

Significant Books in Review

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► Counts, George S. *Decision-Making and American Values in School Administration*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953.

Something over a year ago, in 1952 a group of college professors and school administrators began a series of conferences and communications having to do with the decision-making process in school administration. They were especially interested in exploring the moral commitments which are inherently involved in all important decisions in the educational enterprise or, for that matter, in any other worth-while undertaking. The document, entitled, *Decision-Making and American Values in School Administration*, is an outcome of their deliberations.

Their procedure was to identify a number of typical and critical situations which confront school administrators in these troubled times and which tax their powers of judgment and decision. They then discussed the values and practices involved in dealing with these situations.

The chapter headings illustrate some of the problems dealt with: The Fundamentals (Three R's), The Communist Teacher, Students in Politics, Juvenile Delinquency, The Teachers' Union, and Teachers in Politics.

Professor George S. Counts served as recorder and scribe for the group. From its deliberations, and out of his own rich scholarship, he has drafted a statement which makes a valuable contribution to the creative thinking which is now going on in education in general

and in school administration in particular.

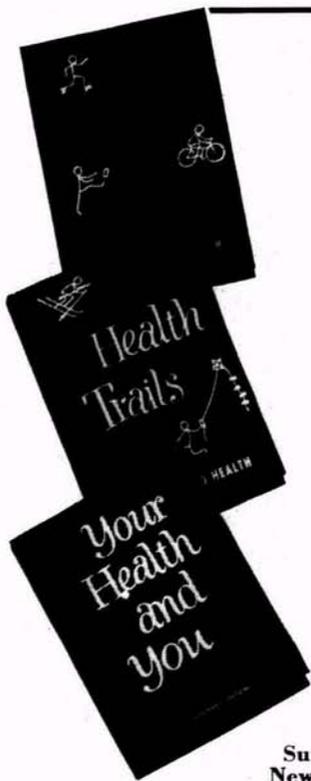
The document is especially concerned with the moral content of decision-making. It claims to provide no universal formulas or pat solutions which may be applied by rule of thumb in the great variety of communities which compose the United States.

This document reflects several convictions: (a) that the decision-making process deserves more fundamental study than it has received in the past; (b) that misadventure in school administration more often than not results from lack of courage; and (c) that principle, based on the great commitments of free societies, should be emphasized more and expediency less.

—JOHN K. NORTON, professor of education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

During the summer of 1953 the Faculty Lecture Series at George Peabody College for Teachers proved so popular that the seven addresses presented have been published in a slim but stimulating volume, *Great Human Issues of Our Times* (George Peabody College for Teachers, 1953, 113 p.). Among the contributors who set forth educationally challenging ideas are Harold Benjamin, Kenneth Cooper, Willard Goslin, C. L. Hall, Claude Chadwick, J. L. Hymes, Jr., and Henry H. Hill. Despite the fact that it is based on a series of speeches, *Great Human Issues* holds together well and provides intellectually rewarding reading.



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Hilda Taba continues her series of contributions in *Leadership Training in Intergroup Education* (American Council on Education, 1953, 243 p.). The book is a successful analysis and appraisal of the workshop method of leadership training in the field of group relations. Promising approaches to educational problems such as the workshop sometimes lose status through misuse. Dr. Taba's report is a good evaluation of what the workshop can and cannot do. Typically interesting observation: "... when the same group remains together and continues to operate under the same leadership for several years, the inventive capacities are apt to atrophy. . . . As competence with certain procedures increases, it tends to be accompanied by a progressive reduction in experimental invention to meet

new needs. . . . Success, like power, is erosive of experimentation." (p. 203.)

An unusually thorough documentation of play therapy in action characterizes C. E. Moustakas' *Children in Play Therapy* (McGraw-Hill, 1953). Extensive use is made of tape recordings in preserving play therapy situations for study and analysis. Because of the obviously broad experience of the writer his seven principles for adults to observe in play therapy contacts with children are of especial interest. Sample: "By his manner . . . the adult should show the child that he accepts his feelings as they are, neither criticizing nor approving but remaining totally acceptive." (p. 208.)

—HAROLD G. SHANE, professor of education, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

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