

Report
of
The American Church Institute for Negroes

Our report to the General Convention of 1949 necessarily followed the reorganization of the Institute so closely that little opportunity had existed to observe the results of that development. Now with three years of actual operation under the new organization it is our pleasure and satisfaction to record it as a most gratifying development in the long experience of the Institute. The Institute is better able to meet the challenges of the changing trends in education for the Negro peoples in the areas where the schools are located.

The major problem shortly to confront these schools and colleges which are directly associated with the Episcopal Church is that of accommodating a rising enrollment of students.

The United States Office of Education has prepared a report on facilities required to meet this test based on studies of the high postwar birth rate. The report indicates that the proportion of students enrolled in non-public schools will increase from the present 12 per cent of the national total to 13 per cent in 1957. In terms of Protestant private schools this means they will need to raise an estimated \$206,000.00 to meet their classroom needs alone.

Another and more immediate influence which will affect college enrollments is the enactment by the Congress of The Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952 - an extension of the "G. I. Bill of Rights" first adopted in 1945. It is estimated that

225,000 veterans of the Korean war will be eligible to enter colleges this fall with Government assistance.

Educators generally agree that Congress has taken an important step towards equalizing educational opportunities by passing this legislation. Some educators regard the new G. I. bill as a first step towards a more comprehensive scholarship program which will eventually reach needy students, whether veterans or not.

Competent authorities have estimated that the peak influx of students under the new bill will come in the fall of 1953 and remain fairly constant thereafter for several years. The change providing for direct payment of the benefits to students enrolling under the Act of 1952 encourages a belief that colleges with modest scales of fees, tuition and other charges will probably attract a larger proportion of the veterans seeking advanced educational opportunities. Schools and Colleges partially or entirely supported by denominational bodies fall naturally into this classification.

Negro education has made great advances in the south in recent years although in seventeen states segregation is still a matter of law while the attitude of the people has shown a phenomenal change in this respect. But despite the admission of Negro students on the graduate level to universities formerly open only to white students, the situation while gradually showing improvement, is far from completely satisfactory as a Christian ideal. Over 8,000,000 Negroes still reside in that part of the nation where segregation laws are in force in varying degrees.

If the majority of the children of these families are to receive any elementary, secondary or collegiate education they must attend some type of separate institution since it is obviously impossible for many reasons, one being financial, for those families to send many qualified students to institutions in other sections of the country.

Our segregated institutions currently exist as Negro schools because there is need to provide opportunity for education: not to support segregation but because of segregation; and that those young Negro people who attend them can have as fine an educational opportunity in a Christian atmosphere as is possible to obtain.

Moreover, in the future when segregation no longer prevails, these colleges will be known as good, capably administered institutions open to all who can qualify for enrollment without regard to race.

To this end the policy of the Church should be one seeking to improve and develop these schools and colleges now operating in the south to the maximum degree of efficiency while simultaneously acquiring and improving the personnel in accordance with the highest academic standards.

The American Church Institute for Negroes is dedicated to the furtherance of these principles and earnestly solicits the support of all peoples to their attainment. Our programs of the past and those for the future have been designed to advance these objectives in the interests of good citizenship and to develop a Christian relationship among mankind.

This report is respectfully submitted on behalf of the Board of Trustees of The American Church Institute for Negroes consisting of:

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