

quiring and imaginative student far exceeded any list of items. Some chose to combine projects in this class with their work in biology or English. But all their activities had in common the application or demonstration of a chemical phenomenon. The projects were not time-consuming but they served to do what "talk" could never do. They brought a closer approach to "one world" for the individual.

And so the lectures rolled on as the waters of a river flow toward their goal

in ever-increasing volume and depth and power. Resourceful projects along the way had caused the waters to irrigate the adjacent lands, to give life to these lands, to make them productive, and to make them yield fruit where fruit had never grown.

The two worlds were fusing, and the students were happily becoming abnormal in their lack of schizophrenia. —*Earl A. Reynolds*, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee.

The Listening Post

Column Editor: C. Glen Hass
Contributor: J. L. McCaskill

Steel—The Crisis in American Education

DOUBLE SHIFTS, triple shifts, quadruple shifts; classes in basements, classes in rented stores, classes next to the boiler room—these are the conditions under which millions of American children are attending school this year.

For the past two decades, few new schools were built, as a result of the depression in the 1930's and the shortage and high cost of materials and labor during World War II and the years immediately following. Compounded with the problem of school facilities, inadequate for even the steady, but predictable, increase in school population over these years, is the fact that the unprecedented wartime and post-war baby-crops are just now beginning to come of school age. In 1951-1952, 800,000 more children began school than in the previous year. Next year, twice that number—1.6 million—will be added to the school rolls. By 1960, 7 million more pupils will be attending school than were in school at the beginning of the decade.

Construction Lags Far Behind Need

In order to reduce the backlog and make normal replacements accumulated over twenty years' time, 54,000 new classrooms are needed annually until the end of the 1950's. Next year alone, 53,000 units should be built to house the increase in enrollments. However, the construction rate prior to mid-1951 was running at about 40,000 units a year—less than one-half of the number required.

In the months following the outbreak of the Korean conflict, it became increasingly evident that the military and civilian demand for steel and certain other metals was far in excess of the available supply. Therefore, in July of 1951, the Controlled Materials Plan, administered by the Defense Production Administration and the National Production Authority, became effective to assure a balanced distribution of these materials as between military and civilian requirements and as between

the various segments of the civilian economy. Since the establishment of the CMP, the U.S. Office of Education, as "claimant agency" for education, has received allocations of approximately one-half of the steel required for essential school construction. In October, the Defense Production Administration announced that education would receive only 96,000 tons of steel for the first quarter of 1952, or 50 percent of requirements as of August, 38 percent as of October 1.

Congressional Resolutions Urge Adequate Steel for Schools

Nation-wide concern over the steel shortage for schools was pinpointed by a special subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee, chaired by Representative Cleveland Bailey, which conducted four days of hearings on the situation in mid-October. State and local school authorities from all over the country, well over a half of the membership of the House of Representatives, many Senators, representatives of higher education, and laymen either appeared in person before the subcommittee or submitted written statements testifying to nationwide deplorable school conditions resulting from the lack of steel. Both the House and the Senate passed unanimous resolutions urging DPA to make available an adequate supply of steel for educational purposes. DPA Administrator Fleischmann stated before the subcommittee that "when the Senate and the House of Representatives pass such a resolution, I consider it a directive and . . . certainly it will receive my consideration."

Steel Allocated Only 38 Percent of Need

However, despite the crying need for additional school construction and de-

spite the representations from all sides for additional steel allocations, DPA appears at this time to be unwilling to allocate more than 38 percent of the steel needed for school construction. DPA rationalizes its position by stating: that 1951 construction is at an all-time high; that the 96,000 tons of steel allocated for the first quarter of 1952 will build 41,000 classrooms, capable of housing over one million students; that all the 1400 school projects under way can be carried forward and 300 new projects can be started during this period; and, that, unless defense-related programs receive sufficient steel, full implementation of the mobilization program will not be possible.

These arguments appear totally to disregard the fact that the highest building rate of schools was reached in 1925 and that construction then came virtually to a standstill for the next 20 years although 7 million more children came of school age during those years. These arguments appear totally to disregard the fact that one out of every five school buildings is outmoded, unsafe or obsolete. These arguments appear totally to disregard the fact that the construction of 41,000 new classrooms would not even be adequate to house the 1.6 million enrollment increase expected just next year, let alone to replace obsolete buildings and to reduce the backlog. These arguments appear totally to disregard the fact that, as of October 1, there were 1300 approvable applications for construction pending in the U.S. Office of Education, that no provision has been made for higher education, and that new starts will have to be almost wholly confined to defense-affected areas. Finally, these arguments appear totally to disregard the fact that whereas military requirements must necessarily receive top priority, "the proper education and instruction of our

youth is as much a part of the national defense as is the production of articles of war." A democracy depends for its very existence upon an educated citizenry, and education for the children depends in large measure on adequate

school facilities, not next year, not five years from now, not ten years from now, but *now*.—*J. L. McCaskill*, director, Legislation and Federal Relations Division, National Education Association.

Curriculum Bulletins

Column Editors: Edward A. Krug
and Robert S. Harnack

Developing Courses of Study

STUDY GUIDES or courses of study can provide direction and security for new teachers. To the more experienced teachers who help develop such curriculum guides, the process itself is a factor leading to an understanding of the role of other teachers and other departments.

The first four bulletins listed below are good examples of bulletins which provide direction and security and which aid the teacher in planning.

►Grand Rapids Public Schools. *Suggested Study Guide for Grade Seven*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1951. (mimeographed).

The preface of this study guide quickly points out that the bulletin is not static, but that it is to be used for its suggestive value and to stimulate creative teaching. The body of the bulletin provides direction for the seventh grade teacher by suggesting a wealth of units in all of the broad areas of learning. Within each unit are helpful approaches, suggested activities, materials, lists of needs to be met, and concepts to be taught.

►Department of Education. *Course of Study and Guide for Teachers Grades 7-12*. Division of Instruction, Bulletin Number 11. Montgomery, Alabama: State Board of Education, 1950, 459 p.

This attractive and ambitious guide is interesting since it provides direction for teachers and school systems from grade one through the high school. This unified twelve-year bulletin indirectly encourages the acceptance of high school education for all youth and helps to break down the artificial barrier between the elementary and the secondary school. The wide range of materials in this bulletin provides the teachers of Alabama with a comprehensive textbook on education as well as a curriculum guide.

►Dade County Public Schools. *Elementary Curriculum Guide*. Curriculum Bulletin Number 2. Miami, Florida, August, 1951, 79 p. (mimeographed).

Sometimes a bulletin arrives which is unusually good. This curriculum guide for elementary schools is well-written, helpful for teachers and encouraging for curriculum planners. It includes a section on developing essential skills and one on resource materials. The most interesting sections are about basic principles and policies of curriculum planning and answers to teachers' questions by grade levels.

►Department of Rural Education. *Education for Living, A Guide for Elementary Education*. Hartford, Connec-

Copyright © 1952 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.