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Washington, D.C. -- Camden, New Jersey, the nation's 100th largest city, and several of its suburbs face a variety of school segregation problems which will not yield to any single solution, according to Albert P. Blaustein of the Rutgers University School of Law. In a 55-page report to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released today, Blaustein describes the range of community attitudes and responses to racial imbalance in the school systems of 9 South Jersey municipalities studied during 1962 and 1963.

While school authorities in some of these communities have resisted desegregating their student bodies and teaching staffs, Blaustein reports, others have made conscious attempts to provide integration of both students and teachers.

In addition to Camden, the South Jersey school study included Pennsauken, Haddonfield, Haddon Township, Berlin Township, Lawnside, Haddon Heights, Cherry Hill and Woodbury. Negro populations in these municipalities vary from almost 98 percent in one to much less than one percent in another. In preparing the report Blaustein drew on information gathered at a public meeting of the New Jersey Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights held in Camden in October 1962, as well as on information supplied by State and local school authorities and Negro leaders.

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CAMDEN

segregated housing

patterns and school segregation by law prior to 1948 have resulted in what Blaustein describes as "an almost unsolvable school segregation problem" in Camden. Forty-four point six percent of the city's school population is Negro and both the student bodies and teaching staffs in the elementary schools of the central city are almost totally Negro.

One of the two senior high schools is 49.5 percent Negro; only 8.9 percent of the student body in the other senior high school is Negro. Of the four junior high schools, two are more than 50 percent Negro, one is 96 percent white and in the fourth there is a solitary Negro student in a school with 564 white students. In 6 of the 28 elementary schools there are no Negroes at all, and in a seventh there are only 6 Negroes as compared with 468 whites. The student bodies of 5 elementary schools are 90 percent or more Negro and two others have Negro percentages between 80 and 90 percent.

Some integration has been achieved as a result of boundary changes and school closings, Blaustein reports, but a traditional policy of "color blindness" has served to perpetuate de facto segregation. Negro leaders have charged that the school board (which includes one Negro member) is not fully aware of the extent of the problem and have asked that the authorities promote integration of both student bodies and faculties by becoming deliberately

"color conscious" in a positive sense. They allege that teacher segregation and the fact that there are no Negroes in the top posts at headquarters can be traced to "administrative segregation."

Dr. Catrambone, superintendent of Camden's public schools, has denied these charges. According to Blaustein, Catrambone has shown some willingness to be "color conscious" in making teaching appointments which will improve the 71 to 2 white-Negro ratio on the faculty of Camden's Woodrow Wilson High School. Catrambone has also met with the city planner's mapping Camden's redevelopment plans, but Blaustein expresses doubt that the anticipated population shifts will significantly increase integration in junior high and elementary schools.

#### PENNSAUKEN

In this municipality, second largest in Camden County, school troubles appear to have been alleviated, Blaustein reports. Pennsauken's all-Negro schools have been closed and all Negro pupils are now enrolled in schools with white pupils. School superintendent Howard M. Phifer is credited with ending pupil and teacher segregation in Pennsauken.

#### HADDONFIELD

Described as wealthy and essentially conservative, this municipality has no problem of pupil segregation, since there are only 25 Negro students in a total school population of 3,000. Blaustein reports that the town's one Negro teacher retired in 1962 and notes that observers believe it is "unlikely" that Haddonfield will soon have another Negro teacher in its schools.

HADDON TOWNSHIP

There are fewer than 110 Negroes in Haddon Township, Blaustein reports. With a bare two dozen Negro families living almost equally close to two elementary schools, the Haddon Township superintendent has said that any of the 13 Negro pupils now attending one school (with an enrollment of 2,221 pupils) may attend the other simply by saying that they want to go there. Opposition to hiring Negro teachers was expressed by the president of the school board who predicted "trouble" if a Negro teacher were hired.

BERLIN TOWNSHIP

Integration in this "very poor" township with a comparatively large Negro population (17.5 percent of the 3,363 total) was accomplished ten years ago by a fire which destroyed the two-room Negro school, Blaustein reports. There are 2 Negroes on the 18-member faculty of the integrated school which now serves the township, and the school's administrative principal has declared the township would be happy to hire more Negro teachers "if we could only get them."

LAWNSIDE and HADDON HEIGHTS

Thoroughly segregated Lawnside, a virtually all-Negro municipality of 2,000 people, has 15 teachers and 413 pupils, all Negro, in its one elementary school.

Secondary education for Lawnside's children is supplied by neighboring Haddon Heights (1960 population: 9,254 whites and 6 Negroes). There are no Negro teachers or pupils in Haddon Heights' one junior high school and 3 elementary schools; however, this fall the high school hired its first Negro teacher.

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Blaustein notes that Lawnside no longer wants to be an all-Negro municipality and suggests that State action to combine two or more municipalities into a single school district might eliminate Lawnside's segregated school.

#### CHERRY HILL

Though Cherry Hill denies it, this thriving municipality appears to be color conscious "in the best sense" in its educational practices, Blaustein reports. There is racial discrimination in housing, but every effort is exerted to make Negro pupils and teachers feel at home in the schools. Guidance and scholarship aid upon graduation is provided for Negro students (only about 100 in a total school population of 8,200). Though there are only a dozen Negro teachers, the percentage is higher than the percentage of Negro pupils and the Negro teachers are on the faculties of both the junior and senior high schools and of 6 of the 9 elementary schools.

#### WOODBURY

Blaustein describes Woodbury as "the most obvious example of an existing segregation situation." And he states that "there is little evidence that those in authority plan to do anything about it." He points out that on two occasions in the recent past the State Board of Education had to force the city to take specific actions to reduce segregation.

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After 1948 when school segregation by law was struck down in New Jersey, school district lines in Woodbury were gerrymandered. After protests the boundary lines of all-Negro Carpenter elementary school were "squared off." Next the city was required to eliminate segregation of Negro children for two additional years by maintaining 7th and 8th grade classes at Carpenter, while the other four elementary schools ended with the 6th grade. Blaustein reports that Carpenter remains all-Negro and still serves 70 percent of the Negro elementary pupils. Woodbury officials say they are not required to take any further steps.

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Blaustein notes that the law is still in "a state of flux" as to whether school authorities have an affirmative responsibility to promote integration where racial imbalance exists. He cites as a sign of progress programs underway in some New Jersey colleges which encourage prospective teachers to prepare to teach culturally underprivileged children.

Summarizing the total Camden area 'school segregation story', Blaustein says "there is no one thing that must be done or might be done . . . but from each school segregation story comes a lesson in experience which provides a guide for the future."

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