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THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT NEWSPAPER'S ROLE IN MODERATING NORFOLK,
VIRGINIA'S 1958 SCHOOL DESEGREGATION CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT NEWSPAPER'S ROLE IN MODERATING NORFOLK, VIRGINIA'S, 1958 SCHOOL DESEGREGATION CRISIS

Alexander Stewart Leidholdt
Old Dominion University, 1991
Director: Dr. Maurice R. Berube

This dissertation explores the critical role played by the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot newspaper's editor, Lenoir Chambers, in moderating public opinion during Norfolk, Virginia's, 1958/1959 public-school closing.

In 1958 the nation's attention was focused on Norfolk. In an attempt to stymie judicially mandated integration, Virginia's Governor J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., supported by the powerful political organization of United States senator Harry Flood Byrd, Sr., ordered the city to close its public schools.

Norfolk was a major urban area. Over ten thousand students were displaced by the state action; and four months after the closing, three thousand students were still receiving no education. Massive resistance transformed Norfolk into a civil-rights battleground where massive resisters were pitted against pro-school forces and the courts. In February of 1959, Norfolk's schools were reopened and Virginia's policy of massive resistance was broken. Although the process by which the schools were integrated was far from orderly, the transition was characterized by debate, political maneuvering, and judicial action--not violence.

The Virginian-Pilot served as an important influence in

facilitating this peaceful integration. The Pilot, alone among Virginia's major white newspapers, urged compliance with the Supreme Court's mandate in Brown v. Board. Chambers was later awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his four-year editorial campaign opposing massive resistance.

Data for this study was drawn from a series of oral-history interviews with key actors in the school closing (including all of the surviving members of the Pilot's editorial and publishing staffs), a wide variety of personal papers and documents, the Virginian-Pilot's editorials and reportage, and a review of secondary sources.

For my mother and father,

Louise C. Leidholdt
and
Edwin M. Leidholdt, Sr.

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I am indebted to a number of people for their assistance in the development and preparation of this dissertation. Dr. Maurice Berube, a prolific researcher in urban services and educational sociology, worked closely with me for four years, guiding my research and analysis. His contributions have been immeasurable.

Robert Mason, Lenoir Chambers's successor as editor of the Virginian-Pilot, was an invaluable source of information. Mr. Mason was kind enough to review my entire manuscript for accuracy.

Dr. Peter Stewart, the historian on my committee, provided important insight into Virginia history and massive resistance. Dr. Charles Smith, another committee member, furnished moral support and expertise on communication theory.

I also wish to thank my mother, Louise Leidholdt, a skilled editor and proofreader, for her review of my manuscript.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines the activities of the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot's editorial page editor Lenoir Chambers and the role he and his staff played in influencing public opinion during Virginia's "massive resistance" to public-school integration. This dissertation attempts to fill a historical vacuum with a detailed account of the exemplary journalism practiced by a major southern newspaper at a critical time in our nation's history and the impact of that paper's stance on the resolution of a bitter controversy.

This study is of further significance because it examines a pivotal moment in our nation's racial history. The peaceful reopening of Norfolk's public schools portended the collapse of Virginia's massive resistance and considerably advanced the momentum of the civil rights movement on a national level.

Journalistic media can have a profound influence on public opinion and policy. Operating in a responsible fashion, the media can influence compromise, moderation, and justice. Irresponsible media can encourage extremism and prejudice.

The murder of Carol Stuart in 1989 provides an example of the consequences of irresponsible reporting. Boston's major newspapers, the Globe and the Herald, despite obvious contradictions in the testimony of Stuart's husband, immediately circulated the story that a black man was the perpetrator. The Stuarts were depicted as "starry-eyed lovers out of Camelot cut

down by an urban savage" (Time, 1990, January 22, p. 10). In a city already known for tenuous racial relations, racial tension increased dramatically. Hundreds of black men were questioned by police, and an innocent man was arrested for the murder.

Accurate reporting and responsible journalistic policy can have an altogether different effect on public opinion. The press can encourage racial tolerance and moderate behavior. The Virginian-Pilot provided an illustration of the power of the press to facilitate positive race relations.

In 1958 the nation's attention was focused on Virginia. In an attempt to stymie judicially mandated integration, Virginia's Governor J. Lindsay Almond, supported by the powerful political machine of United States senator Harry Flood Byrd, Sr., ordered Norfolk, Charlottesville, and tiny Warren County to close their public schools. During the previous year, mob violence had erupted when the Little Rock, Arkansas, school board had unsuccessfully attempted to comply with the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.

Almond's order displaced only two thousand students in Charlottesville and Warren County, and these small school systems quickly and effectively improvised ad hoc educational arrangements. Norfolk, however, was a major urban area. Over ten thousand students were displaced by the state action; and four months after the closing, three thousand students were still receiving no education (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 140).

Massive resistance transformed Norfolk into a battleground

where resisters were pitted against pro-school forces and the courts. The outcome of this battle had national implications. Byrd warned Virginians that the forces of integration were "working on the theory that if Virginia [could] be brought to her knees, they [could] march through the South singing Hallelujah" (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 141).

In February of 1959, Norfolk's schools were reopened, and Virginia's policy of massive resistance was ended. Although the process by which Norfolk's schools were integrated was far from orderly, the transition was characterized by debate, political maneuvering, and judicial action--not violence.

The Virginian-Pilot served as an important influence in facilitating this peaceful integration. The Pilot, alone among Virginia's major newspapers, urged compliance with the Court's mandate. Its editor, Lenoir Chambers, was later awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his five-year campaign opposing massive resistance.

Throughout this emotionally charged period, the Virginian-Pilot influenced public opinion by arguing against the extremism of the time. "Accurate news coverage and editing were never more important," wrote Harold Sugg, one of Chambers's associate editors during this period. "Editorials were never more read, praised and damned. Letters to the editor flowed like rivers" (Chambers, Shank, and Sugg, 1967, p. 387).

METHODOLOGY

A historical methodology has been employed to investigate the role of the Virginian-Pilot in defusing the crisis surrounding the school closing. Historical research is the systematic collection and analysis of data for the purpose of testing hypotheses pertaining to the past. The ultimate function of this research is similar to that of other forms of scientific inquiry, in that historical research attempts to explain and, at times, predict. Historical research is generally acknowledged as belonging to the qualitative genre of research, although the use of quantitative methods of analysis is not precluded.

Historical sources are categorized as either primary or secondary. Primary data is information gathered from firsthand accounts by observers or participants in the historical event. Secondary data is drawn from sources not actually witnessing the historical event. Primary sources are preferred over secondary sources, which are considered less reliable.

The primary sources for this dissertation consist of memoirs and documents--letters, diaries, court records, memoranda, and the like--written and recorded by participants and observers of the school closing. Newspaper editorials are the focus of this dissertation and in this case constitute a primary source. Additional primary source material has been compiled from oral-history interviews conducted with participants in the closing. These interviews have been carefully structured and conducted according to a protocol developed by my dissertation

committee. Secondary sources for this dissertation consist of books and articles on massive resistance; southern, Virginia, and local history; the civil rights movement; racial politics; and Norfolk's school closing.

All historical sources have been carefully evaluated for authenticity and accuracy. Accuracy has been the more difficult criterion to substantiate; verification of accuracy has entailed a careful examination of the knowledge and possible biases of the sources, and the consistency of the data provided by these observers and participants. My committee has provided invaluable assistance during this crucial stage of my research.

In the initial phase of my research, I conducted a review of the literature. In the early stages of this review, I drew heavily from scholarly books and journals. As my understanding of the historical event broadened, my review became more focused. I examined the personal papers and memoirs of key participants and the many editorials written by the Virginian-Pilot's editorial staff pertinent to significant developments in the crisis.

The next stage of my research consisted of oral-history interviews with fourteen principal actors in the closing. Interviewees were selected on the basis of the degree of influence they exerted during the school closing. In the case of the Pilot, I have conducted oral-history interviews and corresponded with all of the surviving members of the editorial staff and with the newspaper's publisher during that time.

To facilitate a focused analysis of the Virginian-Pilot's

editorials written during this period, I have examined all of the editorials written by the Pilot and its sister newspaper, the Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch, during a one-week period preceding and a one-week period following each of fourteen key events in Virginia's massive resistance to Brown v. Board.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In order to assess the role played by Norfolk's Virginian-Pilot newspaper in moderating the crisis surrounding the city's 1958 segregationist school closing, it is essential first to develop an awareness of the nature of the race relations and racial politics of that period. A wealth of scholarly and journalistic writing treating racial politics and, more specifically, the South's massive resistance to the mandate of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* exists. I have grouped these sources into a number of categories to provide some structure to this review and emphasize the wide range of writing on southern resistance and related topics.

I have also attempted to provide readers with a cursory review of communications literature that examines dissemination and adoption of mass-media messages. This communications research points to the crucial role played by media communications such as newspaper editorials in influencing opinion leaders and, indirectly, their followers.

REGIONAL STUDIES

A number of scholarly books and journals examine the South and southern resistance to public-school desegregation. V. O. Key's classic work, Southern Politics (1949), predates massive resistance but is essential to understanding the political context of the South and, more specifically, the mechanics and

machinations of Virginia's Senator Harry F. Byrd-dominated oligarchy. Professor Key's book is based, to a large extent, on an impressive number of field interviews conducted with southern political leaders.

Southern Politics is especially pertinent to this study because of its emphasis on the structure of the Byrd organization. Key perceived Byrd's control as being so complete as to make Virginia a "political museum piece" (p. 19) akin to that of pre-reform England. Organized around a restricted electorate and an efficient system of patronage that effectively eliminated nearly all political competition, the organization nevertheless developed a reputation for efficient (if uninspired) administration and a courtly way of doing business.

Key's analysis touches on elements that are central to a full understanding of Norfolk's school closing. These include Virginia's reputation for generally harmonious race relations, business's close ties to the Byrd organization, the anti-Byrd animus of the Tidewater section of the state, and the state's tendency to delve into affairs normally the province of localities.

Although Key perceived the southern states as being dissimilar in many respects, he argued that the region displayed a unified attitude toward race. He believed that the politics of the southern states were especially influenced by the reactionary attitudes of whites living in areas where the number of blacks rivaled that of whites. Because of the inflexibility of whites

living in these "black belts," Key was not optimistic as to the likelihood of the South's developing enlightened racial policies.

Southern School News and Race Relations Law Reporter, both of Nashville, Tennessee, provide very complete and objective reports of massive resistance and of related legislative and judicial activities. These publications are possibly two of the most useful sources for scholars exploring southern resistance to racial integration of the public schools.

J. W. Peltason's study, Forty-Eight Lonely Men: Southern Federal Judges and School Desegregation (1961), is an account of the judicial struggles waged over desegregation and a revealing scrutiny of the judges who were responsible for enforcing the mandate of *Brown v. Board*. Peltason's narrative provides researchers with considerable insight into the plight and actions of federal judges who, although many were native southerners and preferred the status quo to desegregation, were charged with implementing the Supreme Court's decision.

Peltason was critical of the *Brown v. Board II* mandate to desegregate public schools with "all deliberate speed," believing that its ambiguity provided federal judges with too much discretion in implementing the Court's mandate. Judges who decided to act boldly were held personally accountable because they possessed such a wide range of legal options. In Peltason's view, a Supreme Court order for uniform implementation of school desegregation would have mitigated this pressure by creating in effect a "heirarchy of scapegoats" (p. 246).

James M. Wilhoit's The Politics of Massive Resistance (1973) is a descriptive analysis and critical discussion of the origins, ideology, and politics of massive resistance. Wilhoit has provided a basic overview of race relations in the United States and charted the development, strategies, and decline of resistance to the Supreme Court's mandate.

Although his discussion of massive resistance is comprehensive, the author chose to focus almost entirely on the activities and motivation of resisters and neglected to examine in sufficient detail the strategies and actions of integrationists. Also weakening the book are Wilhoit's inadequate documentation and his failure to conduct interviews with key segregationist policy makers.

If the scholarship of Wilhoit's examination is somewhat lacking, the detail in which he treated his subject is his book's great strength. The author's analysis of massive resistance is multidisciplinary, employing historical, philosophical, theological, sociological, political, and psychological criticism. The richness of this discussion enhances understanding of southern resistance.

Regional in focus, The Politics of Massive Resistance nevertheless broadens insight into Virginia's resistance. Wilhoit acknowledged Virginia's leadership role in formulating massive resistance, in serving as a crucial political battlefield, and ultimately in portending the collapse of the movement.

STATE PERSPECTIVES

Scholars examining Virginia's massive resistance will encounter an abundance of information, including a number of major works. Benjamin Muse's Virginia's Massive Resistance (1961) predates other scholarly treatments of the subject and is widely cited in nearly all subsequent examinations. His analysis is comprehensive, although his methodology is unclear and his book is poorly referenced. Muse believed that the state's leadership was controlled by a reactionary minority influenced by the racial attitudes of Virginia's "black belt." In his opinion the confrontational policies advanced by the state's leaders were not reflective of the attitudes of the majority of their constituents.

The author, a former Republican gubernatorial candidate, explored Virginia's political and racial climates, discussed the activities of various interest groups, and examined the state's attempt to maintain segregated schools. The most enlightening aspects of his analysis are his comparison of the school closings in Charlottesville, Norfolk, Prince Edward County, and Warren County and his discussion of the integration of these school systems and that of the city of Arlington. Muse ably communicated the divergent impacts of the state's segregationist policies on a range of dissimilar local communities.

Norfolk's resistance plays prominently in the author's treatment. His book effectively places the city's closing and its unique circumstances within the larger context of Virginia's

resistance.

Robbins L. Gates's The Making of Massive Resistance: Virginia's Politics of Public School Desegregation, 1954-1956 (1962) examines the development of Virginia's massive-resistance legislative policy during the crucial two-year period immediately following Brown v. Board. Although the actual closing is treated only briefly, in the final chapter of the book, Gates's well-documented examination provides readers with a rich description of the development of massive resistance and a thorough analysis of the activities of the interest groups involved in charting Virginia's response to the Supreme Court mandate. Gates sought to explain why Virginia turned away from the comparatively moderate policies advocated by the "Gray Commission" and adopted instead the reactionary stance espoused by militant segregationists.

The author's major thesis was that, because Virginia's caste system effectively excluded blacks from meaningful participation in the political process, the state's struggle was fought between degrees of white segregationist and white integrationist persuasion. Gates explored in detail these gradations of beliefs and the political and geographic factors that shaped the opinions of Virginians.

J. Harvie Wilkinson III's Harry Byrd and the Changing Face of Virginia Politics 1945-1966 (1968) is the most complete examination of the Byrd organization. Among the many strengths of Wilkinson's book are sections that focus on the mechanics of the

organization and on regional politics, and his biographical sketches of principal Virginia political actors. The author has also provided readers with an analysis of Virginia's regionalism and its relationship to state politics.

Wilkinson's discussion of massive resistance was thorough and insightful. He submitted that Virginia's crisis was, to a large extent, contrived by the declining Byrd organization to coalesce public support. "This will keep us in power for another twenty-five years," he quoted a Byrd lieutenant as saying (p. 154).

Wilkinson, who later became editor of the Virginian-Pilot, wrote with some authority on Tidewater. The author examined the unique demographic and political characteristics of Hampton Roads; and although he neglected the important role played by the Virginian-Pilot in influencing state politics, he highlighted the critical role of Norfolk's political boss, Clerk of City Courts William L. Priour, in controlling local political activities and appointments.

Virginus Dabney's Virginia: The New Dominion (1971) provides extensive coverage of Virginia history and treats massive resistance in some depth. In addition to being one of the nation's foremost scholars on the South, Dabney was the editor of the state's most influential press, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, for thirty-three years. Thus he was in a unique position to observe Virginia politics during the period of resistance to public-school integration.

Although this author's discussion of the Byrd organization and massive resistance was thorough, he provided little original information on the school closing. He avoided the role he had played as a leading proponent of segregation, writing only that Virginia's presses were "willing to support the buying of time by the use of legal devices, in order that the impact of so far-reaching a decision as that in *Brown v. Board of Education* might be cushioned and disorder and violence held to a minimum" (p. 542). He did on several occasions, however, acknowledge the Pilot editors' long tradition of arguing against Byrd-organization policies ranging from inequities of funding for municipalities and rural counties to massive-resistance legislation.

James W. Ely, Jr.'s The Crisis of Conservative Virginia (1976) is a thorough examination of Virginia's policy of massive resistance. Ely's well-documented book is based on numerous interviews conducted by the author with important political figures, a scholarly examination of the papers of principal actors in massive resistance, and a comprehensive review of the literature. Ely's bibliographic essay is a major strength of this book.

Although the author was correct in writing that "much of the massive resistance story can be found in Virginia newspapers" (p. 209), he relied excessively on the editorials and reportage of the pro-Byrd-organization Richmond Times-Dispatch; he virtually neglected the perspectives and effect of Virginia's

anti-organization newspaper, the Virginian-Pilot. Generally, however, Ely performed an admirable job of exploring the activities of the many constituencies involved in massive resistance.

His book, a conservative analysis for the most part, at times departs from conventional histories of Virginia's attempt to circumvent the implementation of Brown v. Board. In his opinion massive resistance, portrayed by many as a threatened Byrd organization's grandstanding for votes, actually was spawned from a genuine belief by the white majority that segregation was desirable, that blacks were inferior, and that the Supreme Court had violated the Constitution by infringing on the rights of states. In effect, Ely asserted that the organization accurately reflected the sentiments of the white majority. Usually portrayed as opponents of massive resistance, political actors such as Virginia's business community, the state's white teachers, and even the federal judiciary were pictured by this author as indifferent to integration, if not antagonistic.

A number of articles in the popular press deserve attention. Foremost among these is Cabell Phillips's revisionist analysis, "Virginia--The State and the State of Mind" (New York Times Magazine, 1957, July 28), which explodes some of the romantic historical notions that served to create the mystique of Virginia and undergirded many of the arguments of the proponents of massive resistance. Phillips contended that most antebellum Virginians were simple yeomen who owned few slaves, not members of a genteel aristocracy, and that existing vestiges of plantation society had

been toppled by the economic panic of 1820, not the occupation of the South by Union troops:

Thus an ideal that began to disintegrate more than a hundred and thirty years ago, and that vanished utterly with Appomattox--and one, moreover, which never had overwhelming validity in the first place--has done more to mold the Virginian's belief in what he is than anything else in his history (p. 49).

Phillips also conducted a general examination of Virginia and Virginians. He discussed the character of the state's residents, its regionalism, the condition of its economy and educational system, and, most importantly, the structure and significance of the Byrd organization. His article provides readers with a brief but remarkably cogent analysis of state politics and Virginians' perception of themselves.

Virginia's Governor J. Lindsay Almond is pictured on the cover of the September 22, 1958, edition of Time magazine. Time's lead story discusses Almond's motivation for guiding Virginia's fight to maintain segregated schools and his inner conflict over supporting a policy that he knew was politically expedient but legally unsound. The article also examines Almond's tenuous relationship with the leader of the state's political machine, Senator Harry F. Byrd, as well as the development of Virginia's policy of massive resistance.

Dr. Lorin A. Thompson's article, "Virginia Education Crisis and Its Economic Aspects," was circulated throughout the state

prior to its publication in New South (1959, February) and had a major impact on the thinking of Virginia's business leaders.

Thompson served as the director of the Bureau of Population and Economic Research at the University of Virginia, and it is likely that his association with the state's predominant institution of higher education lent credibility to his arguments.

Thompson examined the economic consequences of abandoning public education: school bond owners, he predicted, would demand immediate repayment from localities, teachers would relocate to other states, and the deficient education of children at unaccredited private schools would cause widespread social problems. His discussion of the effects of the closing on industries, however, was particularly heeded by the business community. The author argued that the state's economic progress would be arrested because new industries would choose to locate in regions where public education was provided, and he warned that skilled workers in existing Virginia industries would move to other states with established systems of public schooling.

"Desegregation--or No Public Schools" (New South, 1959, March) examines the effects of two crucial court cases, *James v. Almond* and *Cooper v. Aaron*, on Virginia's policy of massive resistance. The article's authors concluded that those decisions had dealt a death blow to segregation, and that obstructionist legislation developed by southern states would ultimately be declared invalid and serve only to inflict further damage on public education.

THE BLACK VIEW

Scholars examining the experiences of black Virginians have contributed significantly to the study of the state's desegregation struggle. Andrew Buni's The Negro in Virginia Politics, 1902-1965 (1967), is a well-researched political history. The majority of Buni's material was drawn from Virginia's two major Negro weeklies, the Richmond Planet and the Norfolk Journal and Guide; from numerous personal interviews with both black and white political actors; and from private papers and other documents.

Buni's book provides readers with a great deal of information on a topic often ignored. Beginning with the 1902 State Constitutional Convention, which effectively disenfranchised blacks and precluded their meaningful participation in politics, he traced the development of black political activities that resulted in organized opposition to the massive-resistance movement and contributed to the dismantling of the Byrd organization with the election of gubernatorial candidate Mills E. Godwin in 1965.

The author maintained that during most of Virginia's history, blacks were political issues rather than participants. The 1965 election, when both political parties for the first time openly courted a black electorate, was a watershed that would culminate in Virginia blacks' gaining political rights they had been denied throughout the twentieth century.

Philip Morgan's "Don't Grieve After Me": The Black Experience in Virginia 1619-1986 (1986) is a collection of three essays published in conjunction with a traveling photographic exhibit organized by the Hampton University Museum. The essays, which are presented chronologically, explore the history of black Virginians.

Morgan's essay, "Early Virginia," discusses the unique conditions of Virginia's early slave society--one in which slaves freely socialized with white indentured servants and in which the black population grew primarily from reproduction rather than the importation of Africans. Michael Hucles's essay, "The Nineteenth Century," examines the black experience in antebellum Virginia and the temporary gains resulting from the Civil War and Reconstruction. Sarah S. Hughes's essay, "The Twentieth Century," recounts the diminishment of black rights as a result of the 1902 Constitutional Convention; the development of Jim Crow; and the long struggle for equality, which culminated in the Civil Rights Movement.

"Don't Grieve After Me" does not treat massive resistance in great detail, but its general review of black history is helpful in understanding Virginia's racial climate and history.

VIRGINIA'S RESISTERS

Accounts provided by three of Virginia's leading proponents of continued public-school segregation are useful in comprehending their perspectives. James Jackson Kilpatrick's The Sovereign States: Notes of a Citizen of Virginia (1957) is a spirited

defense of massive resistance by the movement's leading intellectual. Kilpatrick advanced a number of arguments against integration and asserted that the Brown decision had usurped the rights of the sovereign states. Citing legal precedents associated with the doctrine of nullification, he maintained that southern states were justified in interposing their authority to prevent desegregation.

Kilpatrick, editor of the Richmond News Leader, one of the state's most influential presses, and a confidant of Senator Harry F. Byrd and many others among Virginia's political elite, played a critical role in developing Virginia's resistance. Familiarity with his arguments is essential to grasping the intellectual origins of the massive-resistance movement.

Governor J. Lindsay Almond's "We Are Stewards of Our States' Inheritance" (1958, May) provides a defense of Virginia's massive resistance. In this article published in the American Mercury magazine, Almond argued that the federal government, by imposing the mandate of Brown v. Board on the state, had usurped the sovereign rights accorded the state by the framers of the Constitution. He maintained that the Supreme Court had placed Virginians in an intolerable position: that although the state's citizenry strongly supported the maintenance of a system of free public education, the people were diametrically opposed to integrated schools and would refuse to enroll their children in them. Almond discussed massive resistance within the context of the Cold War, asserting that the federal government's policies

had acted to undermine the strong and effective system of public education needed to counter the advances made in Soviet technology.

Virginus Dabney's article in Life magazine (1958, September 22), "Virginia's Peaceable, Honorable Stand," provides still another rationale for Virginia's massive resistance. Dabney wrote that although the state's white population was seeking a peaceful and reasonable solution to the racial problems, it was justified in its unwillingness to compromise to the extent of supporting integrated public schools. He explained that Virginians opposed the implementation of the Brown decision for a variety of well-founded reasons, believing that the Supreme Court had incorrectly interpreted the Fourteenth Amendment, that integrated schools would bring about intermarriage (racial "amalgamation"), and that desegregated schools would be marred by violence as integrated schools in the North had been.

Dabney went on to suggest that the condition of racial relations in Virginia had been relatively progressive and that they had been improving rapidly during recent years until the Supreme Court's decision served to create disharmony between the races and create an extremist racial climate.

Virginus Dabney's article in U.S. News and World Report (1960, January 18), "Next in the South's Schools: Limited Integration," examines the means by which the state developed a more flexible pupil-assignment policy--one that sought to contain integration rather than prohibit it. While not embracing

desegregation, Dabney applauded Virginia's grudging but peaceful acceptance of the decrees of the federal and state courts. He expressed support for containment, insisting again that total integration would lead to intermarriage and racial amalgamation. Citing incidents of racial friction in the North and West, he concluded that racial relations were perceptibly better in Virginia.

LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

A number of scholars and journalists have focused on Norfolk's school closing, and their findings provide valuable accounts of local events. Ernest Q. Campbell's When a City Closes Its Schools (1960) is a report of a study conducted by the Institute for Research in Social Science. Utilizing a survey methodology, Campbell and his team investigated the effects of the closing on the city's displaced students and examined students' and parents' views on the controversy. When a City Closes Its Schools is a valuable source of information for scholars seeking insight into the Norfolk white citizenry's perceptions and attitudes regarding the closing. The major weakness of the work is its lack of a meaningful interpretation of the survey results.

Lenoir Chambers, Joseph E. Shank, and Harold Sugg's Salt Water and Printer's Ink (1967) furnishes some valuable source material for the purposes of this dissertation. Written in celebration of the hundred-year anniversary of the founding of Norfolk's first post-Civil War newspaper, The Norfolk Virginian,

the book provides historical information regarding Norfolk and both the Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch. Chambers served as editor of the Pilot during Norfolk's school closing; Shank was the news editor of the Ledger; and Sugg, whose final chapter examines the school closing and the related editorial policies of both newspapers, was an assistant publisher and former associate editor of the Pilot.

Although Salt Water and Printer's Ink serves well as a general reference on Norfolk and its newspapers and provides insight into the newspapers' roles during the closing, it does not do so in great detail; only a half-dozen pages concentrate on massive resistance. The book's treatment of the closing is traditional in nature and leaves many questions about the editorial policy of the Pilot unanswered.

Robert Mason's memoirs, One of the Neighbors' Children (1987), provides more insight into the newspapers' roles in the school closing. Mason served as one of Chambers's associate editors during the closing and, after serving as managing editor, was Chambers's immediate successor.

Although Mason's treatment of the closing is no more detailed than Sugg's, Mason's coverage is much more colorful, containing rich descriptions of leading figures in the closing and providing readers with an especially revealing portrayal of Chambers.

Henry S. Rorer's unpublished manuscript, "History of Norfolk Public Schools, 1681-1968" (1968), charts the development and organization of Norfolk's school system. Rorer's

manuscript focuses on the day-to-day operation of the city's schools and provides valuable reference material not contained in scholarly books.

The author's description of Norfolk's schools is fairly comprehensive, but the scope of the manuscript is limited in that Rorer neglected to investigate the city's black schools in sufficient depth. Another weakness of the work is the author's failure to explore meaningfully the school closing and the issues raised by the crisis.

Jane Reif's pamphlet, Crisis in Norfolk (1960), which was sponsored by the Virginia Council on Human Relations, provides the most complete account of Norfolk's school closing. Reif described Norfolk, identified and analyzed the major actors and interest groups involved in the closing, and examined the key events in the crisis. Crisis in Norfolk also treats the impact of the national and local media on the closing and makes special mention of the role of the Virginian-Pilot.

Reif concluded that the major factor in the deepening of the crisis in Norfolk was the failure of the established community leadership to confront the closing directly. This vacuum in responsible civic leadership resulted in both negative and positive outcomes; while it enabled extremism to flourish until the courts ultimately intervened, it also provided an environment conducive to creating a new generation of leadership.

"What Massive Resistance Costs" (Business Week, 1958, October 4) examines the financial consequences of the school

closing. The article itself had an important effect on Norfolk's business community and is often cited in discussions of the closing.

This article deals with the city's fiscal conundrum: by operating integrated schools, nearly \$700,000 of state funding would be lost; and by maintaining segregated schools, \$350,000 in federal funding (impact funds) would be forfeited. Other potential repercussions of the closing are explored, such as action implied in the Navy's allusions to its dissatisfaction with the situation and the influence of the crisis in out-of-state industries' consideration of locating in Virginia.

"Eighty Days Without Public Schools" (Newsweek, 1958, December 1) discusses the effect of school closings on the displaced students of Norfolk and the city of Little Rock, Arkansas. Norfolk's makeshift tutoring groups are portrayed as unacceptable substitutes for public schools.

Wilma Dykeman and James Stokely's article, "Report on the Lost Class of '59" (New York Times Magazine, 1959, January 4), broadly explores the consequences of the school closing on students, parents, and teachers. The most useful aspect of the article is its description of the organization and limitations of the city's tutoring groups and the narrowing of the career choices of the displaced students.

Forrest P. White's article, "Will Norfolk's Schools Stay Open?" (The Atlantic, 1959, September), describes the closing and the precarious period immediately following the reopening of

the schools. White served as treasurer and later as president of the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools, a citizens' group that lobbied against the closing.

The author explored the rationales of Norfolk's business and professional leadership for not speaking out against the closing, and examined the activities of the prime local actors and the governor during the crisis. White's major thesis was that "to be successful in his policy switch, it was essential for Governor Almond to have followed massive resistance down to a final resounding defeat" (p. 32).

Luther J. Carter's article, "Desegregation in Norfolk" (South Atlantic Quarterly, 1959, Autumn), furnishes a concise account of massive resistance on both a state and a local level. Carter served as the Virginian-Pilot's education reporter during the closing and thus commanded an excellent vantage point for chronicling Norfolk's school closing.

Much of his account centers on the power struggle between various interest groups as they jockeyed for the support of Norfolk's silent and seemingly detached citizenry. Carter's major thesis was similar to White's in that both authors believed Virginia's policy of massive resistance was politically motivated. The Byrd organization, in order to continue its political domination of the state, had to prove to an electorate overwhelmingly supportive of public school segregation that all conceivable actions to delay the implementation of Brown v. Board had been exhausted.

"Quest for a Personality" (Time, 1960, September 5) focuses on the editorial differences of the Virginian-Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch and on the keen competition that existed between the two newspapers. Calling both papers conservative by northern standards, Time characterized the Pilot as "downright liberal" and the Ledger as "middle roading" by southern standards (p. 51). The magazine considered these papers "two of the South's better newspapers" (p. 51). This brief article is useful for its interpretation of the policies held by the joint management of the papers during the school closing.

David Pace's article, "Lenoir Chambers Opposes Massive Resistance" (Virginia Magazine, 1974, October), examines both Chambers's publicly expressed opinions and his private sentiments regarding Virginia's massive resistance to integration of her public schools. Pace described the major incidents in the development of the state's resistance and analyzed the editor's reactions.

Pace's thesis was that, although many viewed Chambers as a leading southern liberal with regard to race relations, in reality he held fairly conservative opinions--preferring, in fact, segregation to integration. This author submitted that it was only the editor's intense respect for the Supreme Court's decision as the "Law of the Land" that influenced him to adopt his adversarial role toward the Byrd organization's racial policies. Pace also maintained that Chambers refused to challenge Senator Byrd directly and instead chided Byrd associates such as Governor Thomas

Stanley. The author believed that Chambers perceived Byrd as too powerful a target to criticize directly and was sympathetic to the states' rights philosophy of the senator.

MEDIA INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC OPINION

Literature on the subject of media influence points to the important role that can be played by media in swaying mass audiences both directly and indirectly. It has been widely acknowledged by communications researchers such as Marshall McLuhan (Understanding Media, 1964), Melvin DeFleur (Theories of Mass Communication, 1966), and Everett M. Rogers (Handbook of Communication, 1973) that mass communications can play crucial roles in influencing public behaviors, opinions, and attitudes. Researchers have differed, however, in their perceptions as to how mass media influence. Much of the following review is based on Stephen W. Littlejohn's discussion of mass communication research findings in Theories of Human Communication (1978) and on studies to which his book directs attention.

In his theory of mass society, W. Kornhauser (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1968) postulated that media messages have a direct and uniform influence over a gullible and increasingly estranged public. Often called the "hypodermic needle" model of media influence, this theory implies that media messages are injected into the public's consciousness and naively adopted. Kornhauser believed that forces and trends in our turbulent world, such as burgeoning technology, the

depersonalization of society, and the deterioration of family values, had created a public that was easily manipulated. According to his theory, as the public has become more malleable, the power of media to influence has greatly increased. Advances in communications technology and techniques of persuasion have enabled the media to become an aggregate institution with unrivaled influence.

Raymond Bauer (American Psychologist, 1964, 19) saw Kornhauser's "hypodermic needle" model as simplistic and the public as an "obstinate audience," attending most readily to messages consonant with existing attitudes and opinions. Bauer perceived the public as more complex, discriminating, and intelligent than did Kornhauser. Central to Bauer's theory is the premise that the effects of interpersonal communications compete with and/or mediate the effects of mass communications.

Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and H. Gaudet (The People's Choice, 1948), in a study of voter behavior, also found a strong interpersonal component in mass communication. Their conclusions indicate that after receiving media messages, recipients interact and influence each other.

The existence of this phenomenon has subsequently been confirmed by other researchers, and ultimately the effect has come to be called the two-step flow hypothesis. Adherents of this hypothesis maintain that media messages are first processed by opinion leaders and are later disseminated to followers. Opinion leaders are individuals who receive information from the media and

exert influence over others in regard to particular issues.

In their investigation of opinion leaders, Everett M. Rogers and F. Floyd Shoemaker (Communication of Innovations, 1971) developed a list of generalizations intended to clarify the nature and roles of opinion leaders:

Opinion leaders have greater exposure to mass media than their followers.

.Opinion leaders are more cosmopolite [sic] than their followers.

.Opinion leaders have greater change agent contact than their followers.

.Opinion leaders have greater social participation than their followers.

.Opinion leaders have higher social status than their followers.

.Opinion leaders are more innovative than their followers.

.When the system's norms favor change, opinion leaders are more innovative, but when the norms are traditional, leaders are not especially innovative.

Of particular relevance to this study is the attribute concerning exposure to mass media. This suggests that Norfolk's leaders of opinion in the controversy surrounding the school closing would have attended to mass media treating the issue and that these opinion leaders would have influenced their followers.

Wilbur Schramm and David M. White (Mass Communications, 1960) reported from their study of newspaper readership that persons who read editorials constituted an especially authoritative and powerful cohort: "Reading of public affairs and editorials

increases with age, with education, and with higher economic status" (p. 439). The authors also found that in the highest class of work status, executive and professional, well over half of the men and nearly half of the women regularly read newspaper editorials.

The editorial page of the Virginian-Pilot may have had a limited readership among the general population of Norfolk--as editorials today have limited readership--but it is likely that an influential elite regularly read and was influenced by the Pilot's opinion page, and that these opinion leaders, in turn, influenced their followers.

MASSIVE RESISTANCE IN VIRGINIA

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

For the South, the United States Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* constituted nearly as tumultuous a watershed as the Civil War. By calling for an end to segregated public schools, the Warren Court incited the South to embark on an emotional campaign to openly subvert the "law of the land" in order to preserve a way of life predicated on racial hierarchy. Four legal cases in four states, including Virginia, and a fifth case in the District of Columbia had been consolidated by the Court to test the constitutionality of state laws that mandated the maintenance of segregated educational facilities. The defendants, citing the precedent of the Court's decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1890, argued that "separate but equal" school systems were constitutional. The plaintiffs, led by future Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall, asserted that segregation deprived black students of equal protection under the laws, as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

Chief Justice Earl Warren, writing the opinion for a unanimous court, concluded that "in the field of public education the doctrine of separate but equal has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal" (*Brown v. Board*, 1954). Importantly, the Court maintained that even if segregated school systems possessed equity of resources--a condition few possessed--the "effect of segregation itself" deprived the

minority of equal educational opportunities.

Resistance to the Brown decision--"massive resistance"--became what historian J. Harvie Wilkinson III termed "Virginia's issue of the century" (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 113). Virginia's resistance would in many ways define that of the South, and the collapse of the state's system of segregated schools would foreshadow the dismantling of the entire Jim Crow system.

The race problem in American society began in Virginia when a Dutch naval vessel unloaded its cargo of twenty blacks at Jamestown in 1619 (Wilhoit, 1973, p. 17). Initially, Virginia was an anomaly among the early plantation societies of the New World, in that the economy of the colony was much less dependent on black labor than were the economies of the other southern colonies. In the early days of the colony, white indentured servants outnumbered blacks four to one.

During this era little effort was made to provide systematic education for Virginia's youth. Schooling in colonial times was laissez faire in nature, and as a result, many children did not receive even basic educations. Some children, however, were more fortunate. Early apprenticeship laws mandated rudimentary educational training for a segment of the population, and endowed free schools created by wealthy benefactors provided more extensive education for some poor youth. Children with parents of means received education through community schools--cooperative ventures in which a number of parents would band together to employ a teacher for their children--or through tutors (Heatwole,

1916, pp. 58-61).

During this period some whites tried to provide schooling for individual black and Indian families. It was not unusual for landowners to will portions of their estates for the purpose of educating servants.

Thomas Jefferson's 1779 plan for public education depended to too large a degree on the aristocratic class that governed many localities. This elite segment of the citizenry was disinclined to bear the brunt of the cost for public education. Jefferson's plan and its derivatives, although often debated, were never realized (Heatwole, 1916, pp. 100-102).

By all accounts race relations between black and white servants were comparatively less strained during this period than at any other time in colonial history. Whites were not threatened by superior numbers, and the two groups worked closely and shared similarly harsh living conditions. Assimilation of blacks was facilitated by the fact that this population grew primarily from natural increase rather than from immigration. Far fewer Africans--alien in appearance and non-English speaking--were received into the colony than into other plantation societies. Consequently, differences between blacks and whites were less apparent than they would later become (Morgan, 1986, p. 15).

As the British economy improved during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, indentured servitude became a less attractive option to the lower classes. The number of Africans began to swell as the British began to participate more

fully in the slave trade. Race relations worsened as the number of African slaves began to surpass that of white servants (Morgan, 1986, p. 16).

In 1662 the Virginia House of Burgesses passed a series of laws diminishing the status of blacks and drastically curtailing their rights; children born to slave mothers became slaves. Moreover, masters beating blacks to death were exonerated on the premise that owners would not knowingly destroy their property. Runaway slaves resisting arrest could be legally beaten or killed (Morgan, 1986, p. 16). This legislation, which effectively divested blacks of any protection under colonial law, served to create among whites a belief that, regardless of their social class, they enjoyed a status vastly superior to that of blacks.

The growth of slavery in Virginia was accepted with minimal resistance. Some whites, motivated by religious scruples or libertarian ideals advanced during the Enlightenment, argued against slavery. The institution was attacked by Thomas Jefferson, a slave owner himself, in his initial draft of the Declaration of Independence. That portion, however, was omitted from succeeding drafts in concession to pro-slavery forces (Wilhoit, 1973, pp. 18-19). Resistance by blacks occasionally took the form of rebellion; but by and large, protest was limited to slowdowns, sabotage, or attempted escape to other colonies, where blacks would try to pass as free.

Some blacks managed to gain their freedom through manumission, and others in return for military service during the

Revolutionary War. Initially blacks had been barred from serving in the continental forces, but after the British army promised freedom to blacks who enlisted, continental forces advanced a similar offer. Five thousand blacks won their freedom this way (Wilhoit, 1973, pp. 18-19).

The growing number of freed blacks frightened Virginia slaveholders, and legislation enacted in the state in 1806 made manumission more difficult (Morgan, 1986, p. 23). Whites grew increasingly concerned about the possibility of a slave insurrection, and the practice of educating blacks was outlawed to prevent them from reading abolitionist literature. A Virginia law passed in 1805 read, "It shall not be lawful to require the master or mistress to teach an apprenticed black or mulatto orphan to read, or to write, or any arithmetic" (Buck, 1952, p. 22).

In 1846 the legislature passed an act providing for free primary education. However, the legislation was only permissive in nature, and schooling was not mandated. As a result of the act, a locality could develop free public schools if two thirds of its electorate supported the idea. The electors of Albemarle, Norfolk, and Washington counties voted to create free primary schools. Still, on a statewide basis, financial and moral support for public education was grossly lacking (Heatwole, 1916, p. 103).

The Civil War was the most significant event in the history of blacks in this country. In the wake of the war, amendments to the constitution progressively outlawed slavery, ensured equal protection under the laws, and guaranteed suffrage for adult males

(Wilhoit, 1973, p. 20). Although this legislation purportedly secured equality, blacks in the South remained quasi-slaves.

Frederick Douglass wrote that the slave

was free from the individual master but a slave of society. He had neither money, property, nor friends. He was free from the old plantation but had nothing but the dusty road under his feet. He was free from the old quarter that once gave him shelter but a slave to the rains of summer and the frosts of winter. He was turned loose, naked, hungry, and destitute to the open sky (Tindall, 1984, p. 671).

With the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Reconstruction Act of the following year, Virginia--now part of Military District Number 1--entered the radical phase of reconstruction. As radical Republicans gained control of the state legislature, former Confederate soldiers were disenfranchised and black men were awarded the vote. By 1867 black voters were in the majority in many Piedmont and Tidewater counties and nearly equaled whites on a state level, 105,832 to 120,101 (Morgan, 1986, p. 52).

Rather than be compelled to abide by the provisions of the Reconstruction Act, the Virginia General Assembly called for a constitutional convention for the purpose of developing an alternative document that would be acceptable to the Congress (Morton, 1919, p. 26). In a display of their newly found political power, 25 of the 105 delegates elected to attend the convention in Richmond in 1867 were blacks (Morton,

1919, p. 50). The product of the convention, the Underwood Constitution (named for the convention's chairman, John C. Underwood of New York), guaranteed suffrage for black males in return for the defeat of provisions that would have disenfranchised former Confederates (Buni, 1967, p. 1).

The new constitution also provided for a system of public schooling and mandated that schools serve children of all races: "The constitution of Virginia shall never be so amended or changed as to deprive any citizen or class of citizens of the United States of the school rights and privileges secured by the Constitution of the said State" (Heatwole, 1916, p. 214).

Virginia's public school system opened its first schools in November 1870. (Norfolk had been a particularly innovative community regarding education and had operated a city-wide public school system for white children since 1858.) Twenty-nine hundred schools for white and black children were operated that year, with 37.6 percent of the state's white school-age children and 23.4 percent of its black school-age children enrolled in these schools. Although state-supported public education was opposed by many, especially those who vigorously objected to educating blacks, public schooling gradually came to be accepted by the majority of Virginians. The state's schools were, of course, racially segregated (Heatwole, 1916, pp. 220-242).

Gains in black political power during this period were, however, illusory. Conservative members of the General Assembly managed to divest blacks of political participation through

gerrymandering, imposition of poll taxes, and manipulation of voting lists (Buni, 1967, p. 2).

Race was very much an issue in postbellum Virginia. Blacks provided a convenient scapegoat for a population that was demoralized and suffering from economic privation brought on, to a large extent, by a state government committed to satisfying out-of-state creditors (Wilkinson, 1968, pp. 3-4).

Just prior to the Conservative State Convention of 1869, a forerunner of the Virginian-Pilot, the Norfolk Virginian, reflecting popular sentiment, shrilly denounced Republicans and the provisions of the Underwood Constitution: "Tell us to join the Republican Party in any form--tell us to endorse Negro suffrage...and we reiterate the sentiment for which we have been taken to task: 'Better that every man, woman and child in Virginia were shot'" (Chambers et al., 1967, p. 46). The Republican Party, the party of the emancipation and the one with which most black voters aligned themselves, was attacked by Conservatives as "the party of the Negro."

As federal troops withdrew from the South, Conservatives--rallying behind the slogan "Shall the whites rule and take care of the Negroes, or shall Negroes rule and take care of the whites?"--elected the Confederate hero General James L. Kemper governor in 1873 (Buni, 1967, pp. 2-3). By 1878 Conservatives had so completely garnered political power that Republicans did not bother to run a gubernatorial candidate. Blacks and Republicans

had ceased to be viable actors in Virginia politics (Buni, 1967, p. 3).

Although blacks were excluded from leadership roles, their political support was still sought. In the 1870s and 1880s, the Conservative party was split over the issue of debt repayment. "Funders," who derived the bulk of their support from the eastern and central regions of the state, advocated full repayment of the state's \$46 million debt. "Readjusters," who received much of their support from the western region of the state, advocated partial repayment. Both sides guardedly sought black support (Buni, 1967, pp. 3-4).

The Readjusters, with the backing of blacks, elected William E. Cameron, future editor of the The Norfolk Virginian, governor in 1881. Blacks made some political gains during his tenure. They were elected or appointed to minor political positions, and both the poll tax--a device commonly used to restrict suffrage--and punishment at the whipping post were outlawed. However, in 1883 the Readjusters were swept from power amid charges of corruption and allegations that the party was dominated by blacks and Republicans (Buni, 1967, p. 3-4). A race riot in Danville also figured prominently in the election. Four blacks and one white were killed. Funders capitalized on the riot by attributing it to Danville's political domination by blacks (Buni, 1967, p. 5).

Fraud and corruption were common components of elections in postbellum Virginia. Illiterate black voters were easily manipulated, and whites employed a variety of strategies for

electoral cheating. Votes were purchased, voting lines were made long by restricting the number of "colored" booths, and returns were often miscounted. Fraud accounted for sixteen of twenty contested Virginia elections for the House of Representatives in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Corruption in Virginia politics became so endemic that many people advocated disenfranchising blacks because they were cheated so regularly (Buni, 1967, pp. 11-12).

With the expressed purpose of disenfranchising blacks, a state constitutional convention was held in 1902. The convention resulted in legislation that formally provided for racially segregated schools and drastically reduced the black electorate, from 147,000 to 21,000 (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 5). Under the provisions of the new constitution, voters were subjected to a literacy test until 1904, when a poll tax requirement of three years' payment six months prior to voting went into effect. Exempted from the tax were Civil War veterans of either side, their sons, property owners who had paid taxes in the previous year, and descendants of those who had voted in 1861. Although most blacks were disenfranchised by these provisions, a sizeable number still remained eligible to vote (Chambers et al., 1967, pp. 225-226; Buni, 1967, p. 17).

Delegate Carter Glass of Lynchburg, responding to those who argued that such legislation was blatantly discriminatory, exclaimed,

Discrimination! Why, that is exactly what we propose;

that exactly, is why this convention was elected--to discriminate to the very extremity of permissible action under the limitations of the Federal Constitution with the view to the elimination of every Negro who can be gotten rid of, legally, without materially impairing the strength of the white electorate (Woodward, 1951, pp. 232-234).

"The age of segregation," wrote Lenoir Chambers, who was editor of the Virginian-Pilot during the state's massive resistance to public-school desegregation and whose role in moderating the ensuing crisis is the subject of this study, "had begun" (Chambers et al., 1967, pp. 225-226).

During the next several decades, blacks played a negligible role in Virginia politics. Generally, those who voted aligned themselves with the Republican Party, although both Republicans and Democrats were careful to maintain a cautious distance between themselves and the small black electorate lest they be tainted with charges of not supporting white supremacy.

Although ostensibly the provisions of the 1902 state constitutional convention had been devised with the intent of stymying electoral corruption, in effect they did little to reform campaign practices. The Ninth District congressional election in 1910 was especially corrupt. Poll tax payments for faithful party members, vote buying, and even the importation of voters from surrounding states were common occurrences (Buni, 1967, pp. 59-60).

The period immediately following the First World War was

characterized by an upsurge of racial violence and Ku Klux Klan activity in the state. Newport News was known as a center of Klan doings, and it was alleged that Norfolk's chief of police was an active member (Buni, 1967, p. 72). In August of 1927 Raymond Bird, a black man accused of raping a white girl, was taken from his jail cell in Wytheville and lynched. Within little over a year's time, a number of other violent racial incidents occurred: Rev. Vincent D. Warren, a Roman Catholic priest, was forced from his car in Virginia Beach and terrorized because of his parish's work with black children; Leonard Woods, a black man accused of murder, was lynched and burned near the Virginia-Tennessee border; and Klansmen beat three white women near Bristol (Buni, 1967, p. 101; Mason, 1987, p. 147).

This rash of racial violence, much of which was thought to have been sponsored by the Klan, triggered a backlash. Louis I. Jaffe, editor of the Virginian-Pilot from 1919 to 1950, conducted a vigorous personal and editorial campaign encouraging Virginia lawmakers to adopt strong anti-lynching legislation.

With the assistance of Monroe Nathan Work, a sociological researcher at Tuskegee Institute, Jaffe carefully documented each lynching for the purpose of educating the public as to the horrors of lynching and the need to enact legislation that would effectively deal with the crime. Jaffe, in a personal appeal to Virginia's Governor Harry F. Byrd, wrote, "I hope you will find a means of forcing a showdown on this outrage--in the name of Virginia and in the name of decency." Byrd suggested that Jaffe

outline his ideas regarding his proposed legislation and later presented them to the General Assembly. With few changes, the bill passed through the legislature and was signed by the governor on March 14, 1928. Since the passage of the law, no lynching has occurred in Virginia. Byrd later wrote that Jaffe's editorials and personal solicitation, more than any other influence, had encouraged him to introduce the legislation.

Louis Jaffe was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for distinguished editorial writing for "An Unspeakable Act of Savagery," an editorial prompted by the lynching of a black man in Houston, Texas, during the 1928 Democratic National Convention. Jaffe's award was the highest any Virginia newspaper writer had received (Mason, 1987, p. 150; Chambers et al., pp. 316-18).

Blacks in the state achieved other gains during the next two decades, primarily in the areas of suffrage and teacher-salary equalization. Luther Davis, a black man from Hampton, sued the Elizabeth City County registrar in 1931 after being denied the right to vote. On appeal, the Virginia Supreme Court ruled that registrars could not query voters as to arcane voting laws and the like, and could ask questions about a voter's age, residence, occupation, and previous voting record only. As a result, Luther P. Jackson, director of the Virginia Voters League, could report in 1940 that only a few registrars continued to attempt to deny blacks the right to vote (Morgan, 1986, p. 86).

Virginia's poll tax, however, constituted a major obstacle to black suffrage and would continue to do so until 1964, when the

Twenty-fourth Amendment to the Constitution prohibited denial of the right to vote in federal elections because of failure to pay taxes.

In 1938 Aline Elizabeth Black, a black teacher at Norfolk's Booker T. Washington High School, petitioned the city's school board for a salary equal to that of her white counterparts. Black's contract was not renewed after she brought suit against the school board. The next year Melvin O. Alston, also a teacher at Booker T. Washington, petitioned the board to equalize the salaries of all teachers. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a district court decision; and on January 1, 1943, all salaries were equalized. Some indication of the toll exacted on the litigant is communicated by Alston's physician's request that his patient be given a month's leave for a "complete change and rest needed to improve his physical and nervous condition" (Rorer, 1968, p. 279-282).

Improvements in the status of blacks, such as the elimination of harassment by registrars as an impediment to voting and the equalization of black and white teachers' salaries, led V. O. Key, in his classic work, Southern Politics (1949, p. 32), to call Virginia's race relations "perhaps the most harmonious in the South." By the time of *Brown v. Board*, there was additional evidence to support Professor Key's conclusion. Only 22 percent of the state's population was black--considerably less than in the Deep South, where race relations seemed to worsen as the number of blacks approached that of whites. Institutions of higher learning

were beginning to integrate their academic programs, and blacks held a number of minor elective and appointive offices (Muse, 1961, pp. 2-4).

While only the naive would have inferred from these concessions that Virginians would embrace public-school integration, nevertheless to even the most seasoned political observers there was considerable evidence to suggest that Virginia would, after some foot dragging, accept the Supreme Court's mandate. The tumult that occurred was foreseen by no one. What occurred was due in great measure to two interrelated factors: Virginia's regionalism and the state's political organization led by Senator Harry F. Byrd.

VIRGINIA'S REGIONALISM

At the time of *Brown v. Board*, Virginia was made up of a number of highly dissimilar regions. The bustling seaport city of Norfolk had little in common with the burgeoning suburban community of Fairfax, which resembled not at all the arrested and caste-driven counties of the Southside. The forces that created this sectional diversity were numerous and could be attributed to much more than simple geography. The major regions of the state varied widely in economics, politics, urban influence, and, most critically, their racial makeup and attitudes. Robbins L. Gates, in *The Making of Massive Resistance* (1962, pp. 2-12), clearly delineates the state's regions and defines their inhabitants. Much of the following description is based on his assessment.

Virginia's black belt was comprised of thirty-one contiguous rural counties, which extended south, west, and north from the mouth of the James River toward North Carolina, the Piedmont, and Northern Virginia. With the exception of some light industry, the economy of this region was almost entirely dependent on agriculture. Cabell Phillips, a native Virginian, described it as "a bleak country of red clay and scrub pine; of somnolent small towns; of marginal worked-out farms; of much poverty, ignorance, and prejudice" (1957, p. 49). The proportion of blacks living in this region ranged from 41 percent in Northumberland County to 81 percent in Charles City County. Whites living in the region, always conscious of their minority or near-minority status, perpetuated a rigid caste system. It was here, in the Southside and Tidewater, that racial attitudes most nearly resembled those of the Deep South. The politics of the black belt revolved around the courthouses in the small towns that dotted the region. This was the heartland and the soul of the "Byrd machine."

Running northeast to southwest through the central part of the state were the majority of the thirty-five counties termed the "middle ground." The black population within this region fell between 10 percent in Botetourt County and 40 percent in Louisa County. Here the diversified economy included manufacturing and was less dependent on agriculture. Residents were industrious and held racial attitudes that were less extreme than those of white inhabitants of the black belt. "Negroes residing in middle-ground counties still live in a caste-structured society, but it is

doubtful that many of them would care to trade places with their brethren in the black-belt" (Gates, 1962, p. 7). If a particular region of Virginia represented the state's ideological and political mean, it was the middle ground.

The white belt, a long band of thirty-two counties that ran parallel to the middle ground, extended into the mountains in the western part of the state and included the counties suburban to Washington, D.C. Industry flourished in portions of the white belt, and the economy was similar to that of the middle ground. Many of the residents of this region were of Scottish and Irish descent, and "the Civil War was less their fight than it was that of the lowlanders" (Gates, 1962, p. 7). Here the number of blacks ranged from zero in Buchanan County to 10 percent in Fairfax County. Racial attitudes in the white belt were fairly progressive.

At the time of *Brown v. Board*, Virginia had thirty-two cities. While the smaller cities were fairly similar to their surrounding counties in terms of racial attitudes, the state's major metropolitan areas--Richmond, Norfolk, and Roanoke--were "laws unto themselves" (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 118) and did not fit neatly into the categories of black belt, middle ground, or white belt.

Richmond in 1950 was the state's largest metropolitan area, with a population of 230,310, 32 percent of which was black. The city was more "dogmatically Virginian" than either Norfolk or Roanoke (Gates, 1962, p. 11). Roanoke was the state's third

largest city and, with a population of 91,921, was significantly smaller than the other large cities. Roanoke's percentage of blacks was only 8.5, and the city's residents held racial attitudes similar to those of the residents of the surrounding counties in the white belt.

Norfolk, with a population of 213,513, was the state's second largest city in 1950 and was growing so rapidly that by the time of the school closing, it would supplant Richmond as Virginia's largest metropolitan area. Thirty percent of Norfolk's population was black.

All of these regions, then, because of the diversity of their characteristics and their attitudes toward race, had different responses toward the mandate of Brown v. Board. Of crucial importance was which response would exert the most powerful influence on Virginia's political leadership.

THE CITY OF NORFOLK

Norfolk was first and foremost a great port and transportation center. Possessing one of the world's finest natural harbors, the city exported more tonnage than any other Atlantic coast city in the 1950s. It experienced an astounding 600 percent increase in exports during the period 1950-1957. Nine major railroads linked Norfolk with the rest of the nation. Consequently, in 1957 the city was one of the ten fastest-growing markets in the country (Ford, 1989, p. 2).

As a result of Norfolk's strategic location, the area was

home to the largest naval base in the world. Most career naval personnel and their families could anticipate serving at least two "tours" of duty in the city; and because the base served as headquarters for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), many international visitors were stationed there. The counties and lesser cities surrounding Norfolk were dotted with a wide range of other military facilities, representing all branches of the armed services (Reif, 1960, p. 1).

Norfolk's naval base and the Norfolk Navy Yard constituted the city's major industrial enterprises. The federal government employed 60,000 of the city's 162,000 adult males. The civilian labor force alone consisted of 35,000 federal workers, twice the number in Richmond's entire employed population (Campbell, 1960, pp. 1-2).

Norfolk, however, was a study in contradictions. On the surface the city appeared to be relatively progressive and cosmopolitan. Many of the city's residents had lived elsewhere and had been exposed to differing perspectives on racial issues. Indeed, 13 percent of Norfolkkians in 1950 had lived in a different county or abroad during the previous year (Campbell, 1960, p. 2).

Community leaders claimed that race relations in Norfolk were better than average. The Norfolk delegation to the state Democratic convention in 1948 had strongly and successfully opposed Governor William M. Tuck's anti-Truman bill, an attempt by the governor to seize control of the Democratic national ballot

because of President Truman's appointment of a Civil Rights Commission.

The city's members of the Virginia General Assembly also displayed relatively progressive views on racial relations. In the early 1950s Norfolk's representatives, led by Delegate Delamater Davis, supported a bill that would have abolished segregation in public transportation. (The bill, however, was rejected in committee.) Norfolk's representatives supported increased funding for public education, advocated the modification of the poll tax, and generally held stances associated with an advanced view of race relations. The city's delegates resembled more the liberal Democrats from Roanoke and the state's liberal Republicans than the delegates from regions of the state that comprised the Byrd-organization heartland (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 12, 1990).

Norfolk's Journal and Guide, one of the country's four largest black newspapers, also contributed to the city's comparatively moderate racial climate. Its publisher, P. B. Young, Sr., one of the most influential black men in the United States, was an independent and highly respected leader. Early in his career he had been influenced strongly by Booker T. Washington's accommodationist philosophy. Young wrote, "It will not hurt to sacrifice racial heat and temper to gain the greater objective of economic advancement" (Suggs, 1983, pp. 399-409). He encouraged blacks not to migrate to northern cities but to remain in the South and seek the friendship of whites.

Certainly some of the credit for the city's comparatively moderate racial climate was owed to the Virginian-Pilot, led by Louis Jaffe and his successor, Lenoir Chambers. In a time when the newspaper was easily the most dominant and influential of the communications media, the Pilot championed improved race relations. Robert Mason, a former editor of the Pilot and a reporter under Jaffe, maintains that the editor's contributions extended far beyond Norfolk: "In social affairs he was not only a liberal writer, but he was a social activist....He was a national figure in his time. I once mentioned him to Roy Wilkins [Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] and spent the next half hour listening to Wilkins review his associations with Jaffe over the years." Chambers, assuming the editorship after Jaffe's death in March of 1950, continued Jaffe's editorial policies (R. Mason, personal communication, April 10, 1989).

These major moderating influences--the Navy, the federal government, Norfolk's political leadership, and the city's white and black presses--helped promote interracial cooperation. The Women's Interracial Council was formed in 1945 and over the next few years rapidly increased in size. The membership of the Norfolk Ministers Association was integrated, as was that of the Norfolk Ministers Fellowship (Reif, 1960, p. 1). Joint meetings of black and white school principals had been held for a number of years (Rorer, 1968, p. 291). Norfolk's Women's Council was interracial and in 1955 successfully sponsored an integrated

nursery for the children of its members ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers). That same year, Norfolk Catholic High School was integrated without incident (Reif, 1960, p. 1).

Yet, despite this veneer of racial harmony, the city was strongly influenced by the traditional racial attitudes of the South, in part because much of the city's work force came from the surrounding counties of the black belt, and partly because the comparatively low educational and income levels of many Norfolk white residents placed them in competition with blacks (Campbell, 1960, p. 2).

Whites and blacks in Norfolk interacted as white employers and black maids or gardeners or janitors, infrequently as equals. The institution of segregation was rarely questioned (E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990; S. Barfield, personal communication, August 8, 1990). In addition to operating segregated schools, the city maintained separate public restrooms and beaches for blacks and whites (Campbell, 1960, p. 2).

Norfolk's political elite connected with the Byrd organization conspired to exclude blacks from meaningful participation in municipal affairs. The organization generally opposed racial progress (Wilkinson, 1968, pp. 59-60); and blacks, in turn, supported liberal Republican candidates such as Theodore ("Ted") Dalton (Buni, 1967, p. 174). William L. ("Billy") Prieur, Jr., Byrd's political lieutenant and arguably the most powerful political figure in Norfolk, in his private correspondence to the

senator wrote of a committee of blacks who approached him in an attempt to place a black on the school board: "I gave them distinctly to understand they could expect no quarter from us as long as they opposed our candidates" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, July 11, 1953, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

The city's electorate, basically content with the status quo, was notoriously apathetic, as were most Virginia voters. By 1958, when the city's population had swollen to nearly three hundred thousand, there were only fifty thousand qualified voters, and only one in twelve had voted in recent elections ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers).

Also belying the appearance of progressive racial relations in Norfolk was, although certainly not as extensive as that of the Deep South, a history of racial violence. Immediately following the Civil War, bands of armed white men had attacked blacks participating in a parade celebrating the passage of a civil rights bill. Several blacks had been killed, and federal troops had been forced to restore order (Chambers et al., 1967, p. 19). In the next several decades, there were a number of reports of lynchings, race riots, and racially motivated murders in Norfolk (Chambers et al., 1967, pp. 219-224). In the wake of the First World War, a celebration planned by the Norfolk City Council for returning black veterans had deteriorated into a race riot (Suggs, 1983, p. 401). Much more recently, in the fall of 1954, the same year as the Brown decision, bombings and civil unrest had occurred when black families moved into the previously all-white middle

class neighborhood of Coronado (Carter, 1959, Autumn, p. 514).

And so, with its contradictions--especially in its racial relations--Norfolk was "a complex city...provincial and cosmopolitan...Southern, modified by the presence of the non-Southerner" (Carter, 1959, Autumn, pp. 514-515).

THE BYRD ORGANIZATION

Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr., and his family played major roles in Virginia and American history. William Byrd, the colonial author, was an ancestor of Harry Byrd. The senator's uncle "Hal" Byrd was a powerful congressman from Appomattox County. Senator Byrd's brother, Richard Byrd, achieved international fame as a polar explorer.

Harry F. Byrd, Sr., is classified by political scientist Francis M. Wilhoit as massive resistance's foremost "tutelary genius,...who, more than any other single individual, determined the shape and style of the movement as it evolved in the decade after 1954" (Wilhoit, 1973, p. 76). In addition to orchestrating the South's response to court-mandated desegregation and thoroughly controlling nearly every facet of Virginia's politics from his election to the governorship in 1925 until the 1966 congressional elections, Byrd played a prominent role in influencing national politics. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and as the senior member of Virginia's congressional delegation--which included Howard W. Smith, chairman of the House Rules Committee, and Willis A. Robertson, chairman of the Senate

Banking Committee--Byrd was a formidable national political leader.

Byrd was first and foremost a politician of Virginia, singularly skilled in controlling and perpetuating the political organization he had inherited from Senator Thomas Staples Martin. The core political philosophy embraced by Senator Byrd and his followers centered around white supremacy, balanced budgets, and a tightly restricted electorate (Ely, 1976, p. 6). V. O. Key wrote in 1949,

Of all the American states, Virginia can lay claim to the most thorough control by an oligarchy....Political leadership has been closely held by a small group of leaders who, themselves and their predecessors, have subverted democratic institutions and deprived most Virginians of a voice in their government (Key, 1949, p. 19).

Some degree of democracy within the organization was allowed. Contenders would battle among themselves while the senator carefully weighed the strengths and weaknesses of his subordinates. When Byrd reached his decision, the unappointed would be expected to bow out gracefully. The senator's candidate would be assured of the Democratic nomination and, with the monolithic support of the powerful organization behind him, the office itself. Byrd exerted his power in carefully selecting only the strongest candidates for political office. This pragmatic strategy enabled him always to present a candidate who was electable and thus allowed him to project an appearance of

complete control of the state's politics (Ely, 1976, p. 9).

He also appeared to exert control through the State Board of Compensation. The board determined the salaries of many local officials such as commonwealth's attorneys, treasurers, commissioners of revenue, clerks of circuit courts, and sheriffs. The senator's closest associate, longtime clerk of the state senate E. R. ("Ebbie") Combs, served as chairman of the board. Although it is uncertain whether the board actually used its fiscal powers to enforce organizational loyalty, local officials were unlikely to risk incurring the board's wrath (Key, 1949, pp. 21-22).

Circuit court judges in the counties and hustings court judges in the cities were appointed by the Byrd-controlled General Assembly and comprised still another means by which the senator perpetuated his organization and controlled Virginia's politics. These judges, who possessed appointing powers for a wide range of local positions such as electoral offices and membership on school-trustee electoral boards and boards of public welfare, were, along with the clerks of the court, the key representatives of the organization at the local level (Key, 1949, pp. 21-22).

The organization was further insulated from the electorate by virtue of Virginia's "short" ballot. In 1928 then-governor Byrd had reformed the state's electoral process by introducing the short ballot. This reform made a number of previously elective offices appointive and diminished the ability of voters to have a

direct impact on state and local politics (Buni, 1967, p. 103).

By tightly restricting Virginia's electorate, Senator Byrd was most effective in limiting access to political participation. On a regular basis a smaller percentage of the state's electorate voted for governor than in any other state in the South (Key, 1949, p. 20). Virginia's poll tax was a major device by which potential voters--primarily blacks and lower-income whites--were excluded from voting. Virginia laws stipulated that the \$1.50 poll tax be paid six months prior to elections. Citizens delinquent in payment of poll taxes were required to pay the fee for the current year and the two immediately preceding years in order to vote.

Apathy was another major cause for the low turnout in state elections. The Byrd organization had so completely consolidated power that the outcome of elections was rarely in question. Voters, basically satisfied with the way things were and had always been, were largely disinterested in political matters (Wilkinson, 1968, pp. 37-38).

On racial issues, the Byrd organization adopted a paternalistic attitude toward blacks and opposed racial progress and civil rights. Although blacks were never categorically denied the right to vote, neither were they encouraged. The organization never, however, supported or condoned racial violence, and Byrd actually earned the enmity of the Ku Klux Klan through his support of anti-lynching legislation and the short ballot. The Klan, of limited power in Virginia, threatened Byrd with a flogging and

burned a cross in Covington when he was speaking nearby (Buni, 1967, p. 103).

THE BYRD ORGANIZATION IN NORFOLK

Although much of Virginia's electorate was placed firmly in Senator Byrd's pocket, anti-organization sentiment did exist, most notably in the urban portions of northern Virginia and Hampton Roads. Some voters in these areas felt that the organization favored rural residents and slighted persons residing in urban areas (Ely, 1976, p. 21).

The senator's conservative fiscal policy, "pay as you go," alienated him from residents of the rapidly growing Hampton Roads area, who desired a modern highway network. Residents were forced to pay for improvements through highway bonds issued at high rates of interest, which, in turn, were financed through excessive tolls. Byrd also distanced himself from Hampton Roads by refusing to allow the localities to implement the sale of "liquor by the drink." Virginia's bottle-only law hindered the trade of Norfolk's and Virginia Beach's taverns and hotels. The senator's popularity in the military-dependent region was further impaired by his famous "golden silences," in which he refused to endorse Democratic presidential candidates. Residents of Hampton Roads felt that Byrd's recalcitrant political stands earned the region the enmity of the federal government and resulted in decreased military appropriations (Wilkinson, 1968, pp. 191-194).

Although many of Byrd's policies served to alienate him from

residents of Norfolk, his local organization, led by clerk of courts Billy Prieur, was still very powerful. From the early 1920s, when Prieur inherited the leadership from the rough-and-tumble saloon owner and clerk of courts Jimmy Trehy, to the 1960s, Billy Prieur was Harry Byrd's lieutenant and boss of Norfolk. Prieur was one of the senator's closest confidants, along with Ebbie Combs and E. Blackburn ("Blackie") Moore, speaker of the House of Delegates (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 190; Chambers et al., 1967, pp. 216-217). Late in the senator's career, two years before his death, Byrd would write to Prieur, "I have never had a friendship that I valued more than yours" (H. Byrd to W. Prieur, June 8, 1965, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

Roy B. Martin, Jr., longtime mayor of Norfolk, recalls the political role played by the city's clerk of courts: "Billy Prieur, in his day, would pretty well designate who [would run for local political offices] like commissioner of the revenue, city treasurer, and those types [of positions]. He used to recommend very strongly who would get the judgeships....That was Prieur's main influence, pretty well being able to say who would get the various jobs around" (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990).

Farley W. Powers, Jr., a prominent local attorney, also remembers the central role played by Prieur: "He was one of the Byrd organization's key players....[He] was very influential, very powerful....Nothing went on without Bill Prieur's stamp of approval. He had the judges' interest, the appointments, the

money, the political power, the contacts at the state level. He called the political shots locally" (F. Powers, personal communication, October 4, 1990).

Prieur's influence was temporarily diminished with the election of prominent businessmen Richard D. Cooke, Pretlow Darden, and John Twohy II to city council in 1946. These reformers, newcomers to politics, ushered in twenty-five years of businessmen's government. The three somewhat naively pledged to depoliticize city affairs by serving a single term (Chambers et al., 1967, pp. 376-377; R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990). Prieur, however, quickly regained power in the next election.

W. Fred Duckworth, former manager of Norfolk's Ford Motor Company assembly plant, with the reform ticket's support was elected mayor, to provide a more professional leadership for the city (R. Mason, personal communication, April 10, 1989; R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990). Duckworth had been born into a family of North Carolina Republicans and seemingly embraced little of Virginia's romanticism. He referred to Norfolk's Confederate soldier statue as a "glorified pigeon roost" and informed the Norfolk Civil War Centennial Commission that there would be no funding for celebrating "that mess a hundred years ago" (Mason, 1987, p. 160).

The cigar-smoking, willful, and often antagonistic mayor was an effective and progressive leader in many respects. He was a tireless promoter of Norfolk and oversaw much of the city's

impressive redevelopment (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990; S. Barfield, personal communication, August 8, 1990). Says Roy Martin, reflecting on Norfolk's recent political history, "The Cooke, Darden, Twohy group tilled the land; Duckworth planted the seeds; and I brought the crop in" (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990).

Under Duckworth the city council was expanded from the five-member city-manager system that had replaced the ward system in 1918 to include six members and a mayor (Chambers et al., 1967, pp. 305-6). Duckworth was especially skilled in directing and controlling the council. The infrequent disagreements that occurred between council members were resolved in closed meetings, and city government spoke with a single and unified voice (S. Barfield, personal communication, August 8, 1990; R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990).

Despite the mayor's progressive economic leadership, independent nature, and lack of ties to tradition, he uncharacteristically allowed himself to be influenced by Prieur and hence by Byrd, who revered fiscal restraint, loyalty to the organization, and all things Virginian. Duckworth's alignment with the organization was not as incongruous as it seemed. Both the senator and the mayor were deeply conservative, harbored traditional views toward race relations, and were highly placed in the Masonic Fraternal Order (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990; W. Malyik to H. Byrd, June 26, 1965, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

As the struggle over public-school integration grew more heated, Duckworth was acclaimed throughout much of the South and experienced considerable celebrity because of his support for the Byrd organization's stand (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). Much of the credit for Duckworth's enlistment in the Byrd camp is certainly owed to Prieur, who zealously courted the mayor and reported on him to Byrd (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990). Indeed, there is evidence that Prieur and Byrd led Duckworth to believe that his support of massive resistance would earn the mayor the governorship (P. Darden, personal communication, August 23, 1975).

THE RESISTANCE

Virginia's official response to *Brown v. Board* was immediate and surprisingly moderate. Within two hours Governor Thomas B. Stanley called for "cool heads, calm, steady and sound judgment" (Wilhoit, 1973, p. 31). The governor hinted that it would be possible to devise a policy response that would both abide by the Supreme Court's decision and be acceptable to Virginia's citizenry. Stanley also indicated that he would establish a commission to recommend a response to *Brown*.

Across the state, in Virginia's counties and metropolitan areas, informal reactions to *Brown* varied widely. White citizens in the rural counties of the black belt predictably responded differently than their counterparts in the suburbs of the nation's capital.

On May 24, 1954, a week after the Supreme Court's decision, Governor Stanley summoned to the state capital five black leaders including Oliver W. Hill, chairman of the Virginia legal staff of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Dr. R. P. Daniel, president of Virginia State College; and P. B. Young, Sr., publisher of the Norfolk Journal and Guide. These leaders were asked to influence Virginia's blacks to accept segregation voluntarily. The governor's request was refused (Dabney, 1971, p. 531).

In June, Stanley met in Richmond with nine of his peers from southern and border states to discuss state responses to Brown. It was the consensus among the governors that the decision would not be complied with willingly (Gates, 1962, p. 30).

From within the state, especially from the Southside, the governor was pressured to adopt a more militant response to desegregation. On June 19 twenty state legislators met in a Petersburg fire station and expressed their opposition to the mandate of Brown. State senator Garland Gray was elected chairman of the group. Across the state other groups of segregationists, granted a hiatus while the court pondered how best to implement its decision, began to organize (Gates, 1962, p. 31; Ely, 1976, p. 5).

Most significantly, the governor was under duress by Senator Byrd to harden his position. A decade later Stanley's successor, J. Lindsay Almond, referring to Byrd, would confide that after the governor's mild response, "I heard, I don't know, that the top

blew off of the U.S. Capitol" (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8). A later Virginia governor, Mills E. Godwin, supported Almond's perception that the senator influenced the governor (Ford, 1989, p. 13).

On June 25 Stanley yielded to pressure and, reversing his previous position, vowed to "use every legal means at my command to proclaim resistance to the court order" (Ford, 1989, p. 13). He also urged that consideration be given to the repeal of section 129 of the state constitution, which mandated that the state maintain free public schools (Gates, 1962, p. 31).

On August 30 the governor, in keeping with his original proclamation, appointed a thirty-two-member legislative committee to examine the effects of Brown and "make such recommendations as [might] be deemed proper" (Public Education Report, 1955, p. 5, White Papers). Because the composition of the committee was likely to affect its findings, various factions had differing ideas as to who should be appointed. The Virginia Council of Churches argued for a biracial group of leaders in education, political science, economics, and sociology. Others felt strongly that the commission should be comprised of state legislators. In the end it was the legislators who won out; and although the committee was bipartisan, it was all white and heavily skewed with representatives and senators from the Southside. At the first meeting, state senator Garland Gray of the Southside's Sussex County was appointed chairman (Dabney, 1971, p. 532; Gates, 1962, pp. 51-52). In addition to being a militant segregationist, "Peck" Gray was an

intimate of Byrd and an ambitious politician who harbored a strong desire to succeed Stanley (Wilhoit, 1973, p. 36; Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8).

Two months after the formation of the "Gray Commission," another organization that would have a profound effect on the emerging crisis was created. The Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties was formed by J. Barrye Wall, editor of the Farmville Herald, and Robert B. Crawford, owner of a laundry in the same Southside town (Gates, 1962, pp. 36-37). The name of the organization was inspired by the similar wording of an inscription on a Farmville statue honoring its Civil War heroes (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

The Defenders would become easily the most powerful pro-segregation organization in the state, far surpassing in influence other groups such as National Protective Individual Rights, Inc.; the Virginia League; the Crusaders for Constitutional Government; the Seaboard White Citizens Council; and a number of other white citizens' councils (Muse, 1961, p. 9). The Defenders, who derived much of their strength from the Southside, were more moderate than the Ku Klux Klan, which was never a significant factor in Virginia politics. The Defenders' publicity-conscious leadership eschewed violence and cross burnings, preferring instead to portray themselves as quintessentially Virginian (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 121).

Much was made of the fact that membership in the Defenders was not secret. However, although the names of the regional

officers and executive committee members were prominently displayed on the organization's letterhead, membership in some chapters, such as Norfolk's, was not disclosed (R. Crawford to J. Almond, February 24, 1958, Almond Executive Papers; Reif, 1960, p. 23).

This organization's primary objections to Brown were that the decision usurped rights constitutionally reserved for the states and that integration would lead to intermarriage--"mongrelization of the races" (White, 1959, September, p. 30). The Defenders, denying widely held perceptions that they were white supremacists, insisted that they were concerned about the effects of desegregation on blacks as well. William I. McKendree, a leading figure in the Defenders, maintains that the organization was concerned about the welfare of blacks: "I saw the black student as not being prepared to be thrown in the classroom with the white student....The biggest question in all the good people's minds that [I knew] in the South was how to bring the colored man's position up in life, not to destroy him, not to embarrass him, not to hold him down" (W. McKendree, personal communication, November 19, 1990).

The Defenders claimed as members a number of prominent Virginians, including Byrd-organization insiders former governor William Munford ("Bill") Tuck and Congressman Watkins M. Abbitt. Other notable public figures such as former governor John Stewart Battle and future governors Mills E. Godwin, Jr., and Albertis S. Harrison, Jr., regularly attended Defenders' functions. James

Jackson ("Jack") Kilpatrick, Jr., the young and energetic editor of the Richmond News Leader, was also in attendance at many of these events (Ely, 1976, p. 31).

Opposing the Defenders was the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The NAACP was exceptionally well organized in Virginia. By 1958 its state conference could claim an impressive membership of twenty-seven thousand and would pursue more legal activity in Virginia than in any other state (Muse, 1961, p. 47; Ely, 1976, p. 46). The major goals of the NAACP were to abolish segregation; to work for equality in education, employment, and housing; and to ensure the voting rights of blacks (Peltason, 1961, p. 64).

The most effective activities of this organization's state conference were legal in nature, rather than political. Blessed with a talented legal staff of attorneys such as Oliver W. Hill, Spottswood ("Spot") Robinson, and Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP, under adverse circumstances, actively sought to ensure that the state complied with the Supreme Court's mandate.

Within the white community the role of opposing the Defenders fell upon the Virginia Council on Human Relations. The organization was founded February 22, 1955, with the goal of readying the state for the peaceful implementation of Brown. Its biracial leadership included academicians, clergy, and social workers. Established political leaders were conspicuously absent. The council attempted to influence Virginians through educational activities rather than political action (Gates, 1962, p. 53;

Wilkinson, 1968, p. 124). Also expressing opposition to the state's rapidly hardening segregationist sentiment were leaders of some religious denominations such as the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists (Gates, 1962, p. 51).

On January 19, 1955, the Gray Commission issued a preliminary statement. Citing findings based largely on a single public hearing that had been held some months earlier in Richmond's Mosque theater, chairman Garland Gray concluded that

the overwhelming majority of the people of Virginia are not only opposed to integration of the white and Negro children of this state, but are firmly convinced that integration of the public school system...would virtually destroy or seriously impair the public system in many sections in Virginia (Public Education Report, 1955, p. 15, White Papers).

Gray advised the governor that the commission would work to develop a program to prevent public-school integration.

In the early summer of that same year, the Supreme Court issued its long-awaited decision concerning the implementation of Brown. Often referred to as Brown II, the decision mandated that integration of public schools should proceed with "all deliberate speed." The Court reasoned that the lower courts, because of their proximity to their communities, could best enforce compliance with Brown. By this delegation of responsibility to the lower courts and by the ambiguity of the phrase "all deliberate speed," the Court, albeit unintentionally, helped create an environment in which obstructionist maneuvering and

legal delaying tactics could flourish. The Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties responded to Brown II almost immediately. The organization called for the amendment of state legislation providing for free public schools and prohibiting expenditure of state monies for private education. Also recommended were the removal from the state constitution of any mention of compulsory education and the enactment of legislation that would prohibit state expenditures for integrated public schools (Gates, 1962, p. 49).

Although the Defenders' recommendations were intended to subvert the Supreme Court's mandate, some public officials in Norfolk indicated their inclination to behave in keeping with the spirit of the decision. Norfolk's school board, chaired by industrialist Paul T. Schweitzer, responded to Brown by issuing a statement on July 1, 1955, that the board would support public education and obey the law: "We intend, without mental reservation, to uphold and abide by the laws of the land. We believe in the public school system and pledge our efforts to its continuation in this city" (P. Schweitzer, Statement of School Board, 1955, July 1, Schweitzer Papers). However, the board maintained that overseeing compliance with Brown was not within its powers, and it looked to the State Department of Education and the legislature to supply leadership to that end.

Less than a week later, Walter E. ("Beef") Hoffman, former football official, former Republican candidate for attorney general, and newly appointed United States District Court judge,

rendered a decision requiring that the management of nearby Seashore State Park rescind its policy of refusing to admit blacks. But rather than alter its policy, the state's Department of Conservation and Development closed the facility for nearly eight years. Hoffman's decision outraged many. "When you get the volume of mail you get after one of those decisions, you wonder if you are going to live another day," he wrote (Peltason, 1961, pp. 77, 211; Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990; Virginian-Pilot, 1990, August 5).

The judge was an especially outspoken opponent of the Byrd organization and had earned its enmity well before his appointment to the bench. Billy Prieur, in particular, was critical of Hoffman. Prieur reminded Senator Byrd that Hoffman "took occasion to castigate you in the recent [gubernatorial election] outside and beyond the record" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, February 4, 1954, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

Perhaps motivated by the Defenders' proposals, Attorney General J. Lindsay Almond initiated a friendly suit to assess the constitutionality of expenditure of state monies for private schooling. Section 141 of the Virginia Constitution prohibited such expenditure. To test the legality of this prohibition, Almond filed a petition with the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia for a writ of mandamus ordering the State Comptroller to authorize payments for the children of deceased and disabled war veterans under Item 210 of the Virginia Appropriation Act of 1954. On November 7, 1955, in an opinion written by Chief Justice John

W. Eggleston, it was determined that Item 210 was unconstitutional in light of Section 141 (Gates, 1962, pp. 64-65).

The long-awaited Public Education Report of the Commission to the Governor of Virginia, the "Gray Report," was issued on November 11, 1955. The commission had operated in virtual secrecy and, with the exception of a single public hearing, had sought little input from Virginia's citizenry.

The authors of the report acknowledged the formidable nature of the crisis at hand, calling the problem "the gravest to confront the people of Virginia in this century" (Public Education Report, 1955, p. 6, White Papers). The commission proposed legislation under which authority for pupil assignment would reside with local school boards, not the state. School boards would take into account factors such as "availability of facilities, health, aptitude of the child, and the availability of transportation" in deciding where to assign children (Public Education Report, 1955, p. 9, White Papers). The commission also proposed legislation ensuring that compulsory attendance laws would not force children to attend integrated schools. Parents who objected to their children's enrollment in integrated schools would be eligible to receive tuition grants to support private-school education.

The adoption of the proposals set forth in the Gray Report would likely result in limited integration in a few communities. Many localities, however, would employ the criteria for assignment as a means of camouflaging de facto segregation. State funding for

private education would, of course, necessitate the amendment of Section 141, and it was advocated that a special session of the General Assembly be called to prepare for a limited constitutional convention for that purpose.

Although the Gray Commission included many members of the Byrd organization, the senator distanced himself from its findings. While on a congressional trip to Europe, he was sent a copy of the "Grey Plan." "This won't do," he is quoted as having said (Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star, 1990, September 23). Byrd issued a statement in which, although he endorsed tuition grants, he avoided supporting local option (Dabney, 1971, p. 533).

Many political observers felt that Byrd was embarrassed by the recommendations of the commission. The senator's southern colleagues had expected Virginia to play a leadership role in impeding the implementation of Brown, and the policies of the commission seemed to imply a strategy of compromise rather than confrontation (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

Byrd hurriedly worked to develop a regional response to Brown: "Ten other states are confronted with the same acute problem. These states are all seeking a way to preserve their schools, and it is possible that some form of action can be accepted as a pattern for all" (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8).

Seeking to rally public support for the maintenance of segregation, Jack Kilpatrick of the Richmond News Leader helped disinter the forgotten doctrine of "interposition." The doctrine

had come to Kilpatrick's attention after William W. Old, an elderly Chesterfield County attorney, had published in August of 1955 a thousand copies of a pamphlet advocating that states interpose their sovereignty to negate attempts by the federal government to usurp rights the states believed were justly afforded them by the Constitution (Dabney, 1971, pp. 534-535). Developed in the late eighteenth century by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison and later employed by John C. Calhoun, doctrines of nullification and interposition were seen by many massive resisters as potentially effective roadblocks to desegregation (Tindall, 1984, pp. 313-314).

Kilpatrick, a respected advisor to Senator Byrd, quickly became a widely influential propagandist on the related topics of interposition, states' rights, and white supremacy. At the peak of the debate surrounding interposition, Kilpatrick launched an editorial campaign, lasting from November 21, 1955, to February 2, 1956, in which he touted the virtues of the doctrine. The campaign culminated in the appearance of Senator Calhoun in a series of three-column portraits.

Many members of the Byrd organization, the senator included, naively saw interposition as a legal means of circumventing the Supreme Court's order (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8). Others, such as Kilpatrick and Almond, viewed interposition as a symbolic protest and were acutely aware that the doctrine and its manifestations would ultimately be rejected by the courts (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, April, pp. 462-464; Dabney, 1971,

p. 535).

On November 30, 1955, the General Assembly was convened in a special session to consider the Gray Commission's recommendation that Section 141 be amended to allow for tuition grants. The section stated that "no appropriation of public funds [should] be made to any school or institution of learning not owned or exclusively controlled by the state or some political subdivision thereof" (Constitution of Virginia, 1902). The delegates, with only six objections, voted to support the amendment. A statewide referendum to ratify the revision of Section 141 was scheduled for January 9, 1956 (Gates, 1962, p. 72).

The State Referendum Information Center was established in Richmond on December 9, 1955. Its purpose was to create public awareness of the need to vote in favor of tuition grants. Dr. Dabney Lancaster, a widely respected moderate who was a president emeritus of Longwood College and a former state superintendent of public instruction, was named its director. The efforts of the center were supported by most of Virginia's political elite, including the entire Byrd organization, by the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties, and by nearly all of the state's white presses. Lancaster and other leaders of the center issued a statement indicating that the amendment of Section 141 would in no way affect the Gray Commission's recommendation that localities be allowed to determine the degree to which they would integrate, if at all (Dabney, 1971, pp. 533-534; Gates, 1962, pp. 76-82).

Privately, within the normally unified Byrd organization, the issue of local option was factious. Some moderate organization members, such as former governors John Stewart Battle and Colgate W. Darden, Jr., preferred that public schools continue to operate, even at the risk of integration. Hardliners such as Byrd, Stanley, and Congressmen Bill Tuck, Watkins Abbitt, and Howard W. Smith vehemently supported segregation regardless of the costs (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 127). The Referendum Center officers who had issued the statement that local option would be upheld would later be chagrined over their proclamation (Dabney, 1971, p. 534).

Opposing tuition support was the Virginia Society for Preservation of Public Education. Armistead Boothe, an anti-organization Democrat from Northern Virginia, spearheaded its efforts. The VSPPE argued that state support for private schooling would destroy public education. The NAACP, the Virginia Council of Human Relations, some religious leaders, a handful of political representatives, and what vestiges of organized labor existed in Virginia supported the society's efforts. The Virginian-Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch, alone among the state's white presses, sided with the VSPPE.

The referendum to amend Section 141 was held January 9, 1956. The ballot asked voters to indicate whether they wished to permit the General Assembly and the governing bodies of the several counties, cities and towns to appropriate funds for educational purposes [for]...elementary, secondary, collegiate, and graduate education of Virginia students in

nonsectarian public and private schools and institutions of learning (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, February, p. 246).

The results of the referendum demonstrated conclusively that Virginians strongly supported the provision of tuition assistance for private education. Regional percentages of voters supporting the amendment varied predictably, ranging from 84.3 in the black belt to 56.4 in the white belt (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 127). In Norfolk, perhaps as a result of the Virginian-Pilot's editorials, the results were nearly even (Chambers et al., 1967, p. 384).

The overwhelming public support for amending Section 141 helped reinforce the perception among Virginia's political leadership that incendiary segregationist posturing and rhetoric would be strongly supported. This impression, along with the efforts of organization hard-line segregationists, had the effect of escalating resistance to Brown.

The adoption of an "Interposition Resolution" by the General Assembly on February 1, 1956, was an early manifestation of this increasingly blatant resistance. Strongly influenced by the Richmond News Leader's two-month editorial campaign, the legislature decried the infringements of the federal government:

We pledge our firm intention to take all appropriate measures honorably, legally, and constitutionally available to us, to resist this illegal encroachment upon our sovereign powers, and

urge upon our sister States...their prompt and deliberate efforts to check this and further encroachment by the Supreme Court (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, April, p. 447).

The assembly also scheduled a special summer session to enact more segregationist legislation (Wilhoit, 1973, p. 139).

The "Interposition Resolution" was a symbolic gesture and little more. Anti-organization Democrat Robert Whitehead called interposition "nullification nonsense" and disdainfully dismissed the overblown emotionalism surrounding the resolution: "The lightning flashed, the thunder struck, and a chigger died!" (Dabney, 1971, p. 535). Seeking clarification as to exactly what the resolution meant, Whitehead wrote to Attorney General Almond. Almond conceded that the resolution did not constitute a defense against Brown but touted the resolution as "an unequivocal epitome of Virginia's unyielding devotion and loyalty to the perpetuation of that constitutional system of government which, more than any other state, she molded and launched in the formation of the Union" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, April, p. 463).

With opposition to integration at a fever pitch, on February 24, 1956, Senator Byrd called for "massive resistance" to integration:

If we can organize the Southern States for massive resistance to this order [the Supreme Court's decree in the School Segregation Cases] I think that in time the rest of the country will realize that racial integration is not going to

be accepted in the South (Richmond Times-Dispatch, 1956, February 25).

The senator appears to have been the first congressional representative to use the term "massive resistance" (Wilhoit, 1973, p. 55).

Byrd's role in shaping massive resistance was carefully concealed from the public. According to Robert Mason, "Senator Byrd didn't have anything to with [massive resistance] officially....He was completely in the background. He never showed himself in that whole time. [However] it became pretty apparent who was pulling the strings and who was answering to whom, but he was an elusive target" (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

Many historians and journalists believe that Byrd's advocacy of massive resistance was motivated more by political survival than by racial prejudice, although white supremacy certainly motivated many organization insiders such as Abbitt and Tuck (Wilkinson, 1973; Carter, 1959, September). For the first time, there were indications that the omnipotent organization led by the aging senator was in decline. The 1954 gubernatorial election had been hotly contested, and it was only with Byrd's personal intervention that Stanley weathered the challenge of Theodore Roosevelt ("Ted") Dalton, the popular delegate from Radford.

Its superiority threatened, the organization sought and became increasingly dependent on support from whites living in the black belt. Byrd used the issue of integration to rally the

support of these voters. "This will keep us in power another twenty-five years," an anonymous leader in the organization is quoted as having said (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 154).

The senator correctly perceived that massive resistance had great popular appeal in regions other than the Southside. White Virginians elsewhere, nearly all of whom wished to maintain their tradition of segregated schools, differed from their counterparts in the black belt only in regard to the sacrifices they were willing to endure to stave off integration.

Byrd's motivations for embracing massive resistance were personal and political. As one of the primary architects of the "Southern Manifesto," which was being developed in the U.S. Senate during this time, Byrd felt it only appropriate that Virginia provide leadership for the rest of the South in maintaining segregated schools.

Representatives assembled in Richmond on March 5, 1956, to hold the limited state constitutional convention mandated by the January 9 referendum. The forty delegates voted unanimously to amend Section 141 to provide public funding for private schools. One delegate advanced a resolution of support for local option, but it was dispatched in committee (Dabney, 1971, p. 537).

The Declaration of Constitutional Principles--the "Southern Manifesto"--was issued on March 12, 1956. The document was introduced by Senator Walter George of Georgia in the Senate and Representative Howard W. Smith, a key figure in the Byrd organization, in the U.S. House of Representatives. Byrd and

Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina had been the foremost architects of the manifesto. One hundred one southern congressmen, the vast majority of the region's federal legislators, including both of Virginia's senators and all ten of its representatives, signed the document (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, April, pp. 436-437).

The authors of the Southern Manifesto called the Brown decision "a clear abuse of judicial power" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, April, p. 435). They pledged "to use all lawful means to bring about a reversal of this decision which is contrary to the constitution and to prevent the use of force in its implementation" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, April, p. 436). Byrd called the document part of the "plan of massive resistance we've been working on" (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8).

Heartened by the early victories of massive resistance--the tuition referendum, interposition, and the Southern Manifesto--Senator Byrd assembled his upper echelon of leaders for a secret conclave in the nation's capital on July 2, 1956. With Stanley, Gray, Tuck, and Abbitt in attendance, Byrd reached the decision to escalate further the resistance to integration by prohibiting state funding for desegregated schools. The local option feature of the Gray Plan was rejected out of hand (Wilkinson, 1968, p. 130; Gates, 1962, p. 130; Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8).

Speaking from his Berryville apple orchard in late August,

the senator drew a line in the sand.

Virginia stands as one of the foremost states. Let Virginia surrender to this illegal demand [the desegregation order]...and you'll find the ranks of other southern states broken....It's no secret that the NAACP intends first to press Virginia....If Virginia surrenders, if Virginia's line is broken, the rest of the South will go down, too (Richmond Times-Dispatch, 1956, August 26).

In an atmosphere of extremism, the governor convened a special session of the General Assembly on August 27, 1956. The same Governor Stanley who had responded to Brown in such a moderate fashion and had supported local option now advocated massive resistance. Gray and the majority of the members of his commission performed a similar about-face. During the session more than twenty anti-integration laws were passed. The obstructionist legislative scheme that emerged became known as the "Stanley Plan."

The plan consisted of three principal redoubts to integration. First, local school boards would be divested of pupil-placement responsibilities. A three-member Pupil Placement Board, to be appointed by the governor, would be charged with assigning the state's public-school students to specific schools. Ostensibly this board would assign students in an objective fashion; in reality it would exist solely to rebuff integration (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, December, pp. 1091-1113; Ely, 1976, pp. 45-46; Wilkinson, 1968, p. 133).

Should black students bridge this obstacle--and it was anticipated that with the federal courts' assistance some would--they would confront a second and more formidable barrier to integration. Schools that were integrated, either voluntarily or as a result of students' appealing decisions of the Pupil Placement Board, would be closed by the governor. State funding would be provided for the private education of students and for the salaries of teachers and principals locked out of the closed schools.

Finally, although the city councils of the closed systems could petition the governor to reopen their schools, these bodies would be denied state funding if they chose to do so. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for most localities to continue to operate schools without assistance from Richmond.

In addition to the legislation that comprised the Stanley Plan, a number of other bills intended to ward off integration were approved. Many of these laws were designed to harry civil rights organizations such as the NAACP. Under these newly enacted laws, organizations that promoted or opposed race-related legislation would be required to furnish the State Corporation Commission with the names of donors and members. NAACP members were afraid that if their membership became known, they would face a number of forms of retaliation ranging from the loss of jobs to the denial of credit. Other laws were intended to harass NAACP attorneys who conducted civil rights litigation. Taken in concert, the laws enacted at this special session were formidable

impediments to those working for integration (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, October, pp. 1014-1026; Peltason, 1961, p. 65). As one segregationist said, "As long as we can legislate, we can segregate" (Peltason, 1961, p. 93).

This legislation was not supported unanimously. Moderates, including embarrassed members of the Referendum Information Center such as Lancaster and former governor Colgate W. Darden, Jr., as well as many members of the State Board of Education, were opposed to the Stanley Plan's fund-withholding provisions. In the end, however, black-belt legislators and the Byrd organization won an unusually close vote: 59 to 39 in the House of Delegates and 21 to 17 in the Senate (Gates, 1962, p. 173; Wilkinson, 1968, p. 133). Virginus Dabney would conclude that "the racial attitudes of most whites in Virginia's black belt, comprising only a small fraction of the state's population, had been imposed on the entire Commonwealth" (Dabney, 1971, pp. 537-538).

In Norfolk, in a relatively minor case that foreshadowed events to come, Judge Hoffman continued to attack segregation. On August 29, the same day on which the General Assembly approved the Stanley Plan, Hoffman granted a preliminary injunction barring municipal officials in the neighboring city of Portsmouth from operating a golf course that refused to admit blacks (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1956, December, p. 1059).

The August 1956 special session of the General Assembly had also authorized the formation of two separate joint committees, one to investigate the activities of organizations that sought to

encourage litigation pertaining to racial activities and another to oversee the enforcement of acts related to champerty, barratry, running, and capping--antiquated common-law offenses that basically amounted to stirring up quarrels and suits (Black, 1979, p. 137; Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, October, pp. 1020-1023). By early 1957, the Committee on Law Reform and Racial Activities (the Thomson Committee) and the Committee on Offenses Against Administration of Justice (the Boatwright Committee) had begun their investigations of the activities of the NAACP (Ely, 1976, p. 47).

For the next several years these committees, named for their chairs, Delegate John B. Boatwright of Buckingham County and Delegate James M. Thomson of Alexandria (a hard-line segregationist and the brother-in-law of Harry Byrd, Jr.) would conduct closed hearings. Armed with subpoena power, the committees would attempt to intimidate members of the NAACP legal staff, litigants in desegregation suits, and members of human-relations groups (Ely, 1976, pp. 21-47).

In the fall of 1957, both committees issued predictable reports. The Thomson Committee concluded that "the manner in which the NAACP attorneys obtained their clients in the school integration cases [was], in most cases, reprehensible" and that the organization had been engaged in the "unauthorized practice of law" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, December, p. 1170). The Boatwright Committee found the NAACP and its legal staff in violation of statutes pertaining to champerty, barratry, running,

capping, unauthorized practice of law, and unprofessional conduct; and the committee recommended that these violations be investigated by the Virginia State Bar (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, February, pp. 98-110).

Also that autumn, Lindsay J. Almond announced his candidacy for the governorship. He had wanted to declare his candidacy in 1953; but when it had become apparent that Stanley was Senator Byrd's preferred candidate, Almond had postponed his bid for four years. Although Almond was a member of the Byrd organization's upper echelon, he had never ranked as one of the senator's inner circle of advisors. Despite the fact that Almond genuinely held Byrd in extremely high regard--in fact, had on one occasion actually lauded Byrd as "the greatest living American" (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8) and supported the vast majority of the senator's policies--the two had differed on a number of political issues.

In 1950 Almond had naively written a letter of support for Martin A. Hutchison's nomination for the Federal Trade Commission. Hutchison had been an anti-organization opponent of Byrd, and there were rumors that Byrd was irritated by Almond's letter. The senator had also been taken aback by Almond's lack of commitment to Virginia's poll tax and by a legal opinion Almond had rendered, supporting the admission of a black graduate student to the University of Virginia. Almond's most conspicuous deviation from Byrd-organization orthodoxy had been his support, albeit tepid, of Harry Truman's presidential bid in 1948. Byrd had refused to

endorse his party's candidate and had, instead, maintained a conspicuous "golden silence" throughout Truman's campaign.

Almond ambitiously began to lay the foundation for the 1958 gubernatorial campaign immediately after Byrd's unfavorable response. As attorney general, he took the fullest advantage of opportunities to position himself as a contender. He embarked on an energetic speaking tour throughout the state and, despite his overblown rhetoric and bombastic style of speaking, earned a reputation as a highly capable opponent of integration.

In 1957 Almond announced his candidacy unexpectedly early and without consulting Byrd. There were some indications that the senator would have preferred Garland Gray because of Gray's ideological orthodoxy, but pragmatism prevailed and Byrd endorsed Almond because of his popularity (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8).

Almond had announced his candidacy in the midst of participating in the argument of a major court case in Norfolk (W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990). Two suits, *Adkins v. School Board of the City of Newport News* and *Beckett v. School Board of the City of Norfolk*, had been brought by black plaintiffs to test the constitutionality of Virginia's pupil-placement laws. Judge Hoffman had consolidated the cases because of their similarities.

Hoffman found the pupil-placement act to be unconstitutional on its face, in view of the fact that it considered the race of students in determining school assignments. While he acknowledged

the conundrum of local officials who were caught between conflicting state and federal statutes, Hoffman pointed to the primacy of federal laws:

I appreciate the fact that school boards and their division superintendents throughout the state of Virginia have been placed in a most unenviable position. If they comply with the Constitution of the United States as interpreted by the Supreme Court of this country, their schools will automatically be closed and all state funds will be cut off....If the school boards and the superintendents fail to comply with the Constitution...they subject themselves to the process of contempt. It is not for me to advise these good people how they should proceed. But the constitutional law of this country cannot be evaded (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, April, p. 336).

In his decision Hoffman took the fullest advantage of this forum to speak freely on a number of issues. He chided the General Assembly, "There has been no effort on the part of that body...to in good faith implement the governing constitutional principles," and hinted at a compromise solution to future desegregation litigation: "I do not know of any law that prevents the so-called gerrymandering of the school areas" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, April, p. 336). The judge also noted the difficult role he and other federal judges faced in interpreting Brown II: "I haven't the slightest idea what the words 'with all deliberate speed' mean. I can only assume that it

means that there must be some effective steps towards compliance" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, April, p. 335).

Hoffman concluded his decision by enjoining the defendants to abolish their practice of assigning students to particular schools solely on the basis of race. The decree was to become effective August 15, 1957.

Hoffman's judgment and the events surrounding it provide insight into the impending crisis and the emerging power struggle. In his decision the judge makes much of a statement provided the court by Superintendent J. J. Brewbaker, to the effect that Brown could be gradually implemented in Norfolk were it not for the obstructionist activities of the General Assembly. Through the use of a number of complimentary references to the superintendent and the board, Hoffman appears to have been attempting to forge an alliance with the city's educational leadership (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, April, p. 339).

Byrd, too, sought to influence the school board. In his correspondence with Kilpatrick, the senator writes of his apparently successful attempts to persuade the board to defy the federal courts:

I am very much pleased to hear from private sources that Norfolk is going to stand by us and the school board has made this decision. That Jackass, Hoffman, was attempting to make a deal with them by agreeing that there would be modified integration over a long term of years. One of the main considerations, of course, was the fact that their school

funds would be withdrawn (H. Byrd to J. Kilpatrick, 1957, March 21, Kilpatrick Papers).

The disaffection between the senator and the judge bordered at times on open hostility. While Hoffman was trying Beckett and Adkins, Billy Prieur wrote to Byrd about the judge's extrajudicial barbs directed at the organization:

He is the type that starts talking and goes off with his mouth running. On at least two occasions he has been most intemperate with his comments while on the bench, and outside the record he is severely criticized by a large number of attorneys here for this apparent lack of judicial temperament (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, January 18, 1957, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

Byrd reacted to Hoffman's decision and attacks by accusing the judge of having determined the case without having heard evidence and of having let the NAACP ghostwrite his decision. "I don't know how he got all that information," Hoffman muses; "but, of course, if I did all of that, I ought to have been impeached. I'd be the first to admit it" (W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990).

Lenoir Chambers, editor of the Virginian-Pilot, puzzled over Byrd's charges and telephoned Hoffman in an attempt to obtain transcripts to determine the accuracy of the accusations. The judge recalls the editor's inquiry: "It doesn't make any sense to me that you would write an opinion without having anything in the files." Hoffman responded, "Well, Lenoir, if they're not going to look in the clerk's office where the files are kept, there's

nothing I can do about it." After reading the voluminous transcript, Chambers wrote an editorial entitled "In Fairness to Judge Hoffman," which refuted Byrd's accusations. Additionally, the editor confronted Byrd during a telephone conversation: "I've got the record down here--five hundred and some pages. I'll send it to you....You owe Judge Hoffman an apology." "Well, I'll keep owing it to him," Byrd retorted (W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990).

Hoffman's decision would be upheld by the United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit. The court, headquartered in Richmond, consisted of Chief Judge John J. Parker, a North Carolina Republican moderate who was one of the country's most distinguished judges; Judge Simon E. Sobeloff, a liberal Republican from Maryland; and Judge Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr., an independent-minded Democrat from South Carolina (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, August, pp. 808-810; Peltason, 1961, pp. 22-24). The circuit court's decision was appealed to the Supreme Court, which denied certiorari on October 21, 1957. The August 15, 1957, deadline for Hoffman's injunction having passed, the desegregation of Norfolk's public schools was set for the beginning of the 1958 school year.

Prieur later reported on Chambers to Byrd:

I have read Chambers's [editorial] and, in my opinion, it is so much eyewash. He, as well as the other editors of the Pilot, are more critical of the position taken in Virginia with reference to integration and I am inclined to doubt the

sincerity of his statements in private conversation (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, May 28, 1957, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

Chambers on occasion corresponded with the senator in an effort to elucidate the Virginian-Pilot's views on massive resistance.

We have never urged swift or sweeping mixture of the races in the public schools. We do feel certain that mixing in varying degrees is inevitable in a future that is difficult to measure in time; and we think strongly that government and citizenship, and all leadership, have the duty to try to appraise these problems, calmly, carefully, with good spirit, and with justice.

Much that has been done in the South reflects, I am afraid, a different spirit. We conceive it our duty in these circumstances to do what we can to encourage a climate in which the best minds and spirits of Virginia (and other states), and not only the most extreme or the best organized, can make their wisdom and intelligence count in dealing with these grave and complicated problems (L. Chambers to H. Byrd, May 23, 1957, Chambers Papers).

Chambers went on to remind Byrd of his "statesmanship" in sponsoring Virginia's anti-lynching legislation and urged the senator to include blacks in the search for a solution to the state's racial problems.

Byrd responded to the editor's letter by expressing his concern that moderate integration would lead to massive

integration. The senator asserted that if Virginia adopted a policy of local option, the NAACP would initiate on a local level a large number of law suits that would result in widespread integration. "Modified integration," Byrd wrote, "is not going to satisfy the NAACP and others who favor the real integration of our public school system" (H. Byrd to L. Chambers, May 28, 1957, Chambers Papers).

Billy Prieur disapproved of Byrd's entreaties to the Pilot's editor. The clerk of courts wrote to Byrd,

I feel you are wasting your time in writing to him on the subject [of massive resistance]. He is, in my opinion, a most charming person personally, but a rabid integrationist in his news columns. I am enclosing (sic) copy of (sic) editorial which appeared in this morning's [Virginian-Pilot] apparently urging Dalton to run. This paper and its editorial columns are not for the Organization (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, June 4, 1957, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

Although Chambers believed that Senator Byrd was ultimately responsible for the state's worsening racial relations, the editor did not consider the senator to be a militant racist, as he did some organization insiders. The editor maintained that the senator's motivation for his development of massive resistance was his states' rights philosophy and his suspicion of federal government.

Chambers was uncertain as to the extent political pragmatism

figured in Byrd's policies. Chambers wrote to William Wing, a young Norfolk man who had left the Virginian-Pilot for the New York Herald Tribune,

There are in Virginia many politicians who know very well that trumpeting the hard segregation point of view is good for another election....They would not hesitate to exploit that issue to the utmost....How much Senator Byrd has been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the political expediency of the segregationist point of view, I do not know (L. Chambers to W. Wing, October 3, 1958, Chambers Papers).

On September 24, 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had practiced a policy of neutrality toward public-school desegregation, issued a statement in which he outlined the responsibilities of the executive branch of the federal government in enforcing Brown. Events in Little Rock, Arkansas, had overtaken the president, and his policy of nonintervention had proved painfully ineffective. Many southern leaders had interpreted the president's neutrality to mean that he tacitly supported segregation. Eisenhower now declared that although the federal government would not participate in the development of desegregation plans, states were compelled by law to abide by the Supreme Court's decision. The president stated that obstruction of justice and mob violence would not be tolerated. One thousand members of the elite 101st Airborne Division were flown to Little Rock Air Force Base. The troops surrounded Little Rock's previously all-white Central High School and escorted nine black

students to and from class (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1957, October, pp. 930-931; Peltason, 1961, p. 46; Wilhoit, 1973, p. 44; Williams, 1987, pp. 102-107).

Ted Dalton, who before Eisenhower's use of federal troops had faced, at best, an uphill struggle in his campaign for the governorship, found himself constrained by events in Little Rock. Almond declared that Dalton's election would be considered "as approval of the invasion...of Arkansas" and would "constitute an invitation for the creation of many Little Rocks in Virginia" (Richmond News Leader, 1957, Nov. 1). In his most inflammatory and popular campaign speech, Almond raised his right arm and vowed that he would lose the limb before a single black child enrolled in a white school in Virginia (Ely, 1976, p. 61).

Dalton, because of his support for local option, found himself termed an integrationist--which he was not--and lumped in a class with Chief Justice Earl Warren, Attorney General Herbert Brownell, the membership of the NAACP, and other figures unpopular with the segregationists (Ely, 1976, pp. 59-61). Of all the state's major daily newspapers, only the Virginian-Pilot endorsed him (Ely, 1976, p. 63). Dalton retaliated as best he could by accusing Almond of having reversed his position on the Gray Plan and by mocking a statement Almond had made regarding a secret plan he had devised for avoiding school integration (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 8).

In the end Dalton's efforts fell short, 188,628 votes to Almond's 326,921. "Little Rock knocked me down to nothing,"

Dalton explained. "It wasn't a Little Rock, it was a big rock" (Dabney, 1971, p. 540).

Almond was pressured by Byrd to use his inaugural address to denounce the usurpation of state's rights by the federal government (Ely, 1976, p. 70). The governor acquiesced, and much of his address on January 11 was devoted to "the sovereignty of the states, the security of a nation--with particular reference to the problems of our public schools," and "the challenge that awaits our entire system of education in light of the Russians' ominous moon [the U.S.S.R. satellite Sputnik]" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, January 12).

The momentum behind Lindsay Almond's campaign and rousing victory over Dalton launched massive resistance in Virginia. In January the legislature met in regular session and enacted still more resistance laws (Ely, 1976, pp. 70-71). Chapter 642 of the 1958 session of the General Assembly limited the expenditure of state funding to "efficient schools." Efficient schools were defined as schools that were not integrated (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, August, p. 768). Chapters 41 and 319, known as the "Little Rock Bills," ordered the closing of schools whose operation was policed by federal military forces (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, April, pp. 341-343).

Also illustrative of the tenor of the session was the controversial "blank paper" amendment. According to sections 24-67 and 24-71 of the state code, a registration board could determine whether a printed registration form or a blank piece of

paper, with no headings, questions, or information, would be issued to a prospective voter. Most registration boards issued printed forms. As attorney general, however, Governor Almond had ruled that printed registration forms violated Section 20 of the State Constitution (Buni, 1967, pp. 196-197).

The section stated that an applicant must make application to register in his own handwriting, without aid, suggestion, or memorandum in the presence of the registration officer, stating therein his name, age, date and place of birth, residence and occupation at the time and for one year preceding, and whether he [had] previously voted and, if so, the state, county, and precinct in which he [had] voted last.

Almond's decision was apparently based on the words "without aid, suggestion, or memorandum." The General Assembly deemed the session an especially propitious time to enforce the governor's decision (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, February 1).

Prospective voters would be forced to memorize the ten or so questions. Registrars who refused to implement the decision would be dismissed from their posts. The real purpose of the legislation was, of course, to obstruct the registration of blacks and reduce further the size of the electorate (Ely, 1976, pp. 71-72).

The federal courts continued to dismantle massive-resistance legislation. That same month a three-judge panel sitting in Richmond ruled that state statutes intended to curtail the legal

activities of the NAACP and force the organization to release its membership lists were unconstitutional (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, April, pp. 274-275). The court consisted of circuit judge Morris A. Sopher, an eighty-four-year-old Republican who had left active service several years earlier; district judge Sterling Hutcheson, a native Southsider with ties to the Byrd organization; and district judge Hoffman. Three-judge panels were required when the constitutionality of state laws was challenged and injunctions prohibiting the enforcement of those laws were requested. Decisions of these courts were directly appealable to the Supreme Court (Peltason, 1961, p. 108).

Surprisingly, this panel's decision would be overturned by the Supreme Court, with Chief Justice Earl Warren and Justices William O. Douglas and William Brennan dissenting. The court felt that the panel should have delayed its ruling until the state courts had been given the opportunity to interpret the state statutes (Peltason, 1961, p. 78).

In early 1958 Byrd unexpectedly announced he would not seek reelection. He had promised his invalid wife he would retire. Virginians--especially members of the organization--were astounded. Political life in the state was inconceivable without the senator. Tuck and Battle, the two most likely successors, made preparations to mount campaigns for the soon-to-be-vacant Senate seat. An internecine struggle between these two organization principals would have torn the Byrd machine apart. Letters poured in, begging the senator to reconsider his decision.

The General Assembly, with complete unanimity, passed a resolution asking him to delay his retirement. Byrd belatedly realized the dire consequences stepping down would have for the organization and massive resistance. With his wife's support, he changed his mind and agreed to run again (Dabney, 1971, p. 540).

With the approach of the new school year, Norfolk braced itself for the long-delayed enforcement of the Brown decision and the possible closing of its public schools. On June 7, 1958, Hoffman announced from the bench that the city must, with reasonable promptness and without regard to race, act upon the transfers of black students who were requesting assignment to white schools (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, p. 942). Prieur responded by making preparations to evoke the state's massive-resistance laws. "As you have no doubt read in the papers," he wrote to Byrd, "Norfolk will be on the front line when the schools open. Our definite plans are to close the schools if the Negroes attempt enrollment. All of this, of course, within the new laws of Virginia" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, June 24, 1958, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

On June 27 the State Corporation Commission of Virginia issued a certificate of incorporation to the Tidewater Educational Foundation, a segregationist private-school organization connected with the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, June, pp. 789-790). Among the five directors of the organization were James G. Martin IV, a local attorney, and W. I. McKendree, the past president of the

City Parent-Teacher Association Council and a vendor of duplicating equipment. Martin, with his strong social standing, afforded the foundation an air of gentility, whereas the zealous McKendree, a charter member of the Defenders, with roots in the working class, represented the constituency most likely to feel threatened by desegregation (Southern School News, 1958, July; W. McKendree, personal communication, November 19, 1990; Muse, 1961, p. 112; L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990).

Besides objecting to integration on the grounds that it usurped state sovereignty, that it was not in the best interest of blacks, and that it would lead to "mongrelization" of the races, these principal members of the foundation professed the belief that integration was a communist plot intended to sow dissent and enervate the nation's youth (Ford, 1989, p. 35; W. McKendree, personal communication, November 19, 1990).

Later, during the making of a Columbia Broadcasting System television documentary on the closing, Martin would state the nature of his objections to public-school integration.

As a device in implementation of this scheme of subversion of American institutions, the Soviet has adopted this technique called integration...with the dual purpose, first since time means little to these master scientists--over the long haul, to so amalgamate the races in America that there will ensue a mongrel race so debilitated and so diffused that it has little or no principle left with which to withstand the avalanche of

Communism, which then plans to take over ("The Lost Class of '59," 1959, January 21, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

McKendree also appeared in the documentary:

Hitler first federalized the police force gaining under him the power to coerce the people throughout the land. And secondly, he federalized the school system to capture the minds of all the children. And thus having done this, he set himself up as a tyrant that would dictate to all of the people of that land. Many of the states, throughout the Union, are now familiar with the crushing hand, the iron glove of this unit known as the Supreme Court of the United States of America. My friends, we teeter on the brink of total dictatorship. Let it not happen here ("The Lost Class of '59," 1959, January 21, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

The Tidewater Educational Foundation, actively supported by the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties, began work to establish an alternative school system. Throughout the state other private school groups located in areas scheduled for desegregation, such as Arlington, Prince Edward County, and Charlottesville, also began to organize with varying degrees of success (Southern School News, 1958, July).

The TEF was faced with the most ambitious undertaking by far. Norfolk was a major metropolitan area, the state's largest city, with a rapidly increasing public-school enrollment. There were 32,163 white pupils and 15,171 black pupils enrolled in the city's thirty-six white and twenty black schools. Public schools

received \$6,000,000 in local funding, \$2,439,000 in state money, and \$1,240,000 from the federal government (Southern School News, 1958, September). Norfolk's school system required the administrative services of a superintendent, three assistant superintendents, and twelve directors of departments (Rorer, 1968, pp. 292, 341).

Of the five directors of the foundation, only Hal J. Bonney, Jr., a history teacher at Norview High School, had any professional experience as an educator. Although many of Norfolk's citizens were undoubtedly sympathetic to the goals of the organization, most perceived the foundation's prospects of replacing the city's public schools as highly unlikely. Nevertheless, McKendree and his associates energetically began to lay the groundwork for obtaining substitute school facilities and a teaching staff (W. McKendree, personal communication, November 19, 1990; L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990; R. Tonelson, personal communication, July 18, 1990).

On July 17, 1958, the school board issued a resolution that enumerated the criteria to be employed in assessing the suitability of students attempting to transfer to schools that had previously been all black or all white. The standards purported to take the would-be transfer students' health, academic backgrounds, physical and moral fitness, mental ability, social adaptability, and cultural backgrounds into account, as well as the health, safety, and cultural backgrounds of the pupils already enrolled in the requested schools. Superintendent Brewbaker was

charged with responsibility for overseeing the administration of a battery of tests and personal interviews that would be used to evaluate the students (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, pp. 942-944).

The board maintained that it would "exercise its proper discretion in making such assignments in the light of all the pertinent facts, but without regard to race or color" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, p. 944). The board had earlier stated that in the event of a conflict between state and federal laws, the latter "must be regarded by the school board as paramount" (Southern School News, 1958, August, p. 6). NAACP attorney Oliver Hill praised the board for its "excellent" attitude (Southern School News, 1958, August, p. 6).

On August 18, 1958, Justice Willis D. Miller of the State Supreme Court of Appeals issued an injunction restraining the school board from "performing any act of enrollment or placement of pupils in the public schools of the City of Norfolk." The justice asserted that the responsibility of assigning students rested with the state Pupil Placement Board. This restraining order, which was to remain effective well into the school year, was issued after Judge Clyde H. Jacob of the Circuit Court of the City of Norfolk had refused the request of the board for an injunction prohibiting the assignment of the black students (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, pp. 944-945; Peltason, 1961, p. 6).

That same day, the school board announced that all of the 151

applications by black students for transfer to previously all-white schools were denied. Sixty-one students had declined to take the prescribed California Achievement Test, one had withdrawn his application, one had refused to submit to the personal interviews conducted by the five-member panel of educators and psychologists, and sixty students were judged as not having met the minimum scholastic requirements. Of the remaining twenty-eight applicants, twenty-four had requested transfer to schools in the racially tense Norview area, where, it was maintained, their assignment would incite racial conflict. It was determined that the final four students would be so isolated that they would suffer psychological harm (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, pp. 945-946; Southern School News, 1958, September, p. 1).

The next day thirty of the would-be transfer students who had been denied admission to white schools petitioned Hoffman to overrule the board's decision (Southern School News, 1958, September, p. 6). The judge, who knew most of the seven board members personally, pressured them to admit the applicants. "I kept telling the school board it was their duty, it wasn't my duty. They took the same oath, as members of the school board, as I took as district judge....I kept poking at that school board: 'You're going to admit them'" (W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990).

None of the six members of the appointed school board favored integration (White, 1959, September, p. 31; L. Carter, personal

communication, October 10, 1990). Chairman Paul T. Schweitzer, president of the Layne Atlantic Pump Company, had attended a predominantly Hispanic elementary school in Arizona and felt strongly about the cultural alienation he had experienced (Carter, 1959, p. 516). The other members of the board were a lawyer, a seafood wholesaler, a fertilizer manufacturer, a furniture retailer, and one woman--Mildred J. Dallas--who was an executive in an automobile agency and also managed a kindergarten (Business Week, 1958, October).

Schweitzer had excellent qualifications to provide leadership for the city's public schools. Despite the fact that he had no formal education beyond military preparatory school, he possessed a keen interest in educational matters. He had served on the board since 1952 and had three years' experience in the role of chairman ("Schweitzer Campaign Brochure," Schweitzer Papers; R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990; R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). Schweitzer was a self-assured, quiet, and effective leader, who enjoyed considerable economic and social status as a result of his successful business ventures. He was ambitious and would later serve with distinction on the city council. Perhaps because of his political ambitions, his general inclination as chairman was to support the existing power structure and not to challenge authority (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990; L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990).

School superintendent John J. Brewbaker had served as

principal of James Madison School prior to accepting a position during World War II as supervisor of defense activities. During the war, public schools were used as registration sites for the selective service and as distribution centers for rationing coupons. It was to assume this responsibility that he had initially been appointed to the superintendent's staff (Rorer, 1968, p. 283).

Although Brewbaker's career had been relatively undistinguished, he found himself a key actor in the controversy surrounding Norfolk's massive resistance. Earlier, he had testified before Judge Hoffman that desegregation could peacefully proceed were it not for Virginia's massive-resistance laws. The superintendent regretted the Supreme Court decision, as did Schweitzer, but he recognized that he was compelled to obey it. Brewbaker, over his wife's objections, opposed the closing of Norfolk's schools (Carter, 1959, Autumn, p. 516; R. Tonelson, personal communication, July 18, 1990).

Brewbaker's opposition to the closing was most likely strongly influenced and supported by Schweitzer (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). Several years after the school closing, Brewbaker would write to Schweitzer,

Our friendship over the years has meant much to me. You have given me the courage and inspiration to live up to high principles. I always knew that I could trust and depend on you....I hope to see you Mayor of Norfolk very soon. A most

desirable change (J. Brewbaker to P. Schweitzer, July 5, 1960, Schweitzer Papers).

On August 25, 1958, Judge Hoffman, in response to the school board's denial of admission of the 151 black students to all-white schools, met with the board members to provide them with a judgment as to the legality of their actions. The judge reviewed the history of desegregation litigation, clarified the mandate of the Supreme Court, examined the rationale advanced by the board for refusing admission, and expressed his willingness to meet with school officials to furnish them with additional clarification regarding the desegregation order. In precise language Hoffman informed the board that racial tension, the threat of schools being closed, and the isolation of black students were not valid reasons for refusing to approve transfers. The results of achievement tests and personal interviews could, he said, be used as grounds for denial, provided these criteria were fairly administered. Additionally, a transfer could be disapproved if a new school located nearer the student's home than the requested school were to be opened within one year. Hoffman concluded his instruction by ordering the board to reconsider the transfer requests and to report the results of its activities on August 29 (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, pp. 946-955).

Hoffman experienced considerable stress as the date set for the opening of schools, September 8, neared. He received hate mail and threatening telephone calls from rabid segregationists, and a cross was set on fire in front of his home in the Lakewood

section of Norfolk (Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star, 1990, August 5). "He did not show it," recalls Farley Powers, his law clerk during that period; "[but] he was under stress, I know" (F. Powers, personal communication, October 4, 1990). Hoffman was affected by the crisis on a personal level as well as a professional one. Some of the judge's friends ostracized him. A popular joke at the time--one that had some basis in reality--concerned the inability of the judge, an avid golfer, to find three partners with whom to play golf (W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990; E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990). Unlike many southern judges, whose children received private educations, Hoffman would choose to continue to send his children to public schools (F. Powers, personal communication, October 4, 1990).

Two days after Hoffman ordered reconsideration of the students' transfer requests, the Pupil Placement Board telegraphed the school board to request that applications be sent to the Placement Board. "[We] cannot see," the executive secretary cabled, "how the furnishing of such information could possibly be construed as contempt of any court" (Southern School News, 1958, September, p. 6).

On August 29 the school board reported back to Judge Hoffman. Chairman Schweitzer stated that contrary to what the entire school board and Superintendent Brewbaker felt was in the best interests of the transfer students, the children in the schools to be integrated, and the city at large, the board had assigned

seventeen black students to six of the city's formerly all-white schools. Blair, Northside, and Norview Junior High Schools and Granby, Maury, and Norview High Schools were named as the schools to be integrated (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, pp. 955-957). The six had a combined enrollment of nearly eleven thousand students.

The board then, on the same day, delayed the opening of schools until September 22, appealed Hoffman's decision to the Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, and filed a motion to postpone the desegregation order until September of 1959. Three days later Hoffman denied the motion (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, December, p. 1156).

Despite its obvious recalcitrance and grudging compliance with the district court's order, the school board found itself castigated by hard-line segregationists. At a meeting held in Richmond on September 1 by the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties, that organization's leadership called on the governor to overrule the Norfolk board's action. The Defenders argued that the Pupil Placement Board was vested with the sole power to assign students ("Defenders Resolution," 1958, August 31, Almond Executive Papers; Muse, 1961, pp. 73-74).

Governor Almond responded the next day by informing reporters that the state's Pupil Placement Act could not legally be interposed to postpone desegregation in Norfolk (Southern School News, 1958, October, p. 3).

Nevertheless, on September 4, 1958, the governor advised the

superintendents of school divisions under federal order to desegregate that they had been divested of their responsibility to assign students. Almond warned these local officials that if they did not abide by his order, they would be held in violation of the state laws. The governor underscored his instruction with a thinly veiled threat:

I am deeply concerned that no charge be justifiably made that any School Board has thwarted the will of the overwhelming majority of the people of Virginia and thus be brought into disfavor with the chosen representatives of the people in the General Assembly (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, p. 959).

Eight days later, the Tidewater Educational Foundation announced that it had secured sufficient facilities to educate forty-five hundred pupils (Southern School News, 1958, October, p. 3). The directors of the TEF had made arrangements with a number of churches and businesses to provide substitute classrooms should the public schools be closed (W. McKendree, personal communication, November 19, 1990).

Although the foundation had experienced some success in obtaining facilities, staffing the private schools was problematic. McKendree, accompanied by several colleagues, approached Superintendent Brewbaker in an attempt to recruit faculty. According to McKendree, Brewbaker seriously considered assigning teaching staff to the foundation: "Brewbaker says, 'I've got a right to take these teachers because they are school

teachers under Norfolk and I would be an agent for the governor of Virginia.' He had a right to use those teachers if that's what we needed" (W. McKendree, personal communication, November 19, 1990).

The governor and Davis Y. Paschall, Virginia's superintendent of public instruction, were also attempting to devise a plan to educate the ten thousand students. According to the plan, schools would be reopened with the exception of the specific grades to be integrated at the schools to which black students had been assigned. White students in those grades would be transferred to schools in Norfolk County, the city of South Norfolk, Princess Anne County, and Portsmouth. The superintendents of those school divisions, with the exception of A. J. Mapp of Portsmouth, agreed to provide schooling for approximately forty-five hundred of Norfolk's students (D. Paschall to J. Almond, Sept. 29, 1958, Almond Executive Papers). This scheme was abandoned, however, when it was not supported by Norfolk's school board (The Christian Science News Monitor, 1958, October 8). The board likely realized Judge Hoffman would not have allowed such a blatantly obstructionist maneuver to circumvent the spirit of the Supreme Court's decision.

On September 12 the school board asked Hoffman to dissolve the Virginia State Supreme Court's injunction barring the board from making pupil assignments (Southern School News, 1958, October, p. 3).

It was announced on September 13 that Superintendent William

Story of South Norfolk had agreed to rent school buildings to Norfolk in the event that schools were closed. The buildings would be available after South Norfolk students had completed their school day at two o'clock. Norfolk would be charged \$3,000 a month for every one thousand pupils (Southern School News, 1958, October, pp. 3-4).

That same day, Governor Almond directed Attorney General Albertis S. Harrison, Jr., to institute a test case in the Virginia State Supreme Court of Appeals to assess the legality of tuition-grant payments, a critical component of Virginia's massive-resistance laws. The validity of tuition payments hinged on whether Virginia's constitution was violated by statutes that mandated the closing of integrated schools and the reallocation of state funding for tuition grants. The governor and the attorney general believed that a test of resistance legislation would ultimately occur and that a more favorable judgment would be provided by the state courts than by the federal courts (Ely, 1976, pp. 75-76; Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, pp. 65-78).

Virginia's first school closing took place September 15, 1958, in tiny Warren County in Northern Virginia. Twenty-two black students had been assigned to Warren County High School in the county seat of Front Royal after federal district judge John Paul had issued an injunction prohibiting the school board from barring their admission. Black students had been attending schools in neighboring counties because Warren County had no high school

facilities for blacks. Even though this practice placed the county in flagrant violation of the law, the closing was unexpected. Attorney General Harrison had believed it was likely that legal maneuvering could postpone integration for another year (Southern School News, 1958, October, p. 3; Ely, 1976, p. 74).

On September 16 the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools was officially formed. This committee, which opposed the closing of the city's schools, had been meeting on an informal basis since May. Even though its members clearly identified themselves as pro-public schools, not pro-integration, they encountered hostility. A September issue of the Virginian-Pilot identified six members of the committee's executive board but did not disclose the name of the seventh member, who preferred to remain anonymous rather than risk facing public animosity (Muse, 1961, p. 89).

The NCPS was comprised of an array of teachers, professors, physicians, real estate agents, housewives, and women active in civic affairs. The Reverend James C. Brewer, minister of Norfolk's Unitarian Church, was elected president. Although prominent business people and politicians were actively lobbied by the organization, and many were sympathetic to its goals, none were willing to be publicly associated with it. Their reasons for not joining included fear of economic reprisal, loss of jobs or prestige, diminished practices, and division of congregations. Despite its initial difficulties in attracting community leaders

to its membership, the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools would become the most visible and influential white organization working to reopen the city's schools ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers).

On September 18 Hoffman issued an injunction to prevent the state courts from denying the right of Norfolk's school board to assign pupils (Southern School News, 1958, October, p. 4). The next day, the board delayed the opening of the city's six white and three black secondary schools until September 29. That same day, after a similar set of postponements, Charlottesville became the second Virginia community to experience a school closure. Lane High and Venable Elementary schools were closed, displacing seventeen hundred students (Southern School News, 1958, October, p. 3).

On September 23 Judge Simon E. Sobeloff, chief judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, denied the request of Norfolk's school board for a stay of Hoffman's desegregation order. Sobeloff had refused similar requests from officials in both Warren County and Charlottesville (Southern School News, 1958, October, p. 4).

Four days later Norfolk's white secondary schools were ordered closed by Governor Almond. Earlier that day, Judges Sobeloff, Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr., and Morris A. Soper of the court of appeals had upheld Hoffman's order admitting the seventeen black students to the city's all-white junior and senior high schools. A certified copy of the order was transmitted to

the district court in Norfolk.

Upon hearing that its appeal had been denied, the school board approved the transfer of the students and notified the governor of its action (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, p. 962). Chairman Schweitzer, understanding that the assignment would close the desegregated schools, requested that Almond use the "best efforts of [his] office to effect the reopening of [the] schools at the earliest possible time" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, p. 962).

That same day, Almond removed the desegregated schools--Granby, Maury, and Norview High Schools and Blair, Northside, and Norview Junior High Schools--from Norfolk's system. The governor assumed complete jurisdiction over the closed schools: "All authority, power, and control over such schools, principals, teachers, and other employees and all pupils now enrolled or ordered to be enrolled, will thereupon be vested in the Commonwealth of Virginia, to be exercised by the Governor" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1958, October, p. 963). The order became effective September 29.

Although Warren County and Charlottesville were able to develop alternative school arrangements for nearly all of the 2,779 students of their three closed schools, Norfolk was deplorably unprepared. Forty-four hundred of the 9,950 dispossessed students would receive educations in informal "tutoring groups." Twenty-seven hundred students would be "unaccounted for," presumably having dropped out of school or for

other reasons receiving no educations at all (Southern School News, 1959, January, p. 9).

If massive resistance was Virginia's issue of the century, certainly the school closing was one of Norfolk's most significant historical events of the century. Frank Batten, publisher of both the Virginian-Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch, and a major actor opposing the closing, recalls the heady emotions of the time: "People talked about massive resistance and integration all the time...and I'm not sure that people who didn't go through that can understand how high the emotions were. [It was] a very tense time." (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

For a brief period of time after the closing of Norfolk's white secondary schools on September 29, 1958, passions subsided as a stunned citizenry disbelievingly contemplated what had occurred. Although the Supreme Court's decision and the Byrd organization's confrontational stance had made such an outcome almost inevitable, to most people the closing of public schools was inconceivable.

As resisters and pro-school forces began to battle for the support of Norfolk's citizens, the clear and consistent voice of the Virginian-Pilot's editorial staff would be heard encouraging reason, moderation, and lawfulness. The Virginian-Pilot's editorials would be widely read by much of the public and would be closely monitored by the state's political elite and other key actors in the closing. In a "war of propaganda" (H. Byrd to J.

Gravatt, October 20, 1958, Byrd, Sr., Papers), these editorials would do much to influence the peaceful outcome of the crisis.

LENOIR CHAMBERS AND THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Lenoir Chambers determined the editorial policy of the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot newspaper and established its advocacy of compliance with the United States Supreme Court's landmark decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka. The Pilot was Virginia's only major daily press to oppose massive resistance to public-school integration. Chambers's editorials during this period facilitated the moderate resolution of Norfolk's school crisis.

THE EMERGENCE OF AN EDITOR

Chambers was born December 26, 1891, to a distinguished and affluent family in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Chambers Building at Davidson College was named for his grandfather; and a city and county in North Carolina and a building at the University of North Carolina were named for other members of the Chambers family. His father, a graduate of Davidson College, worked for several years for a North Carolina newspaper and became a manufacturer of cotton gins, steam engines, boilers, and sawmills. The elder Chambers was active in civic affairs and served as the president of Charlotte's public library board. Grace Singleton Dewey, the mother of Lenoir Chambers, Jr., was a graduate of Presbyterian College in Charlotte. Her mother had been the librarian of the city's first public library (Virginian-Pilot, 1970, January 11; L. Chambers to Morrow Press,

August 25, 1959, Chambers Papers).

Lenoir Chambers, Jr.'s great-grandfather had performed the marriage of Anna Morrison to Confederate General "Stonewall" Jackson. Some of young Lenoir's earliest memories were of the general's widow, who was a close friend of his grandmother. The general would become the subject of Chambers's Pulitzer-Prize-nominated two-volume biography, Stonewall Jackson (1959) (Chapel Hill Weekly, 1970, January 14).

Lenoir, the youngest child, was shy and the only boy of the four Chambers children. He received his early schooling in Charlotte's public schools and for three years attended high school at the prestigious Woodberry Forest School in Orange, Virginia, where he would later teach (L. Chambers to Morrow Press, August 25, 1959, Chambers Papers; E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990).

As a student at the University of North Carolina, Chambers displayed an interest in writing and journalism. For three years he was the editor of the university newspaper, the Tarheel. He also wrote for the college publications, the University Magazine and the Yackety Yack. A talented student, he graduated Phi Beta Kappa.

Sports were an important part of Chambers's student years. At the university he earned three letters, playing varsity football and basketball for two years and varsity tennis for three. He modestly dismissed his athletic accomplishments, claiming that he had played these sports "without distinction"

(L. Chambers to Morrow Press, August 25, 1959, Chambers Papers). Chambers would retain a lifelong interest in sports. He continued to play tennis, as well as golf.

Upon his graduation in 1914, he accepted a position teaching English and history and assisting in coaching the football and basketball teams at his previous alma mater, Woodberry Forest preparatory school. Chambers taught there--"learned, really"--for two years (L. Chambers to Morrow Press, August 25, 1959, Chambers Papers). He would later play an active role in the affairs of the school for many years by serving as a trustee. In 1968 he received Woodberry Forest's J. Carter Walker Award for distinguished service.

Chambers attended Columbia University School of Journalism as a member of the 1916-1917 junior class and worked briefly with one of his faculty and several fellow students to organize the short-lived New Republic News Service in Washington, D.C. (L. Chambers to Columbia University, March 16, 1956, Chambers Papers). He left Washington several weeks later, attended an officers' training school in Tennessee, and was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Army.

From 1917 to 1919 Chambers served in France and Germany with the 52nd Infantry of the 6th Division in the Allied Expeditionary Force. Although some sources report that he commanded a company in trench combat (Virginia Publisher and Printer, 1970, February; Virginian-Pilot, 1970, January 11), his division did not participate in serious fighting. Chambers bemusedly wrote that his

outfit earned the name of the Sight-Seeing Sixth, "because it went everywhere and did nothing of moment" (L. Chambers to Morrow Press, August 25, 1959, Chambers Papers). During his military service he recorded his experiences in letters to his family, with the intention of drawing upon them later for a book on the war (R. Mason, 1987, p. 154).

After the armistice, Chambers returned to Chapel Hill for two years to serve as director of the University of North Carolina News Service. His duties consisted of university publicity work and reporting. Many of his newspaper articles were published by presses throughout the state.

In 1921 he resigned this position and joined the staff of the Greensboro Daily News, where he would serve successively for eight years as reporter, city editor, and associate editor (editorial writer). Chambers's predecessor as associate editor had been Gerald W. Johnson, later a professor of journalism at the University of North Carolina and a talented essayist, critic, and historian. Johnson likely influenced Chambers's editorial writing, and the two remained friends and regularly corresponded throughout their careers.

The Daily News had a reputation of being independent. The paper's tradition of responsible journalism nurtured Chambers's development of his own editorial philosophy. Reflecting on the paper's role in encouraging moderation, Chambers later wrote,

Some courage was necessary in the first two decades of this century to be politically independent, to view some Southern

problems with understanding and tolerance for minority views, and to insist on printing the news. It was a period of great determination to lift the state not only from the mire of its old roads but from the clinging habits of allegiance that had lost their validity (Greensboro Daily News, 1970, January 13).

In Greensboro, while he was city editor, Chambers met his future wife, Roberta Burwell Strudwick. Ms. Strudwick, the society writer of the Daily News, was divorced and the mother of a young son, Robert. Chambers and Strudwick were married in 1928. It is likely that Chambers's courtship and marriage to Strudwick, a divorced woman in a small southern city in the late 1920s, was somewhat scandalous and the subject of gossip. Chambers's daughter, Elisabeth Burgess, recalls that divorce "was very shameful in those days; [Mother] was a fallen woman" (E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990).

In 1929 Chambers was offered the position of associate editor of the Virginian-Pilot, Norfolk's prominent morning newspaper, by the paper's highly acclaimed and nationally known editor, Louis Jaffe. Chambers arrived in Norfolk and began work in December. He would serve as Jaffe's associate editor for nearly fifteen years. Although the two shared professional values and a similar social consciousness, they differed greatly in their personal styles. Jaffe could be brusque and demanding in his interaction with his staff, whereas Chambers practiced a more genteel and nonconfrontational style of management (Chambers et al., 1967, p.

382).

While on the Pilot's staff, Chambers received an attractive offer of an associate editorship in Pittsburgh. As a consequence he was able to secure a promise from the management of Norfolk Newspapers, Inc., the owners of the Ledger-Dispatch as well as the Virginian-Pilot, that he would receive the next editorial appointment (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990). Upon the death of the Ledger-Dispatch's editor, Douglas Gordon, Chambers assumed that paper's editorship in 1944. The Ledger-Dispatch, the afternoon paper, was considered the lesser of the two papers both in reputation and circulation.

Joseph A. Leslie, Jr., Douglas Gordon's associate editor and a future editor of the Ledger, resented Chambers's appointment. Leslie had loyally served under Gordon for many years, working six days a week--often under trying conditions--and deeply desired to be appointed editor (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

Leslie was born in Tazewell, Virginia. He had graduated from the University of Richmond in 1916. The associate editor was an experienced and accomplished journalist who had served as a reporter for the Richmond Virginian; two Newport News papers, the Daily Press and the Times Herald; the Virginian-Pilot; and the Ledger-Dispatch. Leslie was connected by marriage to the Byrd organization. His wife, Nell, was the daughter of Ebbie Combs, a powerful member of Senator Harry F. Byrd's inner circle of advisors and chairman of the State Compensation Board. Leslie

was a member of the Fraternal Order of the Masons, as were Byrd and Norfolk mayor W. Fred Duckworth (H. Byrd to N. Leslie, June 23, 1959, Byrd, Sr., Papers; Who's Who in America, 1969-1973, 1973).

Regardless of his personal feelings concerning Chambers's promotion, Leslie had to work closely with him and, to his credit, developed a friendly relationship with the new editor. Even during massive resistance, when Chambers and Leslie would take diametrically opposed positions on the school closing, the two editors would continue their close relationship (E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990).

Several months after the reopening of Norfolk's schools, Chambers would write to a friend, "I am forever poking my head into Joe Leslie's office to see how my old friend is--to catch a little more of the twinkle of his eye and feel again the strength of his virtues" (L. Chambers to P. Morgan, May 8, 1959, Chambers Papers). Leslie, sharing this affection, wrote, "Your friendship has been one of the possessions which I shall always prize most highly" (J. Leslie to L. Chambers, May 28, 1959, Chambers Papers).

Because of the Ledger's secondary rank vis-a-vis the Pilot, Chambers's six years as editor of the Ledger were often disappointing for him. Robert Mason recalls, "He never did quite fit into there, and I wasn't the only one who thought that....His friends would talk about it--that he was sort of like a fish out of his pond....On the Pilot, they would always look down their noses at the Ledger. It wasn't any prize to be editor of. It wouldn't

have been a good place to wind up one's career. There was a feeling at the Pilot [that the Ledger was not as strong a newspaper]." (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990). Chambers, however, persevered, and with Leslie as his only associate editor, established an editorial philosophy very similar to that of the Virginian-Pilot (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

CHAMBERS AS EDITOR OF THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

In 1950, with the death of Louis Jaffe, Chambers became editor of the Pilot. Leslie was promoted to the editorship of the Ledger, where he would be assisted by George J. Hebert, a capable newsman who had been promoted continually since beginning as an office boy many years before. Chambers's two associate editors were Harold Gray Sugg and William Shands Meacham.

Sugg, who was from Greenville, North Carolina, had graduated from Davidson College and served briefly as the city editor of a small newspaper in Albemarle, North Carolina. Sugg had worked for the Pilot as a reporter and as its staff correspondent for political affairs and city government from 1939 to 1948, minus a four-year interruption for military service in the Army during the Second World War (H. Sugg, personal communication, November 30, 1990; Who's Who in the South and Southwest, 1976, 1976).

Chambers insisted on having Sugg serve as his associate editor. Sugg had written editorials for Louis Jaffe and was highly respected for his writing ability (L. Chambers to R. de Rosset,

January 7, 1959, Chambers Papers). Chambers had a great fondness for this associate editor, and the two shared a warm professional and personal relationship (L. Chambers to R. Mason, August 13, 1957, Chambers Papers; R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

Chambers's other associate editor was William Meacham, originally from Petersburg, Virginia. He had attended the Richmond Division of the College of William and Mary and studied at New York University School of Journalism. He had worked briefly as a reporter for the Ledger-Dispatch before becoming the editor of the Danville Register, a position he held for ten years. Meacham's work attracted the attention of Virginus Dabney, the editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch. Meacham served as Dabney's associate editor for six years before being appointed Virginia's first parole commissioner in 1942 by Governor Colgate Darden. Meacham had long been interested in penology and had written extensively on the subject (Chambers et al., 1967, p. 374; Who's Who in the World, 1978, 1978).

When his appointment was not renewed by Governor Tuck, Meacham accepted a position with the Virginian-Pilot as Jaffe's associate editor. Jaffe's relationship with Meacham was tenuous, and Meacham impressed the high command of Norfolk Newspapers, Inc., poorly (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

The editorial position opened by Jaffe's death in 1950 was coveted by Meacham, and he was frustrated by Chambers's transfer to the Pilot. Consequently their working relationship was at times

difficult (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 13, 1990; R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990). Robert Mason writes of their strained relations, "[Meacham's] vanity was enormous, and although Mr. Chambers took care not to prick it, tension between the two could be discomfoting all round" (Mason, 1987, p. 162).

Chambers rarely confronted Meacham. "Probably there were confrontations between the two," Sugg reflects, "but I happily arranged not to be around when one seemed to be, or just might have been, aborning" (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 13, 1990). Mason has similar memories: "At those editorial conferences sometimes the hostility between them would be thick, and I would suffer. Really, I would suffer. I would wonder why in the hell they [didn't] get this thing out on the table and settle the differences between them....But then, Chambers would not confront anybody with unpleasantness, and Meacham was not in much of a position to do it" (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990). Curiously, Meacham's detailed biography in Who's Who in the World contains no mention of his tenure as associate editor at the Virginian-Pilot.

Chambers was extremely principled and set high standards for the editorial page. He subscribed to the Jaffe editorial formula, which emphasized first and foremost that "the subject had to be absorbed" (Mason, 1987, p. 152). Chambers strongly believed that editorial writing "must be informed, with the broadest possible background of personal capacity, education, reading, and

experience" ("Statement of Editorial Policy," August 1958, Chambers Papers). He worked hard at his writing and expected the same of his associates.

In late 1957 Sugg assumed new responsibilities as assistant publisher and embarked on a program of study in Harvard Business School's advanced management program. Chambers and the publisher, Frank Batten, actively recruited Robert H. Mason, the editor and part owner of the Sanford Daily Herald, a small newspaper in North Carolina, to replace Sugg as associate editor. Mason was a versatile journalist and was held in particularly high regard by Chambers.

In some respects Mason's background was quite similar to Chambers's. Although he grew up in the small town of Mebane, North Carolina, Mason was a native of Charlotte, as was Chambers, and had graduated from the editor's alma mater, the University of North Carolina. Mason had served as city editor of the Sanford Herald and the Durham, North Carolina, Herald prior to becoming Sunday editor of the Virginian-Pilot, where he had worked closely with Louis Jaffe. After military service in the Navy in the Second World War, Mason had invested in the Sanford Herald and had returned to Sanford (L. Chambers to R. de Rosset, January 7, 1959, Chambers Papers; R. Mason, 1987; Who's Who in the South and Southwest, 1973, 1973). Chambers was particularly impressed by Mason's knowledge of southern history.

As editor of the Herald, Mason had lobbied for improved race relations and had earned the enmity of hard-line

segregationists. "I know a little of what it is to be up against a mean and nimble mind," he wrote to Chambers. "For a good many weeks a power in the North Carolina Patriots, Inc. [a white supremacist organization], has been blistering me from rural platforms in terms that his redneck audiences understand" (R. Mason to L. Chambers, February 5, 1956, Chambers Papers).

Mason came to Norfolk with the understanding that he would serve as Chambers's associate editor for five years and would succeed the editor upon his retirement. Meacham viewed himself as the most deserving successor to Chambers. Consequently, the relationship between Mason and Meacham "was a little bit delicate and a little bit uncomfortable" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

The editorial staff of the Virginian-Pilot worked from roughly ten o'clock to six, five days a week; during periods of heavy work, the hours would be extended. Editorial conferences, convened at approximately eleven o'clock, would be thorough and involved (L. Chambers to R. Mason, August 13, 1957, Chambers Papers). Chambers directed the discussion and assigned and outlined the editorials. Mason remembers, "Writing [editorials] was a matter of fulfilling what the editor had agreed on and writing what the editor assigned....Chambers was in command. If anything strayed beyond the limits, it would be either rewritten or set aside. Yet there were broad areas in which Chambers would accept the judgment of an associate entirely--Meacham in medical and sociological topics, for instance, and myself in naval and

maritime affairs. He encouraged me to write lighter stuff from time to time--humor, or what we hoped would pass for it. I found it a pleasant and civilized way to make a living" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990; R. Mason, personal communication, November 19, 1991).

In a speech to the Tidewater Builders Association, Chambers described the conferences and the way editorials were written:

[The editorial staff] may point out this subject or that one, which seems to require or permit analysis, interpretation, or comment. There may be much discussion or little. There may be disagreement, argument, uncertainty; and the conference may adjourn with the realization that we need to know much more than we can find out by any means within reach before we can attempt to say anything. At the end it is agreed what each will do and, broadly speaking, in what manner. For though nobody writes what he does not believe in, everyone writes for a newspaper and not as an individual. Late in the afternoon the fruits come back to the editor's desk, and they are gone over, often with a second conference between the writer and the editor; and there are changes, modifications, or on occasion abandonment of the whole business may follow ("Tidewater Builders," October 26, 1957, Chambers Papers).

The editorial conferences could at times be tedious. Sugg recalls, "Mr. Chambers tolerated rambling talk more than Mr. Jaffe would, and conferences with [Chambers] tended to be overly long (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 13, 1990). Chambers,

too, felt that the conferences sometimes lacked focus: "I am afraid we talk too long. I am constantly trying to better our record, but the flesh is weak. We like to talk" (L. Chambers to R. Mason, August 13, 1957, Chambers Papers).

Chambers's biography of Stonewall Jackson served to distract him from his editorial duties. He had begun work in 1947 on his meticulously researched two-volume biography, and he would often write well into the night. Consequently, he would arrive at his office later in the morning than other members of the editorial staff, on occasion unaware of late developments in the news. Chambers was too proud to accept news updates from his staff, and this resulted in less productive and unnecessarily long conferences (R. Mason, 1987, pp. 154-155; H. Sugg, personal communication, October 13, 1990).

Despite the occasionally frustrating conferences and Meacham's ego and prickly temperament, Chambers and his associates worked closely, and relations between Chambers and Meacham were often harmonious (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

Chambers sought to publish four editorials a day and preferred that each piece have a different focus, either local, state, national, or international (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990). Of the three editorial writers, Meacham wrote the largest number of editorials, usually three a day. All of his time was devoted to writing. Chambers, with his management responsibilities, wrote one to one and a half

a day. Sugg, who was responsible for letters to the editor, syndicated columns, and the like, wrote one to two editorials (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

Although members of the editorial staff would develop areas of special expertise, Chambers saw to it that all of his staff wrote on running subjects. This was particularly true of massive resistance. Despite the fact that Chambers wrote many of the editorials on this subject and even referred to segregation and integration as "Topic A," both Sugg and Meacham, and later also Mason, "dipped into this problem deeply" (L. Chambers to W. Abell, September 6, 1956, Chambers Papers). Sugg reports that "everybody got into the act on 'Topic A,' [although] Mr. Chambers usually wrote the lead pieces" (H. Sugg, personal communication, Oct. 13, 1990).

For Chambers, who set the Virginian-Pilot's editorial policy, massive resistance would become much more than a topic for editorials. The editor would become personally involved in the impending crisis. Robert Mason recalls that Topic A was regularly discussed at work and lunch: "I think Mr. Chambers became awfully close to this subject" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). Elisabeth Burgess remembers that massive resistance was also discussed with great frequency in the Chambers household: "When Daddy came home at night, my mother would say, 'What's the news on the Topic A front?'" (E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990).

Harold Sugg, too, became personally involved with this subject (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). Sugg's wife was active in the Parent-Teacher Association at Norfolk's Meadowbrook Elementary School and was greatly upset by the closing of the schools and the domination of the city-wide PTA Council by the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 2, 1990).

Mason maintains that neither he nor Meacham became emotionally involved in the editorials they wrote opposing massive resistance. "I would write what I thought was the truth," Mason explains, "and what happened next was beyond me. I didn't get emotionally involved in it....I don't think Meacham did, [either]....He wouldn't lose any sleep at night about it" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). "I always had the confidence that the Supreme Court was going to stick to its guns....There was always the satisfaction, when I wrote, of being sure what the war's end was going to be, regardless of who won the immediate battle" (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

Chambers was an accomplished and competent editor. However, he readily acknowledged that his writing was at times verbose. Mason recalls, "He would write too much. He could have been a little sharper. He would have been the first to say that. I had great respect for what he said, but sometimes it could have been improved" (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

The Pilot's editorial policy had little direct effect on

the manner in which news stories were covered or written. The Virginian-Pilot had a long tradition of confining its editors' responsibilities and duties solely to the editorial page (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990). Editors and their associates were removed from the activities in the newsroom geographically as well as organizationally. Their three-room suite of offices was located a floor above the newsroom and was isolated from the paper's reporting activities (Mason, 1987, p. 153).

Chambers did, however, have an indirect effect on the paper's news staff. He was widely respected, and his stand against massive resistance was admired by many reporters. "He had an influence on me," recalls Luther Carter, then the Pilot's young education reporter, "because I really looked up to him" (L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990).

As a result of the reputations of Chambers and Jaffe, the Virginian-Pilot attracted a particularly gifted news and editorial staff. "I don't think that Chambers ever would have left North Carolina except to go to Louis Jaffe," Robert Mason recalls. "Chambers in turn attracted some other good people....It was a joy to work there....A lot of [the staff] wrote books and were accomplished in interesting ways....I remember there were three lawyers and a preacher on the staff at one time, and there had been a doctor....I think it was unusual....You wouldn't have found [that] in Richmond" (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

To be a member of the Virginian-Pilot's editorial staff was to be a member of a "gentlemanly club" (L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990). The editorial page was generally regarded as the strongest facet of the Pilot, and considerable status was accorded editors and their associates by their newspaper colleagues. Chambers was heir to an editorial tradition created by his direct predecessors, Louis I. Jaffe, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, and former governor William E. Cameron (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

The editor of the Pilot was also a respected member of Tidewater's social and professional communities. Editors served as honorary members of the Norfolk Bar Association and the Norfolk Medical Association and were routinely invited to naval ceremonies and civic gatherings (R. Mason, personal communication, April 10, 1989).

Chambers also exerted an indirect influence over the Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Dispatch's young publisher, Frank Batten. Batten had been appointed publisher in 1954 by his uncle, "Colonel" Samuel L. Slover, upon the unexpected death of the previous publisher, Henry S. Lewis. Batten, a graduate of Culver Military Academy, the University of Virginia, and Harvard's Graduate School of Business, was only twenty-seven years old at the time of his appointment (Chambers et al., 1967, p. 380; Mason, 1987, p. 146).

By all accounts Batten was an unusually confident and capable young man. "He had one hell of a lot of nerve," Robert Mason

recalls. "If he set out on a course, you could be absolutely certain he'd go through with that thing. There wouldn't be any second guessing, any flinching, anything like that. He was just direct. He was a brave young fellow, as his success indicates. I have all these times, including this moment, thought he had the coolest eye [during stressful times] I ever saw. And had a great sense of fairness about him" (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

Batten had great respect for his two editors--both much older and more experienced than he--but the young publisher developed a much stronger relationship with Chambers than with Joseph Leslie. "I was much closer to Mr. Chambers," Batten remembers...."He was a man for whom I had enormous personal regard and respect. And I used him often as a sort of elder advisor on a lot of things outside of editorial policy....He was a man whose judgment I respected and whom I trusted implicitly" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

Chambers felt much the same way about Batten. The editor's daughter reflects, "[My father] was a great admirer of Frank Batten's. He and Frank Batten had a close relationship" (E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990). Chambers described Batten as "exceptionally intelligent, well versed in the modern executive spirit, thoroughly human and capable of constant and healthy growth" (L. Chambers to R. Mason, August 13, 1957, Chambers Papers).

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT AND THE LEDGER-DISPATCH: OPPOSING VIEWS

Throughout much of Virginia's massive resistance to public-school desegregation, the editorial staffs of the Virginian-Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch took opposing positions. The Pilot urged a good-faith compliance with the Supreme Court's decision, whereas the Ledger generally supported the actions of the Byrd organization. It is likely that this phenomenon--co-owned papers taking opposite positions on public-school desegregation--was a unique occurrence in southern journalism (R. Mason, personal communication, December 5, 1990).

A few observers believe the divergent editorial stances of the two papers were contrived in an attempt by the owners of Norfolk Newspapers to increase readership and advertising revenues. "[Frank Batten] ran a newspaper to make money," recalls Sam Barfield, a prominent local political figure, "and he often said 'I want my newspapers to be opposite each other.' Now I laugh about that. That's so people can't bring in another newspaper, won't want to bring in other newspapers. How sincere the editors were I don't know" (S. Barfield, personal communication, August 9, 1990).

Regardless of perceptions such as this, the differences between the Pilot's and the Ledger's editorials were not contrived. The opposing editorial stances of the two papers were entirely the result of the conflicting beliefs of the two papers' editors. Throughout Chambers's editorial career he had argued for political moderation and racial tolerance. Leslie was much more a

traditionalist in racial matters; and because of this and his relationship with Ebbie Combs, he tended to align himself closely with the Byrd organization. Robert Mason reflects, "[The difference between the two papers] was simply the matter of two editors' following their longtime persuasions--their longtime convictions--following what they [had] thought all their lives" (R. Mason, personal communication, April 10, 1989).

Chambers himself bristled at allegations that the differences between the papers were not genuine. In response to a reader's insinuation that the papers were more concerned with profit than responsible journalism, the editor wrote:

There is no purpose to make 'better business' in the sense you appear to intimate out of the natural, normal, and historical differences in the views of the Virginian-Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch. I should appreciate it if you should repeat as much to any persons you may hear suggesting that there is....Those who know the history, traditions, and principles of the Virginian-Pilot, for which I have some right to speak, or who know the editors of this newspaper, know better (L. Chambers to L. Weary, November 19, 1958, Chambers Papers).

The editorial autonomy granted the two senior editors by their young publisher helped to create an environment in which the editors' views on integration could be expressed without reservation. Frank Batten explains, "The papers at that time had a long tradition of having separate editorial policies. It was not necessarily a separate editorial policy by design, but we had

different editorial staffs; and the ownership of the papers, going back through several publishers before me, had always given the editors wide latitude on setting editorial policy" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

Some observers feel that the different perspectives espoused by the two papers' editorials had a positive effect and stimulated thinking and debate on integration. Elisabeth Burgess, Chambers's daughter, reflects, "I thought it was healthy for the city and for the citizenry to have different points of view being set forth by different newspapers. I think that was the philosophy Frank Batten had, and I don't think my father felt the fact that someone had a different opinion was bad" (E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990).

Nevertheless, the appearance of the ownership of the two papers trying to pander to readers was disturbing to Robert Mason: "I was pained that there was another paper under the same roof that was taking an opposite view. I don't think that would ever happen again....I think (it) was a mistake....At the time, I never heard anyone at the newspapers or editorial offices object to it. I did" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

Mason believes that had Batten been more experienced, he would have unified the papers' editorial policies: "He had no doubts at all about his ability to run that business, but he had great respect for his editors. He had little urge for editorial work and so he let them alone. If he had been thirty-five at the outset, I think he would have gone to them and said, 'Look, it's

too bad you feel differently, but we aren't going to give the appearance of working both sides of the street. We've got to agree on a course on this thing, and there's going to be unity.'

Certainly the time would come when [Batten] wouldn't blink at a transfer or early retirement" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

WHY CHAMBERS OPPOSED MASSIVE RESISTANCE

Chambers objected to Virginia's massive resistance primarily on the grounds that it violated fundamental precepts of our system of government, especially the authority of the Supreme Court to interpret the Constitution. He explained:

My personal views and those of the Virginian-Pilot editorially do not extend as far as the views of many of my brethren to the south of us--or in Virginia for that matter. This does not mean that we have preached integration or that we are unaware of the magnitude and complexity of the problems. It does mean that we have more respect for a unanimous Supreme Court opinion than some others do, and that we have been critical of intransigence on a universal scale, and stupid ideas, and political exploitation of the emotionalism of the times, and various other current phenomena (L. Chambers to J. Jones, March 16, 1956, Chambers Papers).

The editor was disturbed and keenly disappointed by what he perceived as the obfuscation and dishonesty practiced by the Byrd organization. In a letter to his close friend Gerald Johnson,

Chambers wrote,

The curse of this period in Southern civilization has not been that most Southerners wished the segregation system to remain unchanted (sic). It is easy to understand why they did. The curse is that the reasons they gave were preposterous, the facts they relied on were not facts at all, the case as they stated it was shot through with inconsistencies, hypocrisy, and downright dishonesty. What the politicians have done in these respects is beyond description (L. Chambers to G. Johnson, January 7, 1959, Chambers Papers).

Chambers was particularly perturbed by the unwillingness of respected leaders in the state's academic, professional, and business communities to challenge massive resistance openly. "It is depressing to have to add," he continued in his letter to Johnson, "that most college faculty and administrative leaders, nearly all doctors, and absolutely all businessmen dived into their holes four years ago and have not stuck their heads out except to estimate the force of the winds and thereafter to retire again" (L. Chambers to G. Johnson, January 7, 1959, Chambers Papers).

Although Chambers's editorials were based primarily on his deeply held beliefs regarding the sanctity of American democracy and the duty of public officials to practice responsible leadership, the legacy of Louis Jaffe certainly played a part in shaping the Virginian-Pilot's editorial response to Brown v.

Board. Chambers wrote,

The Virginian-Pilot has a long record of trying to do what it could for justice and opportunity for Negroes. My predecessor, Louis I. Jaffe, won a Pulitzer prize in 1928, for editorial work directed for the control of lynching....This is not a wildcat newspaper. It does not crusade. But it does try to appeal to reason and to encourage all educational processes that overcome prejudice in the end. It was doing so before May, 1954 ("Biographical Data," 1959, Chambers Papers).

Chambers was not a social activist as Jaffe had been. He did not openly embrace integration, and his personal understanding of blacks and racial issues was limited. In many ways he was a product of the segregated South and a privileged upbringing. The only blacks he had known were menial and janitorial workers. He was removed from the masses by birth, education, and position (E. Burgess, personal communication, August 2, 1990; R. Mason, 1987, p. 159). "He never took the attitude that [Brown v. Board] was long overdue after all these years of oppression," Robert Mason recalls. "He never got into that phase of thought" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

What impelled Chambers to target massive resistance and racial prejudice in his editorials was not foremost a desire to advance social justice. Instead, he was motivated by a deep belief in the precepts of American democracy and orderly and responsible government. For the editor, the decisions of the Supreme Court were truly the law of the land. Massive resistance

was a further affront to Chambers because of its intellectual dishonesty, its lack of manners, and its emotionalism (R. Mason, 1987, p. 159).

THE PILOT AND THE LEDGER: INCREASING DIVERGENCE

The Ledger-Dispatch's initial editorial response to Brown v. Board was calm and relatively supportive. In a lead editorial, "The Segregation Decision," the paper acknowledged that although the court had infringed on the rights of the states, there was a perception among Virginians that "many former attitudes on racial questions [were] out of step with the times" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1954, May 18).

The Ledger maintained that desegregation would not traumatize Virginia--most specifically, Norfolk--to the degree it would much of the South. The ratio of blacks to whites in Virginia was considerably lower than in many southern states, and it was likely that most of Norfolk's black school children would continue to attend the black schools that had been constructed near their homes.

Subsequent editorials written on this topic praised Governor Thomas Stanley's moderate reaction to Brown, in particular his call for the establishment of a commission charged with formulating a policy response to the Supreme Court's decision. The commission's recommendations should be based on a deliberate, thoughtful, and unemotional discussion of the issues, the Ledger counseled; and the body should include blacks among its

membership. The paper's editorials deplored the efforts of the NAACP to force hasty implementation of desegregation (Ledger-Dispatch, 1954, May 19-23).

The Virginian-Pilot editorials on the Brown decision were similar in substance to those of the Ledger. In a lead editorial, "The Decision on Segregation," the Pilot acknowledged that the effects of the Supreme Court's decision would be "vast and far-reaching." Virginia, however, would not be as severely affected by the decision as would many other southern states. The Court was lauded for deliberating the issue thoroughly and not pressing the South for immediate compliance. The editorial concluded with a call for responsible leadership: "This is a time for statesmanship, and the South will rise or decline as it produces it" (Virginian-Pilot, 1954, May 18).

In additional editorials on this subject, the Pilot wrote that there were many Souths (a theme it would revisit throughout much of the developing crisis). Some southern communities, such as Norfolk, were capable of prompt compliance with the Court's decree. Other areas, such as Virginia's black belt, faced a more problematic desegregation and would need more time to accommodate the Court's decision.

The Pilot urged southerners to adjust to integration with "good will, determination, and an earnest effort to adjust old folkways with newly defined constitutional law" (Virginian-Pilot, 1954, May 19). Rash action and emotionalism must be avoided. Southerners should approach racial problems with

soberness and responsibility, and with the best thought [they could] produce, not on how to overturn the Supreme Court's decision, which [they could not] do; but on how to adjust life in the South to the philosophy and requirements of the decision, which [they] must do (Virginian-Pilot, 1954, May 22).

Although the staffs of the Pilot and the Ledger responded to Brown v. Board with editorials of a similar theme, the two papers' editorials were markedly different in style. On the whole, the Pilot's writing was and would remain more involved and analytical; editorials were longer, sentence structure was more complex, and more evidence was set forth for conclusions. The Ledger's writing seems primarily to summarize the views of its editorial staff, whereas the editorials of the Pilot, while certainly reflecting the opinions of Chambers and his staff, appear to have been written with the intent of educating readers. As a result of this disparity in style, the Ledger's editorials were likely more readable, and the Pilot's more informative and analytical.

A year later, when the Supreme Court directed that integration should proceed with "all deliberate speed," the views espoused by the editorials of the two papers were still quite similar. The Ledger praised the moderation of Brown II, asserting that the decision took into account the difficulties involved in integration and that the implementation of the decree would not force schools to desegregate too precipitously

(Ledger-Dispatch, 1955, June 1). The paper argued that maintaining a system of public education was an essential responsibility of the state and opposed any efforts to repeal Section 129 of the Virginia State Constitution, which mandated a free system of public schools (Ledger-Dispatch, 1955, June 2).

The Pilot, too, extolled the insight of the justices. In a lead editorial the decision was called "a wise attempt to adjust constitutional principles and practical problems" (Virginian-Pilot, 1955, June 1). The paper warned, however, that it was unlikely either proponents of immediate integration or intransigents on the issue of segregation would be satisfied by the decision. "Somewhere in the South," the editorial ended, "a state will rise to leadership in this probably long and difficult duty. We hope it will be Virginia" (Virginian-Pilot, 1955, June 1).

During the next several days, the Pilot continued to call for responsible leadership which, unlike the Gray Commission, would be representative of a diversity of viewpoints pertaining to integration, and for depoliticization of the issue: "The state needs the advice of men and women of all races who are above political pressures" (Virginian-Pilot, 1955, June 2). The editorial staff also urged good-faith compliance with the Court's order and cautioned against delaying tactics and resistance.

That fall, when the Gray Commission issued its eagerly awaited report concerning Virginia's response to the Supreme Court's decision, its recommendations--local option and tuition

support for private education--were enthusiastically embraced by the Ledger. In a lead editorial written a few days after the report was issued, Leslie stated that the recommendations were well conceived and well considered and that they provided effective solutions to the problems Virginia would face. The recommendations were flexible enough to accommodate the diverse range of racial situations in Virginia and would help to preserve public education (Ledger-Dispatch, 1955, November 14).

The Ledger supported the Gray Report's call for a limited constitutional convention for the purpose of amending section 141 to provide state funding for private education. The paper urged legislators to enact the recommendations as rapidly as possible, to ensure that defenses against integration would be in place by the beginning of the next school year (Ledger-Dispatch, 1955, November 15).

It was over this issue of public support for private education that the editorials of the Ledger-Dispatch and the Virginian-Pilot began to diverge emphatically. While Chambers and his associates agreed that the Gray Report in many ways represented an "earnest effort to find practical and legal solutions for difficult problems" (Virginian-Pilot, 1955, November 13), they cautioned that time was needed to deliberate the outcomes of the report's recommendations. Chambers noted that the commission--which had operated in virtual secrecy, without input from many concerned interest groups--had taken a year to prepare its report. To expect Virginia's citizenry to

support the convening of the convention without the opportunity for thoughtful evaluation of its consequences was unreasonable.

The Pilot found the recommendations pertaining to private schools to be particularly unclear, and the paper asked a number of obvious but difficult questions. With what facilities would these private schools operate? How would the schools be staffed? What standards would govern their existence? How would they be funded? Would their operation be constitutional (Virginian-Pilot, 1955, November 16)?

Chambers was also concerned over the divestment of the electorate in the decisions that would be reached by a constitutional convention. Although a referendum proposed by the Gray Commission would provide voters with the opportunity to declare their support or opposition to the convention, their participation would be limited to that declaration (Virginian-Pilot, 1955, November 13).

In a lead editorial Chambers summarized his reservations: It is difficult now--in our opinion, impossible--to learn from available information the extent, the costs, the effects, the administrative practicality, and the constitutional soundness of a tuition payment plan....The legislators who represent the people don't know the answers. The people whom they represent don't know (Virginian-Pilot, 1955, November 15).

As the January 9, 1956, date for the referendum grew nearer, the disparity between the two papers' editorial views widened. The Ledger dismissed the Pilot's charges that the

constitutional convention was undemocratic. Leslie insisted that the mechanism by which Section 141 would be amended ensured maximum input from the citizenry. Voters would have the opportunity to elect delegates to the limited constitutional convention; and the General Assembly, which was comprised of elected representatives accountable to the electorate, would be charged with formulating the actual tuition legislation (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, January 2).

The Ledger also argued that providing public assistance for private schooling was in the best interest of the state's black schoolchildren. Should Section 141 not be amended, it was probable that public schools would be closed in many communities. These closings were especially likely in the twenty-two Virginia counties in which black students formed majorities of the school populations. By voting for the convention, voters would make certain that a strong and viable public school system continued to operate (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, January 5). Leslie and his staff assured readers that voting for the convention would in no way affect Section 129 of the Constitution, which mandated that the state maintain a free system of public schools (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, January 7).

On the evening of the referendum, the Ledger warned that not voting for the convention would serve to fuel extremism: "If the constitutional amendment is rejected, there can be no question that the attitude of those who accept the Gray plan as a middle-of-the road course between the two extremes on the

segregation issue will be changed" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, January 9).

The Virginian-Pilot, with growing concern, continued to voice its opposition to the recommendations contained in the Gray Report: "The Gray Commission idea...is vague as a whole and unidentified in its most important aspects, and would involve the disestablishment, or dismantling, of the public school system as we know it today" (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 5).

Chambers and his associate editors saw merit in a plan advanced by two members of the faculty of the University of Virginia. With the purpose of depoliticizing the desegregation issue, these academicians suggested that a new advisory commission be established. This biracial commission, to be appointed by the presidents of Virginia's state-supported colleges and the University of Virginia, would be comprised of elected officials and representatives from academia, professional educational organizations, and parent-teacher groups. Similar groups would be formed at a local level. The Pilot agreed that advisory groups such as these would more accurately reflect the sentiments of Virginia's citizens and would devise more innovative solutions to racial problems than the Gray Commission had provided (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 3).

The Gray Plan was seen by the Pilot as an over-reaction to the racial problems of a single community, Prince Edward County. It was likely that limited integration could occur without undue difficulty in most of Virginia's school districts. If the state,

on the whole, demonstrated good-faith compliance with the Supreme Court decision, the court would be understanding of the difficulties faced in integrating schools in areas with entrenched racial attitudes. In these communities even the most minor steps toward desegregation would constitute compliance (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 7).

Chambers accused Virginia's leaders of intentionally creating an emotional climate to reap political benefits: "The advocates of the Gray Commission program seek to gain political advantage by conjuring up the nightmare of 'enforced mixing'" (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 5). The paper also questioned the constitutionality of the use of tax dollars for private education. Chambers anticipated that the Supreme Court might well declare tuition support to be illegal (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 4).

The Pilot concluded its unsuccessful campaign to persuade readers to vote against the constitutional convention with an editorial entitled "The Voter's Choice Tomorrow." In it the Gray Plan was dismissed somewhat contemptuously as "an idea, not a plan" (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 8).

Later that month, the Ledger was ambivalent toward the General Assembly's adoption of an interposition resolution. While the paper saw some merit in the resolution as a symbolic protest against the federal government's infringement of rights constitutionally delegated to the states, it conceded that interposition would do nothing to nullify the court's

decision (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, January 20).

Chambers and his staff vehemently voiced their opposition to the General Assembly's resolution, calling interposition "an exercise in fantasy" (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, February 4). Chambers wrote,

In the calm, cool second thinking that will come someday, the state will understand better that the interposition resolution is no help in complex school problems; that the chances of its leading to an amendment of the Federal Constitution or a change in the reasoning of the Supreme Court are slim indeed; that its present and future meanings are impossible to deduce from the language or circumstances of its adoption (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, February 4).

Leslie and his staff were tentative in their support of an alternative proposal by the governor--the "Stanley Plan,"--which would mandate the elimination of all state funding for communities that chose or were forced by court order to integrate their schools. The Ledger conceded that the provisions of Governor Stanley's plan would likely close schools in some areas, but argued that the integration resulting from local option would almost certainly result in school closings in large areas throughout the state. The editor also warned that local option would lead to mass integration (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, August 27).

In response to the governor's assurance that schools would remain open unless members of one race attempted to enroll in

schools designated for students of the other race, the Ledger wrote that "Stanley lean[ed] upon a fragile reed" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, August 28). There was no reason to believe that the threat of school closings would dissuade the NAACP from continuing its efforts to desegregate schools. The Ledger predicted that whether local option or the Stanley Plan was adopted, there was a very real risk that schools would be closed (Ledger-Dispatch, 1956, August 28).

The Virginian-Pilot saw no merit in the Stanley Plan and vehemently denounced the provisions that would eliminate state funding for integrated schools. In a lead editorial, "How Many Schools Are Expendable?", Chambers and his staff expressed their astonishment that the General Assembly would consider adopting legislation that would inevitably result in the closing of the schools in the five Virginia communities (Norfolk included) soon to be under court order to desegregate their schools (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, August 28).

In "A Primary Concern of the State," the editorial staff contended that much educational progress in Virginia would be undone by the Stanley Plan. Localities would no longer be required by law to provide students with school terms of a nine-month duration, fixed state appropriations for local schools would become tentative, and school superintendents would be divested of important responsibilities. The Pilot wrote, "The threat Governor Stanley's program poses to the public schools is an appalling reality. Once the standards are gone, the work of a

generation may be destroyed" (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, August 29).

Chambers urged the General Assembly to reject the Stanley Plan and, instead, adopt a local-option plan similar to that recommended by the Gray Commission. The Pilot maintained that the Stanley Plan would be declared illegal by the courts (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, August 30).

Chambers wrote that local option would stand a far better chance of satisfying the courts and at the same time would discourage massive integration. The Pilot conceded that local option

would not be pleasant to the large majority of Virginians who, if they had the choice, would prefer the traditional ways. If it was operated deceitfully to try to block any change anywhere, it would certainly be thrown out of the courts as a subterfuge. But if it operated honestly with a clear eye on the legal requirement and on the requirement to maintain public education, it would sharply reduce the impact of the change brought about by the Supreme Court decision (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, August 31).

Judge Hoffman's ruling in *Beckett v. Norfolk* was anticipated by both newspapers. Ledger editor Leslie downplayed the significance of Hoffman's decision, calling it "only one skirmish in the school segregation battle," and noted the certainty of appeal: "The state is committed to full-scale resistance to integration and this includes all possible delaying action" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1957, February 12).

Chambers expressed the hope that the General Assembly and local officials would take note of the decision and the emphasis Hoffman placed on good-faith implementation of the Supreme Court's desegregation order (Virginian-Pilot, 1957, February 13). The Pilot praised the moderation of Hoffman's decision, in which he called for gradual rather than immediate integration. Hoffman's order mandated integration in only the first grades of the city's elementary, junior high, and high schools and encouraged the redrawing of school districts to minimize further the impact of desegregation (Virginian-Pilot, 1957, February 15).

Lindsay Almond's inaugural speech was very favorably received by the Ledger-Dispatch. Leslie wrote that at no time had "the case for continued racial segregation been presented with more force and logic" than in the address and that Almond "went deep into the truth of the whole integration issue" when he maintained that forcing parents to send their children to integrated schools would result in chaos (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, January 11). The paper urged that the General Assembly immediately enact the legislation Almond recommended in his address, authorizing the governor to close schools that were policed by federal troops (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, January 11).

Chambers and his staff viewed the inaugural address with concern. Almond had insulted the Supreme Court by drawing a comparison between it and the Soviet Union's space vehicle, Sputnik, categorizing both as "revolving bodies." The Pilot remarked that "these [were] strange words from a governor who

lived his professional life in the law" (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 12). The paper also expressed displeasure at the singular focus of the address. Almond's defiant speech might have earned him additional support from hard-line segregationists, but this was no substitute for providing the state with legitimate and much-needed leadership (Virginian-Pilot, 1956, January 12).

NORFOLK'S SCHOOL CLOSING

The closing of the city's white secondary schools on September 29, 1958, took Joseph Leslie by surprise, as it did most of Norfolk's citizens. Harold Sugg recalls a conversation he had with the Ledger-Dispatch's editor shortly before the closing.

"I found Mr. Leslie alone, and the conversation ran something like this: 'Joe, I know you are in favor of the public schools. You just can't be in favor of them closing down.'

'Harold, that isn't going to happen; they may close for a few hours or a few days, but they will reopen quickly in other forms'" (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 12, 1990).

The Ledger-Dispatch responded to the school closing by encouraging readers not to waver in their support of resistance to integration. "Massive resistance will come to nothing," Leslie wrote, "if it turns into weak-kneed resistance" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, September 26). The Ledger maintained that the overwhelming majority of the city's electorate had demonstrated their support for massive resistance by selecting Lindsay Almond over Ted Dalton in the recent gubernatorial election and that although Norfolkkians would be confronted with trying times, the school closing was to be preferred over the "Pandora's box of trouble and anguish" that would be opened should schools be integrated (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, September 22; Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, September 23).

Leslie and his staff stated that the legislature was not responsible for the crisis. The paper blamed, instead, the

"NAACP's recklessness" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, September 22) and "judicial absolutism" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, September 30).

Leslie wrote that it was naive to believe the Supreme Court was incapable of error and that it was well within the rights of citizens to challenge the Court's decisions.

The paper urged readers to support the segregationist Tidewater Educational Foundation. "It is more than ever imperative," the editor wrote, "that steps for improvising educational facilities to meet this problem be advanced. Only one agency, the Tidewater Educational Foundation, is organized for this purpose" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, September 24).

Chambers and his staff were less surprised by the school closing. The Pilot had anticipated the possibility that the inflexibility of the state's policies would result in such a crisis. "The Virginian-Pilot is the only newspaper in Virginia," Chambers wrote, "which has opposed from 1954--because of their impracticality, unconstitutionality, general lack of wisdom, and inevitable arrival at educational dead-ends--virtually everything that has been attempted in Virginia" (L. Chambers to L. Wilson, March 19, 1959, Chambers Papers).

The Virginian-Pilot held that the school closing was the logical result of the state's policy of resistance to the Supreme Court's order. Chambers contended that massive-resistance legislation ultimately would be overturned by the courts and would do nothing to stave off integration. Massive resistance, he wrote, was the irresponsible invention of "a small coterie of

political leaders" (the Byrd organization) and was based on a number of false cliches and shibboleths (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 28). Arguments by segregationists that the Supreme Court's order could legally be disobeyed, that states' rights must be defended or forever lost, and that outsiders were to blame for Virginia's racial problems were dismissed by the Pilot as specious and misleading (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 24).

The editor decried the destruction of the state's system of public education and cautioned that newly created private schools and informal tutoring groups would be grossly inadequate substitutes for public schools. Trained teachers would be difficult to locate, the acquisition of facilities and educational equipment would be problematic, and accreditation of the substitute schools would be difficult to obtain (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 25).

The Pilot refused to endorse the segregationist Tidewater Educational Foundation and recommended that parents enroll their children in tutoring groups, despite their obvious shortcomings. The editorial staff wrote that the Tidewater Educational Foundation's "political coloration strip[ped] its prospective schools of the free atmosphere which most educators [considered] essential to learning" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 23).

Chambers questioned the commitment of the state's political leaders to its young people. He warned that students would pay the price of the legislature's irresponsibility. As a result of the school closings, many students would lose their "educational

stride" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 21). Others would drift into unemployment or delinquency. "The memory of...this stupidity...will never fade," the editor wrote. "It will be like the memory of depression or war. It will press young attitudes into permanent shape" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 21).

In a lead editorial, "The Schools Must Be Opened," the editorial staff implored citizens and educational and political leaders to work cooperatively to reopen the schools. The school board had delayed long enough and should provide leadership. The city council had a special responsibility to the community to work to develop a solution to the school problem. Citizens should speak out and lend their support to responsible policies. The state "has no moral right--" Chambers wrote, "and probably no legal right--to punish [Norfolk's schoolchildren]" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 29).

In the first few days following the school closing, few voices in Norfolk, other than the Pilot's, were raised in objection to the closure. A hush descended over the city as a stunned citizenry attempted to come to terms with what had happened. Although the crisis had been clearly foreshadowed by the political and judicial events of the preceding several years, most of Norfolk's citizens never really believed that public schools could be closed. Many felt, as Leslie did, that even if the schools were shut down, they would reopen in a few days (Muse, 1961, pp. 75-78).

Although some observers believe that a large percentage of

Norfolk's citizens favored the immediate reopening of the city's public schools, few were willing to speak out. This was especially true of business and community leaders. Many of these leaders feared economic repercussions, social ostracization, and harassment by the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties and other hard-line segregationists (White, 1959, September, p. 30).

As the numbing sense of disbelief of the first few days of the closing wore off, tempers began to rise. Citizens were bitterly divided over the closing. Benjamin Muse writes that in the fall of 1958, Norfolk was not "a pleasant city in which to live" (Muse, 1961, pp. 92-93).

Observers of this period believe that the closure stirred emotions and divided the population to a degree not equaled in their lifetimes. Sam Barfield remembers, "It was a very emotional time, and the only thing that has come close to it in my lifetime has been the abortion issue; [and] I think it was even more emotional than the abortion issue. The city was split wide open" (S. Barfield, personal communication, August 8, 1990).

"People who write about it today," recalls Frank Batten, "have a difficult time in understanding the climate and emotions of the times. The people didn't talk about anything but that, literally....It was a very passionate subject....People who had been close friends--even families--broke apart. They just formed these hatreds over the subject" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

Still, emotional displays were not consistent with Virginia traditions of polite discourse and gentility. Many masked their anger with a facade of southern manners. Robert Mason recalls how this hypocrisy "disgusted" Kenneth Harris. Harris was a prominent local artist who was very vocal in expressing his displeasure with the school closing. "Kenneth would have preferred, if it was going to be ugly, that it be ugly completely--not to be camouflaged, but to get down to the nitty-gritty of it" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). (Interestingly, Harris was related by marriage to Mayor Fred Duckworth, an arch segregationist.)

The most profound effects of the closing were, of course, felt by students and teachers. Students in the last year of their secondary-school education were frustrated. Those who planned to attend college were particularly disappointed. City officials feared a wave of juvenile delinquency would sweep through Norfolk. The parents of students in schools that had opened were acutely aware of the fragility of their children's educations. Teachers' morale was lowered by the closing, and despite the fact that their contracts remained in effect until June 30, 1959, many were considering changing their careers (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 48; Muse, 1961, p. 116).

Warren County and the city of Charlottesville, with only three schools closed between them, were in much better positions to develop alternative school arrangements for displaced students than was Norfolk. Parents of Norfolk's displaced students

desperately tried to improvise schooling arrangements for their children.

Informal "tutoring groups," usually conducted by teachers of the closed schools, sprang up across the city. Many of these groups were organized by students' mothers, who would gather half a dozen to two dozen students in improvised classrooms in private homes and twenty-seven churches and synagogues that made rooms available, and recruit a teacher. The teachers were often qualified to teach only a single subject. Normally twenty dollars a month for tuition was charged parents (New York Times Magazine, January 4, 1959, p. 20).

Prior to the closing, Norfolk's school teachers had received the lowest salaries in the country in cities of over three hundred thousand residents and were understandably grateful for the twenty dollars or so they received from parents for tuition ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers).

The facilities of the tutoring groups were clearly inferior to those of the public schools. Card tables often replaced school desks; cafeterias were nonexistent; and libraries, laboratories, and educational equipment were totally lacking. Additionally, "the quality of teaching was miscellaneous" (Muse, 1961, p. 117).

Other parents attempted to transfer their children into private schools or public schools in other districts. During the closing, Norfolk's students were scattered over twenty-nine states (Muse, 1961, p. 117). The schooling arrangements developed by Dr. Robert Stern, a professor at the Norfolk branch of the College of

William and Mary, and his wife were not unusual. One daughter was sent to live with relatives and attend school in Glens Falls, New York. Another daughter attended private school in Virginia Beach, and a son was enrolled in a tutoring group. "It's a strange experience we're undergoing in Norfolk," Stern is quoted as having said, "a little like something out of Jonathan Swift" (New York Times Magazine, 1959, January 4, p. 4).

Some students continued their schooling at Oscar Smith High School and South Norfolk Junior High School in the neighboring city of South Norfolk, where the superintendent of schools, arch-segregationist William Story, was particularly supportive of the state's defiant stand. Classes were held from 4:00 to 9:00 p.m., after the schools' regular hours.

A small number of students attended school at the Tidewater Academy, which was founded by the Tidewater Educational Foundation. The TEF encountered great difficulty in attracting a teaching staff. As a result, the opening of its only school was delayed until October 21. The academy's classes, held in Bayview Baptist Church in the Ocean View section of Norfolk, were conducted by retired school teachers (Muse, 1961, p. 112). Financing for the school was generated by a twenty-dollar monthly tuition fee. Although this would not raise sufficient revenue to support the academy, there were indications that the school would also receive assistance from the Virginia Educational Fund, a statewide segregationist foundation whose board was headed by former governor Thomas B. Stanley (Southern School News, 1958,

November, p. 13).

The number of Norfolk's displaced students who would be unaccounted for and presumably receiving no schooling during the closing--2,700 out of 9,950--was startling. It constituted a much higher percentage than the corresponding figure in either Warren County or Charlottesville.

The closing would end the educations of many of Norfolk's students. Some would drop out. Others would join the military or the work force. Many would marry and begin families. A number would drift into unemployment.

THE FIRST DAYS OF THE CLOSING

On September 29, 1958--two days after the closing of the Norfolk public schools--the city's two black junior high schools, Jaycox and Ruffner, and its only black high school, Booker T. Washington, were opened. One white junior high school, Willard, and all of the city's elementary schools, black and white, would also operate throughout the closure. No integration had been ordered at these schools.

The next day the city council adopted a resolution that petitioned Governor Almond to invoke the emergency powers granted him under Chapter 69 of the General Assembly's extra session of 1956 and reopen the city's schools. "There exists a need for... [a] State operated public school system embracing such secondary schools as have been closed," council moved (City Council

Resolution, September 30, 1958, Almond Executive Papers). Almond received the petition the following day (City Council Resolution, September 30, 1958, Almond Executive Papers).

Throughout the closing the council was pressured by the school board to encourage the governor to reopen the schools. In a resolution directed to the city council, the board stated, "A system of free public education is essential to the well-being of the City of Norfolk" and "It is now apparent that under the decisions of the United States Supreme Court, such public education cannot be had without some measure of integration" (Southern School News, 1958, November, p. 13). The same school board that had actively sought to obstruct the integration of Norfolk's public schools now became a prime force working to have them reopened.

The city council's petition to the governor provided it with a convenient excuse for its inactivity in attempting to reopen the schools. Pressed by pro-school forces, the council could easily disclaim responsibility. "There is nothing we can say," Mayor Fred Duckworth often repeated during the crisis. "The schools are under the governor" (Reif, 1960, p. 16).

Duckworth refused to endorse a plan for city-operated schools until a city-wide referendum could be held. The mayor said that only qualified voters should be allowed to participate in the referendum: "Governor Almond was elected by an overwhelming majority to do what he has done. I think the only way to impress the governor is to let the same voters show him what they want

done now" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, October 15).

Only fifty thousand of Norfolk's three hundred thousand residents were qualified voters; only one in twelve had voted in recent elections. Many observers of Norfolk politics felt that the results of such a referendum would be a foregone conclusion. Results of past elections in the city suggested that Byrd-organization candidates would be supported by two-thirds of the electorate ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers; Reif, 1961, p. 18). Duckworth placed much of the blame for the school closing on the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He maintained that the city had "done more for its Negroes, within its limits, than any city in the South--barring none....I hate very much that the NAACP attacked the best city in Virginia in regard to its colored population." The mayor went on to say that although blacks made up 75 percent of the jail population, they paid only 5 percent of the city's taxes (J. Reif, 1960, p. 16). If the seventeen black students would simply withdraw their applications, he said, the closed white schools could be reopened immediately.

Governor Almond was not keen to become the scapegoat for the state's crisis and did not acknowledge receipt of council's petition. This necessitated a personal letter from Duckworth to Almond.

We have had no further advices from you...and as a
consequence of your failure to act in accordance with the

directions of state law...approximately 10,000 white pupils who would otherwise be attending the secondary schools in the Norfolk Division are now out of school (W. Duckworth to J. Almond, October 6, 1958, Almond Executive Papers).

Duckworth advised Almond that if the closed schools were reopened in a segregated condition and operated by the state, the courts would allow them to remain open while the matter was litigated. Although state-operated schools might be judged illegal, "at least the schools would proceed with their ordinary affairs until the final solution [was] reached" (W. Duckworth to J. Almond, October 6, 1958, Almond Executive Papers).

The governor responded in writing to the mayor's letter the next day and arranged a meeting with representatives of the council and Attorney General Albertis Harrison. The governor, however, declined to act hastily. "Any action in a matter so urgent and important," he wrote, "must come only after careful reflection and deliberation" (J. Almond to W. Duckworth, October 7, 1958, Almond Executive Papers).

In reality the governor was stalling for time. He had never imagined that the schools would actually be closed, and he had little idea as to what the state's response should be. Almond would later reveal,

I thought the courts would immediately summon the school boards and say that the closing of the schools was without warrant of law and in violation of the rights of the

children. I thought this would be done by injunctive decree, and that the constitutional issues, if any, would be decided later (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9).

Senator Byrd was of little assistance to the governor throughout the closing. The two had not spoken during the summer leading up to the closure; and the senator and Blackie Moore, speaker of the House of Delegates, were vacationing in Alaska throughout much of September (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9).

Even after the senator's return to Virginia, he continued to be inaccessible to the governor. Almond, with growing concern, sought Byrd's counsel: "After the [Byrd's senatorial] election, I hope we can get together for a talk on this terrible crisis" (J. Almond to H. Byrd, November 3, 1958, Byrd, Sr., Papers). "I have been away for a couple of weeks," Byrd breezily wrote, "and therefore, have not written to you" (H. Byrd to J. Almond, December 19, 1958, Byrd, Sr., Papers). The governor replied with increasing frustration, "I hope in the near future you and I can sit down for a long talk relative to our problems" (J. Almond to H. Byrd, December 22, 1958, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

Almond, cooperatively with Davis Y. Paschall, Virginia's superintendent of public instruction, had planned to reopen the nonintegrated grades of the closed schools and enroll the students in the integrated grades in public schools in surrounding communities (Report to the Governor, September 29, 1958, Almond Executive Papers). This ploy was abandoned when the governor, a skilled attorney, realized the courts would not allow such an

evasive maneuver to stand and when school officials in Norfolk stated that it was not workable (Christian Science News Monitor, 1958, October 8).

ADVOCACY FOR REOPENING THE SCHOOLS

The activities of the Virginia NAACP provided the governor and other hard-line segregationists with little solace. The chapter held its annual convention in Norfolk's neighboring city of Hampton October 10-12, 1958. A goal was set to increase the state membership, already the largest in any southern state, from 27,000 to 50,000 by the end of 1959. NAACP leaders also revealed that of 422,663 blacks of voting age in Virginia, only 131,626 were registered to vote (Southern School News, 1958, November, p. 13; Muse, 1961, p. 47).

During the summer preceding the school closing, the Norfolk branch of the NAACP had sought to prepare the seventeen black students for the tribulations they would face when they eventually entered the white schools. This instruction continued throughout the time the schools were closed. The Norfolk NAACP asked Vivian Carter Mason, a graduate of the University of Chicago, to oversee the preparation of the students. Mason, a resident of Norfolk, was highly qualified for this responsibility. She was a former president of the National Association of Negro Women and had been a special delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. During the early 1940s she had served as New York City's

director of social services ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers; Carter, 1959, Autumn).

In an effort to prepare the students psychologically for integration, Mason arranged for speakers who had experienced desegregation in other areas of the country to visit Norfolk to share their observations ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers). Mason's discussions with the students regarding the obstacles they would face were frank.

We told them one morning that they have left their childhood behind them--it's finished for all of them. That is because they have been trained and taught to see and hear nothing that is aimed at them in a detrimental and provocative manner. They are not to take cognizance of unfriendly or hostile actions on the part of their fellow students. They are to apply themselves with great vigor to the job of mastering the academic work required of them. Lastly, they are not to withhold warmth and friendliness from those who extend it to them. They have accepted the role of pioneers (Carter, 1959, Autumn, pp. 513-514).

To prepare the students academically, Mason established a school consisting of five grades and twelve subjects. To staff the school, which was based in a downtown church, she secured the services of an interracial faculty of eight teachers. Gertrude Ferry, a retired Norfolk school teacher with forty years of service, supervised their activities ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers; Carter, 1959, Autumn).

The activism of the NAACP contrasted strongly with the unwillingness of the majority of Norfolk's white citizenry to take action to reopen the schools. A "Rally for Open Schools," held in the Norfolk Arena on October 13, attracted only a thousand participants, far fewer than the number hoped for by the event's organizers (Southern School News, 1958, November, p. 13).

Of the white organizations working to reopen Norfolk's schools, certainly none was more active than the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools. The committee described its membership--professional people, real estate personnel, housewives, and women active in community affairs--as "realistic, public-spirited citizens who wish to maintain public schools" and attempted to portray itself as pro-public schools, not pro-integration ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers; Muse, 1961, p. 89). The NCPS refused to accept black members lest their inclusion diminish the committee's ability to portray itself as a mainstream organization (Reif, 1960, p. 13).

Norfolk's ministers and many members of its religious community also worked to reopen the schools. Sixty-six members of the biracial, Protestant Norfolk Ministers Association, which represented seventy-four congregations, authored a statement urging political leaders to take immediate steps to reopen the schools (Reif, 1960, pp. 9-10). Lenoir Chambers editorialized,

The church has acted with great speed, commendable boldness,

and heartening unanimity....It was the response of educated men unaffected by politics. It was the response of the institution to which much of Norfolk entrusts its conscience....It was a response to evil and peril that this city and this state cannot ignore (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, September 30).

A number of other local religious organizations and individual congregations issued statements disapproving of the closing, but the outcry from the religious community seemed to have no effect on state policy. A delegation of five representatives from the Ministers Association was informed by Governor Almond that although the schools would not be closed permanently, he had little idea as to when or how they would be reopened (Reif, 1960, p. 10).

Jane Reif, in her pamphlet Crisis in Norfolk, notes that the association's members who spoke out against the closing did so as individuals, not as representatives of their congregations (Reif, 1960, p. 10). The clergymen's parishioners were deeply divided over the closing. Luther Carter recalls a story to the effect that James Martin, a leader in the Tidewater Educational Foundation, disapproved so strongly of his minister's pro-school sermons that Martin would sit in the front pew and read a magazine during church to show his disrespect (L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990).

Although many Jews supported the reopening of the schools,

they acted as individuals, not as congregations. Their leadership felt that Jews themselves could easily become targets of racism if their opposition to the closing became too visible (Reif, 1960, p. 9). Racist hate literature was widely circulated throughout the crisis, but anti-Semitism was not a prominent feature of the closing. Rufus Tonelson, who was then the first-year principal of Maury High School, recalls, "Here I was, a Jewish principal and all this going on....I was getting [anonymous] calls...`You're a nigger lover.' `You're a communist.' `You're red.' They threatened to burn a cross on the lawn. [But] in all those times no one ever threw up to me, `What do you expect from a Jew?'" (R. Tonelson, personal communication, July 19, 1991).

A number of women's organizations such as the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, and the Women's Interracial Council also opposed the closing. In general, women's groups seemed to value the public schools more than organizations dominated by men (Reif, 1960, p. 10).

Late in October 1958, Frank Batten began to take some of the first steps to organize Norfolk's business community to urge the reopening of the schools. Batten met with Norfolk school board chairman Paul Schweitzer in an effort to "help the School Board with the present school problem." In a letter to Schweitzer, Batten expressed his opinion that "the business leaders of the community should join together to plan the action they should take at the proper time to help Norfolk and the School Board solve this

school problem" (F. Batten to P. Schweitzer, October 28, 1958, Schweitzer Papers).

Batten and Pretlow Darden, former mayor of Norfolk and the brother of former governor Colgate Darden, would become the two primary organizers of the business community's long-delayed protest. Batten, who then was one of Norfolk's youngest business leaders, recalls that "Pretlow and I had been talking for months about...trying to figure out if there was some way that we could try to organize...the business community to take a responsible role [in the crisis]" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1991).

Some of the delay in the business community's reponse can likely be attributed to fundamental differences between Batten and Darden regarding integration. Batten supported the Supreme Court's decision, although he felt that integration should proceed "very cautiously and very carefully and very slowly" to avoid "the potential repercussions of a rush to integrate the schools" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1991). Robert Mason, who regularly lunched with Batten and Chambers during the closing, recalls that "all the conversation we had was on what Chambers called 'Topic A'....[and Batten] felt exactly as Chambers did" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990). Despite Batten's personal feelings, he greatly respected Darden's political acumen. "Pretlow Darden was a guy that [had] a tremendous sense of timing" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1991).

Darden had much less respect than Batten for the Supreme Court's decision. Darden remembers, "I had divorced myself from the Supreme Court in that matter. I thought they were wrong, and I didn't think much of their judgment" (P. Darden, personal communication, August 13, 1975). Darden would refuse to act until the Virginia Supreme Court ruled on the legality of the closing-- "when my [state] supreme court said to me, 'This is it....You can't do what you are doing now. The [state] supreme court has ruled and you've got to obey.' As far as I was concerned, I gave up any thought that we were going to then continue to defy the government and the [federal] Supreme Court" (P. Darden, personal communication, August 13, 1975).

Organizing the business community to protest the closing would be a formidable task for Batten. Business leaders were not inclined to challenge the Byrd organization, which stood for low taxes and anti-union legislation as much as for white supremacy. In Southern Politics, V. O. Key observed that the organization enjoyed "the enthusiastic and almost undivided support of the business community and the well-to-do generally, a goodly number of whom [were] fugitives from the New York State income tax" (Key, 1949, pp. 26-27).

What ultimately would motivate the city's lethargic business community to begin to organize was the fear that the closing would have a negative impact on the area's economy--in particular, that the Navy would close its large base, which was central to the city's prosperity. Chambers stimulated the fears of the city's

business community by reprinting an article, "What Massive Resistance Costs," that had been published earlier in Business Week magazine. "This article," Chambers wrote to Business Week's editor, "seems to us to summarize very well indeed some important ideas and possibilities. We have been trying to impress these on the business community here" (L. Chambers to K. Kramer, October 14, 1958, Chambers Papers). "A gnawing fear among businessmen," the article read, "is that Navy patience will wear thin, that uncertainty among naval personnel about the opportunity for educating their children will provoke a shifting of operations to other Atlantic ports" (Business Week, 1958, October 4, p. 32). "If the Navy left," an observer later claimed, "Norfolk would sink" (Friddell, 1966, p. 44).

Publicly, the Navy dissociated itself from the crisis. Sailors and officers were instructed not to make their association with the Navy known if they participated in political activities linked to the crisis. Still, many Navy children were affected by the closing, and Navy families were deeply concerned. One Navy wife wrote to Schweitzer, "You may wonder why Navy personnel have not been heard from in more numbers. Many people do not know that we have been ordered not to make our connection with the Navy known when we speak out against the crisis. But make no mistake about it, we Navy people are deeply concerned....Something will be done and Norfolk may well be hurt permanently by what is done about the Navy in Norfolk" (L. McWhorten to P. Schweitzer, January 23, 1959, Schweitzer Papers).

Navy personnel were somewhat removed from local politics. Many did not pay state taxes and therefore were prohibited from voting in state and local elections (New York Times Magazine, 1959, January 4, p. 55). Although a number of Navy parents worked for the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools, they obeyed the order concerning disclosure of their affiliations (Reif, 1960, p. 12).

Behind the scenes, the Navy exerted pressure on Mayor Duckworth and the city council to take steps to reopen the schools. Rear Admiral F. Massie Hughes, Commandant of the Fifth Naval District, the popular "Navy mayor" of Norfolk, made known to the city administration the Navy's displeasure with the closing. Although there was some history of a lack of cooperation between the Navy and the city, in recent years relations had grown much closer. During a meeting of the Hampton Roads Sales Executives Club, the admiral drew attention to the fact that four out of ten children in the Norfolk area had parents who worked for the federal government. "I hope and pray to God," he said, "[the school crisis] will soon clear up" (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 17). The military was responsible for employing 44 percent of the area's work force, and Hughes's opinion of the closing was closely heeded by this audience of business leaders.

Duckworth and Hughes were friends, and the commandant's criticism of the closing would have been received by the mayor. However, Hughes's attempts to influence the mayor were ineffective. As the crisis grew, Duckworth's politics became

increasingly polarized; and as Roy Martin, Duckworth's successor, observed, "there was no working with Duckworth" (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990; R. Mason, personal communication, April 10, 1989; R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990; Reif, 1960, pp. 11-12).

Norfolk's public-school teachers played a major role in subverting militant segregationists' plans to establish an extensive private-school system for whites. On October 2, 1958, the Norfolk Education Association, a professional teachers' organization for the city's 1,100 white teachers, voted 487 to 89 in favor of a resolution requesting that city council petition Governor Almond to allow Norfolk to operate the public schools on an integrated basis if the governor was unable to reopen them in a segregated condition (Southern School News, 1958, November, p. 13). The NEA was led by a popular former Duke University all-American football player, Charles ("Bolo") Perdue, the principal of Norview High School. Perdue warned that many teachers were considering changing careers: "Once your teaching force is wrecked, it's hard to build a good one back again" (New York Times Magazine, 1959, January 4, p. 55).

Some observers had viewed the NEA as "a fairly passive, politically unassertive" professional organization until the closing of the schools (L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990). However, when members saw their jobs threatened and their "life's work blow[ing] up," they closed ranks and urged the reopening of schools (New York Times Magazine, 1959, January 4,

p. 54).

At a meeting of the NEA, public-school teachers were recruited by the head of the Tidewater Educational Foundation, James Martin, whose audience had been arranged by Mayor Duckworth. Only one teacher elected to join the foundation's faculty. "We teachers didn't take part in private school organizations," said Mary D. Johnson, a longtime Norfolk teacher and a member of the advisory board of the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools, "because we felt it would undermine public schools. We took part in tutoring groups only as a stopgap" (New York Times Magazine, 1959, January 4, p. 54; White, 1959, September, p. 31; Reif, 1960, p. 18).

The teachers' refusal to participate in the foundation's private-school plans angered Martin: "We are shocked and baffled by the refusal of the teachers of the six closed schools who are standing idle refusing to teach their own children" (Reif, 1961, p. 6).

Many teachers were concerned that the tutoring situations in which they taught would be perceived by parents as an adequate substitute for public schools. On October 18 Tonelson advised teachers to cease their participation in these groups by the beginning of the new year (Reif, 1960, p. 20). "I'm devoutly against these tutoring groups, although I'm teaching in one," one teacher was quoted as saying. "They obscure the issue, which is public schools vs. massive resistance" (New York Times Magazine, 1959, January 4, p. 54).

A CITY DIVIDED

The rancor and divisiveness displayed at the Virginia Congress of Parent-Teacher Associations, held in Richmond on October 20-22, 1958, symbolized the degree to which Virginians were divided over the school closing and foreshadowed the struggle that lay ahead in Norfolk. On the opening day, Governor Almond addressed the convention with a strongly segregationist speech. His fifteen-minute address was interrupted eleven times with cheers and applause. Nevertheless, moderates defeated an attempt by William I. McKendree, the president of the Norfolk PTA Council and a leader in the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties, to take over the organization (Southern School News, 1958, November; Peltason, 1961, p. 214).

By a tie vote of 557 to 557, the parent-teacher congress rejected a resolution expressing support for massive resistance. Later in the convention, moderates managed to pass by the narrowest of margins--515 to 513--a resolution supporting local option as the best means of solving Virginia's school crisis (Southern School News, 1958, November, p. 13).

Although McKendree was unsuccessful in his efforts to persuade the state Parent-Teacher Association to adopt a pro-massive-resistance stand, he was very successful in controlling the Norfolk City Council of PTAs. The council operated under rules that allowed the appointed chairpersons of its many committees to vote in its proceedings. This enabled McKendree, his officers, and the appointed chairs to outvote the local school

representatives (F. White to PTA Unit Presidents, undated, White Papers).

Earlier the city council of Parent-Teacher Associations had issued a statement opposing the desegregation of Norfolk's schools. The statement read,

We believe desegregation to be unnecessary and impractical and that it will create for all children a hitherto unknown standard of inferiority....We urge our Norfolk City School Board and Superintendent of Schools to take all possible and necessary action to retain the present equal opportunities now afforded all children ("Norfolk City Council of Parent-Teacher Associations Resolution," February 9, 1957, White Papers).

It is highly probable that other members of the PTA Council besides McKendree were members of the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties (Muse, 1961, p. 90). The previous year, the leadership of the Defenders had encouraged its membership to take an active part in PTAs: "All members of the Defenders [are] encouraged to join the Parent Teachers Association and...each member [should] attempt to encourage others of like mind to also join" (R. Crawford to J. Almond, February 24, 1958, Almond Executive Papers).

Rufus Tonelson recalls his efforts to influence the PTA council to adopt a pro-school resolution. "I learned that it's possible to take over an organization in a legitimate fashion. I think Hitler did this....Anything that came up that would favor opening the schools was always voted down....Everything we would

propose and every challenge we would make, [the PTA parliamentarian] would always say, 'You're out of order'" (R. Tonelson, personal communication, July 18, 1990).

William McKendree strongly opposed the efforts of the PTAs of the closed schools to continue to meet, fearing they would challenge the pro-resistance stand of the city-wide council. McKendree consulted with the national leadership of the organization to support his pronouncement that the chapters in the closed schools were defunct and should not be recognized (Reif, 1960, p. 8). Despite his efforts, nearly all of the statements issued by Norfolk's individual PTAs were in favor of reopening the schools and passed by large majorities (White, 1959, p. 30). The one notable exception was Norview High School's chapter, whose resolution to reopen the school barely passed, 65 to 64 (Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

Across the state, individual PTAs issued position statements in attempts to influence state leaders. Lindsay Almond's gubernatorial papers contain many examples of these petitions, with pro-resistance statements from schools in Farmville, Green Bay, Ringgold, Powhatan, Blackstone, Wakefield, Emporia, Kenbridge, Westpoint, and Ellerston; and pro-school petitions from Lexington, Norfolk, Pulaski, Arlington, McLean, Vienna, and Falls Church.

On October 22 a delegation from the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools, led by the Reverend James Brewer, presented Almond with a petition signed by 6,190 white citizens of Norfolk,

urging that schools be reopened (F. White to J. Almond, December 7, 1958, White Papers; "Norfolk Committee for Public Schools Petition," October 22, 1958, White Papers). The delegation warned the governor that the closing was having a profoundly negative impact on the city's economy and that the Navy was disturbed by the effects of the crisis on service families. Committee members assured Almond that the majority of Norfolk's citizens would accept minimal integration "in a spirit of calmness and cooperation" ("Norfolk Committee for Public Schools Petition," October 22, 1958, p. 4, White Papers). The governor informed the delegation that Norfolk's schools would reopen only when the federal courts declared the closing to be illegal (Reif, 1961, p. 5).

Five days later, the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools brought suit against Governor Almond in federal district court on behalf of twenty-six white students displaced by the closing. This suit, to become known as *James v. Almond*, was named after one of the plaintiffs, Ruth Pendleton James. James was a student at Maury High School and the daughter of Ellis James, a member of the NCPS's executive committee. Dr. C. Lyndon Harrell, Sr., a member of the committee's executive board, also brought suit on behalf of his two grandchildren, both students scheduled to attend Blair Junior High School. Several days later Victor J. Ashe, a local NAACP attorney, instituted a third suit on behalf of the seventeen black students (Reif, 1961, p. 6).

All of the suits challenged the constitutionality of the state's massive-resistance laws and charged that the school

closing violated guarantees of equal protection as stated in the Fourteenth Amendment. Governor Almond was named as a party in all three suits (Southern School News, 1958, November, p. 13).

The suits were to be heard before a three-judge panel consisting of chief judge Simon E. Sobeloff of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, circuit judge Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr., and district judge Walter E. Hoffman.

Prior to *Almond v. James*, all suits for integration had been brought by black plaintiffs. The NCPS had reasoned, however, that a court order for integration would more likely be obeyed in a suit filed by white litigants than in a case initiated by the NAACP. Dr. Forrest P. White, the treasurer and a later president of the NCPS, wrote, "The reaction against another NAACP suit might have tipped the balance toward further defiance (White, 1959, September, p. 32).

The committee encountered great difficulty in obtaining an attorney to argue its case. A number of prominent Norfolk lawyers, unwilling to risk incurring the wrath of the Byrd organization, refused to become involved (Reif, 1961, p. 5). Eventually Edmund D. Campbell of Arlington, Virginia, agreed to represent the plaintiffs. A Norfolk counsel, Archie L. Boswell, was engaged to assist Campbell. The defendants were represented by a formidable defense team consisting of Norfolk attorneys Leonard H. Davis, Leigh D. Williams, and W. R. C. Cocke; state attorney general Albertis Harrison; and Harrison's assistant, Walter E. Rogers.

Harrison v. Day, a test case of massive-resistance legislation, was being heard in the Virginia State Supreme Court of Appeals at the same time. Almond's initiation of this "friendly" suit angered Senator Byrd. However, the governor believed that a judicial test of the constitutionality of resistance legislation was inevitable, and he saw an advantage in being able to "frame the issues" (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9, p. 13). Almond later recalled that both his attorney general and he felt "that it would be better to get an interpretation from our own Virginia courts" (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9, p. 13).

The editorial responses of the Ledger-Dispatch and the Virginian-Pilot to the initiation of James v. Almond were limited in their number. The Ledger was critical of the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools' action in bringing the suit. In "This Might Increase Confusion," Joseph Leslie held that concurrent tests of the constitutionality of massive-resistance legislation at both the state and federal levels would likely confound matters. The editor wrote,

The federal case so closely parallels the action previously instituted before the state court, that its value as a means of clearing up the situation created by the closed schools is open to question. It might add to, rather than reduce, the confusion in which the school issue is involved (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, October 30).

In a lead editorial, "Is School Closing Constitutional?", Lenoir Chambers and his staff declared that the institution of

Almond v. James underlined the determination of white parents to reopen the schools and evinced the parents' belief that federal courts would provide the most responsible forum for facilitating an end to the school crisis. "It is apparent," Chambers wrote, "that the plaintiffs in these suits hoped the guidance would come from elsewhere, by through [sic] the action of others. They waited. It has not come....Leadership from those who ordinarily would be expected to provide it has not appeared" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, October 28).

As the third week of October approached, members of the Norfolk Education Association voted to end their participation in the tutoring groups. Lieutenant Governor A. E. S. Stephens responded tersely to the association's refusal to support massive resistance: "When you pick up the paper and see that a large party of teachers have voted not to participate in the private school movement, you ask yourself: where is their loyalty?" (Reif, 1960, pp. 6-7).

On October 30 the Virginia Education Association, the statewide white teachers' and administrators' organization, passed a resolution expressing strong disapproval of the closing and advising Governor Almond to take immediate action to reopen the schools (Southern School News, 1958, November, p. 13). With near unanimity, the organization's board of directors declared its opposition to the state's inflexible massive-resistance legislation and expressed a growing militancy:

We reaffirm that we will exert all possible effort toward the preservation and improvement of a system of free public schools in Virginia....We urge the governor to convene the General Assembly at an early date for the purpose of enacting such legislation as will assure the continued operation of the Virginia Public Schools as a state-supported function (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, October 31).

The Virginia Teachers Association, the black teachers' professional organization, adopted a similar resolution urging the state to obey the Supreme Court's mandate. One hundred delegates meeting in Richmond passed the resolution unanimously. Meeting in Hampton, the Virginia Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers also enjoined the legislature to comply with Brown and urged the governor to include blacks in efforts to resolve the school crisis (Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 7).

On November 4, 1958, Byrd was handily reelected to his Senate seat. What little competition he faced was, in essence, a symbolic protest against massive resistance. Dr. Louise O. Wensel, a Fishersville physician, ran as an independent, and Clarke T. Robb as a Social Democrat. Byrd was so confident of his victory that he declined to mount a campaign (Muse, 1961, p. 99; Southern School News, 1958, August, p. 6).

Wensel was a native of North Dakota and had moved to Virginia only five years before the election. Her disrespect for Virginia's senior statesman infuriated organization supporters; she described Byrd as "an old man who proposes to destroy the very

foundation of our democracy--our public schools" (Southern School News, 1958, August, p. 6).

Although Byrd received 317,221 votes to Wensel's 120,224 (Robb's showing was negligible), the anti-Byrd vote in Norfolk increased significantly from that of 1952, from 29 to 40 percent. Clearly, there was in the city a growing level of dissatisfaction with the senator's intransigence (Muse, 1961, p. 99; Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

Almond declared that Byrd's overwhelming victory was a clear indication of popular support for the senator's massive-resistance policies. Other observers insisted that the margin of Byrd's victory indicated little, in that it was nearly identical to that of his previous elections (Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

The celebratory mood of organization loyalists changed to one of concern a week later when Jack Kilpatrick spoke to the Richmond Rotary Club. Although the News Leader's editor had been one of the primary architects of massive resistance--almost singlehandedly resurrecting the doctrine of interposition--he had come to see that the end was in sight for massive resistance. His speech was the first major indication of disharmony regarding massive resistance in the normally unified Byrd organization. He told his audience,

I believe the time has come for new weapons and new tactics.

I believe the laws we now have on the books have outlived their usefulness, and I believe that new laws must be

devised--speedily devised--if educational opportunities are to be preserved and social calamity is to be avoided
(Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

Kilpatrick believed that the courts would declare the state's massive-resistance legislation illegal. The editor now saw local option and tuition grants as the best means of combating public-school integration (Peltason, 1961, p. 216; Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

Congressmen Watkins M. Abbitt and William M. Tuck categorically rejected Kilpatrick's "Johnny-come-lately" moderation. Abbitt urged localities to close their black schools if white schools were shut down as a result of litigation. Tuck blustered, "We cannot allow Arlington or Norfolk to integrate. If they won't stand with us, I say make them stand"
(Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 16).

Billy Prieur bristled at Tuck's remarks. Although he supported massive resistance and was every bit as loyal an organization man as the congressman, he resented Tuck's intrusion into the clerk of court's territory. Prieur told Tuck to mind his own business and called his statement "arrogant and presumptuous"
(Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 16). Tuck shot back, "As a Virginian who loves every foot of her soil I think I have the right to voice my views" (Virginian-Pilot, November 16, 1958). Chambers, downplaying the disagreement between these two Byrd lieutenants as a relatively minor family spat, wrote, "No one should infer from the Tuck-Prieur debate that the cogs in the Byrd

machine have suddenly begun to slip" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 18).

The most critical response to Kilpatrick's Rotary Club speech of November 11 was, of course, that of Byrd. The taciturn senator issued a rare public statement:

I have supported the strong anti-integration school policy of Governor Almond and his firm stand against the usurpation of power by the Warren Supreme Court. I shall continue to support this policy which I believe to be in the best interest of the people of Virginia (Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

However, there were some indications--albeit minor ones--that Governor Almond was considering a change in his hard-line policy. The day after Kilpatrick's speech, he acknowledged that the Virginia General Assembly's barriers to integration might be declared unconstitutional by the courts. "If [our laws] are stricken down, it is my present purpose to appoint a representative commission composed of members of the General Assembly for the purpose of advice and to receive the suggestions which I shall make at that time," he said. Still, Almond pledged to "stay with the statutes of Virginia as long as they are vital" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 13).

Even the suggestion that massive-resistance legislation might be struck down was grounds enough for the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties to question Almond's loyalty. Collins Denny, Jr., former legal counsel for the DSSIL, wrote to

Almond, "I do not believe that the future is as bleak as you seem to think it is, even if our Court of Appeals should decide the pending case against us"; and later, "I have also heard regret [among DSSIL members] that you have stated that you believed the laws adopted by Virginia would be struck down" (C. Denny to J. Almond, December 31, 1958, Almond Executive Papers; C. Denny to J. Almond, January 6, 1959, Almond Executive Papers).

Almond was continually besieged by hard-line resisters such as Denny, volunteering legal advice as to how segregation could be maintained. Despite his doubts as to the constitutionality of Virginia's massive-resistance legislation, Almond had shamelessly catered to this constituency during his gubernatorial campaign. Now he found himself distanced from his base of support. "I'd say," he later recalled, "'Our Navy is depleted, and the Army is gone, and we just don't have the power to resist the federal government'" (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9).

On November 11, circuit court judge Clyde H. Jacob and state supreme court chief justice John Eggleston, of Norfolk, refused to issue an injunction prohibiting Norfolk's city council from holding an "informative" referendum to determine whether voters felt council should petition the governor to return control of the schools to the city for operation on an integrated basis. A group of citizens had sought to enjoin the city from holding the referendum, in the belief that council should display leadership to reopen the schools immediately rather than use the predictable results of the election as an excuse for continued inactivity.

The date of the election was set for November 18 (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 12).

The wording of the referendum's ballot was very controversial. The form included a section entitled "For Information Only," warning voters that

in the Event the Closed Schools are returned to the City of Norfolk, and are reopened Integrated by the City, It will be necessary, because of the loss of State Funds, for every family having a child or children in Public Schools from which State Funds are withheld, to pay to the City a substantial Tuition for each child in or entering such Public School (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 18).

The referendum's opponents protested that the inclusion of such a section was an intentional attempt by council to influence citizens to vote against petitioning the governor.

The Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties, campaigning against petitioning Almond, maintained that support of city-operated schools was equivalent to surrendering "to various pressure groups and professional race mixers" (Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6). The DSSIL also said that parents would be forced to bear the brunt of the expense incurred by local operation of schools (Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

The Norfolk Committee for Public Schools and the Norfolk Education Association warned of the dire effects to the public school system and the local economy if schools were not reopened

shortly (Southern School News, 1958, December, p. 6).

George M. Kelley, Jr., the Pilot's highly acclaimed political writer, called the referendum "a choice between moderation or more massive resistance" and noted that the referendum would "represent the first direct expression of an affected area since Virginia's anti-integration laws closed nine white schools" (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 18).

Kelley had graduated from Wake Forest College and had served in Army intelligence during the Second World War. Dressed "in fashionably tailored suits and trenchcoat with looped belt, he cut quite a figure at city hall," according to Robert Mason.

But as admired as he was there and in the newspaper building, he followed a code...that a reporter's worth should be measured by the confidences he kept. He wrote with grace and authority, and he wrote quite a lot, but he didn't write half of what he knew (R. Mason, 1987, p. 165).

Despite the fact that Kelley was employed by the only major white Virginia newspaper to oppose massive resistance, he was closely tied to the Byrd organization and regularly informed Billy Prieur of events occurring at the newspaper. Shortly after the adoption of the Stanley Plan by the General Assembly, Prieur had written to Byrd, "I am enclosing a clipping from the local newspaper by our mutual friend, George Kelley....He is an excellent man and a stalwart friend" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, October 4, 1956, Byrd, Sr., Papers). Prieur had mentioned Kelley again to Byrd a few months later: "I immediately called George

Kelley, my friend with the Pilot" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, December 11, 1956, Byrd, Sr., Papers). The extent of Kelley's loyalty to the organization can be glimpsed in Prieur's correspondence to the senator half a dozen years after the closing: "I am enclosing an article which appeared in the Virginian-Pilot...written by Luther J. Carter. George Kelley has always questioned whether or not Carter was friendly" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, February 17, 1964, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

The Ledger-Dispatch and the Virginian-Pilot took diametrically opposed positions on the November 18 referendum. Leslie and his staff defended the holding of the "special informative election." The Ledger maintained that Norfolk's city council was well within its rights in determining the sentiments of the city's voters before deciding whether to petition the governor (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, November 12). Although the results of the referendum would not be binding, the editor stated, they would enable the council to respond more confidently to the crisis (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, November 15). The evening before the election, the Ledger fueled the emotional atmosphere surrounding the closing by declaring that a vote for petitioning the governor was tantamount to supporting the mixing of races in the city's public schools (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, November 17).

Chambers and his staff strongly opposed the referendum. The Pilot adopted an unusually caustic and cynical tone for its criticism, writing that

the expected usefulness of the ballot is as uncertain as the arrangement of capital letters in its text. Sifting through the ambiguities, the perplexities, and the senselessness of the ballot and a note appended, in which voters are informed that a reopening of the schools would entail 'substantial Tuition (sic)' for each child enrolled, is a dispiriting experience (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 14).

The Pilot disputed the Ledger's claim that a vote for petitioning the governor was a vote for mixing the races in schools. In an attempt to defuse the crisis, the Pilot's editor reasoned that the issue was not integration, but whether the schools should be reopened (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 14).

In a lead editorial, "The Best Choice: Vote 'For,'" Chambers enumerated his concerns over the referendum. He called on the city council to display leadership in reopening the schools, rather than wait for the results of a poorly conceived and ambiguous referendum. Voters were likely to be especially confused by the referendum's inflammatorily worded ballot, which suggested that an uncontrolled wave of integration would result from reopening the schools. In reality only the seventeen black students would enter the white schools.

Chambers was also critical of the portion of the ballot claiming that should the schools be operated by the city, parents would be charged a substantial tuition for their children's education. The editor maintained that there were many ways the city could fund schools aside from charging tuition

(Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 16).

Despite their severe reservations concerning the referendum and its ballot, Chambers and his staff advised voters not to boycott the election but to vote for petitioning the governor. Chambers wrote that the referendum presented Norfolk's electorate with an important opportunity to display its support for public schools (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 16).

Norfolk's "special informative election" on November 18, 1958, was a victory for Mayor W. Fred Duckworth and other massive resisters. The city's electorate voted 12,340 to 8,712 (three to two, as predicted) to keep the schools closed. Only 21,052 in a city of well over 300,000 residents voted. George Kelley wrote that "massive resistance to school integration won a new direct endorsement from Norfolk's qualified voters." In fact, however, the referendum demonstrated little, aside from the continued notorious apathy of the majority of the city's electorate (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 19; Muse, 1961, p. 93; Ely, 1976, p. 80).

Leslie called the outcome of the referendum "a positive and direct declaration by the voters of their will to resist school integration even at the cost of closed schools" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, November 19). The editor observed that the proportion of white voters opposing petitioning the governor was much higher than three to two. If the thirty-five hundred votes cast by blacks--nearly all in support of the petition--were deducted from the referendum totals, the results indicated that

white voters overwhelmingly opposed the petition, two and a half to one (Ledger-Dispatch, 1958, November 19).

"The people have spoken," Mayor Fred Duckworth was quoted as saying (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, November 19). In Jane Reif's view, "the referendum hardened the attitude of the city government" (Reif, 1960, p. 18). City council assumed total control over all of the city's public-school funding on November 25 and began to allocate funding for the city's schools on a month-by-month basis, effective December 25, 1958. The ordinance declared,

The appropriation herein made for said public schools is made on a tentative basis, and no part of the funds so appropriated shall, in any event, be available to the School Board of the City of Norfolk except as the Council may, from time to time, by resolution authorize (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 43).

This ordinance placed council in a position to close the city's black schools by eliminating the funding for these schools (Reif, 1960, p. 18).

Billy Prieur was intimately involved with Duckworth in orchestrating the escalation of the school crisis. "I am enclosing," he reported to the senator's son, Harry F. Byrd, Jr., "headlines in the Norfolk newspapers which indicate further steps we are contemplating taking. I believe that we have the City's budget in such a state that we can cut off the Negro schools as of January 1, 1959" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, Jr., November 26, 1958, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

Although Prieur was actively working behind the scenes to perpetuate school segregation, he expressed concern over the closing. The clerk of corporation court was a complex character. The Byrd loyalist was an astute politician, who appeared to some to be acutely troubled by the risky position the organization had chosen. Robert Mason remembers conversations he had with the powerful clerk of courts during the closing: "The school closing just didn't seem to suit him. He thought it was a shame....He was very, very gloomy about the whole thing. It just didn't seem a good policy to him" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

After the referendum, Mayor Duckworth adopted an antagonistic stance regarding the city's teachers. In a confrontation with the mayor, school superintendent James Brewbaker had defended his teaching staff, saying, "We have good teachers." "Well, I won't go into that now," the mayor replied; "...with what some of them have done, along with others in your system, I would have to disagree with you" (Reif, 1960, p. 18). Rufus Tonelson remembers a similar incident: "Duckworth had called in Mr. Brewbaker and told him that if [the principals of the closed schools] didn't change [their] philosophy about keeping the schools open, he wanted us fired. And Mr. Brewbaker said, 'Well, you can fire me, too' (R. Tonelson, personal communication, July 18, 1990).

The mayor began to achieve considerable notoriety as a result of his increasingly militant position. Robert Mason recalls a

trip he took throughout the South during the closing: "Everybody knew Duckworth. His name had become [almost as well known as that of Governor Orval Faubus, the segregationist governor of Arkansas]....That got to him....Everybody was cheering [him]. Everybody was congratulating [him], including the senior senator of [his] state" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

Mayor Duckworth grew closer to Senator Byrd as the crisis escalated. After the reopening of the schools, Prieur would write to Byrd that the mayor "is one of your strongest admirers" (W. Prieur to H. Byrd, September 22, 1959, Byrd, Sr., Papers). Duckworth's strong support of the organization's stand on school integration placed him firmly in the organization's inner circle. "The more I see of Fred Duckworth," Byrd wrote to Prieur, "the abler I think he is, and the finer" (H. Byrd to W. Prieur, October 20, 1959, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

If Senator Byrd was impressed by Mayor Duckworth's leadership qualities, moderates working to defuse Norfolk's school crisis were not. Dr. Forrest P. White, a principal member of the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools, was much disturbed by the militant position adopted by the mayor. White warned Duckworth that his policies could lead to violence: "One stick of dynamite under each of a certain two Negro houses would open Granby and Maury tomorrow. Is this what you want? I don't believe it is. But if it happens can you disclaim all responsibility" (F. White to W. Duckworth, December 6, 1958, White Papers).

White also wrote to Governor Almond to suggest that he

develop "scape-goats" for the crisis. By suggesting to Virginians that Communists and northern industrialists were the only two constituencies benefiting from the crisis, White believed Almond could justify the reopening of the schools and suffer minimal political damage. "If you can find any better scape-goats than the Yankee industrialists and the Communists to aid the swing from massive resistance, you'll be doing well," the pediatrician wrote. "I personally regret the necessity of straining the bounds of logic to find emotionally appealing reasons for logical acts--but I do believe it is necessary" (F. White to J. Almond, December 7, 1958, White Papers).

On the national level, although President Eisenhower continued to display a lack of leadership in resolving the school crisis, some members of his administration did speak out (Peltason, 1961, p. 50). On December 1, Secretary Arthur S. Flemming of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare called the school closings in Arkansas and Virginia "indefensible and warned that children kept out of school would suffer serious consequences" (Southern School News, 1959, January, p. 9). During the crisis, Attorney General William Rogers made several speeches to the effect that southerners were being misled by their political leaders to believe that the Supreme Court's mandate could be legally ignored (Peltason, 1961, p. 49).

In November and December 1958, an informal group of the state's leading businessmen and industrialists was organized by Stuart Saunders, president of Norfolk & Western Railroad.

Saunders was concerned that Virginia was not as effective as other southern states in attracting out-of-state industries (Virginian-Pilot, 1958, December 19). His concern was likely traceable to University of Virginia economist Dr. Lorin A. Thompson's report, "Virginia Education Crisis and Its Economic Aspects," which had been widely circulated throughout the state before it was published in New South. Thompson saw the school closing as largely responsible for the state's failure to attract new businesses. He maintained that new businesses were unable to persuade highly skilled workers to move to Virginia while the state's public schools were in such an unstable condition. He also claimed that some of Virginia's skilled work force had already relocated to other states because of the school problem (Thompson, 1959, February, p. 3). Thompson's views could hardly have been considered objective. He was actively involved in Charlottesville's pro-public-schools movement.

At Saunders's behest, the twenty-nine-member group of businessmen and industrialists met in Richmond in November or early December to discuss ways to promote economic development. Frank Batten was in attendance, as was future Supreme Court justice Lewis Powell, then a Richmond attorney. It was generally agreed that Virginia would face continued difficulty in attracting businesses unless the school crisis was resolved. The group decided to try to persuade Governor Almond to adopt a more moderate position on school integration (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

In late December, at a secret dinner meeting at the Rotunda Club in Richmond, the twenty-nine business leaders met with Almond, Lieutenant Governor A. E. S. Stevens, and Attorney General Albertis Harrison (Carter, 1959, Autumn, p. 511; Wilkinson, 1968, p. 145; H. Sugg, personal communication, October 2, 1990). Frank Batten recalls that the governor was not receptive to the group's entreaties: "We just got hit by this barrage from the governor of the same kind of things he'd been saying in his speeches for months, in which he talked about the evils of integration and everything else" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

Batten remembers that Almond was particularly contemptuous of Chambers's editorials on massive resistance: "In the midst of this speech, he spent about ten minutes blasting the editorial policy of the Virginian-Pilot" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

Although Almond later conceded that the business leaders' entreaties had a profound effect on him (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9), public schools were only one factor--likely a minor one--that out-of-state businesses would have considered before deciding whether to locate their plants in Virginia. In retrospect, the fears of the state's business leaders appear to have been unrealistic (Ely, 1976, p. 85). Shortly after the reopening, Almond wrote to Senator Byrd,

I have not been able to find any documented evidence that any industry has declined to locate in Virginia because of the

pending school problem. Throughout the struggle, our industries in Virginia have continued to expand and from 1950 to date, there has been a steady and substantial acquisition of new and stable industries not only in Virginia, but throughout the South (J. Almond to H. Byrd, March 13, 1959, Byrd, Sr., Papers).

On December 22 Judge Hoffman announced that his three-judge panel had completed its decision in the James v. Almond case. Hoffman stated that the decision would be made public "within a reasonable number of days" (Southern School News, 1959, January, p. 9). The judge had good reason for delaying the release of the opinion. Earlier, while playing golf at a nearby country club, Hoffman coincidentally had met state supreme court chief justice John W. Eggleston, whose court was in the midst of deciding the crucial Harrison v. Day case. Eggleston persuaded Hoffman to postpone the release of the James v. Almond decision until the state court could act. "I just think it would be better for the people of Virginia if we spoke first," Hoffman recalls Eggleston as saying. Hoffman immediately called Simon Sobeloff: "I told him about Eggleston; and he said, 'Walter, for God's sake, hold that opinion. He's absolutely right'" (W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990).

Governor Almond was an astute enough lawyer to sense what the courts' opinions would be. He had managed to secure a conference in Washington, D.C., with the elusive Senator Byrd. At the meeting, the governor described the precarious

condition of massive resistance. Should the courts decide as anticipated, Almond told Byrd, the only means by which total segregation could be continued would be to shut down all of the state's public schools.

The senator, however, remained unalterably opposed even to token integration and expressed concern over what his southern senatorial colleagues would think if Virginia's resisters capitulated to the federal courts. Powerful organization insiders present at the secret meeting, among them Representatives William M. Tuck and Watkins M. Abbitt, echoed Byrd's stand and vehemently supported continued massive resistance. Tuck even advanced the notion that Almond should go to jail before he allowed black students to enter white schools. The governor rejected this ploy, maintaining that it would do nothing to stop integration and that it would constitute a public relations catastrophe for the Byrd organization. The meeting was adjourned without arrival at a satisfactory solution (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9).

On December 30 Norfolk's city council allocated another month's funding for the city's schools. The school board was prohibited from using any of these resources to operate the city's closed schools (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 43).

On January 13 the council, in an action that exceeded the severity of the state's massive-resistance laws, voted six to one to cease funding all of the city's schools beyond the sixth grade. This would have had the effect of adding another five thousand

black students and nineteen hundred white students to the ten thousand pupils already locked out of Norfolk's schools. Because blacks would be affected by this resolution to a much larger extent than whites, hard-line segregationists hoped the seventeen black students applying for admission to the city's white schools would be persuaded to withdraw their transfer applications (Ely, 1976, p. 82; Dabney, 1971, p. 541; Muse, 1961, p. 119; Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 45).

Roy Martin, Jr., the only city council member to oppose Mayor Duckworth, had differed with the mayor throughout the closing, but never publicly. He recalls, "I think...[Duckworth's] thoughts were if the blacks are going to close the white schools, we're going to get everything closed down, which to me was a terrible mistake....I tried to talk several other members of the council to join with me, but none of them would. They just felt very strongly that [massive resistance] was the position of the state and we ought to adhere to it" (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990).

Normally, disagreements between councilmen and the mayor were resolved privately. Duckworth sought to portray an image of a unified council to the public. "We used to have our words," Martin remembers, "but...most of our words were in the back room of a closed meeting. And that's why everything ran so smoothly when you got into the open meeting" (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990). To this end, Duckworth had taken to holding unofficial Monday-morning council meetings that were

closed to the public.

Duckworth's attempt to close the city's black schools proved too extreme for even some massive resisters. Governor Almond, sounding increasingly moderate, expressed disapproval of the council's action:

I have opposed any retaliatory moves against the Negro children in Virginia. It has been my purpose and will continue to be my policy to see to it that as far as I am able that all of Virginia's children receive the educations to which they are entitled (J. Almond to W. Blount, January 15, 1959, Almond Executive Papers).

On January 19, 1959, Robert E. Lee's birthday and a legal holiday in the state, the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals and the three-judge federal district court released their decisions in *Harrison v. Day* and *James v. Almond*. The decisions delivered a one-two knockout punch to massive resistance.

The federal court, which was sitting in Norfolk, unanimously determined that the state of Virginia, by operating some schools and closing others, was in violation of constitutional guarantees of equal protection and due process. Judge Hoffman wrote,

We do not suggest...the state must maintain a public school system. That is a matter for state determination. We merely point out that the closing of a public school, or a grade therein,...violates the right of a citizen to equal protection of the laws (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 49).

The value of interposition as a defense against integration was dismissed out of hand as Hoffman emphasized the supremacy of federal over state law: "It is our duty to apply constitutional principles in accordance with the decisions of the United States Supreme Court and when state legislation conflicts with those constitutional principles, state legislation must yield" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 49).

The state supreme court decision was as devastating to massive resistance as was that of the federal court. In a decision written by Chief Justice John W. Eggleston, of Norfolk, the court determined that

the state must support such public free schools in the state as are necessary to an efficient system, including those in which the pupils of both races are compelled to be enrolled and taught together, however unfortunate that situation may be (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 71).

Ironically, Governor Almond and his wife, Josephine, had hosted a dinner for the justices in the governor's executive mansion the previous evening (Muse, 1961, pp. 122-123).

Two justices, Willis D. Miller and Harold F. Snead, dissented. During the previous summer, these same two justices had attempted to issue an injunction restraining Norfolk's school board from assigning black students to the city's white schools.

The court attempted to soften the blow by sympathizing with the motivations of resisters:

We deplore the lack of judicial restraint evinced by [the Supreme Court] in trespassing on the sovereign rights of this Commonwealth reserved to it in the Constitution of the United States. It was an understandable effort to diminish the evils expected from the decision in the Brown case that prompted the enactment of the statutes under review (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Summer, p. 73).

Although Almond privately conceded that massive resistance was doomed, on January 20 he made a last defiant speech. "We have just begun to fight," he vowed. "I call upon the people of Virginia to stand firmly with me in this struggle. Be not dismayed by recent judicial deliverances" (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 21). Expressions of approval and support poured in to the governor from resisters across the state.

Later, however, Almond regretted this speech:

I don't know why I made that damn speech. If I had listened to my wife, I wouldn't have....I saw the whole thing crumbling. I was tired and distraught. I agonized and gave vent to my feelings, which never should have been done. My underlying thought and motivation was to show the people that we had done everything we could do (Virginian-Pilot, 1964, June 9).

Despite the fact that Byrd applauded Almond's inflammatory speech, the senator carefully maintained a generous distance between himself and the governor. Almond's many telephone calls to the senator were not returned (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, June

9).

Time also appeared to be running out for Mayor Fred Duckworth and the Norfolk city council, who seemed to be on the verge of being left to twist slowly in the wind. At an open city council meeting on January 20, Duckworth lost control of the proceedings and was jeered by a pro-school crowd. When Norfolk artist Kenneth Harris satirically asked the mayor if he intended to cease holding open meetings and hold only closed meetings, Duckworth grabbed the artist by the arm and exploded, "You can't run a \$37 million business in [this] kind of meeting." As the mayor turned to walk away, Harris replied, "You aren't running a business; you are running a city" (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 21).

The evening after the governor's speech, "The Lost Class of '59," a television documentary examining Norfolk's school closing, aired nationally at prime time on the Columbia Broadcasting System television network. The program was produced by the nationally acclaimed journalists Edward R. Murrow and Fred W. Friendly. Although "The Lost Class" featured many prominent actors in the crisis, Mayor Duckworth did not appear. Duckworth had made it known that he wished the producers of the documentary would "get the hell out of town" ("Introduction to the "Lost Class of '59," January 21, 1959, White Papers; "The Lost Class of '59," January 21, 1959, Byrd, Sr., Papers). Jane Reif wrote, "Murrow's telecast helped crystallize half-formed opinions. Its national top television time, and the reputation of Murrow, impressed many

Norfolkians who could no longer deny the facts" (Reif, 1960, p. 22).

The same day CBS aired "The Lost Class of '59," Norfolk received additional national exposure during a presidential press conference. President Eisenhower, although still refusing to exert his personal influence to press for southern compliance with the Brown decision, expressed his concern for the children of Norfolk's federal workers and hinted that his patience with Virginia's policies was running out (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, pp. 5-6).

For the Ledger-Dispatch's editor, Joe Leslie, who had appeared prominently in the Murrow documentary, the combined blows from the federal district court and the state supreme court were too much. Leslie acknowledged that the battle--if not the war--was over. In a lead editorial, "Massive Resistance Breaks Down," Leslie wrote on January 20, 1959,

The [Ledger-Dispatch], which has fought for school segregation with every persuasive means at its command, reluctantly concludes that massive resistance as we have known it has come to an end, and it becomes necessary now for those who believe in segregation to seek some other field from which to carry on the fight (Ledger-Dispatch, 1959, January 20).

Although the Ledger conceded that Virginia's resistance laws no longer offered a defense against school segregation, the editor, as Judge Eggleston had done, held that massive resistance had been an understandable response and had served a worthwhile

purpose in communicating to the nation the degree to which Virginians were opposed to the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board*. Leslie decried the *Brown* decision, calling it a "tragic mistake," and warned that the court and the country would be haunted by the decision in years to come (Ledger-Dispatch, 1959, January 20).

Leslie also defended his paper's role in the crisis, writing that the Ledger had provided a voice for the citizens of Hampton Roads, the vast majority of whom supported massive resistance. "We have placed the North," Leslie wrote, "and the NAACP, and some of our own people who did not realize the intensity of the opposition to racial integration, and the dangers inherent in it, on notice as to what these dangers are" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1959, January 20).

The next day Leslie suggested that Virginia adopt a policy of containment to replace that of massive resistance. The editor recommended the development of pupil-screening procedures that would minimize the number of blacks allowed to enter white schools. He also encouraged the state to begin to provide private-school students with tuition support.

The day after the courts' opinions were made public, Chambers and his staff emphasized the importance of the two decisions by devoting all three of their major editorials to the courts' findings. The Virginian-Pilot's editor urged citizens to abide by the decisions. Chambers wrote that the state supreme court was Virginia's court and that its decisions therefore should be

respected. The federal court's opinion was portrayed as restrained and logical, and the Pilot wrote that it too was worthy of Virginians' respect. "A historic opportunity now opens for Virginians," Chambers wrote. "The great of heart and mind will rise to it" (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 20).

Unlike Eggleston and Leslie, Chambers could discern no positive results from the state's policy of massive resistance. The editor's writing was uncharacteristically harsh:

The massive resistance legislation was always considered by those who viewed it dispassionately to rest on most dubious constitutional pillars. It remained only for the courts to take a long, hard look at the monstrosities of the Stanley and Almond programs. This they have done, and the results are devastating. It remains now for the people of Virginia, including their elected officials, to ask themselves whether this distinguished commonwealth means to go on with the tragedy of legislative pretense that in practice has been legislative injustice and cruelty and perhaps permanent impairment to thousands of Virginia children (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 20).

In an editorial later that week, Chambers denounced attempts by hard-line massive resisters to block the nomination of Justice Lawrence W. I'Anson of Portsmouth to the state supreme court. I'Anson, who had been temporarily appointed to the court to replace a deceased justice, had sided with the majority in *Harrison v. Day*. Chambers also aired his concerns about the

recent denial of Thomas C. Boushall, a moderate on the subject of massive resistance, to reappointment to the State Board of Education. Boushall had been replaced in this position by South Norfolk's superintendent of schools William J. Story, Jr., a militant segregationist and an avowed white supremacist. (Story, later a candidate for Virginia's governorship, was providing schooling for nearly a thousand of Norfolk's white school children in the public schools of the city of South Norfolk.) The Pilot feared that Story's appointment and the opposition to I'Anson's confirmation signaled that public officials who had opposed the school closings would be punished. Chambers urged legislators to protect the court's "right to think independently" (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 24).

In "A Decree That Is a Landmark," Chambers and his staff emphasized that the federal decision in *James v. Almond* was "controlling" and that it prohibited the state, as well as the localities, from engaging in any evasive schemes designed to circumvent public-school integration. The Pilot warned that any plans designed to maintain total segregation would likely be declared illegal by the courts (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 25).

After his defiant speech of January 20, 1959, Governor Lindsay Almond broke with the Byrd organization and began to display an independent style of leadership. He called for the General Assembly to meet in special session January 28, urged the legislature to establish a commission of legislators to study the

state's school problems, and recommended the adoption of a law designed to stop bomb threats. The governor also advised the legislators to repeal the state's compulsory-attendance law and consider the adoption of a tuition-assistance plan for private school students (Wilkinson, 1967, p. 147). The Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties felt strongly betrayed by the governor's about-face and began to refer to him as "Benedict Almond" (Dabney, 1971, p. 543).

On January 26, 1959, 141 days after the schools were closed and a week after the courts had rejected massive resistance, Norfolk's business community finally acted to reopen the city's schools. One hundred of the city's business leaders placed a statement in the Virginian-Pilot, urging city council to take steps to end the school closing. The petition read,

While we would strongly prefer to have segregated schools, it is evident from the recent court decisions that our public schools must either be integrated to the extent legally required or must be abandoned. The abandonment of our public school system is, in our opinion, unthinkable, as it would mean the denial of an adequate education to a majority of our children. Moreover, the consequences would be most damaging to our community. We, therefore, urge the Norfolk City Council to do everything within its power to open all public schools as promptly as possible (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, January 26).

Although some of the signers of the petition would encounter animosity for their actions, each of the businessmen who signed the petition received a rose from Grandy the Florist (Rorer, 1968, p. 306).

Persuading the city's business leaders to sign the petition had been problematic for Frank Batten and Pretlow Darden. Approximately a week before the courts issued their rulings, Darden finally determined that the time was right for action. With the assistance of several other prominent businessmen, Batten and Darden developed the wording of the statement, and then the two organizers contacted business leaders throughout the city. "We had to modify the wording of the petition to get a number of people to sign it," Batten recalls. "We ended up with what we wanted, but we had to qualify...it to get a number of people to sign it" (Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

The petition infuriated Mayor Fred Duckworth, who felt betrayed by the signers, many of whom were supporters and close friends. Pretlow Darden recalls the mayor's response: "I called Fred and I said, 'Now Fred, we are going to run an ad in tomorrow's newspaper saying that the schools ought to be open.' And he said, 'Hell, why didn't you tell me?' And I said, 'We didn't want to embarrass you. We know what your position is and how come you supported massive resistance.' 'Well,' he said, 'you have just stabbed me in the back.' And I said, 'Well, would you like to see it?' 'Hell no, I don't want to see it if I can't do anything about it'" (P. Darden, personal communication, August 13, 1975).

Three years later, when Roy B. Martin, Jr., succeeded Duckworth as mayor, he found the petition framed and hung on the back of a closet door in the mayor's office. Martin recalls, "Any time that door was opened [he saw it]. He really felt very...betrayed by a lot of his friends" (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990). Sam Barfield, a signer of the petition, who later was elected to city council on a reform ticket, tells the story--only half in jest--that Mayor Duckworth used the petition as a dartboard: "They tell me the dart hit my name the most. You can imagine how I felt when I got elected....I didn't have an ally" (S. Barfield, personal communication, August 8, 1990).

It is likely that an overriding concern for the well-being of Norfolk's schoolchildren was not the predominant motivation for many who signed the petition. Certainly economics figured prominently in their decision. Simply put, the business community had come to believe that the school closing was bad for business (Reif, 1960, p. 14).

The same day the businessmen's petition appeared in the Virginian-Pilot, Mayor Duckworth appeared in Judge Hoffman's court to attempt to defend his plans to close all of the city's junior and senior high schools (Muse, 1961, p. 130). The following day Hoffman issued his decision in *James v. Duckworth*. The judge enjoined city council and the city treasurer from enforcing council's resolutions of November 25 and December 30, 1958, and prohibited Norfolk's city council from engaging in any

"evasive schemes" designed to subvert the will of the court (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, pp. 55-56).

The city's political leaders acquiesced to the court's verdict and grudgingly began to make plans to reopen the six closed schools. Interestingly, one of the many plaintiffs in *James v. Duckworth* was Louis I. Jaffe, Jr., the son of the former editor of the Virginian-Pilot.

On January 28, 1959, Virginia's General Assembly met in special session. The beginning of the governor's opening address was vintage Almond and gave no indication that massive resistance was to be abandoned:

Encompassed by the iron will of arrogated power, buffeted upon the storms of an uneven contest, pierced with the daggers of political expediency and battered by the unholy alliance of a conspiracy to destroy the Constitution, Virginia, true to the faith of the founding fathers and refusing to desecrate her heritage, must never recede in this struggle to preserve her rights nor suffer her voice to be stifled in the councils of nations (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 183).

Partway through the speech, however, Almond changed course, revealing that he was distancing himself from the inflexible racial policies of Senator Harry Byrd:

I report as a fact, and not in a spirit of criticism, that the laws enacted to prevent the mixing of the races in our public schools...have been stricken down by a Federal Court, and by the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia. The imminence of

the peril to our people of the crisis thus engendered challenges the loyalty and dedication of our hearts and minds, and the prompt application of our talents and efforts, to the very best we can give in the service of Virginia (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 184).

Importantly, the governor conceded that the powers of the federal government superseded those of the state: "I have repeatedly stated that I did not possess the power and knew of none that could be evolved that would enable Virginia to overthrow or negate the overriding power of the Federal government" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 188). Almond continued by making clear that he had no intention of forcing the federal courts to send him to jail as some hard-line resisters had suggested. That strategy, he maintained, would contribute to "nothing but the ridiculous" (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 184).

Almond concluded his speech by proposing that Virginia's massive-resistance legislation be repealed, that compulsory-attendance laws be abolished, that \$250 tuition stipends be made available to parents objecting to their children's attendance of integrated schools, and that a forty-member legislative commission be appointed to examine future responses (Peltason, 1961, p. 217). The General Assembly passed these proposals by large majorities.

Governor Almond's pragmatism was rejected both by resisters and by some pro-school forces. Three hundred residents of the

Southside met in Kenbridge on February 8, 1958, and unanimously adopted resolutions denouncing the actions of the governor and the General Assembly. "Virginia has...suffered at the hands of her own officials a most severe defeat," they declared (Southern School News, 1959, March, p. 14). The Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties, in various meetings throughout the state, accused Almond of integrating the schools. Additionally, a petition calling for the governor's impeachment was widely circulated throughout the state. It was later determined that the petitions had been printed by Lincoln Rockwell, president of the American Nazi Party (Southern School News, 1959, March, p. 15).

On the other side of the issue, the Virginia Council on Human Relations, opposing the provision of tuition grants and the repeal of the compulsory-attendance laws, called the actions "hasty, unnecessary, and ill-advised" (Southern School News, 1959, March, p. 15).

The day following the governor's opening address to the special session of the General Assembly, Norfolk's city council directed Superintendent J. J. Brewbaker to reopen the six closed schools on February 2, 1959 (Race Relations Law Reporter, 1959, Spring, p. 56). Council's action was a cause for celebration for the city's black community and pro-school forces. Blacks packed the city hall and cheered the vote to reopen the schools (R. Martin, personal communication, August 20, 1990).

On February 2, 1959, the day the General Assembly recessed,

Norfolk's schools were reopened. Although every effort was made to downplay the possibility of violence, careful plans had been made by city officials to be prepared for every conceivable contingency. Plainclothes police and FBI agents were inconspicuously stationed near the schools scheduled to be integrated, and the homes of the seventeen black students were carefully guarded. Additionally, the situation in Norfolk was closely monitored by Attorney General William P. Rogers's staff, and U.S. marshals were placed on alert (Muse, 1961, p. 140; F. Powers, personal communication, October 4, 1990; W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990).

Reporters, photographers, and film crews from more than fifty different newspapers, wire services, and television stations gathered at the schools--many at Norview High School, where there seemed the greatest likelihood of racial violence. A few years before, when nearby white communities had been integrated, a number of racial incidents had occurred in the Norview section (Reif, 1960, p. 25).

Frank Batten specifically directed that reporters from the Virginian-Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch, as well as staff from WTAR-TV services (also owned by Norfolk Newspapers, Inc.), behave responsibly. To avoid fueling hysteria, reporters were to retain as low a profile as possible, and television cameras were not to be stationed at school doors (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 12, 1990).

The reopening of the city's schools was, however, uneventful.

Although there was some name-calling, a cross was burned near a school, and there was a mailing of racist literature from an unidentified source within the city, black and white students attended school together without incident. At worst, the black students suffered the isolation and loneliness for which Vivian Mason had prepared them so well (Carter, 1959, Autumn, p. 512; R. Tonelson, personal communication, July 18, 1990). Forrest White wrote that the press covering the reopening "had a rather dull day. The students arrived, went to school, went home again and that was that" (White, 1959, September, p. 29).

Of the ten thousand students displaced by the school closing, only sixty-four hundred returned. Nearly two thousand had received no schooling since the closure (Muse, 1961, p. 142).

The integration of the state's previously all-white schools was a watershed in Virginia history. Luther Carter later wrote, "The desegregation of schools in Norfolk and Arlington, coming the day the assembly was recessed, cut away an important psychological underpinning of the resistance program. Once the barrier was broken by even a handful of Negro children, all talk of Virginia as a fortress of segregation sounded hollow (Carter, 1959, Autumn 1959, p. 519).

Joe Leslie and his editorial staff at the Ledger-Dispatch wrote that the reopening of the schools should not signify a surrender to the NAACP and substantial integration. Leslie recommended that strategies of containment, which would limit the number of black students attending school with white students to

an insignificant few, replace massive resistance. "This state's initial 'massive resistance' line has been breached, but 'massive integration' doesn't automatically follow" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1959, February 4). The Ledger advocated the development of "legal, carefully planned procedures" to prevent the "appalling destruction of the school system which integration itself, unless checked, would surely bring about in a matter of months or years, depending on how aggressively the NAACP pursues its drive" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1959, February 2). Virginia's massive resistance to public-school desegregation was defended by Leslie as having been an effective "bulwark" that postponed integration for three years (Ledger-Dispatch, 1959, February 3).

Although Leslie continued to oppose integration vigorously, he encouraged readers to abide by the laws, despite the "displeasure and bitterness which are bound to be the by-products of the years of conflict provoked by the Supreme Court's ill-timed and ill-advised pressure for race mixing in the schools" (Ledger-Dispatch, 1959, February 3).

Lenoir Chambers and his associate editors also urged readers to abide by the law and reminded them that the country's attention was focused on the city. Chambers wrote,

Norfolk's citizens all have obligations to the principles by which Americans live--principles of fairness, of justice, of opportunity, of obedience to law, and of good citizenship. In such respects this old city, with its good name for understanding, can add greatly to its own stature this week,

and can set a fine example for the nation--indeed the world--that watches (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, February 1).

The Virginian-Pilot protested the recently enacted legislation that repealed the state's compulsory-attendance law and provided for private-school tuition (Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star, 1991, February 4). The Pilot also criticized the composition of the General Assembly's study commission--the "Perrow Commission," named for state senator Mosby Perrow of Lynchburg. Chambers viewed the forty-member commission, which was comprised exclusively of members of the General Assembly, as being too large to function effectively; and he objected to the exclusion of blacks and women from its membership (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, February 6).

Still, the Pilot praised Governor Almond's conversion to moderation and reason. Chambers wrote,

It must be said that in a critical moment Governor Almond stood up for realism and practicality--and he won. In consequence Virginia has at least more hope of reasonable action ahead than at any time since Governor Stanley surrendered in 1954 to the massive resistance movement (Virginian-Pilot, 1959, February 4).

CHAMBERS'S INFLUENCE

The demise of Virginia's massive resistance and the peaceful integration of the state's schools portended the downfall of the South's resistance to the Supreme Court's decision. Francis Wilhoit observes that

the collapse of massive resistance in Virginia in 1959 was a decisive event in the history of the South's counterrevolution. And it is well to recall that the admission of black pupils to white schools, though doubtless resented by a majority of whites, took place without mob violence or abuse of black pupils (Wilhoit, 1973, pp. 148-149).

Norfolk, Virginia's most populous city, was one of the most crucial battlegrounds in the state's--and the South's--massive-resistance campaign. No other Virginia city experienced a school closing so tumultuous, complex, and large.

Many key figures and interest groups contributed to the resolution of the city's school crisis and the integration of its public schools. Among the factors were the landmark decisions issued by the federal and state courts, the refusal of the city's teachers to align themselves with the private-school movement, and the energetic campaign conducted by the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools. Additionally, the NAACP relentlessly sought school integration; and the black community, led by Journal and Guide publisher P. B. Young, Sr., used its influence to defuse the

school crisis. There were other well-meaning but less influential groups, such as the Norfolk Ministers Association, the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, and the Women's Interracial Council. The Navy's Rear Admiral Massie Hughes, commandant of the largest naval base in the world, used his influence to lobby for a resolution to the closure. Finally, Norfolk's business community issued a long-delayed statement urging that the schools be reopened.

Yet without the example set by the Virginian-Pilot and the moderating influence of its thoughtful and persuasive editorials, this coalition would have operated less effectively.

Robert Mason concludes,

The union of [the pro-school] elements was loose. But as each stood up, it had a rallying point. It had a veteran of the conflict to follow. It had the clear, unwavering, unafraid example set and maintained by The Virginian-Pilot throughout the difficult months.

For all during the school crisis, and particularly during the year of its nadir--1959--Lenoir Chambers said and said again in his editorial columns what the law was, and what justice was, and what reality was. He never wavered. He wasted no time on the fiction of what might have been or might be.

It is not too much to say, I am persuaded, that Lenoir Chambers has done more, and under conditions more vexing and

longer sustained, to give logic and direction to Virginia, and to the whole South, in the school problem than any other editor (Virginian-Pilot, 1960, May 3).

In 1960 Chambers was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for distinguished editorial writing--the nation's highest award for journalism. The citation read that Chambers received the prize "for [his] series of editorials on the school segregation problem in Virginia, as exemplified by 'The Year the Schools Closed,' published January 1, 1959, and 'The Year the Schools Opened,' published December 31, 1959" (G. Kirk to L. Chambers, May 2, 1960, Chambers Papers). (Although the editor's two-volume Stonewall Jackson was nominated for the Pulitzer in biography that same year, Samuel Eliot Morison received the award for his study of John Paul Jones. Some knowledgeable observers believe Chambers's biography would have received the prize had he not been awarded the Pulitzer for his editorials [V. Dabney to L. Chambers, May 6, 1960, Chambers Papers]).

Chambers had been nominated for the honor four years earlier for his editorials on massive resistance. However, that application was complicated by associate editor William Meacham's insistence that he should receive or share the award. Harold Sugg believes that "these efforts...confused the situation and delayed Chambers's Pulitzer by at least two years. If Bob Mason had not picked up the effort...and given it one more try, Chambers could have missed out altogether" (H. Sugg, personal communication, October 13, 1990).

Chambers was gracious in his acceptance and acknowledged the important contributions of his associate editors. He would say that

Virginian-Pilot editorials are written after conference and consultation in which many persons may play a part. I am especially indebted to the associate editors, William S. Meacham and Robert C. Smith; to earlier associate editors, Harold Sugg and Robert Mason; to members of the news staff and to others familiar with school problems; and to The Virginian Pilot's publisher, Frank Batten, and its president, Paul S. Huber, Jr., for their constant encouragement (Virginian-Pilot, 1960, May 3).

Chambers spent much of his \$1,000 prize on the addition of a bathroom for his home. The remainder was used to replace his space-skipping typewriter. As soon as he received notice of the award, he called a local store. "I've won the Pulitzer Prize," he told the owner, "and I'm coming down there to buy a new typewriter" (Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star, 1990, September 23).

For Alice Jaffe, Louis Jaffe's widow, Chambers's prize-winning editorial campaign had been a continuation of her husband's work. She wrote to Chambers,

I feel happy not only about the well-deserved honor, but because of the special series of editorials singled out, in which the subject of human and racial justice followed the precedent of Louis' earlier prize. This series did much to influence current thought and action also, as did his. Yours

was one of the very few voices raised in public utterance for schools, for law, for moderation, for intelligence--the voice never wavered through dark days and (I'm sure) abuse, and the words were as measured and firm as the voice itself (A. Jaffe to L. Chambers, May 4, 1960, Chambers Papers).

The announcement of Chambers's prize also brought Jaffe to mind for Stringfellow Barr, a Princeton University faculty member who had written editorials for Jaffe. "I wish Jaffe could have been alive to see you win it. But given the kind of guy Louis was, he probably does know" (S. Barr to L. Chambers, May 3, 1960, Chambers Papers).

The national press believed Chambers's award was well deserved. The New York Times termed the Pilot's editorial page a

voice of reason on a political battlefield that was a testing ground in the South. Mr. Chambers warned against the danger to the fabric of government that was inherent in resistance to a Supreme Court decision. His was a leading voice and a persuasive voice and it was heard beyond the bounds of his own state in the Southern region. The Pulitzer Prize in this instance crowned a long career that has been dedicated to the defense of civil liberty and public morality (New York Times, 1960, May 8).

C. A. ("Pete") McKnight, the former editor of Southern School News and editor of the Charlotte Observer, one of the nation's most knowledgeable journalists on the subject of massive

resistance, wrote to Chambers: "I have followed your thoughtful and persuasive editorials with great interest and am quite sure that Norfolk's limited integration program went off so quietly because of the influence of your fine newspaper" (C. McKnight to L. Chambers, February 3, 1959, Chambers Papers). McKnight later wrote, "I have told many people that I thought your editorial writing on the desegregation problem was the most distinguished I had seen anywhere" (C. McKnight to L. Chambers, May 3, 1960, Chambers Papers).

Chambers's peers had long applauded his injection of reason and moderation into the emotional debate over integration. R. H. Estabrook, the editorial page editor of the Washington Post, wrote,

I cannot resist writing to commend your courage and common sense in your editorial[s]. It is a great deal more difficult for you to say these things than for us across the polluted waters of the Potomac. I think you are abundantly right, and it gives me great heart to know this sort of comment is continuing in our super-heated atmosphere (R. Estabrook to L. Chambers, August 21, 1958, Chambers Papers).

The editor and publisher of the Journal and Guide, one of the nation's most widely circulated and influential black presses, were highly appreciative of Chambers's role in defusing racial tensions. Thomas W. Young, editor of the Journal and Guide, had chastised Henry R. Luce, Time magazine's editor, for neglecting to mention the Virginian-Pilot in a Time article on southern

newspapers challenging segregation. In a letter to Luce, Thomas Young called the Pilot's editorial page

a beacon in the South where the lights of reason and statesmanship are going out all over the land. I should imagine that Editor Lenoir Chambers and his associates, William S. Meacham and Harold Sugg, are high on the list of enemies claimed by the White Citizens Councils and other invisible Southern state governments, both hooded and unhooded (T. Young to H. Luce, February 22, 1956, Chambers Papers).

P. B. Young, the editor's father, wrote to Chambers, "Your contributions to the proper understanding of the elements which go to create racial tensions have been wonderful. I am sure your paper has the gratitude of all patriotic citizens who read it, and who are influenced by it (P. Young to L. Chambers, December 24, 1958, Chambers Papers). Thomas Young would later congratulate Chambers for receiving the Pulitzer, writing,

Those of us who believe the editorial pages of our newspapers still exert a powerful influence on public opinion can certainly find a relationship between the courageous and convincing editorial voice of the Virginian Pilot throughout the months of Norfolk's dilemma and the easy restraint and ultimate containment of massive resistance forces in our community (T. Young to L. Chambers, May 5, 1960, Chambers Papers).

Although the national press's acknowledgment of Lenoir

Chambers's role as an advocate for racial understanding and moderation is a significant indicator of the editor's influence, it is the testimony of on-the-scene participants and witnesses that establishes his most important contribution to the outcome of the crisis: the role he played in influencing key actors in the drama. School board chairman Paul Schweitzer, who despite personal reservations regarding public-school integration ultimately adopted a moderate position and likely helped to persuade members of the board and Superintendent J. J. Brewbaker to adopt conciliatory positions, was deeply inspired by Chambers's editorials. The chairman wrote,

This community is indebted to you for the calm, dignified stand you maintained throughout the period of our recent controversy. Your reasonable approach, sound reasoning, and ability to clearly express your logic was a tremendous factor in resolving the problem we faced. You were, and remain, an inspiration to me personally in the humble part I had in this ordeal. All our civic problems are not yet resolved but with your continued leadership through the editorial pages of the Virginian Pilot, Norfolk can look to the future with confidence (P. Schweitzer to L. Chambers, May 3, 1960, Chambers Papers).

Judge Walter E. Hoffman read the editorials of the Virginian-Pilot and the Ledger-Dispatch closely during Norfolk's school crisis. Although the judge's actions were based on his interpretation of the law, not on media influence, he felt

that Chambers practiced exceedingly responsible journalism and played an important role in defusing the crisis. Hoffman recalls that the Pilot's editorials were "being written by people who were responsible to get the true facts." The judge has less respect for the Ledger-Dispatch: "[Joe Leslie] blasted the devil out of me, and I knew Joe very well....Not that I respected his opinion, because I'd read through it; and from the facts' standpoint, he had nothing to go on" (W. Hoffman, personal communication, August 30, 1990).

Other pro-school forces and figures were rallied by Chambers's editorials. Shortly after the schools reopened, the Norfolk Educational Association, which had played a critical role in the closing by refusing to support the activities of the Tidewater Educational Foundation, commended the editor for his "editorial policy on the troubled public school situation" (L. McGonegal to L. Chambers, March 31, 1959, Chambers Papers). Edie White, a key figure in several pro-school organizations, later praised the Pilot's role: "Our morning newspaper, the Virginian-Pilot, of which we are proud, wrote and has continued to write excellent editorials urging the people to awaken to the need for action" ("How Norfolk's Schools Were Reopened," February 25, 1959, White Papers). Jane Reif observed that the members of the Norfolk Committee for Public Schools considered the Pilot's editorials to have been "intelligent, thoughtful, and liberal" (Reif, 1960, p. 4).

Many of Norfolk's citizens not directly involved in the

closing also perceived the Pilot as having figured importantly in moderating the crisis. One reader wrote to Chambers,

your editorial policy was largely responsible for the crystallization of sane and purposeful action in regard to the opening of Public Schools in Norfolk. Without it, and the Virginian Pilot...the groups in Norfolk working for the schools would not have succeeded, or at least for some time to come (J. Nelson to L. Chambers, May 3, 1960, Chambers Papers).

Chambers's surviving colleagues at the Virginian-Pilot contend that the paper's editorials had a significant influence on public opinion. The paper's publisher, Frank Batten, concludes that although "average day-to-day editorials" do not influence the public to a large degree, the Pilot's campaign had an impact on Norfolk's citizenry because the closing affected them so immediately and profoundly. "In the midst of all that hatred," Batten recalls, "the Virginian-Pilot's editorial policy was consistent and was very persistent. They wrote about [the crisis] a lot, but they did it in a very calm way...that helped calm the community....I'm convinced that once the schools were integrated, after all the community had been through, the fact that it happened so smoothly and without a hint of violence...was helped by this long, calm argument the Pilot had been making all those years" (F. Batten, personal communication, September 25, 1990).

Luther Carter believes that the Virginian-Pilot's editorials were closely heeded by readers because of their uniqueness. "If someone expresses a contrary voice or sounds an

advanced viewpoint and is a community institution such as the Virginian-Pilot--even though everyone doesn't read it--it becomes very visible. Because the Pilot disagreed with the Byrd organization, it was novel and people attended to it. If [newspaper editorials are written] persistently and in reasoned terms, [they can] have an effect. The editorials have to be written again and again and again. They have to be well thought out. Chambers was careful not to get too far ahead of the citizenry, but he still was intellectually honest" (L. Carter, personal communication, October 10, 1990).

Robert Mason, Chambers's successor as editor, although guarded in his conclusions regarding the Pilot's role in influencing public opinion, believes that the newspaper did have an important effect in educating Norfolk's citizenry and in mobilizing pro-school forces. "I think in Norfolk people read about everything on the school closing because everyone was involved, everybody was affected to some degree....[The Virginian-Pilot] provided...a rallying point....[and] it kept scores on what was being done across the nation, what the reaction to Norfolk was" (R. Mason, personal communication, July 17, 1990).

CONCLUSIONS

In this dissertation I have explored the role of Lenoir Chambers, editor of the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot newspaper, in moderating the explosive atmosphere surrounding the state of Virginia's massive resistance to public-school desegregation. I

have examined Chambers's four-year editorial campaign--from *Brown v. Board* to the reopening of Norfolk's schools--attempting to defuse the South's emotional response to the court's mandate for an end to what was, in essence, the southern way of life.

Chambers alone determined the Pilot's editorial policy and, with the assistance of a talented staff of editorial associates--Harold Sugg, William Meacham, and later Robert Mason and Robert Smith--engaged in a tireless campaign that encouraged moderation and racial tolerance. The Virginian-Pilot, Virginia's second most widely circulated newspaper, was the only major daily newspaper in the state to oppose massive resistance and urge compliance with the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board* decision.

In an effort to demonstrate the unique and forward-thinking nature of Chambers's editorial campaign, I have contrasted the editorial responses of the Pilot with those of its sister newspaper, the Ledger-Dispatch, in regard to fourteen critical events in Virginia's massive resistance. (The Ledger's editorials were relatively temperate by the standards of other Virginia white presses; the contrast between the Pilot's stance and that of a press in Danville, Farmville, or Richmond would have proved even more striking.)

Chambers's voice was heard throughout Virginia and indeed the South. His views were closely monitored by the principal architects of the state's resistance, including both Senator Harry Flood Byrd, Sr., and Governor J. Lindsay Almond. The editor's courageous role was widely recognized by his peers and colleagues;

and as a result of his persistent campaign, he received the Pulitzer Prize, the nation's highest award for editorial writing.

Lenoir Chambers played an important role in moderating public opinion and encouraging the peaceful resolution of Norfolk's school crisis. Television journalism was in its infancy, and radio coverage of news and opinion was limited and superficial. Newspapers were the overwhelmingly dominant media of the day. During the massive-resistance era and especially during the school closing, the Virginian-Pilot's editorials--normally read regularly by a select few--were read with unaccustomed and increasing frequency by rank-and-file residents, primarily because so many were affected by the closing. Of so wide a readership, many persons would likely have been swayed to some degree by the reasoned arguments of Chambers. And it is likely that some of the opinion leaders and elite known generally to read editorials were persuaded by the Pilot to temper their views and in turn influenced followers.

The Virginian-Pilot's editorials also attracted attention because of their novelty; they contrasted profoundly with the opinions expressed by other Virginia newspapers. And Chambers's editorial campaign further attracted the attention of Norfolk's citizenry, especially opinion leaders in the community, through sheer persistence and duration. For four years the editor attempted to inform his readers of the need for compliance with the law of the land, the importance of public education, and the necessity for racial understanding and tolerance. The campaign

continued day after day after day.

For readers who knew of his character and background--certainly a large number of the city's most powerful elite--Chambers was an especially credible and influential spokesperson. His opinions and arguments were not easily dismissed by this audience. The genteel and impeccably mannered Chambers, who on occasion confided that he would have felt more comfortable living in the previous century, was a "son of the South," born into its aristocracy and steeped in its traditions. Chambers commanded and was accorded respect in the southern city of Norfolk. He invoked what was noble (perhaps, albeit, imagined) about the South--its manners and democratic heritage; and deplored its excesses--racism, intolerance, and emotionalism. When readers unfamiliar with his background called or wrote to complain about the Pilot's editorial stance, they were dismayed to learn of the editor's southern roots and his authorship of a biography of "Marse Robert's" most revered lieutenant.

Chambers, although he would likely have objected to the appellation, was one of Virginia's leading intellectuals. His views on racial issues were singularly advanced in their time and context; and pro-school organizations and individuals opposing massive resistance were rallied by his editorials expounding those views.

At the very least, Chambers raised the quality of the debate on integration to a higher level. In painstaking detail, he informed his readers and encouraged them to form opinions that

were based on objective evidence rather than emotional reaction.

Lenoir Chambers truly was a symbol of courage. Afforded complete editorial autonomy by the Pilot's publisher, he could easily have chosen to pursue an editorial policy that would have conformed to the tenor of the times. The editor, despite tremendous pressures to do otherwise, stood alone.

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