R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 012 728 UD 003 850

RACE AND RECONCILIATION--THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL.

BY- FISCHER, JOHN H.

PUB DATE 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.92 23P.

DESCRIPTORS- *NEGROES, *SCHOOLS, *SCHOOL INTEGRATION, RACIAL SEGREGATION, RACIAL INTEGRATION, *RACIAL BALANCE, OPEN ENROLLMENT, SCHOOL REDISTRICTING, SELF CONCEPT, EDUCATIONAL COMPLEXES, EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS, COMPENSATORY EDUCATION, CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED, SLUM SCHOOLS

THE SCHOOLS OFFER THE GREATEST PROMISE FOR ACHIEVING RACIAL INTEGRATION IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. ALTHOUGH IT IS WRONG TO ARGUE THAT NO NEGRO SCHOOL IS GOOD UNLESS WHITE CHILDREN ARE BROUGHT INTO IT, THE FACT IS THAT SEGREGATED SCHOOLS DO PRODUCE A NEGATIVE SELF-IMAGE AND LOW MOTIVATION. COORECTIVE EFFORTS TO BALANCE THE SCHOOL RACIALLY MUST NOT BE COLORBLIND AND MUST BE PURSUED ENERGETICALLY. TESTS OF IMBALANCE SHOULD DETERMINE HOW THE SCHOOL IS VIEWED BY THE COMMUNITY AND WHETHER A CROSS-SECTION OF THE STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL REPRESENTS THE PROPORTION OF THE VARIOUS RACIAL GROUPS IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT. THE MOST WIDELY USED SCHEME FOR INTEGRATION IS OPEN ENROLLMENT, BUT PAIRING, REZONING, THE EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX, AND THE EDUCATIONAL PARK ARE OTHER TECHNIQUES. HOWEVER, THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL IDEA IS WELL ENTRENCHED, BUT IT MUST BE JETTISONED BECAUSE IT IS A MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO INTEGRATION. THE INCREASING SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS A SERIOUS SOCIAL PROBLEM WHICH HAS FOLLOWED THE GROWTH OF WHITE SUBURBS. BECAUSE INTEGRATION MIGHT BE IMPOSSIBLE OR UNFEASIBLE IN SOME AREAS, INTENSIVE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SEGREGATED SLUM SCHOOLS ARE NEEDED. THESE MEASURES SHOULD INCLUDE REMEDIAL, ENRICHMENT, AND COMPENSATORY PROGRAMS. (NH)

JOHN H. FISCHER

Race and Reconciliation: The Role of the School

I

WHEN George Counts asked in 1932, "Dare the schools build a new social order?" the response could hardly have been called resounding. A frightened few took the query for a Marxist threat, the Progressive Education Association spent a year reaching a split decision, but the majority even of those who gave it any attention at all dismissed the challenge as educationist hyperbole. Whatever it was the country needed, not many expected to find it in the schools. Two wars, a technological revolution, and a massive social upheaval have put a different face upon the matter. No longer is education the optional affair it was a generation ago. The easy rhetoric about the nation's reliance on its schools has become an uneasy reality.

President Johnson reflected the discovery when he said that "One great truth" he had learned is that "the answer for all of our national problems, the answer for all the problems of the world comes down, when you really analyze it, to one simple word—education."[1] Mr. Johnson is not the first President to speak well of learning. The dependence of democracy on popular education has been a continuing theme in our history. But it was not until the end of World War II that the country began seriously to consider the full implications of that relationship, and later still that it officially acknowledged the corollary proposition that to limit a man's education is to limit his freedom.

The rationale for improving the Negro American's chance to be educated derives from basic principles and well-established practice, but merely to proclaim a new policy of equality is not enough. Steps to equalize the Negro's educational opportunities must be accompanied by prompt and vigorous action to improve his access to those opportunities and to increase the inducement for him to

use them. Until, in all three respects, he is brought to full parity with his white neighbor, the Negro citizen will continue to depress the composite level of American society, and the society to diminish his standing as a man.

As the struggle to secure the Negro's proper place in that society gains headway and success, it becomes steadily more clear that the two great educational handicaps he has suffered—segregated schools and inferior instruction—are so closely interrelated that they can be attacked successfully only when they are attacked simultaneously.

This is not to argue that segregation is the sole deficiency Negro children suffer in school or that only Negro pupils receive inferior education. Nor is it true that every Negro child is being poorly taught or that effective learning is possible only in the presence of white children. It is important to set the facts, the probabilities, and the proposals straight. Not every Negro child lives in deprivation: each year more Negro families join the middle class. Nor is every white child raised in a good home. Slums are often ghettos, but the two are not always the same. Poverty of purse and poverty of spirit often go together, but the exceptions are numerous and important. Yet when all the differences have been explained and all the exceptions admitted, the hard facts of racial discrimination remain to be faced.

Until the present generation, almost every action affecting Negroes as a group in this country, whether taken by the government or by private agencies, has been to some degree discriminatory and quite often hypocritical. The Negro's just cause for pride in the fortitude of his ancestors in no way alters the fact that from the moment of his birth he becomes the product and the victim of his people's history. The scars he carries are difficult to hide and slow to heal.

Assuring the Negro his proper place in American society involves more than opening a few doors, giving everybody his choice, and waiting for what is certain to come naturally. Many of the trends that have influenced the Negro individually and collectively have carried him not toward but away from the main currents of American life. The momentum that has been built up suggests a sociological analogue of Newton's first law of motion. Unless the course that the Negro race has followed for three centuries is altered by the application of external energy, its direction cannot be expected to change. The heart of the integration question is to

determine what forms of energy are most appropriate and how they may be applied to bring the separate courses together. For some Negroes the process is already under way, but for many more significant change awaits intervention on a scale commensurate with the forces that must be checked and redirected. To serve this purpose no agency offers greater promise than the school.

We can begin on the educational task by considering some facts. One is that a school enrolling largely Negro students is almost universally considered of lower status and less desirable than one attended wholly or mainly by white students. Regardless of the quality of the building, the competence of the staff, or the size of classes, a school composed of three-fourths Negro children and one-fourth white children is viewed by members of both races, virtually without exception, as inferior to one in which the proportions are reversed. Whether all such appraisals are valid remains, at least for the time being, beside the point. So often are "Negro" schools inferior and so long have Negro students been assigned the hand-me-downs that unhappy memories and generalized impressions must be expected to persist despite the occasional presence of really good schools in Negro neighborhoods.

The contention that no school of Negro pupils can under any circumstances be satisfactory unless white students enter it is absurd. The argument insults every Negro child and credits white children with virtues they do not possess. But the effort to establish genuinely first-rate schools in Negro communities has been so long delayed that anyone undertaking to demonstrate that an institution known as a "Negro" school can produce first-rate results must be prepared to accept a substantial burden of proof.

A second impressive fact, closely related to the first, is the unfortunate psychological effect upon a child of membership in a school where every pupil knows that, regardless of his personal attainments, the group with which he is identified is viewed as less able, less successful, and less acceptable than the majority of the community. The impact upon the self-image and motivation of children of this most tragic outcome of segregated education emphasizes the dual need for immediate steps to achieve a more favorable balance of races in the schools and for every possible effort to upgrade to full respectability and status every school in which enrollment cannot soon be balanced.

The destruction of the legal basis of segregation by the *Brown* decision in 1954 marked the climax of an obviously necessary first

campaign, but the new problems to which *Brown* gives rise are even more complex than those which preceded it. The task now is not only to end segregation but to correct the effects it has generated. There is little profit in debating whether *de jure* or *de facto* segregation is the greater evil. It was the consequences of the fact of segregation that convinced the Supreme Court that "separate schools are inherently unequal" and led the Court to strike down the laws supporting such schools. Only by a curious twist of logic could it be argued that segregation statutes having been declared unjust, the practice itself may now be condoned.

This is not to deny significant differences between segregation established by law and that resulting from other causes. As the Court itself pointed out, "The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law." But underlying this greater impact is the Court's finding that "Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children."

Imperative as the need for prompt desegregation is, it would be irresponsible to attempt to deal with a condition so deeply rooted in practice and custom, and so often due to causes lying beyond the school, without taking account of its complexity. The need for intelligence, imagination, and wisdom in effecting fair and workable reforms can hardly be overstated. Yet, however complicated the situation or the final solutions may be, a firm and forthright confrontation of the problem is essential and is everywhere possible.

Some of the most bitter attacks on school authorities have been occasioned not by their failure to integrate every school, but by their unwillingness even to accept integration as a desirable goal. Among the reasons offered in support of this position, two are especially prominent. One is that the only acceptable basis for school policy is simple and complete nondiscrimination. Unless the school is color-blind, this argument runs, the spirit of the *Brown* decision and the 14th Amendment is violated. What this approach overlooks or attempts to evade is that the consequences of earlier discrimination cannot be corrected merely by ending the practices that produced them, that without corrective action the effects inevitably persist. To teach anyone in a way that influences his further development it is invariably useful and usually necessary to take account of the background he brings to the classroom. So often are the disabilities of Negro students directly traceable to racial factors that a refusal on grounds of equality to recognize such factors in the school is not only unjust; it is also illogical. A phy-

sician reasoning in the same way would deliberately disregard his patients' histories in order to assure them all equal treatment.

A second justification commonly offered for not taking positive action to integrate schools is the lack of evidence that better racial balance leads to better learning, and it must be conceded that solid, objective evidence on this question is difficult if not impossible to find. The number of Negro children from deprived circumstances who have attended schools that were both integrated and educationally sound is still so small and the period of integration so brief that neither provides more than a limited basis for study. Because the Negro children with the longest experience in good integrated institutions have more often come from relatively fortunate and upwardly mobile families, their performance, although interesting, is only partly relevant to the task of equalizing opportunities for those who are both segregated and otherwise disadvantaged.

Moreover, even when better statistical data become available, it should not be expected that they will furnish, *per se*, a firm basis for policy. The purpose of school integration is not merely, or even primarily, to raise the quantitative indices of scholastic achievement among Negro children, although such gains are obviously to be valued and sought. The main objective is rather to alter the character and quality of their opportunities, to provide the incentive to succeed, and to foster a sense of intergroup acceptance in ways that are impossible where schools or students are racially, socially, and culturally isolated. The simplest statement of the situation to which school policy must respond is that few if any American Negro children can now grow up under conditions comparable to those of white children and that of all the means of improvement subject to public control the most powerful is the school. The Negro child must have a chance to be educated in a school where it is clear to him and to everybody else that he is not segregated and where his undisputed right to membership is acknowledged, publicly and privately, by his peers and his elders of both races. Although his acceptance and his progress may at first be delayed, not even a decent beginning toward comparable circumstances can be made until an integrated setting is actually established.

Some important gains may come rather quickly in newly integrated schools, but lasting changes in the deep-seated behavior patterns of children and parents of both races cannot realistically be expected to take place overnight. The effects of fourteen generations of discrimination, deprivation, and separation are not likely

to disappear quickly. What a school has to boast about at the end of the next grading period is somewhat less crucial than what happens to the quality of living in America during the next generation. School integration will, of course, be more productive when parallel improvements are made in housing, economic opportunities, and the general social condition of Negro Americans; but the absence of adequate effort elsewhere only increases the urgency that prompt and energetic action be taken by the school.

The effort to identify and define *de facto* segregation, particularly where school enrollment is predominantly if not wholly of a single race, has led to the concept of racial "balance." While no single ratio of races can be established as universally "right," there is no doubt that when the number or proportion of Negro children in a school exceeds a certain level the school becomes less acceptable to both white and Negro parents. The point at which that shift begins is not clear, nor are the reasons for the variation adequately understood, but the results that typically follow are all too familiar: an accelerated exodus of white families; an influx of Negroes; increased enrollment, frequently to the point of overcrowding; growing dissatisfaction among teachers and the replacement of veterans by inexperienced or unqualified junior instructors.

Although there are no completely satisfactory measures of segregation or imbalance, several tests are applicable. The simplest is to ask whether a particular school is viewed by the community as a "Negro" school. Whether the school is assumed to "belong" to a Negro neighborhood or merely to be the one that Negroes "just happen" to attend, whether it has been provided expressly *for* a Negro population, or has gradually acquired a student body disproportionately composed of Negroes, the typical consequences of segregation can be predicted.

In gauging the degree of segregation or imbalance, the percentage or number of Negro students in a given building is usually less important than the relation of the school to the entire system of which it is a part. As Robert Carter has so cogently argued, it is the substantial isolation of Negro and white students from each other rather than the numbers involved that produces the implication of differential status and prevents the association that is the indispensable basis for mutual understanding and acceptance.[2]

One set of guidelines for correcting such situations has been proposed by the New York State Education Commissioner's Advisory Committee on Human Relations and Community Tensions:

In establishing school attendance areas one of the objectives should be to create in each school a student body that will represent as nearly as possible the cross section of the population of the entire school district but with due consideration also for other important educational criteria including such practical matters as the distance children must travel from home to school.[3]

Although it would be impossible in a sizable district to create or maintain in every school a student body that reflects precisely the racial composition of the total district, the cross section criterion offers an appropriate yardstick.

Most of the proposals for dealing with the issue attempt to strike workable compromises between desirable ideals and practical possibilities. The same Committee in a 1964 report[4] defined a school in New York City as segregated when any single racial group comprised more than 90 per cent of the enrollment.

A more flexible criterion was used by Robert Dentler in a 1965 study.[5] Using the borough as the reference point, he proposed that a school be considered segregated if the proportion of any racial group in its student body is less than half or more than twice the proportion that group represents in the total population. Thus, in Brooklyn, where Negroes comprise 15 per cent of the population, a school would be classified as "Negro segregated" when Negro enrollment reached 30 per cent. Since Puerto Ricans form about 8 per cent of the borough population, a school would be "Puerto Rican" segregated if it enrolled 16 per cent or more pupils of that background. Conversely, a school enrolling fewer than 6 per cent Negro students or 2 per cent Puerto Rican students would be designated as "white segregated." Dealing with the issue in Chicago, Robert Havighurst[6] defines an integrated school as one enrolling at least 60 per cent white students.

II

The dilemma of definition cannot be entirely avoided, but far more important is the creation and retention of student bodies that will be considered acceptably integrated by the largest possible number of persons in both races. As the New York City report pointed out, an essential test of any plan for desegregation "must be its mutual acceptance by both minority group and whites. It should be obvious, but does not always appear to be, that integration is impossible without white pupils. No plan can be acceptable, there-

fore, which increases the movement of white pupils out of the public schools. Neither is it acceptable, however, unless it contributes to desegregation."[7]

Of the administrative schemes for bringing children of both races together the most widely used is "open enrollment," under which pupils are allowed to transfer from schools that are segregated or overcrowded to others in the district. The receiving school may be one with a better degree of racial balance, or its enrollment may simply be smaller than its capacity. While open enrollment reduces congestion in the sending schools, allows parents wider choice, and improves integration in the receiving schools, its usefulness, especially for poor children, is sharply reduced unless transportation is furnished at public expense. Freedom of choice is also more effective when it is supplemented by special counseling services and by the careful preparation of pupils, teachers, and parents of the receiving school.

In large cities open-enrollment plans have uniformly been found to affect only a small percentage of Negro students. In Baltimore, where relatively free choice of schools (subject to legal segregation) was standard practice before 1954, open enrollment became the sole basis for desegregation following the *Brown* decision. In the school year 1954-55 only about 3 per cent of the Negro students transferred to formerly white schools.[8] In subsequent years the number of integrated schools and the percentage of pupils enrolled in them steadily rose, but much of the change was due to the continued expansion of the Negro residential areas.

For readily understandable reasons, the free choice policy affects younger and older pupils differently. Most parents, and especially those in restricted circumstances, prefer to send elementary-age children to the nearest school, regardless of its condition. Families in more affluent circumstances are ordinarily willing to accept the added inconvenience and expense of transportation to get their children into better schools, but the regrettable fact is that if opportunity is to be equalized by traveling it is invariably the slum children who must accept the inconvenience of going to where the more fortunate already are.

At the secondary level, distance is less of an obstacle. This is one of the reasons that in New York City in 1963, when 22 per cent of the elementary schools and 19 per cent of the junior high schools were found to be segregated, by the same criteria only one of the eighty-six senior high schools was segregated.[9]

The most tightly structured approach to desegregation, the Princeton Plan, achieves racial balance by pairing adjacent imbalanced schools, the combined attendance areas being treated as a single unit and the pupils being divided between the schools by grade rather than by residence. The advantages are clear: Both schools are integrated, and each is enabled to concentrate upon a narrower span of grades. There are also disadvantages. Travel time is increased for approximately half the children and transportation may be required, each school's established identity and its relations with its neighborhood are altered, and large-scale faculty transfers may be required. In addition, the possibility that white families will choose to leave the community becomes an uncertain hazard in every such situation.

Early and largely impressionistic evaluations of pairing suggest that the device may be more appropriate in smaller communities with only a few elementary schools than in larger places where neighborhood patterns and rates of residential change are more complex. One analysis[10] of the probable result of pairing twenty-one sets of elementary schools in New York City showed that, at most, the proportion of segregated schools would have been reduced from 22 to 21 per cent.

A more comprehensive method of correcting imbalance is the re-zoning of all the attendance areas of a school system in order to obtain simultaneously a viable racial balance and reasonable travel time for all the pupils. Re-zoning and the related practice of revising the "feeder" patterns by which graduates of lower schools move on to junior or senior high schools are usually more practicable in closely populated communities than in less compact suburbs where travel distances are greater.

Among the more recent innovations is the "educational complex" proposed for the New York City schools.[11] The term denotes a group of schools serving differing racial constituencies and consisting typically of one or two junior high schools and their feeding elementary units. The attendance areas of the individual schools are not changed, but within the complex a variety of joint activities may be undertaken to bring the pupils, teachers, and parents into closer association. Programs and services that cannot be offered uniformly in all of the schools may be centered in one or two of the buildings and pupils transported to them as necessary. Faculty specialists may be shared by more than one building and common problems met cooperatively. Parents of two or more of the schools

working together may bridge over old neighborhood lines that inhibit communication and joint action. The "complex" offers unusual possibilities for countering the effect of segregated housing. By retaining the advantages of neighborhood schools while introducing the social opportunities of a more diversified community, it offers children and parents a chance to try new experiences without totally abandoning the security of their familiar attachments.

Of all the schemes proposed for desegregating urban schools, the boldest and most imaginative is the educational park.[12] The rationale of the park rests on the hypothesis that the effect on the school of pockets of segregated housing will be offset if an attendance area can be made large enough to include white and Negro populations in balanced proportions. Thus, all the pupils of a greatly enlarged zone, perhaps 10,000 or more (in a medium-sized city, the entire school population), would be accommodated on a single site or park. Within the park, which could range all the way from a 100 acre campus with many separate buildings to a single high-rise structure covering a city block, students would be assigned to relatively small units, each maintained as a separate school in which teachers and pupils would work closely and continuously together. The distribution of students among the smaller units would be made without regard to the location of their homes but with the purpose of making each school as well integrated as possible.

Beyond these general outlines, there is little agreement on what an educational park should be. One view is that the full grade range should be included, from nursery school to community college. Others propose that a park serve one or two levels, perhaps elementary and junior high schools, or a comprehensive secondary program of three, four, or six years. New York City has examined the feasibility of using middle-school parks for grades five to eight, retaining small neighborhood schools for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and primary programs.

With such a combination, children and parents would be introduced to the public schools first in their own neighborhoods, where familiar relationships, short distances, and close home-school ties would be at their maximum. In these primary centers each child, depending on his age at entry, would spend four to seven years, and some children a longer period, receiving fundamental preparation that primary education at its best should provide. Remedial

services, compensatory curricula, and enriched programs would be available to all who need them. At the fifth grade, each pupil would move on to the middle-school park where for the first time his classmates, now drawn from a much wider area, would reflect the diversity of a truly common school and, hopefully, a genuinely integrated one. All high schools, under this proposal, would operate under a city-wide policy of free choice for all students, subject only to such restrictions as were needed to prevent overcrowding and to respect requirements for admission to specialized programs.

One criticism of the educational park is the excessively high costs that some associate with it. A single site and the construction required to house 10,000 pupils need be no greater, however, than the combined cost of ten sites and buildings for a thousand pupils each. Indeed, a larger site located on relatively open and cheaper land might well be less costly to assemble than comparable acreage in congested sections. The total operating costs for a single, well-managed park should be lower than those for several separate units. In almost every case, however, a large proportion of the pupils would have to be transported and the cost of that service financed as a new expense. As in any other new venture, the increased outlay required must be set against the anticipated return. In a well conceived educational park the better education and the improved social situation that may be expected offer future assets of substantial value.

Beside the possibilities for accomplishing school integration must be set the deterrents that currently retard the process, of which the most visible and powerful is the concept of the neighborhood school. Although the close identification of a school with its immediate community produces results beneficial to both, the battles now being fought in the name of that relationship, and sometimes for virtual possession of particular schools, obscure fundamental principles. The public school is the property not of its neighborhood but of the school district. Since the district itself is created by the state, it is quite reasonable to argue that both title and control rest ultimately with the people of the state as a whole. However commendable the interest of a neighborhood in its school may be, concern is not to be confused with proprietary control. Subject to the state's supervision, the school board alone is legally empowered to determine for any school whose children shall be admitted and whose excluded.

The neighborhood school is essentially an administrative device

designed to assure all the children of a district equal educational opportunity and equal access to it. When the device ceases to serve those functions, and especially when its use is so distorted that it frustrates rather than furthers the primary purpose, it is the device rather than the purpose that must give way.

It is a curious coincidence that during the very period that city and suburban neighborhood schools have been gaining an almost sacrosanct status, the rural sections in which such schools were first established have been abandoning them. The neighborhood school in its original and most authentic form, the one-room schoolhouse, has been disappearing from the United States at the rate of 3,000 a year for the last half century. Despite understandable misgivings about school consolidation, rural parents by the millions have exchanged their nearby schools and the intensely local form of control many of them embody for the superior instruction and broader educational experiences more comprehensive institutions offer. They have learned that, despite its relative remoteness from the neighborhood, the consolidated school not only provides a broader curriculum, better books and equipment, and abler teachers, but, by drawing its pupils from a wider and more varied attendance area, also furnishes them an outlook upon the world that is impossible in the more homogeneous society of the local school.

City and suburban schools meanwhile have gone in quite the opposite direction, becoming steadily more segregated not only by race but also by social and economic level. The momentum of this movement creates one of the principal forces opposing integration in schools and communities. Combined with more common forms of racial prejudice, segregated housing, and repressive economic practices, the growing social stratification of the public school carries the most serious implications for the future of American society.

Despite the generous lip service that the common school has traditionally received, it is a clear fact that, in many parts of the country, substantial minorities of American children at both extremes of the social scale have not been educated in schools that could, by any reasonable criteria, be called inclusive. Yet the complementary truth is that the vast majority of our citizens, the white ones, at any rate, have been brought up in schools that "everybody" was expected to attend. Whether the connection between such childhood experiences and the health of a democratic society is still or ever was as close as Horace Mann held it to be, is beyond explicit demonstration. But whether an open society can be main-

tained and, even more to the present point, whether a hitherto excluded group can be brought into the full enjoyment of citizenship without the instrumentality of the common school, are questions this country cannot much longer evade. On so complex a matter, clear causal relationships are difficult to establish, but the correlation between the rise of the common school and the development of an open society in the United States is, to say the least, impressive. Before we accept by default or support by intent the trend toward stratified public education it would be well at least to project and appraise the probable consequences.

A second force impeding integration, in certain respects the first writ large, is generated by the growth of solidly white suburban communities around the heavily congested urban centers into which the Negro population finds itself channeled and confined. The "white noose" not only prevents the outward dispersion of Negroes but equally, if less directly, discourages white families from remaining in the city. As population density and neighborhood depression worsen, larger numbers of families with the freedom to choose and the power to act abandon both the city and its schools.

The steady increase of urban segregation, the growing ghettos, and the declining attractiveness of the city for all groups produce problems whose magnitude and complexity carry them beyond the control of separate localities. Every day the deteriorating situation emphasizes more strongly the need for a total reappraisal of city-suburban relationships. If the present trend is allowed to continue, the difficulties that now plague the central city can be expected inevitably—and soon—to trouble entire metropolitan areas. The almost total segregation of the incorporated area, the political entity officially called the city, is hardly an acceptable alternative to the systematic desegregation of the total social and economic network that is in fact the city. It becomes constantly more evident that, unless steps are taken to bring about a better dispersion and integration of Negro citizens throughout metropolitan areas, direct action will be required to equalize educational opportunities and the process of school integration between the cities and their suburbs. This responsibility for re-examining urban-suburban racial imbalance and its locus is implied by a sentence in the *Brown* decision: "Such an opportunity [to secure an education] where the state has undertaken to provide it is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms." If the right to equal treatment in the schools, including freedom from racial segregation, overrides, as it does, statutes placing

children in particular schools, the question naturally arises whether that right is to be restricted indefinitely by statutes that fix lines between local jurisdictions.

III

Imaginative and forthright action to bring as many children as possible into integrated schools as rapidly as possible is an urgent necessity, but it would be grossly unrealistic to assume that integration can be accomplished everywhere in the foreseeable future. In the borough of Manhattan 78 per cent of the public elementary-school pupils are Negro and Puerto Rican. Immediate and total integration could be accomplished there only by closing most of the schools in Manhattan and distributing their pupils among the remaining boroughs or by setting up a vast "exchange" system to move hundreds of thousands of children daily in both directions between Manhattan and other parts of the city. Quite aside from the sheer administrative and teaching problems such an operation would pose, little imagination is needed to predict the virtually unanimous objection of parents.

Important progress can be made, however, on the periphery of segregated communities, through the procedures described earlier and by energetic efforts to concentrate on the possible instead of deploring the impossible. When all the possibilities are exploited and new ones ingeniously devised, there will still remain many ghetto schools in which integration is simply not feasible. In those places, the only reasonable action is the massive improvement of schools to educate children where they are.

It is unhappily true, as Kenneth Clark points out,[18] that to ask for good schools in the ghetto is to risk the charge that one acquiesces in segregation. Yet, even though supporting better schools in ghettos has become a favorite ploy of the advocates of separate equality, that fact does not justify neglecting ghetto children. Indeed, many of these children are already so badly victimized by deprivation and neglect that, if integration were instantly possible, strong remedial and compensatory programs would still be necessary to give them any reasonable chance to compete or to succeed.

In designing educational strategies to meet the special needs of Negro ghetto children the public schools are undertaking tasks they have never really faced up to before. The curricula of slum schools have almost invariably been no more than adapted versions of those

designed for middle-class pupils. Even now, a number of the changes being introduced into slum schools involve little more than efforts to apply to the ghetto, although somewhat more effectively and more intensively, the characteristic practices of middle-class schools: smaller classes to teach traditional subjects; more time for reading, using standard readers; increased guidance service employing the customary techniques.

Such projects to multiply and intensify established procedures are by no means wholly wasteful or necessarily wrong. Kenneth Clark[14] insists with considerable justification that the change most needed in slum schools is an elevation of the teachers' expectations of the children. The main reason, he argues, that Negro students rank low academically is that too many teachers and the "system" as a whole consider them uneducable.

However much ghetto children could gain from proper motivation and a decent respect for their potentiality, strong encouragement and high expectation are not enough. No teacher can hope to teach effectively or fairly unless he differentiates between the child whose environment re-enforces the school's influence and the one whose out-of-school world is rarely even so good as neutral and more often is severely damaging. While much can be said for holding both children to the same level of expectation, it is hardly realistic to assume that both will reach it with equal personal effort and the same assistance from the school. The child suffering unusual deprivation would appear obviously to require—and to deserve—unusual attention. The extent to which the special help should be compensatory, or remedial, or unusually stimulating is, of course, a suitable subject of investigation and debate; but that it must be particularly adapted to the child who is victimized by his environment would seem self-evident.

A growing volume of research not only documents the relationship between a child's cultural environment and his school success but also illuminates with increasing clarity the crucial importance of the early years. Benjamin Bloom[15] has examined many of the pertinent studies in the field and estimates that the difference between a culturally deprived and a culturally abundant environment can affect a child's IQ by an average of twenty points, half of the difference being attributable to the influences of the first four years and as much as six points to the next four. After another comprehensive survey, J. McVicker Hunt[16] concludes that while the notion of cultural deprivation is still gross and undifferentiated, the con-

cept holds much promise. He considers it entirely possible to arrange institutional settings in which culturally handicapped children can encounter experiences that will compensate for what they may have missed. Martin Deutsch,[17] whose work has included extended experimentation with such children, has found that those with some preschool experience attain significantly higher intelligence-test scores at the fifth grade than do children of the same background who did not have the experience.

Opinions differ as to the type of preschool program that offers the most fruitful compensation to slum children. One approach assumes that ordinary home-supplementing nursery schools designed for middle-class children will also help the deprived youngster. A second concentrates on preparing the culturally deprived child for school by teaching him to follow directions and to use such things as toys, pencils, crayons, and books. A third approach begins with the view that the culturally deprived child differs fundamentally from others in self-concept, language values, and perceptual processes and offers specialized programs to compensate for the deleterious effects of his lean environment.

While there are still no systematic comparisons of the relative effectiveness of these different programs, two generalizations can be stated with some assurance. One is that preschool programs do appear to be effective in raising intelligence-test scores, vocabulary level, expressive ability, arithmetic reasoning, and reading readiness.

The second is that the results do not run uniformly in one direction. A study made in the Racine public schools[18] reports that:

> Potentially the most useful conclusion which can be drawn . . . is that "one shot" compensatory programs would seem to be a waste of time and money. The fact that differences between groups disappeared and that in several areas the rate of growth of both groups regressed during the traditional first grade years supports this contention.
>
> If these implications are supported by future research, it would seem that curriculum revision over the entire twelve year school curriculum is a necessary part of any lasting solution to the basic problem of urban public school education.

The Racine finding bears out what anyone experienced in slum schools would probably have predicted. Any such teacher knows that the moment the child steps outside, at whatever age, he is caught again in the cultural downdraft of the street and all too often of the home itself. Efforts to compensate within the school must, therefore, begin at the earliest possible age and continue with

steady and strong consistency throughout the whole length of the child's school career.

One outstanding example of what may be done in the upper grades was the Demonstration Guidance Project,[19] initiated in 1956 in New York's Junior High School 43 located on the edge of Harlem. The principal aim of the project was to identify and stimulate potentially able pupils and to help them reach levels of performance more nearly consistent with their capacities. The project students, all selected because they were thought to possess latent academic aptitude and most of them from disadvantaged backgrounds, were placed in small classes, given double periods daily in English, and tutored in small groups. Intensive counseling, clinical services, and social work were provided, and regular contact was maintained with the parents. Scholastic achievement was stressed and special efforts made to prepare the students for college or jobs. Visits were conducted to museums, theaters, concerts, the ballet, and places of special interest in New York and elsewhere. The program was continued into the George Washington Senior High School and the last experimental group graduated in 1960. After three and a half years of this special attention, these students, most of whom would ordinarily have been considered poor academic risks, showed substantial gains over their own earlier records, and over the usual performance of students from the same school. Of one hundred five in one group, seventy-eight showed an increase in IQ, sixty-four gaining ten points or more. The median for the entire group rose in the three-year period from 92.9 to 102.2. Against a previous average for their school of 47 per cent, 64 per cent earned high-school diplomas. Three students ranked first, fourth, and sixth in their class; two and one-half times as many as in previous classes went to college, and three and one-half times as many to some form of further education.

On a modified and reduced scale, the Demonstration Guidance Project was subsequently introduced as the Higher Horizons Program to other schools in New York City with results that have been comparably positive if somewhat less spectacular.

IV

Special programs to meet the needs of deprived children have been undertaken in a number of school systems. A project in the Banneker Group of the St. Louis school system has stressed the

teaching of reading, English, and arithmetic. Particular attention was directed to the motivation of the pupils, to setting standards of performance. The support of parents was solicited, and their pride in their children's accomplishments was stimulated. By the end of the third year of the project the achievement of Banneker eighth graders equalled or exceeded national norms in reading and language and fell only one month short in arithmetic. In the years immediately preceding, the comparable scores had ranged from one to two years below the national norms. The theme of the Banneker project is expressed by Samuel Sheppard, the administrator who conceived it, in his instructions to teachers: "Quit teaching by I. Q. and the neighborhood where the child lives. Teach the child all you can teach him."[20]

Detroit set up a new effort during the 1960-61 academic year with some 10,000 elementary and secondary pupils, mainly in the Negro residential areas, concentrating not only on the children but also on work with parents and teachers. A principal aim was to modify teachers' perceptions of children with limited backgrounds. The program included curriculum revision, re-organized teaching schedules, tutoring, home visiting, and supplementary activities for pupils during after-schools hours and summer months.

A Pittsburgh project centered in the "Hill" district employed team teaching to improve instruction in reading and the language arts.

Virtually every large school system in the country and many of the smaller ones are now attacking the problem of the culturally deprived child, but the volume of well-intentioned activity still substantially exceeds the amount of imaginative and well-designed research that is being done to analyze and appraise the innovations. Until the quality of experimental design and research matches the quantity of sheer energy being devoted to the task, much of the energy is certain to be wasted and potentially valuable information and insights to be lost.

A field in which further study and fresh thinking are badly needed is vocational education, where the long-standing practice of separating vocational students from those in academic programs has more recently been compounded by the effects of racial imbalance. The result has been to render vocational programs in some schools all but useless. The field has suffered also because many schools have adhered too long and too closely to the concepts of curriculum and organization developed forty years ago. The tragically high rate

of unemployment among Negro youth is only one of urgent reasons for the early and thorough reform of this essential part of American education.

In higher education impressive progress in some institutions has diverted attention from the massive obstacles that remain to be overcome. While a detailed discussion of this situation is beyond the scope of this paper it is relevant to emphasize the reciprocal relationship between accomplishments by Negroes in colleges and universities and the improvement of elementary and secondary schools, a prominent element in this relationship being the supply of well-prepared Negro teachers. Hard facts on the relative competence of white graduates and Negro graduates of teacher education programs are not easy to secure, but such evidence as has come to light, most of it subjective, suggests that much remains to be done to equalize the quality of programs and the availability of places in first-rate schools. Despite the fact that thousands of Negro teachers have attained high levels of professional competence and status, many others who hold teaching certificates are unable to obtain employment even in schools that want Negro teachers, because of their inability to compete with other applicants. A largely similar situation prevails in graduate-school admissions.

McGrath's study of Negro colleges[21] provides part of the explanation and suggests directions in which some of the answers must be sought: the prompt and substantial upgrading of faculties, curricula, libraries, laboratories, and physical facilities of the colleges that serve predominantly Negro student bodies and enroll more than half the Negro college students of the country.

Another important part of the solution must be found in programs in high school and between high school and college to furnish the supplemental instruction that many Negro students require in order to qualify for first-rate institutions. The encouraging reports of such programs as those conducted by the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students,[22] as well as by a number of the institutions themselves, indicate what special effort and thoughtful planning toward that end can accomplish.

"A grand mental and moral experiment," Horace Mann once called free schools,[23] "whose effects could not be developed and made manifest in a single generation."

For the Negro American, the development of those effects has taken a good deal longer—far too much longer—than was required

to make them manifest for his white countrymen. The knowledge that the Negro's right to education has been restricted is no new discovery, but what is new is the growing consciousness that what has been withheld from him has impoverished the whole people.

The argument for enlarging the opportunities and enhancing the status of the Negro minority goes far beyond extending a modicum more of charity to the poor. The appeal to equity and to the humane principles that undergird the democratic enterprise is the heart of the matter, to be sure, but the evidence is now irrefutable that until each American has full access to the means to develop his capacities every other American's chances and attainments will continue to be diminished.

That this relationship should become so critically significant in a time characterized by technological progress may seem paradoxical; yet it is that progress and the insatiable demand it generates for intellectual competence that now re-enforces our long-standing moral obligation to re-examine the standards by which we live as a society.

The detailed problems of procedure which flow from this obligation impose a complex array of tasks upon the network of the arts, the sciences, the humanities, and the professional specialities that contribute knowledge and skill to the educational establishment. But here, too—here especially—the prior question and the transcendent issue are moral: What ought we to be doing?

If the educational and political leadership of the country can muster the strength of conscience to face that query forthrightly and honestly, there are abundant grounds for optimism that the subsidiary tasks will become both more clearly visible and more readily feasible.

References

1. Lyndon B. Johnson, Address delivered at the 200th Anniversary Convocation, Brown University, September 28, 1964.
2. Robert L. Carter, "De Facto School Segregation: An Examination of the Legal and Constitutional Questions Presented," *Western Reserve Law Review*, Vol. 16 (May 1965), p. 527.
3. New York State Department of Education, "Guiding Principles for Securing Racial Balance in Public Schools," Albany, N. Y., June 17, 1963.
4. New York State Education Commissioner's Advisory Committee on Human Relations and Community Tensions, *Desegregating the Public Schools of New York City* (Albany, N. Y., 1964), p. 2.

5. Robert A. Dentler, *A Basis for Classifying the Ethnic Composition of Schools*, unpublished memorandum, Institute for Urban Studies, Teachers College, Columbia University, December 1964, p. 1.
6. Robert J. Havighurst, *The Public Schools of Chicago* (Chicago, 1964).
7. New York State Education Commissioner's Advisory Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
8. Maryland Commission on Interracial Problems and Relations, *The Report of a Study on Desegregation in the Baltimore City Schools* (Baltimore, Md., 1956), p. 10.
9. New York Education Commissioner's Advisory Committee, *op. cit.*
10. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20.
12. Nathan Jacobson (ed.), *An Exploration of the Educational Park Concept* (New York, 1964). The papers included in this report of a conference on the educational park contain the most perceptive appraisals of the concept currently available.
13. Kenneth B. Clark, *Dark Ghetto* (New York, 1965), p. 117.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 131-133.
15. Benjamin S. Bloom, *Stability and Change in Human Characteristics* (New York, 1964), pp. 68-76.
16. J. McVicker Hunt, "The Psychological Basis for Using Pre-School Enrichment as an Antidote for Cultural Deprivation," *Merrill Palmer Quarterly*, Vol. 10 (July 1964), p. 236.
17. Martin Deutsch, "The Influence of Early Social Environments on School Adaptation," Paper presented at the Symposium on School Dropouts, Washington, D. C., December 1962.
18. R. G. Larson and J. L. Olson, *Final Report: A Pilot Project for Culturally Deprived Kindergarten Children*, Unified School District #1, Racine, Wisconsin (Mimeo, April 1965).
19. Board of Education of City of New York, *The Demonstration Guidance Project, Fourth Annual Report, 1959-60*, pp. 2-15.
20. William K. Wyant, Jr., "Reading: A Way Upward" in *Civil Rights USA, Public Schools, Cities in the North and West* (Washington, D. C., 1962).
21. Earl J. McGrath, *The Predominantly Negro Colleges and Universities in Transition* (New York, 1965), pp. 21 ff.
22. Kenneth B. Clark and Lawrence Plotkin, *The Negro Student at Integrated Colleges* (New York, 1963), pp. 7 ff.
23. Horace Mann, "Intellectual Education as a Means of Removing Poverty and Securing Abundance," Twelfth Annual Report, *Annual Reports of the Board of Education of Massachusetts for the Years 1845-48* (Boston, 1891), p. 246.