

## Principal McCrea: Careless and insensitive

by Gladys McCoy

Last week Dr. Blanchard expressed the final word from the administration's position concerning the unfortunate news story about Boise School.

This week I would like to write the final chapter from the position of a Board member. I should like to deal with the issue and the process.

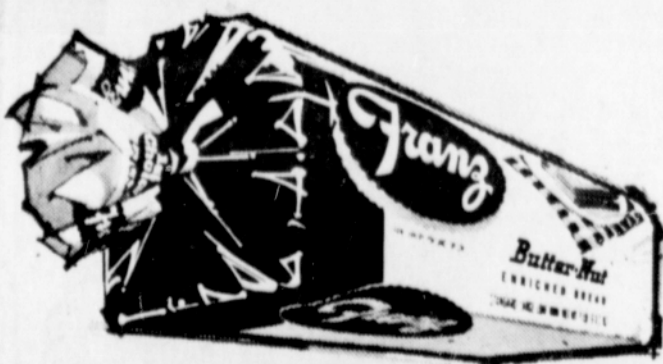


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Having had some experience with news stories that came out differently from what I thought I was expressing, I had no difficulty in giving Mr. McCrea the benefit of "due process". Further, when I was asked to make a statement, I deferred as a Board member stating that positions of the Board are made by the Chairperson and asked that my personal opinion be kept off the record at that time. However, as a person, especially one deeply committed to public schools in Portland, my immediate reaction was one of anger and outrage that any adult in this system could utter some of the negative remarks in that article. And when he admitted to some of the remarks in that story, it was no comfort that some of the positive remarks were omitted. Mr. McCrea is guilty of carelessness and insensitivity that shall not go unrecorded.

Obviously Mr. McCrea was aware of that when he made public apology through a letter to the editor plus copies to various members in the community. Such remarks did reflect a bad image of one of our schools, a school where children are enrolled with the promise of being provided a "good education".

Even so, Mr. McCrea received very strong support from those closer to the situation and in a better position to judge him, and while my attitude toward his remarks will remain the same, I am satisfied to accept the stance of his staff and parents and the best judgment of the Superintendent, who assures us that he "would not hesitate to bring charges against any employee who demonstrates a continuing pattern of incompetence".

This brings us to the process. It is the role of the Board of Education to hire and fire personnel in this district; however, it is not done on the basis of personal whim. Rather it is based on sufficient evidence that reveals beyond a doubt that an employee is incompetent and unfit to teach children or to be an administrator in this district. Each of us would expect to receive the benefit of this position of justice and charity, even though in periods of anger and outrage, we tend to deny that right to those who have upset us. Also, in this day with quick appeal to the courts by students and employees, and rightly so, one must not and should not move hastily when there is any possibility that such haste may be more damaging than the alleged unjust act.

So, process follows some prescribed line negotiated and agreed upon between the Board and teachers and administrative representatives. That process must allow for filing of a grievance, a thorough investigation of the allegations, hearings at the area level, the central administration level and, if not resolved, to the Board, which must act based on its collective best judgment. However, when the evidence is so apparent, I believe this Board would initiate proceedings to remove any personnel believed to be consistently damaging kids and their education.

This will not satisfy some of you in the case of Mr. McCrea. But in the light of evidence available, the decision has been made. Meanwhile, I appeal to each of you for constructive support towards providing good quality education for all our kids. We need your help to help our kids.

## CAUCUS TIME

by Jettie B. Wilds, Jr., Chairman, Oregon Black Caucus

I wish to give you an opportunity to share some words from the President of a small all-male Black College in Atlanta, Georgia. I share this message for the following reasons:

(1) It makes provocative statements about superficial trappings, e.g. hairdos and costumes.

(2) It shows a Black College President before a Black student body advancing notions that may be considered by some as being less than popular.

(3) It admits to racism in America but challenges the graduates to overcome rather than succumb... for the sake of self and the deprived and disadvantaged.

(4) Many of today's professional or other Black men who are newsworthy contributors have had some contact with Morehouse, i.e. graduated, attended, taught by Morehouse graduate, Morehouse graduate was College President, etc.

The following is the Morehouse College President's charge to the May, 1973 graduating class:

"On this occasion it is customary for the President of the College to make a farewell statement to the members of the graduating class. I take this occasion very seriously because I want each of you to be successful not only in your future studies and professions but also in your service to humanity and especially to our deprived and disadvantaged people. In three short minutes what can I say that will have the maximum meaning in your lives? This is a task that is a challenge to my best abilities.

"This ceremony brings an end to your college years, but it also signals the beginning of your careers as professional men and therefore is called Commencement.

"After today some of you will go directly into the world of employment, and others will proceed to graduate and professional schools. No matter which path you take, the requirements will be demanding. Employers will expect and demand punctuality, efficiency, and initiative. Most graduate schools will require an average of "B" and will accept no grade less than "C". The competition will be tough, and there will be little time for pleasures and pastimes.

"In college some of you have had a good time with hairdos and costumes and with rhetoric and handshakes; but from now on these things, which are superficial, will be less important. In the years ahead you will move from a world of sound and symbol to a world of struggle and survival. In this new world you will be measured by your brains and not by your blackness, by your character and not by your color, by your proficiency and not by your pigmentation. You will not be able to get anywhere by proclaiming that Black is beautiful. In order to move forward, you will have to show in your lives and achievements that Black is many other things that are more important, such

as intelligence, integrity, unity and power.

"During your four years at Morehouse speakers have made various proposals for the solution of the race problem in the United States - exodus to Africa, separation in a state, revolution by force, and integration in this society. As far as a return to Africa is concerned, I have not heard of a single African nation that has invited all of us to come back. As far as separation in this country is concerned, I have not heard of a single state that is willing to make property dispositions that will enable us to enter en masse. As far as revolution is concerned, I have been advised that you cannot defeat an atomic bomb and a guided missile with a switchblade and a revolver. As I see it, we must win or lose and live or die by striving for freedom and justice in this country.

"I regret that I must remind you that you will bear a heavier burden in this country than will the white students who are graduating from college in 1973. Like them, you must compete in employment and in graduate and professional schools; but, unlike them, you must endure the additional disadvantage of being a member of a minority that is the object of prejudice and persecution in this country. In American history Morehouse men have made outstanding contributions to the improvement of the status of the Negro, and I hope that members of your class will follow in the footsteps of Martin Luther King, Jr. and many other alumni in making a significant contribution to Black progress in the United States.

"Yes, you will have special handicaps and disadvantages in this society because you are Black. In some cases you will find it harder to get a job and even harder to get a promotion. Some of you will also encounter racial problems in renting apartments and buying homes for your families and in getting first class schools and playgrounds for your children.

"Despite these racial disadvantages, I urge you to succeed despite the odds as so many Morehouse men have done before you. I also urge you not only to make your mark as professionals but also to help solve the problems of our people in this prejudiced land.

"While seeking professional success and rendering social service, remember that whatever you do with your life will affect Morehouse. If you achieve, Morehouse will benefit. If you fail, Morehouse will suffer. You and Morehouse are one. Your record is Morehouse's record.

"We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.

"We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered...

"Facing the rising sun of our new day begun.

"Let us march on till victory is ours."

Hugh M. Gloster, President Morehouse College

## Getting Smart

By WALTER L. SMART  
Executive Director  
National Federation of Settlements  
and Neighborhood Centers

In 1961, the Congress of the United States amended the Housing Act of 1949 to provide federal mortgage insurance to non-profit organizations who desire to construct housing for low and moderate income families.

It is important to note prior to this Amendment the only form of housing constructed on land within an urban renewal area was "luxury housing". The majority of the apartments destroyed to "clear the land" for new construction, however, were occupied by the poor.

The government, therefore, was under tremendous pressure, primarily from social agencies and churches, to aid the construction of housing which could be made available to low and moderate income families.

After the 1961 legislation, FHA 221 (d) (3) was passed, former Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois remarked that the organizations with a social conscience could now act where others had failed. It seemed clear, in the minds of some congressmen, that non-profit organizations like churches, settlements, fraternal organizations would pick up the challenge and construct housing to be controlled by non-profit organizations. What actually happened, however, subsequent to the 1961 Amendment, was something quite different.

I worked in a city where a developer (a person who organized construction efforts) saw the potential for making huge profits through the construction of housing insured under the new (d) (3)

program. Since the mortgage insurance under 331 (d) (3) is available only to non-profit organizations, the developer had to "hustle" an organization for this purpose as a front. He chose a church.

He approached a minister and said, in so many words, that his church could own and construct a new apartment complex for the poor without monetary outlay. Excited at the prospect, the minister accepted without being fully knowledgeable about the FHA insuring program, the legal responsibilities of all parties involved, the goals or intents of such legislation, and the parameters of the program. Without this knowledge, the church relied on the developer to make all of the decisions related to the proposed housing, i.e., choice of architect, design, density, room sizes, number of bedrooms, and so on.

The church, having put up no funds, simply couldn't believe that it could have a strong, even a controlling voice in such matters. In fact, the church was the employer of the developer and controller of practically every aspect of the construction and maintenance of the apartment complex. Although the people, by law, were in control, the developer, in fact, exercised near absolute power over all decisions. Thus, the end product almost always failed to meet many community objectives.

Moreover, a federal enactment created to rid our cities of slum housing is being misused to recreate new slums.

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