

Merger Versus Integration

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The topic to which I was invited to address myself on this occasion might be appropriately modified to read "Merger and Integration" without appreciable loss of meaning because of its relationship in the context of an obvious situation. However, the concept of merger has been fostered to hinder the use of rationalization and error in defining the concept of integration as a slow process of desegregation without due regard for the contributions and potential of either or both State Teachers Associations in the best interest of the public's welfare.

First, we wish to commend the North Carolina Education Association for removing racial restrictions from its constitution, even

though it provides for a form of local option. In all fairness it should be noted that it was made distinctly clear in a public release prior to the submission of proposed amendment that the question did not pertain to merger. But the overwhelming majority of the teachers and administrators who voted for the amendment and the professional nature of the Association stimulates the North Carolina Teachers Association to strive for merger as it has in the past. The state and national movement for the greater recognition of and respect for the dignity and worth of all people without regard to race, creed or color further commends and supports the basis for such action. Toward this end the questions concern, in the main, recognition, representation, and some reorganization on the part of the two asso-

ciations. It seems noteworthy that there exists on the part of NCTA no clamor for unequal representation in merger, a fact that is supported by the full recognition of differentials in the numerical strength of memberships, employed personnel and perhaps in some other areas. But there does exist on the part of NCTA the need, the desire and insistence for representation and recognition in any plan designed for the real integration and unification of the two associations in keeping with the spirit of the resolution of NEA and future progress in North Carolina. It seems appropriate also to point out that there is sufficient similarity in the names of the two associations, NCEA and NCTA, to preclude any great disagreement concerning a name that might be considered in merger. Factors conducive to merger are more numerous and logical than those that hinder it. As examples of this:

1. Both associations are affiliates of the National Education Association.
2. Both associations hold membership in the United Forces for Education.
3. The organizational patterns of the two associations are similar and structured to a great extent on the basis encouraged by NEA.
4. Officers and members of the two associations have enjoyed fruitful contacts through the years and some have served together on national education committees and as officers of NEA.
5. The climate for intergroup relations in North Carolina and the Nation has never been more conducive than now for reorganization and merger of similar organizations of different races with due regard for the contributions and dignity of each. The great Christian and democratic spirit of America has been stirred and the merger of Churches and other institutions across racial lines attests to the fact.
6. Both associations have removed racial restrictions from their constitutions, the North Carolina Teachers Association having done so more than 25 years ago and has white members.
7. The members of both associations have improved their academic and professional training to a great extent on their initiative and with encouragement from the State Department of Public Instruction and local administrative units.
8. Through the years both associations have been tremendously interested in such areas as compulsory school attendance, school bus transportation, school consolidation, school lunch program, bond issues affecting educational progress, the improvement of health conditions in school and community, educational administration and supervision, higher salaries for school personnel, and continuing

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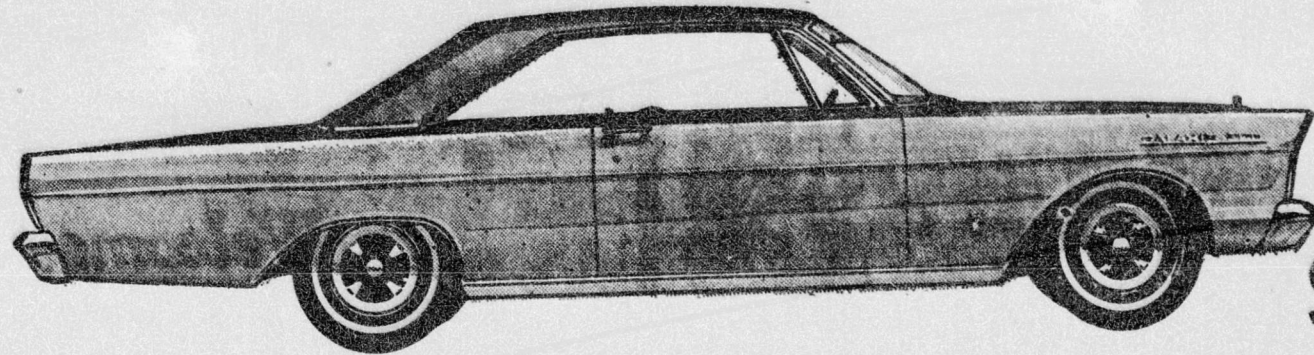
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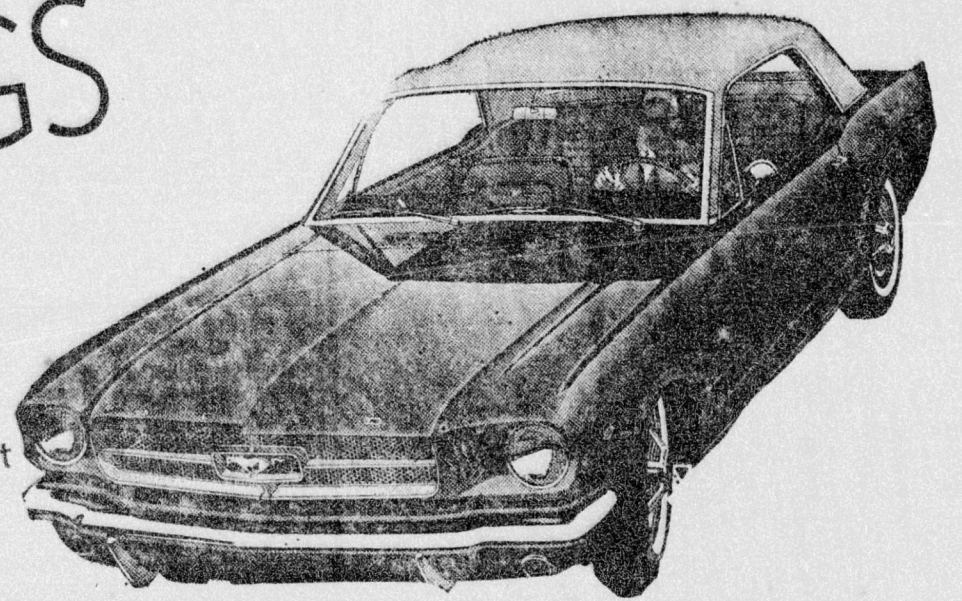
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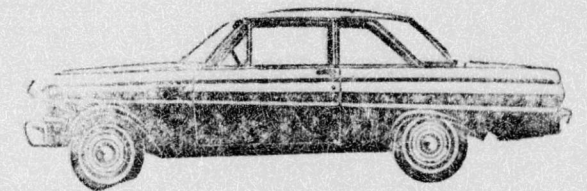
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