

Mostly about People

By Wally Trabing



In Support-Of Denzil Morrissey

I have confidence in Superintendent of Schools Denzil Morrissey as an educator.

I believe we have an excellent school system when it comes to pure education and I have had no problem finding support for Morrissey's educational leadership in talking to leaders in most of the schools.

He is hailed for his "program of excellence," his "support of teachers once he has researched and approved a new approach," his "constant search to keep the system from becoming static as are so many school systems."

They said he has increased the quality of the faculties and consultants.

He is not afraid to be controversial where he thinks the school system will benefit.

He has encouraged flexibility within boundaries. He has established curriculum standards which I hear are being watched with interest by other school systems.

And I hear from these people that our school system is progressing and growing stronger in quality.

But Morrissey has spent money.

This seems to be the crux of the controversy. His opponents have a right to criticize. Most of the opponents I respect.

There are proper ways in a democracy to oppose. One of these steps has been taken through the recent school board elections.

But what disturbs me is their (opponents) panacea for solving the school's monetary criticisms. It can be likened to the Queen of Hearts in "Alice In Wonderland," running around shouting, "Off with his head! Off with his head!"

To remove a successful edu-

cator because of problems which the school board is supposed to handle in the first place is poor thinking.

The school board holds the purse strings. It is responsible for the money spent in a school system. It has the final responsibility for approving expenditures and school programs.

The superintendent should not be the scapegoat.

Another disturbing factor is the insinuations made by some campaigning board candidates that public opinion is against the superintendent.

This is a political trick. Without exhaustive surveys, one can't judge public opinion.

The light turnout in the board election, to me, invalidates their claims.

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Money should be watched carefully, I agree. I scream about taxes, too.

But it should be handled through debate and proper procedure and not by gossip and wild accusals.

I think it is so important that the override tax issue in June be passed.

Think of this: Some 12 millions of dollars are being spent in this county each year on welfare, unemployment insurance, aid to the poor, juvenile hall, the sheriff's department, courts and supporting institutions. The EOC, included in the above figure, spent a half million over 22 months.

It is not valid to think, then, that if the people using these services were properly educated and conditioned to society in school, they would have less need for these services?

A 1965 survey indicated that 61 per cent of our high school students go on to some school, from university and colleges (small amount)?—to junior colleges and beauty colleges, etc.

The rest go straight out into society to produce.

Is it not valid to think, then, that the best possible education should be given non-college students while in high school to correct anti-social attitudes, to rehabilitate physical and mental handicaps, to equip them for employment?

Those who have pledged themselves to making sweeping cost cuts might reflect that the psychologists, speech therapists, curriculum coordinators, mental retardation specialists, work experience advisors are the very people who spend a great deal of their time helping those who might otherwise end up on welfare or on the dole, if not corrected.

You pay for welfare and unemployment and the rest, and it costs twice that of education.

Any amount of money spent on pure education is a bargain.

I believe we have a good school system and a good superintendent of schools.

For the benefit of the kids, let's keep him here.

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