

Bright Middle Class Child Gets Educational Breaks Denied Others

The bright middle class child committed to equal educational opportunity for all, but the commitment is not yet a reality. According to Carl Kaufman, this year's theme of the annual visit-the-schools observance, "America Has a Good Thing Going — Its Schools", will emphasize that some children are "haves" and some are "have-nots" as far as

educational opportunity is concerned.

Even within a single system, some schools are far better than others.

In large metropolitan centers where both affluent suburbs and miserable-slums exist within the city limits, parents in the wealthy areas fight for a bigger slice of the system's financial pie to be allotted to their schools — and frequently get it.

As a result some slum schools wind up with nothing redeeming and everything wanting.

The city slum child is not the only one, however, who is being educationally shortchanged. Rural schools, too, have an uphill struggle in bringing educational programs up to par, although district consolidation has helped.

Quoting a prominent education writer, Mr. Kaufman said, "In some poor Appalachia counties, the schools spend on four children what the suburbs spend on one; the son of a commuter earning \$30,000 a year gets his books free while the children of jobless mountaineers must buy theirs.

A child's educational opportunity should not be dependent on where he lives or how much money his father earns. Nor should he be cheated because of

his academic ability . . . or lack of it.

The educational fashion in the late fifties was to concentrate on the gifted child; since the early sixties emphasis has swung to those of lower academic ability, especially the culturally disadvantaged.

The result is now that the average child is gleaning the educational left-overs. As someone has said, we're so busy helping the poor students and spurring on the gifted that the great middle group is vastly neglected.

Educational inequality really threatens the world of the educationally privileged, Mr. Kaufman noted, adding: "America cannot maintain a system of educational 'haves' and 'have-nots.' Our commitment to full equality of educational opportunity must become a reality."

Sponsored annually by the National Education Association, The American Legion, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the U.S. Office of Education, AEW will emphasize each day of the week specific contributions the school makes to society: Sunday, Nov. 10: "Stimulate Moral and Spiritual Values"; Monday, Nov. 11: "Strengthen the Nation"; Tuesday, Nov. 12: "Aspire to Quality Teaching"; Wednesday, Nov. 13:

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A Pumpkin's Plea

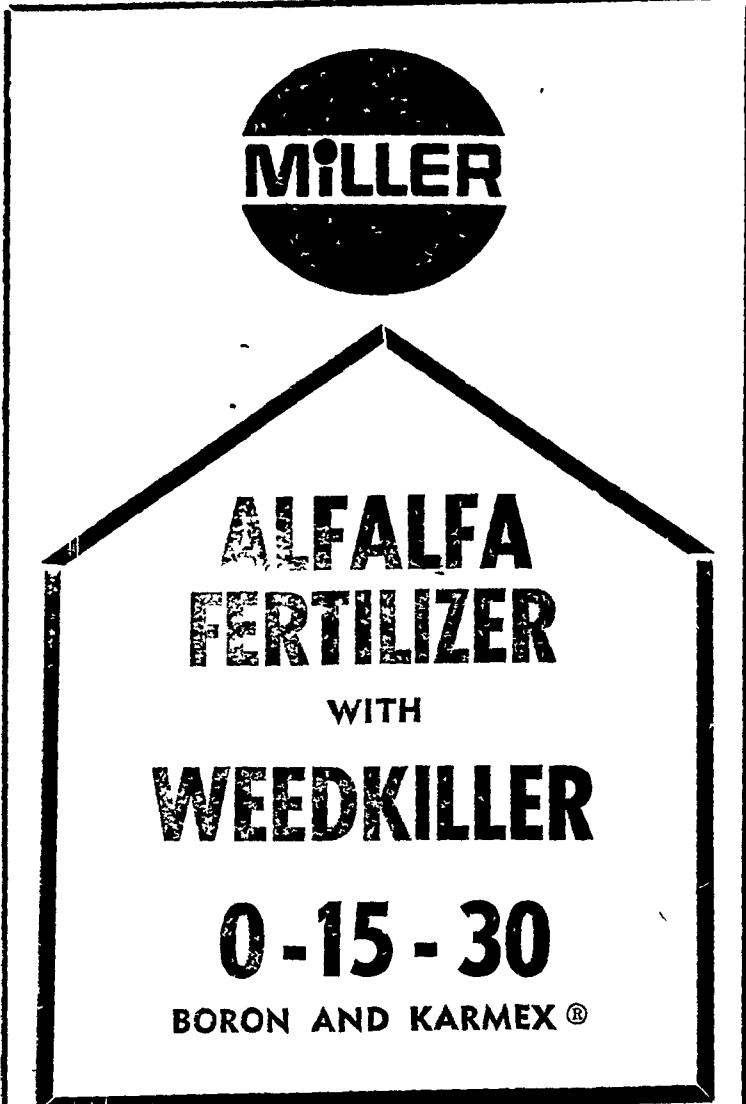
I sat on the ground
And grew nice and round
In a great open field
With my sisters and brothers.
One day I was found
And brought into town
And placed on display
Amongst hundreds of others.

I'm here on display
Please look my way
And choose me someone
For your Big Celebration
Carve me a face
Put me in a place
Where I can be seen
In grim scary elation.

Don't let me die
A mere Pumpkin Pie
I'd like to do something
Big, Bold and Bright
Like frighten a ghost
Off your back fence or Post
Let me Light up the World
For one Halloween Night!

Selina Cox

"Provide Equal Opportunity"; Thursday, Nov. 14; "Foster Lifelong Learning"; Friday, Nov. 15: "Promote Economic Prosperity"; and Saturday, Nov. 16: "Strive for Healthy Personality Development."



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