Watergate-related crimes.

Proposed restrictions on activities that interfere with government functions could be used to prevent picketing, sitdowns, and other peaceful protests guaranteed by the Constitution.

Freedom of the press would be damaged by instituting, for the first time in American history, a sort of official secrets act, that would penalize reporters and publishers for printing classified information. Had this been law a few years ago, the Pentagon Papers would never have seen the light of day. Some press spokesman claim the proposed law is so broad that they'd only be able to publish official versions of defense and diplomatic news.

Other provisions aren't bad at all, such as allowing appeals of overly lengthy sentences and providing compensation for victims of violent crimes. And most of it is innocuous enough - simple codification of existing laws.

But the whole package is a Pandora's Box. It doesn't do what it claims to be doing - streamlining the criminal code - and it contains many provisions that would seriously danger civil liberties.

It is possible that many people will be stamped into supporting this new program because of the need to "do something" about the rising crime rate. But the crime rate isn't rising because the present laws need to be toughened; it's rising because the Depression has widened the gap between the affluent and the poor, while depriving many people of the opportunity to earn an honest piece of bread.

The crime rate is on the upswing in cities with the highest unemployment, it's moderate in those few places where employment is still high. A full employment policy is still the best anti-crime measure around, but it seems to lack the sex appeal of going all out for "law and order" rhetoric.

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FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

Blacks Becoming More Involved In Banking

By Robert Johnson
and John Douglas

Like Kung Fu, black-owned banks have shown that just because you're not a giant doesn't mean you can't take care of business. The fantastic 230 plus percent growth rate in the number of black-owned banks in the past 10 years has shown that blacks are becoming more involved in commercial banking.

Although not as old as the martial arts, black-owned banks have been operating in America since the turn of the 20th century. There are presently 41 black-owned banks operating throughout the United States with assets over \$726 million strong.

Don't think black-owned banks have only been concerned with making money for themselves. They



have been deeply involved and committed to helping black businesses by making loans to them. As early as 1971, black-owned banks with com-

bined assets of less than 0.01 percent of all the white commercial banks in the United States had extended \$60 million in loans to black businesses. This was almost half as much as the \$150 million loaned to black businesses by white-owned banks.

For the past ten years, black-owned banks have been vigorously promoting the message that black-owned banks are entitled to their fair share of both government and corporate deposits. Recent federal

statistics indicate that major industrial corporate deposits in black-owned banks are in excess of \$100 million. But progress is slow. The majority of these corporate deposits are tax deposits, one of the least

profitable type of deposits any bank can have.

It's no news to all of us that 1974 was a difficult year economically. The fact that black-owned banks' assets increased only 10.0 percent from \$660 million in 1973 to \$726 million, compared to a 12.9 percent increase in assets in 1973, bears this out.

So, as you can see, black-owned banks have not just arrived, they have been in the banking business for over 70 years. Make no mistake, the black people who own and operate these banks are as serious as cancer when it comes to making sure these banks will be around for at least another 70 years.