

Opposites Of Extremism

If Thurgood Marshall, chief counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was accurately quoted, as he must have been, he spoke with impatience at a NAACP membership rally in Charlotte during the weekend.

Marshall apparently is impatient because school integration has not taken place more rapidly and extensively. He told the Charlotte meeting that until Negroes "break down education barriers we haven't scratched the surface." He reportedly told his audience that the only thing holding up integration in North Carolina is the "unwillingness" of Negroes to ask to have their children enrolled in white schools.

Somebody should straighten Marshall out if he believes that. Doesn't he know about the strong segregation feeling in most of North Carolina? Hasn't he learned that there are sections of this state which are as determined not to integrate their schools as he and the NAACP are to see that they do? Is he so insistent about integration that he would sacrifice the educational opportunities of his own race as well as those of the whites? Are Negro parents to be condemned for being "unwilling" to take their children out of their own schools where they can study and develop normally and put them where they cannot?

The leadership of the NAACP is obviously seeking to maintain the momentum of its legal victories by agitation. There seems to be little, if any room, for moderation in the organization's strategy. Indeed, some of the things said in the name of the NAACP have been downright inflammatory. Certainly, not all the fault is on the side of the white people who, after all is said and done, are being called upon to make all the concessions. Right or wrong, the Negroes are asking for much, and the least they can do is to try to be reasonable and patient.

Only a few days before Marshall spoke in Charlotte, a voice of the opposite brand of extremism was being heard in Raleigh. I. Beverly Lake, candidate for governor, reportedly told a civic club luncheon he would not support the U.S. Supreme Court's desegregation decision of 1954 if elected.

Those who seek the solution of our racial problems through moderation walk a hard road. They must work and strive under the cross-fire of extremism.