

# THE COLLEGE STUDENT SPEAKS

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NEGRO PRESS INTERNATIONAL

In the early 1800s, the German composer Ludwig von Beethoven wrote his Third Symphony, dedicating it to the French leader Napoleon Bonaparte, in whom he saw incarnated the spirit of revolution and the freedom of man. But when he heard that Napoleon had proclaimed himself emperor, Beethoven became disenchanted.

"He, too, is just like any other," the composer was quoted as saying. "Now he will trample on the rights of man and serve nothing but his own ambition."

The embittered composer tore up the dedicatory page of his just-completed work and re-named it "The Heroic Symphony... to celebrate the memory of a great man."

But who was this "great man" memorialized in the Third Symphony? Probably he was an imaginary person of noble standards few people could live up to.

Beethoven's disillusionment with Napoleon may have parallels with the discrediting of many of today's civil rights leaders.

Some of them, it has been charged, have turned out to be selfish blowhards bent on stirring up trouble for trouble's sake. Others have become involved in racial and religious bigotry, lending credence to the accusation that there is little difference between them and their more obviously evil enemies.

ONE ANSWER to these charges is the one that could have been given to Beethoven: We're all human, and we all have clay feet. There is no "ideal" Napoleon who battles only for the rights of man, and there is no "ideal" civil rights leader whose only objective is to fight for human betterment.

But Beethoven also had his point. Napoleon was the liberator of France only so long as "freedom, liberty, and equality" were his goals. As soon as he became another dictator, Napoleon ceased to be the Napoleon we revere.

So it is today when righteous causes are proclaimed by people who are not righteous when terms like "freedom," "justice" and "brotherhood" are thrown around so carelessly that they often take on the opposite of their intended meaning.

An example of this hypocrisy was found in Milwaukee, where a "Black Christmas" boycott of downtown stores was held. The boycott was an economic lever used by the black community to improve its situation and to protest racial grievances.

But the "Black Christmas" also became something else: a means of coercing Negroes to join activities with which they might not agree--or not even know about. Black people carrying packages were attacked on buses and their windows broken for shopping downtown before Christmas.

Combined with this is the failure of the open-housing marches to come up to the standards of previous civil rights demonstrations. While the marchers have generally been non-violent, sometimes they have not been, and threats of violence voiced by the Rev. James E. Groppi, march leader, make the demonstrations appear to be as much a detriment to society as a spur to its improvement.

Meanwhile, leaders of a "nonviolent" organization continue to threaten the ruination of our country. Perhaps these threats are a smart tactic in the civil rights battle, or maybe they should be dismissed as so much pathological ranting.

But they destroy the sense of decency and respectability the civil rights movement needs if it wants to show that its way of doing things is any better than the one it wants removed or altered.

In Washington, there is talk of "dislocating" a city without hurting anyone. Essential city services are to be halted without causing any human suffering.

ASSUMING THE "dislocation" really comes off, one wonders whether its harmlessness is really possible. If a child can't get needed medical treatment because the streets are clogged--and in D.C., he's likely to be a black child--how benign is this "dislocation," really?

One is astonished at the spectacle of trouble-  
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# Sun Editor Addresses PTA Council

★★★

## "Get Off The Dime & Stop Defacto Segregation"



It was a long, hot summer. SUN Executive Editor Bryn Armstrong, who is also a member of the Southern Nevada Human Relations Commission, called it "The Summer of Flame in the U.S."

Addressing the Clark County PTA Council at the County School Administration Building Monday night, Armstrong cited the social revolution now in progress in America as a symptom of a disease which has been festering since pre-Civil War days.

"With smoke rising over Newark, Detroit, and other cities, 1967 was a bad year... and the odds are that 1968 will be even worse," he said.

"Why? Because we haven't even laid a finger on the basic causes of our Summer of Discontent. We are suffering from an ailment, a hang-over from those dark days in our nation's history when human beings were sold like cattle."

Armstrong said the solution to the ill-treatment of minorities in the U.S. does not lie wholly in demonstrations like Father Groppi's Milwaukee marches to support open housing laws.

He called this solution, also a revolution, "The Quiet Revolution, now being pursued by the courts of law of this land."

Armstrong cited the recent ruling of Federal District Judge J. Skelly Wright as a step in the right direction, but added, "For all of its concern in the area of human right, the Supreme Court of the U.S. has never spoken out on de facto segregation so we are necessarily confined to lower court decisions and the opinions of educators."

"At present these (Wright's) words apply only to Washington, D.C., but if the principles he enunciated were applied in any city, they would nearly mandate the end of segregated schooling in the U.S., whether such segregation was intentional or resulted from housing patterns.

Armstrong said Wright's decision would mean every school system would have to "get off the dime and begin to search for ways to integrate their schools and provide equal educational opportunity."

The editor said that in some instances of de facto segregation, schools boards, while not actively supporting segregation, had in fact promulgated it through "selective teacher assignments; Negro teachers sent to Negro schools, open zones allowing white children to escape attendance in schools in their own neighborhoods which are predominately Negro."

And, he said, the majority of educators favor sending children to the schools nearest their homes. So true school integration is extremely

difficult to obtain because of restrictive housing patterns.

Armstrong said that many "school systems are producing gradually who have not the slightest idea, in many cases, of the way large portions of our population live or the contrast between American ideals and American reality."

Quoting Maxwell Powers, director of Greenwich House in New York City, a social agency, Armstrong added emphasis to his argument.

"In occupying our days and nights in developing arithmetical formulas relating to "X" number of white children and "X" number of Negroes to be transported to "Y" school to create a fictitious ethnic balance, we have lost sight of the heart of the problem.

"How much integrated security have we created in a Negro child's life if, for six hours a day, he sits next to a white child, but at the magic stroke of 3:00 his Cinderella-like existence vanished? Back he goes to poor housing, low family income, and sociological apartheid."

Armstrong agreed with Powers that integration should be synonymous with education (the best kind), good housing (available to all minority groups) and jobs (available according to ability).

Armstrong concurred with Powers, that Americans will never achieve an integrated society until "minority groups have the doors opened wide to an education that serves their specific needs, to jobs that permit a parent to support his family with dignity and to housing that allows a family to enjoy the benefits of contemporary living."

In closing, Armstrong slammed the perennial complainers whose scream of "federal encroachment" as their sole contribution to the current problem.

"It is the history of our federal agencies and courts to move into situations that demand solutions where none have been forthcoming on local levels," he said.

"Because of local inaction we have a rise of centralized government with more concentration of power in Washington. Our failure to solve the problem of equal opportunity for all probably will result in further federal activity in this area.

"A solution is mandatory. Prejudice fosters more prejudice. Children are not naturally prejudiced... it is a conditioned reflex.

There must be greater co-operation in the homes and in the local courts... these are the real battlegrounds of the Quiet Revolution. Here that revolution will be won or lost. Here is where the most hopeful opportunities for meaningful and lasting results exist.

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