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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND COMMUNITY CONFLICT-- AN ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOR AS RELATED TO COMMUNITY CONFLICT

By

R. William Holland

This dissertation concerns itself with the politics of school desegregation in two mid-Michigan cities. Specifically it is concerned with the following questions: what effect does black division over the desirability have on the conflict?; and why do some communities have relatively little conflict over school desegregation issues while others seem to have a great deal?

To answer these questions, I undertook an extensive review of the literature. Though I found several problems with the existing literature on school desegregation, my study is primarily concerned with two of these. First, the literature leaves open the question as to the relationship between the local political structure and the conflict which takes place within. It is my contention that the way in which the political system is mobilized has a decisive effect on the desegregation controversy. Political systems generally define the probabilities that certain kinds of people will be recruited into political life. But not only

does the mobilization of a given political system have implications for individuals, but also for the community as a whole. The conflict which takes place in the political system is structured by that system. Furthermore, some systems are structured such that conflict is encouraged more than in other systems. Looking at school desegregation in this way aids us in explaining why some of the conflicts appear to be more intense and disruptive of community life than others.

Secondly, I have been concerned with the existence of black division over school desegregation. The existence of such a factor had some obvious effect on both opponents of integration as well as those groups who favor ending segregation.

In both communities, blacks were divided over the issue. The consequence of this was a change in the interaction patterns of the disputants as well as the formation of a black-white coalition between the segregationists. While blacks were divided in both communities, only in one did the conflict assume a rancorous dimension. This is explained, in part, by the relative degree to which the political systems were opened or closed. The opened system is one that encourages citizen participation and is the one which experienced the most rancor.

The idea of rancor in political systems is an old one which goes back at least to the Federalist Papers. James Madison noted that "air is to fire as freedom is to

faction." Madison saw this as the precipitating factor in the age old problem of stability for democratic regimes.

In the "opened" community the school board was subjected to numerous political pressures which disrupted community life to the extent that the board was completely incapacitated. Neither the segregationists nor the integrationists were able to implement their plan. In the "closed" community the school board was fairly well insulated from political pressures and was able to follow its own collective mind on desegregation.

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AN ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOR
AS RELATED TO COMMUNITY CONFLICT

By

R. William Holland

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

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Copyright by
R. WILLIAM HOLLAND

1971

This is dedicated to

Herb

Bob

Edna

And most importantly--to the memory of my brother Rodney

PREFACE

As a graduate student at Michigan State, I noticed that in volume after volume lengthy testimonies to "all those who helped in the preparation of this project." I quickly developed a disdain for such matters and vowed never to fall victim to this tradition. I humbly acknowledge that my iconoclasm has dissipated under the weight of debt. So here begins the long list of people to whom I owe so much but can never repay.

To Dr. Robert Melson of Michigan State I owe a sincere thanks for "keeping the faith" as it were and refusing to allow me to get bogged down in my own inertia. To Dr. Biran Downes of Michigan State I owe a sincere thanks for taking over my dissertation in mid-stream and weathering the political storms that developed. I also wish to thank Dr. Charles Press (Department chairman) for making it his own personal business for seeing to it that my work was expedited in every way possible.

Somewhere in the crowd, there always seems to be a wife who either helps or hinders a great deal. My wife helped tremendously. She read parts of the manuscript and offered constructive criticism. But even more important than that, this beautiful lady allowed me, with no complaint, to spend long hours away from home and child, to finish this task. She further understood that I owed so many debts,

that my first book rather than this dissertation should be dedicated to her. Patience is a virtue and my wife is a virtuous woman.

Then there are my parents. In today's times, having great parents who can walk the rather fine line between pushing their son to go on and yet not nag, is rare indeed. They have always been there when I needed them and I have needed them many times.

Finally, there is Dr. Herbert Garfinkel. He has been my academic father. What I owe him in terms of my own academic maturity simply cannot be put into words. I think he understands. Thank you.

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CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

The subject of my study is the politics of school desegregation in two mid-Michigan cities. In this chapter, I shall be attempting to perform three tasks. First, there seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding concerning the legal status of the issue as established in 1954 with *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. The lay understanding of this case, too frequently, has missed the issues that were settled. Perhaps more important is the fact that such an understanding may be insensitive to the issues that were not settled. It is important to understand the legal aspects of the school desegregation problems in this country because the legal parameters define the contextual frame of the issue today. A misunderstanding of this context will likely leave one confused. Therefore, I shall attempt to clarify the legal status of the school desegregation issue.

My second task will be to review some of the more recent literature on the politics of school desegregation, with an eye toward systematizing the various contributions of that literature toward a more complete understanding of the issue as it has been fought out in local political arenas.

Lastly, I shall point to some of the theoretical and interpretative gaps in the literature in an attempt to propose a way in which the information already available can be interpreted in more meaningful ways.

THE LEGAL STATUS OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

On May 17, 1954 the Supreme Court of the United States handed down one of its most controversial decisions. It ruled that "separate but equal has no place." The "Southern Manifesto" issued by Senator J. W. Fullbright and his colleagues is indicative of the misunderstanding of the Court decision. They went on record as "commending the motives of those States which have declared the intention to resist forced integration by any lawful means."¹

A careful reading of the Brown decision clearly shows that the Court was not willing to go as far as "demanding integration." It only ruled on the issue of whether or not segregation as required by law was a violation of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution and whether or not separate but equal was, in fact, inherently unequal. What was unusual about the decision was that it addressed itself to issues that were purposely ignored in 1896 with Plessy v. Ferguson, but ignored the issues that the Plessy case took up.

Let me put the matter differently. The previous rule concerning segregation came to be known as "separate but equal." Erroneously, some scholars of contemporary school desegregation issues have attributed that rule to

the decision given in the Plessy case. Homer Plessy, one-eighth Negro and seven-eighths white, was brought to court when he refused to ride in the section of a coach reserved for blacks, as was required by Louisiana state law. Plessy went to court on the grounds that these rules violated the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States. Plessy further argued that state-enforced segregation stamped Negroes with a badge of inferiority.²

Now there were two issues before the Court in the case. The first was the meaning of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, and the second concerned itself with whether or not separation of the races meant or implied inferiority of one race. The 1896 Court responded by upholding the Louisiana law without explicitly arguing that "separate but equal" must be enforced. They evaluated the case before them on the grounds of whether or not the law in question was a reasonable exercise of state power.³ The Court did not argue that the state "should" separate the races, rather the decision was that the state "could" pass such laws in that they were consistent with the promotion of the comfort of the citizens of the state. Part of the accompanying opinion deserves quoting:

The object of the (Fourteenth) Amendment was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law, but in the nature of things it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social as distinguished from political equality or a

commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either . . . Every exercise of the police power must be reasonable, and extend only to such laws as are enacted in good faith for the promotion of the public good, and not for the annoyance or oppression of a particular class.

So far, then, as a conflict with the Fourteenth is concerned as the case reduces itself to the question of whether the statute of Louisiana is a reasonable regulation, and with respect to this there must necessarily be a large discretion on the part of the legislature. In determining the question of reasonableness it is at liberty to act with reference to the established usages, customs and traditions of the people, and with a view to the promotion of their comfort and the preservation of the public peace and good order.⁴

In the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* it is obvious that the Court upheld the concept of separate but equal, but it did so indirectly. The Court was not willing to rule on the concept per se. Instead, the Court addressed itself to the question as to whether or not such statutes were a reasonable exercise of power by state legislatures. Hence, the question as to the effects of the separate but equal doctrine on the inferiority of one race vis a vis another was never approached.

The *Brown* case in 1954 presented the Court with three alternatives. The Court obviously could have decided that the *Plessy* decision was the authoritative ruling on the issue. In this event the principle of stare decisis would have dictated the outcome. The alternative to a stare decisis ruling would have been for the Court to overturn the *Plessy* decision and declare that the 1896 Court was in error in its ruling. This approach has never been particularly appealing to the Court because

of its tendency to weaken its public image. The third alternative involved confronting the issue that the 1896 Court chose to ignore, the effects of laws requiring a separation of the races. The authors of the "Southern Manifesto" argued that:

. . . the decision of the Supreme Court in the school cases [is] a clear abuse of judicial power. It climaxes a trend in the Federal judiciary undertaking to legislate, in derogation of the authority of Congress, and to encroach upon the reserved rights of the States and the people.⁵

The Court, having rejected the use of stare decisis, set out to establish a new standard rather than applying an old one. Such an application necessarily involves a legislative rather than a judicial decision. "When the Court formulates a constitutional standard, the focus of the inquiry becomes not what judgment is permissible, but what judgment is sound."⁶ Clearly, the Court was doing nothing new when it established a constitutional principle. Thus, any criticism of the Court suggesting that the performance of this legislative function was improper, is itself, improper.

The confusion rests with the question as to what was this new standard? Did the Court proclaim that the law of the land was now integration? The 1954 Court did not say this any more than the 1896 Court said that state laws must forbid interracial contact. The Court struck down de jure segregation but left untouched the major contributor to segregated schools in the nation today, de facto segregation. The struggle in the North is

precisely over the legal status of de facto segregation. The courts have spoken to the issue of de facto segregation, but the problem is that they have not spoken with any measure of consistency. They have not chosen to address the legal status of de facto segregated schools directly. Rather, the cases which have been decided have been adjudicated on grounds involving equal educational opportunity. This confusion concerning exactly what the law is in this area has left the resolution of the conflict to other social and political forces. The confusion coupled with the social pressures that mount with the issue of desegregation has served to make for hotly contested conflict throughout the nation.

There is a great deal of literature on the subject. However, political scientists have not, as yet, chosen to explore this as part of local politics as much as other disciplines have. The field of education has, thus far, been responsible for the vast majority of publications. This literature has tended to deal mainly with the psychological and educational effects of segregated schooling. Though this particular subject area is of immense importance, it does not concern us here directly.

Our concern is with politics and how the school desegregation issue affects the community. There are a few political scientists who have had similar concerns. It is my intention to examine their work and see what insights are provided.

There are two basic reasons why an examination of the politics of school desegregation is justified. First, the present status of race relations brings the health of the American regime into question. The extent to which we are able to solve our social ills may have a determining effect on our chances to survive as a nation. When Lincoln noted that a "nation divided against itself cannot stand," he summed up what is of concern to us still today. Thus, insights to be gained by systematic academic exploration are needed.

Secondly, the study of school desegregation is a study of community conflict. I hope to make a qualitative contribution to the social conflict literature.

A CRITIQUE OF TWO FRAMEWORKS OF ANALYSIS

Norman Hill and Roscoe Feely are the editors of Affirmative School Integration. Eight cities in the United States are examined in which school desegregation was an issue. The avowed rationale for the book is to "describe what action occurred and provide detailed analysis of the forces and problems involved in the elimination of the de facto segregation."⁷ At the onset it is clear that the authors are sympathetic to desegregation efforts. Their task, therefore, is not simply to describe and analyze the eight events, but to highlight those factors either impeding or enhancing efforts to bring about racially heterogeneous schools across the nation.

Hill and Feely do not claim any measure of external validity beyond the eight cities reviewed in the volume. Thus, they confine themselves to comparisons within the universe of the case studies. This is to their credit mainly because, not only are the comparative categories questionable, but also there is some doubt as to whether they present the kind of information that answers the rather limited questions raised.

There were four comparative categories. The first consisted of three questions: Do the statistics show either a decrease or increase in segregation? Was an actual program implemented? Did the school boards resolve the conflict by satisfying or placating the various disputants?⁸ Upon reviewing the eight cases, the answers to these questions are too often implicit at best. New Haven, for example, is listed as one of the three most successful cities. A plan was adopted but the reader is given no indication of what the statistics show. We are left only with the assertion that a plan was implemented that redrew the junior high school boundaries and paired a number of elementary schools. No doubt this had a profound effect on de facto segregation in New Haven. But how much of an effect, one cannot be sure. We are told that before the plan, "several of New Haven schools had enrollments of well over 50% Negro, whereas only 14% of the population was Black."⁹ So the question remains, how successful was New Haven? There were no figures given for the "post-plan"

analysis. This omission assumes more importance because the reader is led to examine other aspects of the study more carefully.

"For example, it is suggested that the mayor played an important role by establishing a Human Relations Council in the Spring of 1963."¹⁰ The author infers relationships between the mayor, the Human Relations Council and the Board of Education. It would be important to find out what these relationships are and how they affect the conflict. Consider for the moment the difference between the situation in which school board decisions are subject to review by the City Council and one in which the school board is a separate entity. An explanation of school board decisions or of the factors impeding or furthering desegregation might find the explication of such filiations efficacious.

Another interesting aspect of the New Haven story is the intensity of the opposition of the white community to the initial desegregation plan as adopted by the school board. Violence was threatened and the board chose to study the problem further. The second proposal, it was noted, was even more far-reaching than the first. The authors wrote that, "while resistance to the Board's final program never repeated the intensity of that which greeted the initial proposals, there remained substantial opposition."¹¹ I find it somewhat paradoxical that the final proposal was more deviant from certain demands from the

white community and yet engendered less overt hostility. There are several questions that are germane. Was the final plan more far-reaching in that it affected the most vocal groups even more? Was the final plan perceived as being worse than the first? If it was perceived as being worse, in what way was it so? Can the drop in intensity be related to the inability of community groups to sustain a high level of commitment over time?

The answers to these questions are not immediately available in the New Haven case, but such considerations deserve attention as researchers explore the issue of school desegregation further.

Evanston was also listed as one of the three successful cities. In fairness to the researcher it should be admitted that the plan for desegregation had not been implemented at the time the research was finished. Therefore, the exact manner in which de facto segregation was affected by the plan was not known.

Many of the problems with the Evanston study come from the analysis of the conflict rather than from a lack of statistical information. Hill and Feely reasoned that "since the plan (in Evanston) satisfied the board's only major critics, the integrationists, parent and civil rights groups, the board seems to have displayed an ability to reduce friction."¹²

The "ability" of the school board appears to be somewhat overstated. Given that the agitation was fairly

one-sided, and that no major opposition to integration emerged in the city, the task of the board was more technical than political. By their own admission, Evanston had a black population that was even more stable than the white community in the city. Further, one school in particular had a black majority of 70 percent for a number of years with no indication that the school would soon be 100 percent black. Furthermore, the social economic statistics on the city of Evanston show it to be well above the national average. Hence the Evanston story was a conflict that really was not very conflictual. When there is one side to satisfy, conflict resolution is rendered easier vis a vis the situations in which conflicting demands are coming from a multitude of groups. In other words I would suggest that Evanston belongs in the "successful" category, not because the board demonstrated its skill in reducing conflict, but rather because there was no major opposition to integration. Hill and Feely are thus crediting a consequence for a cause and thereby direct our attention away from the factors which account for the success.

The city of Pasadena was listed as a "border line" case.¹³ Exactly what criterion was used to determine partial success is unclear. The success according to the authors was indicated because the school board was able to "successfully negotiate NAACP support for a high school bond issue." But in terms of de facto segregation, racial

imbalance increased. It hardly seems appropriate to list Pasadena as marginal. The major issue to which the book addresses itself should be sufficient to call the further integration efforts here a total failure. But given the evaluative categories established by Hill and Feely, an astounding fiasco becomes a marginal success.

Our concern presently is with two of the three questions raised in the first comparative category.

(1) What do the statistics show? A simple presentation of the statistics on racial imbalance before and after the controversy would indeed be informative. Unfortunately, no systematic attempt was made to present the information called for by the question. (2) Was an actual plan implemented? The answer to this question was perhaps the best comparison among the eight cities. The obvious conclusions, however, seem to escape the authors. All of the three "most successful" cities adopted plans and the school boards responded to the initial demands in a positive manner. The "border line" cities, Pasadena and St. Louis, were situations in which no plans were adopted but the school boards were willing to make certain minor concessions on specific, narrow range issues.

The "least successful cities" were those in which the school board refused to respond to the initial demands in any way. In other words, the key to school desegregation issues rested with the school boards and the degree to which the boards viewed the issue as deserving resolution.

The second comparative category was concerned with the way in which the issues were initiated. There was the "ready-made issue." That is, "one means of initiating the controversies was simply for parent or civil rights groups to seize upon a ready-made issue and attach certain demands as a condition for Negro or some other groups' support."¹⁴ Hill and Feely merely allude to the ready-made issue without making any suggestions as to its significance. Three out of the four cities in which the controversy got started in this manner were at least partially successful. In Evanston and Pasadena, civil rights groups coalesced around a school bond issue which led finally to a compromise whereby the school board was able to gain its acceptance. This is important because school bond elections usually do not get a high voter turnout. Therefore, an intensive minority can be a decisive factor in determining the outcome.

The other two cities, St. Louis (partially successful) and San Francisco (unsuccessful) in the category do not really belong there because of the manner in which the controversies were initiated. They differ in both degree and in kind from Evanston and Pasadena. In the latter two, the ready-made issue contained a threat of sanction against important bond proposals. Hence, each side (the board and the civil rights groups) had something the other side wanted. The process of bargaining and compromise is readily understood here. But in St. Louis,

the ready-made issue did not contain these elements. The issue was the existing practice of bussing blacks to white schools but maintaining segregated classrooms within schools. The school board did not need the civil rights votes in the same sense that they were needed in Evanston and in Pasadena. There was nothing inherent about the situation which called for bargaining and compromise. Thus, one must look elsewhere to understand why there was some partial success in St. Louis.

Though it is not my intention or responsibility to demonstrate conclusively why St. Louis was partially successful, the following comments are offered heuristically. One reason that the St. Louis Board was put into a compromising position was that it stood in the middle of two opposing antagonistic groups. To have done nothing further would have had the effect of satisfying absolutely no one. The board established a citizen's committee to study the problem of segregation after a series of protests in 1963. The committee was endorsed by the civil rights organization and condemned by an ad hoc anti-integration group. The report issued by the committee was likewise endorsed and condemned. Public hearings were held and the superintendent of schools opposed the vast majority of the committee's proposals. But he endorsed the idea of voluntary transfers. This compromise still satisfied absolutely no one. A year later, after the intensity of the conflict had died down, the number of

black students bussed was drastically reduced and the remainder were integrated into the receiving schools.¹⁵

I have not given you any more information than that in Affirmative School Integration. But my analysis of the events differs significantly. I am suggesting here that Hill and Feely offer categories that are inadequate for significant comparative analysis. Their classification scheme brings together cases that are similar in a surface manner. Further, even if some of the similarities are meaningful, they are such for reasons that are different from those to which the authors direct our attention.

San Francisco is another city in which a ready-made issue served as the means by which the controversy was initiated. "A Board decision to change an old high school into a junior high school becomes a racial issue."¹⁶ But the fight in San Francisco was different from others in the same category. There was never any need for a white ad hoc anti-integrationist group to form because the superintendent of schools was doing their bidding for them. He was able to keep the issue at such a level that no one could effectively oppose him. The argument for quite a number of years was over whether or not a racial census would be taken. Given that the school board members were appointed by the mayor for five-year terms, the board was fairly well insulated from the public. It seems to me that the ready-made issue does not go very far in explaining the nature of the controversy.

There were two other methods of initiation mentioned, sanctions threatened by the state and national authorities, and local civil rights organizations requesting study groups. The former kind of action is especially important today given the Supreme Court's insistence on an end to de jure segregation in the South.

Another problem with both categories is that they are not exclusive of one another and no attempt is made by the authors to suggest which is more important or to explain the consequences of one versus the other. St. Louis, for example, along with many others, fits into both the "ready-made" and the "study group" classifications.

The third comparative category employed by Hill and Feely is entitled "Modus Operandi." Two major points are made. First, the role of the superintendent varied from city to city. Unfortunately, this is as far as the authors themselves take the matter. Later in the book, Arnold Rose argues that the superintendent is a decisive actor because he and his staff "set the institutional limits within which whatever desegregation the school must take place."¹⁷ Beyond this assertion, however, the comparison of the various roles played by the superintendents is neither systematic nor particularly informative.

It is to the authors' credit that enough information is presented whereby one can, on the basis of simply reading the book, offer a different analysis of the events

as they took place in the eight cities. Several problems, however, still remain. Upon reading the book, one still does not have a clear understanding of the variables that account for the various successes and failures in the eight cities. What role did the actors actually play? Who were the most important actors? Did the local political structure have any effect on the outcome? How can one account for differences in the demands of various civil rights groups?

These are only a few of the many questions that remain after examining Affirmative School Integration.

Bill Edwards and Frederic Wirt have edited a book entitled School Desegregation in the North.¹⁸ The title, however, is somewhat misleading given that all the cases are from California and the New York Metropolitan area. Nonetheless, the authors have done an excellent job of systematizing and pulling together diverse experiences with the issue of school desegregation. One of the unique qualities of the book, which I will explore later, is a brief overview of the status of education in the United States.

It cannot be argued effectively that upon reading the book one will have a better grasp of the causal variables which account for some of the similarities and differences among cities as they have dealt with conflict. This does not appear to be the intention of the authors. Rather, they are attempting to describe in

a meaningful manner how school districts have dealt with the problem. In more respects than not, they have succeeded with their limited task.

Edwards and Wirt have reprinted eight case studies done by other authors. The studies were of Berkeley, Sacramento, Riverside, Sausalito, Manhasset and Teaneck. The authors hoped that in the final analysis, they would establish a model for political decision making. They define a model as "a conceptual framework designed to explain the interrelationship among a number of factors involved in a given event or process."¹⁹ There are five elements to the model. The first of these is broad cultural values. The authors argue that different policy outcomes emanate from different values. In the United States, there seems to be general agreement on three broad cultural values, popular sovereignty, majority rule, and free and open education. They are quick to point out, however, that agreement on these broad cultural values does not mean that conflict does not center around them. It is just like "motherhood"; that is, while everyone seems to be honoring motherhood, there does not seem to be any general agreement over what specific behavior is associated with the belief.

The second element in the model is that of interest group values which operate within the framework of broad cultural values. They noted that Americans particularly have a propensity toward joining interest groups and that

the nature of the groups involved will have a determining effect on the outcome of any political controversy. There are those groups in the community that have both power and interest in a given issue; there are also those groups who have power but no interest. There are those groups that have neither power nor interest. And finally, some groups have no power but a good deal of interest. How the population is distributed over these four types, suggest the authors, will have an important effect on the outcome. If, for example, the groups involved in the controversy have high power and high interest and they agree, there will likely be little controversy. If, on the other hand, they are split, there will likely be high controversy. There is the further implication that the distribution of groups in the community will have a profound effect on the strategies that different groups will use. If there are powerful groups in the community who have no interest, then chances are that other, less powerful groups, will attempt to mobilize the former. The typology offered by Edwards and Wirt is interesting. Unfortunately, little attempt was made to explicate further the implications of the distribution of groups within a given community. Also, there is the further concern that no attempt has been made to ascertain exactly what are powerful groups and what are less powerful groups. This would demand, of course, that one explain and define power. I think that one would find that what is power in

one situation may turn out to be a weakness in yet another. Consider, for example, a civil rights group that is exceptionally adept at working within the legal institutional framework of local government. Such an ability might be considered power. One can easily imagine that a white anti-integrationist group that does not have the organizational skills of the civil rights group would be in a relatively less powerful position. However, if the controversy was such that it demanded mass mobilization and an appeal to the electorate, the power position of the two groups might, in fact, reverse themselves. Power, in the sense that I am discussing it here, is a dependent rather than an independent variable. I am not suggesting that the reverse would not also be an appropriate way to examine power. But it seems to me that both views are needed.

The third element of the model is the legal institutional framework within which the controversy takes place. The authors note that the formal structure is important as well as are the constitutional principles which surround the controversy. They argue that the most significant formal institutional factor is the existence of federalism in American political life. No unit of government has complete autonomy over this subject area. This brings forth the second most important institutional variable, the existence of checks and balances. In a generic sense, it cannot be denied that both federalism

and the idea of checks and balances are extremely important to an understanding of American political life. However, it seems to me that the authors have ignored some other important considerations. For example, there is a question of accessibility under various local governmental structures. If local government is readily accessible to, for example, a civil rights group, then one could explain the exertion of pressure on local government by civil rights groups by this particular variable. The fact that such groups, more times than not, have found themselves going to the courts in the United States, is evidence of the fact that the local governmental structures have not been as accessible or responsive as have the courts. This, coupled with the fact that the courts are not in the business of administering the law, has had the effect of placing civil rights groups in a relatively weaker position.²⁰ The authors do note later that how a given policy is administered can have an important effect. It seems to me that this is an understatement. Consider for the moment the 1954 school desegregation case of Brown versus the Board of Education. The courts were effective in getting the law of the land changed but in the final analysis, the court's decision had little effect on ending de jure segregation. Only after numerous decisions on how the court's ruling would be carried out and administered, was there any real progress in integrating Southern schools. The same might be said of the 1964 Civil

Rights Act. We know, from reading Berman's A Bill Becomes a Law²¹ that the political maneuvering involved in passing the act was intricate. But it is only in retrospect that we realize that passing the act was only half the battle. Title Six of the act gave authority to federal administrative agencies to withhold funds from schools that continued de jure segregation. This had been pushed by Representative Adam Clayton Powell at a much earlier date. President Kennedy suggested that funds be cut off at the discretion of administrative agencies. Finally on July 2, 1964, the act went into effect. But now it had to be decided exactly how the mechanics would be worked out. There were two major ways of looking at the act that were favored. The first of these was to allow each agency to set up its own guidelines and to do its own enforcing. The second position was to establish administrative-wide enforcement. The Justice Department favored incorporating court action into the enforcement so that all enforcement would be consistent with any litigation on the subject. It took six months to go into effect, which meant that the school year 1964-1965 began with segregation as usual. The President decided that there should be an administrative-wide policy and that the suggestion of the Justice Department would be incorporated. But all was not said and done at this point. If you will recall, school boards were to submit desegregation plans to the Department of HEW for approval. If the plans were

disapproved, the threat of cutting off federal funds was eminent. HEW understood early they would have to increase their staff by something like ten-fold in order to handle the barrage of plans they would receive. There was a group in HEW that recognized that pushing desegregation too strongly would mean that other HEW programs would be in jeopardy. This was mainly because the success of these programs depended upon the establishment of a good rapport between federal and local authorities. Hence, there was some resistance within HEW itself toward Title Six.

Another consideration was that no one had really defined the nature of an acceptable plan. Further, there was the fact that local Southern officials were not sure exactly how much power HEW had. That is, they were not sure that HEW really had the authority to cut off federal funds. In the summer of 1965, the answer to that question came forthright. HEW decided to go after the Chicago School District. It was clear that a system of de facto segregation existed and was surviving quite well in the city. They asked Chicago to submit a plan and the city refused. HEW then announced that Chicago would have its federal funds cut off for the ensuing year. At this point, it was reported that Mayor Daley of Chicago placed a call to Washington, and the funds were immediately restored. This had the effect of suggesting to Southern school districts that HEW had limits placed on its

authority by the President. Thus, Title Six of the 1964 Civil Rights Act never really got off the ground.

From this brief description of the history of the implementation of Title Six of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, it is clear that the manner in which a given policy is administered may determine the extent to which the policy or program is effective. Given that the civil rights movement traditionally has had to deal with the courts, it has had to deal with that branch of government which is least prepared to carry out the all-important implementing process. To this extent, civil rights groups have been at a disadvantage. The authors of School Desegregation in the North acknowledge this point, in a manner of speaking, when they introduce the fourth element of their model. Public officials can have a profound effect on the outcome of the school desegregation issue. Officials differ in their focus and in the way in which they apply the policy that is to be implemented. Hence, such officials as the school superindendent or the principals of the high schools and the teachers can have a good deal of discretion as to whether or not the plan will succeed.

The fifth element of the model was actually a series of questions dealing with policy outcomes and factors that affect policy outcomes. The following questions were raised: How do groups use resources? What institutional frameworks are used and how do they affect the outcome? What roles do public officials play? What

are the limits of the roles that public officials play? Under what set of conditions is desegregation accomplished easily or with difficulty? Can these cases and the accompanying analysis make possible predictions about the kinds of policy outcomes to be expected under different sets of social conditions?

The answers as given by Edwards and Wirt to these questions are considerably less systematic than are the questions themselves. Nonetheless, the similarities and differences as noted by the authors have proven insightful. They noted that throughout the case studies, one can see the various contending interests enunciating all the democratic values, but one can also see them interpreting these values to suit their own interest.²² Hence, the proponent of ending de facto segregation who can muster support at the polls, as in Berkeley and Teaneck, will continuously argue the legitimacy of majority decisions and applaud the will of the people. But in situations in which such support cannot be mustered, the legitimacy and the will of the people is criticized as being unfair and unnecessarily restrictive. There was also conflicting interpretations as to the meaning of minority rights. A white majority resisting proposals for reform has a tendency to believe that it should define the extent to which a minority has a given right. But for the minority, such a definition of rights means, in fact, that there are no rights. Further, throughout all of these cases after

the struggle had been resolved, the people who were most opposed to reform learned to live with it. Though the authors did not mention this, it would seem that the conflict over school desegregation as it took place in these eight cities was not a "life and death situation."²³

The authors were somewhat surprised to find that no one in any of the eight cases studied argued against open education. The conflict was over the meaning of open education, rather than over the legitimacy of the concept itself. In summary, Edwards and Wirt argued that:

Americans are wont to ascribe lofty principles and enlist prestigious cultural values to their proposals. Such actions may seem hypocritical to some, but more likely they arise out of the very nature of our broad cultural values. After all, these high aims by their very generality permit and indeed encourage, a variety of meanings. When one man's freedom interferes with another's, both will necessarily justify their reactions under the broad rubric of liberty and both will be correct. When one man's freedom results in an unequal treatment or differential acquisition of the rewards for others, this outcome reflects the inherent conflict between the democratic values of liberty and equality. These competing claims to freedom and equality most often work themselves out in some kind of compromise, in which neither party gets all that he wants. Such a resolution does not always work for all groups or all issues, it is true, as the Negroes have well known over the last century. But the political and governmental Americanism of our system operates on this impulse to compromise, in which nobody gets everything, nobody gets nothing, but everybody gets something. The mechanism of compromise will next be sketched in as another component of the policy making process.²⁴

Edwards and Wirt are suggesting here that in all conflicts over issues of school desegregation both blacks and whites are bound to have some of their proposals accepted. They are suggesting that the American system

is structured such that compromise is the rule of thumb that makes sure that each party gets at least something. It may indeed be that compromise does dominate much of American politics. But as we argued before, in order to understand the American political process, the simple assertion that compromise is the rule of thumb is not sufficient. There are some situations in which no compromise is necessary or possible. There are others in which each side has something the other wants. It is this latter situation that will more often lead to compromise. Edwards and Wirt by glancing over the necessary and sufficient conditions under which compromises are most likely to result, are led to miss the importance of the operations of the American political process.

A further question might be raised here. At what level is compromise most likely to take place? Or stated differently, in what decision making arena is compromise most likely to take place? Giving the answers to these questions forces us to examine the dynamics of the compromise process. As we noted earlier, in the San Francisco case as presented by Hill and Feely, it was not necessary for the school board to compromise with the black community at all. Compromise in the American political process is really only likely when powerful groups are contending.

In reference to the interest groups involved, the authors noted that the NAACP, CORE, and the Urban League were the most prominent groups in advancing the idea of

ending de facto segregation. It was noted that these groups do not stand alone. Other groups such as ministerial associations, some parent-teacher organizations, branches of national liberal groups, and numerous ad hoc citizen's committees came to the assistance of the groups that initiated the controversies. On the other side of the picture, those groups opposing integration had very little in common. There was no national ground to counter the NAACP and CORE. Further, the efforts of neighborhood school associations to form a regional organization out of the efforts in Teaneck and Englewood, New Jersey, came to nothing after one meeting. The one similarity between these groups, the resisters, is their enthusiastic endorsement of the neighborhood school concept.²⁵

Both kinds of groups--that is, those resisting and those favoring an end to school desegregation--had roughly equal accessibility to various resources. The authors found it surprising that actually little money seems to have been involved in any of these cases. All groups seem to have had difficulty in mobilizing and especially in maintaining support for their various programs. It is unfortunate that the authors of the volume did not examine this aspect of the controversy more thoroughly. Usually from the time the NAACP initiated the controversy to the time the school board actively took the issue up, at least one or two years had passed. Hence, one can conclude that the NAACP and other such civil rights organizations had a

staying power that was stronger than the white ad hoc anti-integrationist groups that formed. The significance of this fact is that one can hypothesize that the longer the period between the time the school board takes the issue up and the time in which the conflict is resolved, the greater the probability that the NAACP and other such organizations will be successful.

It was also noted that there was a real contrast between the strategies employed by the proponents and the opponents of school desegregation. The integrationists consistently avoided appeals to the electorate, whereas the segregationists did just the opposite. Even when the former kinds of groups were at the polls, the election was always forced upon them by the latter.

Other contrasts in strategies centered around the fact that no group in any of the controversies reviewed, denied the necessity of improved educational opportunities for blacks. They differed, however, on the means by which these improved educational opportunities would be brought about. The most frequent point of disagreement was on bussing. Also, the integrationists were willing to resort to mass activities such as marches and sit-ins, whereas the segregationists were hesitant to do anything of the sort.

In the final analysis, the important lesson that the authors of School Desegregation in the North point out is that any of the changes that were made around the issue of school desegregation were made only at the insistence of

the black community. That is, the benevolence of the political system was not automatic. Problems would not be touched that blacks themselves were not willing to object to.

The discussion of the framework of government and the role of public officials was woefully inadequate and also disappointing. The most important fact about government as noted by the authors is the existence of federalism which, "operated repeatedly in these cases."²⁶ Beyond this simple assertion, however, very little is added that will increase our understanding of the role of government. What is even more disappointing is that there is no systematic explication of the role of local government. We are only told that the absence of a national control makes for a variety of policies that have arisen at the local level over the issue of school de facto segregation. Thus, in the end, the questions raised by the authors at the beginning of the book simply are not answered. But one does come away with a better understanding of the similarities and differences between various groups as they were involved in the issue of school desegregation across cities.

The most interesting chapter in the entire book was entitled, "Excellence and Opportunity." In this chapter, Edwards informs the reader of the various plans that have been tried as remedies for segregated schools. There are four plans which deserve mention at this point.

The first of these is called the "Educational Park Concept."

A large area in the city where a number of schools are located serves as a centralized facility for the entire metropolitan area. It is like a college or university campus in its appearance. The obvious handicap is that nearly all children must be transported, some of them for long distances. A less obvious handicap is the isolation of the children from the community, and even from the group activities of its own parents. Educational parks are being planned or considered by eight cities--Berkeley, Sausalito, New York City, Albuquerque, East Orange, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and St. Paul.²⁷

Various rezoning devices, using the existing buildings, have been used in many communities. The simplest plan is to close a racially unbalanced school and assign its pupils to other schools. School closing was a technique used in Manhasset, New York, and was part of the plans adopted by Englewood and Teaneck, among the communities studied. An alternative to school closing is the formation of an educational complex by utilizing schools functionally within a consolidated attendant zone.²⁸

"The Princeton Plan" ties two elementary schools together. The years of schooling of a given child are split between two schools. He may go to one school for three or four years and then change to the other one, or he may shift back and forth annually. The plan is limited to mixing the populations of the two adjacent schools.

A number of cities have converted a racially unbalanced school into a central school teaching a single grade to children from the entire city or a large part of it. Central schools have been used in three school districts examined in this book.

THE POLITICS OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

The most extensive work done to date on school desegregation has been authored by Robert Crain, The Politics of School Desegregation.²⁹ Crain put together eight case studies and offered an analytical framework to explain the similarities and differences among them. The case studies include St. Louis, Lawndale, Bay City, Newark, Buffalo, Baltimore, San Francisco, and Pittsburgh. Crain's data and analysis are extensive and impressive. In his chapter "Definition and Overview," Crain notes that one of the major forces operating to integrate schools in the United States is the need to maintain racially stable neighborhoods. He infers this from his finding that most of the groups agitating for school integration came from neighborhoods that were themselves integrated and the citizens of the neighborhood wanted to maintain a racial stability. This conclusion runs counter to the data that have hitherto been gathered from other studies. Most studies have emphasized formal organizations and their role in the issues of school desegregation.

In the same chapter, Crain says that there are three types of actors pushing for school desegregation--white liberals, community leaders, and civil rights leaders. He says this division is important because these different kinds of leaders seem to be pursuing different kinds of goals. The white liberal, suggests Crain, has more of a welfare orientation while the civil rights leaders tend to

be more interested in symbolic kinds of rewards.

Crain's work is the first, to my knowledge, that goes into detail about the response of the school superintendents. He maintains that the response of the school superintendent to the civil rights movement usually has three elements: (a) an insistence that the only morally correct position is a strict nondiscrimination (color blindness), that efforts to intentionally integrate schools are improper for this reason; (b) an insistence on a narrow definition of the function of the school which stresses "educational" rather than "social" values and hence sees integration as outside the school's province; and (c) an unwillingness to engage in serious discussion of the issue with lay persons, and an extreme defensiveness in face of criticism. He says that the superintendent's "narrow and defensive" ideology would be rooted in the fact that superintendents as educators feel a need to protect themselves from criticism and from the interference of the community.³⁰ Though Crain's analysis is interesting here, there is no evidence presented in the book or elsewhere which would suggest that it is correct. Crain, himself admits that the analysis of the role of the superintendent in this respect is nothing other than pure speculation.

There is some question here as to whether or not the role of the superintendent is at all important because in seven of the eight cities studied by Crain, the school board, rather than the superintendent made the major

decisions on the school integration issue. But the boards, says Crain, have a way of ignoring important issues. This means, of course, that they also have a way of ignoring the school desegregation issue. School boards tend to operate independently of other city officials and of other community groups. However, community groups vis a vis civil rights groups tend to be more effective in dealing with the school board because, suggests Crain, they are willing to settle for less, they are willing to take more drastic action, and lastly, they represent usually both black and white parents.

Crain warns the civil rights groups across the nation that the school boycott is the heaviest artillery in the civil rights arsenal. Therefore, it should be used with caution. We shall pause here for a moment to discuss the subject of citizen boycott of schools because there seems to be some confusion in the literature as to the effectiveness of such measures as tactics. The view which is most different from my own is that of Robert Crain's. He contends that:

The school boycott is the heaviest artillery in the Civil Rights Movement's arsenal. We should distinguish again between the strike which is of indefinite duration and the boycott. The strike is a very powerful and very effective weapon. In the two cases where it was either threatened or used, it seemed to be very effective. The school boycott is a different sort of tactic. The boycott, like any other demonstration, is merely intended to embarrass the Board, and to demonstrate the support within the community for the Civil Rights Movement. People are "voting with their feet." We noted earlier that one reason why the Civil Rights organization is not as

effective as a community group is that its base of support is not as obvious. By holding a successful boycott, the movement makes the entire Negro community the protagonist in its fight. In terms of bargaining, however, the disadvantage of using the boycott is that it is the heaviest artillery. Once the school board has survived it, it knows that it has nothing worse to fear. Another disadvantage of the school boycott is that it is difficult for the Negro school board members to support it. If they do, they can be criticized for condoning truancy.³¹

I could spend the rest of the essay discussing Crain's understanding of the use of the boycott, but time does not permit such an extravagance. The following brief discussion will have to suffice.

First and least important in some respects, Crain is misdirected if he thinks the boycott is "the ultimate weapon." Nothing could be further from the truth. Maybe Crain is correct if we consider the course of "normal" politics, but race conflict hardly conforms to "normalcy." The truth is that in matters of race conflict, whites have traditionally in this country had a monopoly on the means of and use of violence. Such a monopoly has proven to be a rather effective political resource. Only in recent years has the social scientist understood this. The threat of political assassination, fire bombings of schools and homes, regardless of the extent to which one may detest such behavior, nonetheless, makes the school boycott out to be like a Sunday school picnic rather than any kind of "ultimate weapon." There have been conflicts around the country in which this kind of behavior has dominated the scene. There is no reason for social

scientists to ignore these kinds of conflicts as though they did not exist.

To me, the most important aspect of Crain's analysis is his suggestion that the boycott is "intended to embarrass the board." It may be true that this will be one of the consequences of such an action; however, I find it unlikely that this is the sole or even the most blatant intention. The school boycott, if successful, has the potential to send the school system into financial ruin. In Grand Rapids, Michigan, the boycott that was attempted had the potential of losing 1.5 million dollars for the school system. Now it may be that the board would be embarrassed by such an event, but this is hardly as significant as the fact that they would have to operate an entire system on something less than a shoestring budget. Teachers would probably have to be released, athletic budgets might have to be eliminated, special programs would have to be stopped, and other cuts in the budget would have to be made. I would argue that the boycott is not simply a matter of trying to embarrass the board. This is apparent when one considers the structure of educational finance in the United States with the amount of money a given school board gets being determined by the number of students in the school system. If the school can be boycotted, at the time when the census is to be taken to determine the amount of money to be given, then to the extent that the boycott supporters represent a

significant portion of the school population, it is an effective means of imposing severe financial harm.

Crain constructs a profile of what he calls the "typical Northern school desegregation controversy." He notes that there are six stages in the initiation of any school desegregation issue. The first stage is the appearance of the issue. Usually, civil rights groups have previously made occasional statements and in some cases there was a full-scale discussion of some issue relating to school desegregation. Normally, however, this was too far in the past to be meaningful when the controversy became full-fledged.

Stage two involved the rejection of the demands. In most cases the initial complaint was rejected by the school board which was interpreted by the civil rights group as a direct insult. Only in two of the eight cities studied did the school board take a sympathetic position to the first demand. In only one of these cities did the board actually do anything.

This would usually lead to stage three which is the first civil rights action. The civil rights leadership proceeds to call the issue to the board's attention more forcibly. This usually means threatening demonstrations. In some cases, however, a suit was filed. The effect of all this would be to make it clear that the issue would not be a transient one and that the board would "soon be forced to take a clear public position on the issue."

Stage four is the key response. At this point, says Crain, the school board makes a response that would set the tone for almost all of its later actions. In most cases this response was more sympathetic than the initial response of the board.

Stage five is usually an escalation and resolution of the conflict. Three things can happen: the civil rights leadership will be satisfied with the acquiescence of the board and will drop the issue; the school board can publicize certain concessions that will satisfy the general Negro community as a whole, thus cutting off the movement's grass roots support; or the civil rights movement will remain dissatisfied but will be unable to find a particular issue to focus on. At this point, Crain says it is interesting to note that the comparison of the cases studied suggests that demonstrations, once they have succeeded in raising the issue, have little effect on the board behavior. In other words, once the key response is made, the board has usually committed itself as far as it is willing to go.

Stage six is the introduction of new actors. Usually if the civil rights group is dissatisfied, it will seek, as Edward and Wirt have already suggested, to take the issue to higher authority. In Crain's words, "the board is provided with a new frame of reference." If integration is necessary in order to conform to state law, then few school boards will oppose integration. The

intervention of higher authorities usually means that the school board has had to sacrifice some of its freedom. But as Crain has noted, it is not at all obvious that the school board regrets the loss. To this point, what Crain has done is to argue that the important thing to study is the school board, because the board is largely independent of the community. Therefore, in looking to understand the variety of responses the school boards give, Crain is suggesting that we look not at the community but rather, specifically at the school board.³² In some respects, this is in response to a question raised by Hill and Feely in their book, Affirmative School Integration. One of the things that baffled these two authors was the tremendous diversity of responses from school board to school board. Crain rules out the level of civil rights activity as an explanatory variable for this diversity. He also rules out the idea that the community has any real effect on the way in which the school board responds. He suggests that there are three factors that explain the extent to which a given school board is willing to acquiesce. The first factor is the degree to which the boards are liberal and/or conservative. That is, he is arguing that the initial response of the school board is determined by their attitudes toward the civil rights movement as a whole. A school board with a favorable attitude toward civil rights will, by and large, make positive responses to the issue of school desegregation. A board with a

less sympathetic attitude toward the movement will give just the opposite response.

There was the further suggestion by Crain that cohesive boards³³ tend to be more acquiescent toward the civil rights movement. There were three reasons given for why this was the case. The first, the non-cohesive board will be less acquiescent because it will be unable to prevent the issue from becoming a matter of public controversy. Secondly, whereas the cohesive board may be able to put up a united front, each dissenting board member will air his position publicly. Thirdly, even if the board does not have to contend with segregationist public opinion, the demands of the civil rights movement will require change on the part of the school board. There is an inertia in any public body which tends to maintain the status quo, and any innovative action requires discussion and agreement on the part of the board members.³⁴

This all seems to make quite a bit of sense until one is led to examine the manner in which Crain is measuring cohesion. He is using a scale established by Leon Festinger in 1950 which refers to the average level of "positive feelings" between the members of a given group. It is not clear in my mind that this is the kind of cohesion that one ought to be looking at here. But nonetheless, Crain has found that "the least acquiescent board is the least cohesive; and the least appointed is the least cohesive." Conversely, the boards which are the most

acquiescent seem to have the least internal conflict. Then it would seem that it makes no difference as to whether the board is elected or appointed. The important thing is the extent to which boards are cohesive.

Crain's contribution to the school desegregation literature is a valuable one. He demonstrates fairly conclusively that the school board is the single most important group involved in the controversy. However, by his emphasis on the school board, Crain practically ignores other interest groups. I would argue that other interest groups may be more important than Crain's analysis has led us to believe. This is true for a variety of reasons, not the least of which has to do with the possibility that the conflict in some situations may actually survive the board. It is possible that the board will be thrown out of office which may bring in an entirely different kind of ball game. In cities in which this has happened, the autonomy of the board has been at best, questionable. But further, the importance of competing groups is bolstered. Thus, on the one hand, Crain has made a valuable contribution, but on the other, he has led us to ignore some things that are at least potentially important.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION AND DESEGREGATION

Another study of school desegregation which deserves brief mention is Ramond Mack's Our Children's Burden.³⁵ Professor Mack's approach to the issue is

similar to those we have already reviewed. Nine communities were studied and an attempt was made to extract some uniformities out of the case studies. His conclusions, though perhaps somewhat too general, nonetheless provide some interesting information. Mack argues that the small and medium sized towns in the United States, both North and South, are showing a trend toward desegregation. The larger metropolitan areas, on the other hand, seem to be resegregating their schools. The author is careful to "hedge" by saying that things "seem" to be going in a given direction. However, the statistical information necessary to support such hypothesizing simply is not provided. Thus, the contention is, at best, an educated guess about the nature of things. As we all know, the problem with educated guesses is that they are really nothing more than what the adjective modifies, a guess.

Another conclusion drawn from the study is that blacks are equating desegregation with better education. Dr. Mack's study suffers from the same problem that the other studies we have looked at suffer from. His study was published in 1968. By that time, it had become clear that there were some rather serious ideological divisions within the black communities across the nation. It simply is not accurate to characterize American blacks as a monolithic entity. The tendency for researchers to do this stems in part from their inability to study each community reported on in depth. Thus, they have been better at

reporting white division than the now more publicized black division. As we know from the Ocean Hill Brownsville confrontation with the FTA,³⁶ the issue of local control of schools has in some measure replaced some of the pressure from within the black community for desegregation.

Mack also noted that social organization is a critical variable for understanding the amount of desegregation in the community. For instance, he argues that:

. . . given the constantly increasing educational attainment of our population, both Negro and white, our steadily rising level of living, and the fact that the cities are drawing as in-migrants the better educated members of the Negro minority, it seems reasonable to predict a decrease in social distance between the races in the coming decades. Most of the rationalizations justifying our treatment of the Negro as a minority are descriptions of lower-class behavior: poverty, disease, ignorance, irresponsibility, poor property upkeep, and so on. Most American Negroes must, at the present time, be objectively rated as occupying a low socioeconomic status. As more and more of them achieve the education, income, and behavioral prerequisites of middleclass "respectability," they will not automatically escape from their minority position, but the beliefs which justify keeping them at a caste-like distance will be greatly weakened.³⁷

The line of reasoning that Mack is advancing is indeed interesting. Unfortunately, he seems to have identified the right phenomena but has drawn the wrong conclusions. A fuller exposition of the point will be taken up in the next chapter, but a few comments are in order presently. There is reason to suggest that as the actual social distance lessens, the intensity of the conflict will increase. The fact that the "real" basis for the caste categorization is dissipated or weakened,

may be irrelevant to the controversy at hand. History tells us, for example, that the conflict in Europe between the social classes intensified at a time when the social distance between the groups was closer than at any other time. If one examines the phenomenon of Nigerian nationalism as it existed in opposition to British rule, we see that the heyday of nationalism came when the Nigerians had come closest to closing the social gap.

Mack is saying that as blacks develop socio-economically, they will become more palatable to whites and that the basis for the controversy will tend to dissipate. In other words, socio-economic development will promote socio-political stability. I am suggesting that just the opposite may be true. Samuel P. Huntington³⁸ has noted that the relationship between development and stability is often just the obverse of what our previous assumptions have led us to believe.

Professor Mack is correct in noting that those blacks who have a tendency to migrate to the nation's urban centers are generally better educated than those who remain in the areas from which the migrants come. Gary Marx has documented the same phenomena. But it may be, as we shall argue later, that this fact produces results different from those as suggested by the author.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS IN LITERATURE

It is appropriate at this point to offer a systematic summary of what we have learned about school desegregation conflicts.

A. The issue is usually initiated by an integrated neighborhood group or a civil rights organization, such as CORE or the NAACP.

1. In all cases, the initiating group took the issue before the school board for a redress of grievances. Only after the response of the school board was negative did the initiating groups mention the threat of court action.

2. Neighborhood groups are usually more effective because they tend to have more legitimacy in the eyes of the board and because of their tendency to make specific demands.

3. The issue of school desegregation is initiated in either one of three ways: there is a ready-made issue to which demands are attached; state and national authorities can induce local boards to take action; citizen's committees can bring the issue before the public.

4. Both proponents and opponents appear equally ready to take the issue to court.

B. The school board is the most dominant decision-making body.

1. The board's response to demands by the initiating group is a function of the attitudes of the board members toward the civil rights movement.
 2. Most boards respond positively to the demands after the issue is shown not to be transient.
 3. The school board seems to be fairly well insulated from public opinion.
- C. After the board has made its "key" response, the threat of or the existence of demonstrations will have no effect on the board's behavior concerning acquiescence to the demands.
1. One possible exception is Riverside, California. The school board initially refused to consider the issue, but after the Watts riot and after one of the primary schools was burned, the city integrated the schools without further incident.
 2. The issue is usually taken out of the superintendent's hands and handled directly by the board.
 3. Any plan proposed for desegregating the schools will usually get a public hearing which seldom affects the board's decision.

As I have indicated, there are several problems with the existing literature on school desegregation. My study will be primarily concerned with two of these. First, the literature leaves open the question as to the relationship between the local political structure and the conflict which takes place within. It shall be my contention that

the way in which the political system is mobilized has a decisive effect on the desegregation controversy. Political systems generally define the probabilities that certain kinds of people will be recruited into political life. But not only does the mobilization of a given political system have implications for individuals, but also for the community as a whole. The conflict which takes place in the political system is structured by that system. Furthermore, some systems are structured such that conflict is encouraged more than in other systems. Looking at school desegregation in this way should aid us in explaining why some of the conflicts appear to be more intense and disruptive of community life than others.

Secondly, I shall be concerned with the existence of black division over school desegregation. The existence of such a factor has some obvious effects on both opponents of integration as well as those groups who favor ending segregation.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER I

¹Hubert H. Humphrey (ed.), School Desegregation: Documents and Commentaries (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1964), p. 34.

²Albert P. Blaustein and Clarence C. Ferguson, Jr., Desegregation and The Law (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 95-96.

³*Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁴Richard Bardolph (ed.), The Civil Rights Record (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1970), pp. 150-151.

⁵Humphrey, op. cit., p. 32.

⁶Blaustein and Ferguson, op. cit., p. 128.

⁷Roscoe Hill and Malcolm Feely, Affirmative School Integration (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1967), p. 12.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 90.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 54-60.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 137.

¹⁸William Edwards and Frederic Wirt, School Desegregation in The North (Chicago: Chandler Publishing Co., 1967).

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 14.

²¹Daniel Berman, A Bill Becomes a Law (New York: Macmillan, 1966).

²²Edwards and Wirt, op. cit., pp. 8-11.

²³Ibid., p. 11.

²⁴Ibid., p. 305.

²⁵Ibid., p. 25.

²⁶Ibid., p. 317.

²⁷Ibid., p. 32.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 32-33.

²⁹Robert Crain, The Politics of School Desegregation (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968).

³⁰Ibid., p. 140.

³¹Ibid., p. 138.

³²Ibid., p. 134.

³³Ibid., p. 126.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 138-167.

³⁵Raymond Mack, Our Children's Burden (New York: Random House, 1968).

³⁶M. Berub and M. Gittel, Confrontation at Oceanhill-Brownsville (New York: Praeger, 1969).

³⁷Mack, op. cit., p. 457.

³⁸Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968).

CHAPTER II

SYSTEM ORGANIZATION

To argue extensively that community conflict does not take place within a vacuum is perhaps to belabor the obvious. Many social scientists have noted that any community conflict is governed by the context out of which it arises.¹ What does not seem to be well understood is the rather specific ways in which such conflicts are affected. Conflicts that involve the perennial issue of race have a tendency to "highlight" the institutional and social controls available to communities because of the perception on the part of both black and white Americans that the stakes involved in the conflict resolution are higher than those of "normal" politics.² Hence, institutional inertia tends to be at a peak in such situations.

Even though the contextual framework of conflictual situations is widely acknowledged as exerting significant influence, the treatment and attention given to this area of inquiry have, especially of late, neither been systematic nor especially informative.

But even if one were to examine both the context and the conflict contained therein, there would be no assurance that one would have described adequately what has taken place. There is, at least, another "face of power," that

is more and more being explored by the political science literature. It is not merely that the context defines the conflict. The context also determines what kind of influences will come to bear on these decision makers, and what kinds of issues may properly be entertained within the arena.

Two of the more forceful spokesmen for this particular understanding of politics have been Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz.³ Bachrach has asked:

Can we safely ignore the possibility . . . that an individual or group in a community participates more vigorously in supporting the nondecision-making process than in participating in actual decisions within the process? Stated differently, can the researcher overlook the chance that some person or association could limit decision-making to relatively non-controversial matters by influencing community values and political procedures and rituals notwithstanding that there are in the community serious but latent conflicts. To do so is, in our judgment, to overlook the less apparent but nonetheless extremely important face of power.⁴

This understanding of community politics is part and parcel of a shift in emphasis in political science represented by, among others, William Conolly (The Biases of Pluralism)⁵ and Charles Mc Coy and John Playford (Apolitical Politics).⁶

A major thrust of the "new politics" is that of a criticism of Robert Dahl and Nelson Polsby⁷ for relegating conflict to a residual category and thereby emphasizing consensus as the modus vivendi that dominates American politics. To be sure, there are other charges which speak directly to the pluralist understanding of the political. But for our purposes, a full exposition of these is beyond our intention and is unnecessary to the task at hand.

Bachrach certainly represents, to date, the best of what the new emphasis has to offer. He understands Schattschneider's concept, "organizational bias."⁸ (That is, some conflicts and people are simply "factored" out of the politics of the community by the existing mobilized bias of the values and governmental structure that dominate.) His understanding of that phenomenon is well demonstrated, but in and of itself, does not go far enough. Further, and perhaps more serious, this particular understanding tends to lead the researcher down dark alleys chasing ghosts that we thought were captured with the extensive critiques of David B. Truman's The Political Process.⁹ I am referring to Bachrach's view that the pluralist researcher, by ignoring mobilized bias, is also led to overlook "serious latent conflicts."

One is led to wonder exactly what does Bachrach mean by "latent conflicts?" It seems that he could mean one of three things. Let us substitute the word "conflict" for the word "interest." We are assuming that conflict develops around non-coinciding interest. While it is understood that not all such interests result in conflict, the substitution simply makes the wording of the discussion easier without meaningfully changing the content. Now he could have meant by latent that the researcher is led to ignore interests that could develop, but were not present at the time of the research. I doubt if he meant this because interest that is not present simply is not interest.

It may be that one could hypothesize that given a certain set of conditions, the probability that certain kinds of interest will materialize is increased. For example, the astute researcher could have argued that an interest would have developed among Nigerian bureaucrats who were not allowed promotion under British rule. Clearly the rules of the game as established by the British factored out of the politics of the colony any mobilization of Nigerian interest.¹⁰ However, the oversight of the researcher in such a situation has more to do with his individual competence rather than the inherent bias of the tool he is using.

It seems that Bachrach could also have meant by "latent," interest that is present, but has not as yet been mobilized. Once again though, unmobilized interest is exactly what it implies. It is not so much that the pluralist understanding of politics cannot account for such potential, rather it is that such interest, quite properly I add, does not assume a center stage position in terms of the researcher's interest. One does, of course, run the risk of drawing an improper conclusion concerning "who runs things around here," because there may be interests in the community that are not reflected in the political mobilization of the system. An example of this would be the Watts riot. Clearly those who ran things had little, if any, influence over a significant happening with widespread political ramifications. But I doubt if Bachrach

had this understanding of "latent" in mind.

It seems to me that he intended to argue that any mobilized political arena is biased against certain kinds of interest and conflicts. Therefore, the researcher, by formulating his research problems in terms of the existing structure of government and the participants therein, is led to miss the existence of values and groups who are factored out but who are capable of and perhaps forced into performing political acts outside the political system.

This may indeed be true. The literature that has come out of this new direction in political science has been especially concerned with the plight of black Americans and the turn taken by militant groups toward intense political activism. But while the finding and its implications are significant, they hardly speak to the problems confronting the black community. The truth of the matter is that blacks are not factored out of the political system in the way indicated above as frequently as the analysis would have us believe. That is, they are not factored out in the sense that values are mobilized that are not supported by the black community. The problem has been one of gaining accessibility to the decision-making arena so as to increase possible pay-off. A more germane problem has been the illusion that the "black representative" is in fact a measure of the extent to which accessibility has been gained. I hope to demonstrate that such is not the case. One cannot merely look at the number of blacks sitting on a

city council, for example, and argue from the presence of "black bodies" that blacks and black interests are represented. Why this is so, I hope now to make clear.

In his now classic book, Negro Politics, James Q. Wilson¹¹ typologizes black leadership. The different types are as follows:

1. Prestige leader--usually professional Blacks who other Blacks recognize as having the "best" or extensive contacts with influential whites. Such contacts frequently have nothing to do with race or civic issues.
2. Token leader--the Black selected most by whites to represent the Black community. Such leaders tend not to represent the most outspoken elements of the Black community.
3. The organizer--recognized as the only "true" leaders of the Black community by that community.
4. The new Black--the mass agitation.

This typology represents one of the better efforts at understanding black leadership. It speaks of leadership from the perception of those whom the leaders are reputed to lead. One gets the impression, however, that the criterion for being considered as a black leader is simply a matter of being black occupying either a formal or informal leadership position. This ignores, of course, such figures as Father Groppi and more marginal people such as Robert Kennedy. But it also makes no mention of what I shall argue is a rather common situation; that is, the black leader who is a non-leader. I do not mean by this, the black who has "sold out," but rather, the black person who owes his position of leadership, or is responsible to

persons other than the black community.

What I am getting at here is that the problem of mobilized bias is not simply the factoring out of certain values. Admittedly, such bias frequently has the effect of either excluding blacks from authoritative positions or of operating in such a way as to guarantee that those blacks who are recruited will be moderate in their politics and non-race oriented in their public pronouncements.¹² But, we must keep in mind that such bias also may have the effect of excluding extreme anti-black groups.

Some may argue that this is not much consolation. This may be true especially given what this country needs to do in reference to the race question. But one should not lose sight of the fact that while it may not be much consolation, given the strong anti-black feeling in our major metropolitan areas, it is enough of a consolation to warrant making note of it.

A CASE STUDY

A casual perusal of the city administration in Lansing might lead one to conclude that both the blacks and Spanish populations are well represented in the running of the city. Upon entering city hall one is impressed with the conspicuous presence of black faces sitting behind desks upon which stand impressive titles. One indeed has to be careful not to assume a priori that city government runs counter to what one reads of other administrations around the country. To say that blacks are represented tells

one nothing about the influence wielded or the style of representation which characterizes the city or how it is that a particular style manages to get recruited. The following few pages will attempt to inform the reader about the black representation.

On Tuesday, April 3, 1967, an historic event took place. For the first time in the history of the city a black councilman was elected. The major local newspaper reported that "Ferguson displayed balanced support in his historic victory."¹³ The conditions which made the "Ferguson victory" possible are the same conditions that make it virtually impossible for a black "race" candidate to get elected.

Both the primary and the general elections had fairly "low-key" campaigns. Only one of the four candidates running at-large alluded to the fact that Lansing should do something about the "underprivileged."¹⁴ He was white and managed to come in dead last. The campaign Ferguson waged centered on three issues: a lessening of city property taxes; better public transportation; and problems relating to labor relations. That the election was low-key is further attested to by the fact that only 33.6 percent¹⁵ of the registered voters turned out. Before getting too far afield, a word should be said about the overall structure of the city government.

Lansing has a mayor-strong council type of government in which the mayor wields a great deal of influence

by way of his appointive powers.¹⁶ The mayor and the council members are elected for four-year terms with one-half of the council being up for election every two years. Beginning in 1958 four of the eight council members were to be elected at-large while the other four would be elected from one of the four wards in the city. Each election would be for two at-large seats and two ward seats. Previous to 1958 the city was divided into eight wards which meant that the probability of minority interest securing a representative was greater than with the new four-ward system. For the increasing numbers of blacks and Spanish-speaking peoples in the city,¹⁷ this had the obvious consequence of reducing the probability that they would be able to elect a representative.

It is not clear why the "powers to be" decided in 1958 to change the representative system. The most frequent explanation received by this researcher was that the "new" system would represent "city-wide" interest. It cannot be asserted positively that the move was specifically designed to keep blacks from running a "race" candidate even though this was the effect of the change.

Under the four-ward system, the great majority of the black population lives in the fourth ward and constitutes approximately 30 percent of the voting population there. The black housing area is pushing further into the ward, which means that any black candidate running out of the ward would have a great deal of difficulty putting

together a winning coalition there.¹⁸ The best chance then for a black seeking a council seat is for him to run at-large, in a low-key election year, and to play down any race conflict that may appear, and still mobilize the black vote quietly. In fact, it was to Ferguson's credit that his platform was as non-race oriented as it would get.

The election results demonstrate the truth of what has been argued. There were four candidates running at-large in 1967. Each voter could vote for two. In the second ward, Ferguson finished last. In the third ward he was third. Therefore, based on these two wards, he definitely would not have been elected. But in the first and fourth wards (the fourth has the greatest number of blacks), he finished a strong second. These two districts were sufficient to elect him to a four-year term. It is important to note that in none of the wards did he come in first.¹⁹ Given this situation, it is extremely unlikely that he could run as a race candidate. It is also unlikely that he would be able to champion any highly visible "black causes" without suffering a considerable loss of votes in the next election. Yet, even with these restraints, most of the persons we talked with in Lansing considered Ferguson a "black leader."

It is clear that Ferguson could not have won without solid black support, and yet such support in no way guarantees the election outcome. Hence, Ferguson may be considered a leader who is in fact a non-leader. That is,

he must make himself accessible to the black community and yet must be moderate enough so as to be able to attract widespread white support. He does then, represent a way in which black demands may be "inputted" into the political system. But obviously only the most modest and moderate of demands would be supported by him. There are, then, certain kinds of demands and interests that are simply factored out by the way in which the political system is mobilized in Lansing.

We do not mean to suggest here that this phenomenon only applies to racial minorities in Lansing. Indeed, the mobilization of such bias is at least a "double-edged sword." The same holds true for any group that coalesces around issues that do not have wide-spread community support. For the city government, this new system meant that the number of people needed to get their specific interests represented in the council was greatly increased.

So at this point, it is proper to ask, what kind of direct accessibility do blacks in Lansing have to the council, the primary arena for conflict resolution? What they have is a black leader who, by his rather tenuous political situation, cannot take the lead in matters of race. Such a leader does not fit comfortably into any of Wilson's categories. His is not a prestige leader who avoids conflict and politics. It would also not be consistant to call him a token leader because he is not simply selected by whites to represent the "Negro

community." Further, having to avoid being identified as a "race" man, he cannot possibly be considered the "organizer." Lastly, he is not "the new Negro" because of his desire to stay away from issues of race.²⁰

The question remains: What is he? He is the non-leader who on the one hand has to act as a black agent in the council but who must make his appeals so as to include interests that have little if anything to do with race. He must contain within his own person and constantly play up both sides of the \$100 misunderstanding.

Another point of accessibility is the Human Relations Council (HRC). The generalizations which hold for the city council are magnified by the HRC. That is, it can be argued that the mobilization of the HRC is of such a nature that certain kinds of interests and values will be factored out as possible inputs to the decision-making arena. This fact had a great deal to do with the inability of segregationist whites and blacks to gain accessibility to either the school board or the city council, or the HRC in the school desegregation controversy.

The provision for the HRC was passed by the city council on July 1, 1963.²¹ As near as one can tell, there were no specific local events which prompted the council to take this action. The national climate at the time was one of tension and civil disorder in the major metropolitan centers around the nation. The local NAACP took advantage

of the climate and argued before the city council that the establishment of a Human Relations Council would be in the best interest of the city given that no one knew exactly when and if the widening gulf between blacks and whites in the nation would continue to express itself in the way of riots. That Lansing needed such a body was not disputed seriously on the council or publicly throughout the city. The question to be settled centered on what kind of powers would such a body have? The original proposal was presented by a coalition of groups including the Council of Churches, the NAACP, the U.A.W., and others. The two aspects of this first proposal that created the most controversy were the power of the committee to investigate claims of discrimination in the name of the city of Lansing, and the provision for an annual budget to finance such investigations. To make a long story short, both of these provisions were cut by the council. The NAACP indicated that it was displeased with the "watered-down" version.²² What was provided was that the

HRC would consist of 12 members to be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the city council. One of these members shall be designated by the committee as chairman. The members of the HRC shall, as nearly as possible, be representative of management and labor, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths, of white and non-white races and other segments in the community interested in human relations.²³

What this meant in practice for black representation was that the "token black" would be appointed by the mayor. What it has meant in Lansing is that the NAACP has been able to dominate that particular point of accessibility

for blacks. For example, the only blacks on the committee in 1965 were members of the NAACP. Richard Letts was given the position of Director²⁴ and Sturwart Dunnings, the director of the legal council for the local branch, was made a member. The fact that these two men occupied positions on the HRC was not unimportant in the school desegregation controversy. Both of these individuals were major protagonists for the plan as developed by the school board. But further, by and large, the major groups represented on the HRC were supporters of the plan also.

What they had in Lansing, then, was the institutionalization of a certain coalition of people who were then able, by way of their "semi-official" position to launch an attack on de facto segregation. The fact that there was wide-spread opposition to the integration plan from both blacks and whites, seemed not to be of consequence in the sense that the opposition had extremely limited ways of gaining access to the bodies which played decisive roles in the development and implementation of the plan.

But here we come to a major paradox. Even though it is exceptionally difficult for a black representative to emerge within the formal political structure of the city, it is not as difficult for certain black demands to get accepted and implemented.

SYSTEM ORGANIZATION AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

Just as system mobilization affects the kinds of people who are chosen for political office in a community, so also is the structure of conflict affected. This is true not only for city councilmen but also for school boards and the various conflicts that involve them.

Common sense tells us that persons who have their interests adversely affected will mobilize especially when such behavior is most likely to be effective. To be effective, in this sense, groups must have accessibility. An accessible system is one that encourages participation. And a participative system is one that is conducive to rancorous conflict.

This notion of political action is not new. William Gamson, "Rancorous Conflict,"²⁵ has made a similar argument. He noted that "the more political structures permit or encourage widespread citizen participation the greater is the conduciveness to rancorous conflict."²⁶ Further, the more the proponents and opponents in a given conflict tend to be of different length of residence, nationality, educational levels, and religious backgrounds, the less resistance to rancorous conflict. By rancor, both Gamson and I mean conflict which violates the "rules of the game."

This notion of community conflict runs counter to a traditional understanding of American politics which argues that citizen participation is a measure of the

health of a regime in that participation acts as a "safety-valve" for the reservoir of pent-up discontent. Gamson's argument and mine are just the opposite.

Actually, James Madison made essentially the same argument when he talked against the evils of a small republic in which there would be a direct or participative democracy. Madison saw in men a propensity toward division that could be precipitated even for the most fanciful and frivolous of reasons. He set out and defined the political system in such a way so as to insulate the decision-making process from the people and yet retain ultimate control for the people.²⁷

Lipset has noted that the last election in Germany before the ascendancy of Hitler was so participative that the system was not able to tolerate the strain.²⁸

In the final analysis, the question as to the effects of a participative versus a non-participative system on conflict is an empirical one. Gamson found a greater incidence of rancorous conflict in participative communities than in non-participative communities.²⁹

We are talking here about structural conduciveness. Citizen participation is a way in which residents of the community can get their interests translated into public policy or at least have the opportunity to be heard. Perhaps the most ideal of democratic situations is the one in which the citizens, upon deciding that their representative, or the system, is not behaving in their interests,

have the constant opportunity to change either one. The whole idea of representative democracy as fought over, during the Constitutional Convention, and as understood today, is that the representative is responsible to (especially, at election time) those whom he represents. Therefore, one could argue that the greater the opportunities the citizens have to hold their representatives responsible to their wishes, the more open is the system. But there is a further consideration. The structural opportunities presented also have a "spill-over" effect. A group may organize to influence the school board's policy and in the process encounter other mobilized groups. The system accounts for the initial mobilization but the conflict may not all be centered in the direction of the board. As we have suggested previously, mobilized black groups in opposition to one another will be contesting for the support of the same population group. Hence, the system defined the rewards but the conflict will be multi-directional.

OPEN AND CLOSED SYSTEMS

It seems to me that there are at least five factors which can account for the degree to which a system is opened or closed vis-a-vis other systems. These factors are: (1) frequency of elections; (2) districts vs. at-large elections; (3) sub-system autonomy; (4) the nominating process; and (5) the turnover potential.

Frequency of Elections. The notion here is simple. A system which has elections every year versus one that has an election every other year can be said to be more open. When one considers school board elections, our discussion is more germane. Clearly, the board that has to answer to the general electorate each and every year can be said to be more open than one that has to go through such exercises less frequently. Also, the election is a "natural" event around which to mobilize people. Hence, the system in which there are frequent elections encourages citizen participation more frequently and thereby contributes to the conduciveness of structural strain and rancorous conflict.

Turnover Potential. The variable refers to the length of time it takes for each member of the decision-making body to have come up for re-election. In some communities it may be six years before the entire board has come before the public for re-election. In others, it may be shorter or longer. Such distinctions are important because they represent an indirect measure of how sustained an issue has to be in order for it to serve as the focus around which campaigns will be built. One could hypothesize that the shorter the turnover potential, the greater is the accessibility of the citizens to the system. Intuitively this would seem to be true because over the shorter period of time such things as information and time cost will be less than over a longer period.

District vs. At-Large Elections. Usually, an at-large election means that a given group of persons coalescing around a given issue will have to have significantly greater support in order to get their views translated into the decision-making arena vis-a-vis district elections.

The employment of the at-large election has been most conspicuous as a move to disfranchise black voters. Lee Sloan's article, "The Black Beater," makes this point. Sloan argues that:

Not surprisingly, many Negroes in Lakeland consider themselves to be disfranchised under the new electoral system. They are now denied the "right" to choose their representatives. In effect, the white electorate of Lakeland selects representatives for them. The fact that the democratic procedures were used to take from them a "right" which was theirs under the old ward system leads many Negroes in Lakeland to view democratic government as but another form of white hypocrisy.³⁰

Sloan correctly notes that the effect of the "new" system serves to "disfranchise not only Blacks, but the entire working class." The sword here is indeed "double-edged," but more needs to be said concerning the consequences of the way it cuts. In areas in which the black population is relatively small, such disfranchisement may actually prove to be a boon to black demands for integration. This would be so because in many Northern communities the number of whites who might be sympathetic to integration demands might be proportionately greater than such communities in the South. What this means is that the less accessibility groups have to the political process the less

probability that anti-black groups or pro-black groups will get their view within the decision-making arena. Stated differently, at-large representation requires more broadly-based support than does district representation. In areas in which acknowledgment of the legitimacy of black demands does not spell political "death" the disfranchisement of blacks in the aforementioned manner may also end the disfranchisement of anti-black groups.

Nominating Procedure. The impact of the nominating procedure is, in part, determined by whether it is an at-large or district election. Beyond this, the ease with which an individual can get on the ballot in the general election also determines the extent to which the system is opened or closed. Usually there are three steps: petition, primary, and general election. In some instances, there are only two steps. The fewer the number of steps involved, the more accessible is the system.

Subsystem Autonomy. For reasons that will become apparent later, the question of subsystem autonomy does not concern us here. Briefly, however, it may be that the system one is attempting to affect will not have the final authority over the subject. The most steps one has to go through to reach the final decision-making body, the less accessible the system tends to be.

For our purposes only three of the variables are relevant because the State of Michigan requires by law that the elections be held at-large and the law indicates

exactly to whom the board is responsible, when, and in what manner. Hence, two of our variables turn out to be constants. Our three variables are the frequency of elections (X), the turnover potential (Y), and the nominating procedure (Z). I should mention here that we are dealing with relative degrees of openness and closeness. That is, systems are open and closed vis-a-vis one another. It would be appropriate, therefore, for us to rank a number of school systems and establish the parameters of our scale based on that population.

A way of approaching the problem of classifying systems as "opened" or "closed" is to rank each system on each variable. Take, for example, "frequency of elections." A system which had elections every year would rank first. Systems that held elections less frequently would rank below. On each variable all systems would receive a score depending on where they ranked vis-a-vis other systems. I would expect the systems to cluster in one direction or the other. That is, the systems would tend to show a direction toward either being "opened" or "closed." We could then classify the systems as shown in Figure 1.

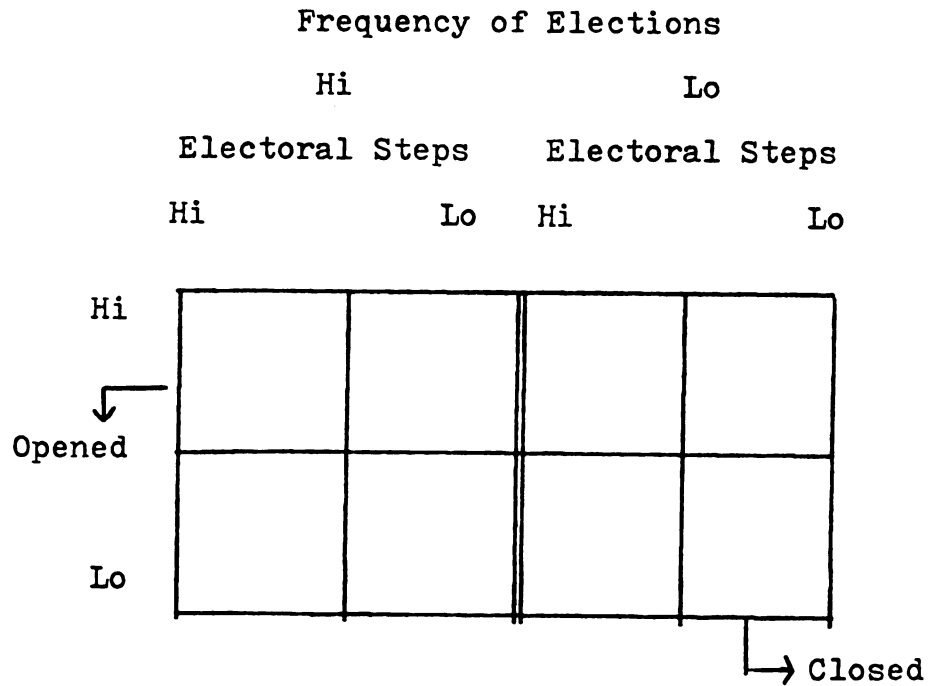


Figure 1. Classification of School Board Systems in Michigan by Frequency of Elections, Turnover Potential, and Number of Electoral Steps.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER II

¹It would seem that any analysis of decision making or of community conflict would take into account the influences exerted by the arena in which it takes place. But such an obvious suggestion seems to have escaped some writers on the subject of school desegregation. The example that comes to mind is that of Robert Crain, The Politics of School Desegregation (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968). Crain's book is used as an example not because it is poorly done but rather because it is extremely informative. However, his analysis suffers because his various discussions of the cities studied do not take into account sufficiently the organization of the political system and the values that are mobilized as a result of the way in which the system is organized.

²This suggestion came out of a meeting of my dissertation committee. The question was raised as to whether or not "race" conflict in the American society differed both in degree and in kind from other kinds of conflicts that are translated into the political arena? The answer to the question still is not available to this researcher. However, it can be asserted that issues of race do seem more frequently to involve greater intensity than do other issues within given communities. It is not clear, however, that underlying this intensity are issues and values that are completely different from other kinds of issues and values that come into conflict within communities.

³Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, Power and Poverty: Theory and Practice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

⁴Peter Bachrach, "Two Faces of Power," The Search for Community Power, eds. Willis D. Hawley and Frederick M. Wirt (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pp. 239-249.

⁵William Conolly, The Bias of Pluralism (New York: Atherton Press, 1969).

⁶Charles McCoy and John Playford (eds.), Apolitical Politics (New York: Crowell, 1967).

⁷Both Dahl and Polsby, in a loose sense, represent the "Pluralist" school of thought in American political science. See Robert Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961).

⁸Schattschneider's efforts represent perhaps the best work that has been done in the area. See E. B. Schattschneider, The Semi-Sovereign People (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1961).

⁹David B. Truman, The Political Process (New York: Knopf, 1952).

¹⁰There has been a great deal of work done on the development of race politics in Africa. Unfortunately, political scientists working with American race relations have not generally availed themselves of this literature. There are, to be sure, some interesting similarities between race relations here in this country and race relations as they existed at the time the European powers dominated Africa. The one that specifically is of interest here is the fact that the initial agitation in Nigeria for nationhood began as demands on the part of Nigerian bureaucrats for better jobs in the government.

¹¹James Q. Wilson, Negro Politics: The Search for Leadership (New York: The Free Press, 1960), pp. 255-280.

¹²The term "non-race oriented" may not be clear. We are not referring to an attitudinal dimension here. Certainly a person may be highly race oriented in his thought but may feel constrained by the situation he is in to act in a way that is counter to his feelings. Of course, it may be that persons recruited under such conditions will in fact be moderate in their actions as well as their attitudes. Regardless, we are interested in actions. One could hypothesize that persons recruited under conditions that require "moderate" stands on race but who behave counter to what is required, will not be in office when the next election is staged.

¹³Lansing State Journal, March 27, 1967, p. 3F.

¹⁴Ibid., February 5, 1967, p. 11F.

¹⁵Ibid., March 4, 1967, p. 1A.

¹⁶A casual glance at the appointive powers of the mayor probably will not do justice to an explanation of his ability to dominate certain areas of the city bureaucracy. He is allowed to appoint only two persons without the approval of the council. But for most of his other appointments, he must get council approval. The power comes from the fact that in almost every case, the people he appoints are in turn responsible for appointing other persons within their departments. It does not take much imagination to see that this set-up of the city government gives the mayor a great deal of discretion.

¹⁷Thus far, not too much has been said concerning the Spanish population in the city. They constitute only approximately 2 percent of the total population. In the conflict over school desegregation, not much was heard

from this segment. Therefore, it was not necessary to include them in our study except perhaps to point out that the problems experienced by the black community are by and large the same as those of the Spanish-speaking population. It was not until 1970 that the city had any conflict involving the Mexican Americans. At this time, one of the junior high schools was closed because of an incident involving one of the teachers and a Spanish student. The students boycotted the school and got support from their parents. This was the first time in the history of the city that the Mexican Americans banded together in a form of social protest. Whether or not blacks and Mexican Americans will form a coalition remains to be seen.

¹⁸The argument here is that those whites in the city who would feel most threatened by a "race" candidate are those who are on the edge of the ghetto and are fleeing to other parts of the metropolitan area. It is possible, of course, that whites living here would have a less hostile attitude toward black demands. But if this is the case, it runs counter to all else that the literature on the subject suggests.

¹⁹Lansing State Journal, April 4, 1967, p. 1A.

²⁰Ibid., July 2, 1961.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., July 1, 1967, p. 5A.

²³Code of Ordinances of the City of Lansing, #17B.1-17B.8.

²⁴I might add here that up until 1965 there was only a chairman who was elected from the 12 members of the HRC. Beginning in 1965 a director was appointed with pay to oversee the committee as well as administer and displace staff assigned to handle HRC business. This move gave the director a great deal more resources and thereby enhanced the ability of HRC to influence the city administration.

²⁵William Gamson, "Rancorous Conflict in Community Politics," Community Structure and Decision-Making: A Comparative Analysis, ed. Terryn Clark (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1968), pp. 197-214.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 198-199.

²⁷H. Hamilton, J. Jay and J. Madison, The Federalist Papers, Paper #10 (New York: New American Library, 1961).

²⁸Seymour M. Lipset, Political Man (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1960).

²⁹Gamson, op. cit., p. 210.

³⁰Lee Sloan, "Good Government and the Politics of Race," Social Problems, Vol. 17, Fall, 1969.

CHAPTER III

BLACK DIVISION AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

One can read in volume after volume on the school desegregation issue and note instances in which whites are divided on the subject. For some reason, researchers expect just the opposite from blacks residing in the community. The expectation would not deserve notice if it conformed to reality. But, more and more we are coming to find that blacks are sometimes no more united on the subject than are whites. The ideological shifts that have taken place over the last ten years are increasingly becoming a part of the local political scene. The time when one could view the civil rights movement as a single entity has long since passed. Thus, today there seems to be as much division among blacks over what goals are legitimate as there is between blacks and whites on the same subject.

Of course there is a question as to whether or not there was ever any "real" agreement among blacks and black leaders on the goals of the "movement." There is, however, reason to suggest that the black leadership is considerably more fragmented today than ten or twenty years ago. This suggestion makes sense if one recalls that previous to the 1954 Supreme Court decision in Brown vs. the Board of Education, there was not the premium on mass participation

as there is today. This meant, of course, that nationally recognized black leaders were few in number. Thus it was unlikely that leaders with potentially conflicting ideological stances would be working in the same neighborhood at the same time. The 1954 decision acted as a catalyst to civil rights demonstrations. By 1956 no less than seven major metropolitan areas had experienced some form of major protest in the name of civil rights. The battleground was expanding rapidly and thus the involvement of greater numbers of people with expanding opportunities for greater numbers of leaders characterized the decade of the sixties.

Today, few, if any, communities with significant numbers of blacks have remained immune to the expanded awareness of the civil rights call. If there was a unity over the goals of the civil rights movement prior to 1954, it has certainly dissipated from the weight of sheer increase in the numbers of persons involved. If the pre-1954 era was only a mistaken unity, then it has simply become more visible in this decade.

Such disunity is hardly out of the ordinary. James Coleman, in his article, "Community Conflict," argued that as one goes from the single individual to the level of a community, the level of conflict will increase.¹

Coleman was actually speaking to a point that is somewhat different from our concern here. He was suggesting that for each collectivity there is a minimum amount of conflict that will exist. Conversely, there is also a

maximum amount of conflict that an entity can experience before it dissolves. Our point speaks to the implicit assumption Coleman posits. As the size of the entity increases, the minimum level of conflict inherent may also increase. Thus, it is natural that as more and more blacks become involved, and as more and more black leaders have arisen, the conflict between blacks on the direction of the movement would also increase.

THE QUESTION OF BLACK DISUNITY

The problem here is that the literature does not take this potential division into account. Hill and Feely (Affirmative School Integration)² make an implicit assumption that there was in each one of the cases studied an entity entitled the "Negro Community." This community generally agreed on the idea of integration as a proper goal for the civil rights movement. The authors managed to convert this assumption into a value directive by typologising the cities as "successful," "partially successful," and "unsuccessful," according to the extent of integration. Such a bias, at its best, claims the "white" hats for the integrationist, and the "black" hats for other means of achieving equality. At its worst, the implicit directive places blacks in opposition to integration into the "invisible" man category, creating the illusion that all blacks still view the white man's world as superior.

Edwards and Wirt (School Desegregation in the North)³ perform a similar feat by arguing that in some instances

"Negroes themselves may divide on strategies." By limiting their understanding of the disagreements to strategies, they are led to ignore some important ideological differences. The authors redeem themselves in some respects by noting that in Manhasset, "Negro" leaders admitted that before the challenge to the system only 15 or 20 percent of the (Negro) people wished for a change in the segregated pattern. The problem here is that they disguise the 80 to 85 percent of blacks as people who probably could not be mobilized at all around the issue. They gave no thought to the possibility that these people could be mobilized to fight integration.

Robert Crain (The Politics of School Desegregation)⁴ is guilty of the same mistake. He contends that the school board's response can have a three-fold effect on the movement: the response can satisfy the general Negro leadership; a compromise can satisfy some and therefore cut off the grass roots support; or the movement can remain dissatisfied. Crain's analysis further demonstrates the problem encountered when one views the black population within a given community as a collective unit. The idea of cutting off the grass roots support by making certain concessions may have just the opposite effect. A concession to integration may, in fact, serve to mobilize black anti-integration forces. The grass roots support mentioned by Crain is assumed rather than verified. By using this assumption from which to launch this particular aspect of his analysis,

he misses other forces within the black population which are potentially important.

At this point one is led to ask why is it that so many of the authors we have discussed thus far appear insensitive to ideological division among blacks? A part of the answer rests with the fact that most studies on school desegregation view the school board as the major decision-making arena. Few boards have been willing and/or able to capitulate entirely to integrationist pressure. Thus, frequently anti-integrationist whites and blacks have had little reason to mobilize. The school board has tended to do their bidding for them in a defense of the status quo. This suggestion also explains, in part, why some authors have noted a marked absence of white hate groups. Given the relative failure of integration efforts across the nation, it is frequently unnecessary for the anti-integration forces to mobilize. It is little wonder then that Crain and others view the school board as the most dominant group in school desegregation controversies. In situations in which the school board is able to maintain a segregated pattern of school attendance, the conflict remains relatively simple. That is, the groups involved are usually highly visible and relatively few in number. This is not to suggest that such situations will be any less intense or rancorous. But the disputants tend to have clearly drawn lines. Certain civil rights groups, both all-Black and integrated, will be in conflict with school

board policies.

The assumption of black unity is also a carryover from the days in which the white leaders of the community power structure hand-picked blacks who were to do the bidding for the rest of the black population. This usually worked quite well because expectations as to the benefits to be received from the accessibility to the community powers were relatively low. For example, black colleges in the South were run on this principle. White supporters of the colleges chose the major officers. These officers, in turn, would see to it that the rest of the college was run "properly." Opposition to administrative policy was put down with the argument that "such opposition would jeopardize all the gains we have made." This was the rationale used by Booker T. Washington as president of Tuskegee University. Students were not allowed to carry books across the campus for fear that some white supporters would think the students were learning something other than manual skills. The same argument was employed by black educators in Greensboro, South Carolina, in 1960 when SNCC was formed. The students were expelled from school for jeopardizing white support for the college.

The legitimacy of black leadership has traditionally been granted by whites. The black population has been viewed as relatively passive and unquestioning. It has only recently come to the attention of social scientists that black leaders have always been suspect by the black

population for their contact with whites. But even given this suspicion, leaders have still been able to mobilize blacks in a unidirectional manner on many issues creating the illusion that there was no serious division in the ranks. A variation on this theme was noted by Franklin Frazier.

The economic and political life of a small northern city, which borders on a southern state, is dominated by a large manufacturing corporation. This corporation provides employment for many Negroes as unskilled laborers and a large proportion of whites as professional and white-collar workers. The white political leader is an official of the large corporation. At the same time, he is the owner of several local business enterprises including a cinema and restaurant, neither of which admits Negroes. The white political leader finances the business enterprises of the Negro political leader who owns a cinema attended solely by Negroes. When Negroes started campaigning for their admission to the white cinema and the white restaurant, the Negro political leader discouraged them and urged them to be loyal to Negro business enterprises.⁵

It is easy to see that the maintenance of a black leader's position depended on his ability to control his constituency. In this case, black unity was of benefit, but only for the black leader. As long as his leadership is not seriously challenged, there is the assumption of unity regardless of the nature of the relationship the leader may have with the people he is supposedly leading. As the rank and file become aware of different interests, it is possible that they will mobilize to secure them. As we shall see, the same is true today with blacks concerning the issue of school desegregation.

In most of the studies on school desegregation certain kinds of actors recur continuously. Various authors

have chosen to examine the interactions between these actors with differing emphasis. Frequently, depending on the analytical framework employed, some of the same actors receive different labels. For example, the school board has been referred to as an interest group, the decision-making arena, as part of the legal institution framework, etc. Doubtless, these different tags are informative and serve as valuable distinctions between participants in the various controversies. For our purposes, however, we are less concerned with making analytic distinctions between the kinds of participants and more concerned with who seems to be confronting whom. In other words, we are focusing on the confrontation patterns and seeking to examine what difference it makes in such patterns if the mobilized participants are united or divided. Further, we also want to examine the circumstances that determine whether or not the conflict over the school desegregation will, as it were, "get out of hand." That is, we want to examine circumstances under which conflict tends to be rancorous.⁶

The studies we have reviewed have already suggested an interaction pattern in which blacks are relatively united in the demand for integration. Figure 2 shows the various patterns of interaction between the participants. It could be argued that all of the possible interaction patterns are central to an understanding of the conflict.

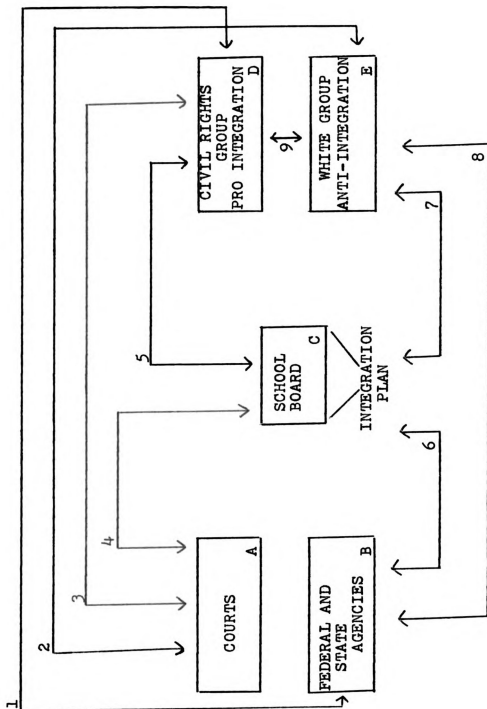


Figure 2. Interaction Patterns Between Potential Disputants in School Desegregation Controversies at the Local Level.

However, there are a few which stand out as more central than others for our purposes.

CIVIL RIGHTS GROUP-SCHOOL BOARD PATTERN

1. Pattern 5. We have already established the demand for integration is initiated by a civil rights or an integrated neighborhood group. The response of the school board is not usually positive at first. Also, the integration plan, if any, that comes out eventually, is usually not satisfactory to the group which filed the initial complaint. The importance of this pattern rests with the fact that it will persist throughout the entire controversy. It is not unusual for pattern #5 to also be accompanied by #3 or #1. The involvement of the courts and other state and federal agencies can have an important bearing on the course of the conflict. The desegregation plan many times is furthered by such outside forces. But usually, because of the highly formalistic structure of the interaction, these confrontations are not particularly rancorous in nature.

2. Pattern 7. A more potentially rancorous kind of confrontation will take place between the white anti-integration group and the body immediately responsible for the integration plan. The white group usually seeks to influence the board's behavior directly by appearing before it to demonstrate wide-spread community support for segregation. If this tactic fails (which it usually does) attempts to change the membership on the board often follow.

3. Patterns 5 and 7 concomitantly. When considering a plan it is not unusual for the school board to invite "interested citizens" to voice their opinion at an open meeting. This is likely to be a highly volatile affair because it is one of the few times that the mobilized groups encounter one another directly. This is usually the time at which the political system is the most open. Direct citizen participation is encouraged. As shall be argued later, it is not by accident that such a situation produces some of the most rancorous conflict during the entire controversy.

4. Pattern 7. Clearly, the most highly volatile confrontation would be between opposing black and white groups. But it seldom occurs because of the infrequency with which these two groups confront each other directly. One situation in which this occurs we have already alluded to--the concomitant pattern of CD and EC. But here, the school board will probably have a mediating effect. Another way in which a direct civil rights-segregationist confrontation can be brought about is with the implementation of the proposed plan.

The preceding discussion assumes black unity. As we have suggested, though, this assumption may be false. If it is false, the existence of disunity within the black population affects the confrontation patterns and thereby affects the controversy itself.

THE EXISTENCE OF DISUNITY IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY
WEAKENS THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRO-INTEGRATION GROUP
(Figure 3). This proposition is fairly easy to understand.

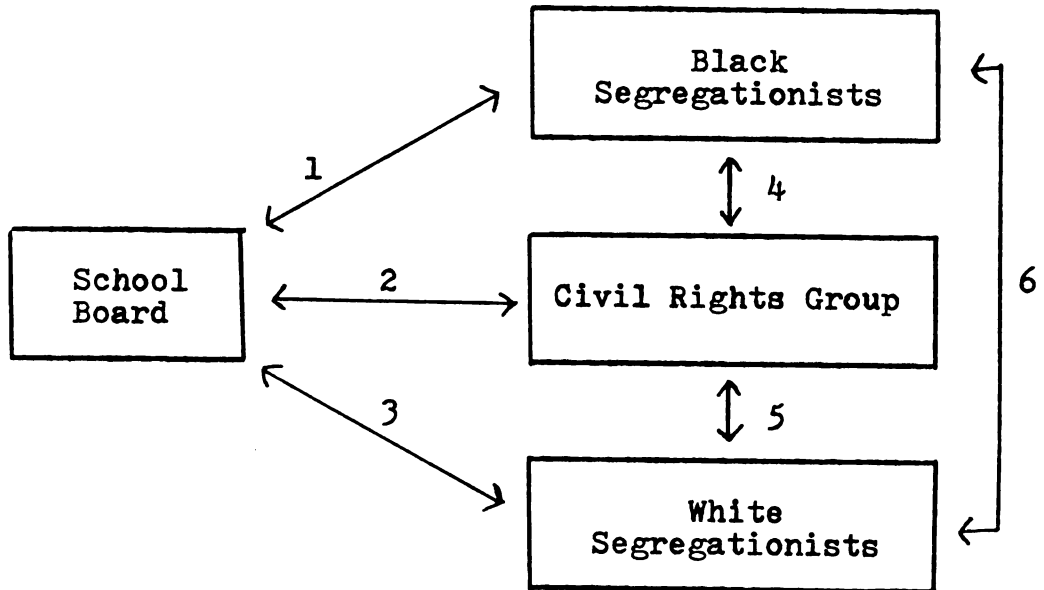


Figure 3. Confrontation Pattern--Black Disunity.

The group demanding an end to de facto segregation can speak with greater authority if it has the support of the entire black and white community. If total support is not with the integration group, then at least they will have the backing of blacks who are mobilized around the issue. In this situation one sees only the confrontation patterns listed previously. The introduction of mobilized black segregationist forces has, at least, a twofold effect. First, it absorbs some of the energies of the integration group by forcing them to fight still another "enemy." Secondly, it brings the legitimacy of the integration group into question because it is clear that certain segments of

the black population are not willing to allow the group to go unchallenged in doing the bidding for the "black community."

1. Pattern 4. The most obvious change in interaction patterns is the introduction of pattern 4. This has the potential for being particularly rancorous because both mobilized groups are seeking to win the support of the same population and they are likely to come into face-to-face contact more frequently than would be the case if one of the groups was white.

2. Patterns 1 and 4. This poses a greater challenge for the school board because now practically any decision would have the effect of alienating some major group. Any compromise with the integration forces would probably be somewhat distasteful to both black and white segregationists. Further, the very fact of compromise makes it highly probable that the pro-integration group will remain dissatisfied because the board is not willing to commit itself fully to "equal educational opportunities."

BLACK DIVISION LAYS THE BASIS FOR A BLACK-WHITE SEGREGATIONISTS' COALITION. The possibility of this coalition has been ignored altogether in the literature. Logically, it makes a great deal of sense given that both groups are after similar kinds of things. As shall be shown later in this work, when both groups are not exceptionally adept at dealing with the school board, the possibility of such a coalition is enhanced. Such a

coalition can also have the effect of conferring legitimacy on each of these groups.

I do not intend to give the impression that this consideration is solely a theoretical utterance. Recall that Marcus Garvey got a great deal of financial support from the Ku Klux Klan. Garvey wanted to move blacks back to Africa and the Klan could not have been in more agreement with his objectives.

BLACK MIGRATION AND BLACK DIVISION

We have briefly touched the changes in the interaction patterns that occur when blacks are divided versus when blacks are united. Those who have chosen to emphasize black unity have not done so without empirical references. It is indeed true that the degree to which blacks are divided or united runs the spectrum as we go from community to community. In some places, the traditional black leadership pattern has been able to survive the onslaught of radical shifts in ideological orientations. The question which is most appropriate at this point is what are the variables which can account for the propensity of a given black population to go in one direction or the other. Or rather, what variables account for the tendency in some black communities to divide over the issue of school desegregation?

A partial answer to our question is included in William Gamson's "Rancorous Conflict"⁷ in which he argues that differences in the populace in length of residence,

ethnicity, education, etc., can explain the propensity of such populations toward division on community issues. Underlying Gamson's assertion is the assumption that such differences call forth in the community differences in interests, loyalties, and experiences that prompt differing responses to the same set of stimuli. Given this then, a proposed solution to a particular community problem will affect these differing interests in the community in different ways. Then the more homogeneous the population in some respects, the less likely it is that a given issue will divide the community as much as it would divide a less homogeneous community. An example of this would be a situation in which the residents of a certain community, by and large depended on the local university for their livelihood. If the university threatened to close its doors permanently because of student rioting on the campus and in the town, one would expect the town residents to be fairly united in their opposition to the move. Contrast this with the situation in which some, but not all, the residents were tied to the university. One might expect the community to be fairly well divided because the proposed closing would affect their interests variously.

The same principle applies to blacks residing in a community. The assumption of unity has, in part, been predicated on the belief that all blacks have a common interest and common perceptions as to how that interest should be pursued. One major facilitator of changing

perceptions in the black population is significant migration into the community by other blacks. I am suggesting that one way of explaining division among blacks over the school desegregation is to look at the extent to which the population has changed over time. That is, we want to look at the extent to which persons have moved into and out of the community. It has been noted that Americans have been a tremendously mobile people. This generalization also includes blacks. The major migration trend for blacks in this country has been from the South to the more industrialized North and West Coast areas. We have learned that blacks who migrate tend to be more literate, better trained for jobs, and have a higher social-economic status than those blacks in the communities from which they migrated. Just the opposite is true when one compares such persons to the black populations of the communities into which they move. In a social-economic sense, migrating blacks are different.

It would seem that the greater the influx of migrating blacks the greater chance there is that the black population will change its social-economic characteristics. This is important because with such changes it is also likely that the kinds of demands that may have emanated from the black population in a given community will also change. What is more, is that such changes in interest will probably go unnoticed until an actual controversy arises.⁸ The black leaders in the community are supposedly

representing the interests of people who have been in the community for a number of years and who have developed expectations concerning how things work. Leaders are likely to be aware of their interests and see themselves as representing those interests. The introduction of new interests in the community by way of the introduction of significant numbers of new persons, frequently leaves the black leader in a cross-pressured situation. The black interests that helped bring him to power and the interests he represents, are no longer as prominent in the black community as they once were. Other opposing interests may have developed. The black leaders are still seen as the representatives of the black community. Yet in order for the "new" interest to become a fact of political power, either their own representatives must come forth, or the more established black leadership must capitulate and thereby run the risk of abandoning that interest which helped bring them to a position of leadership.

The discussion concerning division among blacks can be summarized as follows: BLACK DIVISION CREATES STRAIN AMONG THE BLACK RESIDENTS OF THE COMMUNITY:

1. The degree of strain is reflected in "formal" leadership turnover in positions held by black leaders.
2. The degree of strain is reflected in the emergence of new leadership roles among blacks.

We have implied another proposition throughout the essay. THE AMOUNT OF STRAIN IS RELATED TO THE EXTENT

TO WHICH THE LOCAL POLITICAL SYSTEM ENCOURAGES CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

1. Citizen participation makes the political system conducive to rancorous conflict.

2. The extent to which the system is accessible or inaccessible determines its conduciveness.

In the final analysis we are concerned with three things: first, we want to correct the mistaken impression that blacks are united on the idea of integration as a proper direction for the civil rights movement. Not only are blacks divided on the issue, but there are some variables which can identify the probability that a given black population will be divided. Secondly, we are concerned with the fact that mobilized division tends to create strain in the black community. The degree of strain will be indicated by the turnover rate in black leadership. Lastly, there are some situations in which black division tends to be particularly rancorous. Rancor in conflict is encouraged in any system that encourages citizen participation.

With this introduction we are ready to turn our attention to the conflict over school desegregation in two mid-Michigan cities which fall on opposite ends of the "openness-closedness" and participation dimensions. The next two chapters will attempt to give the reader the background information and a feel for the chronology of events. I realize that the use of only two case studies seriously hampers the external validity of any conclusion

that may be drawn. There are two factors which make this a less damaging aspect of the study. First, the kinds of variables being examined here are part and parcel of a body of literature. Therefore, my conclusions can be compared to other findings, thereby validating what has been done previously. In the event that my conclusions run counter to other findings, then I have suggested, but not proven, that we ought to take another look at some of the findings in the field.

Secondly, I would argue that there is no statistical difference between two case studies and eight. The question of external validity is mathematical. It refers to whether or not one has an N that is sufficiently large to be representative of the universe. None of the studies we have examined thus far has been the least bit concerned with studying a representative sample of school desegregation controversies. The reasons for this are obvious. First of all, not enough is known about the incidence of such conflicts. Secondly, to gather a statistically representative sample would require a level of funding beyond the capabilities of most researchers. Hence, most researchers, including myself, have had to use cases because the information was readily available and not because a given case or set of cases was representative.

Another problem here is that the research design may not account for all of the variance. For example, different size black populations in our two communities

may account for differing degree of intensity among whites. A large black population vis-a-vis whites may be eminently more threatening to the local power structure than a smaller black population. I have tried to account for this factor by choosing cities with roughly similar population compositions. However, as we shall see, there were still some aspects of the controversies that could be accounted for by way of the differing sizes of the black communities. I have tried to be sensitive to this consideration. The extent of my success is left to the reader's evaluation.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER III

¹James Coleman, Community Conflict (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957).

²Roscoe Hill and Malcolm Feeley, Affirmative School Integration (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1968).

³T. B. Edwards and F. M. Wirt, School Desegregation in the North (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1967).

⁴Robert Crain, The Politics of School Desegregation (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968).

⁵Franklin Frazier, Black Bourgeoisie (New York: Free Press, 1957), pp. 109-110.

⁶William Gamson, "Rancorous Conflict in Community Politics," Community Structure and Decision-Making: A Comparative Analysis, ed. Terryn Clark (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1968).

⁷Ibid., p. 195.

⁸Ibid., p. 196

CHAPTER IV

DESEGREGATION IN LANSING

Someone once had the insight to note that "God so loved the world that he did not send a committee." Any student of American politics who seeks to uncover the dynamics of decision making at the community level is frequently led to wonder whether or not God loves government. For there indeed seems to be a tendency among officials to abide by the following rule--when in doubt, refer the matter to a committee.

My task, in this chapter and the next, is to review the story of the fight over school desegregation in the communities of Lansing and Grand Rapids, Michigan. The task was rendered more difficult than would otherwise be the case, had not in both instances so much of the conflict taken place within committees. A great number of formal and informal committee records were not preserved and those that were, were not always available to the researcher. Hence, I proceed with my story with the understanding that I will be telling somewhat of an incomplete tale. However, it is my sincerest feeling that the resultant gaps do not affect appreciably one's understanding of the conflicts.

The battle in Lansing, Michigan, over the issue of

school desegregation began officially in April of 1963 when the Education Committee of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) requested that the Lansing Board of Education adopt a policy statement in favor of all "children receiving an equal opportunity in the public school system." In this report, there were three recommendations:

1. That the Lansing Board of Education make a formal statement of policy favoring the elimination of school segregation wherever it exists regardless of the cause.
2. That the School Board and the school administration make Saginaw Street the northern boundary, and Mount Hope the Southern boundary of the West Junior High School [the major junior high for blacks] district for the coming year.
3. That the School Board form a Citizens' Committee to study the long range aspects of the problem of integration and advise the board at regular intervals with regard to ways of implementing an on-going program.¹

The intent of the report was clear. The NAACP sought to get the issue of school segregation to be taken up by the board as a problem that demanded a solution.

This was no easy task, for as Robert Crain has argued in

The Politics of School Desegregation:

We began the study with the basic assumption that the school integration decision would be a complex, bargaining arrangement, the result of rather elaborate negotiations, threats, and counter-threats. Obvious though this assumption may be, it is not a good way to approach the problem. We found instead that in most cases the school board members first responded to the issue by acting according to their predispositions about civil rights; liberal boards tended to integrate; conservative boards did not. By increasing the pressure, the civil rights movement might be able to exhort some minor additional concessions or to

escalate the conflict into an all-out battle, but it could not change the overall tone of the board's behavior.²

If the board chose not to take the issue up, there would be very little that the NAACP could do except take the matter to court. Of course, this was an exceptionally precarious way to proceed given that there had been no ruling on de facto segregation. Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, dealt only with de jure segregation. This fact and the resistance of local boards has left those in the North who seek solutions to the problem of the separation of the races, in an unfavorable position vis-a-vis the courts.

The Lansing Board could have indeed avoided the entire issue by refusing to consider the question. But the ideology of the board members and other community pressure helped to lead the board in the direction of endorsing the principle of racially balanced schools but refusing to admit that the issue could properly be handled by this particular body given that the cause of racial imbalance was attributable to segregated housing patterns that were outside the jurisdiction of the school board.

Though not perceived as such at the time, this admission was a major victory for the NAACP because the board, while not willing to take up an issue that would almost for sure bring about intense community conflict, chose to make concessions on the other demands and thereby assured themselves, inadvertently, of having to deal with

the issue of school desegregation at a later date. The policy statement on equal educational opportunity was adopted on June 4, 1964, and deserves quoting at length.

The Board of Education plans to continue its traditional practice of establishing attendance areas on a geographical basis because it believes that what happens in the community and in the homes served by each school building is of crucial importance to the effectiveness of teachers, counselors, and administrators. The Board of Education also believes that the school is and should be a unifying influence in a neighborhood.

The Board of Education believes that students, both elementary and secondary, are more likely to participate fully in both the curricular and extra-curricular activities of the school nearest their homes. Insofar as physical facilities or curricular program will permit, students will be assigned to schools on an attendance area basis.

The Board of Education recognizes that this policy produces in some areas of the school district an imbalance of minority group pupils (sometimes referred to as de facto segregation). This undesirable result is caused by factors beyond the control of the Board of Education. The reduction of that imbalance will be one of the factors taken into account by the Board in planning new construction or in adjusting school service area boundaries to accomodate shifts or changes in pupil population.

However, the Board of Education recognizes that on occasion it has been necessary to deviate from the attendance--area concept and assign students to schools far removed from their homes. This has been done to eliminate overcrowding of certain schools. In individual cases, students have been allowed to attend a school other than the ones to which they would normally be assigned. Such transfers have been authorized only because of the particular, individual needs of the student--usually curricular needs--which one school is prepared to meet, another is not. The Board of Education shall continue its present policy regarding such individual transfers.³

A couple of things are worth noting here concerning the statement. First, the board of education was willing

to take on the issue of school desegregation but not at the expense of the "neighborhood" concept of school attendance, which meant, of course, that their willingness was an unwillingness; and perhaps more importantly, the board would only consider the issue in a secondary sense. That is, if the need for boundary changes were present, the board would take into consideration the racial balance of schools. Otherwise the issue would not be considered.

The major concession made by the board at this meeting was the appointment of a "Citizens' Committee," that eventually, in July of 1966, recommended that bussing be used to achieve a more desirable racial balance.

In December of 1964, David T. Duncan, President of the Greater Lansing Coordinating Council for Human Rights, issued a report in which he contended: "That de facto segregation exists and constitutes a problem in Lansing is an obvious fact." The first part of his statement concerning the existence of de facto segregation was never seriously disputed by anyone in the city. (See Tables 1, 2, and 3 for school population statistics.) However, the extent to which a significant number of persons thought it to be a problem was not at all certain. But even if it were a problem, whether or not the school board would acknowledge that it belonged properly before them, was the major issue that had to be settled. As we have already shown, some boards will try to "duck" the issue by attributing the problem to causes that are outside their

"proper" jurisdiction.

At the time the Duncan report was issued, Lansing had three senior high schools (grades 10-12), five junior high schools (grades 7-9), and forty-nine grade schools (grades K-6). Table 1 shows that of the junior and senior level schools no school had more than 28 percent black. And the great majority of grade schools had fewer than 20 percent black. (See Table 2.) The argument over the existence of de facto segregation did not hinge on this kind of reading of the school population statistics. Table 3 shows more explicitly what the local NAACP was concerned with. In the high schools, over 71 percent of the black students in the junior high system went to one school, while over 77 percent were enrolled in two of the five schools at the junior high level.⁴

The concern was obvious. As more and more blacks moved into the city the possibility that a dual system would develop was great indeed. If one looks at those grade schools with 10 percent or more black enrollment. (see Table 4), the trend toward an "undesirable" situation becomes more evident. Kalamazoo, Main, and Michigan grade schools accommodated 45 percent of the black population in the system at that level. All three of these schools contained racial imbalance of over the 83 percent figure, an obvious indication of the existance of de facto segregation.

Table 1
 Percentage of Black and White Population
 of Lansing Schools in 1967

School	Total Population	Percentage Breakdown		
<u>High School</u>	<u>All Students</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u>
Eastern High	1761	89%	5%	6%
Everett High	2289	96%	3%	1%
Sexton High	1747	77%	21%	2%
<u>Junior High</u>				
C. W. Otto	1325	86%	6%	8%
Dwight Rich	1609	94%	4%	2%
Pattengill	1189	80%	12%	7%
Walter French	1422	96%	2%	2%
West	1422	69%	28%	2%

Table 2

Percentage of Black and White Population
in Selected Lansing Schools in 1967

<u>Elementary School</u>	<u>All Students</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u>
Harley Franks	217	91%	1%	7%
High	367	71%	6%	22%
Holmes	399	83%	12%	2%
Horsebrook	233	100%	0%	0%
Hurd	105	100%	0%	0%
Kalamazoo	423	10%	83%	6%
Kendon	396	89%	10%	1%
Lewton	417	99%	0%	0%
Lincoln-Special Education	42	43%	7%	0%
Lyons	263	100%	0%	0%
Main	312	3%	97%	0%
Maple Grove	394	93%	3%	3%
Maple Hill	266	99%	1%	0%
Maplewood	421	94%	0%	4%
Michigan	341	13%	81%	4%
Moores Park	388	90%	2%	7%
Mt. Hope	432	87%	7%	5%
North	529	98%	0%	2%
Northwestern	336	99%	0%	1%
Oak Park	238	82%	3%	14%
Pleasant Grove	559	91%	6%	3%

<u>Elementary School (continued)</u>	<u>All Students</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u>
Pleasant View	463	89%	7%	3%
Post Oak	458	96%	2%	2%
Reo	426	96%	1%	2%
Sheridan Road	501	93%	2%	5%
Valley Farms	338	100%	0%	0%
Verlinden	329	84%	14%	2%
Wainwright	878	92%	6%	1%
Walnut	491	74%	19%	6%
Willow	563	74%	23%	3%
ELEMENTARY TOTAL	18,991			
Total Blacks in Elementary School	2,018			

Table 3

Percentage Black Population
in Lansing Schools - 1967

School	Number of Black Students	Percent of Total Blacks in System at Indicated Level	Cumulative Percent
<u>High School</u>			
Sexton	370	71.98	71.98
Eastern	85	16.53	88.51
Everett	59	11.47	99.88
<u>Junior High</u>			
West	401	57.20	57.20
Pattengill	143	20.40	77.60
C. W. Otto	73	10.41	88.01
Dwight Rich	57	8.13	96.14
Walter French	27	3.85	99.99

Table 4
 Percentage Black Population
 in Lansing Schools - 1967
 (Selected Elementary Schools)

<u>Elementary School</u>	<u>Number of Black Students</u>	<u>Percent of Total Blacks in System</u>	<u>Cumulative Percentage</u>
Kalamazoo	353	17.492	17.492
Main	304	15.064	32.556
Michigan	277	13.726	45.282
Willow	134	6.640	51.922
Allen	106	5.252	57.174
Grand River	64	3.171	62.345
Fairview	57	2.824	65.169
Holmes	48	2.378	67.547
Verlinden	46	2.279	69.826
Forest View	43	2.130	71.956
Kendon	40	1.982	73.938
Forest Road	40	1.982	75.220
High	21	1.040	76.260
Community	12	0.594	76.854
n=2,018			

There were several events that occurred during the controversy that demonstrated that the conflict did not divide completely along racial lines. There are several questions that need answers at this point, but we shall refrain from asking them until our story is more complete.

The citizens' committee was appointed by the Lansing Board of Education and consisted of fifty persons. It was authorized to do a study of de facto segregation in the city. Sixteen months later, the results were turned over to the board.⁵

The composition of that committee clearly earmarked it as a committee of "initial agitators" for the integration of public schools. In other words, those who were most responsible for bringing the issue before the school board were appeased in the sense that now they had some direct affiliation with the board with the defined task of dealing with the issue of de facto segregation. This attitude represented a shift in the position of the board. Before, they were unwilling to acknowledge that the issue properly belonged before them. Now they were funding a committee to study it.

The major issue was taken up directly when the report noted that a segregated housing pattern existed in Lansing and that this pattern, "unless modified by other means inevitably will lead to segregated education." When the school board released the report, however, the board itself added that "since housing patterns are

beyond the scope of its area of recommendations, the group can only urge those educational program adjustments which will tend to alleviate the situation as it now exists."⁶

The report also made note of the fact that West Junior High School would be all black were it not for the bussing of whites from other areas of the city. It was clear at this point that the bussing of these students coincided with the goals of providing for racial balance, but the school board denied that racial balance was a consideration in the bussing. In fact, the explicit rationale for the bussing was "relieving overcrowding" elsewhere in the school system.⁷ The struggle on the part of the school board to keep the issue from coming before it was rapidly being lost.

At the senior high level, the Committee noted that 20 percent of the Sexton High students were black which represented an increase of 5 percent over the 1964 level. The message of the committee was that the situation as it existed would soon mean an almost complete and total separation of the races in the public schools of Lansing. The obvious immediate answer to the problem was bussing for purposes of establishing racial balance. But the expressed hope was the need for bussing would be obviated by increased integration in housing.⁸

Given that the Committee felt that the school board could really do little or nothing concerning

segregated housing patterns, they recommended that the Lansing School Board discontinue the operations of the elementary and junior high schools that showed the greatest degrees of racial imbalance in the direction of becoming all black.⁹ These schools included Kalamazoo, Christianity, Cedar, and West Junior High. In reference to the closing of West, the Committee suggested that this be done as soon as possible and the building be used for administration. The Committee also recommended that the affected black pupils be assigned in equal numbers to each of the city's junior high schools.

The implications of such a move would be that black children would be bussed around the city. In terms of the objectives of the local NAACP, this particular move was in line with what they were trying to do. The school administration would be responding to the issue put before them in a concrete manner. One of the problems here was that the NAACP assumed that it had the support of the local black community. As it turned out, this assumption was, at best, misleading. As we shall see later, the issue of bussing served to reveal that a significant amount of disunity existed in the black community.

On July 23, 1966, the school board met and took two major steps in the direction they had been fighting all along the way. The board authorized the transfer of all students residing in a portion of the West Junior High School attendance area to Pattengill Junior High starting

in September; secondly, the board took under study a proposal submitted by Superintendent Manning involving "cross bussing" for the three senior high schools to eliminate segregation at that level.¹⁰

For purposes of brevity, allow me to quote directly from the report concerning the transfers that were to take place. The "Manning Plan" as it came to be known, was to be carried out over the 1966-67 and 1967-68 school years. The first year was to involve only tenth graders. The number of students involved and where they were to be transferred to is listed below. SEXTON TO EASTERN--transfer all Negro students living in that portion of the Sexton attendance area east of Logan Street and north of St. Joseph, including the north side of St. Joseph, to Eastern (115 students). No transportation would be required. SEXTON TO EVERETT--transfer the Valley Farms area from Eastern to Sexton (110 students). These students are transported now and could remain a part of the Sexton area along with Sheridan Road and Hurd after a new senior high is built. EVERETT TO SEXTON--transfer that portion of the Everett attendance area west of the NYC railroad and north of Victor to Sexton (135 students). This area is far from Everett and would logically remain a part of the Sexton attendance area after a new high school is built. This would also help to reduce the current overcrowding at Everett. Transportation would be required for that part of the area west of Boston Boulevard. EVERETT TO EASTERN--

transfer that portion of the Everett attendance area east of the Michigan Central railroad to Eastern (85 students). This area is distant from Everett and has been part of Eastern in the past, and could logically remain part of the Eastern area after a new senior high is built.

In all the first year of the program, 545 students would be affected and one additional bus required to implement the program.¹¹ By 1968, the distribution of students would conform to an acceptable racial balance. The projected figures are listed below.

ENROLLMENT ¹²			
<u>Eastern</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>
Total	1,965	2,050	2,075
Black	85	125	165
<u>Everett</u>			
Total	2,225	2,250	2,300
Black	65	100	130
<u>Sexton</u>			
Total	1,937	2,020	2,050
Black	350	275	205

Over the next two years, 1967 and 1968, the plan was to distribute the black population in the school system over the three high schools in roughly equal numbers. Sexton would still have the largest number of black students at 205, but this number would represent only 40 percent of the expected black high school population rather than the more than 70 percent Sexton presently housed. With

this plan, there was also the assurance that a de facto segregated situation would not develop in the future.

It is noteworthy that the first phase of the plan did not employ "one-way" bussing. The desegregation of the junior high schools, however, would mean that most of the black population at that level would be bussed.

Details of the plan were released in the local newspaper. By the next meeting of the school board, an all-white group had formed to fight the plan. The organizational impetus came from those white neighborhoods that were to be affected during the coming school year. Petitions in the area were circulated and a neighborhood meeting was held.

One informant, who was not particularly sympathetic to the cause of the new white group told us that the meeting was billed as a "keep our kids in their school and keep the niggers out" meeting. The details of the meeting were not accessible to this researcher. However, the group immediately issued a press release calling themselves the "Colonial Village-Eaton Downs Citizens' Committee." Their initial membership was around 200, but they were able to gather more than 2,000 signatures before the board meeting, which was less than three days after the group formed.¹³

At the request of the Colonial Village-Eaton Downs Citizens' Committee, the school board held an open meeting on August 4, 1966. During the meeting it became clear that no one member of the school board, regardless of

their stand on the plan, had the confidence of the Citizens' Committee. One board member in particular, who had voted against the plan and who expressed sympathy with the Citizens' Committee, was threatened by one of the group. The meeting was heated and most of the citizens who wanted to speak, were given the opportunity.

Up to this point, it was assumed that the antagonists to the plan were, by and large, white. But to the surprise of almost everyone present, J. C. Williams, a former black football player at Michigan State University and coordinator of a new black group called "The Grass Roots Committee," (GRC) argued "that both black parents and students were against the plan. "We found," said Williams, "that many young Negro kids don't want to go to Everett. We believe the school system should get out of the bus system entirely. I think if you talk to the people (black residents) you will get an entirely different view of what's happening. You should go to the people. If we used the money that's wasted for busses properly, we would give our teachers more adequate salaries."¹⁴

The anti-integrationist whites immediately offered "thunderous" applause.¹⁵ This left the NAACP members at the meeting holding a shattered illusion that had previously suggested a great deal of unity among Lansing blacks concerning the desirability of the bussing plan. Richard Letts, Lansing Human Relations Director, could only offer a restatement of the necessity of racial

balance in the Lansing school system. At this time, the white anti-integrationist group presented a petition to the Board requesting them to "cease and desist" until a new plan could be formulated that would take all the members of the community into consideration.¹⁶

The school board met the next week and decided to go ahead with the plan in spite of clear evidence that significant groups in the community could and would wage an impressive fight against it.

The Colonial Village-Eaton Downs group met again and reorganized. A new chairman and vice chairman were elected and the group, in light of what now appeared to be considerable black support for their petition, renamed itself, "The Peoples Action Committee on Education" (PACE).¹⁷ The outcome of this reorganization meeting was the issuance of another press release accusing the school board of misusing a recent millage increase. Instead of higher teacher salaries, it was argued that the board used the money on an extensive transport system. Further, PACE formally announced that they "were not in opposition to the idea of integrated schools but rather, they opposed the manner in which it was being attempted."¹⁸ That is, they opposed bussing as a means of achieving integration.

Given the existence of segregated housing patterns, bussing was the only way to bring about the integration that PACE said "it did not oppose." Also, though we have not been able to confirm it, the members of PACE

seemed to understand implicitly that to win their fight, they would have to attract much broader community support. Hence, they consciously took Williams' suggestion concerning higher teacher salaries and included it in their press release.

On August 15, the school board held another open meeting in which citizens would have the opportunity to speak on the proposed bussing plan. Though there were several persons present who denounced the plan, the board decided to go ahead. At this juncture, PACE, having failed to influence the board's decision by direct petitioning, appointed Lloyd Kemp, a lawyer, to study the possibility of legal action. This move prompted the State's Civil Rights Commission to send PACE a letter requesting that they not interfere with the right of equal opportunity to education for any children in Lansing. PACE, in turn, used the letter to argue that the Civil Rights Commission was trying, as were others, to make the issue a racial one.¹⁹

Court action was taken on September 7, 1966, by the District Circuit Court which ruled that the plan would not go into effect until more study was done by the court concerning the plan's constitutionality. The effect of this would have been that the bussing plan would be a dead issue for the school year 1966-67, given that school was to commence in less than one week after the court decision. In light of this, the school board and the court went into conference. The outcome was to allow the

high school students affected by the bussing plan to appear at the assigned schools on a "voluntary" basis and to allow the school officials to provide the necessary bussing transportation for them.

What was left unclear was the legal course of action that would follow if students did not appear at their scheduled classrooms. During this time, the coalition between PACE and GRC became more evident. One of the claims of the defendant (the school board) was that race was the motivating variable for the action by PACE. The plaintiff was quick to point out in court that four of the persons actually filing suit were black and that their case involved minors of all races and persons of diverse national origins.

The answer as to what would happen to students who did not go to their assigned schools was soon forthcoming. At Everett students who were not assigned to the school (those reassigned to bring about better racial balance) were denied admission. In a formal statement, Superintendent Manning argued that:

A suit is pending in Ingham County Circuit Court challenging the validity of the assignment of certain students to certain schools. However, the temporary restraining order entered in this case does not provide that any student is entitled to attend a school different than that to which the student has been assigned by the Board of Education. The restraining order entered in this case does permit the voluntary attendance of the student to the school to which the student has been assigned. Until litigation in question is resolved, the Board of Education must adhere to the assignments made, although in compliance with the court's present order, the Board will take no

action to compel students to attend the schools to which they have been assigned if they do not attend voluntarily. On the other hand, the board must necessarily refrain from any action as to reassignments prior to the final resolution of the law suit in question.²⁰

In other words, the students in question had a choice--either they could attend school "voluntarily," or they could stay home until the suit was settled. This meant, of course, that the school board would have its way until such time that the court ruled against them. The intent of the board was clear. Maybe after the plan had the chance to be implemented, opposition to it would dissipate and the suit might be dropped.

About 78 percent of the reassigned students showed up "voluntarily" to the schools to which they were assigned. On September 13, 1966, the County Court dealt with this new maneuver by the school board and made a three-fold ruling: (1) Continuation of the earlier preliminary injunction pending a full hearing of the case and a decision as to whether the plan is unconstitutional; (2) enrollment forthwith by school officials of those students who refused to register voluntarily at their assigned schools; and (3) enrollment in their regular schools of those pupils who voluntarily went to other schools as required under the plan. What this meant, in essence, was that the school board's attempt to enforce the plan while the issue of its constitutionality was pending, was thwarted by the court.²¹

Given that the court had moved against the board's decision to go ahead with the plan, Superintendent Manning

issued the following statement: (1) Students who have voluntarily enrolled at the school to which they were assigned by the August 4 school board order and who wish to stay there may do so; (2) Students who voluntarily enrolled at the school to which they were assigned by the August 4 order, but who wish to attend the school they would have attended in their original attendance area may transfer back to that school. Parents of students who wish to re-enroll their children in their original school have been ordered by the court to fill out a form stating this request; (3) any student residing in any area affected by the school transfer plan who has not yet enrolled at any school may so enroll at the school he was entitled to attend prior to the August 4 board order.²²

Both PACE and the school board knew that the issue was dead for the school year 1966-67. On September 14, the school board announced that "there will be no further changes of high school attendance areas during this school year regardless of the outcome of the law suit now pending in Ingham County Circuit Court."²³

The State Board's interpretation of what happened is, at best, questionable. First, trying to get the Lansing board to acknowledge that a problem existed was a difficult task. Though after the board acknowledged that a problem existed, they were willing to admit that something ought to be done, they still maintained that what was to be done was outside their jurisdiction.

But as things developed, the board committed itself to ending de facto segregation in the city. What kept them from implementing their commitment was the court.

The pattern of student choice after the court blocked the plan tells an interesting tale. According to figures released, 90 out of the 148 elected to enroll in the school to which they would have been assigned prior to the August 4 order. The remaining 58 voluntarily enrolled in the schools to which they had been assigned by the Master Plan. The breakdown of the five areas covered in the three way high school transfer plan was as follows. First, thirty-four Everett students who had been assigned to Sexton went back to Everett. Seven of the original Everett area students enrolled at Sexton. Secondly, of the Everett area students reassigned to Eastern High School, ten returned to Everett and sixteen stayed at Eastern. Thirdly, of the Eastern area students who had been assigned to Sexton, twenty-six returned to Eastern and five enrolled at Sexton. Of the Sexton students who had been assigned to attend Eastern, nine returned to Sexton and fourteen enrolled at Eastern. The Sexton students who had been assigned to attend Everett, two returned to Sexton and six enrolled at Everett.²⁴

Our story began with the Education Committee of the NAACP and went on to cite the numerous committees that developed during the conflict. It is appropriate that the formal story end with the headlines that appeared in the

local newspaper following the outcome of the law suit-- "CITIZENS COMMITTEE NAMED FOR BUS STUDY."²⁵ The truly ironic fact is that of the six things the committee was charged to do, none of them dealt directly with racial imbalance and the issues that initiated the entire controversy.

Though our formal story ends here, we have not told all. One might think at this point, that the school board had been severely beaten. But per usual in matters of local politics, Longfellow's contention that "things are not what they seem," holds true. West Junior High was closed the following year. This meant that there would be no junior high school in the black community. Students would then have to be bussed to other schools. There was no major opposition to the closing of West largely because it was one of the oldest buildings in the school system and had pretty much lost its utility. Therefore, since black students were already being bussed, it made little difference where. In 1969, two new junior high schools opened and the entire junior high boundaries were redrawn. Both black and white students are bussed throughout the system.

As one can tell by Table 5, the senior high schools were not integrated. However, the board has made plans for a new senior high which will necessitate a redrawing of the boundaries. By 1971, the black population will be divided fairly equally among three of the four senior high schools in the city with the option to go to the fourth

if they so desire. For students who do not live within walking distance, bus service will be provided. All of this has been implemented without serious struggle.

Indeed, it appears that the school board has worn the resistors down. The Peoples Action Committee on Education is still running candidates for the school board, but their members seem to be interested in other things now. One woman from the original PACE group, when asked to explain the difference between the bussing plan they had fought and the one the board now has, replied, "There isn't any difference at all. It just goes to show, you can't fight city hall." The unarticulated response was "Yes, you can fight city hall sometimes, but it depends."

Table 5
 Percentage of Black and White Population
 in Lansing Schools in 1970

<u>School</u>	<u>All Students</u>	<u>Percentage Breakdown</u>		
		<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u>
<u>High School</u>				
Eastern	1,793	86%	6%	8%
Everett	2,183	94%	3%	2%
Sexton	1,920	76%	22%	2%
<hr/>				
<u>Junior High</u>				
C. W. Otto	1,526	84%	7%	8%
Dwight Rich	1,987	85%	12%	2%
Gardner East	849	84%	13%	3%
Gardner West	736	82%	15%	3%
Pattengill	1,326	80%	9%	10%
Walter French	<u>1,254</u>	<u>82%</u>	<u>14%</u>	<u>14%</u>
Total		84%	11%	

Table 6
 Percentage Black Population
 in Lansing Schools
 1970
 (Selected Elementary Schools
 with 10% or More Black)

School	Number of Blacks	Percent of Total Black Population	Cumulative Percentage
<u>High School</u>			
Sexton	414	70.77	70.77
Eastern	101	17.26	88.03
Everett	<u>70</u>	11.97	100.00
n =	585		
<u>Junior High</u>			
Dwight Rich	185	22.370	22.37
Walter French	169	20.435	42.81
Pattengill	136	16.444	59.25
Gardner East	114	13.784	73.03
Gardner West	113	13.663	86.69
C. W. Otto	<u>110</u>	13.301	99.99
n =	827		
<u>Selected Elementary Schools</u>			
n = 2,379			
Michigan	263	11.06	11.06

<u>School</u>	<u>Number of Blacks</u>	<u>Percent of Total Black Population</u>	<u>Cumulative Percentage</u>
Main	255	10.72	21.78
Willow	173	7.27	29.05
Holmes	173	7.27	36.32
Kalamazoo	160	6.73	43.05
Wainwright	112	4.71	47.76
Allen	106	8.58	56.34
Pleasant View	91	3.83	60.17
Walnut	89	3.74	63.91
Verlinden	70	2.94	66.85
Woodcreek	57	2.40	69.25
Foster	51	2.14	71.39
Genessee	43	1.81	73.20
Grand River	36	1.51	74.71
Harley Franks	36	1.51	76.22
Forest View	32	1.35	77.57
Forest Road	30	1.26	78.83
Cedar	20	0.84	79.67
Lincoln	15	0.63	80.30

Table 7

Percentage of Black and White Population
in Lansing Schools in 1970

<u>Elementary Schools</u>	<u>All Students</u>	<u>Percentage Breakdown</u>		
		<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u>
Allen	438	56%	24%	19%
Attwood	528	91%	4%	3%
Averill	520	88%	9%	3%
Barnes	405	94%	3%	2%
Bingham	349	84%	5%	7%
Cavanaugh	413	96%	2%	1%
Cedar	143	52%	14%	34%
Cumberland	378	97%	2%	1%
Elmhurst	577	91%	7%	2%
Everett	483	96%	1%	2%
Fairview	432	82%	16%	1%
Forest Road	173	79%	17%	3%
Forest View	202	78%	16%	5%
Foster	434	80%	12%	6%
Genesee	330	72%	13%	15%
Gier Park	433	78%	8%	14%
Grand River	478	66%	12%	21%
Gunnisonville	387	97%	1%	1%
Harley Franks	277	74%	13%	12%
High	345	66%	7%	25%
Holmes	524	57%	33%	7%

<u>Elementary Schools</u>	<u>All Students</u>	<u>Percentage Breakdown</u>		
		<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u>
Horsebrook	232	99%	0%	0%
Hurd	103	100%	0%	0%
Kalamazoo	199	11%	80%	8%
Kendon	347	92%	6%	3%
Lewton	394	99%	1%	0%
Lincoln - Special Education	52	69%	29%	2%
Lyons	285	98%	0%	2%
Main	301	12%	85%	0%
Maple Grove	427	95%	1%	4%
Maple Hill	288	83%	13%	3%
Maplewood	388	93%	1%	3%
Michigan	307	8%	86%	6%
Moores Park	324	80%	4%	15%
Mt. Hope	427	96%	0%	4%
North	493	98%	1%	1%
Northwestern	287	99%	0%	1%
Oak Park	214	71%	2%	27%
Pleasant Grove	547	90%	7%	3%
Pleasant View	646	76%	14%	9%
Post Oak	557	94%	3%	2%
Reo	412	84%	9%	7%
Sheridan Road	527	94%	2%	3%
Valley Farms	312	98%	0%	2%
Verlinden	321	73%	22%	5%

<u>Elementary Schools</u>	<u>All Students</u>	Percentage Breakdown		
		<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u>
Wainwright	782	81%	14%	3%
Walnut	454	70%	20%	9%
Wexford	325	78%	19%	3%
Willow	576	67%	30%	3%
Woodcreek	<u>258</u>	<u>74%</u>	<u>22%</u>	<u>3%</u>
ELEMENTARY TOTALS	19,034	81%	12%	6%

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER IV

¹Report to the Education Committee of the NAACP, 1963, p. 3.

²Robert Crain, The Politics of School Desegregation (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 357-358.

³Policy Statement from the Lansing Board of Education, June 4, 1964.

⁴Tables 1-4 were compiled by the Office of Child Accounting in Lansing.

⁵Lansing State Journal, July 13, 1966, p. 1E.

⁶It is the belief of this researcher that the school board was very much aware that it was alleviating overcrowding with the express intent in mind of also relieving de facto segregation. In talking with some of the board members, one got the impression that the board was willing to consider the question of desegregation but only in a "quiet" way.

⁷Lansing State Journal, July 14, 1966.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., July 24, 1966.

¹⁰It was true that only one additional bus would be required to carry out the program as designed. Yet it is not clear as to why the school system had so many busses to begin with unless it was already greatly involved in some kind of bussing program. Neither the antagonists nor the protagonists for the plan chose to pursue what seemed to this researcher to be an inconsistency between the board's assertion that it had not been doing extensive bussing and the contention that only one other bus would be required.

¹¹Figures compiled by the Lansing Board of Education.

¹²Lansing State Journal, July 1, 1966.

¹³Ibid., August 2, 1966.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid. The political tactics of PACE showed a measure of sephistication. As will be argued later in the chapter, the school board, HRC, and the city council are not directly assessable by a relatively small number of intense persons. It was in PACE's interest, therefore, to broaden the issues so as to attract as much support as possible.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., September 14, 1966.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., September 16, 1966.

²⁴Ibid., September 14, 1966.

²⁵Ibid., September 18, 1966.

CHAPTER V

DESEGREGATION IN GRAND RAPIDS

Grand Rapids, the second largest metropolitan area in the state of Michigan, has a population of 177,313. Approximately 8.3 percent of the population is black. Unlike Lansing, the industry in Grand Rapids is diversified. It has no single industry that accounts for a major portion of the industry in the city. Its population has remained remarkably stable over the last fifty years. In 1910, for example, the population stood at 112,571. It is the 71st largest city in the United States.¹

The area was initially settled by Dutch immigrants who were experiencing religious persecution in the Eastern part of the United States as well as in Europe. Even today, the descendants of the original settlers maintain somewhat of an existence that is separate from the rest of the city. The Dutch Reform church has its own city-wide school system.

The politics of the city are not too much different from those of Lansing. Grand Rapids has a mayor-council system in which the mayor is able to exert a considerable degree of influence by way of his appointive powers. There are seven councilmen (they call them

commissioners), who are elected from three wards in the city. Each ward has two councilmen and one is elected at large. Each term is for four years, with two of the members coming up for re-election each year and the at-large councilman runs the fourth year.²

Black representation on the council is non-existent. Just as is the case with Lansing, and for the same reasons, it is very unlikely that a black "race" candidate would get elected.

The most that blacks can hope for in the city is representation on the Human Relations Commission. But here again, the Commission members are appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council. The Commission's task as defined by the city charter is to eliminate prejudice wherever it exists, to help maintain peace in the community, and to promote intergroup harmony.

How it is to do this is left pretty much undefined. It has no real investigatory powers and is not required to report to the council or the mayor.

It would not be an exaggeration to maintain that the city council is, by and large, closed to the black population in the city. In Lansing, at least moderate blacks have a measure of accessibility to the city government. But the system in Grand Rapids appears to be fairly closed. The extent to which this is true is not of central importance to the task at hand; however, it is interesting to note that in Lansing, while the city council

is relatively open to blacks and the school board is relatively closed, in Grand Rapids, as will become clear in the next chapter, just the reverse is true.

Race relations in the city have never been especially good. We were surprised to find that an incident in which blacks and whites cooperated in the handling of a local fire was front page news for the local paper. The report was not on the accident, but rather on the cooperation between the races.

Out of necessity in this chapter, some incidents which took place during the "struggle" have been omitted. Their inclusion would not materially alter our understanding of the sequence of the events. They have been excluded, therefore, for purposes of brevity and over-all coherence.

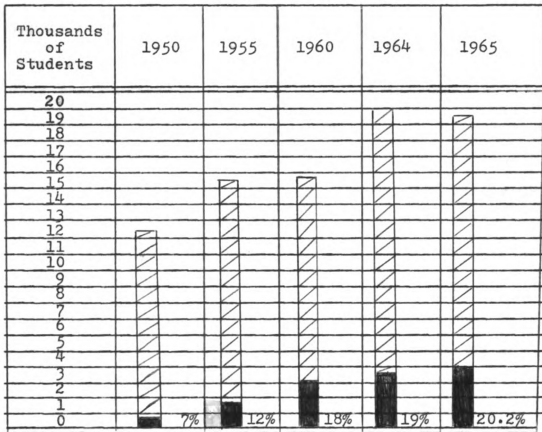
SCHOOL POPULATION IN GRAND RAPIDS

It might properly be argued that the city of Grand Rapids inadvertently found itself in a situation in which the number of black students increased to the point where this segment became a significant portion of the total student population over the 15 year period from 1950-1965.³ Hindsight informs us that it was likely that Grand Rapids would have the travel path of so many of our major metropolitan areas today. The city, at some time or other would probably be gripped by intense racial conflict.

In 1950, the non-white population of the Grand Rapids public schools amounted to only 7 percent of the


total school population. (See Figure 4.) By 1965 this had changed to where the black population was 20.2 percent of the total.⁴ Actually, even these figures do not show the magnitude of the change. In 1960, eight school systems were annexed to Grand Rapids. According to the Census Bureau of the Grand Rapids public schools, the first enrollment report in which these schools appear is that of 1964-1965. This is why the percentage increase of non-whites is small during this particular school year.⁵ If one excludes the population of the annexed schools, which were 100 percent white, the black population would constitute approximately 25 percent of the student population in the city. But even with the increase in the white population because of the annexation, we can still contend that the increase in the black population is still significant. For that period, the white population increased 38 percent over its 1950 level. In contrast, however, the percentage increase for the black population was almost double that of the white increase at 60 percent.


As shall be demonstrated later, the trend was clear to the local NAACP. It would not be long before the concentration of blacks in the central city would be sufficient for the maintenance of a dual system of education. This fact precipitated at least a four-sided controversy. There were those who saw this development as inconsistent with the aims and goals of the civil rights movement and with the directives of the courts across the nation.



Enrollment:						% Increase 1950-65
Non-White	888	1,930	3,059	3,888	4,007	(+351%)
White	<u>11,484</u>	<u>13,727</u>	<u>13,937</u>	<u>16,129</u>	<u>15,823</u>	(+ 38%)
Total	12,372	15,657	15,657	20,017	19,830	(+ 60%)

KEY:

Non-White - 

White - 

It is important to know that eight (8) school systems were annexed to Grand Rapids on December 31, 1960. The first enrollment report in which these schools appear is 1964-65. These students were white. This is the reason that the percentage increase of non-white is small during this period.

Figure 4. White - Non-White Enrollment, Grand Rapids Public Elementary Schools, 1950-1965.

Still another group (black) viewed this development as an opportunity for black control of public schools, a la Ocean Hill-Brownsville in New York City.⁶ As usual, there were those whites who wanted no part of integration and who were willing to go to great extremes to see to it that what they wanted would, in fact, be granted. And, of course, there were those whites who aided and abetted the NAACP in the move toward an integrated school system.

Lastly, though certainly not of the least importance, there was the school board. As shall be more clearly demonstrated in Chapter VI, the school board eventually came to the position of the anti-integrationist whites but was kept from turning the pro-integration decision around because of the involvement of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), and the State Board of Education.

Of course, it is not sufficient just to show that the number of black students was on the rise. What prompted the controversy was the fact that these blacks were being channeled into schools that were in the central city and, therefore, were forced to occupy the older facilities in the system. Further, and perhaps even more important, was the fact that the central city schools were rapidly becoming known as "black" schools and it was the feeling of the NAACP and some black parents that such an education setting hindered the educational opportunities of black children.

When we examine selected elementary schools in the Grand Rapids system, at least two trends are visible (see Table 8). Alexander, Jefferson, Madison, Sigsbee, and Vandenberg represent one kind of trend. Madison, for example, in 1961 had a black population that equalled 2 percent of the student body. By 1966, the black population was 94 percent. Hence, over the relatively short period of five years, the racial composition of the school completely changed around. The same was true for Jefferson, which went from 2 percent to 75 percent in the same time period. Sigsbee went from 4 percent to 63 percent and Vandenberg went from 22 percent to 82 percent.

These figures indicate that there was a tremendous out-migration of whites and an equally impressive in-migration by blacks. This also produced another trend, which continued to alarm the local NAACP and its sympathizers. Schools like Campu, Morris, and Maplewood were new constructions that opened their doors to a population that was as high as 95 percent black.⁸ Thus, not only was there the problem of having given school districts a tip in the direction of becoming all black, but there also appeared to be a willingness on the part of the school board to ignore considerations of racial balance in the construction of new schools.

The problem was compounded by the fact that these elementary schools were in districts that were adjacent to one another. By and large, they fed one junior and one

Table 8

Percent Non-White Pupil Enrollment
in Selected Elementary Schools,
1950-65 (Revised)

<u>School</u>	<u>1950-51</u>	<u>1955-56</u>	<u>1960-61</u>	<u>1964-65</u>	<u>1965-66</u>
Alexander	1%	2%	12%	37%	59%
Campau	--	--	93	93	93
Franklin	74	81	91	79	78
Henry	69	81	82	88	89
Jefferson	2	29	36	58	75
Madison	2	26	73	90	94
Maplewood	--	86	91	90	89
Morris	--	--	--	95	96
Sheldon	43	80	88	96	96
Sigsbee	4	18	41	57	63
Vandenberg	22	47	79	84	82
Total Enrollment in Elementary Schools	12,372	15,657	16,996	20,017	19,830
Total Non- White Enrollment in Elementary Schools	888	1,930	3,059	3,888	4,007
Total White Enrollment in Elementary Schools	11,484	13,727	13,937	16,129	15,823
Average of All Elementary Schools	7%	12%	18%	19%	20.2%

It is important to know that eight (8) school systems were annexed to Grand Rapids on December 31, 1960. The first enrollment report in which these schools appear is 1964-65. These students were white. This is the reason that the percentage increase of non-white is small during this period.

senior high school. As more and more blacks came into the city, chances were pretty good that the experience of a student from elementary through to senior high would be an "all black" experience (see map).

Of course, the senior and junior high schools in the city showed the same trend that was present in the elementary schools (see Table 9). In 1951 the black enrollment in South Senior High School was 6 percent of the total population in that school. By 1966, the black population was 37 percent of the total population. The racial composition in South Junior, which fed South Senior, indicated what the future held for the city system. South Junior went from 20 percent black in 1951 to 77 percent black in 1966.⁹

It was not just that blacks constituted 37 percent of the population of South High School. The important fact was that this 37 percent represented 54 percent of all blacks in the Grand Rapids system. Also, this situation was aggravated (or enhanced, according to which persuasion you represent) by the fact that a new senior high school (Union High) was already nearing completion in an area of the city that was all white.

In summary, what all of this meant to integrationist whites and blacks alike was that the central city schools would be entirely taken over by the seemingly ever-increasing numbers of blacks in the city. The somewhat "natural" trend was being hurried by the unwillingness

Table 9

Non-White Teachers in Grand Rapids
Public Schools

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Non-White Teachers</u>	<u>Number of Different Assignments</u>
1949-50	2	2
1950-51	5	3
1951-52	5	4
1952-53	8	4
1953-54	11	5
1954-55	13	7
1955-56	15	9
1956-57	23	9
1957-58	29	13
1958-59	33	16
1959-60	38	19
1960-61	48	21
1961-62	58	21
1962-63	65	23
1963-64	69	28
1964-65	75	29
1965-66	88	31

A further breakdown of the assignments of the 88 professional non-white staff members shows their present assignment as follows:

<u>School</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	
	<u>Classroom Teacher</u>	<u>Other</u>
Central High	8	1 counselor
Creston High		1 head librarian
Ottawa Hills High	2	
South High	9	3 special education teachers
Union High		1 special education teacher
Burton Junior High	2	
Harrison Park Junior High	1	
Ridgeview Junior High	1	
Riverside Junior High	2	

of the school board to take questions of racial balance into consideration in the planning of new facilities.

What has just been described represents the demographic context out of which the controversy arose. The existence of de facto segregation was beyond dispute. Grand Rapids, not unlike the rest of the major metropolitan areas in the United States, was faced with an angered black population demanding better "educational opportunities." But as is becoming the pattern around the country today, neither blacks nor whites were in complete agreement as to what form, if any, such opportunities should take. To some, integration was the panacea. To others, it was the antithesis of progress. To others still, it was only a partial solution more oriented to symbolic reward than to tangible results.

It is interesting to note that the rise in the black student population was accompanied by a striking increase in the number of black teachers in the school system. From 1949 to 1966 the number of black teachers in the school system increased from 2 to 88. The number of different positions they occupied paralleled the increase. In 1949 the two teachers occupied two separate positions. Finally, in 1966, black faculty occupied 31 separate positions.¹⁰

We have reason to conclude that the school board has tended to be fairly responsive to demands presented to them by various community groups. This has been especially

true when demands can be met without affecting other groups in the community. As it turned out, the responsiveness of the school board to the demand for black faculty had a two-fold effect. First, the potential issue of hiring black faculty never became an issue during the conflict. Secondly, the presence of a significant black faculty created yet another interest group that had to be dealt with. However, as will be shown, the stand of the black faculty was never really clear. They served more as a buffer between the NAACP and the more "radical" members of the black community.

The following is a summary of the development of de facto segregation in Grand Rapids:

1. In 1950 there were three elementary schools, no junior high schools, and no senior high schools which had 50% or more non-white students.
2. In 1955 there were four elementary schools, no junior high schools, and no senior high schools which had 50% or more non-white students.
3. In 1960 there were seven elementary schools, one junior high school, and no senior high schools which had 50% or more non-white students.
4. In 1964 there were ten elementary schools, one junior high school, and no senior high schools which had 50% or more non-white students.
5. In 1965, there were eleven elementary schools, one junior high school, and no senior high schools which had 50% or more non-white students.¹¹

As more and more elementary schools concentrated in a single area became segregated, more and more of the junior and senior high schools would soon follow. It was this trend to which the NAACP spoke; and it was this trend

that served as the focal point for the entire controversy.

It is truly ironic that the fight over the issue of school desegregation began in Grand Rapids as a response by the NAACP to the school board's attempt to bring "quality" education to the ghetto. One certainly cannot accuse the board of playing "the invisible man" game with the black population in the city. During the controversy, accusations were made that might lead one to think that the board was made up of the world's worst racists. Much of what was done, in the opinion of this researcher, was done in good faith. This is not to say that the board made no mistakes or that they were operating out of a sense of hatred for black Americans. It is to say, however, that Grand Rapids has proven to be not too much unlike other cities in America. The division between the races is deep and has the potential of completely tearing the community apart. Grand Rapids had just such an experience.

The seed that eventually gave birth to the issue was planted, quite innocently, in 1961 when the school board enacted the Committee of Elementary Principals to study the "unique needs of the schools of the inner city."¹² The rationale behind the committee was simple. It was brought to the attention of the board by the NAACP and other "concerned citizens" that the inner city was increasingly becoming an area of concentration for black low-income families. Given the effect that such a concentration might have on achievement levels of the

students, it was felt that those responsible for the running of the city educational system should take note of this important development.

In October of 1963, the committee presented its findings to the board. The report noted that their worst fears were confirmed. That is, students in the inner city schools showed a marked difference in achievement motivation and attainment levels vis-a-vis students in non-inner city schools. They made the following recommendations: (1) a coordinator of inner city education; (2) lower pupil-teacher ratios (25-1 in the inner city); (3) coaching teachers for each school; (4) preschool experience for four-year-olds; and (5) summer school for kindergarten through six.¹³

The school board responded to these recommendations by eventually implementing all of them. In other words, the board engaged a very expensive compensatory educational program with very little prodding relatively speaking. We have reason to believe that such an expenditure of funds is considerably easier for the board to "sell to the public" than is integration of the schools. At this point, however, the issue of desegregation was not yet an issue.

The question as to whether or not the issue of de facto segregation belongs properly before the school boards in the state always seems to come up. This is in part due to the fact that the cause of student segregation is segregation in residential housing patterns. In 1963,

the State Board of Education attempted to clarify that issue when it commissioned a committee to study the whole question of equal educational opportunity. In May of 1964, the report was released by the State Board. The major thrust of the report is summed up by the following statement:

It is recognized that meeting the challenge of racial segregation and discrimination is a responsibility of both state and national government. Yet, solutions to such problems in the field of education must be resolved at the local level. Therefore, each community should publicly acknowledge its responsibility for achieving an integrated school system and should see that this responsibility is defined and administratively implemented in a manner that is in keeping with sound educational and democratic measures.¹⁴

This report settled nothing for communities across the state. It did, however, suggest that the state bureaucracy would be sympathetic toward efforts aimed at desegregation.

In the spring of 1964 some members of the black community expressed concern that black students in the city system were having to use the oldest facilities which were by and large inadequate and inferior to those that most of the white students used.¹⁵

True to form, the school board commissioned a study to be done by Dr. Donald Leu of Michigan State University. It is important to note that here, as with the Committee of Elementary Principals, the objectives of the board in no way related to the issue of school desegregation. A section of the report mentioned the problem in

passing. The major recommendations and the discussion concerning school segregation deserve quoting at some length. Obviously, the full text of the report or the totality of the recommendations are too lengthy to be presented here. We will give only those that are most relevant to the conflict as it developed.

1. School organization: the survey team recommends that the Board of Education adopt a K-2, 3, 4, 5 school organization and provide new construction when and as needed and that existing junior high schools be renovated to provide facilities for middle school staff operation. Intensive curriculum planning of the involved school staff is an obvious prerequisite to the implementation of this recommended organizational change.

2. Middle schools and junior high schools: middle schools and/or junior high schools serve as the transition between the relatively self-contained, one teacher, one classroom experience of the elementary school and the departmentalized, comprehensive high school. These transitional schools may serve the elementary schools in two or more neighborhoods. Adolescent children require more comprehensive staffs, programs, and facilities than do elementary school children. Existing junior high schools have been planned with a "rated" capacity of 650 to 850 students. These schools could be enlarged to a maximum capacity of approximately 1200 students. Schools that are too small tend to be inefficient in use of specialized staff, programs, and spaces. It may be necessary to plan smaller middle schools in conjunction with an elementary school on the same site with the sharing of a few specialized spaces.

3. Senior High Schools: As the senior high school becomes smaller, it becomes increasingly difficult to provide a comprehensive high school program in an efficient and economical manner. It should be noted, however, that the small high school has a number of advantages that partially compensate for its limitations. Teachers, students, and parents tend to know each other better. Coordinated staff planning becomes easier. Problems of student circulation are reduced. The "little school" or "school within a school" concept attempts to utilize the advantages of both

the large and small high schools while reducing or eliminating their respective limitations. If schools are carefully planned, organized, and staffed into "little schools," the upper limits of desirable size are extended. For example, a number of school districts are now planning senior high schools of 2,000 students or more utilizing the "school within a school" concept. It should be carefully noted that the existing Grand Rapids high schools, because of their original design, do not lend themselves to this concept. The school district should be further cautioned that the survey staff is not recommending large (2,000 pupils or more) high schools as the sole future solution to the school district's needs. If a large school becomes necessary and desirable to serve a community area, it should be planned, designed, staffed, and organized to take advantage of the "school within a school" concept.

4. Socio-Economic Factors: There is no one simple solution to the many complex problems of causing segregated schools. It should be emphasized that segregated educational facilities are the resultant of concentrations of segregated housing. The long term solution of this problem is the dispersal of Negro and low income housing throughout the greater metropolitan area. The City of Grand Rapids alone, cannot solve the problem. The School District of Grand Rapids can only contribute to the resolution of the problem. In fact, the decisions of the school district will be quite ineffectual unless concerted action by private citizens and public institutions in the greater metropolitan area is directed toward a comprehensive solution. We recognize, however, and reaffirm our belief that the Board of Education of Grand Rapids Public Schools has a major role to play in progress toward the desirable goal of racially balanced schools. The following planning principles are suggested:

A. Active support of all neighborhood, city, state, and national efforts designed to reduce segregated housing and resultant segregated educational facilities.

B. A policy position statement by the Board of Education stating that all reasonable efforts should be made to arrest, reduce, and eliminate segregated schools.

C. Redistricting of school attendance areas, when consistent with good planning practices, to disperse the Negro enrollment.

D. The development of a policy on open enrollments, containing adequate controls, permitting and encouraging children in overcrowded schools to attend those schools outside of their community area which are under-utilized. These controls should assist in achieving racially balanced schools.

E. The planning of new schools and additions to existing schools designed to disperse concentrations of Negro enrollment. Such planning should focus on long term solutions and should not contribute to the reduction of educational quality in the schools.

F. Location of special education centers designed to encourage the dispersal of the Negro enrollments.

G. Compensatory education to include continued and increased curriculum planning by the professional staff designed to further improve in-service preparation programs for the teaching and administrative staff, improved curriculum materials specifically designed for disadvantaged children, and the allocations of increased human resources to those areas where culturally deprived children and youth are concentrated.

It should be clearly recognized that the implementation of the above planning principles will require major expenditures of monies which will need to be provided by federal, state, and local governmental agencies.

The following statement succinctly states desirable goals for our system of public education:

'To begin with, the public school must become instrumental in helping the child create and sustain for himself a self-concept which permits and enables him to move, without constriction and undue inhibitions, in positive ways towards others who may be different in religion or racial background from himself. In the second place, the growing child in American culture today must learn certain human relations skills. In a rapidly changing world, these are as essential as the fundamental skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. In the third place, the child in contemporary America must develop positive attitudes towards democracy--the social system in which he must live and to which he must contribute upon reaching adulthood.'

The recommendations included in this section of the report are not complete and final suggestions, for the continued improvement of Grand Rapids each year should witness a review, evaluation, and revision of these suggestions.

The city is in the fortunate position of being able to control and determine its future. The many cultural, educational, recreational, and business advantages of Grand Rapids portend a bright future for the central city. Planning and policy decisions will determine, to a large measure, its future characteristics.

Segregated schools are one unfortunate resultant of segregated housing. The only adequate long term solution to the problem of segregated schools is dispersal of the Negro population. The Board of Education and its administrative staff is to be commended for its vigorous leadership in the area of human relations. It is hoped that the recommendations contained in this section will be of further assistance to them in their future deliberations.¹⁵

From a reading of the entire report and the excerpts presented here, it was clear that redistricting of school attendance areas would only be recommended when it could be justified on grounds other than those of achieving racial balance. Furthermore, there was the explicit assumption that in the event racial imbalance could be alleviated, it would be done via the dispersal of the black population. This would mean that both in theory and practice, one way bussing would be employed.

In the fall of 1965, about the same time that the Leu study was being completed, the local NAACP presented a petition to the Grand Rapids board requesting them to do something about the increasing amount of de facto segregation in the city school system. Up until this time, the board had not had to confront the issue directly. But

it was becoming increasingly clear that it would not be long before a formal demand would be issued asking for an end to segregation in the Grand Rapids schools.¹⁶

On November 1, 1965, four professional consultants from Michigan State University were employed by the Board of Education for purposes of working with a Citizens' Committee of 51. The total committee was sub-divided into three groups, each charged with preparing reports on the following: racial imbalance, facilities, and compensatory education. The committee found that the charge by some members of the black community that inner city facilities were inferior to other such facilities in the city was in no way true. Also, the committee noted that in the area of compensatory education, the programs in Grand Rapids were generally superior to those in the rest of the state. The question of racial imbalance in the schools proved to be a problem that could not be dismissed quite as easily.¹⁷

The committee recommended that whenever possible the Board of Education work to bring about racial balance in the public schools. The suggestions of the Committee of 51, while acknowledging that the problem existed, in no way suggested that the school board take on the entire burden of bringing about the "needed" changes. In other words, there was nothing new that the board had to do. Thus, they returned to the Leu study for purposes of making some necessary changes in the school system generally.

These changes had little or nothing to do with questions of race.

Finally, in March of 1968, the school board had a prepared plan for the reorganization of the city school system. They had planned the construction of 16 new elementary schools (grades K-5) and the introduction of a new concept, the middle school (grades 6, 7, and 8).¹⁸

Details of the plan had leaked out to certain members of the local NAACP. They learned that these "details" called for the construction of a middle school (Madison Middle) right in the heart of the ghetto. Once again, new construction was being planned that did not take into account considerations of racial balance.¹⁹

On February 11, 1968, Mr. Ray Hardy, member of the education committee of the local NAACP, telephoned the State Board of Education and informed them of the plan. Mr. Hardy requested that the State Board intervene and secure a postponement of action at least until the implications contained therein for the black community could be better ascertained. Hardy then called a "community" meeting with the school board, at which he requested the States Civil Rights Commission (SCRC) to send a representative to explain to the school board the negative effects of segregated schooling.²⁰ On February 16, 1968, a representative of SCRC called Dr. Plyman, superintendent of schools in Grand Rapids, and asked him to participate in

the meeting that was to take place on the 18th. At this time, Plyman acknowledged that the middle school plan would in no way affect racial balance in the city of Grand Rapids.²¹

As it turned out, this particular plan was never presented to the board for consideration. Instead, Milton Miller, Director of Plant Planning, and Dr. Leu were charged with the responsibility of forging another plan that would specifically alleviate de facto segregation on the one hand, but one that would be acceptable to both blacks and whites on the other.²² This particular specification ruled out any possibility that a cross-bussing proposal would emerge. During the week of May 27, 1968, the Grand Rapids superintendent of schools informed the Michigan Civil Rights Commission that a new plan of organization had been developed for consideration by the Board of Education on June 2. This new plan became known as the "Master Plan."

Up to this point, the conflict was really between the NAACP and the school board with the GRC applying pressure on the Board on behalf of ending de facto segregation in the Grand Rapids system. But newspaper accounts of the fact that the board was considering a plan that would attempt to desegregate the city schools prompted the emergence of political actors supported by various groups of citizens to seek election to the school board on an anti-bussing ticket. After the plan was accepted by the

board, three new members were elected on anti-bussing platforms. Given that there were nine members on the board, the addition of the new members did not immediately affect the board's decision.

The "Master Plan" contained four phases, all of which were to be completed by 1976. The first phase was to be implemented in the fall of 1968. For our purposes, there were five major items in the plan that deserve discussion. First, the architects of the plan took care to build their case. They took note of the fact that whites were leaving the inner city at increasing rates because of inner city "deterioration."

An example of the flight of the middle class white can be seen in the retention rates of white students residing in the South High School attendance areas. Of the white students in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades of this area six years ago, less than 45% are 10th, 11th, and 12th graders at South High School this year.²³

This confirmed what the local NAACP had been suggesting to the board all along. The "Master Plan" was an attempt to own up to this.

The second item dealt with the integration of faculty. It was felt that if student integration were to be successful, then one needed to take care to integrate the teachers in the system. So along with student transfers, there would be significant teacher transfers as well. To white segregationists, this meant that not only would their children have to go to school with blacks, but they might even have to be taught by black faculty. To this

segment of the population, both of these changes were equally objectionable.

Thirdly, the plan called for retention of the middle school concept as introduced in the Leu study. This necessitated an enormous amount of new construction, which meant increased millage had to be voted on. This further reduced the probability that the plan would be implemented in any meaningful way.

Fourthly, because the white groups that emerged were opposed to having their children bussed, the plan sought to appease them by arguing that "in this plan, it would not be proposed that cross-bussing be effected, but rather, that bussing would be one way from the inner city to the periphery educational centers." In other words, there was the feeling that if they did not bus whites into the inner city and if they were still able to integrate, they would satisfy major objections to the plan. The board assumed that blacks in the city wanted to be integrated so badly that they would be willing to be discriminated against categorically in the matter of being bussed across the city. That assumption proved false. The board also underestimated and misunderstood the objections raised by whites. Whites opposed bussing not only of their own children, but opposed the bussing of blacks into "their" schools. The board also failed to even satisfy the NAACP. Recall that the objection of the NAACP was to the establishment of a middle school in the inner city. The plan

retained the middle school concept even though it sought to integrate other areas of the school system first.

The last aspect of the plan that concerns us immediately was the changes that were to be implemented in September of 1968. These are listed below:

- A. Begin programming for half-day preschool programs for all four-year-olds in the inner city target area.
- B. Implementation of a no-retention policy through the 8th grade.
- C. Implementation of a non-graded program through the 8th grade.
- D. The closing of South High School, senior high school level, grades 10-12. In general, these students will attend Central, Creston, and Union High Schools. This will be accomplished by making Union High a 10-12 (rather than its present 9-12), Central a 9-12 high school, and effecting a boundary change at Creston, a 10-12 high school. Ottawa High School will become a 9-12 high school.
- E. The full utilization of elementary classroom capacity to eliminate overcrowding and to effect the pupil-teacher ratio guidelines of the Board.²⁴

What the Master Plan meant was that most of the junior and senior high students in the city system would be affected in one way or another. Students who were not being bussed, would have an influx of students from other schools.

The middle school in the inner city was still to be implemented even though it was this move that prompted the NAACP to take action against the first plan. Admittedly, however, the board sought to meet this objection by using the old South High School as the middle

school and then phasing out the inner city middle school by 1976 when new construction would be completed. Also, it is important to note that of the four studies completed by the board from 1961 to 1968, the Master Plan was the only one that was being billed as a desegregation plan. Previous to 1968 black students had been bussed from the Ottawa attendance area in 1964-65 with no resistance from either blacks or whites. But the rationale for the 1964 bussing was "relieving over-crowding."²⁵ Further, the annexation that took place in 1965 necessitated the bussing of students into the city proper. Thus, the city of Grand Rapids had already implemented bussing for various means before 1968, but never for purposes of integrating the school system.

During the summer, the school board held conferences with various school administrators and teachers affected by the Master Plan during the coming year. They sought to outline some of the problems that might occur and suggested ways of handling them.

Keep in mind that the great majority of the pressure applied thus far was from the NAACP and the State Board of Education through the SCRC. Exactly what the state would do in the event the school board refused to follow their suggestions to end de facto segregation was not certain. What was certain, however, was that the school board was not willing to risk direct confrontation with the state.

The school year 1968-69 was probably the most

troublesome in the history of the city for students and administrators alike. The high school which had been most publicized was Union. The school was relatively new and previously was "all white." On September 13, less than two weeks after Union opened, it had to be closed down. A quarrel started in the hall was between a black and a white. In less than 15 minutes the entire school was in the halls. A full-scaled race riot developed. The two elements polarized immediately and the school was closed.²⁶

During the year there were several other incidents that kept the mood of the school tense. The general atmosphere of the school can be summed up by noting that a group of about 30 self-styled "stompers" met regularly to report on school patrols on blacks bothering or associating with white girls. Some blacks did not hesitate to take action against members of their own race who were trying to make the Master Plan work. One woman, whose daughter "wanted to make it work," was warned several times to "behave." Finally, she had her home fire bombed.

What all of the activity meant was that three new anti-bussing board members would be elected to the board in the spring of 1969. This would mean then that the anti-bussing forces would have a majority on the board and the Master Plan could be turned back.²⁸

Given the rather unsuccessful year, the question that dominated the summer was "where do we go from here?" There were three positions supported by various community

organizations and groups: The Master Plan (Phase II) could continue to be implemented; the plan could be abandoned and things could be allowed to revert to where they stood previous to 1968; or the first phase of the plan could remain intact without either going ahead or backwards. The sympathy of the board after the second school board election was in the direction of reversion.

The Grand Rapids Press favored full implementation. On July 12, 1969, the Press carried the following editorial entitled, "Not Back to Segregation." It argued that:

[The fact that the Master Plan contains many flaws should not lead us in the direction of abandoning the goals it sets out.] Too much blood has been shed in the last 15 years to bring about integration to abandon the fight now. Medgar Evers and Martin Luther King did not die for segregation. U.S. Marshalls were not called out in one Southern community after another to preserve segregation. The laws of this land of the last 15 years were not written or interpreted to preserve it.²⁹

The middle road position was forced by what proved to be the most important group of all, HEW. By July, the Board of Education in the city was prepared to question the implicit direction as given by the State Board of Education. On Thursday, July 28, 1969, six of the nine board members went to Washington, D. C., to find out exactly what was expected of them in the way of school desegregation. As one board member put it, "I heard so many statements about tell Washington to go to . . ., and I decided we had better find out just how much power Washington has." No one really found out how much power Washington had, but

the truth of the matter was, no one was really willing to find out. HEW never (at least not publicly) said explicitly that federal funds would be cut off if the Grand Rapids board reverted to the old "segregated" system. The board was instructed by HEW to go ahead with the plans and that if a plan that provides for desegregation was dropped in favor of resegregation, the board would be "doing it at its own peril."³⁰

A careful reading of the statement suggests that HEW wanted the plan implemented, but would invoke sanctions against the city system only in the event that it reverted to the old set-up.

Meanwhile, an anonymous group of blacks circulated a petition in the city which alleged that: (1) only blacks were being bussed; (2) the black community schools were being taken away from it with the implementation of the Master Plan, and (3) that with integration, blacks have no chance for leadership development.³¹

At least one of the charges was in part true. That is, the inner city schools were to eventually be closed and there would be no schools with a black majority. But up until this time, inner city residents had not exerted any measure of community control over "their" schools. In reference to bussing, what was true was that blacks were definitely being bussed over longer distances than any other students. But as we have suggested earlier, a bussing program had been implemented in Grand Rapids as

early as 1964.

On Tuesday, August 4, the school board held a meeting in the presence of and at the request of a new group entitled Blacks United for Survival (BUS). The demands made by BUS were four-fold: (1) the restoration of the inner city schools; (2) establishment of circumstances that create the proper learning environment for black students; (3) involvement of black parents in schools; and (4) involvement of a black educator from outside the Grand Rapids system to evaluate the effects of the Master Plan and suggest changes.³²

The board realized more than ever that they "were caught between the frying pan and the fire," because now significant numbers of blacks and whites sought to reverse the implementation of the Master Plan, on the one hand, but they stood to lose their federal aid if they followed these dictates. Further, there were significant numbers of civic leaders, both black and white (including the local press) who approved of the plan. The board had managed to put itself in a position in which it could satisfy no one completely. Furthermore, if the second phase of the Master Plan was to be tried at all, planning and appropriations would have to be started now.

On August 2, 1969, the only black member of the board, Paul I. Phillips, resigned. Phillips had been on the board since 1962 and was probably more responsible for the board's adoption of the plan than any other

member.³³ Yet, before he resigned, he joined forces with the anti-bussing members to elect one of them chairman. His dilemma was plain and simple. He was having to answer to a divided black community. Toward the end of his service on the board, he completely reversed positions and joined the anti-bussing faction. A black woman was appointed to replace Phillips. Her first act was to call the State Civil Rights Commission and request that they help her put together a plan that might be acceptable to all factions. SCRC, not having a magic wand either, was not able to respond positively. Being in a rather helpless situation, the woman chose not to run for re-election the next year.³⁴

During the time of the school disruptions in 1968-69 it became evident that the City's Human Relations Commission was not effectively communicating with the black community. Its job, as defined by the city charter, was to act as a mediator between the city and inner city residents. The Commission was disbanded and reformed for purposes of looking into a rumor of a black boycott of the school system in the event the Master Plan was not abandoned.³⁵

By September 2, 1969 (just a week before school was to start) the boycott rumor became reality. Rita Scott, Director of BUS, appealed to the Association of Afro-American Educators for assistance in the boycott. The Association of Afro-American Educators issued a press release which read:

The Association supports the parents who are determined to better the educational opportunities in our community. We know well the injuries that this educational system has brought to bear upon the black children of Grand Rapids, and we support the parents in their attempt to seek quality education in our community.³⁶

The boycott leaders listed 14 demands, among which included, "the immediate restoration of South Middle School as a high school; immediate return of sixth graders to elementary school facilities in the inner city; establishment of a curriculum that includes a black studies program; immediate appointment of a black person as assistant superintendent of schools; establishment of a community board of control for inner city schools; and total revision of the hot lunch program."³⁷

We shall pause here for a moment to discuss the subject of citizen boycott of schools, because there seems to be some confusion in the literature as to the effectiveness of such measures as tactics. The view which is most different from our own is that of Robert Crain's, and it deserves quoting at length:

The school boycott is the heaviest artillery in the civil rights movement's arsenal. We should distinguish again between the strike, which is of indefinite duration, and the boycott. The strike is a very powerful and very effective weapon. In the two cases where it was either threatened or used, it seemed to be very effective. The school boycott is a different sort of tactic. The boycott, like any other demonstration, is MERELY INTENDED TO EMBARRASS THE BOARD, and to demonstrate the support within the community for the civil rights movement. People are "voting with their feet." We noted earlier that one reason why the civil rights organization is not as effective as the community group is that its base of support is not as obvious. By holding a successful boycott, the movement makes the

entire Negro community the protagonist in its fight. In terms of bargaining, however, the disadvantage of using the boycott is that it is the heaviest artillery. Once the school board has survived it, it knows that it has nothing worse to fear. Another disadvantage of the school boycott is that it is difficult for the Negro school board members to support it. If they do, they can be criticized for condoning truancy.³⁸

We could spend the rest of the essay discussing Crain's understanding of the use of the boycott, but time does not permit such an extravagance. The following brief discussion will have to suffice.

First, and least important in some respects, Crain is mis-directed if he thinks the boycott is the "ultimate weapon." Nothing could be further from the truth. Maybe Crain is correct if we consider the course of "normal" politics. But race conflict hardly conforms to "normalcy." The truth is, that in matters of race conflict, whites have traditionally in this country had a monopoly on the means of and use of violence. Such a monopoly has proven to be a rather effective political resource. Only in recent years has the social scientist understood this. The threat of political assassination, fire bombing of schools and homes, regardless of the extent to which one may detest such behavior, nonetheless, makes the school boycott out to be more like a Sunday School picnic rather than any kind of ultimate weapon. There have been conflicts around the country in which this kind of behavior has dominated the scene. There is no reason for us, as social scientists, to ignore these conflicts as though they did not exist.

To us, the most important aspect of Crain's analysis is his suggestion that the boycott is "intended to embarrass the board." It may be true that this will be one of the consequences of such an action; however, we find it unpalatable that this is the sole or even the most salient intention. The school boycott, if successful, has the potential to send a school system into financial ruin. In Grand Rapids, if the boycott was 100 percent effective, the school system stood to lose 1.5 million dollars.⁴⁰ Now it may be that the board would be embarrassed by such an event, but this is hardly as significant as the fact that they would have to operate an entire school system on something less than a "shoestring" budget. Teachers would probably have to be released, athletic budgets might have to be eliminated, special programs would have to be stopped, and other cuts in the budget might have to be made.

The BUS-sponsored boycott ended in total failure. Absenteeism was spotty and there were no signs that black students would go along with the boycott in the future.⁴¹ The local newspaper reported that most of the inner city ministers told their congregations to "send their children to school on Thursday in defiance of the scheduled boycott." "If no solution is reached by next year," contended Rev. Parks (spokesman for the black ministers), "then we can have a real boycott. What we are really doing is buying time for one year to work this out."⁴²

On September 3, 1969, the Association of Afro-American Educators released another press statement to the effect that they did not favor the boycott necessarily. But they supported the parents involved in the boycott.⁴³ One cannot be sure what the Afro Association really meant by this. But now, the Master Plan was being attacked from all quarters as being racist. Joe McMillian, Director of Inner City Schools who was fired by the board, presented a well-covered speech in which he attacked the plan.⁴⁴ Previous to this, he had given it his whole-hearted support.

The NAACP threatened legal action if the board did not change that part of the plan calling for the conversion of South High School into South Middle School. BUS threatened more demonstrations if the board did not return "the schools back to the community." Angry white parents set out and elected an anti-bussing majority to the school board. Finally, HEW and SCRC refused to allow the board to back off on the desegregation that had already taken place.⁴⁵

The school board for the last two years has been left with the following: (1) a board that favors segregation; (2) an inability to back off the Master Plan; (3) an inability to go ahead with the new construction called for by the Master Plan; and (4) a very uneasy racial peace subsisting in the corridors of the high schools in the city.

The fight over the issue of school desegregation in Grand Rapids is not over. The board has been responsive

to the demands placed upon them. This responsiveness, of course, has served to place the fight over the issue in deadlock.

As will become more clear later, Grand Rapids is the most democratic of cities. Citizens have accessibility. And because of that accessibility, the "deadlock of democracy" is nowhere more prevalent than in Grand Rapids.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER V

¹Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1967, p. 21.

²City Charter of the City of Grand Rapids.

³Proposed School Organization and Construction Plan, p. 6.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Study on Racial Imbalance in the Grand Rapids School System, July 13, 1966. Prepared for the Grand Rapids Board of Education.

⁶M. Berub and M. Gittel, Confrontation at Oceanhill-Brownsville (New York: Praeger, 1969).

⁷Study on Racial Imbalance . . . , op. cit.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Proposed School Organization . . . , op. cit.

¹²"Report of Elementary Principals," prepared for the Grand Rapids Board of Education, 1963.

¹³Ibid, p. 7.

¹⁴Statement issued by the State Board of Education of the state of Michigan, May, 1964.

¹⁵Planning for the Future: Grand Rapids Secondary School Needs, prepared by Dr. D. Leu and J. J. McNichols, August, 1966.

¹⁶The assumption is based on the experiences of other major metropolitan areas around the country.

¹⁷There was a feeling on the part of a number of the school staff that the committee was biased from the start. The "notables" on the committee, it was contended, were people who agreed ideologically with the school board. Hence, the feelings that existed out in the community were categorically factored out. One cannot determine the extent to which the assertion is true. But we are on the opinion that it is fairly accurate.

¹⁸This conclusion was drawn mainly from an interview with Milton Miller, Director of Plant Planning for the Grand Rapids City School System.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Memorandum from Rita Scott, Executive Director of the Education Division of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission to Burton I. Gordon, Executive Director of Michigan Civil Rights Commission, March 15, 1968.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Blue Print for Progress, Prepared for the Grand Rapids Board of Education, p. 10.

²⁴Ibid., p. 25.

²⁵Recall that the Lansing school board did the same thing. No one was willing to admit to bussing for purposes of achieving racial balance when the "over-crowding" rationale was readily available.

²⁶Grand Rapids Press, July 12, 1969.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., August 1, 1969.

³¹Ibid., August 29, 1969.

³²Ibid., August 5, 1969.

³³Ibid., August 3, 1969.

³⁴The official rationale given by both of the black board members who resigned was that the job took "too much time." To our way of thinking, however, it was a perfect case of extreme cross-pressure. Neither of them could win in that situation. Blacks were severely divided and almost any stand they took was sure to displease someone.

³⁵Grand Rapids Press, August 29, 1969.

³⁶Ibid., September 2, 1969.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Robert Crain, The Politics of School Desegregation (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968), p. 134.

³⁹B. Muse, Virginia's Massive Resistance (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961).

⁴⁰Grand Rapids Press, September 3, 1969.

⁴¹Ibid., September 8, 1969.

⁴²Ibid., September 1, 1969.

⁴³Ibid., September 6, 1969.

⁴⁴Ibid., November 4, 1969.

⁴⁵Ibid., August 31, 1969.

CHAPTER VI

SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

After reviewing the controversies in Lansing and Grand Rapids, one is immediately struck by the similarities between the cities. If we were to employ the various techniques that have hitherto dominated the study of school desegregation in the North, the differences between our two case studies might go unnoticed. As has been mentioned, the overriding assumption of previous studies has been that of black unity. Those blacks who do not participate tend to be viewed as unlikely to mobilize under most circumstances. But as I have already suggested, this does not hold up under more careful examination. A partial explanation for why "black unity" has not been challenged in previous studies rests with the way in which research has been conducted. With comparative research generally, there is a premium on gathering information on as many cases as possible. Limitations of time and financial resources have dictated how much of a researcher's budget can afford to be spent on a given case. Therefore, data collection has been fast and, in some instances, surface in nature. This has meant that questions which require complete familiarity with the community are left both unanswered and unasked.

A solution to that kind of problem is the use of the case study. Obviously, the researcher's ability to generalize his findings is severely hampered. I have tried in this study to combine the best that both worlds have to offer. Rather than a single example of school desegregation, I have examined two. Of course, this particular compensation does not readily solve the problems presented by the single case study, but it does point to some relationships that have a higher probability of being significant. In this chapter, we shall attempt to specify the factors which account for the way in which the issues developed and the patterns of conflict that dominated each situation.

At this point it might be helpful to point out some of the general similarities and differences we have found between our two cities.

1. Bussing. The use of bussing as a means of alleviating de facto segregation represents a pattern that has emerged all over the country. Grand Rapids and Lansing were not exceptions. In fact, neither school board considered any other proposals seriously. Though the general solutions were similar, there were some important differences. Lansing was to employ a two-way bussing system while Grand Rapids thought only in terms of bussing blacks to "white" schools. Normally one might conclude that white parents in Lansing would be more upset, as it were, than those in Grand Rapids. That is, whites are more likely to

oppose a two-way bussing plan than one which calls for only the bussing of black children. It is possible to argue that had Lansing used only a one-way bussing solution, PACE would not have gotten as much support as it did. But, as I hope to demonstrate later, there were other factors in both cities which outweighed these considerations.

It is also interesting to note that the anti-bussing whites took care to contend that their position against bussing was not racially motivated. They opposed bussing in "principle" and not because it might bring about integrated schools. Yet in both cities, extensive bussing programs already existed that were not aimed at integrating the schools.

On the other hand, anti-bussing blacks rested their stand on racial considerations. In Grand Rapids, blacks wanted a measure of community control over the education of "their" children.¹ Blacks in Lansing simply asserted that no one particularly wanted to integrate.

2. Black division. The now obvious similarity that emerged was the fact that in both instances blacks were divided over the school desegregation issue. Two questions are of interest to us here; first, how can we account for the fact that in one city this division all but dominated the conflict while in the other the issues raised by the anti-bussing blacks did not seem to catch hold?; and secondly, how did this division change the line-up of

disputants? We shall return to both of these questions later in the chapter.

3. The school boards' reluctance to admit that the issue belonged properly before them. Another pattern which has spread throughout the country has been the refusal in the initial stages of the conflict on the part of the school board to address themselves to the issue. Hence, those who have sought integration have found it necessary not only to prove the existence of a segregated pattern of school attendance, but they have also had the burden of finding a governmental agency that identifies the problem as within its domain. The rationale most frequently used by the school board is that segregated school patterns result from segregated housing patterns which the school board can do nothing about. An additional factor here which has gone unnoticed in the school desegregation literature is the fact that many school boards are legal entities that are separate from the city council. This means that the board cannot be instructed by the council to consider the issue. It also means that the council does not have to get involved in the matter by simply claiming that school attendance patterns are outside their domain as well.

In both our cities the school boards refused the initial demands on the same grounds. But in both cases, the boards admitted that the development of a dual educational system was not healthy for the city. Having made

this kind of commitment, they were later called upon to do what "was in their domain" to keep in tune with their publicly expressed sentiments.

4. The use of outside specialists and citizens' committees. Other social scientists have noted that school boards frequently employ specialists and citizens' committees for purposes of delineating the problems and proposing "professional" solutions. Crain argued something similar to this when he contended that school superintendents resent "outsiders" trying to tell them what are the proper functions for the school administrators.² The administration of the school system is seen by the administrators as a technical job requiring specialized kinds of skills. The aura of the technical nature of the job is preserved by the use of the "Blue Ribbon Committee."

It seems to me that while there may be some of this kind of reasoning present, it does not go far enough in explaining the widespread use of this particular tactic. In Lansing and Grand Rapids it does not explain things at all. In both cities, officials saw the committees as a means of building community consensus and legitimating the decision eventually made by the boards.³ In neither case was the tactic effective. But there was another purpose to the committees that has not been given enough attention. The school board, by appointing a committee, is effectively able to delay having to make a decision that will for sure divide the community and precipitate major controversy.

But on the other hand, the appointment of a committee or the employment of specialists is tantamount to admitting that problems exist and, therefore, is a major victory for the integrationist forces. Furthermore, such action has the effect of placing the problem under the authority of the school board. Once the board has made this admission, it becomes the focus of groups that are dissatisfied with subsequent action as it relates to school desegregation.

5. Pro-integration decisions. The distinguishing characteristic of our two studies is the fact that both boards made pro-integration decisions. As I have already indicated, this proposed change in the status quo certainly has the potential for bringing black division to the forefront. It is surprising that researchers have ignored this fact. The dynamics of black political division are really no different from any other divisions that come about in community politics. Groups usually will not engage in mass protest to preserve the status quo until the existing order is perceived to be threatened. Since in practically every case on record, school boards have resisted the initial demands of the integration forces, those blacks who are against desegregation have had the boards do their bargaining for them. Obviously then, the one factor which is likely to precipitate mobilization of this group has been missing in most of the cases studied to date.

6. The involvement of state and federal agencies. While in both our examples, there was a considerable involvement of outside agencies, the involvement was uneven and variously effective. This is, in part, attributable to the fact that the controversies took place at different points in time and therefore under somewhat different state and national policies. In Grand Rapids, H.E.W. and the State Board of Education, through the initiative of the State Civil Rights Commission (SCRC), prohibited the local forces from instituting what appeared to be the will of a majority of the citizens there. In Lansing, the courts ruled, in essence, in favor of the segregationist forces.

7. The school board election as a weapon against the desegregation decision. In the final analysis, the major recourse for those seeking to influence the decision-making process in America comes at election time. The opportunity to "vote the racials" out of office played an important role in both cities. As shall be argued, that opportunity defined the parameters of the conflict and accounted for, in most respects, the level of success met with in both communities.

These observations represent only the top layer of the conflicts. This dissertation concerns itself with the less conspicuous aspects of the issues. For the duration of the essay, we will be focusing on these.

SYSTEM MOBILIZATION

A few words should be said concerning the overriding methodological orientation of our study. In the past few years some social scientists have sought to change the emphasis of research by arguing that a pluralistic approach to the study of politics ignores the activities of relatively powerless groups who are forced to go "outside" the normal channels offered by the political structure. In many respects, this change in emphasis has been positive. Certainly, the riots taking place in most of the major metropolitan areas in this country in the last seven years testify to a need for a change in the methodology of the traditional approaches. This fact became obvious when researchers attempted to explain the riots in social science terminology. There were those who saw these events as irrational in nature and, therefore, not deserving of serious study. Titles such as "rioting for Fun and Profit"⁴ typified the thinking which dominated the study of riot behavior. A summary of the methodological assumptions implicit in the research that has been conducted to date was offered by Jerome Skolnick in The Politics of Protest. He makes three general points:

[The traditional approaches to riot behavior] tend to focus on the destructive behavior of the disaffected groups while accepting the behavior of authorities as normal, instrumental, and rational. Yet established, thoroughly institutionalized behavior may be equally destructive as or considerably more so than riots. Secondly, [many orientations] tend to describe

collective behavior as irrational, formless, and immoderate. Finally, it is insufficient to analyze riots in terms of "tension" or "strain." It is not that this perspective is wrong, but that it tells at once too little and too much. Too little because the idea of "tension" and "strain" does not encompass the subjective meaning or objective impact of subordinate caste position or political domination.⁵

A pluralist conception of politics does not offer a sufficient understanding of the politics of insurrection. To treat rioters simply as irrational beings is to miss the fact that recent evidence has suggested that the riots were indeed a form of insurrection.

The different emphasis that is emerging in the literature of political science is becoming increasingly sensitive to these considerations. William Connolly (The Bias of Pluralism)⁶ and John Playford (Apolitical Politics)⁷ are two of the representatives of this "new" school of political science.

Though I am in sympathy with this school, I find it inappropriate for a study on school desegregation at this point in time. In fact, my argument runs counter to what is being suggested by those who are dissatisfied with the various studies in riot behavior. Furthermore, my approach is one that has not received a great deal of attention in the discipline within the last few years. My thesis is exactly this: THE WAY IN WHICH THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IS MOBILIZED HAS A DECISIVE EFFECT ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONFLICT WHICH TAKES PLACE WITHIN THAT SYSTEM.

Another general similarity between the various

conflicts over school desegregation has been the tendency on the part of the disputants to operate within the confines of the system. The rules which govern that system have had a decisive effect on the way in which the controversies have proceeded. In other words, I am offering a structural analysis of conflict.

This particular way of approaching community conflict is not in vogue today. A part of the disfavor stems from the fact that the past decade has seen a great deal of methodological sophistication on the part of political scientists. The advancement of survey research techniques, computer simulation, and the like has given the discipline a wealth of insights. With our "new found" sophistication, I would caution us not to look past the obvious for answers to recurring problems. Structural analysis has a proper place within the discipline. This is evidenced by the fact that so many of the studies on school desegregation continue to systematically ignore the obvious and thereby distort the internal dynamics of the conflicts. To ignore the existence of black division over the issue of integration is to miss not only the obvious but also tends to attribute to a group of people characteristics they do not have. I am suggesting that the way in which a system is mobilized and the rules governing that mobilization, structure the conflict and help to define the disputants. For example, foreign observers of American politics have often been confused by the structure

of American political parties. They are not provided for formally in the Constitution; they do not appear to be national parties except once every four years; they do not have uniform ideological orientations; and there do not appear to be significant differences between the parties. Yet, the two major parties are in constant conflict with one another. To understand the organizational dynamics of the parties in this country it is necessary for one to consider the impetus behind the party structure. Diamond, Fisk, and Garfinkel have noted that:

The constitution not only legitimates and stimulates the formation of political associations; equally important it substantially molds their distinctive traits. Schattschneider's metaphor is excellent: "if the parties are the river of American politics, the stream of the living impulse to govern, the Constitution is the river bed, the firm land whose contour shapes the stream."⁸

This is no less true of politics at the local level. Generally speaking, the local political parties are not directly involved in school desegregation matters. This means that persons coalescing around the issue tend to be "single-issue" oriented. Further, the system defines the mode of accessibility. That is, if the school board is elected, groups will usually work through the electoral process to change the school desegregation decision. On the other hand, if the board is appointed, that group or office which is responsible for the appointments will be the focus of the agitation.

These two considerations alone, which have been

ignored in the literature, can tell us a great deal about school desegregation and the politics that ensue.⁹ For example, the matter of single-issue orientation has some important implications. Political systems which are relatively closed would require more "staying power" for ad hoc groups vis-a-vis systems that are relatively open. This follows logically from the fact that in most groups there are at least three levels of involvement. First, there are those who are the leadership core and who are the most active. Secondly, there are those who are involved but who might be tabbed as followers. The third group are the sympathizers. Most groups will start out with a flurry of activity. But as the issue drags on and information and time cost continue to rise, some people will have to drop out to devote their energies to things that are more central to them.¹⁰ The relatively inaccessible system would tend to discriminate against the influence of ad hoc groups. On the other hand, a system which is highly accessible would tend to maximize the influence of the ad hoc group. In this sense, then, power is defined in certain respects, by the way in which the system is mobilized. The mobilization of the system is our first consideration in the comparative analysis between Lansing and Grand Rapids. In the final analysis we want to find out what effect the mobilization had on the manner in which the conflict proceeded.

As indicated earlier in Chapter II we can determine

the extent a given system is "opened" or "closed" by comparing a random number of school districts on three variables, frequency of elections, turnover potential, and number of electoral steps. I found that the variations between systems were not particularly great. Fourteen districts were examined. Clearly Grand Rapids and Lansing represented polar types. In the former, there was an election each and every year with one-third of the board being up for reelection. Lansing, on the other hand, held elections once every two years. In addition, groups seeking to vote the board out of office in Lansing would have to do so over a six-year period while it only took three years in Grand Rapids to accomplish the same result.

None of the systems I examined held elections less frequently than two years. Hence, those systems holding elections every year were classified as "Hi" in terms of frequency of elections and those holding elections once every two years were classified as "Lo." Similarly, there was not much variation in terms of turnover potential between our systems. Eleven out of the fourteen systems had a turnover potential of four years. But once again, Lansing and Grand Rapids proved to be polar types, with six and three years respectively. Systems with four or fewer turnover-potential years were classified as "Hi" and those with more than four were placed in the "Lo" category.

When I examined the number of electoral steps involved, the classification scheme became obvious. All

systems required petitioning and a general election except under some rather unusual circumstances. The variable which distinguishes systems is the absence of the primary. Those systems which required a primary were viewed as less accessible vis-a-vis those that did not have such a requirement. Thus, they were classified as "Lo" and "Hi" respectively.

As we can see from examining Figure 5, Grand Rapids and Lansing have significantly different kinds of systems. The former is "opened" while the latter is "closed." Of course, the question which concerns us here is what effect these differences played in the development of the respective controversies.

Recall that in both cities, the school board made pro-desegregation decisions that were unpopular with certain segments of the populations. In both instances, a redress of grievances was sought by approaching that body most directly responsible for the decisions, the school board. Generally speaking, school board elections do not arouse a great deal of interest in the community. In fact, in both our cities the most dominant issue for the decade preceding the conflicts was millage. In this sense then, the school desegregation issue represented a disruption of the "normal" politics of the boards. In addition, school desegregation provided another abnormality in that it precipitated serious community conflict.

		Turnover Potential			
		Hi		Lo	
		Electoral Steps			
Frequency of elections		Hi	Lo	Hi	Lo
	Hi		Grand Rapids Benton Harbor Jackson		
	Lo			Flint	Lansing

Figure 5. Classification of School Districts in Michigan by turnover potential, number of electoral steps, and frequency of elections.

Because of the relative accessibility of the Grand Rapids board, the issue had a significantly greater impact than it did in Lansing. In Grand Rapids, for example, one-third of the board is up for reelection each year. Therefore, even the most transitory of issues are given their "day in court" so to speak.

When the Grand Rapids board finally acquiesced to the demands of the NAACP toward the end of the school year of 1968, immediately one-third of the board was up for reelection. The election took place at a time when emotions both in the black and white communities were extremely high. There was very little time lapse between the board's decision and the election. The groups that formed to fight the decision had the advantage of having relatively low

information cost. That is, the election came on the heels of a controversial decision and hence gave the people an opportunity to react to that decision while the issue was most visible to the public.

<u>LANSING</u>	<u>GRAND RAPIDS</u>
1. Seven member board.	1. Nine member board.
2. Elections held every two years.	2. Elections held every year.
3. Terms for 2, 4, and 6 years.	3. All terms for two years.
4. Two members of a seven-member board are up for reelection every other year.	4. Two members of a nine-member board are up for reelection every year.
5. Vacancies filled by the board for the duration of the term to be filled.	5. Vacancies filled by the board only until the next election.
6. Millage is the most dominant issue in school elections.	6. Millage is the most dominant issue in school elections.

Figure 6. Review of the Characteristics of the Lansing and Grand Rapids School Boards.

The situation in Lansing was different in some rather obvious ways. First, the decision came after an election which meant that two years would elapse before the people would be able to register an opinion at the polls. Even then, only two members out of seven could be rejected.¹¹

This, of course, accounts for the different foci of the ad hoc groups. In Grand Rapids, the organizational

focus of the white anti-integration group centered on the pending election while in Lansing, the only real avenue available was the courts. Both anti-integration groups won their respective battles in the initial stages. But in the "closed" system the court decision was not allowed to "stick." The court ruled that the bussing plan would have to be delayed until more study of its constitutionality could be made.¹² This in no way prohibited the school board from coming up with other plans that did not immediately involve bussing such as redrawing boundary lines, building new schools in areas that would draw on populations that would be racially mixed, and the like. In other words, because of the limited accessibility to the school board by the public, the Lansing school board could be flexible in its approach to the problem. The members of the board who were responsible for the decision had time to work out alternatives.

Students and practitioners of democratic politics have traditionally placed a premium on citizen participation. It has been generally felt that the more a system allows for such participation, the more it conforms to the democratic norm. A "healthy democracy is one whose citizens participate fully."¹³

In our two cities it seems that the greater the opportunity for citizen participation, the greater the probability that the citizenry will opt for segregated patterns of school attendance. This leaves us in the

position of arguing that the forces for integration in our society have the best chance of success in systems that are the least democratic. As previously noted, this assertion is nothing new. James Madison realized that one of the greatest dangers to democracy was unrestrained freedom.¹⁴ De Tocqueville spoke of this as the "tyranny of the majority."¹⁵ S. M. Lipset noted that in 1932 Germany had an unprecedented turnout at the polls.¹⁶ Rather than being an indication of a "healthy" democracy, it indicated that the German democracy was in serious trouble. The fact that the Germans opted for Hitler as an absolute ruler may suggest that the relationship between citizen participation and the "health" of a democracy has been inverted by traditional democratic theorists.¹⁷

There are two assumptions which have emanated from the traditional view of citizen participation, that concern us. First, it has been assumed that participation works in a manner similar to a safety valve. That is, participation is one way for citizens to vent their "hostilities" toward the political system. Once this "venting" activity is over, things can return to normal because the "steam" has been let off.¹⁸ The second assumption, which is related directly to the first, is that citizen participation is a dependent variable. Lester Milbrath's (Political Participation)¹⁹ propositional index of research done on political participation clearly

demonstrates what I am suggesting. Practically every proposition in the book views political participation as a function of other variables. The problem with these two assumptions is that they are misleading. William Gamson has found that participation encourages, rather than gravitates against, intense conflict. Thus, the act of participation has consequences for the political system and is properly, at times, best viewed as an independent variable.²⁰

I am contending that the "open" system encourages citizen participation, which in turn may place strain on the regime. The combination of these two factors makes the system conducive to rancorous conflict.²¹

As Gamson noted, one measure of "strain" in the formal leadership turnover rate. Given the rather "lack-luster" character of school board elections, one would expect, as a matter of course, that there would be very little turnover on school boards. The turnover that is present under "normal" circumstances would result more from voluntary retirement from the board rather than defeat at the polls. Further, it might also be expected that the "open" system would have a higher turnover rate vis-a-vis a more "closed" system. When we examine these particular aspects of the two school boards, some interesting patterns emerge.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

By and large, the matter of school board elections has been ignored in the literature. Robert Crain (The Politics of School Desegregation)²² does spend some time looking at the ideological composition of various school boards. He contends that the most important variable in determining the reaction of the school board to the demands for integration is the individual orientation of board members toward civil rights. This orientation emerges with what Crain describes as the "key response," which comes after the board initially rejects the demands. What is not clear with this analysis is this: why are we to assume that the "key response" represents the attitude of the board toward the civil rights movement and not the initial response? If we are concerned with the politics of the subject, then is it not more logical to view the change from rejection to partial acceptance as a function of political pressure rather than of attitude? But even if we accept Crain's premise, the tale is only partially told. As we know from our cases, the politics of the subject are just beginning to surface once the board has made its decision (key response). Crain has assumed that the board members who make the decision are somehow the final arbiters of the matter. I say the accuracy of this assumption rests with the rules governing the mobilization

of the system. As we examine the turnover rates for the two boards, keep in mind that the school desegregation controversies became public issues in 1965-1967 and from 1967-1969 in Lansing and Grand Rapids respectively.

I had assumed, up to this point, that one of the consequences of the "opened" versus the "closed" system would be a relatively higher turnover on the two boards. From 1957 to 1970 we see that Lansing (closed) has a higher rate generally than Grand Rapids (opened). However, we should make note of the fact that the turnover on the Lansing board in 1959 can be accounted for by the fact that two board members whose terms had expired chose not to run for reelection. Also, another board member died which left a total of three positions that were to be filled but whose existence had nothing to do with the presence of any kind of community conflict. This leads us to conclude that under "normal" circumstances, the turnover rates are not affected by the mobilization of the system. When we factor out the .42 turnover in Lansing in 1959 we see that in the "opened" system the turnover during the desegregation controversy was greater than any of the turnover in the "closed" system over the entire 13-year time span.

We can note that previous to the desegregation conflict, both boards showed remarkable stability in turnover. The interesting thing here is that the election in Lansing which is closest to the controversy resulted in

zero turnover.²³

It has been demonstrated that the higher one's socio-economic standing, the greater the probability that one will vote. One could infer from this that in "normal" school board elections lower-class persons are not likely to vote.²⁴ I had initially thought that the unusually high involvement on the part of the population would result in some dramatic changes in the kinds of people elected. That is, I hypothesized that the new board members would be more like those who elected them. Previous to the controversies, every board member, save two, had some college experience. For the most part, the board members had either four years of college or more. The new board members in Grand Rapids (all of whom were elected on anti-bussing platforms) were just as educated as previous board members. One board member who was elected in 1968 emerged as the board chairman after only one year. He was the only one of the board at the time with no college experience. It is extremely unlikely that this would have happened had not the system been "opened" and had not the issue over school desegregation arisen. The only other non-college board member that showed up over the 13-year period had received honorary degrees from three universities in the state.²⁵

The anti-bussing people were similar to previous board members in other ways. School board members do not come to the board with much previous political experience

nor do they seek other political offices once they are off the board. To date, only two board members in both cities have held other political offices once off the board.

A former Lansing board member ran for the state senate in 1970 and a former Grand Rapids board member was appointed by the Nixon administration to a position in Washington, D. C.²⁶

Based on the previous discussion, there are three conclusions to be drawn. First, the kinds of people who are elected to the school board in times of controversy do not differ from persons elected at other times. Secondly, turnover rates do not distinguish the "opened" from the "closed" system except when there is intense community conflict. Lastly, and as an outgrowth of our second conclusion, the "opened" system is susceptible to strain during times of controversy.

Another measure of strain might be the competitiveness of elections. Competitiveness here is defined as the percentage of votes received by the winners versus that received by the losers. The smaller the percentage of votes cast for the winners, the more competitive is the election. One would expect elections to become relatively more competitive when there are controversial issues to be decided. Hence, we could hypothesize that the elections closest to the school desegregation decisions, in both cities, would be relatively competitive. Further, we can also suggest that the more opened the system, the more

likely it is that controversial elections will be competitive.

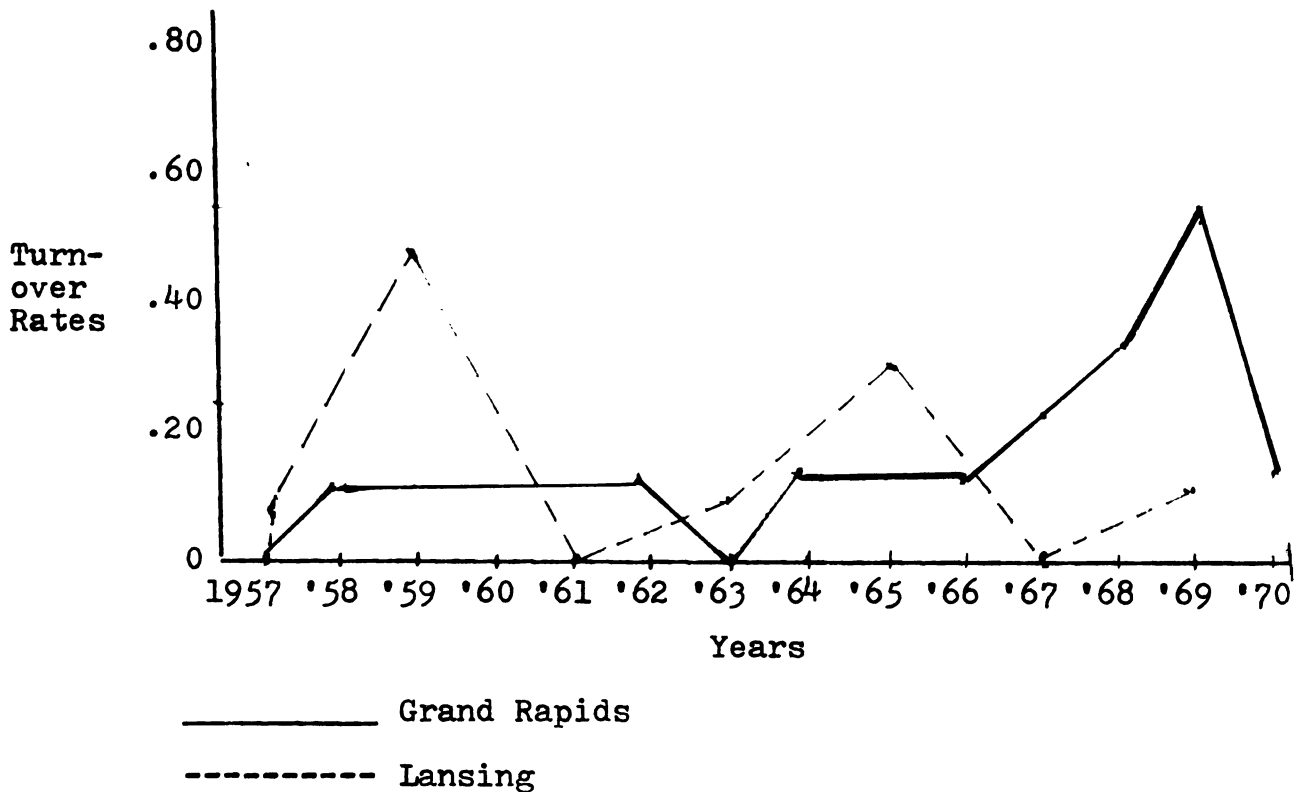


Figure 7. Turnover Rates for the Lansing and Grand Rapids School Boards From 1957-1970.

Because of the rules governing the elections in Grand Rapids as compared with those in Lansing, I had to rearrange the manner in which electoral competitiveness was to be measured. In Grand Rapids, it is possible for the candidates to win a seat on the board by capturing a majority of the votes in the primary. This meant that sometimes there was no general election. Persons running for election in Lansing, on the other hand, must compete in the general election. These different electoral patterns mean that we had to use somewhat different methods in evaluating the competitiveness of elections within each city.²⁷

Table 10

Turnover for the Grand Rapids School Board
from 1957-1970

<u>Year</u>	<u>#of Positions⁺ Available</u>	<u>New Members Added</u>	<u>Max. Turn- over</u>	<u>Actual Turnover</u>
1957	3	0	.333	0
1958	3	1	.333	.11
1959	3	1	.333	.11
1960	3	1	.333	.11
1961	3	1	.333	.11
1962	3	1	.333	.11
1963	3	0	.333	0
1964	3	1	.333	.11
1965	3	1	.333	.11
1966	3	1	.333	.11
1967	3	2	.333	.22
1968	3	3	.333	.33
1969	3	5*	.333	.55
1970	3	3	.333	.33

⁺Refers to the number of positions that are defined by law as available for electoral challenge.

*In 1969 the number of new members added exceeded the number defined by law as available for electoral challenge. This happened because two members who were not up for reelection in 1969 resigned from the board.

Table 11
Turnover for the Lansing School Board
From 1957-1969

<u>Year</u>	<u>#of Positions Available</u>	<u>New Members Added</u>	<u>Max. Turn- over</u>	<u>Actual Turnover</u>
1957	2	1	.28	.14
1959	2	3	.28	.426
1961	2	0	.28	.0
1963	2	1	.28	.14
1965	2	2	.28	.28
1967	2	0	.28	.0
1969	2	1	.28	.14

Upon examination of the school board elections in Grand Rapids, from 1960-1970 we see that in seven out of ten of these at least two of the three positions available were filled in the primary election. In fact, it could be argued that the norm for the decade was that school board elections were so uncompetitive that for most of the positions, a general election was not necessary.²⁸

Viewing the data a little differently demonstrates the emergence of another pattern. The probability that candidates will win elections in the primary appears to be a function of the number of people running for office. Stated differently, the greater the number of people seeking office, the less likely it is that there will be a victor in the primary.

A way of checking this hypothesis would be to examine the distribution of "Z" scores for the numbers of persons running for office in the primary election. The distribution informs us that only in one election, 1966, did the numbers of persons vying for office show any statistically significant variation. To me, however, this does not indicate that the numbers are not significant. It would be appropriate to run a Fisher Exact test to find out if there is any relationship between the probability of people being elected in the primary and the numbers of persons running for office. Unfortunately, the relative size of N prohibits such a test. Gerhard Lenski in his book The Religious Factor encounters a similar problem.

He was led to conclude that:

Unfortunately, in the social sciences in recent years many serious abuses have grown up around the use of . . . tests of significance. Frequently it has been assumed that statistical significance is a measure of social significance. Sometimes the degree of statistical significance has been assumed to be the same as the degree of association. But more serious than any of these is the tendency for researchers and their readers to use tests of significance as a substitute for thought in the formation of judgments concerning the validity and generalizability of sample findings Tests of significance should be recognized for what they are; merely one of the tools available to social scientists to aid in the formation of judgments concerning the validity and generalizability of findings based on observations.²⁹

Looking at the data from still a different perspective we can see that any time there were 12 or more persons in the election, no one was elected. When there were from 10-11, one person was elected. Anywhere from 6-9 meant that two people would emerge victorious in the primary. And finally, any time 5 or less were running all three would be elected in the primary. The interesting thing to note here is that this pattern still holds for the elections in which school desegregation was an issue. The 1968 election was controversial but only seven persons sought office and, true to form, two persons were elected in the primary. Hence, we can conclude that it is not simply the controversy itself which produces competitive elections, but rather the number of persons seeking office. If a given controversy encourages an "abnormal" number of persons to seek office, then the election is likely to be competitive.

We can look at the competitiveness of the school board elections in Lansing in a more traditional manner. Competition here can be defined as the percentage of votes received by the victors. The smaller the percentage, the more competitive is the election. But as with Grand Rapids, the degree of competitiveness is also a function of the number of people seeking office. The point is proven out by examining the ratio of positions available to the numbers seeking office. The only deviation from this occurred in 1965. This can be explained by the fact that one candidate withdrew from the contest after the ballot had already been printed. Also, there were two persons who received a single vote on a write-in.

Generally, the school board elections in both cities can be characterized as non-competitive affairs. This characterization held true for Lansing throughout the decade of the sixties. In Grand Rapids, the political system was more accessible and became more competitive during the controversy as a function, not directly of the conflict itself, but rather as a function of the number of people who sought election. The "normal" involvement of the electorate in both cities in school board elections is relatively low. Turnover for both proved to be low and stable. The relative inaccessibility of the Lansing system vis-a-vis that in Grand Rapids only becomes apparent as accessibility is sought. The latter's conduciveness to rancorous conflict is what concerns us for the duration of the essay.

Table 12

Summary of Grand Rapids School Board
Elections, 1960-1970

<u>Year</u>	<u># Running</u>	<u># Elected in Primary</u>	<u># in General Election</u>	<u># of Positions Available</u>
1960	6	2	2	3
1961	5	3	0	3
1962	5	3	0	3
1963	4	3	0	3
1964	5	3	0	3
1965	9	2	2	3
1966	20	0	6	3
1967	13	0	6	3
1968	7	2	2	4
1969	12	0	8	4
1970	11	1	4	3

Table 13

Regrouping of Data on Grand Rapids
Elections, 1960-1970

<u>#Running for Election</u>	<u>#Elected in Primary</u>
12	0
10-11	1
6-9	2
5 and below	3

Table 14

Distribution of "Z" Scores for the Number
Persons Running in Grand Rapids
Elections from 1960-1970.

<u>Year</u>	<u># Running(X)</u>	<u>X-X</u>	<u>x/s</u>
1960	6	-2.82	-.61
1961	5	-3.82	-.83
1962	5	-3.82	-.83
1963	4	-4.28	-.93
1964	5	-3.82	-.83
1965	9	+ .18	+.04
1966	20	+11.18	+2.41
1967	13	+ 4.18	+.90
1968	7	- 1.82	+.39
1969	12	+ 3.18	+.75
1970	11	+ 2.18	+.57

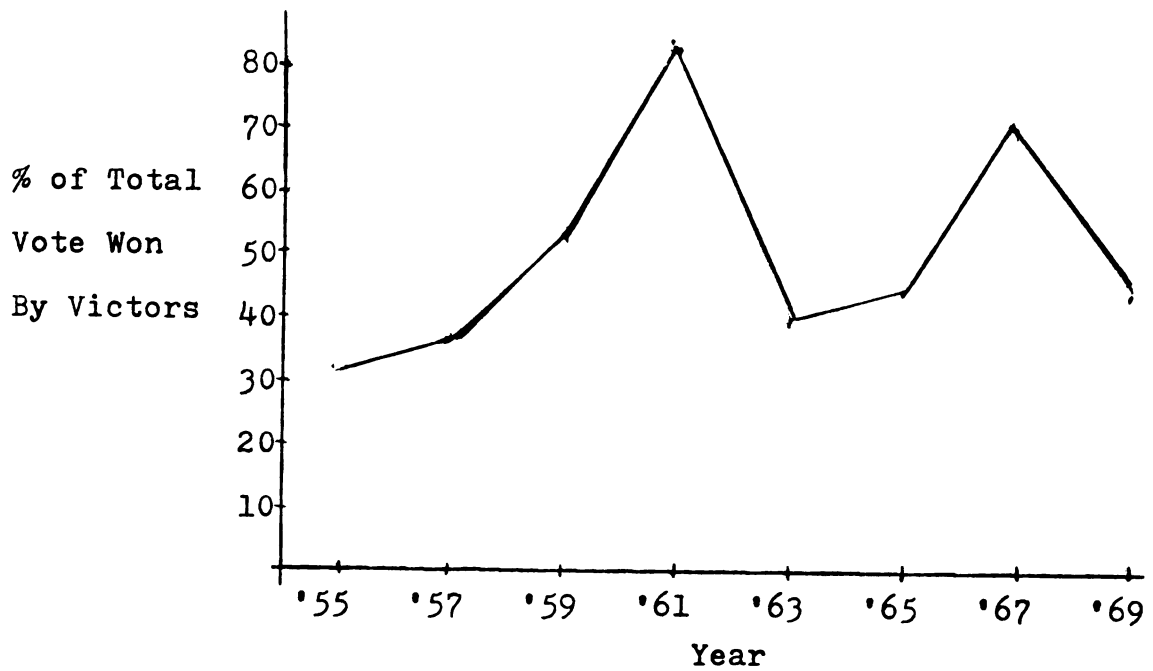


Figure 8. Competitiveness of School Board Elections in Lansing, 1955-1969.

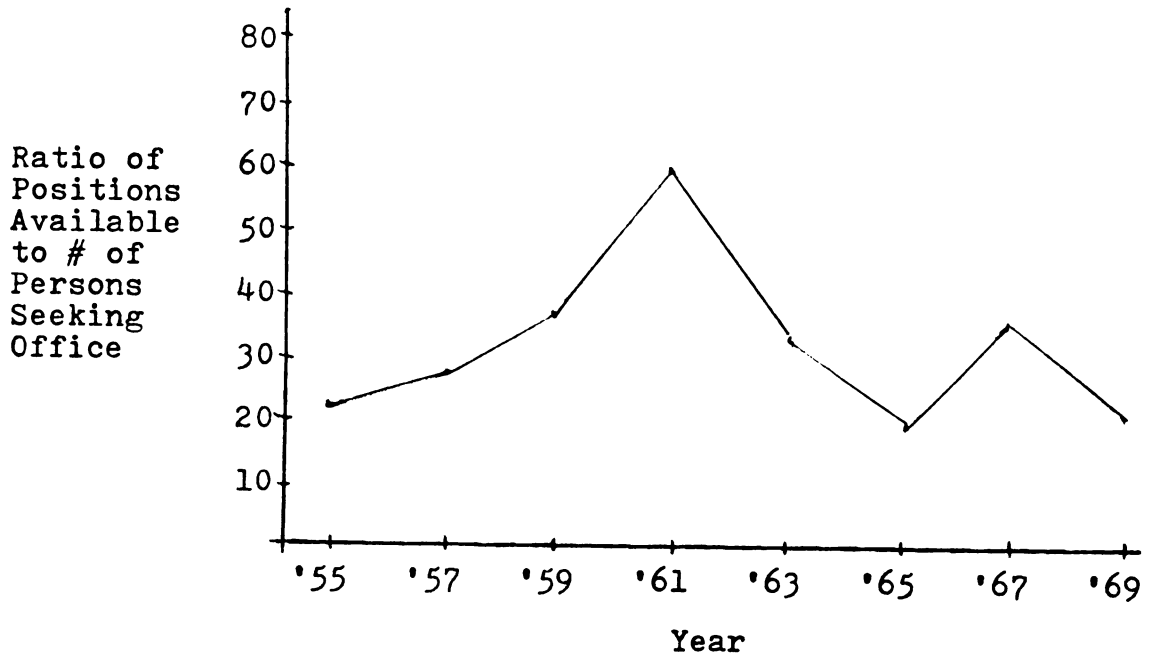


Figure 9. Competitiveness of School Board Elections in Lansing, 1955-1969.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER VI

¹The idea of community control of schools is fairly new to the desegregation controversy in the United States. In some respects it has emerged as an alternative to integration. New York was the first city to experience a full-fledged conflict over community control. An excellent account of the issues is contained in M. Berube and M. Gittel, Confrontation at Oceanhill-Brownsville (New York: Praeger, 1969).

²Robert Crain, The Politics of School Desegregation (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968).

³The make-up of the committees in both cities were conspicuous because care was taken to include persons who were agitating for a change in policy. Another interesting aspect of this is the politics of "co-optation." That is, it could be argued that by bringing the "agitators" into the political system of the school boards, they might then see themselves as having a stake in the existing structure or at least a stake in the boards as presently constituted.

⁴E. C. Banfield, The Unheavenly City (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1968), pp. 185-209.

⁵Jerome Skolnick, The Politics of Protest (New York: Ballantine Books, 1969).

⁶William Connolly, The Bias of Pluralism (New York: Atherton Press, 1969).

⁷Charles McCoy and John Playford (eds.), Apolitical Politics (New York: Crowell Publishing Company, 1967).

⁸Martin Diamond, Winston Fisk and Herbert Garfinkel, The Democratic Republic (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1966), pp. 292-293.

⁹The idea referred to here is basically a simple one but it continues to be ignored in much of the research in political science. Certainly, one way to understand the behavior of disputants is to examine the ways in which influence is sought. More often than not, the channels of accessibility are defined procedurally by the rules and regulations which govern the political system.

¹⁰This suggestion entails an assumption concerning how groups operate. Implicit in this assumption is the belief that individuals within groups will behave according to a "cost-benefit" analysis. The amount of effort a given member of the group is willing to give to group goals, is dependent on the amount of benefit that member perceives himself as gaining over and above his effort. For a more complete discussion of this line of reasoning see Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

¹¹Information gotten out of the Lansing and Grand Rapids Municipal Code Books.

¹²Lansing State Journal, August 1, 1966, p. F1.

¹³The wide-spread American belief here is easy to document. All one has to do is to notice the number of politicians who profess that they do not care if the citizens vote for them, it is more important that they vote. The assumption is, of course, that the exercise of this right makes for a healthy regime.

¹⁴A. Hamilton, J. Jay and J. Madison, The Federalist Papers. Paper No. 10 (New York: New American Library, 1961).

¹⁵A. de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, Vol. I (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), pp. 281-297.

¹⁶S. M. Lipset, Political Man (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963), pp. 87-114.

¹⁷Actually the "traditional theorists" have well understood the point I am making here. But there seems to be a confusion in American political life concerning this point. The founders of the regime understood it, but practicing politicians seem to find it necessary to speak as though just the opposite is true.

¹⁸This partakes of the "frontier" theory in American history which argues that America has avoided some of the social unrest of Europe simply because the dissatisfied could always pick up and move West.

¹⁹Lester Milbrath, Political Participation (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965).

²⁰William Gamson, "Rancorous Conflict in Community Politics," Community Structure and Decision Making: A Comparative Analysis, ed. Terry N. Clark (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing, 1968), pp. 197-214.

²¹Ibid.

²²Crain, op. cit.

²³Information gathered from the official records of the cities of Lansing and Grand Rapids.

²⁴Milbrath, op. cit., pp. 110-142.

²⁵Information gathered from the official records of the "Grand Rapids Press," 1955-1970.

²⁶The appointment by the Nixon administration does not really qualify under the heading of "seeking" other political offices. The person in question did not run for election. This further supports my contention that school board members do not come to the board with much previous political experience nor do they seem particularly interested in pursuing political careers.

²⁷The fact of having to use different measures of competitiveness for each city does not injure our analysis. Keep in mind that we are not really interested in the competitiveness of elections of one city versus another. Rather, the comparison is within each city over time.

²⁸It was suggested to me that I look at "voter turnout" and its effect on competitiveness of elections. This is not possible because the school board elections coincide with other local, state, and national elections. Hence, it would be at best difficult to factor out what portion of the voters saw the school board election as the most important issue on the ballot.

²⁹Gerhard Linsky, The Religious Factor (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961), p. 281.

CHAPTER VII

BLACK DIVISION

As I indicated earlier, one of the most important considerations here is the existence of black disunity and its effect on the development of the conflict. It is obvious that in both cities, the basis for black division over the issue existed. In only one of our cities, however, did this division sustain itself over a significant period. Part of the reason why the issue was kept alive in Grand Rapids can be traced to the involvement of HEW and the SCRC. Both of these agencies insisted that the integration already implemented by the Master Plan not be reversed. The factors taken into consideration in the development of the plan assured the school board of continuous conflict, especially in light of the fact that the board could go neither forward or backward. Recall that the Director of Child Accounting was charged with the responsibility of coming up with a plan that would be acceptable to both blacks and whites. As he himself acknowledged, "this all but eliminated the possibility of two-way bussing."¹ Obviously, the school board in giving this directive felt vulnerable to pressures emanating from the community. He made two assumptions in drawing up the plan that proved later to be false. He

thought that those blacks agitating for integration represented the entire black population of the city. Secondly, he assumed that the primary objection of whites would be the bussing of "their" children.

It must be admitted here that by being sensitive to feelings of the white population, the board removed the possibility of being taken to court by the white segregationists. Surely, they would not be willing to claim in court that their constitutional rights were being violated by having blacks admitted to "their" schools. Their only "real" recourse was to change the composition of that body which made the decision to integrate the schools.

It might properly be asked at this point why the segregationist blacks did not choose to take the issue to court? They were in a position to make the same claim that whites made in Lansing. I do not have a definitive answer to this question. Perhaps a partial answer would be that the conflict did not really start with these people over the bussing issue. The initial demands of the ad hoc black community organization dealt with the refusal on the part of the school board to reconsider its previous decision to build an elementary school in an all black area. Bussing did become an issue rather quickly, however. Perhaps another partial explanation might be that the organization in the community which had the resources, both technically and financially, to sponsor such action, the NAACP, was the force behind the integration plan.

One additional factor in considering the non-involvement of the courts in Grand Rapids may be the proximity of the decision to integrate to the start of the school year. The decision came two weeks before the first day of classes. There simply was not time to do much before the plan went into effect.

In contrast, the Lansing school board put forth a more equitable plan that involved two-way bussing. They did not have to fear the immediate reaction of the white community. There was no pending election. In fact, it would be five years before a majority of the board would be up for re-election. The architects of the Lansing plan were simply and directly charged with the responsibility of eliminating segregation in the schools. There was no directive to be sensitive to any demand other than that one.

Once the segregationists had a majority on the Grand Rapids board, they were anxious to reverse the desegregation decision. If this happened, the NAACP had already threatened to take the matter to court. Given that outside agencies prevented the board from reinstituting the previous status quo and given that the first year of the plan was only to be a partial implementation of desegregation, no one, including the NAACP, the white segregationists, and the black segregationists were satisfied. The plan continued to rest in limbo and remained highly visible. The next step was to take a "wait and see" stand on how the integration already effected would work out. The fact that it did not

work out particularly well helped to keep the issue out front.

THE QUESTION OF BLACK DIVISION AND RANCOR

What concerns us immediately is the question of black division and its effects on the course of the controversy. The pattern which materialized in both cities was the beginning of a black-white coalition of segregationists. In the public meetings held before the school boards these two groups were supportative of each other. In Lansing, the white group that filed a suit included the parents of two black children who were also against the plan. In Grand Rapids, the black members of the board, after having sponsored the school desegregation plan, joined the ranks of the anti-integration people and pushed to elect one of them as board chairman.

In both cases, black division caused some strain within the black community. The longer school desegregation remained an issue, the more apparent the strain became. I shall attempt to specify the way in which the strain manifested itself in each situation.

1. The first opportunity for the strain to become visible came with the public hearings sponsored by the school boards. Both anti-integrationist black groups made the claim that those black leaders demanding integration did not really represent the black community.² This came as a surprise to the NAACP and the school

boards alike. Previous to this both boards had assumed relative black unity on the question of integration.

2. The black leadership structure in Lansing was constituted in such a way that it was unlikely that a purge would take place. There were no blacks on the school board. The body which most closely incorporated a black leadership set was the Human Relations Council. Two of the blacks on the Council were also NAACP leaders and were directly responsible for the school desegregation plan. Given that the plan never really got out of the courts and that the board instituted desegregation in other ways, the black community never really mobilized against the leaders on the Council. Hence, the only real confrontation which took place among blacks was at the public hearing held by the school board.

3. In Grand Rapids there were more opportunities for confrontations between opposing black groups. First of all, there was a black person on the school board. In fact, Paul Phillips engineered the desegregation proposal and was the main force behind getting the board to consider the whole question. He became a target for both sides. As the Director of the local Urban League, he was most closely allied with the NAACP. When the conflict continued to escalate, it became clear to Mr. Phillips that his integrationist stance was not

tolerable to major segments of the people he saw himself as representing. Therefore, practically any stand he chose to make would be unacceptable to someone. After the election in 1968, he joined with the three new white segregationist members of the board to elect one of them chairman.³ As one might suppose, this was totally unacceptable to the NAACP who threatened to challenge Phillips in the next election.⁴ Caught between, as it were, two irrevocably opposed forces, Phillips resigned his post.

Phillips' replacement was also black and found herself in a no less vulnerable position. She called for the assistance of the SCRC which indicated that, given the division in the black community, they had no proposal that would satisfy the disputants. Any time a person is appointed to fill an unexpired vacancy on the Grand Rapids board, they must run for election the next time a school board election is held, regardless of whether or not the vacancy filled was due to expire at the next election time. Realizing that there were no immediate solutions on the horizon, she declined to run for re-election.

4. Another indication of strain in Grand Rapids appeared with the dissolution of the Human Relations Council. By the time that one of the high schools had been closed twice within two weeks as a result of racial violence and threats were being made on the lives of various

persons, it became apparent that the HRC was not able to do its job. It was disbanded and a new Council was formed. In all, there were six blacks who were either removed from or removed themselves from office. If we examine the formal leadership structure, these six represented exactly 60 percent of the black leaders in the city. Of course, I am not trying to suggest that there is a one-to-one relationship between the formal and informal leadership structures. Undoubtedly, there are certain influentials in the community who do not occupy formal leadership positions. On the contrary, there are some formal leaders who may not exert "real" influence. But in the case of Grand Rapids, there is every reason to believe that most of the blacks in office were considered to be community leaders. Also, we should consider the fact that when the conflict escalated, it was these leaders who were forced to give up their positions in favor of others who might be more in tune with current demands.

In a certain sense, it is somewhat misleading to compare the strain on the black community in Grand Rapids with that in Lansing. The conflict ended "prematurely" in the latter and, therefore, the issue was taken away. But reasoning a little differently, one could argue that this statement is also misleading. Recall that the school board in Lansing still pursued

an integrationist course of action even after losing the battle in the courts.

5. A final indication of strain in Grand Rapids surfaces when we examine the role played by the black ministers, especially as that role involved the proposed school boycott. Two weeks preceding the opening of school, the black ministers met and decided to oppose the boycott. Each was instructed to return to his pulpit and encourage the parents to send their children to school. This prompted the boycott sponsors to denounce the ministers as "uncle toms" who had a vested interest in seeing to it that the boycott failed.

There was no such conflict in Lansing. In fact, the ministers, who seem to wield a significant amount of influence, remained silent during the entire affair.

From the analysis of the situations in our two communities, one might be led to conclude that the conflict as it existed in Lansing was not particularly intense. This is only true in relationship to Grand Rapids. When we examine the incidences of rancorous conflict, it is clear that emotions were running high in both cities. I should note here that I am referring to incidences that were reported in the newspapers. Certainly, there could have been more than were reported, but I really have no way of ascertaining that information.

In Lansing, there were two such incidences reported. As expected, both of these took place during the height of the controversy. The first of these occurred at a time when the system was the most accessible, the public hearings held by the school board. The anti-integrationist whites provided the action when one of their members rushed the podium and physically threatened one of the school board members! The other incident involved phone calls to various black and white supporters of the desegregation plan calling them communists and threatening to "see to it that they did not have their way."⁵

At the time of the public hearing in Grand Rapids, the same kind of threats existed. In this sense, both communities experienced similar kinds of rancor at similar points in the controversies. But as the Grand Rapids conflict carried on, other more serious things happened. First, one of the homes of a black supporter of the plan was fire bombed. Secondly, black students were physically beaten by other black students because of differing views on the matter. One of the high schools had to be closed on two separate occasions because of fighting in the halls between blacks and whites. The ministers all received threatening phone calls. Finally, the anti-integrationist blacks marched on the school board headquarters twice.⁶

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There were some differences between the cities that cannot be accounted for by way of the theoretical framework I have established. Now is the time to speak to the variance that cannot be accounted for.

A theme that has been running through this essay has dealt with the failure of other studies to deal with differences between cases of school desegregation systematically. For example, there is a qualitative difference between the situation in St. Louis, where the school board finally acquiesced to the demand to allow the few black students who were being bussed to be actually in classrooms with white students, and Pasadena, where the integrationist advocates made more forceful demands.⁷ The word "integration" was employed to cover both situations when actually it meant different things in different communities. Such a qualitative difference exists between our two case studies as well.

Given the size of the high school population in Lansing, it would have been possible to send all of the black students to a single school and not threaten the white majority of that school. When we consider the fact that the black population was to be spread throughout three high schools, blacks would be even less conspicuous. In each school blacks would constitute less than 15 percent of the school population. In other words, white parents had no

reason to "fear" a large influx of black students.

Furthermore, the Lansing plan affected less than 2 percent of the total school population. Herein lies a key to a fuller understanding of the conflict. As we shall see, not only was the Grand Rapids system "conducive" but also the respective plans in the two cities had the effect of minimization of conflict in one and maximization of conflict in the other.

The white parents in Lansing most directly responsible for the organization of PACE were those whose children were to be bussed. They were vocal, loud, and had some measure of city-wide support. But in the final analysis, their numbers were not sufficient. Even though they gained a victory in the courts, they knew full well that the school board would find another way to work its will. PACE ran two candidates in the election of 1967. By this time, the board had instituted a measure of desegregation in ways that did not involve bussing and had plans on the drawing board for a new high school that would do the same thing. By the time the election came around the issue was a "non-issue" and PACE's city-wide support had dissipated under the weight of other more visible issues.

What did integration mean in Lansing? At most, it meant the disruption of a relatively small percentage of the total school population. At the very least, it meant building much needed new schools that would draw on a racially diversified student population. With relatively

little effort, it was possible to bring about the integration of the Lansing public schools.

Such obviously was not the case in Grand Rapids. Not only was the system "opened" to the pressures of various segments of the population, but also the plan to be implemented affected a large percentage of the school population. The integration of the junior and senior high school levels necessitated the reassignment of the grades that schools would service. In some schools, a grade was added. In others, grades were deleted. Even though most of the students at the junior high level would not have a racial mixture too different from their previous experience, the plan necessitated their changing schools, nonetheless.

Furthermore, in order to bring about meaningful integration, two of the high schools that previously had no black students would have "overnight" 10 percent of their student body as "outsiders." This, coupled with the fact that only black students were being bussed and that black seniors would not be allowed to graduate from "their" school, served to make the plan objectionable to almost everyone affected. Integration in Grand Rapids meant the involvement of the total city. Many black students for the first time were a minority in a school. White students, for the first time, were in the same school with more black people than they probably knew existed in the city. Clearly, integration meant different things in the two communities.

Another factor has to be mentioned. In Grand Rapids the very fact that some desegregation took place gave the students there a closer physical proximity to one another. Hence, the opportunity for rancor was more prominent than in Lansing.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION AND BLACK DIVISION

I argued earlier that one way of explaining the propensity among blacks in a given community toward serious division over the school desegregation issue is to raise the question of the extent to which that population has changed over time. It would seem that the greater the influx of migrating blacks the greater the chance there is that the black population will change its socio-economic characteristics. Further, with such changes, it is also likely that the kinds of demands that may have emanated from the black population will also change. The black leaders in the community who are supposedly representing the interests of people who have been in the community for a number of years and who have developed expectations concerning how things work. Leaders are likely to be aware of their interests and see themselves as representing those interests. The introduction of new interests in the community by way of the introduction of significant numbers of persons, frequently leaves the black leader in a cross-pressured situation. The black interests that helped to bring him to power and the interests he represents

as they once were. The black leaders are still seen as the representatives of the black community. Yet, in order for the "new" interests to become a fact of political power, either their own representatives must come forth or the more established black leadership must capitulate and, therefore, run the risk of abandoning those interests which helped bring them to a position of leadership initially. Thus, if Grand Rapids had a significantly greater influx of black people vis-a-vis Lansing, we then might attribute the sustained black division in that city to the emergence of new people and new interests.

In addition, there is also the possibility that blacks in Grand Rapids had a higher degree of social mobilization than those in Lansing. That is, it could be argued that black people in Grand Rapids who opted for community control of schools were "modernized," as it were, than blacks in Lansing.

Karl Deutsch has defined the concept of social mobilization as "the process in which major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior." There are two "distinct" stages to this process. First, there is the "stage of uprooting or breaking away from old settings, habits, and commitments; and secondly, the induction of the mobilized persons into some relatively stable new patterns of group membership, organization and commitment."⁸

The implications for differences in such mobilization between Grand Rapids and Lansing are clear. If there is a marked difference between the cities, then the relative degrees of division among the black populations can be explained in terms of social and not system mobilization.

If we look at the growth of the black population in Lansing and Grand Rapids from 1920-1960 we see that up until 1940 they were similar in size. From 1940 to 1950 the black population in Grand Rapids vaulted from 3,000 to 7,000; while in Lansing, it only went from 2,000 to 3,000. The decade closest to that we are concerned with here, shows that the number of blacks in Grand Rapids doubled. In Lansing during the same period, 1950 to 1960, the population more than doubled. Admittedly, the respective growths of the populations are similar only proportionately. In absolute numbers, more blacks migrated to Grand Rapids than migrated to Lansing.

A more relevant question at this point would be the extent to which the influx of blacks in both cities altered the socio-economic composition of the population? Using employment categories established by the Bureau of the Census we see that from 1950 to 1960 in none of the nine categories was there a statistically significant change in the distribution of the black populations as they were spread over these categories. In other words, the people who migrated to our two cities either possessed or developed employment skills in the same proportion as existed in the cities before the migration.

It should be noted at this point that the concept of social mobilization does not necessarily run counter to what I have been suggesting. In fact, one could argue that social and system mobilization complement one another. Clearly, if the black population in Grand Rapids was not only operating in a more "open" system vis-a-vis Lansing, but also was more socially mobilized in the sense that Deutsch discusses the term, we could then argue that the expectation of more rancorous conflict is consistent with my findings.

The major concern of this study has been with the way in which other social scientists have conducted research when dealing with the politics of school desegregation. More attention will have to be given to the individual cases if we are to understand the phenomena. The use of the case study has allowed me to give the appropriate attention. Four major summarizing points need to be made:

1. I have argued and demonstrated that rancor over school desegregation issues is most likely to occur in "opened" systems. School board members and administrators seeking to avoid such intense controversy would probably find the implementation of desegregation plans easier in "closed" systems.
2. I have not tried to indicate that rancor is totally undesirable. In fact, with many situations, just the opposite may be true. Coser has noted that conflict performs certain positive functions such as defining

group boundaries, precipitating change, as well as many others.⁹ Carmichael and Hamilton have contended that in order for any group in American politics to be effective, it must first close ranks.¹⁰ Political activists who seek changes on a wide spectrum of issues may be able successfully to precipitate conflict on one particular issue with the purpose of bringing about group unity and thereby becoming more effective on other issues.

3. While I have demonstrated that closed systems are most likely to give desegregation advocates their greatest likelihood of success, there is another side to the question which should be discussed. It is possible that a system can be so closed that accessibility on the part of interested citizens is impossible. Such a system might have a tendency to be too unresponsive to the forces of change. This is not unheard of in educational systems. David Rogers' discussion in 110 Livingston Street¹¹ is a case in point.

4. Not a great deal of attention has been given here to the present debate over the desirability of integration. There is a growing body of literature which calls into question the whole aim of that part of the civil rights movement which seeks integration into the American society. It may be that before the nation gets too far along the road toward integration, American blacks will have rejected the idea.

Table 15

Black Population Growth in Grand Rapids
from 1920 to 1960

<u>Year</u>	<u>Black Population</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
1960	15,000	109.3
1950	7,000	156.1
1940	3,000	-4.8
1930	3,000	156.4
1920	1,000	63.9

Table 16

Black Population Growth in Lansing
from 1920 to 1960

<u>Year</u>	<u>Black Population</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
1960	7,000	127.0
1950	3,000	81.4
1940	2,000	16.3
1930	1,000	101.9
1920	1,000	97.2

Table 17
 Distribution of Black Population
 in Grand Rapids over Employment
 Categories in 1960

Categories	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Professional	102	93	195	4.04
Managerial	56	12	68	1.41
Clerical	86	146	232	4.81
Sales	17	24	43	.89
Craftsmen	351	9	360	7.47
Operatives	871	332	1,203	24.97
Private household	5	417	422	8.76
Service	540	838	1,378	28.60
Laborers	490	23	513	10.64
N.A.	257	146	403	8.36
			<u>4,817</u>	<u>99.95</u>

Table 18
Distribution of Black Population
in Grand Rapids over Employment
Categories in 1950

Categories	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Professional	36	19	55	1.94
Managerial	48	17	65	2.30
Clerical	40	44	84	2.97
Sales	24	9	33	1.16
Craftsmen	180	8	188	6.65
Operatives	557	150	707	25.01
Private household	12	278	290	10.26
Service	481	418	899	31.81
Laborers	409	52	461	16.31
N.A.	27	17	<u>44</u>	<u>1.55</u>
			2,826	99.96

Table 19
 Distribution of Black Population
 in Lansing over Employment
 Categories in 1960

Categories	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Professional	100	49	149	5.54
Managerial	7	11	18	0.66
Clerical	62	90	152	5.65
Sales	10	16	26	0.96
Craftsmen	163	8	171	6.36
Operatives	556	112	668	24.86
Private household	73	222	295	10.97
Service	286	360	696	24.04
Laborers	169	9	178	6.62
N.A.	259	125	<u>384</u>	<u>14.29</u>
			2,687	99.95

Table 20
 Distribution of Black Population
 in Lansing over Employment
 Categories in 1950

Categories	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Professional	37	13	52	4.09
Managerial	15	7	22	1.73
Clerical	22	39	61	4.79
Sales	3	11	14	1.10
Craftsmen	103	5	108	8.49
Operatives	338	47	385	30.29
Private household	4	115	119	9.36
Service	203	147	350	27.53
Laborers	134	8	142	11.17
N.A.	13	15	<u>18</u>	<u>1.41</u>
			1,271	99.96

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER VII

¹Obtained from interview with Director of Child Accounting, Grand Rapids Public Schools.

²It is not clear in either city just who did represent the "black community." The activist in the cities assumed, as have social scientists, that when blacks are involved in political action, there is some body of individuals entitled the "black community." The existence of a community is an empirical question that should not be given an a priori status.

³Grand Rapids Press, July 12, 1969.

⁴The fact that Phillips was not able to satisfy anyone put him in an untenable position. This obviously is a classic example of withdrawal in the light of being cross-pressured.

⁵Lansing State Journal, August 2, 1966.

⁶Grand Rapids Press, July 12, 1969.

⁷Roscoe Hill and Malcolm Feely, Affirmative School Integration (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1967).

⁸Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development." Political Development and Social Change, eds. Jason L. Kindel and Richard W. Gable (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.), pp. 205-226.

⁹Lewis Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict (New York: Free Press, 1956), pp. 33-38 and 121-137.

¹⁰Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, Black Power (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 44.

¹¹David Rogers, 110 Livingston Street (New York: Random House, 1968).

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