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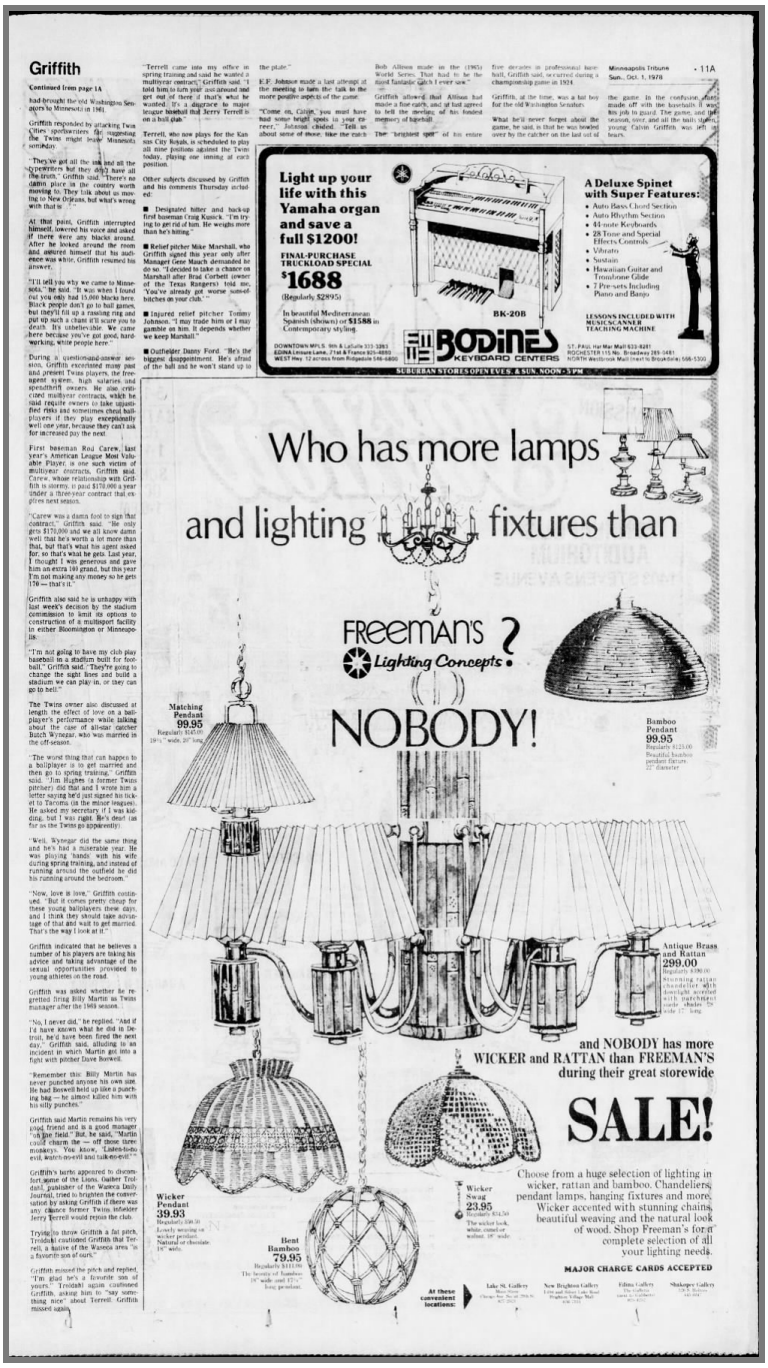

## Griffith

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had brought the old Washington Senators to Minnesota in 1961.

Griffith responded by attacking Twin Cities sportswriters for suggesting the Twins might leave Minnesota someday.

"They've got all the ink and all the typewriters but they don't have all the truth," Griffith said. "There's no damn place in the country worth moving to. They talk about us moving to New Orleans, but what's wrong with that is ..."

At that point, Griffith interrupted himself, lowered his voice and asked if there were any blacks around. After he looked around the room and assured himself that his audience was white, Griffith resumed his answer.

"I'll tell you why we came to Minnesota," he said. "It was when I found out you only had 15,000 blacks here. Black people don't go to ball games, but they'll fill up a rooting ring and put up such a chant it'll scare you to death. It's unbelievable. We came here because you've got good, hard-working, white people here."

During a controversial owner session, Griffith excoriated many past and present Twins players, the free-agent system, high salaries and spendthrift owners. He also criticized multiyear contracts, which he said require owners to take unjustified risks and sometimes cheat ballplayers if they play exceptionally well one year, because they can't ask for increased pay the next.

First baseman Rod Carew, last year's American League Most Valuable Player, is one such victim of multiyear contracts, Griffith said. Carew, whose relationship with Griffith is stormy, is paid $170,000 a year under a three-year contract that expires next season.

"Carew was a damn fool to sign that contract," Griffith said. "He only gets $170,000 and we all know damn well that he's worth a lot more than that, but that's what his agent asked for, so that's what he gets. Last year, I thought I was generous and gave him an extra 100 grand, but this year I'm not making any money so he gets 170 — that's it."

Griffith also said he is unhappy with last week's decision by the stadium commission to limit its options to construction of a multisport facility in either Bloomington or Minneapolis.

"I'm not going to have my club play baseball in a stadium built for football," Griffith said. "They're going to change the sight lines and build a stadium we can play in, or they can go to hell."

The Twins owner also discussed at length the effect of love on a ballplayer's performance while talking about the case of all-star catcher Butch Wynegar, who was married in the off-season.

"The worst thing that can happen to a ballplayer is to get married and then go to spring training," Griffith said. "Jim Hughes (a former Twins pitcher) did that and I wrote him a letter saying he'd just signed his ticket to Tacoma (in the minor leagues). He asked my secretary if I was kidding, but I was right. He's dead (as far as the Twins go apparently)."

"Well, Wynegar did the same thing and he's had a miserable year. He was playing hands with his wife during spring training, and instead of running around the outfield he did his running around the bedroom."

"Now, love is love," Griffith continued. "But it comes pretty cheap for these young ballplayers these days, and I think they should take advantage of that and wait to get married. That's the way I look at it."

Griffith indicated that he believes a number of his players are taking his advice and taking advantage of the sexual opportunities provided to young athletes on the road.

Griffith was asked whether he regretted firing Billy Martin as Twins manager after the 1969 season.

"No, I never did," he replied. "And if I'd have known what he did in Detroit, he'd have been fired the next day," Griffith said, alluding to an incident in which Martin got into a fight with pitcher Dave Boswell.

"Remember this: Billy Martin has never punched anyone his own size. He had Boswell held up like a punching bag — he almost killed him with his silly punches."

Griffith said Martin remains his very good friend and is a good manager "on the field." But, he said, "Martin could churn the — off those three monkeys. You know, 'Listen-hear-no evil, watch-no-evil and talk-no-evil.'"

Griffith's barbs appeared to discomfort some of the Lions. Oather Trotdahl, publisher of the Waseca Daily Journal, tried to brighten the conversation by asking Griffith if there was any chance former Twins infielder Jerry Terrell would rejoin the club.

Trying to throw Griffith a fat pitch, Trotdahl cautioned Griffith that Terrell, a native of the Waseca area "is a favorite son of ours."

Griffith missed the pitch and replied, "I'm glad he's a favorite son of yours." Trotdahl again cautioned Griffith, asking him to "say something nice" about Terrell. Griffith missed again.

"Terrell came into my office in spring training and said he wanted a multiyear contract," Griffith said. "I told him to forget it and get out of there if that's what he wanted. It's a disgrace to major league baseball that Jerry Terrell is on a ball club."

Terrell, who now plays for the Kansas City Royals, is scheduled to play all nine positions against the Twins today, playing one inning at each position.

Other subjects discussed by Griffith and his comments Thursday included:

■ Designated hitter and back-up first baseman Craig Kusick. "I'm trying to get rid of him. He weighs more than he's hitting."

■ Relief pitcher Mike Marshall, who Griffith signed this year only after Manager Gene Mauch demanded he do so. "I decided to take a chance on Marshall after Brad Corbett (owner of the Texas Rangers) told me, 'You've already got worse sons-of-bitches on your club.'"

■ Injured relief pitcher Tommy Johnson. "I may trade him or I may gamble on him. It depends whether we keep Marshall."

■ Outfielder Danny Ford. "He's the biggest disappointment. He's afraid of the ball and he won't stand up to the plate."

K.P. Johnson made a last attempt at the meeting to turn the talk to the more positive aspects of the game.

"Come on, Calvin, you must have had some bright spots in your career," Johnson chided. "Tell us about some of those, like the each Bob Allison made in the (1965) World Series. That had to be the most fantastic catch I ever saw."

Griffith allowed that Allison had made a fine catch, and it had agreed to tell the meeting of his fondest memory of baseball.

The "brightest spot" of his entire five decades in professional baseball, Griffith said, occurred during a championship game in 1924.

Griffith, at the time, was a hot boy for the old Washington Senators.

What he'll never forget about the game, he said, is that he was bowled over by the catcher on the last out of



the game. In the confusion, Griffith made off with the baseball. It was his job to guard. The game, and the season, over, and all the built-in years, young Calvin Griffith was left at bears.

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