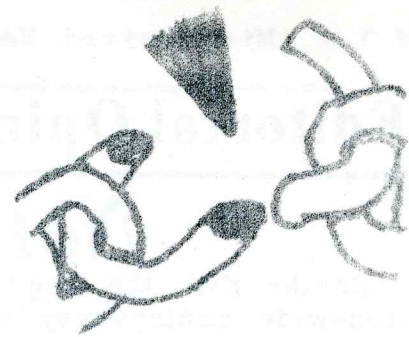




MISSISSIPPI NEWSLETTER



Number Forty-Six - Box 120, Tougaloo, Miss 39174 - February 2, 1968

CLARK on Parchman, Schools, Welfare, Milk

Holmes County Representative Robert Clark says he will make a "thorough personal investigation of Parchman," as a public official, and he will introduce welfare legislation into the House of Representatives. He also says he is strongly opposed to the compulsory school law that is now being considered by a House committee. He explains that this law would only require school attendance through the 8th grade and that in areas of under 10,000 population, children would only have to be in school 80 days of the year. Clark is a member of the Education Committee and the chairman has assured members that if any individual is not satisfied with a bill, a vote will not be taken in the committee. So he is hoping his changes can get into the final bill sent to all the members of the House to be voted into law.

His welfare bill would allow Mississippi, by getting federal aid, to assist children with unemployed or underemployed parents. This would mean that both parents could stay in the home, as they cannot under present law and get welfare. Clark would also like to increase Mississippi welfare payments from \$30. million to \$40. million a year.

In addition to the Education committee, Clark is also on the Agriculture, Pensions and Social Welfare, Livestock and Poultry, and Mileage committees. Each bill that is introduced into the House is sent to the appropriate committee for discussion, sometimes public or private hearings, and put into final form before all Representatives get a chance to vote for or against it.

Clark is in favor of keeping the Miss. Milk Commission, because it "protects the man who milks the cows. Especially, it guarantees the poor man who milks one cow a certain payment for the milk."

He is opposed to raising the sales tax, as a bill is expected to ask for. "Sales tax takes bread out of poor peoples mouths."

Clark states that "at-large election of supervisors would be to our advantage in Holmes" but he doesn't favor it because it takes away Negro majorities in some beats, where they could win.

EVERS RALLY TONIGHT

A convention-type rally is being held tonight at the Masonic Temple in Jackson to kick-off the campaign of Charles Evers for U.S. Congress. People are expected to come, with county signs, from all over the Third Congressional District. Evers will be the main speaker, and the Tougaloo College Choir will sing.

Evers has been endorsed by the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and the Baptist Ministers Union - all the Negro clergy in Jackson - as well as the Miss. Elks.

Editorial Opinion

THE SOUTHERN COURIER

January 27-28, 1968

Not Nice

Eartha Kitt, the Negro singing star, started a nation-wide controversy last week when she told it like it is at a luncheon given by President Johnson's wife, Lady Bird.

The 50 invited ladies were discussing crime in the streets. But, Miss Kitt explained later, there was too much talk about flowers by the roadside, and about bigger and better streetlights. So, according to published reports, this is what Miss Kitt told the First Lady and her guests:

"I think we have missed the main point at this luncheon. We have forgotten the main reason we have juvenile delinquency.

"The young people are angry, and the parents are angry, because they are being so highly taxed and there's a war going on, and Americans don't know why. The youth are not rebelling for no reason at all. They are rebelling against something, and we can't camouflage what it is.

"Boys I know across the country feel it doesn't pay to be a good guy. They figure that with a record, they don't have to go off to Viet Nam. . . .

"I am a mother, and I know the feeling of having a baby come out of my gut. I have a baby, and then you send him off to war. No wonder the kids rebel and take pot--and Mrs. Johnson, in case you don't understand the lingo, that's marijuana."

The reaction was immediate. The wife of the governor of New Jersey rose and said, among other things, that "anybody who takes pot because there is a war on is a kook." Mrs. Johnson made a tearful speech, and the next day issued a statement saying she was sorry "only the shrill voice of anger and discord" had been heard.

And finally, the Rev. George R. Davis--pastor of the President's church in Washington--took it upon himself to "apologize" for Miss Kitt's remarks, calling them (and her) "ill-mannered, stupid, and arrogant."

You have to go no farther than Davis' remarks to see how racism dominates white America's reaction to the White House incident. Nothing Miss Kitt said was half so rude as the minister's apology--but of course, that's different. And only Negroes are "arrogant" for telling off the Johnsons--down here we call it "uppity." Perhaps Miss Kitt should have offered to help with the dishes.

It seems obvious to us that since Miss Kitt was invited to the White House to express her opinion, she had a right to express it. And what did she say that was so awful, anyway? She said what is on her mind, and on the minds of millions of other Americans. It could have been a valuable lesson for the Johnsons and for all America, but instead everyone seems determined to turn it into a lesson for Eartha Kitt.

Miss Kitt may not have made perfect sense, but there is no denying that people in this country are unhappy. There is no denying that the best way to stay out of the Army is to be a criminal or a homosexual (or a rich kid). There is no denying that many intelligent people--even if they don't turn to pot--are beginning to wonder if anything is worth doing, so long as the Johnsons are in the White House and the country continues in its present path.

That path, as many see it, is away from racial and social justice, and toward the war that will destroy the world. Some "kooks" might even say these concerns are more important than one of Lady Bird's garden parties.

CANDIDATE'S CROP RUINED

Delta Ministry reports for January of 1968 says that:

"Joseph Williams, defeated candidate for supervisor in Yazoo County, lost his entire soy bean crop when he was unable to hire a combine and driver to harvest the crop. Williams, who had suffered other economic reprisals, previously had contracted with white neighbors for use of a combine."

Want to be an INSURANCE AGENT?

Anyone interested in becoming an insurance agent should get in touch with Bob Fitzpatrick at the Lawyers Committee right away. Call 948-5400 or write to 233 North Parish Street, Jackson, Miss

You have to take a licensing exam in order to be an insurance agent. But Bob tells us he has been assured by people in the insurance industry that they will help people to prepare for the exam.

PERSONAL NOTE to W.F.S.

It sure would help if you'd pay for the \$13.50 worth of work F.I.S. did for you almost a year ago. We need it, brother.

The War Gets Bigger

Cordelia Nikkalaos was the first to let us know about President Johnson considering a "selective callup of reservists with needed skills." She comments that he hadn't said what skills were "needed", but "I suspect the most needed ones are marching, trigger-pulling, and bleeding."

She also reports that Paul Harvey's news program noted that the U.S. was bombing Salgon Thursday and the Viet Cong, which includes girls, was going door-to-door organizing a revolutionary council to run the city.

Student Strike April 26th

The National Black Anti-War, Anti-Draft Union is asking "all students throughout the Third World to join the Black students of the United States in an International Student Strike on April 26th, 1968."

FIRST BLACK CASE against WHITE

Three weeks ago, Willie Daniel, a Negro father from Columbia, Miss. was found guilty of cursing a white principal. He was fined \$25. Then he brought an assault and battery charge against the principal for hitting him. In a trial last week, a white jury let the principal off as innocent after five minutes of discussion. Mr. Daniel will appeal his conviction and sue the principal, L.L. Autry, for damages. The incidents supposedly happened when Mr. Daniel went to the school to find out why his son had been suspended.

ADULT EDUCATION in JACKSON

Mr. Bacon of the adult education program of the Jackson public schools, will speak at a meeting Tuesday night, Feb. 6, at the Bethlehem Center on Blair Street in Jackson. An educational program is to be set up for adults who can't read and write to the 8th grade level. The meeting will start at 7:30 p.m.

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

by Mike Higson

The Mississippi Legislature is already showing its concern over the possibility of Black rebellions this summer.

One member has asked more money for the lily-white National Guard. Another member proposes that demonstrators or "rioters" should be made to pay for any damage they might cause!

The bill asking an additional \$60,000 for the Miss. National Guard will probably pass. It was drawn up by Sen. Bill Burgin of Columbus. Burgin, significantly, heads the Senate Appropriations Committee - the committee which decides the legislature's spending.

The legislature has now been meeting four weeks. It has not shown much indication, so far, of wanting to deal with the problems of Black people. The only bills on welfare propose more money for those getting old age assistance. Nothing for the disabled or mothers with dependent children.

Two bills to re-instate compulsory schooling have been introduced. They have, however, been viciously attacked by the White Citizens' Council. It's a sign that this particular legislation might help Black people!

After 78 years, someone has thought to make the registration laws dealing with residency and voting age easier. The legislature may agree to lower the voting age to 18 and decrease the amount of time a person has to live in Mississippi before registering. At the moment the period is 2 years. The suggested period is one year.

In another election measure, Rep. Ralph Herrin (Jones and Covington Counties) asked that candidates for public office should be made to file a statement of what they think about capitalism, socialism, and communism.

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A CAGE FOR INNOCENTS

by Orville Schell

Nguyen Luc is 77 years old. He had been labelled an Innocent Civilian and was waiting to be shipped out (to a refugee camp in Viet Nam). He was probably the oldest inmate in the Chulai camp. Although his hair was not completely gray, he was hunched over from years of bending down working in the rice paddies. He walked extremely slowly and finally had to be helped up the steps of the interrogation hut. I reached down to give him a hand. His wiry body could not have weighed more than 80 pounds. A major from the Press Information Office thrust out a glad hand in welcome. But Nguyen did not know the significance of shaking hands. Instead he placed both hands together in front of him in a prayer-like motion, which is the traditional form of Vietnamese greeting. The major gave a nervous laugh and then tried to clasp him around the back like a public relations man squiring a big client into his office. But Luc had already begun to sit down. His eyes were fixed to the ground the whole time. He wore an oversize pair of sawed-off army fatigues, and sat quietly on a small wood stool. He seemed neither nervous nor scared, just weary. I had the feeling that even if I had wished to, I could not have done anything that would have gotten any emotional response from him.

Question. How long have you been here?

Answer. Six days.

Q. How were you captured?

A. I was captured in the morning while out in the rice fields working. The Americans and the ARVN's (Army of the Republic of Viet Nam, that is South Vietnamese) came and ordered me to go with them.

Q. Did they allow you to return home and talk to your family or bring any possessions?

A. No, they were in a very big hurry. They pointed guns at me and I just went.

Q. Had your fields been planted?

A. Yes.

Q. What will happen to them now?

A. I don't know who will harvest the rice. I would like to go back because now there are very few people in the village. They all live underground. All our houses have been bombed and destroyed. The bombs have made big holes in our rice fields.

Q. When did the bombing start?

A. (He paused.) It started three years ago -- but then not as much as now.

Q. Did the people fear the V.C. or the bombing more in your village?

A. We don't like the V.C. because they take our rice and sometimes make us work.

Q. But which do you fear the most?

A. We fear the bombing because we don't know when it will come and we can't see it. (At this point Luc began fidgeting with his pants. I asked why, but he did not respond.)

Q. Who are the Americans?

A. (Pause.) The Americans are like the French. The French were very cruel.

(continued on the next page)

A CAGE FOR INNOCENTS (continued from page four)

Q. Are the Americans cruel?

A. The French beat the people.

Q. Do the Americans beat the people?

A. (Luc glanced over at the agitated but silent PIO officer.)

Sometimes the Americans give candy. (Again he started tugging at his baggy fatigue shorts, which I noticed were missing most of the buttons on the fly.)

Q. Why are you fidgeting? Are you hurt?

A. (A long pause during which time Luc stared at his feet.) I want some underwear. I am embarrassed because my pants will not fasten.

Q. Have you asked the Americans for some new clothes? You know that they give clothes to inmates, don't you?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you asked them? (The PIO major interrupted here to assure me that all prisoners received all the clothing and medical attention that they needed.)

A. Yes, once.

Q. What happened?

A. I asked the Americans, but they did not understand me. They just laughed at me, and one struck me. He slapped me on my face. I was very scared. I didn't dare ask again.

Q. Why do you ask now? I have explained that I am not in the army.

A. The atmosphere is good. (The PIO major acted shocked and assured me that this "oversight" would be corrected. After the interview he hurried to the office to launch his protest.)

Q. Do you know why your village was bombed?

A. The people said that it was because of the Communists.

Q. What is a Communist? Who are they?

A. (Long pause.) They are... I don't know.

Q. Have you ever heard of Nguyen Cao Ky or Nguyen Van Thieu?
(These men are South Vietnamese leaders.)

A. No, I don't know them.

Q. Have you ever heard of Ho Chi Minh?

A. Yes, he sent troops from the North. He is well known.

Q. Why were you detained?

A. I don't know why. They just brought me in.

Q. But has anyone explained to you the reason for detaining you?

A. No. They do not speak Vietnamese. We cannot understand one another.

Q. What did they tell you in the interrogation?

A. They asked me questions. They asked me if I was a Viet Cong and if I knew where the Viet Cong were hiding. They just asked me questions.

Q. Do you know that you have been designated an Innocent Civilian?

A. What is that? (The PIO major moved forward on his chair ready to give an explanation.)

Q. Where are you going when you leave here?

A. I don't know what they are going to do with us. Will I be able to go back to my village? I am very worried because no one is there to look after our ancestral tombs.

Q. Do you have a family?

A. Yes, a wife, two sons, and some grandchildren.

Q. Where are they now?

A. I don't know. I am very sad because I don't know what has happened to them. Maybe they are worrying about me also.

(continued on bottom of page six)

LETTERS

Dear FIS:

Rev. RLF Smith I am writing you all to let you no I need somebody up here to help me. I don't have no one to help me with the stamp program. Please send me somebody. I have the agriculture man an that is all. Please answer soon. I receive your letter an was glad to get them. I am the felv man off the NAACP. I work with the US government. The people here do not have the money. They can't get no stamp. This is bad conty, Greenwood, Mississippi.
from mr lee davis

Dear FIS:

This is my new adress. I hope to start back to receiving my newes letters. Oh yes we met in Marks last night. The church were full. We had for our gest Mrs. Robinson and Mr. Mel Leventhal from Jackson (from the Inc Fund). He talk on the school matters. He draw a map jest how the white an colored school were arrange and he showed us jest how much more money the white school has per child then the colored.

Mrs. Robinson she talked on the wellfair problem on which we are having much differcult with. Our big problem in Quitman County is getting our colored people together. Our

preacher an school teacher is one of the big hindrance so that we poor people is the only one that is trying to do anything. Oh yes I will be glad when I can get able to help you all out in sending out the newsletter.

Yours truly,
Tommy Young

RANDLE'S PLATFORM

Mr. Carver Randle, Leland school teacher and Sunflower County NAACP chairman, is continuing his campaign for mayor of Indianola in the February 6 run-off election.

He lists his platform as:

- 1) equalization of the tax load, and equal use of taxes (more tax burden on the rich)
- 2) improvement in sanitation and drainage
- 3) improvement of streets, sidewalks, etc.
- 4) new housing and a housing code
- 5) equal police protection
- 6) attraction of new industry

Mr. Randle sees the duty of the mayor, including his role as municipal judge, to be very important.

He says that "only if substantial steps are made to accomplish what is outlined in my platform can there truly be justice and liberty for all our people in Indianola."

A CAGE FOR INNOCENTS (Continued from page five)

Q. Perhaps they are in refugee camps. Do you know anything about the resettlement program?

A. No.

Q. Have the Americans ever dropped leaflets on your village explaining the refugee program and warning you to leave your village because it will be bombed?

A. Yes, sometimes they drop leaflets. But I can't read. Many people can't read. Now there are no schools in the countryside. They are all destroyed.

Q. Do you know what is going to happen to you?

A. No, I don't know. I need someone to help me. I am very scared here all alone.