

Education: Some Present Needs for Future Excellence

The times call for sober, serious, intellectually tough leadership. It is up to the schools to respond to this challenge, to give it shape and meaning, and to stand affirmatively and consistently for the things of the mind and spirit.

ONE THING is clear about this year's crisis of confidence in the quality of public school education: the public is ready now, as it has never been before, to give serious attention to the things of the mind and of the spirit. It has dawned on many a man that he has parked his personal golden calf at the curb in front of his house. While the beep, beep, beep coming to us from space in October 1957 had an unholy origin, its effect was to remind us of the cold truth that the ultimate human power is not in our possessions, but in our minds. We can now challenge the Philistines, the materialists, the Babbitts, and expect public support. All we have to do is give expression to our ideals. There is appearing now in the mass media, for the first time ever, a respect for intellectuality that has been totally absent in the past. The evidence is all around us that the times call for sober, serious, intellectually tough leadership. And it is up to us in the schools not only to respond to this public clamor, but to give it shape and meaning; to lead the next generation of Americans forward to a civilized state of being such as we have never known.

This is the setting in which we must view the American school. If this sounds pretentious, let us remind ourselves of the central place that the public schools have in what our country may become. If we educators are not willing to take ourselves as seriously as this broad setting of our problems suggests, then let us remember that the public does take us this seriously. If we, as educational leaders, are unwilling to confront problems in the terms that the present crisis of civilization demands, then others will be found who are able and willing to confront them on this scale. Some of these others are already clamoring for the leadership of education. Some of them propose ways of operating the schools and philosophies of education that are fundamentally at variance with the American ideal.

The struggle in which we are now embroiled is as serious as it can possibly be. There is no place in educational leadership for triflers, for those who make expedience their goal, or for the silent brethren who wish to wait and see which way the wind is blowing before they declare themselves. If there was ever a time

that called for thinking on a grand scale, this is that time.

Areas of Progress

Even a hasty consideration of the crisis we are in suggests what the schools must do. The schools must make the development of thinking more central, more deliberate than has ever been the case. As pedagogues, we have to break free from our own history in the sense that we have to weld content and method back together—we have to put together, at a level we have never attempted on a large scale, the content of education and the methods used for developing the content with growing children. In a word, we have to make the child, thinking, the object of our efforts; we have to make *thinking* a proper and main purpose of the schools. What the times demand of us, and what we should in turn demand of the times, is that we exert the authority granted to us as educators to develop further the life of the mind and of the spirit; that we become clear about the nature of American civilization and make the experiences children have in school consistent with that civilization at its best. We will not be told *how* to do these things by the public. We must continue to work this out for ourselves, maintaining contact with the public as we go. We can be thankful that we have already made some progress.

Improving Personnel

What do we have to work with? First of all, we have professional people. According to a recent NEA Research Divi-

sion report,¹ the general level of preparation of all elementary school teachers in service has improved for the eleventh consecutive year. Of all those in service in 38 states, Alaska, District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, 71.1 percent hold the bachelor's degree and only 4.3 percent have earned fewer than 60 semester hours of college credit. Moreover, only a very small number of states will now permit teachers to enter the classroom without a bachelor's degree. In Hawaii, five years of preparation are required for either the elementary or high school standard certificate. In effect, many school districts also require a minimum of five years of college preparation before they will accept candidates for teaching positions.

Now, these are optimistic figures. It is good to know that the general education of the teaching force is likely to continue to improve during the years ahead. But it would be fatuous to assume that because the proportion of those holding degrees is increasing, the basic education of the teaching force is good enough for the task that lies ahead. Those of us who were in the teaching force in the 'twenties and 'thirties remember perfectly well that the large number of people admitted to teaching on emergency credentials in the post World War I period included entirely too many people who never improved their own educational status beyond the minimum requirements of state certification laws. Some of the difficulties encountered during the period of school experimentation in the 'thirties arose from the fact that teachers, supervisors, and administrators were not sufficiently capable of dealing with abstract ideas,

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¹ Teacher Supply and Demand in the Public Schools. The Eleventh National Teacher Supply and Demand Study. Washington, D. C.: Research Division, National Education Association, 1958.

and therefore tended to oversimplify complicated matters.

As a further dampener to our optimism, let us remember that the turnover of teachers is in many cases fantastically large. In one western school system, for example, 50 percent of all the elementary school teachers have been teaching for less than four years. Too much of the time of some of our most effective curriculum leaders has been spent of necessity orienting new people to the teaching profession—new people, most of whom do not stay. We hear much these days of the needs of gifted children. Of course, these needs must be met. But what of the needs of gifted teachers? If we are to do more than maintain the level we have already reached in education, we must rely on them. *Progress* in raising the quality of education has always depended on the best teachers we have—the real “pros” of the profession; those who are in it for keeps; those who have made a moral commitment to the education of children as their main lifework. Everything considered, we surely have neglected these people during recent years. Most school districts have done well to keep the classes manned and the school doors open. But there is no denying the fact that school districts all over the country have failed to provide educational leadership on the scale required both to deal with the influx of new teachers and to carry the schools forward qualitatively.

I recall a conversation I had last year with a friend who is an outstanding curriculum leader in a city school system. Remembering her pioneering work in developing a sound social studies program in the schools, I asked her what had been going on recently in this field, in her school system. She sighed and said, “Really, very little if anything. We’ve

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had to spend all our time on the new people. I honestly believe the schools were doing more 15 years ago than they are now.”

The education of the entering teacher is improving. However, we must not delude ourselves into supposing that the improvement is fast enough, or will occur in time to cope adequately with the crisis we are in. Mr. Micawber was not even adequate in the nineteenth century. Certainly he has no place in the ranks of educational leadership in the twentieth century. We can’t wait for something “to turn up.” Something turned up in October 1957.

Improving Materials and Methods

Let us turn from personnel to curriculum. In my judgment, there has been one very important and favorable development during the past few years that has directly to do with what children learn in school. I refer to the great improvement in the materials of instruction. More and better materials exist right now for the teaching of children than has ever been true before. The books are better, and there are more of them. Phonograph records have improved vastly in quality. So have record-playing machines. The development of the tape recorder into a commonplace tool of learning is something brand new in the world. We have a whole generation of children in the schools now who have benefited from the tremendous impact that television has upon people. Most of us will agree that children now have more general information when

they come to school than has ever been true before. Moreover, we have reached a time when it is possible to state affirmatively what the contribution of television can be to the direct instruction of children in the schools. We can look forward hopefully to the day when all classrooms will have television sets easily available, and when there will be a steady stream of valid material available on TV in many instructional fields, and on many levels.

It is legitimate to hope that in the future the teacher will come more and more to fit the classic ideal: guide, philosopher, and friend. This will happen in direct proportion to our efforts to make an intelligent use of the resources now available, and those that will become available, as the technology of communication continues to develop. For a "guide, philosopher, and friend" is not primarily a transmitter of information; he is much more nearly a transmitter of the intellectual and spiritual processes which are the very stuff of civilization—the processes that make information meaningful.

The time may come when we will look back on today's situation with amazement, wondering how it was that anybody thought that the teacher's main job was to be, with the textbook, the repository of all learning. In a time when so much has happened to make the transmission of information easy, we may hope that the teacher's work will become more and more of a strictly teaching job; that is, that the teacher will become a supervisor of learning, someone who will work with each child in the terms he requires so that he may grow in ways that are most appropriate for him and for the society that he will enter. Of course, these things remain a dream while we appropriate the present \$3.98 a year per

child for textbooks, and about \$1.00 a year for all other materials of instruction. If we were in earnest, the figure would be \$25.00.

There is no way to build skill in thinking that doesn't involve trying to think. It is therefore encouraging to consider the fact that active methods, those which require the thoughtful participation of the student in his own learning, are more widely used in the schools now than they have ever been. This fact (for such I believe it to be) sometimes eludes us as we listen to those who wish to turn students back into repositories and parrots. As it happens, I spent the better part of a month this spring in France, sitting for hours in the classrooms of a lycée and talking at great length with teachers and administrators in French secondary education. My purpose in doing this was not to appraise French education, but rather to get some sense of where the French are headed, and to see what we might learn from them. Some things they are doing would not be appropriate in America. We have, however, much to learn from them, especially in the field of the teaching of the mother tongue. My purpose in bringing this up, however, is to call attention to the fact that they are deliberately and in a highly systematic manner introducing what they call active methods into their teaching. With characteristic French clarity, they see the defect that is inherent in the "sit still and listen" approach to teaching and learning, and they are vigorously bringing it to an end in the French schools, especially in the lycées where they educate their élite.

It is worthwhile to remember that our own introduction of active methods is associated with our attempt of a generation ago to take Dewey's "method of intelligence" as the key to effective learn-

ing. Problem solving, which might be translated into the term critical thinking, is something that teachers know a great deal about, as it is appropriate to children. With all the faults and shortcomings of our attempts to teach critical thinking to children, it remains true that American school children learn more about planning and evaluating their work than do children anywhere in the world.

This is not, of course, to say that all, or even most, school classes conform to this ideal. But if it is a minority that conforms, it certainly is a very large minority. And this is encouraging.

With these developments in materials and teaching methods has, of course, come an improvement in many schools. The best schools now are probably better than they ever were before. But the spread between the best and poorest schools in the United States is probably greater than it ever was. For while progress has been made during the years since World War II, there are a great many schools that have failed to progress. It is safe to assume that one can find examples of almost any kind of teaching that has ever been practiced on this planet, somewhere in the United States. As a people, we Americans have notoriously failed to put a qualitative floor under our educational system. At its best it rises to the level of high art. At its worst, it is very poor. Can we tolerate this kind of disparity? For me, this is a rhetorical question. We cannot tolerate it any longer. But it is going on, and the situation is becoming worse, not better. Paradoxically, the reason that it is becoming worse is that the best schools are improving faster than the worst. The gulf between them is now so deep that teachers in the best schools cannot even talk about teaching with teachers in the

poorest schools. They come from different educational worlds. I say that this situation is intolerable. Some day our national professional organization is going to take the kind of vigorous action on this question that they have taken on some others. Some day, the educational equivalent of the Flexner Report will be published and the floor will be established.

What Are Our Needs?

Let us turn from this admittedly inadequate survey of the present educational situation to consider the needs we face. Many of them are suggested by the preceding comments. Others will be known to you, though I have not touched upon them. I believe that efforts focused upon these needs would be productive. In any case, they demand even more attention than they are now receiving.

First, we need a better teaching force than we now have. The teacher of the future should have a general education that is not merely equal to, but clearly superior to that of the community he serves. Any teacher should be an outstandingly well-educated human being. Now, those of us who have worked directly with curriculum improvement programs know perfectly well that a sound and valid education is of itself no guarantee of qualitatively good teaching. Many well educated people cannot teach. We have to have both skill with children —a high level of professional competence—and an outstandingly well-educated individual to exercise the skill. To me, this implies that in the future, boards of education and school administrators should sit in judgment upon the bachelor's degrees now being granted by American colleges. We should no longer accept into teaching, people with inadequate collegiate education. All of the faults that

are associated with the qualitative range that I have mentioned in the public schools are also associated with the qualitative range of the American four year college. If, as I think we must, we are to put a floor under the quality of education, then we must put a floor under the quality of the general education of the teaching force.

Moreover, I do not see how it will be possible in the future for us to accept as teachers, people with less than five years of collegiate instruction, including a thoroughgoing professional preparation to teach, and an excellent general education. I repeat, however, that I do not mean just any five years, or just any college. Our need is for an average that is as good as our present best.

If we are going to conduct meaningful educational experiments in the future, especially in the field of intellectual development (and I hope that we will), then we require a majority of teachers (not a minority) who can handle the difficult ideas that will emerge from such experimentation.

People in teacher education institutions have known for a long time that it is necessary to begin the process of making a teacher at least two years, and preferably three years, before a student faces classes. This process must include from the beginning both direct experience with children, and university classes in which the student is taught how to think about this experience. It is the failure to integrate successfully the concrete and abstract aspects of teacher preparation, and the failure to take sufficient time for the process, that accounts for much of the apparently trivial content of strictly classroom education courses. Many a teacher has discovered, as I myself did, that the difficulty with the education courses

that he had was that they came before experience with children. They should have come *during* experience with children. These courses are frankly theoretical. The function of theory is to clarify reality—no reality, no clarification; no reality, no function for theory.

But the making of a teacher does not stop with college. As things stand, the in-service education of new teachers is carried on through quickie orientation experiences conducted by the school system, plus the unofficial but potent influence of "the teacher down the hall." The lack of articulation between collegiate preservice professional education and on-the-job reality is a notorious and glaring weakness in our present practice. The solution is obvious and simple. We need to add to the preservice education a two-year period of on-the-job continued joint effort by colleges and school systems. The orientation of new teachers is properly the concern of both. Until we recognize the need for a systematic internship program during these two probationary years, we cannot hope for the dramatic improvement in the quality of education that is required.

In-service education is a lifelong affair. It is not now, nor should it be, restricted to matters of direct professional concern. The continued general education of the teacher is as much the concern of the board of education as continued professional education. Each should be offered in its own terms. There is no reason why professors of chemistry, history, and English should not be carrying part of the load of the adult education of teachers, provided they are asked to do what they can do well—to teach adults their disciplines.

At its best, professional in-service training has long since passed the level at which 8,000 teachers are herded into

an auditorium on the day before Thanksgiving to hear an entertaining professional lecturer talk about his trip through the Amazonian jungle. Ten years of experience with action research have demonstrated that classroom teachers can think about professional problems at a level far above that usually permitted them. All our efforts to get better people into teaching and keep them will be meaningless if professional in-service work inhibits their growth. There is no question in my mind but that some educational leaders, in their desire to be practical, clamp an intellectual lid on the development of education in the schools.

Second, *we need better teacher education than we have had in the past*. Better, and more of it. I have referred to the need for a four- or five-year period of pre- and in-service education, to be carried on jointly by colleges and school systems, and I shall not dwell further on this need. On the college campus it will be necessary for schools and departments of education to become more selective of those who are admitted to teacher education programs. The pressure to produce larger numbers of teachers has been so heavy that such departments have tended to accept and put through too many mediocre students, rejecting from teaching only the most obviously ill-qualified people. There is no denying that schools and departments of education often have a poor campus reputation. This fact has to be analyzed for its real meaning. I have already touched on one reason for this reputation—that the intellectually tough content of courses in education does not receive its due in the classes, and that too much abstract material is allowed to remain unrelated to educational reality. I wish to consider two other aspects of the problem.

One of these arises from the tendency

of some education professors to forget that they are dealing with future teachers, rather than with future educational theorists. If, as a member of an education department, you listen to professors of other departments and try to become "respectable" according to their rules, you are lost. There is a place in education for scholarship, but the rules of evidence as between education on the one hand, and disciplines like history, literature, and biology on the other, are quite different. The educationist who tries to behave like a conventional academician is mistaken; in the degree that he succeeds in acting this way, he is neither educationist nor academician. So the first problem a professor of education has to solve is, "Who am I?" He has to answer this in his own terms, not someone else's. That is, he has to be an educator, not a stray.²

Next, let us consider that aspect of the problem of the reputation of teacher education that has to do with the criticism from other departments. Some members of other departments of a university criticize education because it does not make adequate intellectual demands on its students. There is some reason for this criticism, as I have already indicated. But there is another aspect to the criticism that has fooled many people, including some college administrators.

They have been fooled by a campus feud which has to do with a legitimate question, but has next to nothing to do with professional education as such. The legitimate question is, what is the place of the arts in the general education of the college student? There is a quiet, ancient war going on between the professors of disciplines like literature, philosophy, and history and the professors

² I have developed this point further in an article, "The Need for a Discipline of Education," *Educational Research Bulletin* 36:159-66, May 8, 1957.

of disciplines like physics, mathematics, engineering, and life sciences that turns on this question. The professors in these latter fields tend to doubt the value of prolonged programs in the arts, and many of their students actively rebel. But professors of the arts know that the contribution of the arts to civilization is profound and all-pervasive, and are furious that the question of their value should even be raised. Now, we need not deal with the question here; my bias is probably already apparent, in any case. My point is that much of this argument has been focused on teacher education, as if it were a central point at which the issues could be settled. There are those who would reduce the amount of professional education in order that the teacher might have more time for general education. This is a footless demand; it has nearly nothing to do with the real issues; it is a proper concern of professors of education that college students be well educated, but they are in no position either to know the issues in depth nor to deal with them effectively. The argument, in short, is being conducted in the wrong place, directed at the wrong people, in terms of the wrong issues. It is time that those who haunt Academe face one another in the open.

Third, *we need a coherent theory of learning*. Such a theory does not exist at present, according to the psychologists who are directly involved in studies of learning. In 1942, at the time of the publication of the National Society for the Study of Education yearbook, *The Psychology of Learning*, it looked as if a reconciliation among the various learning theories then current was about to take place. This has not happened—not because the reconciliation was not attempted, and not because of any fault among the psychologists. What has hap-

pened instead is that theories have continued to multiply, each as intriguing as the last, each susceptible to experimental tests, each potentially important to the practicing teacher. I can no longer tolerate casual references by educators to "what we know about learning." What is known is quite complicated, and much remains to be discovered. However, there are of course some fundamentals that have withstood the test of time and application, and we should obviously make use of them. But they do not amount to a coherent theory of learning. "What we know about learning" can be summarized in brief statements, such as these: (a) Learning involves the whole of the organism that is learning; (b) The emotional component of the learning situation is often as significant as the overt or apparent thing being learned; (c) You learn what you do, and the basic approach to the evaluation of learning, therefore, involves a study of the learner's response, taken as a whole; (d) Learning is a highly selective process—the learner inevitably selects from among all that is presented to him that which he considers to be relevant to his personal goal. That is why so much of what is presented in school is forgotten; (e) People learn at different rates; they learn with different perceptions of what is important; they develop highly individualistic configurations out of identical stimuli.

Perhaps you would care to add other generalizations to this brief list. My point in bringing it up is to emphasize the fact that the ideas are complicated, and that application is not always obvious. In any case, there is no comprehensive theory now in existence that takes into account all of the phenomena that anyone would recognize as belonging under "learning."

There is another development in the

field of psychology to which we should be paying attention. Somehow the studies of the psychology of the elementary school subjects have diminished greatly in number during the past 20 years. A great deal of what we are now using in fields like arithmetic and reading has been developed out of studies that are now more than a generation old. The studies have not been verified during recent years, and the field as a whole has not been extended. It lies within our power as public school educators to bring about a resumption of the study of the psychology of school subjects. All we really have to do is to call for such studies, and they will be made. If we will indicate that we are receptive there are excellent researchers who will go on with the work. Perhaps, again, we can look to France for encouragement. While the volume of educational research in France is not comparable with the volume here, there have been some very interesting experiments conducted in the field of the learning of school subjects. I refer specifically, for example, to the 1953 study of Mialaret³ in the field of elementary school arithmetic. Mialaret has made some findings about the basic vocabulary of proportion and quantitative relationships among small children to which we should be paying attention.

We should turn to our colleagues in psychology and ask that they accelerate the development of a theory of learning that we can employ. The very complexity of their work sometimes makes them forget that they are socially responsible in the sense that we in education can scarcely wait for their findings. We have

to act, even though our knowledge (and they are the source of much of our knowledge in principle) is inadequate. They have to talk to us, as well as to one another, but we have to listen. We also have to talk back.

Fourth, *we have to make the statement of our educational goals consistent with the ideals we hold as individuals and as a people.* We are part of an enormous institution. Like all institutions, the public schools have their own internal needs. One of these is that students move through the years of schooling smoothly, with a minimum of disturbance to the institution itself. This purely institutional need leads to a certain amount of insensitivity to the needs of the individual child—for example, to his need to grow at his own rate. Moreover, this need for institutional orderliness provides those at the later stages of school life with a convenient way of pressing their needs on those at the earlier stages. The college entrance examiner is having a more and more profound effect on the secondary school curriculum, since he doesn't have to bother his head about the problems of mass education. Some secondary schools are putting similarly narrowly conceived pressures on the elementary schools. If we don't watch out, we will become so busy meeting the needs of our educational system that we will forget about our society and our culture. It is necessary, but by no means sufficient, to prepare the student in elementary school for what is coming next in the schools. If we ever lose sight of the fact that we are preparing students, not only for schools but also for effective participation in our American civilization, our schools will at that time be drained of their vital substance.

What we are trying to help produce is not simply a student, but a man. If we

³G. Mialaret. Recherches préliminaires à la pédagogie du calcul à l'école primaire. *Cahiers de Pédagogie Expérimentale et de Psychologie de L'Enfant*, Nouvelle Série No. 9. Génève, Switzerland: L'Institut des Sciences de L'Education de l'Université de Génève.

don't know what kind of a man we are trying to produce, we are lost. Here, again, the French have something to say to us. The general purpose of French public education is to produce a civilized individual. And the French know perfectly well what they mean by the words "civilized" and "individual." I wish we had equal clarity in this regard. Whatever their record in the field of politics, the French have never failed to produce great individuals. If we are ever to do as well, we will have to decide on what we think it signifies to be a man in the United States. It seems to me that there are some things that we can say immediately on this great theme, and that we should busily be saying them to one another and to the public.

For one thing, a man is a rational being. He has a mind. He can think. Evidence is accumulating that we have underestimated the ability of little children to think in schools all over the world, and in particular in our own schools. In Ohio, 30 years ago, Josephine McLatchy demonstrated that children entering kindergarten know a good deal of arithmetic. They are able to handle, in their own terms, concepts that are not presented in the official school program until they are in the fourth or fifth grades. If we think that a man has a mind, and that a mind is something one develops through use, then we ought to be saying to ourselves and to the public that we mean that the schools in future shall teach people to think, not merely to memorize. One has to have information to think, but it is perfectly possible to have lots of information and not think.

Moreover, our American man is a person who believes in the validity of action. We, more than most people in the world, believe that action is a significant form of being. We do not hold up as our ideal

the man who merely contemplates. We value the tangible and concrete; we do not begin by rejecting it. That is why, in speaking to the public about what the goals of the school are, we should be making the point that the specifically American version of what it means to be a human being involves not only a respect for the way things are, but the development of the ability to deal with them as they come, and a tendency to value change.

As Americans, we believe deeply in the right of every individual to progress in life according to his will, as well as according to someone else's judgment of his talents. That is why in the schools we favor continuous promotion processes, rather than a system of cold, official selection points such as is characteristic of public education in the rest of the world. We believe in self-selection and in self-development. If we didn't, the phenomenon of social mobility would not exist. As Americans, we do not believe that a man should "keep his place." If we did, we would set up a school system in which the main function was to assign every man a place and tell him how to keep it. We don't do this; our schools exist to show people the possibilities, not the "places." But my main point is that we should learn to talk to the public about the public goals of American civilization, and not fall into the convenient trap of talking to the public about what are essentially institutional problems, such as the preparation of a child at each stage for the next. I do not mean to imply that preparation for the next stage is not important; I simply mean to assert here that preparation of this kind offers an utterly insufficient criterion for deciding what the curriculum of the school should become.

Fifth, we need to make the quality of

education a passion. As teachers, we have to resist the tendency to substitute organizational schemes for curriculum study in the schools. We have to resist the tendency to separate the theoretical from the practical. We have to recognize the *child learning* as the object of education, to quote my friend, Roy Pearce, of the English Department at Ohio State University. It is we, not others, who should be calling for a qualitatively better educational system than we now have—no matter how good it already is. Nobody knows better than the serious educator that at its best a school is never as good as it might be, or even as good as it ought to be. We, not others, are the people who ought to be demanding of the public that they support what is best and most important about life. We, not others, should be in the vanguard of those resisting our national tendencies toward materialism.

In other words, as we come to the sixth of the needs as I see them, *we should resume leadership in the American population in those things that pertain to the mind and to the spirit.* We should declare candidly the way things ought to be, and bring to an end our tendency to settle for the way things are. Our function is not to "give the lady what she wants," but to give her—and her school child—what they *ought to have.* As practical school people, we are constantly faced with the problem of taking something as it is given to us and making the best of it. And the ideal of making the best of what we are given to work with has carried us a very long way. We are really good at it. I do not propose that we abandon this practice—that would be nonsense. What I am proposing is that we never cease, while dealing with things the way they are, to declare the way things ought to be. How should

things be in your own community? Let me name a few instances where a school teacher should be taking leadership.

First, do you have a really adequate public library? It continues to be astonishing to me that communities fail to provide books, but demand learning.

Second, and in the same connection, do your children have books at home? Do they have a place to study? Do their parents offer them the kind of stimulating environment that encourages the development of a mind? Of course, many parents can't afford to provide the physical equipment that goes with this sort of thing, but all parents can provide the stimulation if they mean to.

Third, does the school reflect the needs of the future or the needs of the past? Are the resources for learning really present? If they are present, are they really being used? Are faculty meetings being devoted to education, or to organizational detail?

Fourth, are we being candid in our own communities about the dearth of cultural opportunities presented? Do we speak up, or are we mute, when, as happened in one Ohio community, the local symphony orchestra was left to flounder financially while the businessmen gathered more than \$100,000 to support the local professional baseball team?

Fifth, what are we saying to the local newspaper publisher about his coverage of educational events? I don't mean, now, "puffs" about the public schools and how wonderful they are. What I mean is the coverage as news of the serious cultural events in the community; the good writing, the sculpture and painting, the musical performances, the architecture.

This sort of approach could be extended, of course. We refer here to the role of the teacher as a citizen. As teachers we are most effective and most power-

ful in our communities when we are truest to what we deeply believe. There is no one who believes in education the way teachers believe in it. There is no group in the community, except the clergy, which has more thoroughly committed itself to the pursuit of a truly lofty set of ideals. As citizens we should stop standing, hat in hand, begging for the public's attention to the external needs of the

school. We should put our hats on, and play our proper public role as those people in the community who most affirmatively and most consistently stand for the things of the mind and spirit. In so doing, we will be carrying forward the profession of education, contributing to the solution of our deepest public problems, and responding to the spirit of these times.

Consider Your Feet

O.K., lie there and consider your feet.

But I ask you

Will you be a light? gifted? effectual?
If so, bombastic or shy intellectual?
Will your teacher delight in you?
Be high in her praise of you?
Discern you are bright
As she gropes through the maze of you?

All right, your hands are the wonder of the universe.

But I give you

Round, red apples; colored balloons;
High-flying kites with ribbon festoons;
The concept of one; number the blocks;
Run, Spot, run; put hands on the clocks;
Hold hands with your buddy; sit still; don't speak;
Color arms and legs orange; don't let the chalk squeak.

Now you know you can't get your whole fist in your mouth.

And later on

Square roots, quantum, stress and traction;
Underlying motivations of thought and action;
Heroes of revolution as despots go tumbling and rot;
Beowulf in Old English, the courtly battles of Scott;
The mystery of the heavens; comment allez-vous; and lots more;
An innocent pawn in the various programs of group, track and core.

Yes, I know you're wet and hungry, but can't you wait ONE minute?

I need to know

What of us, your father and I? Keep up, they say. Oh, fine.
A pity the answer so blithely given doesn't come with a ration of time.
Right now your world is all in a bottle (four Mullsoy, four water—eight ounces).
But outside the window, the worldly-wise say a nation readies, waits, pounces.
To find the strength to promise you peace beyond the sides of your playpen
Is an uneasy search when, for an example, we must use a world verging on mayhem.

—EVELYN M. FORD, ASCD Staff

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