ABSTRACT

THE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL THEORY OF
ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

By

Hermione Shantz

Alexander Meiklejohn is one of the most significant educators of the twentieth century. No major study has been completed, however, on either his historical role in education or his philosophical position. The focus of the dissertation concerns the latter as it relates to education.

This statement of Meiklejohn's social and educational theory is undertaken from two perspectives. The first deals with Meiklejohn's involvement in higher education. The primary purpose of this section is to attempt to illustrate the process of development of his educational theory. This part of the study considers his approach to the problems of higher education under the changing conditions of the present century and the relation of his approach to his general theoretical outlook. Of particular concern is an introduction to that conception of liberal education which he argued was relevant to the sustenance of a democratic social order. Meiklejohn's evolving liberal education programs deserve the attention of scholars interested in the education of free men.

Considerable attention is given, therefore, to the point that his conception of liberal education was central to conceptions of teaching, administration, curricular development, and continuing education. Meiklejohn's role in developing experimental innovations should be of particular interest to members of universities who currently are engaged in developing residential colleges and who, concomitantly, are concerned with developing adequate conceptions of, and programs appropriate to, liberal education.

Meiklejohn's conception of liberal education included a concern for the appropriate processes of thought (for logical principles, particularly that of consistency) and the proper use of thought. The use of thought, Meiklejohn held, is to achieve a grasp of the issues of human life in-the-large. The ultimate aim of liberal education, that of developing men with a creative will to overcome the devisiveness which Meiklejohn saw existed between democratic belief and on-going social action, is thoroughly discussed in this perspective of the study.

The second perspective of the dissertation primarily concerns a philosophical analysis of Meiklejohn's social and educational theory. Meiklejohn's quest for a democratic response to the question of what constitutes a truly human existence is considered in relation to his discussion of the meaning of "freedom" and the relationship of this concept to the structure of society and to man's social obligations.

Emphasis is given to the point that Meiklejohn's position on education is irrevocably tied to his position on freedom.

Meiklejohn held that the problem of understanding "freedom" was bound to the problem of determining the proper form of the state. The latter must be evaluated in terms of the question of whether human living possesses a dominant purpose. Meiklejohn's arguments that "fraternity" is not only the fundamental human idea in terms of which such evaluations are to be made, but, also, that "fraternity" provides for the proper form of the state are scrutinized in this study.

The rationale for Meiklejohn's contention that education is basically a political concern forms the second major aspect of this portion of the dissertation. In this regard it was necessary to clarify premises involved in his judgment that man is a creator of self, culture, and reason; and that man is striving to interpret his own intentions as causes in the formation of man's objective, cultural condition.

Particular attention is given to Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence as the key to his theory of liberal education. He stipulated that intelligence is the reasonableness of brotherhood and a process of enacting kindness as the qualitative characteristic of institutions and as a learned disposition of men. The proposition that men are brothers meant for Meiklejohn that all of those activities which are summarized under the term "intelligence" must be expressions

of that kinship. It was from this premise that Meiklejohn's general theory of education was derived.

The concluding discussion of this study concentrates on the topic of the education of the sovereign, the citizen, in a free society. Meiklejohn urged the necessity of re-thinking current conceptions of sovereignty if society is to be democratic. Meiklejohn's conclusion as to what characterizes the genuine sovereign is an extremely important aspect of this discussion. In this context the relation of Meiklejohn's theories of intelligence, freedom, and the fraternal form of the state and his premises concerning the education of the sovereign are joined. This section of the dissertation ends with a statement of the implications of Meiklejohn's theory of education for the function of teaching and for the establishment of specific objectives for liberal education.

The study concludes with a summary commentary on Meiklejohn's social and educational theory.

THE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL THEORY OF ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

By

Hermione Shantz

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Secondary Education and Curriculum

1969

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer highly values the constant encouragement of and effort made on her behalf by her major professor, Dr. Carl Gross, throughout the process of her academic program and specifically in terms of this dissertation.

Dr. George Barnett, Dr. Louise Sause, and Dr. Harold Walsh, members of the writer's guidance committee, have been positive factors in her academic pursuits and similar appreciation is expressed to them for their assistance.

The writer is deeply grateful to Dr. William B. Lauderdale, Miss Ruth E. Renaud, and Mrs. Marshall B. Shantz for their invaluable support and advice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS - Continued

CHAPTER I

THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this study is to effect a comprehensive statement of the social and educational theory of Alexander Meiklejohn. While Meiklejohn is a well-known thinker and educator of the twentieth century, no major study to date has been completed on either his historical role in education or his philosophical position. The focus of this dissertation is the latter as it relates to the study of education.

It is significant to point out that it would be reasonable to pursue a historical study of Meiklejohn because of the significant contributions he made to educational movements in America. He initiated and carried out an experimental program of liberal education at Amherst College. He developed and headed an experimental college at the University of Wisconsin. He founded the School of Social Studies, an adult education program, in San Francisco. But even though his administration of these three programs encompassed approximately two and one-half decades, beginning in 1912, such activities did not constitute the whole of his contribution in education. However significant as these programs

were, it seems appropriate that any initial study of Meiklejohn focus on the philosophical rationale which he developed and from which these programs grew.

Meiklejohn was a humanist. Although his humanism represents a departure from other modern humanistic positions, its continuity with the whole of western thought is undeniable. Like Plato, he saw educational concerns as containing the most basic questions through which investigations about the good life had to be made. He viewed the good education as crucial to the good society and the good man. He possessed the ability to utilize the best of western tradition to generate new perceptions about his time and his society.

Meiklejohn's preeminence as a historical figure was a result of his engagement in a continuing analysis of philosophic concepts and his ability to meaningfully relate them to current social issues and conditions. His fundamental ability to make his conceptual framework relevant to the existing cultural situation offers contemporary educators an exemplar of significance in their persisting struggles to develop responsible social and educational theories. In addition his work as an educator, particularly his role in developing experimental innovations in liberal arts education, should be of particular interest to those universities which currently are engaged in developing residential colleges. Meiklejohn's efforts to conceptualize "liberal arts" in terms that would be constantly relevant to the social situation

might aid university personnel who have embarked, comparatively recently, on a similar quest.

Meiklejohn's long career was bound to higher education. He was concerned with the critical question of the function of higher education in a democratic society. He increasingly became involved with the problem of the meaning of democracy and viewed its clarification as the problem crucial to the task of rightly directing society's improvement and, consequently, as crucial to the task of giving legitimate direction to the role of the institution of education.

The question of the meaning of democracy had become urgent in a century which had seen virtually the total restructuring of society's institutions. It is not necessary to review those economic factors of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries which have yielded the description of ours as the "new industrial state."[1] Necessary changes in basic institutions have emerged with the development of this technological society. If one were to characterize the general nature of these changes, one might begin by noting the quality of interdependence which has come to undergrid all significant human activity. Existing institutional forms to

---

[1]John Kenneth Galbraith, The New Industrial State (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967). Galbraith gives serious attention to defining contemporary aspects of an industrial state and deals at length with the quality of interdependence which characterizes that state.

an extent exemplify the fact that men have organized their lives in terms of corporate ends.

The increasingly corporate character of American society has affected not only the organizational nature of the educational institution but has raised fundamental, and continuing, questions concerning the purposes of education in a democratic state. Of critical significance is what Dewey has called "the tendency to combination in all phases of life."[2] As he pointed out in The Public and Its Problems, this tendency is manifest as diverse and competing publics.[3] The growth of a strong democracy depends on the correction of chaotic social conditions which have accrued from divisive publics. This necessitates the realization of a legitimate unification of purpose among publics. In this endeavor the school must play a role. It was essentially in terms of this context that Meiklejohn faced the problem of the purposes of higher education.

Historically the broad issue regarding higher education in the United States revolved around concepts of liberal education versus utilitarian education. Various advocates have not argued merely for one perspective or the other nor have arguments been confined to discussions between those holding

---

[2]John Dewey, Individualism Old and New (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), p. 36. Dewey's chapter entitled "United States, Incorporated" offers a cogent discussion of the changed nature of society.

[3]Dewey, The Public and Its Problems (Denver: Allan Swallow, 1954).

these two opposing concepts. But the lines of argument were never clearly drawn as advocates of a liberal education proclaimed its utility and proponents of a utilitarian curriculum laid claim to its liberating functions. Beyond this there were diverse meanings attached to conceptions of liberal education, as there, also, were diverse meanings attached to conceptions of utilitarian education. Obviously, then, substantial controversy existed regarding such concepts as the nature of school curricula. In fact, several liberal educational points of view gave rise to perplexing questions. Does a liberal curriculum mean study of the classics for mental or intellectual discipline? Does a liberal curriculum aim at the development and discipline of men's faculties? Does it mean education for culture, understanding "culture" as that which signifies something like the acquiring of taste and good character?

Traditional arguments regarding liberal education and utilitarian education have never completely dissipated. But in the nineteenth century they did begin to fuse into a new approach. This new direction of thought was referred to as "new humanism."[4] Insight into this position was reported by Veysey in his discussion of the controversies surrounding higher education during the post-Civil War decades.

---

[4]Laurence R. Veysey, The Emergence of the American University (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 180-261.

> Of the many attacks upon scientific specialization which were uttered by the friends of culture during this period, only one appears to have contained a truly practical suggestion for carrying on the struggle. Josiah Royce, addressing the graduate students at Harvard and pleading with them not to become slaves of their specialities, raised a suggestion that offered important consequences. He advised: "Become conscious of the methods of work pursued in your technical branch of learning." Such awareness, Royce contended, would liberate the observer from routine subservience to his science, hence make "of your technicality a humanity." Study "...the philosophy of your own subject," he urged. The implications of this line of thought were gradually to gain importance during the twentieth century.[5]

Although the strength of the commitments to liberal education has wavered frequently during this century, as when particularly tense social situations have lured us toward educational programs for immediate solution, the problems posed by those continuing to advocate a liberal education as necessary for a democratic society have maintained the attention of scholars interested in the education of free men. Meiklejohn surely was such a scholar and was representative, in fact, of the "new humanism." This is not to say that he stopped with Royce's plea to make each technicality a humanity. It is to say that Meiklejohn extended this line of thought considerably in developing his concept of liberal education. Certainly he viewed liberal education as providing a fundamental condition for the achievement of a required creative response on the part of individuals if we were to move toward effecting more genuinely democratic institutions.

---

[5]Ibid., p. 203.

In Education Between Two Worlds, published in 1942, Meiklejohn wrote this:

> A society which takes the democratic mode of life as its dominant aim is not living without pattern, without general will. It is attempting to create the most difficult, the most complicated, as well as the most sublime, of all social compositions. It can succeed only insofar as the authority of that purpose is accepted by every member of the group. Unless the citizens of a democracy are intelligently, sensitively eager, in every passing situation, to play their proper parts, to serve the common cause of freedom, the theme simply cannot be developed. It breaks down--as today in America it has at so many points broken down--into a welter of clashing meaningless acts. Without cultural authority, there is no social order. Without it, men are not human beings. And to talk of education without it is to use words that have no meaning.[6]

It was Meiklejohn's aim not only to construct a concept of liberal education relevant to a democratic state and the education of free men, but to find the means of actualizing the concept. Ultimately, then, the most persistent concern of Meiklejohn's teaching, whether in classroom, lecture hall, article, book or president's chair, was the development of a definition of freedom. And, although other concepts were recognized as decisive, he spent approximately three decades after "retirement" probing the meaning of freedom as the construct we were in most immediate need of comprehending adequately. For Meiklejohn the clarification of this construct was basic to a sound theory of democracy and, he held, it is only when the latter is attained that an adequate definition of education is possible.

---

[6]Alexander Meiklejohn, Education Between Two Worlds (New York and London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1942), p. 92.

Relevant to the above is the fact that Meiklejohn was in the vanguard in clarifying on the national scene salient issues facing education and the democratic society. Much of his attention after World War II, for example, was focused on the problem of academic freedom, assuredly a crucial aspect of the total problem of freedom. This concern was typified in his December 13, 1957 petition for redress of grievance which was addressed to Mr. Rayburn, then Speaker of the House of Representatives.[7] In it Meiklejohn questioned the constitutional and moral authority of the Committee on Un-American Activities to compel a witness to testify about his beliefs or associations against his will. This activity was only one in a series of many which were intensely centered on clarifying the meaning of freedom. The importance of such activities for education cannot be maximized.

Further, the achievement of a reliable understanding of a principle was, for Meiklejohn, vitally necessary but not sufficient. This was only part of the urgent task.

> ...Every principle, before its work is done, its meaning realized, must find its way into the field of practice, must be a principle of action.[8]

Involved in his constant search for the meaning of concepts was a basic concern about the social significance of the

---

[7]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 156-158.

[8]Meiklejohn, Freedom and the College (New York and London: The Century Co., 1923), p. 33.

cleavage between belief or principle and action. Along with other observers of the American scene, Meiklejohn viewed the separation between our ideals and social realities with intense concern. Certainly Meiklejohn viewed his obligation as centered on overcoming this dualism, since its continuation is fatal to the realization of democracy.

In light of the above, the scope of Meiklejohn's contribution went beyond truth-seeking to the problem of the legitimate application of truth to institutional arrangements. Herein lies, to some extent, the strength of Meiklejohn as a scholar. He gave as serious attention to the prudential matters which are relevant to actualizing a principle as he did to the seeking of the principle itself. A serious investigation of Meiklejohn, therefore, demands emphasis on both of these aspects of scholarship.

It seems appropriate to this rationale to indicate that the writer first encountered Meiklejohn when engaged in research on Rousseau. The discussion in Education Between Two Worlds develops those insights Meiklejohn gained from Rousseau in constructing his own social and educational theory. Further, since the writer found the kinds of concerns Meiklejohn dealt with in that book relevant to her own attempts to develop a theory of education within a general humanistic outlook, and since the cogency of Meiklejohn's approach was most congenial to the author, she decided to pursue his other writings. This program divulged, as indicated, that no

doctoral study as yet has been completed on Meiklejohn's philosophic position.

Organization of the Dissertation

To this point the writer has attempted to portray the kinds of concerns that Meiklejohn found most pertinent. It is obvious that the scope of these considerations is quite large. For this writer to create a lucid statement from such diversity of thinking required that attention be given to the organization of ideas to be handled.

Note might be made here of the evolutionary nature of Meiklejohn's writings. Although Education Between Two Worlds is undoubtedly his major work, no single work is totally representative of his social and educational theory. However, there is a pattern of development in his work. His writings conform to what might be described as the two major periods of his public career. That is, those written between 1905 and 1935 essentially parallel his formal involvement in higher education and are addressed most specifically to questions of educational theory and practice. These are the works that arose out of his particular educational experiences. His later works deviate from this approach only in that his considerations are put in a broader framework. These works center on questions having to do with problems of the nature of society and the meanings of concepts fundamental to the democratic state.

The present study takes both of the approaches indicated above seriously in developing a synthesis of Meiklejohn's social and educational theory. Thus, Chapter II of the dissertation deals briefly with some of the major periods of educational activity in Meiklejohn's life. A sensitivity to his theoretical contribution can be enhanced by viewing it in light of some of his significant activities as a public servant. This chapter illustrates his approach to the problems of education and the relation of the latter to his general philosophical position.

Chapter III is a basic statement of his social and educational theory. Chapter IV aims at the construction of his theory of intelligence as the key to liberal education and hence the development of the democratic man. The task of Chapter V is a clarification of Meiklejohn's position that a theory of society is a theory of education. Although Chapters III, IV and V can be viewed as somewhat particular, they are to be regarded basically in concert. These chapters include a description and analysis of his general philosophy of man, society and education.

This author has alluded to the fact that much of the impact of Meiklejohn's thinking is lost because no synthesis of his position is available. Meiklejohn had that relatively rare ability of seeing specific problems in terms of a basic philosophic framework. The kind of writing he did, however, was of such a nature as to often inhibit the reader's

recognition of its underlying assumptions. The unaware reader loses the continuity that makes Meiklejohn a significant thinker. The endeavor of this dissertation is to establish the reference for viewing his specific concerns relative to his general commitments.

Examination of the writings of Alexander Meiklejohn provided the major source of the material for this dissertation. The task of rendering an intelligible synthesis of Meiklejohn's social and educational theory, as well as that of carrying out the intent of other portions of the study, depended upon a method of reasonableness. Meiklejohn's position is part of the western tradition which regards the logical meaning of "reasonable" as being "consistent with." That is, internal consistency of thought provides the logical basis for assessing the validity of any proposition within a general theoretical framework. In synthesizing his theory and in regarding its relation to application what the writer intends by a method of reasonableness is in harmony. Since the logic of consistency is basic to Meiklejohn's philosophy, it seemed an appropriate method for this study.

Development of the study in its various aspects involved the mechanical problem of documentation; the logical problem of the selection, scope and arrangement of topics and concepts; and the philosophical problem of interpretation. To substantively address the content areas of this dissertation is was necessary to establish and clarify certain concepts, premises

and definitions which were selected as necessary and appropriate to the study's problems. Analyses of concepts and the relational or identical nature of the major aspects of Meiklejohn's theory resulted from a rational appraisal of the literature and, hopefully, meet the requirements of intelligibility and logical consistency. It may be maintained that appropriate and meaningful selection of topics and concepts, correct interpretation, and logical consistency are the sources of validation for the content of this discourse.

CHAPTER II

ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN: EDUCATOR

Introduction

It has been indicated that the various pursuits to which Meiklejohn devoted his life ultimately had as their overarching concern a quest for the nature and actualization of principles fundamental to a free society. Early in Meiklejohn's public service his attention turned to the question of the nature of the free man. Obviously it is impossible to separate these quests in Meiklejohn's thought. For Meiklejohn the domain of action finally made these pursuits inseparable. Fundamentally, the free man was one who acts upon certain appropriate social principles. The complementary quest was, of course, that of determining the education appropriate for the free man.

Historically one first most cogently encounters Meiklejohn's commitment to the education of the free man during his presidency of Amherst College. Prior to his service at Amherst he had studied at Brown and at Cornell, pursuing his graduate studies in philosophy at the latter university. He returned to Brown University in 1897 as an instructor in

philosophy and in 1901 became Dean of that institution. This office was newly invented and consequently held no precedents. Meiklejohn apparently saw his office as possessing concern for the total quality of student life. Here, also, as in each other educational context, his capacity as a teacher was exemplary. His method was Socratic in nature and his use of the dialectical exploration was persistent. He evidently lectured little but questioned with the hope of carving away common-sense definitions and conventional understandings.

During this time, also, he formulated a definition of education. His approach was Kantian in nature, utilizing the distinction between form and content.[1] His exposition was not novel, but his skill at expressing it was persuasive. Broadly, he held, the content of life is found in each individual's nature, desires, needs, opportunities, and circumstance. Out of such content the individual must make a life, an order, a form. Now, for Meiklejohn, since all institutions, church, home, education, provided to human experience both form and content, the process of education was as wide as living itself. What, then, was the meaning of education in its narrower sense?

> ...I think we may say that, as it is the primary business of the church as an educational force to teach the forms of life, the so-called moral laws, as it is

---

[1]Meiklejohn, "College Education and the Moral Ideal," Education, xxvii, 9 (May, 1908), pp. 552-67.

> the primary function of the home and the social group to give training and practice in the application of those laws within familiar fields and under careful guidance, so it is primarily the work of the school and college to open up to the student the content of life. It is the task of the teacher to lead his pupil out of the narrower affairs of self, of home, of friends, of city, of country, to make him acquainted with the world and its values, to widen his horizon, to reveal to him the content of human experience, to show him the possible content of his own living. ...It is not primarily to teach the forms of living, not primarily to give practice in the art of living, but rather to broaden and deepen insight into life itself, to open up the riches of human experience, of literature, of nature, of art, of religion, of philosophy, of human relations, social, economic, political, to arouse an understanding and appreciation of these, so that life may be fuller and richer in content; in a word, the primary function of the American college is the arousing of interests.[2]

The reason for employing this quotation is not to lay claim to its uniqueness as a definition nor to argue whether or not Meiklejohn actually was claiming in his principle of interests that part of the definition of education, indeed, does include the art of living according to appropriate forms.[3] For "interests" are always to be understood as "worthwhile interests." Such a quote does serve, it seems to this writer, as a worthwhile point of comparative departure. Meiklejohn, in subsequent contexts, not only broadened his definition, he

---

[2]Ibid., pp. 557-558.

[3]In this same article Meiklejohn notes the Kantian form of "generosity" to be observed in the ordering of our lives. "If there be any good thing to be had, it is quite as well for me that another have it as that I take it myself. For this principle the distinction between myself and another is unimportant." (p. 555.) It becomes increasingly clear that this form, for one, is part of the definition of education. Ultimately it became, in amended form, crucial to Meiklejohn's concept of intelligence.

confined it and sharpened it. He broadened it by acknowledging as part of his definition that not only was education to be concerned with the quest for appropriate forms of human experience but, indeed, that there were forms that the process of education ought to stress as significant for positive human living.

It was at Amherst that one first sees significant sharpening of his definition of education and more readily encounters the intense commitment to the objective of self-examination. We find that the latter now possessed a more inclusive intention. Self-examination had come to mean examination of the nature of the free man and society and of the obligation the former properly owed to the latter. The ancient debate concerning what constitutes the "educated man" became translated in Meiklejohn's thought and practice to the question of what constitutes the "free man."

Amherst College: Experiment in Liberal Education

Meiklejohn was called to the presidency of Amherst in the fall of 1912. His charge was to reform Amherst, to make its education commensurate with the dimensions and demands of modern life. Between that time and his forced resignation on June 19, 1923, that haven for the leisurely pursuit of a traditional liberal education was to take on qualities resulting from a new notion about liberal education from which Amherst may have "recovered" but which, nonetheless, signalled the initiation of several significant movements in higher

education which were not to disappear from the general scene with Meiklejohn's removal from office. To say, further, that in his efforts to reform Amherst he stirred up some lively questions that have been destined to persist would not be amiss.

The struggle over the purpose of higher education, particularly the function of liberal education, was brought to a focus during Meiklejohn's tenure at Amherst. National and world conditions at that time had convinced him of the essential unreality of the usual institution of higher education. In particular, those institutions predicated on some of the variations of classical conceptions of liberal education seemed variously irrelevant in view of the increasingly complex development of national and international problems and institutional forces.

At Amherst, and later at the Experimental College of the University of Wisconsin, Meiklejohn undertook the reformation of the college into a community. He attempted to weld its individual members into a group with common purpose, that of involving the student in an intellectual adventure which would relate his, the student's, education to the issues of his life and his society. From a contemporary perspective the general ideas expressed above are hardly new. At the time such a perspective within a historically conservative institution was so.

Meiklejohn set the tone for the next eleven years, approximately enough, in his "Inaugural Address" on October 15, 1912.[4] Although his basic message had to do with the mission of the teacher, that of dealing with the life of the mind ("The college is primarily not a place of the body, nor of the feelings, nor even of the will; it is, first of all, a place of the mind."[5]), he gave some attention to a defense against other views of the function of the college, something he was to continue to do particularly between the end of his Amherst career and the termination of the Experimental College at Wisconsin. He considered, in his text, the hostility of those who demanded of the college "practical results" for the commercial and industrial scene. He declared that the liberal college was not to engage in teaching for a variety of purposes, in particular that the special training for the trades and professions appropriately ought to be located in other institutions. Certainly, the professional person has to deal with the realm of ideas and principles, but these have as their dominating aim an immediate practical interest which cuts such ideas and principles off from the intellectual view of the scholar. The function of the liberal college was not to furnish applied knowledge in this sense. Further, in

---

[4]Meiklejohn, "Inaugural Address," Essays for College Men: Education, Science, and Art, chosen by Norman Foerster, Frederick A. Manchester, and Karl Young (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913), pp. 28-59.

[5]Ibid., p. 30.

speaking of the technician, Meiklejohn noted that:

> His primary function as a tradesman is not to understand but to do, and in doing what is needed he is following directions which have first been thought out by others and are now practiced by him.[6]

Lest it be misunderstood, Meiklejohn was not arguing against these kinds of teachings and certainly not arguing that individuals experiencing these teachings should not be liberally educated; to the contrary, liberal education was requisite for each man.

Meiklejohn spoke also of internal misunderstandings about the mission of the liberal college. Friends of the college, students, graduates, trustees, colleagues, misunderstood and in doing so minimized its intellectual ideals or falsified them.

> I have often been struck by the inner contradictoriness of the demand that we have faith in intelligence. It seems to mean, as it is so commonly made to mean, that we must unintelligently follow intelligence, that we must ignorantly pursue knowledge, that we must question everything except the business of asking questions, that we think about everything except the use of thinking itself. As Mr. F. H. Bradley would say, the dictum, "Have faith in intelligence," is so true that it constantly threatens to become false. Our very conviction of its truth compels us to scrutinize and test it to the end.[7]

The "use of thinking," in Meiklejohn's conception, was a conjunction of the appropriate processes of thinking. Neither the proper use nor the proper processes of thinking were a

---

[6]Ibid., p. 32.

[7]Ibid., p. 36.

result of the study of any of the presumed "disciplinary" studies; studies, it was held by some, whose inherent nature would yield the student certain capacities of thought. Meiklejohn conceived of the appropriate processes of thought as being the employment of principles (forms) of logic, the most fundamental of which was the principle of consistency.

> It is a statement of fact that you and I, as our daily life goes on, are thinking multitudes of thoughts which, upon examination, turn out to be contradictory of each other, and which, therefore, must be so modified that they may dwell together in the same thought-system. It is an expression of the principle that our various judgments and descriptions are so related and interrelated that no one of them can be regarded as finally true until it has shown to be consistent with every other judgment of fact made by the same mind about the same world. From this point of view, then, the one fundamental form of mental activity, the one "common element" in all mental procedure is the making of judgments consistent with one another, the construction of a system of judgments within which each of them may find a proper place. In a word, it is...the establishing of order.[8]

It was such distinctive modes of thinking which would allow the individual to systematize his world. In this sense, a distinctive aim of the college was to train minds in the proper processes or forms of thought. But what, then, of the proper use of thought? Broadly, as Meiklejohn conceived the aim of the liberal college, the use of thought was to achieve a grasp of the issues of human life in-the-large, rather than facility in life's special interests and occupations.

---

[8]Meiklejohn, "Is Mental Training a Myth?" Educational Review, xxxvii, 2 (February, 1909), pp. 134-135.

How does this aim differ from the expressed intentions of other conceptions of liberal education? In viewing what the student should study and how he should approach his study we gain some insight into how Meiklejohn viewed the current intention of the college, as well as how Meiklejohn responded to the prudential requirements of this aim.

> And what shall he study? Those things which give unity to human life: the ideas which have, whether we know it or not, made us what we are--philosophy, the history of human thought; then the institutions which express us and mold us--property, the courts, the family, the church, the mill; then the stage on which this drama is played--earth and heavens--geology, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology; next, the history of the past, the pit from which we were dragged or the hills from which we are descended--history; and with these, those burgeonings of the artist mind which thinks in pictures, which sets forth its unified conceptions of all this multiform life in literature, painting, sculpture, music, and architecture. Finally, these studies are to be welded together into an interpretation of the student's own experience and clearly related to the world in which he lives....[9]

What has been stated here has some overtones compatible with those educators who were advocates of "liberal culture." But, not only was the basic tone different, different consequences flowed into innovations in the curriculum and concomitant expectations about student behavior. Not only did Meiklejohn initiate survey courses, but he and his faculty built into these and other innovations certain requirements concerning

---

[9]Lucien Price, Prophets Unawares: The Romance of an Idea (New York and London: The Century Co., 1924), p. 26. Price's exposition of the Amherst experiment is not only one of the most lively and engaging books that this writer has read but informative in terms of the current educational issues and Meiklejohn's role.

the appropriate uses of thought.

A curricular innovation instituted in 1914 perhaps will specify what has been claimed. At that time a course on Social and Economic Institutions was placed into the heart of the freshmen curriculum. The difference between this course and other economic and government courses held by other colleges can be expressed briefly. Amherst's course on Social and Economic Institutions consisted in critical examination of the objectives and merits of our institutions, the inconsistencies between ends and means that any institution might express, as well as evaluations about the compatibility of the ends sought throughout our system of institutions with democratic forms of human association. Those courses held by other colleges were essentially descriptive in character. We encounter here, therefore, an instance of Meiklejohn's intention of overcoming the divisive dualism present in society, and within men, by the creation of a curricular structure which forced students toward a recognition and understanding of our contradictory belief systems and action patterns.

Amherst's survey courses, as expressed in the course on Social and Economic Institutions, were not generalized descriptions of isolated institutional developments as was most often the case in other institutions, but were critical studies designed to focus the student's own experience on his world. The student was persuaded, by this means of

instruction, to examine not only the "reasonableness," in the sense expressed previously, of his social milieu, but concomitantly the dualism between those moral forms expressed in democratic conceptions and actually existent moral forms. In effect, the student, at the start of his college experience, was not only allowed but required to question the foundations of his society, the institutions of property, of church, of mill, and so forth. As Price indicated:

> One of the awkward results of the...years of liberal thought in Amherst College was that it frequently made the sons of upper- and middle-class families zealous to liberate those whom their fathers exploited.[10]

Not only was freedom of inquiry into the institutions of property and the processes of industry tolerated, it was provided for and demanded.[11] The most persistent methodology provided for the achievement of this objective was that of guided discussion, in tutorial as well as in class situations.

The intent of Meiklejohn's conception of liberal education was expressed, also, on the stand he took at Amherst regarding the issue of elective versus required subject-matter areas. It is not surprising that he held that, since the educational institution possessed certain intentions, prescribed subjects indicated that conception of education

---

[10] Ibid., pp. 35-36.

[11] Needless to say, this situation does provide a basis for the reasonable suggestion that Meiklejohn's dismissal was based, at least in part, upon the conflict inherent in the fact that financial support for the college came from men of property and industry. Some of the "loudest" complaints recorded asserted that Amherst was teaching students "how to think rather than what to think."

for which the institution aimed. It is analytic, given this, that an educational institution would become miseducative if the means supplied for the realization of intentions in actuality circumvent or were contrary to them. The elective system might result in the student's attainment of a liberal education, but it would do so accidently. If a liberal education was the intention of the college, the elective system would offer an opportunity for it provided the student were wise enough to make proper choices and if all courses were properly taught. So ran part of Meiklejohn's argument against student election of subjects. Prescribed subjects, as instruments, were indicative of the fact, according to Meiklejohn, that some educational conception was actually aimed for rather than merely hoped for.

Further, Meiklejohn articulated an additional position, familiar today, on the issue of means-ends relationships. The splitting up of human knowledge into a multitude of departments, each with its own specialized provinces, not only called the elective system into further question but afforded little chance for the realization of the essential unity of knowledge. Lacking this understanding, Meiklejohn argued, meant the defeat of the aim of the liberally educated man. Once more, education dominated by special points of view failed in realizing what men needed to know in order to live intelligently. The order men gave to their lives on the basis of the former was actually no order, lacking in

the appropriate requisites of the uses and content of thought.

Meiklejohn's conception of education, as evidenced in the Amherst experiment, possessed the notion that intelligence is a process. That is, not only did "intelligence" include an impartial scrutiny over any given problem, an attitude of openness, questioning, and receptivity, it grew to include a dimension that is expressed in the phrase "a will to create." The idea of intelligence as a liberating and/or creating force, again, was not novel in the abstract, but how it was expressed in the life of the community certainly was so. To view an exciting manifestation of this, one has only to record that in spite of war and a post-war conservatism this idea appeared in the establishment, on the part of the members of Amherst, of workers' classes in the mills and industrial cities of Holyoke and Springfield, Massachusetts. These classes, in economics, history, municipal government, even in writing and reading, were managed in collaboration with the Central Labor-Unions. It would be beside the present point of discussion to more than note the reasonable supposition that this sort of thing ultimately was not to Meiklejohn's credit in the matter of his continuation in the presidency of the college and possibly represents one of the origins of those expletives, "socialist," "communist," that were to be charged against him.

What is to the point is to stress the fact that not only was Meiklejohn's conception of intelligence sharpened by the growing inclusion of "a will to create," but how this was evidenced in the practical domain. What this writer has come to term Meiklejohn's commitment to "expanding intelligence" was exemplified in the establishment of the workers' classes. That is, not only does this illustrate Meiklejohn's concern for the freeing of the individual's mind from the limitations of his experiences, but it expressed something significant about "institutional intent." The assumed obligation of Amherst was bound to Meiklejohn's growing articulation of a concept of intelligence basic to the education of the free man. But, such an institutional intent, according to Meiklejohn, obviously could not be merely confined to the individuals at Amherst but must find appropriate expression in the wider society.

In such a manner this aspect of the Amherst experiment expressed an additional, but different, dimension of Meiklejohn's growing answer to the question of what obligation free men owe to society and, further, how this might well be expressed through institutional means. The community of common purpose, previously referred to, was being conceptually and operationally enlarged. In a word, the perspective on the boundaries of the community to which the institutional intent of expanding intelligence was applicable was being broadened considerably. Certainly part of the effect of this

expansion was to contribute to that "awkward result" we found Price commenting on. More to the intent of this dissertation, however, it illustrates Meiklejohn's developing articulation of not only what constitutes the education of the free man and the nature of the free man, as expressed in the concept of intelligence under discussion, but the kind of obligation to society incumbent upon the free man.

Insofar as one might be asked to express in a single proposition what the Amherst experiment was all about, this writer would say that it was about that conception of intelligence as a process and what that process must effect. In commenting on Meiklejohn's baccalaureate address of June 17, 1923, Meiklejohn's last at Amherst, Price noted, in reference to his own query as to what slew the liberal idea at Amherst, the following point made by Meiklejohn.

> He said that the conflict was between two conceptions of intelligence: one, that intelligence is a thing you can have, get, and keep, handed down out of the past by a teacher or by a book; the other, that intelligence is a process--something that you must do.[12]

It is evident that, while the idea may have been "slain" at Amherst, it was to be developed and refined further prior to and, of course, during the Wisconsin experiment. Not only did Meiklejohn's conception of liberal education receive a hearing before the creation of Wisconsin's Experimental College, but there it found further expression in curricular

---

[12]Price, Prophets Unawares, op. cit., p. 168.

innovations and in like commitments referred to in this present discussion. Also, the expression of intelligence as "something that you must do" was found in Meiklejohn's theory of administration, his concept of experimentalism and his additional emphasis on the community idea. Although each of these, some of which have been considered briefly, were relevant to the Amherst experiment, it seems more appropriate to consider them in the context where they acquired more thorough actualization and development.

The following comment by Meiklejohn serves as a transitional statement for our discussion of the Wisconsin experiment.

> It has sometimes been suggested that our man of intellectual culture may be found like Nero fiddling with words while all the world about him is aflame. And the point of the suggestion is not that fiddling is a bad and worthless pasttime, but rather that it is inopportune on such an occasion, that the man who does it is out of touch with his situation, that his fiddling does not fit his facts. In a word, men know with regard to thinking, as with regard to every other context of human experience, that it could not be valued merely in terms of itself. It must be measured in terms of its relation to other contexts and to human experience as a whole.[13]

It appears true that it was in terms of this perspective that Meiklejohn formulated his plan for the Experimental College and in terms of which he and his faculty made decisions in the operational domain. The Wisconsin experiment represented Meiklejohn's most intensive efforts to refine, sharpen, and

---

[13]Foerster, "Inaugural Address," Essays for College Men: op. cit., pp. 38-39.

institutionalize that conception of education which constitutes the education of the free man. In persistently addressing this problem he continuously addressed the problem of the nature of the free man. As noted, the latter was of necessity ever present with the former. It is in Chapter III, however, that Meiklejohn's conception of the latter is directly considered.

The Experimental College: The Community Idea

The controversy surrounding Meiklejohn's dismissal from Amherst received tremendous public attention. The stance of one editorial is clear and representative. In speaking of the trustees of the college, The Nation said this:

> To put the matter more accurately, they did not want a liberal college enough to pay for it. They might have been willing and able to raise the money, but they could not raise the courage and intelligence necessary. To make an Amherst such as they might have had, they found they must shock that great mass of the alumni which, as with all colleges, hangs like a sentimental millstone around the neck of the institution. To make an Amherst such as they might have had, they found they must shock that considerable portion of the faculty which, as with all faculties, sits tight in its safe chair.... The trustees found they must pay for a liberal college by choosing teachers who now and then might get themselves talked about in the world as the holders of novel doctrine; they found they must pay for it by making it easy for the students to become questioners of the established order.... Had these men been anything but timid, short-sighted trustees, they must have seen that no price is too high to pay for what they had in 1923 gone a long way toward developing. You cannot pay too much for liberty, for the free exercise of the intelligence, for the untrammeled quest for truth and beauty.[14]

---

[14]"A Chapter Ends at Amherst," The Nation, cxvii, 3026 (July 4, 1923), p. 5.

John Merriman Gaus perhaps gave a more charitable and perhaps a more reasonable assessment in his elucidation of the conflict between the new "Meiklejohn men" and older members of the faculty: in his consideration of the lack of fusion of older educational traditions with new approaches which Gaus, at least, saw as potentially possible; in his discussion of the criticisms of Amherst's relinquishment of faculty responsibility for student conduct to the students themselves. In effect, Gaus reviewed those issues which resulted from the overall necessity of integrating new courses, new men, and new relationships with what was "best" in the old.[15]

In any event, the issues raised from the heart of the Amherst controversy became critical points of discussion in the public domain and held consequences which struck beyond this particular college into the broader field of education. What <u>is</u> the liberal college? What shall be its kind of teaching? What shall be the nature of its curriculum? What shall be its government? What shall be the office of the president? These kinds of questions became publicly explicit and, in so doing, yielded a dialogue in which Meiklejohn played a critical role. As a matter of fact, Meiklejohn led the discussion of the idea of the liberal college through the 1920's and much of the 1930's.

---

[15]John Merriman Gaus, "The Issues at Amherst," <u>The Nation</u>, Vol. 117, 3026 (July 4, 1923), p. 12.

Meiklejohn's plans for a "new college" originally were based on the creation of a separate institution where the primary conditions of freedom to teach and freedom to learn were to be protected by a minimum of administrative machinery and no trustee control. In January of 1925, Meiklejohn's article, "A New College: Notes on a Next Step in Higher Education," appeared in The Century Magazine.[16] This article was somewhat in the nature of a report on what Meiklejohn and some of his associates, in planning for a new college, felt might be done. Meiklejohn argued for a small college, of a two hundred fifty or three hundred student body membership, in order that its faculty would be small in number.

> The besetting difficulty of the colleges just now is confusion. They are acquiring many millions of dollars and are doing many hundreds of things. But in the midst of it all there is a conviction of relative futility, of scattering of effort. From this futility only one body can save us, and that is the faculty. It seems to us the first essential, then, that the attempt be made so to form and place a faculty that it will become a coherent, self-determining body, definitely committed to a well formulated purpose, and directing all its efforts, individual and corporate, to the realization of that purpose. It is for the sake of this coherence, this unity, that we chiefly need smallness.[17]

Meiklejohn pursued this argument within the context of considering the dual function of the teacher--that of scholarship, the making of abstract knowledge, and that of instruction. The stress resultant from this dualism, the separation of

---

[16]Meiklejohn, "A New College: Notes on a Next Step in Higher Education," The Century Magazine, cix, 3 (January, 1925), pp. 312-320.

[17]Ibid., p. 312.

these roles or functions, was the reason, so ran the argument, for the loss of coherence and unity of purpose within our colleges.[18] The proliferation of knowledge, the scope, methods, and content of research, had yielded separate fields, each with its special presuppositions and techniques. The increasing conglomeration of knowledge had thrown the aim of instruction to the area of specialities.

> We no longer have, if we ever had, instruction in intelligence. We now have instruction in a number of subjects.[19]

The problem of the dualism of functions and the problem of instructional content was joined to a final argument, the inevitable transformation in the modes of living determined by knowledge and the uses of knowledge, substantiating the need for a new educational institution. Meiklejohn was a progenitor of those educators today who are arguing for a more pertinent conception of education based on the recognition that what men will need to deal with in the future, due to the rapid transformation of modes of living, will be very different from the present. How are men to be educated in order to cope adequately with a changing future? For Meiklejohn the question was how are men to be educated for freedom in order to cope adequately with the changing future?

---

[18]Once more, we are faced with a familiar concern. But historically Meiklejohn was one of the first to articulate it and, on the basis of the strain imposed on higher education, proposed the small college. Certainly roots of the current residential-college movement are found here.

[19]Meiklejohn, "A New College: Notes on a Next Step in Higher Education," op. cit., p. 313.

The above concerns formed the essential basis for substantiating the necessity for an experimental college. The overall objective of the enterprise, as stated, was to "start the student toward intelligence in his living...."[20] The prudential conditions of the experiment, then, were to attempt to correct the problems referred to by serving as the means to this end.

The rationale having been established for the new college, Meiklejohn then proposed a new starting point for instruction. That point was conceived to be the study of two civilizations rather than a collection of subjects. Freshmen were to attempt to become acquainted with an ancient civilization as a whole and sophomores with a modern one. In speaking of the study of these two civilizations, Meiklejohn remarked that:

> ...Our principle is fairly clear. The college is trying to get the student to make for himself an understanding of himself and of the society in which he is living. We wish him to know this not simply in some of its aspects, but as a total human undertaking. ...If we could get him to engage in the attempt to know each of these in itself as a unity and also by similarity and contrast with the other and with the present, we think we should have him on the road to liberal education.[21]

The ancient civilization was to be Greek, especially study of the fifth century Athenians, although the claim was made that other civilizations could have been chosen to achieve the same purpose. Study was to be "analytic" and "appreciative." The philosophers were to be studied in order

---

[20] Ibid., p. 314.

[21] Ibid., pp. 315-316.

to share with them the problems of philosophy; the orators were to be studied in order to share with them the political, economic, and social situations with which they dealt. In effect, the student was not only to share, insofar as possible, the choices for living that men made but to understand how these men made one of the great attempts to understand the human situation. The modern civilization to be studied as yet was undetermined, although Meiklejohn thought some episode of the nineteenth century would be appropriate. As a matter of fact, modern industrial America was subsequently chosen.

> ...We think that out of these two views of western civilization, first at its beginnings and then at its next to latest point, the student would get a sense of the human process as a whole. He would see that life had determining conditions and that their effects are definite and continuous. And also he would get a notion of what our future is likely to be and how it can be shaped and molded by human folly and human wisdom.[22]

What then, of the actual experiment itself? The above plan had been written when Glenn Frank was editor of The Century Magazine. In 1926, Frank, as President of the University of Wisconsin, provided the opportunity to put the plan into action. Although the "new college" originally was discussed as a separate institution, it, obviously, was felt that it could be incorporated into a university structure. Indeed, conditions at Wisconsin were receptive. A university committee report, written in 1925, cited concern for the quality of teaching and for the rapid growth of the university

---

[22]Ibid., p. 317.

which had resulted in disarticulations of purpose and function; it lodged special criticisms against large classes; it stressed the need for closer adviser-student relations; and so on. The report, in essence, called for a reconsideration of teaching and of social arrangements with particular reference to sophomores and freshmen.[23] It apparently was Frank's conviction that the experimental situation proposed by Meiklejohn set up within one of the great universities would provide new effective leadership for higher education.

Meiklejohn became professor of philosophy and Chairman of the Experimental College in 1926. In 1927 the experiment began. The discussion that follows singles out those aspects of educational practice which this writer judges significant in terms of Meiklejohn's concern for the actualization of ideas. In this instance, therefore, some of the major conceptions about and means utilized to meet the developed concept of the liberally educated man will be discussed.

The unique opportunity afforded to Meiklejohn was a more exact interpretation of and establishment of the conditions for the community idea that was referred to in the discussion of the program at Amherst. The aim of the Experimental College was to effect the conditions wherein its members

---

[23]It should be noted that reference to the "Annual Report of the University of Wisconsin," University of Wisconsin, 1925, is based upon remarks made by Meiklejohn in his book The Experimental College. This Report was not published.

could share intellectual experiences completely. The key to achieving the principles of a liberal education was conceived as being intellectual compactness; simply, a structure that demanded the cross-fertilization of ideas. The problem which the University of Wisconsin was trying to assess through its Experimental College was how young Americans could be made more intelligent. The core of the experiment was the supposition that a social unit defined along intellectual lines was worth investigating as a potential answer to the problem.

What were the means utilized to achieve the community idea? Certainly residential isolation was considered necessary as was voluntary membership in the experimental community. The overall primary necessity was to focus the members of the college on the unifying idea itself. The liberal college idea, for Meiklejohn, contained two essential principles, the first being shared, in his conception, with technical and professional teaching, the second being applied to liberal education alone.

> The principles are these: (1) that activity guided by ideas is on the whole more successful than the same activity without the control of ideas, and (2) that in the activities common to all men the guidance by ideas is quite as essential as in the case of those which different groups of men carry on in differentiation from one another.[24]

---

[24]Meiklejohn, The Liberal College (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1920), p. 25.

The actualization of these principles demanded freedom to teach.

It must be understood, then, that the community idea characterizing the Experimental College cannot be understood except as a conception of freedom. Perhaps this can be clarified best by referring to a discussion in Meiklejohn's book Freedom and the College.[25] In a chapter entitled "To Whom Are We Responsible?" Meiklejohn noted that the "we" referred to those persons in charge of the college, meaning the faculty and the president.[26] He argued that the faculty and the president were responsible neither to students nor to parents nor to the public nor to financial benefactors nor to the alumni nor to the trustees nor to the state. The making and working out of teaching plans were held to be the responsibility of a particular side of the process of education, that of the faculty and president. In this case "we" were considered responsible "for" students, not "to" them. In like manner, Meiklejohn argued against the idea of education as being responsible to any specified group. For instance, he maintained that "we" were responsible in the interest of the public but not submissive to the public's judgments concerning its own interests; donors, if they would keep control of their gifts, would deny the competency

---

[25]Meiklejohn, Freedom and the College (New York and London: The Century Co., 1923).

[26]Ibid., pp. 2-23. This discussion also appeared in The Century Magazine, September, 1923.

to those to whom the gift was made by paying to have their work done, not the work of teachers; alumni were held responsible to "us" since:

> We have spent ourselves in trying to reveal to them the way of high-minded, intelligent living. Through us, in some measure, they have had the best of life's opportunities. We have a right to an accounting of what they have done with it.[27]

But what of the trustees and the state? Meiklejohn acknowledged their legal relationship but argued that this was an essentially superficial one since the rights and duties of scholarship essentially were granted to those in actual charge of scholarship.

> There are, I think, two relationships in which the scholar feels and acknowledges responsibility. The first and lesser of these is the relation to other teachers and scholars, to other seekers after the truth. The second and greater responsibility is that which we feel and acknowledge toward the truth itself.[28]

In terms of the former relationship Meiklejohn talked about the fellowship of learning and in terms of the latter the objective existence of meaning in the world. These relationships were what he conceived teachers, faculty and president, were responsible "to."

The collegial relationship expressed in the fellowship of learning and seeking after truth was the heart of the community's freedom. This small group of teachers and pupils had the authority to exercise together complete freedom in

---

[27]Ibid., p. 13.

[28]Ibid., p. 19.

judging methods, content, and conditions of study. In some further sense, however, the collegial relationship was exercised for the students by the teachers.

> But the essential point is that the collective intelligence of the faculty shall find expression in a concerted plan of action, which, in his own way, every teacher shall accept and every student follow. In a very real sense the course of study lays down the conditions of membership in the college community.[29]

Surely the structure of the community itself was the condition for teaching; in fact, was "teaching." Specific responses to the questions of how teaching ought to be done and what constitutes appropriate teaching acts found their source in the total conception of the community as a "living for teaching." Meiklejohn's plan of teaching was the fusion of content and method as this inhered in the community structure.

> A college...is a group of teachers and pupils, all of whom are reading the same books, trying to solve the same problems.[30]

But surely that definition cannot be comprehended adequately without the view of the broad contextual situation.

It has been noted that the major question the University of Wisconsin was bent on assessing was how young Americans could be made more intelligent. Certainly this question involved the question of how they must be taught.

> How can it be brought about that the teachers in our colleges and universities shall see themselves, not

---

[29]Meiklejohn, The Experimental College (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1932), p. 40.

[30]Ibid., p. 119.

> only as the servants of scholarship, but also, in a far deeper sense, as the creators of the national intelligence. If they lose courage in that endeavor, in whom may we expect to find it? Intelligence, wisdom, sensitiveness, generosity--these cannot be set aside from our planning, to be, as it were, by-products of scholarly pursuits. They are the ends which all our scholarship and our teaching serve. If, then, one is set to inquire how American teaching can be better done, the most fundamental phases of inquiry must concern themselves with the forces which create and fashion the attitude, the life, of the American teacher. The primary question concerning our academic system is not, "What is its effect upon the student?" but rather, "What is its effect upon our teachers?" If we can get them rightly placed in relation to their work, nothing in the world can prevail against them.[31]

This was certainly one of the crucial questions upon which the experiment was focused. How can teachers be "rightly placed" in relation to their work? One of the major factors it was hoped that the experiment would mitigate was that of teachers viewing academic activities as potentially possessed of either equal value or exclusive value in terms of preferred subject-matter areas. Paradoxically, the very forces which had led to the expanded role of higher education, the growth of knowledge and its expanded use in the world, had caused confusion in terms of the need for persistent consideration of the role of knowledge in the life of a people. The growth of knowledge had made it necessary to reshape the content and method of instruction, but such growth itself had precluded the proper reexamination necessary to a sound reshaping. It became critical to experiment with teaching in

---

[31] Ibid., p. 318.

order to discover the right relationship referred to.

The plan of teaching Meiklejohn held now was conceived as having to do with the will and the mind. Teaching must result in the development of the student's will to read and his capacity to read well. Success or failure in teaching could be determined, it was argued, by assessment of the student's capacity for and interest in learning and his active interest in using such capacity. Failure to achieve one or the other or both of these teaching aims meant failure in the plan of teaching itself. But the plan of teaching must be predicated on a new relationship between teacher and teaching. Without this, there would be no constructive plan but, rather, old plans.

What kinds of teaching acts were considered appropriate experimental material? The "personal conference," while not the whole of the teaching scheme, was the basis of the scheme. This method gave best expression, it was experimentally held, to the purposes of the liberal college. The essential quality of the relationship between adviser (teacher) and student was collegial and anti-dualistic both in the sense of method and content being inseparable as well as in the sense of mind being joined to mind.

> Young people must find themselves in the company of, in close and personal association with, scholars who are doing the thinking on which our life as a people depends. It is by contact with such thinkers in their work, that the art of right thinking is best acquired.[32]

---

[32]Meiklejohn, "A New College," The New Republic, xlvi, 593 (April 14, 1926), p. 216.

The personal conference represented a radical departure from then current procedures. Lectures were largely eliminated and teaching depended upon work done by the student himself, within the community framework. The personal conference was augmented by group discussions encompassing both students and teachers.

Further, Meiklejohn stated:

> Throughout the history of mankind the experience of every democratic enterprise reveals the fact that the attempt to deal with men and women, not by compulsion, but by regarding them as free and equal with their fellows is an amazingly difficult and complicated undertaking. Far from saying that during the two years of the lower college the teacher has nothing to do for his pupil, this suggestion implies that at no other point in the educational scheme is the influence of the teacher so vitally important, so tragically decisive of the future character and destiny of the student. Teachers in the lower college are commissioned by society to convey a message to young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty. They are not saying, "Do as you please." Rather, they are saying, "The time has come for your freedom; no one else can give it to you; you must therefore, make it for yourself." And the question of teaching method is, How can that message be delivered effectively?[33]

The Experimental College was an attempt to answer that question. Insofar as the aim of acquiring intelligence was subverted by secondary forces as pressures to learn, motives of self-seeking, the confusion of scholarship with intelligence, and so forth, then genuine education could not take place nor concomitantly, in Meiklejohn's conception, could the development of the free man.

---

[33]Meiklejohn, The Experimental College, op. cit., pp. 121-122.

The plan of teaching which formed the experimental basis of the new college was predicated, further, on the position that the lower college was an episode in the educational process, but a kind of culminating episode for its students. That is, it was considered the highest institution of general training, the formal intention of educating for intelligence. In this sense it became essential to consider the process of teaching as running from the primary school through the college, and, hence, as something to be planned as a single piece of work. It was one of the expectations of the experimental college plan that this idea would diffuse into a dialogue for evaluation, centered on the proposition that education must be cooperatively planned if the essential purposes of schools in a free society were to be realized.

If the special contribution of the lower college was that of general intelligence, what was its relation to the aims of the upper college? What was to follow in the educational scheme? Simply, that the culmination of liberal education laid the foundation for the individual's special activity; that it gave him better apprehension of the human spirit as its proper work in the creative modes of law, art, medicine, and so on.

The focal point of instruction of the new college was as indicated in the discussion of the plans for the college. Now, however, study was regarded as the study of a single topic, the study of two episodes in human civilization.

> To understand a civilization is nothing else than to face and to solve, so far as one can, the questions with which its intelligence is dealing.[34]

Meiklejohn's concern for the unity of knowledge as well as for the community idea was reflected here in his demand that throughout the process of instruction there should run a single dominating scheme of reference. All fields of study were to be covered by this scheme of reference, wherein each field could find its proper place. This conception of an integrated curriculum included the recognition that the quality of intelligence depended upon its capability of being applied in any field.

> ...What do you do in each field as you work within it, what kind of mental operations do you and your students carry on? And here the answer of the typical advocate of integration involves him at once in difficulties with his colleagues, if not also with his own principles. He says, to put it very bluntly, that you will never establish relations either within a field or between fields so long as you are merely seeking specific information. It is only in terms of general problems and general ideas that different fields and different situations are to be understood. What then shall we do with our students as we send them in search of intelligence? By some means or other we must arouse in them an activity in general ideas, must get them possessed of a store of general questions, must teach them to universalize, to infer, to deduce, to connect. In a word, they must think, in each field, about things which are logically significant in that field. They must attempt to understand it as a whole and as in relation to a larger whole.[35]

We are returned again to considerations of the proper forms and uses of thought. The writer now turns to some illustrations of how this principle of integration was pursued.

---

[34] Ibid., p. 72.

[35] Ibid., pp. 48-49.

It is clear that the information that students were to gather in relationship to any problem was secondary to the proper posing of the problem or the proper setting of questions relevant to the problem. The purpose of study was met as it contributed to the student's scheme of reference. For example, it was held that any attempt at an organized understanding of contemporary life must include a distinction between poverty and riches. Understanding this cleavage within human societies and, indeed, between them, was a vital element in the scheme of reference of any intelligent man. How could studies in Athenian civilization teach freshmen about this distinction? The answer to that question, it was maintained, depended upon the answer to a prior question: What does the ordinary youth need done to his mind with regard to the problem? The perspective embedded in the conception of the "scheme of reference" held that what he needed to begin with was not more information about the problem but a more active response to the information he in fact already had. The arousing of response was based upon the immediate experience of each student. It certainly was true, for example, that within the college distinctions between pupils concerning wealth, and consequences stemming from these distinctions, could be observed. The teaching question was, Does each student in fact understand, in a comparative sense, such distinctions? Are they regarded as something to understand or are they simply accepted as a matter of fact?

If an affirmative response was given to the latter, students were failing to achieve in liberal understanding, were failing to become educated. At this point the experience of Athens was raised for teaching purposes. Students studied the record of concern about the distinction between rich and poor. They studied the serious social conditions that resulted in the reforms of Solon. But, coming to know these reforms was not the end of teaching itself.

In general, the whole process was conceived as a device for stirring the student to "see" that with which he already had some acquaintance, to think about what he already knew in relation to the divisiveness within a society based upon distinctions in wealth.

> The chief task of the teacher as he deals with...students is to get their minds active, to give them a sense of the urgency of human need, to establish in them the activity of seeing and solving problems. It is true that they are sadly in need of information, but it is far more true that they need the desire for information. We must set them to work at a task in relation to which information is the material to be used. If they will attempt to build up a "scheme of reference," then for them every new fact will take on significance, every new situation will become an object of active inquiry.[36]

Similar to the arousing of interests previously referred to is this notion of the arousing of activity. The current social values of American life, Meiklejohn maintained, were not inclusive of the educational aim of understanding those social forms which in fact were conducive to the society's

---

[36] Ibid., p. 57.

general welfare. Hence, a primary task was the arousing of activity about social conditions in order to become intelligently grounded in a concern for the general welfare.

A further illustration of the principle of integration: A special assignment for sophomores was added to the two episodes already studied. This was a regional study, a study of an American community of the student's choice. The effort to the point of the last part of the sophomore year had been study of the attempts of two widely differing groups to order and conduct a successful social life. Their endeavors to produce and share goods, their modes of government, their institutions, their arts and sciences; in total, their social conditions and their efforts to create forms of human living had been studied and compared. Adding a regional study, as a third episode in human civilization, held the qualities of producing a liveliness of interest and of confronting immediate and concrete experience in depth of today's society. This teaching problem, it was held, would add significantly in contributing to the making of the student's scheme of reference for the interpretation of human living.

In addition to the above, a final paper was required of all students. For several years this had dealt with The Education of Henry Adams; one year it dealt with Dewey's Human Nature and Conduct. In introducing the paper to the sophomores one of the college teachers, Carl M. Bögholt, wrote:

> The study of fifth-century Athens...revealed the presence in the society of men who criticized existing social arrangements and deplored their effects upon the welfare of the group. The most important of these critics of Greek society was, of course, Plato, whose reflections upon man and society resulted in a view of human nature and conduct which has influenced thought about these matters ever since.
>
> Likewise, as we have found, modern industrial America has its critics, and the literature devoted to the criticisms of existing institutions is increasing in volume. Many of the views expressed, however, leave unexamined the view of human nature, intelligence, its nature and function, which serves as their basis. It will be our purpose during the remaining weeks of the year to make as careful and critical study as possible of one view with respect to these matters that has had wide acceptance. The book that will be used in this study is John Dewey's Human Nature and Conduct. ...Additional books suggested for use in group discussions: Lippman, Walter, Preface to Morals; Krutch, J. W., The Modern Temper; Fite, Warner, Moral Philosophy; Otto, M. C., Things and Ideas and Natural Laws and Human Hopes; Plato, Gorgias, Republic; Tawney, The Acquisitive Society; Zimmion, Alfred, Learning and Leadership.[37]

These illustrations of the nature of the curriculum seem to clearly support that the principle of integration was dominant. Any study was evaluated for its proper quality on the basis of the persistent development of the student's scheme of reference. It, also, seems relevant here to revert to a point previously made, that of the antidualistic nature of the experiment. These identifying examples of the nature of the curriculum give specific illustration of the inseparability of teaching method and study content.

Further, in previous discussion reference was made to the roles of teachers and students in the educational

---

[37] Ibid., p. 421.

enterprise. The point that these roles cannot be understood apart from the community idea has been supported. Involved in the particular characteristics which identified the nature of the collegial relationship among members of the community was Meiklejohn's theory of administration. He had long held that through its corporate thinking, not its departmental thinking, the faculty should decide what the college should be and do. Control of the process of education must reside, he argued, with the scholars who have become clear as to what society needs to have taught. He further argued that the officers of the college should be determined by the faculty. Although the latter was not done, it is clear from both the Amherst and Wisconsin experiments that Meiklejohn considered the office of the president or the office of the chairman as being a faculty office. It may be worth noting here that at the time of the creation of the American Association of University Professors his was one of the first voices raised in protest regarding the exclusion of college presidents. The only legitimate separation between functions, he argued, was that between those legally responsible for administering funds and those in actual charge of creating education. To deny that the president was an officer of the faculty was not only to essentially misrepresent his function but concomitantly tended to throw his role in the direction of carrying out the wishes of the trustees rather than the needs of education. Certainly as Chairman of the Experimental College he conceived

his role as a participant in the corporate voice of the community.

In one sense the aim of the Experimental College can be stated as that of getting liberal thinking done, not excellently, but at all. Meiklejohn and his associates based this modest aim upon their assessment of a society which did not actively seek or value liberal understanding. It is clear that the concept of experimentalism involved in the undertaking rested upon the assumption that the foundations of education were those means that aimed at the creation of intelligence. The encompassing value of the community idea, that which has been referred to as a "living teaching," was aimed at a conception of intelligence that, at large, would serve to reduce the conflicts in society by actively seeking for the institutionalization of democratic forms. It was evident that, for Meiklejohn, the free man was the intelligent man and that the concept of intelligence included a notion of the individual's attainment of the power of self-direction in the affairs of life. At the center of this proposition was the belief that that power could be judged appropriate if the individual was able to see, in any given set of circumstances, the best response which a human being could make to it. In a sense, Meiklejohn was urging something close to wisdom in characterizing intelligence as the power to judge circumstances in terms of their possibility for realizing human values. And he urged wisdom in terms of

the common man who was responsible for making decisions in a democracy.

Meiklejohn was convinced that the most urgent educational question in a democracy was recognizing that while men must be masters of special fields (scholars), it also must be asked whether they could be servants of the whole. This writer believes it is worth renoting how this question permeated the entire concept of the community idea.

> In the contriving of...efficient devices for the destruction of human life the chemist uses all the refinements of skill, of precision, of comprehensive information of which his mind is capable. He does beautiful scholarly work. If, however, we ask, "Should such devices be used, should the nations engage in brutal, mutual self-destruction?" the chemist, as such, replies, "My studies give no answer to that question; it is not in my field." In whose field, then, does the question lie; shall it go by default? ...No scholar, as such, not even the student of politics or of ethics, will take the responsibility for that decision. In the last resort we are drawn back to the makers and enforcers of laws--in a democracy to the legislators and citizens of a community. But in that case we face exactly the dilemma we are trying to illustrate. The mental processes of the ordinary voter, even those of the comic-paper United States Senator, are not highly approved by men of scholarly training. The discussions of a legislature seem to them ill-informed, inaccurate, superficial, unscientific. The decisions of the "average voter" are intellectually quite disreputable. And so there arise the strain between the "expert" and the "common man." The latter must, in the making of practical decisions, have regard for all the results of scholarship. But he cannot possibly know them. ...He cannot be a master of law and politics and economics and art and religion and all the rest. And especially he must be very inept in the face of the task of bringing together into some sort of intellectual order such fragments of these as he is able to gather and interpret. What a sorry mess his thinking is, when compared with the investigations of the scholars! But why is it so bad? Is it because the mind of the common man is inferior in quality, his purpose less keen than that of the scholar? The evidence available gives no support for

> that opinion. So far as one can see, the sufficient explanation is that "practical" questions are much more difficult than those of the scholars. The latter group limits its field.... But in the world of human affairs men cannot be so dainty in their choices; they must meet urgent problems as they come; they deal with problems, not because they can, but because they must.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The lower college uses scholarship, its methods and results, for the developing of young Americans in intelligence. But its primary task is not the education of scholars; it is the education of common men. And if we wish to estimate the results of college training, we must, primarily, measure it, not in terms of the kind of thinking scholars do, but in terms of that thinking which all men are called upon to do in the ordinary relations of life.[38]

Once more, assuming one were asked to identify in a single proposition what the Wisconsin experiment was all about, this writer would submit this: The Experimental College was concerned with a scheme of teaching whose dominant aim was the development of that intelligence demanded of the common man in a free society. Hopefully, elements of that scheme of teaching touched on in the previous discussion have indicated the radical nature of the community idea upon which the Experimental College was based. Certainly it is important to note that the population of the college was not "special" in any academic sense, but rather a "general" and a volunteer one. It is worth noting that no grades were given, except for the regional study, nor were any tests, and that the movement of students into upper level work primarily depended upon the recommendations of the faculty.

---

[38] Ibid., pp. 166-168.

These methods were considered necessary to do away with those secondary forces for learning previously mentioned. While these details are to be considered relative to their importance as means for achieving the aims of the college, it is clear that comprehending the radical nature of the experiment depends upon understanding that the nature of the corporate freedom characterizing the community was itself considered of the primary signifcance in the education of the free man.

It is hoped, also, that during the course of this discussion some sense of what Meiklejohn conceived as the qualities of intelligence appropriate for the free man has been achieved, as well as some understanding of the prudential means organized toward this end. Although Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence is the topic of a later chapter of this dissertation, it is hoped that the major point of this entire discussion, Meiklejohn's concern for the relationship between theory and practice, has been amply borne out.

No attempt has been made by this writer to evaluate the success of the Wisconsin experiment since this goes beyond the aim of this study. Certainly the fact that the university failed to establish a permanent conference committee to assess the experimental conditions that were being tested seems relevant. Meiklejohn himself proposed in 1931 that no new class be admitted in the fall until a committee had assessed the experiment. No such committee was appointed.

Criticisms about the college were wide-ranging and no adequate method of assessing their validity was available. There were certainly misunderstandings internal to the university and external cries from the larger community. Most criticisms bore a similarity to those encountered in the Amherst experiment. There seems little doubt, however, that Meiklejohn's attempt to structure a plan of teaching relevant to society's needs and readily adaptable to the university situation in general was an extremely important predecessor to the current and increasing interest in residential colleges. Meiklejohn's commitment to the proper uses and forms of thought would seem to possess considerable comparative significance for those premises about liberal understanding which are being institutionalized in current experimental situations.

Meiklejohn continued to develop his concept of intelligence, already heavily involved in the problem of overcoming our conflicts between democratic forms and our actual action systems. Brief consideration, appropriate to the intent of this chapter, will be given to this in relation to his further activities as an educator. It is well to keep in mind, during the ensuing comments, that what is exemplified here is his concern for expanding (or diffusing) intelligence in the wider population as a condition for securing and maintaining a free society.

Expanding Intelligence

Meiklejohn continued as a half-yearly professor of Philosophy and Education at the University of Wisconsin, although he moved, in 1932, to Berkeley, California, with the apparent intent of turning his full attention to writing. He immediately became involved, however, in the planning of a new adult center for learning in San Francisco. The School of Social Studies, sometimes referred to as the Adult Institute of Social Studies, was the first center and, at that time, the only center of group study and discussion of significant books under full-time academic leadership. Although work on a fifty-year curriculum was in progress, the school functioned only until 1938, melting away with World War II.

Broadly, Meiklejohn's effort was aimed at translating his ideas about education to a wide segment of the population. The rationale for adult public education was bound to Meiklejohn's conviction that the deepest question about American life was not to be found in the political and economic domains but was educational in essence. As we have seen, the educational question had to do with the thinking power of a free society. This experience also supplied support for Meillejohn's premise that <u>all</u> education must be bound together by a dominating idea or purpose. Thus, his concept of continuing education was basically tied to the judgment that our efforts to sustain and revise democratic forms were dependent upon the ability of each citizen to continually and comprehensively study relevant facets of our common life.

> The end to be served by this new teaching will not be vocational. We Americans are already able to train ourselves for jobs. There is no need for a fresh start along that line. On the other hand, the purpose is very badly described as that of "fitting people for the new leisure." That notion has in it too much of individual irresponsibility, too much of mere escape from obligations--from significant loyalties and endeavors--to serve as a basis for a national movement in popular teaching. The primary aim of adult education goes far deeper than any of these relatively superficial glimpses of its meaning. That aim is the creation of an active and enlightened public mind.[39]

The position expressed above obviously was not, for the most part, different from the intent of the Experimental College. Education for "free inquiry" was now being sought, however, in a new situation. In this situation Meiklejohn was concerned to expose the question of how an entire people not valuing study could best learn how to value that self-critical study the maintenance of a free society demands. The teaching question, once more, was what methods could best secure that creative intelligence upon which the entire scheme of democratic living depended. Although Meiklejohn well recognized other efforts at adult education, he, not surprisingly, criticized them not because they served special needs and interests, but because they did not serve an overarching purpose in terms of what we, the people, have in common to think about.

The teaching method that was utilized in the School of Social Studies was familiar to those who knew of the Wisconsin

---

[39]Meiklejohn, "Adult Education: A Fresh Start," The New Republic, lxxx, 1028 (August 15, 1934), p. 14.

experiment.

> It seems to me to be the soundest idea that we can find for use in the field of Adult Education in America, viz., that the best external help in learning to think about problems is to get into living contact with the ablest men who have thought about these problems. One learns to play well by playing with the best players. Americans would learn to study if they would read properly the great books.[40]

The organizing principle for the selection of books was familiar, also, to those who knew Meiklejohn's work. Those books which represented, in the judgment of the teachers, the expression of the best minds at work on the human problems facing civilization and possessing particular significance for American society were selected. There were no restrictions on the "field" of study. Neither poet nor philosopher was excluded unless he did not meet the criterion indicated. Plato, the Bible, Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Brandeis, Marx, Dewey, Veblen, Dreiser, Jeffers, and Dos Passos were only a few of those minds encountered in the school. To understand American life, ran the principle, was to understand the problems with which its intelligence was dealing.

Equally important was the position, held as part of the teaching plan, that nothing was studied in isolation. That is, teachers did their work within the perspective that each element of endeavor was but a part of the broader aim of understanding community life as a whole.

> What we would like to develop in the city is the sense that there are certain central problems with which every mind should be dealing, certain leaders of intellectual

---

[40] Ibid., p. 16.

> activity with whom every intelligent American should have acquaintance. We need, in our American cities, what might be called a common culture of ideas, of interests, of problems, of values. We need to be brought together into unity of interest and understanding so that we might have the materials, the methods, the acquaintance with ideas that would make possible for us the experience of genuine thinking together. We are at the present time a curiously multifarious, unrelated collection of individuals who do not know each other. And we are rendered ineffectual in our common living by the lack of any common thinking.[41]

Thus, in terms of its teaching plan some of what was relevant to Wisconsin was similarly expressed in the San Francisco School of Social Studies. There is little point, therefore, in more than mentioning that active discussion groups rather than lectures on "meaning" were central, based on the premise that the former kind of involvement would develop the student's power of understanding and judgment where the latter, because of its encouragement of passivity, would not. But, once more, thought was ill-served if the discussion process merely led to the confirmation of opinions already uncritically held or the deepening of prejudices or the like. The proper uses of thought demanded, initially, that the student understand what in fact an idea meant to the mind which had proposed it.

It is worth noting that one of the ways discussion groups were formed was merely to invite organizations, such as women's groups, labor unions, churches, and political groups,

---

[41] Ibid., p. 16.

within the city to do so from their own membership. Not only did discussion groups, composed of approximately five to sixteen members, vary in terms of homogeneity, but also varied with respect to political and social attitudes as well as occupationally. Further, no restriction was made in terms of student educational background.

It was Meiklejohn's hope that such a teaching organization might not only be extended to other cities but ultimately result in central organizations on the state, and finally, national levels. He hoped to stimulate the creation of a national system of adult education. His concern not only for the cooperative and continuous planning of education but for the making of an American mind was illustrated in this vision. His emphasis on adult education was surely an emphasis on expanding intelligence.

In the above respect a growing concern for international education, during and after World War II, likewise expressed Meiklejohn's conviction that we must have a teaching plan that would release intelligence <u>in</u> the world. Just as he viewed the tremendous necessity of developing a national movement in popular teaching, so he extended his position to a consideration of the overwhelming need for an international movement in popular teaching. In both cases, "popular teaching" bore reference to <u>all</u> of the people.

Although the following statements may appear to be somewhat outside of the limits established for Chapter II, it

does seem worthwhile to comment briefly on his proposals for international education. It was clear that he viewed as the ultimate goal that humanity should become an intellectually self-governing community. He argued that while international peace and justice rest upon the administration of a unified political world-order, they also rest on a unified economic world-order. Indeed, that without the former the latter (particularly that the production and distribution of wealth should be under public control) would not be possible. He further argued that political institutions could only be sustained and controlled on the basis of a proper and popular education.

Meiklejohn carried his position on the relation between "expert" and citizen, the decision-maker, into his considerations of the nature of the international society. International problems must be studied by experts, but as problems they must be dealt with on the popular level. The people of the world, therefore, must learn to think together.

> Political and economic institutions can succeed only as they grow out of and give expression to fundamental agreements of purpose which, without such mutual acquaintance and understanding, are impossible. And from this it follows that the citizens of nations which are trying to create and administer an international society must engage in widespread, well-organized, and continued study both of the end to be realized and of the conditions which are favorable and unfavorable to its realization.[42]

---

[42]Meiklejohn, "For International Citizenship," Adult Education Journal, Vol. 2, 1 (January, 1943), pp. 44-45.

In the same article from which the above statement was taken, Meiklejohn proposed that an Institute of Education should be placed at the center of the international organization. The teaching which the world needs could be acted upon by separate nations but must express what was essential to the international community. In effect, Meiklejohn's arguments about or for a national system of adult education were extended into the international domain. It must be noted that Meiklejohn sought for "free" education in the democratic sense as much for this level as for the national level. The Institute of Education must present problems to be solved and common studies for inquiry.

Meiklejohn later saw in Unesco a legitimate source for the cultivation of that intelligence he conceived that the world needed. He noted that its, Unesco's, meaning could only be found as it gave to the United Nations its intellectual and moral foundations.[43] Certainly, he maintained, the purposes of the United Nations required an education for self-government as well as an education predicated on the proposition that no plan of world government can succeed without the consent of the governed.

Meiklejohn's conviction that the possessiveness and insulation of the scholar and his work or the possessiveness and insulation of a group of scholars about its work was

---

[43]Meiklejohn, "To Teach the World How to Be Free," The New York Times Magazine (August 11, 1946), pp. 5f.

destructive of popular intelligence was at least as well expressed, and perhaps more crucially, in the context of his proposals concerning international education as elsewhere. The totally instrumental view he expressed in 1946 had to do with the practical responsibility of knowing, that of working for humanity. It was because the membership of Unesco, so well-supplied with scholars, shared this conviction that Meiklejohn expressed the view that a revolution, in terms of the redefinition of the purpose of scholarship, was underway.[44]

At this point, Meiklejohn proposed an International Institute of Study and Teaching. Such an institute would define its task not only as an explicit obligation to contribute to the success of the United Nations, but its identifying function would be to bring the force of relevant intelligence to bear upon the transformation of the world into a cooperative community. The faculty of the institute were to be both scholars and teachers. It would seek for both accurate and relevant knowledge in all fields as well as ways to communicate that knowledge to the people. It would be both "theoretically" and "practically" oriented, both having an identity of purpose.

> This identity of purpose between the man of action and the man of theory is the basic postulate of all education. As men seek to live intelligently, theory and action are bound together in holy wedlock. If either

---

[44]Ibid., p. 48.

> deserts the other, intelligence is destroyed. Theory which does not guide action is idle and worthless. Action which is not guided by theory is stupid and self-defeating. Unesco's institute will, then, be theoretically practical.[45]

One final word: Meiklejohn assumed that the faculty of the institute would function as a fellowship for the international community. He maintained, consistent with his principles and with that perspective illustrated at Wisconsin, that, of course, the heart of this fellowship should be the search for truth. But he also expressed the judgment that the faculty itself must be a model community for the world by expressing in action the fact that men of diverse cultures could work together. The scholar-teachers of the world, it seemed obvious to Meiklejohn, must have effective intellectual communication if we are to achieve the necessary effective unity in human action the world demands. Varied and non-related activities will not enlighten the world, but distract its intelligence from the urgency of building a world community. In this context Meiklejohn argued for the unqualified freedom of the faculty to do its work if it was to create the necessary fusion of scholarship and morality inherent in the Unesco plan and vital to the realization of a United Nations.

> The United Nations is an expression--an external, political expression--of the human purpose that we shall cease killing what we care for, cease from building up what we abhor. That purpose requires of all men the fullest possible cultivation and use of their intelligence. To lead the way in that cultivation and that

---

[45] Ibid., p. 49.

> use is the "specialized" task of Unesco. To explore and mark out that way is the task of Unesco's institute.[46]

The previous points do not exhaust the content of Meiklejohn's proposal. As with previous educational enterprises he was concerned to point out those practical details that give particular relevance to plans. Indeed, he expressed, in the writer's judgment, that relationship between theory and action for which he argued. His position on international education appears, in the writer's view, to be a logical extension of those principles and prudential operations encountered at first most expressively in the Amherst experiment and later more completely at Wisconsin's Experimental College. It certainly was an extension consistent with what was expressed in the adult center for learning in San Francisco and in terms of his vision of a national scheme of popular teaching.

Conclusion

What has comprised Chapter II does not exhaust the topic of Meiklejohn's role as an educator. The aim of this chapter will have been well-served if light has been thrown on the nature of his activities as a public servant, particularly his approaches to the problems of education in relation to relevant aspects of his philosophical position.

It seems clear that Meiklejohn's concern for the appropriate forms and uses of thought was persistently translated

---

[46] Ibid., p. 50.

in relevant decisions about the nature of teaching methods, including the appropriate selection of curricular materials as teaching instruments. It, also, appears clear that in his theory of intelligence, to be considered more thoroughly elsewhere, one can discern the heart of his position on what constituted the mark of the liberally educated man. In brief, the development of those educational enterprises considered in this chapter illustrate the conclusion that Meiklejohn considered the mark of the liberally educated man as one whose intelligence was in touch with our common life, inclusive of the common issues of the day. Further, it seems apparent that the development of this sort of intelligence, because of its use-value, designated the basis of the relationship between man and society that Meiklejohn held as valid and, indeed, moral. To be "in touch" meant, for Meiklejohn, to express a creative will to overcome the divisiveness inherent in our social system, not only between the dualism of democratic belief and action but between man and man.

Certainly the previous discussion has illustrated Meiklejohn's commitment to the education of the free man and his search to establish conditions which would actualize that education. Meiklejohn's position on education and its institutional forms cannot be understood without recognizing that it is a position on freedom. His quest for responses to the question of what constitutes the free man led him, from about 1935 to his death, to seek an understanding of freedom and

its relation to society and human obligation. This forms a crucial aspect of his theoretical position which is the basis for the discussion of the remainder of this dissertation.

CHAPTER III

MEIKLEJOHN'S SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL THEORY

Introduction

It is clear that Meiklejohn viewed conceptions of man, education and the state as inseparable.[1] He shared not only the Platonic conviction that the state is the great pedagogue, but the Aristotelian conception that our evaluation of the state depends upon our understanding of its proper form; what it ought to be. In essence Meiklejohn, too, maintained that the polis exists for the sake of life but grows for the sake of the good life. In the Aristotelian manner he considered that the form of the state could not be judged as good, just, or wise until a prior question had been formulated.

> Has human living at large a dominant purpose which runs through it from end to end, from limit to limit? Can the life of man be known as having a dominant ideal?[2]

Thus, Meiklejohn maintained that the questions that Aristotle asked continued to hold the same viability for us. What is

---

[1]See page 7 of this study. The quotation employed there is a typically strong example of Meiklejohn's view.

[2]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1935), p. 181.

the right human condition? What are the rightful or appropriate activities of the human being? He insisted that responses must be developed in human terms. That is, that we must attempt to understand what it means to be human as such.

Meiklejohn further maintained that if the answer to the questions posed in the above quotation was "no," then our study of democracy and its intents was fruitless. If, however, "yes" could be answered, then, according to Meiklejohn, we would be in possession of a human principle in terms of which democracy could be defined and judged. And having this meant for Meiklejohn that we were then in concomitant possession of both the broad and narrow meanings of education.

It has been maintained throughout this writing that Meiklejohn held that a sound definition of education depended upon a sound understanding of democracy, especially the principle of freedom. What, then, was his answer to the question which is prior to that of seeking the meaning of democracy?

It is necessary to point out here, and for the sake of subsequent clarity, that Meiklejohn conceived of human nature in "inner" and "outer" terms. He claimed, although not persistently clearly, that in establishing such designations he was not adhering to a traditional dualism, mind and body or spirit and matter, but merely employing these terms as vehicles for certain arguments. It is clear, nonetheless,

that while he may not have been arguing for a dualistic conception of the nature of man, he did maintain a distinction in terms of man's "essence." That is, man's nature is essentially spiritual in character. Such spirituality is made manifest in man's creation of his outer or objective condition. As man, according to Meiklejohn, is capable of interpreting his inner self in various ways, as he does so he establishes a transactive process whereby self and environment are made mutually healthy or mutally corrupt.

How did Meiklejohn endeavor to lead us to an understanding of what man-as-spirit is if rightly understood? He suggested that a historical comprehension of man would lead us to a knowledge of what the minds and wills of men have been driving at. It is quite clear that Meiklejohn was deeply concerned to support the argument that man is a creator, of self, of culture, of reason, and that human intent is persistently toward bettering his creations. It, obviously, may be maintained critically that man's creations are as capable of being evil as they are of being good. It was in view of this argument that Meiklejohn urged that men must become capable of a continuing assessment of the question as to whether man's created objective conditions indeed do express man's intent.

Human life, as Meiklejohn viewed it, can be seen as a record of men struggling toward something "better." Man has invented agriculture, science, philosophy, education, law,

customs, the state, to this end. Man has created human society and continues to create human society and, in so doing, has interpreted and continues to interpret himself.

> We have interpreted ourselves, have given expression in various forms to meanings which we find within us. Man has invented ways of saying to himself and to his fellows what he has found his world, including himself, to be.[3]

It would seem that Meiklejohn argued on two grounds for a conception of human nature. He seemed to argue that the "natural man," reminiscent of Rousseau, expresses the will to create and that the intention of creation is toward the good. On the other hand, there is no clear telos in the human situation if, as Meiklejohn also argued, man not only creates his own intentions but also, in a significant sense, his own spirituality. In speaking of the invention of language, for example, Meiklejohn stated that language

> ...is, in the truest sense, man's remaking of his own nature. As words come into use, another self-created creature comes into being. The human animal becomes a mind, a spirit, a will. Through words the human being has invented his second self.[4]

Perhaps there is no more frustrating question for the educator than the question of what it means to be human. That dilemma we share with Meiklejohn. Although he did not fully answer the question, Meiklejohn surely aided in formulating the ramifications of the problem for us. With an

---

[3] Ibid., p. 183.

[4] Ibid., p. 184.

impetus similar to that given by Rousseau, Meiklejohn forced us to the question of what is the nature of society, and hence education, that fosters humanness? If the development of some of Meiklejohn's arguments leaves the reader confused, it was explicit in his position that the spirit of man is creativity and that man becomes not what he is, but what he wants (interprets himself) to be. Man, if he would be man at all, is not striving toward some ultimate and irrevocable self-actualization, but he is striving to interpret his own intentions as causes in the formation of his objective conditions. To understand Meiklejohn it is absolutely vital to grasp this point.

In all fairness, it should be pointed out that the intent of Meiklejohn's work was to result in our recognition of the human dilemma rather than to give a ready solution to it. Although Meiklejohn concluded that man's striving does have purpose or direction, he was sincere in leaving the final nature of such striving an open question. On his own grounds he could do no less. One of the basic illustrations of this was Meiklejohn's conviction that man tends toward "reasonableness," but, since man creates reason, there was, for Meiklejohn, no ultimate teleological sense in which "reasonableness" should be understood.

It was because of the dilemmas illustrated by the previous discussion that Meiklejohn insisted that we must look at particular and current situations in order to make questions

concerning the qualitative nature of society, man, and education meaningful. That is, since we know that man intends and interprets we must examine the immediate cultural context in order to evaluate whether or not man's inner life is adequately manifested in his outer condition. It was for this reason (essentially, that men are known not only for what they do but what they fail to do) that Meiklejohn directed us to the study of democracy.

> The constant tragedy in human life is that we..., by our actions, defeat ourselves. We block our own purposes as well as further them.[5]
>
> . . . . . .
>
> This principle, which I have applied to individuals, holds also for nations. They, too, have plans. They, too, defeat them. The two statements, "Americans love liberty" and "Americans practice slavery," are not, in fact, contradictory. Taken together they express the common human tragedy. The second statement does not deny the first. It tells us only that our devotion to freedom has been blind and inconstant. At some essential points our minds have slipped. Error has crept into our calculations. We have not known what we were doing. The evil that we would not, that we have done.[6]

Although Meiklejohn's faith in terms of what men in this society <u>really</u> intend may not be shared, he was surely correct in insisting that democracy, if that is man's intent, expresses purposes and, indeed, is a plan for the human condition, a plan capable of being evaluated in terms of human actions. Meiklejohn held that democracy as plan and as action must be evaluated in terms of two essential dimensions. Does it express

---

[5]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 72.

[6]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 73.

and provide for human ideals? Is it rightly apprehended by men in terms of the nature and meaning of those principles that identify it? These concerns were never separate in Meiklejohn's thought, although he, as manifested in his constant concern for the present development of man and society, investigated the former in terms of the latter. It does not seem to be contradictory to consider what Meiklejohn held to be the prior question, that of human direction, within the context of the search for the meaning of democratic principles (purposes). Although it might be argued that a systematic statement of one's philosophy ought to begin with what is considered most basic, or prior, this would be to ignore, in Meiklejohn's case, the direction inherent in his judgment that the present state of the world does not allow us time for beginning with what is logically prior nor is it necesary. It is not reasonable, Meiklejohn argued, to step out of the world to "do" philosophy when the intent of philosophy is to put us, or keep us, in touch with the world. With this in mind and because it is reasonable that judgments about human purpose can be considered concomitant with the search for the meaning of present social principles or purposes, we turn to that principle Meiklejohn believed to be fundamental to understanding the intent or plan of democracy.

There is merit, at this point, in recalling in Meiklejohn's words what he meant by man's double nature, the inner and the outer, as expressive of a single human process, since

this is relevant to a discussion of freedom.

> The men, who, through the ages, have been making the modern social order have, in the same process, been making themselves. They have been making modern man. If the supply of food is to be increased by a developing agriculture and commerce, men themselves must be transformed. They must learn to keep for seed possessions which they might have used at once for food. They must learn to plow,..., to buy and sell, to make and keep agreements. But this learning has inner meaning as well as outer. It means that men themselves are changing; they are becoming provident; they are getting control over their immediate desires; they are studying problems; they are becoming socially-minded; their intelligence is taking charge of what they are and do. ...As seen from the outside the growth of civilization is simply a series of external responses to external situations. But, as seen from within, it is the story of the making of the human spirit. ...Grappling with problems, with perplexities far too great for him, he has yet made of himself a person who grapples with problems, who studies perplexities. And in the process he has, in some measure, created intelligence, sensitiveness, generosity, high-mindedness as the qualities of his own being. He has made, and is still making, himself. That is his spiritual enterprise. The making of a man is the other side of what, in outer terms, we see as the making of his world. These are two "sides" of the same process.[7]

The Concepts of Liberty[8]

Meiklejohn was convinced that liberty is at once both our deepest commitment and that principle which men in our

---

[7] Ibid., pp. 60-61.

[8] Meiklejohn's concern for "freedom" is basic, in the writer's view, to understanding all of his works. There are, however, three primary sources to which the reader must be referred which rehearse similar arguments on this topic and which, therefore, provide the bases for much of the following discussion. See What Does America Mean? (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1935), Education Between Two Worlds (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1942), and Political Freedom: The Constitutional Powers of the People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

society most widely misunderstand. Without justifiable comprehension of this principle, he claimed, neither democracy nor education can be understood. Without these understandings, it is nonsensical to debate the problem of that education appropriate for the free man.

In a sense much, if not most, of Meiklejohn's work can be viewed, not as an expression of novel ideas, but as an attempt to get us to take our beliefs seriously. "Taking our beliefs seriously" meant, for Meiklejohn, that what a belief means abstractly and evaluative considerations of its forms of action are a single process. To dissociate the process into presumed elements of meaning and acting, to sever their association, was to cut ourselves off from potentially the deepest source of coming to terms with the meaning of democracy as a plan of human association.

The insight that Meiklejohn continued to promote was that resultant from his premise that man's interpretations of his own intentions, in this case liberty, are causally related to existent, and objective, conditions of culture. What principles do we seek to enact, do we intend to make manifest? What meanings do we intend to create <u>in</u> the world? In the pursuit of such questions Meiklejohn sought not only for ways in which to overcome the dualism between belief and action, but to determine what it is we, as a people, really intend to enact. It is about the latter area, with its obvious implications for the former, that critical

questions can be raised, for it seems possible that for each "intent" identified someone can argue its converse. Meiklejohn's endeavors, however, seem particularly significant, since he turned his analysis to that document which should tell us most about the form of the state, the Constitution. Where, indeed, is a more appropriate place to become knowledgeable about the intents of this society? Where is there a more appropriate basis for seeking for the proper interpretation of the national plan of democracy? Meiklejohn buttressed his discussion concerning the meaning of the principle of liberty as revealed in the Constitution through historical considerations of the manner in which we have succeeded or failed in enacting democratic purposes.

It may not appear logical to this writing to insert here that Meiklejohn has been criticized for failing in his interpretation of democratic purposes and, in fact, of ultimately adhering to their opposites, to totalitarian forms of association.[9] Sidney Hook objected to points of the following kind:

> Only a strong state can maintain freedom and equality in any nation, or in the world as a whole. No collocation of individuals, in which each individual assumes responsibility for the guarding of his own freedom and equality, can succeed in the attempt at democracy. As Rousseau tells us, the "whole common force" of our human association must be brought to bear wherever the issue of freedom arises. Whenever the general welfare and some individual good are incompatible with each

---

[9]See Sidney Hook's Education for Modern Man (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), Chapter 4, "Society and Education," pp. 80-98.

> other, the former must prevail. So far as the question of authority alone is concerned, a democracy must be a totality in action. The state which is the guardian of our liberties must be exalted.[10]

Hook criticized Meiklejohn for, among other things, failing to conceive of liberty for the individual and for a dangerous ambiguity in his interpretations or use of such terms as "the state," "society," and "the general welfare." We shall certainly return to Hook's criticisms, for these are obviously serious charges. The point of emphasis here, and the reason for raising the issue before the development of Meiklejohn's arguments, is to suggest that while Meiklejohn left us with unresolved problems, the validity of Hook's comments can be judged more properly in view of a more thorough acquaintance with Meiklejohn's works and position than that expressed in Education Between Two Worlds, the source of Hook's judgments. In light of the following discussion did Hook misinterpret or did Meiklejohn's mind "slip" at that writing? Is Meiklejohn's position in Education Between Two Worlds a contradiction of his thinking before and after the issuing of that text?

The Bill of Rights

It was Meiklejohn's judgment that we are faced with two problems concerning liberty: To find out what it is and to see how, under actual and changing conditions, it may be

---

[10]Meiklejohn, Education Between Two Worlds, op. cit., p. 266.

realized. To search for the former Meiklejohn turned his attention to the Constitution. The Bill of Rights, he maintained, identifies two sets of "liberties" but deals with them in opposite ways.

> This is, if I am not mistaken, the division of human interests upon which a proper understanding of liberty in America rests. In the field of Religion, Speech, Press, Assemblage, Protest, a government finds itself facing activities which are beyond, above, the level of its authority. It is their servant. It owes them allegiance. In relation to them its one legitimate activity is to see that they are kept free from interference, that no agency, public or private, shall establish control over them. Here the law reads, "Congress shall make no law, prohibiting...or abridging." ...
>
> But in the other field, that of external possessions and actions, a radically different dictum is enacted. Here our government says, in effect, "Men desire life: they crave liberty of action: they fight and strive for property. No state can allow them to pursue without hindrance or controls these multifarious and conflicting desires. It is, however, essential that any government which exercises such control shall do so with justice, with due regard for all men, in ways which will deserve the confidence and respect of all who are affected by the decisions made." Over against the "Congress shall make no law" of the first field, stands the "not without due process of law" of the second field. And these two phrases mark off for us, on the one hand, the field of spiritual activities in which our institutions provide that men shall be free and, on the other hand, the field of external activities, in which men must be regulated and restrained.[11]

The significance of the First Amendment in relation to the Fifth Amendment and the Fourteenth Amendment, then, lies in the clearness of the difference they establish between two kinds of human liberties. The public welfare, Meiklejohn argued, depends not only upon our understanding of their

---

[11]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? op. cit., pp. 106-107.

differences in principle but also in terms of the differences in actions which they imply. It is clear, according to Meiklejohn, that the public welfare is the enactment of the purposes that the involved principles express, and that, in both cases, these purposes are public rather than private.

Meiklejohn wrote the above in the pre-McCarthy era. It is hardly surprising that he persisted in his attempt to understand the form of the state as affairs during and after World War II increasingly convinced him that the United States was in need of political and social renewal. We are familiar with those agencies and activities which have been established under the assumption that certain forms of political opinion and advocacy should be, and legitimately may be, suppressed. Meiklejohn was surely correct in asking whether federal and state legislative committees established to investigate "un-American activities" and engaged in distinguishing "dangerous" expressions of belief were proper forms of constitutional principles, proper enactments of our intent. Meiklejohn argued, in this context, that we must make the meaning of the First Amendment clear. What is the valid meaning of freedom of speech?

Meiklejohn consistently noted that the meaning of the First Amendment implied no private right to speak as one pleases; that no such unalienable right, whether considered given by God or nature or reason, existed. To the contrary, reasonableness, Meiklejohn contended, in a self-governed

society means that such a society must prohibit such speech that is clearly self-seeking and corruptive of the general human good. Slander, libel, incitement to murder and the like come under the rubric of self-seeking advocacy.

"Clear and Present Danger"

> If some forms of speech are abridgeable while others are non-abridgeable, then we are inescapably faced by the task of defining the difference between these two kinds of utterance.[12]

In view of this it must be noted that a major source of the concern that Meiklejohn expressed can be traced to the Supreme Court of 1919 when Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes enunciated the position that some speech that is permissible in times of peace cannot be allowed in war time and, hence, may be constitutionally abridged by legislative action. Meiklejohn has not been alone in his scrutiny of such a premise, particularly in view of a world at war for much of this century. Meiklejohn argued that not only did the "clear and present danger" formula deny the principle of freedom for which we ought to seek, but exemplified, in view of our present concern for freedom in the world, the depth of unreasonableness. We have, Meiklejohn stated, accused our enemies, in hot and cold war, of suppressing the communication of ideas and have indicated that:

---

[12]Meiklejohn, "Everything Worth Saying Must Be Said," The New York Times Magazine (July 18, 1948), p. 8.

> We are determined that, with the respect to the freedom of its communications, the human world shall be a single community.[13]

Meiklejohn recognized that, although our intentions might well be reinterpreted, the meaning we assigned to human freedom at-large and at present was denied by the "clear and present danger" formula.

> The Clear and Present Danger formula represents the Constitution as saying to Congress, "When the public safety for which you are responsible is clearly and immediately threatened by the words of a speaker, you may make laws to suppress such words and to punish such speakers." But, as against this, I am sure that the Constitution is saying to Congress, "When the public safety for which you are responsible is clearly and immediately threatened by words, you will be tempted to suppress those words. But you are forbidden to do so.[14]

Not only did Meiklejohn express the judgment that the Constitution, rightly interpreted, declares that some of the acts we undertake to save us from evil are more evil than that which they are intended to overcome, but, most significantly, that the "clear and present danger" proposition as enacted denies that principle upon which the entire structure of government rests. Meiklejohn did not argue merely that the fear of any idea makes us unfit for self-government, but, in fact, that the enacted proposition that legislative bodies can destroy freedom when they find it "advisable" in turn

---

[13]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom, op. cit., p. 6.

[14]Meiklejohn, "Everything Worth Saying Must Be Said," op. cit., p. 8.

destroys the intellectual basis of our national plan of self-government, of human association.

It is of some significance to point out that the criticism which is our concern here was lodged, according to Meiklejohn, from the perspective of a teacher. His position is familiar: All social institutions teach; certainly the Supreme Court teaches.

> ...To us who labor at the task of educating Americans it becomes, year by year, more evident that the Supreme Court has a large part to play in our national teaching. That court is commissioned to interpret to us our own purposes, our own meanings. To a self-governing community it must make clear what, in actual practice, self-governing is. And its teaching has peculiar importance because it interprets principles of fact and of value, not merely in the abstract, but also in their bearing upon the concrete, immediate problems which are, at any given moment, puzzling and dividing us. But it is just those problems with which any vital system of education is concerned. And for this reason, the court holds a unique place in the cultivating of our national intelligence. Other institutions may be more direct in their teaching influence. But no other institution is more deeply decisive in its effect upon our understanding of ourselves and our government.[15]

It must be pointed out, also, that Meiklejohn's conception of the function of the Supreme Court rested on the premise that "the law is what the court ought to say."[16] This, perhaps, yields some insight into the nature of Hook's criticism, if one is tempted to read into that assertion that "the law" is something that stands "above" man. This does not seem to be Meiklejohn's position. He is to be understood as acknowledging that in a current and temporary sense the Constitution is

---

[15]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom, op. cit., p. 32.

[16]Ibid., p. 33.

what the court says, but matters cannot be left at that. The court is "after" the law, e.g., what we intend in fact and in purpose. Further, no people can be considered self-governing if, while they obey the rulings of the court, they do not reflect upon them. This does not seem to be a totalitarian position, since it is based upon evolutionary and non-teleological premises. In case it has not been made clear to this point, Meiklejohn certainly shared with Dewey an evolutionary conception of society and, indeed, of mind and intelligence, that was open-ended rather than closed in nature.

Further question of the "clear and present danger" formula was raised as Meiklejohn reminded us that the Constitution prohibits the abridgment of debate in Congress and suggested that, in spite of the occasions when that body fails to enact the common good, our system of representation would break down if this were not the case. The Supreme Court itself contradicts the formula, since there is no question of the place of dissent in that institution. In neither case is abridgment legal. In the case of the former, Meiklejohn pushed his argument a meaningful step further. Since members of Congress are our agents (as representatives), it is mandatory that public discussions by citizens have the same immunity.

> ...It is essential that when we speak in the open forum, we "shall not be questioned in any other place." It is not enough for us, as self-governing men, that we be governed wisely and justly, by someone else. We insist

> on doing our own governing. The freedom which we grant to our representatives is merely a derivative of the prior freedom which belongs to us as voters. In spite of all the dangers which it involves, Article I, section 6, suggests that the First Amendment means what it says: In the field of common action, of public discussion, the freedom of speech shall not be abridged.[17]

Freedom and Public Obligation

Meiklejohn maintained, as indicated, that the principle of liberty involved prohibits us from viewing speech as a private right. Meiklejohn's premise was that freedom of speech is related to inquiry and that inquiry in a democracy is public in nature. Further, while inquiry in democracy must always be free, action must always be subject to restraint. Such points were argued in terms of their relevance for the common or general good and gave rise to the perplexing question of the place, if any, of private rights in a free society. Meiklejohn was convinced that the question of private rights was bound to the "due process" intention of the Constitution, a subject to be taken up in another section of this chapter.

It is abundantly evident that in the conceptions involved here Meiklejohn rejected both laissez-faire premises of freedom as well as, ultimately, those conceived in the modern liberal tradition. In the case of the former his arguments to the effect that we have confused "liberty" by misinterpreting it as "independence" are interesting and telling. He reviewed, for example, certain historical circumstances which

---

[17]Ibid., p. 36.

have resulted in this confusion. Meiklejohn cited not only the paradox, and tragedy, of our social and political beginnings--that our people sought for certain "freedoms to" (worship, secure property, rule, and the like) while denying them to men outside the community--but the bewilderment that the external independence exemplified by the frontiersman has engendered. In the making of the minds and culture of our people Meiklejohn urged, we have taken in the frontiersman an improper model. The frontiersman did not engage in the attempt to form society, he withdrew from it.

> In any organized society the issues of worship, of wealth, of government--of freedom in relation to all of these--are inescapable. The attempt of a society to make and keep its people free goes on forever. The pioneer, however, seeks refuge in his isolation. He gives up trying to make his freedom and hopes instead to find it ready-made. ...In a word, external conditions will provide what inner spiritual struggle has failed to give. Men put their trust in happy, favorable circumstances rather than in long and arduous agony through which the Spirit of Man has fashioned his institutions and himself. In this sense it must, I think, be grankly acknowledged that we Americans, for three long centuries, have been running away from human responsibilities.[18]

Meiklejohn's serious argument against an "external" conception of freedom as being "independent from," was that such a misunderstanding of liberty threatens to enslave men. It appeared evident to him that to conceive of liberty in terms of fate, the "invisible hand," or favorable circumstance meant that men have nothing to do <u>for</u> liberty and, in fact,

---

[18]Meiklejohn, <u>What Does America Mean</u>? <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 144-145.

cease even to be independent. The historical tragedy resulting from a confusion of independence and liberty as promoted by the laissez-faire theory of human association, Meiklejohn asserted, is that the ethical premise of free competition is a deliberate denial of the principle of the general welfare. The identification of the general welfare with self-interest, albeit "enlightened," is a denial of the intentions of the former, as a human purpose.

The writer agrees with Meiklejohn on this point: Institutionalization of "self-interest," whether in national state, business corporation, or education, is a denial of responsibility for a systematic concern for human welfare. Indeed, what chance does the human cause of peace have in a world in which nation-states, having no conscience for human beings as such, find their "human" motives in self-seeking, whether that is overtly identified as national aggrandizement or covertly identified as a matter of prudence or survival of "our way of life?"

It does not seem necessary to assert Meiklejohn's obvious criticisms of the institution of education based upon such an interpretation of human motives. Broadly or narrowly conceived the institution of such intent is miseducative. The method of self-interest, of free competition, calls for a "state of war" among men and surely is fatal to intelligence. Meiklejohn rightly argued, in this writer's judgment, that our interpretation of the inevitability of self-interest,

which ultimately yielded the ethical principle that free competition is right, is a systematic denial of the role of intelligence in the ordering of human affairs. It was Meiklejohn's contention, with regard to democratic political responsibility, that what has been fatal to the realization of the intelligence that political obligation demands is our translation of the external right of free competition among men to the "inner" assumption that, with regard to ideas, they, too, should meet the "test of the marketplace." Our tendency to perceive truth as determined through the competition of ideas has resulted in the fact that men in this society have absolved themselves of adhering to that quality of deliberation essential to the form of democracy. It has resulted in the fact that there are few men in society who are capable of that deliberative intelligence demanded by democracy. If ideas are a matter of self-interest, then, as Meiklejohn maintained, our concern for the quality of life is merely private and ignores the quality of the general welfare. In a sense, cunning is substituted for wisdom, if one understands the latter as being concerned with the quality of human life as a whole.

Meiklejohn obviously did not argue against the laissez-faire position because it is not workable, but because it is. That is, asserting that the modern business enterprise is "frontier" in character because it views its goals in terms of new worlds of wealth to conquer, Meiklejohn made the following comment:

> I am afraid that the scheme may work, that it may produce wealth so richly and distribute it so widely that we shall be satisfied with it and keep it as our mode of life. My terror is that laissez-faire may meet the external test of happiness, of material success, and may at the same time lead us to such inner madness that the excellence of the spirit will be lost, that men, as human beings will be destroyed. What does free competition do to human beings? How does it form and shape their characters? What sort of social relationships does it set up among them?[19]

Meiklejohn contended that the laissez-faire view of human nature severs the roots of morality, including that morality expressed in democratic purposes rightly understood. In the long run, to apprehend obligation in terms of self-interest is destructive of human freedom. To interpret freedom in terms of desire rather than in terms of commitment is ethically reprehensible. The former, because it is a self-centered craving for uninhibited action, results, according to Meiklejohn, in a social condition whose primary quality is the moral opposite of "caring." It is, in a word, a prizing on the part of one man for other men insofar as they are instruments for his use. To consider, then, the laissez-faire view of human associations and the human condition as an appropriate expression of man's "dominant ideal" was madness to Meiklejohn, since it is thoroughly evident that it is destructive, in its ultimate indifference to man's fate, to the quality of human life as such.

One of the basic issues inherent in the previous discussion is addressed to the problem of the nature of political

---

[19]Ibid., p. 154.

authority in its relation to the individual. Meiklejohn, in an argument similar to Erich Fromm's, maintained that the result of our historical struggle to escape from the power of external control was to "escape from freedom." Fighting to escape from hated external controls, be they religious, economic, or political, which was legitimate, we reciprocally corrupted, by the nature of our flight, the inner or spiritual nature of man as well as the nature of culture. In our efforts to become free, Meiklejohn claimed, we lost the inner obligation of "taking thought." Or, rather, we confused the principle that man-thinking must be free from outside interference with "each man has a right to think as he pleases." The outer manifestation of this interpretation of human intent resulted in the institutionalization of the persuasion of power and, hence, the reinstituting of external forces of compulsion. This is, as Meiklejohn held, the irony, the tragedy, of our human situation.

To maintain that "obligation" is to be free from compulsion was to miss, in Meiklejohn's conception, the moral point in the idea of democracy.[20] The issue in part is that of resolving the potential conflict between individual desires and the public role of the individual in a free polity.

---

[20]See Joseph Tussman, Obligation and the Body Politic (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960). The writer recommends Tussman, a student of Meiklejohn's and a contemporary political theorist, as a worthwhile source of understanding of some of the relevant aspects of Meiklejohn's political thought.

Meiklejohn asserted that for the citizen, man in his public role, to determine obligation on the basis of desire or self-interest is destructive of culture and the spirit of man. To be free is to have obligations; the highest of which is to labor for intelligence in the world.

In view of the considerations advanced thus far it is perhaps unnecessary to mark again Meiklejohn's conclusion that the state conceived in laissez-faire terms of human association cannot teach or is totally miseducative. It seems apparent that concern for the nature of democratic freedom, and hence the question of how the state teaches, involves coming to terms with several potentially explosive notions: that between "public" and "private" rights, between "obligation" and "interest," between "authority" as the legitimate basis for making public decisions and "power" as the capability of enacting decisions without regard for moral questions. Meiklejohn's concern to advance the development of a theory of political obligation, rather than a theory of political behavior, as providing most relevant criteria for a theory of teaching, resulted in his rejection of the laissez-faire position because of the latter's rejection of genuine democratic forms; because it exalts anarchy (independence, private rights and the power of self-interest) and, thus, is destructive of democratic culture. Nor did he find in the modern liberal theory of the state and theory of democracy, as

expressed by Dewey, a satisfactory response to the problems posed.[21]

It seems evident that the mode of analysis prescribed by Dewey did not offer, for Meiklejohn, adequate grounds for interpreting the forms of freedom and, therefore, for responding to the above problems or, essentially, for establishing the appropriate relation of freedom and political obligation. Meiklejohn's contention that freedom implies political obligation does not find a ready parallel in kind in Dewey's position. Meiklejohn surely agreed with Dewey as to the identity of freedom and intelligence. However, mutual acceptance of the proposition that freedom is intelligence is an incomplete consideration of their respective positions, since grounds for such a conclusion were incompatible.

Meiklejohn basically argued that Dewey's theory of the state and theory of democracy were developed in the "subjective mood," in spite of Dewey's claims of objective grounds for establishing the value of democratic forms of human association. Meiklejohn did not deny, to the contrary, that the use or misuse of intelligence makes a difference in the objective features of the world as well as in the meanings we assign to those features. Nor did he deny that Dewey was

---

[21]See Meiklejohn, Education Between Two Worlds, op. cit., Book III, "The Pragmatic Episode--A Study of John Dewey," pp. 123-195. Since it is beyond the scope of this study to critique Meiklejohn's criticisms of Dewey's position, except where specifically relevant, the writer is content to suggest that a comprehensive study of their positions specifically comparative in nature would be worthwhile.

a democrat. Nonetheless, Meiklejohn affirmed that Dewey's concept of intelligence confirmed no sufficient grounds for making judgments because it offered no rational way of judging the worth of the consequences of those judgments. Nor, according to Meiklejohn, did Dewey offer any rational way of choosing between democratic and totalitarian forms of association. It is obvious that Meiklejohn had to conclude that Dewey offered a theory of teaching that, since it arose from subjective sources, could not be justified.

What, more directly, was the nature of Meiklejohn's criticism? It is desirable, in responding to this question, to make specific note of a theme which, up to this point, may not have been established explicitly enough. It certainly must be remarked that, while freedom might be our most misunderstood democratic purpose, for Meiklejohn the "general welfare" was one of our most ignored. Ignored because we had assumed it to be the automatic outcome of pursuits made in the name of subjective principles of freedom; ignored because we historically had failed to learn that as a people we have something actively to do <u>for</u> establishing the general welfare as a cultural theme. The negative or protectionist theories of state meant, Meiklejohn maintained, that we were content to conceive of the common good as a resultant of prior strivings rather than as a democratic form to be pursued, to be regarded as a cultural object in its own right. To this writer, indeed, it appears that Meiklejohn's stress

on the interpretation of man's intention of the common good or general welfare as a purpose in the making of the external world, for the shaping of our institutions, is a source of the accusation of totalitarianism leveled against him. It is an accusation that conveniently seems to ignore Meiklejohn's commitment to freedom as well as his attempts to make the latter principle relevant to the purpose of the general welfare.

It seemed clear to Meiklejohn that Dewey's conception of the state was negative and protectionist in nature and that it was bound to man-as-subjective. It does not seem necessary to review Dewey's argument as to the origin of the state. It is sufficient to say that the growth of "a public," an interest group whose activities result in consequences which must be systematically cared for, makes the state derivative and secondary in nature. While no claim was made that "a public," an interest group, represents "the public," it must be acknowledged that for Dewey <u>the</u> public interest was held as being somehow generated out of "publics." Meiklejohn, correctly in the writer's judgment, saw little less subjectivity, albeit quantified, in this position than that represented in the laissez-faire position, although the former did offer a recognition that "self-interests" had become "corporate self-interests" in essence. The general welfare here seemed to rest on some sort of quantification of "publics." Was Meiklejohn correct in concluding that Dewey,

assessing the source and nature of the state as resulting from pressure groups, gave us no grounds for appraising the worth of "consequences" as the product of intelligence? This writer concludes that in this context he was and that the conception of the general welfare as that which arises out of the self-interested pursuits of groups leaves the state, and its intelligence, as a mere arbiter of conflict. And a poor one at that since no grounds are given for judging the worth of interests (the fact that interests are held is apparently justification enough) nor the direction in which the state ought to proceed in the handling of consequences in order that the "true public will" may be made manifest. The state itself, in the long run, evolves into a pressure group, having no guide but the temporary intelligence of its temporary membership, and whatever is conceived as intelligent arbitration is so. For Meiklejohn the logical extension of Dewey's analysis of the origin and nature of the state resulted in the exaltation of the private interests of groups as the assumed principle of political obligation.

It is urged, countering Meiklejohn's arguments, that there is no way to judge human welfare except in terms of the people involved. That to judge otherwise means that a "higher and external" authority has to be invoked, as Meiklejohn does with a doctrine of "the general will." Once more, this charge has to be considered at a more relevant point in this study. The questions Meiklejohn raised in terms of

Dewey's theory are at issue here. Included in these observations is a question that is implied from a consideration of Meiklejohn's entire thought: Is it not tyrannical to predicate freedom, and therefore political obligation, on the transitory interests of publics? Further, does it not mean that to proceed on such a basis democratic forms are generated "per accidens?" Meiklejohn was correct in his concern for the theory of teaching that is implied in terms of that particular aspect of Dewey's position that is now under review and, also, in suggesting to us that the nature of the state is better sought in that document which presumes to give it form than in Dewey's assessment of the nature of "public will." Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that while Meiklejohn discerned an essential problem in Dewey's position if we are to look to the state as the source of political obligation, the latter's philosophic stance is, overall, pervasively "objective." There surely is no question that Dewey's commitment to the value of the scientific method is a commitment to both objective processes of inquiry as well as to objective standards of what is constitutive knowledge. Also, there surely is no question that the pragmatic perspective on "consequences" refers to effects which actions have <u>in</u> the world.

Further, it may be asked whether Meiklejohn has given Dewey his objective due in terms of the latter's theory of democracy. It is clear that Dewey distinguished the state from "the community" while Meiklejohn did not. It is in

terms of "community" that Dewey's theory of democracy may be considered. It is within this frame of reference that Dewey argued that intelligence (hence, freedom) is coming to judgments based upon observation of current cultural conditions and in terms of intrinsically worthwhile purposes. It is in these terms and in view of the "continuity of experience" that men, according to Dewey, are in charge of the existential situation in which their choices are, or ought to be, predictors of democratic consequences for the community. In this sense Meiklejohn and Dewey were remarkably close in their conceptions of obligation arising from the identification of freedom with intelligence. That is, that intelligence is having an obligation for expanding and developing democratic forms of human association. In such a view Meiklejohn shared with Dewey a conviction of the humaneness of democracy. There are, then, two points at immediate issue here: First, was Meiklejohn correct in maintaining that Dewey offered no rational method of choosing between democracy and aristocracy? This writer must conclude that he was incorrect in his own terms since both men "tested" the consequences of the patterns for living of both of these modes of organization in terms of their significance for the quality of human living as such. Second, is such an objective test of consequences as they contribute to the quality of life of the community reconcilable with Dewey's theory of state? It seems to the writer that Meiklejohn found

his most telling criticism here. That, in fact, there is no reconciliation between Dewey in his "objective mood" and Dewey in his "subjective mood."

There is an additional remark to be made that is pertinent to the last comment. There can be little doubt that Dewey aimed at "freeing intelligence" from the limitations of its experience. On the objective side implications of this tenet of experimentalism for the development of the individual, and for a theory of pedagogy, has been important. As Meiklejohn pointed out, however, Dewey advocated a conception of thinking that is subjective in nature; hence, contradictory of the characteristics of "critical intelligence" as objective. The reference here is to Dewey's theory of "homeostasis" or "adjustment." Learning begins, Dewey held, with a state of disequilibrium, e.g., a problematic situation which the individual seeks to overcome. The individual does so in view of his own interests and needs and in terms of the results of examining alternative means for the restoration of equilibrium. Education so conceived is the seeking of homeostasis. But there is certainly no requirement in such a conception that homeostasis be sought with regard for democratic values. It may well be that the "reconstruction of experience," to increase the democratic quality of human association, of necessity might have to seek to produce maladjusted persons. It is worth noting, as Meiklejohn pointed out, that problems giving rise to the

necessity of inquiry are not only within individuals but "in the situation" for Dewey.[22] That is, that they are objective and social. The point of difficulty here is that, while individuals have no "reason" for solving problems democratically, they also may solve problems to achieve inner equilibrium while leaving the objective condition unchanged.

The issues raised in the previous discussion, it must be understood, do not constitute an evaluation of the whole of Dewey's thought, but the writer would agree that Meiklejohn discerned an essential weakness in Dewey's position. That weakness, for present purposes, has to do with the relation of freedom and political obligation.

It might be argued that since Dewey conceived of teaching in terms of the community, then the principles of the former are to be constituted on the basis of that community democratically viewed. In this case Dewey's theory of state would have to be considered irrelevant. This is, as Meiklejohn implied, absurd. In the realm of political obligation the state is the source of the quality of that obligation. Dewey, therefore, in his subjective mood, gave no reliable grounds for establishing the relationship between freedom and political obligation--for reasons similar to those Meiklejohn advanced in this critique of laissez-faire premises. Grounds are inadequate in that, once more, to represent obligation

---

[22]Ibid., pp. 128-129.

in terms of self-interest is destructive of human freedom and human intelligence.

> Dewey, I am saying, chooses one of two alternative explanations of the origin of the state, in terms of its motivation. Political action, as he sees it, is not disinterested. It is selfish. The conscious political institutions of men do not continue that drive toward social integration which marks the unconscious life of an instinctive fellowship. On the contrary, it arises from the accidental coincidence of separate desires. The members of any one of Dewey's "publics" have no primary interest in each other. For the moment they find their separate needs and desires running in the same direction. So long as this is true they plan and work together. But they are equally ready to separate into hostile factions whenever their interests divide and clash. They have no identity of interest, no interest in each other. Their marriage is one "of convenience." Each is looking out for himself. Each is using the others to that end so long as he finds them useful.[23]

Meiklejohn noted that Dewey's "attitude" was toward giving us "an intellectual basis for such public action as that of teaching,"[24] but that his thinking about the state drove Dewey in an opposing direction.

> He strongly demands public co-operation for the common good. But The Public and Its Problems is significant because it shows that Dewey's thinking does not express his own attitude. The pragmatic account of intelligence, as here given, robs it of all objectivity, all disinterestedness. What it offers us is not a state. It is a shifting, whirling collocation of pressure groups, of factions, of parties, in the baser sense of that term. Government becomes not a unified attempt at freedom and justice, but a miscellaneous collection of "interested" activities, each of which is directed toward the welfare of some individual or private group. In spite of all his brave attempts to establish and use an objective

---

[23] Ibid., p. 176.

[24] Ibid., p. 178.

> criterion, Dewey, when put to the test of a concrete situation, drifts back into his subjective mood. The thinking which men do as they carry on the work of governing may put on the "garb" of reason. But, at the bottom, it is nothing else than rationalizing. The motives of government are not such "disinterested" emotions as the love of justice, of equality, of freedom. They are merely individual passions, each of which, as it strives to prevail over others, "would exhibit itself as a reasonable persuasion."[25]

It would seem that Meiklejohn was correct in maintaining that a state, finding its power in private rights, is corruptive of democracy. Social programs established in terms of a morality of self-interest are, as Meiklejohn argued, different in character from a social program which takes seriously a commitment to the collective intentions of "We, the People." In urging us to study the Constitution as our basic source of coming to an understanding of the question of what principles we intend and must enact, Meiklejohn concomitantly led us away from traditional interpretations of freedom and obligation. His argument that the latter cut us off from and denied the moral purpose of democracy was significant and pertinent. It cannot be denied that the form of the state, as constitutionally expressed, commits us to the public obligation of morally caring for the general good. We are not obliged, as Meiklejohn so strongly stressed, "in spite of ourselves," but because of our intentions of enacting certain purposes in the world as objects of culture. Meiklejohn maintained that the form of the state meant that

---

[25] Ibid., pp. 178-179.

social good was not achieved by withdrawing from society, withdrawing from a commitment to actively engage in creating forms of human association on the assumption that good forms would automatically develop, but by recognizing that we indeed do intend the public good and, hence, must actively seek it. In the resource of the Constitution Meiklejohn found that we do have a fundamental community of purpose, a theory of cooperation, based upon, not a collocation of externally related human atoms, but upon a society of internally related human beings.

It is evident that differing intentions about liberty, about the meanings we intend to create <u>in</u> the world, shape our institutions, the existent conditions of culture. Finding our source of authority in the Constitution does not seem strange. What does seem strange to this writer is the reaction of Meiklejohn's critics to those very terms which express the fact that as a people we do have corporate intentions. To maintain, as Meiklejohn did, that freedom is to act for the public good and that our plan of human association therefore calls for a "national intelligence" is not to deny the worth of individuals but to affirm that under our plan of government individuals have public obligations. If this is tyranny, then the Constitution is expressive of a form of tyranny.

In brief summary we can conclude that in terms of the question of the meaning of freedom in relation to public

obligation, Meiklejohn held that the operative concerns are bound to the notions of "disinterest," "obligation," and the "general welfare." It seems analytic to state that to understand obligation, authority as opposed to power, is to understand the foundation of the political behavior that the Constitution demands. That is, that as a people we do, as Meiklejohn stressed, have a field of common action, the general welfare, which takes precedence over an individual good. Further, "disinterest" is to be understood in this context. Freedom is to have public, rather than self-interested, obligations. Recalling the discussion of the First Amendment is relevant at this juncture. Was Meiklejohn not correct in asserting that for self-governing to be reasonable the freedom of ideas (speech) cannot be conceived as the power of any self-seeking idea to get accepted in the "marketplace," but must be conceived as a necessary requisite for our democratic, e.g., public, commitment of advancing the quality of human life as such? It is thoroughly evident that the plans of teaching, or the theories of education, implied by these alternative interpretations of the First Amendment are different in kind. The resultant nature of morality, of society, of individual development are different in kind. The nature of intelligence sought is different in kind.

It will be asked whether Meiklejohn, in his preoccupation with the individual as citizen, as man in his public

role, gave any legitimacy at all to private rights. He did and he did so consistent with his concern for a theory of political obligation as revealed through a comprehension of this area as constitutionally expressed. Meiklejohn's position on private rights is found in his consideration of the meaning of "due process."

"Due Process"

On November 14, 1955, Meiklejohn testified before the Hennings Senate Sub-Committee on Constitutional Rights. He said, in part, the following of the principle of freedom of the First Amendment in relation to men's other civil liberties.

> The First Amendment seems to me to be a very uncompromising statement. It admits of no exceptions. It tells us that Congress and, by implication, all other agencies of the government are denied any authority whatever to limit the political freedom of the citizens of the United States. It declares that with respect to political belief, political discussion, political advocacy, political planning, our citizens are sovereign, and the Congress is their subordinate agent. That agent is authorized, under strong safeguards against the abuse of its power, to limit the freedom of men as they go about the management of their private, their non-political affairs. But the same men, as they endeavor to meet the public responsibilities of citizens in a free society, are in a vital sense, which is not easy to define, beyond the reach of legislative control.[26]

Thus, Meiklejohn distinguished "public authority" and "private liberty" or, in other contexts, the "freedom" of the First Amendment as being distinct in kind from the "liberty" of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. The freedom of the former,

---

[26]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom, op. cit., pp. 107-108.

Meiklejohn held, has to do with that authority by which we, the people, govern; the latter with those non-political liberties which citizens grant, by corporate action, to themselves and others.

> Men speak of the freedom of belief and the freedom of property as if, in the Constitution, the word "freedom," as used in these two cases, had the same meaning. Because of that confusion we are in constant danger of giving to a man's possession the same dignity, the same status, as we give to the man himself. From that confusion our national life has suffered disasterous effects in all its phases.[27]

In effect, Meiklejohn argued that, as we easily confuse our two, but radically different, kinds of civil liberties, we perpetuate a disasterous misunderstanding of the relations between an individual and the state. Freedom, as formerly expressed, gives an unlimited right to the individual as a citizen. Liberty, as in the holding of property, has no such guarantee, Meiklejohn contended, but must be limited under the "due process" clauses of the Constitution. Such limitations are justified by public need or in consideration of the general welfare. The latter point obviously is understandable in terms of, and must be comprehended as being consistent with, the nature of political obligation previously considered. Uninhibited liberty of "free enterprise" is destructive of the freedom, hence the intelligence and obligation, of the members of a self-governing society.

The Fifth Amendment, and subsequently the Fourteenth, does express, constitutionally, our intent to accommodate

---

[27] Ibid., p. 9.

private rights under our plan of government. But within that plan, as Meiklejohn maintained, man pursuing such rights is one of the governed and, as such, there is every reason why, in terms of our corporate intention of the general good, his activity should be regulated. It is clear, therefore, that while life, liberty, and property may be regulated, restrained, or taken away under the "due process" directives of these two amendments as the public welfare may require, such restraint, regulation, or denial must be done justly. Those activities which may be properly hindered, Meiklejohn argued, are accommodated under the principle of justice which is concerned with particular external activities as these sustain or deny our inner, or spiritual, intentions.

In an effort to substantiate the above point it is well to return to Meiklejohn's position on man's double nature as expressive of a single human process. In the text of What Does America Mean? the following statement is found.

> ...When external interests interfere with inner activities it is reasonable that the latter should have the right of way. However we phrase it, there is essential truth in the old, traditional statement that the body of a man must be made to serve rather than to block the purposes of his spirit. Every one of us knows how his own plans are hindered by laziness, by desire for immediate enjoyment, by dullness and distraction of mind. And in the same way the community at large suffers from its own vagaries of impulse, of prejudice, of passion. Throughout our social structure human beings are needlessly held back by external circumstances from being what men and women and children should be. In our American civilization, children, on the city streets, are in daily process of being destroyed as human beings. Men and women, harassed by poverty and dread of greater poverty, are being robbed of sanity and spontaneity of living. Owners and managers, who must use other human

> beings as if they were not human, are not thereby becoming fine and intelligent persons. ...The sober judgment of our civilization is that, if a man or woman becomes a person of taste, of eager, powerful intelligence, his life is, on the whole, a good one. ...On the other hand, to make a fortune, to acquire power, to get comfort and convenience--all these are...compatible with wretched and despicable failure in the business of living. One may be very rich, very powerful, very comfortable, and yet be "a poor thing." The making of men has wholly different standards from those of the making of fortunes. And, this being true, it is reasonable that we demand that fortunes shall serve man rather than vice versa. We cannot allow whims and caprices and ambitions to run riot. These have no right to freedom. And we, who care for spiritual values, must bring them under control. We must take the social order into our hands and set it right. ...And it is for the doing of this task that we demand, and must have, spiritual freedom. Liberty without limit belongs to, and only to, those of our activities which are enlisted in the cause of sensitiveness and intelligence. Desires have a right to justice. But they have no reasonable claim to freedom. That claim belongs to us only as we are striving to measure up to our obligations.[28]

Meiklejohn maintained that not only is the principle of justice partially expressed by the "due process" requirements of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments, not only is the corporate aim of "due process" expressive of our spiritual intentions that justice under law shall be universally accessible as well as compensatory where the state of the human condition demands, but that, at large, the principle of justice is a human one. Therefore the quality of human association, now marred by the divisiveness of institutional processes which have, in creating wealth, created poverty and which sanction our praising of one group while reviling

---

[28]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? op. cit., pp. 221-223.

another, can be advanced only by enacting justice based upon our recognition of the qualitative dimensions such a principle embodies.

> Justice is reason in the affairs of men. Justice is friendship of man for man, of group for group. No man can treat another man with justice, unless he knows him as a human like himself....[29]

Meiklejohn was convinced, like Plato, that to do injustice is worse than to suffer it, to put a man to death unjustly worse than to die. Meiklejohn advocated the institutionalization of justice conceived as moral regard for one's fellow man and, consequently, as the basis upon which the community of men can render impartial judgments concerning the acts of the community. Justice as human regard, Meiklejohn held, is reasonable since it is consistent in yielding impartial judgments and, hence, in strengthening the human community.[30]

It seems apparent that "due process," concerned with the non-political and private affairs of men, is only

---

[29]Meiklejohn, "In Memoriam," The New Republic, lvi, 718 (September 5, 1928), pp. 70-71.

[30]Meiklejohn pointed out that Plato, in the "Apology," sought to understand the ways in which the mind of the community had made itself unfit to do justice; e.g., to render impartial judgments. Certainly Meiklejohn shared this concern and persistently concluded that the only reasonable meaning of impartiality was, in essence, fraternal regard. In Meiklejohn's thought the term "impartial" is equated with "disinterested." In neither case did Meiklejohn mean that men, to be disinterested, have no interest in human values, to the contrary. Men's judgments are unreasonable, unfit, and unjust when based upon self-interested valuations.

partially expressive of the human motive of justice, although assuredly, in Meiklejohn's view, a significant and necessary aspect. The constitutional provisions of "due process" acknowledge both our concern for private rights in our national plan of government as well as, most importantly, the recognition that the realms of freedom and justice must not be confused. Although Meiklejohn claimed that there is a necessary relationship between the two, he also claimed that they are not identical. Surely he was correct in believing that in order for men to be politically free, methods for the just adjudication of men's desires and ambitions must be present in the social structure.

> ...There can be no doubt that desires do oppose, do interfere with, one another. If, for example, two men want the same piece of land, it is clear that both cannot have it. ...In this realm, interests are constantly and inevitably at war. ...If one man gains, another man is deprived. And this means that control does not create interferences. Rather it finds and adjusts and lessens them. The laws which we impose upon property and possessions and enjoyments codify, and so regulate, conflicts of interest which already existed before the laws were made. ...Single desires, it is true, cry out against control as arbitrary and unreasonable. But that is because no single desire as such knows what "reasonable" means.[31]

In the realm of the external affairs of men, therefore, reason or justice is "due process." For instance, while men's unqualified freedom to speak on public matters is not subject to "due process," their liberty to speak on private matters is subject to due process of law. As Meiklejohn

---

[31]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? op. cit., pp. 211-212.

pointed out, in concern for a currently vexing problem, the private policies of communications media (e.g., to sell newspapers) raises the question of their constitutional validity and suggests, for the general welfare, the necessity of just control.

It is equally apparent, nonetheless, that to state the principle of justice in external terms only, in terms of giving men justice, was not, according to Meiklejohn, to be in possession of a sufficient understanding of the principle. The actualization of justice must be found not only within cultural conditions but within the characters of men. Meiklejohn expressed himself as strongly as Aristotle on this point. Justice cannot be simply given to men, but men must love it and live it. They must be just. Without fraternal regard, the essence of the just character, outer arrangements for justice ("due process") prove futile. Meiklejohn was correct in asserting the significance of this point in regard to the teaching requirements such character development imposes upon us. Although justice is a human motive, and so reasonable, it is not a "given" in the structure of the human personality and, therefore, must be an acquired disposition.

At this point it is appropriate for the writer to turn to a consideration of fraternity, as well as of equality, and their relation to freedom in Meiklejohn's view.

Fraternity and Equality

Meiklejohn affirmed that democratic principles are not only mutually supportive but in a relationship of mutual necessity if the intent of a democratic social order is to be realized. It is now redundant to assert that Meiklejohn held that the form of freedom demanded by the First Amendment must be the center of American political thought and of the American social structure. It furthermore is evident that he confirmed that freedom is not the total meaning of democracy.

> It was the liberty of equals and brothers which we established as the guiding formula of our society. ...I would protest that except as men are regarded as "equals," except as they are treated as "brothers," the attempt to make them free, even to think of them as free, is a hopeless and futile one.[32]

It was, of course, at the foot of the unprincipled conception of liberty as espoused in atomistic views of human nature and human association that Meiklejohn placed our confusion about the values of fraternity and equality. A society ordered on the basis of self-seeking individuals surely negates the moral values expressed in a fraternity concept and nullifies the meaning of equality.

> If in an open market men are free to compete with one another, each being free to get and keep what he can, and if these competitors are different in the capacity for getting and keeping, it follows, by a logic which one cannot deny, that liberty will and must destroy equality. If unequals strive in conflict, the stronger must win, the weaker must lose. And so--Quod erat demonstrandum--if men are free they are not equal.

---

[32] Ibid., p. 117.

> A social order must choose between the two. And we Americans, the argument says, have chosen liberty. Therefore we have abandoned equality.[33]

Meiklejohn, as is evident by now, was convinced that the democratic form of human association which men in this society intend allows for no such interpretation of liberty; that the meanings we intend to create in the world do not allow us to argue for the institutionalization of liberty at the expense of both political freedom and equality.

It is clear that for Meiklejohn, taking his cue from the doctrine of the general welfare, the equality demanded by the form of the state is the equality of brothers. It is similarly apparent that in relation to political freedom, in relation to man's obligation in a self-governing society to deliberate about public affairs, Meiklejohn sustained the Aristotelian proposition that genuine conversation (e.g., deliberation) can occur only among equals.

Meiklejohn pointed out that, although we have argued equality "away" by misconstruing liberty, the concept of fraternity has yielded to no such argumentation but has merely drifted out of our comprehension. That is, Meiklejohn maintained that we have ceased to take fraternity as a spiritual value seriously and, in fact, that our adherence to atomistic views of liberty have tended to make fraternity meaningless. It was, however, through the concept of fraternity, the idea

---

[33] Ibid., pp. 119-120.

of human fellowship, that Meiklejohn derived what he considered to be the reasonable form of the state.[34]

At this juncture it is critical to state that in Education Between Two Worlds Meiklejohn rehearsed the transfer of the institution of education from church to state and addressed himself to the crucial question of whether the state in fact can teach. He noted that the processes of the secularization of our civilization meant that we have given up those theological premises and principles upon which the works of man, including his education, can be judged.

> In law, in medicine, in art, in literature, in politics, in science, in morals, in social theory, in education, men have assumed the existence and validity of cosmic principles on the basis of which their work could be, and would be, judged. Though men have striven for human ends, they have done so as servants of God. And now that presupposition is being abandoned. We know of no "divine" standards or ends. And that fundamental change in belief confronts us with the desperate issue which, at every significant point in our experience, staggers the modern mind. If we can no longer believe in God can we maintain, can we carry on, the civilization which was founded on that belief? Is not civilization itself a veneer, a pretense? The despair which underlies that query has been cutting deep into the foundations of all our institutions. And it still remains to be seen whether that despair can be dispelled,..., whether, within its own experience, mankind can find a solid basis on which to continue, to enlarge, to enrich its culture. --It is that question which we must answer if we are to have a theory of modern education.[35]

---

[34]See Chapter 15, "The Doctrine of Human Brotherhood," in Education Between Two Worlds (New York and London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1942), pp. 199-209. Note that the doctrine of human fellowship is a basic tenet of Book IV, "The Social Contract as Basis of Education," of the text and of which Chapter 15 is the introductory statement. Meiklejohn's conception of the social contract will be considered at a later point in this study.

[35]Ibid., pp. 200-201.

It is significant to notice that Meiklejohn spoke of brotherhood as a human fellowship. He was convinced that the abandonment of our theology was to abandon only one kind of man-created sanction for human values and human actions. While for some people religious belief continues to form the basis from which democratic institutions may be derived, for others no extra-human support is found to exist. Surely it is historically evident that institutions, including public education, do not now in the main derive their sanctions from religious beliefs.

As Meiklejohn suggested the relevant issue at this stage is whether there is any evidence that warrants believing that there is a dominant ideal for the life of man which is basic to the structuring of his institutions. If so, the questions with which this chapter began, and concomitant problems regarding a theory of education in a democratic society, are satisfactorily answered. The specific question of whether there is evidence that warrants our believing in fraternity was primary for Meiklejohn. Since he saw in the idea of human fellowship not only the basis for adducing the quality of human life as such but the root for ordering political and social behavior, warrantability was assured for Meiklejohn.

It is well to reiterate the point that Meiklejohn, while denying theological sanctions for fraternity and other values, did not assign any cause to them other than human intentions. He held that values and the principles they

embody are man-created rather than man-discovered. Values are neither pre-existent in the structure of the universe nor in the structure of human nature qua human nature. It is, as has been argued, within the nature of man to possess intentions which can be and, according to Meiklejohn, must be assessed as being or not being value-worthy. The validity of a concept like fraternity ought to be held only hypothetically. We choose to express the value of the human association demanded by such a concept, the principles of behavior which the idea of brotherhood involves and beliefs about the goodness of such behavior--or we choose not to. By what test can we be assured that such choosing is valid or invalid, worthy of approval or disapproval? What kind of evidence warrants our institutionalizing the human intent of the morality of brotherhood rather than the human intent of moral anarchy? It is one thing to agree with Meiklejohn as he says this:

> When we say that men are brothers we are saying that, both morally and intellectually, they are engaged in a common enterprise. That enterprise determines what are, and what should be, their relations to one another. It prescribes both their modes of conduct and their modes of thought.[36]

It also is one thing to agree with him that such a perspective yields prescriptions for structuring institutions, including the conduct of education. The perplexing problem with which to deal is that of the warrantability of saying men <u>are</u> brothers or that men <u>ought to be</u> brothers. In both

---

[36]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 204.

cases the problem is an epistemological one. In the latter case it is also axiological in nature.

It is impossible for the reader's imagination not to be captured by Meiklejohn's rhetoric or not to respond to the mood invoked by his argumentation. In speaking of the idea of human fellowship, for salient illustrations in this writer's judgment, the core of Meiklejohn's concern is expressed in these passages.

> Is the brotherhood of man a fact? Can we justify its assertion by objective, impartial, secular evidence? The answer to that question is decisive to all educational theory. What we shall teach depends upon our view of the relations of men to one another. And especially are the relations between intelligence and brotherhood significant for any study of education. What kind of intelligence do we wish to inclucate? Is it the friendly wisdom of persons who are cooperating in a common cause? Or is it the cleverness and calculating self-interest of individuals, each of whom is, in the last resort, seeking his own advantage?[37]
>
> . . . . . .
>
> ...The idea of human fellowship, as it passes over from divine to human status, is, of necessity, changed in meaning. At one essential point, this change is very important for education. The religious belief which thought of the human community as established by God, regarded it as already existing, as having existed from the foundation of the world. It was, of course, recognized that men had, in many respects, failed in their responsibility for the fulfilling of Divine purpose. As in Locke's State of Nature, though men had "rights," they did not always get them. And yet the cosmic fact could still be asserted. God had made men brothers. He had created the human community. Men might ignore the fact, but they could not deny it. It was there, in the nature of things, setting up eternal standards by which the conduct of men would be judged. But the community which human beings themselves are making has no such "prior" existence as this. It exists only in

---

[37] Ibid., pp. 204-205.

> so far as men bring it into being. Men are brothers only as they become so by their own moral and intellectual achievements. The life of fellowship is an ideal, a goal, toward which men may strive. It is an end which, through human wisdom and virtue, may be attained but which also, through human ignorance or wickedness, may, in greater or lesser degree, be lost. And, in the same way, the intelligence of man, when seen as participating in this enterprise, is not the perfect wisdom of God. It is the growing, and not-growing, insight which, by countless ages of searching and striving, men have won for the enriching of their lives, the guiding of their actions.[38]

What men ought to do, as Meiklejohn viewed the human situation, is not only to be understood as being in contrast with an individual's immediate desires and ambitions but, most meaningfully, consists in obligations which have been authorized by man himself. Man, Meiklejohn declared, creates values, creates culture. In the immediate context what indeed warrants our intention of fraternity and the objects of culture it implies? This question is raised not in terms of the warrantability of fraternity for a democratic social order, but in terms of the prior question on which Meiklejohn insisted--Does the life of man have a dominant ideal?

The empistemological problem, that of determining how we know whether or not men are brothers, is mitigated by Meiklejohn's insistence that we treat the proposition, e.g., "Men are brothers," hypothetically. We are not faced, then, with the dilemma that J. S. Mill, for example, set for us by asserting that the goodness of ultimate ends is not amenable to direct proof. We are, in agreement with Meiklejohn's thought,

---

[38]Ibid., pp. 205-206.

"simply" faced with the necessity of assessing the consequences of objectifying the idea of human fellowship or of some other mode of human relationship. It might be argued, however, that in the final analysis Mill is correct and that at the end of the regression the axiological choice as to whether each individual life must be enhanced, as in caring for each man as a well-loved brother it would be, or some lives may be diminished in quality is arbitrary and subjective.

For Meiklejohn the values which inhere in ordering men's relations to one another on the basis of fellowship were neither arbitrary nor subjective as these terms usually may be understood. Certainly, as argued, ethical judgments which equate "goodness" with individual "desire" were held as invalid in Meiklejohn's thought. To assert that something is good is to make an assertion about a fact, element, or quality of, or in, the world. A statement affirming "goodness" is not, Meiklejohn maintained, a proposition about a state of mind. Rather, such a statement has as its referent an existent in the world and, on such a basis, therefore may be judged true or false. Although it may be argued that the whole tenor of Meiklejohn's position is subjectivistic since he expressed concern for understanding men's intentions, this would be to ignore the totality of his perspective--that of understanding and assessing men's intentions as the latter are made manifest in culture, hence as they are objectified.

In a sense Meiklejohn echoed a common sense perspective on the question of values, although he expressed his position

more persuasively than ordinary men tend to do. Certainly if men hold the identity of valuing and feeling then question about the approval or disapproval of an act does not arise. In the usual situation, nonetheless, men not only express their feelings about an act but, in fact, make a judgmental commitment about the quality of the act itself. It seems indisputable that in a significant sense men can judge the consequences of an act, both immediately and broadly, in terms of its qualitative effect on the conditions of life.

Further, Meiklejohn's deontology characterizes his position as objective. It would be hard to disagree with the point that common men, for the most part, feel that there are occasions when they are "obliged" to act in a manner contrary to what they might "like" to do. It is hard to see how such judgments would arise if moral judgments are entirely reducible to subjective terms.

While in general the above holds true for Meiklejohn's position, we ought to review more precisely relevant grounds, in terms of his argumentation, of his theory of valuation. How, according to Meiklejohn, can we appraise, rather than merely prize, the values encompassed in the idea of human fellowship? For this author Meiklejohn's weakest point lies in his claim that historically human life can be viewed as striving toward something "better" and that, from this perspective, it is an analytic judgment that it is universally better for mankind to live, indeed to live at all, on the

basis of a human fellowship rather than on the bases of other modes of human association that, to a greater or lesser degree, result in a "state of war" among men.

It is clear that Meiklejohn's ethical premises were formulated on non-naturalistic and non-emotivistic grounds. It is on the basis of Meiklejohn's judgment that man is the creator of culture, values, and self that the writer finds the most telling grounds for concluding that Meiklejohn found objective warrantability for the idea of human brotherhood. Essentially two points are developed in substantiation of the last comment. Men create reason. And men crated the idea of human fellowship. Meiklejohn agreed with Rousseau, and disagreed with Locke, that the rights of men are not "natural" in the sense that they are considered to originate in some presocial condition. Nor did Meiklejohn hold that moral laws are natural existents. In both cases rights and morality are created by men in organizing society. More specifically both are political inventions.

In a specifically revealing distinction Meiklejohn contrasts, or separates, the "laws of nature" from the "laws of society." In the case of the former he was acknowledging what the scientific endeavor is after; e.g., to determine factual propositions of the kind that assert that under specified conditions such-and-such a thing will occur universally. The latter case, the laws of society, although universal, grants the probability of infraction while the former does not.

> When we say, "Men should not lie," we do not mean they never "do" lie. We mean that they never "should" lie. As matter of fact the prohibition assumes the existence of the offense. It tells us to stop doing what we are doing. And, as we all know, such prohibitions are only partially effective. So long as men are men the law will be needed because, presumably, so long as men are men, lying will go on. But, nevertheless, the law, if valid, does reveal a fact. It tells us, at one point, about the society in which the law holds good. It is a society which prescribes that the truth shall be told.[39]

In the same manner then a society which prescribes brotherhood is not claiming that all men are acting like brothers but that they are brothers and, therefore, should be acting appropriately.

> And from this it follows that we can think of men as belonging to the same brotherhood, even though they hate each other, provided that we can also say that their hatred is wrong, that they are not dealing with one another as members of the same community should deal with one another. In a word, the essential feature of the life of fellowship is the presence of principles in accordance with which judgments of approval and disapproval can be made. Ignorance of one's fellows does not disprove the fellowship relation, if that ignorance can be judged to be a misfortune. War does not constitute a denial of human brotherhood if we can say that war is a crime. It is taken for granted when the principles of community life are formulated that specific human actions will both conform and fail to conform to their authority. But the basic "fellowship" fact is the presence of that authority. Men cannot fail, unless there is a goal which they fail to reach. They cannot violate principles unless there are principles to violate. And it is those value principles which constitute community life. To belong to a brotherhood is to have one's conduct open to censure and approval.[40]

It seems plain, given the above, that Meiklejohn held that the guiding goals for teaching are bound to our understanding of the fact that while men in society set principles of conduct, they often break them. Once more we encounter

---

[39] Ibid., p. 209.

[40] Ibid., p. 208.

Meiklejohn's concern for overcoming the dualism involved in man's contradicting his beliefs through his actions, for it is the former rather than the latter which are the foundations of educational practice.

It can still be argued that the above gives us no warrant for assuming that we should choose as the guiding law of society the idea of fellowship. It is the point that "men create reason" that now must be addressed. It is, in effect, through the creation of "reasonableness" that men have "civilized" themselves. Meiklejohn referred to that strong western tradition which has revealed us as being persistent in our attempt to meaningfully distinguish the difference between settling problems by resorting to violence and settling them by "reasonable" means.

> For the purposes of business, men had devised a phrase which for sheer deceptive deviltry surpasses all other devises by which the human mind has ever led itself astray--the idea of "intelligent self-interest." That phrase can justify any crime. It can sanctify any sin. It can make respectable any disregard for the general welfare. The phrase is fruitful in all the bargaining tricks of self-deception and hypocrisy. A culture which prizes honesty because "honesty is the best policy" is not honest. It is shrewd. And shrewdness is violence become crafty. If we say that men "seeking their own advantage" are "led by an invisible hand" to promote the welfare of others which, however, "was no part of their intention," we are explaining human helpfulness in terms of human selfishness. Virtues are thus deduced from vices. Fairness has become a weapon which contending passions may use as they seek "to exhibit themselves as reasonable persuasions." And the distinction between reason and violence is gone. The civilizing of man is now seen to have been simply the taking on of a veneer. Laws, principles, rights, obligations--these are merely covers for the brutal fact of individual aggression. One need only scratch the skin of a saint to find beneath

> it the avid, craving flesh of what Huxley has called "the ape and the tiger" in mankind.[41]

Modern society thus repeats the kinds of problems that Plato attempted to solve. This writer, as asserted previously, judges Meiklejohn to be in the Platonic tradition since the former was concerned that linguistic distinctions (that between "violence" and "reason") reflect real distinctions in terms of "unprincipled" or "principled" behavior. As Meiklejohn rightly argued the "self-interested" basis for human behavior, if allowed to stand, equates violence and reason. Those Orwellian prohecies about beliefs, the results of the process of "doublethink" (War is peace), become the center of our thought. The outcome of denying that there is a behavioral distinction (principled) between violence and reason creates or perpetuates a social structure in which "justice," "obligation," "freedom," are meaningless phrases, perhaps piously verbalized but signifying nothing. It is analytic, in total agreement with Meiklejohn, that a social order which accepts conflict as the basis for the resolution of problems among groups or between individuals, possesses no rational basis, as western man has been endeavoring to create and secure it, for the adjudication of such conflicts. It was Meiklejohn's solution, as it was Plato's, that the dilemmas of which we have spoken to this point (whether they involve the problem of the adjudication of external acts,

---

[41] Ibid., p. 227.

desires, or the issue of the worth of an idea) be submitted to the jurisdiction of reason. Meiklejohn saw in laissez-faire and other premises previously criticized no reasonable standards for evaluating behavior or ideas. The ethical relativism involved has not only yielded chaos in human affairs but has tended toward the eventual destruction of mankind. Like Plato he sought for the establishment of an objective standard for the determination of value issues, a standard that would allow men to distinguish between principled and unprincipled modes of conduct and thought.

Thus Meiklejohn selected the idea of brotherhood because its principles of behavior and thought "stand to reason." He hypothesized the idea of fraternity because it is reasonable. The reasonableness of the idea, its warrantability, lies in what responding according to its principles produces for the quality of human life as a whole. Reasonableness itself is that "special effort which men are making to transform themselves and their world."[42] It is that effort which men make to make sense out of an existence which by nature has no prevailing reasonableness to it and which, in much of human experience, in nature is nonreasonable. It is then that effort men make to become "civil."

Meiklejohn saw in the community of scientists a model for the fraternity of mankind. Scientists, brothers in intent,

---

[42]Ibid., p. 237.

pool interests, pool information and cooperate in terms of the establishment and maintenance of common procedures for solving problems. They are "in relation" to one another not only in terms of a cooperative enterprise bent on achieving publicly verifiable knowledge but "over" or "through" time, to their "posterity" as it were. Their efforts are qualified by being disinterested rather than prejudiced by self-interest. All of these characteristics exhibit the quality of reasonable cooperation. This author agrees with Meiklejohn that in the matter of seeking for that wisdom needed for the conduct of human living fraternal regard is reasonable. The statement that one man cannot "have" the "same" experiences as another, value experiences, experiences of pain, the whole gamut of experiential possibilities, does not disqualify such a perspective. The fact that the former statement has become for us so assured, through psychological data as well as philosophical assumption, has become so strongly and so simplisticly "true" for us, identifies that we are in persistent danger of the consequences of submerging ourselves within it. Such a belief ignores the fact that we do have the reasonable potential for having regard for the interests of the other, that human interests in fact can be pooled and problematic human situations confronted in fraternal terms. In speaking of what it means to be reasonable in social situations Meiklejohn said this:

> ...That people, having common values to measure, can engage together in the solution of a common problem of measurement. It means that men are friends. And, on

> the other hand, it means that, if men are not friends, to speak of reasonableness between them is to speak nonsense.[43]

To the above point, the writer feels compelled to point out, Hook's best judgment of Meiklejohn's position, that the latter's position unwittingly develops into totalitarianism, seems misplaced thus far, to put the mildest light on it, and that the former might have been on stronger, but in consequence not too meaningful, grounds to question Meiklejohn's tautologies. In fairness to Hook, however, it was specifically with Meiklejohn's conception of "the state," particularly in relation to the premise that teaching should express the "cultural authority" by and for which teaching is done, that the former took issue.

The Form of the State

It has been stated that Hook indicated Meiklejohn for "dangerous ambiguity" in the employment of such terms as "community" and "state." This writer recognizes no such ambiguity and points out the possibility that because it appears to the pragmatic view that essential distinctions must be made between them, while for Meiklejohn such distinctions did not apply, that Hook apparently failed to grasp their identity in Meiklejohn's theory. Meiklejohn surely was cognizant of the fact that his conceptions were not entirely free from vagueness or the liability of misinterpretation. Let it be emphasized once more that he was attempting

---

[43] Ibid., p. 233.

to structure a direction for social and educational theorizing that expressed more meaningfully the nature of men's intentions regarding democracy, and their intentions for education, at this time and under current social conditions, than that found in theories based on some variation of "self-interest."

For Meiklejohn the concomitant point to regarding the hypothesis that all men are brothers as the dominant ideal of human living was that this provided a human principle in terms of which democracy could be defined and judged. In essence he argued that it is from the principle of brotherhood that the form of the state derives. The state is a people, a potential fellowship or a community, seeking to become reasonable; e.g., seeking to develop and evaluate modes of conduct and thought based on the human principle of fraternity. It has become commonplace, when people talk about "the state," to assume that that to which reference is made is some sort of supra-human organism. Although Meiklejohn termed his theory of state "organic," he clearly meant this to be understood as referring to a people internally related in acting for the common welfare. The constitutional expression of the latter, that which refers to the intentions of men in this society, is bound to those phrases which in fact give evidence of our corporate and, in Meiklejohn's thought, fraternal political obligations.

For Meiklejohn, therefore, the state is primary. It is the basis for human fellowship and, as such, the source of

morality and intelligence. The state, Meiklejohn argued, is not a human accident, no part of human reasonableness; it is not secondary in nature, arising out of the need to arbitrate conflicts of interest; it is not an artifice created "in spite of ourselves." Although Meiklejohn's concept of "the fourth branch of government" is dealt with more extensively in a later chapter of this study, it must be mentioned in this context. The fourth branch of government, as Meiklejohn conceived it, is the people in a democratic society. In effect the concept refers to that part of the state which is all of those persons who are participants in the processes of self-governing. There are three points to be mentioned here. First, what Meiklejohn is talking about has to do with the proposition that it is "government" which is derived from and is the agent of the state. Second, that government is composed of various processes necessary to the representation of the will of the state (fraternally understood) and, therefore, is separated into legislative, judicial, executive, and sovereign branches. Third, it is the latter, the function of the sovereign, which we have failed to take seriously in the enacting of and the education for our democratic, corporate intentions and in terms of which freedom and political obligation currently have most relevant reference. Nonetheless, the four branches of government, it must be clearly apprehended, are representatives of and agencies for the state. Government then is not

"the enemy" of the people but the community's (the state's, the fellowship's) special agent for "civilizing" its members.

Surely if Meiklejohn's particular conceptions are misapprehended, it is analytic that such a phrase as "the state" can be interpreted in ways that are contrary to the direction of Meiklejohn's theory. The nature of "the state" as Meiklejohn affirmed it must be comprehended as deriving its form from the principles of fraternity. The separation of state and government, and the agencyship of the latter, must be acknowledged. And the function of the sovereign thoroughly identified. Without these understandings statements to the effect that the state exists through and for the people and they for it certainly can be misapplied. Perhaps, however, it is Meiklejohn's doctrine of the general will that leads most to the conclusion that his position results in totalitarianism.

To talk of Meiklejohn's doctrine of the general will is equivalent to speaking of "the democratic will." In the writer's judgment the definition of the democratic will has been indicated throughout the content of this chapter and needs only to be brought together in context to consider the problem of the potentiality of totalitarianism. Perhaps it is too simplistic to assert that when we say that men in this society "intend" a democratic mode of human association we are indicating that they "will" it. To intend is to will. As the writer interprets Meiklejohn "to will" expresses what

must be the nature of men's intentions actively objectified in culture. In effect, the democratic will is when men have achieved the intellectual recognition and enacted it that the nature of democratic intentions are not expressed in terms of who rules, in terms of the unqualified powers of persons in decision-making acts, but what rules in terms of principles and how relevant principles are enacted. Certainly if "will" is thought to be superior and external to persons, working through them as a more or less uncontrollable force, then some sort of totalitarianism is conceded. Meiklejohn's "democratic will" is not extra-human, it has no pre-human metaphysical status, but expresses that men are creating a society ordered on the basis of the principles of fraternity, on the basis of reasonableness. As such, that will is disinterested, as the latter term has been identified. And, again, we have constitutionally expressed the nature of the democratic will as fraternal in our acknowledgment of the collective and unified obligations of "we, the people."

It may be worthwhile to discuss this aspect of Meiklejohn's theory by referring to Rousseau from whom, as Meiklejohn acknowledged, the latter took his "cue." Meiklejohn agreed with Rousseau that it is within the domain of civil society that moral principles are to be found. For Rousseau such principles were defined or circumscribed by the principle of the "general will." According to Rousseau man achieves freedom because, since he literally becomes part of

the sovereign power, he obeys that which he participates in prescribing for himself. Meiklejohn certainly agreed. What are individual rights, in the case of both men rights of citizens, become "transferred to the whole community" in a manner which results not in the loss of individual freedom but in which freedom is found by being socially centered on the common good. Now this writer would suggest that the concept of the general will is perplexing in a manner in which Meiklejohn's concept of the democratic will is not. In Rousseau's case the general will, the "volonté generale," seems in some instances to be the "volonté de tous"--a quantification of individual wills. Meiklejohn's strenuous objection to this has been discussed in relation to Dewey's analysis of the relation of "publics" to "the public will." Yet, for Rousseau, for the most part, the general will apparently was not conceived as a mere aggregation of wills but "the will of all when all will rationally." Somehow the general will compels the conformity of individual wills on public matters and results in acts for the common good. This writer does not see in Meiklejohn's conception of the democratic will the perplexing "somehowness" that Rousseau's position arouses. What is the common good, the democratic will, centers on fraternal regard, morally caring for each man.

In addition, while the metaphysical status of Rousseau's general will remains a problem, as does the concomitant question of how one <u>knows</u> that the legitimate expression of the

general will has been attained, Meiklejohn, in the former case, offers no such problem and, in the latter, a legitimate and on-going concern. It is surely clear that Meiklejohn viewed fraternity, the essence of the democratic will, as a goal to be realized, to be made a real object of culture, and not as something given prior to human intentions. To consider the problem of how one knows when and if the democratic will has been achieved as a legitimately on-going one is certainly consistent with Meiklejohn's perspective that our political, hence moral, obligation necessitates our persistent attentiveness to the demands of currently changing social situations in order to continually minimize the cleavage between principle and action.

Thus far it is concluded that if Meiklejohn is right about the state, then rights and obligations spring from the same source. What morality is, and indeed what education is, rests on the organization of the state. Meiklejohn's conception of the democratic will led him to this conclusion as to what authorizes teaching.

> The purpose of all teaching is to express the cultural authority of the group by which the teaching is given.[44]

Hook seriously questions this.

> Test this proposition by concrete reference to the actual teaching which goes on in a democratic community. Where or in whom does the "cultural authority" repose? Is it one group or many groups? The most obvious fact about a democratic community is the plurality of groups of which it is composed, and these are not in agreement. What, then, is the character of the "cultural authority"? Is it

---

[44] Ibid., p. 91.

> the values which all groups in the community hold in common, or is it the values of the dominant group? How do teachers "express" the cultural authority of the group? By transmitting it as antecedent truth that cannot be rejected, or by critically appraising this authority as one proposal among others? Are the teachers hired by a community to teach the truth as they see it or as the community sees it? All of these questions can be clearly answered when we examine the actual role of teaching in totalitarian societies, for no one is in doubt as to who is master there. None of them can be clearly answered independently of the specific educational situation, when we turn to societies which we recognize as democratic. The answers will be different in Winnetka and Boston, Dayton and New York.
>
> When Mr. Meiklejohn goes on to assert the proposition not merely as a description of what we might actually observe but as a judgment of what teaching should be, its moral inadequacy becomes palpable. It is just because teaching in a totalitarian community transmits the authority of the group that we condemn it. Nor do we hesitate to condemn the teaching in a politically democratic community whose cultural authority decrees that the content of instruction be fixed--whether in astronomy, biology, or social thought--irrespective of the weight of scientific evidence. A teacher is not disloyal who teaches the theory of evolution in a fundamentalist community.[45]

Given this understanding of Meiklejohn it is no wonder that Hook was indignant at Meiklejohn's identification of freedom with the state. But Hook must be judged faulty in his interpretation. He surely does not understand Meiklejohn's conception of the state nor his conception of the democratic will. Hook certainly disagrees with Meiklejohn's identification of a community of purpose.

Although Hook's critique involves misinformation, even if it were corrected it is obvious that he would not be sympathetic since he posits different premises about man and

---

[45]Hook, Education for Modern Man, op. cit., pp. 93-94.

society. The kind of controversy involved here lends weight to the conclusion that this kind of confrontation between concerned men simply must be resolved to achieve a more adequate (to the times) educational theory. There does not appear, it seems to the writer, any way for minds of the pragmatic and minds of the humanistic persuasions to meet. This writer would argue that our enactment of democratic purposes must be based on a continuing analysis of the form of the state as expressed constitutionally in persistently assessed interpretations of the Constitution. It does appear that Hook is ultimately wrong in attributing a totalitarian outcome to Meiklejohn's position given those concepts of state, political freedom, public obligation, fraternity, and the democratic will discussed to this point and given the latter's effort to interpret the national document. Surely, perhaps, Hook could raise more relevant questions as to what kind of collective intention it is that we, as a people, have expressed or is he to be allowed to abandon that issue for a sheer insistence on pluralism?

It might be true, as Hook suggested, that the educational problems that are present in Dayton are different than those present in New York, although the writer confesses to some puzzlement as to whether even in 1946, at the time of the first publication of Education for Modern Man, this actually was so. For Meiklejohn, nonetheless, such problems would not be different in kind, although degree or instance or specificity

well might vary. What is to be taught, what is authorized by that "cultural authority" to which Hook took exception, is tied to the realization of democratic purposes and the development of that intelligence necessary to objectify them in culture.

Meiklejohn, in equating "will" with a "pattern" or "theme" of culture, was consistent. There is, in the author's judgment, nothing supra-human or totalitarian involved in the efforts of men to actualize, institutionalize, what they will. The democratic will, the cultural authority, must be interpreted as principles, most particularly those involved in the idea of human fellowship, which are binding and non-arbitrary, and which are adhered to by a necessity which is freely recognized by men in this society.

The idea of fraternity provides the basis for social relations, the basis for moral actions. The idea of authority lying in the community, the state, as a whole and the idea of human association (as opposed to either mere aggregation or a totalitarian relationship) are related under the idea of fraternity. What fraternity expresses, in principle, what Meiklejohn interpreted as the proper expression of the democratic will, is the ethical ideal of the state, inclusive of what the act of citizenship or sovereignty means.

Meiklejohn, in summary, showed to the twentieth century what has been western man's historical failure, in the writer's opinion, to learn from Platonic teachings--the need for

complete agreement between our institutions and our human goals. Institutions express intentions and to the degree that they are really expressive of what men intend as reasonable (ethical) ends, they are to that degree educative. The basic intention which Meiklejohn maintained should be objectified in culture is bound to the idea of human fellowship which grounds reasonableness and morality. It is this dominant human ideal, at this time, in terms of which both democracy and education must be defined. Further, since the state properly understood is fraternal in character, there was, for Meiklejohn, no single group of persons to whom the fellowship should be confined. The theoretical source of Meiklejohn's proposals for international education, as discussed in Chapter II, and his assertion that education belongs to the world state lies in the universality of the principles of fraternity and the reasonableness of the point that only brothers can reason together.

It may be suggested that in this relatively lengthy discussion of the idea of fellowship one of the primary aims of this chapter, that of addressing the meaning of freedom, has been obliterated. The writer trusts that this is not so in suggesting that a context has been provided for the statement that "freedom is to act for the general welfare."[46] "To act for the general welfare" signifies that no confinement can be placed on the political obligation of men to

---

[46]Meiklejohn, Education Between Two Worlds, op. cit., p. 274.

deliberate about and participate in the formation of public policy. For this, absolute freedom of minds and ideas is mandatory.

Conclusion

For those who see in Meiklejohn's judgment that social plans and actions must be evaluated in terms of whether they provide for human ideas and that the principles of democracy in particular must be rightly apprehended by men, a question in the fact that he was vitally concerned with the problem of men's intentions but not a man's intentions, the point must be reinforced that his concern was to develop a public philosophy and, in consequence, to provide a basis for the authority of the public activity of teaching. While one might have liked Meiklejohn to more fully account for the individual in his existential situation, it can hardly be denied that it is necessary to account for mankind in its existential situation. Meiklejohn's attempts to develop grounds for those principles of thought and conduct upon which a social order should be based does not deny the value of individuality but can be viewed as a regard for providing right conditions for the individual's optimal development. It was, of course, with the optimal development of the free individual with which Meiklejohn was most concerned in his theorizing.

The nature of the education that the free man needs is bound to the developed definition of freedom (to act for the

general welfare) and is plainly political in essence. It is significant that the liberal idea advocated by Meiklejohn is represented in his writings in the persons of Socrates and Christ. The former, in asserting that the "unexamined life is not worth living," called for men to be critical about themselves and their social situation. The latter impelled men to be brothers, to be kind. Meiklejohn found these to be united--to be intelligent is to be kind. The relevance which Meiklejohn saw in this for humankind was particularized in its relevance for the form of a democratic society rightly ordered. The liberal idea, seen in Socrates and Christ as representatives of the crucial elements of the good man and the good state, Meiklejohn saw as universal as well as at the heart of democracy's educational obligation.

There have been many references in this study to the concept and the purpose of intelligence, to the necessity for intelligence. The point has been emphasized that Meiklejohn sought for the nature of intelligence required by the free man and for the freeing of men. It, also, has been stated that Meiklejohn's deepest concern was the development of the thinking power of a free society. This author concluded, therefore, that particular attention should be given to his theory of intelligence, since it is the key to Meiklejohn's position on liberal education. It is with Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence that Chapter IV is concerned.

CHAPTER IV

THEORY OF INTELLIGENCE: THE KEY TO LIBERAL EDUCATION

Meiklejohn's perspective was that genuine education must be concerned with the clarification of the conditions in which human welfare can be most fruitfully realized, the human community most positively enhanced, and, of necessity with the concomitant tools (means) required for its enhancement. There is no question that intelligence is the primary requisite for achieving that quality of living that Meiklejohn sought as the goal of humankind.

Meiklejohn, supported by such analyses as that of the reasonableness of brotherhood, that of the difference between principled (reasonable) and unprincipled (violent) acts, and that of the concept of the scheme of reference, concluded the following.

> We have now defined, in principle, the road which human intelligence seeks to travel. It leads from the state of nature toward the state of civilization. Its signposts say, "The Appeal to Reason." The direction of that road gives direction to education. Our schools and colleges are successful according as their pupils escape from confusion and violence and equip themselves for reasonable living in peace and order.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> If it be true that the task of human intelligence is to bring order out of disorder, then at every step in

> that process there must be full and detailed recognition of the disorder with which we are dealing. To ignore it would be worse than madness. It would be idiocy. And yet it would be equally idiotic, for a "reasonable" person, to deny that there is, in human experience, a striving for fellowship, for understanding, for reasonableness. It is no longer possible for us to personalize those two sets of facts. We can no longer attribute them to the universe by calling them God and the Devil. But the stubborn facts still remain. The life of man, so far as it has value at all is, at every point, a struggle of wisdom against folly, of generosity against selfishness, of objectivity against prejudice, of civilization against barbarism. The struggle may be a losing one. Chaos may be too intractable for our vagrant and fitful attempts at thinking. And yet that struggle is the only thing which gives dignity and worth to human living. Our task is to create a fellowship in which all reasonable beings may live on equal terms, with equal status, with mutual regard, one for another. No one who really faces the agony, the meanness, the misunderstandings, the self-righteous brutalities of the modern world, will think that task an easy one, will fail to see the desperate difficulties that stand in its way.[1]

Meiklejohn argued that the intelligence demanded by a democratic social group reflected the requirements of mankind at large. He stipulated, as others have, that democracy is a social order in which all of its members have a genuine share and that that which is fundamentally shared is the decision-making obligation in the public domain. The point that decisions must be made in terms of a dominant purpose, the idea of human fellowship, has been substantively addressed. Without such a principle nothing, neither action nor thought, justice nor education, can be judged worthy or unworthy, good or bad. Reasonableness demands, Meiklejohn held, that all

---

[1]Ibid., pp. 262-263.

facets of human living be critically addressed in terms of an adequate response to the question of what we are trying to do. The educational necessity of creating an active and enlightened public mind is deduced from the foregoing comments. Citizens, those obligated to make decisions on public policy, surely do not do so in enlightenment if they cannot determine whether any particular decision "stands to reason."

It must be clear that Meiklejohn held that the "intelligence" promulgated by a competitive social order was unreasonable, unprincipled, and undemocratic. On genuine intellectual grounds a competitive social order is unsuited to the purposes of democracy. The common people, all of us, must make decisions of a certain nature, qualitatively speaking, but such an obligation is lost, as are the identifying principles of democracy itself, if competitive relations among men and among ideas are perpetuated. Under such an order, Meiklejohn pointed out and with which the author strongly agrees, sheer power prevails and, thus, men do not share in the making of common decisions for the very obvious reason that no such decisions are really made.

The writer cautions against a tendency to render the judgment of "totalitarian" to Meiklejohn's educational commitment to "an" active and enlightened public mind. He was endeavoring to express the point that as a people we intend a mode of human association and that each individual mind

has work to do in relationship to the whole, in relationship to that intention. Although he often spoke of humanity in the abstract, the limitations of language must be acknowledged and Meiklejohn given his due. He was concerned with men, with individuals, and, as has been discussed, envisioned a state in terms of the completeness and self-sufficiency of its members which could not be achieved by coercion. To speak of "a national intelligence" or "a public mind" was to speak of that thinking men in a democracy have to do in common. To speak of education "in the service of the whole," as Meiklejohn did, was to speak of education's obligation for the development of the thinking powers of men in a free society, of that kind of intelligence which needs to be the possession of each man. The educational issue has to do with what contributes to the freedom of the human mind so that intelligence may act as a guide to behavior. As the existentialist seeks individually to bring reason into his world, to make sense out of it, Meiklejohn, viewing the existential situation of mankind in general and of our society in particular, viewed the task of common men as that of seeking to bring reason into the world.

Meiklejohn supported grave implications for education, in regard to intelligence, when he called to our attention what he termed in many contexts "the drift in popular thinking." He meant that men, upon whom public decision-making is incumbent, had neither an understanding of their social

conditions nor standards of judgment. The moral dilemma involved is that the judgments we make, the choices we make, are either confused or irrelevant. In either case the question of coming to right and good judgments loses its potency and life becomes unmanaged, then unmanageable. Teachers who share in such inadequate understandings and who have no theory of action contribute to the drift in popular thinking and, finally, to the resort to violence as the basis for making decisions.

The consequences of such unintelligent thinking, as Meiklejohn affirmed, are not confined to our nation but, in view of the obligations we have assumed, are diffused throughout the world. Peace, no less than war, has found our decisions based on the method of violence, the method of self-seeking. Meiklejohn may be accused of maintaining that acts which do not meet the test of reasonableness are, ergo, violent. Though this may be true the writer would argue that in the world of Meiklejohn's concern, the world of the twentieth century, the possibility of developing an appropriate theory of intelligence based upon some sort of continuum is null. Meiklejohn is consistent in his view that any act can be evaluated as violent that is not fully reasonable, that does not fully express a genuine meeting of minds. His concern for the ability of teachers and scholars to stop the drift of popular thinking, to turn men's minds from judgments of violence to those of reason, was a no less viable

one for the international situation than for our national condition. It is certainly true that we have predicated our international relations on the same notions of self-interest as individuals and groups have done nationally. What, then, in terms of our assumed obligation for the peace of the world have we historically taught? The appeal to violence rather than the appeal to reason. Was Meiklejohn correct in his interpretation of history? That our judgments concerning tariffs, the desirability of "returning to normal" after World War I, our propagandizing about American "virtues," are illustrative of our teaching of violence rather than reason? The writer affirms that he was. Regarding our general intent in this century, to teach the world how to be free, the paradox lies in that we have repudiated that principle of freedom which is "to be reasonable." In 1943, in speaking of our intent to reeducate Germany, Meiklejohn asked this:

> Is it not clear that, if we are planning to teach our manner of life to other nations, the time has come when we must frankly acknowledge what that manner of life is? We are...a pressure-group people. We believe in strife and conflict for the goods of life. In a world so conceived men do not appeal to Reason, except for the purposes of salesmanship, of strategy, of subterfuge, of self-interest. They appeal to Violence. They fight--with their wits.[2]

What is outlined above goes beyond irony, to teach Germany what we have not taught ourselves, to contradiction. What,

---

[2]Meiklejohn, "Teacher, Teach Thyself!" Adult Education Journal, Vol. 2, 3(July, 1943), p. 125.

asked Meiklejohn, does the teacher now intend in a world whose nations desire individual sovereignty but some of whom, as nations, claim at the same time that nations shall live together in terms of equality and justice?

> Do Russia and the United States, Great Britain and India, China, France, Mexico, Poland, and the rest--do they intend, after the war is over, to discard the methods of Violence, to establish law and order, justice and freedom for all mankind? If so, they will proceed to create and sustain a world-state which shall have authority and power to make and enforce laws which shall be equally binding on every one of them. It is the function of a state to make Reasonableness prevail throughout its domain. Under actual human conditions, there is no other institutional method by which that end can be accomplished. ...Are we willing to submit our wills, our lives, our fortunes to the common will of an organized humanity? Are we wise enough to create an organization by which the ends of reasonableness would be served? If so, it may be that the nations of the earth can together engage in the task of a common re-education. If not, then humanity will again have chosen, or will have fallen into, the ways of Violence. One would hope that, if that disaster must again come upon us, there might at least be an end of self-deception about it. Let us, at least, recognize that, if we are living one manner of life, we can not teach another.[3]

The task of teaching is to understand the complex and overarching requirements that will result in the substitution of intelligence for the drift in popular thinking. Intelligence is understood here to refer to the point that common men have something to actively do for the instituting of reasonableness in the world. As was pointed out in Chapter II, Meiklejohn, in his preoccupation with the thinking power of the common man, was not denying that there should be experts

---

[3]Ibid., p. 127.

and leaders in a democracy. He was affirming that the common man needs an intelligence appropriate to making correct interpretations and judgments about the acts and decisions of the former. What concerned Meiklejohn most in terms of the democratic plan of human living was

> ...that of the intellectual difficulties which are inherent in the making and administering of this political program of ours. We do not see how baffling, even to the point of desperation, is the task of using our minds, to which we are summoned by our plan of government. That plan is not intellectually simple. Its victories are chiefly won, not by the carnage of battle, but by the sweat and agony of the mind.[4]

In review of the dimensions of Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence considered to this point the writer notes that "intelligence" essentially has been defined as "being kind," as the reasonableness of brotherhood, and as a process of enacting kindness as the qualitative characteristic of institutions and as a learned disposition of men. The processes of intelligence include the will to create order out of disorder, in the external as well as in the internal human realms, and an interpretation of life based on a method of accepting or rejecting men's opinions and ideas about human living. Intelligence-as-a-process analytically denotes that intelligence is not a "thing" but something that men must do; e.g., enact reasonable (moral) relations among men and within culture. The function of intelligence is to criticize the world. Meiklejohn cited as a relevant analogue

---

[4]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom, op. cit., p. 10.

to this point that Christianity stands as a criticism of the world, certainly not as a theory by which it lives. The function of intelligence then is to deal with the problems civilization faces and is revealed in the man who is in touch with our common life, inclusive of the common issues of the day. As stated in the conclusion of Chapter II, its function is expressed in a creative will to overcome the divisiveness contained in our social systems, that inherent not only in the dualism between belief and action but between man and man.

It must be recalled that Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence, as discussed to this juncture, is concerned with a conceptualization of "form." Form has a logical as well as a moral dimension. In the former case, form is basically understood as the principle of consistency. It was discussed under the topic of the processes of thought and illustrated by the "scheme of reference" idea. The latter was Meiklejohn's generalized way of establishing the premise that the forms of life (how and whether we create order out of disorder) are moral in content. His persistence in identifying sensitiveness and generosity as elements of or equivalent to intelligence is to be understood by seeing that, in either case, they are related under the idea of form. They are not only moral in content, demanding that the individual criticize and systematize his relations to and understandings of the social situation in terms of them, but logical in terms of being consistent with the idea of human fellowship.

Once more to recall the discussion of the processes and uses of thought within Chapter II is pertinent.

In sum, the proposition that men are brothers meant for Meiklejohn that all of those activities which are summed up under the term "intelligence" are expressions of that kinship. It was on this basis that Meiklejohn held that a general theory of education should be made. Our program of education or teaching must be designed to free intelligence, as a recognition of kinship, for increasing control by men over the future development of culture.

> The permanent and recurring problems of a social order must be, for each member of society, objects of lively and vital study. The life of the community must be shot through with the activities of inquiry, of taste, of creation, of interpretation. The sharing of the most significant human experiences must bring us all together into spiritual unity. We must become a genuine fraternity of learning, afraid of nothing, eager to understand everything. I am not saying that the task will be easily or completely done. But I do believe that, by proper teaching in a proper social order, every normal and mature person in America can be so developed that he will interpret and fashion his life on the basis of his participation in a society so conceived. In a word, if we try, we can make a democracy--a society in which every member is in process of education for the highest forms of behavior of which he is capable.[5]

While we may conclude here that the fundamental task of intelligence is to make human institutions serve human purposes, there are aspects of Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence which must be addressed more particularly before thorough understanding as to why or how it can be considered the key

---

[5]Meiklejohn, What Does American Mean? op. cit., pp. 233-234.

to liberal education is achieved. Certainly the idea of a national or corporate intelligence bears further attention.

Corporate Intelligence

Corporate intelligence refers to that which, as has been stated, the people of this society have to do in the way of common thinking. Corporate or common thinking is thereby rendered distinct from individualistic thinking. The latter is represented by those variations on the theme by Voltaire--"I detest your opinions, but I will fight to the death your right to utter them." This position surely renders attempts at common living ineffective, in fact is utterly destructive of them. Such a sentiment despairs of, if not denies, reasonable cooperation between men. Such a view sanctifies the belief that beliefs themselves are private possessions which do not require, or wish for, a validating basis. Since such beliefs have a private, separate purpose there is no need for "truth-testing." Teaching, for one, therefore, is in charge of whim or caprice. Meiklejohn's judgment about the tyranny of the transitory interests of publics is met again in terms of the tyranny of private beliefs and the tyranny of the individualistic nature of ideas. To predicate the public activity of teaching on the basis of caprice, whether this is present in an individual, a village, or a nation is, as Meiklejohn concluded, unreasonable. It is "insanity."

The one real question as to the success of a democracy centers on whether the polity can learn to think. The success of a democracy rests, as Meiklejohn maintained, on our intellectualizing, in recognition of our collective intentions, our acceptance that the form of the state, as expressed in "we, the people," demands reasoning together. To secure the general welfare indicates that we are in pursuit of a single inquiry and our achievements for the general welfare depend on education's recognition of its responsibility for the development of deliberative, as opposed to compromising, intellects. The "making of an American mind" is to make each mind deliberative in quality.

The success of education itself depends on that institution's being manned by deliberative minds. Certainly, for example, in terms of the quantities of materials and influences that are available for employment by educators in their teaching activities selection and censorship must be exercised by those to whom teaching is entrusted. Such activities are despotic when, as is often the case, they result from the utterances of that power which has won the war of conflicting interests. The deliberative process, that of reasoning together, results in the issuing of standards of selectivity and censorship which assures that the best materials and influences are chosen to secure educational ends.

What is it "to deliberate?" It is to reason together on the bases of standards of judgment. Tussman suggests

that compromise is better than warfare. Meiklejohn urged, of course, that compromise is but a degree of warfare. In speaking of our propensity for compromise, Tussman noted that:

> It does not follow from the recognition of our fallibility and partiality that our salvation lies in the compromise or the bargain. Where has it saved us or created what we value? Scientists disagree, but does science move by compromise? Is great art the product of compromise? Has compromise given Socrates or Jesus to the world--Crito and the Compromise on the Mount? Whom shall we advise to bargain? Is it for lovers or for friends, for families or colleagues, for priests or teachers? Bargaining is the death of any fellowship.[6]

He goes on to mention that there are hopeful examples of thinking that are in contradiction to that of compromising. Any situation or idea which we can describe as an improvement over another is not the result of compromise.

Surely deliberation is cooperative and objective in character. It is the opposite of propagandizing. One of our popular and debilitating educational myths is that "both sides" of an issue must be encountered by a student. Such a dictum is mythical and debilitating because we actually assume that, with respect to the correct belief about an issue, only one "side" in fact is correct. To prejudge is surely not to deliberate. In the security of the "right belief" issues are not deliberated; one "side" is slain for the "correctness" of the other.

---

[6]Tussman, Obligation and the Body Politic, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

Thus, whether one is talking about compromise or the individual's assumption that he has a sheer right to any belief or a group's similar assumption or propagandizing, Meiklejohn's conclusion that such attitudes, since they posit no intellectual obligations, issue into a denial of freedom has been joined. Insofar as institutions perpetuate the same lack of intellectual obligation, from a logical point of view, Meiklejohn argued, a systematic denial of freedom results. For example, two churches may hold opposing views of man, but, according to the laws of logic, two contradictory opinions cannot be true. These churches, then, are "at war." But freedom in regard to this issue lies in the intellectual obligation to deliberate about it; in Meiklejohn's words, lies in the "method of peace," the method of mutually helpful inquiry.

> When men are thinking together in peace each says, "I cannot hold as true beyond a question any opinion which my friend finds reason to question." Facing a common problem, men think together, as well as independently. In such an inquiry evidence is not "mine"; it is "ours."[7]

Deliberation is what characterizes corporate intelligence and indeed corporate freedom. In it we meet once more the quality of disinterestedness. Without disinterest we can neither come to know (to understand) our human undertakings nor deliberate them. We cannot submit ourselves or our culture to that critical intelligence, that reasonableness, our plan of human living intends.

---

[7]Meiklejohn, What Does American Mean? op. cit., p. 171.

In speaking of the problem of freedom and social control, of our tendency to judge the latter as inherently opposed to the former, Meiklejohn testified to one of the educationally crucial results of our inability to conceive of both freedom and intelligence in corporate terms.

> If we wish to grasp the politics of freedom we must go far deeper than the method of external controversy (that of governmental control versus intellectual freedom). We just seek for a theory of political structure and function in which freedom and control are not in conflict with each other, in which they do not strive for reconciliation by making compromises and concessions and "exceptions" to each other, but are seen to be two mutually complementary aspects of the same self-governing process. But this kind of thinking is not easy for present-day Americans.
>
> We encounter here what is, I think, the most discouraging and terrifying feature of our current attitude and behavior. We are propagandists rather than reasoners, salesmen rather than teachers. Two centuries ago our forefathers...were thinking into being a tentative unification of the claims of freedom and control which gave form to our plan of government. ...So far as conflicts of ideas were concerned, it (thinking) was ready and eager for a fair fight on any open field. But two centuries of frenzied and successful preoccupation with the acquisition of power and wealth have transformed our attitude toward free inquiry. It has now come about that the "free men" of the United States are not called upon to think through their political institutions, to understand and criticize them. On the contrary, we are forbidden to do so.
>
> Our duty as citizens, therefore, is not to understand but to believe. Loyalty requires of us that we defend our principles against the attacks of "alien" ideas, not by reasoning about these ideas, but by bringing to bear upon our "opponents" or "enemies" the pressures of military force, or economic advantage or the trickeries of propaganda. And the effect of that corrupting of our minds has been to transform our intellectual heritage, from an exploring and fearless idea which led the world forward, into a timid, defensive, hysterical dogma which holds the world back. That is why, like Athens, we hunt our teachers down as "corrupters of the youth."

> That is why, to make sure of their "loyalty," we demand of them a conformity and submissiveness of mind which makes them utterly unfit for the work we gave them to do.[8]

Our corporate intelligence must be bent on criticizing our institutions, our culture, in relation to its task of the interpretation of our collective intentions. The institutions and forces of society must be studied in terms of their effect on human growth and freedom. Have we established a freedom of the whole so individual freedom may be developed? Do our political, economic, and family institutions serve men's well-being or are men sundered into the masters and the slaves, the ruler and the ruled, the wealthy and the poverty-stricken, the confident and the fearful? One permanent aspect of liberal study, for Meiklejohn, was concerned with critical inquiry into all social institutions to determine our success or failure in achieving the growth and freedom of men. The growth of culture is compatible with providing for human and democratic purposes for the growth of men and must be studied and interpreted in relation to that end.

Meiklejohn's arguments to this point can be viewed as the statement of his conviction that there is a common and rational basis for men's thinking. This opposes the contemporary belief that irrationality ("My opinion is as good as yours") is at the base of all thinking. Meiklejohn's

---

[8]Meiklejohn, "Sedition Circa 400 B.C.," The Nation, Vol. 180, 17 (April 23, 1955), pp. 351-352. Parentheses the author's.

substantively argued premise about "collective intelligence" issues into the proposition that such intelligence is not only rational but finds its expression in interpreting and evaluating human living as well as in concerted plans of action to ensure the humane enhancement of social systems. The last idea brings us to the point of discussing as relevantly as possible the proposition that to be intelligent is to be obligated to act.

Intelligence as Obligation

The theme consistently is encountered in Meiklejohn's writings that freedom has no meaning unless the individual recognizes that he has obligations which have authority over him. And that such obligations are authorized by men. In several writings he utilized the following from the Discourses of Epictetus.

> ...Well then it was fitting for you to take care how you should be like the rest of men, just as the thread has no design to be anything superior to other threads. But I wish to be purple, that small part which is bright, and makes all the rest appear graceful and beautiful. Why then do you tell me to be like the many? And, if I do, how shall I still be purple?
>
> Priscus Helvidius also saw this, and acted conformably. For when Vespasian sent and commanded him not to go into the senate, he replied, "It is in your power not to allow me to be a member of the senate, but so long as I am, I must go in." "Well, go in then," says the emperor, "but say nothing." "Do not ask my opinion, and I will be silent." "But I must ask your opinion." "And I must say what I think is right." "But if you do I shall put you to death." "When then did I tell you I was immortal? You will do your part, and I will do mine: It is your

> part to kill; it is mine to die, but not in fear: yours to banish me; mine to depart without sorrow."[9]

It is persons who are committed, who are obligated. They are committed to enterprises and the latter have valid claims upon them. The non-intelligent view of obligation, Meiklejohn argued, is that which holds that it is external in meaning. In essence this means that either people conform unthinking to situations or that when a man is told that he "must," the response is, "Who says I must; who has the right to tell me I must?" The dilemma is not that external authority is denied claim over the individual but that inner authority is taken to be meaningless.

> ...The citizen who obeys the law in order to keep himself out of jail does not thereby express his respect, his regard for the law: He is merely revealing his preference for the out-of-doors.[10]

To regard obligation then as the result of outer forces, as an external requirement, is altogether to deny its meaning and appropriately renders the description of unintelligent or nonintelligent to an act undertaken in these terms. To describe men as intelligent is not to describe them as either forced into duties by or as passive recipients of the social order, but as those whose commitments are internal and, hence, as those who are actively creating the social order in accord with such commitments. A society ordered on the basis of

---

[9]The Discourses of Epictetus, Book One. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., University of Chicago, 1952, p. 107.

[10]Meiklejohn, What Does American Mean? op. cit., p. 262.

democratic intentions can only be accomplished as persons freely recognize that such intentions are obligatory. It is not their desires which seek satisfaction and in terms of which persons should conceive duty for, as Meiklejohn affirmed, that in fact denies the enactment of obligation.

Meiklejohn's separation of human nature into the inner realm of spirit and the outer realm of the objective existence of that spirit in culture is remet here in his proposition that intentions dominate acts. In the case of the latter reference is to either maintaining or changing an external situation. In the case of the former it is the commitment, or lack of commitment, that grounds the act of change or maintenance. In this sense the purpose of education, however external its methods, is inner, is spiritual in nature. Its concern is with developing intelligence. This means, in the present context, with the development of the principle that principles themselves have authority over acts. If education views its purpose as the study of external conditions only, if life comes to be seen solely in terms of its outer pluralities, persons will come to view human living for what is revealed in the multiplicity of external conditions--purposeless. The justification of such studies actually lies in what is revealed about the quality of human living. To find something "revealed" about the quality of culture means that persons are evaluating and interpreting it according to ideas and principles. Thus, thinking is

inner if human action, if culture, is seen in reference to ideals and principles. What education is properly seeking is not a person who possesses a cauldron of random thoughts, but one who is capable of giving order to those thoughts, of making sense out of them. It is that quality of reasonableness that is attained by viewing the multifarious activities of our outer condition in terms of responding to the inner question of whether or not they conduce to human purposes. It is those principles and those processes of judging the relation of the inner and outer aspects of the human process which contribute to the quality of intelligence that is education's purpose. It is here, in the inner dimension, that life can be seen as a single enterprise, as unified and purposeful.

This is not, however, "intelligence" fully realized. From the statement that "intentions dominate acts" and from the foregoing comments it is obvious that to merely "think about" things is an incomplete act of thought. It is necessary for but not sufficient to the requirements of intelligence. Thinking, to be a complete act of intelligence, must result in action. Persons, then, must take thought, they must learn the mental processes for individually making thoughts rational. But the justification for doing so lies in the quality of life to which thought gives direction.

In our "psychologized" age we have learned readily that desires, satisfactions, and motivations "exist," that they

are "real." We have made desires as "real" as our scientific descriptions of the outer world. We have learned readily and, in agreement with Meiklejohn, erroneously, since we have not learned that obligations are as "real" as desires. What we have failed in enacting is that obligations exist as truly as do desires and scientific facts. What Meiklejohn urged us to consider in reflecting with Epictetus is that what is admirable or despicable are men, are persons, and that our judgments of admiration or destestation are made in relation to the obligations persons enact. To understand the difference between Jesus and Pilate and to determine qualitative distinctions in terms of their behavior is to be rational. To distinguish, and judge, the kind of obligations each intended and enacted is to be intelligent, partially. To judge one to be possessed of obligations worthy of emulation and to act in their terms is to be fully intelligent. Meiklejohn's theory of action asserts that every principle which has a valid claim on men must be a principle of action, or it is unprincipled. To be ethical is to have obligations and to enact them. To be intelligent is to be ethical.

The materials from which men give form, give order, to their lives are external in content. It is well to re-emphasize that the intelligent man gives form to content; that what is at issue is not entirely what a man's situation does to him but what he is enabled to do to the situation. A man who is starving in the midst of plenty is in an evil

situation, in a situation in which he is not enabled, in which he cannot act, cannot be obligated, cannot be intelligent. The man who enjoys plenty in the midst of starvation has given no rational order to life but has created an unethical form of human behavior. The experiences of both men, the former because he is not enabled to have obligations and the latter because he chooses to have no obligation, are destructive--of men and culture. Both kinds of experience destroy the quality of human welfare and both kinds of experience destroy intelligence.

Unlike Socrates who held the identity of knowledge and virtue, Meiklejohn proclaimed the identify of intelligence and virtue. How then, did Meiklejohn view the relation between intelligence and knowledge? Although Meiklejohn's totally instrumental view of knowledge has been mentioned, it seems appropriate to further consider the relationship between knowledge and intelligence as he viewed it.

Knowledge and Intelligence

Just as Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence is part of the classical tradition so his position on knowledge has a classical history. The humanistic judgments on knowledge, however, have gained new importance, in the writer's opinion, in this post-Freudian world. Because of what is presumed to take precedence over rationality, the emotional and intuitive aspects of men, there seems to be considerable doubt as to the efficacy of knowledge in influencing action. It seems

reasonable to suggest that such doubt has become reflected in those attitudes toward empirical studies which have fixed on the conclusion that "empirical facts must be." The writer would agree with two statements relevant to Meiklejohn's position. That the need to translate the realms of the intuitive and the emotional to rationally ordered forms of understanding increases in importance to the degree that men continue to settle their disputes by increasingly violent means. That what is intuitive and emotional about men simply must be brought under men's control. Second, that when men assume that what has been designated an empirical fact "must be," they are confusing a statement of fact drawn from the sciences with an immutable aspect of existence. Social science, for instance, cannot proclaim the unalterable existence of any form or process of individual or group behavior. And should not be construed as doing so. Nor, on the other hand, Meiklejohn held, should those statements of fact now drawn from science be confused with constituting recommendations. Knowledge, no matter what its source, does not express purposes. Only men do, in relation to other men.

It has been suggested by Hook that Meiklejohn disavowed the importance of scientific studies and the experimental method. Such a conclusion is false. Certainly an intellectual activity which attempts to describe the world, any process of knowledge which aids individuals and groups to determine what is their nature as well as the nature of the

surrounding environment with which they have to deal, any study which contributes to the realization of ends relevant to the quality of human experience was part of Meiklejohn's concern. Scientific studies surely are instrumental in revealing to men those events, forces, movements, which are enabling of or disabling to the quality of human life, the realization of human purposes.

Further, Meiklejohn saw in the scientific method hope that additional modes of thought could be developed which had equally valid ordering power over thought. The experimental attitude finds "events" and "things" to be varied, to be multiple. In so doing it asserts commitment to the authority of a single unifying mode of thought. Its intellectual demand is that we hold knowledge of the external world tentatively, that "must be" is not relevant in that domain. Yet, in the inner domain, the realm of its thought, such an assertion is part of the method's principle of authority, of order. There is little that is tentative about the scientific method itself. This is surely a basic example of our ability to create inner unity in our own thinking. It is a philosophic principle which has been proclaimed with most vigorous authority. What is proclaimed in fact is an obligation as to how to think. Its object is clear and dominating--to enable humans to think capably about their world. To say that "I will not believe beyond the warrant of the evidence which bears upon the question at

hand" is to have a principle to whose authority one submits one's thinking. This is a human principle which conduces to human purposes. Such a principle makes all human investigation at all times and in all places into a single process. The rationality of the principle is undeniable. It gives not only a method of study but standards of judgment as to what is relevant study, what is relevant knowledge.

The kind of order that the application of the scientific method gives to understanding life cannot be held to meet the totality of our need for rationality. Although in dispute between naturalists and non-naturalists, Meiklejohn, being of the latter group, believed that the use of knowledge must be submitted to other and non-scientific standards of rationality. And, further, that there are other sources of knowledge in addition to scientific knowledge.

Other knowledge can be expressed, in Meiklejohn's words, as that possessed by "men who live as minds." These are not only imaginative men, eager to grasp and savor ideas and experiences but men who consequently weave their understandings and the conclusions of their imaginative probings into systems of ideas and who give to human experience new possibilities of interpreting the meaning of that experience. These minds are the opposite of those sluggish minds which blindly accept given patterns of meaning.

It is true that knowledge in this field, primarily of the inner life, is harder to make than is scientific knowledge.

Knowledge which is sought concerning ideas, concerning our imaginative searchings, gives, as Meiklejohn upheld, a promise of deeper human meaning, a promise of a deeper resource for intelligence than the discoveries of political scientists or physicists or psychologists. At the same time, such knowledge, since it has less certainty, presents intelligence with a greater sense of inadequacy. The challenge to intelligence is evident in the irony of the human condition--that knowledge needed to respond to the question, "What should men be and do?" while more important than the knowledge needed to respond to the question, "What are men doing?" is less certain. While it may be agreed that men have no right to certainty except as impartial and disinterested evidence produces it, it also must be acknowledged that it is at-large the challenge of intelligence to seek for knowledge in that realm which, thus far, has been our least certain source of it.

Somewhat less clearly, therefore, what is "done" with new systems of ideas, new alternatives of meaning, new knowledge in this sense, is the task of intelligence. To answer the question of what such knowledge reveals about or how it is relevant to genuine human purposes is the function of intelligence. The man who reveals to us what the possibilities of human living are, whether he be artist or theorist, gives to men's intelligence knowledge for possible use. Intelligence then uses knowledge and uses it well

insofar as it aids mankind in constructing a rational humanity. Meiklejohn did not judge, therefore, that knowledge could be or ought to be promulgated for the sake of knowledge. To conceive of knowledge for its own sake is an inhuman, or unhumane, conception.

This section closes on the note that men in a democratic society need essentially two educations, two sets of teaching. This, too, has been discussed in Chapter II and its relevance to this chapter can be stated simply. For their vocations men need that technical knowledge which will provide intelligence those resources for doing the work of the world. The additional task of intelligence, the liberal task, however, is to consider knowledge about the work of the world in relationship to the endeavor to understand what it is done for and to distinguish what is worth doing from what is not worth doing.

The final consideration of this chapter will be addressed to a brief discussion of the relation between intelligence and the fourth branch of government. Although the topic of the education of the sovereign is dealt with in Chapter V, it is appropriate to the present chapter to indicate the relevance of Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence to the activity of sovereignty.

An Example of Relevance

It will be recalled that the "fourth branch of government" refers to that group of citizens in a democratic state

who are participants in effecting public decisions. A citizen is a participant in a plan of human living, a plan whose principles have authority over him. These principles, principles of fraternity, freedom, justice, of necessity must be freely acknowledged by the sovereign or citizen as binding upon him. Such obligations must be intended by the citizen not only because they express human purposes but because their enactment ensures a democratic political organization.

The citizen, therefore, the individual in his public role, is one whose intellectual obligations are based upon or grounded within the enactment of principle. His intellect must center on the intent of aiding in the institutionalization of democratic intentions as well as in critically evaluating his own living based on the question of whether it, too, reflects modes of behavior which can be proclaimed characteristically compatible with these same intentions. In the case of the former he must exhibit that deliberative intellect which he has every right to expect to be similarly reflected in his fellow citizens. In either case he must be disinterested in order to qualify as intelligent.

It is obvious that those decisions which the citizen is called upon to make are public in nature. Surely the qualities of intelligence referred to, particularly of disinterested deliberation, are those that assure that man in his public function will not be swayed to erroneous public-affecting decisions by mistakingly basing his judgments on

self-seeking motives. The intelligent sovereign is certainly one who can distinguish private from public questions and discussions. The art of deciding has a double-sided nature. The individual must learn to think independently but he also must learn to think with others. In the first instance two well-intentioned citizens may come to opposing conclusions. It is in the second area, that of seeking together, that Meiklejohn's point concerning holding open to question anything one's friend questions is relevant and related to the concept of corporate intelligence. In both kinds of thought, it must be remembered, the citizen must be disinterested and capable of making judgments in recognition of the requirements of the general welfare. It is clear that the possibility of legitimately differing judgments must be handled in the larger context of "reasoning together." It is this common situation which leads one to understand Meiklejohn's point that citizens create intelligence.

The problem of maintaining a distinction between one's private judgments and one's public decisions, between desires or self-interests and the public requirements of situations is continuous and resulted in part in Meiklejohn's position on continuing and adult education. Learning rationality means learning to nullify "I wish to do so-and-so" in favor of, "For the common welfare we must do so-and-so." It is easy to illustrate this in a minor key.

If citizens are asked to pay greater taxes for public education, the relevant public question is, "Does the function of public education now in fact require greater financial resources?" The irrelevant, non-deliberative question, the one that denies sovereignty altogether is, "Do I wish to pay more taxes?" The kind of distinction illustrated here is difficult enough, as Meiklejohn pointed out, for Americans. To broaden the quest for genuinely public-serving questions is even more perplexing to intelligence. The sovereign must recognize as legitimate, and adequately frame, questions concerning the total function of an institution in the life of a people. "Does capitalism meet our intentions? Is it reflective of the dominating intentions of humankind? Is it appropriate to a democratic social order? If not, can it be reconstituted to serve human ends?" These sorts of questions are those that must be addressed by the collective intelligence of "we, the people." To do so, to ask if culture reflects objective intelligence and to seek for its correction if not, is part of the citizen's function, certainly difficult to understand in view of some current habits of mind, and assuredly challenging to intelligence.

It is patently apparent that the government, understood as the sovereign and his representatives, is the primary institution of intelligence. The form of government demands intelligence, and consequently teaching, of a certain kind. The qualities of a democratic social order demand that intelligence be conceived as something which all men share,

something which must record itself in certain action, something which results in the universal recognition that thinking has moral consequences, and something which, thereby, says "no" to the kind of non-intelligent thought which is compromise. The central hypothesis of self-government is that intelligence must be in control.

> Our American venture in self-government is not based on "assurance" that we are intelligent enough to be free, but only on the "hope" that our minds can carry the responsibilities which the Constitution assigns to them. ...Our self-governing is not...based on assurance of success. It is, as Mr. Justice Holmes has told us, an "experiment." We have only a chance, but one which is worth fighting for--with our minds.[11]

Meiklejohn, in his entire philosophic stance, did not confine the "use of our minds" to this society alone, but, in the judgment that human life is a single enterprise, conceived of a single cooperative human intelligence conducing to the benefit of humankind.

Why, then, can we conclude that Meiklejohn's theory of intelligence is the key to liberal education? It is certainly sensible to say that such a conception of intelligence is what liberal education is "about." According to Meiklejohn what liberal education is after, the end it seeks, is that quality of intelligence which has been the concern of this chapter. The relation can be summed up in Meiklejohn's words as he addressed the meaning of the term "liberalism."

> ...The processes of education reveal with peculiar clarity and urgency, not only the aims of a people but

---

[11]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom, op. cit., pp. xiv-xv.

> also the difficulties, the perplexities by which the mind of that people is beset. It may be worthwhile, therefore, to try to see the teaching problem with which we are dealing as one aspect of a wider problem which torments all our contemporary Western culture. We commonly speak of it as the dilemma of liberalism.
>
> The term liberalism, as used in our tradition, indicates a pattern of culture which criticizes itself, which challenges its own validity. Such a culture has a double pattern. It has customs and standards of behavior. But it also has the habit, the attitude, of free and active questioning of its own dominant beliefs and standards. And this means that in a liberal social order both customs and intelligence hold sway. It has a "way of life" which is authoritative. But it has also activities of criticism by which the way is tested. Neither of these can replace the other. It is by a combination of the two that liberalism is created and sustained.
>
> It need hardly be said that the "liberal" state of mind, as thus defined, is an uneasy one. It is easy merely to believe--if you do not doubt. It is easy to doubt--if you find no basis for belief. But the liberal is not content with either of these "easinesses." He will both believe and doubt. He doubts what he believes and believes what he doubts. To give up either of these is to abandon the way of intelligence, to cease to be a liberal. If a man or a society stops doubting its convictions, it is dogmatic and despotic. If a man or a society stops believing, it has nothing to live for, nothing to do, nothing to teach. This is the way of futility and loss of nerve. But the mind and the will of the liberal are made of sterner stuff than either of these. He is determined to establish and maintain an active, forward-moving, but self-criticizing culture. It is an amazing combination of the demands of the authority of custom and the authority of intelligence. The liberal responds to the claims of customary, authority but--apparently on the basis of some other "higher" authority--he questions and even opposes the action of the society to which he gives his allegiance. He is a critic of his own way of life. He makes criticism of customs one of his established customs.[12]

In view of the foregoing it seems permissible to claim the identification of the "liberal" and the "democratic

---

[12]Meiklejohn, Education Between Two Worlds, op. cit., pp. 112-113.

sovereign." This study's concluding chapter concentrates on the education of the sovereign for two reasons. First, such a chapter is justified as a conclusion because within its confines the writer can bring to bear the major outlines of Meiklejohn's philosophy considered to this point. Its second justification rests on the fact that an adequate theory of public education is the writer's primary professional concern and surely was Meiklejohn's. It is obvious that the writer has found Meiklejohn's position congenial and, in the crucial question of the education of men for self-rule, continues to do so. The immediacy of Meiklejohn's concern for the education of the citizen is apparent, in the writer's judgment, and hence warrants particular attention.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION OF THE SOVEREIGN

It seems undeniable that contemporary society is organized in ways which can be described as abusive to the quality of the human condition. The institutions of law, economics, and education exhibit functions which are systematically and negatively discriminatory but which in fact are contrary to their purposes in a free society. The temptation is to attribute a morally negative nature to purposes when such a judgment often should be rendered in terms of functions. In either case, nonetheless, the qualitative outcomes of institutions for human welfare at-large are judgments about our political capacities. The nature of our institutions is a direct consequence of the exercise of political decision-making. In a society which is attempting to "be free," to institutionalize activities that deserve the designation of "free," the question of <u>how</u> education for decision-making in the political domain should be conceived is that society's most crucial challenge. It appears, however, that education has not only had difficulty in adequately conceptualizing the role of the citizen and what education's responsibility

is in terms of that role but in adequately perpetuating a working recognition of who in fact the sovereign is.

Meiklejohn's aim in developing the proposition that government is the primary instrument of intelligence in a free society was to persuade us to the necessity of re-thinking our conception of sovereignty. Or, if not precisely that, to persuade us to "make sense out of" a concept of "government by the people." Again, to get us to take our beliefs, in this case belief in the sovereignty of the people, seriously. When Meiklejohn talked about the sovereign it must be understood that that reference involves man in his role as one of the governors seeking to promote the kinship of the state.

The identification of kinship or fraternity and intelligence has been discussed. It also has been remarked in effect that the state (actually government as the agency of the state) in replacing the church in taking charge of the teaching of the people denotes that education is not only secular, it is political. Although questions may be raised about the success of the church in its teaching task, the fact that it had the possibility of teaching men how to live because it knew what life should be, based upon its authority to interpret values and mark appropriate dimensions of behavior, is undeniable. Its conceptions of the educated man, the intelligent man, were developed from given purposes and standards and, in Meiklejohn's judgment, theoretically

suited to the teaching enterprise. The beliefs and values held by the church gave concrete guidance, concrete authority, for developing education as the vehicle for the control of behavior. However, to transfer the educational function to the state raised the overwhelming question of how or if in reality we know that governments can teach. The question obviously is addressed to the problem of whether the state has anything to replace the standards of authority of the church. How do we know, Meiklejohn in effect asked, that the state can assume the task of shaping the minds and behaviors of the people? Can the state which is now in charge actually cultivate that intelligence demanded by men for the enhancement of the human condition?

What the above discussion has done in essence is to return us to the question basic to developing an adequate theory of education. Does the state, upon which the cultivation of intelligence now depends, <u>believe</u> in anything that serves as the legitimizing authority for the making and directing of education? What are the beliefs and values which government represents?

Although a considerable portion of this study has been addressed to the above question, there are two interrelated problems that need to be brought to focus here. One involves the statement that "levels of government represent levels of reasonableness." The other involves the problem of belief.

In asking what beliefs governments represent Meiklejohn was asking whether the city of Dayton and the City of

New York, each of which sponsors schools, believe anything about living, about desirable qualities of human behavior and existence. Do cities possess values out of which a scheme of teaching may be made? Do counties? Townships? Villages? If we are uncertain what cities, towns, and even the nation, believe, if they believe anything, then it is analytic in Meiklejohn's view, that teaching likewise lacks convictions and standards of procedure.

It is worth noting a particular dilemma that comes to light here. In Meiklejohn's opinion we are in the dangerous situation of having come to the operational judgment that governments believe nothing, except perhaps <u>in</u> power. It was the view of his critics, on the other hand, that Meiklejohn judged "the state" to believe "too much." Each accuses the other of denying freedom, vision, morality. It is the writer's judgment that Meiklejohn was concerned to develop a conception of the state that revealed its qualities as the opposite of "brutishness," "immorality," "short-sightedness," and "absoluteness." It likewise has been made clear that he was concerned to develop a conception of the state that was opposed to the negative and merely regulatory function of hindering hindrances to the social welfare (of, for example, viewing the state as that which merely punishes wrong-doing rather than endorsing right-doing). And finally to not only question that "cities" per se had convictions, had particular purposes in Hook's sense (although, as noted, they might

have specific intents or needs relevant to an all-encompassing social purpose), but to affirm that under our plan of human association units of government are in fact in relation one to the other. The irony of our situation, as Meiklejohn confirmed, is that our attitudes are going in several directions at once, directions that are not compatible by nature. "The state is too much government" but the "city" or the "town" or "the community" ought to be all-directing--but the function of any government is to "regulate" affairs for the security of individual rights. In this situation Meiklejohn was correct and justified indeed in asking what kind of teaching plan could be developed. The irony of the situation is that our society has developed and extended its corporate interests and intents which our political mood denies insofar as it restricts its view of government to the notion that the latter is a necessary evil whose function is merely that of setting certain, but changing, limits to activities. The further irony is that the latter conflicts with our corporate democratic intentions <u>constitutionally</u> expressed.

Meiklejohn attempted to answer the crucial question--the decisive problem of our culture as expressed above--of the nature and power of the political state in his judgment regarding the fraternal form of the state, and, in part, through his position on the function of the sovereign. To comprehend the nature of government as that whose units

variously represent levels of reasonableness is to comprehend the point that such units are increasingly reasonable as they represent, on the basis of the fraternity principle, larger segments of mankind. The smallest political unit, perhaps the village, is therefore the least reasonable level of government because its concern is with the smallest unit of population. To be reasonable, to be intelligent and moral, however, the decisions that village government represents must be based on the idea of fellowship. As governments encompass larger populations their judgments are moral and intelligent to the extent that they reflect commitment to the principle of fraternity as applicable to all members of the unit. Thus, for Meiklejohn the government which represents the world-state, which represents the fellowship of man, is the most reasonable human agency. It was in terms of this development of thought that Meiklejohn advocated popular education, not ultimately for the democratic nation-state but for a world-state whose intent ought to be to fashion a universal and rational society of men.

It is evident that Meiklejohn's conception of representation is in conflict with some conceptions of government based upon a principle of "participatory" democracy. This principle obviously implies a locus of reasonableness that is opposed to Meiklejohn's premise. That is, for those committed to participatory democracy the implication is that the lower the governmental level (in some positions, then, the individual),

the more reasonable it is. There certainly has been continuing conflict between advocates of "direct" and advocates of "representative" democracies. There surely is question, in the writer's judgment, about the adequacy of current conceptions of "participation" and "representation" for the realization of democratic purposes. The premises on participation of the so-called radical left, for example, seem to be about what should be destroyed institutionally, but a lack of attention to "a" theory of society leaves the observer somewhat confused as to what "pheonix" is to issue out of the ashes. Further, in agreement with Meiklejohn, current processes of representation have proved inadequate insofar as what has resulted is decision-making on the basis of power rather than authority, as these have been discussed. The writer is suggesting that Meiklejohn offers hope that men might prove capable of establishing a morally valid theory of representation, wherever this is to be applied, whether in the university or in the nation. Moral validity lies in the distinction that what is being "represented" is a set of principles in relation to the quality of life of a people; that it is principles, rather than power, that become cultural objects. At the same time Meiklejohn offers hope that men can incorporate into their concepts of representation, rightly understood as referring to principles, a viable theory of participation. In general the sovereign is a participant in making public policy. What distinguishes the genuine

sovereign is that he bases his judgments on principles and in terms of the widest consideration of the effect of his judgments on humanity of which he is capable. What also distinguishes him is that he is enabled to do so.

There can be no doubt that Meiklejohn was correct in concluding that to say that we intend a democratic social order is to say that we believe in something that obliterates any line that is seriously assumed to separate New York City from Dayton. To say that we "intend" is to say that we "believe in" or that we "plan to enact." It is this perspective that allowed Meiklejohn to oppose his organic theory of state (by which he meant that as a people we are striving after a certain kind of order and that we do have common purposes) to those disorganic theories which explain societies in pluralistic terms. This perspective also offers justification to the statement that the intelligence of individuals and of the institution of education, or any institution, has work to do "in the service of the whole."

In relation to the above and illustrative of implications of the previous comments for education Meiklejohn asked:

> Does belief just happen to a man, like measles or a pleasant morning? Is it a mere drift of opinion that brings to a group of men the conviction that immersion is better than sprinkling, that freedom is better than despotism...?[1]

Meiklejohn's criticism of the drift in popular thinking has been noted. It surely is the task of the teacher and the

---

[1]Meiklejohn, "The Devil's Revenge," The Century Magazine, cvii, 5 (March, 1924), p. 719.

scholar to provide the potential sovereign with those tools that will promote his understanding of and enable him to assume the legitimate responsibility for his participtory role. The overall intention of education is clear--that of initiating the student into many social groups but finally into one social group. That which gives credence to the function of education is not, nonetheless, a mere introduction into social groups but that of giving to the student principles of belief and action for criticizing and enhancing the quality of those bodies through his membership within them. The primary principle, of course, is that of fraternity which enables the student to freely share in reasonable decisions about the common welfare. It, also, must be understood that insofar as the individual develops an understanding of the authority of the fraternal principle, and enacts it, he is enabling not only his own freedom but the freedom of other members of the fellowship.

While to some it may appear utterly naive under the current conditions which characterize our social systems to believe that human beings can now choose to interpret such an intention as freedom fraternally, Meiklejohn's point that men who man institutions continue to decide, either with reason or without it, what shall be objectified in culture cannot be ignored. Surely the educator makes recommendations about human behavior and does so, with or without recognition, on a variety of grounds. Educators who are

commissioned to provide for the advancement of learning for all the people are not involved in an institution that is preventing something from being done or that is passive, but one that is creating a social order. It is actively civilizing men--or the opposite. What is morally culpable is to conceive that education's efforts at developing intelligence are dependent upon the "force of events." Certainly Meiklejohn was correct in arguing that, if this is so, having no theory of obligation, having no theory about what they are doing as educators means that education is manned by unreasonable, thus immoral, men. If this is so, then it follows that the institution of education will be improperly structured and therefore disabled in its obligation for the fulfillment of democratic theory. In no sense can such a structure be conceived as objectifying intelligence.

It is familiar, but accurate, to note that however other other political orders may view education, the success of a polity democratically intended depends upon its success in educating its members. We have noted that such a plan of government demands teaching of a certain form, of a certain intent. How then did Meiklejohn view "the sovereign" who, in a democracy, must be the focus of education's responsibility?

The Ruler

Meiklejohn remarked that men in this society have two roles to play. One is the role of the sovereign, the ruler,

who has a genuine part in effecting political decisions; the other is the role of the ruled, he who obeys the decisions of the sovereign. There is, of course, a third role for some men in a democratic political order, that of the agent or representative of the sovereign. Such agents, mayors, city councilmen, members of legislatures, represent the sovereign in terms of making decisions which objectify principled intentions.

Meiklejohn, in 1935, described social conditions that are the opposite of that genuine social order which ought to result from an adequate understanding of the role or function of sovereignty. He said in part:

> I have spoken of disillusionment as growing out of our war experiences. But those of the following "time of peace" have been quite as disconcerting. At almost every point in our common life there has come upon us the dreadful sense of disloyalty to ourselves. The battle over the Eighteenth Amendment, for example, was a sordid and disheartening controversy. We saw the great mass of the "better people" of the nation banded together in the name of liberty in a conspiracy of subterfuge and evasion. The "crime wave" too has shocked us. From one end of the country to the other, criminals have attacked us in open defiance of the law, and we have been largely helpless in the face of their depredations. But deeper than the external harm they have done us has been the dread that, in some very real way, these bands of outlaws are our own creations, are representatives of ourselves, that they express our own attitude of lawlessness. The gangster and the bootlegger have been, we know, in close touch with the politician whom we have elected. And politics, too, has had very intimate connections with the management of business. And business, through the ever wider holding of securities, has brought very many of us into the network of its presuppositions and implications. By such associations as these all the integrities of our public life has been brought into question. Is it true that, in the last resort, freedom means that every man is playing to his own hand? Is that what we mean by "free institutions?" Is there no genuine difference

> between the criminal who desperately breaks the law and the smug man of affairs whose lawyer keeps him safe within it?[2]

It is apparent that for Meiklejohn there was no real difference between the criminal and the "smug man of affairs," that they similarly misconstrued freedom as well as, concomitantly, the intent of democratic institutions. For our present concerns certainly no sense can be made out of terming any of the decisions which have yielded a social order as described above acts of sovereignty. Those who fail to see in the above that while we, the people, consented, such consent was immoral, have failed utterly to grasp the requirements of sovereignty. The primary requirement radiates from Meiklejohn's premise that just as government is the agent of the people in its responsibility for actualizing principles so the genuine sovereign is to be regarded as an agent for those same principles.

It is relevant here to mention those political positions which, following Locke, have separated "morality" and "prudence."[3] In effect what is argued for in these perspectives is the "reasonableness" of separating human conduct into distinct fields. That of virtue, on the one hand, where behavior is based upon some conception of "individual conscience," and, on the other hand, that conduct which has

---

[2]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? op. cit., pp. 79-80.

[3]See Education Between Two Worlds, Chapter 5, "The Forces of Disintegration," pp. 56-58. See also p. 71f.

to do with the "practical affairs of the day." In the latter case reference is to those behaviors which are legitimized by a civil authority whose function is conceived as hindering obstacles to the social welfare as this is achieved, it is assumed, by persons engaged in the self-interested pursuit of "life, liberty, and property." In that realm virtue, if considered at all, is individualistically determined. Meiklejohn was consistent, of course, in his arguments against those conceptions which saw government as merely prudential, rather than moral, in nature. And he certainly was consistent in objecting to "sovereignty," whether of individuals or majorities, as lying in the regulated activities of self-interest. To see the function of the ruler in a legalistic sense was to deny in actuality, Meiklejohn urged, genuine sovereignty.

The sovereign, the citizen in Meiklejohn's theory, is a number of the "fourth branch of government." Is is within this context that the individual in a democratic society finds himself in the role of statesmen, in a context for behaving reasonably and morally for the general welfare. The sovereign is the bearer of responsibility for the common good and as such must be equipped to freely participate in a body whose corporate intelligence is bent upon a common aim. The corporate nature of the "fourth branch of government" is not additive in nature, is not to be construed to be a mere majority, but is rightly apprehended as men

"joining together" intellectually in a decision-enacting process based upon deliberative procedures and in terms of common standards for judging the public adequacy of decisions. The sovereign is a member of the body politic--of course. But we have been unable to get ourselves or the agency of education to take the meaning of this seriously--to recognize, and develop, the behaviors required for the enactment of decisions in the political domain, decisions in terms of principles intended by the democratic form of the state, intended by the collective. Unless the general "scheme of action," to employ a phrase of Meiklejohn's, required by a democratic social order is made intelligible to the people, unless education fulfills the obligation of making it intelligible, it follows that to speak of that order as democratic is sheer nonsense. Unless education clarifies what marks public behavior from private, what distinguishes the deliberative from the compromising intellect, it is sheer nonsense to talk of education for freedom or education of the sovereign. Democratic principles and motives must be made intelligible to the common man in order for him to distinguish reasonable from unreasonable institutions, reasonable from unreasonable decisions made by those he has chosen to represent him, indeed to be able to continually mark the line that distinguishes those public powers he possesses, those powers by which citizens govern themselves, from those private liberties which citizen by corporate action grant to themselves as members of "the ruled."

In maintaining that the sovereign is one who has a genuine share in the decisions that affect him, Meiklejohn concomitantly upheld the Platonic notion that "the state is ourselves seeking to become reasonable." Freedom is for those who are acting as rulers and to act as a ruler is to seek for reasonable relations among men and to seek for their objectification in institutions. Inherent here is Meiklejohn's premise that the quality of the state which men ought to seek rests upon the social agreement that life shall be "made reasonable" and that such "reasonableness" can be created only by individuals who freely recognize the fraternal form of the state. In speaking of men like Churchill, Tawney and Keynes, Meiklejohn made his point in this manner:

> These men and women have dignity because they are thinking and acting "for the state," identifying themselves with it. They plan for the wars and for the peace of their people. They analyze the financial and industrial and social influences of their people. They grapple with the intellectual and moral problems of their people. They are rulers. They are disinterested. Insofar as that is true, the state is not their enemy. It is themselves.[4]

The sovereign therefore must be viewed, and understand himself to be, as a disinterested agent for the community. Incorporated in that view is the recognition that he is a participant in a corporate body, which, in order to be free, can be properly controlled only by itself. In sum, Meiklejohn argued for that self-control, for individuals as well

---

[4]Alexander Meiklejohn and Others, Religion and Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945), pp. 25-26.

as the corporate body, that can be guaranteed only by the cultivation of disinterested and deliberative minds. Otherwise neither will the people exercise control over governments, particularly understood, nor will the individuals who participate in governments enact those principles which represent the intentions of "we, the people."

Meiklejohn made it perfectly clear that our endeavors to create a free society have broken down due to the method of violence that governing "agencies" have utilized for the securing of decisions. Genuine representation, which we do not have, met the test of reasonableness for Meiklejohn. We have noted essentially that with respect to legislation the people are subject to it, but it was Meiklejohn's conviction that a free society called for the operationalizing of the premise that with respect to legislators they are subject to the political authority of the people. In a further sense, but consistently, Meiklejohn maintained that what legislatures are to represent, if the representative function is properly understood, is the democratic will. It is in the Congress of the United States that the democratic will of the society must find its fullest representation or so, Meiklejohn argued, we should reasonably expect. It cannot but be obvious to even the most casual observer that this is not so and that we have been engaged for decades in what Meiklejohn called "a crisis of representation." Not only have citizens failed in being sovereign because they

do not expect Congress to be representative of anything other than self-seeking individuals or to act in terms of reasonableness, as this concept is understood in both its logical and moral forms, but, according to Meiklejohn, and perhaps he is right, Congress does not even "represent its own members. By this he meant that although he believed that men of good will, ability, and devotion to the common good outweighed those members of Congress who were individually corrupt, that our political processes themselves were corruptive, making good men helpless and bad men effective. The entire machinery by which men are nominated, elected, discarded, by which they do their work on the floor of Congress and in the state with their constituents, gives representation not to principles, not to the democratic will and deliberated purposes but to self-interests, prejudices and the like. The people, then, corrupt their political authority, their sovereignty, by their expectations and insistence upon the validity of every interest in the marketplace of the halls of Congress, and Congress corrupts its agency of representation. One must wonder why, however, if men of good will outweigh those of bad this has to be the case. The following quote, too, seems to deny significantly Meiklejohn's usual insistence on the representation of principled intentions. Nonetheless, it does offer some direction for a more moral theory of representation under current political processes than what has been our procedure.

> Any agency which undertakes to act for the people has two tasks facing it. First, it must find out what the people want. It must discover and take account of the whole range of private interests which are at stake throughout the country. In this sense, every individual, every group, every region has a right to representation in the councils of government. And that representation must be equal, must be enjoyed without prejudice and without special privilege. But, second, since the huge conglomeration of a nation's desires and needs and intentions is riddled with conflict and contradiction, since interests are at war with one another, any representative body has another job to do. It must choose. It must think. It must discover the common good in all separate goods. It must deny as well as affirm. In every case it must make sure that the greater good prevails over the lesser. As it does so, no genuine human interest of any individual or group may be ignored. But it is equally imperative that no private or public interest be allowed to have its way if it denies other interests which are found by impartial judgment to be more important.[5]

Whatever questions one might have about the above, Meiklejohn surely confronted us with a relevant dilemma and surely contributed to our recognition of the need for an adequate theory of representation. Further, he reinforced judgments about the qualitative necessity for adequately conceptualizing "critical intelligence" that it is mandatory for education to cultivate in a society which intends to be democratic. Once more, if we continue to misconstrue freedom, both the function of sovereignty and the function of representation are rendered if not destructive, meaningless. Meiklejohn rightly pointed out that our beliefs about "localism" are illustrative of our incapacities to adequately conceptualize the deliberative purposes of the sovereign and the representative. It would be superfluous to repeat how our belief

---

[5]Meiklejohn, "Congress and the People," The Nation, Vol. 155, 19 (November 7, 1942), p. 470.

in "local right" has appeared in the institution of education. It assuredly has rendered us either unable to, apathetic about, or opposed to perceiving "sovereignty" and "representation" as relevant to all of the people as a legitimate educational concern. In this situation what sense can be made out of "government by the consent of the governed" when we do not take the meaning of "political authority" seriously? In what sense can it be held that genuine citizens "make law" if representation is confined to self-interested groups?

It is significant to note that one can make sense out of Meiklejohn's theory of social compact only if the notion of sovereignty as the self-controlling and self-controlled agency of the body politic is clearly apprehended. To speak of self-governing is to speak of the people enabled to make their will effective. If, then, the people are in control, they are in agreement to make their life reasonable, to establish reasonable relations among men. Such an agreement, such a compact, connotes therefore that decisions will be equally binding on all citizens, in their role as the ruled. A minority of one or more cannot refuse consent. A man who rejects the results of genuine sovereignty, genuine deliberation, is not thereby proclaiming he is self-governed. He is, according to the development of Meiklejohn's argument, denying political freedom for anarchy. It is, of course, our inability to either come to genuine decisions or, perhaps,

to recognize one when we have achieved it, that marks out implications for education. The importance of Meiklejohn's consideration for education is the impetus he gives for developing methods to achieve deliberative minds. Such an impetus cannot be maximized. The social compact means that no man is called upon to obey a law unless he has shared equally in its making, but obedience to the law is required if that condition is met. Men, sovereigns, share equally, they consent, insofar as processes of deliberation have been rightly invoked. It must be pointed out in addition that Meiklejohn advocated not only the right but the duty of citizens to rebel if our basic agreement has collapsed or if the government, as a particular institution, has entirely failed in its agency. The meaning of the comment that education in particular must make our scheme of government, our plan of human association, our democratic intentions, clear is heightened in view of Meiklejohn's social compact theory. Education must not only make the question of what do we, the people, mean when we provide for freedom of belief and its expression and the question of what it is in fact that we have agreed to in believing in decisions based on consent relevant to its purposes. It must recognize that only by addressing such questions can the objective of "education for citizenship" be rendered sensible.

Freedom and the Sovereign

Political freedom is self-control. Insofar as the body politic has had an effective voice in decision-making, it is

self-controlled. Insofar as the body politic has been unable to make its will effective, it is not self-controlled, not free; it is manipulated. Realization of the will of the body politic is essentially what is meant by "government by consent." Within the context of this meaning it is clear, according to Meiklejohn, that we have not achieved "consent" and thus are subjugated to a will other than our own. In those cases, too, where we attempt to govern others without their consent, we are the subjugators. If we are to conclude that, lacking consent, governments have no just powers, we may do so only on the grounds of an increasingly adequate and comprehensive understanding of the intellectual requirements involved in "consenting."

The distinctions that Meiklejohn made regarding the relationship of "freedom" and "consent" as the basis for understanding the intellectual obligations required by sovereignty can be reviewed by turning to two examples that are encountered in his writings. He urged us to review the Socratic arguments in the Crito and in the Apology in order to understand that to conclude a contradiction exists in respect to Socrates' advocations is invalid. In the Crito Socrates argues that even though the state is mistaken in putting him to death, and thus is unjust, it is imperative for him to obey the legal authority which the state exercises. It is imperative because Socrates has "consented" to "the law" for seventy years. He has made a compact with the state

and thus concludes that it now would be unworthy to withdraw his consent to the law. The writer finds a dilemma here because, although the basic agreement between Socrates and the state apparently has not collapsed, has not the state failed in its agency? Again Meiklejohn confronts us with a peculiar but persistent human dilemma, one with which a "democratic intelligence" has not adequately coped. The law, if it expresses principles in its external operations is one thing to relate to in continuing consent, but in what reasonable manner, in Meiklejohn's sense, can the sovereign consent to the law that is unjust? If justice is misconceived by government must a man, who may have "stayed" and failed in persuading government to correct its misconceptions, allow the judgments of an agency which itself has failed to prevail over him? In what sense can Meiklejohn reconcile belief in the appropriateness of the consequences of Socrates' consent, to maintain his covenant with the state and thus not to be a lawbreaker, and "due process" rightly interpreted? Does Socrates' assertion that it is not "law" which has wronged him but the people fit what Meiklejohn is claiming about freedom and consent? In the constitutional context with which Meiklejohn was trying to deal, the author judges that it does. There is a general proposition which is relevant and supportive of Meiklejohn's concern with the matter of consent and freedom. That is, with the respect to the freedom of ideas Socrates' declaration that his teaching

cannot be abridged by government is unequivocal and entirely right for the sustenance of a free society. A proper relation between freedom and consent is established insofar as the Apology affirms obedience to freedom of thought while the Crito affirms obedience to regulation in the conduct of external affairs for the human welfare. The issue, at least, can be understood as that of enabling intelligence, through freedom of thought, to enact appropriate objects of culture and to sustain them.

The model of the town meeting perhaps finds a clearer expression of the relationship. Freedom of speech, ideas, advocacy, is guaranteed in terms of the conditions of the meeting. In consenting to the form of the meeting, including its procedures and aims, that speech which is free is that which is relevant and offered under the "due process" requirements of the situation. The moderator not only "recognizes" speakers but he "abridges" inappropriate speech. The town meeting is not a speech "free for all," but a self-governing process whose procedures (laws) are freely consented to by its members and whose aim is not solely to achieve some deliberated result on a public question but to lead to the action that such a result suggests. The trouble with much of our education, Meiklejohn noted, is not that it doesn't promote thinking but that the latter, since it is not self-controlled, is too often irrelevant to "the issue." In speaking of the town meeting form Meiklejohn said that what is to be discussed are public questions.

> The community has agreed that such questions as these shall be freely discussed and that, when the discussion is ended, decisions upon them will be made by the vote of the citizens. Now in that method of political self-government, the point of ultimate interest is not the words of the speakers, but the minds of the hearers. The final aim of the meeting is the voting of wise decisions. The voters, therefore, must be made as wise as possible. The welfare of the community requires that those who decide issues shall understand them. ...Both facts and interests must be given in such a way that all alternative lines of action can be wisely measured in relation to one another. As the self-governing community seeks, by the method of voting, to gain wisdom in action, it can find it only in the minds of its individual citizens. If they fail, it fails. That is why freedom of discussion for those minds may not be abridged.[6]

Persons may be barred from speaking on the basis of "due process," to which men have consented, but no individual may be denied because his opinions are thought to be dangerous or unwise or un-American. The overwhelming requirement for the intelligence of the citizen, for the purpose of the sovereign's taking thought, in seeking for the advancement of the general welfare is complete and thorough access to that information and to those ideas which are relevant to that end. The right of the sovereign to <u>hear</u> is a deduction from our agreement that issues shall be resolved by consent. Plato may not be removed from school shelves, Marx banned from courses in economic and political thought, Salinger censored in literature classes. Intellectual fitness for sovereignty demands that what can be said in favor of or in contradiction to the character of our culture, our institutional life, must be not only accessible to but required of

---

[6]Meiklejohn, <u>Political Freedom</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 26.

the citizen's understanding. Free minds must direct behavior. This is why our legislative behavior must be reconstructed, the institution of education more adequately manned, the institutions of public media required to play their proper role in a free society. To recognize that free minds must direct behavior is to recognize the intellectual basis of self-government and the identifying obligations of education. The potential enactment of men's intentions into the creating of a democratic culture is rendered meaningless, in fact is destructive of culture, if this principle of freedom goes unattended. There is no basis for consent and no meaning applicable to "the just powers of the government" without it.

Education which is adequate to the task of cultivating the free intelligence which men need in order to enact democratic purposes is that education which is adequate to the popular teaching which the world-community needs.

> Men know their minds in terms of admiration and contempt. They recognize the human obligation to think clearly and persistently. It is not fitting that a man be stupid if he might be wise. No man who fails to know his world, to master it with his mind, so far as he is capable, is living as a man should live. Intelligence is admirable; stupidity is abhorrent. If, when he has before him the chance for clearness, coherence, understanding, accuracy, a man sinks back to dull, insensitive, and slipshod lack of thought, so far he fails to be a man at all. He fails to play his part in an essential human enterprise. A social order, too, which keeps men ignorant when they might be wise, which makes them dull when they are capable of insight--that social order, destroying the human spirit, is worthy of human contempt and condemnation. Men, both as individuals and as groups, are bound to labor for intelligence. And it is in relation to that high obligation that there arises the human demand for freedom of

> thought. Thinking, like worship, cannot be done by compulsion. To say that liberty of mind is good because it gives us better food or better shoes is topsy-turvy thinking. Our passion for freedom finds its power in the demand that we be better men. It summons us not to be contemptible in the use of our minds.[7]

Meiklejohn found freedom not only a reasonable principle for the democratic state but for the community of humankind. It is that freedom which is possessed by men who recognize that on account of it they have obligations. Men are sovereign, they are to be free, as they attempt to advance the common welfare. Only as rulers, therefore, do men have a right to freedom, as that principle has been discussed throughout this study. To deal with matters of public policy requires that intelligence be kept free. Such freedom is always expedient since the public welfare persistently requires it.

It was, once more, in view of these kinds of considerations that Meiklejohn reiterated the classical point that man's education for meeting universal needs must be a common education. An education which joins men together in a common search for common truths and a common welfare. It was on this basis that he indicated that in a democracy the liberal arts college is to be regarded as the college of the common man. To achieve a "genuine consent" of free men demands universal and common education. No man can give his consent, can share validly in the requirements of sovereignty, unless he knows.

---

[7]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? op. cit., p. 94.

In this sense "consent" defines the purpose of the college of liberal arts. To consent is in effect, and if rightly understood, to be intelligent about the qualities of active participation in the common enterprise.

The Agency of the Teacher

> Human government is human understanding in action. To know, then, what a state is we must know what intelligence is. And vice versa, to know what intelligence is, we must understand what political agencies are and do. What, then, is the state? Does it speak for reason? Or is it primarily an agency of force, of violence?[8]

As we have seen Meiklejohn developed the assumption that fraternity, the idea of human fellowship, is the dominating human purpose, that principle which gives the most genuine and reasonable direction to the advancement of the human condition. As such it offers a basis upon which the democratic state can be created and in terms of which its institutional life can be evaluated. In a simple manner the function of teaching can be expressed as that of leading pupils into an active membership in the fraternity. In essence this intends that ultimately teaching is for the development of citizens for the world-state, since this level of government is the most reasonable.

The teacher is called upon, in Meiklejohn's theory, to form and fashion an immediate community (as in the Experimental College) which in no way restricts the vision of his students to the "limits" of that community. Within the community context, a "living for teaching," individuals are to

---

[8]Meiklejohn, Religion and Education, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

learn that intelligence which is identical to the form of the good state. The teacher then acts "for the state," and, therefore, ultimately is obligated for developing that self-criticizing intelligence which is cooperative, disinterested and, in turn, obligated. It is only through teaching, through putting students into active relation with the issues of the day, that members of a free society can come to value that self-critical study such a society demands.

Meiklejohn concluded that democratic governments are equipped to teach because they possess purposes and values which are humane and, as such, give morally valid grounds for constructing a plan of teaching. That intelligence which a democratic plan of government demands in fact has authority over the institution of education, hence provides standards of judgment regarding teaching methodologies and procedures. The task of intelligence is to interpret democratic intentions and to appraise their manifestation in culture. The mark of intelligence for which teaching is responsible is that which is expressed by the man who is capable of at once interpreting intentions correctly, identifying and understanding democratic purposes, and enacting principled intentions as the quality of our objective cultural condition. Man must be reasonable in order for culture to be reasonable.

The teacher is an agent for the state, but not the state as negatively understood. When it is asked, "In what sense

or manner can the government protect us mentally?" the response of the teacher in a democratic state must be in contradiction to the response of a teacher in a despotic state. In the latter case the answer will be, "In any way it please." In the former the answer must be, "In no way can the government protect the people mentally; in no way ought it to." If government is rightly serving as an agency of the people its "protective" function is to see that teaching and learning shall be completely free.

> It must be urged that the chief source of our blundering and ineptness in dealing with moral and political problems is that we do not know how to think about them except by quantitative methods which are borrowed from non-moral, non-political, non-social sciences. In this sense we need to be, not more scientific, but less scientific, not more quantitative, but other than quantitative. We must create and use methods of inquiry which are suitable to the study of men as self-governing persons but not suitable to the study of forces or of machines. In the understanding of a free society, scientific thinking has an essential part to play. But it is a secondary part.[9]

In effect Meiklejohn maintained that our skills, our techniques were threatening the development of our wisdom. Education for wisdom was for Meiklejohn equivalent to political teaching in general. To be a skilled empiricist alone is surely, he affirmed, not to be the kind of human being that can be defined as "politically wise." In substituting political for religious teaching we have changed our procedures for determining what human beings shall be. To confine our determination to "science" or to "technique" is to

---

[9]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

mistake the role of consequent learnings--which are to be used in the service of our efforts to secure political wisdom. "To be merely skilled" defines the negative function of liberal teaching, that of abolishing mechanistic thinking in all areas of living. It must be remembered that Meiklejohn had regard for the knowledge yielded by science and surely regard for it as a model of thought, but, also, that he was convinced that neither did such knowledge proclaim its use nor was the method complete for the rational ordering of man's life. He certainly recognized that in our search for political wisdom we as yet do not know how to think. This is the challenge to teaching.

We do know that thinking must be concerned with our common enterprises and, therefore, that teaching methodologies which in any way encourage the belief that not only may a man "do" what he please, he also may "think" as he pleases are disasterous to that enterprise. It is finally the death of a free society. The First Amendment which declares the necessary freedom of the human mind does not mean either that man may think as he pleases or that he may not think at all. Thinking in common about our common intentions is a requirement of democracy which must be rightly directed. Our plan of teaching must protect freedom of mind by assuring that individuals are introduced to, and by requiring that they comprehend insofar as capable, all issues, ideas, information, necessary to augmenting the morality of the state.

Liberal teaching, therefore, deals mainly with ideas and abstractions. Conceptions of liberal education which envision "freeing" minds through teaching procedures based upon each individual's vocation are fated to fail, Meiklejohn declared, since for most men "genuine living" means that their vocations are but a part of their life concerns. Assuredly Meiklejohn's contention that teaching is finally for the joining of all nations, for the joining of men into the processes of a corporate intelligence, means that, while the "lessons" for all men must be the same, to assume that they could be liberated through intellectualizing in some sense about their vocations was an in complete notion of what men must study in common.

It is indispensible to restate in the present context a point that has been touched upon previously. Since to be "self-governed" means that the people are assigned an intellectual task which cannot be done unless the doing of it is free (in the sense that incorporates the concept of obligation), this means that teaching must be free. It will be recalled, however, that the relation of the educational objective of developing free minds and the freedom of the academic or "teaching mind" is particular. That is, academic freedom is a form of, but not greater than, popular freedom. The teacher, as well as the researcher, is an agent of the government. Government in turn is an agent of the people. The logic of the situation leads to the conclusion that teachers and researchers are the agents of the people. What

teachers are "responsible to" is to the people who need the truth. Teaching is to be done not in the interests of the teacher but in the interests of the people. Justification for academic freedom lies in the purposes of "we, the people." This is not to say, quite the opposite, that the teacher can be coerced into "proper thought," "proper teachings, "proper loyalties," he is not, in a word, "for hire." The tragic failure of much of our teaching, as Meiklejohn rightly concluded, is that teachers have surrendered that very intelligence which they need to exemplify and use in teaching men to be intellectually free. Teachers thus have misconstrued their agency.

Teaching is in the service of the common life. Efforts to sustain and revise democratic forms are dependent upon the ability of each citizen to continually and comprehensively study relevant facets of our common life. The expertise of teacher and scholar, the new knowledge, new systems of thought, new interpretations of meaning which they formulate as well as the "old," must be handled from the viewpoint of what the sovereign needs to have "in mind" in order to deal with problems on the popular level. The purposes of teaching and research must be understood as being entirely instrumental--instrumental for the people, for the life of the community. Teachers and researchers, while masters of special fields, must be servants of the whole. Varied and unsystematically related activities of teachers and scholars will not enlighten

man, the state, or the world, but serve to distract intelligence from the urgency of building both a national and world community. For this purpose, teaching must be free in order to free those whom teaching serves.

The direct purpose of education in a free society is to teach its members how to think. Not to think in terms of self-seeking whose aim is a cunningness of thought and the degradation of democracy, but to think for the common good. Such thinking is a moral undertaking in that the intelligence displayed by persons is that which uses knowledge to promote the universal good.

> The very nature of a mind is that it recognizes obligations, it serves a cause. The True is better than the False and must be chosen by every man, whatever his private inclinations. Facts must be recognized. The man who forms beliefs by whim, by mere caprice, by laziness or sloth, by social pressure, by private interest--that man is traitor to the cause of Truth. That cause makes heavy and savage demands on all of us. It has authority. Failure to give obedience to that authority does not mean that we are free. It means only that we have ceased thinking.[10]

The "true" is what is rational. It is the result of utilizing rational methods of thought in the service of judging the relation between intentions and actualities. It is what is revealed to us, as we meet the demands of the deliberative life, about ourselves and our attempts to create culture. As man is striving to interpret his intentions as causes in the formation of culture, he makes of himself, Meiklejohn declared, a man who is grappling with the problem of truth;

---

[10]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? op. cit., p. 167.

he is seeking for the truth as to the nature and quality of both "intentions" and "enactments." He is seeking to understand by rational means the human dilemma involved in securing institutions for human purposes. Overall it is this endeavor which must be the concern of teaching. The sovereign, in order to be really free, to be genuinely intelligent, not only must possess actually effective authority to act, he must know what he is about. Teaching must enable men to become deliberative and active.

It is analytic to say that teaching methods "follow," in some reasonable sense, from purposes. It is not necessary to review those methodologies which Meiklejohn developed as appropriate to liberal teaching, and which have been discussed in Chapter II. It does seem important to develop an additional point about liberal education in relation to the task of creating reasonable methodologies.

Questions as the Organizing Objectives of Education

It has been established that intelligence can be judged "qualified" that is capable of being applied in any field. With particular pertinency for the tasks of sovereignty such quality is manifested by that individual who is in thorough possession of general concepts and ideas which actively can be brought to bear on an issue. He also is in possession of general questions relevant to the situation. The information that persons are to gather in connection with any human problem is, according to Meiklejohn, secondary to the

proper posing of the problem or the proper setting of questions germane to the problem. The latter is what arouses and directs a student's interest. The combination of accurate questions in relation to a genuine social or human issue with the proper forms of thought, plus the accessibility of knowledge and ideas, ultimately is what conduces to the student's learning to infer, connect, deduce, universalize--to think.

Thus, it was mandatory for Meiklejohn that teachers understand that basic to meeting the requjrements of creating a fellowship of learning as well as basic to the overarching aim of leading pupils to an apprehension of the objective existence of meaning in the world was the ability to pose questions. In a very significant way the formulation of questions is not only at the heart of a teacher's methodological process but questions themselves become the objectives around which or in terms of which methods of education in general ought to be organized. The teacher's duty for liberal education is not to give authoritative answers but rather to clarify questions by challenging not only the assumptions involved in them but all possible alternative responses.

The manner in which questions might be set is readily illustrated. Let us assume with Meiklejohn that a primary task of education is to cultivate in all members of the body politic a desire to understand what our national plan

of government is. To suggest that the objective is met by simply forming the question, "What is our plan of government?" is, of course, absurd. Meiklejohn had, however, relevant, but more discrete and demanding questions, although it must be acknowledged that it would not be sensible to hold them "at-issue" all at once, nor did he intend this.

> Under the actual conditions of life in the United States does the Constitution work well? Does it provide wise and efficient guidance for our dealing with the desperate issues which are now, in ever new forms, rushing upon the nation? If not, should it be amended or even abandoned? What alternative lines of Constitutional planning, if any, give promise of providing better care for the national welfare? Or, as against all these suggestions, may we decide that the source of our political difficulties lies not in the Constitution, but in ourselves? Have we unwittingly fallen into a way of life which is inherently hostile both to the Constitution and to the human values it seeks to enhance and preserve? If so, how shall we change that way of life to make it promote, rather than prevent, the creation of freedom...?[11]

It is obvious that such questions demand the recognition that not only must alternative responses be examined but the assumptions grounding the questions must be identified and assessed. Teaching that conceives of its objectives in terms of posing questions that are made as profound as possible may guide humanity toward productive thought, while it is certain that teaching which contributes only one-sided answers will not, as Ulich once noted. It seems justifiable to conclude that the latter conception of teaching must be judged illiberal.

---

[11]Meiklejohn, Political Freedom, op. cit., p. 159.

Surely it is freeing to the intelligence of the sovereign, in recognition of his obligations, to pose questions which specifically reveal what is at-issue in understanding our democratic intentions. Meiklejohn suggested that in our continuing study of the First Amendment a constant question is needed. In view of current conditions of culture, where forms of belief and communication are in a state of rapid change, reconsideration of the meaning and intent of the amendment may occur within the framework of a constant query--Is the First Amendment just and wise?

It has been stated that Meiklejohn's aim throughout his social, political and educational writings was not so much to express novel ideas but to get us to take our beliefs seriously by attempting to lead us to new insights about them in relation to current social situations. His endeavor has been summarized by stating that he attempted to abolish the dualism between our beliefs or principles and action systems. It seems to the writer that Meiklejohn's major theme, no matter what the particular context of concern, was centered on overcoming this two-fold distinction in the life of man. His analyses are not totally novel, yet what appears to the author as Meiklejohn's special importance is the persistently present sense in which he identified our problems and asked us to "take them seriously." He consistently pressed us to take the domain of action as soberly as the domain of theory. He persistently cautioned against the

result, the disintegration of culture, that occurs when men are "double-minded"; that is, when they view efforts to give order to life as "theory versus practice." He consequently argued that we must have regard for the identify of purpose which binds theory and action together. He persisted in pressing us to accept the domain of action as an urgent concern whether we are arguing about whether "communists ought to teach" or whether we are investigating the meanings of the First Amendment. The major dualism his theory of action intended to resolve encompassed additional concern for dualisms in kind. That between business and democracy, for example, which results in the not unusual conclusion that the social and educational programs built in terms of either are very different in character. His insistence that we must recognize the urgency of our human dilemmas was expressed in the question, "What are the principles we must enact?" The quest for answers is significant on both the theoretical and action levels.

Such quests as Meiklejohn required of us do tend to generate new perceptions. For example, "everyone knows" that democratic citizenship demands universal education. But, what about? Meiklejohn demanded that we evaluate this nominal agreement about citizenship and argued that whatever "universal education for citizenship" means, it must at least cause us to face such teaching questions as, "Who are 'we, the people?'" and "What constitutes the general welfare?"

In terms of the first he developed his concept of "we" as public persons acting in a corporate capacity under the demands of a continuously-to-be-created corporate intelligence. The issue of "private, self-interested rights" as hostile to "public, disinterested obligations" assumed, under his hand, intensity and cogency. The education of the ruler, ourselves as the common man, becomes clearer. He did not, however, consider the question closed. Under changing social circumstances the question continues as an educational objective.

The second question in fact reemphasizes our particular need for education for the form of the state and the democratic man, the ruler. We need education in order to know the general welfare (which must change with situations) in order, in our capacity as agents, to enact the principle of the common good. In this sense the question that becomes the organizing objective of teaching is, "How may we promote the general welfare?" Thus it is that the question, not answers, becomes the objective or the purpose of the educational process. Answers may destroy good questions. Answers may develop illiberal minds rather than those liberal intellects that the capacity of sovereignty needs, that the form of the state demands. "How may we promote the common good?" To answer, "By each man's pursuing his own self-interest," destroys educational purpose and, as a "principle" to be enacted, the free state itself. Meiklejohn's capacity to make

distinctions of this sort are typical of his way of examining what appear to be insoluble dilemmas of democracy, yet, in the present context, make the perplexing question of teaching methodologies appropriate for the education of the sovereign somewhat and significantly less perplexing.

In fairness a further point ought to be considered in terms of the question of "questions" and the agency of the teacher. It cannot be denied that Meiklejohn was accurate in judging that teaching in a free society which ignores the controversial questions facing that society is at best irrelevant. All questions must be addressed and all points in-conflict considered by those who would be rulers. Not only, Meiklejohn maintained, must "communism be taught" but "communists must teach." If we accept Meiklejohn's resolution of one dilemma, all ideas and recommendations about human association must be taught, he faces us with another. Meiklejohn claimed that the teacher cannot be neutral. If he is doing what he requires of his students that they properly do in regard for the development of their intellects, if he requires a "scheme of reference" from them, the teacher, too, must be "going somewhere," he must be an advocate of some plan of human living. In acting upon the judgment that we must provide for the criticism as well as for the advocacy of our institutions, communists must teach. Where, it will be asked, is that impartial, disinterested intelligence, which we expect of citizens, to be found in

teaching which provides "advocates" whether they be communists or democrats? It lies in the process of teaching; in the fact that this must not be conceptualized by any one teacher as "salesmanship" or "propagandizing," as giving to the student opinions which someone other than himself wishes him to have. If Meiklejohn's perspective that teaching is a process that must be the art of creating and using intelligence for improving the human condition seems naive in this situation, the writer would venture to suggest that the attempt to institutionalize such a proposition, as well as to accommodate all genuine expressions concerning what is at issue, gives more promise of freeing minds for the task of sovereignty than those positions which deny students access to responsible advocacy. The teaching dilemma is to create and secure that process which indeed does have authority over us and which is compatible with those authorizations which democracy makes about the capabilities the ruler needs to develop. This surely is an issue which we currently are tending to solve in ways that are unsatisfactory for meeting the requirements of intelligence in a free society.

Conclusion

Meiklejohn's assertion that the obligation of education is to make society's scheme of action intelligible to the common man in a sense serves as a focal point for understanding his conceptions of liberal teaching, particularly

if the term "society" is understood as referring not to a democratic state alone but also to the society of humankind. To make something "intelligible" to a man is to free him for the moral obligation of judging situations and responding to the requirements of situations in terms of principled intentions; to make of him, then, a sovereign. It is to free him to aid in the task of creating a culture which conduces to the human welfare. Education based upon such a conception is in moral and intellectual contradiction to those educational procedures based upon some variation involving the "selling" of ideas or the mechanistic inculcation of knowledge and values. It was Meiklejohn's evaluation that current educational plans were predicated on the latter and hence miseducative for and totally abortive of the development of free men.

> We are destroying mutual confidence and respect. When this process reaches its end, so far as it goes toward its end, human life has lost its quality as human; it no longer has virtues; it has no scruples; there are not "things that may not be done"; necessity has taken the place of principle; compulsion has taken the place of obligation; human living is becoming unscrupulous; it is becoming, for human beings, not worth living.[12]

For Meiklejohn education for free men, liberalizing education, depended upon our ability to satisfactorily answer the question of whether we can enrich our culture, whether men as the creators of values, reasonableness, and culture, in fact could recognize the strenuous obligations involved in

---

[12]Meiklejohn, What Does America Mean? op. cit., p. 83.

"taking thought" about that endeavor. Whatever theories of education are developed may well be considered alternative responses to that question, but for Meiklejohn without a satisfactory response no meaningful theory of education could be developed. An essential aspect of the maturity of liberal teaching is the recognition that man, in the process of making himself, makes culture. Both can be brutish or wise. A vital part of liberal understanding is the recognition that man's interpretations of his own intentions yields a plan for the human condition which men must be enabled to judge worthy or despicable. Has man, in the process of making himself, created objective conditions of culture which are worthy expressions of human values? Are we or are we not, liberal teaching inquires of its students, indifferent to man's fate? Are we or are we not indifferent to what strengthens the human community?

These questions are not the only kind that demand the attention of free men, but in essence define the nature or function of the free man. That man is free, in other words, who recognizes the validity of the intellectual demands such queries command, the intellectual requisite for addressing himself to the issue of what meanings men intend to create in the world. A man who does not recognize the moral and logical validity of such questions is not free and the liberal content of his education is questionable. It surely is evident by now, it must be acknowledged, that understanding

Meiklejohn's conception of human nature is fundamental to understanding his conceptions of the free man, the free state, and liberal education.

For Meiklejohn that intelligence which identifies the free man was summed up by the equation of intelligence with brotherhood. Liberal teaching involves, he maintained, coming to the understanding that any act or judgment which is evaluated as wise or intelligent is at-large a judgment that both men and institutions are expressing what we have discussed as fraternal regard, as morally caring for the welfare of one's fellow man. Meiklejohn, in his concern for the relation of principle and action, saw in the current strivings of the world for social justice, although bewildered as to how justice can be accomplished, evidence of the intelligence, the kinship, that is appropriate for free men to possess. Education which does not take account of such movements, which does not make "note of" the demand for social justice in its present teaching plans, is not fulfilling obligations appropriate to the aims of liberal education.

Although that intelligence which characterizes the free man and which is the primary purpose of liberal teaching can be generalized in terms of its identity to fraternity, the discrete dimensions of Meiklejohn's conception must be perceived in order to more meaningfully comprehend the aim of liberal instruction. Certainly the premise that men are intelligent as they seek to establish reasonable relations

with other men ("reasonable" in both its logical and moral forms) has to be stressed. The human task, the liberal task, is to extend man's scope of cooperation to a world-state where violence will be replaced by reason in the relations of all men. To be intelligent, to be free, is to understand that men are engaged in a common enterprise. The reasonableness of this view for the creation of a world-state Meiklejohn found reflected in the essential character of the democratic state. Education is liberal insofar as its acts are predicated on this understanding.

It is clear that Meiklejohn was diligent in his attempts to express in action his theoretical claims that mankind is a community and that the guiding directive for liberal teaching is found here. His premises about human principles and human values not only served to justify his premises about a democratic social order but the search for the meaning, requirements, and intentions of such principles and values were crucial to his conceptions of liberal education. His conviction that the free man is one who recognizes that principles have authority over him, that he is obligated to participate both in the process of understanding and in the process of enacting them as well as in the process of making them (in the sense of creating) relevant to current social issues, gave critical direction to Meiklejohn's beliefs about and practices of liberal teaching. For a democratic society it is required that finding out what a principle

means is prior, though not alternative, to judging its truth and usefulness in general as well as in particular circumstances.

Meiklejohn maintained that at-large the purpose of the liberal teacher is to furnish the ideas by means of which the people as a whole may do their thinking. However, he did claim that scholars and teachers tend to misconstrue their function, insofar as the schemes of thought they make or advocate are isolated from unifying democratic intentions, primarily because teachers and scholars do not tend to see the question of how or whether they "fit" as a relevant responsibility. The "drift in popular thinking" that is a consequence of this situation means that what men in a free society ought to think about, enhancing the common enterprise for the common good, is compromised or denied. The result is that men may hold beliefs, may hold ideas, but may not "think" about them; i.e., may not see the necessity of "making sense" out of them. The student who has gained ideas or beliefs, but who holds them chaotically "in mind" has not been liberally educated. A society which aspires to a democratic plan of human association fails in that aspiration insofar as "minds drift." Insofar as minds drift they are not free; they cannot consent as sovereigns must be able to do.

Hopefully it has been made clear that Meiklejohn saw in the form of the state as constitutionally expressed a directive for liberal education. Particularly in view of his

analyses of the First Amendment is this comment applicable. Freedom of the mind, which he argued that amendment was about, hardly means freedom to drift.

Assuming with Meiklejohn that the place to discover the nature of a society is in its schools, the writer tends to agree with him that what they tend to exemplify is a conviction that there is no common basis for men's reasoning; that either irrationality tends to be conceived as the basis for all thinking or authoritarian thoughts are simply issued. Our systems of social relations and expectations about man's behavior reflect, in the writer's opinion, what has been developed in the schools. Our institutional life paradoxically tends to express a laissez-faire view about ideas and acts, but it expresses as well authoritarian modes of thought in the persons or processes which are in control of institutional systems. We have "permissive" and "authoritarian" teachers. We have exhortations to act as reasonable citizens by being "loyal" and exhortations to be "an individual in spite of the system." The function of liberal education is to criticize and challenge these paradoxical manifestations of beliefs and values, to understand and to question and to interpret them in view of appropriate standards and processes of judgment. To make the society rational and moral is "all" that Meiklejohn asked of liberal instruction. For him, however, liberal teachers are not to be found just in the institution formally charged with education. He was convinced of something which is simple to the understanding but

which we have been unable to enact. That is, that within the intentions of the Constitution we find principles and purposes binding upon all social institutions. Thus, all institutions share in the obligation of serving as processes of enlightenment in order for the sovereign to responsibly enact his obligations. It is too apparent that we have failed thus far in so constituting our institutions that each serves to enhance the intelligence, hence freedom, of the members of society.

It is surely clear that the perspective that "freedom is intelligence" has been central to many conceptions of liberal education. Meiklejohn's endeavor to equate "acts of sovereignty" with freedom and intelligence was, in the writer's judgment, exemplary and certainly worth the consideration of those who are concerned to develop a significant theory of education. Those who may find themselves in agreement with Hook, who conclude that Meiklejohn's collective-kind of conceptions (the democratic will, cultural authority, corporate freedom and corporate intelligence) are actually totalitarian in nature obviously will find the understanding expressed in this dissertation at variance.

This is not to say that the writer does not have questions about aspects of Meiklejohn's position. His judgment that history reveals man as striving toward "the better" has been questioned. This, of course, raises a companion concern about his Rousseau-like account of human nature, for it seems

undeniable that while there may be no clear telos in the human situation, Meiklejohn's "natural man" is good. His persistently optimistic view of history perhaps can be understood in terms of the point that men do have the tools for structuring "the good life," conceptions of law and justice, principles of reason and intelligence, and so forth, but that they in some sense "allow" other, and corrupting, ideas and processes to deter them from their "natural" inclinations. This, it must be emphasized, is not to deny the significance, in the author's view, of Meiklejohn's premise that the intentions of men are made manifest in culture. But it does lead to a problem with which Meiklejohn failed to adequately cope. That is, in spite of Meiklejohn's view of history, the tenor of much of his assessment about current conditions of culture leads to the conclusion that the natural goodness of man has been corrupted by the institutions which man himself has developed. Meiklejohn's comments about the good men in Congress is a case in point. It is difficult to state the dilemma, but it involves a belief that Meiklejohn has given inadequate treatment to the question as to why, when men do know "the good," they fail to enact it. It is true that he maintains a general response to this query: That institutions are not enabling. A note here may be pertinent. It was suggested that some persons may judge it naive under current conditions of culture to believe that human beings can choose now to interpret an

intention such as freedom fraternally. Meiklejohn was consistent in one sense in holding that it is not naive, since men do continue to make choices. In another sense his perspective was not consistent if one can judge that conditions are not presently enabling of the actualization of such an interpretation. Such a dilemma concomitantly casts doubt on the degree of the adequacy of Meiklejohn's argument that men must be reasonable in order for culture to be reasonable. While it appears reasonable to agree that men must make social change on the basis of intellectual commitments, a more complete accounting of the relation of such commitments to the on-going social realities or processes of culture would strengthen Meiklejohn's stance. Meiklejohn seems to have left us with the problematic conclusion that men must do what they cannot do.

Perhaps a major concern has to do with Meiklejohn's conception of the democratic will. It will be recalled that such a concpetion includes the important point that the democratic will, fraternal in essence, is something to be "realized," a goal to be sought, and not a "given" outside of human experience. There are several considerations which should be raised. Briefly, it seems probable that it is easier to determine when a cultural situation does <u>not</u> express the qualities of fraternity as this has been discussed, than when a cultural situation possesses the complete qualities of brotherhood. A similar question is raised as we

recall the proposition that mankind's goal is to establish complete agreement between institutions and human intentions. The obvious problem is how we know when completeness has been achieved. To give Meiklejohn his due in terms of this paradox, that the absence of a quality appears to be more readily assessable than the completeness of its presence, the point should be reemphasized that a major impetus of Meiklejohn's endeavor was to foster a recognition of what happens to the quality of the human condition when it is structured in terms of the "sum of particular wills." The proposition that particular wills obscure our realization of democracy (the democratic will) is, of course, fundamental to Meiklejohn's thought. Nonetheless, the significance of that point does not resolve the problem of how we in fact know when the general, or democratic, will has been made fully manifest. Although it is true that Meiklejohn insisted that when thoughtful individuals come to opposing conclusions on an issue, in this case the issue of how we know or if we can know what the democratic will is in a particular context, then they must reason together, the fact that men create interpretations together does not necessarily yield the conclusion that the "true" will has been achieved. This problem surely is one that Hook raised. Perhaps the strenuousness of this comment is softened as we remember that Meiklejohn's objective, in part, was to convince men in this society of the necessity of not only the constant process of

evaluating on-going cultural conditions, but of seraching for increasingly adequate meanings and methods of evaluation of the democratic will.

Similar concerns can be raised in regard to the concept of the "common good" or the "general welfare." Here, too, it seems probable that Meiklejohn was in some sort of quandry, which the author nowhere found resolved, concerning the relation of particular goods to the common good. This issue develops, as we recall, from the discussion of his theory of representation in which he asserted that any agency which intends to represent the people must give equal consideration to the private interests of every individual and every group. This, as maintained, is not a consistent point. The author trusts that she is not reading too much into this inconsistency when she suggests that perhaps what is at stake is a concern about particular goods and how they affect the common good itself. If so, one wishes that Meiklejohn had discussed it in these terms rather than appearing to deny, however momentarily, the distinctions he had made between "public" and "private" persons.

An additional consideration should be noted. In the context of Meiklejohn's claim that teachers cannot be, and ought not be, neutral, it must be acknowledged that his endeavors to persuade us that it is within the <u>process</u> of teaching that objectivity is found are more adequate in the descriptions of pedagogical techniques encountered in his

accounts of the Amherst and Wisconsin experiments than in his brief theoretical considerations. The writer wishes to stress the point that a thorough expression of a theory of process, given the condition of advocacy, would be valuable.

Finally, although the writer finds that some of her own existential inclinations go against her own essentially humanistic thinking, that surely is not Meiklejohn's fault and, of course, represents a different, if not genuine, dilemma than Hook expressed. The issue of totalitarianism at base seems to be an issue regarding the essentially pluralistic nature of human living versus a viewpoint which sees human living as essentially unitary in nature. These dissimilar perceptions, of course, give different "reasons for" directing educational aims and processes. Although it seems as if it ought to be theoretically possible in a democratic state to develop a common theory of education, especially if we agree to look to that instrument, the Constitution, which should offer common grounds for authorizing a public theory of education, the author sees no resolution to the problem.

The writer must conclude by acknowledging that this study has exhausted neither the topic of Meiklejohn's practicing contributions to education in the twentieth century nor of his theoretical contributions, particularly as the latter was addressed to the increasingly discrete problem of the education of the sovereign. However, it is hoped that this

view of his work in the service of public education as well as an attempt to develop a synthesis of the major aspects of his social and educational theory will contribute to an understanding of Meiklejohn's important contributions to liberal educational developments.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Primary Sources

Meiklejohn, Alexander. Education Between Two Worlds. New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1942. Pp. x + 303.

_____. The Experimental College. New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1932. Pp. xix + 421.

_____. Freedom and the College. New York and London: The Century Co., 1923. Pp. xiv + 231.

_____. The Liberal College. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1920. Pp. viii + 165.

_____. Philosophy. Reading with a Purpose Series, 14. Chicago: The American Library Association, 1926. pp. 51.

_____. Political Freedom: The Constitutional Powers of the People. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965. Pp. xxv + 166.

_____. What Does America Mean? New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1935. Pp. ix + 271.

Meiklejohn, Alexander and Others. Religion and Education. Religion in the Post-War World Series. Edited by Willard L. Sperry. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945. Pp. ix + 114.

Secondary Sources

Dewey, John. Individualism Old and New. New York: Capricorn Books, 1962. Pp. 171.

_____. The Public and Its Problems. Denver: Allan Swallow, 1954. Pp. 224.

Essays for College Men: Education, Science, and Art. Chosen by Norman Foerster, Frederick A. Manchester, and Karl Young. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913. Pp. 390.

Galbraith, John Kenneth. The New Industrial State. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967. Pp. xi + 427.

Hook, Sidney. Education for Modern Man: A New Perspective. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963. Pp. 235.

Price, Lucien. Prophets Unawares: The Romance of an Idea. New York and London: The Century Co., 1924. Pp. 172.

Schilpp. Paul D. (editor). Higher Education Faces the Future. New York: Horace Liveright, 1930. Pp. xvi + 408.

The Thirty-First Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Part II: Changes and Experimentation in Liberal Arts Education. Prepared by Kathryn McHale and Others. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1932. Pp. ix + 310.

Tussman, Joseph. Obligation and the Body Politic. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960. Pp. vi + 144.

Veysey, Laurence R. The Emergence of the American University. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1965. Pp. xii + 505.

Articles

Primary Sources

Meiklejohn, Alexander. "Adult Education: A Fresh Start," The New Republic, lxxx, 1028 (August 15, 1934), 14-17.

_____. "Are College Entrance Requirements Excessive?" Education, xxix, 9 (May, 1909), 561-6.

_____. "The College and the Common Life," Harper's Monthly Magazine, cxlvii (November, 1923), 721-6.

_____. "College Education and the Moral Ideal," Education, xxviii, 9 (May, 1908), 552-67.

_____. "The Colleges and the S.A.T.C.," The Nation, cvii, 2788 (December 7, 1918), 697-8.

_____. "Congress and the People," The Nation, Vol. 155, 19 (November 7, 1942), 469-71.

Meiklejohn, Alexander. "The Devil's Revenge," The Century Magazine, cvii, 5 (March, 1924), 718-23.

_____. "Educational Cooperation Between Church and State," Law and Contemporary Problems, Vol. 14, 1 (Winter, 1949), 61-72.

_____. "Educational Leadership in America," Harper's Monthly Magazine, clx (March, 1930), 440-47.

_____. "Everthing Worth Saying Must Be Said," The New York Times Magazine, (July 18, 1948), 8.

_____. "Farewell Address," School and Society, xviii, 445 (July 7, 1923), 12-16.

_____. "For International Citizenship," Adult Education Journal, Vol. 2, 1 (January, 1943), 44-7.

_____. "Freedom and the People," The Nation, Vol. 177, 24 (December 12, 1953), 500-3.

_____. "The Future of Liberal Education," The New Republic, Vol. 108, 4 (January 25, 1943), 113-15.

_____. "Higher Education in a Democracy - I," The North Central Association Quarterly, xvi, 2 (October, 1941), 149-54.

_____. "Mr. Hutchins' Dogma," The New Republic, Vol. 109, 5 (August 2, 1943), 147.

_____. "In Memoriam," The New Republic, lvi, 718 (September 5, 1928), 69-71.

_____. "Integrity of the Universities--How to Defend It," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Vol. 9 (June, 1953), 193-4.

_____. "Is Mental Training a Myth?" Educational Review, xxxvii, 2 (February, 1909), 126-41.

_____. "Liberty-For What?" Harper's Monthly Magazine, Vol. 171 (August, 1935), 364-72.

_____. "A New College," The Century Magazine, cix, 3 (January, 1925), 312-20.

_____. "A New College," The New Republic, xlvi, 593 (April 14, 1926), 215-18.

_____. "Pharisees and Reformers," The Nation, cvxii, 3026 (July 4, 1923), 13.

Meiklejohn, Alexander. "Rejoinder," The Nation, cxxxii, 3429 (March 25, 1931), 325-6.

_____. "A Reply to John Dewey," Fortune, xxxi, 1 (March 14, 1945), 207f.

_____. "Required Education for Freedom," The American Scholar, Vol. 13, 4 (Autumn, 1944), 393-5.

_____. "Sedition Circa 400 B.C.," The Nation, Vol. 180, 17 (April 23, 1955), 349-52.

_____. "Should Communists Be Allowed to Teach?" The New York Times Magazine (March 27, 1949), 10f.

_____. "Teacher, Teach Thyself!" Adult Education Journal, Vol. 2, 3 (July, 1943), 120-29.

_____. "Teachers and Controversial Questions," Harper's Monthly Magazine, Vol. 177 (June, 1938), 15-22.

_____. "The Teaching of Intellectual Freedom," Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors, xxxviii, 1 (March, 1952), 10-25.

_____. "To Teach the World How to be Free," The New York Times Magazine (August 11, 1946), 5.

_____. "To Whom Are We Responsible?" The Century Magazine, cvi, 5 (September, 1923), 643-50.

_____. "Unity of the Curriculum," The New Republic, Educational Supplement (October 25, 1922), 2-3.

_____. "What Constitutes Preparation for College: The College View," Education, xxxi, 9 (May, 1911), 578-84.

_____. "What Next in Progressive Education," Progressive Education, Vol. VI, 2 (April, 1929), 99-110.

_____. "Who Should Go to College?" The New Republic, lvii, 737 (January 16, 1929), 238-41.

_____. "Wisconsin's Experimental College," The Survey, lviii, 5 (June 1, 1927), 268-70f.

Secondary Sources

"A Chapter Ends at Amherst," The Nation, cxvii, 3026 (July 4, 1923), 5.

"Alexander Meiklejohn," The Nation, Vol. 199, 21 (December 28, 1964), 506.

"Amherst College and President Meiklejohn," School and Society, xvii, 443 (June, 1923), 687.

Dewey, John. "The Meiklejohn Experiment," The New Republic, lxxii, 924 (August 17, 1932), 23-4.

_____. "The Problem of the Liberal Arts College," The American Scholar, Vol. 13, 4 (Autumn, 1944), 391-3.

"Dr. Meiklejohn's Plans for a New College," School and Society, xx, 507 (September 13, 1924), 337-8.

"Dr. Meiklejohn Proposes," The New Republic, xli, 530 (January 28, 1925), 246-8.

Gaus, John Merriman. "The Issues at Amherst," The Nation, Vol. 117, 3026 (July 4, 1923), 12.

"Learning's Mr. Different," Newsweek, xlix, 24 (July 17, 1957), 114.

Lewis, Hal. G. "Meiklejohn and Experimentalism," Teachers College Record, Vol. 44, 8 (May, 1943), 563-71.

McConn, Max. "A Communication: How Shall We Educate the Young Barbarians?" The New Republic, lvii, 737 (February 6, 1929), 324-5.

"Meiklejohn at 70," Newsweek, xix, 20 (May 18, 1942), 56.

"Meiklejohn Award for Academic Freedom," School and Society, Vol. 86, 2136 (September, 1958), 322.

"Mild-Mannered Maverick," Time, lxix, 24 (June 17, 1957), 67-8.

Powell, John Walker. "Tribute to Alexander Meiklejohn," Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors, Vol. 51, 4 (Autumn, 1965), 366-73.

Price, Lucien. "Americans We Like: Alexander Meiklejohn," The Nation, cxxv, 3254 (November 16, 1927), 541-2.

"Quotations: Liberal Education," School and Society, xviii, 445 (July 7, 1923), 27-8.

Taylor, Harold. "Meiklejohn: The Art of Making People Think," The New York Times Magazine (May 5, 1957), 20.

"The Innovator," Newsweek, Vol. 64 (December 28, 1964), 52.

Vivas, Eliseo. "Wisconsin's Experimental College," The Nation, cxxxii, 3429 (March 25, 1931), 322-25.