

The Petal Paper

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East Side

By P. D.

A letter of considerable interest has come to my attention. It was written to William Faulkner, Oxford, Miss., and dated October 14, 1957. I think the point made by the writer is still timely; indeed, it will be timely so long as people occupy this nation, so long as our form of government exists. I can only hope that will be forever.

Dear Mr. Faulkner,

Like thousands of your other readers, I greatly admire your penetrating insights into the motivations of men and I respect you for your deep and many-sided compassion and for the ardor of your feelings on the just and the unjust.

I have read your eloquent letter of October 7 to the New York Times in which you remind us that we of the United States must set an example and unite over our racial differences if a community of free men is to endure anywhere in the world.

However, some of your statements, I think, are not as true as they seem and are very likely to play directly into the hands of the segregationists and race-haters. Speaking of an alleged fact brought out by the tragedy of Little Rock, you write: "This is the fact that white people and Negroes do not like and trust each other, and perhaps never can." Mr. Faulkner, I am a white man from the North, but I have met a number of Negroes in the Armed Forces and elsewhere, and I can truly say that personally I know some Negroes whom I like and trust as much as I do some of my white acquaintances, and more than I do certain other whites. I know more than a few white people who share my feelings on this matter and see no reason to doubt that the experience is mutual among a number of Negroes.

And even if this were not so, I ask you in deep earnest which of us can claim the omniscience to speak for the feelings of all the members of both races and to state this opinion, not only as a present, unqualified fact, but as one that is likely never to change? I am not even sure that your statement is true of the entire South, let alone of the whole country. True, mutual dislike and mistrust between the races is endemic in the South and sporadic in the North. However, if these feelings were as universal and as immutable as you seem to believe, a Federal law which opposed them and ignored their obstinacy could not in the long run be enforced by governments which derived "their just powers from the consent of the governed." Therefore, if your unqualified statement of racial incompatibility were true, we should eventually have to give up government by consent and persuasion in the very effort of preserving the Constitution in the vital matter of equality before the law, while jeopardizing the Constitution in the equally vital matter of embodying the permanent will of the people.

But if interracial situations are potentially more fluid and amenable to common sense than they now appear to be in many parts of the United States, and if this is made known throughout the land, the prospect for greater unity in freedom will be mightily strengthened. If they heard more about the cases where harmony already existed within the frame of integration, more and more Negroes and white people could dare to experience that closer fellowship which would gradually replace stubborn misunderstandings with mutual appreciation and even friendship.

To be sure, if a Southern white has all his life believed that the continuing subjugation of the Negroes in the South is right, we cannot expect him to accept integration cheerfully, and even less that he will begin to like and trust the Negro simply because the law prescribes equal and not separate education for both races. Yet, while it is neither necessary to say that "it is not important for us to like and trust each other" especially when you have indicated that this may never happen. Your eloquent call for unity without animity may be politically expedient when addressed to reluctant Southerners for the moment, but your supposition that such animity is neither necessary nor likely in the future is not only harmful to the confident growth of such animity where it is lacking, but it contradicts the fact of its increasing occurrence in this country.

Yours sincerely,
s/ Marc R. Gutwirth
19 Agassiz St.
Cambridge, Mass.

Letters

Los Angeles, Calif.
Mr. P. D. East, Editor
The Petal Paper
Petal, Mississippi

Dear Sir:

After reading about you and your paper in a newspaper article by Paul V. Coates, I made a mental note to send you a check at once for a subscription. That was a few weeks back. The delay was occasioned, I suppose, by a suspicion as to the authenticity of the facts set down in the article—although I am aware of the integrity of the writer. In this day of advertising and political pressures, for an editor to proceed as you have done is highly unlikely.

I have never lived in the South. I have never even visited that section. Yet I believe I can understand—after doing some hard thinking on the subject and attempting to view the arguments dispassionately—that the white people in the South are likely to view the question of segregation differently than born and bred Westerners. It's all so easy out here; it requires no effort at all to stand up and cry "shame!" (Which makes your stand the more remarkable.) It's a common occurrence to board a streetcar in this city and sit down by a Negro; or have a colored person sit down by you in a restaurant; and you don't give it a second thought. It may be that being at a distance from the scene, we don't tend to lose sight of what has been termed "basic human dignity." If there is such a thing then discrimination is morally untenable.

I'm pretty well convinced that prejudice results from education. We're not born with it. It ought to be just as easy to develop what we are born with as it is to drive it away. It isn't natural to experience prejudice; it's natural, however, to experience brotherly love. Oh, I know that's a trite phrase to many; but let me illustrate:

A large colored woman boarded a streetcar that I was riding. Before she reached her seat, the car started with a lurch. Losing her footing, she started to fall. A strong white arm shot out and prevented the fall. The colored woman thanked the man profusely and sat down. But the act of kindness was too much to bear. A few minutes passed and she leaned over and said to the man, "I SURE do want to thank you."

We were watching the annual running of the Los Angeles Coliseum Relays. The world famous athletes had finished their record smashing performances, and it was getting late; yet the huge crowd remained seated. The deciding events of the all-city high school track championships were being run off. This yearly culmination of an intense inter-city rivalry held, as usual, the attention of the crowd, alert for the inevitable thrills. The five-year winning streak of formidable Jefferson High, the all-Negro school appeared about to be broken. During the important relay race an incident occurred. At the moment of passing his baton, a white boy stumbled and fell, dropping his stick. With over forty-seven thousand pairs of eyes on him, he lay with the bitter blame of defeat over him. Absorbed in the

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FROM A KANSAS MOTHER —

An Open Letter To Parents

AN OPEN LETTER TO PARENTS

Blood dripped from the hero's mouth. His face, raw and swollen was distorted with pain. The villain's eyes sparkled happily as he drew back his boot for another kick.

Tears slid out of the corners of the eyes of the little golden-haired girl sitting beside me. Probably seven or eight years old, she tried hard not to cry and quickly wiped away the tears when she thought no one was watching.

I pitied the poor child. Then I began to get MAD. Mad at the parents, countless thousands, who thoughtlessly do not care what their children see.

"Oh, it's all right. The good cowboy always wins."

You hear that many times and it might have been a sufficient excuse for the old-time shows but it won't do for the ones today.

Now children see, in fantastic realism, a man stupidly staring at an arrow protruding from his belly which they just heard make a nauseating "plop." Or the "good man" looking satisfied stands by watching while the "bad man," with his clothes afire, burns to death. And every tiny detail of the inhuman agony is acted out for their "enjoyment."

Such "entertaining" scenes as eyes gouged out with hed-hot prongs and a chopped-off head carried on a platter are spared no expense to make them seem uncannily real.

Do we realize how many such scenes with sadistic brutality are becoming common-place simply because we see so many of them?

What about our youngsters who lounge around on the rug in front of the television set and nonchalantly look on while some character in a drunken rage snarls, "I'm gonna kill you if it's the last thing I ever do!" Then the drunk grabs a saber and plunges it in another man's stomach, carefully draws it out, and wipes off the dripping blood with a tablecloth.

Television has immense influence. Many TV shows and motion pictures are beautiful and informative. But let us write to the producers about the other kind.

It's a well-known fact that the influences on a child's life are home, school and church—and in that order. Consequently, the supposedly indifference with which our children watch make-believe crimes (as on TV) is in the very place which holds the

strongest teachings.

It's no idle speculation that juvenile delinquency MAY be increasing. We have proof that it is a horrifying truth. Major crimes (as a whole) have multiplied almost FOUR times as fast as our population since 1950, according to the F.B.I. But the ALARMING factor pointed out by J. Edgar Hoover is that almost 46% of these crimes were committed by youths UNDER 18 — and of that 46% the largest proportion (40%) were not yet even 15 years old!

I'm begging you parents—take time to teach your children something. You are still head of the house aren't you? You CAN turn off the TV set if you want to! If your child sulks and pouts, you are smarter than he is, aren't you—and can plan some activity that will stimulate his brain? Maybe you as an adult cannot answer what are considered the three most important questions of a mature life (what do you want out of life, what do you want to do, where do you want to live) but you can control your own juvenile offspring by 1) Seeing that they have WORK to do. 2) CHECKING that they do it right. 3) KNOWING where they are at all times. I'm pleading, now that you as an intelligent grown-up—accept the responsibility of guiding your children.

MENTALLY — Work with school boards; all organizations that raise the QUALITY of teachers; teach them yourselves during their hours at home EVERYTHING you have learned from experience.

PHYSICALLY — Games as youngsters, competitive sports (if only in the family) for teenagers; and out and out calisthenics. Namely because a good physical workout is considered the best way to work off emotional steam.

SPIRITUAL — If you are not strongly attached to a religious group take EXTRA pains to teach, really set down with books and TEACH, knowledge and love. Use a simply written book on the history of philosophy — outline how down through the centuries man has always progressed when ever he has tried to help his fellow man. Make a list of your own favorite famous men and women and use a short stretch about them from the encyclopedia to learn from their lives.

We adults control a large part of what our young people see, hear and learn. Let's do the job right.

—Mary Einsel.

THE WORLD OF NATURE

by
John M. Frazier, Conservationist
Mississippi Southern College

Springs Disappeared

Many older houses which were built by permanent springs no longer have permanent springs nearby. If they have a spring at all, it may be only temporary, or intermittent. This is sometimes called a wet weather spring. When the weather gets dry, the spring dries up. Some of the older generations can remember when they were permanent.

The dried-up permanent springs are not likely to return. The way of our civilization

scarcely permits it. During days of permanently flowing springs much of the land in the watershed area was covered with mature forests. These forests produced a thick mat of leaves and needles on the ground. This mat was like a sponge in its ability to hold water. Only small areas were cleared and cultivated, consequently much of the land was covered with the thick carpet which held water. The water was released slowly. It went into the

(Continued on Page 3)

Letters . . .

excitement, no one paid any attention to the mishap—except a Negro athlete who stepped over and laid an arm over the boy's shoulders; then they walked away across the turf, the colored boy talking quietly.

With kindest regards and every good wish for the success of your paper.

William A. Reichel

Fairhope, Ala.

Dear P. D.

Rowe said "Some Call it God" But according to the Standard

Dictionary — "GOD — The Supreme Being, self-existent; the infinite maker, sustainer, and ruler of the universe." But does it make the question any clearer by calling it Intelligence? The way nature works in the universe is it not difficult to think of Intelligence and if you must have a God as the "ruler of the universe" what are we as human being to think of the cyclones, floods and earthquakes over which man has no control? Does it not require a belief in a cruel God? Every living thing has its enemy. In May Geographic there is an interesting article about the beetles in Brazil; Julian Huxley has written a book about the

ants; Rachel Carson has written about the crustaceans at the Edge of the Sea. All these studies show how if one thing wants to live something else has to die and the death penalty is not very humane.

But how can an Infinite Maker exist in an infinite universe, and who or what would create the Creator? Is it not evident that the power to create must be an integral part of nature, of the universe, of creation? I have not been able to understand why Descartes had to have all things as springing from God since he states that God and Nature are ultimately one. It reminds me of a line in a leaflet left with me by a missionary for her church. It read "God is in nature and nature is in God". Then why do they bother about a Creator beyond and above nature? The

eastern philosophers of the eastern religions taught that the Divine Spark was in everything that existed including the human being and so were closer to our scientific findings than any of our Christian theological philosophers. Every healthy seed has the power of creation, the germ, and if the conditions are not suitable for growth then it goes back to the earth to act as food for whatever is trying to grow. The "God of Creation" is an integral part of the most infinitesimal seed.

What man creates man can destroy but man cannot destroy life. Life is self-existent. The only law that we can be sure about is the Law of Change.

Sincerely,

Alexis C. Ferm.

LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI) COUNTY OF FORREST) TRUSTEE'S NOTICE OF SALE

WHEREAS, on 1st day of December, 1951, Eugene Ford and wife Helen Ford executed their Deed of Trust, to the Trustee in the Deed of Trust, Recorded in Book 149, pages 563-64, of the Land Deed of Trust Records of Forrest County.

WHEREAS, default having been made in the payment thereof, and I having been called upon by the beneficiary to foreclose the same.

THEREFORE, I will on May 29th, 1959, at the front door of the Courthouse, within legal hours, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the land described:

Beginning at a point 80 feet West of the Southeast corner of Block 60 of the D. D. McInnis Third Survey and run North 50 feet, thence run West 40 feet, then run South 50 feet thence run East 40 feet to the point of beginning, being house numbered 124 Cypress Street.

WITNESS my signature on this the 21st day of May, 1959.

J. W. HAMBRICK, Trustee.
45-5-7, 14, 21, 28

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI) COUNTY OF FORREST) SUBSTITUTED TRUSTEE'S NOTICE OF SALE

WHEREAS, on February 6th, 1958, Carrie Miller, a Widow, and Walter Miller Jr. executed their Deed of Trust to the original trustee in the Deed of Trust, Recorded in Book 209, page 391, of the Land Deed of Trust Records of Forrest County.

WHEREAS, default having been made in the payment thereof, and I having been substituted by the beneficiary in the place and stead of the original Trustee by an instrument spread at large on the margin of the Record of said Deed of Trust, and I having been called upon by the beneficiary to foreclose the same.

THEREFORE, I will on May 29th, 1959, at the front door of the Courthouse, within legal hours, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the land described:

Lots 2 and 3 and the South 1/2 of the South 1/2 of Lot 1 all in Block Four B of the T. J. Mixon Survey of the City of Hattiesburg, together with improvements, less and except one parcel sold above by Deed which appears of record.

WITNESS my signature on this the 21st day of May, 1959.

RALPH SMITH, Substituted Trustee
45-5-7, 14, 21, 28

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI) COUNTY OF FORREST) SUBSTITUTED TRUSTEE'S NOTICE OF SALE

WHEREAS, on August 13th, 1952, Nathan Price and wife Dorothy Price executed their Deed of Trust to the original trustee in the Deed of Trust, Recorded in Book 155, page 552-554, of the Land Deed of Trust Records of Forrest County.

WHEREAS, default having been made in the payment thereof, and I having been substituted by the beneficiary in the place and stead of the original Trustee by an instrument spread at large on the margin of the Record of said Deed of Trust, and I having been called upon by the beneficiary to foreclose the same.

THEREFORE, I will on May 29th, 1959, at the front door of the Courthouse, within legal hours, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the land described:

A parcel of land lying and being immediately North of Lot 8 in Block 3 of the Yellow Pine Park Survey of the City of Hattiesburg, said parcel of land being bounded on the West Side by Whitney Street, and on the North Side by Tenth Street and more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the North West corner of Lot 8 in Block 3 of the Yellow Pine Park Survey; thence run North along Whitney Street to the Southeastly Junction point of Whitney Street with Tenth Street; thence run East 100 feet along the Southern line of Tenth Street; thence run South to the Northeast corner of Lot 8 in Block 3 of the Yellow Pine Park Survey; thence run 100 feet West along the Northern line of Lot 8 in Block 3 of the Yellow Pine Park Survey to point of beginning.

WITNESS my signature on this the 21st day of May, 1959.

RALPH SMITH, Substituted Trustee
45-5-7, 14, 21, 28

The Petal Paper

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In our enthusiasm over the new federal system of highways, we must not forget the school bus and mail routes, the farm-to-market, the home to church system of roads which are the real bloodstreams of a community.

Our rural road program MUST BE ACCELERATED!

Mississippi's program of farm-to-market roads has made fine progress since its inception in 1949. However, out of 11,600 miles designated for improvement under the State Aid Program, only 2,953 miles have been completed. The progress of any state is directly tied to its transportation facilities.

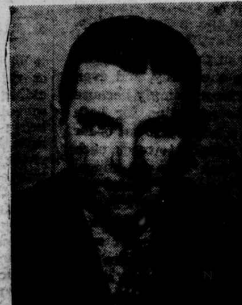
Carroll Gartin advocates the adoption of a program to black top the school routes of Mississippi and says this can be done without any increase in the gasoline tax.

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