

# Action Taken Against Segregation Petition Signers in Southern States

Editor's note: When public schools reopen next week, most of the 50th will resist the Supreme Court decision ordering an end to separation of white and Negro pupils. The United Press surveyed the situation in nine Southern states. This is the first of three dispatches.

By AL KUETTNER  
United Press Correspondent

Atlanta, Ga. — (U.P.) — Gracie Richburg, a Negro school teacher and mother of two young children, went job-hunting today, but not in the teaching profession.

Mrs. Richburg was fired from the teaching job she has held for 13 years in Clarendon county, S.C., after her father-in-law

signed an anti-segregation petition. Loss of her job was the price she paid for becoming even remotely involved in a well-organized campaign by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is pushing

throughout the South to implement the Supreme Court ruling. South Carolina and Mississippi both reported numerous cases of Negro petition signers losing their jobs. As the news spread, Negroes all over Dixie rushed to get their names off the lists.

Many charged their names were forged, were fraudulently added or that the facts of the petition were misrepresented.

The NAACP chose the petition strategy at a meeting in Atlanta last month. The petitions are

directed at school boards and ask that segregation be eliminated. They have no legal weight, but failure of a school board to comply would indicate it had no intention of integrating schools with the "reasonable speed" admonished by the Supreme Court.

Thus the petitions might be used as the basis for court suits. Mrs. Richburg's case was different from most. Her father-in-law, Farmer J. Haskell Richburg, signed a petition endorsing the famed Clarendon county segregation case, one of the five on which the Supreme Court outlawed segregation.

"I don't know what I will do," Mrs. Richburg said. "My husband Joe, is a teacher, too, and he also signed the petition. We are afraid he will lose his job."

She said School Superintendent H. B. Betchman promised her husband that if his own and her father's name were removed from the petition, she and two other discharged Negro teachers "could get our jobs back."

Mrs. Richburg said the names were removed and they applied for their jobs—"but that was three weeks ago and we've heard nothing."

Betchman said, however, that about 15 to 16 of the 68 Negro teachers who worked in his district last year have not been rehired for various reasons. He said he had received about 500 applications for the jobs.

Asked to comment specifically about the Richburg case, Betchman said:

"I couldn't tell you about any individual cases. A school district has the right to hire who it sees fit to teach. To ask why we didn't renew any particular contract is getting too personal. We don't have to say why we hire a teacher. We had one who asked for a year's leave because she's pregnant. There are lots of reasons."

Throughout the South Negroes are increasingly fearful of signing any kind of petition. At Raleigh, N.C., the city school board said "several" sign-

ers of a petition urging the children be assigned to school nearest their homes asked by telephone that their names be removed. They said they didn't know what they were signing. The same thing happened at Union Springs, Ala.

In Mississippi a number of Negroes wanted their names stricken from such lists with the standard explanation, "We didn't know what it meant."

Ten Negroes from Charleston county, S.C., signed a statement that "at no time" did they sign a petition asking that their children be admitted to white schools. Thirteen others said they signed "under a misrepresentation of fact."

The local school board then met and issued a statement that fraudulent methods had apparently been used to obtain signatures of an integration petition before the board.

50th Year

## MEDFORD TRIBUNE

United Press—Full Leased Wire

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### Change in Checks On Allotments Set For Next Year

A change in checking compliances of wheat allotments will become effective next year, according to T. D. Sehorn, secretary of the Jackson county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation committee.

Next year, the initial measurement of acreage will be financed by the government, but any recheck necessary because of harvesting excess wheat will be financed by the farmer, according to changes in wheat allotment regulations.

Previously, the government financed both the initial check and any recheck. Sehorn reminded Jackson county farmers that federal controls still will be in effect on wheat plantings next year. Allotments have been issued, he said, to qualified county farmers. Penalties will be assessed on wheat harvested in excess of the farm allotment. Penalties are not levied where the total wheat harvested on a farm does not exceed 15 acres, Sehorn pointed out.

Long Beach, Calif. — (U.P.) — Mrs. Fred J. Tooze, Portland, has been reelected recording secretary of the National Women's Christian Temperance Union convention here.

### Comic Harbors Yen for Return To Good Old Days When Life Wasn't Quite So Fast

New York — (U.P.) — Sam Levenson, who earns his living by poking gentle fun at the foibles of the past, admitted today he harbored a secret yen for the days when you and I were young, Maggie.

"Life is too fast nowadays, too complicated, too big to grasp," said the roly-poly comic. "And as a result, I've think we've lost something—a sense of personal relationships with our neighbors."

"Take something like doors, for instance. Who would ever think of locking a door in the past? But nowadays, they've got peepholes in apartment doors," said Levenson. "Your neighbors inspect you through those little holes—you gotta have 20-20 vision to get in."

**Current Summer Sub**  
Levenson, currently working as summer replacement for Herb Shriner on CBS-TV's "Two For The Money," moaned low about today's kids. He's currently riding herd on two youngsters of his own, Conrad, 12, and Emily, 3.

"We've been doing a miserable job in the past 25 years of raising our kids," said Levenson. "We've been intimidated—we hand everything to them on a platter. When I was a kid, I was satisfied with a small allowance. Nowadays, the kids demand a guaranteed annual wage. Families are falling apart, too,

said Levenson. "It used to be that your cousins and uncles practically lived with you. Now you only see them at funerals."

**Can't Pinpoint Blame**  
The blame for all this disarray is hard to pinpoint, Levenson admitted. "But I think it has something to do with our sensibilities," he said. "Nobody cares very much when thousands of people die now—casualty totals have become too difficult to grasp. But in the old days, the whole neighborhood cried when an old man would fall off his stoop."

"A guy will go into a supermarket nowadays and swipe a can of soup. It's a big impersonal organization, he'll figure, and nobody will miss it. But in the old days it was different—then you were stealing from the little corner grocery man, Mrs. Jones."

Levenson confessed that, of course, it wasn't all rosy in the placid world of the past. "I guess it's a little like my mother's meatballs," he said. "I remember they used to melt in my mouth, but I tend to forget they used to harden in my stomach."

Still there was a difference. "We used to get into mischief when we were kids, no doubt about it," Levenson said. "But we were still scared of our parents, our teacher and the corner cop. Who's scared of a cop now? He's a buddy."

"And there was the good old institution known as snitching. That seems to have disappeared, too. Snitching was healthy—one parent would tell another, 'I saw your Sammy climbing up a fence' and the next day you can bet Sammy wouldn't be climbing fences anymore."

"We mind our own business now and we think it's a virtue, but I wonder if it really is."

Levenson turned nostalgically to his own family. "I had even brothers and one sister—even my father was wearing hand-me-downs. Actually, my mother had 10 kids, but lost two. She was a wonderful woman. Once she got sick, I remember, but wouldn't go to see a physician. She said, 'A doctor? I'm too sick to go to the doctor.'"

"My father was a poor tailor and he put me through college. You know, I was a Spanish teacher in a Brooklyn high school for a long while and I really miss teaching."

"Byt TV isn't so bad. After all, now I have a much bigger class."

**BIG SIX-GUN**  
Riverton, Wyo. — (U.P.) — Donald Layton doesn't think the culprits who stole a pistol from his gun shop will get much use from it. They carted off the huge four-foot replica of a six-gun used to advertise the shop.

### Chaplin Objects To Tax Assessment

Washington — (U.P.) — Silent film star Charles Chaplin has protested the government's assessing him \$516,167.47 in income taxes and interest for 1953, U. S. Tax Court records show.

Chaplin left the United States during 1953 and consequently cannot be assessed income tax for that year.

Chaplin, a British subject despite his many years in the United States, said that when he left in September, 1952, for a visit to Europe the U. S. Government announced it would oppose his return.

The government, he said, raised a question of "moral turpitude" against him. Chaplin said he "interpreted this statement to mean that he would be prohibited from re-entering the United States."

The government contends that between Jan. 1, 1953, and April 10, 1953, Chaplin was a resident alien and from April 11, 1953, to the end of that year he was a non-resident alien engaged in trade or business in the United States.

The states west of the Mississippi account for 62 per cent of U. S. livestock production while 69 per cent of the country's meat production is eaten in the states east of the Mississippi.

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