

benefits program should be the rehabilitation and integration of veterans into the community, and we have consistently supported legislative programs that would achieve this goal.

We would urge that this philosophy be a guide to the veterans' benefits program and that any current or future legislation meet the criteria we have set forth.

Now, before I present the last two measures, I would like to make these observations. We have here an endorsement of a bill. It is fresh in my mind, gentlemen, when in our area a high school was formerly the George Washington High School, after the 1954 decision and the integration the school name was changed. I make this point because there are certain intrinsic values that are necessary to the establishment of first-class citizenship. It is not enough to have equal housing. It is not enough to have equal job opportunities. But there are certain intangibles such as the respect that one has for the people who have played a part in the development of this country. George Washington Carver High School's name was changed when the school was integrated.

We heartily endorse H.R. 745, introduced by Congressman Jonathan Bingham, which would name the Veterans' Administration hospital in Jackson, Miss., the "Medgar Evers Memorial Veterans Hospital." We think this would be a very appropriate tribute to the slain civil rights leader who had contributed so much to the people of Jackson, Miss. It is particularly fitting that a VA hospital be named after him because he was very active in veterans' affairs and was a member of the national board of this organization at the time of his cruel slaying. Our AVC chapter in Jackson, Miss., is named the Medgar Evers Jackson (Miss.) Chapter. We urge you to support this bill and press for its enactment by the Congress.

Further, we would like to endorse Senator Ralph Yarborough's amendment to increase the rates of educational assistance paid to veterans under the current GI bill. If a GI bill is to be meaningful, it must be realistically geared to the costs of education. The present rates actually discriminate against veterans from lower income groups because without additional financial help it is certainly difficult for them to take advantage of these benefits. We endorse this amendment which brings the rates up to more realistic levels and would give veterans a freer choice of schools.

Since there is a draft, which brings men involuntarily into military service, and which disrupts their schooling and lives, it is very important that the veterans reassistance program fulfill its purpose. We have noted and been critical of the present selective service law which has been highly inequitable and has hit disproportionately certain groups of the population. (We have endorsed the reforms suggested by the Burke Marshall report.) Some of these servicemen who come from the lower income groups have not been able to take advantage of the GI bill because they don't have additional financial resources.

That is the reason we wholeheartedly support Senator Yarborough's efforts to raise the allowances for the GI bill. Many of the new veterans were drafted because they could not go to college in the first place nor could they get the preferred technical jobs that meant student and occupational deferments. It would be adding injustice to injustice if these men could not utilize the educational benefits under the GI bill because the allowances were insufficient to meet the expenses of either college or other schooling.