

Point of View

Editorial

Education in the state of Nevada and elsewhere throughout the United States seems to be receiving more than its share of criticism from the politicians at this time. Some of the criticism is undoubtedly warranted, while some of it is and should be taken for just what it is, political rhetoric.

Teachers, or anyone else for that matter, cannot do their best work when they feel that they are being singled out as the "bad guys," and must spend a great deal of their time defending what they are doing. Their self-concept plunges to new lows when they constantly read in the newspapers and hear on radio and television that they are not doing their job well, and at the same time these same criticisms are being used as excuses to freeze their pay.

It is a known fact that 50 years ago parents were not forced to send their children to school if the child was unable to learn or if the child was needed at home for work. Today the schools are forced to take in every child regardless of the child's ability to learn. There are also federal and state laws which make it mandatory for every child to be taught in the "least restrictive environment," which means that the child with behavior, physical, learning, or emotional problems must be taught alongside, and at the same time, as all other children. An impossible task! Much of the teacher's time must be taken up with these problems.

With all the threats, rhetoric, and downright insults being leveled at teachers, it is no wonder that many of our best teachers are leaving the profession and that qualified college students are going into other fields. Who would want to be a member of a profession where there are little or no rewards except for threats, rhetoric and insults? Most of us would not.

In order to keep qualified teachers, politicians must begin to paint a rosier picture of teaching and its rewards.

Get off the teachers' back and let them teach for a change. The results will be astounding.

To Be Equal

By John E. Jacob

The defeat of the nomination of Bradford Reynolds as Associate Attorney General was a punishing rebuke of the Administration's civil rights policies, which he has faithfully administered. And it was an example of a Congressional display of courage that's been all too rare in recent years.

Three Senators played a key role in derailing the Reynolds nomination. One was Senator Howell Heflin of Alabama, who voted "three times in crucial votes that not only withheld the Committee's approval of the nomination, but also blocked sending the nomination to the Senate floor. Senator Heflin acted on principle, despite tremendous pressures on him to vote to approve.

The other key Senator to

Courage In Congress

vote "no" on all three votes was Maryland's Charles Mathias, a stalwart supporter of civil rights who defied his Party's leadership to sink the Reynolds nomination. Another Republican, Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, cast a key "no" vote —



John E. Jacob

the one that withheld the Committee's backing for the nomination. And Delaware's Senator Joseph Biden orchestrated the Committee minority's stand and played a large role in the result.

While a lot has been said about inconsistencies in Mr. Reynolds' testimony I believe the key reason for his defeat was dissatisfaction with the Administration's civil rights policies.

Over the past four years the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division has amassed a sorry record of refusing to implement effective civil rights enforcement, defying the clear intentions of Congress and the Courts, and seeking to reverse two decades of civil rights progress and established law.

Only weeks before the confirmation hearings the Justice Department filed suit in federal courts to force local governments that were complying with court-ordered affirmative action plans to unilaterally defy the law and the courts by ending those plans.

The Department's action was based on a willful

misreading of a Supreme Court decision that was limited in scope — the decision that gave contractual seniority plans precedence over affirmative action plans when layoffs were involved.

By twisting that limited decision to pressure local governments to end effective affirmative action plans, the Department was encouraging law-breaking and continuing its ceaseless campaign

courage is coming back into style in Washington.

If that's so, it's good news. That's because civil rights is far too important to be allowed to die a slow death at the hands of officials who are hostile to the laws and who refuse to enforce them effectively.

Even opponents of busing or affirmative action should recognize the dangers of government departments refusing to enforce existing

John E. Jacob is President Of
The National Urban League

against busing, affirmative action, and other ways to desegregate our society as mandated by the law.

Congress has gone along with the Administration's policy in the past, but now there are signs, such as the Committee's rejection of the Reynolds nomination, that

laws and undermining court decisions opposed to their personal views. And all citizens have to be deeply concerned about the Justice Department's failure to enforce the Voting Rights Act and other laws that represent a national consensus on civil rights.

Church Desecrated By Court

By Alexander R. Jones

In a country bound by its constitution to protect freedom of religion, the courts are increasingly being used as instruments of religious discrimination, and as forums for anti-religious sentiment. Dr. Milton Reid knows this. He is the black activist pastor of the New Calvary Baptist Church in Norfolk, Virginia. Since 1982 his church has been subjected to devastating and reprehensible court ordered attacks which strike at the very basis of religious freedom, not only for Dr. Reid's church, but for every church in America.

The whole issue at New Calvary Baptist Church centers around a group of dissidents and the willingness of Judge Alfred Whitehurst of the Norfolk Circuit Court to issue court orders on their behalf.

The bizarre case began in November of 1982 when two church dissidents filed suit in the Circuit Court of Norfolk against the New Calvary Baptist Church and its pastor. The suit sought to force an audit of church records and the resignation

of Dr. Reid.

Since that time the court battle has intensified. In late 1983, Judge Whitehurst appointed William Mazel, a white man and a Jew, as overseer of the church. During a subsequent church meeting, Mazel requested the church's membership list, a request adamantly refused by Dr. Reid and his deacons.

As a result Dr. Reid was jailed for contempt of court and fined \$1,000 a day for each day he refused to turn over the requested list. Finally after 13 days, he relented, but vowed the case would be taken to the Supreme Court.

If decisions in this case are allowed to stand, any group of malcontents can take any church to court and thereby disrupt its activities, and lay open the church to arbitrary orders at the whim of the courts.

Let us pray that Dr. Reid is successful. For his victory will be a victory for us all.

Alexander R. Jones is the Director of Minority and Third World Affairs of the Church of Scientology.

Letter To Editor

Dear Editor:

Few Americans need to be told that the Justice Department's breakup of the Bell System was a blunder. For the average citizen, rates have gone up.

We had the best telephone system in the world. If it was a monopoly, we need more like it. So much for the Justice Department and its anti-trust division.

The phone situation today

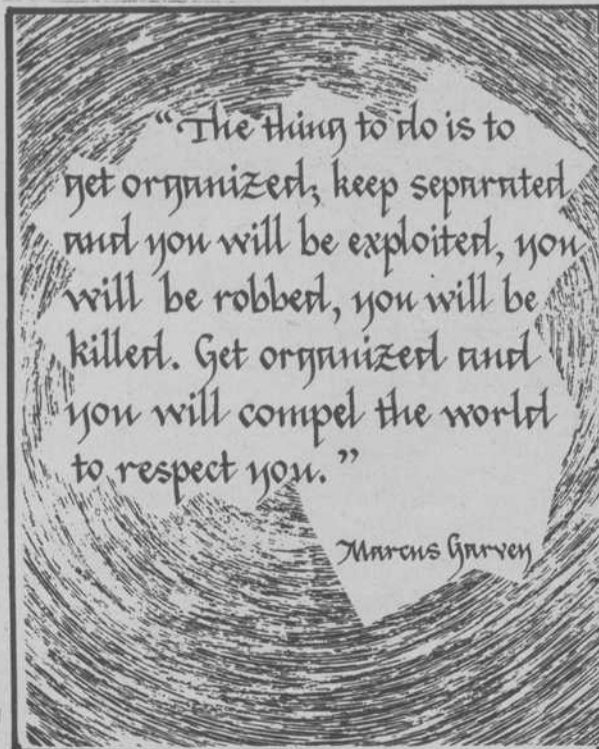
is beyond repair. Long distance service is confusing. It is hardest on the aged. They have less money to throw around. This pseudo-scientific jargon favored by the phone companies also confuses them.

Where, I ask you, is the big bad Justice Department and its anti-trust division, now that we need help? The Justice Department wrecked the telephone industry in this country; yet it is doing nothing to correct or clean up the mess that it created.

For a government that tells its citizens how to raise their children and everything else, its silence about this telephone mess is rather strange.

I fully agree now with the 18th Century philosopher, David Thoreau, when he said, "Government is best that governs least."

Elder George Ward



The views expressed on these editorial pages are those of the artists and authors indicated. Only the one indicated as the Sentinel-Voice editorial represents this publication.