

danger and fallacy of thinking of human beings in terms of caste groups rather than as individuals. Remove the category, and we find that the Negro child is like other children. He has the same need for belonging, for adequacy, for affection, for self-respect and for the respect of others as does any other child. He has the same need for success and for the thrill of accomplishment. He has the same potentialities and the same desire for the fulfillment of the American dream. Physical well-being, emotional stability and the practice of the democratic principle are as necessary for his wholesome per-

sonality development as for that of any other child. No child can develop as a free human being within the framework of segregation.

Paraphrasing Lewis Mumford, the integrated school can form the basis of the community of the mature person. It is a true sample of the whole world. It has the utmost variety of human beings learning side by side. It is the environment where by orderly process the last stage of human growth will be reached, where children, through their experiences in school, will be led to cooperate with their neighbors throughout the world.

KIMBALL WILES

STEPS *in* INTEGRATION

What practical steps can be taken in school and community to facilitate desegregation, to improve communication and to increase understanding and acceptance of individuals? This author reviews some years of exciting progress and expresses high hope for the future.

IN A WORLD in which five of each six persons are yellow, brown or black, integration in the United States is not only desirable but imperative, if we hope to exert moral or intellectual leadership in the world.

We have come a long way; we have a long way to go. Let us explore the progress in the past thirty-five years through the experiences of one member of the majority group.

In the 1920's I lived on a farm in

southern Ohio and the Negro farm hands ate with us and Negro children went to school and played with us but they "knew their place" and we did not consider them our equals. They were never invited to attend our parties or come to our church.

In the mid-thirties I taught and coached in a Midwestern city. A Negro was the star player on the basketball team I coached but when the team went to a movie to celebrate

a victory, I had to make special arrangements with the manager of the theatre or our star would have had to go up to the section of the balcony in which Negroes were required to sit. Negro youngsters did not come to the school parties and there was not a Negro teacher in the city.

During the three years prior to the beginning of World War II, I lived in the Deep South. When the sidewalk was crowded on Saturday afternoons, Negroes stepped into the streets. Throughout the three years I lived there I never had a real opportunity to talk with a Negro teacher or visit a Negro school. An influential colleague labeled me a Communist because I told him it would be necessary to raise the economic level of the Negro if the Southeast was to prosper.

At a major war industry in the North where I spent a portion of the war period, Negroes were hired for service, maintenance and transportation. But not a member of the office staff or personnel department was a person of color.

In the late forties at a northern, urban university I saw Negroes receive equal opportunity and participate fully in social activities, but saw trained teachers have difficulty getting placed because of color in even the most liberal communities. Sly remarks concerning the size of the Negro and Jewish groups in our student body were commonplace in social conversation of some members of the suburban communities in which I lived.

As a member of ASCD's Executive Committee at mid-century, I saw city after city agree to meet our requirement that Negro members be able to

live and eat in the convention hotels until even Washington, D. C., agreed to the conditions. The NEA, working with the same philosophy by the early fifties, held its 1953 summer convention in Miami Beach and Negroes lived in the hotels and rode in taxicabs on an equal basis in this Southern city. It was the first time it had happened there.

In 1950 I returned to the Southeast to work and found social conditions greatly changed. Negroes no longer waited until whites had been served in the stores. Communication lines between Negro and white educators were much easier. In almost every statewide education committee, Negroes and whites sat and thought and planned together. But professional associations were segregated. Neither did Negro and white teachers work together in all counties. The mores of acceptable behavior varied from county to county and from situation to situation.

Conditions Vary

Integration has been occurring rapidly throughout my lifetime. In the preceding paragraphs I have sketched briefly some aspects of integration that I have experienced. Each person reading this statement could parallel this account from his own experience.

The May 1954 Supreme Court decision has caused everyone to stop short and take inventory. Ideas and events that had been diffused have been brought into center focus. All who believe that integration is impera-

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tive in the United States must attempt to determine the steps ahead. The remainder of this article is one person's hypothesis advanced for analysis.

In the early months after the 1954 decision there was an apparent willingness to go along with the "law of the land." Loud objections were voiced, however, in the states of Georgia, South Carolina and Mississippi. During the year that intervened before the Supreme Court's decision as to the way its decision was to be implemented, opposition to desegregation rose and organized itself.

As I write in August 1955, it is apparent that the steps toward integration are not the same in all sections of the country. Conditions vary so greatly. To a person who has worked seven years in the Midwest, six years on the East Coast, one year on the West Coast, and eight years in the Southeast, and who has traveled much throughout the North and the South during the past year, it seems that there are four categories into which various states and communities can be divided and that the steps in integration vary from situation to situation. The categories are: (a) areas where the power structure is actively opposing desegregation; (b) areas where the power structure passively opposes desegregation; (c) areas where the power structure favors desegregation; (d) areas where desegregation has occurred. Integration is not a problem of one section of the country.

As I began to analyze the situation, I thought I should include a category for states and communities in which people did not believe integration is morally right. But careful reflection

led to the conclusion that it should not be listed. There may be such areas in the country but if there are, I have not found them. Almost without exception, the churches have taken a firm position on this issue. The Catholic Church, the Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church, and the Presbyterian Church particularly have exercised notable leadership in helping members of the community to examine their beliefs. Even in communities in which the politicians and the mass media of communication have been most outspoken against desegregation, church people, teachers, members of the PTA participating in groups in which they can be honest about their real convictions, state that they believe that integration is right and that it should take place. Many, however, hope that it will not occur within their lifetime.

What steps can people who believe that integration is morally right take in each of the four situations described above?

In some states the power structure is definitely opposed to desegregation. The government officials have stated that they will do all in their power to prevent it. One governor went so far as to say that he will use troops. Others have taken action which indicates that they would be willing to sacrifice the public school system in order to preserve segregation. In one state the Attorney General threatened that he would take action which would revoke for life the teaching certificate of any teacher who belonged to the NAACP, and asked for outstanding lawyers in various communities to volunteer to watch for efforts to bring

about desegregation and to take legal steps to prevent the success of any such movements. Men important in the power structure in another state have attempted to pair the Klan and the NAACP, and insisted that neither should be allowed to function in the state.

In such states court cases will be necessary. In some states, the state constitution conflicts with the U. S. Supreme Court's interpretation of the national Constitution. Where the power structure wants to prevent desegregation, the authority of the national government must be upheld by court action. Until test cases have been brought about which secure a ruling that desegregation should occur in these states, school personnel can call the full implications of the Supreme Court decision to the attention of local authorities. The decision is much more vigorous than many people within such states pretend. Unless local school authorities can prove that they are proceeding to desegregate as rapidly as they can, they will be liable to fines and imprisonment. The proof that desegregation is proceeding with all possible speed rests with the school authorities involved.

In states where the power structure opposes desegregation, school people can take the steps which will ease desegregation when it is legally enforced. Joint committees of white and Negro members of the teaching staff can meet to think together about the problems of their community. Opening channels of communication in which members of the Negro and white communities think together on an equal basis is an important step.

Where the power structure is passive, school people have a responsibility for taking more rapid steps. School administrators should discuss with boards of education the conditions in the community and propose the steps that can be taken immediately. Securing the appointment of an advisory committee composed of Negroes and whites to make recommendations to the Board has proved helpful in some communities. The in-service programs of Negro teachers and white teachers can be combined. Teachers can arrange for the interchange of student committees from Negro and white high schools as they are working on common problems. All can insist that separate professional associations unite. They can join inter-racial discussion groups. They can enroll in human relations workshops where they increase their skill in working with diverse groups.

In situations in which the power structure is indifferent, the responsibility for leadership rests more strongly on the shoulders of the administration and staff of the public schools than it does in any other locality. They are the ones who can exert the leadership which makes it possible for interested community members to come together. They can provide opportunity for interested citizens to formulate the procedures for moving ahead.

Where the power structure in the community favors desegregation the problem is not as difficult. Steps can be taken immediately.

Easing the Transition

There is no clear-cut pattern of how desegregation should take place. It

seems possible to start from almost any angle. No serious difficulty has arisen anywhere when desegregation has been undertaken at the higher education level. Some communities have started desegregation with the elementary school while others have started in the secondary school. Some communities have moved the Negroes to what have previously been all-white schools rather than move white students to what have previously been Negro schools.

In communities in which the power structure favors desegregation the transition has not been as difficult as some had anticipated. In only a few situations has any difficulty arisen, and it has come from the adults rather than the students. In one Washington, D. C., high school there was a student rebellion when Negro students enrolled in a high school that had previously been all white, but it did not last long. A few days after it occurred the principal went to the biology class in which the leader of the student revolt was enrolled. It was being taught by a Negro teacher. When the principal asked the boy if he would like to change classes he said no, that he was very satisfied with the quality of teaching he was getting. At the end of the year the senior class, in listing the accomplishments of which it was proudest, gave as its number one triumph the successful integration of Negroes and whites in that high school.

For the most part, parents have found the transition much easier than they thought they would. There has been no wholesale shift of students. Most students, because of school district lines, continue to attend the

school that they did before desegregation occurred.

As desegregation is attempted, students should have an opportunity to participate in thinking through the problems involved. Too frequently adults have attempted to supply answers to youngsters. When student councils and student groups, in schools that have integrated, have thought with teachers about ways to conduct student activities and social affairs, the intelligence of their answers and the sincerity with which they have faced the problems have been very gratifying to the adults working with them.

Desegregation Is Not Integration

In many schools in which desegregation has existed for years, the integration process has not been carried far. Negro boys and girls do not attend class parties. Negro boys and girls are not selected for school offices. Negro boys and girls sit and play with other Negro boys and girls. White teachers and white students assume a superior attitude toward the Negro youngsters and the school program does nothing to attempt to change their attitude.

In many school systems in the North there is not even one Negro teacher. Few teacher education institutions have a Negro staff member. Many children attending Northern schools have never seen a Negro in a position other than that of a day laborer or cleaner. Some communities do not allow a Negro to live within their boundaries.

Educators in school systems that already are desegregated need to look very carefully to see whether they have

taken steps such as the following: Are there any Negroes on the teaching staff? Are there any Negroes in any status positions within the staff? Do students have the opportunity to come into contact with Negro leaders in the role of resource people in the classrooms? Are the Negroes active in the PTA? Do Negroes hold any positions of status in the parent organizations of the school? Do teachers find it difficult to work with Negro students? Are human relations workshops made available to teachers so that they can increase their skill in working with people who come from different backgrounds?

The steps in integration are varied. They are the local problem and responsibility of each community in the na-

tion. They are the problem of each individual, Negro and white. As individuals, each of us must examine his desires for superiority, and recognition, and his actions of exclusion and retribution. We must scrutinize our way of work to see whether we are contributing to improved communication, increased understanding and greater acceptance of individuals on the basis of contribution rather than classification.

If integration is to be accomplished, we must each attempt increasingly to understand and to value diversity as a method of enriching culture and living for all of us.

We have come a long way; we have a long way to go.

GEORGE S. MITCHELL

Reaching the Hidden Springs

In working out together the considerable adjustments of desegregation, white and Negro citizens are participating in a constructive effort that will be of benefit to all.

FIRST LET us make some attempts at theory. When a minority people is put off in a special category, scorned and kept out of opportunity and out of participation in public life, and away from self-respect, certain reactions may develop. Many thus injured may resort to the one available weapon—non-cooperation disguised as indifference—a subtle kind of sabotage. Many heroically overcome the system, but most are caught by it. This process has been

going on in the South for two or three centuries, and a lot of people think such an arrangement is foreordained. It takes a bit of a jolt to reverse old habits, and it may be just the good luck of the U. S. A. that the Supreme Court's decisions are the kind of tug that will accomplish the change. For the change can be made. The problem is to reach in some manner the hidden springs of a people's character; to bring to full alertness ambition, purpose, re-

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