

# Schools Given an 'F' on Treating Blacks

By WILLIAM LUELLEN  
(Of The State Journal Staff)

A program on racism and schools began here Thursday night with a denunciation of ghetto schools and ended with a denunciation of all schools and all of white society as well.

The program was a part of the conference on "The Black Revolution" under way on the University of Wisconsin campus. The two-part program Thursday night began with a speech by Jonathon Kozol, former teacher in a Boston, Mass., ghetto school and author of the book "Death at an Early Age."

His speech was followed by a panel discussion.

**THE SOFT-SPOKEN** young white teacher outlined some of the frustrations he faced while trying to teach a fourth grade class, from which he was later

fired, and how he helped a group of neighborhood residents set up an independent school in the ghetto which has become a showplace of the city.

Commenting on the need to set up an independent school, Kozol said, "Children are dying not in Biafra but in the ghetto schools of Boston and other cities.

"Parents have decided to save them and will not take instructions from their murderers any longer."

**EARLIER** Kozol said, "Black radicals do not need to teach hatred; we have already done it for them. And we have been no more effective than in the public school classroom."

He said all phases of the educational system from the buildings through books, teachers, and school boards contribute to

the "murdering" of a child's spirit and the teaching of hatred.

**SPEAKING TO** an audience of more than 800 jammed into the Great Hall of the Memorial Union and another 100 in another room via a public address system, Kozol said the racism of teachers is one of the prime causes of hatred.

"Teachers who have looked down on blacks for 20 years and called them 'niggers' beat the black children who do not show them 'respect,'" Kozol said.

It's easy to detect the obvious racists, he said, but the less-obvious racists probably are more harmful. Teachers in this category are sarcastic and bitter toward their pupils.

**ONE TEACHER** refused to believe a child who said he was the son of a minister or another

who said she was the daughter of a nurse. But, Kozol said, the teacher made the children stand before the class and say they had not told the truth about their parents, although they had.

Textbooks belittle black persons around the world, Kozol said, and fail to teach the accomplishments of the blacks.

And one Boston School Board member, once criticized for the quality of the education in the ghetto schools said, "There is no inferior education in our schools; we have simply been getting an inferior type of child." That person was voted out of office, Kozol said.

**SIX FAMILIES** sitting in a kitchen one night decided to do something about improving things, Kozol said. With no

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money, they went out and took out two mortgages on a building and hired a staff of teachers and administrators. Then they sought financial aid and quickly came up with \$80,000 and later brought the total contributions to \$250,000.

The school began operations three years ago in the ghetto and now has a waiting list of white residents trying to get their children into it, Kozol said.

**SINCE THEN**, he said, two similar schools have begun in the area as well. These schools are run by the black residents of the area and are doing a far better job than the public schools, he said.

"The third and fourth grade youngsters were recently tested and were determined to be reading at third and fourth grade level — a remarkable accomplishment for any ghetto school," he said.

"As one white to another," he concluded, "look at this rising tide with a sense of history. Support it with all your heart and urge it to continue."

"And if you cannot support it, be generous and understand it."

A **MULTI-RACIAL** panel reacted to his speech after a short break.

The blacks on the panel praised Kozol's honesty but said there was nothing either in the speech or his book that a black has not known for 15 years.

"His book is no real accomplishment," said Rocky Taylor, a former UW student. "Any black man could have told you that, but the white man seems to need a white man saying it in order to legitimize it." Several of the white panel members cited cultural distinctions and mentioned that the reason that blacks did not get along was because they are culturally deprived.

**BUT JOSE VADI**, who is working on his Ph.D. degree in political science disagreed: "When I was working as a teaching assistant I was appalled at the quality of the work many of the white students were doing. They were as 'culturally deprived' as anyone I have seen in the ghettos.

"I ask myself why they were able to get to college. It must be because they know how to behave and how to take tests. Cultural deprivation is a national problem. Schools are no good across the board."