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East Side

By P. D.

Whether "sit-in", "stand-in", "walk-in", "swim-in", or "fall-in", some of the reactions have been nothing short of fantastic.

One example was that of a Memphis, Tenn. television station having refused to carry a CBS program on the "sit-ins", titled "Anatomy of a Demonstration." The story was reported in The New York Post and they quoted the program director of WREC-TV in Memphis as having said: "The station decided not to carry the show because it reflected propaganda rather than objective reporting and would serve no useful purpose."

Well, maybe so, I can't say. But I suspect that if all the TV stations in the south refused to carry such reports the problem would go away — like problems cease to exist for the ostrich — ah, yes, but the exposed part of the anatomy in such cases — yes.

A MEMO TO ROY WILKINS OF THE N.A.A.C.P.:

Dear Roy:

It is my understanding that your organization is concerned about the recent incident here in The Magnolia Jungle having to do with the attempted integration of the beach at Biloxi. Well, Roy, I fear you don't understand our southern way of life, not fully. No, not at all do you understand it.

Just the other day I tried to explain it to a friend, whose name you know if I mentioned it, and he didn't understand our way of life, so he came back at me with this:

The recent racial incident in Harrison County leaves in its wake some question that, I believe, need answering.

In the first place, how did Harrison County get its 28-mile man-made beach?

It was dredged up a number of years ago by the US government. Work was done under a federal statute that provides for protection of militarily strategic highways.

US 90 was designated such a highway and as a result a million and one-half dollars in federal funds were spent to build the beach for road protection. Recreation, supposedly, was strictly a by-product.

When completed, maintenance was taken over by Harrison County supervisors. This is paid for by a two-cent a gallon gasoline tax on all fuel purchased in the county, regardless of the purchaser's racial origin.

I don't know how many vehicle owners in the county are Negroes, but I imagine the number is substantial.

Now I'm told the beach front belongs to adjacent property owners across the highway despite the fact that public funds were used to build and maintain it.

That brings me to this:

Under our separate but equal theory, why can't the proportionate tax be figured and the Negro given access to such portion of the 28-mile beach his taxes keep up?

Either that, or stop levying the two cent a gallon beach maintenance tax on the gasoline he buys.

And, if the beach belongs to adjacent owners, despite the fact that a highway separates them from it, why was public money used in the first place to build it and public funds used now to maintain it?

If adjacent property owners have the right to bar the beach to public use then said property owners should be assessed to maintain it.

And this final question:

If we stand firm on separate but equal in theory, how can we logically substitute for it in practice a separate but not equal policy and bar Negroes from the entire 28 miles despite

(Continued on Page 2)

Watch On The POTOMAC

by
Robt. G. Splvack

THOUGHTS ON THE WEST VIRGINIA PRIMARY — Someone, it seems, forgot to tell the voters of West Virginia that they were "bigots" and not supposed to vote for John F. Kennedy for President.

Actually the sort of thing that was stirred up in West Virginia — the so-called "religious issue" — is not a matter to be taken lightly. The politicians who played with it were playing with emotional dynamite. But that is not the worst part of it.

I think newspapermen exaggerated this issue more than the politicians did. One nationally syndicated columnist wrote that Sen. Hubert Humphrey was, in effect, directing his appeal to poor white trash, that he was the beneficiary of the most benighted elements in West Virginia society and that Kennedy was the victim of the worst sort of religious prejudice.

Another writer for a big eastern paper interviewed three or four people, maybe one or two more, and wrote a piece that ran for several columns on how much bigotry there was in the state and how Ku Klux Klan sentiment lingered from the 20s and 30s.

The fact is that the Democrats of West Virginia were scarcely influenced at all by religious prejudice, just as they were not back in 1928 when Al Smith won a primary in that state. Otherwise Kennedy could not have scored his triumph.

This should not lead anyone to conclude that prejudice might not yet emerge as an important factor between now and the Los Angeles convention; or after-
(Continued on Page 2)

HIGHLIGHTS FROM READING

by
Mary Einsel

"Poverty was always a living and evil thing to me, and from the moment in my teens when I could scrape a few pennies together I tried, for however brief a time, to disguise the face of poverty as best I could. (From Moss Hart's wonderful book: ACT ONE) I used to go without lunch for a week or ten days until I had accumulated enough to eat in a restaurant that had tablecloths instead of having a frankfurter or hamburger at a Sixth Avenue sidewalk orange-juice stand, which was the usual. Or I would stroll into the lobby of a fashionable hotel and walk around for as long as I dared, making believe that I belonged there. If all of this had a faintly ignominious and snobbish air, I do not defend it. That is the way it was, and doubtless there must have been another side to me too — less foolish and perhaps more admirable. Perhaps all this accounts in some measure for the extravagant way I have lived from the moment large sums of money began to pour in. I know
(Continued on Page 2)

North Caroliana Teacher Says — Segregation Is Moral Problem, Not Legal

The current Negro protest against refusal of service at chain-store lunch counters is primarily an attack on Southern custom and tradition rather than Southern laws. This underscores a fact too long neglected, both North and South: that the real heart of the segregation problem is a moral issue, rather than a legal one. It will never be satisfactorily solved until that fact has been faced with candor.

Northern integrationists, following the government's lead of 1954, have generally taken the line that compliance with the law of the land is all that is essentially required. This legalistic approach has also been accepted by most Southern moderates, who view integration as something regrettable but unavoidable. It's going to come, they say, and we might as well get used to it even if we don't like it.

But peaceful integration will never be achieved on the basis of the banal "my country, right or wrong." It will be achieved only when and if most of the people of the South come to feel that it is the right path to take, a path compatible with American ideals which they hold as dear as anyone else. Social customs rest on values which people cherish; and if there is to be an acceptable change in customs they must be seen in a new light in relation to those values. Racial segregation is long-standing custom in the South. The question now demanding review is whether it is good custom.

So Little Discussion

I think it unfortunate that there has been so little discussion of the problem in these terms. American democracy depends above all on free and vigorous discussion of what the people want — what they think is morally good and right. It is generally accepted, for instance, that it is healthy and proper for American students, from grade school through college, to discuss important social problems as part of their education. Yet my impression is that the moral aspect of segregation have been little discussed in public schools, perhaps especially in the South; that on the contrary these aspects have usually been avoided. Even at the college level, discussions of the problem are often too legalistic and technical — bristling with points about the Constitution and states' rights — to get at the heart of the matter.

What happens when a thorough discussion of segregation as a moral problem is conducted among Southern students? A few years ago it was decided at North Carolina State College that all senior engineering students must take a course called "Contemporary Issues." The idea was to have them read background material, hear lectures and debates, and participate in discussion on a series of controversial issues which soon confront them as citizens when they went out to take jobs in American industry. Clearly, one of the most important and controversial issues of all was that of segregation; and despite some misgivings, the staff teaching the course agreed that it must occupy a prominent place.

Since then about four weeks of the course have been given to a thorough examination and discussion of the whole problem.

Down The Middle

Since 90 per cent of the students at North Carolina State are Southerners born and bred, and since several members of the Contemporary Issues staff happen to be from the North, it was felt that an extra effort must be made to conduct the investigation of segregation in a fair, unbiased way.

In addition to ample reading matter on both sides, and an absolutely open forum in the classroom with no threat of reprisal in terms of grades, weekly debates by staff members are used as a device to raise every reasonable argument both pro and con. Staff members assigned to argue the segregationist side of the issue spare no pains to present as good a case as can possibly be made short of falsification of fact. (Once, when the staff conducted such a debate on television, the man who took segregationist side was widely congratulated in this area for his presentation.)

The results have been interesting. On the basis of polls taken in representative sections, it appears that, semester after semester, a majority of the senior engineering class has slowly, painfully, sometimes grudgingly, worked around to the conclusion that, despite longstanding Southern tradition to the contrary, segregation of the Negro cannot be reconciled with the basic democratic principle of justice. And, in relation to the problem as it faces the nation today, the salient fact is this: while there has been in the course an ample discussion of the legal and technical aspects of segregation versus integration, the point that finally seems to sway most Southern students is not the necessity of obedience of federal law, but the necessity of obedience to moral law.

What Is Justice?

Sometimes included in the background material of the course has been Robert Penn Warren's book, "Segregation," and a remark he makes illustrates the approach to the problem many of the instructors have used. Mr. Warren writes that "desegregation is just one small episode in the long effort for justice."

The enveloping problem, then, the context for the discussion of segregation, is an age-old, very simple (and very difficult) question: What is justice? That question, thrown point-blank to a roomful of college seniors, elicits a variety of strange and interesting answers, as well as a good deal of silence pregnant with puzzled thought. But the impressive thing is that after kicking the question around for a while, the average class is very likely to come up with an objective definition of justice closely resembling that given some 2300 years ago by Aristotle.

Justice, they decide, is equal treatment for equals. It prevails when men are treated without difference or discrimination with respect to any ability which they have to an equal degree. If their ability is unknown, they obvious-
(Continued on Page 2)