

Separatism, Segregation, and Integration

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MOST desegregation models are based on the definition of integration labeled "racial balance."¹ The familiar measure is 80-20, 80 percent white and 20 percent black. Racial balance, then, is none other than the restrictive quota system masquerading as a liberator. The process is the distribution and/or dispersal of certain groups by other groups according to the former's percentage of the national population. For a moment, consider the distributed group as B group, and the distributing group as A group. A has power over B.² The problem with racial balance is that B does not participate in the defining, the decision making, or the implementing. B is powerless.

No desegregation model is based on a second definition of integration labeled "open social arrangements," wherein every individual has an opportunity to make a multitude of voluntary contacts with any other human being based only on personal taste, ability, and preference.³ Under such a model every citizen would have the right to live in any house, in any neighborhood, to work on

any job, and to go to any school. In such an "open society" there would be no A group or B group. Why was the open social arrangements definition ignored?

The definition of the problem largely determines the alternatives considered as possible means to solutions. The question is: How is it possible for one to define a problem one way or another, or to decide to answer one point of view or the other, or to embrace one conceptual scheme or another? These issues reach a kind of metaphysical bedrock. For one is asking whether in choosing between alternatives the basis for choice does not itself presuppose a conceptual scheme.

A "Rational" Choice

After the 1954 Supreme Court Decision, most black people (B group) opted for the open social arrangements definition of integration and the liberal whites (A group) opted for the racial balance definition. The inevitable split arose over the divergent interpretations which were only rarely discussed. But why did liberal whites opt for racial balance?

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¹ Oscar Handlin. "The Goals of Integration." In: Talcott Parsons and Kenneth B. Clark, editors. *The Negro American*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965. pp. 659-77.

² Sol Tax. "The Freedom To Make Mistakes." Fred Gearing, Robert McNetting, and Lisa R. Peattie. *Documentary History of the Fox Project*, Exhibit 44. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960. pp. 245-50.

³ Oscar Handlin, *op. cit.*, p. 661.

First, the agitation for integration was often led by liberal whites who found themselves in neighborhoods threatened by black inundation.⁴ The assumption was made that black people were moving into white neighborhoods for the same reasons that white people were moving to the suburbs: better schools and better homes. An arrangement to integrate *all* the schools⁵ could eliminate those moving for better schools, would force white neighborhoods distant from black communities to share the burden of the black blight, and would stall for time until some better solutions could be found, for example, urban renewal, Model Cities Programs, or zoning laws.

Second, the abolition of powerlessness of the B groups necessitates the surrender of A group status. The model or theme which serves as the foundation of Western definitions and alternatives in philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and education is the myth of the white man. The white male model symbolizes a belief in the inherent superiority of all Western European white men. An open society definition would eradicate white supremacy and European superiority (A group status). The option of racial balance has no such requirement. In fact, it reinforces the supremacy, for A has power over B. The choice of racial balance, then, was a rational choice.

Rational man acts for a reason. Four suggested basic social components of that action are: values, norms, the individual's motivation for action, and the situational factors.⁶ The values are the broad-ended goal statements upheld by the rules, laws, regulations, and standards (norms) executed by the individual properly motivated to obedi-

⁴ Robert Crain. *The Politics of School Desegregation*. Chicago: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969. pp. 112-30.

⁵ Gregory Coffin. "Moving Toward Integration." *Illinois Education*, November 1968. See also literature on Evanston, Illinois, school desegregation.

⁶ Neil J. Smelser. *Theory of Collective Behavior*. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc. pp. 24-46. See also: Edward Shils and Talcott Parsons. *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Harper Torchbooks, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1951. pp. 47-189.

ence and conformity by socialization or the provision of skills, knowledge, and information (situational factors). Models or images are both the means of socialization, which defines a person's place in the world, and of social control, which confines one's place in that world.

For example, the values of democracy, love, peace, and brotherhood were supported by the civil rights movement under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.⁷ These human values have been manifest in the black community for some time. They are revealed in the extended black family, through its belief in individualism, its confidence in education, and its faith in Christianity.⁸ But, in its powerlessness, the black family could not make white institutions support these values. It never mobilized its resources adequately to win that control.

Additionally, although democracy, love, peace, and brotherhood are the declared values of the white community, the white family does not support them. Myrdal calls this lack of support "An American Dilemma."⁹ He attributes this failure to the "psychic resistance" of those who need to sustain their belief in white supremacy. But another explanation might be the existence of another value system . . . undeclared. . . . That undeclared value system could well be: male superiority,¹⁰ white supremacy, European superiority,¹¹ and the superiority of people with money.¹² If this is the value system, three B groups emerge: women, non-whites and non-Europeans, and the poor.

⁷ Martin Luther King, Jr. *Where Do We Go From Here: Community or Chaos?* New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967. pp. 1-66.

⁸ Andrew Billingsley. *Black Families in White America*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968.

⁹ Gunnar Myrdal. *An American Dilemma*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1944. pp. 1027-34.

¹⁰ Lionel Tiger. *Men in Groups*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1969.

¹¹ Albert Memmi. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1965. For detailed description, see: Harold Cruse. *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*. New York: Morrow and Company, Inc., 1967.

¹² Ferdinand Lundberg. *The Rich and the Super Rich*. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968.

"Things Fall Apart"

These observations suggest that B groups must go beyond mere analysis of A group studies of B groups. For, if these conditions are "to be turned upside-down," in the words of Fanon,¹³ it must be determined whether or not A groups are capable of changing their behavior. In his most penetrating novel, Chinua Achebe has the hero, Okonkwo, ask a friend, Obierika, "Does the white man understand our customs about land?" Obierika answers:

"The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart."¹⁴

B groups must study A groups and their alien models and images created and superimposed on B group cultures and incorporated into their lives; for these exert some measure of control over the group.

Segregation is such a control: the condition of separatism which occurs when the A group (whites) forces the B group (blacks) to remain apart from the A group. A has power over B. The value is white supremacy; the norm (law) is segregation. Both A and B group members are motivated to conform to the belief in B group inferiority and worthlessness and the fear of A group reprisal by models and images.¹⁵

Separatism is the condition of separation which occurs when B group decides for itself to separate from A group. A is equal to B. The value is usually some aspect of the pursuit of happiness (cultural preservation, a certain way of life, survival, or group mobility). Most previously excluded groups (B groups) attempted to improve their conditions from a separated vantage point, for

¹³ Frantz Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1963. pp. 29-74.

¹⁴ Chinua Achebe. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann, 1958.

¹⁵ Allison Davis, Burleigh and Mary Gardner. *Deep South*. Phoenix Books. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941. pp. 20-24.

example, Amish, Muslims, immigrants, and Catholics.¹⁶

The intransigence of the firmly entrenched A group causes the B group to use the only resource available, people. From the pseudospecies declaration, "We are the chosen people," grounded in religion, a strong group identity specification emerges attached to a territorial imperative.¹⁷ This combination leads to an intense nationalism which transforms itself into a powerful group cohesion and support system projecting a negative identity.¹⁸ The negative identity designates A group as harmful and B group excludes A group, whereupon the need for cooperation is noted within B group. Within the confines of B group, the human values are practiced. B group members choose each other for jobs, services, and support.¹⁹

This model for group mobility developed because the individual mobility model which worked for the A group (Protestant Ethic, Horatio Alger, etc.) failed the B group. Individual mobility models work for members of the "in" group. It is possible that separatism will be necessary as long as A groups have power over B groups. The blind cannot compete with the seeing. They need support. All B groups do. Greeley and Rossi discovered this in their study of Catholic Americans.²⁰

On the other hand, if one believes all

¹⁶ Barbara A. Sizemore. "Separatism: A Reality Approach to Inclusion?" In: Robert L. Green. *Racial Crisis in American Education*. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1969. Chapter 12.

¹⁷ Erik H. Erikson. *Identity, Youth, and Crisis*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1968. See also: Robert Ardrey. *Territorial Imperative*. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1966.

¹⁸ Erik H. Erikson, *ibid.*, pp. 172-76.

¹⁹ Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton. *Black Power*. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, Inc., 1967. See also: Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish of New York City*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1963.

²⁰ Andrew M. Greeley and Peter H. Rossi. *The Education of the Catholic Americans*. National Opinion Research Center Monographs in Social Research. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1966. p. 151.

men are equal under God, desegregation models need practices and policies which support the values manifest in such a belief. Participation in such models must be voluntary and must respect the rights of people to live, work, and go to school anywhere. Therefore, the involvement of all participants in the defining and decision-making process is imperative. Such a model has been conceived by the Chicago Midwest Desegregation Institute.²¹

²¹ Jacob Carruthers. "The Black View of the Workshop." In: *Toward a Model of Relevant In-*

In order to ensure B groups of full, free, and constructive participation in decision making, human values must be supported for liberation and survival if and when A groups refuse to support these human values. To do otherwise would mean to adopt a value system which destroys one's identity and any possibility of true integration. □

clusion. The Midwest Program in School Desegregation and Equal Educational Opportunity. Indianapolis Workshop: A Progress Report. Funded by Grant #OE6-0-8-000365-4515 (036) under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by the U.S. Office of Education, February 1969.

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Harold T. Shafer, Chairman □ Edited by William H. Lucio

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128 pages

NEA Stock Number: 611-17782

\$2.50

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA
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