

School Board Studies Plea to End Segregation

Orleans parish school board members had before them today a petition signed by 179 persons calling for immediate racial integration in public schools.

A group of delegates led by Rabbi Julian B. Feibelman presented the document to board members at their meeting last night.

The petition asks the school board to "honor the laws of the United States" and make plans for immediate integration.

It concludes:

"We beg the school board to instruct the superintendent of schools and his staff to study the local scene immediately with the purpose in mind of drafting a plan by which integration or desegregation in schools of Orleans parish may go forward as soon as possible."

Members Silent

Board members did not comment on the presentation of the petition nor did Dr. James F. Redmond, school superintendent.

Rabbi Feibelman, in remarks prefacing the petition, referred to the school board's recent hiring of an attorney to defend it in lawsuits stemming from segregation. The rabbi said:

"Some of us feel that this is a usage of the taxpayers' money designated to circumvent and defy the law as now written in the decision of the supreme court of the United States on matters of segregation.

"In this sense it would appear to be a misuse of public monies."

On Aug. 29, board members decided to hire Gerard A. Rault, lawyer, as special counsel in segregation matters.

Resolution Cited

The resolution provides that Rault be paid \$25,000 for services from the time of his appointment until June, 1956, and also be paid \$150 daily for each day he spends out of the city in connection with these services, and for each day in court, or in taking testimony or depositions.

Rabbi Feibelman told board members, "Our primary purpose, however, is to urge you gentlemen to face the issue of segregation in a more realistic sense than that which would specifically

imply your determination to defy it or to ignore both the existence and its validity."

He said respect for the law "would warrant the further study we ask you to make."

Other Action

The school board took these actions on other matters:

1. Approved a plan for salary increases to personnel.
2. Authorized preparation of drawings and specifications for the proposed Joseph A. Hardin Elementary school.
3. Authorized advertising for bids for building Joseph Bohn Junior High school.
4. Appointed the firm of Dreyfus, Seifert and Gibert as architects for a \$975,000 addition to L. B. Landry Junior High school.

Dr. Redmond said the salary hike plan calls for increases of \$20 to \$30 yearly for 2500 teachers, raises for nurses, custodians and some supervisors, directors and co-ordinators.

"Too Much at Stake"
In his remarks accompanying the petition calling for racial integration, Rabbi Feibelman also said there "is too much at stake for our city and state merely to close its eyes, harden its heart, and ostrich-like, pretend that no such issue exists."

He said the persons signing the document were "chagrined to call attention to the fact that all children applying for admission into our schools in New Orleans today must present a notarized statement that they are white."

He added: "This would hardly appear, in the light of the proud history of public education, which is one of the keystones in the American Republic, to be consistent with a democratic spirit or even of a humane policy.

"Such a practice we have never countenanced before, and to be brutally frank, we are ashamed