A Charlotte School Story

Not every public school

in North Carolina has the

wealth and leadership

provided by West Charlotte

School in Mecklinburg

County, nor the skill to tell

its story since 1970 as does

Rolfe Neil, publisher of

The Charlotte Observer.

Yet there are hundreds of

good public schools in the

state as the threat of being

taken over by private

The job faced by the

public schools has been

and continued to be

difficult although there

progress since the 1960 has

been marvelous. Because I

read Rolfe Neil's column in

The Charlotte Observer of

June 13 with both interest

and encouragement, I am

reproducing it in this

column as a public service.

"He's the youngest of my

five children, not yet old

enough to know the

irreplaceability of time.

So, Quentin extravagantly

wished away the days until

last Friday afternoon when

he at last would hold in his

hands a West Charlotte

"Sitting here in the

Coliseum's cool dimness, I

know I should be

concentrating on him, on

the celebration of this, his

special day. In three years

he has set a record none of

my others matched: Never

failing to make the 6:20

a.m. alarm and traveling

the eight miles across town

to class on time. Nice

Down there - so distant -

on the Coliseum floor it's

an endless chessboard of

471 seniors gowned in

"My mind keeps

wandering to people whose

names I don't even know

but whose deeds I much

admire. They are the

parents who decided in

1970 to preserve the

school system when court-

ordered integration

threatened to create a

white flight stampede.

Spread before me are the

18-year-olds who were only

first graders then, now the

first class to go 12 years

through our integrated

"My 1949 high school

graduation in Columbus,

Ga. had an all-white cast.

Most of us didn't question it

Who

encourage us to? Our

parents, our church and

our school board all said

that's the way life was

meant to be lived: Blacks

"Quentin is proud of his

school,

accomplishments and

especially its spirit. His

school — I examine the phrase. West Charlotte

was the city's only black

high school until a dozen

years ago. Around me sit

black parents who as

alumni must be thinking

that it was my school. This

afternoon it is our school.

Who says mankind is going

fall of 1975 when I was

Philadelphia to live in

Charlotte. When I visited

campus, I looked about and

thought my children would

be attending a mostly

black high school. The

percentage was 55% white.

Odd, isn't it, how so many

"An old friend, C. D.

Spangler Jr., talked to me

as soon as I hit town. "Give

our public school a

chance," he urged. Dick

was on the school board

then. I told him that only

the previous day a

headmaster had made the

case over lunch why my

kids would be better off in a

"Dick, I said, my children will go to the

"The decision is one

never regretted. Quentin is

the fourth Neill to receive a

"You can still get legal

arguments about the

West Charlotte diploma.

private school.

public schools.

white minds operate?

'Give Us A Chance'

West Charlotte

"My thoughts drift to the

from

backward?

returning

to the rear of the bus.

would

classrooms.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg

"Where is he, anyway?

going, Quentin.

maroon and gold.

Names Are Unknown

High School diploma.

It follows:

schools is no longer valid.

constitutionality of busing

But you can't debate an

aspect of human nature:

Where a man's treasure is,

there will his heart be also.

When white people's

children enrolled at West

Charlotte that school

began to receive additional

resources of teachers and

material that it otherwise

never would have been

given.

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Out Of State

To Build Or To Lend

We listened on TV Cable around 9 o'clock Sunday night to a program in which Donald T. Regan, U. S. Secretary of the Treasurer, was being interviewed by a small panel of citizens. We took no notes, but during the interview, Mr. Regan made the following statements which are easy to remember:

He said that Congress should Constitutional introduce Amendment which the states should pass making it illegal for the United States Government to exceed its budget.

He said that he believes it right to place a tariff on steel produced by those countries which have overproduced as a result of trying to maintain jobs in their steel mills.

Asked if a taritt on steel might cause these countries to retalitate on farm grains? he said it might to a degree, but as a whole the United States believes in free trade.

He said that he does not believe the country will go into a deep depression, as signs of recovery are beginning to be seen. He said that the tax cuts and Social Security increases in July will have a great effect on the economy as much of it will go into savings and thus create more business.

In reply to a question, he said, that while some of the Social Security increase money might go to purchase of some items, such as stocks, etc., that the bulk of it would go into savings in support of the supply side as recommended by Reagannomics.

There was much more of course, all along the Reagan line, plausibly given, and seemingly weil and courteously received.

Mr. Regan said that he sees no unfairness in the way taxes are being levied and that he personally believes that corporations should pay some taxes. Some taxes, of course, beats no taxes, but it is our understanding that Germany and Japan pay the highest corporation taxes in the world.

And furthermore, it seems to us that it would be much better to get money into the hands of the people so that business would be stimulated to the point where people would go back to work, to paying taxes and Social Security, than to save if for funds to build more factories and other businesses, which can not now sell their produce for lack of market. Few are going to build factories when they are going to make more money lending money.

Holding Down Taxes

In many Eastern North Carolina towns which operate their own electric systems, commissioners are able to hold their ad valorem taxes down because of profits from sales of electricity. Unfortunately most of them fail to charge enough to maintain their plants with the result that a bond issue for repairs must be levied or high emergency taxes

The same is true of water and sewer lines-too much profit going to hold taxes down, and too little provided for maintenance. That is true of Warrenton, where the electric company was sold to Carolina Power and Light Company in the twenties. Since then maintenance has been no problem, and service has been vastly improved.

Nearly 70 years ago most of Warrenton's sewer pipes were laid. They were terra cotta and today many of this type nave been crushed, root-filled, and should be removed. Through the years commissioners have taken the bulk of sewer and water profits to the town, in the face of growing opposition to paying

taxes. This has finally caught up with more than a generation of those who have been charged with levying taxes. Earlier in the year a big jump was made in water and sewer rates, when emergencies with tanks and pipes developed. This helped some, but not enough.

The water rates remain at the higher rates-really in line with increases of other private purchases. Where no tax rate increase was made last year in the face of need, in its tentative budget this year the rate was raised 15¢ on the hundred dollar valuation, with

(Continued on page 3)

Quotes

If you watch a game, it's fun. If you play it, it's recreation. If you work at it, it's golf. - Bob Hope.

A good traveler is one who does not know where he is going to, and a perfect traveler does not know where he came from. - Lin Yutang.

News Of 10, 25 and 40 Years Ago

Looking Back Into The Record

June 12, 1942 Five hundred and six tires were issued to Warren County motorists by the local ration board during the months of March, April and May, according to information released by that agency. Of these tires, 153 were obsolete and 143 were for trucks. Not quite half were recapped tires.

Mrs. Andrew Jamieson of Oxford entertained the Tri-City Club of Oxford, Warrenton and Henderson on Wednesday at a fivecourse luncheon. Mrs. W. Baskervill Warrenton, Mrs. A. P. McNeny of Henderson and Mrs. Jamieson won the Grand Sweepstake prizes for the year.

Robert Macon Davis, son of Mr. and Mrs. P. R. Davis, returned to his home at Grove Hill last week after graduating on 1 from the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music, Dayton, Va., with a bachelor of arts degree in music education.

June 14, 1957 Warrenton voters may

shortly be given an opportunity to determine whether or not the town shall vote a \$193,000 bond issue for improvement of the town's water system. Rachel Annette Abbott,

daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin T. Abbott of Warrenton, graduated from Rex Hospital School of Nursing on Friday. A graduate of John Graham High School, Miss Abbott received the Royster Award, the highest honor a student nurse can achieve at the school.

Mrs. Walter S. Smiley, a member of the Oakville Home Demonstration was elected president of the Warren County Council at the

regular meeting held here on Monday. She will succeed Mrs. James C. Harris of Inez.

June 15, 1972 The Rev. Elton Cooke, pastor of the Hillside Church Baptist Richmond, Va., has accepted a call to the pastorate of Norlina Baptist Church.

Mrs. Selma Rooker returned to her home last Friday after visiting her daughters and their families, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tingle and Mr. and Mrs. Carlton Smith of Richmond, Va., and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Buchanan of Pabb, Va.

Arlene Bender, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Bender of Norlina, earned class honors at Duke University in addition to having the distinction of being included on the Dean's List.

"From what I've heard, the early '70s were not easy years in Charlotte-Mecklenburg public schools. There were fights, tensions and disruptions. Meanwhile, additional private schools sprouted. Heroes: Parents, Kids "Those first integrated

years had some wellknown heroes, from several community organizations to school personnel. But those without public citation were the parents who decided to hang with it and their kids who lived it day by day, bus ride by bus ride. They were black.

They were white.

"These parents and kids so-called "average" people, never getting their names in the paper or their faces on TV. They simply obeyed the law and did what had to be done. With the sensitive, dedicated work of the school folks they made it work. And don't leave out the PTA's.

"Today, delegations from Northern cities visit the hometown of Stonewall Jackson's widow to learn how Charlotte teaches the human race in the same schoolhouse.

Quentin, congratulations on an historic graduation and good luck this fall at St. Andrews College. On this day I want to tell someone thank you for the good education you received at West Charlotte, our all black and white high school."

ROLFE NEILL Publisher, The Observer

Letter To The Editor

First of all, let me say that I believe in equal rights. I believe the Constitution of the United States of America sets forth that "All men are created equal."

However, I believe that the people of North Carolina have won another battle in the area of the Equal Rights Amendment. Notice, I did not say "Equal Rights" but rather the ERA. For, I believe there is a difference in the term "Equal Rights" and the "Equal Rights Amendment."

Having spent more than 20 years in the public affairs business and 10 of those years in Washington, D. C., I have learned to look beneath the surface of any issue. I spent much time studying the ERA issue, especially during the time the Congress decided to extend the time allowed to ratify the amendment.

I discussed the issue with numerous proponents and opponents. My conclusion was that this proposed amendment does not mention women anywhere in it. It alludes to women by the word "sex." However, when we discuss sex discrimination, it opens up a much more involved issue than women receiving equal pay for a job. The proponents have shouted loudly about the "equal pay" issue. However, if there can be no discrimination according to sex, you cannot tell me that I cannot go into the "ladies" rest room if I desire. That becomes my right, according to an amendment to the Constitution.

But, thank God, North Carolina has taken a stand against another man walking into the rest room with my wife or my 12-year old daughter.

The main issue with this proposed amendment, I think, is not whether or not there should be equal rights. I think it goes much deeper. The plain fact of the matter is that we, in America, have slipped away from what our fore fathers established. They established a nation "under God." They believed in "the Almighty." Many who were involved in founding this great nation came here seeking religious freedom.

However, in recent years we have sought to take God out of everything. As we have done this, we have established a monster called "immorality." In fact, the more we take God out, the more flagrant this immorality becomes. We become concerned about our drug problem, our abortion problem, our murder problem, our drinking problem. Yet, we have opened up our society to lax morals. Lax morals caused these problems.

Our courts, in recent years have ruled more and more liberally in the area of morals. Our courts have tied the hands of our law enforcement people. If a police officer does his job to protect our society, someone cries "police brutality" or "discrimination." We suspend the officer until the courts rule that the criminals' rights were violated. Then the criminal goes back onto the streets and the police officer begins to take his job less seriously. And, we ask: "What's nappening to our country?"

What this country needs is not another amendment to the Constitution but rather a turning back to the God upon whom the nation was established.

As an officer of the church, I think the churches of America have negated their responsibility to God and to the nation over the past few years by making it necessary for the poor to have to lean on the federal government for needs which the church should be providing.

The poor of this nation no longer need to respect the church or God because their help comes from the federal government. When there is a need, the underprivileged receive from Washington. Therefore, there is praise and respect for the god that provides the need. The church needs to get back to helping those in need. Jesus said: "If you have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

We have allowed our nation to lean more and more towards a socialistic form of government with our social programs. We have gotten into the web where the government rules our lives. Yet we continue wanting more and more handouts from the government. Some of us even feel that since we pay taxes, it is our right to take advantage of all the free programs with which we can get away. This is not right — and not the way our founding fathers intended it to be.

All men are created equal to work and make a living. All are created equal under the law for protection. All are created equal to live and serve. All are created equal to pursue happiness. However, we are not created equal to impose on the rights of others even if we feel it would give us what we want.

The Soviets have warned that they would "bury us from within." With our continued effort to wipe God out of everything we do in America, we are fastly fulfilling their dream. They are anti-God. If we continue on our present course, we will be like they are. Then we both will be the same. Once our nation becomes communistic, the government will control us and everything we have. We won't own anything. We are definitely in a dilemma.

What we need is not an Equal Rights Amendment - We need to get back to God and then the equal rights situation will be taken care of.

JULIAN R. MILLS, SR.



An Irish lad carries recently harvested potatoes home for his family's dinner. Valued worldwide for nutrition and versatility, spuds grow in more countries than any crop except corn. Although potatoes are native to South America, the Irish and East Europeans lead the world in per capita consumption.

Potato Is Easy To Underestimate

National Geographic News Service Mashed into a side dish or fired into fast food, the

potato is easy to underestimate. But potatoes are actually the world's bread and butter, according to the International Potato Center in Lima,

Peru. Potatoes yield more nutritious food more quickly on less land and in harsher climates than any other major food crop. This amazing vegetable is a South American native brought back to Europe from Peru by 16th-century

conquistadors. Its own world conquest now complete, King Potato grows in more countries than any crop except corn. Robert E. Rhoades of the International Potato Center writes in the May issue of National Geographic: "The

average annual crop (291 million tons) could cover a fourlane superhighway circling the world six times." More Protein Per Acre

Produced in 130 of the world's 167 independent countries, one year's crop is worth \$106 billion at consumer prices, Rhoades reports.

Potatoes are fourth, after wheat, corn, and rice, in world production, but because of multiple harvests, yield the most protein and food energy per acre.

They are remarkably adaptable; potatoes grow from below sea level behind Dutch dikes to almost 14,000 feet up in the chilly Andes and Himalayas, from the Arctic

Circle to the Strait of Magellan, and in the scorching deserts of Australia and Africa. Brimming with vitamin C, many of the B vitamins, and iron, the potato is so nutritious that a man in Scandinavia lived healthily for 300 days on only spuds dressed with a

bit of margarine. And eating a potato without rich toppings is no more fattening than eating a pear-the potato is 99.9 percent fat free. Without potatoes, meat production would slump and meat prices skyrocket; nearly half the world's crop is fed

to livestock.

Potatoes are also distilled into vodka and aquavit, processed into starch, paste, and dye, and converted to fuel. Researchers have shown that one acre of potatoes in one year's time can yield 1,200 gallons of ethyl alcohol, or potato gasohol, for cars.

Rhoades notes that tomatoes, tobacco, and eggplants are related to the potato, but the sweet potato is not-even though its Indian name, batata, became the English word

Thousands of Varieties

The familiar brown oval spud belongs to the species Solanum tuberosum, one of eight cultivated throughout the world. Most of the world's crop and all potatoes grown in the United States belong to this species.

In the Andes, however, farmers cultivate all eight species, embracing as many as 3,000 of the 5,000 or more

Rhoades describes the varieties: "The colors of the rainbow and more, many looked like miniature pineapples, some like coral snakes, and others like bright red cherries or purple gumdrops."

When Europe's potato crops fell victim to late blight in the mid-19th century, a million people died in Ireland, where potatoes were the chief food. Now scientists believe that genetic engineering of potatoes holds promise for a 21st-century solution to the world food

The International Potato Center's goal is to make the (Continued on page 3)

