

EDITORIALS

SAVE COPY
SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1963

THE LOUISVILLE TIMES

BARRY BINGHAM, Editor and Publisher
MARK ETHRIDGE, Chairman of the Board Lisle Baker, Executive Vice-President
Editorial Page Staff: GEORGE BURT, Editorial Page Editor
JAMES C. HUTTO NORMAN L. JOHNSON ROBERT YORK, Cartoonist

30 pt 2 line U. Of K. Students Take The Lead

(The Louisville Times) *Stali*

A CURIOUS SIDELIGHT on the school integration argument that has been going on for nearly a decade is the fact that the white students, the very people who would be most immediately affected by integration, are, by and large, far less disturbed about it, far more in favor of it, than their elders.

Obviously, not every white high school or college student is overjoyed by either the prospect or reality of integration. Ugly events in Mississippi and elsewhere have destroyed any tendency to think of segregation as just an old man's prejudice. Nevertheless, the youth of the South is demonstrably much more willing than its seniors to accept—even when it does not embrace—integration.

In part, but only in a small part, we think, this may be due to the enormous impact of the Negro in athletics, where colored boys (and girls) have proved their skill and courage and stamina. Certainly the Southern white athletes have shown no reluctance to meet Negro athletes. Mississippi State's basketball team, for example, was eager to participate in this year's N.C.A.A. tournament. The fact that it would meet—and did meet and was defeated by—a team having several Negro players did not bother Mississippi State's boys. The game, according to press accounts, was played without incident.

Now *The Kernel*, the student newspaper at the University of Kentucky, is urging that school's athletic overlords to take what is, in our opinion, an overdue step: use Negro athletes

even though this may mean withdrawal from the Southeastern Conference.

"Here and now," an editorial in the paper says, "with a withdrawal from the S.E.C., or an announcement that we will begin to recruit Negro players by a certain date, we have a golden opportunity to become leaders. We can stand up and tell the world that we, a Southern university, are sick and tired of having a doctrine of racial inferiority rammed down our throats."

The university itself is integrated, with perhaps as many as 125 Negro students on the campus. But its athletic teams have been all-white, presumably because many of its fellow members of the S.E.C. do not want to play teams having Negroes.

Dr. Frank Dickey, university presi-

dent, while agreeing in principle that the U. K. teams should be integrated, asserts there is also a responsibility to the bondholders who put up money for the stadium and Coliseum. Withdrawal from the S.E.C. might mean difficulty in scheduling games and result in financial loss, he says.

Granting the responsibility to the bondholders, we are not sure this point is completely valid. Even if U. K. began to recruit Negro athletes today, they could not play intercollegiate ball until their sophomore year. In the intervening time, U. K. surely could make some adjustment of its schedules.

Perhaps there would be some open dates for a year or so, but we think that preferable to perpetuating a system that has no place in today's world.

The Courier-Journal

Editorial Page Staff: RUSSELL BRINEY, Editorial Page Editor
ADELE BRANDEIS, MOLLY CLOWES, WELDON JAMES,
JOHN ED PEARCE, WILLIAM PEEPLES, HUGH HAYNIE, Cartoonist

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1963. FOUNDED 1826.

U.K. Athletic Policy Shouldn't Be Dictated By Dixie Bias

IN A STATE with an official anti-discrimination policy, it is an anomaly for the state university to condone and practice it in the area of athletics. For that matter, it is anomalous within the context of university policy. U. of K. admits Negro students without restriction, yet they cannot play on its athletic teams. Why? Because U. of K. is a member of the Southeastern Conference and the conference custom is to have lily-white athletic teams.

The Kernel, the campus daily newspaper, contends the price is too high to pay for conference membership, and we agree. In an editorial, *The Kernel* declares: "If the university is to live up to its moral obligation and make significant progress as a major institution it must divorce itself from the segregation policy which dominates the Southeastern Conference. Here and now with a withdrawal from the S.E.C. or an announcement that we will begin to recruit Negro players by a certain date, we have a chance to take a real step forward."

The latter course, we believe, would be preferable to immediate withdrawal. Looking at the situation from one angle, it would make more sense for two or three other conference members—Mississippi, Mississippi State and possibly Alabama—to withdraw from the con-

ference. The two Mississippi institutions are the bedrocks of segregation in the conference, although Mississippi State set a precedent this year in competing, for the first time, against Negro players when its basketball team played in the N.C.A.A. On previous occasions Mississippi State, although it won the right to represent the Southeastern Conference in the N.C.A.A., refused to participate because it would have to play teams with Negro athletes.

Most teams in the Southeastern Conference have played against non-conference teams with Negro players, both in basketball and football—and the sky didn't fall in, and it wouldn't if Southern teams had Negro players of their own. We are sure this policy would appeal to coaches. Think of what a rich recruiting field the South would offer if its own schools started seeking out good Negro athletes, instead of losing them by default to the rest of the country!

In any event, the University of Kentucky is not in the Deep South, and Southern customs and prejudices should no longer dictate its athletic policy. The Board of Trustees and the Athletic Board of Control should announce that the University intends to recruit Negro athletes, follow through on it, and leave the next move to the Southeastern Conference.

