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NO ONE BOTHERED TO ASK SUSIE

WHY does the supply of elementary teachers in North Carolina fall short of the demand?

Because no one asked Susie what she thought about it.

That was the diagnosis given to N. C. editorial writers by Chancellor Edward K. Graham of the Woman's College. The text of Dr. Graham's address is elsewhere on this page today.

Susie is the girl who is starting college. She is young. She is idealistic. She wants a liberal education. She also is quite aware that she might have to make a living after she leaves school. But she has not yet selected a vocation.

Susie would make an admirable teacher for young children. She is qualified in every respect. And the average starting salary for teachers today is as high as the averages for other employment open to her.

Why doesn't she become an elementary teacher? Because the rigid certification requirements laid down by the priestly hierarchy of education force her to make her decision at the beginning of her college career. And Susie simply isn't ready to decide that early.

By a quirk of the rules that defies logical explanation, Susie can decide at the end of her sophomore year if she wants to teach high school students. Meanwhile, she has received the liberal education background she wanted. But the list of certification courses for an elementary teacher is so long that she must devote four full years to it.

Dr. Graham said the theory of certification was adopted 30 years ago on a false assumption, and that it had caused the "creeping paralysis of liberal education of the teacher". And he urged that the entire structure of certification be torn down, and a new one erected that would enable students to satisfy elementary teaching requirements in their junior and senior years.

That makes sense. The annual output of elementary teachers by North Carolina colleges is not enough to furnish annual replacements, much less replace those who hold low-grade certificates. All devices tried in the past to lick the problem have failed. It's time to try Dr. Graham's bold approach.

New Wine For An Old Bottleneck

(An address by Chancellor E. K. Graham of the Woman's College, University of North Carolina, delivered at the North Carolina Editorial Writers' Conference in Chapel Hill May 24).

VIRTUALLY every physically able child in our State goes through public school, and starts his formal education towards citizenship in the elementary grades. Since the eventual outcome is so greatly influenced by the early experience, there is no single part of education that carries — or should carry — so much of our thought, our hopes, and our plans as the education of these youngest North Carolinians. Childhood is essentially a memory that has peculiar overtones for all that follows, and by the best testimony and the most convincing experience, its importance can hardly be overstated.

When American college and university presidents met in Chicago at the end of last month, they had a lot of things to talk about. The program included Financial Problems; International Understanding; Manpower Policies; Developing Effective College Teachers; Intercollegiate Athletics; and Television.

Since the program was devised by getting opinions from the entire membership of the American Council on Education, it seems reasonable to assume that college and university presidents regard these as the six most important subjects on the educational scene: their pet projects for 1952.

I cannot escape a guilty feeling that television, or athletics, for example, as important and exciting as they are, do not measure up in stature to the problem of educating teachers for our young children. Look at this for a moment from the standpoint of North Carolina.

Emphasis On Things

What has been said and written about public education in our state relates almost invariably to things and the lack of them. This leads us into an error that has often been cited. When we talk about the public schools and elementary education, we seem to be asking the familiar question, "What is the setup?" We ought to be asking, "What is the story?" The story relates to time, ideas, and human beings.

As the father of two children in the elementary school and one who has just finished, I find that I am becoming increasingly uninterested in the setup and bad things to be said about it. These are facts for the embattled Educationists and their critics. To those of you who may be interested in the provocative aspect of the controversy over teacher training, I commend fairly recent articles in the Atlantic and in Harpers, putting the blame on our schools of education. I also commend various reports out of conferences of educators, with caution, putting the blame virtually everywhere else.

This much has emerged so far as our own state is concerned. During the past decade when the enrollments in our elementary grades were increasing sharply, the number of teachers certified to teach our children has gone down. Dr. Clyde Erwin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, said in his 1951 report that we needed 1,200 new elementary teachers each year for replacements alone. Less than 500 were graduated in our public and private institutions last year.

Devices Have Failed

Here is the brute fact. We are not getting enough elementary teachers through any of the devices that we have developed in our state up to the present time. We had better start thinking about some new devices, or better yet, we had better take into account the possibility that we need fewer devices and at least one fewer hurdle.

Suppose for a very radical change, we looked at elementary education through the eyes of that unreconstructed realist, a North Carolina girl who has just entered college. Suppose your name was Susie Brown, and you were eighteen, and came from some place like Goldsboro or Siler City. You might be in college for a number of reasons, but all of them would add up to a conviction on your part that it was a good thing. Eighteen years on this earth, a complex of ideals and ambitions that have been growing along with you, your family and the hopes of your parents and an assortment of other forces have pointed you in this direction for a considerable length of time.

Over and beyond the possibility of getting married, you may or may not have a clear idea of what you want to do after you get through college. If you do have a clear idea, the chances are you will change your mind at least once before you graduate. Nobody is going to make you sign up for a specific career until you are good and ready. That is what you came to college for — to learn, as you would put it, what the score is; to get an education; to make up your mind in your own good time about a career; and to build upon a foundation of general education the best professional training for whatever it is that you eventually decide will be the most productive and rewarding career.

This is part of being a realist. It would be impossible to imagine Susie conducting a raid on a neighboring dormitory with the idea of getting a thrill out of acquiring a lot of uninhabited underwear. Neither would she bother to swallow a goldfish on the theory that it contained vitamins or that it might feel good going down.

It Leaves Susie Cold

Now undoubtedly she is aware of something called a teacher shortage. She knows that people are concerned about statistics on the deficit side, minimum salaries, buildings, standards, and all the rest of it. But that leaves her cold. She has only her "insistent present," and she is going to make the most of it.

Statistics are all right for pointing up the critical nature of a problem with which all of us are properly and gravely concerned. They come in handy in connection with speech making, annual reports, editorial viewing-with-alarm, and otherwise dramatizing the issue. But if we want to do anything about getting teachers into the public schools, and getting the right sorts of teachers, we had better forget statistics. All we have in Susie. If we are going to do anything about teachers, we had better start thinking on how to get Susie interested, for Susie as an individual has been largely overlooked.

Here is what she is up against. If she wants to teach in an elementary school, she would have to make up her mind virtually on the day that she entered college or shortly thereafter. She has to do this because the State of North Carolina will not let her teach young children unless more than half of her college career is devoted to certain courses that someone has said are necessary for her certification as an elementary teacher.

The dean of one of our oldest and finest colleges of liberal arts told me only this week that his daughter, who is a college freshman, had planned for years to teach young children. That is, she had planned to teach young children until she saw what it would mean to her college education. Her final statement to him on the subject was, "Daddy, I just won't take all of that stuff because I do not see where it will help me to be a good teacher."

She had decided instead to major in English. She can't do that, Heaven help us, and teach. Her father, who thinks she would be a superb teacher, is hoping to persuade her to get off the certification requirements for elementary teaching in Summer sessions. The Visiting Committee of the Board of Trustees got much the same reaction from girls with whom the committee members talked during their recent inspection tour of Woman's College.

You can't blame the girls. They did not create the great need for elementary teachers, and if their elders have made it difficult or unappetizing to become an elementary teacher, they have no moral obligation to get into the certification lock step. Beginning salaries, while too low, are not essentially the problem. The average starting salary for a teacher going into the schools from the Class of 1952 is just about the average starting salary of girls in the Class of 1952 going into other kinds of work. According to the estimate of an employment officer who places hundreds of girls every year, the starting teacher will average about $2,375, and the average starting salary of her classmates will be about $2,400.

Always The Minimum

There is another part of the story that has not received much attention, but if you knew Susie, I think you would understand why she is bothered by it. It is the idea of emphasis on the minimum standards. This pervades all sorts of education, of course, as well as teacher training. But in teacher training, it seems to go with you all your life. Susie's whole experience in school has been with groups where the progress of the individual was geared close to the lowest common denominator of whatever group she happened to be in.

As Susie looks at a teaching career, she sees her whole future mapped out in terms of guaranteed minimum salaries, guaranteed minimum privileges, minimum standards for certification, and so on. Nobody seems to be much interested in maximum salaries and maximum opportunities for the exceptionally able. Susie probably thinks she is pretty good. When she selects a career, she wants a chance to get ahead as fast as she can and to get ahead as far as she can.

Note the contrast in her extra-curricular activities. Whether she is running for an office in student government, trying for the editorship of the college paper, playing on an athletic team, or entering a business management competition, the idea seems to be that whoever has the most on the ball gets the most attention. In education, the idea frequently seems to be that whoever has the least on the ball gets the most attention. Susie doesn't find that particularly appealing, and neither should we.

We Lack Ideas

The most thoroughgoing effort to appraise our educational problems, the report of the State Education Commission in 1948, makes the same mistake that the rest of us have made in putting most of its attention on things, on the setup, and not upon persons and ideas. We do not lack for things like buildings. What we lack are ideas. We can't get ideas with things. We can get them only with people. I doubt we are going to get them with people as long as so little of our attention is devoted to getting the best qualified people on the job and giving them reasonable opportunity to run with the ball.

Does Susie have reasonable opportunity? I do not think she has. We can get more elementary teachers, and better elementary teachers, by giving her the opportunity. I am convinced, furthermore, that giving her the opportunity is a relatively simple thing. It involves a new approach to the question of certification.

Certification might be compared to the high jump in a track meet. You raise the bar a little bit at a time, each high jumper goes over it, and then you raise the bar a little bit more. The person who clears the bar at the highest level is the best high jumper.

Certification was undertaken in this state as in others, on the plausible theory that it would work something like the high jump. By raising the course requirements for a teaching certificate, you made each prospective teacher go a little bit higher, and the more you raised the certification bar, the better teachers you got. The report of the Education Commission, in its amazing section on professionalizing teacher education, subscribes to this theory in its entirety. So, apparently, do our college and university heads. Every certification requirement was voted in by the North Carolina College Conference.

The catch is that course requirements for certification are not like the high jump. They are more like studying for the high jump. Presumably it would not hurt a high jumper to have read a book on the theory and practice of high jumping. After he had read a book on theory and practice, he might be ready for an additional book, say the core curriculum of high jumping. After that, he could have organization and administration of high jumping, high jumping leadership, field projects in high jumping, introduction to the philosophy of high jumping, high jumping for democratic living, the history of high jumping, psychodiagnostic methods in high jumping, the dramatic apperception tests in high jumping, experimental high jumping, observation of high jumping, psychology of high jumping, practice and diagnosis of high jumping difficulties, remedial high jumping, high jumping for life adjustment, group dynamics of high jumping, and, of course, works without number on orientation in the various aspects of high jumping. But the measure of his excellence would always be how high he could jump.

DR. E. K. GRAHAM

The Higher Hurdle

The interesting thing about North Carolina's certification requirements is that professional courses in Education itself run no more than eighteen to twenty-one hours, or something less than a third of the certification requirement. What constitutes the higher hurdle is a vast array of courses hopefully included to provide the teacher with an assortment of skills and understandings that it is thought she ought to have.

Nobody asked Susie what she thinks about these requirements. The chances are that while she would go along with the idea that she ought to have a reasonable amount of work in methodology, and the greatest number of hours feasible in practice teaching, she strongly feels that the question of her liberal education is something that ought to be left to her and the college.

Our certification requirements have grown bit by bit, a sort of creeping paralysis in the liberal education of the teacher. The most recent change came within the past two years, when ten additional hours, or one-twelfth of an entire four-year college course were added to the certification requirements. It seems doubtful that the structure in its entirety has been thoughtfully considered as a possible obstruction in the providing of good teachers to North Carolina's children. We'd better consider it in its entirety, and seriously.

Susie Brown will become an elementary teacher only if she makes up her mind that she wants to become an elementary teacher. She will do this for reasons that appeal to Susie Brown, and not for reasons that appeal to college heads, deans of Education, and state officials. It is critically important that Susie make up her mind to become an elementary teacher, if we want teachers. She should be able to make up her mind any time within her first two college years, just as she can make up her mind to become a high school teacher any time in her first two years. Certification requirements for high school teachers don't paralyze so much of the college course. While other factors doubtless enter in, it is perhaps relevant to note here that we have plenty of high school teachers at the same time that we have a critical shortage of elementary teachers.

I should like to propose that we do a relatively simple thing. Take the entire certification structure down, and start over. The new start would be based on the idea that the pattern for elementary teachers could be completed, so far as certification requirements are concerned, in the junior and senior years of college. Education and related disciplines would require roughly the credit earned in a little less than a college year (24 to 30 semester hours). There would be included materials and methods, student teaching, and such offerings as may be useful and pertinent from the related fields of biology, psychology, and sociology.

Special subjects, essential to the primary teacher, would require something in the neighborhood of two-thirds of the credit earned in a college year (18 to 24 semester hours). Here would be included art for children, public school music, health and physical education in the elementary school, and so on. Certification requirements should stop right there for any girl who holds a degree from an accredited college. Each institution would have to have some freedom in setting up its own program to make the requirements come within the hours provided. The entire general education program, relating to skills and understandings implicit in the liberal arts, should be the responsibility of the college.

What is required next is for the proposal to be brought before the North Carolina College Conference, which comprises the colleges and universities of the state, and whose strength the general policies of the Office of Public Instruction, has always been consulted in the matter of certification requirements. The presidents of the colleges and universities making up the Conference should stand and be counted on the pattern of certification as it relates to elementary school teachers in their schools.

About this time you have doubtless caught on to the fact that Susie is only part of the story. What about the child? We might as well come to him briefly. Certainly the child is more than a lot of gross data on a population curve, or on a chart of overcrowded school facilities. He is a human being taught for better or worse. While we can take the view that the immediate and pressing problem is getting teachers and the right sort of teachers, sooner rather than later we must face the fact that we are going to have to do more for the youngest North Carolinians than our present pattern of elementary education anticipates.

These things have been established. The structure of the child's personality is pretty well laid down by the time he is six years old. Experience has shown us that the child entering the first grade from kindergarten on the whole does a better all-around job in the matter of adjustment than does the child who hasn't had kindergarten. The child who enters kindergarten from nursery school has a comparable edge.

Now extending the public school system downward is not the entire answer. It will help. Eighteen states — North Carolina not among them — provide state aid in support of kindergartens, and Connecticut offers some state funds in support of nursery schools. Nursery schools established with Federal aid during the depression and during the Second World War did their job during periods of national emergency. But North Carolina's children are North Carolina's responsibility, and we require neither an emergency nor an extended pattern of Federal aid to meet their responsibility.

Resources Are Here

But our colleges and universities in the State must begin to think of its youngest citizens in terms of their entire story, over and beyond the schools. We have within the three divisions of the Consolidated University of North Carolina combined resources which should enable us to develop educational leadership in the field of family life and child development that is without precedent in our part of the country.

This brings us the full circle. For the family is where Susie got her start as a child, and it is in the most far-sighted and thoroughgoing development of the resources of the family, the school, and the teacher that we have hope to find the most productive start in life for the North Carolinians of the future.

Stated in general terms, the brief which I have to submit is simply this. When we talk about teaching, we are talking essentially about human beings. The human being who is to teach must be professionally qualified for the job that is to be done, she must believe that it is the most important job in the world and there must be the creative spark that is at the heart of the art of teaching just as the creative spark is at the heart of every art in the world.

A Better Climate

What we are really concerned with here is simply an effort to provide the most favorable climate, the happiest combination of soil and atmosphere in which a unique sort of growth takes place. This growth takes place in the mind and spirit of the child under the art of teaching. The teacher as artist is engaged in the difficult rigorous discipline of all, the discipline of applying her own creative genius. Our colleges, our accrediting agencies, our standards, our teachers' associations, and all the rest exist simply in order that this genius, or spirit, may find its most constructive and rewarding expression.

Every child in North Carolina is dependent on Susie, and has a vital stake in whether or not she enters the teaching profession. For every child goes into your public schools, and the experience of every child for years to come is determined in large measure by the teachers we can offer and by the impetus that we can provide on the road to happy and effective citizenship.

OUR AMBIVALENT TAR HEEL DEMOCRATS

ACCORDING to Keynoter L. Y. Ballentine, the past five national Democratic Administrations have done quite a job for the country. This is the way he ticked them off, to the applause of Tar Heel Democrats assembled in Raleigh for their annual convention:

"We" (that's the word he kept using) have checked inflation and deflation, restored confidence in banks, restricted speculation, restrained monopoly, provided insurance for the jobless and pensions for the aged and needy, encouraged construction of private homes, promoted low-cost public housing, protected renters, guaranteed labor's right to organize freely and bargain collectively, abolished child labor, established minimum wages and maximum hours of work, protected the small businessman, safeguarded the consumer, harnessed rivers to provide flood control and more plentiful power, extended electricity and telephone service to rural areas, lowered tariff walls, evolved a great system of agricultural legislation, provided insurance against crop excesses and failures, conserved natural resources, regenerated the land, manufactured the A-bomb, won a great war.

"We" (jumping to foreign policy) have saved Greece and Turkey through the Truman Doctrine, put Europe on its feet with the Marshall Plan, warned Stalin with the North Atlantic Pact and underscored the warning with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, blocked Communist aggression in Korea.

And "we" have chased Commies out of the government, prosecuted and jailed their top leaders, indicted some second-string leaders, and suppressed conspiracy by a foreign power, all the while guaranteeing individual liberty under the Constitution.

A few minutes after the Tar Heel Democrats applauded Ballentine's summary, they roared their approval as three top party leaders lashed the Truman Administration. And in the end, they "endorsed" Sen. Richard B. Russell, who has led the Southerners in recent years in the successful coalition with Republicans against many of the measures Ballentine listed.

"Ambivalent?" The dictionary defines it as "simultaneous attraction toward and repulsion from an object, person, or action".

Ho-hum.

IT'S CHAIRMAN CONNALLY AGAIN

FOR YEARS Chairman Tom Connally of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee pushed, scolded, bullied, cajoled and argued his colleagues into support of major foreign policy measures. Early this year reports from Texas indicated that Attorney General Price Daniel, who seeks Connally's Senate seat, would give the incumbent a hard race.

On March 3, with the eyes of Texans upon him, Candidate Connally attacked the Mutual Security Program as proposed by Secretary of State Acheson.

"France must be told she cannot rely on the United States to defend her and hand out large sums to aid her from an economic standpoint," he said. "France must do her duty."

On March 14 Candidate Connally said he wasn't fooled by mutual security "semantics" He shouted at Mutual Security Director Harriman that substitution of "defense support" for "economic aid" was a "device" to prolong ECA aid, which was to end this year.

"We can't go on forever appropriating large sums of money to the United Kingdom, France and other countries," he cried, "and we're under no obligation to do so."

On March 13 Senator Connally announced his decision not to run for re-election. The next day he said he would not accept a draft.

On May 26 Chairman Connally of the Foreign Relations Committee, no longer a candidate for re-election, said the mutual security measure is probably the last major legislation he will pilot through the Senate.

We must be prepared to meet our allies half way, he said. Any failure of Congress to act decisively now "might mean that peace would slip from our grasp and the lights of civilization would go out again for a long, long time." The European nations on the whole have "responded to the threat of Communist aggression vigorously and promptly within the limits of their capabilities."

Thus the full circle has been completed. It is reassuring that Chairman Connally, rather than Candidate Connally, is shepherding the mutual security bill.

THE BREAKING POINT

WHEN Congress voted new taxes last year, it upped the levy on legal liquor from 89 to $10.50 a gallon, despite protests from U. S. distillers that the higher prices would cause a drop in sales.

Now the returns are coming in. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1951, Uncle Sam collected $1,746,000,000 in liquor taxes. Treasury officials estimate they will collect only $1,683,000,000 this year—a drop of $63 million.

And while U. S. warehouses bulge with stocks of unsold legal whisky, moonshiners are busier than ever turning out illegal hooch.

This indicates that there is a limit to the excise tax on any product, just as there is a limit to the total tax that can be levied on the income of the people. Congressmen who worry themselves into a dither about the latter should take note of the former as well.

From The Greensboro Daily News

HUMPTY-DUMPTY AND THE HOUSEWIFE

"WHEN I use a word," said Humpty-Dumpty to Alice, "it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less."

The Federal Trade Commission is Humpty-Dumpty. The American housewife is Alice.

The FTC charges two grocery store chains, Safeway Stores Inc. and the Kroger Company, with tending to "lessen competition" and "create a monopoly". Why? Because they knowingly bought groceries for lower prices than their competitors paid.

So what? So they can sell them for less. Will this "lessen competition"? On the contrary, it will enable Safeway and Kroger to sell for less, which will induce other stores to reduce their prices in order to keep their customers. This does not sound like "lessening" competition. It sounds more like "stimulating" competition.

Nor does the charge of tending to "create a monopoly" seem to us to fit the situation. Whatever happened to all the A. & P. stores? Aren't they still doing business at the old stand, not to mention hundreds of thousands of independent groceries? Where is that "monopoly"?

Under our boasted American system of "free enterprise", it is difficult for us to understand why it should be illegal to buy or sell for less. Isn't the practice of buying and selling for less what makes competition? Isn't that what made the American economic system the best in the world?

Yet today "fair trade" laws prevent merchants from selling for less. And now the FTC is trying to prevent merchants from buying for less.

The American housewife, beset by laws which make for higher prices, is the modern Alice in a Price-Fixing Wonderland.

If she were granted an audience with the governmental Humpty-Dumpty she might say: "But your 'fair trade' laws are unfair to me. And your idea of stimulating competition is doing away with competition."

Humpty-Dumpty would rely as of old: "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less."

There is not much the housewife can do about this. But it may be some comfort to her to know that Humpty-Dumpty is again sitting on a wall and that sooner or later he will have a great fall.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Truman Stands Firm On Tidelands Oil

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Truman was both jovial and paternalistic when he received a California delegation led by Attorney General Pat Brown who came on the forlorn hope of changing his mind on tidelands oil.

"You heard my speech," the President remarked, half humorously, "How can you expect me to change my mind after that?"

Brown reminded him that Californians had come to talk with him in 1948 at which time he had refused to take a stand because tidelands oil was then before the Supreme Court.

"Yes, and the Supreme Court has now decided in favor of the 48 states," Mr. Truman interrupted.

However, he agreed to study a memo that the California lawyers promised to prepare for him, though, as an indication that it probably wouldn't change his mind, he told the following story:

"It reminds me of an old judge out in Missouri," he said. "He told the court: 'Bring the man in. We'll give him a fair trial and then hang him.'"

The President also enjoyed talking to Brown, who is running against Sen. Estes Kefauver in California, about the various Presidential candidates. Regarding Sen. Richard Russell of Georgia, he said: "If he were right on civil rights, he might be the ablest of all."

Averell Harriman he described as "a wonderful man—but imagine a Wall Street banker being elected President!"

Taft's Socialism

SEN. Bob Taft, author of the Taft Housing Act of which he is quite proud, would not be flattered if he read a letter written by the Los Angeles real estate lobby calling his act "socialistic."

Of course "socialistic" is an easy epithet to hurl these days, and Senator Taft has used it himself at times. However, this column has just unearthed an unusual letter written by the Los Angeles lobby in its effort to defeat a slum clearance-housing program in Los Angeles, to be built under Taft's housing law.

The letter puts the bite on the Los Angeles Clearing House Association, Ben Meyer, Chairman, to the tune of $15,000 as part of an $183,000 slush fund the real estate lobby is raising to defeat Los Angeles housing.

Real estate and housing groups all over the nation are watching the Los Angeles battle, where the City Government had already signed a contract with the Federal Government to proceed with the housing program, when suddenly two City Councilmen mysteriously changed their minds.

After that the California Supreme Court ruled that the City must continue with its housing contract, regardless of the two Councilmen. But the real estate lobby is continuing the battle just the same.

In case Senator Taft is interested in what the Los Angeles realtors think of his "socialism", here is their letter signed by "George M. Eason, finance chairman, Committee Against Socialistic Housing":

"Mr. Ben Meyer

"Chairman, Los Angeles Clearing House Association

"Los Angeles, California

"Dear Mr. Meyer:

"You are familiar with the fight now going on at the City Hall regarding public housing.

"This matter will be on the ballot in the election of June 3.

"The various organizations interested in financing and building of homes in Los Angeles have formed the Committee Against Socialistic Housing. We anticipate that it will take a fund of $185,000, to put on the campaign. Many organizations have already pledged the amount that they will raise through their membership.

"In the campaign on Proposition 19, the Clearing House Association subscribed $7,500. The cost of that campaign was $94,000. We therefore are asking the Clearing House Association to subscribe $15,000 towards this campaign.

"The public housers have started their campaign and are now holding meetings in various parts of Los Angeles. We anticipate that they will have unlimited funds at their disposal.

"We will appreciate any assistance that you can give us in this matter."