The Transition of the Predominantly Negro College

L. Richard Meeth

CHAPTER XXI
THE TRANSITION OF THE PREDOMINANTLY NEGRO COLLEGE
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_The Sword and the Stone_ by T. H. White humorously chronicles the tale of young Arthur. Camelot had no king and all the warring barons and knights gathered at the cathedral to see who could pull the sword from the stone and become ruler. Each tried in vain until at last young Arthur stepped up and easily removed the blade, the symbol of truth set free. The adventures of King Arthur and his knights stand among the great stories of the English-speaking world but, as the account goes, none of it would have come to pass had not Arthur innocently and quietly pulled the sword from the stone.

Arthur's great feat is not at all unlike the task of the predominantly Negro college in past decades. In order to provide quality education, in order to make an impact upon the larger community, in fact, in order to survive, many institutions have performed feats very similar to Arthur's. They have had to wrest a unique purpose and general educational leadership from the stony environmental and communal complexities which still encase many of them. This volume is in a real sense published as a testament to the permanence of the predominantly Negro college in transition — that the sword will be fully and finally pulled from the stone and held shining before the people as the symbol of a right and noble endeavor.

The tertiary education of Negroes has moved forward in giant strides in the last ten years and the end is not yet in sight. Colleges which even five years ago were doomed to mediocrity now have new hope, others on the verge of collapse have found healthy paths of service through a change in purpose or merger. Nearly every college offering two, four or more years of education primarily to Negroes is in the throes of great change — building and expanding, seeking new avenues of service, considering organic or functional merger or determining ways to strengthen basic programs and purposes. In spite of great diversity, predominantly Negro colleges and universities do possess one element in common — they are all in transition, on the move, changing, usually (though not always) improving and growing.

Change is a theme which appears repeatedly in the earlier chapters of this volume, uniting descriptive analysis and social research conclusions in recognition of the massive transition still facing the Negro student and institution today. The nature of that change and its concomitant difficulties and advantages constitutes the subject of this chapter in the concluding section.

The nature of change is such that conflict is inevitable once the flood gate has been opened. Every significant change, either personal or social, contains elements of both the old and the new. In other words, no institution such as the predominantly Negro college loses its former identity entirely nor retains it entirely in the process of change. There is always a radical continuity about institutional
change which sometimes deceives those most involved in effecting it. The old always conditions the new. At the same time there is usually a radical discontinuity in significant change that breaks entirely with the past and often appears to be unrelated to it. This paradox of the simultaneous presence of continuity and discontinuity causes conflict which may result in positive growth or serious setback depending upon the understanding of those responsible for leading an institution through a period of transition as disruptive as that now being experienced by the predominantly Negro college.

Change as profound as that which re-directs social institutions faces conflict of pace also. Revolution and evolution oppose each other in major transitions. Of course, there will be conflict between those who want to move slowly into a new position and those who want to embark on a sudden and highly divergent new path. But beyond this, the nature of change again, paradoxically, contains elements of both evolution and revolution. Closely allied with the concept of continuity, some aspects of every revolution move more slowly than others, shaped sequationally rather than intuitively imposed. Likewise, even the process of evolution contains sudden surprises which leap logic and sequence to form apparently unrelated new species.

That the predominantly Negro college is caught in this conflict is evidenced by Richard Plaut in his chapter "Plans for Assisting Negro Students to Enter and to Remain in College" and by Gilbert Ware and Dean Determan in their chapter "The Federal Dollar, the Negro College, and the Negro Student." Both speak of the "Negro Revolution of 1963" and yet both describe the slow progress and obvious conflict over permanent gains, the effect of the past on the present and the evolution of funds to support the revolution of ideas.

Another facet of change which causes conflict centers in people and institutions that are rarely prepared to change. The nature of revolution is such that some parties involved are not able to face change because they have designed the system being attacked and construe change as personal criticism. Institutional leaders also are often unready for change because they have not been involved in making decisions about it. Change is imposed on us all and we resist. When institutions are caught in a revolt against entrenched social customs, parts of the institution may be ready to change and can accept its consequences but forces mitigate against acceptance resulting in a third conflict area.

The fourth arena of conflict lies within the persons involved in changing situations and is more imagined than real. The nature of change is such that it rarely equals our greatest fears. There appear to be poles or extremities of change within which an individual or institution moves that are seldom reached. Trauma, defensiveness, anxiety, rejection and other similar responses to fear arise in institutions as well as persons and tend to conflict with change. Recognition that the fear of change usually exceeds its reality is difficult for a social institution to achieve causing flights of conflict that are hard to handle rationally.

Conflict growing out of these four basic aspects of change always has both positive and negative results. The transition of the predominantly Negro college is no ex-
From my viewpoint at least four impediments to healthy change have arisen which grow directly out of the conflict integral to the nature of change.

The first negative outgrowth of the transition of the Negro college centers in the increased militancy of Negro youth, especially students. Opposition to discussion of racial questions or emphasis on race in any way, even efforts to overcome racism has grown strong among Negro high school and college students. When approached about racial issues an increasing number of students state positions similar to the Black Power movement — they are tired of talking, tired of the subject, disenchanted with the prospects of overcoming prejudice through education or other open channels of bi-racial communication and much more willing to fight than face continued defeat. A rapid transition with overtones of revolution never supplies the promised rewards as fast as the young expect them, resulting in a disenchantment with the prospect of change.

Increased faculty rigidity has been a second negative response to change in predominantly Negro colleges. Educational equality brings with it a single standard of measurement which has a traumatic effect on those who find it difficult to meet new requirements that tax their preparation or accept uniform standards such as national achievement tests and accreditation. The response has been varied; many faculty members have made every effort to accept change but a body large enough to retard progress exists in most predominantly Negro colleges. Usually composed of older members of the faculty these persons react to change with a rigidity that blocks effective faculty leadership at a time when the faculty most need to fill a long existing void. Faculty resistance springs from fear of change more than any of the other sources of conflict.

A third negative response arising from recent changes in predominantly Negro colleges centers in the leadership of these institutions. The Negro educational and social leadership has become increasingly divided over courses of action which lead to the most productive change. Some college presidents and deans have held to a position considered essentially a betrayal by younger students and faculty, often in order to keep the doors of the institution open at all. Others have failed to provide a greatly needed role model in this social upheaval and have indeed betrayed their institution. Still others have chosen to compromise their beliefs for a more moderate change. Some have been short-sighted, some prophetic but most have simply attempted to carry the weight of leadership alone and either broken under the weight or found themselves no longer the real leaders of educational change. The transition of the predominantly Negro colleges is so great that very few men or women are single-handedly capable of carrying the burden of leadership through the radical discontinuity and revolutionary processes that have ensued.

Students, faculty members, and administrators have each fallen prey to conflict involved in transition. Whole institutions also are subject to similar conflict. The fourth negative effect of change focuses on the general defensiveness of the small predominantly Negro college. As the spotlight has grown brighter on these institutions, many have responded by de-
Transitions of predominantly Negro colleges have been vociferous but not one has passed judgment on any aspect of institutional failure not already fully understood by those who love their colleges and who have sought desperately to preserve them. The defensiveness is as unwarranted as are the other negative outcomes of change but nonetheless real and disruptive. Because of their defensiveness some small predominantly Negro colleges are being bypassed for financial assistance. Because of their entrenched provincialism, which grows out of fear of change, some institutions have virtually lost their opportunity to be a part of the larger stream of American higher education through merger, consortia, or new service roles.

These four negative outgrowths of revolutionary change in the situation of the predominantly Negro college have by no means cancelled the tremendous positive effects but they may have caused serious setbacks for the education of Negroes and for the whole civil rights movement.

Of course, what in the present appear to be setbacks may in the long view turn out to be only detours, the long way around or even advantages. Even though these negative responses have contributed to breakdowns in communication, have brought about the loss of valuable friends for these colleges and have resulted in closed eyes and deaf ears among some Negro leaders and institutions, the thesis of this chapter still maintains that negative response is one kind of natural outgrowth of arching change, should be expected, tolerated if not encouraged, and creatively handled by those who are more comfortable with change. The prophets of ancient Israel who were champions of change could prophesy the negative responses to the changes taking place in their world, not because they were soothsayers able to see the future but because their insights into human nature and social history revealed to them the obvious and repeated consequences of change. Those prophets of the Negro revolution in America have the added responsibility of turning the negative into the positive, the setbacks into advantages.

At least four positive results of change already exist within the predominantly Negro colleges not the least of which is the large opportunity for turnover in educational leadership. The numerous va-
cancies in college presidencies and deanships attest to the fact that the old leadership is retiring or resigning for positions in government, integrated colleges, private foundations and business. Having carried the battle to the forefront of American politics the old leadership is yielding to younger men and women with newer kinds of insights, broader understanding of cooperative team leadership and greater ability to creatively advance the cause of the predominantly Negro college in a period of massive social change.

One of the few shortcomings of this yearbook, so deeply concerned with the changes taking place in the education of Negroes, is its failure to find any responsible research relating to the present Negro and white leadership of change. Study of the nature of the transition and leadership of these institutions is a deeply needed piece of the total descriptive analysis, for in each lies some of the most significant answers for the future of the education of American Negroes. The burgeoning new leadership, different in kind and degree from the old, is a positive result of this transition.

Another advantage of the transition of the predominantly Negro college centers in the greatly expanded examination of the educational and social problems facing these institutions. Every chapter of this volume attests to increased kinds of research and analysis now taking place which was not present even four years ago. All the current studies of the higher education of Negroes assembled in 1963 for the publication of The Predominantly Negro Colleges and Universities in Transition by Earl J. McGrath filled only one large file cabinet drawer. New studies now appear weekly but so much of the research on Negro/Caucasian educational differences repeats itself. As great an advantage of change as increased examination of a problem area may be it is regrettable that so many individuals do the same studies over and over without knowing of the duplication and without being a part of a "grand plan" of attack.

In spite of this duplication, the increased study has resulted in numerous action programs which have greatly benefited the predominantly Negro colleges. Most important, however, is the recognition among these institutions that serious continuous examination of problems and areas of interest is an important step toward full implementation of positive change and a responsible way to administer any institution of higher learning.

Increased sources of support, the third advantage of change, closely relate to the expanded examination of Negro students and colleges. Because of the spotlight focused on these institutions in recent years by McGrath and others, the Federal Government and private foundations have greatly increased their financial support and interest. Extensive grants have been made to individual colleges, to students across the board and for special short-range programs throughout the nation. No other shortcoming in our national heritage has received such massive review, interest and support as has the education and socialization of the disadvantaged. The predominantly Negro college has been in the middle of this restoration movement and has probably benefited more than any other single social institution. The prospects for the continuation of this pattern of support appear to be high for several years to come.

Effective change must be undergirded with sufficient funds to overcome previous
difficulties and to implement new concepts until they become self-supporting. Funds have not been forthcoming to the extent that such a deep social problem has been uprooted but they have been given freely enough that there is little likelihood of retreating to any of the socially stagnant forms of education of even five years ago.

The fourth significant advantage of the change occurring in the predominantly Negro college is reflected in the growing number of friends gathering to the cause. People who four years ago were saying that the higher education of Negroes was a professional dead end street are now designing “grand plans” for the salvation of faltering schools. People of previously limited vision, having watched the Negro revolution parade down their street for ten years, are beginning to join the last band wagon and responding to the needs of these colleges. Pioneers and zealots have increased; skeptics and late-comers have been converted as though to a great religious revival. Friends of the education of Negroes in high and low places, concentrated and scattered, rich and poor have given themselves to effect change. By and large the transition of the predominantly Negro college has attracted responsible, wise persons which makes their friendship an advantage of change.

Surely, other advantages and disadvantages could be compiled. This is not a comprehensive listing but only four of the most significant, far-reaching positive and negative out-croppings of a pulsating institutional transition. Although the negative aspects of the transition have been deep-seated and detrimental they have been offset by the positive.

The most important truth of the change taking place in the predominantly Negro college is that the transition is not over. Not only is it not over but the end appears to be nowhere in sight. From within a revolution or even evolution it is very difficult to know if the change is well underway, at midpoint or beginning the denouement. We can only conjecture that the transition of these colleges is well underway and perhaps past the midpoint but we know that it is by no means anywhere near the end. Forces of ferment have been loosed that are not ready to be stilled. More negative and more positive results are still to come. Discussion with any five sophomore Negro students makes it immediately obvious that the transition is not complete.

Perhaps, however, somewhere near the middle of the great change the time has come to take a new turn. By looking at the nature of change and its advantages and disadvantages we can see why things have occurred as they have, we can evaluate and analyze but now we must attempt to change change. We must try to structure the rest of the transition by providing more of a “grand plan” of attack and by recognizing that if we do not the whole transition will very likely fall far short of the hopes and aims of all who have given life and years to its fulfillment.

Revolutions, as Arnold Toynbee points out, have the nasty habit of turning in upon themselves. Much like floats in a college homecoming parade they start out grandly, pass the judge’s stand with every tissue in place but by the time they reach the football field moving parts are broken, overhead wires have knocked off heads, the band has gone for a hot dog and floats have rammed one another in a milling, turning crowd of spectator and
spectacle. It was great while it lasted but was always over long before the main event — the homecoming game. The Hungarian Revolt is much more the prototype of revolutions than the American Revolution. The “Negro Revolution” faces similar risks.

Further, there is the real possibility that this present transition has squeezed all the value to be gained from revolution and now should forego this phase of change for quieter paths. If Toynbee is right and revolutions do turn on their middles and if the transition of the predominantly Negro college is anywhere near midpoint then, indeed it would appear wise to abandon revolutionary tactics for other ways.

Since change contains both revolution and evolution perhaps a concentration upon evolutionary methods would be more beneficial. Unfortunately, evolutionary change rarely "gets there." Evolutionary change moves too slowly, mutates too often, looks too much like its ancestors, and is too optimistic and liberal to ever change the education of Negroes sufficiently to permanently repair the damages of the past 200 years. Belief in progress by development, "It takes time," has been the theme song of the antagonists of Negro equality who still wanted to be elected and represent "all the people."

Procession, catastrophe, mutation is the order of change — revolution and evolution intrinsically woven together. One without the other or even one overbalanced by the other causes optimum, positive change to falter. How then can the predominantly Negro colleges change change? How can they structure the remaining momentum in the present transition in order to gain the maximum value from it? These can be done by restructuring, not the nature of change, but the focus of change, turning from the past emphasis on changing institutions to an effort to change persons.

Social institutions, especially educational ones, are natural habitats of prejudice and the entrenched home of resistance to all change. That the predominantly Negro colleges have been able to make as much progress as they have is a marvelous accolade to their perseverance. Part of the reason that this transition has gained all it can from revolutionary tactics is because these institutions per se have been stretched as far as some of them can stretch without a respite to recoup forces and reinstate some stability. To continue to focus on the institutions of higher education alone will increase fear, frustration and the negative aspects of change.

Focus on people, such as presidents, deans, individual faculty members and students, trustees and staff, will require some restructuring of the transition of the predominantly Negro colleges. First of all, there is no better time for the design of a “grand plan” of research and action programs by foundations, government and collegiate leaders. Second, there are several critical factors which must be considered as axioms in the second half of this transition. Third, though no one individual can propose the shape of the structure for change, at least some key areas might be suggested for solution in the "grand plan."

Throughout the preceding chapters reference has been made to two factors which are critical points in any restructuring of the transition in the education of Negroes. The development and strengthening of the self-image and concomitant motivation
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of the teacher and the taught must be the aim of any new plan. Self-image relates closely to learning ability, motivation and retention but is especially crucial in change which focuses upon the person. How a person feels about himself greatly conditions the ways in which he relates to others as well as the ways in which he learns. Thus, the seven areas suggested as keys to restructuring change aim at strengthening the self-image of the Negro teacher and student in higher education.

To many critics of American education a focus on the self-image of the person rather than upon achievement in a democratic society is fallacious. But to the majority of Negroes involved in the educational process, achievement is not a reality until they are able to accept themselves in a rapidly changing, increasingly singular society, as being of as great worth as all other citizens. Acceptance of one’s self of course depends to a great extent upon the way in which others accept you. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara in a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in August, 1966 said it well, “In a poverty-encrusted environment . . . achievement is seldom advanced as a value, only because it does not exist as a realistic possibility.”

One of the most important areas of concentration is a restructuring of change in the development of a greater number and wider range of role models. Sound role models are more crucial to the predominantly Negro college today than money for any other program. There simply are not enough to go around. The drain of outstanding faculty and students to predominantly white Northern colleges coupled with the increase of vocational choices for Negro college graduates has worked a severe handicap on many institutions that are left with limited leadership for a wide range of roles. Probably more students are drawn into professions on the basis of individuals they have observed than through any career day or vocational counseling. Likewise, students take their cues on the relative value of academic pursuits against other pursuits from model students. Faculty and staff are not exceptions in motivation. They too are moved by the models of deans and scholars in their midst.

How are individuals recruited as models? They aren’t. Rather, college leaders must seek special means for enlisting outstanding faculty and students by upsetting salary and scholarship scales if necessary, by changing the curriculum in such ways that it has a broader appeal and more opportunity for research and individual study, and whatever other adjustments need to be made to insure outstanding personalities in the college. Alumni visitation and programs featuring close community contact, such as advisory councils of professional citizens, can supplement the models which a college can supply. Other techniques such as exchange of faculty and students, allow the flexible institution to recruit models which will enhance the self-image and person-to-person interchange of faculty and students.

A shift in admission policies and programs in the predominantly Negro college constitutes a second key area of restructured change. The admission counselor who promises that his college will provide every individual with exactly the kind of education the person thinks he wants, does the prospective student and his institution a grave disservice. Admission’s programs in these colleges, and
many others in America, need to concentrate upon vocational and educational counseling as the kingpin of their services. They need to change the focus of their policies from a straight mathematical formula on achievement scores and class rank to a careful review of the total person. In other words, they drastically need to shift from a desire for the sure achiever to a concern for the potential student. Great differences exist between achievers and seekers that most admission’s officers never grasp. Of all the administrative offices of a college that have massive contact with students, none is more important than admissions which introduces the student to the curriculum and initially colors his self-image in relation to the colleges’ expectations of him.

In spite of the middle-class demeaning of remedial type educational programs which denies them as college level study, they are of primary importance in shaping changed persons in most predominantly Negro colleges. Accrediting agencies have begun to accept the necessity of additional programs to upgrade deficient students and, in fact, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools sponsors several through its Educational Improvement Project. Remedial type programs are going to have to be a part of the educational experience of many Negro youth for at least a decade and should be made and recognized as an integral part of the curriculum in these colleges.

The chapter “The Educational Outlook for Non-Whites in Florida” states a good rationale for continued remedial study but to attach the remediation to the high school instead of the college misses the point. For students terminating their education at high school, remedial study would seem unnecessary. For those going on to college, remediation is most effective in the collegiate setting as an educationally integrated part of the total curriculum. Just as four years of general education spread through the full experience of students has received the greatest following and seems educationally sound, so remedial study might be spread over at least two years by reshaping the curriculum in ways which introduce various skills and material gradually.

The Florida study is also quite right in that the lack of special skills is one of the critical problems holding back Negro youth. Predominantly Negro colleges concerned about individual students will wisely adopt throughout their curriculum the new effective techniques of remedial study that some Upward Bound Projects have demonstrated, programmed learning laboratories and exclusive emphasis for concentrated periods of time on verbal skill building. Remedial study has been a great issue in this transition period which, when positively resolved, can be a most effective support to restructuring change and aiding individuals to move toward personal excellence.

The Federal Government has been keenly interested in the improvement of teaching in predominantly Negro colleges as a key to breaking the cycle of poor quality education. Much of this emphasis has centered on supporting programs for enlarging the preparation of faculty members. Although the most massive efforts to date have not had time to demonstrate their effectiveness there are reasons to suspect that additional preparation will not result in teachers who are more highly motivated and better models for their students. In addition to preparation the new
emphasize in restructured change should also be upon faculty attitude. Again, McNamara in his VFW speech says it succinctly, "Too many instructors look at a reticent, or apathetic, or even hostile student and conclude: 'He is a low-aptitude learner.' In most cases it would be more realistic for the instructor to take a hard, honest look in the mirror and conclude: 'I am a low-aptitude teacher.'"

Faculty graduate preparation, workshops, and in-service training should concentrate more on the way of thinking about knowledge and persons than on gains in knowledge. The mode of learning which places emphasis on the relationship of ideas also emphasizes the way in which people receive, retain and relate ideas. The ways people learn are increasingly understood to depend upon the attitudes of the instructor and his perception of himself and his students. Any new transition of the education of Negroes must seek ways to avoid blocking learning by faculty attitudes which discredit the student rather than seek every avenue for his self-fulfillment.

A fifth focus of restructured change should concentrate more upon student aid than upon institutional aid. In the first place funds given to students rather than colleges are more equitably distributed but more importantly, it is the most effective, direct and quick way to aid the total effort of higher education in private and public colleges. Further, student aid supports the worth of the individual person by placing trust in his ability to use wisely public funds for the common good.

Aid is especially needed for the average student in most predominantly Negro colleges. Superior students have many hopes for financial assistance and the weak students have been assured governmental support but the average still fend too often for themselves. More grants for B and C students who adequately fulfill requirements would relieve many of them of necessary work responsibilities and enable them to place more energy on the learning process. Coupled with a new admissions policy and procedure, a new financial aid concept of incentive awards to average students and general concentration of aid to students rather than institutions would support this transition.

The integration of student populations, not just institutions, constitutes the sixth area for solution. A healthy climate for learning is no more promoted by ethnic homogeneity of students than it is by social or economic homogeneity. The greatest chance for change to take place depends upon the greatest exposure to new ways of viewing life by people committed to them.

Of all the suggestions for restructuring change, this one will be most difficult to fulfill as Dr. Allen well knows from his chapter "The Possibilities of Integration for Public Colleges Founded for Negroes." Widespread attendance of white students at predominantly Negro colleges appears to have little to do with efforts made by the institutions to attract them and much more to do with the climate of socialization in the particular state or part of the nation. More white students attend colleges originally all Negro in cities than attend in rural areas, many more attend in Northern and border states than do in the deep South. Colleges must prepare themselves for integration by the utilization of common standards, exchanges and other means suggested by Dr. Allen, but not expect change in this area too soon.
Contrary to popular statement, time does not heal wounds without new experiences and the new experiences will be difficult to provide — white students probably will not be flocking to the predominantly Negro colleges any time soon and those students who will be drawn by low cost and close proximity will continue to be relatively few and highly homogeneous.

Institutions should ready themselves for integration of students, however, for preparation does make a difference. In areas where white students do attend formerly Negro colleges, they do not attend all of them equally but choose those which best serve their needs. Special scholarships, concentrated recruitment, special educational programs and other techniques used in reverse by Northern universities to attract Negro students can be applied toward the enrollment of at least a five to ten per cent white student population.

The final key area for restructuring change centers in an old American myth of education, naively set forth by Thomas Jefferson — that a man who knows right will do right. One of the grandest errors of social change is to suppose that people educated to the truth will do anything about it, or, if they do something, will act on the truth they have learned. Acting on truth requires commitment to it. Education is not the panacea for racial equality or even for educational equality. In fact, education can never be substituted for commitment; though it may model it, examine it, describe and project it, education always remains a second level, long-range tool of social change, even of educational change.

Acknowledging the limits of education to provide racial equality and change will help individual students gain perspective on the real value of their education for social mobility and vocational stability. To understand that achieving an education places the responsibility upon the individual to use it for the common good, leads to quite a different curriculum than one which assumes that education automatically produces responsible citizens and social equals. Such a curriculum will be more honest because it does not hold out false promises; it will be more free because students will be able to openly face racial conflict; it will be more demanding because it focuses on responsibility rather than privilege; and it will be more person-centered because it recognizes that knowing the truth and doing the truth is not a stimulus-response relationship. Only recognition of the proper role of education in human experience can ever lead to the complete, purposeful, transition of the education of Negroes into equal education for all peoples.

For eleven years the advocates of Negro equality have petitioned for equal educational opportunity. The day has come for a new position. The future of the predominantly Negro college no longer depends upon its ability to provide equal opportunity for students but upon its ability to provide genuinely equal education. The difference between equal educational opportunity and equal education is the difference between D-Day and VE-Day in World War II. The tide of battle has been turned by the Federal legal and political resolution of the segregation issue but the war cannot be over until full educational equality is achieved.

After equal educational, social and economic opportunity have been fully
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achieved and the marchers, martyrs and hecklers are silent the Negro people will still not necessarily have equal education. Even when admission is legally secured into every institution of higher learning in the land the preponderance of Negro youth may not be able academically to remain more than one semester in the majority of these colleges and universities because they have not been prepared to compete.

The transition is passing the midpoint. The struggle for equal educational opportunity is drawing to a close but the struggle for equal education is just gaining momentum. Equal education is a key to the achievement of social and economic equality and the kind, quantity, and quality of the education the Negro receives in the predominantly Negro college will importantly condition his own welfare as well as that of the entire American society. What each individual is able to achieve in the realization of self, in the level of his accomplishments, in civic responsibility and economic efficiency is the human capital he brings to society at large. The mandate is clear. The predominantly Negro college can take the initiative and lead its students to equal education or join the ranks of 14 institutions which have closed their doors in the last year.