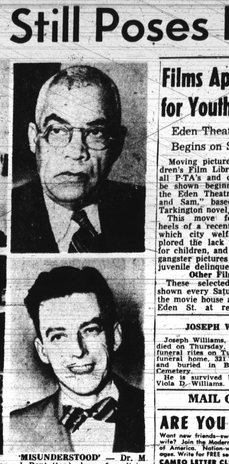
Regional Plan for Meharry Still Poses Dilemma for Dixie

SHE TYPED IT — Miss Gwendolyn Orton of Nashville, secretary to Dr. Murray C. Brown, director of Meharry Medical College, typed the "Meharry Plan," which was submitted to Southern Governors in Florida last week, and which seems the answer to Dixie's problem of how to keep its medical schools lily-white.

FUNDS NEEDED—Meharry needs money to carry on a program which includes research in dentistry like the investigation in process above. Director of the dental research project, for which the Federal Government granted $5,000, is Dr. H. D. West, biochemist. Miss Ramell Eddins, a student, is from Memphis. Negro officials generally favor the regional plan, but insist that high scholarship be maintained.



'MISUNDERSTOOD' — Dr. M. J. Bent (top), dean of medicine at Meharry, says the purpose of the "Meharry plan" is misunderstood. Dr. Brown (below) and other whites would remain in top positions if it is adopted.

Quality of Undergraduate Schools, Openings for Internes Big Factors

Governor of Tennessee Says Dixie Is Not Ready Yet to Greet Mixed Student Bodies

By DOUGLASS HALL
Special Correspondent

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — "Unless the Southern States take over Meharry Medical College and save it, the colored people of this area will find themselves without a medical school," Gov. Jim McCord of Tennessee declared in an exclusive AFRO interview last week.

"But 27% of all the medical schools in the United States are located in the 15 Southern States," I pointed out, "why can't persons attend these?"

"I do not think that the South is ready yet to admit colored persons to its professional schools," Gov. McCord replied.

"How do you think the Supreme Court's decision in the case of Miss Ada Sipuel Fisher vs. Oklahoma will affect the Regional plan?"

The Governor answered prompt-ly: "I have no comment on that question. It seems as if they are having quite a time out there. Why, the latest that I heard is that she (Mrs. Fisher) is not even a native of the State."

Worried Over Issue

It was quite clear that Tennessee's Chief Executive wanted to keep off the Oklahoma affair, but it was also just as obvious that he was deeply concerned over Meharry Medical College, and although no announcement has been made, it was apparent that they found here an answer to their efforts to keep colored persons out of white professional schools in Dixie.

"When they came to visit our department," one student told me, "it seemed as if they were inspecting to see if they wanted to buy us or not."

At that time, it seems as if agreement had been reached on everything except the financial arrangements, and Dr. Brown, as representative of the college and trustees, had been ordered to draw up a plan acceptable to all concerned.

Complex Developments

However, since that time, a number of interesting complications have set in.

Mrs. Fisher is boycotting the jim crow, three-room Law School which Oklahoma set up for her seven day after the Supreme Court's decision.

Herman Marion Sweatt, through his attorneys, told the State of Texas that what he really wants is "educational equality" which he is convinced could be given only in the same school white students attend.

Although these cases affect admission to Law Schools of Southern universities only, it is evident that any action on a regional plan would definitely affect medical and other professional schools as well.

That faculty members and administrative officials at Meharry favor the regional plan is evident in various documents in which it is affectionately referred to as the "Meharry Plan."

Dr. M. J. Bent, dean of medicine, told the AFRO he thought that many persons had "a misunderstanding of the plan, feeling that it will be one of the greatest things that could happen to Meharry."

Some officials believe that the plan will be approved and put into effect "within the next three months, if at all."

The plan, secretly guarded, is expected to follow the same line as a previous one, which offered these solutions for "medical education for colored students in the South":

1. States may underwrite undergraduate medical education at Meharry and designate that institution as their official colored professional school.

2. States using the Meharry plan should stimulate improved pre-professional training for students in order to take full advantage of the plan.

3. Graduate training facilities should be developed by each participant in the plan to benefit fully from it. In this connection, Meharry will lend supervisory faculty personnel upon request to any State which will underwrite the salaries of this personnel.

In other words, in event the Meharry Plan is adopted—and there are indications that such announcement will be made after the Florida meeting—Southern States will still find themselves in a dilemma.

They will have to greatly improve their undergraduate schools so as to give students the proper pre-med background.

Unless this is done, very few students will be in a position to take advantage of the Meharry or any other plan. Many attending the Medical School are finding it very difficult to master their studies because of the lack of proper background training.

Internship Problem

Assuming that the student has taken advantage of Meharry Medical School, the matter of internship is another factor. Most Southern hospitals do not allow colored physicians opportunity for practical experience.

Meharry offers as a solution to this problem the development of "colored hospitals, some of which will eventually attain the size required for interne training."

Meharry's Analysis

Officials hope that the Meharry Plan will have the support of all. They do not anticipate any "hold-up" or serious opposition.

Under the heading of "A Southern Dilemma," Meharry makes the following observation:

"To many States, the assumption of this responsibility (medical training for colored students) is now proving a dilemma.

"Neither available facilities, considerations of economy, nor total demand for training permits traditional development of separate training in the medical sciences for colored students within the borders of each State.

"Yet social custom will not permit admission of colored candidates to State-supported professional schools. . . . It can be safely said that it would be impossible to develop medical training of quality for colored students in any Southern State under present conditions."

Thurgood Marshall, special counsel for the NAACP, told the AFRO that "such a school (regional) will not meet the demands of colored students for professional training."

Recent Supreme Court decisions directed that the States must provide the same type of education for one race as it provides for the other.

Mr. Marshall said further: "The question is not whether we can learn just as much with the teacher on one end of the log and the student on the other. It is a fact that the State does not provide logs for is white students."

Gov. McCord, sponsor of the Regional Plan, declared: "I expect some opposition. But this plan is not for colored only. It is for whites as well. The matter of race does not enter into regional planning."

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2 Men Who Put Trash in Streets Fined $15

Jolted the hard way, through their pocketbooks, two men were reminded at hearings Monday in Central police court that it is a violation of a city ordinance to throw trash and ashes into the street.

John L. Jackson, 42, of 433 Pierce St., was fined $5 and costs for improper disposal of rubbish, and Joseph Brown, 26, of 539 Forest St., was fined $10 and costs for throwing ashes into the street.

Films Approved for Youth Here

Eden Theatre Series Begins on Saturday

Moving pictures from the Children's Film Library, approved by all P-TA's and civic groups, will be shown beginning Feb. 21, at the Eden Theatre when "Penrod and Sam," based on the Booth Tarkington novel, will be featured.

This move followed on the heels of a recent AFRO story in which civic welfare groups deplored the lack of suitable films for children, and pointed out that gangster pictures were a factor in juvenile delinquency.

Other Films Listed

These selected films will be shown every Saturday morning at the movie house at Monument and Eden St. at regular admission prices.

Other pictures will include "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," "Midnight Summer's Dream," "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," "The Prince and the Pauper," "Alice in Wonderland," "Young Buffalo Bill" and "Young Tom Edison."

JOSEPH WILLIAMS

Joseph Williams, 304 N. Gilmor St., died on Thursday, and will be given funeral rites on Tuesday at Williams funeral home. Rev. Jesse Richardson officiated and buried in Baltimore National Cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Viola D. Williams.

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