

two are four,' the teacher added." The eyes of the breakfasters flickered as if they had been given an obscure dare. "And 'four minus two are two,' he subtracted," Arnie went on.

"That one is no good," said Ce. "But it works with *added*. Why is that?"

"Because our language is mystical. It's runic and medieval and extra-sensorial," I said. "Listen: 'I'm already up,' he lied."

Babs perked up: "We've taken over the government,' the general cooed."

Cheers for Babs woke us to the gravity of our discovery. Said Carl: "'My experiment was a success,' the chemist retorted."

Said Arnie: "'You can't really train a beagle,' he dogmatized."

Said Ce: "'That's no beagle, it's a mongrel,' she muttered."

Then, after a pause in which six brains silently whirred, Carl came up with a real dog: "'You ought to see a psychiatrist,' he reminded me."

This mental effort depressed us, and I thought that maybe the game would fade away, and the day could finally begin after all. But Arnie zapped us with, "'I'm dying!' he croaked," and we had to applaud. We even named the game Croakers in honor of this triumph—or, more grandly: the Tom Swift Verbal Croakers game, with a nod to an earlier adverbial form.

Wondering what was to become of our terrible word magic, we went out on the beach and deployed on blankets around the beer cooler. Nobody wanted to go swimming for fear of letting someone else get away with an illegal or outrageous Croaker. Then, suddenly, a storm of Croakers broke.

"'That's my gold mine!' he claimed."

"'But it was mine!' he exclaimed."

"'And I used to be a pilot,' he explained."

"'The fire is going out!' he bellowed."

"'Bad marksmanship,' the hunter groused."

"'Another plate of steamers all around,' he clamored."

The storm passed, the sun beat down hot, and it was hard to tell whether anyone was thinking anything. Finally we went swimming, then came back to our stretch of beach and drank beer, and I thought the word threat might have left us. I lay back to bask happily in the sun, and let my mind wander freely. Then suddenly I sat bolt upright. "'Your upstairs bathroom is all installed,' the plumber piped up."

"Aw, pipe down," Arnie said, gratuitously.

"'Pipe down,' he piped up?" I suggested.

Ce said, "'Your basement lavatory is ready,' he piped down." She had sand thrown at her for breaking all sorts of

unwritten rules. She was even accused of punning.

Arnie said, "'I'm going to do up this package outdoors,' he rapped out."

Babs said, "'I've got a new game,' mumbled Peg."

"'Double-worded ones!' said Ce. "All right: 'I spent the day sewing and gardening,' she hemmed and hawed."

"'What's *hawed*?' asked Dot.

"'Cultivating rose bushes,' said Ce.

"'I was in a riot in Paris,' he noised abroad," said Carl.

He was booed. Arnie said, "If you can get away with that, then I can do: 'My bicycle wheel is melting,' he spoke softly."

I thought that now, at last, we had croaked our last, but I was wrong.

"'No frankincense for me,' he demurred," said Ce.

"'My ropes are tangled,' she snarled," said I.

"'Let's clear out of this joint,' he articulated," said Dot.

Then, articulating our aging joints, we got up to go back to the house as a late-afternoon chill set in over the beach. □

The Most Hated Man in Michigan

BY WILLIAM SERRIN

DETROIT, Mich.—The most sweeping busing plan ever drawn up—U.S. District Judge Stephen J. Roth's order that cross-district busing be undertaken to link Detroit's largely black schools with the nearly all-white schools of the city's suburbs—has created an immense furor here. The equivalent of requiring blacks and whites to be bused between Harlem and Scarsdale or Chicago's South Side and Winnetka, Judge Roth's decision dominates Michigan politics, giving President Nixon a strong chance to carry this traditionally Democratic state in November. It is said that even dog-catchers are running on an antibusing platform this year.

Roth's order has, predictably, been appealed by the state, the suburbs, and the Detroit Board of Education. The Justice Department attempted to intervene to stop busing, putting the government on the side of anti-integration—which must be some kind of a first—but Roth ruled that the department had no right to enter the case. Arguments on the appeal will

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be heard by the Federal Appeals Court in Cincinnati starting this week.

The order has also made Roth a hated and vilified man. Angry whites attend antibusing rallies in the suburbs, their cars plastered with bumper stickers that read "Judge Roth is a child molester." The gray-haired, ruddy-faced judge, who lives in a comfortable house in an exclusive white suburban area south of Flint, has been hanged in effigy in the working-class suburb of Wyandotte and condemned over linen tablecloths in Bloomfield Hills and Grosse Pointe.

An eleven-member panel set up by Judge Roth earlier this year estimates that about 290,000 students, or 37 per cent of the 780,000 students in the three-county Detroit metropolitan area, will have to be bused to achieve integration. (Presently the fifty-three school districts involved bus 202,000 students, primarily for distance reasons.) This would make the school population, like that of the metropolitan area, 25 per cent black. (As things stand now, schools in Detroit proper, where the majority of the area's blacks live, are 65 per cent black.) As a rule, kindergarten students would not be bused but would attend neighborhood schools. An elementary school child would attend his neighborhood school for three of the grades one through six and would be bused to a school the other three years; junior and senior high school students would similarly be bused for three out of their six school years.

The Roth order asks a difficult thing of white parents: namely, to place their children on buses headed for a city that many of them worked hard to earn enough money to be able to flee. But what has been asked of black parents in the past, and what may be asked of them in the future foreseen by Roth, is even more difficult. Until now they have had to send their children to dilapidated, crowded, and decidedly inferior Detroit schools; under Roth's order they would send them to communities whose inhabitants have made it clear that they do not want to associate with blacks. Thus blacks can expect their children to meet with a rough reception.

Because of the lack of courageous leadership in Detroit, the busing issue has pre-empted discussion of more basic problems. The fact that many Michigan cities, not just Detroit, are providing inadequate education is one presently overlooked problem. The fact that education is a class problem is also slighted. (Blacks in Detroit have long suffered from having to attend poor schools, but then so, too, have white students in the city's working-class suburbs.) Meanwhile no mention is made of the fact that the violence that has occurred throughout the country when schools have been integrated has come

largely from the whites, not the blacks.

Douglas Fraser, a United Automobile Workers vice president who unsuccessfully urged Democratic congressmen to display courage in the busing dispute, claims that, if political leaders had taken more responsible positions, there would not be the hysteria that exists in the Detroit area today. The trouble is that white politicians here seem to have assumed from the start that their constituents would not listen to arguments or be moved by the plight of the blacks. In short, that they were bigots. State Sen. Coleman Young says that he, a black, thinks more highly of white suburbanites than do their white leaders. "I have faith in whites," Young says. "They don't."

A statement by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which brought the suit that led to Roth's decision, asserts that what is at stake in the Detroit case is whether the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 school desegregation decision (*Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*) is "to be a mockery," with the nation declaring school segregation unconstitutional, while insisting on the other hand that because ending segregation is painful and unpopular with white people things should be left as they are.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Detroit school case is the transformation of Judge Roth, a cautious, conservative man who a year ago told lawyers from the NAACP that he did not like "outsiders" meddling in Detroit's affairs and who said that he had no wish to involve suburbs in the case. Roth has been known to use pejorative racial epithets in private conversation. And in 1969, in a scathing Law Day speech at Flint, he denounced the U.S. Supreme Court for showing a "disproportionate sensibility [in regard to] the treatment of the accused criminal and an almost total lack of concern for the victim of the crime."

Forced busing may well be the Red scare of the 1970s.

He said there were too many appeals, lambasted activists who "do not wish to heal but to destroy," and railed at hippies. The nation, Roth said, seemed headed toward "limited anarchy."

Stephen Roth was born in 1908 in Hungary, the son of a caretaker on a Hungarian nobleman's estate. His father immigrated to America in 1911, coming first to the steel country in Pennsylvania, later moving north to the Buick plant in Flint. Stephen's mother brought him and his sister over in 1913, making the trip in steerage. The family lived in a working-class neighborhood on Flint's north side, where immigrants, blacks, and southern whites lived side by side (if not very amicably) in flimsy frame houses under the Buick smokestacks.

After graduation from high school, Roth worked in Flint for several years before he decided to go to college. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1931, then went on to get his law degree from the University of Michigan in 1935. In Flint, where he set up practice, Roth became interested in politics and ran unsuccessfully for the Flint city commission. In 1948 he was elected attorney general as boy wonder G. Menen Williams led the Democratic ticket to victory. But two years later Roth was defeated for re-election in 1950.

In 1951, upon the death of Sen. Arthur Vandenberg, Democratic party leaders urged that Roth be appointed to the vacancy. Williams appointed Blair Moody instead, but in 1952 he named Roth to the Genessee County circuit court. Ten years later President Kennedy appointed Roth, who had been nominated by Sen. Philip Hart, to the federal district court.

Throughout these years Roth's reputation was that of a deliberate man within the Democratic party's conservative wing, a man so deliberate that in the Detroit schools case he wrote down his courtroom jokes before he cracked them.

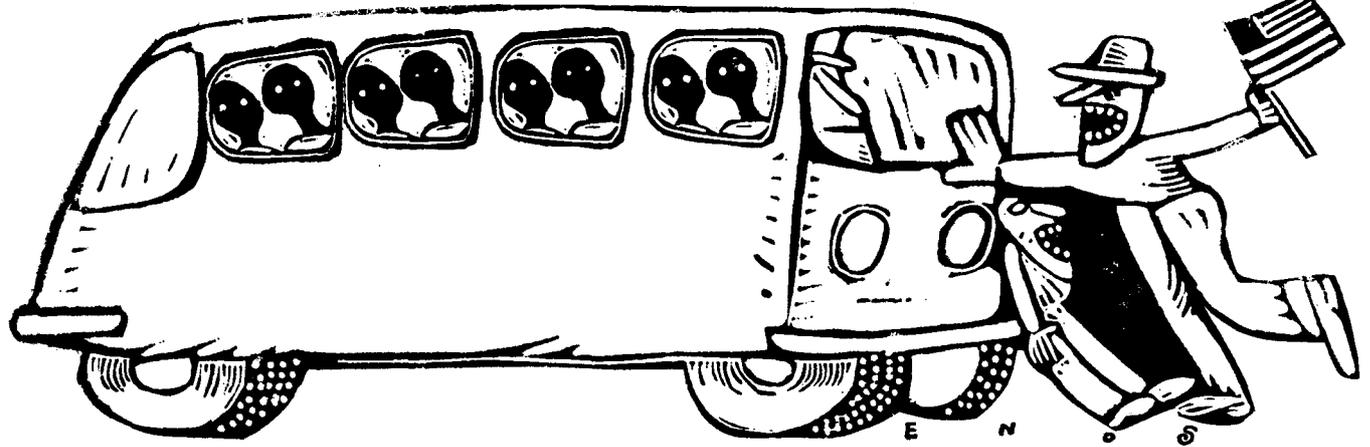
From the NAACP's point of view, Roth was hardly the best possible judge to hear the Detroit school case. In De-

cember 1970 he said he was opposed to the "forced feeding" of integration plans, meaning busing plans instituted by the courts. Yet the evidence amassed by the NAACP was so overwhelming that Roth was won over. And it was Roth who suggested that suburban school districts be involved in a Detroit integration plan.

At the three-month trial, which began in April 1971, it was demonstrated to Roth that banks, savings and loan associations, and other mortgage and brokerage houses in Detroit often "red-lined" neighborhoods in the city, meaning blacks could not get mortgages in these areas. He also learned that the Federal Housing Administration and the Veterans Administration used mortgage politics to encourage "harmonious"—i.e., all-black or all-white—neighborhoods.

Black real estate salesmen testified that despite open occupancy laws they could not find homes in suburbs or white areas in Detroit to show their black clients. Other testimony demonstrated that the Burton Abstract and Title Company, a large Detroit title insurance firm, included racially restrictive covenants in its real estate contracts until as recently as 1969—twenty-one years after the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled such covenants unconstitutional—and that the Detroit Housing Commission built only large projects in black areas rather than small ones that would tend to scatter blacks throughout the city. In his decision Roth observed that the Detroit public school system located new buildings in either all-white or all-black neighborhoods, thus perpetuating previous segregated patterns, rather than in border areas that would draw both blacks and whites.

Roth ruled in September 1971 that Detroit and the metropolitan area were segregated areas. In a stinging rebuke to the Establishment, he went on to say: "Government actions, and inactions at all levels, federal, state, and local, have combined with those of private organizations . . . to establish and to maintain the pat-



tern of residential segregation through the Detroit metropolitan area." In March 1972 he ruled that he had the legal authority to consider metropolitan schools in an integration plan. In June he issued his busing order.

Because Roth's order is now under a stay issued by the federal appeals court in Cincinnati, it is unlikely that there will be any massive busing in the Detroit metropolitan area this fall. Roth's panel says, however, that if the court action is completed by November 1—and if Roth is upheld—busing in seven of sixteen school clusters in which the fifty-three districts are grouped could begin in February 1973. Complete integration, the panel says, could be achieved by September 1973.

There is a good likelihood that the appeals court will uphold Roth's order; the three judges who comprise that court have the reputation of being fairly liberal. But a strong possibility remains that, if the case goes to the Supreme Court, Roth will be overruled at least to the extent that busing will be restricted to Detroit. No one has any real doubt that Roth's decision that *de jure* (by law) segregation exists in Detroit will stand. What is at issue is whether Roth has the power to involve the suburbs in the case.

William Penn, executive director of the Detroit branch of the NAACP, sees busing whites in from their suburbs as the only way to pressure them into accepting their responsibility to assist in the education of the black and the poor. As things stand now, Penn says, the main concern of white businessmen, industrialists, newspaper editors, and the like is simply that Detroit's freeways be kept in good enough repair to allow them quick access to, and a fast getaway from, their offices, the shopping centers, the hotels, and Lions and Tigers games.

Former Detroit schools superintendent Norman Drachler, forced out of his post because of his liberal inclinations, says the shrillness of the debate over busing is both a measure of the people the educational system has produced and, in turn, an indictment of that system and of our society. Busing will bring turmoil and friction, Drachler concedes, but it is better, he thinks, to face up to this now than to allow the problems created by segregation to grow more serious. C. L. Golightly, a black member of the board of education, says that the behavior of Detroit-area citizens today reminds him of that of citizens of Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi in the 1950s and early 1960s. Southern states have moved to integrate their systems, and busing has become an element in that integration, Golightly points out. "Here in Detroit," he adds, "we're just behind the times." □

Love Song to Willie Mays

BY JOE FLAHERTY

SHEA STADIUM, N. Y.—When Willie Mays was traded by the San Francisco Giants and came back to New York last spring, many fans—may God forgive them—argued a cold case: What could the forty-one-year-old center fielder with a waning batting average and a waxing temperament do for the Mets? To those of us who had grown up debating whether the first person of the Holy Trinity was Mantle, Snider, or Mays, Willie's return was a lover's reprieve from limbo. No matter that the Mets had been amazin'—a part of our hearts was coming home from San Francisco.

As a teen-ager in the vociferous borough of Brooklyn, I was a Giants fan. My Galway father reasoned that any team good enough for John McGraw was good enough for him and his offspring. So the Flaherty boys, rather than take a twenty-minute saunter through Prospect Park to Ebbets Field, made their odyssey to 155th Street in Manhattan—the Polo Grounds. In that sprawling boardinghouse I had to content myself with the likes of Billy Jurges, Buddy Kerr, and a nearly retired Mel Ott, whose kicking style at bat was already a memory. Of course, we had Sal Maglie, that living insult to Gillette, who thought the shortest distance between two points was a curve. But the enemy in Brooklyn was as star-laden as MGM: Reese, Robinson, Furillo, Cox, Hodges, Campanella, *et al.*

Then Willie Mays arrived and gave us respectability; even the enemy fan was in awe of him. He had a body forged on another planet. After I saw him bound across the 155th Street prairie to haul down Vic Wertz's 1954 World Series drive, no ballet dancer could ever make me swoon again.

Yet, looking back on the final playoff game against the Dodgers in 1951, I think his comet could have sputtered. I was in the stands that day with a gang of other hookey players. Mays was young—too young, too unsure—a kid trying to please his surrogate father, Durocher. If he had come to the plate in the ninth, something dire surely would have happened. He would have dropped the bat, or lunged at the ball like a drunk climbing stairs. He didn't flub, of course, since Bobby Thomson's home run ended the series with Mays still on deck.

The mind's eye conjures up the scene as the rest of the Giants rushed to home

Joe Flaherty reports for The Village Voice.

plate to greet Thomson. Willie, who had been standing right there, should have been one of the inner circle, but for a moment he was paralyzed. Then he began to jump up and down on the outer fringes, a chocolate Pogo stick trying to leap over the mob, leaping higher than all. He was acting like a man who had just received the midnight call from the governor.

Now it is Sunday, May 14, 1972. This is no sun-drenched debut of a rookie; the sky is overcast and threatening. The opponents are those lamsters from Cogan's Bluff and Willie's recent classmates, the San Francisco Giants. Shea Stadium is as displeasing as ever. Sitting high up in the stands, you feel like a fly alone on the edge of a bowl. (The ideal baseball park packs you all in together and forces you to bend down in a communion of concentration. Ebbets Field was such a park.) Today, as usual, the fans are fatuous. The kids, like groupies for the Rotarians, are carrying signs saying, "Hicksville Loves the Mets" and "Huntington Loves the Mets." Alas, Babylon cannot be far behind. When Willie Mays steps out on the sidelines to warm up with Jim Fregosi, the crowd, drooling like an affectionate sheepdog, cheers. A Little League of the mind.

But there is still a sprinkling of magic in the stands. The black men and women from the subway wars of long ago are here: the men in straw hats, alternating a cigar and a beer under the awnings of their mustaches; the women with their bouquet bottoms (greens, reds, yellows, purples) grown slightly wide with age. They won't yell, "Charge!" when the organ demands it (that insulting machine is a gift from the Los Angeles Dodgers), nor will they cheer a sideline game of catch. They have seen the gods cavort through too many series to pay tribute to curtain-raising antics.

Mays is in the leadoff spot. I watch him closely, for the pundits have been playing taps for Willie lately. Many aging ballplayers go all at once, I know, and his .184 batting average is not reassuring. Nothing much is learned from his first at-bat. He backs away from "Sudden Sam" McDowell's inside fast ball, betraying a trait that is becoming more noticeable lately. He doesn't feverishly bail out, just steps back apprehensively. The indignity is small, like an elegant man in a Homburg, nodding off in a hot subway. Finally, Mays walks, and Harrelson and Agee walk after him. Then Staub, disturbed by the clutter, cleans the bases with a grand slam. Mets, 4-0.

I notice, when Mays comes up again, that he shops for pitches more than he used to. Where once there was unbridled aggressiveness, there is now a slight begging quality. This time patience pays a