

Is Segregation the Answer?

In the closely knit world of today, the arguments for segregation have grown threadbare and meaningless. But the arguments, and the problem itself, are very real in the minds of young people. We have chosen for your reading but a few comments typical of the hundreds we found in children's papers. They represent comments from white youngsters who are vehement segregationists and those no less vehemently opposed to segregation. Perhaps more telling than any other is the statement of a Negro child which you will find at the end of this section.

White Children Say . . .

—“yes”

¶ I think that the colored people should stay on their own side of the town and we stay on our side.

¶ As far as social affair are concerned I think we should be seperated. I also think our classes should be divided with one race on one side and the other race on the other side of the room.

¶ I think the Latin-American should be separated from the American people completely. Such as having their own towns or shopping centers, churches would help.

¶ It should be that the negro people should have a state or a city to live in of their own. We shouldn't have anything to do with them.

¶ If the negro is working in a factory with the white people—It is all right to get the same amount of pay—but I think they should not have the same place to eat with the white—their rest rooms should not be the same—They should have different rest rooms.

¶ I do not like the negroes and hillbillies because they not only live dirty but are very rude. They think they can push anyone around they please. If they were sent back down south I think there would be less trouble here.

¶ They also should have their own beaches where only negroes are allowed. We don't want them on our beaches and that's where they'll go until they have a nice one of their own.

—“no”

¶ I think the people of different races could feel better toward each other by working together, forgetting the past, and hoping for a wondrous future. All men must lose some

of their pride and look upon the other fellow as being as themselves.

¶ Instead of feeling that intermarriage is the only solution I now think that there are many other things to be done first: for example, laws which make it illegal to refuse a Negro a job; houses and housing establishments which will take both races; schools, both public and private, which will purposely try to get a mixed student body; educational opportunities with scholarships as incentives which will give the Negro the knowledge which any white who considers himself “cultivated” has. All these things seem to me the only way of bringing about fair and good relations.

¶ As long as these people are kept isolated from other groups in the small, poor sections of the country, forced to accept jobs with low wages and hard physical labor, their standards of living cannot possibly rise; and until they do rise they will present a serious problem that must be solved by the people of the United States. These people, especially those of Spanish decent, are criticized for clinging to the customs and speech of their native country; yet the people of the Nordic races are not willing to accept them into their communities and help them to learn the ways of a new and strange country.

¶ If I were President of the United States I would solve the race problem by letting each race have equal rights. I would build a large number of gymnasiums for boys of all races and ages to attend. By doing this I would help stop juvenile delinquency. I wouldn't separate the Negroes from the whites. This would give each race a chance to know and understand each other, and agree with each other on even terms.

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