

The Present Hypocrisy

Thirteen years ago the highest judicial body of our country decreed that schools should be integrated "with all deliberate speed." The Congress, the supreme legislative body has passed two civil rights measures and in other matters has insisted that race or color should not be the basis for determining the use of facilities or the exercise of normal social procedures. No major Presidential candidate in the past twenty-five years has solicited votes on the basis of a segregated society, either explicitly or implicitly. The Executive, Legislative and Judicial bodies of our government and the majority of the electorate have constantly and overwhelmingly pronounced in favor of racial justice. The color of a man's skin should not be the determinant of his character or rights.

The Catholic Bishops of America in their annual pastoral letters over the past twenty years have solemnly condemned racial segregation as immoral. The beloved Pope John, whose voice and presence was welcomed in every heart, likewise reiterated that eternal note of the voice of Christ: "All men are brothers"; "Whatever you do to one of these the least of my brethren you do to me."

Every major religious denomination has declared the evil of segregation as being contrary to the Spirit of the Divine Creator.

The schools of America are as segregated today as they ever were. Our Churches — of every denomination — have at best, a token integration; and that often achieved by authority's threat of sanction. It is the Church members who sign restrictive real estate covenants, who form the country clubs and swimming pools to make sure that "undesirables" are excluded. And a dark skin means that one is undesirable.

There are counties in North Carolina where it is an act of courage for a Negro child to exercise the right of choice in school registration. In one county those Negroes who elected to send their children to previously all white schools found that credit was denied them for necessary farm supplies; this and other pressures forced them to remove their children. In September there were over one hundred Negroes registered in the best schools in the county; by December there were only twelve. AND THERE WAS NO PUBLIC OUTCRY.

The freedom that comes to most citizens without any doubt or question was denied certain citizens because of the color of their skin.

As a Nation and as members of Ecclesiastical Organizations we have proclaimed something that we do not live. And that element of society which is most apt and responsive to reform — the young, the college student — have not been any more decisive in showing a preference for integrity and interior commitment. They conduct their wild shows of independence and revolutionary fervor only until that moment when the sheepskin and lovely wife permit them the security of their segregated suburbs and country clubs.

The inner voice, that prompts our allegiance to moral values, that part of us that determines what we are in God's eyes, that shapes our lives and the structure of society, contradicts the pronouncements of the government we elect and the Faith we profess. If communication is the acknowledged sharing of ideas and values, if knowledge is the conformity of the mind to the reality outside it, then both Church and State in America have not communicated, have given no true knowledge of what racial justice means.

This utter failure is perhaps part of the explanation — although not an excuse — for the carnage of Watts, the hostility of Harlem the lawlessness of Brooklyn. The responsibility of government is a structured and impersonal affair; the failures of law can be corrected by other laws. For the Church the failure is more serious. It calls into question the effectiveness of the witness of the Body of Christ in our time. Our schools, our crowded Churches are evidently no gauge of success. The Bishops in council have prefaced all reform on the basis that the first reform is a change of heart. Changes of that type are hard to verbalize but they can be visible.

In Orange County five white families have elected to send their children to previously all Negro schools. There is evidence that the heart thirsts for change; but it is precious little. Who will bring forth five more thirsting for justice so that perhaps ten just men will save us all?

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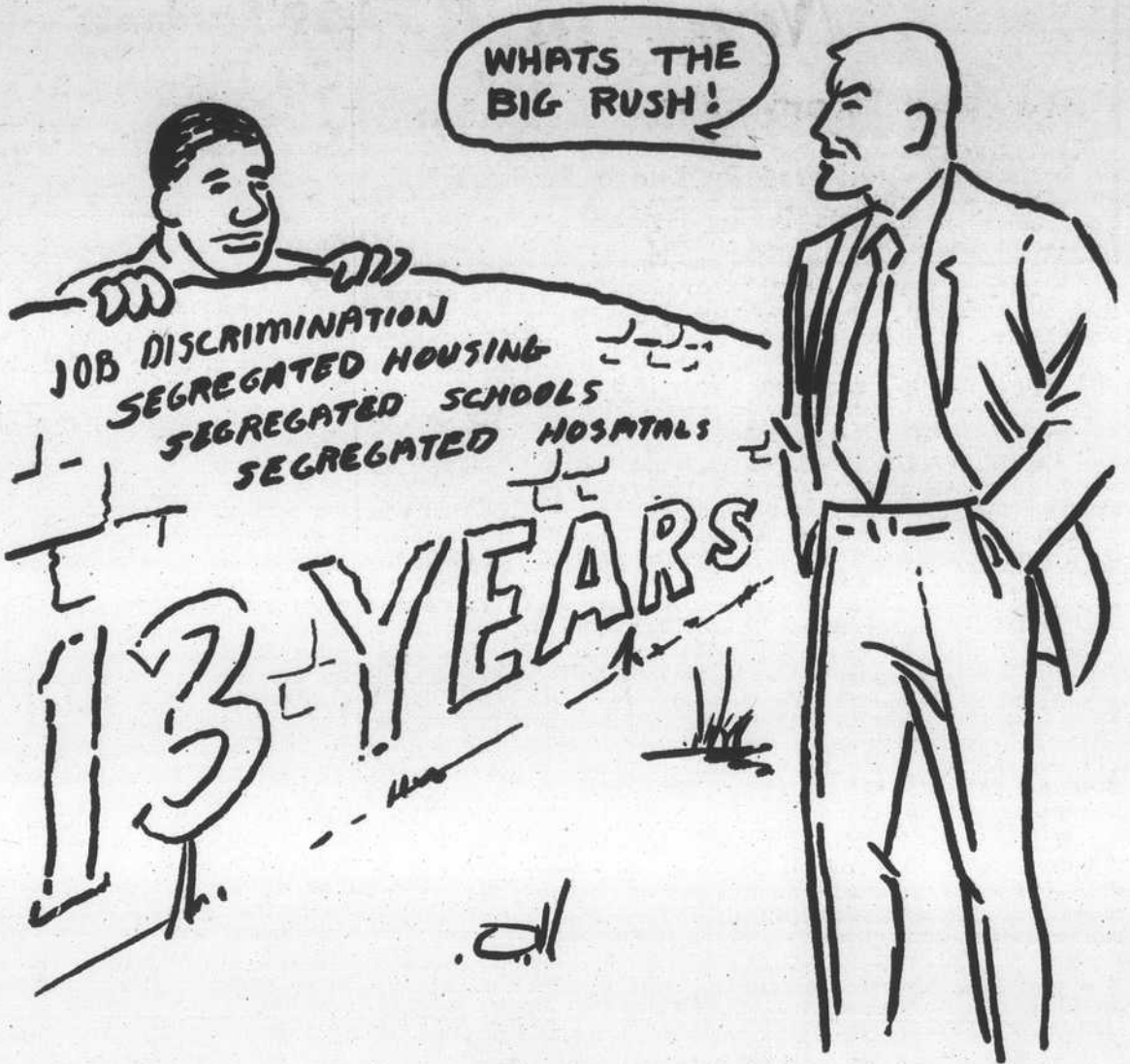
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WE MUST INTEGRATE WITH ALL DELIBERATE SPEED — 'LAW OF THE LAND-1953'

Guidelines on Race

Any human society, if it is to be well-ordered and productive, must lay down as a foundation, this principle, namely, that every human being is a person, that is, his nature is endowed with intelligence and free will. By virtue of this he has rights and duties of his own, flowing directly and simultaneously from his very nature which are therefore, universal, inviolable and inalienable. . . .

The Natural Law also gives man the right to share in the benefits of culture, and therefore the right to a basic education and professional training in keeping with the stage of educational development in the country to which he belongs. . . .

Thus in very many human beings the inferiority complex which endured for hundreds of years is disappearing, while in others there is a fading of the superiority complex which had its roots in social-economic privileges, sex or political standing.

The conviction that all men are equal by reason of their natural dignity has been generally accepted. Hence racial discrimination can no longer be justified in doctrine or in theory.

Pope John XXIII — Pacem in Terris

Since all men possess a rational soul and are created in God's likeness, since they have the same nature and origin, have been redeemed by Christ, and enjoy the same divine calling and destiny, the basic equality of all must receive increasingly greater recognition.

. . . with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language or religion is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent.

The Church Today — II Vatican Council

The past decade has seen a new awareness that religious Faith is barren unless it leads to action—especially on such moral issues as civil rights, the war on poverty, and peace.

Let us be frank about our shortcomings. Let us in all honesty say that some local Churches still closes their doors to many of their brethren, and many more do not speak and act on issues of conscience which arise in their communities.

Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey

Christ sought by precept and example to teach the truth that with God there was to be no dividing wall between Israel and the other nations. . . .

Nor was there to be among Christ's followers any preference of caste or nationality or race or color, for all men are of the blood and in the words of Christ. The elect of God are a universal brotherhood, a new humanity, all one in Christ.

Christ came to this earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness. He laid a foundation for a religion by which Jew and Gentile, black and white,

free and bond, are linked together in one common brotherhood.

No distinction on account of nationality, race or caste, is recognized by God. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption.

Seventh Day Adventist World Conference

The Church or any institution serving humanity, insisting on being neutral and not involved in the anxiety and sorrows of the people, that Church or institution will be ignored by the masses of people and will be forgotten.

Archbishop Robert Lucey — San Antonio

It is assumed that Negro worshippers will be accepted in Churches at anytime, a practice required by the law of the Methodist Church. . . .

Some of our Churches ought now carefully, wisely, creatively follow the example given by a heroic few of our Western Carolina congregations and decide to welcome the qualified Negro Christians into their membership — not ostentatiously, not in patterns of radical and zealous aggression, but quietly, gradually and in a humble Christ-like way.

Methodist Bishop Earl G. Hunt

North Carolina stands on the threshold of an era of unprecedented prosperity in which racial discrimination has no place. In meeting the challenges of the era, we cannot afford the denial of equal educational and employment opportunities to any North Carolinian. We cannot tolerate the high rates of school dropouts, unemployment, and out-migration of skilled persons.

Governor Dan Moore

The Status of the Negro in North Carolina 1959 Statistics

- 70% of Negro families had incomes of less than \$3,000 compared to 29% of the whites. A family with less than this income is considered poverty stricken.
- In the period from 1949 to 1959 Negro income increased but relative to the white income it fell from 48% to 43%. The Negro did not fully share in increased prosperity.
- The unemployment rate among Negroes since 1951 is twice as high as the rate among whites.
- The Negro male with one to three years of college earned less than the white male with only an elementary education.
- The dropout rate in high school among Negroes is 61% compared to 46% of white students.

WHAT CAN I DO?

For information, address:

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