



Education in the New Industrial State

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One approaches the goals of education with some trepidation because they are almost always abstract, considerably obtuse, and generally very difficult to articulate in precise language. The average parent, when asked what he wants for his child, gets bogged down in clichés. "I want my child to be happy and be prepared to make intelligent decisions about his daily life. He should have the necessary skills to function effectively and should face adulthood with as much knowledge of past centuries as the schools are able to give him."

These are admirable goals, and professional educators would certainly agree with them; however, they are not adequate in themselves to indicate to us whether the direction in which society is moving has been taken into consideration. Hence, the

validity of the educational goal is dependent upon societal direction.

Children go to school daily and experience various ways of teaching. Reading, science, social studies, mathematics, art, physical education, and other subjects are based on disparate goals if set by individuals with different conceptions of the future and what the child's role in it *should* be. Furthermore, the incidence of school failure increases when curriculum decisions are made by a small group of technical experts who, because of their academic orientation and areas of specialization, are thrust into a policy-dictating position. Their voice should not be the sole criterion for policy implementation. A wider range of views should be taken into consideration when making decisions regarding education, otherwise, we may accom-

modate ourselves unwisely to administrative efficiency.

Much of the uncertainty toward the future is due to conflicting beliefs, attitudes, and values about the direction of society. Such diverse opinion should be encouraged and not reduced.

II

One of the more popular theses on societal direction is set forth in John K. Galbraith's *The New Industrial State* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1967). Some of Galbraith's concepts are related to education. These are primarily economic and are considered quite controversial.

As sophisticated technology increases within large American corporations, certain convergent tendencies become identifiable. The vast complexity of the enterprise requires comprehensive planning as a neces-

sary basis for production. Accompanying this are far greater amounts of capital committed more rigidly to the goal of production. In 1903, the Ford Motor Company, comprising 125 men, produced their first automobile in four months with total capital of \$150,000. All the parts for this automobile were bought locally and no engineers were required. Sixty years later (after undergoing radical change) Ford produced the "Mustang." The production costs of the "Mustang" were in excess of \$60 million. The company employed 317,000 people and had assets of \$6 billion. All parts for the "Mustang" were especially designed, tested, and produced for this automobile alone. Once the decision to produce the "Mustang" was made, it was virtually impossible to deviate much from planned production. The technology required for this type of production requires great organization and planning. Greater specialization requires more extensive planning and increased technical knowledge. When such a large-scale economic venture is undertaken by industry, the risk of losing capital must be reduced. Indeed, most large companies have virtually eliminated risk and have not had a loss for decades. If the decision to buy a product were left to the consumer, we would have a supply and demand type economy with the usual and necessary risks attacked. Galbraith argues however, this type of economic myth persists in the United States only among the uninformed. No large industrial organization today can afford to allow the consumer to make decisions which could destroy the corporation. Advertising has become the instrument by which organizations control consumers. Through very sophisticated and well researched educational devices, centering upon such things as status, social acceptance,

prestige, and sex, advertising now has to convince the consumer of his "need" for the product. Advertising devices, although judged by non-Westerners as juvenile, are absolutely essential to the success of big business. Without advertising and its attendant media, also controlled by the industrial complex, no such control would exist. What the housewife, who believes she is the "tiger" of the supermarket, forgets is that her choice does not make or break companies since they collectively control the available alternatives. Nor does she usually consider that the reason she bought a particular brand of soap or deodorant is connected with a well-organized advertisement.

The type of knowledge required by modern technology is very sophisticated and increasingly must come from groups, not individuals. No single person, however well qualified, has sufficient technical knowledge; hence, the concept of the organizational man becomes more acceptable and necessary. Invention of a color television set is clearly beyond the capacity of any single individual; but like all technical inventions, it is within the capacity of a group of well-organized specialists. It may be possible for a boss to call in a worker like a plumber and say, "Tell me everything you know about plumbing." This becomes impossible when the worker is a computer expert. When technology requires this type of knowledge, some power passes from those with the organizational authority to the employees who have the know-how. Only in simple organizations like the Boy Scouts and in some areas of the military does complete power remain at the top. Decisions made by a group or committee cannot be reversed by a single individual.

Another aspect of big business is that maximum earnings are no

longer the primary goal of corporations. Earnings are secondary to growth. With corporate power passing from owners to managers, technicians, and scientists, decisions are made in the interest of these technocrats and not the owners' interests. For this reason, growth becomes primary. The technocrat is identified with the corporation because it gives him an opportunity to pursue interests, similar yet not identical to the corporation. The growth factor involves ego, prestige, greater responsibility, and aspects of "empire building" which cannot be separated from the corporation. The relationship between owner and technocrat is truly symbiotic. The industrial state is not confined to private corporations; indeed, economic concepts in both public and private corporations are almost identical. Historians of the future will marvel at the fine distinctions placed between public and private. To view General Motors, Ford, or Westinghouse as private concerns presently requires some imagination. Here we get into a somewhat political question. If the technocrats in modern industrial concerns have power separate from owners and exercise it in their interests, not the owners, which is predominantly growth and secondarily profit, they must do so with freedom from interference. This is a kind of technological oligarchy which may not be undesirable. The power given to technocrats accompanies the responsibility of insuring success. If the venture fails, they are through. There will be Edsels as well as Mustangs.

If democratic controls were applied to internal corporate structure, many corporations would fail. For this reason, most public (democratic type) concerns do not succeed. Presently, all public concerns in India and Ceylon, countries having difficulty amassing capital, operate at a

loss. Many public concerns in the United States don't fare much better. It would appear that democratic socialism cannot be successfully applied to large-scale industrial enterprises since decision making, to be administratively efficient, must rest in the hands of few.

It should be clear that fundamental industrial decision making, e.g., whether to make a Mustang or a missile is also concentrated in the hands of a very few. When these types of basic decisions are made by an industrial complex capable not only of production, but of consumer manipulation by advertising, only then can one realize the power of the industrial state.

To believe that growth and technical progress is synonymous with the public good is a myth, but if this notion is accepted, we will spend our lives in servitude to the industrial establishment. Our young people seem increasingly aware of this danger. Acceptance of the idea that the needs of the individual are necessarily convergent with the needs of the industrial system is only half a step from the view that any opposition to the industrial system is anti-growth, anti-social, and eventually un-American. The aesthetic dimension of life is perhaps the only sphere beyond the control of the industrial complex. Therefore, the system does not like the artist because of his unwillingness to be administratively organized, but likes scientists and engineers who are the lawful prey of the system.

If progress is measured by the yardstick, does it pay? If so, then we have written off the aesthetic dimension of life. There is no reason for aesthetics to pay. Indeed, economic goals should be subservient to aesthetic ones or we have doomed ourselves to a monopoly of social purpose. But what has all this to do with the goals for education?

III

Perhaps the major social institution in a position to reverse this trend in the industrial "establishment" is public education. Students at any level must not be subjugated to organization efficiency. The highly technical knowledge which is necessary for the industrial system to function is abundant on college campuses. Because of the changing nature of such knowledge, colleges and universities may be the only sources of expertise for industrial concerns. But the chemistry or physics professor who is on the payroll of a local industrial concern will reflect the industrial value norms in his classes since no knowledge is transmitted separate from values. Anyone who performs research for industrial groups accepts the goals of the system. It is easier to receive research grants to investigate industrial problems than aesthetic ones. Universities are in the best position to act as a conscience for the industrial system, but they can only be free to do this when they are not accommodating themselves to any industrial, clerical, social, or political group. However, universities are made up of very complex, diverse groups who represent many shades of values that exist in society. Because of this, universities cannot be controlled as easily as other educational levels.

The elementary and secondary public schools are more susceptible to the press of the middle-class whose values parallel the industrial "establishment," than are universities. They have a captive audience which has very little part in deciding curriculum, methodology, and evaluation procedures. A recent education report on the schools disturbed the nation. This report, one of the largest ever conducted by the Office of Educa-

tion, is entitled "Equality of Educational Opportunity" and is more popularly known as the "Coleman Report" after James S. Coleman, the study group chairman. The report is praised by the critics of education and hotly disputed by the educational "establishment" which satisfied with the status quo. The report states that physical and economic resources, including teachers' salaries, library facilities, laboratories, school size, guidance facilities, ability grouping, textbooks, and school programs made little difference to student achievement. Indeed, the largest single factor which affects student achievement is the social environment in which the child lives and that remains largely outside the control of the school. What this means if one accepts Coleman's results, is that any attempt to educate children separately from the environment of the child will have little effect upon his individual achievement.

Although Coleman's methodology is questioned, the results of the study are widely accepted by educators, but his recommendations are subject to sharp controversy. The point I wish to stress is that Coleman suggests schools be opened to private enterprise, i.e., large companies such as IBM, SRA, and Westinghouse be allowed to develop programs in, say reading, for children. The parent would have the right to send his child to public school or to any of these companies which he thought would serve his child best. The companies would compete against each other and the school. The incentive would be a larger percentage of public support to the efficient organization. This would weed out the inept schools and the concentration would be upon results. Coleman is suggesting exactly what should be avoided, namely, making the schools serve the industrial system. The values transmitted through a private

corporation's reading program could be in direct opposition to the broader goal of education which is to stimulate effective thinking. To follow Coleman's recommendation is to surrender, objectively for efficiency measured by standardized tests.

Locally, the Department of Education (DOE) has unveiled a plan for reorganization around a more centralized administration which resembles the industrial model. A major difference in the DOE's plan is that those few men at the top of the bureaucratic structure would be responsible for decision making. They would retain their present curriculum-centered orientation.

Coleman and the DOE may just be swapping mistakes. By passing degrees of control to industrial concerns, Coleman would reduce the capacity of the school to act on the social environment and to be objective. The DOE could effectively reduce the capacity of schools to educate youth by placing the power with the curriculum-oriented specialists who are at the top of the organization. This can effectively reduce the teacher's role to that of a teaching machine. When you reduce a teacher's role, you also reduce her initiative. One fails to see how massive administrative reorganization is going to increase the Department's capacity to help children in Hawaii. There are great advantages in having the administration of Hawaii's schools under one unified control, and many states could benefit from this type of a plan. However, when power in a centralized administration gathers at the top (unlike that of industrial concerns), local initiative is lost. The teacher or principal presently has a difficult enough time effecting change at the district level. To push the control even higher would reduce the function of a teacher to that of an administrative expeditor. Teachers in general

will not fight state committees; they will quit first or even worse, give up psychologically.

If Coleman's findings (separate from his recommendation) are correct and the social environment of the child is the most important factor determining student achievement, the role of the school needs to be modified. Modification must include broadening of the school's role to effect such social environment. The DOE reorganization plan would increase the capacity of the school to gather pertinent social data about the child by the use of census tract information and to redirect school boundary lines which closely approximate that of the census tracts. However, at this point, such social data requires local initiative and control over a broad range of issues, not just predetermined short-range curriculum packages.

The creation of curriculum commissions comprised of university professors and lead teachers from the local schools will not solve the problem either. These are viewed by the non-lead teachers as being peripheral to education. Since it is the non-lead teachers who must eventually administer the package, the success of such a plan lies in their hands.

It would appear that the DOE has embarked upon a very risky course. In constructing a model similar to that of an industrial concern several different factors are unexplained. Because the technocrats in industry are free from interference from both the top and the bottom, they are willing to gamble on their future and guarantee success. No such freedom can exist at the DOE. State agencies are much more accessible to a broad range of criticism which can and should come from anywhere. Few of Hawaii's pedagogical bureaucrats would gamble their future on the success of the reorganization proposal.

Response—*continued from page 9*
Education purposes emancipation. Emancipation means the realization of one's identity, of one's manhood or womanhood. As the man in Watts said after the riots there, after he had smashed shop windows and turned-over cars, after he had taken the loot home: "For the first time I felt like a man."

Underlying the relatively high crime rate among Samoans and Hawaiians, I think, is the same basic motivation that drove the man in Watts. Crimes by and large are the products of anxiety, frustration, and fear. The "culture of poverty" implies the "cultivation" of anxiety, frustration, and fear. Get Whitey or the Haole, is the motto. They do not recognize that the "good life" advertised on TV emasculates and eventually kills, because in order to become somebody they have to give up what they are.

The task then is to make the minorities proud of the fact that they are different, that they have a culture worth preserving, that they can and must contribute from their perspective to the learning processes in our schools. The U.S. has the means to overcome poverty, given the will to do so. But the ramifications of a "culture of poverty" are much more universal and therefore more difficult to combat. It takes more than money, it takes a vision and its realization. The standard, the criterion for our educational efforts must be MAN in his different manifestations. Not American man, not Japanese man, not Hawaiian man, but all of those in communication with each other. The educated man is a world citizen. It would not be difficult to eradicate poverty in the U.S. The means are available. We must wish to eradicate poverty *and* fear and frustration. That is the ultimate task of education vis-a-vis the "culture of poverty."