

Pioneer Senate Page

Lawrence Wallace Bradford Jr.

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WASHINGTON, April 13—
At 3:55 this afternoon, the phone rang in the Republican cloakroom just off the Senate floor. Senator Jacob K. Javits, his secretary reported, had left his overcoat there and wanted it brought to his office. "Tell you what I'll do," the cloakroom assistant said.

Boy
in the
News

"I'll send Bradford." Four or five minutes later, a gangling 6-foot 2-inch high school sophomore strode

beaming into Senator Javits's office with the overcoat, and a small quiet moment in the history of the United States Senate had been made. For Lawrence Wallace Bradford Jr., the newest member of the Senate staff, had thus completed his first assignment as the first Negro page ever to serve Congress. Earlier today, Senator Javits had named the 16-year-old New York City youth to an interim vacancy on the pageboy staff.

Later, when the Senate had adjourned and the last television cameraman had departed, the youth, who is nicknamed Mickey, sat in the Senator's office and talked about the civil rights breakthrough in which he had participated this day. In his hand, he clutched the blue-bound "Pocket Congressional Directory" as if it were a missal.

"Everyone was very nice, very gracious to me," he said. "One Southern page said he wanted to introduce me to Senator Thurmond first thing tomorrow."

Doubts Resentment

Asked whether he feared resentment from Southern Senators, the youth replied: "I think they'll be very willing to go along with me because I'm so willing to go along with them."

How did he feel on such a day?

"It's very important to me, being the first Negro to be here. I hope that others will follow in my footsteps—but I have this feeling I'm a pioneer today."

Although Senator Javits was instrumental in bringing the youth to Washington, the prime mover was Mrs. Emma Bowen. She was his Sunday School teacher at St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church, 49 Edgecomb Avenue, and youth adviser to the New York branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Mickey has been president of the N.A.A.C.P.'s Manhattan Youth Council for the last two years.

Last summer Mrs. Bowen decided that he could be the first Negro Senate page. He agreed to try, and she began to move.

Today the youth reported to the office of Joseph C. Duke, the Senate's sergeant-at-arms, who gave him a cordial indoctrination lecture on the Senate and approved his official appointment papers.

Mickey Bradford does not differ greatly from many New York City high school sophomores. True, he is brighter and more composed than many and he goes to a progressive and experimental private school—the New Lin-



Associated Press Wirephoto
Sights set on politics
(Mr. Bradford yesterday on Capitol Hill.)

coln School, 31 West 110th Street—on a scholarship that covers part of the \$1,600-a-year tuition.

He has also been more active in civil rights work than many teen-agers and has more political ambition than most boys his age. Today, he said in one of many interviews that he would like to run for Mayor of New York City some day; in another, that he wanted to return to the Senate as a member.

On at least one question, he displayed keen political sense. He identified his mother and his father, a Ford assembly-line worker in Mahwah, N. J., as Republicans. An interviewer in New York City, however, found Mrs. Bradford describing herself and her husband as Democrats.

Near Polo Grounds

The Bradfords live in a 12th-floor, four-and-a-half-room apartment in the Colonial Project at 159-30 Harlem River Drive. From Mickey's bedroom, he used to be able to see the old Polo Grounds.

The newest Senate page is, however, a basketball player. This year he was on the varsity at Lincoln, a forward "when they let me play." Although he has played the violin for years, he publicly ranks his chief hobby as the more fashionable guitar. He likes topical folk music, his favorite is Bob Dylan's "Times Are Changing."

While in Washington, the youth will live with family friends. He will attend the special school for pages in the Library of Congress from 6:30 to 9:30 A.M., then report for his \$5,000-a-year job of running errands and doing chores for the various Senators.