

- To become acquainted with the nature and purpose of the College Agreement Program
- To evaluate effectiveness of group processes
- To establish communication of thinking through a progress evaluation by the four Plymouth groups
- To evaluate the Study and determine possible applications of the group process in daily school life.

Liaison between groups was facilitated through:

- Weekly reports of each group's discussion, given to every member of the workshop
- A Central Planning Committee which met each week before the group meetings

- Intervisitation of groups by members and resource persons.

It is difficult to evaluate the intangible outcomes of this project such as those represented by modification of classroom teaching and teacher-teacher, teacher-pupil, teacher-parent, and teacher-administrator relationships. However, recommendations and suggestions have formed the starting point for another study in which the emphasis is on implementation rather than on evaluation, although it is the belief of many that both must go on concurrently. Also, a beginning is being made on setting up a pattern for continuous evaluation at the autonomous building level with coordination through a system-wide Curriculum Council.

Youth Look at Their World

RALPH P. GALLAGHER

What do high school students consider to be the most urgent problems and issues facing them and the world today? Last spring almost one thousand seniors in Somerset County, New Jersey, came together for a day's conference to discuss these problems with representatives of various areas of American life. Ralph P. Gallagher is supervising principal of the Bound Brook, New Jersey, public schools.

THE SOMERSET COUNTY, New Jersey, Youth Forum, held last May 27th in the Bound Brook high school, brought the nine hundred high school seniors of the county together in an all-day session



North Phoenix (Ariz.) High School

to identify and seek answers to "Youth's Problems in Today's World."

The conference itself was divided into three parts, with lunch and dancing arranged as a break during the noon period between parts two and three. The first part of the conference consisted of fifteen-minute talks by three speakers who were given the task of setting the stage for pupil discussions in groups of twenty, led by students who had been trained as discussion leaders. These speakers were Roma Gans of Teachers College, Columbia University, who spoke on the topic "Human Relations"; Robert Hoppock of the New York University School of Education, who discussed "Career Problems of Youth"; and Millard C. Faight, economist, who spoke on "Youth's Responsibility to the Community."

Part two consisted of meetings of discussion groups in which pupils were asked to identify and discuss what they thought were the most pressing problems of young people in today's world. The seniors also had previous preparation through discussions of such issues in their problems of democracy classes. In the discussion, pupils from the various county high schools met together, five or six from each school, with a sprinkling of key citizens who were brought in both to listen and to contribute. One of the purposes of having representative citizens present was to spread among lay people a first-hand knowledge of youth's problems.

During the noon period the problems and issues raised by youth were classified and mimeographed for the use of the mass meeting of seniors in the afternoon. At this mass meeting a

panel of experts (who turned out to be highly variable in their expertness on youth's problems) undertook the job of giving adult guidance in the matter of these issues and problems. This panel included an educator, an economist, a government official, an industrialist, a fashion editor, a member of the United Nations Secretariat, and a labor leader.

The most vital parts of the whole conference were those sections where youth predominated in the activities. This may have been due to the fact that the discussion leaders and seniors themselves were better prepared for their part of the task than were most of the adult speakers and panel members. There was ample evidence that a panel on youth problems, without youth on it, was a mistake.

Group Leaders Have a Dual Job

The following "Memorandum for Group Discussion Leaders" was used in a preliminary training session with the student leaders:

The Somerset County High School Seniors Forum has two purposes:

- ❶ to get an up-to-date appraisal of the most important issues and problems that face youth today
- ❷ to indicate the significance of these issues and problems for the community and its agencies and for young people and their parents.

Your first job. You are to open up the subject. Your opening of the meeting should not take over five minutes! You may wish to point out such things as the following:

The world is constantly in a state of change. Youth's problems are therefore of two types, viz: those that are

always with us, and those peculiar to the period being discussed. Even the ever-present problems look and are different in different periods.

After great wars we find new conditions impinging upon youth. For example, after the Civil War the cry was "Go West, young man." There were problems of post war delinquency, prosperity, racial problems, and cultural changes. Schools and education of all kinds greatly increased in both quantity and quality.

European youth after World War I tended to reject the authority of their elders. Morals, religion, and sex problems became matters of great concern. New social and economic conditions brought about new outlooks at home and toward other nations. American youth after World War I changed some also. There was some concern about sex, mores, manners, appearance, amusements, and delinquency.

Education changed some. Religious problems took on different aspects. Whether there was a critical appreciation of the new world American youth was in, is a moot question.

Now we are in another era of rapid change. Youth, as well as oldsters, are greatly influenced by such developments as the following: Technical advances, government controls, changes in family life, full employment, inflation, different emphases on character, and increased self-indulgence.

Your second job. Elicit from your group what they feel are the most pressing issues and problems that they are facing right now. Emphasize the idea of getting at real issues—not theoretical problems. If your group seems to be single-tracked, try to get them

to bring up before your time is up, problems in the following areas:

Research and Science
Technology and Invention
Economics
Leisure and Recreation
Spiritual Values
Education
Health
Politics
Organized Labor
Race and Religious Prejudices
International Affairs
The Family
The Arts

The job of the group.

1. Bring problems out into the open where others can react to them
2. Bring out the relation of facts to the matter being discussed
3. Interpret facts that are, or that seem to be, in conflict with one another
4. Bring some unity through mutual understanding
5. Try to utilize the experiences of each member of the group.

Another useful training aid for these young chairmen was a list of fifteen suggestions by Walther Weir entitled, "Some Things That Every Chairman Should Know," published in *Printers' Ink* for September 5, 1947.

Problems of Youth

The questions or problems discussed by these groups of high school seniors may be grouped as follows:

Problems of Prejudices

How are we to conquer the problems of racial and religious prejudice?
Why do parents and other older peo-

ple have more prejudices than their children?
Can tolerance be taught? How?
When does discrimination start and why?

Labor Problems

What should be youth's attitudes toward labor unions?
Are unions too strong?
Should unions enter politics?

Politics

How can a high school graduate be effective in community life when he is too young to vote, although not too young to fight?
How can more people be encouraged to vote?
What should youth's attitudes be toward political machines?
Is the federal government becoming too powerful?

The International Scene

What should be done about Communism in the United States?
Is a third world war inevitable?

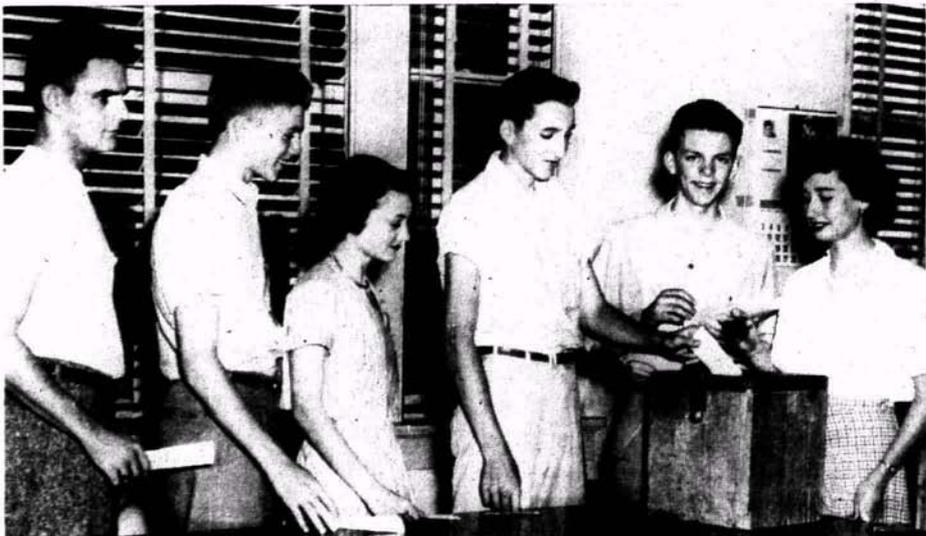
Is war the only way to solve international problems?
What should our attitude be toward world government?
Are international problems of real concern to youth?

Family Life

How financially secure should a young couple be before marrying?
Should boys and girls date if parents object?
Is religion a vital issue in marriage?
Should there not be courses in marriage and family life in high school?
How can family relations be improved?
How much of one's pay check should a graduate turn over to his parents?
How much authority should parents have over children after they finish high school?

Social and Economic Problems

Is our country traveling down the road to socialism?
Are we heading for a depression? If so, how should it be met?



Courtesy Waco (Tex.) Public Schools

Youth and politics

Should we socialize mining? Medicine?

How much do children owe their parents and the community for the money invested in them?

Leisure and Recreation

When high school is over, where can boys and girls meet their friends?

What should a community do about recreation for young people?

How can there be more variety in young people's after-school activities?

Should movies and other recreational activities of youth be censored and controlled? By whom?

Whose responsibility is recreation?

Education

Why cannot high schools be changed to provide work experience?

How does one get reliable information about schools?

Should high schools train youth for jobs?

Why do not schools provide more guidance?

Is present-day education as good as it should be?

Should there be more free tuition for pupils who want to go to college?

Who should provide the tuition?

Which is better, four years of college or four years of work?

Jobs and Career Problems

How can more jobs be made available for graduates?

Are labor unions and strikes the cause of the present shortage of jobs?

If the job you are seeking requires experience, how can the initial experience be obtained?

Where are chances for a career better, in a large firm or in a small one?

To what should one give more weight in taking a job, security or opportunity?

What kind of vocational guidance should one get at the start of and during high school?

Where can we get dependable guidance after we finish high school?

If graduates find themselves unem-

ployed after graduation, should they consider their high school career wasted?

Panel Discussion

It was hoped that the afternoon adult panel would do two things with the questions, issues, and problems raised by these young people: (1) evaluate them further in the light of adult experience, and (2) bring forth some constructive proposals for coping with these issues.

This was realized to a limited extent. One of the reasons for limited success was the short time that could be devoted to the task. Another difficulty was the inability of some panel members to change their frame of reference from the routine tasks of life to these dynamic problems of youth.

After the conference was over, the lists of problems were sent to various community groups leaders with a request that in their on-going work attention be given to such problems as properly fell within their programs. Up to now no check has been made on what these groups have done by way of follow-through on these issues.

The schools from which the pupils came have, in varying degrees, taken up certain of these matters as part of their general curriculum development, but results are too scattered as yet to report anything significant.

Those responsible for this forum do not consider the job finished. In fact, activities of this kind open up all sorts of needs for adaptations in schools and in all kinds of social groups. Many of these adaptations are matters that require considerable groundwork and take a great deal of time to invent, introduce, and evaluate.

In addition to what has been started in this forum, some of the more thoughtful of our community leaders are asking questions that might be generalized thus:

What ought to be done, in addition to forums like this, to develop a more realistic consciousness among young people, and maybe adults too, about problems like the following (some of them have been mentioned by these young people) that are so important, but remain on the periphery of youth's concerns:

- ☐ the ever-increasing influence of science and technology on the lives of us all
- ☐ the lack of stability in the total economic scene that is reflected by such things

as periodic unemployment and tensions between government, industry, and labor

- ☐ the greater amount of leisure at our disposal

- ☐ the ever-increasing demands on education to meet life's problems with the same old devices and resources

- ☐ the lack of regard and appreciation for people who enter politics and government service

- ☐ the failure to understand the implications of America's present role as a world power

- ☐ the ferment in the area of spiritual values which is reflected by: the disillusionment and cynicism over how little positive good has come out of World War II; the increase in critical and controversial issues of church and state; an increased interest in identifying and following "the good life."

What, Another Meeting? _____

CHARLES R. NELSON

A sigh, or a note of exasperation, too often accompanies the exclamation in the title of this article. Charles R. Nelson, elementary coordinator, San Diego County Schools, California, suggests that if meetings were planned and organized as productive enterprises we might eliminate both the sigh and the note of exasperation. Mr. Nelson is on leave of absence at Teachers College, Columbia University.

SO YOU HAVE A MEETING to attend today! At least 30,000 of your colleagues in the nation have one, too. Probably most members of the profession attend at least one meeting a month, and in many cases, one meeting a week. This phenomenon is not limited to education, of course, for it is found to be a familiar and frequent activity in many other professions and occupations.

No doubt there are too many meetings held concerning school matters in

many districts. Probably it can be said that there are too few meetings held in other districts. Nevertheless, the meeting is an integral factor of the democratic way of living with others. As the concept of democracy in education extends itself, the meeting assumes greater significance as a potent medium for the continuous betterment of the profession and improved education of the citizenry.

The democratic process to which this nation is committed contributes

Copyright © 1950 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.