

LID Speech

I am going to take only a certain amount of time and so I am not going to cover all of the topics that were mentioned. And I think that in a way this is very strange meeting. We are talking about the crisis in the ghetto schools and I think that most of us are here not because of the crisis that existed last year or the year before that -- it has existed for a good many years -- but ~~because~~ we are here particularly because of the dramatic effects of the crisis centered around one particular school - I.S. 201 in Manhattan. And I am not sure as to what extent we can still call this a crisis. The school is open, the children are ~~xxx~~ there, the teachers are there, the principal is there. And there are those few newspaper articles being written about the school. Five weeks ago the Board of Education said that it was going to appoint a ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ task force ~~a~~ to look into I.S. ~~Sxxxx~~ 201 and its feeder schools and ghetto education in general. That task force ^{has not been heard from -- as a matter of fact, it was never named -- so that I.S. 201 becomes part of the long stall in these matters and perhaps this task force will never be heard from. So why should we be here talking about the crisis in the ghetto schools when no one else seems to believe that there is one.}

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I believe that those who ~~believe~~ there is no crisis are making a great mistake. ^{all} ~~xxx~~ Those who feel that ^{all} this has blown over and that this was just one particular school and that's it and that Mrs. Testamark is no longer there or has been voted out and that therefore we don't have to worry any more are completely wrong.

We must look at I.S. 201 and the demands which were presented there because these demands are not just the demands of a particular parents committee. They are demands which are gaining favor within the ghetto community and they are demands which have very widespread significance not only in the school system but beyond it.

Now, what are some of these demands. Well first there was a demand on the part of parents and community groups that they have some very special and privileged positions with respect to the selection of staff. And I might say that when the initial agreement was presented through the newspapers which said that parents and community groups would have the right to prevent the appointment of a teacher or a supervisor to a ghetto school if they had sound and serious objections -- that this particular formulation was one that was supported by the United Federation of Teachers -- and when a number of people, teachers, supervisors and others objected, we turned around and said, "Look, if parents and community groups really do have ^{sound and serious} ~~very serious and sound~~ objections -- suppose there is someone who has been a member of the KKK ~~or~~ (to be rather extreme to start with), or has exhibited in a very obvious way prejudicial behavior or who could be shown over a period of time to be absolutely ineffective and perhaps offensive, why ~~shouldn't~~ shouldn't parents and community groups be able to present their objections?" This is not to say that the accused would not have a day in court. But this certainly is the presentation of objections -- a proper role for parents and the community.

But very soon this question of sound and serious objections became much something/more than that and quite different. The "sound and serious objections" were no longer a question of whether a person was prejudiced or whether he was competent ~~or~~ or whether he was white or black. And the very pressures which were brought to bear to turn a white principal into a black one at I.S. 201 ~~xxxxx~~ could have been and would have been used in other areas of the city and of the country to turn black department chairmen and assistant principals and principals and superintendents into white ones and therefore we opposed this.

And in the midst of the I.S. 201 controversy, the dangers that were involved in that situation certainly were brought forward when the leader of the coalition of Puerto Rican groups announced that he favored a rezoning of I.S. 201 to provide that the majority of the pupils ~~of~~ in the school/^{zone}would be Puerto Rican and as soon as that occurred, he demanded that the principal of the school be a Puerto Rican principal, that so that ~~xx~~ was really a beginning.

Now, there was a second issue that was raised and that is that parents have control over/^{the selection of}textbooks, that they ~~should~~ determine curriculum and that they ~~should~~ actually be physically present in the school to evaluate teachers and the school and to determine methods of instruction. Now here again we could recognize the shortcomings of our textbooks, we know that recently there has been a good deal of research that has pointed out the fact that the position of minorities/^{within}in our history~~xx~~ has certainly not been properly presented. Also there has been a good deal of research showing that textbooks and other material are not particularly effective. But there is absolutely no reason why we should support the idea that a group of parents in Harlem should decidex~~xx~~ on methods of instruction an

and curriculum and textbooks when we would not be willing to relinquish this public responsibility in other communities in our city. To be very specific, I do not see how we could allow the parents of I.S. 201 to exercise these functions and to say that Rosemary Gunning in Queens could not decide on her textbooks and her curriculum or that John Birchers in other areas, whether of our city, our state or our country, could not make decisions there. One could not just turn around and say, "Well, these people can pick the textbooks because we like them and because we feel that they are going to _____ where somebody else cannot pick them." It just doesn't work that way.

And so we have here a second very dangerous situation in which our sympathies with the frustrations which have been faced by a particular group in a particular section of our city could have been, might have been the occasion when all of us surrendered very important rights and where people in ultra-right-wing sections would have said, "If it's good enough for I.S. 201 in the liberal city of New York, then it's good enough for our areas. Our parents can decide how teachers teach and what their curriculum and textbooks are."

And finally another dangerous program which emerged from I.S. 201 and which unfortunately is part of more than ghetto trend which is part of a national trend -- and that is that the public schools can no longer be ~~xxxx~~ managed by the public. They must somehow be given away. They must be run very, very differently. Now if anyone at this time came up with the idea of getting rid of the Post Office, and giving it away would be branded ultra right-wingers; or if any other great public service or public function were to be just given away, there would be all of the liberal forces ^{of the Community} ~~of the city~~ rallying against this notion. But when it happens to education, it is a very popular idea.

So that when Kenneth Clark comes and says that the universities and parents must run these schools, the Board of Education must give these schools away -- this was his proposal -- that the Board of Education should relinquish all authority over these schools and turn them over to parents and ^{community and} ~~university~~ groups -- everyone applauded because everyone knows that the Board of Education is terrible and ~~they xxx for xxx~~ ~~giving~~ therefore giving the schools away would be very, very fine. Of course, I don't know why people applaud so much about giving the schools away to universities. It is these very same universities that are training our present teachers and supervisors. Apparently they have not done such a wonderful job. And now there is this great sentiment that we turn over the schools to them.

And there is a recent proposal by Christopher Jenks, which I understand is being very seriously considered on a national level, and which is part of this movement which has appeared in 201 and it goes something like this: It proposes that we establish a sort of GI bill of rights for pupils in elementary and secondary schools and the notion is simply that our big school systems are very ~~xxx~~ bureaucratic and it is almost impossible to get anything done. Instead of getting something done, why not do something like this. We know that the public supports every child in the city of New York to the tune of something like \$780 a year operating budget. Why compel these children to go to the public schools? Why not give each child a scholarship of \$780 and let him go to either the public school, a private school, a parochial school; and Christopher Jenks says this would be very wonderful because it would mean that a lot of very creative teachers who didn't like the public school system could set up a school of their own without principals and

without superintendents, without bureaucracy ~~and~~ without a Mayor and without a Board of Education and they could advertise and probably run a very good school and could run it a lot more cheaply than the Board of Education does because they wouldn't have the tremendous overhead of administration. And this idea is furthered by ~~xxx~~ writers like Paul Goodman. Paul Goodman talks about his daughter who goes to a school in Greenwich Village where they are able to provide very good education, not at \$780 a child but at \$500 or \$550 a child. Now, if one looks at this for a few minutes and you get the picture of 5¹⁰ or 15 thousand schools being set up in New York City on a sort of free enterprise basis -- you know, the way somebody sets up a shoe store, or Woolworth's. If you are willing to let anybody who wants to put a shingle up establish a school, there will be no protest because, after all, each parent of each child will have a free choice so "Let the Buyer Beware." But if you still think that education is a public function, you are still going to have to develop¹ and some over-all central administrative/supervisory authority to go around and see that all of these little shops that are being set up that are ~~being~~ called schools are rather than cheating, are there for public service rather than private gain. And by the time you are finished, we may very well have a bigger bureaucracy than we have at the present time.

And out of this conflict at I.S. 201 came a cause which was perhaps the most dangerous of all. The Governor of the State of New York in the midst of his campaign announced that he was in favor of electing Boards of Education. And Rosemary Gunning ^{of Dulles} said that she thought that that was a good idea - she was in favor of electing Boards of Education.

And a number of people involved in I.S. 201 situation said that they thought elected Boards of Education would be a good idea. And Mayor Lindsay came down and said that education was really much too important for the Board of Education to handle and that they were pretty bad and that it really was a political function and something additional would have to be done. So that we had for a period of time, in this I.S. 201 situation, a ~~xxx~~ combination of forces within the right-wing community and what one might call left-wing community and within the main stream community of Republican politics within the State an agreement that something different ought to be done about education which would throw it into the political arena.

I believe that this is ~~xx~~ absolutely insane. It is not an insane proposal for Rosemary Gunning because her ilk has done very well in recent elections. But it certainly is an insane proposal for anyone who considers himself liberal or progressive. in matters of education, civil rights or integration. Apparently, people think we have done so well in recent elections that what we need at this point -- we can have a great feeling of confidence that all we have to do is have an elected Board of Education and everything will turn out happily ever afterwards. Absolute nonsense. You can see that what this smacks of is exactly the same kind of unfortunate alliance of extremes which in recent elections has resulted in the defeat of some people who were better than the ones who got elected.

Now, why did all this happen? Why did we have these cries for an elected Board of Education? Why do parents all of a sudden want to select textbooks and teachers, principals and give away schools to universities and to community groups? Of course, there

are certain immediate causes. The Board did promise that I. S. 201 would be an integrated school. The whole notion of intermediate schools and moving into a 4-4-4 pattern presumably for the purpose of integration and yet here the first intermediate school opens up as a segregated school. The Board of Education did wait for a very long time to meet with parents and community groups. It did engage in a long stall. It did make promises which it kept breaking. But this isn't really it. I want to spend a little time here to develop a view as to why this happened which is not an analysis of what happened in the immediate situation in the immediate negotiations. Because I believe that^{if}/the cries and slogans of despair which have emerged from the I.S. 201 situation had not emerged from 201 would have emerged from some other school -- that they were deeply rooted in our recent history.

I want to talk a few minutes about this recent history and talk about a history in which we shared -- the United Federation of Teachers and the Teachers Guild before us and that is that for the last 10 or 12 or 13 or 14 years, liberal groups, progressive groups, civil rights groups, United Federation of Teachers, others, have been engaged in a series of very important battles. They were important because they were necessary for the building of a civil rights movement; they were necessary to obtain the involvement of parents and community groups in the ghetto. What I want to say now and then I will illustrate, that most of these battles were^{ir}/relevant to the quality of education, they were irrelevant to what happened to the child in the classroom; they were irrelevant to what happened to parents in the process and they were irrelevant to the teacher.

Now, let's take a look at some of this history. Back in the mid

1950's the first school boycott took place⁶ in Junior High Schools
~~136 and 139~~
136 and 139 in Manhattan. Paul Zuber led those boycotts. The parents kept their children out and when the Board of Education took them to court, for violating the compulsory attendance law, Justice ~~Frank~~ Polier rendered a decision which said that parents could not be compelled to send their children to inferior schools and these schools were inferior because there was a much larger percentage of substitutes in these schools than in schools which were predominantly white. And this was hailed as a great victory. And the Board of Education promptly met the challenge. They went to Albany, they secured legislation to enable them to give out regular licenses to substitute teachers without any further examination. So that the day after that law was passed, exactly the same teachers were teaching the same children in the same classrooms with the same textbooks and under the same conditions but it was no longer possible for the community to say that there was this huge number of substitutes there because the number of substitutes was drastically reduced by this legislation.

Now I think that in this one particular action we find a rather typical situation in this struggle, that significant facts were pointed to, and very important and significant action was taken but the solution was a mere substitution of slogans for reality because nothing changed in the classroom and nothing changed educationally. Only the labels changed.

What happened next? There was a Higher Horizons program and the original Higher Horizons program was a very good one. It involved the expenditure of large sums of money in relatively few schools, it involved the reduction of class size, a large number of guidance

counsellors, psychologists, social workers, other types of services; it involved a spirit of cooperation on the part of the principal and the entire faculty and very significant results came from that program. Then what happened? Everyone said, well, the articles started coming out in the NEW YORK TIMES, "Higher Horizons is the answer. It's great. This is what does things for children. Let's have more Higher Horizons." And so the Superintendent of Schools announced that Higher Horizons would be expanded to 50 or 60 or 70 schools. He did not say that what he was expanding was a very different program; That Higher Horizons was \$2,000,000 for 3 schools and what he was expanding was \$20,000,000 in a number of schools. And in the school in which I taught the Higher Horizons program worked like this.

In September, the principal and teachers came back to school and at a faculty conference the principal announced that "We are very fortunate, we are now a Higher Horizons school and that means we are able to take two teachers out of the classroom - regular teachers - and they will run a Higher Horizons program. So if any of you have friends who want to be substitutes for the year, please let us know because we ~~xxxx~~ now need two substitutes." We found the substitutes and the two regular teachers spent half the year looking through all the school records, trying to find children who had normal average IQ of 100 or thereabouts but who were two years retarded in reading, because these were the children who could be helped by Higher Horizons. It did take a period of time and after a half year had passed, they came up with a list of 100 children. And they brought these children together in a room very much like this - not quite as huge - and the children were told, "You're all very lucky, you have been selected

for Higher Horizons and we've decided that we are really going to do something for you. We've chartered buses and ^{reserved} ~~chartered~~ rooms in a hotel in Washington, D. C, and you are to be involved in this program. We have the consent slips here. Will you please take these home to your parents and come back with \$27.85 and get your parents to sign this form and you'll go to Washington and your horizons will be lifted."

Well, the children came back in a few days and most of the children just could not afford to raise the money. A few of them could but most of them could not. But it was too late . The buses had been chartered, hotel rooms had been reserved and so the trip was opened up to everybody in the school and 100 children, most of whom had been in Washington with their parents once before, went there again. And this is Higher Horizons.

Now, why did this happen? Did it happen because the program was no good? It did not. The program was a very good program, the original one. We tend to forget that now. Higher Horizons is a joke. Everybody talks about it as a rotten program. It was not rotten -- it worked. It worked yesterday and it could work again. What didn't work was that there weren't enough people around to point to the fact that the program was not merely being watered down but was being changed from a reality to a slogan - or an absolute nothing. And no one looked at the substance of what was happening.

The Board of Education itself did not discover what was happening to this program until we sat around the bargaining table in 1962, and told them what was happening in this particular case.

Then we have another area and this is a great area of conflict too.

It is a very, very difficult one to whip. This is a very simple concept. The children of ghetto schools are not learning. They're behind; they're under-achievers. You and I know that when we went to school we had two kinds of teachers. There are only two kinds of teachers. I have never met anyone who had any other kind. There are good teachers and there are bad teachers. And the good teachers you around and talked about and the bad teachers you and talked about and the teachers you don't remember really must have been very bad. But that's the two kinds. Good and bad. And so if our children are not learning -- then there is a very simple solution. What you have to do is take the bad teachers who are now here in our schools -- obviously our children are not learning because of the bad teachers -- and you take those teachers out and you bring in the good teachers who are elsewhere and that's why the children are learning because they have all the good teachers and you bring them over here. A number of different proposals on that have come k in. There was the proposal, you may remember, several years ago that the good teachers be paid \$1,000 more over here to teach and that was defeated. Then there were all kinds of proposals to transfer teachers.

You know, this is almost the last place in the world where people believe that an entire system works upon the good will or the bad will of individuals. If anybody complained about -- let's take something simple like the Post Office, and said the reason we have good or bad postal deliveries because we have good or bad postmen, you'd say it was ridiculous. You have a system which does certain things and they either do them well or they don't do them well because of the way they are organized. The whole approach ignores the idea that by and large people in institutional situations act and behave in ways in which they are compelled to act as a group. A few individuals can generally rise

above and a few will ^{sink}/~~sink~~ way below what the bureaucratic and organizational demands are. Most people are doing exactly what a system makes them do. I'll get back to this ^{question}/~~system~~ later -- about the good teachers and bad teachers.

Now there is another one of these conflicts, proposals, plans, ideas which is causing a great deal of trouble and I don't think it has been publicly attacked before except maybe by Rosemary Gunning -- in this particular case I'll join her~~x~~ but for different reasons -- and that's the Allen plan. A couple of years ago everybody was marching -- we too -- for more paired schools. Does anybody remember paired schools? ~~Yo~~You know, there are some schools paired - but nobody seems to care about them~~x~~ because that's not the program any more. But the Allen plan -- You will remember that this was presented as a rather brilliant proposal because in this great conflict on whether children should be bused, the other people said ~~xxx~~ you shouldn't bus little children who will be stepped on by big people and therefore the Allen plan was considered a rather brilliant compromise.

The compromise was well, all right, let's leave the little ones alone ~~xxxxxxx~~ -- they will go to their neighborhood schools. But let's switch over to a 4-4-4 system so that the children will be put into integrated situations at an earlier age. Well, let's stop to think about whether the Allen plan can accomplish this. I maintain that it does exactly the opposite. In New York City a school is integrated or segregated largely on the basis of the geographic area which it serves. The smaller the geographic area, the more segregated, and the larger the area the more integrated. When you have a high school system that has three grades in it and you change that to a high school system that has four grades in it so that there are thousands and thousands of additional pupils that must go to the high school,

the only way in which you can accommodate those additional high school pupils is to build additional schools. When you build additional schools, the area which each school covers is a smaller area and is more ~~segregated~~ segregated than the schools previously for the larger area. ~~The high schools~~ In the high schools that doesn't make very much different because for high school students if you put one program ~~in~~ in one school and another program in another school, the high school students will take the buses and the subways, and will get from one end of town to another end of town in order to ~~get~~ get the program ~~which is offered in the particular~~ which is offered in the particular school. But in intermediate schools you are going from a 3 year junior high school to a 4 year intermediate school, which means that instead of 140 junior high schools you are going to end up with approximately 200 intermediate schools, and instead of each school covering 1/140th of the city, it will cover 1/200th of the city. If anyone on the Allen Commission would care to sit down with a bunch of maps to see how this would work out in terms of each school serving a smaller area--as to whether this results in integration or in segregation, I would be very happy to sit down ~~with~~ with them and go over it.

But here is the situation we have: We have a proposal known as the Allen Report, or the Allen Plan, which is supposed to be the answer, which is supposed to provide for integration. And then the first intermediate schools open and they are segregated. And almost all of the intermediate schools that are opening are segregated. And then we blame people for marching on the streets and yelling "black power". I do not think that we can blame anyone, and I think that if anyone of us had been involved in the Harlem community or in Bedford-Stuyvesant--being taken up the mountain ~~in~~ in each case to see the "Promised Land", to see what

is just ahead--and then there turns out to be no "Promised Land", I think we too would be ~~xxx~~ talking about black principals and racism in text books and curriculum, and things of that sort.

Now why has this occurred? It has occurred because there has been a concern mainly with slogans and not with reality. None of these things, whether it was Mr. Zuber's boycott, or the Higher Horizons expansion, or switching one bunch of teachers to one place and another bunch to another place, or the Allen Report, or -- I could mention another 5 or 10 such programs, --they had no effect whatsoever within the school system, except to move ~~fx~~ one thing from one place to another place without in any way doing anything of educational significance or qualify. At no point during the situation was any group acting as a watchdog; at no point was there any effect on what happened within the classroom.

Now where does that leave us? What can be done? We are very much in the situation, you know, of the old revolutionary party that yelled "Revolution! Revolution!" one day, and when the revolution came along, and the next day everybody goes to work on the same subway, to the same factory, collects the same pay check--the only difference is that there is a different picture on the wall. This is the kind of thing that we have been going through in the school system for a little more than a decade, and this is the reason for the frustration.

The reason for IS 201 is that in that school district 93% of the children are more than two years behind, and it is possible to project at this point that 93% of the children graduating from the schools in East Harlem will end up as drop-outs, will end up on welfare, will end up on dope, will end up in crime, will end up in all those other channels of non-success. And what we have to do at this particular point is not to enter into some other kind of sloganized approach which will work out a very nice, neat compromise and

everyone will have their pictures taken, and yes, this is the latest victory, and everybody is happy, and this is what we are going to do--that is not the thing to do; that will only lead to another, a more violent 201.

Actually the thing to do now is to forget about slogans, forget about public relations, and to look at reality; to look at what happens to the children and to teachers in the classroom, which is the place where either the child "gets learnt", or he doesn't. And you can change to 4-4-4's or to 3-3-3's or to 1-1-1's; you can give teachers different certificates, you can do all kinds of different things, but unless something different is going to go on in that classroom, in that relationship between teachers and children--then the rest of it doesn't make any difference at all; it's just that somebody will be temporarily happy or sad.

Now I think that it's possible, it is possible, for those who have any understanding, who have ever seen a classroom--for those who are willing to listen, I think that it is possible to develop the major thrust of what a program that would have significance--what such a program would look like.

In the first place, I think we must start with absolute honesty. We cannot turn to the parents in Harlem. As very frequently happens, the parent who is very concerned comes in once a month and says to the teacher, "How's my kid doing?" The teacher says, "Fine. He's doing fine--good pupil". The parent comes in again; he's still doing "fine". And at the end of the year the child fails. Now all that teacher meant was that the kid wasn't making too much noise.

Or, you get the dozens of drop-outs--and I mean this--maybe more than dozens--maybe hundreds--of the child who learns that he is not going to graduate from high school on the day before graduation, because he has not completed his course in physical education because he did not bring in his dental note. That is not funny; I have met these kids. And what does this do to a child in Harlem, who has the ability and the courage to go

through the school system and then have this happen to him.

Now I think we have to start with honesty, and honesty means that teachers must turn to the parents and say: "Before I came to this school I wanted to do all kinds of marvelous things; I had all kinds of ideas about class newspapers, about projects, about trips, and then very shortly I found out that these things do not work. The principal, who said his door is always open--well, I went to him the first time I had some trouble; he came in and observed me 4 or 5 times and asked me to make out detailed lesson plans, and to fix up the bulletin board--to do a hundred other things. Instead of helping, I found that I had three times as many things to do, because I went to him and asked for his help. That help I have learned to do without and will do without; and whenever I tried to teach there was noise, there were problems, there were a few children acting up, and so I haven't been teaching for a long time when I learned certain techniques, not of teaching, but of surviving within the classroom. And that's what I am using now, not teaching techniques, but survival techniques. I am learning that if I give children certain types of work to copy and then give them good marks for it, they will do it, but if I do something else I will have problems. I am learning that if I find out what 2 or 3 kids who lead all the other kids--if I find out what they want, and if that's what I do, then I don't have any trouble. But if I don't do what they want me to do, then I have a lot of trouble. So I do what they want me to do. And in some classes we watch movies all day, because that's what the kids like; that's what keeps them quiet and if the kids aren't quiet, the principal isn't happy. He comes and gives me a bad mark. In other schools where we are near a park, we go out to the park all day and we play games and play ball. In other places we give them things to copy. "

Now not everyone does this, and this is a very difficult thing for a teacher to do. It is more difficult for a teacher to do things the wrong way than it is to do it the right way. Teachers do not want to use this means

of surviving. They want to college, they were educated and they think of themselves as teachers, but most, on the basis of their college education, do not know how. Therefore, we are asking that within each school, a structure be set up where those teachers who somehow, all by themselves, find out how, and they know how, and they are doing it and are teaching, that there be ~~xxxxx~~ a structure set up so that those teachers can teach the others, who want to learn. We call it by a fancy name; we call it an internship program, and maybe the teachers will feel like doctors-- you know, there's a prestigious element involved--but it could be called anything. The point is that there must be a training program in teaching, which is conducted by not officials and not by universities (and the universities could learn a great deal by coming into the public schools) but by the teachers who are successful and who know how.

Now in order to do this kind of thing, in order to have a training program that means anything, in order to be able to help people, people have to have some time. You can't just throw them into the school situation and say "Do it". They have got to have time to plan, time to talk to the more experienced teachers. They should not start out with a complete program.

Furthermore, there should not be any situation in which a teacher feels he does not have to perform because there is nobody to replace him and that's the situation we have at the present. When you have a school system with over 1,000 uncovered classes every single day, this is very, very bad for the human psyche. You will not get people to work unless he feels that he is in some way dispensible and replaceable. Unless there is someone waiting, there is an incentive not to do very much in many situations. And so, when it comes to the question of providing an ample supply of teachers, whether it's to reduce class size or to provide time for the new teachers to plan and to work with other teachers, or whether it's just to say that if you do have X number of teachers who obviously have not made it and are not competent

and should be let go, we will ~~be~~ at least have somebody else who can take the place of such teachers.

We are now in a situation where there is no such supply. And so an answer must be found to this, and we believe that the system which New York City uses at the present time to recruit its teachers is a really ancient procedure; it's medieval; it goes back to the depression period when there were 10,000 people waiting around for every job in the school system.

The facts are that the New York City colleges are not producing, and have not produced, a sufficient supply of teachers for the New York City public schools, and therefore, it is necessary to say that the Board of Examiners should go out of business as examining agent for the New York City teachers, and that New York City ought to 'use the National Teacher Examination which is given throughout the country, in every major city and in every campus in the United States, so that instead of having a few thousand teachers eligible for jobs in New York City, ~~which is not very competitive,~~ we expand our possible list to tens of thousand sof teachers all across the country, ~~which is competitive~~ ~~competitive~~ The objectivity of the system would be maintained; there would still be an examination system, there would be no politics or patronage, but we would get away from New York City alone. The benefits would be many. The New York City public school system employs more teachers than the 11 smallest states in the United States, and we are getting them all from the city colleges. We can do it. By going across the country we would attract thousands of teachers with other backgrounds, we would become less provincial, and we would have a truly competetive system, because instead of having 3,000 teachers competing for 5,000 jobs (that doesn't sound very competetive) we might have 50,000 teachers competing for ~~45,~~ 5,000 jobs. That would be competetive and we would once again be attracting the highest to our school system.

Now let me go to a third step, and that is the whole question of supervision. There is no supervision in the public schools of New York City at the present time. Teachers don't get help, they don't get supervised; they do, at times, get snoopervised--that is there are pages on which a little report is written and put into a file, but there is no time to really improve the structure, and that is because the supervisors have all decided that it's a lot easier to order books and to write up schedules and to be a petty clerk, than it is to actually provide leadership within the schools.

We believe that administrators ought to be a separate division in our school system, and that no professional, no educator, no one who is able to teach or to supervise, ought to be pulled out to write schedules or order books or do business management. We ought to go out and get people at the salaries they earn elsewhere, and put them in the schools to do this kind of job.

Secondly, we feel that supervision has become just absolutely too roo remote from the process of teaching and that there is a way of remedying this. We believe that if teachers are to be involved and really concerned and really interested in the success of what goes on in a particular school, then you can't have somebody coming from above to run the whole thing. There is no reason in the world why supervisors in every school should not be elected by the tenured staff within their school, subject to the approval of some city-wide unit, so that in case some particular school may have made a privileged choice, that could be remedied. There is no other way of getting involvement on the part of workers, or a teacher who is really allowed at work to participate in decision making; there is no way to get teachers really, actively--very actively and violently interested in what is going on in their school, than to have real decision making power and responsibility.

I might also say, parenthetically, that this ~~particular~~ particular election

procedure would probably produce, in a period of a week or two, greater integration of supervisory staff than the present system will produce in a long, long period of time. There is absolutely no evidence to show that the present system produces superior supervisors. The only thing that one can say about the examination system is that it is better than having some political hack appoint somebody; that is about the only thing one can say. Also, it proves that the fellow who gets to be principal has a very good vocabulary.

Now a few other aspects of this program. There is universal agreement that the emphasis in education must be on early childhood. That if you start trying to save somebody at 17 years old and still absolutely illiterate, yes, there are such miracles produced, but they are very rare, very expensive, very unlikely. It just isn't the way to do it. Recent research on Head Start is absolutely right. Everybody who has had anything to do with education has known about this: You can't do something with a child for 6 weeks or for 8 weeks or for 10 weeks or for half a year or for a year, and then throw him into the usual rotten situation and expect that that little head start is going to have permanent influence. And what we must insist upon is that the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, during which the child either learns to read and write and count, should learn with all the other children, makes that child feel that he can or cannot advance. Absolutely nothing must be spared during that period of time in terms of leadership, in terms of money, in terms of anything else, and we have programs. We have a program for that group. We call it our More Effective Schools Plan. It calls for very small classes, it calls for supportive services. It is a young plan. It has been in operation for only two years. It might be possible to devise a similar plan with some slight re-arrangements, but basically we are kidding

ourselves if we think that a child who has failed and who hasn't learned a thing is going to come into I.S. 201 and whether there is a black principal or a white principal, or who selects textbooks, the children of that school are going to be brought up to par. Any one who has had anything to do with children in school systems knows that at the time a child has reached 5th grade, if that child has not made it, the chances of that child being ~~literate~~ literate, are extremely small.

I am going to go to one additional point, which is a very important part of this whole picture and this whole program, and that is the problem of the severely emotionally disturbed child. It's a very unpopular thing to talk about. But if we are going to reduce class size from 34 down to 10, and if the class of 34 has three very emotionally disturbed children, if we are going to put the same three children in the class of 10, you might as well save your money, because if you put 3 teachers into that class with 3 disturbed children, those emotionally disturbed children will have 3 teachers and the other children won't have any teachers.

Teachers are not equipped and principals are not equipped and our school system is not equipped to deal with the severely, emotionally disturbed child. There was a recent article in The Village Voice--a very good one called "An Open Letter to Harlem Parents" which dealt with the problem of emotionally disturbed children, which unfortunately put it into sort of a black power context; that the only reason that the teachers did not care ^{was} ~~xx~~ that the children were Negro and Puerto Rican.

Well, I have been in-- have served in lower class white schools with large numbers of emotionally disturbed children. Teachers have acted exactly the same way: They are afraid of them, they make deals with them, the emotionally disturbed kids become the monitors, they are the ones who decide as to what will be taught in class because if you don't make an agreement

with them, they are in a position to raise holy hell with everybody else. Unless we come to the realization that some special facility must be crecauted, because the school is not doing that emotionally disturbed child any good, the school is preventing any other children from learning and the school is preventing the teacher from teaching ^{and is driving} ~~xxxx~~ a very significant number of teachers out of the schools--they just can't cope with it.

Now there is, and I think we must admit, a racial angle to this question of emotionally disturbed children, and that is when you go into a middle class white or middle class Negro area, and there are ~~xxxx~~ more middle class white areas than middle class Negro areas, the parents themselves generally take their children out of school and provide for some kind of special facilities when their children are veyy disturbed, whereas the economics of 'it works differently within the ghetto, where certainly no parent could afford to send their child, you know, some of these schools go into \$3,500 - \$4,000 per year, with one teacher to two children, with a psychologist, and so forth, so that we are dealing with a very real problem which does have a racial aspect related very closely to the economic aspect, but without dealing with this, there really is not a great deal of hope for the schools. You can adopt almost everything else, and if you don't deal with the problem of the emotionally disturbed child, then the schools are going to be ineffective. ~~I~~ I want to add one other thing to the picture, and that is that the UFT should accept, ~~xxx~~ and I hope, will accept--they haven't had an opportunity yet to vote on it. There are aspects of the program that we have accepted--~~x~~ that is the concept that the teacher should not be alone in the school. It is possible to have a number of people within the community serveas school aides, serve as assistant teachers, to do all kinds of chores, including some which are semi-pedagogical, and which serves really in a number of different ways to improve education. It provides for a way of individualizing instruction because if you got all the money tomorrow, all the buildings tomorrow, you still would not have all the qualified teachers

tomorrow. It serves in a social function outside of education, but related to education, to provide for a large number of economic opportunities for the unemployed, which has a very direct bearing, but more than that it would provide for ~~xxxxx~~ literally, across the nation, ~~xx~~ millions of Negro, Puerto Rican and Mexican--whatever the minority group is in the particular area--of people coming into the classroom to see what the problems are so that there would be some support for the problems, whether it be understanding of the problems faced by the teacher in the schools, and there would be support of particular campaigns to get improvements. It would be, actually, a great lessening of the hostility of the gap that now exists--this great dialogue that exists. A teacher tells the parent "It's your fault because you have too many children. You don't have godd books at home", and the parent turns around and says "You are one of the bad teachers", and so forth and so on. This is a very productive dialogue and goes back and forth, each showing that its the other that is not willing to try.

Now, I have significantly left out integration, but I am not leaving it out, I am putting it in. I want to say very, very frankly that I don't know anyone who seriously talks about massive, wholesale, large scale, realistic integration with the city schools, on a quick basis.

People talk about quality education, and some of the people around IS 201 are talking about "We are a colony seeking our own self-determination, and we want the white teachers and principals, and storekeepers and landlords, and everybody else, to get out and let us manage our own country", but nobody talks about integration. I want to say this. It ought to be talked about, because even if it isn't possible by 4-4-4, or by the Princeton Plan, or by other such things, I think it is possible to create large numbers of pre-school centers which would attract white, Negro and Puerto Rican families because here is a service which is being provided to parents which ~~xxxx~~ they don't have at the present time, and in the few cases where it has been tried

out, it works.

It would be possible to set up summer programs in places that are properly located to make sure they're integrated. It would be possible to set up summer sleep-away camping facilities, where many parents who want to take advantage of 'the situation economically, because they don't want to pay the high prices on the commercial market, would be willing to do so, if quality were guaranteed. I think that it is possible, and I think it is important to do it because I think the children learn more from each other than they learn from their teachers or their parents, and if we believe that they learn ~~from each other~~ that much from each other, then you just have to provide a situation where lower class children are going to meet middle class children and they are going to meet upper class children, because those exchanges are extremely important.

I believe that it is not possible to do it during the school day; there are hundreds of ways in which it is possible to create incentives for both whites and for 'Negroes to do--to create a program which brings people together. It's being done--it's being done in too few places.

In conclusion, I think that IS 201 has provided a great lesson and the lesson simple is this: That teachers on the one hand and parents and community groups on the other, have sufficient power to prevent each other from getting anything done. We were able to prevent them from doing what they wanted to do, and if they try hard enough, they will be able to give us, in spite of all the powers which _____ described for us in the introduction, there is enough power in parents as a community group to see to it that the union's program is not adopted.

Now what this means is that both sides have veto power, but neither group has enough power to be able to get anything done positively, and this means something in terms of the political realities of the kind of structure that now has to be organized. It means that in spite of the recent conflict, and
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in spite of the fact that we still really can't sit down and talk rationally about who is going to run through the schools and select books and methods and that kind of thing, but if there is to be any hope for the school system at all, that hope depends upon a partnership between teachers, parents, and community groups and that such a partnership is one which the Board of Education would not be able to withstand. Now the problem is, what is the role of the parents, ^{and} community groups; what is the role of teachers as professionals?

I maintain that parents have the right to full access and knowledge as to what is happening to the pupils. They ought to be able to know what the pupil achievement rates are, both individually and on a school-by-school basis. They ought to have relevant comparisons. They ought to be able to sit down with the professionals in the school and with professionals outside to find out what ~~xxxxx~~ is going wrong; why is it that our children are not achieving here what other children are achieving there. They ought to be a permanent watchdog to make sure that schools are functioning and that programs are honest and that they are not watered down, and that slogans are not substituted for reality. And they ought to be partners in the political pressure that is necessary in order to get anything done. They ought to leave to the teachers and to the professionals the question of selection of a particular method or the presentation of alternatives which have to be used; they must recognize that no one can ~~x~~ teach--whether in a kindergarten or in a university--in a vigilante atmosphere where everyone runs through deciding what is good and what is bad.

I think, finally, what is to be recognized is that we are really starting from the beginning; we must start from a position ~~were we~~ where we don't blame each other--teachers and parents--but we have to understand that we have all been caught up in a kind of whirlpool, we have all been sucked in and we have all been destroyed by a system which has been bad. But it is precisely because it is the system which has done this that we cannot blame each other. But we can change that system.

And I think that now that I am finished, the thing to say is that what is happening here in education is really, in many, many ways, parallel to what Bayard Rustin wrote about in his article on "Civil Rights and Protest Politics", that we have gone through a period of protest, we have gone through a period of securing certain ideas, certain principles, and getting people to march together and getting people involved who were not involved before, but we are now entering a completely different period. Slogans will not do, public relations will not do. We must actually sit down together and see what will work in the classroom in that relationship between teachers and their children.