

Funding A New Bureaucracy

Mississippi's lawyers will look favorably at Justice Robert P. Sugg's suggestion the state establish an intermediate-level appeals court but we wonder if it will create one more bureaucracy in the judicial system.

Justice Sugg scores points when he argues the state Supreme Court is burdened with too many cases. The number of cases handled by the state's highest court has increased from 613 to 879 in a seven-year period, an increase of 43 percent.

Too, Justice Sugg makes a valid argument that the present 375-day average time lag between the filing of an appeal and a Supreme Court decision on the appeal will grow even longer unless a two-tiered appellate system is established.

"As appeals increase we can't maintain our present 375-day time period. The number of cases handled at the present is too many for each judge to thoroughly acquaint himself with each case," Sugg said. "We're just going to build up a larger and larger backlog."

You'll find few people in the Laurel area who'd argue against the speedy handling of court cases. In fact, many believe most cases aren't han-

dled quickly enough.

But we wonder if adding another level of the court system is wise. There is no question that more and more cases are appealed each year which clogs the judicial machinery.

We're all to blame. Part of the problem is the increasing number of "nuisance suits" that are being filed on a daily basis. Folks who settled problems themselves are turning to the court system for settlement of grievances. There are many cases filed in our court system not because the "grieving party" has hopes of winning a favorable decision but in hopes the second party won't want to bother with the action and settle out of court.

We seem to have reached a point where people believe there is a legal solution to every problem. There have been some mighty ridiculous cases handled in our court system. The potential for abuses, if this trend continues, is endless.

An appellate court would be a benefit in that it would speed up appeal cases. The kicker is if the folks are willing to fund a new bureaucracy when the state already ranks 16th in the nation in terms of public employees.



The Schools We Deserve

(Second of two columns)

The facts about contemporary education tell a withering story. They say that, despite ever more teachers and ever more infusions of cash and ever more experimentation, the nation's schools are producing students ever more poorly equipped.

In 1764 John Adams said that a "native of America who cannot read or write is as rare an appearance as... a comet or an earthquake." Today, 23 million Americans cannot fill out job applications or read newspapers. Indeed, there have been sharp declines in newspaper readership, notably during the past decade — to the point that only 55 percent of U.S. adult read a newspaper every day. Among persons in their 20s, the figure is just 40 percent.

Ignorance and illiteracy are not diminishing but expanding. As Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

What are some of the causes of this lamentable situation?

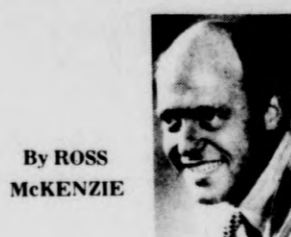
One is TV. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, "Teen-agers read little for their own enjoyment, spend more time watching television than they spend reading, do not read for long periods of time, and prefer movies to books. About 10 percent remain unable to read even simple materials."

Many students believe they will emerge from school into an electronic world that will require little reading and less writing. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The average American child between the ages of 2 and 11 spends nearly five hours per day watching TV. The figures for teen-agers are not quite so high. But such high dosages of TV have bred intellectual passivity; they have to fracture initiative and academic drive; they have to contribute to making accurate computation and clear writing increasingly rare arts.

A second reason is what the University of Michigan's Joseph Adelson calls "the growth of judicial and bureaucratic intervention" in education. This has brought a corresponding emphasis on sociological goals for the schools, as opposed to educational ones — racial balance, etc. As The Washington Post's Jessica Mathews says, "Once the world leader in appreciating the importance of a well-educated populace, the United States today stands alone among the industrialized nations in its indifference to the quality of education its children are getting."

We hear "quality education" all the time, but the more we talk about it the



By ROSS
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less of it we get. The United States now spends the equivalent of 8 percent of its gross national product on public elementary and secondary education, yet the products of that "education" are inexorably dumber. We write almost desperately of those pockets, those exceptions, where all seems not lost. But we are kidding only ourselves.

Remedial courses in academic basics are fast becoming no longer the exception for college freshmen, but the rule. As Adelson has written: "The story of education in this period is a story of experiments — an abundance, a cornucopia of reforms and breakthroughs, each introduced breathlessly, each kept afloat by publicity, soon to be replaced by more publicity, and more disappointment — the New Math, Head Start, computer instruction, programmed learning, closed-circuit TV, community control, contract teaching, open classrooms, sensitivity training." Faddism — that is what the schools have been, neglectful of the essentials.

Those going into teaching come consistently from the bottom of their classes. Teachers in general are overburdened and underpaid; they grow understandably disillusioned — with their

students, with their students' parents, and with the bloated bureaucracies that run the schools. Like homework, discipline is down. Promotion to the next grade is almost automatic. And the result is a shambles. It is a shambles despite the efforts of many dedicated and compassionate teachers — and despite many effective programs.

We have postulated a good education as one of the noblest (and inflation-resistant) possessions available to Americans. Yet the steady decline in academic standards, a lightening of academic regimen; in Miss Mathews' words, "a loss of appetite for the hard work of learning and an appreciation for the results." Some school systems are testing teachers now; some are requiring students to pass proficiency tests to receive their high school diplomas. But the teachers' unions are resisting teacher tests fang and talon, and the student proficiency tests — if they are anything like Virginia's — are tests that fifth-graders ought to be able to pass with ease.

Yes, there have been the pedagogical battles, but none of the thoroughgoing revamping of American education that is required. The confused condition of American education is a reflection of our society's confused values and expectations generally. Until those values crystallize — until we decide what it is we want not only for education but for ourselves — American education will continue to churn out inferior goods. And we shall continue, in the words of Columbia's Diane Ravitch, to have "the schools we deserve."

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The Utility Of Violence

WASHINGTON — Whenever a diplomat or politician is cut down by an assassin, Westerners retreat almost invariably to the verbal formulation, denouncing the "senseless act of violence."

But the attempted murder of Shlomo Argov in London — a brilliant Israeli diplomat well known to this city — was anything but senseless. Cold and calculated, it demonstrates the immense utility of the single act of violence in the 20th century. The man with the gun can change the course of history, or accelerate it.

It is almost a certainty that the would-be assassins of Argov acted without complicity or authorization of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Wedged between the Israeli army and Major Haddad's irregulars in the South, and the Syrian army on its north, the PLO is keenly aware of the precariousness of its position. It has, by and large, maintained the cease-fire, in its own interest. It has refrained from responding to Israeli attacks. It divorced itself at once from the attempt on Argov's life. Indeed, a PLO official was said to be on the assassins' hit list.

Nonetheless, Menachem Begin, enraged that his friend and personal choice for the London post, had been cut down, ordered in retaliation F-16 air strikes on a Palestinian camp near Beirut. Some 300 were killed, as of Monday, mostly women and children.

The massacres compelled the PLO to open up in South Lebanon to the Israeli settlements which gave Begin his long-awaited opportunity to destroy the artillery and rocket positions built up by the Palestinians over the past nine months.

So, now, the Israeli army is pouring north, overrunning the Palestinian positions in South Lebanon, pushing the PLO back into Beirut, beyond artillery range of upper Galilee. While the Syrian and Israeli armies have not yet collided in force, there is the possibility of a fifth major Arab-Israeli war.

When the advance is halted, the Israeli army will surely occupy all of Southern Lebanon. Given the planning and preparation, the cost in lives and material, the diplomatic and political risks accepted, Begin's occupation will not be brief, and the consequences, worldwide, will surely be significant.

There will be almost unbearable pressure upon Cairo to move away from a peace and friendship treaty with an Israel that has occupied yet another Arab land. At the United Nations, Israel will be, if possible, more isolated. Resolutions calling not only



By PATRICK
BUCHANAN

for censure and condemnation, but an economic and military boycott of Israel will be introduced and passed — unless the United States exercises its lone veto.

America's friends in the Arab world, such as Jordan, Morocco and Saudi Arabia, will be estranged from their own populations by radical Arab regimes accusing them of carrying water for the United States, the Great Arsenal of Zionism, which provides Jerusalem with the equipment and weapons with which it kills Palestinian children and occupies Arab lands.

All this — triggered by the shooting of Shlomo Argov on a London Street!

The men in the cells in London may have the minds of murderers; but they are not fools; their act was not "senseless." Look, again, at what a single act of brutality precipitated!

An Israeli invasion of an Arab country, bringing Israel to the brink of war with Syria. The further poisoning of relations between Palestinian and Jew.

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YESTERYEARS

June 11, 1972

Carolyn Ruth Holder, 20-year-old daughter of Dr. and Mrs. E. J. Holder, was crowned Saturday as Laurel's "Miss Hospitality" for 1972-73 by the outgoing title holder, Connie Kite. Miss Holder was named following the annual contest sponsored by the Laurel Jaycees.

Clyde Walters, chairman of the third annual Mississippi Oil Festival in Laurel, expressed appreciation Monday to all those who contributed their time and efforts in making the barbecue a tremendous success.

June 11, 1957

At the Jones County chapter of American Red Cross board meeting Tuesday, it was announced that Hilary Williams of Two Rivers, Wis., has been named field representative for 20 American Red Cross Chapters in South Mississippi and will work with chapters in developing the organization's 10 major service programs.

Daphne Park Pool was a popular place Wednesday as 689 children enrolled in the Free Learn-To-Swim class for boys and girls 6-11 years of age.

Allain & Legislative Snoops

Attorney General Bill Allain must feel like the man whose neighbor crossed the road in order not to pass him on his side of the road.

The state attorney didn't make too many friends in the Legislature when he decided to remove 36 lawmakers from state boards and commissions he considers to be in the executive branch.

No doubt as a result, the Legislature cut Allain's budget during the past session. He wasn't alone. The Legislature also cut Secretary of State Ed Pittman's salary and office budget because of Pittman's criticism of the Legislature's failure to grant teachers pay raises.

Of course the legislators will deny Attorney General Allain and Secretary of State Ed Pittman's budgets were cut because of those reasons, but there are other indications lawmakers have a short fuse when it comes to such things.

So Attorney General Allain became a bit incensed when he found out recently legislators are going behind

his back to get information about the operation of his office.

Allain says he doesn't mind giving information to the staff member who attempted to get the details from the state auditor's office. In fact, Allain said, he would gladly provide the information the staff member wasn't willing to ask for personally.

In the meantime, the attorney general hasn't backed down from his criticism of legislators serving on boards and commissions. He also criticized the Legislature for its failure to pass an open records bill.

The attorney general has been somewhat of a straight shooter since taking office. He is willing to speak the truth and let the chips fall where they may. No wonder the Legislature is worried about giving up their positions on boards and commissions, which to us appear to be a violation of the separation of power.

For now, however, Allain and the Legislature are like two ships that pass in the night. Or like the neighbor that crossed the street to prevent a face-to-face contact.

ERA Ranks As Non-Issue . . .

It just never ceases to amaze us at how worked up people get over things that don't really amount to much. A prime example is the Equal Rights Amendment.

On the one hand, proponents seem to think it's the answer to every problem connected with womanhood. Pass the ERA and everything will be right with the world.

On the other hand, opponents see it as the very work of the devil himself. It will be the end of family, the mountains will crumble, the seas will run dry and everybody, men and women, will look just alike.

Fact is, the ERA won't change things very much regardless of whether it lives or dies. Incidentally, its pulse is rather weak and is failing fast. ERA's time is running out.

Proponents forget that we have reams of regulations and stacks of court decisions giving women just what they contend the ERA would guarantee them — equality. The only thing the ERA would do is bring all that gobbledygook under one umbrella.

Opponents forget that basic differences in men and women were

decided a long time ago and it'll take more than a constitutional amendment to change any of that. May we add, thank goodness that is true.

In the final analysis, about the only thing we can see the ERA do is good for is to give folks something to talk about besides the weather. If that's their pleasure, so be it and have at it.

Protest, demonstrate, live or die, however, ERA just doesn't really matter very much when you boil the rhetoric away.

It's a non-issue.

. . . Ms. Or Miss?

As we pointed out, it appears the Equal Rights Amendment is headed for a sure if not swift death. Time is fast running out.

We take no joy in its looming demise but we do not care to attend the wake. However, we do have one small request to make if ERA goes to its eternal reward.

Could we change the official abbreviation of Mississippi from Ms. back to Miss?

Reagan's Grand Tour Of Europe

WASHINGTON — Unless you have spent the last several days in a cave in the Ozarks, you have unquestionably had your fill of reports on President Reagan's Grand Tour of Europe. It is, predictably, all the rage on the networks' evening news programs.

This, of course, is one of the reasons that presidents like to make such trips. They capture attention in a generally uncritical way — see the president meet with the other World Leaders, see the First Lady going to dinner at the palace, see the president riding horses with the queen. Who is going to be churlish enough to dwell on a 9.5 percent unemployment rate?

This doesn't suggest, of course, that there aren't serious topics being discussed by President Reagan on his Grand Tour. No one questions the compelling importance of Europe of some progress in bringing down interest rates in the United States. No one doubts the need for some coherent western policy on trade with the Soviet Union. And surely no one doubts the genuine concern over nuclear weapons everywhere.

Nor does this suggest it isn't worthwhile for the president, any president, to meet face-to-face with our allies and gain the added understanding that flows from such meetings. That value is clearly enhanced in the case of a President who has been in office a relatively



By JACK GERMOND
And JULES WITCOVER

short time and has no little experience in world affairs.

But from a political standpoint, a trip such as this one is welcomed by the White House first because it is essentially a diversion from the prosaic day-to-day problems the administration faces. Let with the queen is a lot more fun than trying to deal with Tip O'Neill or Dan Rostenkowski on a federal budget for the next fiscal year.

Moreover, the direct political profit is there for the taking. If the usual pattern is followed, Reagan will experience a marked increase in the approval ratings he is given in opinion polls, at least for a week or two. Polls are always influenced by spec-

The temporary nature of such gains is an important point, however, because it demonstrates that the electorate is less genuinely im-

pressed with circuses than with bread, no matter how beguiling viewers may find their nightly ration of news from Versailles or London or Bonn.

That was never more clearly demonstrated than in Richard Nixon's last trip abroad a few months before he was sent to his well-earned retirement in San Clemente. Who can forget the vivid film of the cheering throngs in Cairo and Nixon basking in their glow far from the ugly talk of impeachment. But back home the central problem of the Watergate rot in his administration remained, and everyone knew it.

In Reagan's case, there is an extra measure of political importance to this trip — the notion that has been so widespread both at home and abroad that he is a president with a remarkable lack of sophistication about foreign policy issues. To whatever extent that idea is diluted, the trip is all gravy for the president, even if, as is likely, there are no long-term substantive results of the summit meetings.

There is, however, a political downside to this trip that most presidents traveling abroad don't have to factor in to their political equations. First, at the most obvious level, the pomp and circumstance add weight to the perception of Ronald Reagan as a president far removed from the concerns of those

that they believed would require proportional representation of minorities in elective office. (That the legislation called for a specific prohibition against quotas escaped the attorney general's notice entirely.)

The beneficiaries of the Voting Rights Acts are racial and language minorities who need federal protection to guarantee them equal access to the political process.

In Namibia, however, the beneficiaries of the racial quotas supported by the administration are white.

Under an independence plan proposed by Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker, the tiny white population of Namibia would be guaranteed more seats in the national government than their actual numbers could



By JULIUS
BOND

practical effect of placing inflexible restraints on the opportunities afforded one race in an effort to remedy past discrimination against another," said Attorney General William French Smith in a speech a year ago.

And in Senate testimony, Smith and assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds warned against adoption of a version of the Voting Rights Act renewal

ever elect. Why is such a system wrong in the United States, where it would protect black and brown voters, but right in Africa, where its beneficiaries would all be white? Why is it right to guarantee white representation in an overwhelmingly black nation? Why is it wrong to prohibit similar guarantees for blacks in a country where most of the citizens are white?

Racial politics determined the administration's opposition to strong protection for racial minorities in the House-passed version of the Voting Rights Act renewal.

Blacks and browns traditionally vote Democratic. So why should a Republican administration make it easier for minority voters to overcome the racial barriers that keep their numbers small and impotent?

But the administration favors racial quotas in southern Africa, where white minorities exercise absolute dominance over black majorities.

In Namibia, illegally occupied by South Africa for more than three decades, the administration hopes to predetermine an election outcome favorable to South Africa's white minority government.

Newspaper Enterprise Association

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Friday, June 11, the 162nd day of 1982. There are 203 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history: On June 11, 1509, Britain's King Henry the Eighth married Catherine of Aragon.

On this date: In 1940, Princess Juliana of the Netherlands arrived in Canada as an exile in World War II.

In 1967, Israel and Syria reached a ceasefire in the Six-Day War, with Israeli troops still holding positions inside Syrian territory.

In 1971, Soviet Communist Party Chief Leonid Brezhnev called for an end to the arms race between the United States and Soviet Union.

And in 1978, Uganda's President Idi Amin escaped an assassination attempt when three grenades were thrown at a parade of police recruits.

Ten years ago: The Nixon administration promised better cooperation with Japan on U.S. foreign policy decisions.

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Mulligan's Stew . . .

Summer's Reading List

By HUGHA MULLIGAN
AP Special Correspondent

RIDGEFIELD, Conn. (AP) — The clang of horseshoes on a nearby lawn, the zap and sizzle of a blue bulb bug lamp, the golden glimmer of the first bikinied jogger on my north window last weekend that summer in law is portent that summer is in full bloom.

The time has come to string the hammock and laze away the long sunny afternoons in the quiet company of the Mulligan's Stew summer reading list, now coming at you for the fifth successive season.

Writers who ink their typewriter ribbons with blood can be very fastidious, which is why this year's summer reading list begins with Hector Munro, an elegant writer doing out delicate, delightful malice under the pen name of Saki.

Do try to get hold of the recently published "The Complete Works of Saki," with a splendid introduction by Noel Coward.

After Saki on our reading list, summer's long shadow of horrors moves on to John Collier, another master of the macabre happily enjoying a revival after years of neglect by the critics. Collier was an erudite, graceful British author who hid from fame in Hollywood, of all places, where he turned up memorable scripts like "The African Queen" and some of the finest overlooked short stories of our time. So, read "The Best of John Collier."

As long as our summertime meanderings have taken us to Chicago, do drop in on Harry Mark Petrakis, an American novelist and short story master long overdue for a Pulitzer Prize. For appetizers

at this zesty Greek-American banquet I suggest "Pericles on 31st Street" and "The Wooing of Ariadne," which should make him author of the year among the feminists. Both are featured in "A Petrakis Reader," along with the horrific and hilarious "Pa and the Sad Turkeys."

Under the heading of "Books You May Have Missed But Shouldn't Have," I recommend wickedly, witty "Burr" by Gore Vidal.

For scholarly reading this summer, we depart from our usual custom of urging some neglected classic and call your attention to "Years of Upheaval," the second volume of Henry Kissinger's memoirs.

Also this summer you can spend some sunny afternoons down memory lane with Malcolm Muggeridge's "Chronicle of Wasted Time."