

3B) Amityville Split By School Integration Protests

Demonstrators March Over Racial Issue, *Amityville Herald, September 5, 1963*

The opening of Amityville's' public school system was marked yesterday by picketing demonstrations in front of the Northeast School. Pickets carried signs protesting racial segregation at the building. . . . Richard W. Hasgill, president of the Central Long Island branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, estimated that from 40 to 50 pickets had turned out.

Boycott of Stores Now Looms in School Dispute, *Amityville Herald, September 12, 1963*

An economic boycott has been threatened by Negro leaders in their dispute with the Amityville Board of Education over racial imbalance at the Northeast School. A meeting was called to discuss the move last night at the Hunter-Squires-Jackson American Legion Post on Dixon Avenue. Meanwhile, a boycott against the schools in the District is scheduled for tomorrow. Richard W. Hasgill urged parents of both Negro and White children to support it. . . . Mr. Hasgill said, "Our demonstrations have been peaceful. I don't think anyone can criticize the way the demonstrators have conducted themselves. But we intend to carry on. A boycott will hurt."

85% Out in Boycott, *New York Times, September 14, 1963*

Amityville, L.I., Sept. 13-- Leaders of the civil rights movement said that a one-day boycott today of the district's schools was more successful than they had expected. . . . Mrs. Betty Brown, a member of the N.A.A.C.P. unit's strategy committee, said that 85 percent of the kindergarten through third grade pupils at the predominantly Negro Northeast School had been kept home by parents.

300 Hear Board Stress Its Stand on School Issue, *Amityville Herald, September 19, 1963*

A more or less subdued auditorium crowd of some 300 persons in the Amityville Memorial High School heard the Board of Education reiterate a stand Monday night in favor of keeping the Northeast School the way it is until the law is either changed or clarified. The attendance at Northeast, which accommodates kindergarten to third grade, is more than 90 percent Negro.

Mrs. Kersey reviewed the 1954 Supreme Court decision involving a case against the Board of Education of Topeka, Kan., involving a youngster forbidden to attend a school close to home because of color. "Now," said Mrs. Kersey, "the Negro community and some of our White citizens in Amityville are pressuring for us to duplicate this situation by transporting white children out of their neighborhoods and assigning them to a school on basis of color."

"The issue of de facto segregation and whether or not it is unconstitutional was not answered by the 1954 decision. This question can only be answered in the court room, and this board will again respect the decision of the courts," Mrs. Kersey declared.

Questions:

- 1- Why is the NAACP demanding a plan to racially integrate Amityville schools?
- 2- Does the NAACP have community support? What evidence do you have?
- 3- Why does Mrs. Kersey of the Amityville School Board oppose the NAACP demands?
- 4- Does the Amityville school board have community support? What evidence do you have?
- 5- If you were invited to Amityville to help resolve this conflict, what would you propose? Why?