

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Judicial System Dishonored

Editor, States-Item:

I would like to comment on the "Haggerty case."

Although Judge Haggerty has been acquitted of misdemeanor charges of obscenity, soliciting for prostitution and resisting arrest, his conduct of Dec. 17, 1969, which was shown nationwide on television that night and the next, has put New Orleans on the map again as a laughing stock for the rest of the country.

If other states have accused us of having no respect for the law before, they can now claim our judicial system to be a total mockery of the law.

Being acquitted, is one thing, but remaining on the bench and sitting in judgment of others is something else again. Every case that comes before him will be seeing him in a motel room brawl with the police, and, yet, there he sits, representing what should be fine and unblemished.

How can the youth of today be expected to have respect for the law when some of those who represent it appear to be breaking it?

One of the biggest reasons for today's "Generation Gap" is parents and adults who preach one thing and then openly do another.

I, too, question Judge Haggerty's fitness to continue on the bench. Regardless of whether he was guilty or not of the said charges, he has thrown dishonor on our judicial system.

Mrs. Blanche Henry-

'Whitewash'

Houston, Tex.

Editor, States-Item:

After reading of the whitewash your Judge Braniff gave Judge Haggerty and then noting his ridiculous attack on the police — at a time when law and order is one of the main problems of our country — I think the people of New Orleans need to reject not one judge but two.

Did it occur to Braniff that the person would not have been injured had he not attacked the policeman? Does he expect the police to gain respect by submitting to beating without retaliation?

Dr. J. Smith

Reaps What He Sows

Editor, States-Item:

In reference to your stand concerning the conduct of Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr.:

Judge Haggerty is familiar with God's word in the Book of Galatians 6:7, 8, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatever man (even a criminal court judge) soweth, that shall he also reap (sometimes publicly). For he that soweth to his flesh (party in the motel) shall of the flesh reap corruption."

It's heartbreaking in these

troubled times to think a man reaping a corruption crop is a judge in our criminal court-rooms.

Judge Haggerty has passed local judgment and found not guilty. But, there is the Great Judgment with Jesus Christ on the bench. No lawyer, no jury, no personal friend as judge. By the way, I will also be judged by this just God and so will everyone else. No alibis, no appeal to higher courts.

In closing I want to ask the praying people of New Orleans to put Judge Haggerty on their prayer list. May I refer once again to God's word in the Holy Bible. First Thessalonians 5:22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

The Rev. Bob Harrington

Haggerty View

Editor, States-Item.

Your lead editorial ("The Haggerty Case": Jan. 28) was so reasoned and succinct that few of us in the "over thirty minority" can dare fault it; yet, I can't escape the nagging sus-



picion that perhaps "we've got it all wrong." I refer particularly to the fifth paragraph in which you decree, "Indeed, much of the contempt shown by the youth of today . . . can be attributed to indiscretion, irresponsibility and corruption on the part of those they are taught to respect."

Is it not at least equally likely that in the heat of our passion felt toward a specific incident and a particular individual we are not blatantly disclosing to ourselves and our youth alike the very calloused disregard we feel for the infinitely more important and great general principles upon which we like to think our social order is based and which we say we respect?

I know nothing (other than some of the much which has been reported by the news media) concerning the details of Judge Haggerty's involvement in the "stag party" which led to his arrest; nor do I have the foggiest notion how out of the many "stag parties" regularly being held in both likely and unlikely places, the police happened to have raided this one. I

only know that a man who apparently had been a respected jurist heretofore was arrested (on TV yet!), subsequently charged, was tried and acquitted. If no less than two of the most fundamental general principles which we are taught to respect, i.e., "presumption of innocence" and "due process," are to have any meaning whatsoever, then Judge Haggerty must in fact, as well as in our minds, return to the bench no more nor less tarnished than he was prior to this lamentable fiasco.

Indeed, I suspect most of the contempt shown by the youth of today stems from our own rather secretive distrust yet no less flagrant disregard of the very system which we ourselves have fashioned and our general proclivity for "talking a much better game than we play."

If "our system" properly apprehended, correctly charged, and justly found the judge "not guilty," then the only influence it could have on his fitness to sit in judgment of the lives of others would be an inevitable enhancement of the compassion that is born in humiliation.

Ronald R. Perry

'Blot' Remains

Editor, States-Item:

Let me congratulate you on your editorial "The Haggerty Case," (Jan. 28). It was timely and reassuring.

The fact that "His Honor" was found "not guilty" does not eradicate the blot that Judge Haggerty has brought upon the judiciary by his presence and his behavior at the "stag party" nor does the finding of the court obliterate the indelible and evil impression made upon the minds of our youth who saw the televised proceedings of the judge's arrest.

The Greek philosopher Epictetus tells us: "When superiors do not observe the rules of propriety and inferiors do not learn, then a seditious people spring up, and that kingdom must perish!"

ARM

Braniff Critic

Editor, States-Item:

The Jan. 28 issue of the New Orleans States-Item carried a page one article which attributed highly inflammatory and prejudicial remarks to Judge Matthew Braniff, a criminal court judge of Orleans Parish.

Remarks of the type attributed to Judge Braniff reflect on the entire judicial system at a time when society and the laws require complete objectivity on the part of the men who were the victims of Judge Braniff's tirade, the law enforcement officers of this community.

Judge Braniff's remarks can serve no purpose but to cast reflections on his recent findings in the case involving his colleague, Judge Edward Haggerty. Surely if Judge Braniff handled the Haggerty case with the objectivity that he displayed at the arraignment of a stranger, one can not help but wonder if the state of Louisiana received a fair trial in the Haggerty matter.

Daniel E. McMullen