

**(Johnny Can't Read,
& Sam Can't Count)**

ARE YOU SATISFIED?



By Stan Daniels

Philadelphia's school system is approaching 2/3 Negro in enrollment. Eight high schools already have a Negro enrollment ranging from 70 to 99%! (There are other schools in the city with enrollments as high as 99% WHITE). Not too long ago, a Negro school board member stated that more than three-fourths (that's more than 75%) of the Negro GRADUATES of Philadelphia high schools could not read and write well enough to get (or keep) any kind of respectable job. They were what that professional educator called "functionally illiterate." A better de-

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scription of youths so handicapped would be "economically paralyzed and socially crippled" by a lack of education during twelve years of "schooling."

In spite of excuses and "explanations" by educators and politicians, there are MAJOR differences in the quality of education at Philadelphia's "white" and "Negro" schools. The complexion of the students is NOT the major reason for these differences. West Philly, Gratz, Franklin and William Penn High Schools could easily pass for African schools with their 95 to 99% Negro enrollments. Bok, Edison, Overbrook and Germantown High Schools have their student bodies ranging from 70 to 90% black. Of course we could flip the coin over and look at Northeast, Lincoln, and a few of the "other folks schools" where Negro students are so scarce that they stand out like SNCC members at a Klan rally. The elementary and junior high schools generally show the same or greater "imbalance" in the "complexion" of their student bodies.

An all-black school in Nigeria, Tanzania, or some other AFRICAN nation--(where the "rich" are poorer than many of America's "poor")-- can produce students who can hold their own with the best that America has to offer. BUT, when we come to the USA, we find that the Negro schools, more often than not, are considered "inferior," -- (and in too many cases actually are). What then, should we "integrate" the schools by "bussing" Negroes to white schools and whites to Negro schools? Not necessarily. At least not until certain basic questions are dealt with.

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The "typical" white school usually could stand SOME improvements, but, the "typical" Negro school usually needs a complete OVERHAUL of methods of teaching and materials, if not the building itself. The "white" schools usually have their share of "poor" --(that's poor in grades, not money)-- students, but the Negro schools have a much larger share. Usually a greater proportion of students in the white schools have (and take home) more text books than students in Negro schools. Not as many students in "white" schools have reason to complain that "the teacher let's us play all the time," as students in "Negro" schools have often done.

The student in the "white" school is usually a better reader than his Negro counterpart, and usually has a better idea of what kind of job or profession he will engage in after he finishes school.

It just doesn't seem logical that a WHITE child MUST sit next to a black child in order for the Negro child to learn! While Negro parents will have to sacrifice more than a white parent in order to get action in the classroom, the time for that sacrifice is long overdue. Otherwise, Negro youths will continue to graduate being unable to read and write.



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