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Swing of the Pendulum

AS A LEADER in the discipline-centered curriculum reform movement of the 1950's and 1960's, Jerrold R. Zacharias promoted the shifting of school science and mathematics away from practical application and toward the central ideas which were believed to comprise the "structure of the discipline."

Now Dr. Zacharias is directing a \$4 million project at Education Development Center under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education to develop a series of television lessons for children of ages 8 through 11 designed to teach mathematical topics in the context of realistic human activities, including science, technology, and the arts. The project is based on the conviction that "one can accomplish little in the way of real education without first catching the child's interest, and, to do that, we must present topics that the child can take with him out of

school, and put to good use in the world at large." Accordingly, the project focuses on "the use of mathematics in realistic situations" and on problem-solving abilities which "go well beyond those required for solutions of the 'word' problems presently found in elementary textbooks and more closely reflect the processes a person actually engages in when confronting a real problem, at home, on the job, or in the streets."

The program, described as a "pragmatic-active approach," is intended to have appeal for disadvantaged minority children, as well as the majority population. Although the TV lessons are designed primarily for classroom use, they will be available for home viewing via open broadcast. The first 26 lessons will be available for national broadcast beginning in January 1975. The complete series of 65 TV programs will be broad-

cast during the 1975-76 school year.

Another project at Education Development Center, Unified Science and Mathematics for Elementary Schools, funded by NSF, is designed to unify the study of science and mathematics with emphasis on problem-solving and decision making "through active involvement in every aspect of real and practical situations." The Unified Science and Mathematics program was the focus of a workshop at Michigan State University last summer in which 100 representatives from school districts throughout the nation participated with the intent of implementing the program in their own schools. Following a similar workshop in Chicago last summer, the Chicago Board of Education adopted the program in 15 inner city schools.

For further information on either the TV project or the Unified Science and Mathemat-

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ics project, write to EDC, 55 Chapel Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02160.

Compulsory Education: USA and USSR

As reported in last month's column, the report of the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, sponsored by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation, has called for the elimination of compulsory education beyond the age of 14. "Compulsory attendance laws are the dead hand on the high schools," declares the report.

At a time when compulsory education is under attack in the United States, the Soviet Union has adopted a national policy of compulsory education to age 17. Whereas Article 121 of the Soviet Constitution had called for universal compulsory education to 15, the new policy of compulsory schooling to age 17 is to be completed by the end of the current five-year plan period, 1975. The new policy was adopted last year by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the USSR Council of Ministers.

According to the USSR Deputy Minister of Education, the USSR now will have "a unified school system that prepares students to enter any university or institute or to learn any trade." He notes that the current trend in industry in the Soviet Union is to hire only those with a complete secondary education.

"Invitation to Chaos"

A recent issue of the *Bulletin of the Council for Basic Education* criticizes many of the recommendations in the report of the National Commission on the Reform of Sec-

ondary Education. Concerning the report's recommendation that "a wide variety of paths leading to completion of requirements from high school should be made available," and the report's endorsement of public funds for virtually every type of nonpublic school, the *Bulletin* asks, "How can one accept as equally valid both a classical Jesuit school and a Summerhill-type school, as the report does?" The *Bulletin* goes on to attack the "all-alternatives-are-of-equal-value position" of the report by declaring, "Unless Jesuit schools have changed radically, they can hardly be said to favor student responsibility for determining one's goals . . . which the report says should be encouraged."

The *Bulletin* observes that "the best reading in this report is to be found in the dissent," and quotes one dissenting member of the Commission who views the report's recommendation for lowering compulsory education to age 14 as "a sure invitation to chaos."

Reinventing the Pedagogical Wheel

In a recent issue of *Notes on Education*, a publication of the Institute of Philosophy and Politics of Education at Columbia University's Teachers College, Lawrence A. Cremin views the contemporary efforts toward radical school reform as "a new progressive education movement." He sees a parallel between the "new movement" and the earlier progressive education movement which "enjoyed its heyday during the 1920's and 1930's . . . began to decline during the 1940's . . . and collapsed during the 1950's."

According to Cremin, the two movements share the com-

mon themes of child-centeredness and social reform. However, Cremin notes that unlike the earlier progressive movement which carried a scientific theme, as exemplified by the Eight-Year Study, many of the free school advocates today exhibit "an active hostility" toward the scientific evaluation of their instructional programs. He also states that the present movement "has been far less profound in the questions it has raised and character of education" and describes it as "notoriously a-theoretical and a-historical." Cremin points out that because those who have founded free schools have not read the literature of the earlier progressive movement, "boundless energy has been spent in countless classrooms reinventing the pedagogical wheel."

Challenging Cremin's thesis that the contemporary free schools represent a new progressive education movement, James Kelly views the current efforts as "a bifurcated literary movement that is not in any sense involved in a basic philosophical argument about the nature of society and the means by which culture is transmitted from one generation to another."

Beyond Freedom and Dignity

For many years behaviorists have prophesied an educational revolution through the use of behavior-modification techniques, including Skinnerian operant conditioning in our schools. Last year a variety of behavior-modification projects were implemented in federal and state prisons and in centers for delinquent juveniles to alter the behavior of inmates through funds provided by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration

(LEAA), a federal agency established through the Nixon administration's anticrime program.

As news of these behavior modification projects traveled through the prison grapevine, even inmates in prisons where no such projects were in operation staged protests, including strikes, and wrote letters and articles terming these programs as "Pavlovian" and "Clockwork Orange." Some 400 behavior-modification projects were financed by LEAA—ranging from programs utilizing Skinnerian reinforcement techniques designed to elicit specified behaviors among youngsters in a Pennsylvania juvenile correctional institution and among inmates of the Springfield, Missouri, Federal Penitentiary—to programs employing drugs in the Iowa prison system.

Following a series of lawsuits in the federal courts by prison inmates, the federal government last February banned all further use of funds for behavior-modification projects by the LEAA. The prisoners were represented in their litigation by the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation. Spokesmen for the ACLU Children's Defense Fund noted that the ban would serve to halt possible abuses which might have developed in the use of behavior-modification techniques among children and the elderly.

Girls' Interscholastic Athletic Program

Girls' athletics in Jefferson County, Colorado, have entered a new era. For the first time high school girls have their own basketball and volleyball teams. The district's program for girls was initiated

four years ago with competition in track, tennis, and gymnastics. Basketball and volleyball were added this year.

It is clear that girls' athletics are here to stay. A school law expert opined in the September 1973 issue of the *American School Board Journal*:

If your state does not see fit to provide specific athletic programs for girls when it does so for boys, your athletic league—if not your school district—could wind up in court!

Free Schools Are Short-Lived

According to the *New Schools Exchange*, a newsletter which reports on developments in nonpublic alternative schools throughout the country, the life of the average free school is slightly under two years.

"The Most Exciting Thing We're Doing"

"Our students feel that Core is the most exciting thing we're doing." So spoke Penelope Kuykendall, Principal of the Gibbons School—a small alternative high school located on the Douglass College campus of Rutgers University. The Gibbons School was established by the New Brunswick (New Jersey) Board of Education last year when arrangements were made by the university to provide the necessary physical facilities. Since the opening of the school, faculty from the Rutgers' Graduate School of Education have been engaged in an advisory capacity and have been involved in the teaching of various courses at the Gibbons School.

Although the school's physical facilities are modest, Gibbons has attracted considerable interest on the part of Rutgers University undergradu-

ates, a number of whom are serving as tutors and teacher aides at Gibbons. Soon after the opening of the 1974 spring semester, the Rutgers' student newspaper ran a front-page story on the Gibbons School, describing its curriculum. An entire day (Monday) of each week is devoted to Core. The Core curriculum is organized as problem-focused studies of personal-social significance. Students work together and individually in investigating problems and testing their findings under the guidance of the faculty. While some problems and themes are suggested by the faculty, the students also formulate their own problems. And although each Monday is Core Day, the problems investigated in the Core curriculum are correlated with other studies during the other days of the school week.

Interviewed in the Rutgers' student newspaper, students at Gibbons agreed that the school is "a real learning environment."

Core Curriculum

Core Today, a bulletin published by the National Association for Core Curriculum, describes the rationale and implications for interdisciplinary, problem-focused, pupil-centered, guidance-oriented programs—known by such names as core, common learnings, unified studies, block-time, and humanities.

Single copies of *Core Today* are available free of charge by enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope with each request to Gordon Vars, National Association for Core Curriculum, Education Building, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio 44242. Multiple copies are available at 25 cents each.

Core Curriculum Convention

The 1974 convention of the National Association for Core Curriculum will be held in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, a suburb of Kansas City, October 21-25. The convention will be hosted by the Shawnee Mission Schools, a district with a student enrollment of 43,000. Over 10,000 of these students in ten junior high schools are enrolled in a core program called unified studies. For further information on the convention, write the Association at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio 44242.

Teacher Exchange Program

The Experiment in International Living and the U.S. Peace Corps are developing a unique teacher exchange program. It is designed to exchange qualified and experienced teachers from various parts of the world for teachers from the United States. For information write to the Teacher Ambassador Program, The Experiment in International Living, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301.

Oral Read-In

Recently, Forest Grove Elementary School in Montgomery County, Maryland, held an all-school oral read-in. Teachers and children signed up to read selections of their choice (limited to five minutes) over the school intercom. For fifteen minutes, every hour on the half hour, participants read while teachers and children listened in their classrooms.

Some objectives for the oral read-in, according to reading teacher Nancy Serwer, were:

1. To encourage oral read-

ing as a tool for personal, social, and academic enjoyment

2. An ego-strengthening experience for some children

3. To recognize adjusted rate of reading to nature and purpose of the material (as in poetry vs. a sports article)

4. To stimulate interest and to deepen appreciation in a variety of written material

5. To provide communication with the listeners.

Programs for Problem Youngsters in Hawaii

"We've heard this is a place we can go back to school. What can we do to get in?" This is a question frequently heard at the Olomana Youth Center in the Windward District of Hawaii. Those who pose the question are dropouts who just walk in or are referred to the center by counselors, youngsters from the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility, and former occupants of the adolescent ward of the State Hospital (which serves the mentally ill.)

Each youngster receives individual testing and counseling. Any individual who shows symptoms of possible brain dysfunction goes through intensive testing by the neuropsychological unit at the State Hospital. Where there are brain disorders, a neuropsychology service assists in structuring training programs which can help the individual in compensating for or overcoming the problem.

At the Youth Center, there is a classroom for individualized instruction in academic skills and other rooms for vocational training. Although the setting is informal and the students have much freedom of activity, each knows exactly what he has to do and accepts responsibility for his own work.

A contract system is used in developing each student's program. Of 150 youngsters in the program during the fall quarter, only four failed to meet the terms of their contract. (Three others got into trouble again in the community and were returned to the correctional facility.) Thus far, 18 have received their high school diplomas. Meanwhile, the word has gotten around and there is a waiting list to get in.

The Curriculum and the Energy Crunch

At a recent school board meeting Superintendent Joseph Manch of the Buffalo Public Schools recommended that the study of the conservation of energy be given new emphasis in the curriculum. A curriculum committee composed of teachers, students, and administrators is now working on an energy resource guide to be used in all schools.

Interdisciplinary Program

The University of Vermont's College of Education and Department of Anthropology have jointly established a broad-field social studies program for the certification of secondary school teachers. The aim of the program is "to provide prospective teachers with an understanding of Man as a social, cultural, and biological being in historical perspective." The program is focused on "Man's biocultural evolution; his social, economic, and political organization in different times and places; and his cultural creativity, technology, arts, folklore, and language," and combines the study of anthropology with the study of history, economics, geogra-

phy, political science, and sociology.

For further information, write to Paul Magnarella, Anthropology Department, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont 05401.

International Cooperative Programs

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the School of Education at the State University of New York at Albany will be conducting a summer institute on British Life and Innovation in Education in cooperation with the University of Manchester (England), June 24-July 22. The institute will be held in England at the University of Manchester and will carry three semester hours of graduate credit.

The same universities will be sponsoring an International Cooperative Program during the 1974-75 academic year with a focus on the open classroom and individual-progress instruction. The first term will be spent on the Albany campus, followed by a spring term at the University of Manchester. The program will lead to the M.S. degree in Curriculum Planning and Development.

For further information concerning the summer institute or the academic-year program, write to: Department of Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, State University of New York at Albany, Albany, New York 12222. □

Freedom Fund for School Publications

The Journalism Education Association has established a Press Freedom Fund and a "hotline" phone service to assist teachers and students with any censorship problems encountered with school pub-

lications. The Fund was an outcome of an incident at Torrance (California) High School last year when a faculty adviser to the student newspaper was dismissed for having ignored the Rotary Club's "ethics test" in screening school news items. The case is being decided in the U.S. District Court. The teacher, who has brought suit against the district, has charged that his First and Fourteenth Amendment rights were violated.

Job Guide

The Richmond Public Schools and Virginia Commonwealth University have jointly produced a 170-page *Job Guide for Richmond Area High School Students*. Firms which are listed include many of the area's leading employers. Each firm was asked to list the different categories of employment which it could offer and the number of positions it has. Also included is a brief description of the duties each job requires, a summary of needed qualifications, and a statement of working conditions.

The guide is intended to be used in counseling high school graduates who go directly from the classroom into the labor market.

Great Debate

When construction began on a new high school in the Murray Hill section of Manhattan last year, the New York City Board of Education announced that the new school would be named after Norman Thomas, the late socialist leader. However, residents of the Murray Hill district have launched a campaign against "Norman Thomas" and have opted to have the school named

after Chester A. Arthur, who succeeded the assassinated Garfield as President of the U.S. in 1881. During the 1870's Arthur served as Collector of the Port of New York and was linked with the corrupt political machinery of New York City in that time. As President, Arthur probably is best known for having supported the Civil Service Reform Act of 1883.

Resurgence of the Arts

During the era of the cold war and space race, the arts were regarded as "frill" studies. However, in recent years the arts have become increasingly popular among students. In New York State, for example, the number of teachers of music and visual arts has doubled during the past decade.

Self-Understanding and Personal Development

Proceedings of the 1973 Invitational Conference on Testing Problems is available through Educational Testing Service at \$3.00 per copy. The theme of the 1973 *Proceedings* is "Measurement for Self-Understanding and Personal Development." Included in the *Proceedings* are a paper by Lawrence Kohlberg on "The Uses and Abuses of Moral Stages," and a symposium on "The Contribution of Measurement to Self-Understanding."

Separate audio cassettes for each of the five major presentations in the *Proceedings* are available at \$5.00 each. For copies of the *Proceedings* or for further information on the cassettes, write to Invitational Conference on Testing Problems, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey 08540. □

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