

Nov. 8, 1967

PUBLIC RETRACTION TO MR. F. D. SCHURZ

Since July 1967, I have been putting out Newsletters in which I called the chain of newspapers in the Imperial and Coachella Valleys, SCHURZ'S PROSTITUTED PRESS. This name calling was done under the impression that Mr. F. D. Schurz was responsible for the situation whereby the newspapers of this chain in Indio, Brawley and El Centro were distorting the news, printing lies, and omitting important news all for the benefit of the big farm interests which are the power structure here. The effect of all this was to keep the people brainwashed so that they should not know how the big farm interests were exploiting them.

I WANT TO NOW PUBLICLY RETRACT MY NAME CALLING OF MR. F. D. SCHURZ AND EXPLAIN HOW THIS SITUATION AROSE SO THAT ALL MY READERS WILL KNOW THAT MR. SCHURZ, ONCE HE KNOWS THAT HIS NEWSPAPERS ARE NOT HANDLING THE NEWS PROPERLY, HE TAKES STEPS TO REMEDY THE SITUATION.

I want to impress on all you readers that I am not printing this retraction under the threat of a libel suit by Mr. Schurz. This Newsletter is being put out because it is the fair thing to do. Just yesterday, I was defeated in my effort to be elected Director of the Imperial Irrigation District for Area #4. In the campaigning before the election, Mr. Schurz's newspapers gave all the candidates fair treatment in that their statements were printed and were not distorted so as to bring ridicule on any of the candidates.

It was felt that this election campaign and the handling of the news regarding it, showed definitely that Mr. Schurz had taken steps to remedy the situation. I wish to point out that I am referring specifically to the handling of the news and not to editorial opinions written by the management in which it may advise voters to vote for a certain candidate, etc. I recognize this right of the management to give its editorial opinion, and have never questioned it. Readers generally understand that editorials are the opinion of the management. But many readers do not know that their minds can be brainwashed by a newspaper distorting certain items of news, printing lies, or omitting to print certain news. By this technique, it has been possible for the big farm interests to have a very bright public image.

For the benefit of the readers who do not live in or visited the Coachella and Imperial Valleys, Calif., it is necessary to know some of the social and economic facts of these areas to understand how Mr. Schurz, an innocent outsider, got caught in the battling going on here because he was misinformed by Virgil Pinkley, his publisher.

In these areas, according to the U.S. Reclamation Law of 1902, people who live locally could only farm. In addition, there is a limit of getting irrigation water to be able to farm 160 acres. Because of the warm weather and constant sunshine, it is possible to farm here all 12 months of the year. Because of the irrigation system, there are no droughts or excessive rainfalls or storms which destroy crops as in other regions of the United States.

The result is that one acre here is equal in production to 5 acres

anywhere else in the U.S. So you can see that one person farming here, would be doing the equivalent of a person farming 800 acres elsewhere in the U.S. In addition, if you consider the average family of a husband, wife, and 3 children, it can be seen that they could own and farm here 800 acres in compliance with the U.S. Reclamation Law. But again it must be pointed out that this farm family in terms of farming in the rest of the U.S. is really farming the equivalent of 4,000 acres.

The big farm interests with their money and influence have prevented the enforcement of the U.S. Reclamation Law in that only persons living here can do the farming and that one person can farm only 160 acres. Imperial County with \$230 millions agricultural production in 1966 ranks 5th in the U.S. You can therefore see why the big ranchers try by every device possible to prevent enforcement.

The situation at present is that 70% of the farmland is owned by absentee landowners in violation of the Reclamation Law. 20% is owned by big ranchers who live locally but are in violation because their landholdings are in excess of 160 acres per person (considering the entire family). Only 10% of the land is owned in compliance with the U.S. Reclamation Law.

In addition, just like in different parts of the world and Latin-American countries, the absentee landowners control the county officials so that the assessments on the farm holdings are put at fake low figures so that the farmowner depending on his location escapes on the average of 66% of his property taxes. The local residents have \$8 millions in extra taxes extorted out of them to make up for the outside landowners.

In addition, there is another racket in electricity bills. The Imperial Irrigation District under the control of the big ranchers have been charging the local people 3 times the correct price for the electricity so that it could sell the irrigation water at 1/4 the correct price to the large ranches. This results in a \$14 millions yearly swindle of the people in electricity.

Lack of space prevents telling about other lesser swindles imposed on a suffering people by the outside landowners. So you can see there are serious problems in the Imperial and Coachella Valleys that need to be remedied. THE FOUNDATION OF A TRUE DEMOCRACY IS A WELL INFORMED CITIZENRY. Since the newspapers are really the main sources of political, social and economic information, it can be realized how important it is that newspapers print all the news so that all shades of opinion can be read by the citizenry.

Seven years ago, when Virgil Pinkley owned this chain of newspapers, I began writing Letters to the Editor, concerning these bad social and economic conditions. The letters would not be printed. So I had to learn how to use a mimeograph and started putting out NEWSLETTERS FROM DR. BEN YELLEN so that the CURTAIN OF SILENCE set up by Virgil Pinkley could be penetrated and the minds of the people here and in Washington, D.C. could be debrainwashed so they understand what is going on here. I called Pinkley's newspapers PINKLEY'S PROSTITUTED PRESS. I make no retraction to Virgil Pinkley for he lived in Coachella Valley and knew what was going on here.

I destroyed Pinkley's reputation as a fair newspaperman by distributing my Newsletters all over the U.S. to newspapers, United Press and Associated Press offices, newspapermen's clubs, etc. Wherever, Pinkley visited, the people knew what I accused Pinkley of.

In 1964, Mr. F.D. Schurz and associates of the South Bend, Indiana TRIBUNE bought majority control of the local chain of newspapers but kept Virgil Pinkley as chief in command of the newspapers. I immediately wrote to Mr. Schurz telling him the situation here. Apparently, Pinkley must have told Mr. Schurz that my charges were not true. About July 1, 1967, the Schurz interests bought full control of the newspapers here and Pinkley was out. I then started my attack on Mr. Schurz. He soon found out that he had been misinformed by Virgil Pinkley. HE IS A BIG ENOUGH MAN TO REMEDY THE SITUATION. I SALUTE HIM. I AM GLAD TO RETRACT!