

'If only we'd get hijacked...
I sure could stand a week in Miami'



My Friends of The Citizens Councils

JOHN J. SYNON

Some weeks ago, I received an invitation to speak in Jackson, Mississippi, to the 12th Annual Leadership Conference of The Citizens Councils of America. I accepted.

On my way home I stopped off to pay hand-washing obeisance to one of the 300 publishers who run this column.

My crusty friend asked what brought me to this part of the country. When I told him his eye-brows shot; he wanted to know if I were comfortable among "those people."

I thought about that a moment, then gave him an absolutely truthful answer. The Citizens Council people, as those like them, are the only people I know in whose company I am entirely comfortable. They are my people and my admiration for them is almost unlimited.

There were about 400 delegates in attendance, as I counted them, from 29 States, and if ever a group represented "middle" America, what I would call ordinary decency, it was this one.

First off, there was not a trace of alcoholism anywhere. I didn't say "alcohol"; I said, "alcoholism." There was the scent of soap and of shoe polish. Every coat had three buttons, their shirts were white and their ties, with an exception or two, were conservative. Except for the teenagers, of whom there were a surprising number, no lady's dress was cut above the knee, or below the ridgeline.

Every session opened with prayer and thereafter the business at hand was conducted with far more gaiety and wit than one would expect, say, at a national political convention.

True enough, these people are about a serious business. They mean to fight indiscriminate race mixing until their battle is won — none need ever doubt that. But they mean to enjoy themselves all the while. If the meeting had a common denominator it was this determination leavened with laughter and outspoken admiration for George Wallace.

They are certainly proud of The Little Judge. Proud on three counts: They are proud of him because he represents so well their own belief (freedom of choice), because he stood four square on this principle throughout the campaign, and because he polled so many votes. The Citizens Council people look upon the 9.7 million votes Wallace garnered as the potential membership of their organization. And they may be right.

Though they come from all sections of the nation, it is fair to speak of them as Southerners simply because they reflect the traditional Southern position on the race question: Never. They deeply believe both races do better when neither is forced to rub noses with the other. And so do I. That is why I think of them as my people, why I am entirely comfortable, and comfortably proud, when in their midst.

Last night my television car-

ried a feature on Vietnam and the dirty work our Green Berets are engaged in at the moment, digging the enemy out of granite burrows. The reporter fellow gave us a picture of the grizzled major in command and said he came from Greenwood, Mississippi. He gave his name, too, the same as that of a man, old enough to be the major's father, whom I had met while in Jackson. He hailed from Greenwood, too, and the reason I don't identify them is because I don't know, for sure, that he is the major's father. Though he must be; Greenwood is a mighty small town.

I do know this: Both the major and my friend have the same calm look of determination, the demeanor I have come to associate with my people of the Citizens Council. And to picture them as anything other than what they are, decent, concerned Americans, is to do a disservice to them and to their country. But no matter. You can't beat 'em. Not now; not ever. As they say, Never.

Steven Garner is Sent to Texas Base

Airman Stephen F. Garner, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Garner Jr. of 1704 Windsor Dr., Kinston, has been graduated at Sheppard AFB, Tex., from the training course for Air Force aircraft mechanics.

Airman Garner, a 1968 graduate of Grainger High School, is being assigned to Bergstrom AFB, Tex., for duty with the Tactical Air Command.

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OTHER EDITORS SAY
NEW BERN SUN-JOURNAL

Barbecued Steaks

Some time ago, suspicion was cast on the back yard barbecue as a possible source of cancer. The charge had remarkably little impact on the al fresco cooking habits of Americans.

Nevertheless, it's a pleasure to learn that charcoal-broiled meat has been given a clean bill of health, even though it does contain a carcinogen (cancer-causing agent) called Benzopyrene.

But only about one microgram of benzopyrene gets on your average charcoal-broiled steak, and at that rate, says Health News, a person would have to eat 30 million of them to be in danger.

Lest we allow ourselves to be lulled into a false sense of security, however, from another source comes the warning that unless man stops polluting his environment (with, among other things, smoke from back yard barbecues, presumably), he cannot survive on earth for more than five more generations.

That encouraging word comes from Dr. David M. Gates, director of the Missouri Botanical Gardens in St. Louis, who got it straight from a computer's

mouth.
Win a few, lose a few.

Other Editors Say

THE NATIONAL OBSERVER

Boston: A Victim Is Compensated

The first victim of a crime to be awarded compensation by the state received \$548.60 for medical expenses. Mark Robillard, 17, of Cambridge, suffered a fractured jaw when he was assaulted by eight youths last July. His assailants have not been arrested. A law that went into effect July 1 makes it possible for victims of violent crime in Massachusetts to receive up to \$10,000 for lost wages and medical expenses not covered by private or public insurance programs. The law was passed after a special legislative commission had concluded that the state "owes compensation to the people it fails to protect from crime." Three other states, California, New York, and Maryland, have similar programs as does New Zealand.



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