

## Whose One World?

LATE IN JANUARY the City of New York was host to the third meeting of the United States Commission for UNESCO. Over 2,000 delegates attended from every state and territory, representing almost every social, economic and political group in America. The conference theme treated the problem of citizenship in the world community.

Among the delegates were several hundred elementary school teachers. They worked together in seminars to discover what agreements they could reach on what the schools should teach about world community. Their discussion was focused on five problems:

- What are the understandings and behaviors about the world community that the American Community desires to develop in our boys and girls? (*Objectives.*)
- What, if any, curriculum pattern or design should be agreed upon to show teachers what sequence or aspects of world community might be stressed from grade to grade throughout the school career? (*Curriculum design.*)
- What are the most appropriate instructional methods and available instructional materials through which the objectives may be reached? (*Method and materials.*)
- What public resistance is there to having the school include experiences on world understanding in the curriculum? What needs to be done? (*School-community relations.*)
- How can teachers be prepared to instruct and guide children in their learn-

ing about the human family as it lives in a world neighborhood? (*Teacher education.*)

Large areas of agreement were found to exist among the educators who for three days directed their thinking to these problems. Briefly, the consensus clearly showed that teacher preparation needed to include much more scholarship in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, and that an in-service program must help teachers keep up with the rapidly advancing frontiers in these general education areas. The consensus further showed that the public needed to be invited to study, along with the teachers, the problem of education for a world community; that such joint effort to find an educational solution would not only result in a sounder school program, but would dispel any resistance to having the school do its duty in this regard.

The seminars found some excellent instructional materials available but urged producers of such materials to step up their efforts. They realized, however, that the lack of a curriculum design stressing learning about the world is partially to blame for the lack of a market, essential to major publishing ventures. The seminars listed many useful methods: use of radio and TV, motion pictures, dramatics, native resource persons, etc., all of which need to be utilized more than they are now.

On the problem of design, almost all agreed that the teaching profession must formulate, at least on the local community level, a design or sequential

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pattern of emphases which would assure (1) that no child be permitted to leave school without basic understanding and attitude about the world and its people, and (2) that selected experiences with problems of world community would be placed in the graded curriculum at a point where growth and development factors would best facilitate success.

On the problem of objectives UNESCO gave its greatest help to those teachers present in New York City. Again and again leaders in American life and thought made clear the basic and crucial problem in world community. There is no longer any doubt in the mind of a person who is of average intelligence and education, that modern science and invention in mechanical power and ingenious machines have forced us at last into a one-world situation. Whether we like it

or not, the modern airplane, the radio, the factory, etc., make each of us dependent upon the well being of even the most remote human on the crust of our earth. We cannot wash this hard fact away: the 2 billion humans who live on this planet are going to have to live elbow to elbow: no longer is isolation possible.

#### What Kind of World Community?

The issue is rather *what kind of a world community do we want?* And more sharply: shall the structure of this world community be representative democracy, or shall it be a Soviet world communistic state?

The United Nations was created with full expectations by the nations of the free world that the end and means would be representative democracy. It has become clear since the signing of the UN charter, that the Soviet had a

different aim in mind: world communism. The struggle now engaging us is whether the Soviet will force the free peoples of the earth to submit to world control by Soviet communism; or whether through the instruments gradually being forged in UN the free peoples will eventually be able to create by reason and superior moral force, a world community in which human rights are held as the first priority.

This struggle for world control must be made an important aspect of the school curriculum. We know that the struggle will last a long time. To sustain our determination over the decades we need much wider understanding of the nature of the struggle. The school curriculum has at least these two jobs to do on world community: (a) to provide youngsters with the experiences in geography, history, anthropology, etc., that will help them see the inevitability of a world community, given modern science and advanced technology; (b) to provide the experiences out of which will emerge in every youth a loyalty and commitment to the fundamental human rights and to the representative democratic institutions, including UN and its agencies, strong enough to win out over Soviet communism.

Through continued action research we can discover how best to accomplish these tasks. For the schools to do less, is to work unwittingly for the cause of our enemies in the Kremlin. But if the schools, together with all other private and public groups in the free world work hard enough and soon enough, we are confident that ultimately the one-world will belong to the freedom-loving men and that the threat of a Soviet communistic world will be eliminated.—*Paul R. Hanna*, professor of education, Stanford University.

April, 1952

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