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From: "WHAT THEY ARE DOING TO YOUR CHILDREN", by
Dr. Max Rafferty, pages 216-218.

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READ: There is a recent trend toward using the schools to solve problems that really have nothing to do with the schools. I am speaking specifically now about ethnic imbalance--racial segregation. There is no question but that many schools, and not only in the South, are almost completely segregated. This is bad--bad for the children, bad for education, bad for the future of our country. But in the vast majority of cases the schools are not themselves at fault in this matter. In scores of northern and western cities, schools, that had always served completely integrated neighborhoods suddenly found themselves segregated a few years ago because of the great tide of Negro immigration that swept into these population centers and found itself funneled into segregated neighborhoods.

Because of man's inhumanity to man, because of the refusal of certain Americans to sell or to lease or to rent housing to certain other Americans, because of the inability of Negroes to get jobs that paid more than a pittance, because of a lot of reasons, neighborhoods became all black or all white, and the schools--as they always do--reflected the makeup of the neighborhoods they were originally created to serve.

I hate racial prejudice. But I do not believe that we are going to eliminate it by doing what some cities are doing now--creating an artificial ratio of Negroes to whites in a given school by bussing a certain selected percentage of the pupils across huge cities over roaring freeways, through crowded industrial areas, miles away from their homes. This would be bad for education too. What happens to a child's right to participate in athletics, to help with the school yearbook, to work on the school newspaper, to go to the Junior Prom, if he has to take that long bus ride home as soon as the last bell rings? What happens to parent-teacher conferences when the two are separated by impossible transportation and distance factors? What happens to P.T.A. membership and attendance? What happens in the event of a natural or manmade calamity, with anguished parents trying to get to terror-stricken children across the chaos of a great and suffering city?

The concept of the neighborhood school is older than the nation itself. It must be preserved. This does not mean that the schools cannot help in studying the problem of de facto segregation and putting into effect wise and prudent policies designed to help solve it. It does mean that we had better not try to cover up the ugly ulcer of neighborhood segregation with a pretty bandage labeled artificial school integration. Instead, I think we had better devote all our brains and our ingenuity and our good will to solving the real, underlying problem--neighborhood segregation.

Bussing children miles away from a segregated neighborhood for a few hours each day and returning them to the same segregated neighborhood every afternoon is not going to do anything except make some of us feel nice and comfortable and encourage us in the belief that the problem has been solved and so it's not necessary for us to do anything about it anymore. The

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problem will not be solved so long as any American family is prevented from acquiring housing in any neighborhood where that family wants to live.

Schools exist to teach. They are built to pass on the accumulated cultural heritage of the human race to all the children of that human race. They are not designed or intended to solve great socio-economic problems that originate outside the schools and that are beyond the proper scope and function of the schools. What they can do to be of help, they should do. What they cannot do, they should not be expected to tackle."