



HON. LOUISE DAY HICKS



Boston City Council

NEW CITY HALL

ONE CITY HALL SQUARE

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02201

December 9, 1974

Honorable W. Arthur Garrity, Jr.
United States District Judge
United States District Court
Boston, Massachusetts 02109

Dear Judge Garrity:

Today I once again implore you to take decisive action to alleviate the rapidly deteriorating situation throughout the Boston Public School System. In particular the parents of children attending South Boston High School have become increasingly alarmed and the pupils themselves are now angered and incensed. It is apparent that school administrators are unable to guarantee the safety of their school citizens. Police stationed within the schools have been unable to maintain order and insure a climate conducive to learning. Indeed education within our schools is at a standstill.

We must now face the facts that forced busing to achieve desegregation is not acceptable and that municipal and state officials have not been able to take those precautions necessary to reduce the risk of harm to school children. It is evident that only a diminishing number of individuals remain convinced that the implementation of the desegregation plan can be accomplished without city-wide chaos and disorder. I urge you as a leader of this undaunted group to share your vision with the parents of this city so as to allay their fears, frustrations and forebodings. Let me suggest that this untried alternative could provide the communication necessary to restore order and tranquility to our beleaguered city.

I respectfully submit that it is imperative for you to arrange a meeting with community representatives in an effort to share with these concerned citizens your current thoughts on your school desegregation order that was implemented in September. Your availability to the public on an issue so controversial as to completely disrupt our children's educational process is more vital now than ever before. Let us move resolutely on this issue before this volatile situation deteriorates to the point of unbridled anarchy.

Sincerely,

Louise Day Hicks

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Dear Mrs. Hicks,

Your sincere concern for the safety of school children is shared by all concerned citizens. I believe that the risk of harm you speak of in your letter of December 9, 1974, is not that which you earlier feared and wrote of on August 21, 1974, that of harm to school children from entering so-called "high-crime" areas under the state desegregation plan, ^{or from the possible perils of transportation by bus,} Rather, the danger to South Boston High School students comes from actions of fellow students within and around the school.

I had always understood your position to be not against desegregation,

but against busing. Your latest letter, however, suggests that you object also to the presence of black and white children in the same school if any conflict accompanies it.

You have spoken of the violence being inflicted upon schoolchildren, and of the lack of educational progress in the schools. In my view, the most serious and regrettable violence inflicted upon schoolchildren is that psychological violence done by parents and others who seek to enforce their own prejudices and fears upon their children, who, rather than working with the schools to improve the education of their children, withhold from them

their right to an education, and so cripple them with ^{an} ignorance and mistrust of others that will handicap their productive lives in a desegregated society.

Civil disobedience, even massively demonstrated, does not by itself prove that ~~a~~ ^a law is unjust or wrongly enforced; it proves only that it is unpopular with those who protest it. Those who lead others to think that ~~a~~ law will be undone, enforcement of the that the constitutional rights of all people will be abandoned, if ~~they~~ only they march long enough ^{or} shout loud enough, ~~the~~ ~~the~~ are doing a violence

to their followers and
assuring a bitterness and
disappointment that can do
more to undermine our society's
order than ~~can~~ the education
of a black and a white child in the
same class room ever can.

Dear Mrs. Hicks,

I appreciate your informing me through this letter and your past correspondence of your sincere concerns for the safety of Boston schoolchildren.

Those concerns are, of course, shared by myself and by all citizens. Unfortunately a meeting such as you suggest would be inconsistent with my obligations concerning the pending federal litigation.

Any expression of my thoughts, or ~~more accurately, my~~ ^{any} interpretation of my orders in this case is properly made only in ~~an~~ open court, where all parties can be heard, ~~and~~ argue their positions, and take exception to ~~any~~ rulings by the Court.

The nature of the federal court is that it is accessible to any member of the public through the formal processes of law. The need for business to be done "on the record," to assure the right to be heard to all parties, ~~is~~ prevents a meeting such as you suggests, enlightening though it might be for me.

etc.