

PAR Ad Reveals Brotherhood Hoax

Frank H. Joyce

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EDITORS NOTE: In addition to serving as the Fifth Estate news Editor, Frank Joyce is the Executive Secretary of People Against Racism (PAR). According to its literature, PAR was formed several months ago by those who agree that the problem of race relations in this country is much more a white problem than a Negro problem and that the responsibility of whites is to eliminate white supremacy, discrimination and prejudice in the white community.

PAR has agitated for changes in textbooks and teaching methods concerning the teaching of American History in city and suburban schools. It plans this summer to conduct seminars for high school students on Racism in America in any parts of the white community.

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"We've done more to help the colored folks than anyone else in Detroit!", said Mr. Elving Anderson, advertising manager of the *Detroit Free Press*.

Mr. Anderson's comment along with a lot of others, equally amusing, was made as he reacted to a paid advertisement submitted for publication in the *Detroit Free Press* by People Against Racism (PAR).

Headlined "WE CAUGHT YOU!" the advertisement points out that twenty-one advertisers, including A&P, Grinnell's, Food Fair and Kresge's and United Steel Workers placed statements in the Negro newspaper, the *Michigan Chronicle* special Brotherhood week edition of February 25<sup>th</sup>.

The ads indicated their support of Brotherhood and equality. None of the advertisers, however, placed similar or identical ads in either the *News* or the *Free Press*.

The text of the PAR ad said in part, "We in PAR realize that brotherhood is not a marketable commodity in the white community. It does not help to sell automobiles or groceries or home appliances. Nevertheless, it is high time for us of the white community to recognize this highly selective support of Brotherhood Week as a graphic example of the universal sickness of racism from which our whole society suffers.

"The firms... listed have in this instance, by accepting and exploiting the prevailing double standard, actually done the cause of Brotherhood a disservice."

Both the *News* and the *Free Press* refused to accept the PAR ad for publication. Neither offered any reason for their refusal. Both papers ignored offers from PAR to consider changes in the text of the ad which might make it suitable for publication.

On Friday March 24, PAR filed a complaint with the Michigan Civil Rights Commission against both papers for their refusal to print the advertisement. A record of the dispute has also been sent to the American Civil Liberties Union, which is also considering the matter. Attorneys for PAR are considering possible court action to force the newspapers to accept the Ad for publication.

The text of the advertisement makes it clear that PAR is not defending Brotherhood week but rather attacking the cynical and exploitative use of it. The ad notes, "Each year one week is set aside to make up for 52 weeks of racism. It is known as Brotherhood Week. At best Brotherhood Week is a meaningless gesture. At worst, it is an insult to those it claims to benefit. In many ways, it is an example of the bigotry it is supposed to reduce."

William Witt, chairman of PAR, commenting on the dispute over the ad and the issues it raises, said, "We realize that undoubtedly SOME of these advertisers acted not out of a cynical attempt to exploit the Negro market, but rather out of ignorance. It simply never occurred to them that Brotherhood Week ought not to be segregated, that if it has any meaning at all it is because it is a universal—not just a Negro phenomenon."

Michigan Bell Telephone, Witt noted, was the only company which placed the same ad in the *Chronicle, News* and *Free Press*.



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