

# As We See It . . .

## Mississippi Trial Reveals Bigot's Danger to All

**T**HE jury that acquitted two white Mississippi men in the slaying of a 14-year-old Negro boy based its verdict on doubt regarding identification of a body said to be that of the boy.

Defense attorneys contended the body was too badly decomposed to be that of the boy who disappeared only three days before the body was found. The boy's mother, however, positively identified a ring on one of the bloated fingers as the one given the boy by his father.

Who was right? We don't know. All we know is that the boy, Emmett Till, was admittedly abducted by Roy Bryant and John W. Milam because they were angry that Till had "wolf-whistled" at Bryant's wife. Bryant and Milam say they released the boy unharmed.

Till still is missing. Where is he? If the body recovered from the river is not that of Till, whose is it? Mississippi law enforcement authorities should not rest until they have these answers.

Bryant and Milam are scheduled to stand trial on kidnaping charges. The outcome of that trial will be of further value in evaluating Mississippi's current brand of justice in racial cases.

Negro leaders have praised the conduct of the murder trial, although condemning the verdict. But, the mere fact the trial was held is a step forward. The Deep South has not always felt constrained to bring such cases to the bar of justice.

We are disgusted, however, with the defense's charge to the jury. The jurors were pointedly referred to as "Anglo-Saxons all" and were urged to do their duty lest their "forefathers turn over in their graves."

This was a vicious, bigoted slur on every American. It brought the ugly racial and nationality issues which long have plagued this Nation sharply into focus.

We pity people who have this intolerant view of what makes a good American, or who use this approach to advance themselves or a cause. These people are dangerous, and they are sick.

It is because of them that it is important every American, no matter what his color, religion, or national origin, to work for the elimination of discrimination.

A bigoted mind endangers this Nation's hope for a better future, whether it is turned against the Negroes, or other Americans descended from various nationalities—including Anglo-Saxons.

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