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THE NEWSPAPER is an institution developed by modern civilization to present the news of the day, to foster commerce and industry, to inform and lead public opinion, and to furnish that check upon government which no constitution has ever been able to provide.

—THE TRIBUNE CREDO

Mayor Byrne's school shuffle . . .

During her campaign, Mayor Byrne pledged to provide leadership on school issues. But her first major move in this area indicates that she does not understand how delicate the task is going to be.

She swept aside the work of the Advisory Commission on School Board nominations, which for four months had been working to develop a list of nominees for two board vacancies. Refusing to look at the slate of six finalists, she said she will replace commission Chairman Stanley Owens and increase the size of the group before setting it back to the task of considering candidates.

The commission's slate is in no way *binding upon the mayor. The procedure* was designed, after the school board was wracked by political scandal in the 1940s, to act as a buffer between school affairs and partisan politics. But it was not meant to eliminate the mayor's responsibility. It is a subtle mechanism, meant to deal with a subtle problem. The public schools are vital to the health of the city and are thus of great concern to City Hall. At the same time, school decisions often require professional judgment that does not thrive in a hotly political setting.

Mayor Byrne's late sponsor, Mayor Daley, tried to preserve this balance—allowing the selection commission to do its work but, as in 1968, exercising his authority to refuse to accept its recommendations when he felt it necessary.

There is value in this cautious interplay of power, but it seems to have been lost on Mayor Byrne. In the interest, perhaps, of asserting her power in a dramatic way, she has upset the balance and delayed the process of filling the empty seats on the board.

The school board faces some wrenching decisions in upcoming days: responding to federal demands for student desegregation, coping with another budget crunch, and negotiating a new contract with the Chicago Teachers Union. Now is not the time to ignite a controversy just so the mayor can put people of her choosing on the commission. The board does need Mayor Bryne's leadership and support. It does not need delay in filling its empty seats or political posturing that confuses an already difficult situation.

. . . and HEW's criteria

Meantime, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare has demonstrated just how difficult and sensitive the school board's job is going to be. Responding to School Supt. Joseph Hannon's request for some specific idea of what HEW would consider an acceptable desegregation plan, Office of Civil Rights Director David Tatel presented the board with a series of criteria.

He called the criteria "flexible" and offered to join in discussions with Chicago school officials about whether they might be revised "to reflect more accurately the practical considerations of desegregation . . ."

Because the criteria are in many ways troubling, the offer of flexibility is especially important. Flexibility among all the participants in the discussions will be required if school desegregation in Chicago is to be anything but an ephemeral paper victory.

To begin with, HEW defines a desegregated school in percentage terms. In black-white schools, for example, HEW says desegregated means no more than 50 per cent and no less than 25 per cent white. In black-white-Latino schools, it means no more than 35 per cent and no less than 15 per cent white.

HEW officials insist that these are benchmarks, not strict numerical rules to be imposed throughout the city. But the criteria do not in their terms make any exceptions.

A stiff numerical standard would threaten to destroy the achievement of those Chicago schools which have managed already to create integration and stability. Some of those schools may have more than 50 per cent white, or more than 35 per cent Latino, or whatever. To sacrifice these schools to a numerical standard would be a tragedy for the schools and for the neighborhoods that have managed to cooperate in making them work.

The difficulty with HEW's criteria, for those of us who share the desire to see the development and expansion of integrated neighborhoods and schools, is that they might result in the acceleration of whites from the school system and the city as a whole, leaving Chicago as segregated or more segregated than before.

Mr. Tatel, in his letter accompanying the criteria, stated that HEW's calculations indicate that "approximately 65 to 90 per cent [of Chicago's schools] could be desegregated under the criteria." He went on to say the actual number in an acceptable plan may vary. But the calculation itself appears to take no account of the social dynamics at work in desegregation efforts in an urban metropolis.

In effect, the calculations concern themselves only with the theoretical, numerical possibilities—on the assumption *that the implementation of the plan has* no effect on the total composition of the public school population. However, with the suburbs offering families—white and black—an alternative, the racial mix will not remain stable unless the desegregation plan is developed with great sensitivity to the realities of metropolitan areas.

On the opimistic side, Mr. Tatel has said in the past that he is willing to discuss Chicago's schools neighborhood by neighborhood to see what realistically might be accomplished. If he and his colleagues enter into such discussions with an open mind and an eye to real and lasting progress rather than momentary paper gains, they may succeed in scaling down their expectations and avoiding pushing the city into a plan that does more harm than good.

Flexibility will be the key to the process now about to begin. That and sensitivity and realism.

California's tax-cut hangover

A year ago, Californians passed Proposition 13 and turned tax-cutting into a nationwide craze. Ever since, elected officials in many states including Illinois have been trying to scramble onto the economy-in-government surfboard.

Meanwhile, however, the ride is proving rougher than it looked. Instead of simply paying less in taxes to support local governments, Californians are discovering that they're paying more and more in fees. Services, educational programs, park and recreation facilities that were free a year ago now must be paid for directly by the user; charges for licenses and permits of various kinds are rising steeply and new ones are constantly being imposed. [The Wall Street Journal cites this example among others: In the San Diego suburb of La Mesa, the cost of fees and permits for an average house has gone from $43 in early 1978 to $1,283 now.]

Most Californians are still paying less in fees than they paid in taxes, but the gap is narrowing. And the squeeze is particularly hard on renters, who got little benefit from the tax cut but have to pay the escalating charges for government service.

These increases have set off the same rumbles of revolt that high property taxes did. Paul Gann, co-sponsor of last year's tax-cutting initiative, is now promoting what might be called Son of Proposition 13: A move for a referendum to limit the amounts that state and local governments may spend. Said Mr. Gann: "The real meaning of Proposition 13 is being prostituted right and left by local governments . . . We got property taxes cut, but they immediately took the dough back in another way."

What is happening in California, in fact, is a radical reshaping of the way local governments are financed. And as some local officials point out, the change to a "pay as you go" approach is not all bad. It lets individual taxpayers set their own priorities; they, not government budgeters and planners, decide which services they want and how far they wish to support them. It certainly brings home to voters the blunt fact that governments is not free, that you can't get everything you want simply by voting for it.

Yet the change clearly is not what most people would choose, and inequities are built into it. Charging cash on the nail for government services means that a lot of people can't afford them, that a visit to a city museum or a community swimming pool, say, will be out of reach for those who don't have a dollar or two to spare. It means limiting educational opportunities such as craft classes or senior citizens' study groups to those who can pay for them. And it means that there is still another alternative to economy in government — that local governments faced with shrinking tax revenues can reach into another pocket to make up the difference.

It is tempting to think that by voting to cut taxes we could simply get lower taxes, period. But California is again proving the immutable rule about proposals like this: They aren't as good as they look.

Banking bills

Illinois may be moving—albeit slowly—toward modern banking. Two progressive bills have already passed the Senate, thanks to the sponsorship of Vince Demuzio [D., Carlinville], who is chairman of the Finance and Credit Regulations Committee.

The measures would allow wider use of electronic banking machines for customers in supermarkets and other locations. These would offer at least a few of the conveniences of branch banking enjoyed by consumers in other states.

Sen. Demuzio's next step should be support for Senate Bill 456, which his committee is considering. The bill would allow a modest expansion of limited-service bank branches and permit bank holding companies to operate several banks in designated areas of the state.

This measure would be particularly helpful to rural and small-town customers. Under Sen. Demuzio's leadership, the bill could be refined in order to win wider support from the banking community. Passage would be another step toward ushering Illinois banking into the 20th Century.



Voice of the People

Writers should be as concise as possible. Give full names and addresses. Manuscripts are not returned. Space is limited; the right to condense letters is reserved. Address letters to Voice of the People, The Tribune, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

Praising Chicago cabs

NEW YORK—I've just read, with no little amazement, comments made by Edwina Snow of Oyster Bay, N.Y., [Voice of the People, May 20] about Chicago taxis. One wonders if she has ever left Long Island and actually ventured into New York City airports and their cabs.

The waiting lines at O'Hare are intolerable but no more so than those at John F. Kennedy or LaGuardia airports. The wait is nearly worth it when one enters cabs which, on the whole, cannot reasonably be compared to those in New York. Most in Chicago are impeccable. New York City has many things to be proud of but the condition and level of service of its cab fleet is not among them.

As for the "cab sharing" program, Edwina Snow should investigate her facts. One does not pay for his "share" but pays a flat rate, which constitutes a dubious bargain at best.

You may keep your winters and rain, but the levels of some of the basic services in Chicago would be very welcome in New York City. **Gregory Faust**

Handguns for fun, defense

WYANET, Ill.—In a letter in the May 8 Tribune, Katherine W. Zartman, president of the Committee for the Control of Handguns, advocated H.B. 209 pending in the Illinois legislature as a means of reducing street gang violence.

Although I appreciate her intention to reduce violence, I disagree with her contention that H.B. 209 would be effective in curbing the problem.

She states that a handgun is purchased on the average of every 13 seconds in the U.S. I wonder if she has ever wondered why. One reason is that more people are pursuing formal and informal recreational use of handguns. Another reason is the matter of personal defense.

With violent crime on the increase, people are feeling the need for personal defense more than at any recent time. The instinct for survival still is considered a normal reaction.

Aside from the fact that H.B. 209 would be ineffective, I fail to see how concern for a crime problem in Chicago justifies an attempt to scrap the constitutional rights of the citizens of the rest of Illinois. **Cloe W. Driscoll**

Why productivity lags

CHICAGO—A letter in the May 19 Voice of the People blamed labor and government for the nation's lagging productivity. But management and stockholders must share the blame.

Management contributes to the problem of designing cheaper products for sale at higher prices and investors encourage this by insisting upon a high rate of return at a low level of risk.

Everyone is greedy, lazy, or at least afraid. And we're robbing each other as well as ourselves. **Richard W. Fox**



Young Hispanic women in the Pilsen neighborhood. Tribune Photo

Praise and complaints about Hispanic series

CHICAGO — As a Chicana and an activist, I read with great interest Michael Coakley's first article in the series "Hispanic America." His factual, objective assessment of our group was refreshing.

The Chicano [a native born American of Mexican descent] experience is distinct from that of all the Hispanics who come here from south of the Rio Grande to the tip of South America. Theirs is an immigrant's experience with which Chicanos can only sympathize but not empathize for they have not lived it. This gives rise to the perception by other Hispanics that Chicanos cannot understand their problems as aliens plus the charge that we are *indifferent, which is* just not so.

Yet, between Mexicans and Chicanos, there are blood lines. In the main, we see them as cousins, sharing the same origins. We, the Chicanos, are very cognizant of how the great American systems work for some and not for others. Pertinent to us is the technique of pitting powerless groups against equally powerless groups. We fight that battle by urging Latino groups to coalesce with non-Latino groups, for example, women and blacks.

There are some difficulties facing us in our efforts to organize into a cohesive, viable group.

Chicanos who do finish their education understand the process of our constitutional government. The Hispanic immigrants come here from oligarchical, totalitarian, military governments with no concept of a participating democracy. They bring with them an inbred fear of involving themselves in anything political because in their countries this can bring ruin, exile, and even death. Add to this the thinking of at least some Mexicans who come here to work, stay out of trouble, save their money, and go "home." Of course, it is difficult to politicize and organize such a group.

The "machismo" or sexism that still persists has not curtailed the personal growth and development of many Chicanas. Instead, upon facing the reality of "machismo," they have consciously chosen not to fight with their powerless men but opted instead to go into the women's movement to make their contribution. At the same time, they use this larger forum to raise the issues of their oppressed communities, prevailing upon their Anglo and black sisters to support them on issues such as bilingual education and welfare reform.

Evidence of the first success of these joint efforts are the elections of Irma Rangel, the first Mexican-American woman elected to the Texas legislature, and Polly Baca Barragan, the first Mexican-American woman elected to the Colorado State Senate—both ardent feminists.

For this is what we have to leave our children—the promise of this great country that every woman's son may dream of becoming President and every woman's daughter, too. All it takes to do the impossible is preparation, planning, and guts.

Rhea Mojica-Hammer
National Chair, Chicana Caucus, National Women's Political Caucus



AP Wirephoto

Urban art?

CHICAGO—Since when is painting on buildings and graffiti on subways considered art? In his article on Latinos, Michael Coakley would have you believe it is an honor to have your building blessed with the logo of some demented street gang. I hope his home is so blessed. **George Quinlan**

Joan Beck

Just another complaining female—right, Doc?

So it isn't feminine paranoia after all.

Physicians do, indeed, take a sexist attitude toward female patients and are more likely to brush off their complaints and take their symptoms less seriously than they do those of male patients.

He complains of chest pains and gets a cardiac work-up. She reports chest pains and gets little more than a patronizing pat on the back. His headaches are taken seriously. Hers are dismissed with a pep talk. He wouldn't waste a doctor's time unless he had a legitimate physical reason. She is bored and really looking for emotional support or a father figure.

Many women have been charging that doctors took such stereotyped sexist views about their patients for years—to each other, in books, even in a few rare instances in medical and sociology journals. Usually, they are written off as feminist nags, sexist shrews, chronic malcontents with a litany of imagined slights and put-downs.

But a study just published in the Journal of the American Medical Association confirms with scientific protocols and objectivity that medical sexism does exist. Physicians—as well as women—need to be aware of what is usually subconscious bias, if women are ever to be assured equality of medical care.

Documentation of the sexism in medical treatment follows confirmation in recent years of complaints that a small percentage of psychiatrists and other physicians [including a few pediatricians] have sex with their female patients [and charge regular office rates to do it]. The argument that this is useful therapy is considerably blunted by findings that it is only young and attractive—never old, ugly, or unlovable—patients given such "treatment."

The medical sexism in the current study is much more pervasive and subtle. Medical records of 52 married couples *treated by nine family physicians* were examined by researchers from the University of California, San Diego, to see how the patients had been treated for five types of complaints: back pain, headache, dizziness, chest pains, and fatigue. The doctors all had outstanding reputations in their community and had never been charged with sexism.

The five medical problems were chosen because they are not directly related to sexual organs or functions and because their possible seriousness requires a medical work-up. What the doctors actually did for their patients during 181 episodes of illness was measured against a list of standard medical criteria.

Despite their similar symptoms, the male patients got a much more thorough medical work-up than did the women in all five types of illness—especially back pain and headache—researchers found.

Because the patients were carefully chosen to come from similar socioeconomic environment and to have approximately the same level of health, these factors were ruled out as accounting for the difference in what the doctors did for them.

Could a consideration of differential risks faced by males over females—in the instance of heart disease, for example—account for the fact that doctors paid more attention to their complaints than to those of women? It's not likely, researchers commented, because the differences were smallest in the cases of chest pain. Sex plays no part in the incidence or potential seriousness of the four other medical problems.

Concluded the researchers, "The data may bear out what many critics already claim: namely, that the physicians tend to take illness more seriously in men than in women. In doing so, they might be responding to current stereotypes that regard the male as typically stoic and the female as typically hypochondriacal."

Part of the unfinished business of this century is to ferret out such stereotypes so they can be understood and corrected —in the interest of fairness and maximizing human potential. Research like this study is essential to document subconscious attitudes. And columns like this are necessary, not to nag or complain, but to work for understanding and change.

Mark Frankland

Soviet view of SALT: It beats walking to the cemetery

[Mark Frankland writes for the London Observer.]

MOSCOW — There is a Russian joke about civil defense in the event of nuclear war.

Question: What should you do when the warning sounds?

Answer: Take a sheet. Wrap yourself in it. Proceed to the nearest cemetery.

Russians who tell it would be surprised to know that there are Western strategists who think the Soviet civil defense program so effective that Soviet losses in a nuclear exchange with America might be "only" a few million, and a war for Moscow not so unthinkable.

That Americans should be raising this and other doubts about the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty [SALT II] that Presidents Brezhnev and Carter will sign in Vienna on June 18 both irritates and disconcerts the Russians.

Well-placed Russians and senior Western diplomats agree that the greatest value of SALT has been to force the super-powers to discuss delicate problems of national security with a frankness unprecedented in history.

"We are now talking about things," one Westerner said, "that would have been unthinkable when the SALT talks began, and it gives hope that we'll be able to discuss other problems one day in an equally rational manner. The Russians now know that we don't mean to do them in and I don't think they mean to do us in."

It has not been easy for the Russians, whose traditions and political beliefs both make for deep suspicion of the West.

For all their readiness to exchange with the Americans what, a dozen years ago, would have been considered the deepest military secrets, there is much that remains unchanged in the Russian view of the world.

The pride, self-righteousness and suspicion that shape this view have roots both in Russian history and in Marxist-Leninism but they are incalculably strengthened by the memory of the last war, when 20 million Soviet citizens died. There is a strong sense of grievance that the West does not understand what Russia experienced then.

Soviet forces and strategy in Europe are designed to ensure that, if there is a war, it will be fought as far away as possible from Soviet territory. Russians find it difficult to understand the anxiety this provokes in western Europe. The same is true of the structure and development of Soviet missile forces, where the self-righteous pursuit of maximum security is seen in America as unsettling this strategic balance.

Russian pride fuses with Soviet ideology into the complaint that the hard-won equality with America in nuclear strength does not bring with it recognized equality in the other affairs of the world.

"The Americans always look at things in their own way," the Russian said. "But how many aircraft carriers do they have in the Pacific and how many bases in Japan alone?" There is a fuss, I was told, when the Soviet Union carries out a military airlift to Ethopia, but the West has conducted similar operations for far longer.

One catches the same tone in conversations about Africa. "Why should Africa be a reserve of the Western powers?" I was asked.

The paradox in the Soviet view of the world is that, while Soviet leaders now discuss national security secrets with their potential adversaries, they still insist that there must be worldwide competition between "communism" and "capitalism." No one, they say, can stand apart from this struggle: thus the attempts to divide the non-aligned, or the countries of Africa, into the "progressive" and the "unprogressive."

The news from Moscow, then, is mixed. There will be competition but it need not proceed to the point of confrontation. The Russians believe they have never promised anything more. Support for the world's national liberation movements, I was reminded, is written into the new Soviet constitution.

But we are foolish if we forget that the Russians are no keener than we to take their sheets and proceed to the nearest cemetery. Developing that mutual interest is what coexistence is all about.



"I always shop for groceries on Friday . . . so I won't have any money to waste on the weekend."

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