

VOICE READERS COMPRISE a \$30,000,000 MARKET

EDITORIAL

Miller Assembly Appointment Disgrace to State

WE STRONGLY ENDORSE the denunciations voiced by both Las Vegas daily newspapers in regard to the reappointment of the notorious Dean "Diamond Tooth" Miller as sergeant-at-arms of the Nevada State Assembly.

There is little we can add to the expressions of disgust and disappointment that appeared in the SUN and the REVIEW-JOURNAL. It is necessary for the record, however, that we register

our own protest to the reappointment of this disreputable character as particularly obnoxious to every Negro in Nevada. Miller's selection over some nine other candidates was, in fact, a direct slap in the face to each colored person in the state.

The vicious racist propaganda published in this shakedown artist's slimy political sheet during the 1964 election campaigns certainly disqualified him for any job in Carson City with the possible exceptions of latrine attendant or garbage collector. And even giving him this kind of work would be an insult to the many decent persons (mostly colored, we regret to say) who are forced by circumstances to earn a living in these mean, if honorable and necessary, occupations. In fact, Miller is more the type who keeps latrine attendants busy scrubbing filthy scribbles off the walls of men's rooms, or who delights in flinging garbage along the highway instead of placing it in proper receptacles.

IT IS ESPECIALLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE that Helen Herr, who received such strong support from Negro voters in her successful bid for reelection to the Legislature, should be the one who made Miller's reappointment possible. The Clark County Democrat cast the deciding vote in the Assembly Legislative Functions Committee that gave the job to Miller, 3-2. It is to the credit of the Republican members of the committee that they voted against Miller.

(Democratic members of the committee who voted for Miller along with Miss Herr were chairman Glenn Jones, Nye County, and Boyd Manning, White Pine County. Opposing Miller's appointment were Republicans Archie Pozzi, Ormsby County, and Roy Young, Elko County.)

We completely discount Miss Herr's claim, as reported by the REVIEW-JOURNAL, that as far as she knew, Miller was the unanimous choice of the Clark County legislative delegation. Most members of the delegation insisted they had nothing to do with the selection according to the REVIEW-JOURNAL. Technically, they were correct.

But even if the other members of the Clark County delegation did not approve of Miller's selection, their failure to openly and forcefully express disapproval on the floor of the Assembly was construed by some to be moral cowardice, if not outright dereliction of duty. One regretful Assemblyman privately admitted as much.

ONE IS TEMPTED to agree with Hank Greenspun of the SUN, who wrote: "Every move in the Assembly is now suspect (due to Miller's appointment), and it appears that no good will come from this crowd. . . The public repudiated this shadowy figure who creeps around the periphery of everything that is reprehensible in politics when they rejected him for an Assembly seat. Yet the same persons who defeated him turn around and appoint him to this position. For a time we had hopes that the political climate of Clark County was improving and that decent standards of government would be set for our children. . . But the current crop of legislators seem afflicted with the blight, as were its predecessors who put Diamond Tooth in charge of the chain at the entrance to the Assembly chamber."

It is fervently hoped that before this appears in print, the Nevada Assembly will have had the courage to reverse its acceptance of this blackmailing blackguard as its sergeant-at-arms and toss him back on the dung-hill from whence he came.



AFRICA In Today's World

By DR. CHARLES I. WEST

(This is the second part of a two-part article on Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation. Last week we discussed some of the problems that led to a virtual stalemate among the major political parties and tribal divisions in the recent national election. It was mentioned that Ibadan, the largest indigenous city in Africa, is the center of the Yoruba Tribe which dominates the western region. We proceed from there.)

THE HARD-WORKING IBO TRIBE dominates the dusty eastern region, capital Enugu. Ibos tax themselves through family or village associations to send their young to college and look forward to a growing oil boom to ease the region's unemployment.

More than half the population lives in the northern region, which sprawls along the lower fringes of the Sahara Desert. The Moslem Hausa tribe controls this region and also has the most powerful voice in the federal government. Women have no vote in the north, and many live in four-wife harems.

Only in recent years have the area's feudal emirs lost life and death power over their subjects.

Camel caravans still are used and may be symbolic of the region and people--out of step with the rest of Nigeria and perhaps with the 20th century.

The three major tribes have scores of subdivisions, many of which have been blood enemies for centuries. They speak a dozen official languages and more than 300 dialects.

"The average man thinks of himself first as an Ibo and easterner or Yoruba and western region man rather than as a Nigerian," says one diplomat.

TRIBAL-REGIONAL LOYALTIES prevent true national political parties from taking root.

The Northern Peoples Congress dominates the north, the National Convention of Nigeria Citizens governs the east and midwest while the Nigerian National Democratic Party is in power in the western region.

The recent controversial election--first since independence--was fought by two alliances uniting the northern and western parties on one side into the Nigerian National Alliance and the other major party and a few smaller parties into the United Progressive Grand Alliance on the other.

It is typical of Nigeria that beside a gleaming new oil refinery near the eastern region's port of Harcourt lie rusty metal roofed homes.

Lagos presents the best and worst of this varied land. A dozen new skyscrapers, the tallest 20 stories high, rub against shack market stalls. Dugout canoes powered by floursack sails glide beside modern liners in Lagos Harbor. The city has exclusive residential areas and slums which can match stench and misery with the worst in the world.

YOUNG NIGERIAN MALES seem to have one of two aims, either a white collar civil service job or to get set up in trade. Urban Nigerians purchase most of their needs at stalls operated by "market mammies." Most retail trade is in the hands of these women, who have well-developed buying organizations and almost always deal strictly in cash. They also own "mammy wagons," passenger and freight trucks widely used outside major cities.

Commerce is brisk in Lagos. Even beggars (See AFRICA, page 13)

A Word of Caution

THIS NEWSPAPER BELIEVES in the use of the boycott as a punitive measure against those who discriminate against the Negro. Enlightened self-interest demands that Negroes refuse to buy goods produced and distributed under conditions detrimental to the orderly advancement of colored peoples everywhere. We further believe it is reasonable and right that Negroes decline to patronize merchants who handle goods produced under such conditions.

As a case in point, we refer to an editorial in the VOICE of Jan. 7 entitled, "Let's Make All South African Products Taboo."

The value of the boycott in these and other areas--such as transportation and communication--has been strikingly demonstrated in certain southern cities. As examples, we might cite the Birmingham bus boycott and the Scripto case in Atlanta.

We therefore applaud and heartily endorse the recent action of the New York State Conference of the NAACP in ordering that letters be sent 150 major department stores in that state urging the stores to stop dealing in 80 items produced in Mississippi. We also go along with the edict of conference president William H. Booth that "any store that does not comply with our request will be picketed by members of the organization."

WE SERIOUSLY QUESTION, however, the wisdom of attempts by the New York State NAACP to prevent reissuance of the film "Birth of a Nation" on its 50th anniversary next month because it "depicts the Negro in a degrading, servile role."

If this sort of suppression was pursued against every film, book or work of art allegedly tending to place minority groups in an unfavorable light, it could lead to a "witch hunt" of truly horrible proportions. It could result in a situation that would make the mass "book burnings" of Nazi Germany look like a kids' weinle roast.

The same thought occurred to us not so long ago when we learned there was a movement in Chicago to prevent reissuance of the old "Amos and Andy" television series. The reasoning behind that campaign was much the same that prompted the New York State NAACP to go on record against new showings of "Birth of a Nation."

It's been many a year since we saw "Birth of a Nation" but we hazily recall that the film dealt in a sort of quasi-documentary way with the formation and early days of the Ku Klux Klan or "Invisible Empire" in the Deep South following the Civil War. There may have been a secondary theme woven into the picture, but if there was, it now escapes us.

WE DO NOT DOUBT that "Birth of a Nation" depicts the Negro in a "degrading, servile role," although we can't recall any specific instances of such a portrayal in the film. But we do know that history teaches us that the defeated, die-hard supporters of the Confederacy who organized the Klan did, in fact, force such a role on the liberated slaves wherever and whenever they could.

Actually, the one lasting impression we retain from "Birth of a Nation" is revulsion against the terroristic tactics and brutality of the cross-burning, hooded night-riders of the Klan. In still hazy retrospect, the film comes back to us as a criminal indictment of the white South and most certainly not as a reflection on the Klan's victims. It is the tormented Negro who emerges as the real "hero" of the picture (See CAUTION, page 10)

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