

# • BUSING •

## Part I: ON RICHARD NIXON AND THE SOUTH

BY BAYARD RUSTIN

Until this year the response of much of the South to the 1954 Supreme Court decision decreeing an end to segregated schools was typified by Jackson, Mississippi. For 15 years Jackson's school board and the community itself hid behind a self-erected wall of massive resistance, filing suit after suit against desegregation orders and employing every stalling technique at their disposal.

Then, last summer, the Jackson School Board designed a voluntary desegregation plan which was submitted to the federal courts and ultimately approved. Despite the fact that the formula called for extensive busing, the plan met with approval from both black and white leaders. There was a fundamental reason for its appeal to both races, for, in addition to busing, the plan called for the construction of two new, modern, educational parks, facilities needed by the community and clearly designed to enhance the educational environment of all children. Beyond this, Jackson officials were led to believe by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare that the federal government would finance a large share of the busing.

The Jackson plan is an ambitious attempt not only to integrate the schools but to improve the learning atmosphere for both black and white students. As with all ambitious social plans, it costs money, more money, perhaps, than the city can afford without federal assistance.

Whether the Jackson plan or similar plans in Austin, Greensboro and many other cities can ever be completely implemented is now open to question. This summer, at President Nixon's prodding, the federal government announced that it was opposed to the allocation of federal funds for desegregation plans which involved busing and recent bills introduced in Congress almost ensure that no such aid will be available.

Instead of having integration presented as an attractive social objective which can improve the educational opportunities of both races, the South is in effect being told that integration will further impinge on the already weak financial resources of its cities.

The President has gone to great lengths to exploit busing during this election year. He has repudiated the judgements of Warren Burger, his own appointee as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who wrote the decision which affirmed the constitutionality of busing as one tool of integration.

He has overruled and embarrassed his own Department of Health, Education and Welfare and nullified much of the efforts to devise workable integration plans.

The President's actions have inspired anew those waiting in the wings to serve in the vanguard of any movement which hopes to thwart black aspirations.

And he has misled much of the public, including many who have sincere, deeply-felt reservations about busing, by denouncing "busing for busing's sake" when in fact no court has ever ordered busing except when it was the only means available to bring about integration.

The consequences of these actions are eloquently described by Jonathan Yardley, a southern journalist.

"He (Nixon) by implication, encourages the South in a disrespect for a law suit that had steadily waned in recent years," Yardley writes.

"The South has come, however slowly, to understand that the law must not be tampered with for political expediency, and it has committed itself to obeying it dutifully. For the President of the United States to imply that it can be evaded is unconscionable, and a disservice to every Southerner who is working earnestly for racial peace."

As this is written, President Nixon is visiting China. The President and his supporters like to boast that in the realm of foreign relations Nixon rises above partisan politics and takes on the mantle of statemanship. The consequences of Presidential guidance in this area are clear: China, once looked on as an implacable Cold War enemy, is now accepted as a member of the community of nations and is currently exerting an influence on everything from women's fashions to eating habits.

We witnessed the consequences of the same type of presidential leadership in the area of race re-

# EQUAL RESPONSIBILITY. MUST WORK AS A TEAM...



lations during the 1960s. Black people made significant social and economic progress during this period, progress which was accepted by the majority of whites. We will not enjoy the same type of progress until our leaders have the political courage to once again affirm their commitment to racial progress and social justice.

## Sickle Cell Anemia

Sickle Cell Anemia is a genetic disease affecting black people only.

Still, it is being used now by some to encourage the segregation of blood along racial lines.

A letter on this subject, dated January 3, has this to say:

"Surely, for the safety of both races, blood donations should be labeled as to race so that, in appropriate cases, analysis can be made to determine the presence or absence of sickle cells.

"Public protest to Senators and Congressmen, and to state legislators and boards of health should be aimed to restoring labeling of blood plasma by race."

More than 25 years ago the American labor movement fought for desegregation of blood-and won. We have no intention to lose this battle by permitting new myths to result in new racism.

In letters to the Surgeon General of the United States, the American National Red Cross and Dr. J. Garrott Allen of Stanford University Medical Center, I asked the following question: "Can Sickle Cell Anemia be transferred through blood transfusions?"

Here are their answers:

From the Office of the Surgeon General: "The condition is transmitted only through inheritance; it cannot be transmitted through blood transfusions."

From the American National Red Cross: "It is--not transferable through blood transfusions."

From Dr. Allen: "It cannot possibly be transferred by transfusion in the sense of inducing Sickle Cell Anemia in the patient receiving the blood."

I think it would be wise for us to defer to the

authorities rather than to the racists. With this information, we should be in a better position to combat the myth mongers and to help in legitimate voluntary efforts designed to combat Sickle Cell disease.

## DO NOT JUDGE TOO HARD

Pray, don't find fault with the man who limps-or stumbles along the road, unless you have worn the shoes he wears or struggled beneath his load.

There may be tacks in his shoes that hurt, though hidden away from view, and the burden he bears, placed on your back, might cause you to stumble, too.

Don't sneer at the man who's down today, unless you have felt the blow, that caused his fall-or felt the shame that only the fallen know.

You may be strong, but still the blows that were his, is delt to you, in the selfsame way at the selfsame time might cause you to stagger, too.

Don't be too harsh with the man who sins-or pelt him with words or stones, unless you are sure, yea doubly sure, that you have no sins of your own.

For you know, perhaps, if the tempters voice should whisper soft to you-as it did to him when he went astray-T'would cause you to falter, too.

--Author Unknown

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