

The circumstances under which Miss Arendt first wrote but did not publish her article are described in her introduction. We publish it not because we agree with it—quite the contrary!—but because we believe in freedom of expression even for views that seem to us entirely mistaken. Because of Miss Arendt's intellectual stature, the importance of her topic, and the fact that an earlier opportunity to print her views had been withdrawn, we feel it is a service to allow her opinion, and the rebuttals to it, now to be aired freely.

The attention of our readers is called to the critical comments that follow Miss Arendt's article. In the next issue she will, of course, have an opportunity to reply to her critics; and within limits of space, reasoned comments from readers will be printed.—Errors

REFLECTIONS ON LITTLE ROCK

Hannah Arendt

Preliminary Remarks

This article was written more than a year ago upon the suggestion of one of the editors of Commentary. It was a topical article whose publication was delayed for months because of the controversial nature of my reflections which, obviously, were at variance with the magazine's stand on matters of discrimination and segregation. Meanwhile, things had quieted down temporarily; I had hopes that my fears concerning the seriousness of the situation might prove exaggerated and no longer wished to publish this article. Recent developments have convinced me that such hopes are futile and that the routine repetition of liberal clichés may be even more dangerous than I thought a year ago. I therefore agreed to let DISSENT publish the article as it was written—not because I thought that a year-old topical essay could possibly exhaust the subject or even do justice to the many difficult problems involved, but in the hope that even an inadequate attempt might help to break the dangerous routine in which the discussion of these issues is being held from both sides.

There are, however, two points which were brought to my attention after I wrote the article which I would like to mention at least. The first concerns my contention that the marriage laws in 29 of the 49 states constitute a much more flagrant breach of letter and spirit of the Constitution than segregation of schools. To this, Sidney Hook (New Leader, April 13), replied that Negroes were "profoundly uninterested" in these laws; in their eyes, "the discriminatory ban against intermarriages and miscegenation is last in the order of priorities." I have my doubts about this, especially with respect to the educated strata in the Negro population, but it is of course perfectly true that Negro public

opinion and the policies of the NAACP are almost exclusively concerned with discrimination in employment, housing and education. This is understandable; oppressed minorities were never the best judges on the order of priorities in such matters and there are many instances when they preferred to fight for social opportunity rather than for basic human or political rights. But this does not make the marriage laws any more constitutional or any less shameful; the order of priorities in the question of rights is to be determined by the Constitution, and not by public opinion or by majorities.

The second point was mentioned by a friend who rightly observed that my criticism of the Supreme Court's decision did not take into account the role education plays, and has always played, in the political framework of this country. This criticism is entirely just and I would have tried to insert a discussion of this role into the article if I had not meanwhile published a few remarks on the wide-spread, uncritical acceptance of a Rousseauian ideal in education in another context, i.e. in an article in the Fall 1958 issue of Partisan Review, entitled "The Crisis in Education." In order not to repeat myself, I left the article unchanged.

Finally, I should like to remind the reader that I am writing as an outsider. I have never lived in the South and have even avoided occasional trips to Southern states because they would have brought me into a situation that I personally would find unbearable. Like most people of European origin I have difficulty in understanding, let alone sharing, the common prejudices of Americans in this area. Since what I wrote may shock good people and be misused by bad ones, I should like to make it clear that as a Jew I take my sympathy for the cause of the Negroes as for all oppressed or under-privileged peoples for granted and should appreciate it if the reader did likewise.

It is unfortunate and even unjust (though hardly unjustified) that the events at Little Rock should have had such an enormous echo in public opinion throughout the world and have become a major stumbling block to American foreign policy. For unlike other domestic problems which have beset this country since the end of World War II (a security hysteria, a runaway prosperity, and the concomitant transformation of an economy of abundance into a market where sheer superfluity and nonsense almost wash out the essential and the productive), and unlike such long-range difficulties as the problem of mass culture and mass education—both of which are typical of modern society in general and not only of America—the country's attitude to its Negro population is rooted in American tradition and nothing else. The color question was created by the one great crime in America's history and is soluble only within the political and historical framework of the Republic. The fact that this question has also become a major issue in world affairs is sheer coincidence as far as American history and politics are concerned; for the color problem in world politics grew out of the colonialism and imperialism of European nations—that is, the one great crime in which America was never involved. The tragedy is that the unsolved color problem within the United States

may cost her the advantages she otherwise would rightly enjoy as a world power.

For historical and other reasons, we are in the habit of identifying the Negro question with the South, but the unsolved problems connected with Negroes living in our midst concern of course the whole country, not the South alone. Like other race questions, it has a special attraction for the mob and is particularly well fitted to serve as the point around which a mob ideology and a mob organization can crystallize. This aspect may one day even prove more explosive in the big Northern urban centers than in the more tradition-bound South, especially if the number of Negroes in Southern cities continues to decline while the Negro population of non-Southern cities increases at the same rate as in recent years. The United States is not a nation-state in the European sense and never was. The principle of its political structure is, and always has been, independent of a homogeneous population and of a common past. This is somewhat less true of the South whose population is more homogeneous and more rooted in the past than that of any other part of the country. When William Faulkner recently declared that in a conflict between the South and Washington he would ultimately have to act as a citizen of Mississippi, he sounded more like a member of a European nation-state than a citizen of this Republic. But this difference between North and South, though still marked, is bound to disappear with the growing industrialization of Southern states and plays no role in some of them even today. In all parts of the country, in the East and North with its host of nationalities no less than in the more homogeneous South, the Negroes stand out because of their "visibility." They are not the only "visible minority," but they are the most visible one. In this respect, they somewhat resemble new immigrants, who invariably constitute the most "audible" of all minorities and therefore are always the most likely to arouse xenophobic sentiments. But while audibility is a temporary phenomenon, rarely persisting beyond one generation, the Negroes' visibility is unalterable and permanent. This is not a trivial matter. In the public realm, where nothing counts that cannot make itself seen and heard, visibility and audibility are of prime importance. To argue that they are merely exterior appearances is to beg the question. For it is precisely appearances that "appear" in public, and inner qualities, gifts of heart or mind, are political only to the extent that their owner wishes to expose them in public, to place them in the limelight of the market place.

The American Republic is based on the equality of all citizens, and while equality before the law has become an inalienable principle of all modern constitutional government, equality as such is of greater importance in the political life of a republic than in any other form of government. The point at stake, therefore, is not the well-being of the Negro population alone, but, at least in the long run, the survival of the Republic. Tocqueville saw over a century ago that equality of

opportunity and condition, as well as equality of rights, constituted the basic "law" of American democracy, and he predicted that the dilemmas and perplexities inherent in the principle of equality might one day become the most dangerous challenge to the American way of life. In its all-comprehensive, typically American form, equality possesses an enormous power to equalize what by nature and origin is different—and it is only due to this power that the country has been able to retain its fundamental identity against the waves of immigrants who have always flooded its shores. But the principle of equality, even in its American form, is not omnipotent; it cannot equalize natural, physical characteristics. This limit is reached only when inequalities of economic and educational condition have been ironed out, but at that juncture a danger point, well known to students of history, invariably emerges: the more equal people have become in every respect, and the more equality permeates the whole texture of society, the more will differences be resented, the more conspicuous will those become who are visibly and by nature unlike the others.

It is therefore quite possible that the achievement of social, economic, and educational equality for the Negro may sharpen the color problem in this country instead of assuaging it. This, of course, does not have to happen, but it would be only natural if it did, and it would be very surprising if it did not. We have not yet reached the danger point, but we shall reach it in the foreseeable future, and a number of developments have already taken place which clearly point toward it. Awareness of future trouble does not commit one to advocating a reversal of the trend which happily for more than fifteen years now has been greatly in favor of the Negroes. But it does commit one to advocating that government intervention be guided by caution and moderation rather than by impatience and ill-advised measures. Since the Supreme Court decision to enforce desegregation in public schools, the general situation in the South has deteriorated. And while recent events indicate that it will not be possible to avoid Federal enforcement of Negro civil rights in the South altogether, conditions demand that such intervention be restricted to the few instances in which the law of the land and the principle of the Republic are at stake. The question therefore is where this is the case in general, and whether it is the case in public education in particular.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S Civil Rights program covers two altogether different points. It reaffirms the franchise of the Negro population, a matter of course in the North, but not at all in the South. And it also takes up the issue of segregation, which is a matter of fact in the whole country and a matter of discriminatory legislation only in Southern states. The present massive resistance throughout the South is an outcome of enforced desegregation, and not of legal enforcement of the Negroes' right to vote. The results of a public opinion poll in Virginia showing that 92% of the citizens were totally op-

posed to school integration, that 65% were willing to forego public education under these conditions, and that 79% denied any obligation to accept the Supreme Court decision as binding, illustrates how serious the situation is. What is frightening here is not the 92% opposed to integration, for the dividing line in the South was never between those who favored and those who opposed segregation—practically speaking, no such opponents existed—but the proportion of people who prefer mob rule to law-abiding citizenship. The so-called liberals and moderates of the South are simply those who are law-abiding, and they have dwindled to a minority of 21%.

No public opinion poll was necessary to reveal this information. The events in Little Rock were quite sufficiently enlightening; and those who wish to blame the disturbances solely on the extraordinary misbehavior of Governor Faubus can set themselves right by listening to the eloquent silence of Arkansas' two liberal Senators. The sorry fact was that the town's law-abiding citizens left the streets to the mob, that neither white nor black citizens felt it their duty to see the Negro children safely to school. That is, even prior to the arrival of Federal troops, law-abiding Southerners had decided that enforcement of the law against mob rule and protection of children against adult mobsters were none of their business. In other words, the arrival of troops did little more than change passive into massive resistance.

It has been said, I think again by Mr. Faulkner, that enforced integration is no better than enforced segregation, and this is perfectly true. The only reason that the Supreme Court was able to address itself to the matter of desegregation in the first place was that segregation has been a legal, and not just a social, issue in the South for many generations. For the crucial point to remember is that it is not the social custom of segregation that is unconstitutional, but its *legal enforcement*. To abolish this legislation is of great and obvious importance and in the case of that part of the Civil Rights bill regarding the right to vote, no Southern state in fact dared to offer strong opposition. Indeed, with respect to unconstitutional legislation, the Civil Rights bill did not go far enough, for it left untouched the most outrageous law of Southern states—the law which makes mixed marriage a criminal offense. The right to marry whoever one wishes is an elementary human right compared to which “the right to attend an integrated school, the right to sit where one pleases on a bus, the right to go into any hotel or recreation area or place of amusement, regardless of one's skin or color or race” are minor indeed. Even political rights, like the right to vote, and nearly all other rights enumerated in the Constitution, are secondary to the inalienable human rights to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence; and to this category the right to home and marriage unquestionably belongs. It would have been much more important if this violation had been brought to the attention of the Supreme Court; yet had the Court ruled the anti-miscegenation laws unconsti-

tutional, it would hardly have felt compelled to encourage, let alone enforce, mixed marriages.

However, the most startling part of the whole business was the Federal decision to start integration in, of all places, the public schools. It certainly did not require too much imagination to see that this was to burden children, black and white, with the working out of a problem which adults for generations have confessed themselves unable to solve. I think no one will find it easy to forget the photograph reproduced in newspapers and magazines throughout the country, showing a Negro girl, accompanied by a white friend of her father, walking away from school, persecuted and followed into bodily proximity by a jeering and grimacing mob of youngsters. The girl, obviously, was asked to be a hero—that is, something neither her absent father nor the equally absent representatives of the NAACP felt called upon to be. It will be hard for the white youngsters, or at least those among them who outgrow their present brutality, to live down this photograph which exposes so mercilessly their juvenile delinquency. The picture looked to me like a fantastic caricature of progressive education which, by abolishing the authority of adults, implicitly denies their responsibility for the world into which they have borne their children and refuses the duty of guiding them into it. Have we now come to the point where it is the children who are being asked to change or improve the world? And do we intend to have our political battles fought out in the school yards?

SEGREGATION is discrimination enforced by law, and desegregation can do no more than abolish the laws enforcing discrimination; it cannot abolish discrimination and force equality upon society, but it can, and indeed must, enforce equality within the body politic. For equality not only has its origin in the body politic; its validity is clearly restricted to the political realm. Only there are we all equals. Under modern conditions, this equality has its most important embodiment in the right to vote, according to which the judgment and opinion of the most exalted citizen are on a par with the judgment and opinion of the hardly literate. Eligibility, the right to be voted into office, is also an inalienable right of every citizen; but here equality is already restricted, and though the necessity for personal distinction in an election arises out of the numerical equality, in which everybody is literally reduced to being one, it is distinction and qualities which count in the winning of votes and not sheer equality.

Yet unlike other differences (for example, professional specialization, occupational qualification, or social and intellectual distinction) the political qualities needed for winning office are so closely connected with being an equal among equals, that one may say that, far from being specialties, they are precisely those distinctions to which all voters equally aspire—not necessarily as human beings, but as citizens and political beings. Thus the qualities of officials in a democracy always

depend upon the qualities of the electorate. Eligibility, therefore, is a necessary corollary of the right to vote; it means that everyone is given the opportunity to distinguish himself in those things in which all are equals to begin with. Strictly speaking, the franchise and eligibility for office are the only political rights, and they constitute in a modern democracy the very quintessence of citizenship. In contrast to all other rights, civil or human, they cannot be granted to resident aliens.

What equality is to the body politic—its innermost principle—discrimination is to society. Society is that curious, somewhat hybrid realm between the political and the private in which, since the beginning of the modern age, most men have spent the greater part of their lives. For each time we leave the protective four walls of our private homes and cross over the threshold into the public world, we enter first, not the political realm of equality, but the social sphere. We are driven into this sphere by the need to earn a living or attracted by the desire to follow our vocation or enticed by the pleasure of company, and once we have entered it, we become subject to the old adage of "like attracts like" which controls the whole realm of society in the innumerable variety of its groups and associations. What matters here is not personal distinction but the differences by which people belong to certain groups whose very identifiability demands that they discriminate against other groups in the same domain. In American society, people group together, and therefore discriminate against each other, along lines of profession, income, and ethnic origin, while in Europe the lines run along class origin, education, and manners. From the viewpoint of the human person, none of these discriminatory practices makes sense; but then it is doubtful whether the human person as such ever appears in the social realm. At any rate, without discrimination of some sort, society would simply cease to exist and very important possibilities of free association and group formation would disappear.

Mass society—which blurs lines of discrimination and levels group distinctions—is a danger to society as such, rather than to the integrity of the person, for personal identity has its source beyond the social realm. Conformism, however, is not a characteristic of mass society alone, but of every society insofar as only those are admitted to a given social group who conform to the general traits of difference which keep the group together. The danger of conformism in this country—a danger almost as old as the Republic—is that, because of the extraordinary heterogeneity of its population, social conformism tends to become an absolute and a substitute for national homogeneity. In any event, discrimination is as indispensable a social right as equality is a political right. The question is not how to abolish discrimination, but how to keep it confined within the social sphere, where it is legitimate, and prevent its trespassing on the political and the personal sphere, where it is destructive.

IN ORDER to illustrate this distinction between the political and the social, I shall give two examples of discrimination, one in my opinion entirely justified and outside the scope of government intervention, the other scandalously unjustified and positively harmful to the political realm.

It is common knowledge that vacation resorts in this country are frequently "restricted" according to ethnic origin. There are many people who object to this practice; nevertheless it is only an extension of the right to free association. If as a Jew I wish to spend my vacations only in the company of Jews, I cannot see how anyone can reasonably prevent my doing so; just as I see no reason why other resorts should not cater to a clientele that wishes not to see Jews while on a holiday. There cannot be a "right to go into any hotel or recreation area or place of amusement," because many of these are in the realm of the purely social where the right to free association, and therefore to discrimination, has greater validity than the principle of equality. (This does not apply to theaters and museums, where people obviously do not congregate for the purpose of associating with each other.) The fact that the "right" to enter social places is silently granted in most countries and has become highly controversial only in American democracy is due not to the greater tolerance of other countries but in part to the homogeneity of their population and in part to their class system, which operates socially even when its economic foundations have disappeared. Homogeneity and class working together assure a "likeness" of clientele in any given place that even restriction and discrimination cannot achieve in America.

It is, however, another matter altogether when we come to "the right to sit where one pleases in a bus" or a railroad car or station, as well as the right to enter hotels and restaurants in business districts—in short, when we are dealing with services which, whether privately or publicly owned, are in fact public services that everyone needs in order to pursue his business and lead his life. Though not strictly in the political realm, such services are clearly in the public domain where all men are equal; and discrimination in Southern railroads and buses is as scandalous as discrimination in hotels and restaurants throughout the country. Obviously the situation is far worse in the South because segregation in public services is enforced by law and plainly visible to all. It is unfortunate indeed that the first steps toward clearing up the segregation situation in the South after so many decades of complete neglect did not begin with its most inhuman and its most conspicuous aspects.

The third realm, finally, in which we move and live together with other people—the realm of privacy—is ruled neither by equality nor by discrimination, but by exclusiveness. Here we choose those with whom we wish to spend our lives, personal friends and those we love; and our choice is guided not by likeness or qualities shared by a group of people—it is not guided, indeed, by any objective standards or rules—

but strikes, inexplicably and unerringly, at one person in his uniqueness, his unlikeness to all other people we know. The rules of uniqueness and exclusiveness are, and always will be, in conflict with the standards of society precisely because social discrimination violates the principle, and lacks validity for the conduct, of private life. Thus every mixed marriage constitutes a challenge to society and means that the partners to such a marriage have so far preferred personal happiness to social adjustment that they are willing to bear the burden of discrimination. This is and must remain their private business. The scandal begins only when their challenge to society and prevailing customs, to which every citizen has a right, is interpreted as a criminal offense so that by stepping outside the social realm they find themselves in conflict with the law as well. Social standards are not legal standards and if legislature follows social prejudice, society has become tyrannical.

For reasons too complicated to discuss here, the power of society in our time is greater than it ever was before, and not many people are left who know the rules of and live a private life. But this provides the body politic with no excuse for forgetting the rights of privacy, for failing to understand that the rights of privacy are grossly violated whenever legislation begins to enforce social discrimination. While the government has no right to interfere with the prejudices and discriminatory practices of society, it has not only the right but the duty to make sure that these practices are not legally enforced.

Just as the government has to ensure that social discrimination never curtails political equality, it must also safeguard the rights of every person to do as he pleases within the four walls of his own home. The moment social discrimination is legally enforced, it becomes persecution, and of this crime many Southern states have been guilty. The moment social discrimination is legally abolished, the freedom of society is violated, and the danger is that thoughtless handling of the civil rights issue by the Federal government will result in such a violation. The government can legitimately take no steps against social discrimination because government can act only in the name of equality—a principle which does not obtain in the social sphere. The only public force that can fight social prejudice is the churches, and they can do so in the name of the uniqueness of the person, for it is on the principle of the uniqueness of souls that religion (and especially the Christian faith) is based. The churches are indeed the only communal and public place where appearances do not count, and if discrimination creeps into the houses of worship, this is an infallible sign of their religious failing. They then have become social and are no longer religious institutions.

ANOTHER ISSUE INVOLVED in the present conflict between Washington and the South is the matter of states' rights. For some time it has been customary among liberals to maintain that no such issue exists at all but is only a ready-made subterfuge of Southern reactionaries

who have nothing in their hands except "abstruse arguments and constitutional history." In my opinion, this is a dangerous error. In contradistinction to the classical principle of the European nation-state that power, like sovereignty, is indivisible, the power structure of this country rests on the principle of division of power and on the conviction that the body politic as a whole is strengthened by the division of power. To be sure, this principle is embodied in the system of checks and balances between the three branches of government; but it is no less rooted in the government's Federal structure which demands that there also be a balance and a mutual check between Federal power and the powers of the forty-eight states. If it is true (and I am convinced it is) that unlike force, power generates more power when it is divided, then it follows that every attempt of the Federal government to deprive the states of some of their legislative sovereignty can be justified only on grounds of legal argument and constitutional history. Such arguments are not abstruse; they are based on a principle which indeed was uppermost in the minds of the founders of the Republic.

All this has nothing to do with being a liberal or a conservative, although it may be that where the nature of power is at stake, liberal judgment with its long and honorable history of deep distrust of power in any form can be less trusted than on other questions. Liberals fail to understand that the nature of power is such that the power potential of the Union as a whole will suffer if the regional foundations on which this power rests are undermined. The point is that force can, indeed must, be centralized in order to be effective, but power cannot and must not. If the various sources from which it springs are dried up, the whole structure becomes impotent. And states' rights in this country are among the most authentic sources of power, not only for the promotion of regional interests and diversity, but for the Republic as a whole.

THE TROUBLE with the decision to force the issue of desegregation in the field of public education rather than in some other field in the campaign for Negro rights has been that this decision unwittingly touched upon an area in which every one of the different rights and principles we have discussed is involved. It is perfectly true, as Southerners have repeatedly pointed out, that the Constitution is silent on education and that legally as well as traditionally, public education lies in the domain of state legislation. The counter-argument that all public schools today are Federally supported is weak, for Federal subvention is intended in these instances to match and supplement local contributions and does not transform the schools into Federal institutions, like the Federal District courts. It would be very unwise indeed if the Federal government—which now must come to the assistance of more and more enterprises that once were the sole responsibility of the states—were to use its financial support as a means of

whipping the states into agreement with positions they would otherwise be slow or altogether unwilling to adopt.

The same overlapping of rights and interests becomes apparent when we examine the issue of education in the light of the three realms of human life—the political, the social, and the private. Children are first of all part of family and home, and this means that they are, or should be, brought up in that atmosphere of idiosyncratic exclusiveness which alone makes a home a home, strong and secure enough to shield its young against the demands of the social and the responsibilities of the political realm. The right of parents to bring up their children as they see fit is a right of privacy, belonging to home and family. Ever since the introduction of compulsory education, this right has been challenged and restricted, but not abolished, by the right of the body politic to prepare children to fulfill their future duties as citizens. The stake of the government in the matter is undeniable—as is the right of the parents. The possibility of private education provides no way out of the dilemma, because it would make the safeguarding of certain private rights dependent upon economic status and consequently underprivilege those who are forced to send their children to public schools.

Parents' rights over their children are legally restricted by compulsory education and nothing else. The state has the unchallengeable right to prescribe minimum requirements for future citizenship and beyond that to further and support the teaching of subjects and professions which are felt to be desirable and necessary to the nation as a whole. All this involves, however, only the content of the child's education, not the context of association and social life which invariably develops out of his attendance at school; otherwise one would have to challenge the right of private schools to exist. For the child himself, school is the first place away from home where he establishes contact with the public world that surrounds him and his family. This public world is not political but social, and the school is to the child what a job is to an adult. The only difference is that the element of free choice which, in a free society, exists at least in principle in the choosing of jobs and the associations connected with them, is not yet at the disposal of the child but rests with his parents.

To force parents to send their children to an integrated school against their will means to deprive them of rights which clearly belong to them in all free societies—the private right over their children and the social right to free association. As for the children, forced integration means a very serious conflict between home and school, between their private and their social life, and while such conflicts are common in adult life, children cannot be expected to handle them and therefore should not be exposed to them. It has often been remarked that man is never so much of a conformer—that is, a purely social being—as in childhood. The reason is that every child instinctively seeks authorities to guide it into the world in which he is still a stranger, in

which he cannot orient himself by his own judgment. To the extent that parents and teachers fail him as authorities, the child will conform more strongly to his own group, and under certain conditions the peer group will become his supreme authority. The result can only be a rise of mob and gang rule, as the news photograph we mentioned above so eloquently demonstrate. The conflict between a segregated home and a desegregated school, between family prejudice and school demands, abolishes at one stroke both the teachers' and the parents' authority, replacing it with the rule of public opinion among children who have neither the ability nor the right to establish a public opinion of their own.

Because the many different factors involved in public education can quickly be set to work at cross purposes, government intervention, even at its best, will always be rather controversial. Hence it seems highly questionable whether it was wise to begin enforcement of civil rights in a domain where no basic human and no basic political right is at stake, and where other rights—social and private—whose protection is no less vital, can so easily be hurt.

POLITICS AND THE REALMS OF BEING

David Spitz

Politics, as everyone knows, is the art of drawing distinctions. It involves, to be sure, the pursuit and use—as well as the misuse—of power; but we seek that power for the potential good, not the evil, that its possession affords. We do not, therefore, legislate on all things. Nor do we seek always to control the same things, irrespective of place and circumstance. Nor, again, do we endeavor to act blindly even in pursuit of the “right” things at the right time. As rational men, we try to employ our power wisely; we distinguish, we *discriminate*, between its beneficent and baneful applications.

So much can be said for any sensible theory of just or limited political power; and it is often said impressively. But the articulation of such general principles is the beginning, not the end, of political wisdom. For in this form, the principles are no more than guides to action; they tell us little or nothing of the substantive merits of any particular issue. It is the virtue of Hannah Arendt's reflections on segregation that they seek both to enunciate “right” general principles and to apply those principles in a “right” resolution of the most pressing and important domestic issue of our time. In these respects her argument moves on a level of discourse that raises significant theoretical as well as factual issues. Unfortunately, however, her notion of what constitutes a valid political principle, along with her recommended