

NO:

torted the facts. What the proceedings illustrated dramatically was that prejudice is actually far more an internal than an external affair. For what the segregationist fears is finally less the Negro than himself—his own insecurity inevitably felt most acutely when change and strife render horribly insecure the world about him. Not to be forgotten also is the role conscience plays, a role summed up beautifully by the philosopher Schweighausen, who said in reference to anti-Semitism: “The anti-Semite hates the Jew not because he is the Christ killer but because he is the Christ bearer.”

Those who believe that prejudice can be eradicated simply by education do not properly assess these emotional and moral dimensions of the problem, do not realize how inadequate a solution education is for people whose lives are motivated not by love but by hate and fear of the truth. Thus, while all individuals surely have a clear religious or moral obligation to overcome their prejudices, it seems only realistic to anticipate that far from all will succeed. “Human nature,” as a shrewd observer of the human scene remarked, “is very prevalent.” As far as whole societies go, integration appears an unattainable goal.

BUT does this mean that little or nothing can be done? Quite the contrary. If full integration is unattainable, then desegregation becomes that much more necessary, and, in contrast to integration, desegregation for a whole society is, I believe, a thoroughly attainable goal.

Desegregation and integration are of course interrelated, for while it is true that morality cannot be legislated it is

By **WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.**, editor of *National Review*, a weekly periodical.

WHAT, I am asked, is the conservatives’ solution to the race problem in the South? I answer: there is no present solution to it. Such an answer appals. It brings to mind, to move from tragedy to flippancy, the cartoon of the farmer leaning on his pitchfork and replying to the motorist: “Come to think of it, Mister, I don’t think you can *get* to Glens Falls from here.” There are those who approach all problems as though they involved merely getting an automobile from here to there: there is always a road. There are others who know that some problems are insoluble. These last are for the most part conservatives; and I am here to defend them.

Let us begin by stressing that no matter how convinced a people may be of the wrongness of an existing situation, it does not follow that the people should be prepared to resort to whatever means may be necessary to attempt to make that situation right. That may sound obvious—the end does not justify any means; but when we examine some of the drastic proposals that are being put forward with the end of securing the rights of the Negro (e.g., a constitutional amendment depriving the individual states of their right to set up voting qualifications), the time has come to reiterate the obvious. We acknowledge, for instance, that it is wrong to drive at excessive speeds; but no state in the union seems prepared to impose a heavier penalty on the speeder than the automatic suspension of his license for thirty days. There would be less speeding, and hence less violent

slaughter—the two figures, the experts inform us, are inextricably related—if speeders were packed off to jail for a week. Even so, notwithstanding the established correlation between fast driving and aborted lives, we shrink from so drastic a penalty; and the speeding, and the deaths, go on.

Let us take the word of the predominating school of social scientists and stipulate that segregation is the cause of personality disturbances. And—mark this—not only against the Negro, but also against the white. The argument is not new; it has often been used against corporal punishment. It is not only the victim who is damaged, psychiatrists report, but also the executioner, in whom sadistic impulses are dangerously encouraged. No one who has contemplated a man brandishing a fiery cross and preaching hatred needs help from social science to know that the race problem has debasing effects on black and white alike.

ASSUME all this to be true. Assume, also, that the legal and political power is wholly at the disposal of the society to effect its point of view in the South. Assume, in other words, that *Brown vs. Board of Education* and the supporting decisions of the Supreme Court deconstitutionalized segregated public schooling beyond the point of argument. Then assume that the raw power necessary to enforce that decision is available to the present Administration, and that the will of the nation is such as to insure that Congress will supply power where power is lacking. Should the Federal Government then proceed?

The list of sanctions available to the government is endless. The economic power of the Federal Government has in our time reached the point where it

cannot be denied; cannot, in fact, be defied. If Congress can seriously entertain the question whether to spend money to aid public schooling in any state whose public schools are segregated, why can't Congress debate the question whether it is prepared to spend money for road-building in a segregated state? Or for unemployment? Or for farmers' subsidies? Already the Attorney General has hinted he is considering (for purely punitive reasons) recommending to his old friend the Commander-in-Chief the removal of our large military installations from segregated areas.

In a word, the Federal Government is in a position to visit intolerable economic sanctions against the defiant state. Not to mention the government's arsenal of legal weapons. Why cannot the Congress (assuming always a purposive mood on the subject of segregation) pass laws increasing the penalties for those held guilty of contempt of court in a certain category of cases? And why can't the courts rule—as Professor Auerbach of the University of Wisconsin has recommended—that any state which, having fought to the end of the legal road, sets out to close down its public schools rather than integrate them, be forbidden to do so on the grounds that such action, under such circumstances, becomes not the free exercise of the state's power, but an act of defiance of a federal court? By such reasoning the Federal Government could take over the operation of the schools.

THE crucial question arises: Will the government of the United States move in such a fashion? The answer is: probably not; for the reason that, along the way, the ideological stamina would very likely give out, as the public contemplated the consequences of an assault of such magnitude on a whole region. Another question is: *should* the government of the United States take that kind of action to end segregation? The answer to that is, in my judgment: no, most definitely not.

"You know, the world is hard enough and people is evil enough without all the time looking for it and stirring it up and making it worse," says Leona, in a novel by the eloquent, tormented Negro writer James Baldwin, who celebrates his bitterness against the white community mostly in journals of the far political left. What would be accomplished by turning the legislative, judicial, and executive resources of this country over to a crash program of integration? Let us suppose the program were so successful as to make South Carolina like New York City. This

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spring a distinguished New York Negro told the audience of the television program "Open End" that he did not know three white people in all of New York with whom he felt genuinely comfortable, such is the prevalence of prejudice even in this cosmopolitan center. Louis Lomax may be more sensitive, and hence more bitter, than the average New York Negro, and so unrepresentative of the state of Negro serenity in the North; but then, too, Dr. Martin Luther King is more sensitive, and so more bitter, than the average Southern Negro, and hence unqualified as a litmus of the Southern Negro's discontent. But only one of the other Negro guests on the program challenged as extreme that remarkable testament to race relations in the city under which the fires of the melting pot burn hottest.

THE deep disturbances isolated by the social scientists are not, I think, of the kind that are removed by integrating the waiting rooms and the schools. It has even been revealed (*Villanova Law Review*, Fall, 1960) that the very tests cited by the Supreme Court in *Brown* as evidence that Southern Negro children were suffering personality damage, when administered in the North yielded not merely similar results, but results that seemed to indicate a greater psychic disturbance in integrated Northern Negroes than in segregated Southern Negroes! I believe that the forms of segregation, which so much engross us at the moment and which alone are within the reach of the law to alter, are of tertiary importance, and of transitory nature; and under the circumstances the question arises even more urgently: *Should* we resort to convulsive measures that do violence to the traditions of our system in order to remove the forms of segregation in the South? If the results were predictably and unambiguously successful, the case might be made persuasively. If a clean stroke through the tissue of American mores could reach through to the cancer, forever to extirpate it, then one might say, in due gravity: let us operate. But when the results are thus ambiguous? Use the federal power to slash through the warp and woof of society in pursuit of a social ideal which was never realized even under the clement circumstances of a Chicago or a New York or a Philadelphia?

I say no. A conservative is seldom disposed to use the Federal Government as the sword of social justice, for the sword is generally two-edged ("The Government can only do something for the people in proportion as it can do something to the people," Jefferson said). If it is doubtful just what enduring benefits the Southern Negro would

receive from the intervention of government on the scale needed to, say, integrate the schools in South Carolina, it is less doubtful what the consequences of interposition would be to the ideal of local government and the sense of community, ideals which I am not ready to abandon, not even to kill Jim Crow.

WHAT, meanwhile, are the Negroes actually losing that they would not lose if the government took over in the South? One thing alone, I think, and that is the institutional face of segregation. That is important; but it is in the last analysis only a form. What matters is the substance of segregation. The kind of familiarity that might lessen racial consciousness is outside the power of the government to effect. I would even argue that it is outside the power of the government to accelerate. J. Kenneth Galbraith tells us that the ultimate enemy of myth is circumstance, and I think he is correct. If it is true that the separation of the races on account of color is nonrational, then circumstance will in due course break down segregation. When it becomes self-evident that biological, intellectual, cultural, and psychic similarities among the races render social separation capricious and atavistic, then the myths will begin to fade, as they have done in respect of the Irish, the Italian, the Jew; then integration will come—the right kind of integration. But meanwhile there *are* differences between the races which surely will not be denied by an organization explicitly devoted to the advancement of colored people. The Negro community must advance, and is advancing. The Reverend William Sloane Coffin of Yale University, returning from his whirl with the Freedom Riders, rejected the request of Mr. Robert Kennedy that the Riders withdraw to let the situation cool off with the words: "The Negroes have been waiting for ninety years." Mr. Coffin spoke nonsense, and showed scant respect for the productive labors, material and spiritual, of three generations of Negroes. A sociologist at Brooklyn College only a few weeks before had observed that never in the history of nations has a racial minority advanced so fast as the Negroes have done in America. How far will they go on to advance? To the point where social separation will vanish?

I do not know, but I hope that circumstance will usher in that day, and that when the Negroes have finally realized their long dream of attaining to the status of the white man, the white man will still be free; and that depends, in part, on the moderation of those whose inclination it is to build a superstate that will give them Instant Integration.

The Newest Pamphleteers

By Granville Hicks

A LITTLE while ago (*SR*, Aug. 12), in commenting on Twayne's United States Authors Services, I referred briefly to the University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers. Now four new pamphlets have appeared, bringing the total number to fifteen, and some attention should be paid them. Although the pamphlets, like the books in the Twayne series, are aimed at an academic audience, most of them will interest the general reader who has a little curiosity about the authors he is reading or might like to read.

The editors of the series are William Van O'Connor, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren; and Willard Thorp, Karl Shapiro, and Philip Rahv serve as advisers. Each pamphlet runs to about forty-eight pages and costs sixty-five cents. The general formula calls for a brief biographical account, a discussion of important works, and a critical evaluation. A bibliography, in addition to the usual information, lists current American reprints.

There is naturally a good deal of variation. Some authors lend themselves to brief treatment better than others, and some critics seem to be happy with a ten-thousand-word essay whereas others are uncomfortable unless they have more scope. Of the four pamphlets just published, by all odds the most successful is Louis Auchincloss's "Edith Wharton." Here the right critic has found both the right subject and the right form.

Himself a skilful novelist of manners, Auchincloss is strongly sympathetic to what Mrs. Wharton was trying to do in her fiction, but sympathy never dulls his critical faculties. He is warmly appreciative of "The House of Mirth," "Ethan Frome," "The Age of Innocence," and certain other novels, but he does not hesitate to say that much of the late work was trivial and some of it vulgar. He makes it clear that at her best she is still worth reading, but he does not exaggerate her importance.

It is interesting [Auchincloss observes] that her name should be so constantly linked with James's, considering how different were their approaches to their art. His influence is visible, superficially, in her early work, and, of course, they were both interested in

Americans in Europe, but there the resemblance ceases. James was subtle, speculative, and indirect; Edith Wharton was always clear and to the point. . . . If she must be regarded as anyone's disciple, it would be more accurate to note her relation to George Eliot, whose clear, strong style, broad canvas, and obsession with moral questions always fascinated her.

This is worth saying, for someone is always referring to Mrs. Wharton as James's disciple.

In addition to making sound critical judgments, Auchincloss gives the reader a remarkable sense of Mrs. Wharton as a person. She was surely a formidable woman, extravagantly admired by some of those who knew her but bitterly disliked by others. Auchincloss is cool and detached, sometimes amused but never unkind. The adroitness of his portrayal adds further distinction to an excellent piece of work.

LEON HOWARD is not so fortunate in his "Herman Melville." This, of course, was a frightening undertaking: a major literary figure, a considerable body of work, and a vast critical literature. Professor Howard, who published a biography of Melville ten years ago, clearly found it impossible to say all that he wanted to say in forty-eight pages. He covers a lot of ground, with rather full biographical information as well as comment on each book, but he has to run very fast to do it, and both he and the reader end by being breathless.

Charles E. Shain, no doubt, could use more space in his "F. Scott Fitzgerald" than he has at his disposal, but he is not so harried as Professor Howard. Of Fitzgerald he says at the outset: "He used himself so mercilessly in his fiction, there is often such a complete fusion between his life and his stories,

that conscientious criticism will always have to remember D. H. Lawrence's warning to biographically-minded critics: don't trust the artist, trust the tale." This is sound advice, and Shain does keep his eye on the work, but fortunately he does not neglect the man. Dangerous as biographical criticism sometimes is, it does have its uses. If understanding of a man contributes to understanding and appreciation of his work, as it surely does with Fitzgerald, a critic is foolish to shy away from biography.

On the other hand, it is necessary to remember that the facts of Fitzgerald's life are important only in so far as they served as the materials with which his imagination was engaged. Shain constantly bears this in mind, and he tries to show how Fitzgerald's imagination functioned. He has sound things to say about the novels and stories, and in general the pamphlet serves its purpose.

As a rule, each of the pamphlets deals with a single writer; but there was an earlier pamphlet on "Recent American Drama" by Alan Downer, and now we have "The American Short Story" by Danforth Ross. Downer limited himself to a few playwrights and was able to comment instructively on each. Ross, however, ranges all the way from Washington Irving to Jack Kerouac, discussing more than a score of writers and referring to many others. A critic would have to be remarkably incisive to make much out of such a project, and Ross falls a long way short. What he has to say about individual authors and individual stories is seldom particularly interesting, and sometimes it is wrong-headed. There are few generalizations, and those few are of dubious validity. It seems to me that the editors made a mistake when they commissioned the pamphlet and doubled it when they published what Mr. Ross produced.

ON the whole, however, the editors have done well. If not all the writers are so admirably suited to their subjects as Louis Auchincloss is to Edith Wharton, almost all of them are knowledgeable, and several of the earlier pamphlets are, as Auchincloss's is, distinguished works of criticism. Most of the contributors are teachers, and the quality of their work suggests that in many colleges the teaching of American literature is in good hands. For the general reader, such pamphlets as Leonard Unger's "T. S. Eliot," William Van O'Connor's "William Faulkner," and Philip Young's "Ernest Hemingway" should prove helpful and discriminating guides. In introducing the series, the editors said, "Ideally, of course, each pamphlet should send the reader to the writer's own books." Most of those thus far published are calculated to have that happy result.

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