

school to tell them about the P.T.A. and its work in the school? They could perhaps leave a book or two from the P.T.A. library in which the newcomer might indicate an interest, with the suggestion that she bring it to the next P.T.A. meeting. Don't all normal human beings respond to this kind of neighborliness?

#### Elementary Schools Have the Chance

For those who work with boys and girls in the elementary schools there is a great challenge and a great opportunity. We get all of the children, we get them young, and we can meet, with affection and understanding, the needs of children whose homes do not give them the affection and emotional sup-

port they need. Particularly will this be true in the days ahead as the "purple heart battalion" enters our school. Beginning this coming year, we will get our first crop of war babies; those youngsters whose homes, in too many cases, have never given them the kind of emotional stability to which every child is entitled. Their young mothers have followed husbands from camp to camp and then have experienced long periods of separation during which they were forced to face grave apprehensions, while perhaps living in crowded and unsatisfactory quarters. These, along with parents of children who have long been coming to our schools, rightfully look to us for cooperation in the total educational job for children.



## *Tearing Down the Barriers* ---

MAURICE F. SEAY

A mountain of problems can be moved when an entire state gives its total effort to the attack. Such was the case when Kentucky considered education a major field of progress, and united toward that end. Leads to action for citizens' groups figure prominently in this outline by Maurice F. Seay, dean of the University of Kentucky, Lexington, of how to begin, sustain, and carry through on a large scale.

#### How It Began

The idea originated in the minds of several members of the Kentucky Merchant's Association. These men, realizing the state's great potentialities, were disturbed to see Kentucky lagging behind her neighboring states in health, wealth, and education. So the Committee for Kentucky was organized in 1944

to discover the barriers which were impeding Kentucky's progress—and to tear down those barriers.

Behind the plan of organization of the Committee for Kentucky is the idea that the people themselves, if informed and interested, can and will work out solutions to their problems. The orig-

inal group of businessmen called in representatives of industry, labor, agriculture, the professions, and government to help plan a course of action. A series of meetings followed, out of which grew an organization open to every citizen of the state and a campaign to arouse the people to action.

#### How It Got Its Facts

Many individuals and organizations throughout the state joined the Committee as the publicity program went into effect. The slogan "Wake Up, Kentucky!" was put before the people in newspaper articles and radio broadcasts, by speakers and discussion leaders.

In the meantime a group of specialists had agreed to find the facts about Kentucky's status in ten fields: *agriculture, education, the state constitution, health, housing, industrial development, labor, natural resources, public welfare, and taxation*. Each specialist was to study conditions in his own field and prepare a report for the Committee.

#### How the Reports Were Made

The procedure followed in preparing these reports is an example of democratic practice in research. A description of the preparation of one report—*that on education*—will illustrate the method. This second of the series helped to establish a pattern for succeeding reports.

The Committee for Kentucky selected the writer of this article, then director of the Bureau of School Service, University of Kentucky, to prepare the report on education. It was his task to give a true picture of education in Kentucky, and to make it a challenge to all Kentuckians.

The writer met with the officials of the Committee for Kentucky and with the other experts for a thorough discussion of the objectives, procedures, and outline of the study on education. From the beginning of the fact-finding campaign it was believed that each study should represent the total thinking of the officers, the members at large, and the ten specialists.

The group, realizing that all the reports must be extremely readable, developed a clear and terse style of presenting their facts. Statistics were to be presented in nontechnical terms, without lengthy interpretations. Each report was to carry symbolic illustrations. Covers were to be similar in design, each in a different striking color.

After preparing a preliminary report on education in Kentucky, the writer met again with the executive committee and the other specialists to present the statistics he and his associates had collected. These facts about education were discussed in terms of their meaning to the over-all objectives of the Committee. Many valuable suggestions, which were used in revising the report, came out of this meeting. Several months later, the revised report on education was presented to representatives of all member organizations of the Committee for Kentucky. At this open meeting the report was reviewed and approved in final form for printing and release to the citizens of the state.

Laymen and specialists in fields other than education had contributed to the research for this report at three stages—during the planning, after the first draft, and in the final revision. This democratic process added greatly to the value of the report.

### How the Facts Were Spread

The printed *Report on Education* was sent to all officers, members, and associate members of the Committee; to every firm, business, or club that had cooperated with the Committee; to all members of the Kentucky General Assembly; to the United States Congressmen from Kentucky; to all county judges in Kentucky; to members of the Kentucky Press Association and to every radio broadcasting station in the state; to each county and independent school district superintendent; to all school principals; to P.T.A. officers and to school board members; and to other interested persons in and outside the state.

In November, 1945, the Committee invited all the editors and publishers in the state to meet for a presentation and discussion of the aims and purposes and the program of the Committee for Kentucky. The response was enthusiastic. The whole-hearted cooperation of the press was promised and has since been evidenced by the liberal amount of space given to the activities of the Committee and to reviews of the reports.

The state's largest radio station broadcast a fifteen-minute daily program titled "Wake Up, Kentucky!"—the original slogan of the Committee. These broadcasts reached thousands of Kentucky listeners. So successful was the program in arousing public interest that it earned for the radio station the National Peabody Award for outstanding public service. The "Wake Up, Kentucky!" program also was transcribed for use over other radio stations of the state; in the towns where the stations are located citizens' committees were

organized to help plan the publicity.

The Committee organized a Speakers' Bureau to meet the requests which were coming from every section of Kentucky. Thousands of Kentuckians were told of the Committee's activities and its plans to help in building a better life for the communities of the state.

Individual membership in the Committee grew rapidly. People throughout the state were thinking. One by one the fact-finding reports came out and were distributed and publicized. Local groups such as P.T.A.'s, women's clubs, luncheon clubs, and labor unions studied and discussed the reports. Kentuckians everywhere read, listened, and said, "Let's do something!" The wake-up campaign had been a success. It was time to change the slogan. With the people ready for action, the Committee's slogan became "Kentucky on the March." In January, 1946, a special joint session of the House and Senate of the Kentucky Legislature was held for the purpose of hearing the story of the Committee for Kentucky.

### How Interest Became Action

Membership and interest in the Committee for Kentucky continued to grow. Today more than eighty-five organizations with a total membership of more than 400,000 make up the Committee. Kentucky is on the march. More state funds for teachers' salaries were made available last year. The University of Kentucky has begun an extensive building program. Five new tuberculosis hospitals are being constructed. Kentuckians will soon vote whether to rewrite their Constitution, which, because of numerous restrictions, has impeded progress in the state.

Besides these tangible evidences of awakening—due in part, at least, to the work of the Committee—there are other improvements to come. The Committee has encouraged planning by many groups and has actively cooperated in much of the planning. One example of this kind of cooperation is the Committee's planning with the Kentucky Junior Chamber of Commerce for expanding the industry of the state.

The Committee for Kentucky, realizing that advancement for the state goes hand in hand with community improvement, organized a Department of Community Service to help with the problems and needs of the cities, towns, and rural communities. This department, with a full-time director, helps local-groups develop community councils; offers consultative service on community problems; reports what other communities are doing for their economic, social, and governmental improvement; and furnishes speakers and literature on community subjects.

#### How One Community Reacted

The first community to avail itself of this service was Henderson City and County. Agricultural Henderson County, situated in Western Kentucky and bordered on one side by the Ohio River, has a population of approximately 43,000. Twenty thousand of these people live in Henderson City, the county seat. In many ways the County and City of Henderson are like other counties and cities in the state and the nation—but in one respect, at least, they are different. Last year the citizens of this county and city joined in a study believed to be the first of its type made in the nation.

In February, 1946, more than one hundred leading citizens of Henderson City and County met with the president and the executive director of the Committee for Kentucky to explore the possibility of organizing a committee for Henderson. Tentative plans were made. Henderson was to be the proving ground for the plan to organize local committees throughout the state, and the procedure used there was to serve as a pattern for other communities. Those present—representatives of schools, lodges, women's clubs, labor, government, churches, radio, newspapers, and civic, business, professional, and farmers' organizations—were asked to forget their own specific interests in the interest of a greater Henderson and a greater Kentucky. They were asked to study, work, and cooperate in order to understand and meet local problems common to all.

When the citizens of Henderson voted on the feasibility of making Henderson a proving ground for the extension of the Committee for Kentucky to the local community, not a dissenting voice was heard. This was the beginning of the Committee for the City and County of Henderson.

In March, the members of the Committee invited all citizens of the city and county to attend a meeting in the high school gymnasium in order to: *explain to the people of the city and the county the nature and scope of the citizens' movement; bring the people together to discuss the problems of the community and those of the state; and give Hendersonians an opportunity to meet some of the members of the Committee for Kentucky.*

The Henderson Committee spon-

sored studies of the needs of the community and had the results of these studies reported to the people. The Committee was recognized as a community instrument through which the citizens of Henderson City and County could take a vital part in shaping the future of their locality.

The Subcommittee on Education for the Henderson Committee asked the Bureau of School Service, University of Kentucky, to assist them in making a study of the city and county schools. The Subcommittee and the Bureau adapted the state-wide report on education to a local situation. This unique study was reported in an attractive, easy-to-read booklet, published as a quarterly bulletin of the Bureau of School Service titled *What About Our Schools in Henderson City and County?*

A Community Conference, the first of its kind in Kentucky, was held at Henderson during the celebration of the city's 150th anniversary. The Conference, sponsored jointly by the Committee for Kentucky's Department of Community Service and the Henderson Committee, was attended by representatives from seven states, the District of Columbia, and eleven Kentucky communities.

Immediate and substantial improvements resulted from the work of the Committee for Henderson City and County. The city has enacted, for the first time in its history, a zoning ordinance. City and county together have made provisions for a child-welfare worker and have established a program for training recreational leaders.

The Henderson Committee stimulated other Kentucky communities to action. At present four county-city commit-

tees, two county committees, and one city committee are affiliated with the Committee for Kentucky. Others are in the process of organization.

#### **How the Committee for Kentucky Plans to March Ahead**

After more than three years of studying and publicizing the shortcomings and needs of Kentucky, the Committee for Kentucky recently announced a "people's legislative program" which it will present to the 1948 General Assembly. The Committee realizes that no one session of the legislature could enact all the proposals embodied in the recommendations, but it hopes that the non-partisan platform, developed for all Kentuckians, will serve as a guide for current legislation. In the past, laws affecting education, agriculture, labor, industry, and other fields have been urged by special groups interested in promoting only one phase of Kentucky life. Too often the program of one group has clashed with the programs of other groups. The Committee's program was drafted after each special interest group had formulated its own list of needs and then had accepted compromises in situations where its list conflicted with lists of other groups.

The Committee for Kentucky is especially fortunate to have the leadership of its president, Mr. Harry W. Schacter, a Louisville department store executive, and of its other officers and directors. All of these people are motivated by a desire to use and develop leadership through democratic procedures. They are putting their own business and professional interests in second place as they demonstrate the effectiveness of unselfish leadership in a democracy.

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