

THINKING OUT LOUD

Bayonets Won't Solve It

BY LYNN LANDRUM

MANSFIELD needs help. Governor Shivers can accede to the call for martial law and throw a cordon of bayonets around the school area. The Federal District Court can jail the school authorities and send marshals to drag unwilling children off to school morning after morning.

But this is not the way to solve the problem of living as white neighbors and black neighbors in the same school district and community.

Bayonets on the one hand and violence on the other merely get us back to 1866 and 1867 with the National Association for the Agitation of the Colored People in place of the Freedmans' Bureau and Chief Justice Warren in place of old Thad Stevens.

PREJUDICE exists in Mansfield. Of course it does. It is wrong to hang in effigy a dummy to express hatred of Negroes. Of course it is.

But the people of Mansfield are being pushed around. The white people are being pushed around and the black people are being pushed around. Pushing people around in Texas is an explosive sort of business. It is dangerous.

There has got to be a better way—a friendlier way to handle school and race relations in Mansfield. In the Columnator's thinking, Mansfield is not entirely to blame for not being able to solve her problems to suit a Supreme Court which is so concerned with election returns in Harlem that it can't face either the settled course of law or the basic facts of deep-seated mores imbedded in communities like Mansfield and—Dallas, for that matter.

If Evetts Haley had been elected Governor of Texas, come inauguration day in 1957, Texas Rangers would be in charge of the Mansfield School



HALEY

District and interposition in its strictest and most violent form would be undergoing its baptism of pistol fire.

How that would come out may reasonably be doubted. But it is reasonable to assume that pistols have no more of a legitimate place in operating a school than has the bayonet and machine gun equipment

of the militia. This is simply not the way to peace and amity and the fostering of an educated, independent and free citizenry.

CUSTOMERS sometimes write in to say they are tired of hearing about pepper-and-salt schools. But Mansfield needs a pepper-and-salt plan right now. Mansfield is not large enough to set up such a school. There are many Mansfields in Texas.

The forthcoming session of the Legislature should take over the task of enacting legislation which will permit several neighboring towns to combine to establish a pepper-and-salt school at which there will be assembled for public instruction only those white students and those black students who insist upon such a school for their instruction.

There is nothing in the decision of the Supreme Court which decrees that a Negro child who wants a Negro school shan't have it. There is no line in the decision which says the white child who wants a white school shan't have it. It merely says that those who want a mixed school shall have it. OK. Let them have it. Law and reason can march together.