

perative—including buying, budgeting, first aid, and the care of infants. My education sadly lacked all those important requirements for home making.

High schools should offer a course covering industrial vocations—the average graduate does not know what is expected of an industrial engineer, a secretary, plumber, saleslady, etc. One cannot choose wisely if he or she does not know about many vocations.

The class I remember being most helpful was on current events—it was a free discussion class and no credit was given. Our only text was *Current Events and Time*. I have thanked the instructor often for the spark of inquisitiveness and tolerance of other nationalities he instilled within me.

It is my opinion that the curriculum should be elective with the exception of some mathematics, English, first year science and biology. Because many homes are not fulfilling their job, the school should put more stress on citizenship, politics, religion, dancing, etiquette, mar-

riage and sex, and the practical economics.

Only maturity seems to teach us that learning for yourself and not for the teacher is the thing. There is too much learning for the examinations—then forgetting. In the learning of American History there must be some interesting way—without memorizing dates—to present the lore, the romance, and the drama of these United States.

After fourteen years in a law office, the fact that we know very little of how to truly get along with one another perhaps stands out with clarity. If after the twelve years my child will spend in your school she is able to think her problems over clearly and come to a conclusion on her own good judgment, I shall be quite satisfied; even though she may not be able to quote one word of Shakespeare nor name a date in history.

Yes, they were ready to begin. No, to continue. For the beginning was already there. Concern for children was now the focus of attention.

The Schools and Democracy

ELLIS ARNALL

That lay people in places of public responsibility must be concerned with the needs and functions of education if the schools are to discharge their total responsibility in the democratic way of life is the sincere belief of many educators today. In this article Ellis Arnall, former governor of Georgia and author of *The Shore Dimly Seen*, analyzes the needs of the schools in terms of their service, both to society as a group and to each individual member.

THE THEORY of democratic government assumes that the average citizen has both the capacity for making decisions for himself and a fund of organized knowledge upon which to predicate decisions.

It is possible, scientifically, to demonstrate that the intellectual capacity of the average citizen is adequate for self-government. The data supporting that fact had not been assembled and classified when Thomas Jefferson asserted,

upon philosophical premises and his own observation as a citizen of Albemarle County, that the unalienable rights of human beings included those of establishing governments suited to their requirements and their desires. And, indeed, he might have added with propriety, their whims.

The second assumption, however, requires the not-thoroughly-proved belief that the society of which the citizen is a part has made available to him sources of information and adequate training in reasoning. This belief sometimes requires considerable blind faith.

The schools are instruments of society, serving dual purposes of training the young citizen for life in society, including participation in its government, and of equipping him with knowledge that will be useful to him in earning a living. Too great emphasis upon the latter at the expense of the former could involve a national disaster.

Freedom Must Endure

If the schools are to fulfill their responsibilities to society, then organized society must, in its turn, assume certain very definite responsibilities toward the schools. The first of these is independence from partisan political control. The effort to control educational establishments, so that they become instruments of indoctrination in ideologies, has not been confined to Europe and certain Latin American countries. Tampering with American textbooks is not unknown. Neither is interference with teachers in American schools. There have been occasional definite efforts to utilize the public schools to teach anti-democratic doctrines.

In general, however, this constitutes

less of a menace to the average school system in any American state than does the possibility of becoming a political football or an integral part of the patronage machine. Not all of the inadequate teachers in the country are to be found in school systems dominated by local or state political cliques, but that would be the best place to seek for the lazy, the inadequately prepared, the slovenly, and the subservient.

The gravest menace of all, however, lies in tampering with the curriculum. Vocational education, for example, is an essential and valuable part of the material to be taught in public schools. Nevertheless, in some states and many communities there is a growing tendency to sacrifice essential parts of the curriculum, involving training for citizenship, in order to train students for employment. In general this trend has been resisted by educators and has been supported by politicians, big or little. Wartime experience has demonstrated how rapidly many skills can be acquired by intensive training. This suggests that some advocates of dismemberment of the curriculum, eliminating cultural subjects, have a dangerous bias toward regimentation and its accompanying ignorance.

Schools Do Cost Money

Independent schools can not operate without money. Teachers must be trained; teachers must be paid; teachers must be provided with a decent and honorable retirement system. Textbooks must be provided. Libraries must be assembled. Maintenance employees must be paid. Buildings must be built. Every step in the education of a future citizen costs money. The more complex

our society becomes, the greater grows the cost. The public owes to the schools the assumption of responsibility for their financial support.

Since ignorance is exportable from one section of our country to another, this involves, I believe, the assumption by the Federal government of a share of responsibility. The creation of an adequate fund to equalize educational opportunity throughout the country is necessary, because some of our states can not provide for their schools properly from their available tax resources.

Georgia, for example, expending more than half its state revenues upon education, can not provide enough money for its schools. Not every state—perhaps no other state—is making so great an effort. But the effort results in only very gradual improvement of conditions. The South Atlantic States, with their unusually large ratio of children to adults of working age, present to the nation its number one responsibility and its number one opportunity.

Money to support the schools must be provided. This means considerably more than merely providing adequate salaries for teachers. The school libraries of America are a national disgrace, and present one of the foremost challenges to educators and the responsible public. While too much emphasis can be placed on the physical plant housing a school, buildings are obsolete and inadequate in too many instances.

Children Should Be Served

While independence from political dominance and adequate financing can do much for the schools of America, the public responsibility does not terminate there. Most needed of all things

is public recognition of the purpose for which schools exist, respect for their functions, and a humanizing of public attitudes toward those in the teaching profession.

The schools belong to the children. They exist for the purpose of providing children with an education. They are not establishments for the caretaking of children at the convenience of parents, and efforts to make them perform that function results in inevitable damage to the school system, and to the children involved.

Teachers Are Professional Experts

The schools are specialized instruments of society. They should not be expected to do the entire job. Nor should the members of the teaching profession be expected to assume, as unpaid workers, responsibility for every civic endeavor or every onerous public function that nobody else is willing to perform.

The members of the teaching profession are entitled to be treated as human beings. In too many parts of America, there exist entirely fantastic rules of conduct governing teachers in the public schools. An unreasonable attitude toward teachers, banning them from many desirable social contacts, can be held responsible for many leaving the profession.

The Imperatives of Our Day

The American dream of a democratic nation within a democratic world is practical and attainable. It is a new concept, scarcely more than three centuries old; authoritarianism, by contrast, was ancient when the pyramids were built. Attainment of our democratic goal re-

quires much of the citizen, and demands much of the instruments the citizens provide, such as the schools, to carry out this program. Universal liberty is impractical without universal education. In general, the public knows and real-

izes this, and is willing to assume the responsibility demanded. Education is imperative for the strengthening of democracy, and democracy is imperative for the dignity and liberty of mankind.



Should Public Funds Be Used for Non-Public Schools?

V. T. THAYER

The question stated in the title above is one to which many educators are giving careful and critical thought. In his analysis of the problem, V. T. Thayer, educational director of the Ethical Culture Schools, New York City, opens facets of the problem which must be recognized in a thorough consideration of all issues involved.

IN HIS monumental work on *The American Commonwealth* James Bryce writes as follows regarding the relation of church and state in the United States:

"Half the wars of Europe, half the internal troubles that have vexed European states, from the Monophysite controversies in the Roman empire of the fifth century down to the Kulturkampf in the German empire of the nineteenth, have arisen from theological differences or from the rival claims of church and state. This whole vast chapter of debate and strife has remained virtually unopened in the United States. There is no Established Church. All religious bodies are absolutely equal before the law, and unrecognized by the law, except as voluntary associations of private citizens."¹

And, he adds, "So far from suffering from the want of State support, religion seems in the United States to stand all the firmer because, standing alone, she is seen to stand by her own strength. No political party, no class in the community, has any hostility either to Christianity or to any particular Christian body. The churches are as thoroughly popular in the best sense of the word, as any other institutions of the country."²

The Situation Has Changed

Lord Bryce published these observations near the end of the nineteenth century. Were he writing today he would record the fact that the "vast chapter of debate and strife" which he saw as unopened in the United States is now being opened.

¹ Vol. II (Second Edition, Revised) p. 643. Commonwealth Publishing Company, New York, 1908.

² *Ibid.*, p. 658.

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