

EDITORIAL ★ ★

COMMENT

Students Criticize Thompson's Letter

Dear Dean Thompson:

One statement in your open letter published April 25 in the *Daily Nebraskan* around which your entire argument revolves has been frequently uttered by many Southerners and some reactionary Northerners, to wit: "... you cannot legislate an attitude of tolerance upon an individual or upon a people." That is nothing more than an expression of hope; it may be correct insofar as it goes, but is essentially calculated to throw genuine liberals and Christians off the track to the logical conclusion which is that while you may not be able to legislate against an individual's or a people's attitude, you can legislate against his manifesting that attitude if it is liable to be detrimental to society; thus you may not be able to prevent an individual from wanting to kill another, but you can pass laws penalizing him if he carries his desire into action.

You go on to say, "changes favorable to national tolerance can come only through education and understanding. Until the peoples of this country are willing to open their churches and their lodges and their select societies and their various other selective sanctuaries to all races, this problem is going to be ever present." Exactly. However, your implied conclusions do not logically follow. Sitting tight and doing nothing is not the answer.

As long as educational institutions such as the member schools of the Big Six practice discrimination while the theory of racial equality is taught only in a few obscure labor schools and theological seminaries or in a few isolated sociology and an-

thropology courses, education is failing in its duty to create national tolerance. As long as the nation allows violations of the 14th Amendment and fails to pass such legislation as the F. E. P. C. bill and fails to enforce its anti-poll tax laws, some individuals will feel that they have a franchise to exercise their unreasonable and undemocratic discriminatory practices. Successful legislation and healthy institutional regulations are the only answers. When manifestations of ill-will disappear, ill-will too will eventually disappear. But you cannot expect a moral revolution of tolerance to sweep the country when intolerant actions are left unchecked.

The implied policy of idly waiting for the status quo to change is not going to work because that inaction is strong support of the status quo.

In the matter of the case at hand, the only possible action that the University of Nebraska can take as a leading educational institution in a democracy is to protest the violation of our democratic principles by member schools of the Big Six. If no positive action is taken, we should withdraw from the conference. With an opening in the Western Conference, now is the strategic time.

In concluding, may I have the temerity to call your attention to the excellent Public Affairs Pamphlet prepared by Alfred McClung Lee entitled "Race Riots Aren't Necessary." The causes of race riots and preventative suggestions are capably presented by Dr. Lee, a well-known authority on race and propaganda.

Sincerely yours,
JOSEPH ISHIKAWA.

Dear Madam Editor:

We were happy to learn, from the front page article in yesterday's *Daily Nebraskan*, that there is at least one person on this campus who classifies himself as an internationalist—indeed, almost a "violent" internationalist. It struck us immediately that the writer had restrained his violent internationalism remarkably well!

He had restrained himself so well that his letter gave the appearance of being a typical collection of patronizing, illogical, disconnected, equivocating, trite, and meaningless dodges which together constituted the most tremendous pile of palpable hogwash ever dished out by an administrator to avoid committing himself. Of course, all this was just the appearance it gave.

The writer used the old argument about "only through education" and "not until the churches do, etc." Apparently the writer does not realize that the best way to educate for "tolerance" is to allow citizens an actual interracial experience. Apparently he does not see that, along with churches and lodges, universities need to adopt a decent attitude. If he meant what he said, he would be a proponent of this resolution which promotes, in his own backyard, the very things he claims are necessary for "national tolerance."

The writer of the letter considered himself such an authority on the question (of course, he has "no race prejudice whatsoever" himself) that he had "the temerity" to recommend to an adult Negro, a trained director of a big city Urban League, that he read a couple of articles on the Negro question. We are sure Mr. Grooms will learn a lot about the race question from his reading.

Mr. Grooms is referred to "Is The South That Bad?" by Vir-

Review. The almost violent ingenuus Dabney in the Saturday *Internationalist*, it seems, skipped over the paragraphs in which Mr. Dabney lauds the Southern Regional Council and the Southern Conference of Human Welfare, organizations which are proposing and effecting changes just like that proposed by the Student Council resolution. The sentence, we suppose, which caught the writer's eye, was that which said "You can't rid people of prejudice by passing laws." This, of course, fails to observe that you CAN stop people, by passing laws, from manifesting their prejudice in segregation and discrimination, and thereby make things considerably more comfortable for those against whom the prejudice is directed—which, for one who has a "Christian concept," should be of no small importance.

The other article recommended to Mr. Crooms, "Report on the Negro Soldier," points out that a policy of segregation, like that in the army (or in the Big 6) in addition to being immoral, is wasteful and inefficient. "One thing is certain," said Mr. Welliver, the author of this article.

"As the opportunity to prove himself and gain recognition as an individual respected by his society was extended to the colored man, that opportunity will increase his effectiveness." If the writer of the letter believes that the author has "understanding and judgment" he should oppose the segregation which Mr. Welliver is condemning.

The letter, of course, says absolutely nothing conclusive about the situation under discussion. Far be it from us to "intimidate" Dean Thompson, but we do feel that an honest and unanimous expression of a desire of the student body by its elected representatives is deserving of more than fatuous evasion. BILL MILLER.

Open Letter to Dean Thompson:

Your recent open letter to Dr. Duward Crooms explaining your stand on Negro participation in Big Six athletics was deeply interesting, though very uninformative.

Just exactly, Dr. Thompson, in specific, direct language, what are you going to do about the matter at the next meeting of the Big Six governing board?

In your recent letter you took absolutely no position on Negro participation in the Big Six. Nor did you state any opinion whatever on the Student Council resolution demanding a positive stand against discrimination and eventual withdrawal from the conference if Oklahoma and Missouri would not co-operate in the practice of democracy. And finally, you failed utterly to make clear your intentions of future action, or possibly inaction, in the problem.

The whole matter, we grant you, is one to be weighed carefully. There are considerations of high importance on both sides of the question. In favor of a strategy of inaction and compromise is the certainty of a great uproar among influential alumni and citizen opposing any threat of withdrawal from the Big Six. If you, as Nebraska's representative on the Big Six governing board, were to take a clear-cut stand in favor of the Council resolution, and would act upon it, your position would be seriously threatened. And this is a possibility that demands the fullest consideration of any man.

However, cutting squarely through the center of the whole question is the body of principles involved; the principals of that faith that we term democracy.

It is in the framework of these, our professed principles that the fuzziness of our thinking about the Negro problem is cleared away, and the absolute, two-alternative choice becomes clear. You cannot both follow the principles and not follow them. You cannot say both yes and no. Right is right, and injustice is injustice.

You stated in your letter, Dr. Thompson, that you would not be intimidated. Are you also referring to the "intimidating" effect of high moral principles?

The choice before you is clear: Your "Christian concepts, or a possible weakening of your popularity in some quarters. The student body, as well as Justice, is watching.

BILL ROBERTS.

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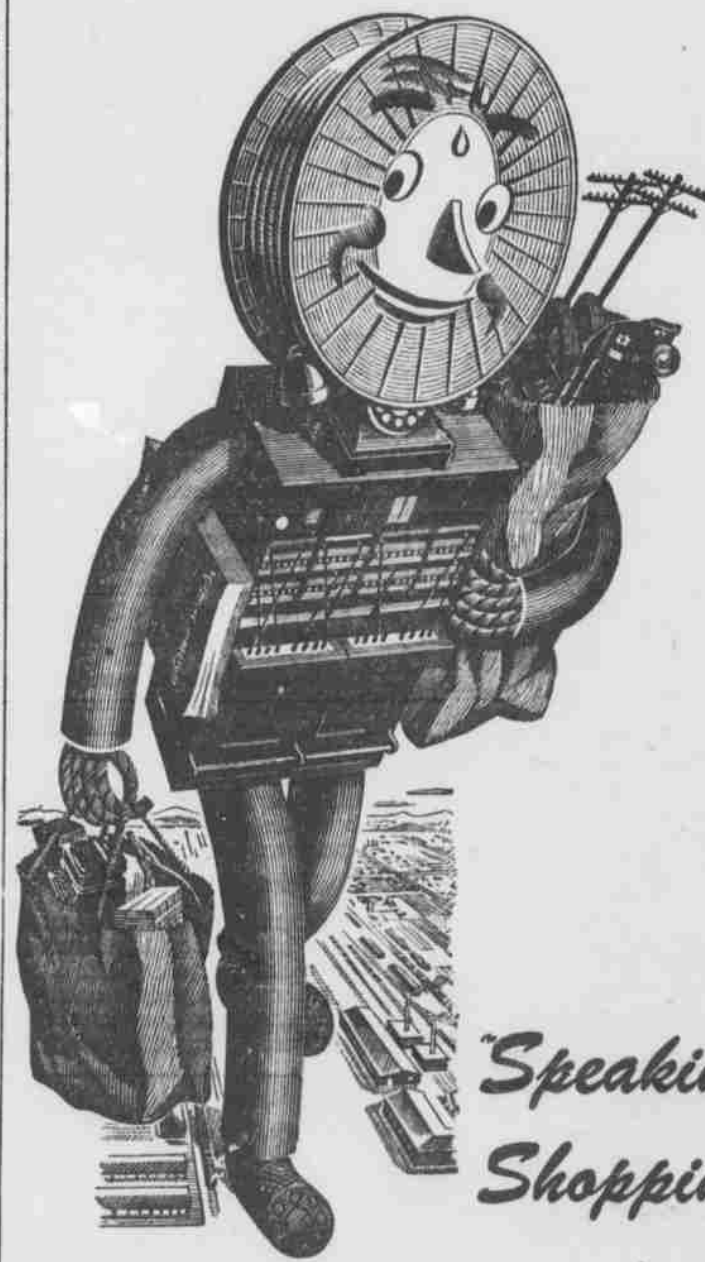
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Hoods and Baldies . . .

The red hoods and baldies of Innocents, senior men's honorary society, will reappear on Ivy Day but only long enough for the wearers to take part in a short ceremony. There will be no tapping until next year, according to the four Innocents now on campus.

It would be impossible to tap the traditional 13 new members this spring, since there have not been 13 men on the campus during the last three war years who fulfill the activity requirements of membership. It is regrettable, however, that the few men, probably less than half a dozen, who have been active the last three years will be deprived of their chance to be Innocents. Their service to school life has been all the greater because they gave their time voluntarily without aiming for the senior men's honorary as their goal.

There are four Innocents in school now. Only two of them will return next year on more or less of a graduate basis. We would think that present members would be glad to have some new blood in the organization to reinstate the group as an active body as soon as possible.



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