

# Letters to the Editor



## Church and State

SR IS TO BE COMMENDED for opening its pages to the exchange between William Ball and Leo Pfeffer on the subject of federal aid to children in nonpublic schools ["Congress Shall Make No Law. . ." SR, Jan. 21]. On balance, the two special pleaders did an excellent job of presenting the issues in a sane and responsible manner. This alone makes the statements unique and worth reading.

It seemed to me, however, that Mr. Pfeffer closed his article on a discordant note with the implication that Catholic elementary and secondary schools are becoming havens for white children fleeing integration in the public schools. Historically, Catholic schools were integrated in many communities long before the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court *Brown* decision. The Washington *Post* (9/13/66) stated that Negro enrollment in the Capital's parochial schools has almost tripled since 1955, but the city's public school enrollment has only doubled. A study of integration in New York City's parochial schools indicates that 50 per cent of the children are Negro or of Spanish American origin, and thirty-five parochial schools in racially mixed areas of Manhattan and the Bronx are better integrated than the neighborhoods in which they are located.

VINCENT P. CORLEY.

St. Louis, Mo.

THE MANY RELIGIOUS and racial problems that have faced the Supreme Court and Congress during the past few years involving our public schools clearly indicate that what we in the United States have called public schools have been, in reality, Protestant parochial schools for white children. Catholic, Jewish, and Negro students have been made painfully aware that the calendar, holiday observances, textbooks, decorations, curricula, inferior buildings, and the general philosophy within the public school system have all favored the majority culture of white Protestant Americans. The battle lines have always been clearly drawn so that the "public school system" for the white Protestant majority, which has been financed by the American tax dollar, will continue to be supported by public funds and that little or no financial support would be given to any other religious or racial group.

The simple facts indicate that the state provides a white, Protestant, parochial school system and is vigorously defending its privilege by forcing sectarian groups to be doubly taxed by paying their regular taxes and paying their private tuition, thereby making it so much cheaper to maintain the white Protestant schools because so many sectarian pupils are being privately educated.

Let's stop the sham and recognize once and for all that the "public school system"

which has been so vigorously defended never did and does not exist today. If federal and state funds can be used to support white Protestant parochial schools, why not for all other creeds and colors?

DR. OSCAR FLEISHAKER,  
Rabbi,  
Beth Israel Center.

Madison, Wis.

MOST OF THE DISCUSSION offered by William B. Ball on the use of federal funds in parochial schools is irrelevant. He points out that some folks in the past have been nasty to Catholics. This is as relevant to the discussion as what the Catholic Church did to the Protestants during the Inquisition.

The issue is simply that of public subsidy to church schools—whether this is good policy or not. We don't think it is. For one reason, such a subsidy is nothing but a subsidy to a church—unsound procedure in a country which separates state and church. Another reason is that the practice would decimate the common schools. With public funds available, all shapes and kinds would get into the subsidy deal.

Mr. Ball seems to think that we must subsidize church schools in order to help poor children. There are other ways of helping them.

He seems to think, too, that there is an overwhelming consensus which favors public assistance to church schools. The polls don't support him. For example, the Nebraska vote on this issue in November snowed the sectarians under. Evidently, Ball arrives at his consensus by talking with himself.

C. STANLEY LOWELL,  
Editor,  
*Church & State*.

Washington, D.C.

IN HIS ARTICLE, Mr. Ball has made a forceful plea for a rational approach to the com-

## Two Awards

*Saturday Review's* Education Supplement twice received recognition when the Education Writers Association made their annual awards on February 10:

Bernard Bard, education writer for the *New York Post*, received first prize in the magazine article category for "Why Dropout Campaigns Fail," which appeared in SR's September 17 issue.

James Cass received the award for the best editorial on education for "Do We Really Want Equality?" which appeared in the issue of December 17.

plex issue of church-state relations. He has, however, again confused the basic issue by citing adventitious problems.

Certainly the primary effect of busing a parochial schoolboy can hardly be said to be religious, but what does the church do with the money saved?

What is in the last analysis undeniable is the fact that a dollar given by me in the form of a tax by the state to support the projects of the state, which is then used to implement a free lunch program in a church school, is a dollar used to establish and maintain that school and its religious orientation. It is therefore a dollar used in violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America.

ERNEST B. MURPHY.

Malden, Mass.

MR. BALL speaks of a "crusade" instigated by "absolutists," but really whose "crusade" is it?

It is not the believers in church-state separation who: sponsored busing of children to parochial schools at public expense on an ever increasing scale, authorized released time, introduced prayers into public schools, legislated free textbooks for parochial schools, passed college "dormitory" loan bills—and the like.

Rather we have been fighting a holding action against continuing encroachment on the "vital principle." Would that we could, in Ball's own words, mount a "crusade" that the Catholic Church supported over 100 years ago and that many Catholics still support.

ROBERT M. STEIN,  
American Ethical Union.

New York, N.Y.

## English Education

I READ with great interest the article by James D. Koerner, "Reform and Revolution in English Education" [SR, Jan. 21]. The article's factual information is, I think, correct, but in my mind it is doubtful whether Mr. Koerner has placed enough emphasis on the forces of resistance to change.


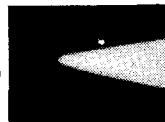

It is true that, after the Labor victory of 1964, the government spoke of the establishment of comprehensive schools as "national policy." However, the Labor majority in Parliament was very thin, and the government didn't push the issue of comprehensives. The Department of Education and Science issued a circular, dated July 12, 1965, on the subject of comprehensives, but the circular was permissive and not mandatory. It requested, but did not demand, that local education authorities submit their plans for reorganizing secondary education along comprehensive lines.

It was not until just before the elections of March 1966 that the Labor government really began to force the issue, and even then the circular from the Department of Education and Science said that future school building programs would not be approved unless they were planned along comprehensive lines. There was no demand that existing local systems, based on "eleven-plus," be altered.

I think Koerner is quite right in pointing out that "the defenders of the present sys-

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# How do you describe a parabola?

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—Sybil Shelton (Monkmeier).

# URBAN SCHOOL INTEGRATION: STRATEGY FOR PEACE

By ROBERT L. CRAIN, *assistant professor of sociology, University of Chicago, and a senior study director of the National Opinion Research Center*; and MORTON INGER, *research sociologist at the Center for Urban Education, New York.*

**T**HE STRUGGLE over de facto school segregation, which has turned the urban North into a political battleground, may well be coming to an end. During the past four years, the desegregation controversy has been the issue in school board elections from Pasadena to Boston. It has spurred the growth of anti-Negro organizations in a number of cities, and it was the spark that set off a riot in Cleveland. Despite

this unattractive history, there is considerable evidence that intense conflict over school integration is avoidable, and that in only a few years widespread school integration without conflict will be the rule rather than the exception.

From 1964 to 1966, the National Opinion Research Center, under a contract with the United States Office of Education, studied the desegregation issue in eight Northern and seven Southern cities. Among them are New Orleans, Atlanta, Montgomery, Columbus (Georgia), Jacksonville, Miami, Baton Rouge, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, St. Louis, Buffalo, San Francisco, and Newark. [The results of the study will be published by Aldine Press this spring, under the title *School Desegregation: Comparative Case Studies of Community Struc-*

*ture and Policy Making.*] One of the surprises of that study is that every city has *not* had conflict. Newspapers and magazines have not brought their readers a systematic picture—the good news as well as the bad.

Boston's Louise Day Hicks and former Chicago superintendent Benjamin Willis are household names, but how many Americans have heard of Daniel Schlafly of St. Louis and William Rea of Pittsburgh? The battles in Boston and Chicago have made good newspaper copy; but the news from Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Los Angeles, St. Louis, and Detroit is more often good than bad and may be more significant—but is largely ignored by the press. St. Louis, for example, while dramatically increasing the number of elementary school students in integrated schools, has induced the white voters to support school taxes and to elect Negro school board candidates.

What is the difference between the conflict-ridden cities and those that