

New Negro Paper

Michigan Herald Would Rather be Right

Carol Schmidt

1967

So you think the *Michigan Chronicle*, Detroit's only Negro newspaper, is conservative, its green color reflecting its primary purpose of making money rather than informing the community?

How does the idea of a Negro paper published by a white racist, who may have John Birch Society money behind him, grab you?

It's not just an idle thought. A paper of that description, to be called the *Michigan Herald*, was scheduled to come out Jan. 21. It apparently encountered some difficulties, but should be out any day, if not by the time you read this.

The Herald will be published by Jack McGriff, who is also publisher of the *Redford Record*, with offices at 17205 Lahser. The *Record* has run such campaigns as a series criticizing integrated textbooks, which have as their "malicious" aim, according to the Jan. 12 issue, "to indoctrinate children to equalitarian theories."

Earlier campaigns showed that integrated schools fell in quality, so schools should be kept separate, both to keep white children's education at the higher level they are capable of and to keep Negro children (always with a small "n" in the *Record*) at a lower level so that they won't be "frustrated" by being overtaxed intellectually.

A January headline on the weekly blared that Negro children now make up 55 per cent of the student body in Detroit, while Negroes only pay 20 per cent of the city taxes. Open occupancy and other issues related to integration in any shape or form have also been targets.

Although the John Birch Society does not make its membership public, McGriff has been linked to probable members, and John Birch money is rumored to be behind the new Negro publication.

Uly Boykin will be the editor of the paper, which presently has offices on Broadway across from the old Broadway market, the former *Detroit Courier* offices. The *Courier* chain was bought out by Sengstacke publications recently, the same company which publishes the *Chronicle* and several Chicago Negro papers, including the *Daily Defender*.

The *Courier* now is headquartered at Hamilton and Webb. Both Sengstacke publications and the former *Courier* chain were owned solely by Negroes, as are almost all Negro papers, unlike Negro aimed radio stations, which have largely been white-controlled. Boykin is a Negro, a former public relations man who once worked for the *Courier*, and has been involved in other enterprises, most of which fell apart and lost money for everyone except Boykin.

He has been called a front man for Samuel Olsen, former Prosecuting Attorney, whose racist tactics were a sore point in the Negro community. He is also strongly Republican.

His staff includes the former associate editor of the *Courier*, Luther Webb who had been fired at least twice from that publication. Others include General Laney and James Cleaver, lured from the *Chronicle* by higher salaries. Both photographers, Cleaver also does some reporting under pseudonyms, generally Jimmy Tinker. He has done many articles on needy families for the *Chronicle*, stressing the need for community self-help, a likely racist theme.

Cleaver and Laney are notorious enemies but both were lured by the prospect of making more money with a publication which is expected to have substantial advertising from white companies who have found the *Chronicle* too "militant" but who want to hit the growing Negro market.

McGriff also publishes the *Redford Township News*, the *Home Gazette*, the *Livonia News*, the *Southfield Sun* and the *Westland Times*, all of which have dwelled on the horrors of integration.

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