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that at some point in time the relationship between past segregative acts and present segregation may become so attenuated as to be incapable of supporting a finding of *de jure* segregation warranting judicial intervention. 402 U.S. at 31-32, 91 S.Ct., at 1283-1284. See also *Hobson v. Hansen*, 269 F.Supp. 401, 495 (D.C.1967), *aff'd sub nom. Smuck v. Hobson*, 132 U.S.App.D.C. 372, 408 F.2d 175 (1969).¹⁷ We made it clear, however, that a connection between past segregative acts and present segregation may be present even when not apparent and that close examination is required before concluding that the connection does not exist. Intentional school segregation in the past may have been a factor in creating a natural environment for the growth of further segregation. Thus, if respondent School Board cannot disprove segregative intent, it can rebut the *prima facie* case only by showing that its past segregative acts did not create or contribute to the current segregated condition of the core city schools.

[14] The respondent School Board invoked at trial its "neighborhood school policy" as explaining racial and ethnic concentrations within the core city schools, arguing that since the core city area population had long been Negro and Hispano, the concentrations were necessarily the result of residential patterns and not of purposefully segregative policies. We have no occasion to consider in this case whether a "neighborhood school policy" of itself will justify racial or ethnic concentrations in the absence of a finding that school authorities have committed acts constituting *de jure* segregation. It is enough that we hold that the mere assertion of such a policy is not dispositive where, as in this case,

the school authorities have been found to have practiced *de jure* segregation in a meaningful portion of the school system by techniques that indicate that the "neighborhood school" concept has not been maintained free of manipulation. Our observations in *Swann, supra*, at 28, 91 S.Ct., at 1882, are particularly instructive on this score:

"Absent a constitutional violation there would be no basis for judicially ordering assignment of students on a racial basis. All things being equal, with no history of discrimination, it might well be desirable to assign pupils to schools nearest their homes. But all things are not equal in a system that has been deliberately constructed and maintained to enforce racial segregation. . . .

" . . . 'Racially neutral' assignment plans proposed by school authorities to a district court may be inadequate; such plans may fail to counteract the continuing effects of past school segregation resulting from discriminatory location of school sites or distortion of school size in order to achieve or maintain an artificial racial separation. When school authorities present a district court with a 'loaded game board,' affirmative action in the form of remedial altering of attendance zones is proper to achieve truly nondiscriminatory assignments. In short, an assignment plan is not acceptable simply because it appears to be neutral."

[15] Thus, respondent School Board having been found to have practiced deliberate racial segregation in schools attended by over one-third of the Negro school population, that crucial finding establishes a *prima facie* case of intentional segregation in the core city schools. In such case, respondent's neighborhood school

17. It may be that the District Court and Court of Appeals were applying this test in holding that petitioners had failed to prove that the Board's actions "caused" the current condition of segregation in the core city schools. But, if so, certainly plaintiffs in a school desegregation case are not required to prove "cause" in the

sense of "non-attenuation." That is a factor which becomes relevant only after past intentional actions resulting in segregation have been established. At that stage, the burden becomes the school authorities' to show that the current segregation is in no way the result of those past segregative actions.



policy is not to be determinative "simply because it appears to be neutral."

IV

In summary, the District Court on remand, *first*, will afford respondent School Board the opportunity to prove its contention that the Park Hill area is a separate, identifiable and unrelated section of the school district that should be treated as isolated from the rest of the district. If respondent School Board fails to prove that contention, the District Court, *second*, will determine whether respondent School Board's conduct over almost a decade after 1960 in carrying out a policy of deliberate racial segregation in the Park Hill schools constitutes the entire school system a dual school system. If the District Court determines that the Denver school system is a dual school system, respondent School Board has the affirmative duty to desegregate the entire system "root and branch." *Green v. County School Board*, 391 U.S., at 438, 88 S.Ct. at 1694. If the District Court determines, however, that the Denver school system is not a dual school system by reason of the Board's actions in Park Hill, the court, *third*, will afford respondent School Board the opportunity to rebut petitioners' prima facie case of intentional segregation in the core city schools raised by the finding of intentional segregation in the Park Hill schools. There, the Board's burden is to show that its policies and practices with respect to schoolsite location, school size, school renovations and additions, student-attendance zones, student assignment and transfer options, mobile classroom units, transportation of students, ¹²¹⁴ assignment of faculty and staff, etc., considered together and premised on the Board's so-called "neighborhood

school" concept, either were not taken in effectuation of a policy to create or maintain segregation in the core city schools, or, if unsuccessful in that effort, were not factors in causing the existing condition of segregation in these schools. Considerations of "fairness" and "policy" demand no less in light of the Board's intentionally segregative actions. If respondent Board fails to rebut petitioners' prima facie case, the District Court must, as in the case of *Park Hill*, decree all-out desegregation of the core city schools.

The judgment of the Court of Appeals is modified to vacate instead of reverse the parts of the Final Decree that concern the core city schools, and the case is remanded to the District Court for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.¹⁸

Modified and remanded.

It is so ordered.

Mr. Chief Justice BURGER, concurs in the result.

Mr. Justice WHITE took no part in the decision of this case.

Mr. Justice DOUGLAS.

While I join the opinion of the Court, I agree with my Brother POWELL that there is, for the purposes of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment as applied to the school cases, no difference between *de facto* and *de jure* segregation. The school board is a state agency and the lines that it draws, the locations it selects for school sites, the allocation it makes of students, the budgets it prepares are state action for Fourteenth Amendment purposes. ¹²¹⁵

As Judge Wisdom cogently stated in *United States v. Texas Education Agen-*

¹⁸ We therefore do not reach, and intimate no view upon, the merits of the holding of the District Court, premised upon its erroneous finding that the situation "is more like *de facto* segregation," 313 F. Supp., at 73, that nevertheless, although all-out desegregation "could not be

decreed . . . the only feasible and constitutionally acceptable program . . . is a system of desegregation and integration which provides compensatory education in an integrated environment." *Id.*, at 96.

cy, 467 F.2d 848, segregated schools are often created, not by dual school systems decreed by the legislature, but by the administration of school districts by school boards. Each is state action within the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment. "Here school authorities assigned students, faculty, and professional staff; employed faculty and staff; chose sites for schools; constructed new schools and renovated old ones; and drew attendance zone lines. The natural and foreseeable consequence of these actions was segregation of Mexican-Americans. Affirmative action to the contrary would have resulted in desegregation. When school authorities, by their actions, contribute to segregation in education, whether by causing additional segregation or maintaining existing segregation, they deny to the students equal protection of the laws.

"We need not define the quantity of state participation which is a prerequisite to a finding of constitutional violation. Like the legal concepts of 'the reasonable man', 'due care', 'causation', 'preponderance of the evidence', and 'beyond a reasonable doubt', the necessary degree of state involvement is incapable of precise definition and must be defined on a case-by-case basis. Suffice it to say that school authorities here played a significant role in causing or perpetuating unequal educational opportunities for Mexican-Americans, and did so on a system-wide basis." *Id.*, at 863-864

[216] These latter acts are often said to create *de facto* as contrasted with *de jure* segregation. But, as Judge Wisdom observes, each is but another form of *de jure* segregation.

I think it is time to state that there is no constitutional difference between *de jure* and *de facto* segregation, for each is the product of state actions or policies. If a "neighborhood" or "geographical" unit has been created along racial lines by reason of the play of restrictive covenants that restrict certain areas to "the elite," leaving the "undesirables" to move elsewhere, there is state action in

the constitutional sense because the force of law is placed behind those covenants.

There is state action in the constitutional sense when public funds are dispersed by urban development agencies to build racial ghettos.

Where the school district is racially mixed and the races are segregated in separate schools, where black teachers are assigned almost exclusively to black schools where the school board closed existing schools located in fringe areas and built new schools in black areas and in distant white areas, where the school board continued the "neighborhood" school policy at the elementary level, these actions constitute state action. They are of a kind quite distinct from the classical *de jure* type of school segregation. Yet calling them *de facto* is a misnomer, as they are only more subtle types of state action that create or maintain a wholly or partially segregated school system. See *Kelly v. Guinn*, 9 Cir., 456 F.2d 100.

When a State forces, aids, or abets, or helps create a racial "neighborhood," it is a travesty of justice to treat that neighborhood as sacrosanct in the sense that its creation is free from the taint of state action.

The Constitution and Bill of Rights have described the design of a pluralistic society. The individual has the right [217] to seek such companions as he desires. But a State is barred from creating by one device or another ghettos that determine the school one is compelled to attend.

Mr. Justice POWELL concurring in part and dissenting in part.

I concur in the remand of this case for further proceedings in the District Court, but on grounds that differ from those relied upon by the Court.

This is the first school desegregation case to reach this Court which involves a major city outside the South. It comes from Denver, Colorado, a city and a

State which have not operated public schools under constitutional or statutory provisions which mandated or permitted racial segregation.¹ Nor has it been argued that any other legislative actions (such as zoning and housing laws) contributed to the segregation which is at issue.² The Court has inquired only to what extent the Denver public school authorities may have contributed to the school segregation which is acknowledged to exist in Denver.

¹²¹⁸ The predominantly minority schools are located in two areas of the city referred to as Park Hill and the core city area. The District Court, considered that a school with a concentration of 70% to 75% "Negro or Hispano students" was identifiable as a segregated school. 313 F.Supp. 61, 77. Wherever one may draw this line, it is undisputed that most of the schools in these two areas are in fact heavily segregated in the sense that their student bodies are overwhelmingly composed of non-Anglo children. The city-wide school mix in Denver is 66% Anglo, 14% Negro, and 20% Hispano. In areas of the city

where the Anglo population largely resides, the schools are predominantly Anglo, if not entirely so.

The situation in Denver is generally comparable to that in other large cities across the country in which there is a substantial minority population and where desegregation has not been ordered by the federal courts. There is segregation in the schools of many of these cities fully as pervasive as that in southern cities prior to the desegregation decrees of the past decade and a half. The focus of the school desegregation problem has now shifted from the South to the country as a whole. Unwilling and footdragging as the process was in most places, substantial progress toward achieving integration has been made in Southern States.³ No comparable progress has been made in many nonsouthern cities with large minority populations⁴ primarily because of the *de facto/de jure* distinction nurtured by the courts and accepted complacently by many of the same voices which denounced the evils of segregated schools in the South.⁵ But if our national con-

¹²¹⁹

1. Article IX, § 8, of the Colorado Constitution has expressly prohibited any "classification of pupils . . . on account of race or color."

2. See, e. g., *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 23, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 1279, 28 L.Ed.2d 554 (1971):

"We do not reach . . . the question whether a showing that school segregation is a consequence of other types of state action, without any discriminatory action by the school authorities, is a constitutional violation requiring remedial action by a school desegregation decree." The term "state action," as used herein, thus refers to actions of the appropriate public school authorities.

3. According to the 1971 Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) estimate, 43.9% of Negro pupils attended majority white schools in the South as opposed to only 27.8% who attended such schools in the North and West. Fifty-seven percent of all Negro pupils in the North and West attend schools with over 80% minority population as opposed to 32.2% who do so in the South. 118 Cong. Rec. 564 (1972).

4. The 1971 HEW Enrollment Survey dramatized the segregated character of public school systems in many non-southern cities. The percentage of Negro pupils which attended schools more than 80% black was 91.3 in Cleveland, Ohio; 97.8 in Compton, California; 78.1 in Dayton, Ohio; 78.6 in Detroit, Michigan; 95.7 in Gary, Indiana; 86.4 in Kansas City, Missouri; 86.6 in Los Angeles, California; 78.8 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; 91.3 in Newark, New Jersey; 89.8 in St. Louis, Missouri. The full data from the Enrollment Survey may be found in 118 Cong.Rec. 563-566 (1972).

5. As Senator Ribicoff recognized:

"For years we have fought the battle of integration primarily in the South where the problem was severe. It was a long, arduous fight that deserved to be fought and needed to be won.

"Unfortunately, as the problem of racial isolation has moved north of the Mason-Dixon line, many northerners have bid an evasive farewell to the 100-year struggle for racial equality. Our motto seems to

cern is for those who attend such schools, rather than for perpetuating a legalism rooted in history rather than present reality, we must recognize that the evil of operating separate schools is no less in Denver than in Atlanta.

I

In my view we should abandon a distinction which long since has outlived its time, and formulate constitutional principles of national rather than merely regional application. When *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873 (1954) (*Brown I*),¹²²⁰ was decided, the distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* segregation was consistent with the limited constitutional rationale of that case. The situation confronting the Court, largely confined to the Southern States, was officially imposed racial segregation in the schools extending back for many years and usually embodied in constitutional and statutory provisions.

The great contribution of *Brown I* was its holding in unmistakable terms that the Fourteenth Amendment forbids state-compelled or state-authorized segregation of public schools. 347 U.S. at 488, 493-495, 74 S.Ct. at 688, 691-692. Although some of the language was more expansive, the holding in *Brown I* was

have been 'Do to southerners what you do not want to do to yourself.'

"Good reasons have always been offered, of course, for not moving vigorously ahead in the North as well as the South.

"First, it was that the problem was worse in the South. Then the facts began to show that that was no longer true.

"We then began to hear the *de facto-de jure* refrain.

"Somehow residential segregation in the North was accidental or *de facto* and that made it better than the legally supported *de jure* segregation of the South. It was a hard distinction for black children in totally segregated schools in the North to understand, but it allowed us to avoid the problem." 118 Cong.Rec. 5455 (1972).

6. See, e. g., *Bradley v. School Board*, 345 F.2d 310, 316 (CA4, 1965) (en banc):

"It has been held again and again . . . that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibi-

essentially negative: It was impermissible under the Constitution for the States, or their instrumentalities to force children to attend segregated schools. The forbidden action was *de jure*, and the opinion in *Brown I* was construed—for some years and by many courts—as requiring only state neutrality, allowing "freedom of choice" as to schools to be attended so long as the State itself assured that the choice was genuinely free of official restraint.⁶

But the doctrine of *Brown I*, as amplified by *Brown II*, 349 U.S. 294, 75 S.Ct. 753, 99 L.Ed. 1083 (1955), did not retain its original meaning. In a series of decisions extending from 1954 to 1971 the concept of state neutrality was transformed into the present constitutional doctrine requiring affirmative state action to desegregate school systems.⁷ The keystone case was *Green v. County School Board*, 391 U.S. 430, 437-438, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 1694, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968), where school boards were declared to have "the affirmative duty to take whatever steps might be necessary to convert to a unitary system in which racial discrimination would be eliminated root and branch." The school system before the Court in *Green* was operating in a rural and sparsely settled county where there were no concentrations of

tion is not against segregation as such.

. . . A state or a school district offends no constitutional requirement when it grants to all students uniformly an unrestricted freedom of choice as to schools attended, so that each pupil, in effect, assigns himself to the school he wishes to attend." The case was later vacated and remanded by this Court, which expressed no view on the merits of the desegregation plans submitted. 382 U.S. 103, 105, 86 S.Ct. 224, 225, 15 L.Ed.2d 187 (1965). See also *Bell v. School City of Gary, Ind.*, 324 F.2d 209 (CA7 1963); *Downs v. Board of Education*, 336 F.2d 988 (CA10 1964); *Deal v. Cincinnati Board of Education*, 369 F.2d 55 (CA6 1966).

7. For a concise history and commentary on the evolution, see generally A. Bickel, *The Supreme Court and the Idea of Progress* 126-130 (1970).

white and black populations, no neighborhood school system (there were only two schools in the county), and none of the problems of an urbanized school district.⁸ The Court properly identified the freedom-of-choice program there as a subterfuge, and the language in *Green* imposing an affirmative duty to convert to a unitary system was appropriate on the facts before the Court. There was however reason to question to what extent this duty would apply in the vastly different factual setting of a large city with extensive areas of residential segregation, presenting problems and calling for solutions quite different from those in the rural setting of New Kent County, Virginia.

But the doubt as to whether the affirmative-duty concept would flower into a new constitutional principle of general application was laid to rest by *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 28 L.Ed. 2d 554 (1971), in which the duty articulated in *Green* was applied to the ¹²²²urban school system of metropolitan Charlotte, North Carolina. In describing the residential patterns in Charlotte, the Court noted the "familiar phenomenon" in the metropolitan areas of minority groups being "concentrated in one part of the city," 402 U.S., at 25, 91 S.Ct., at 1280, and acknowledged that:

"Rural areas accustomed for half a century to the consolidated school systems implemented by bus transportation could make adjustments more readily than metropolitan areas with dense and shifting population, numerous schools, congested and complex traffic patterns." 402 U.S., at 14, 91 S.Ct., at 1275.

8. See also the companion cases in *Rancy v. Board of Education*, 391 U.S. 443, 88 S.Ct. 1697, 20 L.Ed.2d 727 (1968), and *Monroe v. Board of Commissioners*, 391 U.S. 450, 88 S.Ct. 1700, 20 L.Ed.2d 733 (1968), neither of which involved large urban or metropolitan areas.

9. As Dr. Karl Taeuber states in his article, *Residential Segregation*, 213 *Scientific American* 12, 14 (Aug. 1965):

Despite this recognition of a fundamentally different problem from that involved in *Green*, the Court nevertheless held that the affirmative-duty rule of *Green* was applicable, and prescribed for a metropolitan school system with 107 schools and some 84,000 pupils essentially the same remedy—elimination of segregation "root and branch"—which had been formulated for the two schools and 1,300 pupils of New Kent County.

In *Swann*, the Court further noted it was concerned only with States having "a long history of officially imposed segregation and the duty of school authorities in those States to implement *Brown I*. 402 U.S., at 5-6, 91 S.Ct., at 1271. In so doing, the Court refrained from even considering whether the evolution of constitutional doctrine from *Brown I* to *Green/Swann* undercut whatever logic once supported the *de facto/de jure* distinction. In imposing on metropolitan southern school districts an affirmative duty, entailing large-scale transportation of pupils, to eliminate segregation in the schools, the Court required these districts to alleviate conditions which in large part did not result from historic, state-imposed *de jure* segregation. Rather, the familiar root cause of segregated schools in all the biracial metropolitan areas of our country is essentially the same: one of ¹²²³segregated residential and migratory patterns the impact of which on the racial composition of the schools was often perpetuated and rarely ameliorated by action of public school authorities. This is a national, not a southern, phenomenon. And it is largely unrelated to whether a particular State had or did not have segregative school laws.⁹

"No elaborate analysis is necessary to conclude from these figures that a high degree of residential segregation based on race is a universal characteristic of American cities. This segregation is found in the cities of the North and West as well as of the South; in large cities as well as small; in nonindustrial cities as well as industrial; in cities with hundreds of thousands of Negro residents as well as those with only a few thousand, and in

Whereas *Brown I* rightly decreed the elimination of state-imposed segregation in that particular section of the country where it did exist, *Swann* imposed obligations on southern school districts to eliminate conditions which are not regionally unique but are similar both in origin and effect to conditions in the rest of the country. As the remedial obligations of *Swann* extend far beyond the elimination of the outgrowths of the state-imposed segregation outlawed in *Brown*, the rationale of *Swann* points inevitably toward a uniform, constitutional approach to our national problem of school segregation.

II

¹²²⁴ The Court's decision today, while adhering to the *de jure/de facto* distinction, will require the application of the *Green/Swann* doctrine of "affirmative duty" to the Denver School Board despite the absence of any history of state-mandated school segregation. The only evidence of a constitutional violation was found in various decisions of the School Board. I concur in the Court's position that the public school authorities are the responsible agency of the State, and that if the affirmative-duty doctrine is sound constitutional law for Charlotte, it is equally so for Denver. I would not, however, perpetuate the *de jure/de facto* distinction nor would I leave to petitioners the initial tortuous effort of identifying "segregative acts" and deducing "segregative intent." I would hold, quite simply, that where segregated public schools exist within a school district to a substantial degree, there is a *prima facie* case that

cities that are progressive in their employment practices and civil rights policies as well as those that are not."

In his book, *Negroes in Cities* (1965), Dr. Taeuber stated that residential segregation exists "regardless of the character of local laws and policies, and regardless of the extent of other forms of segregation or discrimination." *Id.*, at 36.

10. A *prima facie* case of constitutional violation exists when segregation is found to

the duly constituted public authorities (I will usually refer to them collectively as the "school board") are sufficiently responsible¹⁰ to warrant imposing upon them a nationally applicable burden to demonstrate they nevertheless are operating a genuinely integrated school system.

A

The principal reason for abandonment of the *de jure/de facto* distinction is that, in view of the evolution of the holding in *Brown I* into the affirmative-duty doctrine, the distinction no longer can be justified on a principled basis. In decreeing remedial requirements for the Charlotte/Mecklenburg school district, *Swann* dealt with a metropolitan, urbanized area in which the basic causes of segregation were generally similar to those in all sections of the country, and also largely irrelevant to the existence of historic, state-imposed segregation at the time of the *Brown* decision. Further, the extension of the affirmative-duty concept to include compulsory student transportation went well beyond the mere remedying of that portion of school segregation for which former state segregation laws were ever responsible. Moreover, as the Court's opinion today abundantly demonstrates, the facts deemed necessary to establish *de jure* discrimination present problems of subjective intent which the courts cannot fairly resolve.

At the outset, one must try to identify the constitutional right which is being enforced. This is not easy, as the precedents have been far from explicit. In *Brown I*, after emphasizing the im-

a substantial degree in the schools of a particular district. It is recognized, of course, that this term is relative and provides no precise standards. But circumstances, demographic and otherwise, vary from district to district and hard-and-fast rules should not be formulated. The existence of a substantial percentage of schools populated by students from one race only or predominantly so populated, should trigger the inquiry.

portance of education, the Court said that:

"Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms." 347 U.S., at 493, 74 S.Ct. at 691.

In *Brown II*, the Court identified the "fundamental principle" enunciated in *Brown I* as being the unconstitutionality of "racial discrimination in public education," 349 U.S., at 298, 75 S.Ct., at 755, and spoke of "the personal interest of the plaintiffs in admission to public schools as soon as practicable on a non-discriminatory basis." 349 U.S., at 300, 75 S.Ct., at 756. Although this and similar language is ambiguous as to the specific constitutional right, it means—as a minimum—that one has the right not to be compelled by state action to attend a segregated school system. In the evolutionary process since 1954, decisions of this Court have added a significant gloss to this original right. Although nowhere expressly articulated in these terms, I would now define it as the right, derived from the Equal Protection Clause to expect that once the State has

¹²²⁶ assumed responsibility for education, local school boards will operate *integrated school systems* within their respective districts.¹¹ This means that school authorities, consistent with the generally accepted educational goal of attaining quality education for all pupils, must make and implement their customary decisions with a view toward enhancing integrated school opportunities.

The term "integrated school system" presupposes, of course, a total absence of any laws, regulations, or policies supportive of the type of "legalized" segregation condemned in *Brown*. A system would be integrated in accord with con-

stitutional standards if the responsible authorities had taken appropriate steps to (i) integrate faculties and administration; (ii) scrupulously assure equality of facilities, instruction, and curriculum opportunities throughout the district; (iii) utilize their authority to draw attendance zones to promote integration; and (iv) locate new schools, close old ones, and determine the size and grade categories with this same objective in mind. Where school authorities decide to undertake the transportation of students, this also must be with integrative opportunities in mind.

The foregoing prescription is not intended to be either definitive or all-inclusive, but rather an indication of the contour characteristics of an *integrated school system* in which all citizens and pupils may justifiably be confident that racial discrimination is neither practiced nor tolerated. An integrated school system does not mean—and indeed could not mean in view of the residential patterns of most of our major metropolitan areas—that *every school* must in fact be an integrated unit. A school which happens to be all or predominantly white or all or predominantly black is not a "segregated" school in an unconstitutional sense if the system itself is a genuinely integrated one. ¹²²⁷

Having school boards operate an integrated school system provides the best assurance of meeting the constitutional requirement that racial discrimination, subtle or otherwise, will find no place in the decisions of public school officials. Courts judging past school board actions with a view to their *general integrative effect* will be best able to assure an absence of such discrimination while avoiding the murky, subjective judgments inherent in the Court's search for "segregative intent." Any test resting

11. See discussion in Part III, *infra*, of the remedial action which is appropriate to accomplish *desegregation* where a court finds that a school board has failed to operate an *integrated school system* within its district. Plaintiffs must, however, establish the failure of a school board to

operate an integrated school system before a court may order desegregative steps by way of remedy. These are two distinct steps which recognize the necessity of proving the constitutional violation before desegregative remedial action can be ordered.

on so nebulous and elusive an element as a school board's segregative "intent" provides inadequate assurance that minority children will not be short-changed in the decisions of those entrusted with the nondiscriminatory operation of our public schools.

Public schools are creatures of the State, and whether the segregation is state-created or state-assisted or merely state-perpetuated should be irrelevant to constitutional principle. The school board exercises pervasive and continuing responsibility over the long-range planning as well as the daily operations of the public school system. It sets policies on attendance zones, faculty employment and assignments, school construction, closings and consolidations, and myriad other matters. School board decisions obviously are not the sole cause of segregated school conditions. But if, after such detailed and complete public supervision, substantial school segregation still persists, the presumption is strong that the school board, by its acts or omissions, is in some part responsible. Where state action and supervision are so pervasive and where, after years of such action, segregated schools continue to exist within the district to a substantial degree, this Court is justified in finding a prima facie case of a constitutional violation. The burden then must fall on the school board to demonstrate it is operating an "integrated school system."

It makes little sense to find prima facie violations and the consequent affirm-

ative duty to desegregate solely in those States with state-imposed segregation at the time of the *Brown* decision. The history of state-imposed segregation is more widespread in our country than the *de jure/de facto* distinction has traditionally cared to recognize.¹² As one commentator has noted:

"[T]he three court of appeals decisions denying a constitutional duty to abolish *de facto* segregation all arose in cities—Cincinnati, Gary, and Kansas City, Kansas—where racial segregation in schools was formerly mandated by state or local law. [*Deal v. Cincinnati Board of Education*, 369 F.2d 55 (CA6 1966), cert. denied, 389 U.S. 847, 88 S.Ct. 39, 19 L.Ed.2d 114 (1967); *Downs v. Board of Education*, 336 F.2d 988 (CA10 1964), cert. denied, 380 U.S. 914, 85 S.Ct. 898, 13 L.Ed.2d 800 (1965); *Bell v. School City of Gary, Ind.*, 324 F.2d 209 (CA7 1963), cert. denied, 377 U.S. 924, 84 S.Ct. 1223, 12 L.Ed.2d 216 (1964).] Ohio discarded its statute in 1887, Indiana in 1949, and Kansas City not until the advent of *Brown*. If Negro and white parents in Mississippi are required to bus their children to distant schools on the theory that the consequences of past *de jure* segregation cannot otherwise be dissipated, should not the same reasoning apply in Gary, Indiana, where no more than five years before *Brown* the same practice existed with presumably the same effects?" Goodman, *De Facto School Segregation: A Constitutional and Empirical Analysis*, 60 Calif.L. Rev. 275, 297 (1972).¹³

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12. Indeed, if one goes back far enough, it is probable that all racial segregation, wherever occurring and whether or not confined to the schools, has at some time been supported or maintained by government action. In *Beckett v. School Board*, 308 F.Supp. 1274, 1311-1315 (ED Va. 1969), Judge Hoffman compiled a summary of past public segregative action which included examples from a great majority of States. He concluded that "[o]nly as to the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Washington, Nevada, and Hawaii does it appear from this

nonexhaustive research that no discriminatory laws appeared on the books at one time or another." *Id.* at 1315.

13. The author continues:

"True, the earlier the policy of segregation was abandoned the less danger there is that it continues to operate covertly, is significantly responsible for present day patterns of residential segregation, or has contributed materially to present community attitudes toward Negro schools. But there is no reason to suppose that 1954 is a universally appropriate dividing

Not only does the *de jure/de facto* distinction operate inequitably on communities in different sections of the country, more importantly, it disadvantages minority children as well. As the Fifth Circuit stated:

"The Negro children in Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston, New York, or any other area of the nation which the opinion classifies under *de facto* segregation, would receive little comfort from the assertion that the racial make-up of their school system does not violate their constitutional rights because they were born into a *de facto* society, while the exact same racial make-up of the school system in the 17 Southern and border states violates the constitutional rights of their counterparts, or even their blood brothers, because they were born into a *de jure* society. All children everywhere in the nation are protected by the Constitution, and treatment which violates their constitutional rights in one area of the country, also violates such constitutional rights in another area.'" *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi Independent School District*, 467 F.2d 142, 148 (CA5 1972) (en banc), quoting *United States v. Jefferson County*

line between *de jure* segregation that may safely be assumed to have spent itself and that which may not. For many remedial purposes, adoption of an arbitrary but easily administrable cutoff point might not be objectionable. But in a situation such as school desegregation, where both the rights asserted and the remedial burdens imposed are of such magnitude, and where the resulting sectional discrimination is passionately resented, it is surely questionable whether such arbitrariness is either politically or morally acceptable."

14. See Bickel, *supra*, n. 7, at 119:

"If a Negro child perceives his separation as discriminatory and invidious, he is not, in a society a hundred years removed from slavery, going to make fine distinctions about the source of a particular separation."

15. The Court today does not require, however, a segregative intent with respect to the entire school system, and indeed holds

Board of Education, 380 F.2d 385, 397 (CA5 1967) (Gwin, J., dissenting).¹⁴

The Court today does move for the first time toward breaking down past sectional disparities, but it clings tenuously to its distinction. It searches for *de jure* action in what the Denver School Board has done or failed to do, and even here the Court does not rely upon the results or effects of the Board's conduct but feels compelled to find segregative intent:¹⁵

"We emphasize that the differentiating factor between *de jure* segregation and so-called *de facto* segregation to which we referred in *Swann* is *purpose or intent* to segregate." *Supra*, at 2697 (emphasis is the Court's).

The Court's insistence that the "differentiating factor" between *de jure* and *de facto* segregation be "purpose or intent" is difficult to reconcile with the language in so recent a case as *Wright v. Council of City of Emporia*, 407 U.S. 451, 92 S.Ct. 2196, 33 L.Ed.2d 51 (1972). In holding there that "motivation" is irrelevant, the Court said:

"In addition, an inquiry into the 'dominant' motivation of school authorities is as irrelevant as it is fruitless. The

that if such an intent is found with respect to some schools in a system, the burden—normally on the plaintiffs—shifts to the defendant school authorities to prove a negative: namely, that their purposes were benign, *supra*, at 2697-2698.

The Court has come a long way since *Brown I*. Starting from the unassailable *de jure* ground of the discriminatory constitutional and statutory provisions of some States, the new formulation—still professing fidelity to the *de jure* doctrine—is that desegregation will be ordered despite the absence of any segregative laws if: (i) segregated schools in fact exist; (ii) a court finds that they result from some action taken with segregative intent by the school board; (iii) such action relates to any "meaningful segment" of the school system; and (iv) the school board cannot prove that its intentions with respect to the remainder of the system were nonsegregative.

Cite as 93 S.Ct. 2686 (1973)

mandate of *Brown II* was to desegregate schools, and we have said that "[t]he measure of any desegregation plan is its effectiveness." *Davis v. School Commissioners of Mobile County*, 402 U.S. 33, 37 [91 S.Ct. 1289, 1292, 28 L.Ed.2d 577]. Thus, we have focused upon the effect—not the purpose or motivation—of a school board's action in determining whether it is a permissible method of dismantling a dual system. . . .

" . . . Though the *purpose* of the new school districts was found to be discriminatory in many of these cases, the courts' holdings rested not on motivation or purpose, but on the *effect* of the action upon the dismantling of the dual school systems involved. That was the focus of the District Court in this case, and we hold that its approach was proper." 407 U.S., at 462, 92 S.Ct., at 2203.

I can discern no basis in law or logic for holding that the motivation of school board action is irrelevant in Virginia and controlling in Colorado. It may be argued, of course, that in *Emporia* a prior constitutional violation had already been proved and that this justifies the distinction. The net result of the Court's language, however, is the application of an *effect* test to the actions of southern school districts and an *intent* test to those in other sections, at least until an initial *de jure* finding for those districts can be made. Rather than straining to perpetuate any such dual standard, we should hold forthrightly that significant segregated school conditions in any section of the country are a *prima facie* violation of constitutional rights. As the Court has noted elsewhere:

"Circumstances or chance may well dictate that no persons in a certain class will serve on a particular jury or during some particular period. But it taxes our credulity to say that *mere chance* resulted in there being no members of this class among the over six

thousand jurors called in the past 25 years. *The result bespeaks discrimination, whether or not it was a conscious decision on the part of any individual jury commissioner.*" *Hernandez v. Texas*, 347 U.S. 475, 482, 74 S.Ct. 667, 672, 98 L.Ed. 866 (1954). (Emphasis added.)

B

There is thus no reason as a matter of constitutional principle to adhere to the *de jure/de facto* distinction in school desegregation cases. In addition, there are reasons of policy and prudent judicial administration which point strongly toward the adoption of a uniform national rule. The litigation heretofore centered in the South already is surfacing in other regions. The decision of the Court today, emphasizing as it does the elusive element of segregative intent, will invite numerous desegregation suits in which there can be little hope of uniformity of result.

The issue in these cases will not be whether segregated education exists. This will be conceded in most of them. The litigation will focus as a consequence of the Court's decision on whether segregation has resulted in any "meaningful or significant" portion of a school system from a school board's "segregative intent." The intractable problems involved in litigating this issue are obvious to any lawyer. The results of litigation—often arrived at subjectively by a court endeavoring to ascertain the subjective intent of school authorities with respect to action taken or not taken over many years—will be fortuitous, unpredictable and even capricious.

The Denver situation is illustrative of the problem. The court below found evidence of *de jure* violations with respect to the Park Hill schools and an absence of such violations with respect to the core city schools, despite the fact that actions taken by the school board with regard to those two sections were not dis-

similar. It is, for example, quite possible to contend that both the construction of Manual High School in the core city area and Barrett Elementary School in the Park Hill area operated to serve their surrounding Negro communities and, in effect, to merge school attendance zones with segregated residential patterns. See Brief for Petitioners 80-83. Yet findings even on such similar acts will, under the *de jure/de facto* distinction, continue to differ, especially since the Court has never made clear what suffices to establish the requisite "segregative intent" for an initial constitutional violation. Even if it were possible to clarify this question, wide and unpredictable differences of opinion among judges would be inevitable when dealing with an issue as slippery as "intent" or "purpose," especially when related to hundreds of decisions made by school authorities under varying conditions over many years.

This Court has recognized repeatedly that it is "extremely difficult for a court to ascertain the motivation, or collection of different motivations, that lie behind a legislative enactment," ¹²³⁴ *Palmer v. Thompson*, 403 U.S. 217, 224, 91 S.Ct. 1940, 1945, 29 L.Ed.2d 438 (1971); *McGinnis v. Royster*, 410 U.S. 263, 276-277, 93 S.Ct. 1055, 1063, 35 L.Ed.2d 282 (1973); *United States v. O'Brien*, 391 U.S. 367, 381, 88 S.Ct. 1673, 1681, 20 L.Ed.2d 672 (1968). Whatever difficulties exist with regard to a single statute will be compounded in a judicial review of years of administration of a large and complex school system.¹⁶ Every act

of a school board and school administration, and indeed every failure to act where affirmative action is indicated, must now be subject to scrutiny. The most routine decisions with respect to the operation of schools, made almost daily, can affect in varying degrees the extent to which schools are initially segregated, remain in that condition, are desegregated, or—for the long term future—are likely to be one or the other. These decisions include action or nonaction with respect to school building construction and location; the timing of building new schools and their size; the closing and consolidation of schools; the drawing or gerrymandering of ¹²³⁵ student attendance zones; the extent to which a neighborhood policy is enforced; the recruitment, promotion and assignment of faculty and supervisory personnel; policies with respect to transfers from one school to another; whether, and to what extent, special schools will be provided, where they will be located, and who will qualify to attend them; the determination of curriculum, including whether there will be "tracks" that lead primarily to college or to vocational training, and the routing of students into these tracks; and even decisions as to social, recreational, and athletic policies.

In *Swann* the Court did not have to probe into segregative intent and proximate cause with respect to each of these "endless" factors. The basis for its *de jure* finding there was rooted primarily in the prior history of the desegregation suit. 402 U.S., at 5-6, 91 S.Ct., at 1271. But in a case of the present type, where

16. As one commentator has expressed it:

"If the courts are indeed prepared to inquire into motive, thorny questions will arise even if one assumes that racial motivation is capable of being proven at trial. What of the case in which one or more members of a school board, but less than a majority, are found to have acted on racial grounds? What if it appears that the school board's action was prompted by a mixture of motives, including constitutionally innocent ones that alone would have prompted the board to act? What if the members of the school board were not themselves racially inspired but wished to please their con-

stituents, many of whom they knew to be so? If such cases are classified as unconstitutional *de jure* segregation, there is little point in preserving the *de jure-de facto* distinction at all. And it may well be that the difference between any of these situations and one in which racial motivation is altogether lacking is too insignificant, from the standpoint of both the moral culpability of the state officials and the impact upon the children involved, to support a difference in constitutional treatment." Goodman, *De Facto School Segregation: A Constitutional and Empirical Analysis*, 60 Calif.L. Rev. 275, 284-285 (1972).

no such history exists, a judicial examination of these factors will be required under today's decision. This will lead inevitably to uneven and unpredictable results, to protracted and inconclusive litigation, to added burdens on the federal courts, and to serious disruption of individual school systems. In the absence of national and objective standards, school boards and administrators will remain in a state of uncertainty and disarray, speculating as to what is required and when litigation will strike.

C

Rather than continue to prop up a distinction no longer grounded in principle, and contributing to the consequences indicated above, we should acknowledge that whenever public school segregation exists to a substantial degree there is prima facie evidence of a constitutional violation by the responsible school board. It is true, of course, that segregated schools—wherever located—are not solely the product of the action or inaction of public school authorities. Indeed, as indicated earlier, there can be little doubt that principal causes of the pervasive school segregation found in the major urban areas of this country, whether in the North, West, or South, are the socio-economic influences which have concentrated our minority citizens in the inner cities while the more mobile white majority disperse to the suburbs. But it is also true that public school boards have continuing, detailed responsibility for the public school system within their district and, as Judge John Minor Wisdom has noted, “[w]hen the figures [showing segregation in the schools] speak so eloquently, a *prima facie* case of discrimination is established.” *United States v. Texas Education Agency*, 467 F.2d 848, 873 (CA5 1972) (en banc). Moreover, as foreshadowed in *Swann* and as implicitly held today, school boards have a duty to minimize and ameliorate segregated conditions by pursuing an affirmative policy of desegrega-

tion. It is this policy which must be applied consistently on a national basis without regard to a doctrinal distinction which has outlived its time.

III

The preceding section addresses the constitutional obligation of public authorities in the school districts throughout our country to operate *integrated school systems*. When the schools of a particular district are found to be substantially segregated, there is a prima facie case that this obligation has not been met. The burden then shifts to the school authorities to demonstrate that they have in fact operated an integrated system as this term is defined *supra*, at 2706–2707. If there is a failure successfully to rebut the prima facie case, the question then becomes what reasonable affirmative desegregative steps district courts may require to place the school system in compliance with the constitutional standard. In short, what specifically is the nature and scope of the remedy?

As the Court's opinion virtually compels the finding on remand that Denver has a “dual school system,” that city will then be under an “affirmative duty” to desegregate its entire system “root and branch.” *Green v. County School Board*, 391 U.S., at 437–438, 88 S.Ct., at 1694. Again, the critical question is, what ought this constitutional duty to entail?

A

The controlling case is *Swann, supra*, and the question which will confront and confound the District Court and Denver School Board is what, indeed, does *Swann* require? *Swann* purported to enunciate no new principles, relying heavily on *Brown I* and *II* and on *Green*. Yet it affirmed a district court order which had relied heavily on “racial ratios” and sanctioned transportation of elementary as well as secondary pupils. Lower federal courts have often read *Swann* as requiring far-reaching trans-

portation decrees¹⁷ "to achieve the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation." 402 U.S., at 26, 91 S.Ct., at 1281. In the context of a large urban area, with heavy residential concentrations of white and black citizens in different—and widely separated—sections of the school district, extensive dispersal and transportation of pupils is inevitable if *Swann* is read as expansively as many courts have been reading it to date.

To the extent that *Swann* may be thought to require large-scale or long-distance transportation of students in our metropolitan school districts, I record my profound misgivings. Nothing in our Constitution commands or encourages any such court-compelled disruption of public education. It may be more accurate to view *Swann* as having laid down a broad rule of reason under which desegregation remedies must remain flexible and other values and interests be considered. Thus the Court recognized that school authorities, not the federal judiciary, must be charged in the first instance with the task of desegregating local school systems. *Id.*, at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276. It noted that school boards in rural areas can adjust

more readily to this task than those in metropolitan districts "with dense and shifting population, numerous schools, congested and complex traffic patterns." *Id.*, at 14, 91 S.Ct., at 1275. Although the use of pupil transportation was approved as a remedial device, transportation orders are suspect "when the time or distance of travel is so great as to either risk the health of the children or significantly impinge on the educational process." *Id.*, at 30-31, 91 S.Ct., at 1283. Finally, the age of the pupils to be transported was recognized by the Court in *Swann* as one important limitation on the time of student travel. *Id.*, at 31, 91 S.Ct., at 1283.

These factors were supposed to help guide district courts in framing equitable remedies in school desegregation cases.¹⁸ And the Court further emphasized that equitable decrees are inherently sensitive, not solely to the degree of desegregation to be achieved, but to a variety of other public and private interests:

"[A] school desegregation case does not differ fundamentally from other cases involving the framing of equitable remedies to repair the denial of a constitutional right. The task is

17. See, e.g., *Thompson v. School Board of Newport News*, 465 F.2d 83, 87 (1972), where the Fourth Circuit en banc upheld a district court assignment plan where "travel time, varying from a minimum of forty minutes and a maximum of one hour, each way, would be required for busing black students out of the old City and white students into the old City in order to achieve a racial balancing of the district." This transportation was decreed for children from the third grade up, involving children as young as eight years of age.

In *Northercross v. Board of Education of Memphis City Schools*, 466 F.2d 890, 895 (1972), the Sixth Circuit affirmed a district court assignment plan which daily transported 14,000 children with "the maximum time to be spent on the buses by any child [being] 34 minutes . . .," presumably each way. But as Judge Weick noted in dissent the Sixth Circuit instructed the district judge to implement yet further desegregation orders. Plans presently under consideration by that court call for the busing of 39,085 and

61,530 children respectively, for undetermined lengths of time. *Id.*, at 895-896.

Petitioners before this Court in *Potts v. Flax*, cert. denied, 409 U.S. 1007, 93 S.Ct. 433, 34 L.Ed.2d 299 (1972), contended that the implementation of the Fifth Circuit's directive in *Flax v. Potts*, 464 F.2d 865 (1972), would require bus rides of up to two hours and 20 minutes each day and a round trip of up to 70 miles. Pet. for Cert. 14. While respondents contended these figures represent an "astounding inflation," Brief in Opposition 7, transportation of a significant magnitude seems inevitable.

18. See *United States v. Texas Education Agency*, 467 F.2d 848, 883 (CA5 1972) (Bell, J., concurring in an opinion in which seven other judges joined):

"In our view the remedy which the district court is required to formulate should be formulated within the entire context of the opinion in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*" (Emphasis added.)

to correct, by a balancing of the individual and collective interests, the condition that offends the Constitution. *Id.*, at 15-16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276.

Those words echoed a similar expression in *Brown II*, 349 U.S., at 300, 75 S.Ct., at 756:

"In fashioning and effectuating the decrees, the courts will be guided by equitable principles. Traditionally, equity has been characterized by a practical flexibility in shaping its remedies and by a facility for adjusting and reconciling public and private needs."

¹²⁴⁰ Thus, in school desegregation cases, as elsewhere, equity counsels reason, flexibility, and balance. See *e. g.* *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 411 U.S. 192, 93 S.Ct. 1463, 36 L.Ed.2d 151 (1973). I am aware, of course, that reasonableness in any area is a relative and subjective concept. But with school desegregation, reasonableness would seem to embody a balanced evaluation of the obligation of public school boards to promote desegregation with other, equally important educational interests which a community may legitimately assert. Neglect of either the obligation or the interests destroys the even-handed spirit with which equitable remedies must be approached.¹⁹ Overzealousness in pursuit of any single goal is untrue to the tradition of equity and to the "balance" and "flexibility" which this Court has always respected.

B

Where school authorities have defaulted in their duty to operate an integrated school system, district courts must insure that affirmative desegregative steps ensue. Many of these can be tak-

en effectively without damaging state and parental interests in having children attend schools within a reasonable vicinity of home. Where desegregative steps are possible within the framework of a system of "neighborhood education," school authorities must pursue them. For example, boundaries of neighborhood attendance zones should be drawn to integrate to the extent practicable, the school's student body. Construction of new schools should be of such a size and at such a location as to encourage the likelihood of integration, *Swann, supra*, 402 U.S., at 21, 91 S.Ct., at 1278. Faculty integration should be attained throughout the school system, *id.*, at 19, 91 S.Ct. at 1277; *United States v. Montgomery County Board of Education*, 395 U.S. 225, 89 S.Ct. 1670, 23 L.Ed.2d 263 (1969). An optional majority-to-minority transfer program, with the State providing free transportation to desiring students, is also a helpful adjunct to a desegregated school system. *Swann, supra*, 402 U.S., at 26-27, 91 S.Ct., at 1281-1282. It hardly need be repeated that allocation of resources within the school district must be made with scrupulous fairness among all schools.

The above examples are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. The point is that the overall integrative impact of such school board decisions must be assessed by district courts in deciding whether the duty to desegregate has been met. For example, "neighborhood school plans are constitutionally suspect when attendance zones are superficially imposed upon racially defined neighborhoods, and when school construction preserves rather than eliminates the racial homogeneity [*sic*] of given schools."²⁰ *Keyes v. School District No. 1, Denver*

19. The relevant inquiry is "whether the costs of achieving desegregation in any given situation outweigh the legal, moral, and educational considerations favoring it. . . . It is clear . . . that the Constitution should not be held to require any transportation plan that keeps children on a bus for a substantial part of the day, consumes significant portions of funds otherwise spendable directly on

education, or involves a genuine element of danger to the safety of the child." Comment, *School Desegregation After Swann: A Theory of Government Responsibility*, 39 U.Chi.L.Rev. 421, 422, 443 (1972).

20. A useful study of the historical uses and abuses of the neighborhood school concept is M. Weinberg, *Race & Place* (1967).

Colorado, 445 F.2d 990, 1005 (CA10 1971). See *United States v. Board of Education of Tulsa County*, 429 F.2d 1253, 1258-1259 (CA10 1970). This does not imply that decisions on faculty assignment, attendance zones, school construction, closing and consolidation, must be made to the detriment of all neutral, nonracial considerations. But these considerations can, with proper school board initiative, generally be met in a manner that will enhance the degree of school desegregation.

C

Defaulting school authorities would have, at a minimum, the obligation to ¹²⁴²take affirmative steps of the sort outlined in the above section. School boards would, of course, be free to develop and initiate further plans to promote school desegregation. In a pluralistic society such as ours, it is essential that no racial minority feel demeaned or discriminated against and that students of all races learn to play, work, and cooperate with one another in their common pursuits and endeavors. Nothing in this opinion is meant to discourage school boards from exceeding minimal constitutional standards in promoting the values of an integrated school experience.

A constitutional requirement of extensive student transportation solely to achieve integration presents a vastly more complex problem. It promises, on the one hand, a greater degree of actual desegregation, while it infringes on what may fairly be regarded as other

important community aspirations and personal rights. Such a requirement is also likely to divert attention and resources from the foremost goal of any school system: the best quality education for all pupils. The Equal Protection Clause does, indeed, command that racial discrimination not be tolerated in the decisions of public school authorities. But it does not require that school authorities undertake widespread student transportation solely for the sake of maximizing integration.²¹

¹²⁴³ This obviously does not mean that bus transportation has no place in public school systems or is not a permissible means in the desegregative process. The transporting of school children is as old as public education, and in rural and some suburban settings it is as indispensable as the providing of books. It is presently estimated that approximately half of all American children ride buses to school for reasons unrelated to integration.²² At the secondary level in particular, where the schools are larger and serve a wider, more dispersed constituency than elementary schools, some form of public or privately financed transportation is often necessary. There is a significant difference, however, in transportation plans voluntarily initiated by local school boards for educational purposes and those imposed by a federal court. The former usually represent a necessary or convenient means of access to the school nearest home; the latter often require lengthy trips for no purpose other than to fur-

21. In fact, due to racially separate residential patterns that characterize our major urban areas it is quite unrealistic to think of achieving in many cities substantial integration throughout the school district without a degree of student transportation which would have the gravest economic and educational consequences.

As Professor Bickel notes:

"In most of the larger urban areas, demographic conditions are such that no policy that a court can order, and a school board, a city, or even a state has the capability to put into effect, will in fact result in the foreseeable future in racially balanced public schools. Only a reorder-

ing of the environment involving economic and social policy on the broadest conceivable front might have an appreciable impact." Bickel, *supra*, n. 7, at 132.

22. Estimates vary. *Sicam*, 402 U.S., at 29, 91 S.Ct. at 1882, noted that "[e]ighteen million of the Nation's public school children, approximately 39%, were transported to their schools by bus in 1969-1970 in all parts of the country." Senator Ribicoff, a thoughtful student of this problem, stated that "[t]wo-thirds of all American children today ride buses to schools for reasons unrelated to integration." 118 Cong.Rec. 5456 (1972).

[244] ther integration.²³ Yet the Court in *Swann* was unquestionably right in describing bus transportation as "one tool of school desegregation." 402 U.S., at 30, 91 S.Ct., at 1283.²⁴ The crucial issue is when, under what circumstances, and to what extent such transportation may appropriately be ordered. The answer to this turns—as it does so often in the law—upon a sound exercise of discretion under the circumstances.

Swann itself recognized limits to desegregative obligations. It noted that a constitutional requirement of "any particular degree of racial balance or mixing . . . would be disapproved . . ." and sanctioned district court use of mathematical ratios as "no more than a starting point in the process of shaping a remedy . . ." *Id.*, at 24, 25, 91 S.Ct., at 1280, 1281. Thus, particular schools may be all white or all black and still not infringe constitutional rights if the *system* is genuinely integrated and school authorities are pursuing integrative steps short of extensive

and disruptive transportation. The refusal of the Court in *Swann* to require racial balance in schools throughout the district or the arbitrary elimination of all "one-race schools," *id.*, at 26, 91 S.Ct., at 1281, is grounded in a recognition that the State, parents, and children all have at stake in school desegregation decrees, legitimate and recognizable interests.

The personal interest might be characterized as the desire that children attend community schools near home. Dr. James Coleman testified for petitioners at trial that "most school systems organize their schools in relation to the residents by having fixed school districts and some of these are very ethnically homogeneous." App. 1549a. In *Deal v. Cincinnati Board of Education*, 369 F.2d, at 60, the Sixth Circuit summarized the advantages of such a neighborhood system of schools:²⁵

"Appellants, however, pose the question of whether the neighborhood sys-

23. Historically, distant transportation was wrongly used to promote segregation. "Negro children were generally considered capable of traveling longer distances to school and without the aid of any vehicle. What was too far for a white child became reasonably near for a Negro child," Weinberg, *supra*, n. 20, at 87.

This deplorable history has led some to argue that integrative bus rides are justified as atonement for past segregative trips and that neighborhood education is now but a code word for racial segregation. But misuse of transportation in the past does not imply neighborhood schooling has no valid nonsegregative uses for the present. Nor would wrongful transportation in the past justify detrimental transportation for the children of today.

24. Some communities had transportation plans in effect at the time of court desegregation orders. See *Swann*, *supra*, at 29 n. 11, 91 S.Ct. at 1282; *Davis v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County*, 402 U.S. 33, 34–35, 91 S.Ct. 1289, 1290–1291, 28 L.Ed.2d 577 (1971). Courts have used the presence or absence of existing transportation in a district as one factor in framing and implementing desegregation decrees. *United States v. Watson Chapel School District*, 446 F.2d 933, 937 (CAS 1971); *Northerross v.*

Board of Education of Memphis City Schools, 444 F.2d 1179, 1182–1183 (CA6 1971); *Davis v. Board of Education of North Little Rock*, 328 F.Supp. 1197, 1203 (ED Ark.1971). Where a school board is voluntarily engaged in transporting students, a district court is, of course, obligated to insure that such transportation is not undertaken with segregative effect. Where, also, voluntary transportation programs are already in progress, there may be greater justification for court-ordered transportation of students for a comparable time and distance to achieve greater integration.

25. The term "neighborhood school" should not be supposed to denote solely a walk-in school or one which serves children only in the surrounding blocks. The Court has noted, in a different context, that "[t]he word 'neighborhood' is quite as susceptible of variation as the word 'locality.' Both terms are elastic and, dependent upon circumstances, may be equally satisfied by areas measured by rods or by miles." *Connally v. General Construction Co.*, 269 U.S. 385, 395, 46 S.Ct. 126, 129, 70 L.Ed. 322 (1926). In the school context, "neighborhood" refers to relative proximity, to a preference for a school nearer to, rather than more distant from, home.

tem of pupil placement, fairly administered without racial bias, comports with the requirements of equal opportunity if it nevertheless results in the creation of schools with predominantly or even exclusively Negro pupils. The neighborhood system is in wide use throughout the nation and has been for many years the basis of school administration. This is so because it is acknowledged to have several valuable aspects which are an aid to education, such as minimization of safety hazards to children in reaching school, economy of cost in reducing transportation needs, ease of pupil placement and administration through the use of neutral, easily determined standards, and better home-school communication."

The neighborhood school does provide greater ease of parental and student access and convenience, as well as greater economy of public administration. These are obvious and distinct advantages, but the legitimacy of the neighborhood concept rests on more basic grounds.²⁶

Neighborhood school systems, neutrally administered, reflect the deeply felt desire of citizens for a sense of community in their public education. Public schools have been a traditional source of strength to our Nation, and that strength may derive in part from the identification of many schools with the personal features of the surrounding neighborhood. Community support, interest, and dedication to public schools may well run higher with a neighborhood attendance pattern: distance may encourage disinterest. Many citizens sense today a decline in the intimacy of our institutions—home, church, and school—which has caused a concomitant decline in the unity and communal spirit of our people. I pass no judgment on this viewpoint, but I do believe that this Court should be wary of compelling in

the name of constitutional law what may seem to many a dissolution in the traditional, more personal fabric of their public schools.

Closely related to the concept of a community and neighborhood education, are those rights and duties parents have with respect to the education of their children. The law has long recognized the parental duty to nurture, support, and provide for the welfare of children, including their education. In *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510, 534-535, 45 S.Ct. 571, 573, 69 L.Ed. 1070 a unanimous Court held that:

"Under the doctrine of *Meyer v. Nebraska*, 262 U.S. 390 [43 S.Ct. 625, 67 L.Ed. 1042], we think it entirely plain that the Act of 1922 unreasonably interferes with the liberty of parents and guardians to direct the upbringing and education of children under their control. . . . The child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations."

And in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479, 482, 85 S.Ct. 1678, 1680, 14 L. Ed.2d 510 (1965), the Court noted that in *Pierce*, "the right to educate one's children as one chooses is made applicable to the States by the force of the First and Fourteenth Amendments." I do not believe recognition of this right can be confined solely to a parent's choice to send a child to public or private school. Most parents cannot afford the luxury of a private education for their children, and the dual obligation of private tuitions and public taxes. Those who may for numerous reasons seek public education for their children should not be forced to forfeit all interest or voice in the school their child attends. It would, of course, be impractical to allow the wishes of particular parents to be controlling. Yet the interest

26. I do not imply that the neighborhood concept must be embodied in every school system. But where a school board has

chosen it, federal judges should accord it respect in framing remedial decrees.

of the parent in the enhanced parent-school and parent-child communication allowed by the neighborhood unit ought not to be suppressed by force of law.

In the commendable national concern for alleviating public school segregation, courts may have overlooked the fact that the rights and interests of children affected by a desegregation program also are entitled to consideration. Any child, white or black, who is compelled to leave his neighborhood and spend significant time each day being transported to a distant school suffers an impairment of his liberty and his privacy. Not long ago, James B. Conant wrote that "[a]t the elementary school level the issue seems clear. To send young children day after day to distant schools by bus seems out of the question."²⁷ A community may well conclude that the portion of a child's day spent on a bus might be used more creatively in a classroom, playground, or in some other extracurricular school activity. Decisions such as these, affecting the quality of a child's daily life, should not lightly be held constitutionally errant.

Up to this point I have focused mainly on the personal interests of parents and children which a community may believe to be best protected by a neighborhood system of schools. But broader considerations lead me to question just as seriously any remedial requirement of extensive student transportation solely to further integration. Any such requirement is certain to fall disproportionately on the school districts of our country, depending on their degree of urbanization, financial resources, and their racial

composition. Some districts with little or no biracial population will experience little or no educational disruption, while others, notably in large, biracial metropolitan areas, must at considerable expense undertake extensive transportation to achieve the type of integration frequently being ordered by district courts.²⁸ At a time when public education generally is suffering serious financial malnutrition, the economic burdens of such transportation can be severe, requiring both initial capital outlays and annual operating costs in the millions of dollars.²⁹ And while constitutional requirements have often occasioned uneven burdens, never have they touched so sensitive a matter as wide differences in the compulsory transportation requirements for literally hundreds of thousands of school children.

The argument for student transportation also overlooks the fact that the remedy exceeds that which may be necessary to redress the constitutional evil. Let us use Denver as an example. The Denver School Board, by its action and non-action, may be legally responsible for some of the segregation that exists. But if one assumes a maximum discharge of constitutional duty by the Denver Board over the past decades, the fundamental problem of residential segregation would persist.³⁰ It is, indeed, a novel application of equitable power—not to mention a dubious extension of constitutional doctrine—to require so much greater a degree of forced school integration than would have resulted from purely natural and neutral non-state causes.

27. *Slums and Suburbs* 29 (1961).

28. See n. 21, *supra*.

29. In Memphis, for example, which has no history of busing students, the minimum transportation plan ordered by the courts will require, in the School Board's estimate, an initial capital expenditure of \$1,664,192 for buses plus an annual operating cost of \$629,192. The Board estimates that a more extensive transportation program to be considered by the

district court will require initial capital investments of \$3,924,000 and annual operating costs of \$1,783,490. The most drastic transportation plan before the district court requires estimated annual operating costs of from \$2,354,220, \$2,431,710, or \$3,463,100 depending on the Board's transportation arrangements. *Northcross v. Board of Education of Memphis City Schools*, 466 F.2d at 898 (Weick, J., dissenting).

30. See n. 9, *supra*.

The compulsory transportation of students carries a further infirmity as a constitutional remedy. With most constitutional violations, the major burden of remedial action falls on offending state officials. Public officials who act to infringe personal rights of speech, voting, or religious exercise, for example, are obliged to cease the offending act or practice and, where necessary, institute corrective measures. It is they who bear the brunt of remedial action, though other citizens will to varying degrees feel its effects. School authorities responsible for segregation must, at the very minimum, discontinue segregative acts. But when the obligation further extends to the transportation of students, the full burden of the affirmative remedial action is borne by children and parents who did not participate in any constitutional violation.

Finally, courts in requiring so far-reaching a remedy as student transportation solely to maximize integration, risk setting in motion unpredictable and unmanageable social consequences. No one can estimate the extent to which dismantling neighborhood education will hasten an exodus to private schools, leaving public school systems the preserve of the disadvantaged of both races. Or guess how much impetus such dismantlement gives the movement from inner city to suburb, and the further geographical separation of the races. Nor do we know to what degree this remedy may cause deterioration of community and parental support of public schools, or divert attention from the paramount goal of quality in education to a perennially divisive debate over who is to be transported where.

The problem addressed in this opinion has perplexed courts, school officials,

other public authorities, and students of public education for nearly two decades. The problem, especially since it has focused on the "busing issue," has profoundly disquieted the public wherever extensive transportation has been ordered. I make no pretense of knowing the best answers. Yet, the issue in this and like cases comes to this Court as one of constitutional law. As to this issue, I have no doubt whatever. There is nothing in the Constitution, its history, or—until recently—in the jurisprudence of this Court that mandates the employment of forced transportation of young and teenage children to achieve a single interest,¹ as important as that interest may be. We have strayed, quite far as I view it, from the rationale of *Brown I* and *II*, as reiterated in *Swann*, that courts in fashioning remedies must be "guided by equitable principles" which include the "adjusting and reconciling [of] public and private needs," *Brown II*, 349 U.S., at 300, 75 S.Ct., at 756.

I urge a return to this rationale. This would result, as emphasized above, in no prohibition on court-ordered student transportation in furtherance of desegregation. But it would require that the legitimate community interests in neighborhood school systems be accorded far greater respect. In the balancing of interests so appropriate to a fair and just equitable decree, transportation orders should be applied with special caution to any proposal as disruptive of family life and interests—and ultimately of education itself—as extensive transportation of elementary-age children solely for desegregation purposes. As a minimum, this Court should not require school boards to engage in the unnecessary transportation away from their neighborhoods of elementary age children.³¹ It is at this age level that

31. There may well be advantages in commencing the integrative experiences at an early age, as young children may be less likely than older children and adults to develop an inhibiting racial consciousness. These advantages should be considered as school boards make the various decisions with the view to achieving and preserving an integrated school system. *Supra*, at

2706-2707. But in the balancing of all relevant interests, the advantages of an early integrative experience must, and in all fairness should, be weighed against other relevant advantages and disadvantages and in light of the demographic characteristics of the particular community.

neighborhood education performs its most vital role. It is with respect to children of tender years that the greatest concern exists for their physical and psychological health. It is also here, ¹²⁵² at the elementary school, that the rights of parents and children are most sharply implicated.³²

IV

The existing state of law has failed to shed light and provide guidance on the two issues addressed in this opinion: (i) whether a constitutional rule of uniform, national application should be adopted with respect to our national problem of school desegregation and (ii), if so, whether the ambiguities of *Swann* construed to date almost uniformly in favor of extensive transportation, should be redefined to restore a more viable balance among the various interests which are involved. With all deference, it seems to me that the Court today has addressed neither of these issues in a way that will afford adequate guidance to the courts below in this case or lead to a rational, coherent national policy.

The Court has chosen, rather, to adhere to the *de facto/de jure* distinction under circumstances, and upon a rationale, which can only lead to increased and inconclusive litigation, and—especially regrettable—to deferment of a nationally consistent judicial position on this subject. There is, of course, state action in every school district in the land. The public schools always have been funded and operated by States and their local subdivisions. It is true that segregated schools, even in the cities of the South, are in large part the product of social and economic factors—and the resulting residential patterns. But there is also not a school district in the United States, with any significant minority school population, in which the school authorities—in one way or the other—

have not contributed in some measure to ¹²⁵³ the degree of segregation which still prevails. Instead of recognizing the reality of similar multiple segregative causes in school districts throughout the country, the Court persists in a distinction whose duality operates unfairly on local communities in one section of the country and on minority children in the others.

The second issue relates to the ambiguities of *Swann* and the judicial disregard of legitimate community and individual interests in framing equitable decrees. In the absence of a more flexible and reasonable standard than that imposed by district courts after *Swann*, the desegregation which will now be decreed in Denver and other major cities may well involve even more extensive transportation than has been witnessed up to this time.

It is well to remember that the course we are running is a long one and the goal sought in the end—so often overlooked—is the best possible educational opportunity for all children. Communities deserve the freedom and the incentive to turn their attention and energies to this goal of quality education, free from protracted and debilitating battles over court-ordered student transportation. The single most disruptive element in education today is the widespread use of compulsory transportation, especially at elementary grade levels. This has risked distracting and diverting attention from basic educational ends, dividing and embittering communities, and exacerbating, rather than ameliorating, interracial friction and misunderstanding. It is time to return to a more balanced evaluation of the recognized interests of our society in achieving desegregation with other educational and societal interests a community may legitimately assert. This will help assure that integrated school systems will

32. While greater transportation of secondary school students might be permitted, even at this level the desire of a community for racially neutral neighborhood schools should command judicial

respect. It would ultimately be wisest, where there is no absence of good faith, to permit affected communities to decide this delicate issue of student transportation on their own.

be established and maintained by rational action, will be better understood and supported by parents and children of both races, and will promote the enduring qualities of an integrated society so essential to its genuine success.

¹²⁵⁴ Mr. Justice REHNQUIST, dissenting.

I

The Court notes at the outset of its opinion the differences between the claims made by the plaintiffs in this case and the classical "*de jure*" type of claims made by plaintiffs in cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873 (1954), and its progeny. I think the similarities and differences, not only in the claims, but in the nature of the constitutional violation, deserve somewhat more attention than the Court gives them.

In *Brown*, the Court held unconstitutional statutes then prevalent in Southern and border States mandating that Negro children and white children attend separate schools. Under such a statute, of course, every child in the school system is segregated by race, and there is no racial mixing whatever in the population of any particular school.

It is conceded that the State of Colorado and the city of Denver have never had a statute or ordinance of that description. The claim made by these plaintiffs, as described in the Court's opinion, is that the School Board by "use of various techniques such as the manipulation of student attendance zones, schoolsite selection and a neighborhood school policy" took race into account in making school assignments in such a way as to lessen that mixing of races which would have resulted from a racially neutral policy of school assignment. If such claims are proved, those minority students who as a result of such manipulative techniques are forced to attend schools other than those that they would have attended had attendance zones been neutrally drawn are undoubtedly de-

prived of their constitutional right to equal protection of the laws just as surely as were the plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education* by the statutorily required segregation in that case. But the fact that invidious racial discrimination is prohibited by the Constitution in the North as well as the South must not be allowed to obscure the equally important fact that the consequences of manipulative drawing of attendance zones in a school district the size of Denver does not necessarily result in denial of equal protection to all minority students within that district. There are significant differences between the proof which would support a claim such as that alleged by plaintiffs in this case, and the total segregation required by statute which existed in *Brown*.

The Court's opinion obscures these factual differences between the situation shown by the record to have existed in Denver and the situations dealt with in earlier school desegregation opinions of the Court. The Court states, *supra*, at 2693, that "[w]e have never suggested that plaintiffs in school desegregation cases must bear the burden of proving the elements of *de jure* segregation as to each and every school or each and every student within the school system. Rather, we have held that where plaintiffs prove that a current condition of segregated schooling exists within a school district where a dual system was compelled or authorized by statute at the time of our decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873 (1954) (*Brown I*), the State automatically assumes an affirmative duty 'to effectuate a transition to a racially nondiscriminatory school system,' *Brown v. Board of Education*, 349 U.S. 294, 301, 75 S.Ct. 753, 756, 99 L.Ed. 1083 (1955) (*Brown II*)"

That statement is, of course, correct in the *Brown* context, but in the *Brown* cases and later ones that have come before the Court the situation which had invariably obtained at one time was a "dual" school system mandated by law,

¹²⁵⁵

by a law which prohibited Negroes and whites from attending the same schools. Since under *Brown* such a law deprived each Negro child of the equal protection of the laws, there was no need to prove
 1256 "the elements of *de jure* segregation as to each and every school," since the law itself had required just that sort of segregation.

But in a school district the size of Denver's, it is quite conceivable that the School Board might have engaged in the racial gerrymandering of the attendance boundary between two particular schools in order to keep one largely Negro and Hispano, and the other largely Anglo, as the District Court found to have been the fact in this case. Such action would have deprived affected minority students who were the victims of such gerrymandering of their constitutional right to equal protection of the laws. But if the school board had been evenhanded in its drawing of the attendance lines for other schools in the district, minority students required to attend other schools within the district would have suffered no such deprivation. It certainly would not reflect normal English usage to describe the entire district as "segregated" on such a state of facts, and it would be a quite unprecedented application of principles of equitable relief to determine that if the gerrymandering of one attendance zone were proved, particular racial mixtures could be required by a federal district court for every school in the district.

It is quite possible, of course, that a school district purporting to adopt racially neutral boundary zones might, with respect to every such zone, invidiously discriminate against minorities, so as to produce substantially the same result as was produced by the statutorily decreed segregation involved in *Brown*. If that were the case, the consequences would necessarily have to be the same as were the consequences in *Brown*. But, in the absence of a statute requiring segregation, there must necessarily be the sort of factual inquiry which was unnecessary in those jurisdictions where

racial mixing in the schools was forbidden by law.

1257 Underlying the Court's entire opinion is its apparent thesis that a district judge is at least permitted to find that if a single attendance zone between two individual schools in the large metropolitan district is found by him to have been "gerrymandered," the school district is guilty of operating a "dual" school system, and is apparently a candidate for what is in practice, a federal receivership. Not only the language of the Court in the opinion, but its reliance on the case of *Green v. County School Board*, 391 U.S. 430, 437-438, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 1693-1694, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968), indicates that such would be the case. It would therefore presumably be open to the District Court to require, *inter alia*, that pupils be transported great distances throughout the district to and from schools whose attendance zones have not been gerrymandered. Yet, unless the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment now be held to embody a principle of "taint," found in some primitive legal systems but discarded centuries ago in ours, such a result can only be described as the product of judicial fiat.

Green, supra, represented a marked extension of the principles of *Brown v. Board of Education, supra*. The Court in *Green* said:

"It is of course true that for the time immediately after *Brown II* [349 U.S. 294 [75 S.Ct. 753, 99 L.Ed. 1083]] the concern was with making an initial break in a long-established pattern of excluding Negro children from schools attended by white children. . . . Under *Brown II* that immediate goal was only the first step, however. The transition to a unitary, nonracial system of public education was and is the ultimate end to be brought about" 391 U.S., at 435-436, 88 S.Ct., at 1693.

"*Brown II* was a call for the dismantling of well-entrenched dual systems tempered by an awareness that

¹²⁵⁸ complex and multifaceted problems would arise¹ which would require time and flexibility for a successful resolution. School boards such as the respondent then operating state-compelled dual systems were nevertheless clearly charged with the affirmative duty to take whatever steps might be necessary to convert to a unitary system in which racial discrimination would be eliminated root and branch." *Id.*, at 437-438, 88 S.Ct., at 1694.

The drastic extension of *Brown* which *Green* represented was barely, if at all, explicated in the latter opinion. To require that a genuinely "dual" system be disestablished, in the sense that the assignment of a child to a particular school is not made to depend on his race is one thing. To require that school boards affirmatively undertake to achieve racial mixing in schools where such mixing is not achieved in sufficient degree by neutrally drawn boundary lines is quite obviously something else.

The Court's own language in *Green* makes it unmistakably clear that this significant extension of *Brown*'s prohibition against discrimination, and the conversion of that prohibition into an affirmative duty to integrate, was made in the context of a school system which had for a number of years rigidly excluded Negroes from attending the same schools as were attended by whites. Whatever may be the soundness of that decision in the context of a genuinely "dual" school system, where segregation of the races had once been mandated by law, I can see no constitutional justification for it in a situation such as that which the record shows to have obtained in Denver.

II

¹²⁵⁹ The Court's opinion gives lip service to the notion that the inquiry as to whether or not the Denver school district was "segregated" is a factual one, though it refers¹ in various critical language to the District Court's refusal to find that minority concentrations in the

core area schools was the result of discriminatory action on the part of the school board. The District Court is said to have "fractionated" the district, *supra*, at 2689, and to have "held that its finding of intentional segregation in Park Hill was not in any sense material to the question of segregative intent in other areas of the city," *ibid.* It is difficult to know what the Court means by the first of these references, and even more difficult to justify the second in the light of the District Court's opinion.

If by "fractionating" the district, the Court means that the District Court treated together events that occurred during the same time period, and that it treated those events separately from events that occurred during another time span this is undoubtedly correct. This is the approach followed by most experienced and careful finders of fact.

In commencing that part of its comprehensive opinion which dealt with the "core area" schools, the District Court observed:

"The evidentiary as well as the legal approach to the remaining schools is quite different from that which has been outlined above. *For one thing, the concentrations of minorities occurred at an earlier date* and, in some instances, prior to the *Brown* decision by the Supreme Court. Community attitudes were different, including the attitudes of the School Board members. *Furthermore, the transitions were much more gradual and less perceptible than they were in the Park Hill schools.* 313 F.Supp. 61, 69. (Emphasis supplied.)

The District Court noted, in its opinion of July 31, 1969, 303 F.Supp. 279, the differentiation that the plaintiffs themselves had made between the so-called "Park Hill" schools and ¹²⁶⁰ the "core area" schools. The plaintiffs had sought a preliminary injunction prohibiting the school board from rescinding three resolutions which had been adopted by a differently composed school

board earlier in 1969 and which would have redrawn school boundary lines in the Park Hill area to achieve greater integration. In its opinion granting that injunction, the District Court said:

"Attention at this hearing has focused primarily on the schools in northeast Denver, and particularly on the area which is commonly called Park Hill. The alleged segregated schools, elementary and junior high schools in this area, have acquired their character as such during the past ten years. The primary reason for this has been the migration of the Negro community eastward from a confined community surrounding what is commonly called 'Five Points.' Before 1950 the Negroes all lived in a community bounded roughly by 20th Avenue on the south, 20th Street on the west, York Street on the east, and 38th Avenue on the north. The schools in this area were, and are now, largely Negro schools. However, we are not presently concerned with the validity of this condition. During this period the Negro population was relatively small, and this condition had developed over a long period of time. However, by 1960 and, indeed, at the present time this population is sizeable. As the population has expanded the move has been to the east, first to Colorado Boulevard, a natural dividing line, and later beyond Colorado Boulevard, but within a narrow corridor—more or less fixed north-south boundaries. The migration caused these areas to become substantially Negro and segregated." 303 F.Supp. 279, 282.

[261] Further reference to the District Court's several opinions shows that the allegedly discriminatory acts of the School Board in the Park Hill area occurred between 1960 and 1969, in the context of a steadily expanding Negro school population in the Park Hill area and heightened sensitivity on the part of the community to the problems raised by integration and segregation.

The allegedly discriminatory acts with respect to the "core area" schools—New Manual High School, Cole Junior High School, Morey Junior High School, and Boulevard and Columbine Elementary Schools—took place between the years 1952 and 1961. They took place, as indicated by the references to the District Court's opinion noted above, not in a context of a rapidly expanding Negro population, but in a context of a relatively fixed area of the city that had for an indefinite period of time been predominantly Negro.

Thus, quite contrary to the intimation of virtual arbitrariness contained in the Court's opinion, the District Court's separate treatment of the claims respecting these two separate areas was absolutely necessary if a careful factual determination, rather than a jumbled hash of unrelated events, was to emerge from the fact-finding process. The "intent" with which a public body performs an official act is difficult enough to ascertain under the most favorable circumstances. See *Palmer v. Thompson*, 403 U.S. 217, 91 S.Ct. 1940, 29 L.Ed.2d 438 (1971); *McGinnis v. Royster*, 410 U.S. 263, 93 S.Ct. 1055, 35 L.Ed.2d 282 (1973). Far greater difficulty is encountered if we are to assess the intentions with which official acts of a school board are performed over a period of years. Not only does the board consist of a number of members, but the membership customarily turns over as a result of frequent periodic elections. Indeed, it was as a result of the 1969 election for membership on the Denver School Board that the Board's policy which had previously favored the correction of racial imbalance by imple-

[262] These difficulties obviously do not mean that the inquiry must be abandoned, but they do suggest that the care with which the District Court conducted it in this case is an absolutely essential ingredient to its successful conclusion.

The Court's bald statement that the District Court "held that its finding of intentional segregation in Park Hill was not in any sense material to the question of segregative intent in other areas of the city" is flatly belied by the following statement in the District Court's opinion:

"Although past discriminatory acts may not be a substantial factor contributing to present segregation, they may nevertheless be probative on the issue of the segregative purpose of other discriminatory acts which are in fact a substantial factor in causing a present segregated situation." 313 F. Supp., at 74-75, n. 18.

Thus, it is apparent that the District Court was fully aware that it might take into consideration the intention with which it found the School Board to have performed one act in assessing its intention in performing another act. This is the most that the references in the Court's opinion to evidentiary treatises such as Wigmore and McCormick support. And it should be noted that the cases cited by the Court, and by the authors of the treatises, almost invariably deal with the intention of a particular individual or individuals, and not with the "intention" of a public body whose membership is constantly changing.

¹²⁶³ The Court's opinion totally confuses the concept of a permissible inference in such a situation, of which the District Court indicated it was well aware, with what the Court calls a "presumption," which apparently "shifts . . . the burden of proving" to the defendant school authority. No case from this Court has ever gone further in this area than to suggest that a finding of intent in one factual situation may support a finding of fact in another related factual situation involving the same factor, a principle with which, as indicated above, the District Court was thoroughly familiar.

The District Court cases cited by the Court represent almost entirely the opinions of judges who were themselves

finders of fact, concluding as a part of the fact-finding process that intent with respect to one act may support a conclusion of a like intent with respect to another. This is but a restatement of the principle of which the District Court showed it was aware. And, obviously, opinions of courts of appeals upholding such findings of the District Court do not themselves support any broader proposition than do the opinions of the District Court in question.

Chambers v. Hendersonville City Board of Education, 364 F.2d 189 (CA4 1966), and *North Carolina Teachers Assn. v. Asheboro City Board of Education*, 393 F.2d 736 (CA4 1968), involved a background of segregation by a law in the State of North Carolina and "the failure of the public school system to desegregate in compliance with the mandate of *Brown* until forced to do so by litigation." 364 F.2d, at 192. The courts held that the decimation in the ranks of the Negro teachers while white teachers were unaffected, raised an inference of discrimination which cast upon the school board the burden of justifying such decimation. In each case, the school board had offered virtually no evidence supporting any non-discriminatory basis for the result reached. The cases are thus wholly different in their factual background from the case now before the Court.

¹²⁶⁴ Also worthy of note is the fact that neither in *Chambers* nor in *Asheboro* did the Court of Appeals remand for a further hearing, but in effect ordered judgments for the appellants on the issues considered. This amounted to a determination that the factual finding of the District Court on that issue was "clearly erroneous," and the statement as to presumption was a statement as to the appellate court's method of evaluating the factual finding. This Court is in quite a different position in reviewing this case, with the factual finding of the District Court having been affirmed by the Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit than was the Court of Appeals for

the Fourth Circuit in reviewing the factual findings of the District Courts that were before it in *Chambers* and in *Asheboro*. Indeed, it would be contrary to settled principles for this Court to upset a factual finding sustained by the Court of Appeals. "A seasoned and wise rule of this Court makes concurrent findings of two courts below final here in the absence of very exceptional showing of error." *Comstock v. Group of Institutional Investors*, 335 U.S. 211, 214, 68 S.Ct. 1454, 1456, 92 L.Ed. 1911 (1948).

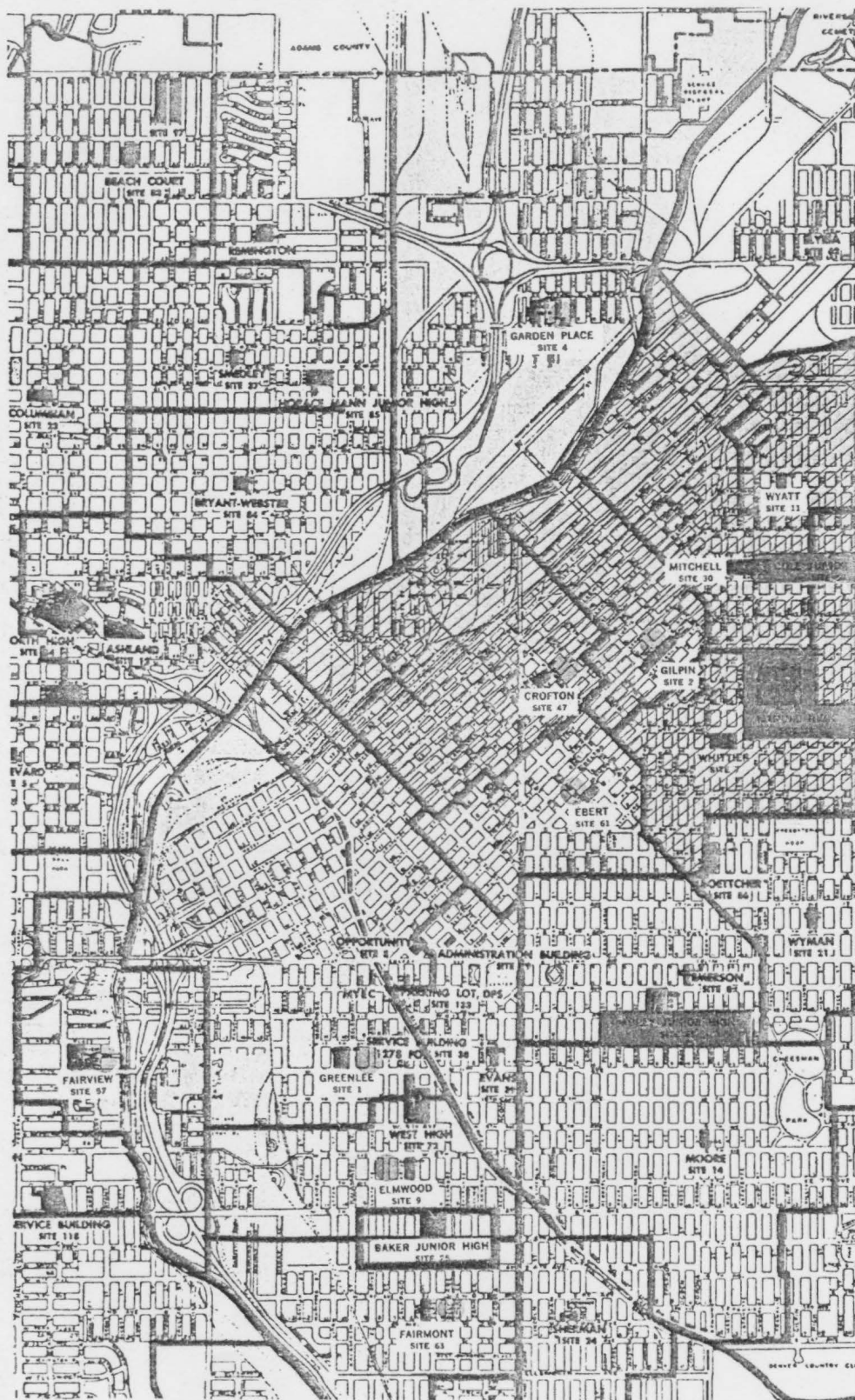
The Court, doubtless realizing the difficulty of justifying an outright reversal, instead remands for further factual determination under newly enunciated standards governing the evidentiary treatment of the finding as to Park Hill by the District Court. These standards call in some parts of the opinion for establishing a presumption, in other parts for shifting the burden of proof, and in other parts for recognizing a prima facie case. Quite apart from my disagreement with the majority on its constitutional law, I cannot believe it is a service to any of the parties to this litigation to require further factual determination under such a vague and imprecise mandate. But, more fundamentally, I believe that a District Judge thorough-

ly sympathetic to the plaintiffs' claims gave them the full evidentiary hearing to which ¹²⁶⁵they were entitled and carefully considered all of the evidence before him. He showed full awareness of the evidentiary principle that he might infer from the "segregative intent" with which he found the Board to have acted in the Park Hill area a like intent with respect to the core area, but he deliberately declined to do so. This was his prerogative as the finder of fact, and his conclusion upon its affirmance by the Court of Appeals is binding upon us.

III

The Court has taken a long leap in this area of constitutional law in equating the district-wide consequences of gerrymandering individual attendance zones in a district where separation of the races was never required by law with statutes or ordinances in other jurisdictions which did so require. It then adds to this potpourri a confusing enunciation of evidentiary rules in order to make it more likely that the trial court will on remand reach the result which the Court apparently wants it to reach. Since I believe neither of these steps is justified by prior decisions of this Court, I dissent.

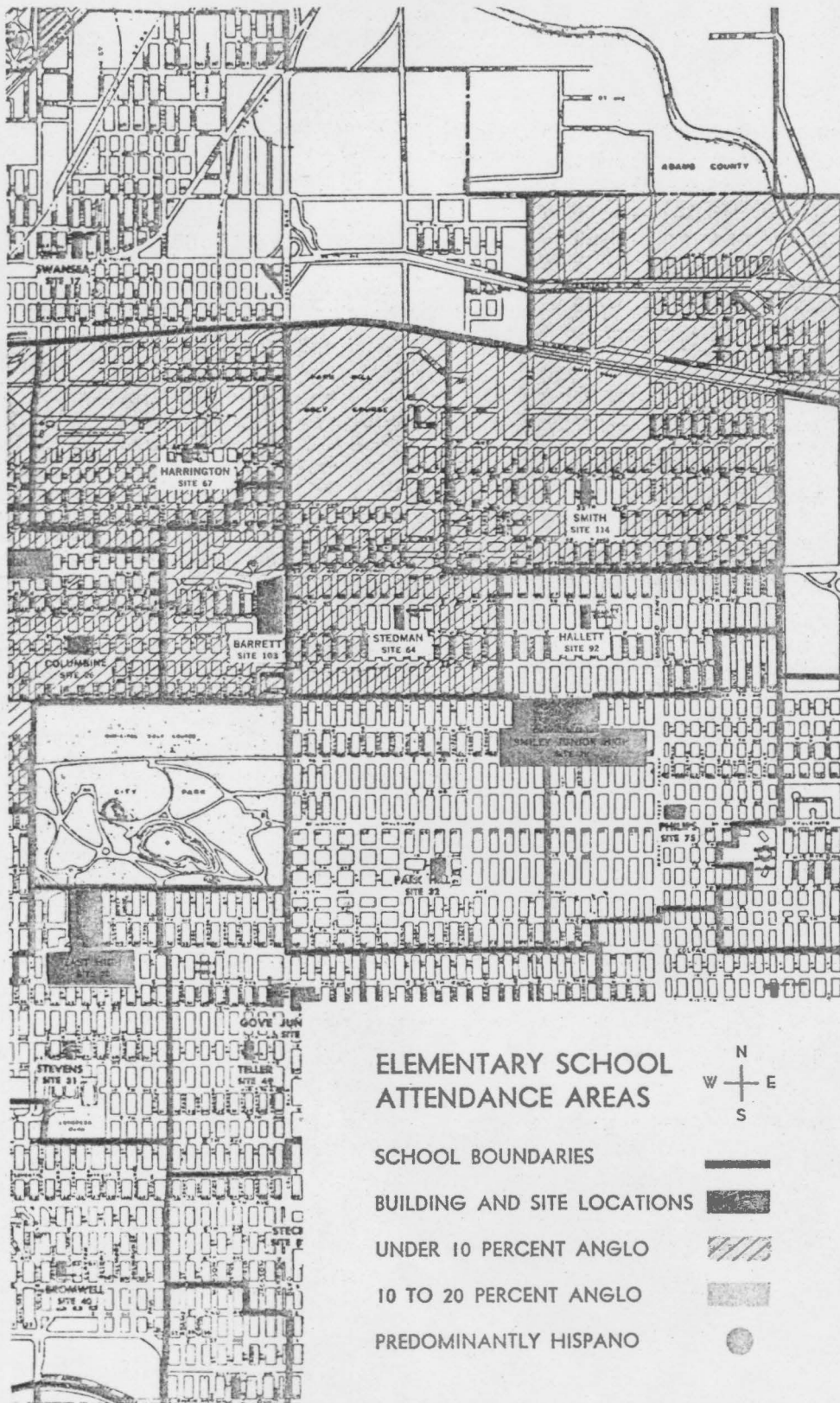
APPENDIX



KEYES v. SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1, DENVER, COLORADO

Cite as 93 S.Ct. 2686 (1973)

2727



418 U.S. 717, 41 L.Ed.2d 1069

William G. MILLIKEN, Governor of
Michigan, et al., Petitioners,

v.

Ronald BRADLEY and Richard Bradley,
by their mother and next friend,
Verda Bradley, et al.

ALLEN PARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS et al.,
Petitioners,

v.

Ronald BRADLEY and Richard Bradley,
by their mother and next friend,
Verda Bradley, et al.

The GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOL
SYSTEM, Petitioner,

v.

Ronald BRADLEY and Richard Bradley,
by their mother and next friend,
Verda Bradley, et al.

Nos. 73-434, 73-435 and 73-436.

Argued Feb. 27, 1974.

Decided July 25, 1974.

Parents, children and others instituted a class action against various state and school district officials seeking relief from alleged illegal racial segregation in the Detroit public school system. On remand after two prior appeals, 433 F.2d 897 and 438 F.2d 945, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan ruled that the system was an illegally segregated one, 338 F.Supp. 582, and, after the Court of Appeals dismissed appeals from orders requiring submission of desegregation plans, 468 F.2d 902, directed preparation of a metropolitan desegregation plan, 345 F.Supp. 914, and purchase of school buses. The Court of Appeals affirmed the holding that a constitutionally adequate system of desegregated schools could not be established within the Detroit school district's geographic limits and that a multidistrict metropolitan plan was necessary, 484 F.2d 215, and defendants appealed. The Supreme Court, Mr. Chief Justice Burger, held, inter alia, that it was improper

to impose a multidistrict remedy for single-district de jure segregation in the absence of findings that the other included districts had failed to operate unitary school systems or had committed acts that effected segregation, in the absence of any claim or finding that school district boundary lines were established with the purpose of fostering racial segregation, and without affording a meaningful opportunity for the included neighboring districts to present evidence or be heard on the propriety of a multidistrict remedy or on the question of constitutional violations by those districts.

Reversed and remanded.

Mr. Justice Stewart concurred and filed opinion.

Mr. Justice Douglas dissented and filed opinion.

Mr. Justice White dissented and filed opinion in which Mr. Justice Douglas, Mr. Justice Brennan and Mr. Justice Marshall, joined.

Mr. Justice Marshall dissented and filed opinion in which Mr. Justice Douglas, Mr. Justice Brennan and Mr. Justice White, joined.

1. Constitutional Law ¶220

Doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place in field of public education, since separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. U.S.C.A.Const. Amend. 14.

2. Schools and School Districts ¶13

Finding of district court that Detroit public school system was illegally segregated on basis of race was not plain error. Supreme Court Rules, rules 23, subd. 1(c), 40, subd. 1(d)(2), 28 U.S.C.A.

3. Schools and School Districts ¶13

Desegregation, in sense of dismantling dual school system, does not require any particular racial balance in each school, grade or classroom.

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4. Schools and School Districts ⇨13

While boundary lines may be bridged where there was been constitutional violation calling for interdistrict relief, notion that school district lines may be casually ignored or treated as mere administrative convenience is contrary to history of public education in United States.

5. Schools and School Districts ⇨13

School district lines and present laws with respect to local control are not sacrosanct, and if they conflict with Fourteenth Amendment, federal courts have duty to prescribe appropriate remedies. U.S.C.A.Const. Amend. 14.

6. Schools and School Districts ⇨33

Before boundaries of separate and autonomous school districts may be set aside by consolidating separate units for remedial purposes or by imposing cross-district remedy, it must first be shown that there has been constitutional violation within one district that produces significant segregative effect in another district; specifically, it must be shown that racially discriminatory acts of state or local school districts, or of single school district, have been substantial cause of interdistrict segregation.

7. Schools and School Districts ⇨13

District court's action in ordering multidistrict metropolitan desegregation plan to remedy single-district de jure segregation found in Detroit public school system was improper in absence of findings that other included districts had failed to operate unitary school systems or had committed acts that effected segregation in Detroit system, in absence of any claim or finding that school district boundary lines were established with purpose of fostering racial segregation, and without affording meaningful opportunity for included neighboring districts to present evidence or be heard on propriety of multidistrict remedy or on question of constitutional violations by those districts. M.C.L.A. §§ 340.26, 340.27, 340.55, 340.77, 340.107, 340.113, 340.148, 340.149, 340.165, 340.188, 340.192, 340.352, 340.355, 340.356, 340.563,

340.567, 340.569, 340.574, 340.575, 340.582, 340.583-340.586, 340.589, 340.591, 340.594, 340.605, 340.609, 340.613, 340.614, 340.643a, 340.711 et seq., 340.882, 388.171a et seq., 388.182, 388.851; U.S. C.A.Const. Amend. 14; M.C.L.A.Const. 1963, art. 8, § 2; Fed.Rules Civ.Proc. rules 19, 24(a, b), 28 U.S.C.A.; 28 U.S. C.A. § 1291(b); Supreme Court Rules, rules 23, subd. 1(c), 40, subd. 1(d)(2), 28 U.S.C.A.

8. Schools and School Districts ⇨13

Constitutional right of Negro children residing in Detroit public school district was only to attend unitary school system in that district, and unless officials drew district lines in discriminatory fashion or arranged for white students residing in district to attend schools in neighboring districts, they were under no constitutional duty to make provisions for Negro students to attend such schools.

9. Schools and School Districts ⇨13

It is not true that, whatever racial make-up of school district population may be and however neutrally district lines have been drawn and administered, schools are never "desegregated" as long as Negro students are in majority.

10. Schools and School Districts ⇨13

Even accepting arguendo the correctness of the theory that State of Michigan was derivatively responsible for Detroit board of education's actions which resulted in illegal racial segregation within its school system, that derivative responsibility of State did not constitutionally justify or require adoption of multidistrict metropolitan desegregation plan involving neighboring districts which had not been affected by board's actions.

11. Schools and School Districts

⇨13, 159½

Isolated instance wherein one suburban school district contracted with illegally segregated urban district to have Negro high school students sent to predominantly Negro school in urban district did not justify adoption of multi-

district metropolitan desegregation plan potentially embracing 52 districts having no responsibility for such allegedly segregative plan.

Syllabus*

Respondents brought this class action, alleging that the Detroit public school system is racially segregated as a result of the official policies and actions of petitioner state and city officials, and seeking implementation of a plan to eliminate the segregation and establish a unitary nonracial school system. The District Court, after concluding that various acts by the petitioner Detroit Board of Education had created and perpetuated school segregation in Detroit, and that the acts of the Board, as a subordinate entity of the State, were attributable to the State, ordered the Board to submit Detroit-only desegregation plans. The court also ordered the state officials to submit desegregation plans encompassing the three-county metropolitan area, despite the fact that the 85 outlying school districts in these three counties were not parties to the action and there was no claim that they had committed constitutional violations. Subsequently, outlying school districts were allowed to intervene, but were not permitted to assert any claim or defense on issues previously adjudicated or to reopen any issue previously decided, but were allowed merely to advise the court as to the propriety of a metropolitan plan and to submit any objections, modifications, or alternatives to any such plan. Thereafter, the District Court ruled that it was proper to consider metropolitan plans that Detroit-only plans submitted by the Board and respondents were inadequate to accomplish desegregation, and that therefore it would seek a solution beyond the limits of the Detroit School District, and concluded that "[s]chool district lines are simply matters of political convenience and may not be used to deny constitutional rights." Without having

evidence that the suburban school districts had committed acts of *de jure* segregation, the court appointed a panel to submit a plan for the Detroit schools that would encompass an entire designated desegregation area consisting of 53 of the 85 suburban school districts plus Detroit, and ordered the Detroit Board to acquire at least 295 school buses to provide transportation under an interim plan to be developed for the 1972-1973 school year. The Court of Appeals, affirming in part, held that the record supported the District Court's finding as to the constitutional violations committed by the Detroit Board and the state officials; that therefore the District Court was authorized and required to take effective measures to desegregate the Detroit school system; and that a metropolitan area plan embracing the 53 outlying districts was the only feasible solution and was within the District Court's equity powers. But the court remanded so that all suburban school districts that might be affected by a metropolitan remedy could be made parties and have an opportunity to be heard as to the scope and implementation of such a remedy, and vacated the order as to the bus acquisitions, subject to its reimposition at an appropriate time. *Held*: The relief ordered by the District Court and affirmed by the Court of Appeals was based upon erroneous standards and was unsupported by record evidence that acts of the outlying districts had any impact on the discrimination found to exist in the Detroit schools. A federal court may not impose a multidistrict, areawide remedy for single-district *de jure* school segregation violations, where there is no finding that the other included school districts have failed to operate unitary school systems or have committed acts that effected segregation within the other districts, there is no claim or finding that the school district boundary lines were established with the purpose of

*The syllabus constitutes no part of the opinion of the Court but has been prepared by the Reporter of Decisions for the con-

venience of the reader. See *United States v. Detroit Timber & Lumber Co.*, 200 U.S. 321, 337, 26 S.Ct. 282, 287, 50 L.Ed. 499.

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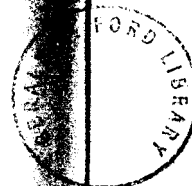
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fostering racial segregation, and there is no meaningful opportunity for the included neighboring school districts to present evidence or be heard on the propriety of a multidistrict remedy or on the question of constitutional violations by those districts. Pp. 3123-3131.

(a) The District Court erred in using as a standard the declared objective of development of a metropolitan area plan which, upon implementation, would leave "no school, grade or classroom . . . substantially disproportionate to the overall pupil racial composition" of the metropolitan area as a whole. The clear import of *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 28 L.Ed.2d 554, is that desegregation, in the sense of dismantling a dual school system, does not require any particular racial balance. P. 3125.

119 1 (b) While boundary lines may be bridged in circumstances where there has been a constitutional violation calling for inter-district relief, school district lines may not be casually ignored or treated as a mere administrative convenience; substantial local control of public education in this country is a deeply rooted tradition. Pp. 3125.

(c) The interdistrict remedy could extensively disrupt and alter the structure of public education in Michigan, since that remedy would require, in effect, consolidation of 54 independent school districts historically administered as separate governmental units into a vast new super school district, and, since—entirely apart from the logistical problems attending large-scale transportation of students—the consolidation would generate other problems in the administration, financing, and operation of this new school system. P. 3125.

(d) From the scope of the interdistrict plan itself, absent a complete restructuring of the Michigan school district laws, the District Court would become, first, a *de facto* "legislative au-

thority" to resolve the complex operational problems involved and thereafter a "school superintendent" for the entire area, a task which few, if any, judges are qualified to perform and one which would deprive the people of local control of schools through elected school boards. P. 3126.

(e) Before the boundaries of separate and autonomous school districts may be set aside by consolidating the separate units for remedial purposes or by imposing a cross-district remedy, it must be first shown that there has been a constitutional violation within one district that produces a significant segregative effect in another district; *i. e.*, specifically, it must be shown that racially discriminatory acts of the state or local school districts, or of a single school district have been a substantial cause of interdistrict segregation. P. 3127.

(f) With no showing of significant violation by the 53 outlying school districts and no evidence of any interdistrict violation or effect, the District Court transcended the original theory of the case as framed by the pleadings, and mandated a metropolitan area remedy, the approval of which would impose on the outlying districts, not shown to have committed any constitutional violation, a standard not previously hinted at in any holding of this Court. P. 3127.

(g) Assuming, *arguendo*, that the State was derivatively responsible for Detroit's segregated school conditions, it does not follow 1720 that an interdistrict remedy is constitutionally justified or required, since there has been virtually no showing that either the State or any of the 85 outlying districts engaged in any activity that had a cross-district effect. P. 3129.

(h) An isolated instance of a possible segregative effect as between two of the school districts involved would not justify the broad metropolitanwide remedy contemplated, particularly since that remedy embraced 52 districts having no responsibility for the arrangement and

potentially involved 503,000 pupils in addition to Detroit's 276,000 pupils. P. 3129.

484 F.2d 215, reversed and remanded.

Frank J. Kelley, Lansing, Mich., for petitioners William G. Milliken et al.

William M. Saxton, Detroit, Mich., for petitioners Allen Park Public Schools and Grosse Pointe Public School System et al.

Solicitor Gen. Robert H. Bork for the United States, as amicus curiae, by special leave of Court.

J. Harold Flannery, Cambridge, Mass., and Nathaniel R. Jones, New York City, for respondents.

¹⁷²¹ Mr. Chief Justice BURGER delivered the opinion of the Court.

We granted certiorari in these consolidated cases to determine whether a federal court may impose a multidistrict, areawide remedy to a single-district *de jure* segregation problem absent any finding that the other included school districts have failed to operate unitary school systems within their districts, absent any claim or finding that the boundary lines of any affected school district were established with the purpose of fostering racial segregation in public schools, absent any finding that the included districts committed acts which effected segregation within the other districts, and absent a meaningful opportunity for the included neighboring school districts to present evidence or be heard on the propriety of a multidistrict remedy or on the question of constitutional violations by those neighboring districts.¹

I

The action was commenced in August 1970 by the respondents, the Detroit Branch of the National Association for

the Advancement of Colored People² and individual parents and students, on behalf of a class later defined by order of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, dated February 16, 1971, to include "all school children in the City of Detroit, Michigan, and all Detroit resident parents who have children of school age." The named defendants in the District Court included the Governor of Michigan, the Attorney General, the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Board of Education of the city of Detroit, its members, the city's and its former superintendent of schools. The State of Michigan as such is not a party to this litigation and references to the State must be read as references to the public officials, state and local, through whom the State is alleged to have acted. In their complaint respondents attacked the constitutionality of a statute of the State of Michigan known as Act 48 of the 1970 Legislature on the ground that it put the State of Michigan in the position of unconstitutionally interfering with the execution and operation of a voluntary plan of partial high school desegregation, known as the April 7, 1970, Plan, which had been adopted by the Detroit Board of Education to be effective beginning with the fall 1970 semester.¹⁷²³ The complaint also alleged that the Detroit Public School System was and is segregated on the basis of race as a result of the official policies and actions of the defendants and their predecessors in office, and called for the implementation of a plan that would eliminate "the racial identity of every school in the [Detroit] system and . . . maintain now and hereafter a unitary, nonracial school system."

Initially the matter was tried on respondents' motion for a preliminary injunction to restrain the enforcement of Act 48 so as to permit the April 7 Plan to be implemented. On that issue, the

1. 484 F.2d 215 (CA6), cert. granted, 414 U.S. 1038, 94 S.Ct. 538, 38 L.Ed.2d 329 (1973).

2. The standing of the NAACP as a proper party plaintiff was not contested in the trial court and is not an issue in this case.

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District Court ruled that respondents were not entitled to a preliminary injunction since at that stage there was no proof that Detroit had a dual segregated school system. On appeal, the Court of Appeals found that the "implementation of the April 7 plan was [unconstitutionally] thwarted by State action in the form of the Act of the Legislature of Michigan," 433 F.2d 897, 902 (CA6 1970), and that such action could not be interposed to delay, obstruct, or nullify steps lawfully taken for the purpose of protecting rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. The case was remanded to the District Court for an expedited trial on the merits.

On remand, the respondents moved for immediate implementation of the April 7 Plan in order to remedy the deprivation of the claimed constitutional rights. In response, the School Board suggested two other plans, along with the April 7 Plan, and urged that top priority be assigned to the so-called "Magnet Plan" which was "designed to attract children to a school because of its superior curriculum." The District Court approved the Board's Magnet Plan, and respondents again appealed to the Court of Appeals, moving for summary reversal. The Court of Appeals refused to pass on the merits of the Magnet Plan and ruled ¹⁷²⁴ that the District Court had not abused its discretion in refusing to adopt the April 7 Plan without an evidentiary hearing. The case was again remanded with instructions to proceed immediately to a trial on the merits of respondents' substantive allegations concerning the Detroit school system. 438 F.2d 945 (CA6 1971).

The trial of the issue of segregation in the Detroit school system began on April 6, 1971, and continued through July 22, 1971, consuming some 41 trial days. On September 27, 1971, the District Court issued its findings and conclusions on the issue of segregation,

finding that "Governmental actions and inaction at all levels, federal, state and local, have combined, with those of private organizations, such as loaning institutions and real estate associations and brokerage firms, to establish and to maintain the pattern of residential segregation throughout the Detroit metropolitan area." 338 F.Supp. 582, 587 (ED Mich.1971). While still addressing a Detroit-only violation, the District Court reasoned:

"While it would be unfair to charge the present defendants with what other governmental officers or agencies have done, it can be said that the actions or the failure to act by the responsible school authorities, both city and state, were linked to that of these other governmental units. When we speak of governmental action we should not view the different agencies as a collection of unrelated units. Perhaps the most that can be said is that all of them, including the school authorities, are, in part, responsible for the segregated condition which exists. And we note that just as there is an interaction between residential patterns and the racial composition of the schools, so there is a corresponding effect on the residential pattern by the racial composition of the schools." *Ibid.*

¹⁷²⁵ The District Court found that the Detroit Board of Education created and maintained optional attendance zones³ within Detroit neighborhoods undergoing racial transition and between high school attendance areas of opposite predominant racial compositions. These zones, the court found, had the "natural, probable, foreseeable and actual effect" of allowing white pupils to escape identifiably Negro schools. *Ibid.* Similarly, the District Court found that Detroit school attendance zones had been drawn along north-south boundary lines despite the Detroit Board's awareness that

3. Optional zones, sometimes referred to as dual zones or dual overlapping zones, provide pupils living within certain areas a

choice of attendance at one of two high schools.

and effect the maintenance of segregation." 338 F.Supp., at 589.⁶

The District Court also held that the acts of the Detroit Board of Education, as a subordinate entity of the State, were attributable to the State of Michigan, thus creating a vicarious liability on the part of the State. Under Michigan law, Mich.Comp.Laws § 388.851 (1970), for example, school building construction plans had to be approved by the State Board of Education, and, prior to 1962, the State Board had specific statutory authority to supervise school-site selection. The proofs concerning the effect of Detroit's school construction program were, therefore, found to be largely applicable to show state responsibility for the segregative results.⁷

6. "Sec. 12. The implementation of any attendance provisions for the 1970-71 school year determined by any first class school district board shall be delayed pending the date of commencement of functions by the first class school district boards established under the provisions of this amendatory act but such provision shall not impair the right of any such board to determine and implement prior to such date such changes in attendance provisions as are mandated by practical necessity. . . ." Act No. 48, § 12, Mich.Pub. Acts of 1970; Mich.Comp. Laws § 388.182 (1970).

7. The District Court briefly alluded to the possibility that the State, along with private persons, had caused, in part, the housing patterns of the Detroit metropolitan area which, in turn, produced the predominantly white and predominantly Negro neighborhoods that characterize Detroit:

"It is no answer to say that restricted practices grew gradually (as the black population in the area increased between 1920 and 1970), or that since 1948 racial restrictions on the ownership of real property have been removed. The policies pursued by both government and private persons and agencies have a continuing and present effect upon the complexion of the community—as we know, the choice of a residence is a relatively infrequent affair. For many years FHA and VA openly advised and advocated the maintenance of 'harmonious' neighborhoods, i. e., racially and economically harmonious. The conditions created continue." 338 F. Supp. 582, 587 (E.D. Mich.1971).

Turning to the question of an appropriate remedy for these several constitutional violations, the District Court deferred a pending motion⁸ by intervening parent defendants to join as additional parties defendant the 85 outlying school districts in the three-county Detroit metropolitan area on the ground that effective relief could not be achieved without their presence.⁹ The District Court concluded that this motion to join was "premature," since it "has to do with relief" and no reasonably specific desegregation plan was before the court. 338 F.Supp., at 595. Accordingly, the District Court proceeded to order the Detroit Board of Education to submit desegregation plans limited to the segregation problems found to be existing within the city of

Thus, the District Court concluded:

"The affirmative obligation of the defendant Board has been and is to adopt and implement pupil assignment practices and policies that compensate for and avoid incorporation into the school system the effects of residential racial segregation." *Id.*, at 593.

The Court of Appeals, however, expressly noted that:

"In affirming the District Judge's findings of constitutional violations by the Detroit Board of Education and by the State defendants resulting in segregated schools in Detroit, we have not relied at all upon testimony pertaining to segregated housing except as school construction programs helped cause or maintain such segregation." 484 F.2d, at 242.

Accordingly, in its present posture, the case does not present any question concerning possible state housing violations.

8. On March 22, 1971, a group of Detroit residents, who were parents of children enrolled in the Detroit public schools, were permitted to intervene as parties defendant. On June 24, 1971, the District Judge alluded to the "possibility" of a metropolitan school system stating: "[A]s I have said to several witnesses in this case: 'How do you desegregate a black city, or a black school system.'" Petitioners' Appendix 243a (hereinafter Pat. App.). Subsequently, on July 16, 1971, various parents filed a motion to require joinder of all of the 85 outlying independent school districts within the tri-county area.

9. The respondents, as plaintiffs below, opposed the motion to join the additional school districts, arguing that the presence of the state defendants was sufficient and all that was required, even if, in shaping a remedy, the affairs of these other districts was to be affected. 338 F.Supp. at 595.

Detroit. At the same time, however, the state defendants were directed to submit desegregation plans encompassing the three-county metropolitan area¹⁰ despite the fact that the 85 outlying school districts of these three counties were not parties to the action and despite the fact that there had been no claim that these outlying districts had committed constitutional violations.¹¹ An effort to appeal these orders to the Court of Appeals was dismissed on the ground that the orders were not appealable. 468 F.2d 902 (CA 6), cert. denied, 409 U.S. 844, 93 S.Ct. 45, 34 L.Ed.2d 83 (1972). The sequence of the ensuing actions and orders of the District Court are significant factors and will therefore be catalogued in some detail.

Following the District Court's abrupt announcement that it planned to consider the implementation of a multidistrict, metropolitan area remedy to the segregation problems identified within the city of Detroit, the District Court was again requested to grant the outlying school districts intervention as of right on the ground that the District Court's new request for multidistrict plans "may, as a practical matter, impair or impede [the intervenors'] ability to protect" the welfare of their students. The District Court took the motions to inter-

vene under advisement pending submission of the requested desegregation plans by Detroit and the state officials. On March 7, 1972, the District Court notified all parties and the petitioner school districts seeking intervention, that March 14, 1972, was the deadline for submission of recommendations for conditions of intervention and the date of the commencement of hearings on Detroit-only desegregation plans. On the second day of the scheduled hearings, March 15, 1972, the District Court granted the motions of the intervenor school districts¹² subject, *inter alia*, to the following conditions:

"1. No intervenor will be permitted to assert any claim or defense previously adjudicated by the court.

"2. No intervenor shall reopen any question or issue which has previously been decided by the court.

"7. New intervenors are granted intervention for two principal purposes: (a) To advise the court, by brief, of the legal propriety or impropriety of considering a metropolitan plan; (b) To review any plan or plans for the desegregation of the so-called larger Detroit Metropolitan area, and submitting objections, modifications

10. At the time of the 1970 census, the population of Michigan was 8,875,083, almost half of which, 4,199,931, resided in the tri-county area of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb. Oakland and Macomb Counties abut Wayne County to the north, and Oakland County abuts Macomb County to the west. These counties cover 1,952 square miles, Michigan Statistical Abstract (9th ed. 1972), and the area is approximately the size of the State of Delaware (2,057 square miles), more than half again the size of the State of Rhode Island (1,214 square miles) and almost 30 times the size of the District of Columbia (67 square miles). Statistical Abstract of the United States (93d ed. 1972). The populations of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties were 2,666,751; 907,871; and 625,309, respectively, in 1970. Detroit, the State's largest city, is located in Wayne County.

In the 1970-1971 school year, there were 2,157,449 children enrolled in school districts in Michigan. There are 86 independent,

legally distinct school districts within the tri-county area, having a total enrollment of approximately 1,000,000 children. In 1970, the Detroit Board of Education operated 319 schools with approximately 276,000 students.

11. In its formal opinion, subsequently announced, the District Court candidly recognized:

"It should be noted that the court has taken no proofs with respect to the establishment of the boundaries of the 86 public school districts in the counties of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb, nor on the issue of whether, with the exclusion of the city of Detroit school district, such school districts have committed acts of de jure segregation." 345 F.Supp. 914, 920 (E.D. Mich. 1972).

12. According to the District Court, intervention was permitted under Fed. Rule Civ. Proc. 24(a), "Intervention of Right," and also under Rule 24(b), "Permissive Intervention."

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or alternatives to it or them, and in accordance with the requirements of the United States Constitution and the prior orders of this court." 1 Joint Appendix 206 (hereinafter App.).

Upon granting the motion to intervene, on March 15, 1972, the District Court advised the petitioning intervenors that the court had previously set March 22, 1972, as the date for the filing of briefs on the legal propriety of a "metropolitan" plan of desegregation and, accordingly, that the intervening school districts would have one week to muster their legal arguments on the issue.¹³ Thereafter, and following the completion of hearings on the Detroit-only desegregation plans, the District Court issued the four rulings that were the principal issues in the Court of Appeals.

(a) On March 24, 1972, two days after the intervenors' briefs were due, the District Court issued its ruling on the question of whether it could "consider relief in the form of a metropolitan plan, encompassing not only the City of Detroit, but the larger Detroit metropolitan area." It rejected the state defendants' arguments that no state action caused the segregation of the Detroit schools, and the intervening suburban districts' contention that interdistrict relief was inappropriate unless the suburban districts themselves had committed violations. The court concluded:

"[I]t is proper for the court to consider metropolitan plans directed toward the desegregation of the Detroit public schools as an alternative to the present intra-city desegregation plans before it and, in the event that the court finds such intra-city plans inadequate to desegregate such schools, the court is of the opinion that it is required to consider a metropolitan remedy for desegregation." Pet. App. 51a.

(b) On March 28, 1972, the District Court issued its findings and conclusions on the three Detroit-only plans submitted by the city Board and the respondents. It found that the best of the three plans "would make the Detroit school system more identifiably Black . . . thereby increasing the flight of Whites from the city and the system." *Id.*, at 55a. From this the court concluded that the plan "would not accomplish desegregation . . . within the corporate geographical limits of the city." *Id.*, at 56a. Accordingly, the District Court held that it "must look beyond the limits of the Detroit school district for a solution to the problem," and that "[s]chool district lines are simply matters of political convenience and may not be used to deny constitutional rights." *Id.*, at 57a.

(c) During the period from March 28 to April 14, 1972, the District Court conducted hearings on a metropolitan plan. Counsel for the petitioning intervenors was allowed to participate in these hearings, but he was ordered to confine his argument to "the size and expanse of the metropolitan plan" without addressing the intervenors' opposition to such a remedy or the claim that a finding of a constitutional violation by the intervenor districts was an essential predicate to any remedy involving them. Thereafter, on June 14, 1972, the District Court issued its ruling on the "desegregation area" and related findings and conclusions. The court acknowledged at the outset that it had "taken no proofs with respect to the establishment of the boundaries of the 86 public school districts in the counties [in the Detroit area], nor on the issue of whether, with the exclusion of the city of Detroit school districts, such school districts have committed acts of de jure segregation." Nevertheless, the court designated 53 of the 85 suburban school districts plus Detroit as the "desegregation area" and appointed a panel to prepare and submit

13. This rather abbreviated briefing schedule was maintained despite the fact that the District Court had deferred consideration of

a motion made eight months earlier, to bring the suburban districts into the case. See text accompanying n. 8 *supra*.

"an effective desegregation plan" for the Detroit schools that would encompass the entire desegregation area.¹⁴ The plan was to be based on 15 clusters, each containing part of the Detroit system and two or more suburban districts, and was to "achieve the greatest degree of actual desegregation to the end that, upon implementation, no school, grade or classroom [would be] substantially disproportionate to the overall pupil racial composition." 345 F.Supp. 914, 918 (ED Mich.1972).

(d) On July 11, 1972, and in accordance with a recommendation by the court-appointed desegregation panel, the District Court ordered the Detroit Board of Education to purchase or lease "at least" 295 school buses for the purpose of providing transportation under an interim plan to be developed for the 1972-1973 school year. The costs of this acquisition were to be borne by the state defendants. Pet.App. 106a-107a.

On June 12, 1973, a divided Court of Appeals, sitting en banc, affirmed in part, vacated in part, and remanded for further proceedings. 484 F.2d 215 (CA6).¹⁵ The Court of Appeals held; first, that the record supported the District Court's findings and conclusions on the constitutional violations committed by the Detroit Board, *id.*, at 221-

14. As of 1970, the 53 school districts outside the city of Detroit that were included in the court's "desegregation area" had a combined student population of approximately 503,000 students compared to Detroit's approximately 276,000 students. Nevertheless, the District Court directed that the intervening districts should be represented by only one member on the desegregation panel while the Detroit Board of Education was granted three panel members. 345 F.Supp., at 917.

15. The District Court had certified most of the foregoing rulings for interlocutory review pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1292(b) (1 App. 265-266) and the case was initially decided on the merits by a panel of three judges. However, the panel's opinion and judgment were vacated when it was determined to rehear the case en banc. 484 F.2d, at 218.

16. With respect to the State's violations, the Court of Appeals held: (1) that, since the

238, and by the state defendants, *id.*, at 239-241.¹⁶ It stated that the acts of racial discrimination shown in the record are "causally related to the substantial amount of segregation found in the Detroit school system," *id.*, at 241, and that "the District Court was therefore authorized and required to take effective measures to desegregate the Detroit Public School System." *Id.*, at 242.

The Court of Appeals also agreed with the District Court that "any less comprehensive a solution than a metropolitan area plan would result in an all black school system immediately surrounded by practically all white suburban school systems, with an overwhelmingly white majority population in the total metropolitan area." *Id.*, at 245. The court went on to state that it could "[not] see how such segregation can be any less harmful to the minority students than if the same result were accomplished within one school district." *Ibid.*

Accordingly, the Court of Appeals concluded that "the only feasible desegregation plan involves the crossing of the boundary lines between the Detroit School District and adjacent or nearby school districts for the limited purpose of providing an effective desegregation

city Board is an instrumentality of the State and subordinate to the State Board, the segregative actions of the Detroit Board "are the actions of an agency of the State," *id.*, at 238; (2) that the state legislation rescinding Detroit's voluntary desegregation plan contributed to increasing segregation in the Detroit schools, *ibid.*; (3) that under state law prior to 1962 the State Board had authority over school construction plans and therefore had to be held responsible "for the segregative results," *ibid.*; (4) that the "State statutory scheme of support of transportation for school children directly discriminated against Detroit," *id.*, at 240, by not providing transportation funds to Detroit on the same basis as funds were provided to suburban districts, *id.*, at 238; and (5) that the transportation of Negro students from one suburban district to a Negro school in Detroit must have had the "approval, tacit or express, of the State Board of Education," *ibid.*

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plan." *Id.*, It reasoned that such a plan would be appropriate because of the State's violations, and could be implemented because of the State's authority to control local school districts. Without further elaboration, and without any discussion of the claims that no constitutional violation by the outlying districts had been shown and that no evidence on that point had been allowed, the Court of Appeals held:

"[T]he State has committed de jure acts of segregation and . . . the State controls the instrumentalities whose action is necessary to remedy the harmful effects of the State acts." *Ibid.*

An interdistrict remedy was thus held to be "within the equity powers of the District Court." *Id.*, at 250.¹⁷

The Court of Appeals expressed no views on the propriety of the District Court's composition of the metropolitan "desegregation area." It held that all suburban school districts that might be affected by any metropolitanwide remedy should, under Fed. Rule Civ. Proc. 19, be made parties to the case on remand and be given an opportunity to be heard with respect to the scope and implementation of such a remedy. 484 F.2d, at 251-252. Under the terms of the remand, however, the District Court was not "required" to receive further evidence on the issue of segregation in the Detroit schools or on the propriety of a Detroit-only remedy, or on the question of whether the affected districts had committed any violation of the constitutional rights of Detroit pupils or others. *Id.*, at 252. Finally, the Court of Appeals vacated the District Court's order directing the acquisition of school buses, subject to the right of the District Court to consider reimposing the order "at the appropriate time." *Ibid.*

17. The court sought to distinguish *Bradley v. School Board of the City of Richmond*, 462 F.2d 1058 (CA4 1972), *aff'd* by an equally divided Court, 412 U.S. 92, 93 S.Ct. 1952, 36 L.Ed.2d 771 (1973), on the grounds that the District Court in that case had ordered

II

[1] Ever since *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873 (1954), judicial consideration of school desegregation cases has begun with the standard:

"[I]n the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." *Id.*, at 495, 74 S.Ct., at 692.

This has been reaffirmed time and again as the meaning of the Constitution and the controlling rule of law.

The target of the *Brown* holding was clear and forthright: the elimination of state-mandated or deliberately maintained dual school systems with certain schools for Negro pupils and others for white pupils. This duality and racial segregation were held to violate the Constitution in the cases subsequent to 1954, including particularly *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, 391 U.S. 430, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968); *Raney v. Board of Education*, 391 U.S. 443, 88 S.Ct. 1697, 20 L.Ed.2d 727 (1968); *Monroe v. Board of Comm'rs*, 391 U.S. 450, 88 S.Ct. 1700, 20 L.Ed.2d 733 (1968); *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 28 L.Ed.2d 554 (1971); *Wright v. Council of the City of Emporia*, 407 U.S. 451, 92 S.Ct. 2196, 33 L.Ed.2d 51 (1972); *United States v. Scotland Neck City Board of Education*, 407 U.S. 484, 92 S.Ct. 2214, 33 L.Ed.2d 75 (1972).

The *Swann* case, of course, dealt

"with the problem of defining in more precise terms than heretofore the scope of the duty of school authorities and district courts in implementing *Brown I* and the mandate to eliminate dual systems and establish unitary

an actual consolidation of three school districts and that Virginia's Constitution and statutes, unlike Michigan's gave the local boards exclusive power to operate the public schools. 484 F.2d, at 251.

systems at once." 402 U.S., at 6, 91 S.Ct., at 1271.

In *Brown v. Board of Education*, 349 U.S. 294, 75 S.Ct. 753, 99 L.Ed. 1083 (1955) (*Brown II*), the Court's first encounter with the problem of remedies in school desegregation cases, the Court noted:

"In fashioning and effectuating the decrees, the courts will be guided by equitable principles. Traditionally, equity has been characterized by a practical flexibility in shaping its remedies and by a facility for adjusting and reconciling public and private needs." *Id.*, at 300, 75 S.Ct., at 756 (footnotes omitted).

In further refining the remedial process, *Swann* held, the task is to correct, by a balancing of the individual and collective interests, "the condition that offends the Constitution." A federal remedial power may be exercised "only on the basis of a constitutional violation" and, "[a]s with any equity case, the nature of the violation determines the scope of the remedy." 402 U.S., at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276.

[2] Proceeding from these basic principles, we first note that in the District Court the complainants sought a remedy aimed at the *condition* alleged to offend the Constitution—the segregation within the Detroit City School District.¹⁸ The court acted on this theory of the case and in its initial ruling on the "Desegregation Area" stated:

"The task before this court, therefore, is now, and . . . has always been, how to desegregate the Detroit public schools." 345 F.Supp., at 921.

Thereafter, however, the District Court abruptly rejected the proposed Detroit-

only plans on the ground that "while [they] would provide a racial mix more in keeping with the Black-White proportions of the student population [they] would accentuate the racial identifiability of the [Detroit] district as a Black school system, and would not accomplish desegregation." Pet.App., 56a. "[T]he racial composition of the student body is such," said the court, "that the plan's implementation would clearly make the entire Detroit public school system racially identifiable" (*Id.*, at 54a), "leaving [ing] many of its schools 75 to 90 per cent Black." *Id.*, at 55a. Consequently, the court reasoned, it was imperative to "look beyond the limits of the Detroit school district for a solution to the problem of segregation in the Detroit public schools . . ." since "[s]chool district lines are simply matters of political convenience and may not be used to deny constitutional rights." *Id.*, at 57a. Accordingly, the District Court proceeded to redefine the relevant area to include areas of predominantly white pupil population in order to ensure that "upon implementation, no school, grade or classroom [would be] substantially disproportionate to the overall pupil racial composition" of the entire metropolitan area.

While specifically acknowledging that the District Court's findings of a condition of segregation were limited to Detroit, the Court of Appeals approved the use of a metropolitan remedy largely on the grounds that it is

"impossible to declare 'clearly erroneous' the District Judge's conclusion that any Detroit only segregation plan will lead directly to a single segregated Detroit school district overwhelmingly black in all of its schools, surrounded by a ring of suburbs and suburban school districts overwhelmingly

18. Although the list of issues presented for review in petitioners' briefs and petitions for writs of certiorari do not include arguments on the findings of segregative violations on the part of the Detroit defendants, two of the petitioners argue in brief that these findings constitute error. This Court's Rules 23(1)

(c) and 40(1)(d)(2), at a minimum limit our review to the Detroit violation findings to "plain error." and, under our decision last Term in *Keyes v. School District No. 1, Denver, Colorado*, 413 U.S. 189, 93 S.Ct. 2686, 37 L.Ed.2d 548 (1973), the findings appear to be correct.

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white in composition in a State in which the racial composition is 87 per cent white and 13 per cent black." 484 F.2d, at 249.

[3] Viewing the record as a whole, it seems clear that the District Court and the Court of Appeals shifted the primary focus from a Detroit remedy to the metropolitan area only because of their conclusion that total desegregation of Detroit would not produce the racial balance which they perceived as desirable. Both courts proceeded on an assumption that the Detroit schools could not be truly desegregated—in their view of what constituted desegregation—unless the racial composition of the student body of each school substantially reflected the racial composition of the population of the metropolitan area as a whole. The metropolitan area was then defined as Detroit plus 53 of the outlying school districts. That this was the approach the District Court expressly and frankly employed is shown by the order which expressed the court's view of the constitutional standard:

"Within the limitations of reasonable travel time and distance factors, pupil reassignments shall be effected within the clusters described in Exhibit P.M. 12 so as to achieve the greatest degree of actual desegregation to the end that, upon implementation, no school, grade or classroom [will be] substantially disproportionate to the overall pupil racial composition." 345 F. Supp., at 918 (emphasis added).

In *Swann*, which arose in the context of a single independent school district, the Court held:

19. Disparity in the racial composition of pupils within a single district may well constitute a "signal" to a district court at the outset, leading to inquiry into the causes accounting for a pronounced racial identifiability of schools within one school system. In *Swann*, for example, we were dealing with a large but single independent school system, and a unanimous Court noted: "Where the school authority's proposed plan for conversion from a dual to a unitary system contemplates the continued existence of some schools that are all or predominantly of

"If we were to read the holding of the District Court to require, as a matter of substantive constitutional right, any particular degree of racial balance or mixing, that approach would be disapproved and we would be obliged to reverse." 402 U.S., at 24, 91 S.Ct., at 1280.

The clear import of this language from *Swann* is that desegregation, in the sense of dismantling a dual school system, does not require any particular racial balance in each "school, grade or classroom."¹⁹ See *Spencer v. Kugler*, 404 U.S. 1027, 92 S.Ct. 707, 30 L.Ed.2d 723 (1972).

[4] Here the District Court's approach to what constituted "actual desegregation" raises the fundamental question, not presented in *Swann*, as to the circumstances in which a federal court may order desegregation relief that embraces more than a single school district. The court's analytical starting point was its conclusion that school district lines are no more than arbitrary lines on a map drawn "for political convenience." Boundary lines may be bridged where there has been a constitutional violation calling for interdistrict relief, but the notion that school district lines may be casually ignored or treated as a mere administrative convenience is contrary to the history of public education in our country. No single tradition in public education is more deeply rooted than local control over the operation of schools; local autonomy has long been thought essential both to the maintenance of community concern and support for public schools and to quality of the

one race [the school authority has] the burden of showing that such school assignments are genuinely nondiscriminatory." 402 U.S., at 26, 91 S.Ct., at 1281. See also *Keyes, supra*, at 208, 93 S.Ct., at 2697. However, the use of significant racial imbalance in schools within an autonomous school district as a signal which operates simply to shift the burden of proof, is a very different matter from equating racial imbalance with a constitutional violation calling for a remedy. *Keyes, supra*, also involved a remedial order within a single autonomous school district.

educational process. See *Wright v. Council of the City of Emporia*, 407 U.S., at 469, 92 S.Ct., at 2206. Thus, in *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1, 50, 93 S.Ct. 1278, 1305, 36 L.Ed.2d 16 (1973), we observed that local control over the educational process affords citizens an opportunity to participate in decision-making, permits the structuring of school programs to fit local needs, and encourages "experimentation, innovation, and a healthy competition for educational excellence."

¹⁷⁴³ The Michigan educational structure involved in this case, in common with most States, provides for a large measure of local control,²⁰ and a review of the scope and character of these local powers indicates the extent to which the interdistrict remedy approved by the two courts could disrupt and alter the structure of public education in Michigan. The metropolitan remedy would require, in effect, consolidation of 54 independent school districts historically administered as separate units into a vast new super school district. See n. 10, *supra*. Entirely apart from the logistical and other serious problems attending large-scale transportation of students, the consolidation would give rise to an array of other problems in financing and operating this new school system. Some of the more obvious questions would be: What would be the status and authority of the present popularly elected school boards? Would the

children of Detroit be within the jurisdiction and operating control of a school board elected by the parents and residents of other districts? What board or boards would levy taxes for school operations in these 54 districts constituting the consolidated metropolitan area? What provisions could be made for assuring substantial equality in tax levies among the 54 districts, if this were deemed requisite? What provisions would be made for financing? Would the validity of long-term bonds be jeopardized unless approved by all of the component districts as well as the State? What body would determine that portion of the curricula now left to the discretion of local school boards? Who would establish attendance zones, purchase school equipment, locate and construct new schools, and indeed attend to all the myriad day-to-day decisions that are necessary to school operations affecting potentially more than three-quarters of a million pupils? See n. 10, *supra*.

It may be suggested that all of these vital operational problems are yet to be resolved by the District Court, and that this is the purpose of the Court of Appeals' proposed remand. But it is obvious from the scope of the interdistrict remedy itself that absent a complete restructuring of the laws of Michigan relating to school districts the District Court will become first, a *de facto* "legislative authority" to resolve these com-

²⁰ Under the Michigan School Code of 1955, the local school district is an autonomous political body corporate, operating through a Board of Education popularly elected. Mich.Comp.Laws §§ 340.27, 340.55, 340.107, 340.148, 340.149, 340.188. As such, the day-to-day affairs of the school district are determined at the local level in accordance with the plenary power to acquire real and personal property, §§ 340.26, 340.77, 340.113, 340.165, 340.192, 340.352; to hire and contract with personnel, §§ 340.569, 340.574; to levy taxes for operations, § 340.563; to borrow against receipts, § 340.567; to determine the length of school terms, § 340.575; to control the admission of nonresident students, § 340.582; to determine courses of study, §

340.583; to provide a kindergarten program, § 340.584; to establish and operate vocational schools, § 340.585; to offer adult education programs, § 340.586; to establish attendance areas, § 340.589; to arrange for transportation of nonresident students, § 340.591; to acquire transportation equipment, § 340.594; to receive gifts and bequests for educational purposes, § 340.605; to employ an attorney, § 340.609; to suspend or expel students, § 340.613; to make rules and regulations for the operation of schools, § 340.614; to cause to be levied authorized millage, § 340.643a; to acquire property by eminent domain, § 340.711 et seq.; and to approve and select textbooks, § 340.882.

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plex questions, and then the "school superintendent" for the entire area. This is a task which few, if any, judges are qualified to perform and one which would deprive the people of control of schools through their elected representatives.

[5] Of course, no state law is above the Constitution. School district lines and the present laws with respect to local control, are not sacrosanct and if they conflict with the Fourteenth Amendment federal courts have a duty to prescribe appropriate remedies. See, *e. g.*, *Wright v. Council of the City of Emporia*, 407 U.S. 451, 92 S.Ct. 2196, 33 L.Ed.2d 51 (1972); *United States v. Scotland Neck City Board of Education*, 407 U.S. 484, 92 S.Ct. 2214, 33 L.Ed.2d 75 (1972) (state or local officials prevented from carving out a new school district from an existing district that was in process of dismantling a dual school system); cf. *Haney v. County Board of Education of Sevier County*, 429 F.2d 364 (CA8 1970) (State contributed to separation of races by drawing of school district lines); *United States v. Texas*, 321 F.Supp. 1043 (ED Tex.1970), *aff'd*, 447 F.2d 441 (CA5 1971), cert. denied sub nom. *Edgar v. United States*, 404 U.S. 1016, 92 S.Ct. 675, 30 L.Ed.2d 663 (1972) (one or more school districts created and maintained for one race). But our prior holdings have been confined to violations and remedies within a single school district. We therefore turn to address, for the first time, the validity of a remedy mandating cross-district or interdistrict consolidation to remedy a condition of segregation found to exist in only one district.

[6] The controlling principle consistently expounded in our holdings is that the scope of the remedy is determined by the nature and extent of the constitutional violation. *Swann*, 402 U.S., at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276. Before the boundaries of separate and autonomous school districts may be set aside by consoli-

dating the separate units for remedial purposes or by imposing a cross-district remedy, it must first be shown that there has been a constitutional violation within one district that produces a significant segregative effect in another district. Specifically, it must be shown that racially discriminatory acts of the state or local school districts, or of a single school district have been a substantial cause of interdistrict segregation. Thus an interdistrict remedy might be in order where the racially discriminatory acts of one or more school districts caused racial segregation in an adjacent district, or where district lines have been deliberately drawn on the basis of race. In such circumstances an interdistrict remedy would be appropriate to eliminate the interdistrict segregation directly caused by the constitutional violation. Conversely, without an interdistrict violation and interdistrict effect, there is no constitutional wrong calling for an interdistrict remedy.

[7] The record before us, voluminous as it is, contains evidence of *de jure* segregated conditions only in the Detroit schools; indeed, that was the theory on which the litigation was initially based and on which the District Court took evidence. See *supra* at 3117-3118. With no showing of significant violation by the 53 outlying school districts and no evidence of any interdistrict violation or effect, the court went beyond the original theory of the case as framed by the pleadings and mandated a metropolitan area remedy. To approve the remedy ordered by the court would impose on the outlying districts, not shown to have committed any constitutional violation, a wholly impermissible remedy based on a standard not hinted at in *Brown I* and *II* or any holding of this Court.

In dissent, Mr. Justice WHITE and Mr. Justice MARSHALL undertake to demonstrate that agencies having statewide authority participated in maintaining the dual school system found to exist

in Detroit. They are apparently of the view that once such participation is shown, the District Court should have a relatively free hand to reconstruct school districts outside of Detroit in fashioning relief. Our assumption, *arguendo*, see *infra*, p. 3129, that state agencies did participate in the maintenance of the Detroit system, should make it clear that it is not on this point that we part company.²¹ The difference between us arises instead from established doctrine laid down by our cases. *Brown, supra*; *Green, supra*; *Swann, supra*; *Scotland Neck, supra*; and *Emporia, supra*, each addressed the issue of constitutional wrong in terms of an established geographic and administrative school system populated by both Negro and white children. In such a context, terms such as "unitary" and "dual" systems, and "racially identifiable schools," have meaning, and the necessary federal authority to remedy the constitutional wrong is firmly established. But the remedy is necessarily designed, as all remedies are, to restore the victims of discriminatory conduct to the position they would have occupied in the absence of such conduct. Disparate treatment of white and Negro students occurred

within the Detroit school system, and not elsewhere, and on this record the remedy must be limited to that system. *Swann, supra*, 402 U.S., at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276.

[8, 9] The constitutional right of the Negro respondents residing in Detroit is to attend a unitary school system in that district. Unless petitioners drew the district lines in a discriminatory fashion, or arranged for white students residing in the Detroit district to attend schools in Oakland and Macomb Counties, they were under no constitutional duty to make provisions for Negro students to do so. The view of the dissenters, that the existence of a dual system in *Detroit* can be made the basis for a decree requiring cross-district transportation of pupils, cannot be supported on the grounds that it represents merely the devising of a suitably flexible remedy for the violation of rights already established by our prior decisions. It can be supported only by drastic expansion of the constitutional right itself, an expansion without any support in either constitutional principle or precedent.²²

21. Since the Court has held that a resident of a school district has a fundamental right protected by the Federal Constitution to vote in a district election, it would seem incongruous to disparage the importance of the school district in a different context. *Kramer v. Union Free School District No. 15*, 395 U.S. 621, 626, 89 S.Ct. 1886, 1889, 23 L.Ed.2d 583 (1969). While the district there involved was located in New York, none of the facts in our possession suggest that the relation of school districts to the State is significantly different in New York from that in Michigan.

22. The suggestion in the dissent of Mr. Justice MARSHALL that schools which have a majority of Negro students are not "desegregated," whatever the racial makeup of the school district's population and however neutrally the district lines have been drawn and administered, finds no support in our prior cases. In *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, 391 U.S. 430, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968), for example, this Court approved a desegregation plan which would have resulted in each of the

schools within the district having a racial composition of 57% Negro and 43% White. In *Wright v. Council of the City of Emporia*, 407 U.S. 451, 92 S.Ct. 2196, 33 L.Ed.2d 51 (1972), the optimal desegregation plan would have resulted in the schools' being 66% Negro and 34% white, substantially the same percentages as could be obtained under one of the plans involved in this case. And in *United States v. Scotland Neck City Board of Education*, 407 U.S. 484, 491 n. 5, 92 S.Ct. 2214, 2218, 33 L.Ed.2d 75 (1972), a desegregation plan was implicitly approved for a school district which had a racial composition of 77% Negro and 22% white. In none of these cases was it even intimated that "actual desegregation" could not be accomplished as long as the number of Negro students was greater than the number of white students.

The dissents also seem to attach importance to the metropolitan character of Detroit and neighboring school districts. But the constitutional principles applicable in school desegregation cases cannot vary in

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III

We recognize that the six-volume record presently under consideration contains language and some specific incidental findings thought by the District Court to afford a basis for interdistrict relief. However, these comparatively isolated findings and brief comments concern only one possible interdistrict violation and are found in the context of a proceeding that, as the District Court conceded, included no proof of segregation practiced by any of the 85 suburban school districts surrounding Detroit. The Court of Appeals, for example, relied on five factors which, it held, amounted to unconstitutional state action with respect to the violations found in the Detroit system:

[10] (1) It held the State derivatively responsible for the Detroit Board's violations on the theory that actions of Detroit as a political subdivision of the State were attributable to the State. Accepting, *arguendo*, the correctness of this finding of state responsibility for the segregated conditions within the city of Detroit, it does not follow that an interdistrict remedy is constitutionally justified or required. With a single exception, discussed later, there has been no showing that either the State or any of the 85 outlying districts engaged in activity that had a cross-district effect. The boundaries of the Detroit School District, which are coterminous with the boundaries of the city of Detroit, were established over a century ago by neutral legislation when the city was incorporated; there is no evidence in the record, nor is there any suggestion by the respondents, that either the

accordance with the size or population dispersal of the particular city, county, or school district as compared with neighboring areas.

23. *People ex rel. Workman v. Board of Education of Detroit*, 18 Mich. 400 (1869); Act 34, § 28, Mich.Pub.Acts of 1867. The Michigan Constitution and laws provide that "every school district shall provide for the education of its pupils without discrimination

original boundaries of the Detroit School District, or any other school district in Michigan, were established for the purpose of creating, maintaining, or perpetuating segregation of races. There is no claim and there is no evidence hinting that petitioner outlying schools districts and their predecessors, or the 30-odd other school districts in the tricounty area—but outside the District Court's "desegregation area"—have ever maintained or operated anything but unitary school systems. Unitary school systems have been required for more than a century by the Michigan Constitution as implemented by state law.²³ Where the schools of only one district have been affected, there is no constitutional power in the courts to decree relief balancing the racial composition of that district's schools with those of the surrounding districts.

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[11] (2) There was evidence introduced at trial that, during the late 1950's, Carver School District, a predominantly Negro suburban district, contracted to have Negro high school students sent to a predominantly Negro school in Detroit. At the time, Carver was an independent school district that had no high school because, according to the trial evidence, "Carver District . . . did not have a place for adequate high school facilities." 484 F.2d., at 231. Accordingly, arrangements were made with Northern High School in the abutting Detroit School District so that the Carver high school students could obtain a secondary school education. In 1960 the Oak Park School District, a predominantly white suburban district, annexed the predominantly Negro Carver School District, through the

as to religion, creed, race, color or national origin," Mich.Const.1963, Art. 8, § 2; that "no separate school or department shall be kept for any person or persons on account of race or color," Mich.Comp.Laws § 340.355; and that "[a]ll persons, residents of a school district . . . shall have an equal right to attend school therein," *id.*, § 340.356. See also Act 319, Part II, c. 2, § 9, Mich.Pub.Acts of 1927.

¹⁷⁵⁰ initiative of local officials. *Ibid.* There is, of course, no claim that the 1960 annexation had a segregative purpose or result or that Oak Park now maintains a dual system.

According to the Court of Appeals, the arrangement during the late 1950's which allowed Carver students to be educated within the Detroit District was dependent upon the "tacit or express" approval of the State Board of Education and was the result of the refusal of the white suburban districts to accept the Carver students. Although there is nothing in the record supporting the Court of Appeals' supposition that suburban white schools refused to accept the Carver students, it appears that this situation, whether with or without the State's consent, may have had a segregative effect on the school populations of the two districts involved. However, since "the nature of the violation determines the scope of the remedy," *Swann*, 402 U.S., at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276, this isolated instance affecting two of the school districts would not justify the broad metropolitanwide remedy contemplated by the District Court and approved by the Court of Appeals, particularly since it embraced potentially 52 districts having no responsibility for the arrangement and involved 503,000 pupils in addition to Detroit's 276,000 students.

(3) The Court of Appeals cited the enactment of state legislation (Act 48) which had the effect of rescinding Detroit's voluntary desegregation plan (the April 7 Plan). That plan, however, affected only 12 of 21 Detroit high schools and had no causal connection with the distribution of pupils by race between Detroit and the other school districts within the tricounty area.

(4) The court relied on the State's authority to supervise schoolsite selection and to approve building construction as a basis for holding the State responsible for the segregative results of the school construction program in Detroit. Specifically, the Court of Appeals asserted that during the period between

1949 and 1962 the State Board of Education exercised general authority as overseer of site acquisitions by local boards for new school construction, and suggested that this state-approved school construction "fostered segregation throughout the Detroit Metropolitan area." 484 F.2d, at 241. This brief comment, however, is not supported by the evidence taken at trial since that evidence was specifically limited to proof that schoolsite acquisition and school construction within the city of Detroit produced *de jure* segregation within the city itself. *Id.*, at 235-238. Thus, there was no evidence suggesting that the State's activities with respect to either school construction or site acquisition within Detroit affected the racial composition of the school population outside Detroit or, conversely, that the State's school construction and site acquisition activities within the outlying districts affected the racial composition of the schools within Detroit.

(5) The Court of Appeals also relied upon the District Court's finding:

"This and other financial limitations, such as those on bonding and the working of the state aid formula whereby suburban districts were able to make far larger per pupil expenditures despite less tax effort, have created and perpetuated systematic educational inequalities." *Id.*, at 239.

However, neither the Court of Appeals nor the District Court offered any indication in the record or in their opinions as to how, if at all, the availability of state-financed aid for some Michigan students outside Detroit, but not for those within Detroit, might have affected the racial character of any of the State's school districts. Furthermore, as the respondents recognize, the application of our recent ruling in *San Antonio School District v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1, 93 S.Ct. 1278, 36 L.Ed.2d 16 (1973), to this state education financing system is questionable, and this issue was not addressed by either the Court of Appeals

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or the District Court. This, again, underscores the crucial fact that the theory upon which the case proceeded related solely to the establishment of Detroit city violations as a basis for desegregating Detroit schools and that, at the time of trial, neither the parties nor the trial judge was concerned with a foundation for interdistrict relief.²⁴

IV

Petitioners have urged that they were denied due process by the manner in which the District Court limited their participation after intervention was allowed, thus precluding adequate opportunity to present evidence that they had committed no acts having a segregative effect in Detroit. In light of our holding that, absent an interdistrict violation, there is no basis for an interdistrict remedy, we need not reach these claims. It is clear, however, that the District Court, with the approval of the Court of Appeals, has provided an interdistrict remedy in the face of a record which shows no constitutional violations that would call for equitable relief except within the city of Detroit. In these circumstances there was no occasion for the parties to address, or for the District Court to consider whether there were racially discriminatory acts for which any of the 53 outlying districts were responsible and which had direct and significant segregative effect on schools of more than one district.

We conclude that the relief ordered by the District Court and affirmed by the Court of Appeals was based upon an erroneous standard and was unsupported by record evidence that acts of the outlying districts effected the discrimination found to exist in the schools of ¹⁷⁵³ Detroit. Accordingly, the judgment of

the Court of Appeals is reversed and the case is remanded for further proceedings consistent with this opinion leading to prompt formulation of a decree directed to eliminating the segregation found to exist in Detroit city schools, a remedy which has been delayed since 1970.

Reversed and remanded.

Mr. Justice STEWART, concurring.

In joining the opinion of the Court, I think it appropriate, in view of some of the extravagant language of the dissenting opinions, to state briefly my understanding of what it is that the Court decides today.

The respondents commenced this suit in 1970, claiming only that a constitutionally impermissible allocation of educational facilities along racial lines had occurred in public schools within a single school district whose lines were coterminous with those of the city of Detroit. In the course of the subsequent proceedings, the District Court found that public school officials had contributed to racial segregation within that district by means of improper use of zoning and attendance patterns, optional-attendance areas, and building and site selection. This finding of a violation of the Equal Protection Clause was upheld by the Court of Appeals, and is accepted by this Court today. See *ante*, at 3124 n. 18. In the present posture of the case, therefore, the Court does not deal with questions of substantive constitutional law. The basic issue now before the Court concerns, rather, the appropriate exercise of federal equity jurisdiction.¹

¹⁷⁵⁴ No evidence was adduced and no findings were made in the District Court

24. Apparently, when the District Court *sua sponte*, abruptly altered the theory of the case to include the possibility of multidistrict relief, neither the plaintiffs nor the trial judge considered amending the complaint to embrace the new theory.

1. As this Court stated in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 349 U.S. 294, 300, 75 S.Ct. 753,

756, 99 L.Ed. 1083: "[E]quity has been characterized by a practical flexibility in shaping its remedies and by a facility for adjusting and reconciling public and private needs. These [school desegregation] cases call for the exercise of these traditional attributes of equity power."

proportion of white pupils than did the schools within the city. Since the mere fact of different racial compositions in contiguous districts does not itself imply or constitute a violation of the Equal Protection Clause in the absence of a showing that such disparity was imposed, fostered, or encouraged by the State or its political subdivisions, it follows that no interdistrict violation was shown in this case.² The formulation of an inter-district remedy was thus simply not responsive to the factual record before the District Court and was an abuse of that court's equitable powers.

mines the scope of the remedy”
Id., at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276.

The disposition of this case thus falls squarely under these principles. The only “condition that offends the Constitution” found by the District Court in this case is the existence of officially supported segregation in and among public schools in Detroit itself. There were no findings that the differing racial composition between schools in the city and in the outlying suburbs was caused by official activity of any sort. It follows that the decision to include in the desegregation plan pupils from school districts outside Detroit was not predicated upon any constitutional violation involving those school districts. By approving a remedy that would reach beyond the limits of the city of Detroit to correct a constitutional violation found to have occurred solely within that city the Court of Appeals thus went beyond the governing equitable principles established in this Court's decisions.

Mr. Justice DOUGLAS, dissenting.

The Court of Appeals has acted responsibly in these cases and we should affirm its judgment. This was the fourth time the case was before it over a span of less than three years. The Court of Appeals affirmed the District

1⁷⁵⁷ 1 In reversing the decision of the Court of Appeals this Court is in no way turning its back on the proscription of state-imposed segregation first voiced in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873, or on the delineation of remedial powers and duties most recently expressed in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 28 L. Ed.2d 554. In *Swann* the Court addressed itself to the range of equitable remedies available to the courts to effectuate the desegregation mandated by *Brown* and its progeny, noting that the task in choosing appropriate relief is “to correct . . . the condition that offends the Constitution,” and that “the nature of the violation deter-

2. My Brother MARSHALL seems to ignore this fundamental fact when he states, *post* at 3153, that “the most essential finding [made by the District Court] was that Negro children in Detroit had been confined by intentional acts of segregation to a growing core of Negro schools surrounded by a receding ring of white schools.” This conclusion is simply not substantiated by the record presented in this case. The record here does support the claim made by the respondents that white and Negro students within Detroit who otherwise would have attended school together were separated by acts of the State or its subdivision. However, segregative acts within the city alone cannot be presumed to have produced—and no factual showing was made that they did produce—an increase in the number of Negro students in the city as a whole. It is this essential fact of a predominantly Negro school population in Detroit—caused by un-

known and perhaps unknowable factors such as in-migration, birth rates, economic changes, or cumulative acts of private racial fears—that accounts for the “growing core of Negro schools,” a “core” that has grown to include virtually the entire city. The Constitution simply does not allow federal courts to attempt to change that situation unless and until it is shown that the State, or its political subdivisions, have contributed to cause the situation to exist. No record has been made in this case showing that the racial composition of the Detroit school population or that residential patterns within Detroit and in the surrounding areas were in any significant measure caused by governmental activity, and it follows that the situation over which my dissenting Brothers express concern cannot serve as the predicate for the remedy adopted by the District Court and approved by the Court of Appeals.

¹⁷⁵⁸ Court on the issue of segregation and on the "Detroit-only" plans of desegregation. The Court of Appeals also approved in principle the use of a metropolitan area plan, vacating and remanding only to allow the other affected school districts to be brought in as parties, and in other minor respects.

We have before us today no plan for integration. The only orders entered so far are interlocutory. No new principles of law are presented here. Metropolitan treatment of metropolitan problems is commonplace. If this were a sewage problem or a water problem, or an energy problem, there can be no doubt that Michigan would stay well within federal constitutional bounds if it sought a metropolitan remedy. In *Bradley v. School Board of City of Richmond*, 4 Cir., 462 F.2d 1058, aff'd by an equally divided Court, 412 U.S. 92, 93 S.Ct. 1952, 36 L.Ed.2d 771, we had a case involving the Virginia school system where local school boards had "exclusive jurisdiction" of the problem, not "the State Board of Education," 462 F.2d, at 1067. Here the Michigan educational system is unitary, maintained and supported by the legislature and under the general supervision of the State Board of Education.¹ The State controls the boundaries of school districts.² The

State supervises schoolsite selection.³ The construction is done through municipal bonds approved by several state agencies.⁴ Education in Michigan is a state project with very little completely local control,⁵ except that the schools are financed locally, not on a statewide basis. Indeed, the proposal to put school funding in Michigan on a statewide basis was defeated at the polls in November 1972.⁶ Yet the school districts by state law are agencies of the State.⁷ State action is indeed challenged as violating the Equal Protection Clause. Whatever the reach of that claim may be, it certainly is aimed at discrimination based on race.

Therefore as the Court of Appeals held there can be no doubt that as a matter of Michigan law the State itself has the final say as to where and how school district lines should be drawn.⁸

When we rule against the metropolitan area remedy we take a step that will likely put the problems of the blacks and our society back to the period that antedated the "separate but equal" regime of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, 16 S.Ct. 1138, 41 L.Ed. 256. The reason is simple.

The inner core of Detroit is now rather solidly black;⁹ and the blacks, we

1. Mich.Const., Art. 8, §§ 2, 3.

2. See 484 F.2d 215, 247-248; Mich.Comp. Laws §§ 340.402, 340.431, 340.447, 388.681 (1970).

3. Mich.Comp.Laws § 388.851 (1948), as amended by Act 231, Mich.Pub.Acts of 1949, and Act 175, Mich.Pub.Acts 1962.

4. See Mich.Comp.Laws §§ 132.1 and 132.2 (1970); 3 App. 157.

5. See 484 F.2d at 248-249.

6. See *Detroit Free Press*, Nov. 8, 1972, p. 1A, col. 3. Michigan has recently passed legislation which could eliminate some, but not all, of the inequities in school financing. See Act 101, Mich.Pub.Acts of 1973.

7. See 484 F.2d, at 246-247; Mich.Const. Art. 8, §§ 2, 3.

8. See n. 2, *supra*.

9. A tremendous change has occurred in the distribution of this country's black population since World War I. See Hauser, *Demographic Factors in the Integration of the Negro*, *Daedalus* 847-877 (fall 1965). In 1910, 73% of all blacks lived on farms and in rural areas; by 1960, 73% lived in urban areas, mainly in the largest metropolitan areas. Moreover, due to the fact that the black population is younger than the white population, the concentration of blacks in the cities is even more pronounced for the school-age population. The pattern of change which has existed since World War I is continuing, and hence the proportion of blacks in the urban North and West will continue to increase. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, J. Coleman et al., *Equality of Educational Opportunity* 39-40 (1966).

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¹⁷⁶⁰ know, in many instances are likely to be poorer,¹⁰ just as were the Chicanos in San Antonio School District v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 1, 93 S.Ct. 1278, 36 L. Ed.2d 16. By that decision the poorer school districts¹¹ must pay their own way. It is therefore a foregone conclusion that we have now given the States a formula whereby the poor must pay their own way.¹²

¹⁷⁶¹ ¹ Today's decision, given *Rodriguez*, means that there is no violation of the Equal Protection Clause though the schools are segregated by race and though the black schools are not only "separate" but "inferior."

So far as equal protection is concerned we are now in a dramatic retreat from the 7-to-1 decision in 1896 that blacks could be segregated in public facilities, provided they received equal treatment.

As I indicated in *Keyes v. School District No. 1, Denver, Colorado*, 413 U.S. 189, 214-217, 93 S.Ct. 2686, 2700-2701, 37 L.Ed.2d 548, there is so far as the school cases go no constitutional difference between *de facto* and *de jure* segregation. Each school board performs state

action for Fourteenth Amendment purposes when it draws the lines that confine it to a given area, when it builds schools at particular sites, or when it allocates students. The creation of the school districts in Metropolitan Detroit either maintained existing segregation or caused additional segregation. Restrictive covenants maintained by state action or inaction build black ghettos. It is state action when public funds are dispensed by housing agencies to build racial ghettos. Where a community is racially mixed and school authorities segregate schools, or assign black teachers to black schools or close schools in fringe areas and build new schools in black areas and in more distant white areas, the State creates and nurtures a segregated school system, just as surely as did those States involved in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873, when they maintained dual school systems.

All these conditions and more were found by the District Court to exist. The issue is not whether there should be racial balance but whether the State's use of various devices that end up with ¹⁷⁶²

10. There are some definite and systematic directions of difference between the schools attended by minorities and those attended by the majority. It appears to be in the most academically related areas that the schools of minority pupils show the most consistent deficiencies." Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, Coleman et al., *supra* n. 9, at 120.

11. That some school districts are markedly poorer than others is beyond question. The California Supreme Court has noted that per-pupil expenditures in two different districts—both located in the same county—were \$2,223 and \$616. *Serrano v. Priest*, 5 Cal.3d 584, 600 n. 15 (1971). In New York the Fleischmann Commission reported that the two Long Island districts of Great Neck and Levittown spent \$2,078 and \$1,189 respectively per pupil. 1 New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost, and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education, Fleischmann Report 58 (1973). "A further glaring inequity resulting from the current systems of school finance is that variations in per pupil expenditures among school districts tend to be inversely related to educa-

tional need. City students, with greater than average education deficiencies, consistently have less money spent on their education and have higher pupil/teacher ratios than do their high-income counterparts in the favored schools of suburbia." Glickstein & Want, *Inequality in School Financing: The Role of the Law*, 25 Stan.L.Rev. 335, 338 (1973).

12. Cities face an especially difficult problem in paying the cost of education, since they have the "municipal overburden" which results from greater costs for health, public safety, sanitation, public works, transportation, public welfare, public housing, and recreation. Because of municipal overburden, cities on the average devote only about 30% of their budgets to their schools. This compares with the over 50% which is spent on schools by the suburbs. J. Berke & J. Callahan, *Inequities in School Finance* (1971), reprinted in Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, 92d Cong., 2d Sess., Report on Issues in School Finance 129, 142 (Comm.Print 1972); see Glickstein & Want, *supra*, n. 11, at 357.

black schools and white schools brought the Equal Protection Clause into effect. Given the State's control over the educational system in Michigan, the fact that the black schools are in one district and the white schools are in another is not controlling—either constitutionally or equitably.¹³ No specific plan has yet been adopted. We are still at an interlocutory stage of a long drawn-out judicial effort at school desegregation. It is conceivable that ghettos develop on their own without any hint of state action. But since Michigan by one device or another has over the years created black school districts and white school districts, the task of equity is to provide a unitary system for the affected area where, as here, the State washes its hands of its own creations.

Mr. Justice WHITE, with whom Mr. Justice DOUGLAS, Mr. Justice BRENNAN, and Mr. Justice MARSHALL join, dissenting.

The District Court and the Court of Appeals found that over a long period of years those in charge of the Michigan public schools engaged in various practices calculated to effect the segregation of the Detroit school system. The Court does not question these findings, nor could it reasonably do so. Neither does it question the obligation of the federal courts to devise a feasible and effective remedy. But it promptly cripples the ability of the judiciary to perform this task, which is of fundamental importance to our constitutional system, by fashioning a strict rule that remedies in school cases must stop at the school district line unless certain other conditions are met. As applied here, the remedy for unquestioned violations of the protection rights of Detroit's Negroes by the Detroit School Board and the State of Michigan must be totally confined to the limits of the school dis-

trict and may not reach into adjoining or surrounding districts unless and until it is proved there has been some sort of "interdistrict violation"—unless unconstitutional actions of the Detroit School Board have had a segregative impact on other districts, or unless the segregated condition of the Detroit schools has itself been influenced by segregative practices in those surrounding districts into which it is proposed to extend the remedy.

Regretfully, and for several reasons, I can join neither the Court's judgment nor its opinion. The core of my disagreement is that deliberate acts of segregation and their consequences will go unremedied, not because a remedy would be infeasible or unreasonable in terms of the usual criteria governing school desegregation cases, but because an effective remedy would cause what the Court considers to be undue administrative inconvenience to the State. The result is that the State of Michigan, the entity at which the Fourteenth Amendment is directed, has successfully insulated itself from its duty to provide effective desegregation remedies by vesting sufficient power over its public schools in its local school districts. If this is the case in Michigan, it will be the case in most States.

There are undoubted practical as well as legal limits to the remedial powers of federal courts in school desegregation cases. The Court has made it clear that the achievement of any particular degree of racial balance in the school system is not required by the Constitution; nor may it be the primary focus of a court in devising an acceptable remedy for *de jure* segregation. A variety of procedures and techniques are available to a district court engrossed in fashioning remedies in a case such as this; but the courts must keep in mind that they are

13. Mr. Justice STEWART indicates that equitable factors weigh in favor of local school control and the avoidance of administrative difficulty given the lack of an "interdistrict" violation. *Ante*, at 3132. It would

seem to me that the equities are stronger in favor of the children of Detroit who have been deprived of their constitutional right to equal treatment by the State of Michigan.

dealing with the process of *educating* the young, including the very young. The task is not to devise a system of pains and penalties to punish constitutional violations brought to light. Rather, it is to desegregate an *educational* system in which the races have been kept apart, without, at the same time, losing sight of the central *educational* function of the schools.

Viewed in this light, remedies calling for school zoning, pairing, and pupil assignments, become more and more suspect as they require that schoolchildren spend more and more time in buses going to and from school and that more and more educational dollars be diverted to transportation systems. Manifestly, these considerations are of immediate and urgent concern when the issue is the desegregation of a city school system where residential patterns are predominantly segregated and the respective areas occupied by blacks and whites are heavily populated and geographically extensive. Thus, if one postulates a metropolitan school system covering a sufficiently large area, with the population evenly divided between whites and Negroes and with the races occupying identifiable residential areas, there will be very real practical limits on the extent to which racially identifiable schools can be eliminated within the school district. It is also apparent that the larger the proportion of Negroes in the area, the more difficult it would be to avoid having a substantial number of all-black or nearly all-black schools.

The Detroit school district is both large and heavily populated. It covers ¹⁷⁶⁶ 139.6 square miles, encircles two entirely separate cities and school districts, and surrounds a third city on three sides. Also, whites and Negroes live in identi-

fiable areas in the city. The 1970 public school enrollment in the city school district totaled 289,763 and was 63.6% Negro and 34.8% white.¹ If "racial balance" were achieved in every school in the district, each school would be approximately 64% Negro. A remedy confined to the district could achieve no more desegregation. Furthermore, the proposed intracity remedies were beset with practical problems. None of the plans limited to the school district was satisfactory to the District Court. The most promising proposal, submitted by respondents, who were the plaintiffs in the District Court, would "leave many of its schools 75 to 90 per cent Black." 484 F.2d 215, 244 (CA6 1973).² Transportation on a "vast scale" would be required; 900 buses would have to be purchased for the transportation of pupils who are not now bused. *Id.*, at 243. The District Court also found that the plan "would change a school system which is now Black and White to one that would be perceived as Black, thereby increasing the flight of Whites from the city and the system, thereby increasing the Black student population." *Id.*, at 244. For the District Court, "[t]he conclusion, under the evidence in this case, is inescapable that relief of segregation in the public schools of the City of Detroit cannot be accomplished within the corporate geographical limits of the city." *Ibid.* ¹⁷⁶⁶

The District Court therefore considered extending its remedy to the suburbs. After hearings, it concluded that a much more effective desegregation plan could be implemented if the suburban districts were included. In proceeding to design its plan on the basis that student bus rides to and from school should not exceed 40 minutes each way

1. The percentage of Negro pupils in the Detroit student population rose to 64.9% in 1971, to 67.3% in 1972, and to 69.8% in 1973, amid a metropolitan school population whose racial composition in 1970 was 81% white and 19% Negro. 5 App. 16; Racial-Ethnic Distribution of Students and Em-

ployees in the Detroit Public Schools, October 1972, and October 1973; 484 F.2d 215, 250.

2. The District Court's ruling on the Detroit-only desegregation plans is set out in full by the Court of Appeals, *id.*, at 242-245, and is not otherwise officially reported.

as a general matter, the court's express finding was that "[f]or all the reasons stated heretofore—including time, distance, and transportation factors—desegregation within the area described is physically easier and more practicable and feasible, than desegregation efforts limited to the corporate geographic limits of the city of Detroit." 345 F.Supp. 914, 930 (ED Mich.1972).

The Court of Appeals agreed with the District Court that the remedy must extend beyond the city limits of Detroit. It concluded that "[i]n the instant case the only feasible desegregation plan involves the crossing of the boundary lines between the Detroit School District and adjacent or nearby school districts for the limited purpose of providing an effective desegregation plan." 484 F.2d, at 249. (Emphasis added.) It also agreed that "any Detroit only desegregation plan will lead directly to a single segregated Detroit school district overwhelmingly black in all of its schools, surrounded by a ring of suburbs and suburban school districts overwhelmingly white in composition in a State in which the racial composition is 87 per cent white and 13 per cent black." *Ibid.* There was "more than ample support for the District Judge's findings of unconstitutional segregation by race resulting in major part from action and inaction of public authorities, both local and State. . . . Under this record a remedial order of a court of equity which left the Detroit school system overwhelmingly black (for the foreseeable future) surrounded by suburban school systems overwhelmingly white cannot correct the constitutional violations herein found." *Id.*, at 250. To conclude otherwise, the Court of Appeals announced, would call up "haunting memories of the now long overruled and discredited 'separate but equal doctrine' of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 [16 S. Ct. 1138, 41 L.Ed. 256]

(1896)," and "would be opening a way to nullify *Brown v. Board of Education* which overruled *Plessy*." 484 F.2d, at 249.

This Court now reverses the Court of Appeals. It does not question the District Court's findings that *any* feasible Detroit-only plan would leave many schools 75 to 90 percent black and that the district would become progressively more black as whites left the city. Neither does the Court suggest that including the suburbs in a desegregation plan would be impractical or infeasible because of educational considerations, because of the number of children requiring transportation, or because of the length of their rides. Indeed, the Court leaves unchallenged the District Court's conclusion that a plan including the suburbs would be physically easier and more practical and feasible than a Detroit-only plan. Whereas the most promising Detroit-only plan, for example, would have entailed the purchase of 900 buses, the metropolitan plan would involve the acquisition of no more than 350 new vehicles.

Despite the fact that a metropolitan remedy, if the findings of the District Court accepted by the Court of Appeals are to be credited, would more effectively desegregate the Detroit schools, would prevent resegregation,³ and would be easier and more feasible from many standpoints, the Court fashions out of whole cloth an arbitrary rule that remedies for constitutional violations occurring in a single Michigan school district must stop at the school district line. Apparently, no matter how much less burdensome or more effective and efficient in many respects, such as transportation, the metropolitan plan might be, the school district line may not be crossed. Otherwise, it seems, there would be too much disruption of the Michigan scheme for managing its edu-

3. The Court has previously disapproved the implementation of proposed desegregation plans which operate to permit resegregation.

Monroe v. Board of Comm'rs, 391 U.S. 450, 459-460, 88 S.Ct. 1700, 1705, 20 L.Ed. 2d 733 (1968), ("free transfer" plan).

cational system, too much confusion, and too much administrative burden.

The District Court, on the scene and familiar with local conditions, had a wholly different view. The Court of Appeals also addressed itself at length to matters of local law and to the problems that interdistrict remedies might present to the State of Michigan. Its conclusion, flatly contrary to that of this Court, was that "the constitutional right to equality before the law [is not] hemmed in by the boundaries of a school district" and that an interdistrict remedy

"is supported by the status of school districts under Michigan law and by the historical control exercised over local school districts by the legislature of Michigan and by State agencies and officials [I]t is well established under the Constitution and laws of Michigan that the public school system is a State function and that local school districts are instrumentalities of the State created for administrative convenience." 484 F.2d, at 245-246.

undue difficulties for the State in the management of its public schools. In the area of what constitutes an acceptable desegregation plan, "we must of necessity rely to a large extent, as this Court has for more than 16 years, on the informed judgment of the district courts in the first instance and on courts of appeals." *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 28, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 1282, 28 L.Ed.2d 554 (1971). Obviously, whatever difficulties there might be, they are surmountable; for the Court itself concedes that, had there been sufficient evidence of an interdistrict violation, the District Court could have fashioned a single remedy for the districts implicated rather than a different remedy for each district, in which the violation had occurred or had an impact. 1770

I am even more mystified as to how the Court can ignore the legal reality that the constitutional violations, even if occurring locally, were committed by governmental entities for which the State is responsible and that it is the State that must respond to the command of the Fourteenth Amendment. An interdistrict remedy for the infringements that occurred in this case is well within the confines and powers of the State, which is the governmental entity ultimately responsible for desegregating its schools. The Michigan Supreme Court has observed that "[t]he school district is a

1769 I am surprised that the Court, sitting at this distance from the State of Michigan, claims better insight than the Court of Appeals and the District Court as to whether an interdistrict remedy for equal protection violations practiced by the State of Michigan would involve

4. The Court of Appeals also noted several specific instances of school district mergers ordered by the State Board of Education for financial reasons. 484 F.2d, at 247. Limitations on the authority of local school districts were also outlined by the Court of Appeals:

"Local school districts, unless they have the approval of the State Board of Education or the Superintendent of Public Instruction, cannot consolidate with another school district, annex territory, divide or attach parts of other districts, borrow monies in anticipation of State aid, or construct, reconstruct or remodel school buildings or additions to them." *Id.*, at 249. (Footnotes and supporting statutory citations omitted.) And the Court of Appeals properly considered the State's statutory attempt to undo the adoption of a voluntary high school de-

segregation plan by the Detroit Board of Education as evidencing state control over local school district affairs. *Ibid.* Finally, it is also relevant to note that the District Court found that the school district boundaries in that segment of the metropolitan area preliminarily designated as the desegregation area "in general bear no relationship to other municipal, county, or special district governments, needs or services," that some educational services are already provided to students on an interdistrict basis requiring their travel from one district to another, and that local communities in the metropolitan area share noneducational interests in common, which do not adhere to school district lines, and have applied metropolitan solutions to other governmental needs. 345 F. Supp. 914, 934-935 (E.D.Mich.1972).

State agency," Attorney General ex rel. *Kies v. Lowrey*, 131 Mich. 639, 644, 92 N.W. 289, 290 (1902), and that "[e]ducation in Michigan belongs to the State. It is no part of the local self-government inherent in the township or municipality, except so far as the legislature may choose to make it such. The Constitution has turned the whole subject over to the legislature. . . ." Attorney General ex rel. *Lacharias v. Detroit Board of Education*, 154 Mich. 584, 590, 118 N.W. 606, 609 (1908).

It is unnecessary to catalogue at length the various public misdeeds found by the District Court and the Court of Appeals to have contributed to the present segregation of the Detroit public schools. The legislature contributed directly by enacting a statute overriding a partial high school desegregation plan voluntarily adopted by the Detroit Board of Education. Indirectly, the trial court found the State was accountable for the thinly disguised, pervasive acts of segregation committed by the Detroit Board,⁵ for Detroit's school construction plans that would promote segregation, and for the Detroit school district's not having funds for pupil transportation within the district. The State was also chargeable with responsibility for the transportation of Negro high school students in the late 1950's from the suburban Ferndale School District, past closer suburban and Detroit high schools with predominantly white student bodies, to a predominantly Negro high school within Detroit. *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, *supra*, 402 U.S., at 20-21, 91 S.Ct. at 1278, and *Keyes v. School District No. 1, Denver, Colorado*, 413 U.S. 189, 93 S.Ct. 2686, 37 L.Ed.2d 548 (1973), make abundantly clear that the tactics employed by the De-

troit Board of Education, a local instrumentality of the State, violated the constitutional rights of the Negro students in Detroit's public schools and required equitable relief sufficient to accomplish the maximum, practical desegregation within the power of the political body against which the Fourteenth Amendment directs its proscriptions. No "State" may deny any individual the equal protection of the laws; and if the Constitution and the Supremacy Clause are to have any substance at all, the courts must be free to devise workable remedies against the political entity with the effective power to determine local choice. It is also the case here that the State's legislative interdiction of Detroit's voluntary effort to desegregate its school system was unconstitutional. See *North Carolina State Board of Education v. Swann*, 402 U.S. 43, 91 S.Ct. 1284, 28 L.Ed.2d 586 (1971).

The Court draws the remedial line at the Detroit school district boundary, even though the Fourteenth Amendment is addressed to the State and even though the State denies equal protection of the laws when its public agencies, acting in its behalf, invidiously discriminate. The State's default is "the condition that offends the Constitution," *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, *supra*, 402 U.S., at 16, 91 S.Ct. at 1277, and state officials may therefore be ordered to take the necessary measures to completely eliminate from the Detroit public schools "all vestiges of state-imposed segregation." *Id.*, at 15, 91 S.Ct. at 1275. I cannot understand, nor does the majority satisfactorily explain, why a federal court may not order an appropriate interdistrict remedy, if this is necessary or more effective to accomplish this constitutionally mandated task. As

5. These included the creation and alteration of attendance zones and feeder patterns from the elementary to the secondary schools in a manner naturally and predictably perpetuating racial segregation of students, the transportation of Negro students beyond predominantly white schools with available space to predominantly Negro

schools, the use of optional attendance areas in neighborhoods in which Negro families had recently begun to settle to permit white students to transfer to predominantly white schools nearer the city limits, and the construction of schools in the heart of residentially segregated areas, thereby maximizing school segregation.

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the Court unanimously observed in *Swann*: "Once a right and a violation have been shown, the scope of a district court's equitable powers to remedy past wrongs is broad, for breadth and flexibility are inherent in equitable remedies." *Ibid.* In this case, both the right and the State's Fourteenth Amendment violation have concededly been fully established, and there is no acceptable reason for permitting the party responsible for the constitutional violation to contain the remedial powers of the federal court within administrative boundaries over which the transgressor itself has plenary power.

The unwavering decisions of this Court over the past 20 years support the assumption of the Court of Appeals that the District Court's remedial power does not cease at the school district line. The Court's first formulation of the remedial principles to be followed in disestablishing racially discriminatory school systems recognized the variety of problems arising from different local school conditions and the necessity for that "practical flexibility" traditionally associated with courts of equity. *Brown v. Board of Education*, 349 U.S. 294, 299-301, 75 S.Ct. 753, 755-756, 99 L.Ed. 1083, (1955) (*Brown II*). Indeed, the district

¹⁷⁷³ courts to which the *Brown* cases were remanded for the formulation of remedial decrees were specifically instructed that they might consider, *inter alia*, "revision of school districts and attendance areas into compact units to achieve a system of determining admission to the public schools on a nonracial basis" *Id.*, at 300-301, 75 S.Ct. at 756. The malady addressed in *Brown II* was the statewide policy of requiring or permitting school segregation on the basis of race, while the record here concerns segregated schools only in the city of Detroit. The obligation to rectify the unlawful condition nevertheless rests on the State. The permissible revision of school districts contemplated in *Brown II* rested on the State's responsibility for desegregating its unlawfully segregated schools, not on any segrega-

tive effect which the condition of segregation in one school district might have had on the schools of a neighboring district. The same situation obtains here and the same remedial power is available to the District Court.

Later cases reinforced the clearly essential rules that state officials are fully answerable for unlawfully caused conditions of school segregation which can effectively be controlled only by steps beyond the authority of local school districts to take, and that the equity power of the district courts includes the ability to order such measures implemented. When the highest officials of the State of Arkansas impeded a federal court order to desegregate the public schools under the immediate jurisdiction of the Little Rock School Board, this Court refused to accept the local board's assertion of its good faith as a legal excuse for delay in implementing the desegregation order. The Court emphasized that "from the point of view of the Fourteenth Amendment, they [the local school board members] stand in this litigation as the agents of the State." *Cooper v. Aaron*, 358 U.S. 1, 16, 78 S.Ct. 1401, 1408, 3 L.Ed.2d 5 (1958). Perhaps ¹⁷⁷⁴ more importantly for present purposes, the Court went on to state:

"The record before us clearly establishes that the growth of the Board's difficulties to a magnitude beyond its unaided power to control is the product of state action. Those difficulties . . . can also be brought under control by state action." *Ibid.*

See also *Griffin v. School Board*, 377 U.S. 218, 228, 233-234, 84 S.Ct. 1226, 1231, 1234-1235, 12 L.Ed.2d 256 (1964).

In the context of dual school systems, the Court subsequently made clear the "affirmative duty to take whatever steps might be necessary to convert to a unitary system in which racial discrimination would be eliminated root and branch" and to come forward with a desegregation plan that "promises realistically to work now." *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, 391

U.S. 430, 437-438, 439, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 1694, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968). "Freedom of choice" plans were rejected as acceptable desegregation measures where "reasonably available other ways . . . promising speedier and more effective conversion to a unitary, nonracial school system . . ." exist. *Id.*, at 441, 88 S.Ct., at 1696. Imperative insistence on immediate full desegregation of dual school systems "to operate now and hereafter only unitary schools" was reiterated in *Alexander v. Holmes County Board of Education*, 396 U.S. 19, 20, 90 S.Ct. 29, 24 L.Ed.2d 19 (1969), and *Carter v. West Feliciana Parish School Board*, 396 U.S. 290, 90 S.Ct. 608, 24 L.Ed.2d 477 (1970).

The breadth of the equitable authority of the district courts to accomplish these comprehensive tasks was reaffirmed in much greater detail in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, *supra*, and the companion case of *Davis v. School Comm'rs of Mobile County*, 402 U.S. 33, 91 S.Ct. 1289, 28 L.Ed.2d 577 (1971), where there was unanimous assent to the following propositions:

"Having once found a violation, the district judge or school authorities should make every effort to achieve the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation, taking into account the practicalities of the situation. A district court may and should consider the use of all available techniques including restructuring of attendance zones and both contiguous and noncontiguous attendance zones. . . . The measure of any desegregation plan is its effectiveness." *Id.*, at 37, 91 S.Ct. at 1292.

No suggestion was made that interdistrict relief was not an available technique. In *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* itself, the Court, without dissent, recognized that the District Judge, in fulfilling his obligation to "make every effort to achieve the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation[,] will thus necessarily be concerned with the elimination of one-race schools." 402 U.S., at 26, 91 S.Ct.,

at 1281. Nor was there any dispute that to break up the dual school system, it was within the District Court's "broad remedial powers" to employ a "frank—and sometimes drastic—gerrymandering of school districts and attendance zones," as well as "pairing, 'clustering,' or 'grouping' of schools," to desegregate the "formerly all-Negro schools," despite the fact that these zones might not be compact or contiguous and might be "on opposite ends of the city." *Id.*, at 27, 91 S.Ct. at 1282. The school board in that case had jurisdiction over a 550-square-mile area encompassing the city of Charlotte and surrounding Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. The Mobile County, Alabama, board in *Davis* embraced a 1,248-square-mile area, including the city of Mobile. Yet the Court approved the District Court's authority to award countywide relief in each case in order to accomplish desegregation of the dual school system.

Even more recently, the Court specifically rejected the claim that a new school district, which admittedly would operate a unitary school system within its borders, was beyond the reach of a court-ordered desegregation plan for other school districts, where the effectiveness of the plan as to the other districts depended upon the availability of the facilities and student population of the new district. In *Wright v. Council of City of Emporia*, 407 U.S. 451, 470, 92 S.Ct. 2196, 2207, 33 L.Ed.2d 51 (1972), we held "that a new school district may not be created where its effect would be to impede the process of dismantling a dual system." Mr. Justice Stewart's opinion for the Court made clear that if a proposal to erect new district boundary lines "would impede the dismantling of the [pre-existing] dual system, then a district court, in the exercise of its remedial discretion, may enjoin it from being carried out." *Id.*, at 460, 92 S.Ct. at 2203. In *United States v. Scotland Neck Board of Education*, 407 U.S. 484, 92 S.Ct. 2214, 33 L.Ed.2d 75 (1972), this same standard was applied to forbid North Carolina from

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creating a new city school district within a larger district which was in the process of dismantling a dual school system. The Court noted that if establishment of the new district were permitted, the "traditional racial identities of the schools in the area would be maintained," *id.*, at 490, 92 S.Ct., at 2717.

Until today, the permissible contours of the equitable authority of the district courts to remedy the unlawful establishment of a dual school system have been extensive, adaptable, and fully responsive to the ultimate goal of achieving "the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation." There are indeed limitations on the equity powers of the federal judiciary, but until now the Court had not accepted the proposition that effective enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment could be limited by political or administrative boundary lines demarcated by the very State responsible for the constitutional violation and for the disestablishment of the dual system. Until now the Court has instead looked to practical considerations in effectuating a desegregation decree, such as excessive distance, transportation time, and hazards to the safety of the schoolchildren involved in a proposed plan. That these broad principles have developed in the context of dual school systems compelled or authorized by state statute at the time of *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873 (1954) (*Brown I*), does not lessen their current applicability to dual systems found to exist in other contexts, like that in Detroit, where intentional school segregation does not stem from the compulsion of state law, but from deliberate individual actions of local and state school authorities directed at a particular school system. The majority properly does not suggest that the duty to eradicate completely the resulting dual system in the latter context is any less than in the former. But its reason for incapacitating the remedial authority of the federal judiciary in the presence of school district perimeters in the latter context is not readily apparent.

The result reached by the Court certainly cannot be supported by the theory that the configuration of local governmental units is immune from alteration when necessary to redress constitutional violations. In addition to the well-established principles already noted, the Court has elsewhere required the public bodies of a State to restructure the State's political subdivisions to remedy infringements of the constitutional rights of certain members of its populace, notably in the reapportionment cases. In *Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533, 84 S.Ct. 1362, 12 L.Ed.2d 506 (1964), for example, which held that equal protection of the laws demands that the seats in both houses of a bicameral state legislature be apportioned on a population basis, thus necessitating wholesale revision of Alabama's voting districts, the Court remarked:

"Political subdivisions of States—counties, cities, or whatever—never were and never have been considered as sovereign entities. Rather, they have been traditionally regarded as subordinate governmental instrumentalities created by the State to assist in the carrying out of state governmental functions." *Id.*, at 575, 84 S.Ct., at 1389.

And even more pointedly, the Court declared in *Gomillion v. Lightfoot*, 364 U.S. 339, 344-345, 81 S.Ct. 125, 129, 5 L.Ed.2d 110 (1960), that "[l]egislative control of municipalities, no less than other state power, lies within the scope of relevant limitations imposed by the United States Constitution.

Nor does the Court's conclusion follow from the talismanic invocation of the desirability of local control over education. Local autonomy over school affairs, in the sense of the community's participation in the decisions affecting the education of its children, is, of course, an important interest. But presently constituted school district lines do not delimit fixed and unchangeable areas of a local educational community. If restructuring is required to meet constitutional requirements, local authority may simply

be redefined in terms of whatever configuration is adopted, with the parents of the children attending schools in the newly demarcated district or attendance zone continuing their participation in the policy management of the schools with which they are concerned most directly. The majority's suggestion that judges should not attempt to grapple with the administrative problems attendant on a reorganization of school attendance patterns is wholly without foundation. It is precisely this sort of task which the district courts have been properly exercising to vindicate the constitutional rights of Negro students since *Brown I* and which the Court has never suggested they lack the capacity to perform. Intradistrict revisions of attendance zones, and pairing and grouping of schools, are techniques unanimously approved in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* ¹⁷⁷⁹ which entail the same sensitivity to the interest of parents in the education their children receive as would an interdistrict plan which is likely to employ the very same methods. There is no reason to suppose that the District Court, which has not yet adopted a final plan of desegregation, would not be as capable of giving or as likely to give sufficient weight to the interest in community participation in schools in an interdistrict setting, consistent with the dictates of the Fourteenth Amendment. The majority's assumption that the District Court would act otherwise is a radical departure from the practical flexibility previously left to the equity powers of the federal judiciary.

Finally, I remain wholly unpersuaded by the Court's assertion that "the remedy is necessarily designed, as all remedies are, to restore the victims of discriminatory conduct to the position they would have occupied in the absence of such conduct." *Ante*, p. 3128. In the first place, under this premise the Court's judgment is itself infirm; for had the Detroit school system not followed an official policy of segregation throughout the 1950's and 1960's, Ne-

groes and whites would have been going to school together. There would have been no, or at least not as many, recognizable Negro schools and no, or at least not as many, white schools, but "just schools," and neither Negroes nor whites would have suffered from the effects of segregated education, with all its shortcomings. Surely the Court's remedy will not restore to the Negro community, stigmatized as it was by the dual school system, what it would have enjoyed over all or most of this period if the remedy is confined to present-day Detroit; for the maximum remedy available within that area will leave many of the schools almost totally black, and the system itself will be predominantly black and will become increasingly so. Moreover, when a State has engaged in acts of official segregation over a lengthy ¹⁷⁸⁰ period of time, as in the case before us, it is unrealistic to suppose that the children who were victims of the State's unconstitutional conduct could now be provided the benefits of which they were wrongfully deprived. Nor can the benefits which accrue to school systems in which schoolchildren have not been officially segregated, and to the communities supporting such school systems, be fully and immediately restored after a substantial period of unlawful segregation. The education of children of different races in a desegregated environment has unhappily been lost, along with the social, economic, and political advantages which accompany a desegregated school system as compared with an unconstitutionally segregated system. It is for these reasons that the Court has consistently followed the course of requiring the effects of past official segregation to be eliminated "root and branch" by imposing, in the present, the duty to provide a remedy which will achieve "the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation, taking into account the practicalities of the situation." It is also for these reasons that once a constitutional violation has been found, the district judge obligated to provide such a remedy "will thus necessarily be con-

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cerned with the elimination of one-race schools." These concerns were properly taken into account by the District Judge in this case. Confining the remedy to the boundaries of the Detroit district is quite unrelated either to the goal of achieving maximum desegregation or to those intensely practical considerations, such as the extent and expense of transportation, that have imposed limits on remedies in cases such as this. The Court's remedy, in the end, is essentially arbitrary and will leave serious violations of the Constitution substantially unremedied.

¹⁷⁸¹ I agree with my Brother DOUGLAS that the Court of Appeals has acted responsibly in these cases. Regrettably, the majority's arbitrary limitation on the equitable power of federal district courts, based on the invisible borders of local school districts, is unrelated to the State's responsibility for remedying the constitutional wrongs visited upon the Negro schoolchildren of Detroit. It is oblivious to the potential benefits of metropolitan relief, to the noneducational communities of interest among neighborhoods located in and sometimes bridging different school districts, and to the considerable interdistrict cooperation already existing in various educational areas. Ultimately, it is unresponsive to the goal of attaining the utmost actual desegregation consistent with restraints of practicability and thus augurs the frequent frustration of the remedial powers of the federal courts.

Here the District Court will be forced to impose an intracity desegregation plan more expensive to the district, more burdensome for many of Detroit's Negro students, and surely more conducive to white flight than a metropolitan plan would be—all of this merely to avoid what the Detroit School Board, the District Court, and the en banc Court of Appeals considered to be the very manageable and quite surmountable difficulties that would be involved in extending the desegregation remedy to the suburban school districts.

I am therefore constrained to record my disagreement and dissent.

Mr. Justice MARSHALL, with whom Mr. Justice DOUGLAS, Mr. Justice BRENNAN, and Mr. Justice WHITE join, dissenting.

In *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S.Ct. 686, 98 L.Ed. 873 (1954), this Court held that segregation of children in public schools on the basis of race deprives minority group children of equal educational opportunities and therefore denies them the equal protection of the laws under the ¹⁷⁸²Fourteenth Amendment. This Court recognized then that remedying decades of segregation in public education would not be an easy task. Subsequent events, unfortunately, have seen that prediction bear bitter fruit. But however imbedded old ways, however ingrained old prejudices, this Court has not been diverted from its appointed task of making "a living truth" of our constitutional ideal of equal justice under law. *Cooper v. Aaron*, 358 U.S. 1, 20, 78 S.Ct. 1401, 1410, 3 L.Ed.2d 5 (1958).

After 20 years of small, often difficult steps toward that great end, the Court today takes a giant step backwards. Notwithstanding a record showing widespread and pervasive racial segregation in the educational system provided by the State of Michigan for children in Detroit, this Court holds that the District Court was powerless to require the State to remedy its constitutional violation in any meaningful fashion. Ironically purporting to base its result on the principle that the scope of the remedy in a desegregation case should be determined by the nature and the extent of the constitutional violation, the Court's answer is to provide no remedy at all for the violation proved in this case, thereby guaranteeing that Negro children in Detroit will receive the same separate and inherently unequal education in the future as they have been unconstitutionally afforded in the past.

I cannot subscribe to this emasculation of our constitutional guarantee of

equal protection of the laws and must respectfully dissent. Our precedents, in my view, firmly establish that where, as here, state-imposed segregation has been demonstrated, it becomes the duty of the State to eliminate root and branch all vestiges of racial discrimination and to achieve the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation. I agree with both the District Court and the Court of Appeals that, under the facts of this case, this duty cannot be fulfilled unless the State of Michigan involves outlying metropolitan area school districts in its desegregation remedy. Furthermore, I perceive no basis either in law or in the practicalities of the situation justifying the State's interposition of school district boundaries as absolute barriers to the implementation of an effective desegregation remedy. Under established and frequently used Michigan procedures, school district lines are both flexible and permeable for a wide variety of purposes, and there is no reason why they must now stand in the way of meaningful desegregation relief.

The rights at issue in this case are too fundamental to be abridged on grounds as superficial as those relied on by the majority today. We deal here with the right of all of our children, whatever their race, to an equal start in life and to an equal opportunity to reach their full potential as citizens. Those children who have been denied that right in the past deserve better than to see fences thrown up to deny them that right in the future. Our Nation, I fear, will be ill served by the Court's refusal to remedy separate and unequal education, for unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together.

I

The great irony of the Court's opinion and, in my view, its most serious analytical flaw may be gleaned from its concluding sentence, in which the Court remands for "prompt formulation of a decree directed to eliminating the segregation found to exist in Detroit city

schools, a remedy which has been delayed since 1970." *Ante*, at 3131. The majority, however, seems to have forgotten the District Court's explicit finding that a Detroit-only decree, the only remedy permitted under today's decision, "would not accomplish desegregation."

Nowhere in the Court's opinion does the majority confront, let alone respond to, the District Court's conclusion that a remedy limited to the city of Detroit would not effectively desegregate the Detroit city schools. I, for one, find the District Court's conclusion well supported by the record and its analysis compelled by our prior cases. Before turning to these questions, however, it is best to begin by laying to rest some mischaracterizations in the Court's opinion with respect to the basis for the District Court's decision to impose a metropolitan remedy.

The Court maintains that while the initial focus of this lawsuit was the condition of segregation within the Detroit city schools, the District Court abruptly shifted focus in mid-course and altered its theory of the case. This new theory, in the majority's words, was "equating racial imbalance with a constitutional violation calling for a remedy." *Ante*, at 3125, n. 19. As the following review of the District Court's handling of the case demonstrates, however, the majority's characterization is totally inaccurate. Nowhere did the District Court indicate that racial imbalance between school districts in the Detroit metropolitan area or within the Detroit School District constituted constitutional violation calling for interdistrict relief. The focus of this case was from the beginning, and has remained, the segregated system of education in the Detroit city schools and the steps necessary to cure that condition which offends the Fourteenth Amendment.

The District Court's consideration of this case began with its finding, which the majority accepts, that the State of Michigan, through its instrumentality,

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the Detroit Board of Education, engaged in widespread purposeful acts of racial segregation in the Detroit School District. Without belaboring the details, it is sufficient to note that the various techniques used in Detroit were typical of methods employed to segregate students by race in areas where no statutory dual system of education has existed. See, e. g., *Keyes v. School District No. 1, Denver, Colorado*, 413 U.S. 189, 93 S.Ct. 2686, 37 L.Ed.2d 548 (1973). Exacerbating the effects of extensive residential segregation between Negroes and whites, the school board consciously drew attendance zones along lines which maximized the segregation of the races in schools as well. Optional attendance zones were created for neighborhoods undergoing racial transition so as to allow whites in these areas to escape integration. Negro students in areas with overcrowded schools were transported past or away from closer white schools with available space to more distant Negro schools. Grade structures and feeder-school patterns were created and maintained in a manner which had the foreseeable and actual effect of keeping Negro and white pupils in separate schools. Schools were also constructed in locations and in sizes which ensured that they would open with predominantly one-race student bodies. In sum, the evidence adduced below showed that Negro children had been intentionally confined to an expanding core of virtually all-Negro schools immediately surrounded by a receding band of all-white schools.

Contrary to the suggestions in the Court's opinion, the basis for affording a desegregation remedy in this case was not some perceived racial imbalance either between schools within a single school district or between independent school districts. What we confront here is "a systematic program of segregation affecting a substantial portion of the students, schools . . . and facilities within the school system . . ." *Id.*, 413 U.S., at 201, 93 S.Ct., at 2694. The constitutional violation found here was not some *de*

facto racial imbalance, but rather the purposeful, intentional, massive, *de jure* segregation of the Detroit city schools, which under our decision in *Keyes*,¹⁷⁸⁵ forms "a predicate for a finding of the existence of a dual school system," *ibid.*, 93 S.Ct., at 2694, and justifies "all-out desegregation." *Id.*, at 214, 93 S.Ct., at 2700.

Having found a *de jure* segregated public school system in operation in the city of Detroit, the District Court turned next to consider which officials and agencies should be assigned the affirmative obligation to cure the constitutional violation. The court concluded that responsibility for the segregation in the Detroit city schools rested not only with the Detroit Board of Education, but belonged to the State of Michigan itself and the state defendants in this case—that is, the Governor of Michigan, the Attorney General, the State Board of Education, and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. While the validity of this conclusion will merit more extensive analysis below, suffice it for now to say that it was based on three considerations. First, the evidence at trial showed that the State itself had taken actions contributing to the segregation within the Detroit schools. Second, since the Detroit Board of Education was an agency of the State of Michigan, its acts of racial discrimination were acts of the State for purposes of the Fourteenth Amendment. Finally, the District Court found that under Michigan law and practice, the system of education was in fact a *state* school system, characterized by relatively little local control and a large degree of centralized state regulation, with respect to both educational policy and the structure and operation of school districts.

Having concluded, then, that the school system in the city of Detroit was a *de jure* segregated system and that the State of Michigan had the affirmative duty to remedy that condition of segregation, the District Court then turned to the difficult task of devising an effec-

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tive remedy. It bears repeating that the District Court's focus at this stage of the litigation remained what it had been at the beginning—the condition of segregation within the Detroit city schools. As the District Court stated: "From the initial ruling [on segregation] to this day, the basis of the proceedings has been and remains the violation: de jure school segregation. . . . The task before this court, therefore, is now, and . . . has always been, how to desegregate the Detroit public schools."

The District Court first considered three desegregation plans limited to the geographical boundaries of the city of Detroit. All were rejected as ineffective to desegregate the Detroit city schools. Specifically, the District Court determined that the racial composition of the Detroit student body is such that implementation of any Detroit-only plan "would clearly make the entire Detroit public school system racially identifiable as Black" and would "leave many of its schools 75 to 90 per cent Black." The District Court also found that a Detroit-only plan "would change a school system which is now Black and White to one that would be perceived as Black, thereby increasing the flight of Whites from the city and the system, thereby increasing the Black student population." Based on these findings, the District Court reasoned that "relief of segregation in the public schools of the City of Detroit cannot be accomplished within the corporate geographical limits of the city" because a Detroit-only decree "would accentuate the racial identifiability of the district as a Black school system, and would not accomplish desegregation." The District Court therefore

concluded that it "must look beyond the limits of the Detroit school district for a solution to the problem of segregation in the Detroit public schools"

In seeking to define the appropriate scope of that expanded desegregation area, however, the District Court continued to maintain as its sole focus the condition shown to violate the Constitution in this case—the segregation of the Detroit school system. As it stated, the primary question "remains the determination of the area necessary and practicable effectively to eliminate 'root and branch' the effects of state-imposed and supported segregation and to desegregate the Detroit public schools." 179

There is simply no foundation in the record, then, for the majority's accusation that the only basis for the District Court's order was some desire to achieve a racial balance in the Detroit metropolitan area.¹ In fact, just the contrary is the case. In considering proposed desegregation areas, the District Court had occasion to criticize one of the State's proposals specifically because it had no basis other than its "particular racial ratio" and did not focus on "relevant factors, like eliminating racially identifiable schools [and] accomplishing maximum actual desegregation of the Detroit public schools." Similarly, in rejecting the Detroit School Board's proposed desegregation area, even though it included more all-white districts and therefore achieved a higher white-Negro ratio, the District Court commented:

"There is nothing in the record which suggests that these districts need be included in the desegregation area in order to disestablish the racial identifiability of the Detroit public schools." 179

1. Contrary to the Court's characterization, the use of racial ratios in this case in no way differed from that in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 28 L.Ed.2d 554 (1971). Here, as there, mathematical ratios were used simply as "a starting point in the process of shaping a remedy, rather than an inflexible requirement." *Id.*, at 25, 91 S.Ct., at 1280. It may be expected that a final desegregation plan in this case would

deviate from a pure mathematical approach. Indeed, the District Court's most recent order appointing a panel of experts to draft an interdistrict plan requires only that the plan be designed "to achieve the greatest degree of actual desegregation [w]ithin the limitations of reasonable travel time and distance factors." 345 F.Supp. 914, 918 (ED Mich.1972). Cf. 402 U.S., at 23, 91 S.Ct., at 1279.

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From the evidence, the primary reason for the Detroit School Board's interest in the inclusion of these school districts is not racial desegregation but to increase the average socio-economic balance of all the schools in the abutting regions and clusters."

The Court also misstates the basis for the District Court's order by suggesting that since the only segregation proved at trial was within the Detroit school system, any relief which extended beyond the jurisdiction of the Detroit Board of Education would be inappropriate because it would impose a remedy on outlying districts "not shown to have committed any constitutional violation." *Ante*, at 3127.² The essential foundation of interdistrict relief in this case was not to correct conditions within outlying districts which themselves engaged in purposeful segregation. Instead, interdistrict relief was seen as a necessary part of any meaningful effort by the State of Michigan to remedy the state-caused segregation within the city of Detroit.

Rather than consider the propriety of interdistrict relief on this basis, however, the Court has conjured up a largely fictional account of what the District Court was attempting to accomplish. With all due respect, the Court, in my view, does a great disservice to the District Judge who labored long and hard with this complex litigation by accusing him of changing horses in midstream and shifting the focus of this case from the pursuit of a remedy for the condition of segregation within the Detroit school system to some unprincipled attempt to impose his own philosophy of racial balance on the entire Detroit metropolitan area. See *ante*, at 3124. The focus of this case has always been the segregated system of education in the

city of Detroit. The District Court determined that interdistrict relief was necessary and appropriate only because it found that the condition of segregation within the Detroit school system could not be cured with a Detroit-only remedy. It is on this theory that the interdistrict relief must stand or fall. Unlike the Court, I perceive my task to be to review the District Court's order for what it is, rather than to criticize it for what it manifestly is not.

II

As the foregoing demonstrates, the District Court's decision to expand its desegregation decree beyond the geographical limits of the city of Detroit rested in large part on its conclusions (A) that the State of Michigan was ultimately responsible for curing the condition of segregation within the Detroit city schools, and (B) that a Detroit-only remedy would not accomplish this task. In my view, both of these conclusions are well supported by the facts of this case and by this Court's precedents.

A

To begin with, the record amply supports the District Court's findings that the State of Michigan, through state officers and state agencies, had engaged in purposeful acts which created or aggravated segregation in the Detroit schools. The State Board of Education, for example, prior to 1962, exercised its authority to supervise local schoolsite selection in a manner which contributed to segregation. 484 F.2d 215, 238 (CA6 1973). Furthermore, the State's continuing authority, after 1962, to approve school building construction plans³ had intertwined the State with site-selection decisions of the Detroit Board of Education which had the purpose and effect of maintaining segregation.

² It does not appear that even the majority places any real weight on this consideration since it recognizes that interdistrict relief would be proper where a constitutional violation within one district produces a significant segregative effect in another district,

see *ante*, at 3127, thus allowing interdistrict relief to touch districts which have not themselves violated the Constitution.

³ See Mich.Comp.Laws § 388.851 (1970).

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The State had also stood in the way of past efforts to desegregate the Detroit city schools. In 1970, for example, the Detroit School Board had begun implementation of its own desegregation plan for its high schools, despite considerable public and official resistance. The State Legislature intervened by enacting Act 48 of the Public Acts of 1970, specifically prohibiting implementation of the desegregation plan and thereby continuing the growing segregation of the Detroit school system. Adequate desegregation of the Detroit system was also hampered by discriminatory restrictions placed by the State on the use of transportation within Detroit. While state aid for transportation was provided by statute for suburban districts, many of which were highly urbanized, aid for intracity transportation was excepted. One of the effects of this restriction was to encourage the construction of small walk-in neighborhood schools in Detroit, thereby lending aid to the intentional policy of creating a school system which reflected, to the greatest extent feasible, extensive residential segregation. Indeed, that one of the purposes of the transportation restriction was to impede desegregation was evidenced when the Michigan Legislature amended the State Transportation Aid Act to cover intracity transportation but expressly prohibited the allocation of funds for cross-busing of students within a school district to achieve racial balance.⁴ Cf. *North Carolina State Board of Education v. Swann*, 402 U.S. 43, 91 S.Ct. 1284, 28 L.Ed.2d 586 (1971).

¹⁷⁹² Also significant was the State's involvement during the 1950's in the transportation of Negro high school students from the Carver School District past a closer white high school in the Oak Park District to a more distant Negro high school in the Detroit system. Certainly the District Court's finding that the State Board of Education had knowledge of this action and had given its tacit or express approval was not clearly erroneous. Given the comprehen-

sive statutory powers of the State Board of Education over contractual arrangements between school districts in the enrollment of students on a nonresident tuition basis, including certification of the number of pupils involved in the transfer and the amount of tuition charged, over the review of transportation routes and distances, and over the disbursement of transportation funds,⁵ the State Board inevitably knew and understood the significance of this discriminatory act.

Aside from the acts of purposeful segregation committed by the State Legislature and the State Board of Education, the District Court also concluded that the State was responsible for the many intentional acts of segregation committed by the Detroit Board of Education, an agency of the State. The majority is only willing to accept this finding *arguendo*. See *ante*, at 3129. I have no doubt, however, as to its validity under the Fourteenth Amendment.

"The command of the Fourteenth Amendment," it should be recalled, "is that no 'State' shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." *Cooper v. Aaron*, 358 U.S. 1, 16, 78 S.Ct. 1401, 1409, 3 L.Ed.2d 5 (1958). While a State can act only through "the officers or agents by whom its powers are exerted," *Ex parte Virginia*, 100 U.S. 339, 347, 25 L.Ed. 676 (1880), actions by an agent or officer of the State are encompassed by the Fourteenth Amendment for, "as he acts in the name and for the State, and is clothed with the State's power, his act is that of the State." *Ibid.* See also *Cooper v. Aaron*, *supra*; *Virginia v. Rives*, 100 U.S. 313, 318, 25 L.Ed. 667 (1880); *Shelley v. Kraemer*, 334 U.S. 1, 14, 68 S.Ct. 836, 842, 92 L.Ed. 1161 (1948).

Under Michigan law a "school district is an agency of the City of State government." *School District of Lansing v. State Board of Education*, 367 Mich. 591, 600, 116 N.W.2d 866, 870 (1962). It is "a legal division of territory, created by

4. See § 388.1179.

5. See §§ 388.629 and 340.600.

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the State for educational purposes, to which the State has granted such powers as are deemed necessary to permit the district to function as a State agency." *Detroit Board of Education v. Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 319 Mich. 436, 450, 29 N.W.2d 902, 908 (1947). Racial discrimination by the school district, an agency of the State, is therefore racial discrimination by the State itself, forbidden by the Fourteenth Amendment. See, e. g., *Pennsylvania v. Board of Trustees*, 353 U.S. 230, 77 S.Ct. 806, 1 L.Ed.2d 792 (1957).

We recognized only last Term in *Keyes* that it was the State itself which was ultimately responsible for *de jure* acts of segregation committed by a local school board. A deliberate policy of segregation by the local board, we held, amounted to "state-imposed segregation." 413 U.S., at 200, 93 S.Ct., at 2693. Wherever a dual school system exists, whether compelled by state statute or created by a local board's systematic program of segregation, "the State automatically assumes an affirmative duty 'to effectuate a transition to a racially nondiscriminatory school system' [and] to eliminate from the public schools within their school system 'all vestiges of state-imposed segregation.'" *Ibid.* (emphasis added).

Vesting responsibility with the State of Michigan for Detroit's segregated schools is particularly appropriate as Michigan, unlike some other States, operates a single statewide system of education rather than several separate and independent local school systems. The majority's emphasis on local governmental control and local autonomy of school districts in Michigan will come as a surprise to those with any familiarity with that State's system of education. School districts are not separate and distinct sovereign entities under Michigan law, but rather are "auxiliaries of the State," subject to its "absolute power." Attorney General of Michigan ex rel. Kies v. Lowrey, 199 U.S. 233, 240, 26

S.Ct. 27, 29, 50 L.Ed. 167 (1905). The courts of the State have repeatedly emphasized that education in Michigan is not a local governmental concern, but a state function.

"Unlike the delegation of other powers by the legislature to local governments, education is not inherently a part of the local self-government of a municipality Control of our public school system is a State matter delegated and lodged in the State legislature by the Constitution. The policy of the State has been to retain control of its school system, to be administered throughout the State under State laws by local State agencies organized with plenary powers to carry out the delegated functions given [them] by the legislature." *School District of the City of Lansing v. State Board of Education*, *supra*, at 595, 116 N.W.2d, at 868.

The Supreme Court of Michigan has noted the deep roots of this policy:

"It has been settled by the Ordinance of 1787, the several Constitutions adopted in this state, by its uniform course of legislation, and by the decisions of this court, that education in Michigan is a matter of state concern, that it is no part of the local self-government of a particular township or municipality The legislature has always dictated the educational policy of the state." In re *School District No. 6*, 284 Mich. 132, 145-146, 278 N.W. 792, 797 (1938).

The State's control over education is reflected in the fact that, contrary to the Court's implication, there is little or no relationship between school districts and local political units. To take the 85 outlying local school districts in the Detroit metropolitan area as examples, 17 districts lie in two counties, two in three counties. One district serves five municipalities; other suburban municipalities are fragmented into as many as six school districts. Nor is there any apparent state policy with regard to the

size of school districts, as they now range from 2,000 to 285,000 students.

Centralized state control manifests itself in practice as well as in theory. The State controls the financing of education in several ways. The legislature contributes a substantial portion of most school districts' operating budgets with funds appropriated from the State's General Fund revenues raised through statewide taxation.⁶ The State's power over the purse can be and is in fact used to enforce the State's powers over local districts.⁷ In addition, although local districts obtain funds through local property taxation, the State has assumed the responsibility to ensure equalized property valuations throughout the State.⁸ The State also establishes standards for teacher certification and teacher tenure;⁹ determines part of the required curriculum;¹⁰ sets the minimum school term;¹¹ approves bus routes, equipment, and drivers;¹² approves textbooks;¹³ and establishes procedures for student discipline.¹⁴ The State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education have the power to remove local school board members from office for neglect of their duties.¹⁵

Most significantly for present purposes, the State has wide-ranging powers to consolidate and merge school districts, even without the consent of the districts themselves or of the local

citizenry.¹⁶ See, e. g., *Attorney General ex rel. Kies, v. Lowrey*, 131 Mich. 639, 92 N.W. 289 (1902), *aff'd*, 199 U.S. 233, 26 S.Ct. 27, 50 L.Ed. 167 (1905). Indeed, recent years have witnessed an accelerated program of school district consolidations, mergers, and annexations, many of which were state imposed. Whereas the State had 7,362 local districts in 1912, the number had been reduced to 1,438 in 1964 and to 738 in 1968.¹⁷ By June 1972, only 608 school districts remained. Furthermore, the State has broad powers to transfer property from one district to another, again without the consent of the local school districts affected by the transfer.¹⁸ See, e. g., *School District of the City of Lansing v. State Board of Education*, *supra*; *Imlay Township District v. State Board of Education*, 359 Mich. 478, 102 N.W.2d 720 (1960).

Whatever may be the history of public education in other parts of our Nation, it simply flies in the face of reality to say, as does the majority, that in Michigan, "[n]o single tradition in public education is more deeply rooted than local control over the operation of schools" *Ante*, at 3125. As the State's Supreme Court has said: "We have repeatedly held that education in this state is not a matter of local concern, but belongs to the state at large." *Collins v. City of Detroit*, 195 Mich. 330, 335-336,

6. See § 388.611. The State contributed an average of 34% of the operating budgets of the 54 school districts included in the original proposed desegregation area. In 11 of these districts, state contributions exceeded 50% of the operating budgets.

7. See, e. g., *id.*, § 340.575. See also 1949-1950 Report of the Attorney General 104 (Roth); Vol. 1, 1955 Report of the Attorney General 561 (Kavanagh); 1961-1962 Report of the Attorney General 533 (Kelley).

8. See Mich.Comp.Laws §§ 211.34 and 340.681.

9. § 340.569.

10. §§ 257.811(c), 340.361, 340.781, 340.782, 388.371.

11. § 340.575.

12. § 388.1171.

13. § 340.887(1).

14. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 4705 (July 7, 1970), 1969-1970 Report of the Attorney General 156 (Kelley).

15. See Mich.Comp.Laws § 340.253.

16. See generally, §§ 340.401-340.415 (consolidations), 340.431-340.449 (annexations).

17. See 1 Michigan Senate Journal, 1968, p. 423.

18. See generally Mich.Comp.Laws §§ 340.461-340.468.

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161 N.W. 905, 907 (1917). See also *Sturgis v. County of Allegan*, 343 Mich. 209, 215, 72 N.W.2d 56, 59 (1955); *Van Fleet v. Oltman*, 244 Mich. 241, 244, 221 N.W. 299, 300 (1928); *Child Welfare Society of Flint v. Kennedy School District*, 220 Mich. 290, 296, 189 N.W. 1002, 1004 (1922). Indeed, a study prepared for the 1961 Michigan Constitutional Convention noted that the Michigan Constitution's articles on education had resulted in "the establishment of a state system of education in contrast to a series of local school systems." *Elementary-Michigan Constitution, Michigan Constitutional Convention Studies 1* (1961).

In sum, several factors in this case coalesce to support the District Court's ruling that it was the State of Michigan itself, not simply the Detroit Board of Education, which bore the obligation of curing the condition of segregation within the Detroit city schools. The actions of the State itself directly contributed to Detroit's segregation. Under the Fourteenth Amendment, the State is ultimately responsible for the actions of its local agencies. And, finally, given the structure of Michigan's educational system, Detroit's segregation cannot be viewed as the problem of an independent and separate entity. Michigan operates a single statewide system of education, a substantial part of which was shown to be segregated in this case.

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What action, then, could the District Court require the State to take in order to cure Detroit's condition of segregation? Our prior cases have not minced words as to what steps responsible officials and agencies must take in order to remedy segregation in the public schools. Not only must distinctions on the basis of race be terminated for the future, but school officials are also "clearly charged

with the affirmative duty to take whatever steps might be necessary to convert to a unitary system in which racial discrimination would be eliminated root and branch." *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, 391 U.S. 430, 437-438, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 1694, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968). See also *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, 267 F.Supp. 458 (MD Ala.), *aff'd sub nom. Wallace v. United States*, 389 U.S. 215, 88 S.Ct. 415, 19 L.Ed.2d 422 (1967). Negro students are not only entitled to neutral nondiscriminatory treatment in the future. They must receive "what *Brown II* promised them: a school system in which all vestiges of enforced racial segregation have been eliminated." *Wright v. Council of the City of Emporia*, 407 U.S. 451, 463, 92 S.Ct. 2196, 2203, 33 L.Ed.2d 51 (1972). See also *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, 15, 91 S.Ct. 1267, 1275, 28 L.Ed.2d 554 (1971). These remedial standards are fully applicable not only to school districts where a dual system was compelled by statute, but also where, as here, a dual system was the product of purposeful and intentional state action. See *Keyes*, 413 U.S., at 200-201, 93 S.Ct., at 2693-2694.

After examining three plans limited to the city of Detroit, the District Court correctly concluded that none would eliminate root and branch the vestiges of unconstitutional segregation. The plans' effectiveness, of course, had to be evaluated in the context of the District Court's findings as to the extent of segregation in the Detroit city schools. As indicated earlier, the most essential finding was that Negro children in Detroit had been confined by intentional acts of segregation to a growing core of Negro schools surrounded by a receding ring of white schools.¹⁹ Thus, in 1960,

19. Despite Mr. Justice STEWART's claim to the contrary, *ante*, at 3133, n. 2, of his concurring opinion, the record fully supports my statement that Negro students were intentionally confined to a core of Negro schools within the city of Detroit. See, e. g., *supra*, at 3146-3147, 3149-3150. Indeed, Mr. Justice

STEWART acknowledges that intentional acts of segregation by the State have separated white and Negro students within the city, and that the resulting core of all-Negro schools has grown to encompass most of the city. In suggesting that my approval of an interdistrict remedy rests on a further conclusion

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of Detroit's 251 regular attendance schools, 100 were 90% or more white and 71 were 90% or more Negro. In 1970, of Detroit's 282 regular attendance schools, 69 were 90% or more white and 133 were 90% or more Negro. While in 1960, 68% of all schools were 90% or more one race, by 1970, 71.6% of the schools fell into that category. The growing core of all-Negro schools was further evidenced in total school district population figures. In 1960 the Detroit system had 46% Negro students and 54% white students, but by 1970, 64% of the students were Negro and only 36% were white. This increase in the proportion of Negro students was the highest of any major Northern city.

It was with these figures in the background that the District Court evaluated the adequacy of the three Detroit-only plans submitted by the parties. Plan A, proposed by the Detroit Board of Education, desegregated the high schools and about a fifth of the middle-level schools. It was deemed inadequate, however, because it did not desegregate elementary schools and left the middle-level schools not included in the plan more segregated than ever. Plan C, also proposed by the Detroit Board, was deemed inadequate because it too covered only some grade

that the State or its political subdivisions have been responsible for the increasing percentage of Negro students in Detroit, my Brother STEWART misconceives the thrust of this dissent. In light of the high concentration of Negro students in Detroit, the District Judge's finding that a Detroit-only remedy cannot effectively cure the constitutional violation within the city should be enough to support the choice of an interdistrict remedy. Whether state action is responsible for the growth of the core of all-Negro schools in Detroit is, in my view, quite irrelevant.

The difficulty with Mr. Justice STEWART's position is that he, like the Court, confuses the inquiry required to determine whether there has been a substantive constitutional violation with that necessary to formulate an appropriate remedy once a constitutional violation has been shown. While a finding of state action is of course a prerequisite to finding a violation, we have never held that after unconstitutional state action has been shown, the District Court at the

levels and would leave elementary schools segregated. Plan B, the plaintiffs' plan, though requiring the transportation of 82,000 pupils and the acquisition of 900 school buses, would make little headway in rooting out the vestiges of segregation. To begin with, because of practical limitations, the District Court found that the plan would leave many of the Detroit city schools 75 to 90% Negro. More significantly, the District Court recognized that in the context of a community which historically had a school system marked by rigid *de jure* segregation, the likely effect of a Detroit-only plan would be to "change a school system which is now Black and White to one that would be perceived as Black" The result of this changed perception, the District Court found, would be to increase the flight of whites from the city to the outlying suburbs, compounding the effects of the present rate of increase in the proportion of Negro students in the Detroit system. Thus, even if a plan were adopted which, at its outset, provided in every school a 65% Negro-35% white racial mix in keeping with the Negro-white proportions of the total student population, such a system would, in

remedial stage must engage in a second inquiry to determine whether additional state action exists to justify a particular remedy. Rather, once a constitutional violation has been shown, the District Court is duty-bound to formulate an effective remedy and, in so doing, the court is entitled—indeed, it is required—to consider all the factual circumstances relevant to the framing of an effective decree. Thus, in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* we held that the District Court must take into account the existence of extensive residential segregation in determining whether a racially neutral "neighborhood school" attendance plan was an adequate desegregation remedy, regardless of whether this residential segregation was caused by state action. So here, the District Court was required to consider the facts that the Detroit school system was already predominantly Negro and would likely become all-Negro upon issuance of a Detroit-only decree in framing an effective desegregation remedy, regardless of state responsibility for this situation.

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short order, devolve into an all-Negro system. The net result would be a continuation of the all-Negro schools which were the hallmarks of Detroit's former dual system of one-race schools.

Under our decisions, it was clearly proper for the District Court to take into account the so-called "white flight" from the city schools which would be forthcoming from any Detroit-only decree. The court's prediction of white flight was well supported by expert testimony based on past experience in other cities undergoing desegregation relief. We ourselves took the possibility of white flight into account in evaluating the effectiveness of a desegregation plan in *Wright, supra*, where we relied on the District Court's finding that if the city of Emporia were allowed to withdraw from the existing system, leaving a system with a higher proportion of Negroes, it "may be anticipated that the proportion of whites in county schools may drop as those who can register in private academies'" 407 U.S., at 464, 92 S.Ct., at 2204. One cannot ignore the white-flight problem, for where legally imposed segregation has been established, the District Court has the responsibility to see to it not only that the dual system is terminated at once but also that future events do not serve to perpetuate or re-establish segregation. See *Swann*, 402 U.S. at 21, 91 S.Ct., at 1278. See also *Green*, 391 U.S., at 438 n. 4, 88 S.Ct., at 1694; *Monroe v. Board of Comm'rs*, 391 U.S. 450, 459, 88 S.Ct. 1700, 1705, 20 L.Ed.2d 733 (1968).

We held in *Swann, supra*, that where *de jure* segregation is shown, school authorities must make "every effort to achieve the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation." 402 U.S., at 26, 91 S.Ct., at 1281. This is the operative standard re-emphasized in *Davis v. School Comm'rs of Mobile County*, 402 U.S. 33, 37, 91 S.Ct. 1289, 1292, 28 L.Ed.2d 577 (1971). If these words have any meaning at all, surely it is that school authorities must, to the extent possible, take all practicable steps to ensure that Ne-

gro and white children in fact go to school together. This is, in the final analysis, what desegregation of the public schools is all about.

Because of the already high and rapidly increasing percentage of Negro students in the Detroit system, as well as the prospect of white flight, a Detroit-only plan simply has no hope of achieving actual desegregation. Under such a plan white and Negro students will not go to school together. Instead, Negro children will continue to attend all-Negro schools. The very evil that *Brown I* was aimed at will not be cured, but will be perpetuated for the future.

Racially identifiable schools are one of the primary vestiges of state-imposed segregation which an effective desegregation decree must attempt to eliminate. In *Swann, supra*, for example, we held that "[t]he district judge or school authorities . . . will thus necessarily be concerned with the elimination of one-race schools." 402 U.S., at 26, 91 S.Ct., at 1281. There is "a presumption," we stated, "against schools that are substantially disproportionate in their racial composition." *Ibid.* And in evaluating the effectiveness of desegregation plans in prior cases, we ourselves have considered the extent to which they discontinued racially identifiable schools. See, e. g., *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County, supra*; *Wright v. Council of the City of Emporia, supra*. For a principal end of any desegregation remedy is to ensure that it is no longer "possible to identify a 'white school' or a 'Negro school.'" *Swann, supra*, 402 U.S., at 18, 91 S.Ct., at 1277. The evil to be remedied in the dismantling of a dual system is the "[r]acial identification of the system's schools." *Green, supra*, 391 U.S., at 435, 88 S.Ct., at 1693. The goal is a system without white schools or Negro schools—a system with "just schools." *Id.*, at 442, 88 S.Ct., at 1696. A school authority's remedial plan or a district court's remedial decree is to be judged by its effectiveness in achieving this end. See *Swann*, 402 U.S., at 25, 91 S.Ct., at 1280;

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Davis, supra, 402 U.S., at 37, 91 S.Ct., at 1292; *Green, supra*, 391 U.S., at 439, 88 S.Ct., at 1694.

We cautioned in *Swann*, of course, that the dismantling of a segregated school system does not mandate any particular racial balance. 402 U.S., at 24, 91 S.Ct., at 1280. We also concluded that a remedy under which there would remain a small number of racially identifiable schools was only presumptively inadequate and might be justified. *Id.*, at 26, 91 S.Ct., at 1281. But this is a totally different case. The flaw of a Detroit-only decree is not that it does not reach some ideal degree of racial balance or mixing. It simply does not promise to achieve actual desegregation at all. It is one thing to have a system where a small number of students remain in racially identifiable schools. It is something else entirely to have a system where all students continue to attend such schools.

The continued racial identifiability of the Detroit schools under a Detroit-only remedy is not simply a reflection of their high percentage of Negro students.

¹⁸⁰⁴ What is or is not a racially identifiable vestige of *de jure* segregation must necessarily depend on several factors. Cf. *Keyes*, 413 U.S., at 196, 93 S.Ct., at 2691. Foremost among these should be the relationship between the schools in question and the neighboring community. For these purposes the city of Detroit and its surrounding suburbs must be viewed as a single community. Detroit is closely connected to its suburbs in many ways, and the metropolitan area is viewed as a single cohesive unit by its residents. About 40% of the residents of the two suburban counties included in the desegregation plan work in Wayne County, in which Detroit is situated. Many residents of the city work in the suburbs. The three counties participate in a wide variety of cooperative governmental ventures on a metropolitan-wide basis, including a metropolitan transit system, park authority, water and sewer system, and council of governments.

The Federal Government has classified the tri-county area as a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, indicating that it is an area of "economic and social integration." *United States v. Connecticut National Bank*, 418 U.S. 656, 670, 94 S.Ct. 2788, 2797, 41 L.Ed.2d 1016 (1974).

Under a Detroit-only decree, Detroit's schools will clearly remain racially identifiable in comparison with neighboring schools in the metropolitan community. Schools with 65% and more Negro students will stand in sharp and obvious contrast to schools in neighboring districts with less than 2% Negro enrollment. Negro students will continue to perceive their schools as segregated educational facilities and this perception will only be increased when whites react to a Detroit-only decree by fleeing to the suburbs to avoid integration. School district lines, however innocently drawn, will surely be perceived as fences to separate the races when, under a Detroit-only decree, white parents withdraw their children from the Detroit city ¹⁸⁰⁵ schools and move to the suburbs in order to continue them in all-white schools. The message of this action will not escape the Negro children in the city of Detroit. See *Wright*, 407 U.S., at 466, 92 S.Ct., at 2205. It will be of scant significance to Negro children who have for years been confined by *de jure* acts of segregation to a growing core of all-Negro schools surrounded by a ring of all-white schools that the new dividing line between the races is the school district boundary.

Nor can it be said that the State is free from any responsibility for the disparity between the racial makeup of Detroit and its surrounding suburbs. The State's creation, through *de jure* acts of segregation, of a growing core of all-Negro schools inevitably acted as a magnet to attract Negroes to the areas served by such schools and to deter them from settling either in other areas of the city or in the suburbs. By the same token, the growing core of all-Negro schools inevitably helped drive whites to other

areas of the city or to the suburbs. As we recognized in *Swann*:

"People gravitate toward school facilities, just as schools are located in response to the needs of people. The location of schools may thus influence the patterns of residential development of a metropolitan area and have important impact on composition of inner-city neighborhoods. . . .

[Action taken] to maintain the separation of the races with a minimum departure from the formal principles of 'neighborhood zoning' . . .

does more than simply influence the short-run composition of the student body It may well promote segregated residential patterns

which, when combined with 'neighborhood zoning,' further lock the school system into the mold of separation of the races. Upon a proper showing a district court may consider this in fashioning a remedy." 402 U.S., at 20-21, 91 S.Ct., at 1278.

See also *Keyes*, 413 U.S., at 202, 93 S.Ct., at 2694. The rippling effects on residential patterns caused by purposeful acts of segregation do not automatically subside at the school district border. With rare exceptions, these effects naturally spread through all the residential neighborhoods within a metropolitan area. See *id.*, at 202-203, 93 S.Ct., at 2694-2695.

The State must also bear part of the blame for the white flight to the suburbs which would be forthcoming from a Detroit-only decree and would render such a remedy ineffective. Having created a system where whites and Negroes were intentionally kept apart so that they could not become accustomed to learning together, the State is responsible for the fact that many whites will react to the dismantling of that segregated system by attempting to flee to the suburbs. Indeed, by limiting the District Court to a Detroit-only remedy and allowing that flight to the suburbs to succeed, the Court today allows the State to profit from its own wrong and to perpetuate for years to come the sep-

aration of the races it achieved in the past by purposeful state action.

The majority asserts, however, that involvement of outlying districts would do violence to the accepted principle that "the nature of the violation determines the scope of the remedy." *Swann, supra*, 402 U.S., at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276. See *ante*, at 3127. Not only is the majority's attempt to find in this single phrase the answer to the complex and difficult questions presented in this case hopelessly simplistic, but more important, the Court reads these words in a manner which perverts their obvious meaning. The nature of a violation determines the scope of the remedy simply because the function of any remedy is to cure the violation to which it is addressed. In school segregation cases, as in other equitable causes, a remedy which effectively cures the violation is what is required. See *Green*, 391 U.S., at 439, 88 S.Ct., at 1694; *Davis*, 402 U.S., at 37, 91 S.Ct., at 1292. No more is necessary, but we can tolerate no less. To read this principle as barring a district court from imposing the only effective remedy for past segregation and remitting the court to a patently ineffective alternative is, in my view, to turn a simple commonsense rule into a cruel and meaningless paradox. Ironically, by ruling out an interdistrict remedy, the only relief which promises to cure segregation in the Detroit public schools, the majority flouts the very principle on which it purports to rely.

Nor should it be of any significance that the suburban school districts were not shown to have themselves taken any direct action to promote segregation of the races. Given the State's broad powers over local school districts, it was well within the State's powers to require those districts surrounding the Detroit school district to participate in a metropolitan remedy. The State's duty should be no different here than in cases where it is shown that certain of a State's voting districts are malapportioned in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. See *Reynolds v. Sims*, 377 U.S. 533, 84

S.Ct. 1362, 12 L.Ed.2d 506 (1964). Overrepresented electoral districts are required to participate in reapportionment although their only "participation" in the violation was to do nothing about it. Similarly, electoral districts which themselves meet representation standards must frequently be redrawn as part of a remedy for other over- and under-inclusive districts. No finding of fault on the part of each electoral district and no finding of a discriminatory effect on each district is a prerequisite to its involvement in the constitutionally required remedy. By the same logic, no finding of fault on the part of the suburban school districts in this case and no finding of a discriminatory effect on each district should be a prerequisite to their involvement in the constitutionally required remedy.

It is the State, after all, which bears the responsibility under *Brown* of affording a nondiscriminatory system of education. The State, of course, is ordinarily free to choose any decentralized framework for education it wishes, so long as it fulfills that Fourteenth Amendment obligation. But the State should no more be allowed to hide behind its delegation and compartmentalization of school districts to avoid its constitutional obligations to its children than it could hide behind its political subdivisions to avoid its obligations to its voters. *Reynolds v. Sims*, at 575, 84 S.Ct., at 1388. See also *Gomillion v. Lightfoot*, 364 U.S. 339, 81 S.Ct. 125, 5 L.Ed.2d 110 (1960).

It is a hollow remedy indeed where "after supposed 'desegregation' the schools remained segregated in fact." *Hobson v. Hansen*, 269 F.Supp. 401, 495 (D.D.C. 1967). We must do better than "substitute . . . one segregated school system for another segregated school system." *Wright*, 407 U.S., at 456, 92 S.Ct., at 2200. To suggest, as does the majority, that a Detroit-only plan somehow remedies the effects of *de jure* segregation of the races is, in my view, to make a solemn mockery of *Brown I*'s holding that separate

educational facilities are inherently unequal and of *Swann*'s unequivocal mandate that the answer to *de jure* segregation is the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation.

III

One final set of problems remains to be considered. We recognized in *Brown II*, and have re-emphasized ever since, that in fashioning relief in desegregation cases, "the courts will be guided by equitable principles. Traditionally, equity has been characterized by a practical flexibility in shaping its remedies and by a facility for adjusting and reconciling public and private needs." *Brown II*, 349 U.S., at 300, 75 S.Ct., at 756. See also *Swann*, *supra*.

Though not resting its holding on this point, the majority suggests that various equitable considerations militate against interdistrict relief. The Court, for example, refers to financing and administrative problems, the logistical problems attending large-scale transportation of students, and the prospect of the District Court's becoming a "*de facto* 'legislative authority'" and "'school superintendent' for the entire area." *Ante*, at 3127. The entangling web of problems woven by the Court, however, appears on further consideration to be constructed of the flimsiest of threads.

I deal first with the last of the problems posed by the Court—the specter of the District Court *qua* "school superintendent" and "legislative authority"—for analysis of this problem helps put the other issues in proper perspective. Our cases, of course, make clear that the initial responsibility for devising an adequate desegregation plan belongs with school authorities, not with the District Court. The court's primary role is to review the adequacy of the school authorities' efforts and to substitute its own plan only if and to the extent they default. See *Swann*, 402 U.S., at 16, 91 S.Ct., at 1276; *Green*, 391 U.S., at 439, 88 S.Ct., at 1294. Contrary to the majority's suggestions, the District

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Judge in this case consistently adhered to these procedures and there is every indication that he would have continued to do so. After finding *de jure* segregation the court ordered the parties to submit proposed Detroit-only plans. The state defendants were also ordered to submit a proposed metropolitan plan extending beyond Detroit's boundaries. As the District Court stated, "the State defendants . . . bear the initial burden of coming forward with a proposal that promises to work." The state defendants defaulted in this obligation, however. ¹⁸¹⁰ Rather than submit a complete plan, the State Board of Education submitted six proposals, none of which was in fact a desegregation plan. It was only upon this default that the District Court began to take steps to develop its own plan. Even then the District Court maximized school authority participation by appointing a panel representing both plaintiffs and defendants to develop a plan. Pet.App. 99a-100a. Furthermore, the District Court still left the state defendants the initial responsibility for developing both interim and final financial and administrative arrangements to implement interdistrict relief. *Id.*, at 104a-105a. The Court of Appeals further protected the interests of local school authorities by ensuring that the outlying suburban districts could fully participate in the proceedings to develop a metropolitan remedy.

These processes have not been allowed to run their course. No final desegregation plan has been proposed by the panel of experts, let alone approved by the District Court. We do not know in any detail how many students will be transported to effect a metropolitan remedy, and we do not know how long or how far they will have to travel. No recommen-

dations have yet been submitted by the state defendants on financial and administrative arrangements. In sum, the practicality of a final metropolitan plan is simply not before us at the present time. Since the State and the panel of experts have not yet had an opportunity to come up with a workable remedy, there is no foundation for the majority's suggestion of the impracticality of interdistrict relief. Furthermore, there is no basis whatever for assuming that the District Court will inevitably be forced to assume the role of legislature or school superintendent.²⁰ ¹⁸¹¹ Were we to hold that it was its constitutional duty to do so, there is every indication that the State of Michigan would fulfill its obligation and develop a plan which is workable, administrable, financially sound, and, most important, in the best interest of quality education for all of the children in the Detroit metropolitan area.

Since the Court chooses, however, to speculate on the feasibility of a metropolitan plan, I feel constrained to comment on the problem areas it has targeted. To begin with, the majority's questions concerning the practicality of consolidation of school districts need not give us pause. The State clearly has the power, under existing law, to effect a consolidation if it is ultimately determined that this offers the best prospect for a workable and stable desegregation plan. See *supra*, at 3152. And given the 1,000 or so consolidations of school districts which have taken place in the past, it is hard to believe that the State has not already devised means of solving most, if not all, of the practical problems which the Court suggests consolidation would entail.

20. In fact, the District Court remarked "that this court's task is to enforce constitutional rights not to act as a schoolmaster; the court's task is to protect the constitutional rights here found violated with as little intrusion into the education process as possible. The court's objective is to establish the minimum constitutional framework within which the system of public schools may

operate now and hereafter in a racially unified, non-discriminatory fashion. Within that framework the body politic, educators, parents, and most particularly the children must be given the maximum opportunity to experiment and secure a high quality, and equal, educational opportunity." Pet.App. 82a.

Furthermore, the majority ignores long-established Michigan procedures under which school districts may enter into contractual agreements to educate their pupils in other districts using state or local funds to finance nonresident education.²¹ Such agreements could form an easily administrable framework for interdistrict relief short of outright consolidation of the school districts. The District Court found that interdistrict procedures like these were frequently used to provide special educational services for handicapped children, and extensive statutory provision is also made for their use in vocational education.²² Surely if school districts are willing to engage in interdistrict programs to help those unfortunate children crippled by physical or mental handicaps, school districts can be required to participate in an inter-district program to help those children in the city of Detroit whose educations and very futures have been crippled by purposeful state segregation.

Although the majority gives this last matter only fleeting reference, it is plain that one of the basic emotional and legal issues underlying these cases concerns the propriety of transportation of students to achieve desegregation. While others may have retreated from its standards, see, e. g., *Keyes*, 413 U.S., at 217, 93 S.Ct., at 2701 (Powell, J., concurring in part and dissenting in part), I continue to adhere to the guidelines set forth in *Swann* on this issue. See 402 U.S., at 29-31, 91 S.Ct., at 1282-1283. And though no final desegregation plan is presently before us, to the extent the outline of such a plan is now visible, it is clear that the transportation it would entail will be fully consistent with these guidelines.

First of all, the metropolitan plan would not involve the busing of substantially more students than already ride buses. The District Court found that,

statewide, 35%-40% of all students already arrive at school on a bus. In those school districts in the tri-county Detroit metropolitan area eligible for state reimbursement of transportation costs, 42%-52% of all students rode buses to school. In the tri-county areas as a whole, approximately 300,000 pupils arrived at school on some type of bus, with about 60,000 of these apparently using regular public transit. In comparison, the desegregation plan, according to its present rough outline, would involve the transportation of 310,000 students, about 40% of the population within the desegregation area.

With respect to distance and amount of time traveled, 17 of the outlying school districts involved in the plan are contiguous to the Detroit district. The rest are all within 8 miles of the Detroit city limits. The trial court, in defining the desegregation area, placed a ceiling of 40 minutes one way on the amount of travel time, and many students will obviously travel for far shorter periods. As to distance, the average statewide bus trip is 8½ miles one way, and in some parts of the tri-county area, students already travel for one and a quarter hours or more each way. In sum, with regard to both the number of students transported and the time and distances involved, the outlined desegregation plan "compares favorably with the transportation plan previously operated" *Swann*, 402 U.S., at 30, 91 S.Ct., at 1283.

As far as economics are concerned, a metropolitan remedy would actually be more sensible than a Detroit-only remedy. Because of prior transportation aid restrictions, see at 3150, Detroit largely relied on public transport, at student expense, for those students who lived too far away to walk to school. Since no inventory of school buses existed, a Detroit-only plan was estimated to

21. See, e. g., Mich.Comp.Laws §§ 340.69, 340.121(d), 340.359, 340.582, 340.582a, 340.590.

22. See *id.*, §§ 340.330-340.330n.

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require the purchase of 900 buses to effectuate the necessary transportation. The tri-county area, in contrast, already has an inventory of 1,800 buses, many of which are now under-utilized. Since increased utilization of the existing inventory can take up much of the increase in transportation involved in the interdistrict remedy, the District Court found that only 350 additional buses would probably be needed, almost two-thirds fewer than a Detroit-only remedy. Other features of an interdistrict remedy bespeak its practicality, such as the possibility of pairing up Negro schools near Detroit's boundary with nearby white schools on the other side of the present school district line.

Some disruption, of course, is the inevitable product of any desegregation decree, whether it operates within one district or on an interdistrict basis. As we said in *Swann*, however:

"Absent a constitutional violation there would be no basis for judicially ordering assignment of students on a racial basis. All things being equal, with no history of discrimination, it might well be desirable to assign pupils to schools nearest their homes. But all things are not equal in a system that has been deliberately con-

structed and maintained to enforce racial segregation. The remedy for such segregation may be administratively awkward, inconvenient, and even bizarre in some situations and may impose burdens on some; but all awkwardness and inconvenience cannot be avoided" 402 U.S., at 28, 91 S.Ct., at 1282.

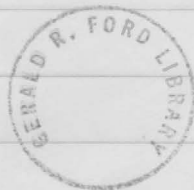
Desegregation is not and was never expected to be an easy task. Racial attitudes ingrained in our Nation's childhood and adolescence are not quickly thrown aside in its middle years. But just as the inconvenience of some cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the rights of others, so public opposition, no matter how strident, cannot be permitted to divert this Court from the enforcement of the constitutional principles at issue in this case. Today's holding, I fear, is more a reflection of a perceived public mood that we have gone far enough in enforcing the Constitution's guarantee of equal justice than it is the product of neutral principles of law. In the short run, it may seem to be the easier course to allow our great metropolitan areas to be divided up each into two cities—one white, the other black—but it is a course, I predict, our people will ultimately regret. I dissent.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 12, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM CANNON *J. Cannon*
SUBJECT: U. S. Attitudes toward Desegregation and Busing

The most recent data available indicating national attitudes toward school busing is in a Harris poll published last October 2 (attached).

In brief, this Harris Poll indicates that Americans favor school desegregation by 56% to 35%; but they oppose busing by 74% to 20%.

Attachment



The Harris Survey

For Release October 2, 1975

DESEGREGATION ? YES. Busing ? No.

By Louis Harris

Although the American people favor the desegregation of the public schools system by 56-35 per cent, a lopsided 74-20 per cent majority opposes busing school children to achieve racial balance.

Better than two out of every three Americans also say they would be unwilling to see their own children bused for racial purposes even if ordered by the court. These figures have scarcely changed since 1972.

When asked to cite their greatest concerns about busing school children to achieve racial balance, the people did not give racial fears as their main reasons. Instead, a substantial 77 per cent of those who objected offered the following explanations: "Children should attend schools in their own neighborhood" (28 per cent); "Busing is expensive and a waste of money" (16 per cent); "Travel wastes too much time, makes the day too long" (11 per cent); "Busing causes an inconvenience to children" (5 per cent); "Children should not be separated from their friends" (3 per cent); "Busing uses gasoline unnecessarily" (2 per cent).

The 20 per cent of the public who did offer objections on racial grounds mentioned such factors as: "Desegregation with blacks lowers the quality of educational standards" (10 per cent); "Oppose racial integration" (4 per cent); "Will make race relations grow more tense" (4 per cent); "Psychologically degrading to children" (2 per cent).

The Harris Survey asked a national cross section of 1,497 adults: "As a matter of principle, do you favor or oppose desegregation of the public school system in the United States?"

DESEGREGATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Nationwide</u>	56	35	9
<u>By Region</u>			
East	57	33	10
Midwest	48	41	11
South	58	32	10
West	64	32	4
<u>By Politics</u>			
Conservative	53	39	8
Middle of the Road	55	36	9
Liberal	72	26	2

In every region of the country and among people of all political philosophies, a clear margin favors desegregation of public education in principle.

The Harris Survey then asked: "Would you favor or oppose busing school children to achieve racial balance?"

BUSING TO ACHIEVE RACIAL BALANCE

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>1972</u>	18	76	6
<u>1975</u>	20	74	6
<u>By Region</u>			
East	20	70	10
Midwest	19	74	7
South	18	77	5
West	27	70	3
<u>By Politics</u>			
Conservative	16	81	3
Middle of the Road	17	78	5
Liberal	31	63	6

Just as people of every region and position on the political spectrum favor desegregation of schools in principle, they also oppose busing as a means of doing so.

Although the American people may publicly say that inconvenience is the main reason for their disapproval of busing to desegregate schools, they would seem to have other, private reasons for their opposition.

-OVER-

The 47 per cent of the households in the survey that have children 18 years of age or younger living at home were simply asked if the children were bused to school. A substantial 40 per cent said they were. This group was then asked if they found the experience inconvenient. By 89-9 per cent, they did not. They were then asked if they were satisfied or dissatisfied with busing their children to school. By 87-13 per cent, an overwhelming majority expressed satisfaction with busing.

By their own admission, parents find virtually no problems in having their children bused to school for non-racial purposes. Thus, it may be concluded that it is the racial undertones of the current busing question that have made it so rancorous. This is also the reason why the American people who say they are in favor of school desegregation are so uptight about the issue. It may be clear that Americans do not view busing as an acceptable means of desegregating the schools, but there is no guarantee that some other solution leading to school integration would cause less pain and turmoil.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 9, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

DICK CHEILEY

FROM:

EDWARD SCHMULTS

SUBJECT: .

Justice Department Involvement in
Private School Bias Litigation

You requested some background for the President on this morning's news story concerning the position of the Justice Department in certain litigation affecting the right of private schools to discriminate on the basis of race. The material under "Background" and "Justice Department Involvement" was furnished to Dick Parsons by the Solicitor General.

BACKGROUND

The case in question was commenced by two private parties against several private schools in Virginia which discriminated in their administration policies on the basis of race. The contention of the plaintiffs was that such discrimination violated Section 1981 of the United States Code, which derives from the old Civil Rights Act of 1866. This law prohibits racial discrimination in the making of private contracts. The defendants in this case argue that Section 1981 could not be applied to private schools and, in the alternative, that if this section were applicable to private schools it was unconstitutional. The lower court and the U. S. Court of Appeals (Fourth Circuit) held for the plaintiffs. The case has been appealed to the Supreme Court by the defendants.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT INVOLVEMENT

When the constitutionality of a federal statute is challenged in litigation before the Supreme Court, it is required that the Department of Justice be notified of the litigation, the statute in question and the nature of the constitutional challenge. As a general rule, the Department will defend, amicus curiae, the constitutionality of the statute, unless a constitutional prerogative of the President is being diminished.



I have been advised by the Solicitor General that it is clear from previous cases that Section 1981 is constitutional.

If the President is asked about this situation, I think he should respond that:

- (1) The Justice Department is participating in this case because of its duty to defend the constitutionality of an act of Congress; the Department believes its position is mandated by the statute and previous judicial decisions;
- (2) He has been advised that the Department's position is that the statute applies only to most sweeping forms of segregation;
- (3) According to the Department, the statute would not be applicable to religious schools or those organized on some other right of association; and
- (4) We should bear in mind the case involves a statute which is within the power of Congress to change.

