AFTER NEARLY 20 YEARS

Prince Georges Takes Every Means To Avoid School Integration

By BLAINE TAYLOR

The Prince Georges County school desegregation case is one of the most important in the nation since the U.S. Supreme Court's historic 1954 decision outlawing segregation.

Attorneys for the NAACP and the American Civil Liberties Union charge Prince Georges has taken every means it could to evade complying with the order, and has done so successfully for the past 18 years.

Federal Judge Frank A. Kaufman Dec. 13, gave the county 10 days to present to him a completed plan for desegregation that will definitely involve busing.

The judge stated that hearings need to be scheduled to see if the plan will hold up under Supreme Court guidelines, adding that he looks forward to signing a final court order late next week.

The suit, filed last March 29, represents parents of eight school children from the county, and it charges "The stipulated and therefore undisputed facts evidence to dismantle their dual school system."

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The plaintiffs asked for desegregation to be implemented during the 1972-73 school year, and the county was ordered to produce a plan to do exactly that, by last Aug. 31, for implementation in September, 1972.

When Aug. 31 arrived, the county hadn't completed its plans and asked for a delay.

The U.S. District Court here ruled that desegregation of senior high schools could be delayed until September, 1973, and that this applied only to the 12th grade.

Grades K-11 would have to be shifted by Jan. 29, 1973, and completed plans for this move were to be turned in to Judge Frank A. Kaufman by Dec. 4.

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Plaintiffs' attorney filed an appeal of this decision Sept. 22, with the intention of getting immediate desegregation that month of all grade levels, but this was denied.

When the plans were submitted, Judge Kaufman was reportedly "angry" over what he termed "slovenly and incomplete" proposals, and he held the county in contempt of the earlier rulings.

Just this week, the county once again asked for another delay, to desegregate the entire system by next September, and also asked the U.S. Justice Department to intervene on its behalf.

The Jan. 29 deadline has still to be met for the elementary and junior high schools, and also the September cut-off for the senior highs.

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On Monday about 800 irate county parents confronted Gov. Mandel on the steps of the Statehouse in Annapolis, demanding that he intervene.

The governor stated he sympathized with them and that he thought busing a bad means to achieve racial integration and quality education.

He further told the group that, after Judge Kaufman made his final decision, "We will immediately turn that over to the state attorney general to see what legal action can be taken."

One major aspect of the prior rulings is that no school in the county have more than 35 per cent of its student body black, and this means busing of students, perhaps as many as 12,300, which and overall transfer of 30,500.

Attorney Gerald A. Smith says "The county buses 50 per cent of all of its students anyway, and 70 per cent of its high school students."

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At stake in the case is the 10th largest school district in the nation, and numerically, one of the biggest in the state.

By population, Prince George's is one of Maryland's most important subdivisions, with 660,567 people, leading Baltimore County by some 39,000 and second only to Baltimore City, which has 905,759 residents.

The county borders on Washington and has 232 schools, with 173 elementary, 41 junior highs and 18 senior high.

The school system contains 162,828 students, of which 36,450 (or 22.4 per cent) are black, and 126,378 (or 77.6 per cent) are white.

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The 18 senior high schools are: Bladensburg, Laurel, Bowie and Suitland; Parkdale, Riverdale; Potomac, Oxon Hill and Friendly, Oxon Hill.

Also: Frederick Douglass and Largo, Upper Marlboro, the county seat; Surrattsville, Clinton; Fairmount Heights and Central, Seat Pleasant; Northwestern, Hyattsville; and Gwynn Park, Brandywine.

Plus: High Point, Beltsville; Duval, Lanham; and Cross Lane, Camp Spring.

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Upper Marlboro has two elementary and one junior high schools, while Laurel has 12 elementary and four junior highs, and Suitland 33 elementary and nine junior highs.

Others are located in the area's major cities and towns: Hyattsville, Surrattsville, Oxon Hill and Brandywine.

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Only one member of the county's school board is black: Jesse J. Warr, Jr.

The rest of the nine-member panel, appointed by the governor for a six-year term, are: Chester E. Whiting, Mrs. JoAnne T. Goldsmith, A. James Tolato, Dr. Rodney W. Johnson, Mrs. Sue V Mills, Dr. J. Wrighton Robertson, Mrs. Ruth S. Wolf and Graydon S. McKee.

The district covers 485 square miles and its operating budget for 1972-73, the suit says, "Is in excess of $159 million."

The system has 7,995 teachers, of whom 1,357 (or 19 per cent) are black, and 6,638 (or 81 per cent) are white.

The document alleges "The Prince Georges County schools are characterized by an intense pattern of isolation of black pupils from white pupils."

It further states "Sixty-one per cent of all black pupils attend schools with student bodies greater than 50 per cent black, and the other 40 per cent go to schools which are greater than 80 per cent black."

In contrast, 47 per cent of the white pupils attend schools with student bodies greater than 90 per cent white, while "Only 49 of the 222 schools (or 21 per cent) have student bodies which are from 10 to 30 per cent black."

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The parents who filed the suit seek "Declaratory and injunctive relief to remedy racial discrimination resulting in segregation of children and faculty in the district's provision of public education."

The attorneys have documented the course of Prince George's actions since 1954 to put off obedience of the order.

"The county had a duty to dismantle its dual school system and to commence operating a unitary system.

"The district has failed in that, and has, at all times since 1954 and to date continued to operate a dual school system."

The first evasive action was the 1956 adoption of a "freedom of choice" plan whereby "Each pupil was given the option of electing to transfer to the school nearest to where he lived or, in certain cases, to any other school."

This plan continued in effect until 1964-65, and the effect was "To maintain intact the racially-segregated school system which had existed."

As a result, over 82 per cent of the district's black students went to schools which were 100 per cent black, and over 73 per cent of the whites attended schools over 95 per cent white.

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The "geographic attendance zone" method of segregation was in effect during 1965-72.

In this system, the student attended school in the zone in which he lived, again preserving the pre-1954 situation intact.

Two years ago, the U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Department told the county "The plan for school desegregation now in effect in Prince George's cannot be considered adequate to meet the requirements of the law."

HEW offered aid to the county but was rejected, leading HEW to bring compliance proceedings against administrative non-compliance the defendants under the 1964 Civil Rights Act to end the district's eligibility for Federal funds.

This proceeding is still in progress, with the county getting financial aid to this day.

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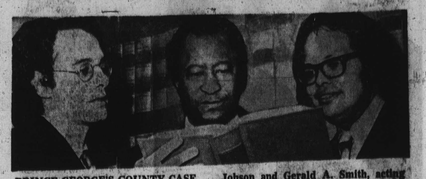
"The pattern of site selection and school construction in the district has served to perpetuate the dual school system," attorneys Kenneth L. Johnson, Gerald A. Smith and Richard V. Falcon charge.

"Thus of the 232 schools, 217 (or 93.5 per cent) were so sited and constructed that when they opened, they did so as schools

(Continued on Page D-46)



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY CASE LAWYERS — (From left) Richard V. Falcon, representing the American Civil Liberties Union; Kenneth L. Johnson and Gerald A. Smith, acting on behalf of the NAACP. (AFRO photo by I. Henry Phillips, Sr.)

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THE AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS, in honor of their 80th anniversary, invite editors and reporters of high school and college newspapers and magazines to participate in a seminar December 27 and 28, 1972.

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Place: Home office
628 N. Eutaw Street
Office of the Chairman
of the Board

Registration will be $1.00 and must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from your advisor or school counselor. Participants must have a knowledge of typing.

Registration closes December 21, 1972. Write Seminar for Reporters and Editors, Attention Mr. Frances Murphy, 628 N. Eutaw Street, Post Office Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

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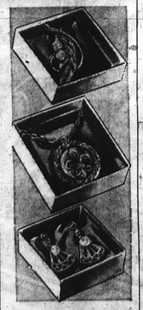

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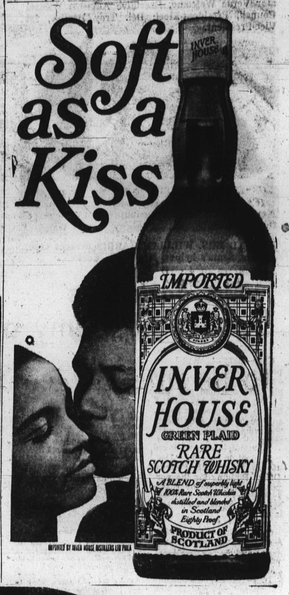

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Students win prizes in CCB AFRO contest

CCB ESSAY WINNERS in the college's contest on the "Afro-American Newspaper's Unique Contribution to the Community." Conducted by the CCB news bureau, the contest was held in connection with the college's salute to the paper on its 80th anniversary. (From left, insert) George Bauer, who wrote on AFRO's war coverage, and Abram O'Niel, who told about the jobs the AFRO provides and its news coverage and campaigns. (From left, seated) Patricia Charles, runner-up; Pamela Norris, third prize. (From left, standing) Christopher Mavergeorge, second prize; Don Chambers, runner-up; and Ralph Davis, first prize.

By SIDNEY KOBRE

The journalism and English students at the Community College of Baltimore wrote essays in the contest, "The AFRO-AMERICAN Newspaper's Unique Contributions to the Community."

The contest was held in conjunction with the college's recent salute to the newspaper on its anniversary, and three top prizes were awarded by CCB's News Bureau, which also gave gifts to four runners-up.

Each student selected a different phase of the subject to develop, but all the essay-writers showed not only a clear understanding of the value of the AFRO to the people of Baltimore, but expressed their ideas in effective language.

Top winner Ralph Davis, a journalism student, pointed out in his essay that because there are blacks and whites in America, there is need for a black press.

"The AFRO speaks for the voiceless and the powerless" he wrote.

"The black press can convince white America that blacks can mobilize their own talents, their own genius, and take fate in their own hands."

'GIFT OF THE MONTH' WINNERS—At Provident Hospital where head nurse Mrs. Sarah Lightfoot (far right) rewards her staff members for perfect attendance by presenting them with a small gift. The project was initiated Nov. 1 and seen here are the first winners (from left) Victoria Knighton, Sylvia Johnson, Walter Blair, and Nancy Bennett.

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National Urban Fellows seek applicants here

Applications are being sought in the Baltimore area by the National Urban Fellows, a nationwide program designed to recruit and train urban administrators and to open top leadership opportunities in government for minority group members and women.

Persons now applying will be candidates for the fifth Fellowship year which begins July 1, 1973 and ends June 30, 1974.

The National Urban Fellows are men and women in their twenties and thirties, mainly from ethnic minorities, who are selected competitively on the basis of their leadership potential.

The core of the Fellowship program is a 10-month on-the-job assignment as special assistant to a mayor, city manager or other urban administrator.

Contact National Urban Fellows, P.O. Box 1775, New Haven, Conn., 06506, or call (203) 624-5168

Service academy applicants to be interviewed Saturday

Congressman Parren J. Mitchell (D-7th) has announced that his Personal Academies Interview Board will meet on Saturday, Dec. 16, in room 1018 Federal Office Building for the purpose of interviewing applicants for the military, Navy and Air Force.

Upon the recommendations of the board, the Congressman will make nominations to the service academies sometime in January of 1973.

In expressing his thanks to those serving on the board and to the applicants, Congressman Mitchell said, "this action reflects the very essence of the democratic process because it involves real citizen participation in the decision making process."

The board will be comprised of the following persons: Senator Clarence Blount, Delegate Hilderardies Boswell, Mr. Joseph Bracey of Social Security, Mr. William Bryant of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Reverend Harold Carter, Dr. Cleveland Chandler, Attorney Paul Cockrell and Dr. Iva Jones of Morgan State College.

Other board members include: Colonel Albert J. Genetti, Mr. Robert Griner, Counselor at Douglass High School, Colonel William (Box) Harris of the Baltimore City Police Department, Mr. John Kaminsky, High School Counselor, Mr. Earl Lawrence, President of Student Government Association, Morgan State College and Delegate Lena K. Lee.

Also, Mr. Stanley Mazer, Counselor of the Community College of Baltimore, Miss Linda Smith, President of Student Government Association at Coppin State College, the Reverend Marcus G. Wood and Mr. Timothy Wilson, of Morgan State College.

The board will be interviewing the following applicants: David Albaugn, Pervis Bates, Ronald Britt, Donald Brown, William Irving Chatman, Michael Crimmons, and David Cole.

Also, Eric Douglass, Cleveland Evans, Stephen Griffin, William Griffin, Corwin Jennings, Jeffrey McDaniel, Samuel B. Meene, Marvin Smith, Ronald Smith, Walter Terrell, George Terry, Ralph Westcott and Calvin Williams.

Herring Run school council meets Dec. 18

The second Council on Education meeting for the year 1972-73 of the Herring Run Junior High School, No. 77, will meet Mon., Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m., in the school

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Rights board settles two cases a month

By SCOTT PONEMONE

Exclaiming she is "markedly and painfully dissatisfied" by the way the state Human Relations Commission handles bias complaints, Commissioner Lane K. Berk at Tuesday's meeting strongly urged a speeding up of the process.

Or, she added, she may openly join the citizen groups that have complained to her it frequently takes over a year to settle discrimination cases lodged with the commission.

Mrs. Berk, a Baltimore County representative, told the AFRO in her 3½ years on the commission she has never taken a public stand on her dissatisfaction against this govern-appointed body.

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Emphasizing she first will work closely with Chairman Jacob Edelman until all internal means of improving the system are exhausted, the commissioner remarked any public stand she might take against the commission may result in Governor Mandel dismissing her.

Mrs. Berk asserted the last five-month report shows the commission staff has been able to settle less than two employment bias complaints a month while receiving about 50 new cases a month.

She claims she has a complaint processing plan in mind that would increase staff performance by a rate would "stagger the imagination," but she refused to disclose her ideas at this time.

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Her outburst during the regular monthly meeting led to a lengthy discussion with several motions raised but none were passed.

Among the suggestions that arose were the commissioners should come together and revise the complaint procedure, the body should hire an expert consultant, and the commissioners should have monthly meetings with the senior staff.

The idea that was accepted was that of Executive Director Treadwell Phillips, who proposed inviting Peter Robinson, director of local and state agencies for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, to the January meeting to discuss generally the commission's problems.

4th Demos install officers

Officers of the Fourth District Democratic Organization will be installed by Rev. Jessie Boykins at the club's 1500 block W. North Ave. headquarters at 8:30 p.m. Dec. 18.

The annual Christmas party will follow the affair to be attended by black elected officials as well as other elected officials from city and state.

The organization also has a Christmas party for children at its headquarters at 4 p.m. Dec. 16.

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Officers to be installed are William Council, president; Del. Troy Brailey, vice-president and special assistant to the president; John Thornton, second vice-president and other vice-presidents are Mrs. Mary Murray, Mrs. Beatrice Lewis, Bertram Dorsey, James Harvey, Richard Greene, James Crockett, and Earl Jordon.

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Other officers are Mighnon Atkins, executive secretary; Mrs. Mary Murray, recording secretary; Mrs. Grace Burkett, assistant recording secretary; Mrs. Anne Mae Pinkett, financial secretary; Charles Michael, treasurer; councilwoman, Mary B. Adams, padiamentarian; Chaplain, Rev. James Wise; Rev. Bishop Morton, assistant chaplian; Mrs. Louise Farr, sergeant-at-arms; members at-large are Mrs. Grace Burkett, Percy Watson, Earl Brown and Mrs. Nini Scot; Rev. Olin Moyd, chairmand of the board and Senator Verda Welcome is executive advisor.

Moved furniture while wife was gone from home

Mrs. Margie Dean Bennett, 32, 2220 block E. Chase St. was granted a divorce on Tuesday from her husband, Franklin Bennett, 31.

The couple was married March 21, 1959 and has one child. Court records show Mrs. Bennett, a nurses assistant, has custody of the daughter.

According to court record Mr. Bennett left her home for a couple of days "because of domestic arguments."

When she returned, Mr. Bennett had removed the furniture from the house.

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