

# Experiences in Cultural Integration

## Introduction

Symposium Editor: William Van Til

**T**HIS symposium needs no extended introduction. The contributors speak for themselves—with characteristic courage and spirit. They tell of their experiences in cultural integration as the doors of American schools in our democracy increasingly swing open to students and faculty members of all races, religions and nationality backgrounds. Despite the opportunity proffered, none chose anonymity. They are among the free men and women who have shown their willingness to stand up and be counted on the most crucial domestic problem of our times.

Teachers speak. A native of India describes her assignment in the Midwest. A husband and wife who are Americans of Spanish-Mexican background tell how things seem to them in the Southwest. A Negro teacher writes of her experiences in employment on a college staff in New England.

Superintendents speak. Watch for the common thread which runs through the three superintendents' independent accounts of the desegregation process in the South and Southwest. Vigorous leadership; community involvement; refusal to be intimidated; support of democratic ideals.

Supervisors speak. An assistant principal tells what she learned as the staff of her Midwestern school became inte-

grated. A Western observer reports a surprise among Indian children and an insight into supervisory procedures. A language arts consultant in Hawaii describes the power of broad community participation in planning. An adult education director in the Middle West, in cooperation with a human relations agency worker, indicates how workshops can help. A supervisor in the Rocky Mountain states describes integration of staff in a school in which she served as principal.

Curriculum workers speak. A consultant who helped engineer one of the better desegregation programs describes procedures in integrating the teaching staff in a city at the crossroads of North and South. A team reports from the largest metropolis of them all; New York City struggles with formidable difficulties. A dean describes problems encountered in finding and evaluating prospects of minority group background for a college staff. The author of an able case study on Gary sums up the situation as to employment of minority group members in a New England state.

Thanks are due to the editors and publication planners of *EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP* for sharing the courage and the spirit of the contributors. *EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP* has again directed a beam of light into a dark area of American educa-

tion sedulously avoided by timid educators and timid organizations.

The symposium is dedicated to the late Dr. Tanner Duckrey, a distinguished American and a District Superintendent of the Philadelphia Public Schools. He would have contributed to this symposium were it not for his untimely death.

## Teachers Speak

### An Experience in Minnesota

I CAME to the United States in 1956 as a member of the India Centenary Choir. We traveled across the country for about six months conveying the message of goodwill from the people of India to the people in this country. In 1957 I received a Master's Degree in Education from George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee. I was married on June 21, 1957, to Sunder, a Ph.D. student at the University of Minnesota; we had known each other as children in India.

In September, the magnificent new Highland Park Junior High School in St. Paul, Minnesota, became my home away from home. No one in the system, or myself, knew exactly what I would do from day to day. I was available for the whole system and was to help teachers when they needed my services.

Uncertainty, haziness, excitement, happiness, fear, anticipation—mixed emotions like these—characterized my feelings during the first weeks. I spent my time teaching classes at the invitation of teachers at the Highland Park Junior High School, decorating my room, writing units on India and South East Asia, and getting acquainted with the staff and the students.

Dr. Duckrey's life testified that cultural integration in American education can be realized. He happened to be a Negro.

—WILLIAM VAN TIL, *professor of education and chairman of the Department of Secondary Education, New York University, and chairman ASCD Commission on Intergroup Education.*

By: Virginia Singh, Luisa G. G.  
and George I. Sánchez, and  
Juliette P. Burstermann

Several factors helped me gain confidence gradually. The courtesy, kindness and thoughtfulness of downtown office personnel like Mr. Edberg, Dr. Conner, Dr. Kearney and others, showed me that they were happy to have me in St. Paul. Mr. Dolen, the Principal, and the faculty of Highland Park Junior High School exhibited interest and happiness at having me as a member of the group.

The students were curious and happy to see me around. In the classroom they anticipated my visits, asked many questions ranging from my use of nail polish to complex world problems. Numerous parents expressed their extreme delight and approval for this enrichment program.

The resource teacher, Miss Ruth Langer, introduced me to many people, accompanied me to various schools on my first visits and went far beyond the call of duty to help me. The principals and faculty members of all the schools have received me gladly. Their cooperation and hospitality have far exceeded my expectations.

I now go to all the junior and senior high schools in the system on the invitation of principals and teachers. I stay in a school from two to four weeks.

The over-all theme is India, my country, but the implications are much broader. My purpose is to help the students see the great apparent variety and the great *underlying unity* in this world.

In the social studies classes I give an impression of my country—its physical characteristics, social customs, religions, government, dress, education, etc. I use slides, movies, pictures, maps, objects and demonstrations. The students enjoy dressing up in the native costumes, seeing the creations of students in art and craft classes in India, discussing the customs of no dating and of arranged marriages, expressing what they thought India was like.

In language classes I discuss Indo-European languages, multiplicity of languages in India, emergence of one national language, and the place of English in the schools in India. In home economics classes I demonstrate cooking in India, home life and the position of women. In art and music classes I share my background. In gym classes I generally teach one or two games from India, demonstrate classical and folk dancing, and try to teach one or two movements to the students. Usually I am also invited to talk in many club and activity groups. Many civic, religious and teachers' organizations have honored me by their invitations for luncheons, dinners, and speeches. Now I feel at home in St. Paul.

—MRS. VIRGINIA THEODORE SINGH is a teacher in the St. Paul Public Schools in Minnesota. (Editor's note: Assistant Superintendent Nolan C. Kearney, St. Paul Public Schools, writes of the author, ". . . she is doing a superlative job. The teachers respect and admire her to a point that is hard to describe. She catches the interest of the students.")

## An Experience in Texas

NEITHER of us recalls being segregated or discriminated against, because of race, in the public schools. Both of us are aware, however, that the segregation of youngsters of Spanish-Mexican descent has been quite common in the past in the schools of the Southwest; and that some recalcitrant school systems there still use one or another subterfuge to discourage and delay the integration of such children. This statement is supported both by the facts set forth in court cases and by the conclusions of informed educators and lawyers. On occasion, in protest to this segregation, we have expressed a view that may be useful to some sectors of the dominant group in the delinquent communities.

First, it should be known that one of us is a first generation United States citizen, and that the other's antecedents have lived within the present boundaries of this country since before Jamestown. It should also be known that neither of us is an "immigrant," since we live in what was once New Spain, the home of our ancestors; and that, as Indo-Hispanic people, we concede priority in belongingness only to the Indian. Further, like the Indians, our people did not ask the United States to come here.

The dominant group in the Southwest has a very special moral obligation to those from whom it wrested control of the land. It also has an unusual opportunity in acculturation with the Spanish-speaking peoples of the area. Therefore, it is truly dismaying to discover school systems so lacking in responsibility and in vision that not only would they discard the Indo-Hispanic cultural heritage but they would ostracize those who truly pioneered this land. The differential treatment given Americans of Spanish-

Mexican backgrounds in some public schools of the southwestern part of the United States represents one of the most foolish manifestations of segregation.

—MRS. SÁNCHEZ is a visiting teacher in the Austin, Texas, Public Schools. GEORGE I. SÁNCHEZ is chairman of the Department of the History and Philosophy of Education at the University of Texas.

### **An Experience in Connecticut**

IN 1958, I completed nine and one-half years of service in the Willimantic State Teachers College. I was appointed as an Assistant Professor in 1948, and my specific assignment was that of supervising teacher in the campus laboratory school. Since 1948 I have continued to serve in this capacity as well as to teach in every other division of the college. All of these experiences have been challenging.

I recall my first contact with the Willimantic State Teachers College. In mid-August of 1948 I had a telephone call from Ervin Sasman, Chairman of Committee on Personnel, requesting that I come to Willimantic for an interview. On leaving for the interview, I did not entertain the thought that because I was a

Negro I might not be favorably received. My approach was positive, unbiased, enthusiastic. The same atmosphere was apparent among my interviewers. We discussed phases of education relative to the vacancy. At the conclusion of the interview I was offered the position.

When I returned to the campus in September to begin my work, most of my colleagues were cordial, but a few found it difficult to hide their uneasiness. As the year progressed, I was invited to some of their homes for teas, meals, discussion groups and parties. In faculty meetings my opinions, like those of my white colleagues, were always entertained and often accepted.

I have enjoyed all phases of my work although at times the situation demanded great courage. My memorable experiences begin to approach the goal of cultural integration.

—JULIETTE PHIFER BURSTERMANN, *associate professor of education at the State Teachers College, Willimantic, Connecticut, is on leave of absence for the Spring Semester 1957-1958, to teach in the Department of Education, Brooklyn College of the City of New York.*

## **Superintendents Speak**

### **An Experience in Arizona**

INTEGRATION of teachers as well as pupils in the Tucson Schools, inaugurated in 1951, has shown encouraging results.

Parents, teachers, principals, boys and girls, PTA, the Tucson Education Association, the local newspapers and radio stations, and many other interested in-

stitutions and organizations have been most cooperative. The School Board, Ministerial Association, and other organizations have helped in educational projects to promote integration.

As a result, our school district, with an enrollment of some 34,000 students, has accepted integration with a minimum of opposition. When the announcement

By: Robert D. Morrow,  
Anthony Marinaccio and  
Bertis E. Capehart

was made in March that pupils and teachers would be integrated in September, there was some consternation, but a good orientation program for both teachers and pupils was initiated with excellent results.

The problems, real or imagined, were faced. Discussion groups, forums, class and community projects all made a positive contribution to the transition from a segregated to an integrated school.

In 1951 great care was exercised in the assignment of Negro staff members. Negro teachers were not assigned to "all-white" schools, but two were assigned to schools with only two and three Negro pupils respectively. Since then, Negro teachers have been placed in all-white schools, a Negro has been appointed as a helping teacher in the Music Department, and we presently have two Negro principals. Probably one of the most popular teachers on our staff of 1400 is a Negro in an all-white school. Indications are that careful selection of an outstanding teacher for a first assignment will cause parents, pleased with their children's progress, to pass the word along to other parents.

When we asked for volunteers to teach in the few schools where the Negro children are in the majority, we had many more volunteers than we could use. Many of them were from the deep South.

White teachers have played no small part in bringing about general acceptance of Negroes in most hotels and restaurants of the community by arranging to take Negro teachers to eating places near their schools for lunch. Only one or two of the city's hotels and motels now have any policy of discrimination when state-wide education conventions are held here, and the Negro members of the Cleveland Indians baseball club—in

Tucson for spring training—can all stay at the same hotel as the white players. All public recreation facilities in Tucson are now non-segregated. These concomitants of integration in Tucson may seem trivial, but we feel they are quite important.

We have felt at all times that all of our teachers, all of our boys and girls, are fellow citizens and fellow Americans. Tucson, by and large, shares this feeling. American Indians, Negro-Americans, Spanish-Americans, Anglo-Americans, Chinese- or Japanese-Americans, and other groups in this border city of the Southwest, with its population of many races, are now just "plain Americans."

—ROBERT D. MORROW *is the superintendent of the Tucson Public Schools in Tucson, Arizona. Robin M. Williams, Jr., and Margaret W. Ryan in Schools in Transition: Community Experiences in Desegregation comment on the skill and integrity shown by administration in the Tucson transition.*

### **An Experience in Missouri**

THE integration of Negro and white students in Mexico, Missouri, was discussed broadly immediately following the first Supreme Court decision. Comments were made that there would be killings, fights. It was said that integration couldn't happen in Mexico because Mexico was one of the communities which had had a comparatively recent Negro lynching.

Before the Board of Education discussed integrating the two groups, the problem was presented to many civic groups in the community by way of after-dinner speeches, discussions, etc. Then meetings were held with leaders of both the white and the colored groups in order that there be concerted leadership on

both sides. After general agreement was had from the standpoint of the leadership in the community, the problem was presented to the Board of Education with recommendations for approving the integration of Negroes and whites in the high school the first year (1954-55); integrating the elementary children the following year; and the teaching staff the third year. The Board of Education approved of this program unanimously, and took the first step immediately.

Following publicity given to this decision, there was much discussion among a few rabble-rousers in the community. Occasionally the superintendent was stopped on the street or received an anonymous abusive phone call.

These were trivial and minor incidents. No major incidents took place. The superintendent then had meetings with the parents and the children in the Negro high school previous to the opening of the fall term to prepare them for the first few days of integration. Both parents and children exhibited much fear about going to Mexico High School.

They "let their hair down" and discussed their fears very freely. The parents indicated several kinds of fear. For example, one parent said, "They will beat up my boy." Another said, "My child won't like the food served in the cafeteria." Another one said, "Our children can't do as well in school, and will fail."

Much discussion was had concerning the method of approaching Mexico High School—the first day especially. The youngsters were told not to go "en masse," but rather to go in naturally small groups as they would if they were still going to the Negro school.

The youngsters took their places in the classrooms and were invited by white boys and girls to sit next to them. White

boys and girls offered their assistance to Negro children when it came to opening lockers, finding rooms and things of that sort. Negro children were invited to sit next to white children in the cafeteria. Several Negro boys played exceptional football and basketball the following season.

Of course, there were still some rumblings in the community that fall—among the grandparents of the white children in the community. These rumblings faded, however, when a group of white children from Mexico High School appeared in the superintendent's office voluntarily one day. One of the comments the white student committee made was this: "We are doing very well and are very pleased to help the Negro kids. There hasn't been a single incident. If our grandparents would only keep quiet, we feel certain that everything would go well."

The new superintendent in Mexico, Missouri, tells me that the situation at Mexico High School has always been wholesome in regard to integration.

—ANTHONY MARINACCIO *was superintendent of schools in Mexico, Missouri. He is now superintendent of schools of a larger school system, Kankakee, Illinois.*

### **An Experience in Tennessee**

SINCE September 1955, the Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Public Schools have been operating as a desegregated school system—pupils and teachers alike. Contrary to early expressions of fear, the integrating of the teaching staff did not develop into a major problem. Elsewhere this problem had become a greater source of controversy. "The pupils won't object," it was stated, "but the parents in the community might." That such fears did not materialize at Oak Ridge is a tribute to the teachers and administra-

tors of both races. Its success also points up the decisive importance of sound policies and actions of school officials in carrying out the desegregation order.

In announcing the desegregation action, the superintendent, with reference to integrating the teaching staff, stated:

Under an integrated school system, there should be no emphasis on the race of the teacher, just as there should be no emphasis on the race of the student. A policy of merit should apply. This means that personnel should be hired, assigned, and promoted on the basis of qualification alone without regard to race.

The decision to employ at least one Negro teacher at the Oak Ridge High School during the transition period was a deliberate one. In this instance, Negro children were entering a white high school as a decided minority—three percent of the total enrollment. Three years of operating with an integrated staff have proved the wisdom of this decision. It has helped to establish a relationship between the school and the community and to give a feeling of security to all children. A mixed staff has aided everyone in thinking of the school without racial designation.

This is not to say there were no prob-

lems. Early in the school year a pro-segregation group at the state level tried unsuccessfully to have the Anderson County School Board (which operates the schools for the Federal Government) fire the superintendent and an integrated teacher. One ardent segregationist had his son take pictures of the integrated teacher's classroom to "prove" untidiness—as if color is, or race could be, a factor in good housekeeping!

"But Oak Ridge is different," it is said. "Everything is operated by the Federal Government. It would do no good to object."

But is Oak Ridge different—in this age of a mobile population? Segregation is an American problem but probably nowhere is this anachronism of black versus white more apparent than in Oak Ridge, the city where the atom was split, now much concerned with the adaptation of nuclear energy for peaceful uses.

—BERTIS E. CAPEHART *was superintendent of schools in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He is now associate director of the Education Department of Hill and Knowlton which supplies public relations counsel to industrial concerns on services to schools.*

## Supervisors Speak

### An Experience in Ohio

THE Cincinnati Public School system has made strides in its program for the integration of school faculties. At this writing 19 elementary and 6 secondary schools have integrated staffs.

During the school year of 1943-44

Cincinnati integrated the faculty of one small elementary school. In 1948 it was my pleasure to be assigned as assistant principal to the second school in Cincinnati to have an integrated staff. This school was a large elementary school with a pupil enrollment of over 1000 Negro and white pupils. Most of the 30

By: Helen Yeager, Robert F. Gwilliam, Lawrence M. Kasdon, Morton J. Sobel and Mrs. Albert L. Brown, and Mildred Biddick

faculty members were new to the school as were the principal and I.

Many of the things which were planned so carefully may seem relatively insignificant in the light of present-day advances, but in my own thinking they contributed to a great extent to the success which the program has met.

During the summer of 1948 the newly appointed principal talked with many of the small shopkeepers in the community, informed them of the change, and discussed with them the value of integration. He talked with the president of the newly organized Parent-Teacher Association. This parent, who was a Negro, was not too pleased to hear of the integrated staff but agreed to call a meeting of the PTA Board at her home. The principal met with the Board and found them dubious. He put a question to them directly: if they as Negro PTA Board members did not back him, whom could he expect to support the program?

The principal planned carefully for the first faculty meeting on the Saturday morning preceding the opening of school. An envelope of material was provided for each teacher with the individual's name on the cover. These envelopes were arranged alphabetically in the chairs. This procedure necessitated seating the faculty alphabetically and also served to mix Negro and white teachers by chance. At this first meeting each teacher gave his numerical choice concerning his service on three committees. This process enabled each person to serve on the committees in which he was most interested and also provided a natural way for Negro and white teachers to work together on school projects.

Soon after school opened, each committee held its first meeting. The committees chose to meet at noon rather than remain after school. Since the school

had no lunchroom, this arrangement meant that the committees lunched together and at their first meeting elected a chairman and a recorder.

The first social affair was a Christmas faculty party at the school at which the faculty were guests of the principal and his wife. By this time Negro and white faculty members had had many opportunities to work and meet together, to get to know each other as persons and to respect each one for his particular contribution to the work of the school.

In looking back upon this experience it seems to me that several factors played a role in the integration of this school faculty. Since the program for faculty integration was still in its infancy in Cincinnati in 1948, no traditions had been set and no guideposts established. This enabled the staff to work out its program as it saw fit for this particular school. Another factor was the unusual sensitivity of the principal toward the feelings of the pupils, the staff and the community. He seemed to assume the attitude of "Here is a task to be done. It has been assigned to us to do it. We will all do our best to accomplish it." Because his leadership bespoke this attitude, it was reflected in that of the staff. A professional attitude toward the work plus the strong personal relationships which developed gave strength and vitality to the program of this school and to the entire program of integration in the Cincinnati schools.

—HELEN YEAGER, *formerly assistant principal in the Dyer School of which she writes, is now supervisor of social studies in the Cincinnati Public Schools, Cincinnati, Ohio.*

### **An Experience in Utah**

WHILE conducting a study of relationships between teacher attitudes and

the social climate of classrooms with respect to the acceptance of a Navajo Indian minority, I enjoyed an experience that proved to be an object lesson in principles of both racial integration and good supervision.

The study was conducted in the Spring of 1957 in a school district in southern Utah into which 120 Navajo children had been introduced under the sponsorship of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Bordertown Dormitory program. While making a preliminary survey of the classrooms involved, I observed one situation in which the teacher had separate reading groups for the Indian pupils. My reaction was one of disapproval and I fully expected to find, upon further investigation, evidence of disunity between the majority and minority groups in this classroom.

However, the use of sociometric devices, repeated observation, and the analysis of anecdotal records kept by the teacher indicated that this particular classroom had one of the best social climates for acceptance of a minority group of any of the 26 classrooms studied. Exceptional gains were made in sociometric status of the Indian children over a period of four months. The following anecdote by the teacher is indicative of the kind of activity we eventually learned to expect to see when we visited her class:

"The white children were interested in knowing what the Navajo children were saying when they were speaking their language. The Navajo boys and girls collected pictures of familiar objects. They labeled them in Navajo. The white children labeled them in English."

She also explained that she had separated her reading groups because the white children had begun to make fun of the pronunciation of the Navajo chil-

dren and because their painful slowness was the cause of some resentment. By grouping flexibly to remove sources of irritation and by placing a value on the cultural contributions of the minority group, this teacher was apparently effective in promoting good relationships between the two groups in her classroom.

—ROBERT F. GWILLIAM *works in Indian Education at Brigham Young University, in Provo, Utah.*

### **An Experience in Hawaii**

IN Hawaii, the common schools, established over a century ago for Hawaiian children, developed into the public school system of today. To the work of educating these native children of a pre-literate folk society was soon added the task of educating the children of many Oriental immigrants. Because of the linguistic, cultural and class differences separating these children from those of the middle and upper class Caucasians, the latter attended primarily private schools.

Since the 1920's the proportion of Caucasian children attending public schools has risen. The proportion of middle and upper class non-Caucasian children in private schools has risen. Thus, a process of racial integration has been taking place gradually in both public and private schools.

The development of integrated public schools in a new suburban community on the growing fringe of metropolitan Honolulu is part of the process of integration. At the end of World War II, the area lay on the edge of the city and by gentlemen's agreement was restricted to upper middle class Caucasians, locally termed Haole. (The term "Haole" originally applied to *all* foreigners, now applies to Caucasians of middle to upper

status. Portuguese, having come in as a working class, are still not fully included in this category.) Adjacent to this urban outpost were farms tilled by Japanese farmers.

As the city expanded, some of the farms were subdivided in 1950 to provide sites for 96 additional homes. It was understood that the farmers who had been displaced, or members of their immediate families, would be permitted to build homes in this new subdivision. Four of the Japanese families chose to do so. The remainder of the homes were built by Caucasians. Additional subdivisions were developed from other farms in quite rapid order and members of all races were allowed to build. On the whole, however, the community has remained essentially Haole.

Until 1954 there were no schools in this area and most of the Caucasian residents followed the tradition of sending their children to private schools. With the continued rapid expansion of the community, a public school was planned and many members of the community participated in its planning. Interest in the local elementary school appears to mark the beginning of attendance in a public school by a large number of children from this area. Children of all races attend and their parents actively participate in the PTA.

With the current announcement of a projected high school in this community, a citizens' advisory committee was formed. The members were appointed without reference to race. Sizable audiences attend committee meetings. From the lively discussions, it appears that many members of the community are now interested in sending their children to the new public high school.

It is the writer's opinion that *one* of the basic reasons that integration is taking

place in the schools of this community is that there is broad community participation in planning.

—LAWRENCE M. KASDON is consultant in language arts for the Territory of Hawaii, Honolulu, T. H.

## An Experience in Michigan

EARLY in 1955, a Human Relations Workshop was added to the Inkster, Michigan, Adult Education Program. By the end of the third Workshop in 1957, almost 100 teachers, principals, school administrators, PTA leaders, librarians and community leaders had completed a ten week series of two-hour sessions devoted entirely to intergroup relations.

Inkster is a community with a bi-racial population which, in 1955, was geographically, economically, educationally and socially arranged on a rigidly segregated pattern. Negro and white residents were about equal numerically. Because of discriminatory practices in the hiring of teachers in other school systems, the school board has many excellent Negro applicants each year. Though the school system is under-financed, the caliber of the teaching staff has been at a high level, with a predominance of Negroes being employed. The schools were, in 1955, racially homogeneous, with some integration at the faculty level.

The usual small fee for most adult education courses was charged workshop participants. Many of them came on scholarships provided by one of the four civic associations in the community or by churches, social clubs, businessmen and others. The Board of Education gave teacher-tenure credit for the class and about one-third of the participants were either teachers or school administrators. Sessions included the areas of discrimina-

tory practices in the United States, the causes of prejudice, the "Rumor Clinic," roleplaying demonstrations, inter-religious relations, cultural pattern differences, socioeconomic concerns in intergroup relations and others. Some original research was conducted by participants on the history of the establishment and growth of the community, on discriminatory practices in the town, school patterns in terms of intergroup relations, and so on.

At the conclusion of the workshop, each scholarship participant returned to the group which had sent him and reported on the project. There were strong feelings that the program ought not cease at the end of each ten-week session and the Inkster Council on Human Relations was formed. This was later expanded to include representation from Dearborn, a nearby community with no Negro residents, and a series of projects, programs and surveys was commenced.

Some of the schools have developed interracial faculties since the first workshop. Some white teachers and a few white children are now in the predominantly Negro high school and the rate of integration appears to be somewhat accelerated.

Workshop participants who are active in the Human Relations Council are teachers, parents or community leaders who stand solidly for integration and have done much to avert potential tension situations which, on occasion, previously did occur. Obviously, not all of the problems have been "solved." However, a common meeting ground with a concept of equal social status and contact on concerns of common interest has been established. It seems likely that the workshop played an important role.

—MORTON J. SOBEL is *Michigan Regional Director of the Anti-Defamation*

*League of B'nai B'rith, and* MRS. ALBERT L. BROWN is *Adult Education Director of the Inkster Public Schools, Inkster, Michigan.*

### **An Experience in Colorado**

AN attractive Negro mother entered her six-year-old daughter at our brand-new school, in a fast growing middle class neighborhood. At the same time, she registered her three-year-old for preschool and joined the mothers' discussion group. Since Mrs. Greenwood had been a Denver teacher before her marriage, she offered to serve as a substitute teacher.

What would the attitude of the community be? There were only three Negro families represented in the school so it seemed wise to find out before asking for Mrs. Greenwood as a substitute teacher.

By the end of the year Mrs. Greenwood had made a place for herself in the preschool mothers' discussion group by her thoughtful participation. In her daughter's classroom she had helped out by teaching some of the first grade songs which had presented a problem to the new teacher. Everyone seemed to appreciate her help.

Another baby delayed Mrs. Greenwood's actual service as a substitute teacher, but when she began her first day as a substitute, the usual introduction started the class off naturally. To visiting parents the teacher's absence seemed explanation enough. When the kindergarten teacher was out for a month's illness, parents and children considered our school lucky because we were able to have Mrs. Greenwood carry on in her quiet, relaxed way.

During that year and the next Mrs. Greenwood substituted a total of 75 days for our primary teachers. Teachers

who were ill were always glad when we were able to get Mrs. Greenwood. Even the children asked to have her when their own teacher was to be away.

A chance remark started the exploration of the possibility of having Mrs. Greenwood as a permanent teacher. She was interested and the teachers heartily approved the idea. The reaction of the first grade teachers was particularly important because one of them would share a room with her on our double-session schedule. Mrs. Greenwood had been appointed chairman of one of the PTA committees and was highly regarded by the officers. They approved of our request to have her as a regular teacher in our school.

In September, when two first-graders, who didn't want to come to school, happened to be in Mrs. Greenwood's room, it was probably natural that we feared it was because their teacher was a Negro. In neither case was there the slightest indication that race was a factor in the situation. In each case the parents conferred with both of us and cooperated wholeheartedly in helping their children adjust to school and to first grade. We learned how easy it is, because of our own concern, to assume that a cause exists which is not present.

By the following fall I had three parental requests for a particular teacher and all asked for Mrs. Greenwood. That is not to say that we do not occasionally have an incident of name-calling among children.

Soon she was "Marie" to all of our faculty, and her husband and children

were members of our faculty family. Once when Marie was leading the singing of old songs at a picnic, the group moved into Stephen Foster's songs. Not a flicker of an eyelash indicated any feeling about the words as Marie continued singing. Perhaps no one else felt any qualms.

Integration with the faculty seemed easy and complete until planning for Brotherhood Week came along. The planning committee raised the question: Would we feel free in this discussion with Marie present? Yet she was the one who, by her own emotional maturity, set us free and provided an enriching experience for all of us as she told us questions the children asked and her replies to them. In her replies we found answers to our own questions.

If this sounds like a success story, it is. The fortunate combination of a competent teacher and a mature person; accepting attitudes on the part of the persons involved; the fact that the request came from the grassroots rather than the superintendent; and "right" timing resulted in natural integration.

Since Marie joined our staff we have had a teacher of Japanese ancestry from Hawaii, a Negro psychologist, a Negro recreation worker and have made a request for a teacher with a Spanish cultural background. We covet for ourselves and our children the chance to know different kinds of people.

—MILDRED BIDDICK is principal of Jesse H. Newlon School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado.

## Curriculum Workers Speak

By: Frank M. Sskwor,  
William H. Bristow and Dina M.  
Bleich, Willard B. Spalding,  
and James H. Tipton

### An Experience in Missouri

A NUMBER of good procedures in integrating teaching staff were developed in St. Louis. Some of these were:

1. The total school personnel were desegregated at the same time that the pupils were assigned to desegregated schools. In almost every instance, the incoming child then felt some security.

2. Some schools where large numbers of both races formed the new teaching staff had a faculty picture taken, placed on the bulletin board, with the names appended from left to right by rows. This speeded acquaintanceship.

3. Careful selection of well-qualified teachers with known intergroup orientation gave the early stages of the desegregation program the maximum opportunity for success.

4. A firm central administrative policy made principals primarily responsible for the success of desegregation in their schools. Agitators living outside a school district were treated as trespassers if they disturbed that school.

5. Many plans of faculty integration were used, ranging from informal coffee sessions before faculty meetings to assignment of both racial groups to the same committee, providing an opportunity to work together and become acquainted.

Some doubtful outcomes resulted from doing too little. When faculty meetings were reduced to an absolute minimum, no social gatherings encouraged, and no committees formed, the teachers of each group remained strangers to each other.

Little opportunity was offered for sharing of pupil information and teacher experiences.

Doubtful outcomes may also result from doing too much. Compulsory faculty mixing by urging all to have lunch together upset a lone Negro teacher's plans to study for an advanced course during lunch time. Some white teachers were unhappy because they could no longer eat in a nearby cafeteria which did not welcome Negroes.

Such instances were few. The great majority of schools used one or more of the successful procedures listed above.

—FRANK M. SSKWOR is consultant in human relations, Harris Teachers College, St. Louis, Missouri. He was an active participant in preparation for and achievement of desegregation of St. Louis Public Schools.

### An Experience in New York

ONE APPROACH to the problem of cultural integration in the New York City schools was the organization of a series of 36 mental hygiene seminar sessions by the Bureau of Curriculum Research. These sessions were made possible through funds allocated by the New York State Mental Health Commission.

At each session an outstanding psychiatrist, psychologist, sociologist, or specialist in a subject field, served as consultant. Participants included principals and assistant principals in elementary and junior high schools, high school chairmen, supervisors of community educa-

tion, remedial reading teachers, curriculum assistants, and staff members of the Bureau of Curriculum Research. A total of 450 persons attended one or more sessions.

Most of the sessions were devoted to mental hygiene problems related to cultural integration. A listing of some of the topics reveals the extent: "Problems of Learning in the Junior High Schools," "Education for Self-Understanding," "Remedial Reading in the Elementary Schools," "Teaching Emotionally Disturbed Children," "Problems in Community Education," "Problems of Population Shifts," "Problems of Special Service Schools." Sessions were conducted at the Bureau of Curriculum Research and in districts that highlighted the problems of population shifts, the emotionally disturbed child, the special service school.

The seminar on "Mental Hygiene Problems in Special Service Schools" may serve as an example of the format of a session:

Twenty-five assistant principals were invited to two all-day sessions. They were supervisors in schools designated as "special service"; namely, those that had recently received an additional assistant principal, additional personnel for remedial reading and for help with the non-English speaking child, and additional teachers for the reduction of class size. Consultant at the first session was Kenneth B. Clark, associate professor of psychology at City College; at the second, Dan W. Dodson, professor of education at New York University.

Some questions which were discussed were: What are some basic factors which influence the relations of people with each other? What are some psychological and sociological factors that impede learning? Can we evolve a set of "principles of integration" that might mini-

mize conflict? In the curriculum, what are the values and what are the dangers of stressing the contributions of various minority groups?

The participants concluded that the culturally deprived youngsters in the "special service" schools would benefit from contact with other ethnic groups and that there might be greater opportunity for educational stimulation in heterogeneous racial grouping.

—WILLIAM H. BRISTOW is the director of the Bureau of Curriculum Research and DINA M. BLEICH is Junior High School curriculum coordinator for the Bureau in the New York City Public Schools, New York.

### An Experience in Oregon

THE first problem faced by a college which desires to provide the opportunity for its students to enjoy the advantages of an integrated faculty is created by fair employment practice laws in various states. Agencies to which one writes to secure the names of prospective faculty members are unwilling to provide data about race, religion, or national origin. Thus, most of the usual sources of faculty supply are closed.

The second problem, which arises once one has located a prospect, is that of evaluating his training. If he is an immigrant, it is necessary to discover the nature of the content of the courses which he has studied and so determine the extent to which he is ready for the particular task at hand. If he is Negro, advanced education at a Northern college is essential, for most Southern colleges for Negroes have not been maintained at a level which produces adequately prepared graduates.

No other problems have come to my attention. Faculty and students accept

members from minority groups without question.

—WILLARD B. SPALDING is dean of the faculty at Portland State College, Portland, Oregon. The faculty of the college is integrated, despite the problems cited by Dean Spalding.

### An Experience in Connecticut

TODAY, 1958, sixty of Connecticut's 159 towns employ approximately 450 Negro teachers. The first Negro public school teacher hired, in modern times, was by Hartford in 1925. There has been a rapid increase since the Connecticut Commission on Civil Rights was established in 1947. Connecticut's towns have occasionally shown reluctance in hiring Negro teachers. "Teachers must be active members of their communities, teach Sunday school, visit pupil's homes, and many other things which Negro teachers would find difficult or impossible."

However, no Negro public school teacher, once hired, has been released for unsatisfactory service.

Soon after it was established, the Civil Rights Commission sent a letter to superintendents and boards of education advising them of the new anti-discrimination law. This, along with the increasing shortage of elementary teachers and the improving climate of opinion through much of the country, stimulated steady progress in employment of Negroes as teachers.

Connecticut's Negro teachers have usually been hired first to fill positions in the elementary schools in those sections of the larger cities where substan-

tial numbers of Negro citizens live. They find acceptance later in the secondary schools and in areas with few Negro residents.

Since 1956, no complaints have come to the Commission from Negroes who believed they had been discriminated against in the teaching field. Negro teachers refused employment in one locality usually find a position somewhere else and do not file a complaint.

Some years ago, a complaint was received from a Negro man. A Commission representative interviewed the superintendent, who admitted discrimination. He feared he might lose his job as "many white people would be upset by the hiring of a Negro teacher." The agency representative appeared before the Board, which decided unanimously to employ the teacher. Attitudes of school superintendents are directly related to the decision to hire a Negro teacher for the first time as well as to the ease or difficulty with which the change has been accomplished.

As recently as 1938-39, school superintendents and boards requesting applicants for teaching positions would specifically exclude Catholics and Jews on occasion, never even mentioning Negroes. Today this does not happen and all graduates are employed on merit with no notice taken of group identification.

—JAMES H. TIPTON is associate professor at Willimantic State Teachers College, Willimantic, Connecticut. He is the author of *Community in Crisis*, a full-length case study of the so-called "race strike" in Gary, Indiana, during the nineteen-forties.

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