

## A BRIEF HISTORY: SEGREGATION AND EDUCATION

The current difficulties surrounding the enrollment of James H. Meredith at the University of Mississippi have focused popular attention on the broad problem of segregation and education. A brief review of this problem shows that discriminatory practices in Southern education began during the late years of the Reconstruction Period and have been subjected to widely varying court interpretations over the years.

In response to the South's great educational needs at the Civil War's close, widespread effort began to provide both public school and college facilities for white and Negro children. For almost a decade biracial education prevailed in many Southern areas. However, the gradual withdrawal of federal troops, the restoration of conservative government, and the nation's general disinterest brought on the phenomenon of Jim Crowism in education and most other phases of Southern society.

### SEPARATE BUT EQUAL DOCTRINE

A legal basis for segregation was furnished by a series of Supreme Court decisions, culminating in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). According to this decision, separate but equal facilities were pronounced constitutional. Although the case specifically involved segregated public carriers, the precedent established covered all forms of segregation. For over a half century segregation thrived with considerably more emphasis on "separate" than on "equal."

The first major challenge to the Plessy view came in *Gong Lum v. Rice* (1927). In ruling that a child of Chinese ancestry in Mississippi had to attend a non-white school, the Supreme Court reaffirmed its 1896 doctrine.

From the late thirties to 1954, the Supreme Court decided against

## WELCOME FRESHMEN

To the Freshmen, we, together with SGA, would like to extend a most cordial welcome to the Hazleton Campus. It is our hope that you will come to feel yourselves an integral part of our campus.

Not only do we wish you success in your academic pursuits, but also we hope you will be able to participate in all our cultural, athletic, and social activities. This is the one sure way to receive the maximum benefit from your years in college.

To the Sophomores, we would like to wish continued success in the attainment of your goals. We are happy to see you all back for another year. Your active participation this year again will be appreciated by all Campus societies and activities and will do much towards making this an enjoyable and successful year.

A reminder to all: Let's all try to keep our Cafeteria clean so that we can be proud of our new Student Union Building inside as well as out.

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several states in cases involving facilities. The separation view was still maintained. In *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938), the court held that Missouri had to establish a separate law school rather than pay costs for Negroes at out-of-state schools.

### RECENT DECISIONS

In *Sipuel v. Board of Regents* (1948) and *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), Negro admissions were ordered at the Universities of Oklahoma and Texas where no "equal" Negro law schools existed. Physical segregation within a classroom was declared illegal in *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents* (1950).

### THE 1959 DECISION

The separate but equal doctrine was finally discarded in the famous 1954 desegregation decision. In *Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka et al.* the Supreme Court ruled that separate facilities were "inherently unequal" and deprivations of the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection of the law. Since the Fourteenth Amendment applied only to states, a separate decision, *Bolling v. Sharpe* (1954), prohibited segregation in District of Columbia schools under the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment.

The history of school desegregation since 1954 has been one of contrasts. While slow and numerically small, important steps toward compliance have been taken in many Southern areas. However, efforts to obstruct desegregation have successfully held back widespread integration, especially in Mississippi, Alabama, and South Carolina where there is no integration other than Meredith.

Through pupil placement laws, school-closing laws, private school plans, anti-barratry regulations, and occasional violence, Southern governments have restricted integration to only ten thousand out of a total Negro school-age population of nearly three million.

The integration of state-involved colleges and universities has followed a path as tortuous as that of the public schools. After the triumph of mob rule at the University of Alabama in the Autherine Lucy case (1956), the Supreme Court decisions in *Pennsylvania v. City Trusts of Philadelphia* (1957) and *Aaron v. Cooper* (1958) declared any state participation in racial discrimination in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. Compliance has been achieved in several Southern institutions, e. g., the University of Georgia, but determined opposition has been shown in many areas, e. g., the University of Mississippi.

The future of integrated educational facilities is clouded by the frequent appearance of stormy controversy, but the ultimate outcome cannot be in doubt. Ironically, the one dissenting judge in the Plessy decision made comments appropriate for today's situation. "Our Constitution is color-blind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. The arbitrary separation of citizens, on the basis of race, . . . is a badge of servitude wholly inconsistent with civil freedom and equality before the law. It cannot be justified upon any legal grounds."

## ORIENTATION PROGRAM INTRODUCES FRESHMEN TO P.S.U. CAMPUS LIFE

Freshman orientation week opened Monday, September 17, at 1 o'clock in the Student Union Building. Mr. John Longo, chairman of the faculty, greeted the new freshmen and later introduced the rest of the faculty. Director of the Hazleton Campus, Mr. Frank Kostos, also welcomed the students.

On Tuesday, the freshmen heard various lectures by members of the faculty concerning Senate Regulations, bookstore procedures, study techniques, and what to expect from classes. The role of the advisor was also explained, and,

later in the day, the students met with their advisors.

Student Personnel Forms were filled out on Wednesday and registration procedures were explained by Mr. William Schneider, Assistant Director. That afternoon the Student Government Association gave the freshmen an idea of the Student Activities Program at the Hazleton Campus and explained the regulations of Customs Week.

Registration of freshmen finally took place on Thursday, Sept. 20, and all students returned the following Monday for the first day of classes.