

TSU Needs New Priorities, President-Designate Asserts

By KEEL HUNT
Tennessee Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON—The newly designated president of Tennessee State University has his own notion of what makes a university "great" and some definite ideas about how American higher education is falling short.

"To me, Harvard's not great," said Dr. Frederick S. Humphries, leaning forward in his chair for emphasis. "Harvard takes success and produces success."

"MY DIMENSION of greatness is: 'Give me a bunch of losers, and I'll turn them into winners.' That's greatness," he insisted. "But so far, society has not seen fit to invest in that."

Humphries, 39, will as-

sume the TSU presidency early next year at a critical time in the university's history. He said in an interview here Thursday that TSU and the state authorities who control it need to adopt new priorities.

Me said he is convinced, however, that the TSU faculty and students represent a significant potential for Tennessee's system of higher education.

SINCE 1967, Humphries has been associated with an innovative curriculum development program designed to benefit the nation's black colleges and universities. He has been vice president of the Washington-based Institute for Services to Education since 1970 and through the ISE he has

worked as a curriculum planning consultant to TSU and other institutions.

Humphries said he believes most colleges and universities have not equipped themselves with programs to improve black-white relations, which he said could best be handled through college-level philosophy departments.

H said race-related problems in America involve "ethical" questions, but he said most colleges do not prepare students to deal with society in that way.

"THERE MAY be those who know the demographics and statistics of black people, but I don't see anyone dealing with it from an ethical, moral perspective," he said.

"I don't know of any teachers who sit up in the classroom and talk to their students about the ethical and moral problems between black people and white people in our society," he said. "I'm not talking about indoctrination. I'm talking about raising the question—in a mixed group—of why you feel the way you do about other human beings."

"I would like to see higher education getting into the business of providing those kinds of people for the society."

HUMPHRIES said such programs could provide trained "specialists" in human relations, a type of expertise that he said is needed in business and industry. But higher education, he said, "hasn't recognized that there is a need for such a specialist."

However, Humphries said he believes TSU may be better equipped than most schools to provide such a program because there is a "greater sensitivity" among faculty members there for students who come from underprivileged financial and educational backgrounds.

He said that is an important reason for TSU's existence, but he said the university's role in the Nashville community needs to be clarified, specifically in



Frederick Humphries
'Losers to winners'

regard to the University of Tennessee.

THE FUTURE of TSU and UT-Nashville has been uncertain due to a federal court desegregation case involving the two state-supported schools. The state boards which govern the two institutions have devised a plan to assure the continued existence of both schools, but Humphries said here he has "problems" with the compromise plan.

"I really think there should be just one comprehensive institution in Nashville," Humphries said, "and I would hope that that one institution could be Tennessee State."

He said the "only explanation" for the existence of UTN "is that it came at a time when people could not think of white people going to TSU." As a result, he said, a final decision in the TSU-UTN dispute should be "on the side of the predominantly-black institution, which was there first and which did offer—and is still offering—quality educational programs."

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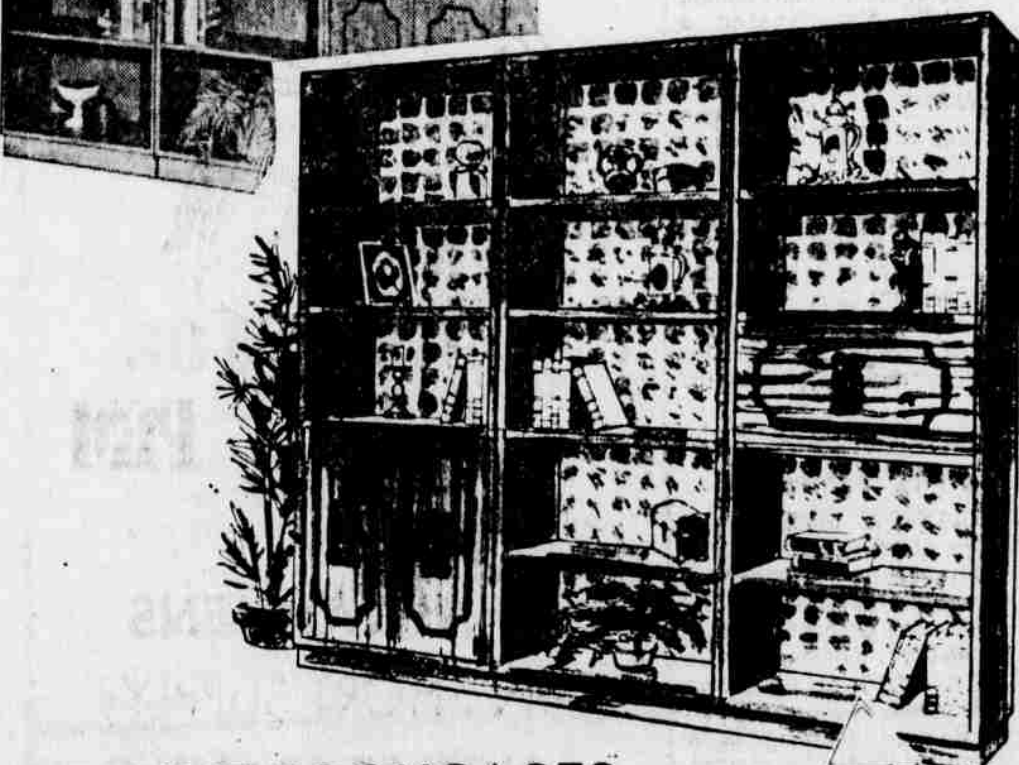
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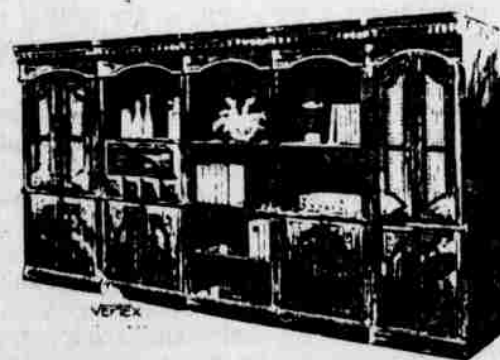
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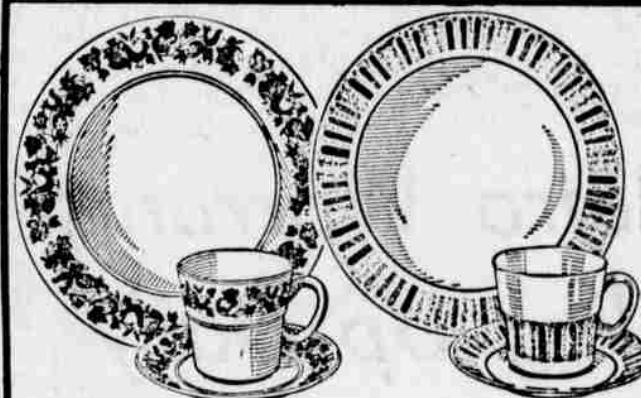
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