

# Off Center

Sol Plafkin

1967

A possible pleasant alternative to the traditional “tweedle-dum—tweedle-dee” characters bound to run from the two major political parties in 1968 is a combo of Rev. Martin Luther King for President and Dr. Benjamin Spock for Veep on a 3<sup>rd</sup> party “peace” ticket.

It would be interesting to know how some of our “radical” Young Democrats would react to this slate.

The new Michigan Young Dem Chairman, Rick Wiener, is allegedly opposed to Johnson’s policies in Vietnam and is a product of the 17<sup>th</sup> Dist. YDs which supported the recent Spring Mobilization and endorsed Jim Lafferty as a “peace” candidate for Congress last year.

We are also interested in seeing the reaction of the two “inner-city” peace-oriented “senior” Democratic organizations—Rep. Conyers’ First and Rep. Diggs’ 13<sup>th</sup> Districts.

Whether we like it or not, the “recall” movement against Mayor Cavanagh is going to have heavy racist overtones and we’re going to have to support that pompous young whippersnapper for fear of a hell of a lot worse in the Mayor’s chair.

While some of Councilman Mary Beck’s criticisms of the Mayor are valid (that he is a “part-time mayor” and “too interested in the national scene” to the detriment of the solution of local problems), one can certainly not support her when she calls for the enactment of the infamous “stop and frisk” law by the legislature.

We wish that there was a true progressive alternative to the Mayor, but the realities of the rise to political power and its retention militate strongly against this possibility.

Les Biederman, formerly of Jefferson Junior High, caught the Detroit Board of Education by surprise by his dramatic, unexpected resignation. Instead of invoking the full protection of the Teacher Tenure Act which prohibits discharge without a formal public hearing, he told the Board, in effect, to go to hell—that he no longer wanted anything to do with their antiquated techniques and bureaucratic bungling.

Yep, the Board was embarrassed. For a few minutes they acted like they might not accept his resignation. But after talking in circles they accepted it with a proviso that Les is welcome to appear before the Board at any time to tell them why he feels a creative, imaginative teacher cannot function freely within their system.

Some fun, eh!

Speaking of education, an important ruling just came down from a Federal District Court in New York City—that a student is entitled to the services of an attorney before being suspended from school.

This historic decision by Judge Constance Baker Motley (formerly counsel for the NAACP) has got all the educational mal-administrators in New York City all riled up.

Educational bureaucrats, whether they be in Detroit, New York, or Oshkosh, don’t like to change their archaic methods.

The New York case should have considerable impact in Detroit where so-called “trouble-makers” are kicked out into the streets and denied their basic right (under the Michigan Constitution) to a free public education.

# fifth Estate

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