

THE WINNETKA SUPERINTENDENCY OF CARLETON WASHBURNE:
A STUDY IN EDUCATIONAL STATESMANSHIP

By

George H. Thompson, Jr.

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

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Carleton Washburne served as superintendent of the Winnetka public schools for the twenty-four years between 1919 and 1943. During his superintendency Washburne effected some radical and far-reaching curricular innovations within the Winnetka schools. He had the twofold objective of adapting instruction to individual needs and differences, and of meeting the broader social and emotional needs of his pupils.

What Washburne was doing in Winnetka came to be labelled, by the educational theorists of the day, "the Winnetka Plan." The label was an unfortunate one because it connoted something of a finished product rather than a system that was ever in-process. Washburne once insisted: "There is no Winnetka plan; there never was. It is and was a spirit, a condition, an attitude of teaching; but never a fixed plan."¹

It is the purpose of this study--not to examine the innovative curricular changes initiated during Washburne's superintendency--but rather to depict some of the dynamic qualities of his leadership that made him an effective agent of change. The scope of the paper has been confined to a study of Mr. Washburne's leadership as it revealed itself in interaction with (1) the community; (2) the school board; and, (3) the teaching staff. These relationships were selected because they seem to be the major arenas within which a superintendent must exercise his leadership.

The resources upon which this paper rests include published works such as Washburne's A Living Philosophy of Education and his [with Marland] Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment.² Perhaps to an even greater extent this study relies on unpublished materials on file in the administrative offices of the Winnetka public schools such as the Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education: 1919-1943, the Superintendent's Reports: 1919-1943, and the Correspondence files. Finally, several interviews with persons closely associated with Washburne and the Winnetka technique incalculably forwarded the writer's own thought in regard to Washburne's Winnetka superintendency.

Certain events and incidents that occurred during the Washburne superintendency have been selected and

detailed in this paper so that through them his qualities of educational leadership might emerge. One of the most striking features of Washburne's brand of leadership is the straight-forwardness of approach with which he met a need or problem. This approach--over the years--brought Washburne into conflict a number of times with both his board of education and the larger community. Washburne's strong-willed determination and his power of persuasion enabled him to maintain a more-or-less absolute control over the professional and technical aspects of the Winnetka public schools in spite of occasional challenges raised by the board or community.

In relation to his staff, Washburne during the early years can be well characterized as a benevolent dictator; in the later years, however, he became cognizant of his teachers' need for a measure of autonomy. This is probably the area of greatest growth in Washburne over the years of his superintendency: his growing realization of the implications of democratic administration followed closely by his efforts toward implementation.

In summary, Washburne was an educational leader who brought to the Winnetka Superintendency a measure of strength, determination, intelligence, broad-vision, warmth, and kindliness. He brought, too, certain concomitant limitations such as a lack of finesse in some human relations and a degree of pride that

sometimes impeded his potential effectiveness. Notwithstanding, Washburne had, indeed, something of that magnanimity of spirit that gives a man a claim to "greatness."

¹Carleton Washburne and Sidney P. Marland, Jr., Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 169.

²For publication information on these works, as well as a more detailed discussion of resources, see infra, AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE, pp. 269-280.

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CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION

"This man was a rebel; he was a genius; he was a benevolent dictator; a scientist; a humanitarian--but most of all he was a giant of a teacher."¹

¹Sidney P. Marland, Jr., in the keynote address: dedication of the Carleton W. Washburne School, Winnetka, October 12, 1969.

Early in 1919 in his office at San Francisco State Normal School, President Frederic Burk confided to one of his young faculty members, Carleton Washburne that "a manufacturer of pumps, named Yoemans, in a little suburb of Chicago has been writing to me from time to time and has asked me to recommend someone as superintendent of their schools."²

The little suburb of Chicago to which Burk had referred was, of course, Winnetka. Washburne once described the village as

a small city, a suburb of Chicago that is well named Winnetka. For "Winnetka" is an American Indian word meaning "beautiful land." Winnetka lies on the shore of Lake Michigan where once an oak forest grew. It is a suburb of beautiful homes, each surrounded by garden and lawn, shrubs and usually some of the old forest oaks. Its often winding streets are lined with elms and maples. There are no factories. There are no flats and apartment buildings. People move to Winnetka in order to have a good place in which their children may grow up to happy, clean, effective manhood and womanhood. Most Winnetka men work in Chicago's offices and factories. They are business and professional people with rather good incomes from their work, able to afford a little or a large home, with some ground around it.³

In this community, which can only be considered advantaged according to current educational terminology,

²Carleton Washburne and Sidney P. Marland, Jr., Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 17.

³Carleton Washburne, "Winnetka," School and Society, vol. XXIX, no. 733 (January 12, 1929), p. 37.

there had grown up a great concern for the quality of education that their children were receiving. In 1911 or 1912⁴ a group of prominent citizens of Winnetka gathered to discuss the possibility of establishing a private school. One member of the group, Edwin Fetcher,⁵ suggested that rather than establish a private school, why not make the public school so good that a private school would be superfluous. The idea was so simple that the question of the private school was completely dropped.⁶

In order to implement Fetcher's idea, the same group met again and a motion was carried to draft Fetcher as a candidate for the school board presidency-- along with a selected slate of others to serve as board members.⁷ Their commission was simple enough: first, get elected; and, second, once elected make the public schools good enough so that they would provide an

⁴This is the date given by Washburne and Marland (op. cit., p. 4); however, Edward Yeomans contributing several paragraphs to an article, (C. W. Washburne, "The Inception of the Winnetka Technique," The Journal of the American Association of University Women [April, 1930], p. 129), places the meeting in the year 1910.

⁵Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 4.

⁶Washburne, "The Inception of the Winnetka Technique," p. 131. It may be that the idea of a private school did not drop altogether, since the North Shore Country Day School was opened in the Village in 1919.

⁷Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 4.

education of the highest quality. At the next election, Fletcher was elected president of the school board, and one by one as the terms expired for incumbent board members, each was replaced by the hand-picked group who had once talked of starting a private school. "Only one member of the old board was re-elected, and that by universal consent--Charlotte McKenzie, a woman of dynamic energy, good sense, broad vision and a keen insight in public affairs and education."⁸

In 1914 the first⁹ superintendent, E. N. Rhodes was hired by the board. A library was established; home economics and the manual arts were added to the curriculum; an excellent music program was initiated; and there was a strong program in art.¹⁰ "While many excellent things occurred during Rhodes' superintendency, one surmises that they were initiated by the Board. Rhodes apparently failed to gain the confidence of the Board of Education and the people of Winnetka. The Board . . . began in 1918 to look for a new superintendent."

⁸Ibid., p. 5.

⁹For twenty years prior to this date Miss Mary Gillespie held the title of superintendent; however, the position was nothing more than a titular one.

¹⁰Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 5.

In the meantime, Burk's writings had come to the attention of certain members of the Winnetka School Board. It was Gertrude Lieber who in 1917 first read Burk on the individual technique; impressed, she passed the material on to Edward Yoemans. Yoemans' imagination was fired and he initiated a lively correspondence with Burk. The board determined to implement the individual system in the Winnetka schools;¹¹ they turned to Burk to recommend someone for the superintendency who could accomplish just that.

Hence it was that day in his office that Burk mentioned such a position to Washburne. He continued, "You're a very young man. Winnetka is a very small town. If you fail it won't make a big splash. I guess I'll recommend you!"¹²

Washburne served as the superintendent of the Winnetka schools for the twenty-four years between 1919 and 1943. During those years he made the Winnetka schools over into his own likeness. "Notwithstanding his personal humility and his repeated protests that the great creative work of the Winnetka schools was

¹¹Gertrude Lieber, "Stenographer's Transcript of Meeting of a Special Committee on Education, Winnetka Board of Education, Held at Skokie School, Winnetka, Illinois, on December 7, 1925," p. 39. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. (cf. *infra*, p. 144.)

¹²Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 17.

the work of the faculty, in truth, the Winnetka schools were Carleton Washburne's schools. His desires and his goals motivated the faculty and the community."¹³

Washburne belonged to that group of progressive educators who viewed the schools as agents of social change:

. . . education has already produced great changes in man's habits of hygiene, and has succeeded in replacing many of his superstitions and dogmas with more nearly scientific attitudes. Is it too much to hope that even our present purblind gropings may lead us to a clearer vision, a more coordinated endeavor, and that, seeing and working together, the educational leaders of the world may be able to exert their powerful leverage on the new generations and lift them out of the morass in which we, their ancestors, still find ourselves mired?¹⁴

Washburne set out to make the Winnetka schools into an educational laboratory in which techniques of the newer education could be developed, implemented, and evaluated for the betterment of the whole of American education. He liked to think of the Winnetka schools as pointing out more effective techniques of education which other school systems could implement after he had demonstrated their value and feasibility in his schools.

¹³Sidney P. Marland, Jr. in Washburne and Marland, Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 167.

¹⁴Carleton Washburne, "What Are the Makers of Tomorrow Thinking?" Progressive Education, vol IX, no. 4 (April, 1932), p. 287.

The Winnetka Schools are being looked upon more and more as educational laboratories in which some of the pressing problems of the day are being attacked in a scientific manner. This is a much more accurate way of looking at the Winnetka Schools than to consider them as models or demonstration schools. We are attempting to attack problems in a scientific manner, not to prove that we haven't found the ultimate in education--we know too well that we haven't. Studies are constantly under way as to where our methods may be improved, how our subject matter may be made more valuable for the children, how we can prepare and secure better materials of instruction, how we can inculcate better habits of work and social responsibility in our children.¹⁵

. . . If the Board of Education and the community continue to give us the support and backing which have been given during the past six years, the Winnetka Schools may be able to solve some of the most pressing educational problems of the day. We are gradually building up a faculty capable of research and careful experimentation and possessed of the necessary ability, enthusiasm, and vision to make, during the next one or two decades, a contribution to American education which will never be forgotten.¹⁶

On-going research and experimentation were integral parts of the Washburne superintendency; this was the only route, Washburne felt, to progress: "from the amoeba pushing out its pseudopodia and the vine feeling its way with reaching tendrils, to a Columbus, a Galileo, a Lindbergh, or an Einstein, progress has come only through change of form, through experimentation, through initiative."¹⁷

¹⁵Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), October 15, 1925, p. 908.

¹⁶Ibid., March 12, 1925, p. 822.

¹⁷Carleton Washburne, A Living Philosophy of Education, (New York: The John Day Co., 1940), p. 110.

Washburne found Winnetka as a community ideally suited to his purpose:

[it] is a community of less than 15,000; its number of pupils, about 2,300, and teachers about 115-120, could be easily encompassed in one building, as we compare ourselves with some large city schools. We consist of three elementary schools at about 500 pupils each, and the junior high school containing about 750 pupils.¹⁸ But our size has been to our advantage, permitting us to come to grips with the specifics of children, teachers, and the learning process in a fairly compact and visible unit.¹⁹

Winnetka, moreover, was particularly fitted to the work that Washburne hoped to carry out because it was wealthy enough to afford the necessarily high cost of conducting an experimental program and forward-looking enough to support it: "When we spend more money on tobacco, drinks, and cosmetics," Washburne wrote, "it is puerile to say that we cannot afford any essential of sound education."²⁰

Not all of Winnetka, however, whole-heartedly supported the superintendent who was so radically altering the complexion of education in their community:

¹⁸With the opening of the Carleton Washburne School in the spring of 1969, Winnetka now has three lower schools--Greeley, Hubbard Woods, and Crow Island--accommodating pupils in grades 1 - 4; one middle school--Skokie School--for pupils in grades 5 and 6; and one upper school--Carleton W. Washburne School--for pupils in grades 7 and 8.

¹⁹Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. viii.

²⁰Washburne, A Living Philosophy of Education, p. 57.

Whenever I think of the educational methods, as far as I have been able to comprehend them, that prevail in our schools in Winnetka, I always think of one or two of those futurist paintings that I have looked at in an effort to see that they were what the futurist painter called art. It may be because I am old fashioned and just not able to see it.²¹

In the latter years of his superintendency, after having weathered many clashes with the community, Washburne once cautioned the board

against being unduly influenced by vociferous minorities. I have watched these for twenty-one years. Occasionally we have had to come out and fight them. When we have, we have been overwhelmingly supported by the great satisfied, and therefore silent, majority. When criticisms come they must, of course, be heard, and, insofar as they are just, acted upon. But insofar as they represent lack of understanding or emotional tension or short sightedness, they should affect Board policy only in the direction of working toward better public relations, fuller interpretation of the schools to the public, and the education of the public to longer and wiser vision.²²

After Washburne's first few vigorous years in Winnetka, the reputation of his work had spread so widely that a board member once wrote him: "Though you go to the farthest corner of the earth, what you do there will inevitably be associated in the public mind

²¹Letter to Mr. Ernest Ballard from Mr. Justice Charles M. Thompson (Illinois Appellate Court), June 1, 1923. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

²²Superintendent's Reports, vol. 7 (April 1940 - February 1943), "Supplementary Board Report: April 25, 1940," p. 3315.

with education in Winnetka. You cannot disassociate yourself from it. You belong to Winnetka"23

What Washburne was doing in Winnetka came to be labelled "The Winnetka Plan." The label was an unfortunate one because it connoted something of a finished product rather than a system that was ever in-process. Washburne once remarked to Marland: "There is no Winnetka plan; there never was. It is and was a spirit, a condition, an attitude of teaching, but never a fixed plan. Our educational theorists of the day enjoyed attaching names to things, so what we were doing became known as the Winnetka Plan."24 For this reason, throughout this paper, the label "Winnetka Plan" has been avoided; for the most part the term "Winnetka technique" (which Washburne himself always preferred) has been substituted in an attempt to avoid the unwarranted connotations of the more popular nomenclature--or as Washburne so often called it: "Pedagese."25

Washburne tried, too, to avoid having any labels attached to his own person:

²³Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowen Brown, April 2, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 291-292.

²⁴Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 169.

²⁵Washburne, A Living Philosophy of Education, p. 257.

I'm really not any kind of an "ist" except an educationist. That is not to say that I have no opinions--of course I have lots of them. But my one basic interest is to help boys and girls grow up thoughtfully, far-sightedly, with a passion for the ideals to which all of us give at least lip-service--truth and honesty, social justice, responsibility.²⁶

When Washburne resigned as superintendent and S. R. Logan had reached the age of retirement,²⁷ a group of teachers concerned themselves with the selection of a new superintendent:

We approached the job realizing that the challenge of the times must be faced here in Winnetka as everywhere. We can move forward, welcoming the challenge, or we could follow some trends of thought concerning education which, while purporting to be efficient, might lead to irresponsible rigidity. A quantitative course of study, neatly laid out, administered and measured would have its appeal to a side of each of us; but we realize that while it might be easy and superficially satisfying, it would be an abandonment of the course we have taken under . . . Carleton's leadership. This leadership, which we think of as Educational Statesmanship, is hard to define but must not for that reason be minimized. Therefore, we have tried to formulate the characteristics of such a leader:

²⁶Letter to the Members of the Board of Education from Carleton Washburne, November 2, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of this letter see Appendix F, pp. 338-339.

²⁷In 1943 Washburne went into the army: in his absence S. R. Logan was appointed superintendent; however, Washburne did not formally resign until 1945 without ever having returned to the superintendency. Hence S. R. Logan was superintendent (both in title and fact between 1943 and 1946). This explains the discrepancy that exists in reporting Washburne's superintendency variously as 1919 - 1943 and 1919 - 1946. In fact, Washburne was superintendent of the

1. He should have an understanding of the responsibility of education in the realizing of a democratic society; and he should have demonstrated that he can take a position of leadership in the larger community of which the school is a part.

He should be able to help the faculty make this democratic realization a part of the daily living of the school.

2. He should have an appreciation of the forces which have contributed to the development of free public education.

3. He should have skill in working with people--faculty, board, parents, children--so as to foster active group planning and responsible group participation in making decisions and developing policy.²⁸

It is, then, a study of this "Educational Statesmanship" that is the subject of this thesis. In attempting to define the purpose and scope of this study, it may be well to begin such a delimitation by stating what this dissertation is not. It is not a systematic, exhaustive study of Washburne's educational philosophy though, indeed, glimpses of that philosophy do occur throughout the paper. Such a systematic statement of philosophy has already been made by Mr. Washburne himself in what could well have been his single most

Winnetka Schools from 1919 to 1943. He formally resigned, however, only in 1945. It should be noted, moreover, that between 1943 and 1945 the Winnetka technique was maintained very much in the spirit of Washburne and under the assumption that Washburne would, in fact, resume his duties as superintendent following his army experience.

²⁸Superintendent's Reports (S. R. Logan), "An Agreed Statement of Twenty Teachers," vol. 8 (March 1943 - June 1945), June 26, 1945, pp. 4159-4160.

important contribution to the professional literature: A Living Philosophy of Education.²⁹ Nor does this paper purport to be a definitive historical record of the Winnetka schools under Dr. Washburne's superintendency though, again, a partial history is reflected through the unfolding of this paper, if one will accept a rather simplistic definition of history as "events and persons across time." An attempt at a definitive history of the Washburne superintendency has already been made by Mr. John Tewksbury in his doctoral dissertation.³⁰ Tewksbury's dissertation is concerned with the development of the Winnetka public schools during the Washburne years. He has attempted to identify--and put in proper perspective--all the shaping events and persons that contributed to what came to be called the "Winnetka Plan." This paper is neither an attempt to improve upon Mr. Tewksbury's work nor to duplicate it; to attempt the former would be presumptuous and to attempt the latter would be pointless. And, finally, the purpose of this paper is not to discuss the many significant curricular

²⁹Carleton W. Washburne. A Living Philosophy of Education. New York: The John Day, Co., 1940. 585 pp.

³⁰John Tewksbury. An Historical Study of the Winnetka Public Schools From 1919 to 1946. 3 vols. An unpublished doctoral thesis at Northwestern University. 1962.

Innovations that made the Winnetka superintendency of Carleton Washburne a unique chapter in the history of American education; for this has already been approached in a book jointly authored by Washburne and Marland: Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment.³¹

What this thesis modestly attempts is to depict some of the dynamic qualities of leadership in Carleton Washburne as they delineate themselves in his relationships with the community, the school board, and his teaching staff.

The purpose of this paper is implicitly bound up with the purposes for which any biographical study is undertaken. There is the underlying thesis that something of value can be gained from at least a partial knowledge and understanding of the behavior of some significant other. If, indeed, profit is to be had from the lives and experiences of others, their lives and experiences must be spread out on the pages of history.

Educational change is a painfully slow process; Carleton Washburne effected as much practical change as any other single American educator of the past several decades. While, there must, indeed, be some

³¹Carleton W. Washburne and Sidney P. Marland, Jr., Winnetka: The History and Significance of An Educational Experiment. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1963.

validity to the argument that "greatness" is an interaction of both "the times" and "the man." Washburne's leadership had a dynamic quality about it that was adaptive to changing circumstances. While it may be argued that some of Washburne's techniques of leadership would be inappropriate and impotent in today's schools, the writer feels that Washburne had qualities of person and leadership that transcended "the times." A young Washburne in the '70's might very well exercise a different brand of leadership than a Washburne of the '20's. Both, it is suggested, might well be effective.

Certain events and incidents that occurred during the Washburne superintendency have been selected and detailed so that through them his qualities of educational leadership might emerge. The events that have been selected to form the body of this paper do not fall together as history in the strict sense; rather they were selected because, in the judgment of the writer, taken together they define the parameters of the educational leadership of Carleton Washburne during his Winnetka superintendency. Through the exercise of his forceful brand of leadership, Washburne was able to make one of the most sustained and significant contributions--in the form of educational experimentation--in the history of American public education.

The scope of this paper has been confined to a study of Mr. Washburne's leadership as it revealed

itself in interaction with (1) the community; (2) the school board; and, (3) the teaching staff. These relationships were settled upon for they seem to be the three major arenas within which a superintendent must exercise his leadership. It is readily admitted that there must be a great deal of overlapping of these arenas, and a discrete separation of them has been made only for organizational purposes. In some cases an event reported in one chapter might just as properly have been included in another; for example, the bitter school board campaign of 1933³² could as well have been included in the chapter concerned with the school board as in the chapter dealing with the community where it does actually appear. Whereas in other cases, one incident or another properly belongs in two or more chapters such as Washburne's world-study tour which both infuriated the community³³ and embarrassed the board.³⁴ The material in the chapters that follow has been arranged topically; within each topic there is a loose trend toward chronology. There is, therefore, a considerable overlapping of years both within and across chapters.

³²Cf., infra, Chapter II, pp. 57-84.

³³Cf., infra, Chapter II, pp. 59-61.

³⁴Cf., infra, Chapter III, pp. 154-159.

The very process of selectivity imposes limitations on a paper such as this one. There are, admittedly, other events and incidents during the Washburne superintendency, not included in this study that manifest his qualities of leadership--perhaps as well as those which the writer has selected for inclusion. Two of the most notable omissions in this paper are the "voluntary tax payment plan" of 1932 and the conception and construction of the Crow Island School in 1940. By means of the voluntary tax payment plan, Washburne kept the Winnetka schools on a cash basis during a particularly critical period of the depression. Tax collections had fallen behind through a delay caused by a reassessment of properties in the township. Washburne appealed to the Villagers to make voluntary tax payments while tax collections were in arrears. He and his board established the machinery for processing the voluntary tax payments. The whole effort represents just one more facet of Dr. Washburne's leadership.

As for the construction of the Crow Island School in 1940, Dr. Washburne's ideas for it were so radical that the county superintendent felt obliged to seek advice of the state department of education in Springfield, Illinois, before giving his approval to the proposed plans. "Winnetka's famous public school system--spearhead of many important educational advances in the past 22

years--is pioneering in a new field," began an article in a local magazine. "The North Shore suburb is now winning national attention in educational and architectural circles through developing--in the new Crow Island school--an entirely new concept of educational architecture."³⁵ Surely this, too, manifests still other aspects of Washburne's dynamic and forward-looking leadership.

These two pieces of the Winnetka mosaic--and, likewise, many others--are not developed, however, within the body of this paper. This is a decided limitation. Many such events are not detailed within because there is either a paucity of information, or the events do not fit well into the framework of the paper, or--in the opinion of the writer--the omitted incidents do not significantly contribute to, or advance, the theme of this study.

Another limitation arises from confining the scope of this paper to the three major arenas of community, board, and staff. Such a definition excludes at least one other significant arena in which Washburne exercised leadership: that of the greater education movement that existed beyond Winnetka. The exclusion of this important exercise of his leadership is yet

³⁵Hal Burnett, "Winnetka School Pioneers a New Trend," The Townsfolk Magazine, n.d. (circa), 1940. A Reprint.

another limitation of this study. Only a partial listing of the leadership roles which Washburne assumed in that greater education movement during the years of the Winnetka superintendency would include his fifteen year chairmanship of the "Committee of Seven" which carried out extensive research in the placement of arithmetic topics; chairman of the yearbook committee for the National Society for the Study of Education; Vice-President of the American Educational Research Association; member of a White House Conference on Child Health; and both Vice-President and President of the Progressive Education Association. In addition, Washburne served variously on the advisory or editorial boards of a number of both professional and popular journals of education, a partial listing of which includes: The Instructor, Parents Magazine, Progressive Education, Individual Instruction, Modern Education, and the Journal of Educational Research. In a word, Washburne exerted his leadership well beyond the limits of the North Shore community of Winnetka and it is an admitted limitation of this study that these aspects of his leadership have not been included and detailed.

Finally, there is one significant limitation due to source materials. Much of this study has been built upon the unfolding of events traced through Washburne's correspondence which had been preserved in the central

office of the Winnetka public schools in a set of vertical correspondence files. Just recently the Winnetka office staff had begun a systematic disposal of the correspondence of the Washburne superintendency. When the writer arrived in Winnetka to begin his research of the Washburne years, he discovered that most of the correspondence from the first five or six years of Dr. Washburne's superintendency had been discarded and the staff intended to continue discarding materials as time permitted their sorting through the files. Therefore, the "early years" of Washburne's superintendency suffer the limitation imposed by this loss of potential resource materials from the correspondence files.

"Washburne's brand of instructional leadership, as I see its evidence in Winnetka, was a hip-deep kind of personal immersion in educational innovation, in which he not only conceived the ideas, but did some of the actual teaching, wrote and edited the necessary texts, calculated the statistical outcomes, and published the learned papers deriving from the exploration."³⁶ It is this leadership--and this man--that this study attempts to portray.

³⁶Sidney P. Marland, Jr. in Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 165.

CHAPTER II

WASHBURNE AND THE COMMUNITY

" . . . what damn fools people are to want to destroy this thing."¹

¹Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, May 4, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Introduction

Carleton Washburne once compared the superintendent and his relationship with the community to the relationship that must exist between the captain of an ocean-going vessel and its passengers. In carrying out the analogy, he suggested that during a storm some of the passengers become alarmed and insist upon the captain's taking another course. "In such a case he would be indeed stupid were he to swerve because of the popular clamor of his passengers and their hysteria induced by the storm." Like the captain of the ship

we are trained navigators [of schools], steering by the best charts available, maintaining radio communication with meteorological stations and all other sources that will be of help to us. All we can do with the popular clamor of some hysterical passengers and some reasonable ones who nevertheless think they know navigation better than we is to treat them with courtesy and attempt to inspire confidence, listen attentively to any reports they may make as to failure on the part of any member of the ship's crew in the performance of his duties or the sighting of an iceberg or breakers. We cannot take their orders on the details of navigation.²

At the outset of Washburne's superintendency in Winnetka, there were certain factors in the community which made it uniquely suited to Washburne's brand of innovative leadership. For one thing there was a group of citizens actively interested in providing "better"

²C. W. Washburne, "Opposition Criticisms," Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934), June 13, 1933, pp. 2274-2275.

public schools for Winnetka who were open-minded toward educational experimentation and innovation.³ Secondly, Winnetka was an affluent community that was willing to pay significantly higher per-pupil costs than the mythical "average" community.⁴

There was at the same time, however, an element of almost extreme religious, political, and economic conservatism within Winnetka.⁵ Washburne, himself a Quaker, an admirer of Gandhi, and an advocate of internationalism, was the very antithesis of this conservatism. This fact, in itself, was bound to make potentially explosive Washburne's relations with the community and to call forth from him the most determined sort of leadership if he were to implement a system of education in Winnetka consonant with his own philosophy.

This chapter will portray Washburne in the role of educational leader in relationship to the community. Washburne faced two major crises with the community during his twenty-four year superintendency. These are

³Cf. supra, Chapter I.

⁴Villagers supported either by taxes or contributions --in addition to the basic Winnetka curriculum--a department of educational research, a department of educational counsel (which employed for a number of years both a full-time psychiatrist and a full-time psychologist), and the Winnetka Nursery School.

⁵Interview with Mr. James Mann--teacher and principal during Washburne's superintendency--December 15, 1969. (For more information about Mann see AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE, p. 276.)

treated in some detail in the section entitled: "The Community Divided."⁶ Both were heated, village-wide elections which, had the school administration been defeated, would have significantly altered the direction and complexion of the Winnetka schools. Both elections called forth careful organizational strategies and forceful leadership, which Washburne was able to provide.

Perennial problems arose out of the Winnetka curriculum. The section in this chapter entitled "The Community and the Curriculum,"⁷ deals with three aspects of the curriculum over which persistent objections were raised within the community.

Finally, "The Community as Individuals,"⁸ is a section which briefly deals with Washburne's relationships with the community as expressed in his one-to-one personal encounters with members of the community.

The Community Divided

The Skokie School Campaign

Out to the west of the Village of Winnetka lay a vast swamp or marshland, known early by the Indians as "Skokie." The name remained, and Winnetka residents

⁶Cf., infra, pp. 24-84.

⁷Cf., infra, pp. 84-109.

⁸Cf., infra, pp. 109-116.

called the swampy lands the Skokie. Early in 1918⁹ the school board had the opportunity of purchasing a twelve acre site adjacent to the Skokie at a reasonable price.¹⁰ It seemed an ideal school site in that it provided such ample grounds for both building and playgrounds; it seemed logical since the Village of Winnetka was growing in a westward direction.

There is evidence in the Board Minutes¹¹ that for more than a year before the purchase of the Skokie site, the school board had shown considerable interest in the new junior high school movement in public education. A reasonable conclusion from this seems to be that the board, at least in a vague, general way, intended the new school site for a departmentalized upper school. There are, however, no official records to substantiate this assumption.

At any rate, according to law a special election was called to issue bonds for the purchase of the Skokie site located on West Elm street; the election was held on Saturday, March 23, 1918.¹² The proposition

⁹Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 7 (August 29, 1911 - September 29, 1920), January 15, 1918, p. 218.

¹⁰About \$18,000.

¹¹Loc. cit., December 11, 1916, p. 200; January 8, 1917, p. 201.

¹²Ibid., February 21, 1918, p. 220.

to buy the site carried,¹³ but--for a Winnetka school election--the total vote was mildly heavy and the opposition comparatively strong (40 opposition votes out of 274 total votes cast).¹⁴

This, then, was apparently the situation when Washburne became Superintendent at Winnetka: the board had purchased a site on the west edge of the Village on which it intended to build some sort of upper, departmentalized school. The community had the opportunity of expressing itself in an election to authorize issuance of bonds to purchase the site and had expressed itself favorably. In May, 1919, Washburne attended his first board meeting. At that meeting Laird Bell, recently elected board president--possibly for the new superintendent's benefit--presented a report on the progress of plans for the "Liberty Memorial" school. Bell's report showed "that the plans were very immature and only tentative."¹⁵

The school population in Winnetka was growing at a phenomenal rate. The three schools of the district

¹³Ibid., April 8, 1918, p. 227.

¹⁴For example, on April 3, 1915 the vote on a bond issue to build the Hubbard Woods school included only four opposition votes. (Minutes, vol. 7 [August 29, 1911 - September 29, 1920], p. 157.)

¹⁵Minutes, vol. 7 (August 29, 1911 - September 29, 1920), May 8, 1919, p. 225.

had a "proper capacity for only 770."¹⁶ Projected figures for the district estimated 1200 pupils by June of 1920; 1400 by 1922; and 1780 by 1924. "There is an end even to the attics, corridors, basements, assembly halls now being pressed into service." The need for significantly more classroom space was urgent. The major obstacle facing Washburne and the school board was that the district had a reserve bonding power of only about \$123,000,¹⁷ and most of that had already been earmarked for improvements to the three existing schools. The board considered the possibility of raising the rate of valuation; it was realized, however, that only thirty per cent of extra taxes collected in this way would go to the schools. Hence, it would be necessary to raise over \$1,000,000 in order for the district to obtain the \$350,000 the board wanted to spend on a new school. "That is our situation, therefore, we can't tax enough, we can't borrow enough and we must go ahead."¹⁸

What occurred after this composes, perhaps, one of the unique chapters in the annals of public school

¹⁶"Crowded Schools!" A Campaign Circular, n.d. (circa), February, 1920. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁷"Ammunition: for the special use of those who solicit funds for Winnetka's New School." A Campaign Pamphlet, n.d. (circa), February, 1920. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁸"Launch Campaign to Raise \$350,000 for New School," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 14, 1920), p. 2.

history. The Village of Winnetka built a junior high school through popular subscription. It was accomplished, however, only after a long, bitter struggle over the Skokie site. It was, at one and the same time, one of Washburne's most challenging, acrimonious, and gratifying encounters with the community during his lengthy tenure in Winnetka.

Laird Bell, president of the school board, is generally given credit for coming up with the idea of a popular subscription campaign and carrying out the details with the assistance of the new superintendent, Mr. Washburne.¹⁹ This writer is convinced, notwithstanding, that the idea of building the new departmentalized school by voluntary contributions was very much Washburne's and that it was carried to its successful conclusion, in large part, through his unstinting effort and persuasive argumentation.²⁰

It is difficult to demonstrate the factual nature of this conviction, principally because there is virtually no mention of the subscription drive in

¹⁹In a conversation with Mr. Frank Temmerman, assistant superintendent of the Winnetka Public Schools, October, 1969.

²⁰The notion that Washburne did, in fact, conceive of the subscription campaign was subsequently lent support during an interview with Miss Marion Carswell--long-time teacher and principal in the Winnetka schools--December 12, 1969. (For more information about Miss Carswell see AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE, pp. 274-276.)

either the Minutes, the public records of the school district, nor in the Superintendent's Reports, the "quasi-public" records. It is the writer's conjecture that either the school board doubted the legality of its carrying out such a drive, or--more likely--because the Minutes are very much public record and accessible on demand, the board feared that someone potentially opposed to such a voluntary subscription campaign might discover the board's intent before the Village had been prepared for it, and, hence, made no direct references to it.

In this regard, it hardly seems likely that the failure to mention the subscription drive or anything to do with it in either the Minutes or the Superintendent's Reports was merely an oversight. The strongest piece of evidence here must be the failure of the board to either mention or acknowledge in the Minutes, the campaign's "kickoff" donation of \$60,000 from Louis B. Kuppenheimer²¹ to build the school's assembly hall as a memorial to his daughter, Jane. Failure to acknowledge this generous gift can scarcely be the result of a lapse of either memory or good manners. Rather, it must have been a conscious omission.

²¹"\$60,000 Memorial Hall for Winnetka School," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 14, 1920), p. 1.

In the face of a complete lack of positive proof that Washburne conceived the idea of the voluntary subscription drive, there are several shreds of circumstantial evidence which point to him. It has already been noted that at Washburne's first board meeting, Laird Bell presented plans for a new school that were only very "immature and tentative."²² However, in the June Superintendent's Reports, Washburne made the following notation: "Begin to organize campaign for raising \$300,000 for Victory Memorial School."²³ This early reference is the only direct reference in either Minutes or Superintendent's Reports concerning the subscription drive. It is significant that, apparently, the first reference to it comes from Washburne. A second, and less tangible source of evidence, is the style and content of the many articles and advertisements appearing, particularly through the early months of 1920, in the Winnetka Weekly Talk. The articles are not only "shot-through" with Washburne's educational philosophy but are also reminiscent of his writing style. This writer, after having read literally thousands of pages of Washburne's written work, is convinced that it was Washburne who

²²Cf., supra, p. 26.

²³Loc. cit., vol. 1 (June 1919 - June 1923), June, 1919, p. 5.

authored the greater part of the campaign articles and advertisements which were variously published over the name of the "Committee on Publicity, Winnetka School Board;"²⁴ "Executive Committee of the Committee of Five Hundred;"²⁵ and the "Winnetka Board of Education."²⁶ There is, in fact, conclusive evidence that in at least one instance this was the case: in the very heat of the battle over the school site a rather significant article appeared in the newsletter published by the Congregational Church of Winnetka presenting arguments in favor of the proposed West Elm street site for the new school. The article was signed by the Winnetka Board of Education. An interesting note, moreover, appears in the Superintendent's Reports for April: "allow letter over Board's name to be published in Messenger,"²⁷ and the school board duly authorized the same article: "Moved by Mrs. Olmstead, seconded by Mrs. Lieber that Mr. Washburne write the article

²⁴E.g., Committee on Publicity, Winnetka School Board, "Map Shows Location of Proposed New School Site," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, January 3, 1920), p. 1.

²⁵E.g., Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 17, 1920), full page ad. purchased by the Executive Committee of the Committee of Five Hundred, p. 9.

²⁶E.g., Winnetka Board of Education, "For the W. Elm St. Site," The Messenger (The Congregational Church, Winnetka), (April, 1920), pp. 1-2.

²⁷Loc. cit., p. 83.

requested by the Messenger in regard to the New School Site, same to be signed by the Board of Education."²⁸

A third piece of evidence--and in one sense the strongest--that points to Washburne as originator of the subscription drive is the sheer unorthodoxy of such an approach to the financing of a school building. There is no evidence that any other public school district had ever resorted to the tact of financing a building through voluntary contributions.²⁹ This head-on approach is so typical of his administrative leadership, it appears likely that the idea originated with Mr. Washburne.

It is not, however, the purpose of this chapter to demonstrate conclusively that the subscription campaign was of Washburne's conception; personally, this writer is convinced of it. It is perhaps more to the point to simply concentrate on the events which subsequently unfolded recognizing the while that Washburne, undoubtedly, played a principal role in seeing the campaign to its successful conclusion and in the building of the new, centralized intermediate school for the Winnetka district. If he did, indeed, conceive the idea of a voluntary drive to build the school and let it appear to have come from

²⁸Minutes, vol 7, April 8, 1920, p. 274.

²⁹Mary Pepper, "The Winnetka Technique," Welfare Magazine (October, 1928). A reprint, p. 6.

Laird Bell, the reason that he did so might have been because he was new to the Village. Something as unorthodox as a voluntary drive to build a public school might sound a rather unresponsive chord in the Villagers should it originate with the relatively unknown and untried--not to mention, young--Superintendent of Schools. Laird Bell, a long-time and much respected member of the community, would have a better chance of selling Winnetka on the idea.

In order to sell Winnetka, a many-pronged attack had to be launched. It was not merely a matter of convincing the Village that the school should be built by popular subscription; the job was immensely more complicated and challenging. The community had first to be convinced about the necessity of a new school; secondly, it had to be convinced that the new school should be a centralized, departmentalized intermediate school; and, finally (though completely unexpected at the outset of the campaign), it had to be convinced that the West Elm street site was the best and most logical site on which to locate the new school. It was this last point--the proposed site of the new school--that brought forth some of the most bitter feelings that members of the community were to direct against Washburne (excepting the School Board election of 1933) during his entire tenure. Only when these antecedent

issues were settled was the subscription campaign able to be carried to a successful conclusion.

The strategic groundwork was well-laid by Washburne and the board. In late December, 1919³⁰ front page articles began to appear regularly in the Winnetka Weekly Talk up to the announcement of the Campaign Drive in mid-February of 1920.³¹ In an article descriptively headlined: "School Children or Sardines?"³² readers were challenged with the following question: "Can you imagine healthy, well educated, useful citizens graduating from a Skokie, Horace Mann or Greeley Sardine box?" The article called the present, overcrowded conditions of the Winnetka Schools an educational handicap. The article concluded that the only "thinkable way out" is for the entire community to "get behind the project for an adequate and well-located new school building, such as the one proposed for the 12-acre Elm street site." The next significant article appearing in the Talk very much bore Washburne's hallmark. His penchant for attacking every problem

³⁰E.g., Winnetka Weekly Talk, "School Children or Sardines? Question School Officials Ask Winnetka Citizens," (Saturday, December 20, 1919), p. 1.

³¹Winnetka Weekly Talk, "Launch Campaign to Raise \$350,000 for New School," (Saturday, February 14, 1920), p. 1.

³²Winnetka Weekly Talk, "School Children or Sardines?"

with statistical data, and the careful thoroughness of the study both evince Washburne's authorship. The article was aimed at convincing the community of the logic of the Elm Street site. A heavily dotted map of the Winnetka school district accompanied the article, and each dot on the map represented a child enrolled in the Winnetka schools. Downtown had always been considered the center of Winnetka; however, by means of the map, the Committee on Publicity attempted to show that the center of the population had already moved considerably westward and that it "is likely to keep moving farther west each year as the great areas bordering the Skokie fill up with newcomers."³³ An inscribed circle on the map showed that most Winnetka pupils would be within a mile-and-a-half of the new school if built on the West Elm site. Reminiscent of the Washburne philosophy and style were the concluding remarks of this article:

Think of the advantage for these larger pupils in the large playfields which only the Skokie site makes possible. Think of the increased health, self-reliance, manhood and womanhood that will result from school rooms located in the midst of a broad, free playfield, with a modern, roomy sunlit building, swept by the fresh air of the encircling woods and fields.

With an aura of self-assuredness, the article stated that "any fears as to the out-of-wayness of the Elm

³³Committee on Publicity, "Map Shows Location of Proposed New School Site," Winnetka Weekly Talk, (Saturday, January 3, 1920), p. 1.

street site should be entirely dissipated by the above [accompanying] map."

At least one citizen was anything but convinced; in a letter to the editor he stated that "it would be difficult to find a spot in the entire Village which is more inaccessible [sic] for a large part of the population both present and to come."³⁴ The real reason, he editorialized, that the school board was intending to build on the West Elm street site was "that a former school board bought the site because it was cheap." The most damaging thing that he said, perhaps, was that the Village must "recognize the facts as they exist, and admit that because of the nature and size of the Village one central school is not feasible, either for the lower or higher grades."

This was possibly the first ill-boding wind that reached Washburne and the school board. It may be that with the publication of this letter, they realized that a full-fledged battle would have to be waged before the new school would be built; however, it seems more likely that the board still anticipated the support of the overwhelming part of the community. If this be the case, it was soon to be divested of this false sense of security.

³⁴F. F. Parsons, "Communication" (letter to the editor), Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, January 10, 1920), p. 2.

In mid-January, just four weeks before the scheduled announcement of the campaign drive, a "picture-news" story³⁵ was run in the local newspaper which underlined the overcrowded conditions existing in the Winnetka schools. Among other scenes, there was one of the Horace Mann Assembly room cut into classrooms and another of the superintendent's office overfilled with thirty-six desks and "our superintendent does the best he can with a cloak room for his office." It would appear that on this point--overcrowded conditions--school officials through their publicity campaign most successfully convinced the community. Never through the course of the battle did anyone deny the need for more classroom space; everyone seemed to acknowledge that need.

Strains of emotionalism began to appear with the publication of a second "letter to the editor"³⁶ in late January, 1920. In it the concept of centralization was discounted because of the "insurmountable distances" involved, and a further inference was made that the school was proposed for the purpose of improving "the

³⁵Winnetka Weekly Talk, "Pictures that Tell the Story of Our Inadequate School Facilities," (Saturday, January 17, 1920), p. 1.

³⁶"A parent," "Communication" (letter to the editor), Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, January 24, 1920).

west part of town." It was the emotional tone of the letter that made it significant. It indicates that feeling had begun to run high in the community. The following excerpts from this letter go far in pointing up the feeling and the misgivings that had begun to grow up around the idea of a centralized school:

As to the centralization plan it seems that it would come as near as possible to the days of the "little red schoolhouse" to give a child a little tin dinner pail and send him a mile and a half or two miles to school.

I can remember my grandfather tell about going two miles to school through snowdrifts, dear old man, I do not believe he knew any more for that experience.

.

The system of a child from ten to fifteen years is at a low ebb, their health in after years depends upon the watchfulness and care bestowed upon them during those years. Let us not do them injustice to send them so far.

If there are any who are so interested in improving the west part of town and must have the proposed site, let them purchase and build a reform school, there are boys about town, that a school of such nature would be a blessing, and also remove them from other schools where they are a menace to others.

So it was this kind of a narrow-mindedness that Washburne and the school board had to overcome before they would be able successfully to carry out the campaign to raise the necessary funds.

Opposition to the new school began to mount. By the January 31st number of the Winnetka Weekly Talk opposition comment to the school plan began to get

article-status on the front page.³⁷ The thrust of one of these early articles was that the writer felt that the school board's plan for a new school on the West Elm site ultimately could be reduced to the fact that the school board wanted a Junior High School.³⁸ The writer of this article felt that the New Trier High School should have been consulted about the feasibility of such a school, but, in questioning Superintendent Washburne, he found that this had not been done. It would be, he felt, ill-advised for the board to carry through with its projected plans.

Having convinced the community of the need for additional classroom space, the board's Publicity Committee began to urge the need for a "centralized, upper" school. In an article the committee argued for the need in the upper grades "for manual training, printing, cooking, sewing, science, physical education, music, art, literature, grammar and composition, history and geography, civics and mathematics."³⁹ The argument closed with the logical conclusion that it would be both practically and financially impossible to furnish

³⁷E.g., J. E. Lutz, "Protest Junior High School Plan," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, January 31, 1920), p. 1.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Board of Education Publicity Committee, "Say Winnetka Need Centralized School," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, January 31, 1920), p. 1.

equipment and teachers for this variety of courses at three different schools. A centralized, departmentalized school was the only answer. Such schools were being built all over the country by progressive school districts, the committee maintained. "By establishing such a school Winnetka is keeping pace with intelligent, progressive school systems throughout the nation."

Throughout the drive, one of the major arguments for the Elm street site rested in the availability of ample playground areas. In an article on this subject, the playground director for the Winnetka Schools, compared the older boys at the Horace Mann School to "squirrels [sic] in a cage."⁴⁰ "One of the most important functions of a school," he continued, "is to teach courage, responsibility and co-operative social efforts. On a playground of sufficient size such teaching is put into actual practice through the playing of baseball, soccer, football, volleyball and other games"

The Winnetka Weekly Talk in the February 14, 1920 number reported the first public announcement of the Board's decision to attempt to build a school by voluntary subscription.⁴¹ The same issue of the Talk

⁴⁰ Harry P. Clarke, "Says Playgrounds Are Indispensable," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 7, 1920), p. 1.

⁴¹ Loc. cit., "Launch Campaign to Raise \$350,000 for New School."

also carried an article which revealed the contribution of \$60,000 by the Louis Kuppenheimer family to erect, as a part of the new school, the Jane Kuppenheimer Memorial Hall.⁴² "Not only will it serve as a place of assembly for the pupils of this school, but it will also give the village an adequate hall for general meetings . . ." Jane, who had died the previous summer, had been a fourth grader in the Winnetka public schools. "Members of the Board of Education have expressed their profound appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Kuppenheimer for memorializing the little girl in a way which would benefit all the children of the village."⁴³

It appears that neither Washburne nor the board was yet aware of the strength of the opposition movement to the idea of a centralized school and, particularly, to the Skokie site. The Kuppenheimer gift was conditional. The two conditions insisted upon were that first, the school be built on the proposed site and, second, that at least \$300,000 be spent on the complete building.⁴⁴ This writer conjectures that it was Washburne rather

⁴²Loc. cit., "\$60,000 Memorial Hall for Winnetka School."

⁴³As mentioned earlier in this chapter (see p. 29), there is no official acknowledgment or expression of the board's appreciation in the Board Minutes.

⁴⁴"\$60,000 Memorial Hall for Winnetka School," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 14, 1920), p. 1.

than Kuppenheimer who imposed the conditions as stated-- at least the one about building on the Elm street site. He likely felt such a generous gift when made conditional on the site would silence much of the criticism about it.

The Southeast section of the Village was the most vocally opposed to the new site. This is logical not only because the Southeast corner of Winnetka was farther away from the proposed site than any other part of the Village, but also because it was separated from it by railway tracks. Children from the Southeastern section of Winnetka would have to cross these tracks in order to attend the proposed new school. A petition was circulated among the residents of that part of the Village "asking for three eight-grade schools in Winnetka"⁴⁵ rather than the proposed single upper grade school. "It already carries more than two hundred and fifty names and it is said that only two or three people in that district have refused to sign."

Washburne was quick to reply that he intended to provide bus service for the more distant pupils; he argued that the cost of establishing three departmentalized schools was prohibitive and that a reversion

⁴⁵"Launch Campaign to Raise \$350,000 for New School," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 14, 1920), p. 1.

to undepartmentalized upper grades was "educationally a backward step."⁴⁶

Washburne realized that the subscription drive would be doomed to failure as long as one segment of the community remained vehemently opposed to the new school as was the Southeast corner of the Village. He apparently felt that his biggest problem was with "feminine emotionalism." Applying the tactic of divide-and-conquer, Washburne invited thirty-five "representative" businessmen from the Southeast area to a meeting. "It was the desire of the Board of Education to secure a dispassionate and careful investigation of their facts and statistics by a comparatively small group of businessmen representing the southeastern part of Winnetka."⁴⁷ The meeting was an apparent success: "the great majority . . . seemed entirely satisfied that the Board of Education had made the best of an extremely difficult situation. Several men who had previously opposed vigorously the plan of the Board of Education arose and expressed themselves entirely convinced that the Board of Education had chosen the only way out." The argument that Washburne used to this gathering of businessmen

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷"Choose Committees for School Campaign," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 21, 1920), p. 1.

was simply the cold, hard argument of dollars and cents: an argument these men understood and respected. Once Washburne had sent these converts back into the ranks of the Phillistines, he went forward on the organizational aspects of the fund raising drive. The idea was to utilize much of the machinery of the Liberty Loan organization still left over from WWI. The Committee hoped, of course, "to rally [the community] to the cause of education with the same vigorous and practical support that [it] showed throughout the war."⁴⁸

Organization of the subscription drive was anything but haphazard. A village-wide canvass was to be the major feature of the campaign. Each Villager was to be asked to make a pledge, payable over two years, toward the construction of the new school. The drive itself was to be spurred on by the dual aspects of civic pride and competition. As far as civic pride was concerned, a huge "thermometer" was erected in the park just across from the Winnetka commuter station. Its boiling point was fixed at 350 degrees "indicating the quota of \$350,000 which Winnetka must raise."⁴⁹ As far as competition went, the Village was divided into eight zones; a "captain" was assigned to each of

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹"Zone Village in School Campaign," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, March 20, 1920), p. 2.

the zones and each "captain" had his quota based on the assessed valuation of his zone. Those who were to carry out the actual door-to-door canvass were at once enthusiastic about the proposed school and campaign; were well-versed on the board's needs and rationale; and were armed with well-prepared materials calculated to convince and confound.⁵⁰

Just about the time that the subscription drive was getting well underway, the opponents of the proposed new school themselves sought to increase the effectiveness of their opposition through organization. Late in February, 1920 a group of these parents met at the New Trier High School and formed the Winnetka School Association.⁵¹ The alleged purpose of the association was to "promote interest among the citizens of Winnetka in the educational problems of the community." Its actual purpose, of course, was to block the school board in its plan to build a centralized, upper school on the Skokie site.

The initial stand that the Winnetka School Association took was one in favor of three eight-grade

⁵⁰E.g., "Ammunition: for the special use of those who solicit funds for Winnetka's New School," A campaign pamphlet, February, 1920; and "Crowded Schools!" A campaign circular, February, 1920.

⁵¹"Winnetka School Association Organized," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 28, 1920), p. 1.

schools. One of these would be "fully equipped for work in the special subjects such as manual training and printing, cooking, sewing, science and art work."⁵²

The association failed to suggest how all the Winnetka children might best benefit from the one school so-equipped. The association also admitted that their plan would not provide the ample playground space that the Skokie site provided. This lack could be adequately compensated, they maintained, through a well-equipped gymnasium.

Despite growing opposition, early in March, 1920 Dr. Washburne unveiled plans for the new school. He reaffirmed that the building would principally house an intermediate school for all the pupils of the district. Its planned one-story construction would actually be cheaper; it would make skylighting possible for every work space; and, it would minimize fire hazard. The central feature of the new school was to be the Jane Kuppenheimer Memorial Hall; other features were to include a good-sized gymnasium and a manual arts wing which would provide both laboratory, shop, and studio areas.⁵³

As the subscription drive gained momentum, the threat posed by the Winnetka School Association became

⁵²"New Association Favors 3 Schools," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, March 6, 1920), p. 1.

⁵³"Gives Plans and Details for Proposed Elm Street School," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, March 6, 1920), p. 1.

apparent. The issue reduced to its simplest terms was that if the subscription campaign were to succeed, it would take the full support of the community. Any significant factionalization within the community could seriously impede the success of the fund raising drive. Washburne attacked the problem in two ways. First, he organized a Committee of 100 "which includes practically 100 different families, many of them socially and financially prominent in north shore circles,"⁵⁴ and enlisted their support of both the intermediate school and the Skokie site. Through the Committee of 100⁵⁵ Washburne hoped by marshalling community support to counterbalance the Winnetka School Association. Secondly, he intensified his program of "community education" by stepping-up newspaper articles and advertisements and by holding a mass meeting at the Community House. The center of discontent was the Southeast corner of the Village. When the drive had

⁵⁴"Donate to Build Schools," Chicago Daily News (Friday, March 12, 1920).

⁵⁵Washburne, however, was more than happy to have the Committee's membership exceed the 100 invitational membership. Within the first week of the Committee's organization, the membership was nearly 200 ("'Committee of 100' Seeks School Funds," Winnetka Weekly Talk [Saturday, March 20, 1920], p. 2); as the campaign reached its crescendo, the Committee was renamed the Committee of 500 to accommodate the many who wished to lend their support to the Board. ("Many join Ranks of 'Committee of 500'" Winnetka Weekly Talk [Saturday, April 17, 1920], p. 1.)

almost reached the half-way mark,⁵⁶ pledges totalling only \$500 had been subscribed by Zone 4--the South-eastern section of the Village.⁵⁷ This \$500 represented only 2% of the quota assessed against that zone. The situation began to look desperate!

Washburne sought a parley with the Winnetka School Association; the school board and the Association huddled in closed-door session and emerged with a compromise which they hoped would salvage the subscription drive. The Winnetka School Association gave up its insistence on three full-grade schools and "acknowledged the need for a centralized upper grade school with adequate playgrounds, which the Board insists is an absolute necessity."⁵⁸ The board, on its part--as a concession to the Association--agreed "to submit the question of location of an upper grade school . . . to a referendum after the money to build the school had been raised." And, finally, the Winnetka School Association appointed a committee to act as a joint-committee with the board's campaign committee "in raising funds for the new school. It is to be

⁵⁶\$142,880 had been pledged by this time.

⁵⁷"Thermometer Shows \$142,880 Subscribed," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, March 27, 1920), p. 1.

⁵⁸"Board of Education Grants Referendum to Site Objectors," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, March 27, 1920), p. 1.

understood that in soliciting funds in the future the question of the location of the school would not be involved."

The fund raising efforts continued; within the following week, Zone 4 had achieved 20% of its quota.⁵⁹ "At first it seemed likely that the funds would be raised and then the referendum held, but the solicitors objected on the grounds that it was impossible to raise money on an uncertainty. Many givers . . . have stated flatly that they would consider only a definite plan as a basis for subscription."⁶⁰ Washburne had no alternative: he suspended the fund-raising drive and announced the site referendum for Saturday, May 1.

To this point Washburne had won the first two scrimmages; he had convinced the community (1) that overcrowded conditions of the Winnetka schools warranted more classroom space and facilities, and (2) that this needed classroom space should be in the form of a centralized, upper-grade school. The decisive battle, however, remained ahead: the question of the school site to be determined by a Village-wide referendum vote.

⁵⁹"Report Steady Boost in School Donations," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 3, 1920), p. 1.

⁶⁰"Committee of 100 Backs New School," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 3, 1920), p. 1.

The Association stood in unqualified opposition to the proposed West Elm street site. Their arguments against the site were that it was not centrally located and so presented a problem of distance and hazard, particularly to those in the Southeast;⁶¹ secondly, the Association maintained that the Skokie posed a constant threat of flood to the school site.⁶² In fact, some of the opponents of the West Elm Street site went so far as to maintain that the site not merely adjoined the Skokie but was, if the truth were known, a part of the marsh.⁶³

The Winnetka School Association contracted with the architectural firm of W. A. Otis and Sons to prepare tentative plans for the expansion of the "downtown" Horace Mann school to house the proposed upper school. The Association also proposed the purchase of the remainder of the Horace Mann block to provide additional play area.⁶⁴ The arguments for the Horace Mann site included its central location; the fact that additional

⁶¹Cf., supra, p. 42.

⁶²"Winnetka School Association Organized," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, February 28, 1920), p. 1.

⁶³Frank D. Fulton, "For the Horace Mann Site," The Messenger publication of the Congregational Church of Winnetka vol. XVI, no. 19 (April, 1920), p. 2.

⁶⁴Frank D. Fulton, "Calls Horace Mann Site Most Logical," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 17, 1920), p. 1.

playgrounds would serve the Horace Mann lower grades as well as the upper; that the drainage problem of the Skokie site was non-existent at the Horace Mann site; and, finally, that the school board would not be required to furnish transportation.⁶⁵ The Association insisted that the Board's estimated cost of bussing was not realistic:

It will not do to trust our boys and girls to vehicles which are made by super-imposing a bus body upon a cheap, made-over Ford touring car . . . the best standard equipment should be supplied in order that the hazardous nature of this transportation may be minimized. They also take the position that this hazard should also be reduced as much as possible by employing steady, careful and competent chauffeurs and mechanics.⁶⁶

The school board responded: "The real issue before the village is simple Do we want our children to do their playing in the business district, surrounded by streets, or in the clean, free air of the open country?"⁶⁷ The April 17th number of the Talk reported that "scores fall into line in support of Board of Education plan for Elm street site."⁶⁸ The

⁶⁵"Tentative Group Perspective: School and Civic Center: Horace Mann Site--Winnetka, Illinois," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 17, 1920), pp. 4-5.

⁶⁶Frank D. Fulton, "Calls Horace Mann Site Most Logical," loc. cit.

⁶⁷Ad purchased by the Executive Committee of the Committee of Five Hundred, Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 17, 1920), p. 9.

⁶⁸"Many Join Ranks of 'Committee of 500'", loc. cit., p. 1.

following issue of the paper--a week later--however, reported as "remarkable . . . the apparent phenomenal growth of sentiment attached to the plan of the Winnetka School Association . . ."⁶⁹

A reporter for the Talk attempted to crystalize something of the flavor of the battle:

Winnetka's liveliest civic controversy, a battle of words, has resolved itself into a head-swimming, nerve-wrecking [sic] conglomeration of facts, statistics and opinions in wide diversity from architect, builder, educator and lawyer, civic leader and average citizen. Both factions in the unprecedented school site controversy claim to be armed with undisputable facts. No sentiment is wasted and, with Referendum day close at hand, the fight is on to a finish. It is the greatest civic battle in the history of the village.⁷⁰

The major thrust of Washburne's argument for the Skokie site turned on the availability of ample play space:

Do you want your children to develop a taste for God's outdoors, and its healthful, exhilarating sports? Or would you rather they would spend their time in street-corner idling and in congregating in candy stores?

Wellington remarked that "the battle of Waterloo was won on the playfield of Eton and Harrow." It is true today that the battles of business and social life are largely won on the playfields of childhood.

⁶⁹"School Association Offers Some 'Facts,'" Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 24, 1920), p. 1.

⁷⁰Ibid.

Is Winnetka to fail in this great opportunity for her boys and girls?⁷¹

The Association answered the argument in the following terms: "The whole of Winnetka is practically a playground, and in determining what amount of room is necessary for our children we do not have to follow some set formula propounded by an 'expert,' which formula is based upon conditions vastly different from those which obtain in Winnetka."⁷²

The controversy became so heated that the May 1st issue of the Talk, scheduled for the Saturday of the election, was on the stands by Friday afternoon in order to carry the final arguments.⁷³ The Association concluded: "The Horace Mann school site is centrally located. The central location eliminates the necessity of the forever after and large yearly maintenance expense of a bus system. The Horace Mann site is a site on the hill as against a site in the swamps."⁷⁴

⁷¹Committee of 500, "Do we need any stronger argument than this for the West Elm St. Site?" Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, April 24, 1920), p. 4.

⁷²Frank D. Fulton, "For the Horace Mann Site," loc. cit., p. 3.

⁷³"Call the 'Talk' for Election Returns," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, May 1, 1920), p. 1.

⁷⁴Winnetka School Association, "Sum Up Horace Mann Site 'Advantages,'" Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, May 1, 1920), A clipping.

As the opposition mounted, one member of the Committee of 500 addressed a letter to the editor of the Talk, in which she said that she was a member of the Committee of 500 only because she had been "solicited by two postals and phone."⁷⁵ She indicated that, though she was a member of the Committee, she intended to vote against the Elm street site and that she knew other persons in the Committee who felt as she did.

Laird Bell, president of the school board, published a statement in the "post-dated," May 1st number of the Talk. In part, he said: "The Elm street site will give our children as good facilities and surroundings as they could hope from the best private schools. This plan represents the fruition of ten years of steady evolution of our schools. We believe that, having supported a forward-looking school policy for all this time, Winnetka will not turn back."⁷⁶

On Saturday, May 1, 1920 "every eligible voter [in Winnetka] was led, carried or pushed to the polling place."⁷⁷ The referendum vote occasioned "the heaviest

⁷⁵Victoria Adams Barber, "Communication" (letter to the editor), Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, May 1, 1920).

⁷⁶Laird Bell, "Statement," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, May 1, 1920), p. 1.

⁷⁷"West Elm Street School Site Wins in Biggest Vote in Village History," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, May 8, 1920), p. 1.

balloting and most closely contested election in the history of Winnetka." As long as the polls remained open "both [sides] claimed a decisive victory . . . and groups of citizens feverishly awaited the result near the offices of the Weekly Talk."

While 1,346 ballots cast for the Skokie site carried the day for Washburne and Bell, there were 1,202 negative votes cast. There were "no demonstrations, no shouting. Quietly every Winnetkans [sic] went his way. It had been a momentous fight. West Elm had won, but by such a scant majority as to bar enthusiasm, the natural accompaniment to decisive victory."

The Talk warned that

. . . the heavy opposition . . . must have the effect of cautioning the Board of Education in preparation and action in school problems. The Board now must prove the worth and feasibility of its school plan. It must proceed carefully with its plans, taking into its confidence, constantly, the fathers and mothers of Winnetka in all matters concerning the conduct and administration of the public school system.⁷⁸

At least one Villager added his personal word of caution to the Board and Mr. Washburne:

The whip and reins are in your hands, and you have but to drive. But in the day of your triumph, be humble. Try once more. There are hundreds and hundreds of people here--good, honest, earnest well-meaning folks, who care nothing about your Montagues and Capulets, your struggle for control, yet who are absolutely convinced that you are dead wrong. The writer agrees with them, and with malice toward none

⁷⁸Ibid.

and charity to all he underwent with his family, the hardest physical day of their lives trying to prevent what he most sincerely believes will prove an awful municipal mistake.⁷⁹

Once the election was over, the subscription drive was begun anew with revitalized zeal. By the middle of November, 1920 the first phase of the drive had been completed and Winnetkans had pledged over \$300,000.⁸⁰

In April of 1922, the Skokie School was dedicated to the citizens of Winnetka who had so generously donated of their money, time, and effort to build it. A plaque on which the names of the contributors were to be inscribed was planned for a prominent place in the school. In 1926 Ernest Ballard wondered whether it might not be appropriate to include the names of board members at the time of the subscription campaign. "My personal reaction," wrote Washburne, "is that it decidedly should, for that Board had to stand an amount of grief and work which had not, as far as I know, been paralleled in the history of our local education."⁸¹

⁷⁹Carleton Prouty, "Communication: A Friendly Word to the School Board," Winnetka Weekly Talk (Saturday, May 8, 1920), p. 6.

⁸⁰Minutes of the Board of Education, vol. 8 (October 14, 1920 - December 15, 1926), November 19, 1920, p. 5.

⁸¹C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), April 15, 1926, p. 967. It is interesting to note, moreover, that Dr. Washburne's name is not included on the plaque in spite of the role that he played in the subscription drive to build the Skokie school.

The School Board Campaign of 1933

The seeds of discontent.--The southeastern section of Winnetka "was not a Washburne stronghold,"⁸² this fact was undoubtedly due, at least in part, to some lingering tenderness over the bitterly-fought Skokie-site contest at the outset of Dr. Washburne's superintendency.⁸³ It may also have been due in part to the fact that the Southeastern section of Winnetka was the older section of the Village; this could account for a less "progressive" attitude than that among the newer sections of the Village such as the Hubbard Woods area which tended to give more support to the progressive elements of the Winnetka technique.⁸⁴ Finally the lack of wholehearted support from the Greeley school district residents may have had a partial cause in the person of the principal of that school. Although an exceptional teacher and a competent person, the woman chosen by Washburne as principal of the Greeley school was never comfortable as an administrator. She did not relate particularly well to parents; and, while she always retained the full confidence of Carleton Washburne, she never developed an equal measure of

⁸²Interview with Miss Marion Carswell, December 12, 1969.

⁸³Supra, p. 42, 50.

⁸⁴Interview with Miss Marion Carswell, December 12, 1969.

confidence in herself. On a number of occasions she sought release from the responsibility of the Greeley principalship.⁸⁵ Whatever the cause--or complex of causes--as the 1933 school board election approached, Washburne and the Winnetka technique were being subjected to constant criticism and hostility from the Southeastern section of the Village.

The economic depression had fostered a general disenchantment across the face of America. Winnetka was no exception; it, too, had suffered mightily from the market crash of 1929. During the depression there were people in Winnetka who were literally burning their furniture in order to heat their homes.⁸⁶ Tax supported institutions--such as the public schools, for example--became handy "whipping boys". People could pose vigorous challenges to the school as an outlet for their own frustrations; in this way they could project their anger against an economic system that was collapsing around their ankles. It is not particularly germane to this study to belabor the fact of the depression or its role in the subsequently

⁸⁵Letter to Dr. Washburne from Florence Brett, March 11, 1929. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁸⁶Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray--Winnetka teacher and dean of the Graduate Teachers College during the Washburne superintendency--December 11, 1969. (For more information about Mrs. Murray see AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE, pp. 276-277.)

bitter attack on Washburne in the 1933 election. Suffice it to say that the depression undoubtedly created stresses within the community that otherwise might never have been.

In light of the duration and intensity of the depression (and probably only in retrospect) Washburne did an ill-advised thing. Early in 1931, together with his wife, two daughters, and a principal, Washburne left Winnetka for an extended trip around the world. The experience for him was one of professional growth and research. He had "secured a leave of absence from the Board of Education and a fellowship from the Rosenwald Fund to make a study of educational aims as conceived by various leaders of thought in different countries of the world".⁸⁷ His trip was definitely a "working-trip"--he interviewed educational leaders in Syria, Korea, China, Japan, Turkey, Iraq, Poland, Austria, France and Russia. Moreover, the highlight of his entire world tour was a personal audience with Gandhi. As a result of his world study tour, Washburne was to make a major contribution to the field of comparative education with the publication of his book Remakers of Mankind.⁸⁸

⁸⁷Letter to Mrs. Thomas Hearne from C. W. Washburne, December 19, 1931. Correspondence Files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁸⁸C. W. Washburne, Remakers of Mankind, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932).

Back in Winnetka resentment smoldered. As the depression continued unabated, Washburne's trip increasingly became the subject of caustic remarks. One Winnetkan, writing to Board President Randall, reflected in his letter something of the community's feeling in the matter of Washburne's absence:

I have gathered from talks I have heard on the train, in the drug stores, and at social gatherings that there is considerable dissatisfaction over the absence of Mr. Washburne during this school term. They seem to feel that a proper sense of responsibility and duty to our schools could best be expressed by being on the job, and that the time for vacation and travel is in the summer time during the long period of school inactivity.⁸⁹

With the community in this mood an unfortunate event occurred: an article appeared in the March 30th issue of the Chicago Tribune concerning Washburne's visit to India. The article implied that there were political overtones to the Washburne visit. Within the article, the superintendent was described wearing a native Hindoo loin cloth. The article created a furor! Randall immediately cabled Washburne and followed that up with a letter of censure: "The incident was on everyone's tongue yesterday, and on

⁸⁹Letter to Mr. C. B. Randall from Mr. Fred W. Loco, March 19, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

the trains and around the village last evening I was the butt of many wisecracks."⁹⁰

In point of fact, Washburne had on several occasions worn the "white cap common to followers of Gandhi. I put it on first as a sort of joke; but when I saw how it opened people's hearts--and minds--to me, I wore it several times more seriously."⁹¹

Washburne had, in an off-hand and friendly way, related to a Tribune reporter staying in the same hotel in Karachi (India) "about the way the little cap has proved an open sesame." The rest of the story about the Hindu loin cloth was a pure fiction, written into the article either through a genuine misunderstanding or to stimulate reader interest:

The Gandhi cap served to identify me as American and thereby to avert the suspicion and dislike I would have had had I been supposed to be English--as I was when I did not wear it. Except for the cap, I of course wore ordinary American or European clothes--I never thought of such a thing as wearing Indian dress.⁹²

The whole incident, of course, was hardly more than a tempest-in-a-teapot; however, even "teapot-tempests" can make for some bad moments. Randall's

⁹⁰Letter to Mr. Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, March 31, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 288-290.

⁹¹Letter to Mr. Clarence Randall from C. W. Washburne, May 8, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 293-296.

⁹²Ibid.

letter of March 31st also advised Washburne of a growing personal resentment toward him:

Your absence has come in for more and more discussion as the weeks have gone along, and to a certain extent there is a Carleton Washburne issue as distinguished from a Winnetka School issue I have come to feel that we have many staunch friends, but there is no blinking the fact that we also have a substantial group of real people who are entirely sincere in their disapproval of some phases of our work.⁹³

Perhaps equally unfortunate in clearing the matter up was the fact that Randall's cablegram miscarried. The first that Washburne knew of the "grossly distorted accounts of my activity in India which appeared in the press"⁹⁴ came in Randall's letter of March 31st which finally reached him at Jerusalem in early May. The damage had been, by this time, well done. Community judgments had long since been made. And, apparently, rumors continued to circulate long after his denial had been published.⁹⁵

The fact that Washburne's study tour of the world included a look at Russian education--coupled with the fact that he had also briefly visited and lectured in

⁹³Loc. cit.

⁹⁴Letter to Mr. Clarence Randall from C. W. Washburne, May 8, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁹⁵Letter to Mrs. Thomas Hearne from C. W. Washburne, December 19, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Russia in the summer of 1927⁹⁶--was to become one of the major issues of the 1933 campaign.

Russia was one of the topics treated in the seventh grade social problems class. Russian communism was, indeed, becoming a significant part of the world's social milieu and, as such, Washburne felt that it should be viewed as objectively and honestly as possible. In defense of including Russian communism in the curriculum, Washburne on one occasion addressed the school board:

I personally happen to be opposed to the communist path--I don't want class hatreds; I don't want revolutions; I don't want indoctrination But I feel that insofar as any of these beliefs are not universally [italics mine] shared by thoughtful, intelligent people I have no right to impose them on young minds I am convinced that all children should be taught to think about all important issues, and to guide their ultimate actions in the light of a fair minded weighing of arguments and facts, in a spirit of scientific study, but with a goal to achieve the ultimate good of mankind.⁹⁷

At any rate, the social studies curriculum at Skokie included a four day look at Russia; one day on geography; a second on the people; a third on the

⁹⁶Following the conference of the New Education Fellowship at Lacarno.

⁹⁷Letter to Members of the Board of Education from C. W. Washburne, November 2, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of this letter see Appendix F, pp. 338-339.

social system; and a final day as a general summing up.⁹⁸ In May of 1932, a parent visited one of the social studies classes during the presentation and discussion of the Russian social system. During the class the teacher, Marion Russell, read a chapter from M. Ilin's New Russian Primer (The Five Year Plan)⁹⁹--one copy of which had been placed two years earlier in the Skokie library¹⁰⁰--about the Russian nationwide electrification program. "She then went on to show that whether or not we liked the things that Russia was doing, we ought to be familiar with them and we ought to know what the Russian point of view was."¹⁰¹

Following the class, the man approached the teacher and asked her how much of the course was devoted to Russia and some further questions about the overall course content. Following this brief exchange of question and comment with the teacher, the parent left

⁹⁸Memorandum concerning Mr. Koch's visit to Marion Russell's class on Thursday, May 12, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of Memorandum see Appendix F, pp. 330-331.

⁹⁹Translated from the Russian by George Counts and published in the United States by Houghton Mifflin, New York.

¹⁰⁰Washburne was later to remove it from the library upon complaint. (Clarence Randall, "Winnetka Talk Public Forum," Winnetka Talk [Thursday, April 6, 1933], p. 15.)

¹⁰¹Memorandum, loc. cit.

and "did not act particularly critical or in any way offensive."

Within a matter of days, however, repercussions were being felt throughout the North Shore area. Washburne reported to the board that the man had gathered "enough ammunition and used it vigorously. Now people are sure I'm a Communist!"¹⁰²

As events unfolded, the visiting parent had dictated his own memorandum upon leaving Miss Russell's classroom. Eleven months later--just two days before the school board election--that memorandum appeared in the Winnetka Talk.¹⁰³ In it he had recorded an incident that had occurred during the class which he felt was evidence enough that Communism was both being taught and advocated in the Winnetka schools:

Some reference was then made about control, and Miss Russell then pointed out that we didn't have the opportunity here of regulating affairs for the good of everybody; that here we had a country that was oversupplied with wheat and still people were starving--oversupplied with industry and people were unemployed. She said that last year the suggestion was made that cotton-growers should omit every third row of cotton, so that there would be less cotton and the price would be much higher, and that the

¹⁰²C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934), May 24, 1932, p. 2104.

¹⁰³"Memorandum," appearing in the "Winnetka Talk Public Forum," Winnetka Talk (Thursday, April 6, 1933), p. 14. For full text of Memorandum see Appendix F, pp. 332-334.

wheat-growers should not plant so much acreage, but that neither the cotton-growers nor the wheat-growers paid any attention to the suggestion. The implication was quite evident that if we had a dictatorship to have compelled such action that the country today would be in better shape than we actually are.¹⁰⁴

So it was that the seeds of discontent had been sown. The depression had taken its toll. "Psychologically the public in Winnetka is certainly introspective and discouraged. Some of their dissatisfaction finds perhaps a more than normal outlet in criticizing public expenditures and more particularly the administration of the schools."¹⁰⁵ Washburne's trip around the world--and, particularly, the mis-reported Gandhi incident, gave the Villagers something tangible to rail against. Finally, a parent's visit to a social studies class marked the beginnings of a whispering campaign that sought to destroy the moral person of Carleton Washburne.

The school board election of 1933.--Through the early years of Washburne's superintendency, new board members were hand-picked by their incumbent fellows. The following notation, for example, appears in the Superintendent's Reports of March 7, 1929: "President Ballard wants a discussion of replacements for members

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, March 31, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 288-290.

of the Board whose terms are expiring."¹⁰⁶ Until the election of '33, school board candidates had run unopposed. Without exception, school board members had been persons committed--at least in a fundamental way--to the Washburne educational technique. The typical school board election drew little interest; for example, the election of April 18, 1929 saw seventeen voters go to the polls to vote for the unopposed school board slate.¹⁰⁷ Occasionally, the vote ran considerably heavier.¹⁰⁸ Generally, however, the ballots cast in school board elections rarely ran above one hundred.

The school board elections were always held separately from the Village elections. Both elections were held in April--the Village election being held the first Tuesday, while the school board election was held on the second Saturday. Prior to the 1932 election, the school board began to come under fire as being a self-perpetuating oligarchy. As the pressure mounted, it was decided that the board would discontinue its

¹⁰⁶Loc. cit.

¹⁰⁷C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 3 (May 1927 - September 1930), April 18, 1929, p. 1438.

¹⁰⁸E.g. In the school board election of April 14, 1928, a total of 392 ballots were cast. (Superintendent's Reports, vol. 3 [May 1927 - September 1930], May 3, 1928, p. 1297.

rather informal nomination procedures and put the nomination in the hands of the Village Caucus Committee.¹⁰⁹

In 1933, however, the Village Caucus Committee came under severe attack. A letter to the editor of the Winnetka Talk reflects something of the sentiment running against the Caucus:

we stand absolutely unique as the only municipality in any free country where citizens and taxpayers have surrendered their right to elect, in the manner provided by law, the officials who shall run their government and have turned over their government to the rule of a self-constituted and self-perpetuating illegal aristocracy.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹The Village Caucus system was first introduced in 1915 (Winnetka, a portfolio distributed by the Winnetka Chamber of Commerce, 1967). Each year thereafter, the Village Caucus Committee presented a slate of candidates for village offices. The Caucus Committee was composed of twenty-five citizens--two from each of ten precincts and five at-large members. (The Caucus, as it operates today, is composed of fifty members--three from each of fifteen precincts and five at-large members. Ibid.)

Year after year, the slate of candidates nominated by the Village Caucus ran unopposed. In fact, the village elections rarely drew any more interest than did the school elections. Winnetka had settled into a state of complacency; for nearly twenty years, a literal handful of Villagers elected an unopposed slate of village officials the first week of April and an unopposed slate of school board members the second. Notwithstanding, in the face of growing criticism in 1932 the school board turned over its nominating chore to the Village Caucus Committee.

¹¹⁰Letter from Eugene O'Brien, "Public Forum," Winnetka Talk, vol. XXII, no. 4 (March 23, 1933), p. 12.

Needless to say, the Caucus system had its many defenders as well. The upshot of this ill-will toward the Caucus Committee was the nomination of an opposition slate of candidates for village officers for the election of 1933. Their platform was to reduce the cost of the Village government and they gathered under the banner of The Economy Party.

While the school board election was entirely separate from the village election, it seems probable that the appearance of an opposition in the village election inspired opponents of the Winnetka schools to run its slate of candidates for board president and members. The board was particularly vulnerable this election year because a coincidence of term expiration and member resignation left the board presidency and three board memberships up for election. A sweep of these four positions would give an opposition party a voting control of the school board. The school board election was set for Saturday, April 8. The Caucus Committee had already announced its candidates for the board. On the evening of March 14th an opposition slate calling itself the Independent Party was announced.

As the campaign got underway, three issues became central. They were (1) the question of school costs; (2) the progressive and experimental nature of the Winnetka schools; and (3) the personal life and character of Carleton Washburne.

The issue of school costs was bound to come about. The Village--as well as the nation--was still reeling under the depression. Per-pupil costs were high in Winnetka; the substance of Washburne's retort to this criticism was merely that the educational advantage of the individual system and extra-academic services rendered the Winnetka pupil far outbalanced the actual per-pupil cost. Throughout his tenure, Washburne always responded to the question of school costs in a similar vein. One of his best statements on this issue is the following:

Of course the real value of good schools is to the children themselves. This value is not one that is readily measured in dollars and cents, although anyone taking a long range view knows that the greatest asset that our country has is its children, that the potential wealth of a community and of the country as a whole depends upon the effectiveness of the complete education of the children--in school and at home and in the community. The cost of juvenile delinquency, the cost of insanity and emotional instability are far greater than the cost of the difference between poor schools and good schools. It is generally recognized that good schools decrease delinquency and increase mental and emotional stability. It is generally recognized that good schools increase general efficiency and good citizenship. The dollar and cents value is speculative as to exact amount, but I think is recognized by every thinking person to be far greater than the expenditure.¹¹¹

The experimental nature of the Winnetka schools was vigorously challenged. A return to the standard

¹¹¹C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 6 (June 1937 - March 1940), June 6, 1938, p. 2986.

system of education was advocated by a core of dissatisfied Winnetkans. Some, undoubtedly, aligned themselves with this tact of criticism because their children had not progressed satisfactorily under the individual technique; others, perhaps, joined in the criticism in a kind of reactionary backlash to progressive trends in American education. At the March 14th meeting, when the opposition slate was announced, Dr. Charles Galloway¹¹² struck out against the experimental aspect of the Winnetka schools: ". . . we do not want our schools used as experimental places, nor our children used as experimental guinea pigs."¹¹³ Within the text of his speech, Dr. Galloway suggested that the "Individual System" had not--over a number of years--demonstrated its value; that it had become a hobby with the teachers and administrators--and that "teachers with hobbies can not concentrate on their primary work;" that discipline in the home was breaking down through a lack of it in the schools; that competition should have a place in the schools "because in life persons compete with each other;" that "this system as we see it with the lack of discipline gives the sissy

¹¹²Mrs. Charles Galloway was a candidate for board member on the opposition ticket.

¹¹³Transcript precis of speech delivered by Dr. Charles Galloway at opposition meeting, March 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

too good a break;" and, finally, that "there is too much time wasted by our children." These considerations, then, led to the platform of the opposition: "We believe that the Winnetka system of grade schools should be modified to conform more nearly to the standard schools as used throughout the United States, in the interest of economy and education." The ouster of Dr. Washburne as superintendent was one of the direct implications of this platform.

Dr. Galloway concluded his speech that evening with the allegation that communism¹¹⁴ was being taught in the Winnetka schools:

We do not believe that teachers know what the civilization of the future will be. We do know that we are a capitalist country and that we have the least suffering and want of any country. We also know that Winnetka is a capitalist community and we do not want our children taught the principles of communism or communistic society.¹¹⁵

From the allegation that communism was being taught in the schools to the allegation that Washburne himself was a communist took only a small leap of the imagination.

So it was that a whispering campaign was launched against Dr. Washburne. Without question this was the

¹¹⁴Mrs. Virginia Koch, candidate on the opposition slate, was the wife of the man who had visited Miss Marion Russell's class during a discussion on communist Russia. (cf., supra, p. 64 ff.)

¹¹⁵Transcript precis of speech delivered by Dr. Charles Galloway at opposition meeting, March 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

most unworthy and unprincipled aspect of the school board election: it was a bitter, scurrilous, and totally unjustified attack on Mr. Washburne's character and personal life. It's difficult to know exactly what went said or unsaid about him because the gossip was so abusive--and apparently baseless--that no newspaper would risk a libel suit in publishing it. The Winnetka Talk reported only the "bitter attacks have been directed against Supt. Washburne, casting reflections upon his integrity, challenging his patriotism--and worse."¹¹⁶

One can, perhaps, best gain an insight into the nature of the whispering campaign by reading an open letter that Washburne addressed to the editor of the Talk.¹¹⁷

I have lived among you in Winnetka for fourteen years. I have associated with you in many ways. I have been responsible for the education of a generation of your children, who, after leaving me have made excellent records in high school and college, not only scholastically but in terms of civic responsibility and character. I have worked in close contact with many of Winnetka's most outstanding citizens. And now, of a sudden I find preposterous rumors afloat about me, as if I were some new and unknown quantity about whom most anything could be ture.

¹¹⁶"School Board Election Next: Bitter Campaign at Climax," Winnetka Talk (Thursday, April 6, 1933), p. 1.

¹¹⁷"That Whispering Campaign" (An open letter from Carleton Washburne), Winnetka Talk (Thursday, March 30, 1933), p. 13. For the full text of this open letter see Appendix C, pp. 298-299.

May I present a few facts, in the open, any of which can be readily verified by anyone interested in truth rather than slander?

1. I was married in Pasadena, California, September 15, 1912, a little over three months after finishing college at Stanford. My first child was born December 4, 1913, at Tulare, California. My wife and I have three children. Our home life is entirely regular and unusually happy.

2. I am an American through and through I believe with my whole heart in the ideals on which our country was founded; and to our country I have the deepest loyalty and devotion.

3. I believe ardently in peace and the importance of world well being. I believe in the purpose of the Kellogg Pact. But I think it sheer stupidity to disarm and be unprepared in the midst of armed and imperialistic nations. I am therefore in favor of the R.O.T.C. and Citizens Training Camp. I would not hesitate to bear arms in defense of our country. I was opposed to our entering the world war, but once we had entered it I publicly advocated the importance of throwing our resources into it completely--it seemed to me that having made the decision it was necessary to carry on with our whole strength.

4. I am not a regular church goer, but I am religious. I have been a small contributor to the Congregational Church here for many years; I sent both my daughters to Sunday School there; I taught its men's Bible class at one time. These facts are to me less important than my own attempt to lead an essentially Christian life--too Christian, I hope, ever to indulge in the pastime of spreading slander about my fellow townsmen.

One by one, Washburne had denied the charges levelled against him. At one and the same time his letter also reflected a magnimity of spirit by which he could conclude his letter: "I believe in Winnetka. To me it has always seemed as fine and decent and fair a community as one could find anywhere in the world.

I believe that the great substantial majority of Winnetka citizens care more for facts than for prejudice or gossip. I believe that they stand for fair play and high ideals."

Although the whispering campaign must have been rather painful to Washburne, it did have its moments of compensation. It brought forth a certain indignation--and, at the same time shame--among the right-minded of Winnetka. One mother wrote:

My dear Mr. Washburne,

I have felt so keenly the injustice and unkindness of the criticism aimed at you in this school controversy, that I wanted to write and tell you of my absolute confidence in you in every respect.

It must be a great disappointment to you to have this come as your reward for years of unselfish effort for the children of Winnetka and I am ashamed that Winnetka should have treated you so badly¹¹⁸

There were also those somewhat warm and light moments, such as the fanciful humor of one of Washburne's militant supporters:

Remember, too, that altho there may be some who devoutly believe that you feast on three Christian maidens each morning before breakfast, there are many more of us who look upon you as a

¹¹⁸A letter to Carleton Washburne from Katherine Kendrick, March 31, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

prophet and a saint and of course we represent the forces of the enlightenment!¹¹⁹

Washburne once again with characteristic determination rose to the challenge of the moment. His initial ploy was to seek the support of educational experts outside of the Winnetka community--he composed a letter which he sent to educators both locally and nationally prominent. Recipients of his letter included Flora Cooke of the Francis W. Parker School; Perry Smith, headmaster of North Shore Country Day School; W. D. Scott, President of Northwestern University; H. W. Chase, President of the University of Illinois; John Dewey of Columbia; and W. J. Cooper, U. S. Commissioner of Education. His letter to these educators ran, in part, something like this one:

We are having a little fight here in Winnetka. The depression with its economy wave is rallying to its cause all malcontents, and the school election about to take place is definitely on the issue of whether Winnetka's schools shall revert to the traditional or continue in their attempt to progress.

The Chairman of the Publicity Committee in support of the schools has said that it would be very helpful indeed if she could have brief statements from a few well known educators as to the general reputation of the Winnetka Schools, and has suggested I write to you¹²⁰

¹¹⁹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Lucille F. Milton, March 29, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For the full text of this letter see Appendix C, p. 300.

¹²⁰Letter to Hon. William J. Cooper, U.S. Commissioner of Education from Carleton Washburne, March 20, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Washburne's appeal to fellow educators for support drew a genuine and concerned response. Of the previously mentioned educators, only John Dewey appears to have failed to respond.¹²¹ The support of fellow educators must have been particularly gratifying to Washburne during this moment of crisis. Included in the responses were the following:

It seems to me nothing less than a catastrophe for Mr. Washburne to leave Winnetka where he is serving not only that community but through it also the larger cause of education.¹²²

and,

The work of Doctor Washburne in elementary education is pointing the way to reform in methods of higher education. No teacher who is not hopelessly wedded to the tradition of the educational lockstep can fail to profit from careful study of Dr. Washburne's educational philosophy and instructional procedure.¹²³

Washburne then proceeded to put together a campaign pamphlet¹²⁴ in which he attempted to speak to all issues of the campaign except those issues

¹²¹While Dewey may, indeed, have responded there is no indication in either campaign materials or the correspondence file that he did so.

¹²²Letter to Mr. Frederick W. Copeland from Flora Cooke, principal of the Francis W. Parker School, Chicago, March 22, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹²³Lewis M. Terman as quoted in "Evolution--Not Revolution," a campaign pamphlet, n.d. [circa] March 1933.

¹²⁴"Evolution--Not Revolution." A campaign pamphlet. n.d. [circa] March 1933.

personal in nature. In the booklet he quoted statements of the various educators who had expressed their support of his educational leadership in Winnetka; he spoke to the issue of costs; and he underlined the philosophy of the Winnetka schools.

In an effort to dispel some of the rancor of the community, as a second phase of the campaign Dr. Washburne organized an army of loyal supporters to go on a door-knocking canvass of the entire community. Perhaps nothing breaks down the sort of mindless hostility that had been bred in this campaign more effectively than a friendly smile and a warm handclasp. Supporters were supplied with a catechism that posed "typical" questions that they might expect raised and provided an effective response that they might memorize and use. For example:

Question:

"Is Communism taught in the schools?"

Answer:

"Of course not. The Board of Education would not tolerate it for a moment, neither would Mr. Washburne, nor any of the faculty. People accusing any member of the faculty of Communism should produce their evidence, since the Board of Education would undoubtedly dismiss immediately anyone proved to be a Communist, or to be teaching communism to the children."¹²⁵

¹²⁵"Instructions for Workmen," School Board Campaign, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

The campaign workers were urged to "keep good natured;" not to "waste time on people dead set either way;" and not to discuss "details of educational policy or teaching methods."

Neither was the opposition slate idle in the days before the election. It, too, had put together a pamphlet and had distributed about 3,000 copies within the Village. As the day for the vote approached, the Village was in a frenzy over the school question:

. . . according to all indications, it will be one of the most hotly contested elections in the history of the village.

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With undercurrents of disapproval in evidence hereabouts almost since the inception of the so-called "Washburne system" of educating Winnetka's children, Saturday's election bids fair to settle at least for a considerable time this much mooted question which has provoked a flood of oratory and a veritable deluge of literature in the current campaign. It should determine rather definitely whether the opposition to the methods now employed in the instruction of Winnetka's children is widespread and thoroughly representative of community attitude, or whether the rumblings of discontent are confined to a comparatively small portion of the citizenry.¹²⁶

On election day, the P.T.A. provided automobiles at the commuter stations to transport voters to the polls; they also provided transportation from the home

¹²⁶"School Board Election Next: Bitter Campaign at Climax," Winnetka Talk (Thursday, April 6, 1933), p. 1.

on request.¹²⁷ Almost 3,700 ballots were cast in the school board election. The caucus nominees received an overwhelming majority of the vote. Villagers cast 2,695¹²⁸ votes for the incumbent Board President, Clarence Randall--with the other three member candidates, respectively, receiving votes of 2,679, 2,610, and 2,589.

While, undoubtedly, victory tasted sweet to Washburne, caution was in the air. One thousand votes had been cast for the Independent Party; one thousand people had voted, in effect, to oust Washburne from the superintendency, to throw over the work of the past fourteen years, and to return to a traditional curriculum. There were some, too, who saw in the victory more a vote of confidence in the school board than in the superintendent himself. The chairman of the Caucus congratulated Board President Randall on his re-election:

Notwithstanding your admirable modesty, I am sure you will realize that the splendid vote you received is a remarkable tribute to you. The unhappy conditions which have so long surrounded our schools and the controversial atmosphere which has prevailed and grown more and more pronounced with the years would have culminated in a distinctly adverse vote, I am sure, except for the

¹²⁷"P.T.A. Provides Cars for Voters in School Ballot," Winnetka Talk (Thursday, April 6, 1933), p. 1.

¹²⁸"Results of School Board Election, April 8, 1933," Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

confidence and devotion which many hundreds of your fellow villagers have come to have in you.¹²⁹

The campaign of 1933 had some far-reaching effects on Washburne's relationship with the community. In some ways, following that election, his superintendency lacked some of the spontaneity of earlier years. For one thing, the school board's hand was strengthened; it assumed a more directive role in matters that involved the superintendent and his relationship with the community.

The board insisted that channels of communication be established between the school administration and the community. Randall urged Washburne to schedule regular office hours¹³⁰ (which he subsequently did) and "to cultivate ways of meeting people on other than an educational basis." The board, also, following the election invited critics of the Winnetka technique and of Dr. Washburne to board meetings which it requested Washburne not to attend. This was an entirely new experience for him as superintendent. Critics of the administration came before the board at these meetings and attempted to verbalize their complaints against the system. Many of the complaints were much too general,

¹²⁹Letter to Clarence Randall from Charles Thomson, April 10, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹³⁰Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, April 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix C, pp. 304-305.

or unsupported by fact, to be of any real significance-- for example, the comment: "Think our reading and arithmetic is below the average grade in an up-to-date modern school."¹³¹ Other comments were simple expressions of dislike for Carleton Washburne, such as the criticism: "Mr. Washburne is not courteous,"¹³² or "when it comes to Americanism, Mr. Washburne just doesn't seem to be there."¹³³ Still other criticisms were made about Washburne that were of a more constructive nature, such as the following comments:

Why has all this opposition to Mr. Washburne developed? There must be a fundamental, basic reason for it. It is certainly not because of any lack of ability on his part. I think the opposition is only too glad to admit the wonderful capacity that Mr. Washburne has The chief difficulties of Mr. Washburne in his present position has been in his contacts with the public I think he is handicapped because the position requires a contact with the public which he probably is not the best man to give¹³⁴

Still other criticisms bordered on the absurd-- such as the complaint of a parent that the Washburne system had failed in the teaching of geography because his son, a sophomore at Oberlin College, once found

¹³¹Mrs. Aldrich quoted in transcript of "Meeting of Board of Education for Parents," May 22, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools, p. 2.

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Mr. Koch quoted loc. cit., p. 15.

¹³⁴Mr. Stanley Simpson, quoted loc. cit., pp. 9-10.

himself in Detroit while vainly attempting to hitch hike to Chicago!¹³⁵

Once Washburne had carefully reviewed the transcripts of these meetings, he reported to the board that

I am frankly disappointed in the criticisms. I suppose I should not have expected that criticisms by uninformed parents on professional matters would reveal things which the continuous searching criticisms of a highly trained faculty and continuous research by an adequate research department has failed to bring to light. Yet somehow I thought that perhaps in the mass of material adduced there might be things that could help us really to improve the schools in important ways.¹³⁶

Concerning the criticisms levelled against himself, Washburne remarked:

The one really positive value that has come from the campaign and the criticism lies in emphasizing the importance of improving public relations. On this I and the faculty can and will take action in every possible way. I think it is true that I have not succeeded in keeping as close touch with some parts of the community as is desirable.¹³⁷

The election of 1933 had its effect, too, on the thinking of the Village Caucus Committee. The committee felt that it had failed to represent in its choice of

¹³⁵Mr. Wm. A. McKinney, indirectly quoted, loc. cit., p. 13.

¹³⁶C. W. Washburne, "Opposition Criticism," Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934), June 13, 1933, p. 2259.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 2270.

nominees for the school board a significant minority of Villagers. Every year thereafter, the committee always attempted to include at least one of the Washburne critics on its slate.¹³⁸ The Caucus hoped thereby to mollify the opposition on the one hand and, on the other, to moderate the progressive policies and directions of the Winnetka public schools. This latter intent of the Caucus, however, tended to be nothing more than a vain hope. In one of the Village-wide Caucus meetings a number of years later, Dr. Charles Galloway, who was perhaps the most vocal Washburne critic during the 1933 campaign,¹³⁹ told the assembled Villagers that it was useless for the Caucus to attempt to keep Washburne in rein by nominating board members who were critical of his administration because whomever they put on the school board would, within a few months' time, be loyal to Dr. Washburne, anyway.¹⁴⁰

The Community and the Curriculum

Sex Education

Among the first curricular innovations in the Winnetka Public Schools under Carleton Washburne's

¹³⁸ Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

¹³⁹ Cf., supra, pp. 71-72.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

superintendency was the introduction of a biology course at the seventh grade level. "We must frankly confess that we began teaching biology primarily to get this matter of sex straight."¹⁴¹ The first year that he put the course into the curriculum, it was offered as an elective. This led to two serious drawbacks: (1) children that least needed the course were the ones enrolled for it, while those who most needed it either were forbidden or chose not to take it; and, (2) those enrolled for the course began to share their new knowledge with those not taking the course in clandestine gatherings and, thus, a somewhat less than wholesome atmosphere was engendered.¹⁴²

Thereafter, Washburne made the seventh grade biology course a requirement. Parents could have their children excused from the class only upon discussion with the superintendent and presentation of a proposed course of study to be carried out at home. However, "almost no parent has ever made this request."¹⁴³

¹⁴¹Willard Beatty, "Method of Teaching Sex," Intelligent Parenthood: Proceedings of the Mid-West Conference on Parent Education, held by the Chicago Association for Child Study and Parent Education, March 4 - 6, 1926, pp. 166.

¹⁴²Carleton W. Washburne, A Living Philosophy of Education (New York: The John Day Co., 1940), p. 88.

¹⁴³Russell B. Babcock, "A Seventh Grade Course in Sex Education," Progressive Education (May, 1936), p. 375.

Years later Washburne asserted: "To the best of my knowledge, the Winnetka Public Schools were the first public school system in the United States or elsewhere to include systematic sex education in either the elementary or the junior high curriculum for all children."¹⁴⁴ In introducing a course of sex instruction, Washburne was faced with the task of overcoming the inhibitions of an entire community. "The first thing we have to do in our biology course is to overcome the attitude of mind which the silence, shame, false modesty, and wrong attitudes of the adult . . . environment in which the child has been previously have put this whole question of sex."¹⁴⁵

Washburne felt, in the ideal order of things, that sex instruction would best be accomplished in the home:

Personally, I believe that so far as it is possible parents should give the sex instruction in the home right from the beginning. The first time a child asks a question about how babies come into the world, the child should have information. I believe that children should know about their own bodies, the bodies of their brothers and sisters, and should have frank, wholesome information from their parents; the trouble is, most parents themselves were not taught that way. The parents are

¹⁴⁴Washburne, Carleton and Sidney P. Marland, Jr., Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 86.

¹⁴⁵Beatty, "Method of Teaching Sex," loc. cit., p. 170.

in many, many cases, self-conscious in talking to their children.¹⁴⁶

Washburne was led to the conclusion, then, "that sex instruction in the school is, in the present state of society, the only possible solution for the majority of children."¹⁴⁷

There were only two major threats to sex education in the Winnetka schools. The first of these occurred early in 1924. The P.T.A. had requested Dr. Washburne to have conducted a "series of classes for parents on desirable ways of instructing children at home in regard to human reproduction."¹⁴⁸ Willard Beatty--who was then teaching the seventh grade boys the biology course at Skokie--conducted the classes at the Hubbard Woods and the Greeley Schools. Washburne, himself, taught the same course for parents in the Horace Mann district. A group of parents, who for the most part professed to be Christian Scientists (who also objected to physical examinations and, in some cases, physical

¹⁴⁶Carleton Washburne, "Sex Education in School--The Winnetka Plan," Intelligent Parenthood: Proceedings of the Mid-West Conference on Parent Education, held by the Chicago Association for Child Study and Parent Education, March 4 - 6, 1926, p. 161.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁴⁸C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), March 13, 1924, p. 652.

education¹⁴⁹), crashed the third session of Mr. Beatty's class at Hubbard Woods and "expressed themselves vehemently on the subject of such instruction being given to the children in the school."¹⁵⁰ The protestors were smothered by a storm of argument and approval for the program. The next evening a similar group appeared at his Greeley class; however, none appeared at Washburne's Horace Mann class. Washburne reported to the board that rumors of "indignation-meetings" had been brought to his attention and that "there are still unquestionably a number of parents who feel strongly opposed to what the schools are doing in biology instruction."

In his report to the board, it seems as though Washburne rather minimized the threat and difficulty posed by this group of irate parents. Only several years later, when he was considering initiating some phases of sex instruction in the fifth grade was he to remark: "I know that it's bound to bring unfavorable reaction from a few people, particularly Christian Scientists and Catholics . . . [but] it's not nearly

¹⁴⁹E.g. C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), October 27, 1924, p. 754.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., March 13, 1924, p. 653.

as hard to do now as it was in the early days, when sex education in the schools was a great novelty."¹⁵¹

It was in 1936 that the whole question of the sex education program arose once again when Washburne decided to make human reproduction part of the course in fifth grade physiology. He had long felt that sex instruction should be introduced earlier than in the seventh grade.¹⁵² "Every year in one fifth or sixth grade one or another sex problems arise. It is a universal experience that children of 10 and 11 begin to have sex curiosity, begin to pick up information from other children, and tend to pass it on. Each year we have had to take up with individual groups or individual children this problem."¹⁵³

¹⁵¹Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, February 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁵²Cf. Washburne's Superintendent's Reports, vol. 5 (March 1934 - May 1937), September 21, 1936, pp. 2688-2689.

¹⁵³Ibid. For instance in February, 1933, Mr. Washburne sent a letter to parents of fifth and sixth graders at the Hubbard Woods school informing them that an "epidemic of smutty sex talk" (draft of letter to Hubbard Woods Parents from Carleton Washburne, February 15, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools) had broken out there and that he had determined "to have the course in physiology and hygiene broadened to include human reproduction." Washburne then underlined the necessity of the instruction: "The issue is not whether children in the fifth and sixth grades are old enough to know about human reproduction. They are learning it, whether we want them to or not, from their fellows, and they are learning it in the worst way. Our choice is not between ignorance and knowledge. It is a

In September of 1936 Washburne held meetings for parents of fifth graders "telling them of our plans and the reasons for them, so that they will be prepared, if the children come home with questions, to answer their questions, or so that they may, if they wish, give the children information before they get it in school."¹⁵⁴ Some of the objections raised at this time to the overall sex education program included some of the following: "Why must these things be told to our children?" "Why must they be told at so tender an age?" "Why must little boys be told about menstrating, and little girls told about wet dreams?" All this sex instruction will cause pupils "to talk about it, and talk is apt to lead to action." "If sex matters are understood, and the mystery dissolved, the fear of such things will be lessened and fear is the best

choice between knowledge scientifically and cleanly given by people with ideals and understanding, or half-knowledge given in a distorted way by other children."

Even at the time of his decision about the situation at Hubbard Woods, it is clear that Washburne had already been considering regular sex instruction for his fifth graders. "I had hoped to postpone any action of this sort for another year or two," he wrote Randall. (letter from Carleton Washburne to Clarence Randall, February 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.)

¹⁵⁴C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 5 (March 1934 - May 1937), September 21, 1936, p. 2689.

safeguard of morality." And, finally, "Is nothing sacred?"¹⁵⁵ Washburne answered such objections in the following vein:

Experience shows that instruction in such matters at an early age lessens rather than stimulates curiosity, and therefore decreases conversation among children on the subject. Even if the removal of mystery and therefore of fear did increase immorality, the real tragedy is not the commission of an immoral act but the consequent ruination of a life due to the consequences, either physical or mental. If understanding can prevent this major tragedy, it is of much greater value than the fear could ever be. Experience in the Skokie Junior High school where sex instruction has been given for many years is there has not been one case of sex delinquency in this school during its entire history. The parent who suggests that sex is too sacred a subject for common discussion is confusing his own subconscious thought that sex is primarily nasty and that the sacredness of marriage justifies it. If he honestly feels that sex itself is a sacred subject, he would treat the child's interests and inquiries in the same way that he does regarding sacred religious subjects, that is he would welcome the inquiries and be glad to enter into a discussion as he does regarding his own religious convictions. The parent who raises this objection must therefore realize that he is making a mistake in understanding his own viewpoint.¹⁵⁶

After this discussion in 1936, it appears that Washburne was never again challenged by any sort of organized opposition to sex instruction. It is probable--though this is only an assumption--that there were isolated objections to the course in sex instruction

¹⁵⁵"Objection to Sex Instruction," 1936. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁵⁶Ibid.

down through Washburne's tenure; there is, however, no mention of such matters in either the board minutes or reports of the superintendent.

In fact, in 1948 Dr. Harold Shane--then superintendent at Winnetka--was quoted as stating that "we no longer hear any objections but often strong endorsement."¹⁵⁷ And, likewise in 1961 Sidney Marland was able to say: "In Winnetka the [sex] instruction is taken so completely for granted that we should have great resistance from parents if we should choose to discontinue the offering."¹⁵⁸

Manuscript Writing

The board granted Dr. Washburne a leave of absence from November 1, 1922 through February, 1923 to study progressive European schools. Apparently Washburne's fancy was caught by the manuscript¹⁵⁹ style of penmanship being taught particularly in the English progressive schools. Until his discovery of manuscript, Washburne had never felt that the question of penmanship was a

¹⁵⁷"Sex Education," Family Life (March, 1938), p. 5.

¹⁵⁸Sidney P. Marland, Jr., "Placing Sex Education in the Curriculum," Phi Delta Kappan, December, 1961, p. 134.

¹⁵⁹Manuscript is distinguished from the more usual cursive style in that "the letters are separate and resemble printing or the lettering of architects and engineers." (letter to Mr. Ralph Rockwood from Carleton Washburne, June 12, 1939. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.)

priority item of the curriculum.¹⁶⁰ Upon his return to Winnetka, Washburne provided his faculty with the manuscript materials that he had brought back with him from England. In 1924 manuscript was introduced into the second grade "and carried up the grades with that and succeeding classes."¹⁶¹ It was "being taught in comparatively few schools in this country when it was adopted in Winnetka."¹⁶² By 1937 Washburne was able to report that "manuscript writing has made its way into the primary grades so positively and with such a weight of scientific evidence in its favor that a discussion of its merits at that level is no longer

¹⁶⁰"I've always found it hard to get enthusiastic about the art of penmanship. I've been content if children could write legibly and rapidly. Ours can do that. My own laxness in this regard is reflected in the system. If the Board really wants us to take the time for it, we can have a drive that will shoot the quality of our penmanship upward. We're trying, even now, to improve it. I'm hoping that the manuscript writing will solve the problem for us in the future." (C. W. Washburne, "Response to the informal criticism of various members of the Special Committee on Education, as included in the stenographer's transcript of the meeting of December 7, 1925, and to the questions previously raised by President Ballard," Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 [April 1923 - April 1927], June 10, 1926, p. 998-1.)

¹⁶¹Letter to Members of the Board of Education from C. W. Washburne, May 8, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁶²S. R. Logan, "Writing in the Winnetka Schools," in the Superintendent's Reports, vol. 8 (March 1943 - June 1945), January 15, 1945, p. 4084.

necessary."¹⁶³ There seems to have been little disagreement among educators "that it had been shown quite conclusively that manuscript writing in the primary grades is a material aid to learning to read;"¹⁶⁴ or that there was evidence from both English schools that had "been using manuscript writing for the last ten or fifteen years, and in those American schools which during the last decade have been gradually introducing manuscript writing" that "the letter forms are made more carefully and more distinctly if they are first made separately as in manuscript, and later connected."¹⁶⁵

The subject of manuscript writing in the Winnetka Public Schools became a controversial one, not for its introduction into the primary grades--but because neither Dr. Washburne nor his staff could see any necessity for the pupils to learn a cursive style in addition to the manuscript acquired in the lower grades: "Why should a pupil who has been taught to make neat,

¹⁶³C. W. Washburne and Mabel Vogel Morphett, "Manuscript Writing--Some Recent Investigations," The Elementary School Journal, vol. XXXVII, no. 7 (March, 1937), p. 517.

¹⁶⁴Letter to Mr. Owen W. Middleton from Carleton Washburne, October 11, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁶⁵Letter to Mr. Frank S. Whiting from Carleton Washburne, October 31, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

legible manuscript-letter forms, change to cursive writing? In a test given to junior high school pupils, the quality of writing in the manuscript papers was far better than that in the cursive ones, and the speed was nearly equal."¹⁶⁶

In 1929 the first of the manuscript-writing pupils began to enter the New Trier Township High School. The New Trier faculty at first refused to accept assignments written in the manuscript penmanship style; Dr. Washburne, then, wrote the principal: "Since our children do the manuscript writing at fully as rapid a rate as the average child can do cursive script, and since it is much more legible, won't it be possible for your English Department to co-operate by accepting neat, legible, rapidly written manuscript, instead of demanding that children learn a whole new type of writing?"¹⁶⁷

Finally, as the election of 1933 approached, manuscript writing became involved as one of the several issues of the campaign. One of the points raised by

¹⁶⁶Jeannette Baer, "Manuscript Writing," a paper prepared for the Winnetka Parent-Teacher Association, circa, fall, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁶⁷Letter to Mr. Frederick Clerk from C. W. Washburne, September 9, 1929. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Dr. Charles Galloway in a speech¹⁶⁸ was that there was some evidence to suggest that printing slowed the mental processes.

Following this criticism, the manuscript issue was a perennial problem through the remainder of the Washburne superintendency. It was, in fact, in response to the opposition that following the 1933 elections, Washburne introduced cursive as an elective once the pupils had thoroughly mastered the manuscript style.¹⁶⁹

Down through the years, manuscript writing probably was the single most criticized aspect of the Winnetka curriculum. Its criticism appears from this perspective to have been entirely out of proportion to the more or less inconsequential nature of the issue. To this researcher, Washburne's maintenance and defense of manuscript also appear out of proportion to the issue. Persons interviewed about the Winnetka curriculum under Washburne are quick to criticize

¹⁶⁸ Transcript precis of speech delivered by Dr. Charles Galloway at opposition meeting, March 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁶⁹ Letter to parents from C. W. Washburne, October 5, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

manuscript penmanship.¹⁷⁰ A dissertation which reported the way graduates of the Winnetka Public Schools evaluated their educational experience¹⁷¹ reported that Winnetka graduates "expressed almost complete inadequacy" regarding the handwriting program. In fact, "fifty-seven per cent of the graduates indicated that they received unsatisfactory instruction in the Winnetka Public School handwriting program."¹⁷² (*Italics in original indicating a categorical response.*)

Even former board President Ernest Ballard¹⁷³ raised a stir over the question of manuscript in 1935. In a response to the board, Washburne underlined at least one rationale for the maintenance of manuscript: "We are trying to give children the best education we can, and we certainly don't want to waste time in making

¹⁷⁰Mrs. Virginia Holdredge, a former pupil of the Winnetka schools and current teacher at the Skokie School, Winnetka, in a conversation in October, 1969 considered manuscript as a handicap; Mrs. Luella Murray, whose children formerly attended the Winnetka Schools, now herself on the staff of the Department of Educational Counsel, spoke of manuscript as her single objection to the Washburne curriculum.

¹⁷¹Benedict J. Surwill, Jr. The Graduates of the Winnetka Public Schools Evaluate Their Elementary and Junior High School Experiences, an unpublished dissertation, submitted in the School of Education, Boulder: The University of Colorado, 1962.

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁷³See, for example, letter to Clarence Randall from E. S. Ballard, April 19, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

them go through long and unnecessary labor to get a less desirable product when there are so many other things that we would rather be teaching them."¹⁷⁴

The two most commonly raised objections to manuscript were (1) that manuscript did not allow for individualism, and (2) that a manuscript-signature was not a legally valid one.¹⁷⁵ "When a member of the Winnetka Board raised this [first] question, we simply fastened up on the walls of the room where the board met thirty or forty samples of junior high school writing in the Winnetka schools. This demonstration completely disposed of the question, as a similar observation must to any openminded observer." Regarding the second criticism, Washburne wrote a parent that "legal opinion has repeatedly asserted that a manuscript writing signature, if the usual signature of the signer, is a valid signature on checks and all other legal documents."¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴Letter to Members of the Board of Education from C. W. Washburne, May 8, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁷⁵Washburne and Morphett, art. cit., p. 528.

¹⁷⁶Letter to Mr. Ralph Rockwood from C. W. Washburne, June 12, 1939. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.--There seems, nonetheless, to have been some validity to this criticism. In a conversation, October, 1969, Mrs. Virginia Holdredge recalled that the Winnetka State Bank had refused to accept her manuscript-signature. Rather, it was insisted that she devise a cursive signature before opening an account.

In 1940 a columnist¹⁷⁷ for the Chicago Daily News, in his column, challenged the value and practicality of manuscript.¹⁷⁸ "It struck us with considerable horror, intellectually speaking, for while the fad will do no particular harm in Winnetka, where children are all from thoroughly literate families and will learn to read and write outside school if necessary, the example is likely to do cruel damage if adopted by educational faddists in ordinary communities."

Washburne carried on a lively correspondence with Mr. Munger in an attempt to make a convert of him. "The sole argument against manuscript writing is the fallacious assumption that it is slower than cursive. Evidence both in England and this country is overwhelmingly against this assumption,"¹⁷⁹ was only a small part of Washburne's initial reaction to Munger's column. Washburne, however, never convinced Mr. Munger;¹⁸⁰ needless to say, neither was Washburne particularly swayed.

¹⁷⁷Royal F. Munger, in the Column "'Old Bill' Suggests."

¹⁷⁸Loc. cit., Tuesday, October 29, 1940.

¹⁷⁹Letter to Mr. Royal F. Munger from C. W. Washburne, November 1, 1940. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. Subsequently published in the November 13th issue of the Chicago Daily News.

¹⁸⁰Cf., letter to Carleton Washburne from Royal Munger, November 27, 1940. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

It is perhaps evidence of Washburne's tenacity and educational leadership that the Winnetka public schools still maintain manuscript writing until the sixth grade.¹⁸¹

The Social Studies

Almost from the beginning of the "Washburne era," the social studies curriculum in Winnetka differed radically from the more traditional social studies curricula across the nation.¹⁸² The reasons for this deviation from the more standard approaches were rooted in two principles of Washburne's educational philosophy. These principles might be briefly stated as: (1) the principle of functionality, and (2) education for world-mindedness. The first of these principles applied

¹⁸¹Mr. Robert Filbin, current superintendent of the Winnetka Public Schools, indicated in an interview (December 15, 1969) that he was seriously considering bringing the Winnetka Public Schools in line with the more common practice of maintaining manuscript only through the first two or three grades.

¹⁸²In a letter to the publisher of the Winnetka social science materials, Dr. Washburne wrote: "You realize of course, that the material does not follow the traditional American course of study as outlined by one of the old N.E.A. committees [Ours] gives much more emphasis to world history than has been done in the past, but leaves the latter part of the sixth and all the seventh and eighth grades for American history as related to world history." (letter to Mr. E. C. Buehring [Rand McNally & Co.], March 29, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.)

equally to all curricular subjects; the latter applied more peculiarly to the social sciences.

The principle of functionality, in its most concise statement, insisted "that we have no right to induce a child to acquire any knowledge, skill, or convention which we are not reasonably sure, from objective evidence, will be used by him" ¹⁸³ Application of this principle to history, for example, demanded the determination of "what facts, names and places are of so much importance to everyone that a person [would] be handicapped without them." ¹⁸⁴ The first long-term research project that the Winnetka teachers engaged upon was just this: to determine the functionality of facts, names, and places in history. Every Wednesday evening for two years--1921 to 1923--the teachers met in seminar groups to consider this aspect. The teachers made a "detailed analysis of all allusions to persons, places, and events in fifteen of the most widely read newspapers and magazines, scattered through a period of years from 1904 to 1922." ¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³Carleton Washburne, A Living Philosophy of Education, p. 223.

¹⁸⁴Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 78.

¹⁸⁵"Summary of Talk by Superintendent Carleton Washburne before the American Legion Monday evening, April 17, 1933." Revised June 1, 1938. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools, p. 2. For the complete text of this talk see Appendix E, pp. 321-326.

Once these allusions to events, persons, and places--throughout the world and across the ages to the dawn of civilization--had been gathered, some organizational strategy had to be adopted. Washburne chose well the person for this task; she was Louise Mohr, "a woman of profound scholarship and of great skill in writing things interestingly for young children."¹⁸⁶ Because the approach differed so radically from common practice in the social studies, it was necessary to prepare materials from scratch. Miss Mohr began preparing study pamphlets for the social studies classes. Her work represented "the first actual text book material on world history and geography that has become available."¹⁸⁷ Pamphlets in the series included: "Our Earth and its Place in the Sky," "Early Civilizations," "Story of the Romans," "Egyptians of Long Ago," "Crete and Greece," and several others. "The whole series gives the story of mankind more fully, more authentically, and in simpler more dramatic style than anything that has yet been published."

It was the second principle: education for world-mindedness, however, that some Villagers found particularly offensive. Following the First World War,

¹⁸⁶Ibid.

¹⁸⁷Letter to Mr. E. C. Buehring from Carleton Washburne, March 29, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

many Americans were prepared to retreat into a kind of isolationism: Woodrow Wilson was unable to convince a Congress of the desirability of membership in a League of Nations. A Bolshevik revolution in Russia had cautioned the industrialist and the financier. The American middle class leaned heavily to the right. Yet Washburne had a different set of ideals--and these ideals reflected themselves in the social studies curriculum:

At all times the fundamental purpose of the course is to awaken children and students to the realization that we are all members one of another, that the long-run good of the individual is inextricably bound up with the long-run good of society. Society is not made up of isolated groups today. It is an organic, worldwide whole. Its organic nature and its world extent are a reality. Except as we act and live in accordance with this reality we fail to act and live wisely. The end result of each child's total experience and learning in the comprehensive field of social science should be the realization that, in the long run, his good is the world's and the world's good is his own.¹⁸⁸

Needless to say this philosophical principle was hardly popular during this era, but particularly was this so in a community of industrialists and financiers such as was Winnetka. Mention had already been made of the allegations during the School Board election of 1933 that Communism was being taught in the schools

¹⁸⁸Washburne, A Living Philosophy of Education, p. 423.

and that Dr. Washburne, himself, was a Communist.¹⁸⁹
 These allegations dogged him throughout the remainder
 of his superintendency.¹⁹⁰

Through the course of the Washburne era, the
 Winnetka post of the American Legion took a concerned-
 interest in the social science curriculum in the
 Winnetka schools. In ways subtle--and not so subtle--
 the Legion attempted to have a hand in shaping the
 content of the American history course. Dealing with
 the American Legion put the administration's diplomacy
 and tact to the test. For example in 1931,¹⁹¹ the
 chairman of the Legion's Americanism Committee suggested
 that the Legion sponsor an essay-writing contest "on
 some subject connected with American politics or
 history."¹⁹² The reply to the Legion was cool:

If the competition is merely announced and
 not pressed, so that it is purely voluntary, I
 see no objection to undertaking it which would
 not be outweighed by its advantages. Of course,
 the product will be childish at this level. In

¹⁸⁹Cf., supra, p. 65.

¹⁹⁰During this era many persons prominent in the
 progressive education movement were the objects of
 irresponsible allegations concerning communism. See
 Appendix F in this regard--particularly pp. 350-352.

¹⁹¹Washburne was on his study-tour of the world
 at this time: the matter was handled by S. R. Logan,
 Acting Superintendent of Schools.

¹⁹²Letter to S. R. Logan from Edward R. Lewis,
 April 16, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public
 Schools.

the high schools the children are much more ready to express themselves in formal writing on these matters.

It has been suggested that the purpose might better be accomplished by turning the project over to the Scouts and Campfire Girls. They represent high school as well as eighth grade ages, and they are already committed to the use of medals and competition. Our teachers would gladly co-operate with advice and encouragement and would accept the work done by the children in that connection as school work.¹⁹³

The Legion attempted several other intrusions into the curriculum such as suggesting that "this year it is desired, if possible, to have all the school children in the village participate in the [Memorial Day] parade,"¹⁹⁴ or that on Armistice Day, the Legionnaires might come over to the school and "instruct our boys on the lowering of the flag and blowing of taps."¹⁹⁵ Responding to this offer, Washburne was courteous, but clear: "If we find that this is desirable, we shall be very glad to take advantage of your offer and shall again communicate with you."¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³Letter to Mr. Edward R. Lewis from S. R. Logan, April 18, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁹⁴Letter to S. R. Logan from Edward R. Lewis, May 15, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁹⁵Letter to Mr. Francis E. Phelan (Commander, Winnetka Post No. 10) from C. W. Washburne, November 6, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁹⁶Ibid.

Washburne, concerned by the long-standing insinuations and mistrust of the history curriculum on the part of the American Legion, accepted their invitation to speak on "the Teaching of History in Winnetka."¹⁹⁷ His speech to the Legion was a well-reasoned, but hard-hitting, if-the-shoe-fits-wear-it kind of talk. In it he left no ambiguity as to where he stood on the subject:

Breadth of attitude is likewise necessary if our children are effective members of American society. There are two kinds of patriotism and two kinds of internationalism. The narrow, bigoted kind of patriotism is at swords points with the diffuse sort of internationalism which fails to recognize one's responsibility to one's own nation. But there is another kind of patriotism which includes a recognition of the fact that America is not isolated, that its well-being is bound up with the well-being of other nations of the world.

The provincial, prejudiced, narrow form of patriotism which distorts facts to make tin gods of our heroes, which arrogantly claims America to be the best in all the world in all respects, which disregards the rights and the contributions of other nations, has no place in education. But to fail to have our children recognize that their first duty is at home, to fail to have them recognize that we are primarily citizens of the United States with direct social responsibility to our country, to fail to give them an abiding love for this country and a reverence for the ideals which have gone into its making, would be to fail in transmitting to them their heritage.

True patriotism realizes that for the well-being of our own nation we must co-operate unselfishly and understandingly with other nations of the world. It is not opposed to internationalism, but is a part of a wise internationalism

¹⁹⁷April 17, 1933.

which recognizes the place of national loyalties and of the responsibility of each citizen toward his own nation. We must recognize that if America is to make her contribution to the world, we must make America as fine and as great as possible.¹⁹⁸

The Winnetka social studies curriculum relied heavily on all manner of reference materials. Washburne once estimated that "a complete list of all historical reference material in which assignments are made from time to time . . . would be a list of 200 or 300 titles" ¹⁹⁹ Occasionally one or another of these "references" would be discovered by a parent on a witch-hunt; sometimes quite a row would ensue. The reader may recall previous mention in this chapter of Washburne's removal of M. Ilin's New Russian Primer from the shelves of the Skokie library on the insistence of an irate parent.²⁰⁰ Washburne defended the use of widely-differing kinds of reference materials:

. . . textbooks are not used as they once were as a body of gospel truth to be memorized by the child. In modern schools we are trying to train children to think honestly for themselves and to pierce propaganda . . . in the textbook . . .

. . . . We must above all things avoid the techniques of Russia and Germany, where history is

¹⁹⁸"Summary of Talk by Superintendent Carleton Washburne before American Legion Monday evening, April 17, 1933." Revised June 1, 1938. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools, (an excerpt). For the full text of this talk see Appendix E, pp. 321-326.

¹⁹⁹Letter to Mrs. Byers (Mary) Wilcox from C. W. Washburne, October 7, 1937. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

²⁰⁰Cf., footnote on p. 64.

deliberately twisted to give the children the ideology held by those who are in control of the schools. The job of history is not to give any ideology, not even our own beloved American ideology. It is to give an honest, unbiased statement of facts, a clear light on problems, and a stimulus toward thought.

This being the case, I know of no textbooks in use in any of our public schools which could possibly be considered subversive. There are many textbooks which contain statements and interpretations with which both you and I would disagree, but that is wholesome provided the child is likewise invited to agree or disagree in light of the best evidence available.²⁰¹

Despite Washburne's cogent arguments for variety in viewpoint among the several social studies references, ill-feeling still arose over one title or another. Once when Huberman's We, The People was standing trial before the Education Committee of the school board, Washburne agreed that any assignment in that book would be "counterbalanced" by "one or more suitable references on the same subject handled from the more traditional standpoint."²⁰² In making such a concession, however, Washburne could not suppress the further comment:

. . . I wish that it were practicable for us similarly to see that for each chapter of historical material and each bit of historical fiction which children now read and which assumes

²⁰¹Letter to Mr. R. Worth Shumaker (National Americanism Commission: The American Legion) from C. W. Washburne, February 12, 1941. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

²⁰²Letter to Mrs. Byers (Mary) Wilcox from C. W. Washburne, October 7, 1937. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

the traditional interpretation and emphasis in American history, we might have a counter-balancing chapter or book presenting the material from the liberal or even the radical angle. Then we might indeed feel that we were avoiding all indoctrination. As things stand, I think we will have to be frank in admitting that in spite of our best efforts and because of the dearth of suitable material based on a more economic, or more realistic, or more socialistic interpretation of history, our children are being indoctrinated, not only by the home and the community, but by the school itself, on the conservative side.

The Community as Individuals

If Washburne had any weakness in dealing with the community, it was in his encounters with the community-as-individuals. It was not so much that he was tactless--rather, it was more a function of his brilliant intellect and his determined will. His mind leapt--"he thought in paragraphs"²⁰³--and he had the capacity to grasp the radical elements of a situation almost instantaneously, often before a parent had been able to formulate in his own mind the fundamental issues in question. Washburne's arguments were examples of sheer logic. He thought fast and he spoke fast.²⁰⁴ When he often felt that he had sent away a parent convinced of his viewpoint, he had

²⁰³Interview with Mrs. Rose Alschuler--the founder and supervisor of the Winnetka Nursery School--December 13, 1969. (For more information about Mrs. Alschuler see AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE, p. 274.)

²⁰⁴Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

actually just rendered him speechless--overwhelmed by the force of Washburne's cogent, logical arguments. Apparently, many parents, after a conference with Dr. Washburne "didn't feel any different except that they might have been a little madder."²⁰⁵ One parent, in a letter to the Board President complained:

To speak perfectly frankly, my present feeling is that I have wasted my time in trying to approach Mr. Washburne with my criticisms. His gift of words is so extensive and his tact and plausibility so extraordinary that after our recent meeting I felt much as I did after hearing W. J. Bryan talk for two hours, dazed but in great doubt as to what had happened.²⁰⁶

And another parent wrote:

But, parents have warned me that one may talk and talk and get nowhere, in the attempt to change anything in the Winnetka Public Schools. Is that a just charge?

I feel that our schools are advertising their merits all over the world. And we parents are staying patiently at home trying--(by home-work) --to correct the mistakes of the Winnetka School System. This parent is awfully tired of it!²⁰⁷

Whatever fault there was in Washburne's relations with individual parents must have resided in the fact that he was more-or-less unaware--or at best puzzled

²⁰⁵Ibid.

²⁰⁶Letter to Ernest Ballard from A. D. Jenkins, January 31, 1926. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

²⁰⁷Letter to Ernest Ballard from Mrs. Albert (Grace) Veeder, February 3, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

by--the reactions that he prompted within these parents. It was probably not until the School Board election of 1933²⁰⁸ that Washburne was actually appraised of the magnitude of this problem. At that time, Board President Randall wrote him a word of advice in dealing with parents:

You must learn to listen. Parents come out of conference with you unsatisfied, and for that reason many parents stay away. Your extreme facile mind recognizes the question while it is still half framed in the mind of the timid mother, and your quick reply leaves her dazed. It is not until she gets out that she is able to think what she wishes she had said. A studied humility and simplicity of expression would help in these situations.²⁰⁹

Washburne replied to Mr. Randall:

I am doing my darnedest to learn to listen. . . . How without being a hypocrite, one can give a parent a feeling of satisfaction, when that parent is absolutely determined upon a way which after most careful consideration seems to be fundamentally wrong, is an extremely difficult problem. It is, however, one with which I am wrestling. I agree with your suggestion in regard to a studied humility of manner and simplicity of expression.²¹⁰

In short, within Washburne were coupled a strict integrity and a straight-forward manner of expression. This did not always result in the best of public

²⁰⁸Cf., supra, pp. 58-84.

²⁰⁹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, April 13, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix C, pp. 301-303.

²¹⁰Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, May 4, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix C, pp. 306-308.

relations. In a position paper, Washburne wrote that "the parents should feel perfectly free to go to the school authorities in a spirit of friendly co-operation, to point out the apparent failure of the school in regard to this child, and to offer to co-operate with the school in bringing about a satisfactory adjustment."²¹¹ Though, he went on to point out that

the bigoted parent, on the other hand, the parent who feels that he knows more about the running of schools than does the professionally trained educator, the parent who insists upon his own particular educational theory is a problem with which every school administrator has to deal. If such a parent is educable of course he should be educated. Frequently, however, he is not educable and all the administrator can do is to give him courtesy, listen open-mindedly for any grain of truth that may be in his generalized statements, and forget the rest.

Most importantly, perhaps, Washburne (perhaps better than the school board--or other parents) realized that whatever his approach to the matter of public relations, he could never satisfy everybody: "In every community there are some parents who are extremely conservative, others who are extremely progressive, up to the point of being educationally radical. No school system can possibly satisfy the

²¹¹C. W. Washburne, "The Parent and the Public School," article manuscript (circa, 1933). Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

demands of both extremes. It is well for parents to realize this."

The foregoing remarks should not be construed to imply that all, or even most of Dr. Washburne's contacts with individuals were negative encounters. One parent wrote during the heat of the '33 election campaign:

Personally I know nothing of teaching but if children grow up with the self-reliance, poise, and self-confidence which the Winnetka schools seem to instill in our boys as well as those of our acquaintance attending the same schools, I think the school system is to be highly commended.²¹²

Washburne actually enjoyed many close, interpersonal relationships among members of the community. Immediately following that same election, Randall wrote: "I have yet to find anyone who has had an opportunity to work intimately with you that does not both respect and like you, and those who have taken up the personal cudgel are principally those who have no acquaintance with you at all."²¹³

In point of fact, parents often moved to the Village of Winnetka solely--or at least in part--because

²¹²Letter to C. W. Washburne from Arthur J. Roth, April 4, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

²¹³Letter to C. W. Washburne from Clarence Randall, April 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix C, pp. 304-305.

of the reputation that the Winnetka technique had gained.²¹⁴ Individual parents, also, were responsible for carrying out educational programs that would not have been feasible without the kind of individual support that was rendered. Examples would include, of course, the \$60,000 donation of the Louis B. Kuppenheimers to build the assembly hall for the new Skokie School²¹⁵--or the Hibbard family's gift of the \$20,000 gymnasium at the same school. Mrs. Rose Alschuler represented a much deeper kind of personal immersion in the Winnetka educational program. In 1928 together with her husband, she did donate the money²¹⁶ to build an additional wing on the Skokie School to house the Nursery School and the Department of Educational Counsel.²¹⁷ More than this, however, she was co-founder with Washburne of the Winnetka

²¹⁴E.g., C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 3 (April 1927 - September 1930), February 13, 1930, p. 1600. Also in a conversation in December, 1969, Mrs. Luella Murray relates that her husband insisted on moving the family to Winnetka after he had addressed the student body at Skokie. The students had full charge of that program and comported themselves so well that Mr. Murray wanted his children to have the benefit of the Winnetka schools.

²¹⁵Cf., supra, p. 41.

²¹⁶About \$30,000.

²¹⁷Mr. Alfred Alschuler also served as architect for the new wing.

Nursery School and was, for many years, its supervisor.²¹⁸

Mrs. Alschuler was more than merely another member of the staff; she was Washburne's colleague and confidante in all matters educational.²¹⁹

Another parent²²⁰ convinced Dr. Washburne to establish a new kind of primary experience for first and second graders on an experimental basis. It was to be an activity curriculum and "would involve many excursions, projects, and other forms of group and individual enterprise, freed from formal drills or formal requirements, the teacher bringing in only such reading, writing, and arithmetic opportunities as are the natural outgrowth of the activities."²²¹

There were then parents who were progressive-minded, and parents who threw their entire support behind the Winnetka educational system. Indeed, Washburne

²¹⁸Interview with Mrs. Rose Alschuler, December 13, 1969.

²¹⁹He relied on her completely for the establishment and organization of the Nursery School (letter to Mr. B. G. Eberle from C. W. Washburne, May 26, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.) He consulted her about the Department of Educational Counsel (letter to Mr. A. K. Stern from C. W. Washburne, May 23, 1928. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.) And, finally, he confided in her his plans for the Graduate Teachers College (letter to Mrs. Alfred Alschuler from C. W. Washburne, September 14, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.)

²²⁰Mrs. Walter (Katherine) Fisher.

²²¹A petition to the Winnetka Board of Education, July, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

and the Winnetka schools had their critics; nonetheless, it would be only a half-truth were his strong, loyal supporters not mentioned as well.

Recapitulation

In the preceding pages, some of Washburne's encounters with the community have been detailed so there might emerge from them aspects of his leadership in relationship to the community.

Early in his tenure, Washburne was faced with a Winnetka divided over the question of a school site. He had inherited the problem from a previous Board of Education and superintendent; nonetheless, he determinedly set forth to convince the community of the educational advantages of a centralized school and the feasibility of the Skokie site. It was, in a sense, his trial-by-fire. He probably emerged from this encounter tempered but stronger.²²² During the community fracas over the school site, Washburne demonstrated organizational skills of leadership by counterbalancing the Winnetka School Association with his own Committee of 100 and by the well-planned organization of the subscription drive. During the

²²²This must remain conjectural, however, for the correspondence files are sparse during these early years of Washburne's superintendency. Most of the information concerning the Skokie School controversy was garnered from the local newspaper, The Winnetka Weekly Talk.

campaign he also evinced great skill in using the local press to his best advantage and recognized the importance of educating the community and keeping it well-informed. Finally, he utilized a measure of diplomacy in handling the compromise situation that arose with the Winnetka School Association.

In the challenge to his superintendency in 1933, Washburne once again underlined his organizational strategies and the use of personal contacts provided by the village-wide canvass technique. The quality of leadership that stands out most significantly, to this writer, in the Campaign of 1933, is the personal equanimity with which Washburne encountered bitter personal criticism and unfounded rumor. One of his close associates remarked that "never through the campaign did he criticize anyone of the opposition. He was always generous in judgment toward others."²²³ Undeclared by the opposition, Washburne was able to admit whatever there was of weakness in his relationship with the public and set about to alter his image--to try to make himself better understood by the community and, at the same time, to make an attempt to better understand the attitude of the community toward the Winnetka technique. This writer is convinced

²²³Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

that the community's attempt to oust Dr. Washburne during the School Board election of 1933 was at once a great personal disappointment to him, the source of the greatest challenge of his entire superintendency, and a lesson to him in community relations.

With regard to the curriculum, Washburne once again revealed leadership qualities in his relations with the community. In introducing sex education--the first public school to do so at the elementary level and in a community that was basically conservative in attitude at that--Washburne relied heavily on the approach of community education. Of no less importance was his unflinching conviction in the face of opposition.

This same brand of determination is evident in dealing with critics of manuscript writing. His arguments for the retention of manuscript were logical, plausible, and persuasive. Here again, Washburne, manifested a modicum of compromise in introducing cursive as an elective in the face of growing opposition.

In the name of the social studies curriculum, Washburne was required to exercise his diplomatic skills in dealing with pressure groups such as the American Legion. He proved himself able to fend them off without at the same time openly antagonizing them. Once more he compromised on the textbook issue rather than risk the possibility of some imposed textbook

restrictions. The mere fact that he was able to maintain a social studies curriculum that was liberal in approach in the Village of Winnetka must be something of a testimonial to his leadership qualities.

The least of Washburne's strengths seems to have been in individual contacts with parents. He was, perhaps, too quick to use logic, too ready to quote statistics, too apt to refer to the results of experimental studies--when the parent, indeed, preferred to talk about "Johnny" or "Ann" in a way that was illogical and non-statistical because colored by parental concern. On the other hand, he did have the ability to utilize community resources to the advantage of the public schools. The school district benefitted immensely from personal contributions generously donated at the request of Dr. Washburne; the schools benefitted, too, from the personal involvement of persons such as Mrs. Rose Alschuler whose association with the schools came directly through contact with Carleton Washburne.

Qualities that stand out in Carleton Washburne across all his dealings with the community must include a strong, personal conviction about the direction of the Winnetka Technique; the ability to make his position plausible, and even convincing, although a great ideological gap might have existed between himself

and the community; the diplomacy that goes with making tactful compromises; and, finally, an equanimity or greatness of soul that was able to prosper in spite of maliciousness and hatred.

CHAPTER III

WASHBURNE AND THE SCHOOL BOARD

"For my own self-respect and for my own real usefulness as a citizen, I have to be able to stand squarely for the things in which I believe."¹

¹Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, April 8, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Introduction

In an article Washburne once described what the relation between superintendent and school board would be in an ideal situation. In such a setting, the school board would determine, in most general terms of policy, the direction that the schools under their charge would take; the board, then, would elect a superintendent who would have the requisite professional and technical skills to implement such an educational program that would embody the board's more general policy.

Once the board had elected such a superintendent, "[it] would ideally leave all professional questions to him--the selection, promotion, and dismissal of teachers; all matters having to do with curriculum, textbooks, and methods; all matters having to do with the detailed administration of the school system--buildings and grounds, finance, records, etc."² Washburne saw the superintendency, then, as a strong executive position. It was for the board to put its complete confidence in the superintendent whom it had hired; if it lost its confidence in him, then its recourse would be to remove the superintendent and

²Carleton Washburne, "Democracy in School Administration," School Management, vol. 7., no. 7 (March, 1938), p. 205.

find another.³ In fact Washburne remarked that one of the responsibilities of the superintendency was "to see that the board did not step out of its role and interfere with the detailed administration of schools, or try to substitute lay judgment for the professional decisions of the teaching and supervising staff of the schools."⁴

If the board had what might be considered a proper role in the administration of schools then it lay in the board's "visiting the schools and talking with the superintendent and principals, learning as much as they can about what the schools are trying to do, familiarizing themselves with educational literature, and preparing themselves to act as interpreters of the schools to the public and of the public to the schools."⁵ Washburne saw himself as principal mentor of the board. A newly elected member of the board received a letter of welcome from Dr. Washburne. "I wonder if you wouldn't like to do a little reading in regard to schools in general and the Winnetka schools

³Carleton Washburne and Sidney P. Marland, Jr. Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 149.

⁴Ibid., p. 149.

⁵Carleton Washburne, "What is Progressive School Administration," Progressive Education (April, 1935). Reprint, p. 4.

in particular," he would write. "Each member of the Board of Education usually takes on a bit of self-education along this line."⁶ Moreover, this reading program was in no way haphazard. Materials would be forwarded to the new member one by one: "I think it better to feed things to you one at a time than to give you an armful of literature and have you sit discouraged in front of the pile."⁷ On the back page of each "assignment" was an addressed postal card that the member would mail to Dr. Washburne "as an indication that you are ready for your next dose."⁸

In addition to this short-course in progressive education, Washburne also took new members of the board "on a day visiting tour of the schools."⁹ Washburne often urged the board to hold "educational meetings" in addition to the regular board meetings--in fact at one time he attempted to have the board meet twice a month: once to conduct the usual business of the district and again to discuss matters of an educational

⁶Letter to Mr. Richard Aishton from Carleton Washburne, March 20, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁷Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, January 22, 1930. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Letter to Mr. Richard Aishton from Carleton Washburne, March 20, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

nature. The board often wasn't able to find the time for these extra meetings. It was something of a disappointment to Dr. Washburne that the board didn't take more interest in such meetings.¹⁰ So, too, did he often urge board members to attend educational meetings and conventions, such as his suggestion in 1939 that

it would be a fine thing if some members of the Board would go at Board expense to the Progressive Education convention in Detroit. It is an excellent opportunity to become familiar with the broad educational trends of our country. There is a special train late Thursday afternoon, reaching Detroit Thursday evening, with a round trip fare of \$8.55. I shall be glad to make arrangements for any Board members wishing to go. It is quite customary for members of Boards of Education to attend conventions of this sort.¹¹

Despite his careful indoctrination of new board members, there were times when individual members of the board disagreed with Washburne over the respective roles of school board and superintendent.¹² Washburne

¹⁰Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, May 26, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹¹C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 6 (June 1937--March 1940), January 24, 1939, p. 3078.

¹²For example at the expiration of Mr. Randall's Board presidency, Washburne wrote: "You and I have clashed at times. I don't think we ever fully agreed on the theory of the relation of School Boards and superintendents. But our disagreements were always frank and they were always based upon mutual confidence in each other's sincerity and right-mindedness." (Letter to Mr. Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, May 15, 1936. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.)

"had many battles with the board; these were, however, always the clashes of opinions among people holding a common ideal but differing as the ways of realizing it."¹³ Notwithstanding, board members manifested an intense loyalty to Dr. Washburne when they acted as interpreters to the community. There was apparently a "high mutual respect"¹⁴ and a genuine friendship between board members and superintendent. Board President Randall once wrote to him: "I have yet to find anyone who has had an opportunity to work intimately with you that does not both respect and like you."¹⁵

During the beginning years¹⁶ of the Washburne superintendency there is ample evidence that the relationship between board and superintendent was consonant with Washburne's philosophy. The board gave him free rein in terms of "professional and technical" matters. In 1925¹⁷ the board challenged this relationship and attempted to interfere with certain curricular

¹³Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 148.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, April 14, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁶1919 - 1924.

¹⁷Cf., infra., pp. 130-154.

aspects and detailed policy of the Winnetka technique. The matter was brought to a crisis-stage; it was analogous to a contest of stares, and the school board blinked first.

Following the election of 1933,¹⁸ the board saw in their election a mandate from the community to exercise more direct influence in the direction of the Winnetka technique. It was about these later years of his superintendency that Washburne would say of the board: "I learned much from the Board of Education and was kept from letting my enthusiasm carry our program forward too fast for assimilation by the community."¹⁹

Board members of the Winnetka School district fairly represented the somewhat conservative character of the Village. There were, then, inevitable ideological clashes from time to time. Some of these clashes will be recounted in more detail within.²⁰

The Distribution of Functions

The Beginning Years

The board had sought out Carleton Washburne to be superintendent of its schools through Frederick Burk,

¹⁸Cf., Chapter II, pp. 57-83, and Chapter III, pp. 161-166.

¹⁹Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 149.

²⁰Cf., infra, pp. 170-184.

president of the San Francisco State Normal School. The job had sought the man and, as a consequence, bargaining power was on his side. Moreover, Washburne was able to keep it that way for the first several years of the superintendency.²¹ In order not to make too youthful an appearance on his first interview with the Winnetka Board of Education, Washburne grew a

²¹Washburne's early intentions in taking the Winnetka superintendency were to stay only long enough to implement the individual technique and then to go on to some other sort of position such as the deanship of a college of education or the presidency of a normal school. He had brought Willard Beatty out to Winnetka from the staff of San Francisco State Normal School to serve as assistant superintendent. His original plans included passing the superintendency to Beatty when the individual technique had once become established.

The Board, on its part, was most desirous of retaining the services of Dr. Washburne; this fact kept all the bargaining power on Washburne's side for the first several years of the superintendency. When Washburne sought a four months' leave of absence in 1921-22, the Board was happy enough to comply, with the proviso that Washburne pledge the Board another full year of service. Once that proviso expired, the Board passed a resolution that "Mr. Washburne's salary beginning January first 1924 be raised from \$5,400 per year to \$6,000 per year, that on September first 1924 this salary be raised to \$6,600, and that on September first 1925 it be raised to \$7,000, provided that Mr. Washburne will pledge himself to stay with the Winnetka Board of Education until June 1926." (Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 8 [October 14, 1920 - December 15, 1926], December 13, 1923, p. 102.) Carleton Washburne accepted the Board's offer under the terms "that the present educational policy of the Board of Education will be continued during the period of employment stated in the offer of the Board . . . and that general policies be modified only on recommendation of the superintendent." (C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 [April 1923 - April 1927], January 16, 1924, p. 627.)

moustache.²² In negotiating with the board, he acquired such fringe benefits as moving expenses for himself and family, and a Ford touring car for the use of the superintendent.²³

Apparently the school board of 1919 gave Dr. Washburne a virtual carte blanche in the implementation of an experimental curriculum and educational system in the Winnetka schools. Washburne made it his policy never to miss a board meeting.²⁴ From the outset Washburne shaped the direction of the board meetings.

²²Typically enough, this came to light when Washburne's daughter, Margaret, in a class discussion period told her classmates and teacher that "my daddy shaved off his moustache because he got the job." (Interview with Miss Marion Carswell, December 12, 1969.)

²³No expenditure was authorized for the Ford according to the Board Minutes; it appears to have been a sub rosa purchase. Therefore, it must have been to everyone's embarrassment when, only six months later, on December 8, 1919, the Ford was stolen from the Grant Park garage even though "it was doubly locked." (Superintendent's Reports, vol. 1 [June 1919-April 1923], December 11, 1919, p. 47.) The Board then ratified the purchase of a used Ford with the insurance money from the Ford that it had never officially purchased in the first place!

²⁴If Washburne found himself with a schedule that conflicted with one of the regular board meetings, he often requested the Board to meet at another time (e.g., cf. Superintendent's Reports, vol. 6 [June 1937 - March 1940], January 24, 1939, p. 3080.) With the exception of his leaves of absence (in 1921-22, 1931, and 1940)--and excepting the several meetings he was specifically requested not to attend (cf., supra, Chapter II, p.81), Washburne probably missed no more than a dozen or so of the monthly Board meetings during the twenty-four years of his superintendency. Even then he was generally represented by assistant superintendents Willard Beatty (early years) and S. R. Logan (later years).

He prepared the first of his Superintendent's Reports²⁵ for the June, 1919 board meeting. In the years that followed, Washburne prepared such a report prior to each meeting of the board. In these reports, he detailed the financial aspects of the district, the month-to-month operations of the school, matters of staffing and professionalism, and any other aspects--significant or otherwise--that he thought should be brought to the attention of the board. In concluding each report, he enumerated a set of proposals upon which he sought Board authorization. The school board of 1919 officially "expressed its appreciation"²⁶ for the first of Dr. Washburne's reports. Through the early years, the board basically served to "rubber-stamp" the suggestions of the superintendent.²⁷

The Crisis of 1925

In April of 1925 Mr. Henry had a conference with Willard Beatty, principal of Skokie school and assistant superintendent of the Winnetka schools,

²⁵During the course of Washburne's twenty-four year tenure, these reports came to fill seven volumes which contain 3832 typescript pages.

²⁶C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 1 (June 1919 - April 1923), June, 1919.

²⁷One need only compare the Minutes of the Board with the Superintendent's Reports during these early years to see that most of Dr. Washburne's recommendations were accepted, unaltered, by the Board.

concerning his son, Henry Jr. He confronted Beatty with a battery of complaints. When Beatty denied him the sympathy to which he felt entitled, an irate father sought out Board President Ernest Ballard, denounced the whole Winnetka technique, and took Henry Jr. out of Skokie. The encounter unsettled Mr. Ballard; upset, he requested that Washburne recapitulate the father's criticisms and answer them in light of the theory and philosophy of the Winnetka technique.

Since it was Beatty who had been directly involved in the altercation, Washburne relied on him to furnish the Board President the information he had requested. Mr. Beatty wrote a six page letter²⁸ to Ballard in which he both recounted the father's major arguments and took up his each complaint in turn, answering it as completely as he could. According to Beatty, the parent frankly admitted that his son was both lazy and dull; however, it was precisely on these terms that the man felt that the Winnetka technique had failed his son. He argued that the system lacked both incentive and the mechanics for forcing the kind of student that Henry Jr. was.

²⁸Letter to Ernest Ballard from Willard Beatty, April 20, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

The Winnetka schools, through the introduction of the individualized materials, had virtually eliminated failure by grade. Mr. Henry retorted

that he thought it was a healthy thing when he was in school to be stared in the face by mid-term examinations and to know that failure in them meant degrading and repetition of the grade, that because of the fear of such disgrace boys of his day worked much harder than boys do today, that he felt that it was just exactly that kind of experience that would be necessary to get the proper response from Henry.

The man further complained that there was no home-work, children were not kept after school, and that teachers gave the pupils a complacent attitude by accepting work of a poor quality. Still other criticisms levelled by Henry's father were that the Skokie School lacked disciplinary standards, "that the children can get by with anything," and that there were no effective means of disciplinary control.

In conclusion, Mr. Henry contended that not enough time was being spent on essentials, and "that on a test of general information, Henry had proved himself woefully ignorant of things which were a matter of general knowledge to children of his age and grade in Mr. Henry's own youth."

The remainder of Beatty's letter not only answered these criticisms but, moreover, stood as an apology for the Winnetka technique, particularly as it operated in the Skokie School. Beatty argued that the school did

not force children because it was trying to develop the kind of self-reliance that a person needs in his mature life.

Life is very seldom at a man's heels continuously. In maturity a person is constantly meeting opportunities for choice, in which wrong choices are sometimes made, and in which the price of wrong choices must be paid.

As far as his conception of the essentials went, Beatty insisted that it was too narrow. A real education must include much that is of a social nature as well. "If Mr. Henry is content with the three R's, I think he is doing Henry an injustice--but it is no criticism of us that we decline to accept his measure."

As far as Washburne was concerned, once Beatty's report had been submitted the matter was closed. But as events were to prove, it was only the beginning of a power struggle between the board and Washburne. The superintendent was apparently caught completely unaware when at the board meeting on May 14, 1925 Board President Ballard formally submitted to the Education Committee of the board a series of questions which embodied the major criticisms raised the previous month by Henry's case. Ballard charged the committee to consider and answer at the following board meeting the following six questions:

1. Under the Winnetka system what incentives to work has the competent but unwilling pupil?

2. Can any incentives to work be provided beyond those now existing without violating such educational principles, and if so, what are they?
3. What system of punishment have the Winnetka Schools for infraction of discipline other than neglect of work?
4. What additional forms of punishment could be provided for the purpose of correcting the faults of the offender as distinguished from protecting his fellows from disturbance?
5. Under the Winnetka system are any of the common essentials omitted from the curriculum, and if so what are they?
6. How much time per school day is devoted to the common essentials?²⁹

The Education Committee, which was commissioned to study and answer these questions, was composed of Mrs. Moulton, chairman; Mr. Edmonds; and Mrs. Lieber.³⁰ President Ballard also appointed Mrs. Blatchford as a special member³¹ to the committee during the consideration of these questions. The Education Committee, as a committee of the Board of Education, was initially appointed by Ernest Ballard on June 7, 1923³² soon after his election as Board President. The function and purpose of this committee was antithetical to

²⁹Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 8 (October 14, 1920 - December 15, 1926), May 14, 1925, p. 152.

³⁰Ibid., April 16, 1925, p. 148.

³¹Ibid., May 14, 1925, p. 152.

³²Ibid., June 7, 1923, p. 91.

Washburne conception of the school board's proper role. Washburne insisted that subjects of proper concern to the school board were matters legal and financial; whereas, educational concerns were properly handled by the superintendent and his professional staff.³³ It is apparent that during the first two years of its existence, the Education Committee had rankled Superintendent Washburne more than once by its attempted interference into educational questions and policy which Washburne considered his proper role and exclusive domain.³⁴

At the board meeting in question, however, in charging the committee with a study of these questions, Ballard remarked that he was not particularly interested in Washburne and Beatty's answers to these questions (for these he already knew from Beatty's lengthy letter in April), but rather desired that the committee work out its own answers to the questions in order "to help [Washburne and Beatty] to solve the problems raised in them."³⁵

It was to this last remark that Washburne reacted most strongly. He felt that if the committee were left

³³Cf., supra, p. 122 ff.

³⁴Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, May 18, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

³⁵Ibid.

unchallenged in discharging President Ballard's mandate that a "dangerous precedent" might be established by which the board would gain more and more control over the educational and professional matters confronting the schools. In a firm, but courteous, letter to Ballard written four days after the board meeting, Washburne candidly stated that the Board was not competent to undertake the solution of such problems as those raised in Ballard's questionnaire.³⁶ It was well enough and very desirable that the board consider the questions raised if the board's purpose were to inform itself of the principles involved in these questions; in fact, it was even remotely possible that the committee's investigations might produce some "useful sidelights." Furthermore, Washburne remarked that "we who are studying the problems are eager for any light that may be shed by any person or any incident." The major thrust of his letter, however, was the following:

Now the problems are basically technical. They are problems of discipline and incentive on which courses are offered in our Normal Schools and universities and on which educators are spending their lives. They go down to the basic laws of psychology and the methods of applying these laws to the educative process. During the recent years their study has resulted

³⁶Ibid.

in marked changes in school procedures--changes still in the making. In their detailed application to the Winnetka system, they are problems to which Mr. Beatty and I and our entire faculty have given close study and attention over a period of years. We have not solved them. We have reached partial solutions; each year we approach a final solution somewhat more closely, although it is still a long way off. The problems are in their very nature problems which must be solved by years of study in close touch with many actual cases and by people especially trained for such work.

For the Board, through its committee, to attempt to solve these problems for us, or to share to a considerable extent in their solution is for it to undertake work for which it has employed us and for which it has neither the time, the opportunity, nor the training requisite.

Ballard, in his turn, responded to the superintendent:

It probably goes without saying that I would prefer to dismiss incidents like that of Henry from my mind and reply to the comments of parents that the question is a technical one which the Board considers you and Beatty entirely competent to deal with . . . such a stand . . . would probably result eventually in an opposition school board ticket running on a platform hostile to you.³⁷

Ballard defended his action in charging the Education Committee with the study of his six educational questions on the grounds, in the first place, that he wanted to get satisfactory, practical answers to questions such as those raised by the Henry incident, and he saw

³⁷Letter to Carleton Washburne from Ernest Ballard, May 22, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. This statement of Ballard's has something of a prophetic quality about it when viewed in light of the later events of the 1933 school board election (cf., supra, Chapter II, pp. 57-83).

the committee as a means of getting a knowledgeable layman's viewpoint after the committee had made "as exhaustive, intelligent, and sympathetic an investigation as they are capable of making."

In stating his second objective in framing his questionnaire and in giving it over to the committee, Ballard was no less firm and no less candid than Washburne had been:

The second object of the questionnaire is to ascertain whether there are not now certain improvements and changes which you yourself will acquiesce in. Certainly you do not wish and cannot afford to take the position that the Board should not at all times examine in the most thorough and critical manner every aspect of the Winnetka system. This is what every Board worthy of the name in every line of endeavor does and the mere fact that the questions involve technical aspects of the business does not render them improper. Any technical employee must at all times be ready and able to justify his theories fully to his employers. (Italics added.)

Ballard's concluding remark was not lost on Washburne; neither, however, did it make him back down. He responded once more to Ballard with a cordial, but firm, reply.

As you know, I have urged in vain educational meetings of the Board, at which we could take up in a thorough-going way the underlying principles of what we are doing, and in which I could try to give the Board as complete an understanding as possible of what we are trying to do. This is not the same thing, however, as the statement made in the Board meeting and hinted at in your phrasing of your second object of the questionnaire, to-wit,

that the Board's committee is to help us solve our technical problems.³⁸

At the board meeting in June,³⁹ the Education Committee made a tentative report in reply to the questionnaire which President Ballard had asked them to consider. "This report was ordered placed on file and the committee was requested to continue its investigations and make a progress report in September⁴⁰ and a final report later in the fall."⁴¹ Washburne made no comment of record on the tentative report submitted by the committee at the June meeting, and-- while only conjectural--it may be that Mr. Washburne felt that the whole matter would lose much of its impetus and intensity over the summer holiday. If so, Washburne failed to take into account the tenacity of both President Ballard and the committee chairman, Mrs. Alice Moulton.

When, in September, classes resumed, the Education Committee was on hand to begin a systematic visitation of classes which was to continue into the first eight

³⁸Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, May 26, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

³⁹Minutes, vol. 8, June 11, 1925, p. 157.

⁴⁰There is no mention of this progress report in the September meeting of the School Board. (Minutes, vol. 8, September 18, 1925, pp. 159-161.)

⁴¹Minutes, vol. 8, June 11, 1925, p. 157.

weeks of the school year.⁴² Apparently, virtually every teacher received at least one visit from the committee during its investigations. When the committee finally did submit its informal report at the December meeting⁴³ of the Winnetka Board of Education, these visitations formed the basis on which the report was prepared.

In addition to classroom visitations, the committee also conferred with parents⁴⁴ who were disgruntled about one aspect or another of the Winnetka technique. It is common knowledge among schoolmen that it is easy enough to find some dissatisfaction with even the most generally satisfactory of systems--due at least in part to the vast individual differences that exist among both school children and their parents. Differences exist not only in interest, aptitude, and ability but also even in basic orientation and ideology. So, instead of providing satisfactory answers for questioning parents, the

⁴²Carleton Washburne, "Response to the informal criticism of various members of the Special Committee on Education, as included in the stenographer's transcript of the meeting of December 7, 1925, and to the questions previously raised by President Ballard," Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), June 10, 1926, p. 998-f.

⁴³"Stenographer's Transcript of Meeting of a Special Committee on Education, Winnetka Board of Education, Held at Skokie School, Winnetka, Illinois on December 7, 1925." Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 2.

Education Committee was precipitating a crisis by the appearance of encouraging and inviting criticism of the Winnetka technique.

On December 7, 1925, the Education Committee presented the results of its several months of study to the board, Mr. Beatty, and Mr. Washburne. Owing, perhaps, to his legal background, Mr. Ballard conducted the meeting after the fashion of a courtroom hearing. It was almost as if the Winnetka technique of individual instruction were on trial. There was a stenographer on hand to record the proceedings, and Mr. Ballard charged the committee members to

talk very fully and frankly and right from their hearts as to what they have found, even though they are not clear in their own minds. None of this will go outside the Board, and if we are going to give the superintendent and assistant superintendent the help they are entitled to, and do what we can for the schools, we all of us have got to be absolutely frank and candid and full in what we say.⁴⁵

He then advised Washburne and Beatty that they would have the "opportunity at the close of each person's report to ask all the questions they want to in order to develop fully what they have said." But he further stated that "it would be a waste of time for them to make an explanation or justification. So I want all of that postponed."

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 3.

The report itself was quite lengthy⁴⁶ and a perusal of the document reveals that most of the study was conducted by the committee's chairman, Mrs. Moulton, and it was from her that most of the criticism came.⁴⁷

Criticisms in the report ran all the way from the allegation that some teachers "excessively physically handled" the children⁴⁸ to the general complaint that "we as a nation lack clear speech and fine writing"⁴⁹ to the specific accusation that "Roderick McKenzie does not get as much out of his lessons as his parents think he should."⁵⁰

Among other criticisms were that "there is a spirit of flippancy at times among some children and

⁴⁶51 pages of stenographic transcript.

⁴⁷Mrs. Moulton's report to the Board comprises pp. 4-37 of the stenographic record.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 14. Under direct questioning by Dr. Washburne, Mrs. Moulton related an incident about one teacher when "one of her children came in to tell her something that had happened on the playground. She put her arm around him, put her hand on his shoulder, and then fondled his head and talked to him. She straightened him out and sent him back to the playground." (Ibid., p. 27.) Upon a further question from Mr. Washburne as to how widespread she found this "excessive handling," Mrs. Moulton replied: "I have the feeling that every room I would go into I would feel that occasionally the teacher would handle the children." (Ibid., p. 29)

⁴⁹Washburne, "Response to the informal criticism . . .", p. 998-k.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 998-j.

. . . the question is raised . . . as to whether the Winnetka methods are not partly responsible for it."⁵¹ Individual instruction, perhaps, bore the brunt of the attack. Among the points that were raised were the following: that some children waste time; that some do inaccurate work without adequate checking; that individual instruction lacks inspiration and vivid response; that there is no opportunity for creative thinking; and, finally, that slow children are sometimes discouraged.⁵²

The methods of primary education and, particularly, first grade in the Winnetka system came in for the wholesale disapproval of the Education Committee. The feeling of the committee "seems to be that these grades are too lax, too indefinite, too individual, that they lack pressure, and especially that the standards are too low."⁵³

Still other criticisms included in the report were that children do not learn how to study,⁵⁴ that some teachers don't speak loud enough,⁵⁵ that penmanship

⁵¹Ibid., p. 998-b.

⁵²Ibid., p. 998-d.

⁵³Ibid., p. 998-f.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 998-i.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 998-k.

is poor school-wide,⁵⁶ and that some teachers do not read aloud as well as they should.⁵⁷

It is difficult to know the mood of the Education Committee as it delivered its report. Mrs. Moulton protested at the outset of her report that "any criticism is based on appreciation of the schools and all the efforts in the schools."⁵⁸ It seems doubtful, however, that--from the type of criticisms raised--the spirit of the criticisms was actually as disinterested as the chairman maintained.

Of all the board members, Mrs. Gertrude Lieber alone had tenure that extended back to the hiring of Dr. Washburne. When her turn came to speak, she came to his defense:

What I am going to bring is not a criticism at all . . . While Mrs. Moulton was talking I was thinking. Eight years ago, when we were looking for a new superintendent . . . it was the definite understanding that the board was just as interested in this individual system, and it was with the definite understanding that it be tried out.

.

Upon the whole, Mr. President, I am just as proud as I can be of the Winnetka schools. I feel we are not absolutely perfect, but I don't

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 998-1.

⁵⁸"Stenographer's Transcript of Meeting of the Special Committee on Education," p. 5.

believe we will find work that is done any better
anyplace else.⁵⁹

Shortly following the December board meeting in which the Education Committee presented a critique of the Winnetka technique, President Ballard received a letter from A. D. Jenkins⁶⁰ objecting strenuously to the methods employed in teaching arithmetic in the Winnetka schools: "I feel that a great deal too much emphasis is placed on written work and that the very great repetition of phraseology and form of question produces a parrot-like response in the child, and the answer is obtained without the slightest idea of the process involved."

Jenkins went on to suggest to Ballard that the board "should see to it that such changes are made in the method now employed in the teaching of this subject as may be necessary to accomplish better results." Jenkins concluded his letter with the mention of four other parents dissatisfied with the Winnetka course in arithmetic; conspicuous among those was former Board President, Mr. Laird Bell.

Ballard forwarded Jenkins' letter to Washburne and requested that he read it "carefully and with an

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 39, 42.

⁶⁰Letter to Ernest Ballard from A. D. Jenkins, December 9, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

open mind."⁶¹ After remarking that the letter confirmed much of the Moulton Report, Ballard stated: "I have arrived at the conclusion, at least tentatively, that we will have to make some changes in the manner of teaching arithmetic."

It is evident that Ernest Ballard, as a boy, had never stood in the middle of a pasture and waved a red flag at a bull; or, if he had, he had either failed to learn an important lesson, or lacked the insight to see this as a parallel situation. In any case, Washburne's irritation began to show through at this point. In his response,⁶² Washburne opened with the following remark: "I wish you wouldn't arrive at even tentative conclusions on the basis of a complaint, however intelligent the person is who makes that complaint." He stressed the need for scientific analysis; he mentioned in passing his work with the Committee of Seven; finally, "to shift from one method of teaching to another on the recommendation of laymen, no matter how intelligent and earnest, would be worse than folly."

⁶¹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Ernest Ballard, December 10, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁶²Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, December 11, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Still courteous, but no less firm, Ballard continued his correspondence with Washburne:

Up to the present time I have firmly believed that our system of instruction was the best humanly possible in the present state of the art. This belief resulted from a conscientious and thorough examination of the subject from the theoretical side and was so strong that I have all along been inclined either to ignore criticism or assume that it was not well founded. The situation has reached a point now, however, where I am bound to admit to myself and bound to say to you, if I am to have any regard for the success of the system that the present methods of instruction in arithmetic are not in my opinion as good as is humanly possible to make them in the present state of the art.⁶³

As to Mr. Washburne's comments on the necessity of scientific analysis and his work with the Committee of Seven Ballard stated: "we are not conducting a laboratory on the subject of educational methods, except to the extent that it is a necessary and legitimate part of a practical school system."⁶⁴

⁶³Letter to Carleton Washburne from Ernest Ballard, December 16, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁶⁴Ibid. The question of educational research was one over which Ballard and Washburne held antithetical viewpoints. In a letter to a Board member who had suggested cutting the research funds from the budget, Superintendent Washburne candidly stated his position on the research question: "Incidentally," he wrote, "the research end of education is the part that I am interested in and is the reason that I am in Winnetka. If I were interested primarily in administration, I would want a larger place. As you know, I have refused larger places and larger salaries repeatedly. I have done this because I felt that there was in Winnetka an opportunity to solve educational problems more successfully than in any place I knew of. My interest is in education in general, that is in finding ways of

It is clear from the last paragraph of Ballard's letter that a power struggle between board and superintendent was being brought to a stage of crisis:

Please let me have a written report on the question of instruction in arithmetic about a week before our January meeting including (1) a brief description of the present method; (2) a statement of the grounds upon which it has been conscientiously criticized in Winnetka; (3) full references to technical authorities in support of it; (4) your proposals for immediate changes, if any; (5) your proposals for ultimate changes, if any.

Washburne lost no time in preparing this requested report for Ballard.⁶⁵ In his reply, he attempted to be objective and realistic. He wished to emphasize, once again, that the question of methods and other professional matters were better left in the hands of the professional staff rather than in a board which has "neither the time, the opportunity, nor the training requisite."⁶⁶

educating boys and girls to make them more fit citizens, more efficient men and women, persons with greater breadth of view, greater sense of social responsibility than the present generation. I am so keenly aware of my own ignorance as to the best means of doing this that I must carry on investigations which will give me some light. That's why I am in the school business and that's why I am in Winnetka, and that's why I consider research one of the last things which I should consent to having cut from our budget." (Letter to Mr. Barret Conway from Carleton Washburne, June 3, 1926. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.)

⁶⁵Report to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, December 19, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁶⁶Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, May 18, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

He underlined the professionalism which undergirded the Winnetka technique:

Our methods in Winnetka are the outgrowth of my own thirteen years of teaching experience, Mr. Beatty's twelve years' experience, the experience of many of our teachers, the reading of various technical books, keeping in touch with articles in at least four technical journals, and the Year-books of the National Society for the Study of Education, attendance at lectures at educational conventions over a period of years, and many informal conferences with leading educators in different parts of the country.⁶⁷

As to proposed immediate and long-range changes in the arithmetic curriculum, Washburne insisted that the program was ever under the closest scrutiny of both the teachers and the administration and that the arithmetic "methods are undergoing constant modifications on the basis of practical, daily experience, and on the basis of careful scientific research, both on our own part and the part of others."

Washburne's report to Ballard, while certainly full and objective, lacked his usual spontaneity and warmth. It, too, lacked the smug firmness of his earlier letters to the board's president. His deep distress over the developing events was only hinted in the report when he remarked: "part of the research which I wish to carry out . . . if I continue in the Winnetka schools,

⁶⁷Report to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, December 19, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

is to deal with questions of grade placement and methods in arithmetic." (*Italics added.*)

In another letter to Ballard⁶⁸ written the same day, Washburne expressed the feeling that Ballard's confidence in him "has been gradually diminishing during the past two years." Washburne continued that in view of the loss of confidence on the part of the President of the School Board--and particularly if the loss of confidence was shared by the rest of the Board--he felt that he must tender his resignation as Superintendent of Schools, effective September first, 1926.

Ballard's reply to Washburne was quick and contrite: "I am very much disturbed by your letter," he wrote, "and feel greatly at fault in having let you misunderstand my attitude, which is exactly the reverse of what you suppose."⁶⁹ He invited Washburne to his home the following Monday evening for a "heart to heart talk." Exactly what transpired at that conference is not known. However typed across the top of Washburne's letter of resignation is the following notation: "After personal conference letter retracted."⁷⁰

⁶⁸Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, December 19, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁶⁹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Ernest Ballard, December 20, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁷⁰Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, December 19, 1925. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

The furor stirred up over arithmetic methods was to carry on over the next several months. Ballard came to rely more and more on Washburne in replying to the critics. Early in January, 1926, Washburne wrote Ballard and concluded with the following comment on the Education Committee's report: "I am going to take the Moulton report with me on the train going east next week, and analyze it in detail, so as to be ready to prepare the answer for it on my return."⁷¹

In the April agenda contained in the Superintendent's Reports,⁷⁵ Washburne reported that both he and Beatty had carefully studied the Moulton report. "I am not sure that we shall be able to get our completed reply in shape for this Board meeting, but if not, it should certainly be ready for the next one." The reply was not ready for the April Board meeting; conjecturally, at least, a report at the May meeting would have been a tactical error--for it would have given the opportunity to the Education Committee of responding in June without leaving Washburne an opportunity for a final rejoinder before the schools closed for the summer. Therefore, to keep the tide of time flowing to his advantage, Washburne waited until the June meeting for his response to the

⁷¹Letter to Ernest Ballard from Carleton Washburne, January 11, 1926. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁷²Loc. cit., April 16, 1926, p. 965.

committee's report. It appears to have been a strategic choice for the following reasons: (1) it allowed a six-month cooling-off period from the presentation of the initial report; (2) it didn't give the Education Committee the advantage of the last word; and, (3) it afforded another cooling off period of about three months--the length of the summer vacation.

Washburne's report⁷³ began in his own inimitably politic style:

In going over the report we have been impressed by the painstaking, conscientious work of the committee, its fair mindedness, and its constructive purpose. While in the following pages we point out certain facts which we believe may modify some of the impressions gained by the members of the committee, and while we frankly disagree with their point of view in certain places, we do not want to have it felt that we are trying to defend ourselves against an attack. The Committee's Report is not an attack and this is not a defense. We are grateful to the committee for its work, and we have profited by a number of its suggestions.

If the report is studied, a reader can note the tendency for Washburne to destroy the Moulton Report by rendering it absurd through an overemphasis of the "petty" criticisms in the committee's report such as the criticism that some teachers do not read aloud as well as they should--Washburne's reaction: "I guess there's no doubt about that. Teachers perfect in every

⁷³Washburne, "Response to informal criticism" pp. 998-a--998-t.

respect don't exist."⁷⁴ Similar was his reaction to the criticism that penmanship was poor: "I've always found it hard to get enthusiastic about the art of penmanship. I've been content if children could write legibly and rapidly. Ours can do that."⁷⁵

Proposed changes that he envisioned as a result of the Moulton Report magnified, once again, the petty aspects of the report and made it further appear to have been an exercise in absurdity. Washburne mentioned several positive actions initiated as a result of the committee's investigations: "We have watched to see if we could find cases of teachers handling children too much so that we might eliminate such excess handling;"⁷⁶ and, "the particular teacher who was reported as not talking loud enough has been spoken to";⁷⁷ and, finally "Roderick McKenzie has been made case of special study, and his problems as nearly solved as circumstances will allow."⁷⁸

Washburne had won. He demonstrated by implication and inference that not only was the Education Committee

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 998-1.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 998-s.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid.

incapable of solving the professional and technical problems of the schools, but--more importantly--they were incapable of even identifying problems of any significance. The Moulton Report, representing several weeks of intense work by the Education Committee, was destroyed as immensely naive by Superintendent Washburne--and done with so much finesse that exception could hardly be taken.

At least by May, 1926, Washburne knew that he had won--and that without loss of face or power. In the agenda for the May board meeting, Washburne reminded the Board to "re-appoint" him, superintendent, for the coming year: "for the sake of the records, it would probably be well to elect a superintendent for next year. The present incumbent has no objection to being considered for the position."⁷⁹

World-Study Tour, Campaign of
1933, and Later Years

In the spring of 1930, Washburne applied to the board for

a leave of absence next year from the beginning of the Christmas vacation, December 19th, 1930, until the opening of school the following autumn, for the purpose of travel and study. Eight years ago the Board gave me such leave for four months. The result, I believe, has justified the trip in educational advantages to the Winnetka Schools.

⁷⁹Superintendent's Reports, May 20, 1926, p. 987.

My own horizon was greatly widened and the development of the group and creative activities in the Winnetka Schools since that time is partly a result of that experience. I feel that a more extensive trip, delving deeper into the philosophy and purposes of education as conceived by the leaders of educational thought in the principal countries of the world, will make me a more competent leader in the development of Winnetka's educational programs in years to come.⁸⁰

The board granted Washburne's request and his world study-tour took him to the orient, western Europe, Russia, and India.⁸¹ Winnetka, along with the rest of the country, was in the grips of the depression. The community was highly critical of Dr. Washburne over this leave of absence and it was up to the board members to defend his untimely and unpopular trip. In March of 1931 President Randall held meetings in the Hubbard Woods and Horace Mann Schools⁸² to explain the purpose and reasons for Dr. Washburne's study-tour. Following one of these talks, a Villager wrote Randall:

Personally, I am sold on the way you are handling the school problems and I am going to do all that I can in my small way to defend your position. You have convinced me that a man like Dr. Washburne, who apparently puts every ounce of his strength and ability into his work, cannot continue to grow and expand without something of

⁸⁰C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 3 (April 1927--September 1930), April 15, 1930, p. 1666.

⁸¹Cf., supra, Chapter II, pp. 59 ff.

⁸²Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, March 31, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 288-290.

this sort from time to time, and that our village is more than repaid by having the benefit of his added experience and increased enthusiasm, but I am afraid a goodly number of our citizens are looking at it from a different viewpoint.⁸³

Just prior to such a meeting for the Greeley parents, a news item appeared in the Chicago Tribune which described Washburne as appearing before Gandhi wearing a Hindu loin cloth and a Gandhi cap.⁸⁴ And although the report concerning the loin cloth was false "the accounts of the Gandhi incident have given people an excuse for speaking their minds and I have scarcely met anyone from Winnetka within the past few days who has not referred to it, usually in very caustic terms."⁸⁵ Mrs. Frances Murray, acting principal of the Greeley school that year⁸⁶ recalls how upset Board President Randall was over the news item;⁸⁷ he called at her office before the parents' meeting. She told him that the report had to be in error; however,

⁸³Letter to Clarence Randall from Fred W. Loco, March 19, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁸⁴Cf., supra, Chapter II, pp. 60 ff.

⁸⁵Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowan Brown (board member), April 2, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 291-292.

⁸⁶Florence Brett, Greeley principal, had accompanied the Washburne's on their world tour.

⁸⁷Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

"in his heart he didn't believe me. I could have just killed him." "I was proud of him at the meeting, though," she remembers, "because once there he fought like a tiger for Carleton."

Immediately following that meeting, though, the board president dispatched a cablegram which said in part "keep your pants on"⁸⁸ and followed it with a lengthy letter, both calculated to chasten the absent superintendent. In speaking of the news accounts, he wrote: "The publicity value comes, if you will pardon me for saying so, not so much from the fact that Carleton Washburne appeared in a Hindu loin cloth, as from the fact that this costume was worn by the head of the schools in the proud suburb of Winnetka."⁸⁹

Randall's admonition continued:

I write you with entire frankness as I know you would want me to, and would like to suggest that you keep in mind in your further experiences that it is not possible for you to disassociate yourself even when on leave of absence from the fact that you are our Superintendent, and to have before you the thought that whatever is dramatic and bizarre in publicity about yourself tends, in my opinion, to reduce your effectiveness in our schools.

⁸⁸Interview with Frederick Reed--teacher and principal in Winnetka during the Washburne years--February 24, 1970. (For more information about Mr. Reed see AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE, pp. 277-278.)

⁸⁹Letter to Carleton Washburne (addressed to Jerusalem) from Clarence Randall, March 31, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 288-290.

Board member Robert Brown took the occasion to add his own words of advice concerning Mr. Washburne's leave: "It is my own personal feeling that our cause in Winnetka will be best furthered if there is no further publicity given to your movements during the balance of the time you are away. I am writing in a very frank vein because I know that you appreciate as well as any of us the local situation and the danger signals which come up periodically."⁹⁰

Washburne received the letters from Randall and Brown in early May. Since "except for the cap, I of course wore ordinary American or European clothes--I never thought of such a thing as wearing Indian dress."⁹¹ Washburne was sure that Randall's reference to the loin cloth was a facetious one. "I might as well suspect you and Ballard and Bell⁹² of walking arm in arm down State Street with nothing on but a pair of bloomers!"⁹³

⁹⁰Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowen Brown, April 2, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 291-292.

⁹¹Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne (en route Jerusalem to Cairo), May 8, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 293-296.

⁹²"You [Clarence Randall],[Ernest] Ballard, and [Laird] Bell," the three board presidents with whom Washburne had worked.

⁹³Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne (en route Jerusalem to Cairo), May 8, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 293-296.

"I am very sorry that any of my activities have embarrassed you and other members of the Board. I shall certainly do my best to avoid further publicity-- I had no desire for what I got."

Board members expressed something akin to sheer relief upon receipt of Washburne's letter: "Clarence Randall showed me your letter last evening, written on receipt of his and mine concerning the Ghandi [sic] incident, and I can't tell you how glad I was to get it," wrote Robert Brown. "Your letter, together with the last one from you and Mrs. Washburne jointly, gives us the facts about your thrilling and altogether wonderful visit to Ghandi [sic], and disproves, of course, the foolish Tribune account."⁹⁴

Randall hastened to assure Washburne that "my reference to the loin cloth was by no means facetious. That was the point of the whole story from the newspaper point of view, and it is that which has become a byword in Winnetka. I suspect that some of the newspaper men whom you met casually double crossed you in a very unethical way because they saw an opportunity for a

⁹⁴Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowen Brown, June 1, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

sensational story."⁹⁵ In his letter, the board president went on to add a note of caution:

I am very much impressed with the tone of your letter, and I am sure I need not caution you on extreme care in any statement that you may publish or that you may give by way of lecture when you return. A chance word lifted from its context might do us a great deal of harm. If you would like to have me for your own protection, I will be glad to read in advance any manuscripts that you propose to publish but I offer this merely as a suggestion as I have entire confidence of your good judgment.

So far as lecturing is concerned, we must also recognize that our malcontent element are expecting you to absent yourself from the schools a great deal during the coming winter, and that the best possible refutation of the things that they are saying will be for you to throw yourself completely into the routine work of the schools as soon as you return. Of course, I know that you will do this.

The Gandhi incident was inherently only a matter of trifling significance--a bit of journalistic elaboration to sell copy. Nonetheless, coming at a time when "probably the temper at home this year has something to do with their reactions. Business is rotten; many people are living on considerably reduced incomes; nerves are frazzled; and anything which is the least bit off the usual routine comes in for its share of comment and criticism,"⁹⁶ and when resentment

⁹⁵Letter to Carleton Washburne (addressed to Vienna) from Clarence Randall, May 29, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁹⁶Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowen Brown, April 2, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix B, pp. 291-292.

had already begun to grow up about Washburne's trip, the incident has "given people an excuse for speaking their minds . . . I do not believe there has been any time since I have been particularly interested in the schools, when there has been more criticism, latent and spoken, than there is now." The ill-will toward Carleton Washburne engendered over this incident was a contributing factor in the growing opposition to both him and the Winnetka technique which was to culminate in the hotly contested school board election of 1933.⁹⁷

Since the events of the 1933 school board election have been detailed elsewhere in this paper,⁹⁸ it would be repetitious to recount them here. The election did, however, change the relationship that had hitherto existed between Washburne and the school board. During the battle for re-election, the incumbent school board declared, as a part of its platform, to "survey the school system with an open mind, retaining always what is best and striving constantly to improve it."⁹⁹ Following that hard-fought election, the board was less inclined to give the superintendent the full

⁹⁷Cf., supra, Chapter II, pp. 57-83.

⁹⁸Cf., supra, Chapter II, pp. 57-83.

⁹⁹"An Open Letter to the Opposition Candidates for the School Board" (a paid advertisement), Winnetka Talk (April 6, 1933), p. 18.

executive power in all "professional and technical matters" that he had exercised through the early years. There was a definite feeling on the part of the board--and some segments of the community¹⁰⁰--that the favorable vote for the incumbent school board represented more faith and confidence in the board members than in the superintendent. Randall, writing Washburne soon after the election said in part:

I am firmly convinced in my own mind that if the opposition had been well led by striking personalities, who had wide influence in the Village, the result would have been far different As I have said to you in conversation, I think you are prone to underestimate the proportion of the vote which constituted an expression of confidence in the candidates as distinguished from vindication of yourself personally or of the schools.¹⁰¹

Randall chided Washburne for frequently acting without first consulting the board: "I have felt that you were apt to talk with me only after the thing in question had been done. I am very sensitive on the whole subject of public relations, and am entirely willing at any time to assume responsibility for decisions, if I may be consulted in advance." "Self-satisfaction is so close to self-confidence that

¹⁰⁰Cf., supra, Chapter II, p. 80.

¹⁰¹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, April 13, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix C, pp. 301-303.

sometimes one follows the other before we know it," the board president continued, "I should like to see us reconsider everything searchingly in the light of the recent public criticism with an honest willingness to re-model the structure wherever there is a weakness." The closing paragraph of Mr. Randall's letter indicated unequivocally that Carleton Washburne's definition of the board's functions and its relationship to the superintendency would no longer maintain:

Those of us who have just been elected feel that we have a special responsibility to the people, and if differences of opinions should arise we shall expect you to accept our decisions with loyalty, but we have the highest regard for your ability, both professionally and administratively, and we want to join with you in doing the best possible job for the schools in the Village. (*Italics added.*)

This sense of responsibility that Randall felt to the community was heightened when he received letters from the electorate such as the following that he received sometime after the election: "I was very glad to have talked with you the evening before the school election, and to have had your assurance that you and the other members of the board would give serious consideration to modifying the school system as it now exists."¹⁰²

¹⁰²Letter to Clarence Randall from Martha F. Rankin, May 21, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Randall responded to this attitude among Winnetkans and announced an informal "meeting without you [Washburne] or any member of your staff present, to be held in each school building as soon as possible in an effort to let people get their ideas off their chest."¹⁰³

While Washburne respected the board's wishes that he not attend the special meetings, he did have stenographic transcripts made of their proceedings.¹⁰⁴ In June of 1933,¹⁰⁵ he attempted to answer the major points raised by the critics of the schools, and, at the same time, offer an apology for his administrative philosophy. Washburne maintained that

one cannot deal with the public without making some enemies and without the disapproval of many of one's acts by even highly intelligent persons. The opportunistic politician is able to carry the masses pretty well with him, but is despised by thoughtful and intelligent persons. A superintendent in Winnetka who stood still or who was conservative would be criticized by a very large part of the community. After all, Winnetka had such a superintendent and got rid of her. Winnetka had a moderately progressive superintendent, who lacked aggressiveness and moved forward slowly, and got rid of him. Winnetka has upheld the present administration for fourteen years. There were in the opposition exceedingly few persons who have

¹⁰³Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, April 13, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix C, pp. 301-303.

¹⁰⁴Cf., C. W. Washburne, "Opposition Criticisms," Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930-February 1934), June 13, 1933, p. 2258.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

standing in the community and who have an intelligent understanding of educational problems.¹⁰⁶

In answering the critics, Dr. Washburne reaffirmed his position concerning the need for professional judgment and research as opposed to responding to community pressures for change: "The problems . . . are technical problems, involving research, technical knowledge, training and experience. They are problems that have to be attacked scientifically, rather than in response to popular demand."¹⁰⁷

At the meetings arranged by the board to accept criticisms of the school, a number of parents requested the board to discharge Washburne and employ a new superintendent. Washburne, however, insisted that

the outstanding fact is that the people elected a Board of Education in whom they have confidence. It is for the Board to have confidence in the superintendent, rather than for him to be subject to popular election. It was the Board that was elected, not the superintendent. But if there were strong, widespread disapproval of a superintendent, a Board which persisted in employing him would not have the confidence which the people showed in their overwhelming vote for the present board members.¹⁰⁸

And, finally, he reassured the Board that while "perfection in our schools is impossible of attainment

¹⁰⁶Washburne, "Opposition Criticisms," loc. cit., p. 2270.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 2275.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 2272.

. . . the Board may look with entire confidence, based on our record of the past fourteen years, to a consistent and intelligent improvement."¹⁰⁹

While Dr. Washburne never retracted nor reformulated his theory of the functions of the Board of Education and its relationship to the superintendency, the last ten years of his Winnetka tenure lacked the spontaniety of the early years. Few curricular or organizational changes were made in these years. While, indeed, much of the stability of these later years probably resulted from the working out to his satisfaction of the Winnetka technique, nonetheless, there is ample evidence that through the later years the school board exercised a tighter rein over its superintendent.

Early in 1940¹¹⁰ Washburne was defending his budget before the board with his characteristic vigor. One of the board members accused the superintendent of being uncooperative with the board. He was both angered and hurt by the accusation. "I do not think this quite fair," he wrote. "It is not very modest

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 2272.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., pp. 2275-2276.

¹¹⁰April 25, 1940.

and is probably superfluous to state that I have a long record of co-operating in financial as well as educational matters."¹¹¹

Through the later years the board began to challenge every aspect of the Winnetka technique that Washburne had built up across the years. The board questioned the expenditures involved in maintaining a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a research department. Board members suggested salary cuts and questioned the teacher-tenure policies of the Winnetka schools.¹¹² Further, they questioned the use of controversial textbooks¹¹³ and were critical of teachers who worked for causes unpopular with the Winnetka community.¹¹⁴ Washburne felt that these questions all touched on the "integral . . . structure which over long years, the successive School Boards, the teachers, and I have built."¹¹⁵ Washburne began to feel threatened by the fact that "I find

¹¹¹C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 7 (April 1940-February 1943), April 25, 1940, p. 3312.

¹¹²Ibid., September 24, 1940, p. 3383.

¹¹³Such as the Rugg social studies texts which were under attack by conservative elements at this period of educational history.

¹¹⁴Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 7 (April 1940-February 1943), September 24, 1940, p. 3383.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

myself fighting the Board . . . over and over we seem to be on opposite sides of the fence in our discussions."¹¹⁶

The superintendent then related to the board a dream. In it he was walking from one cathedral-like edifice to another along a connecting wall that was hundreds of feet high; suddenly, the wall began to sway and, as he looked down, Washburne became terrified. He dropped to his knees, and then lay flat on his stomach and clung to the wall. Then he awoke. He attempted to interpret his dream to the board:

As I tried to analyze the dream I realized that it was connected with my relations to the Board. Our educational program has reached a very considerable height. This part makes it easier for it to be overthrown. And remarks made and questions raised by Board members have made me fear that unwittingly they might destroy it.

.

Actually the Board has taken no definite action toward changing any one of our important policies and has made no harmful or unwise decisions. But it has, at times, seemed on the verge of such action, and under conditions, such as a budget meeting, when thorough consideration was impossible. Then I have felt that I had to fight. But I think this fighting on my part has probably been unnecessary. And it has tended to make the members feel less responsible and more like fighting back.¹¹⁷

Washburne requested that the board write into its policy a resolution that it would alter no aspects

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 3381.

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 3382-3382; 3384.

of the existing schools without giving the matter some months of consideration. On his part, Washburne promised the board that he would listen open-mindedly to suggested change from board members, gather pertinent facts, and then render the board both his opinion and advice. "I feel convinced that insofar as we follow this procedure our decisions will be sound and the spirit of our discussions will be consonant with our genuine and deep regard for each other."¹¹⁸

Washburne's plea served to quell for a time the board's growing restiveness. Some two years later, the resolution in essence that he had requested was written into board policy:

Be It Resolved that it is the policy of the Board that proposals by the superintendent of schools or any Board member or members relating to a major change in the scope or type of education in Winnetka, or policies concerning the number and compensation of employees, be presented, so far as practicable, to the Board well in advance of the meeting when the budget is adopted so that they may have mature and thorough thought before action is taken.¹¹⁹

Through the years--and particularly the later years--the board sometimes chafed Washburne and sometimes held him in close rein. However, it is significant that this writer found no evidence through

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 3385.

¹¹⁹Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 11 (March 28, 1939 - February 15, 1943), October 19, 1942, p. 145.

the records and files of the twenty-four years of Washburne's superintendency that the board ever reversed any of his administrative policies. Every indication is that Washburne very much shaped the Winnetka technique and the school board universally ratified his decisions, albeit, at one time with marked enthusiasm while at another with cool reluctance.

Ideological Clashes

Washburne once described the Winnetka school boards under which he had served for twenty-two years as being

composed of some of Chicago's leading business men and lawyers and professional men, most of whom are ardent Republicans, many of whom have been capitalists, practically all of whom have believed in the capitalist economy. Winnetka is something like 90 per cent Republican. On my School Board I have had the Vice-President of the Inland Steel Company, the President of a large bonding house, the Vice-President of two of Chicago's largest banks, the President of the Chicago Title & Trust Company, one of Chicago's most powerful and conservative corporations, leading corporation lawyers, and so on. I have been unanimously elected by this succession of Boards every year for twenty-two years.¹²⁰

Washburne's statement should not be taken to mean that the board and the superintendent were in complete sympathy, ideologically, at all times. Washburne was

¹²⁰Letter to Mr. Robert Donner from Carleton Washburne, October 27, 1941. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix F, pp. 353-355.

both forward-looking and liberal-thinking. While Washburne viewed the school as an instrument of social change, as a community Winnetka "was shocked by the concept of economic or social change."¹²¹ Sometimes he moved too fast for both board and community. There were bound to arise ideological clashes between the superintendent and his board. Three such incidents are detailed below.

The Basu Affair

In the summer of 1932, Washburne attended the World Conference on New Education in Nice.¹²² At the conference he met an East Indian, Anathnath Basu by name. Carleton found Basu an intriguing person. He had been a field worker for Gandhi; had taught in Rabindranath Tagore's School; and had finally gone to the University of London and studied under Sir Percy Nunn, "one of England's outstanding educationists."

Dr. Washburne was looking forward to that fall when he was to open the Graduate Teachers College¹²³ to its first class of students. He sincerely wanted

¹²¹Interview with Mr. James Mann, December 15, 1969.

¹²²Letter to Mrs. Emmons Blaine from Carleton Washburne, September 16, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹²³Cf., infra, Chapter IV, pp. 217 ff.

Basu in that first class: "We feel that it would be a fine thing for the Graduate Teachers College to have from the beginning the international tone that Basu's presence would give it, and we feel that there would be an inspiration to those of us who are working in the college, in feeling that our work might have so broad an influence."¹²⁴

Basu, on his part, was enthusiastic about the possibility of studying under Dr. Washburne for a year at the Graduate Teachers College: "It seemed to him . . . that if he could work for a year with Miss Cooke and Perry and me¹²⁵ in our schools and in our new college, he could carry back to Tagore's school and to the other schools in India a much needed light of the New Education."¹²⁶

Basu himself was not able to finance a year's study in the United States and Washburne determined to establish a fellowship fund to meet the young Indian's

¹²⁴Letter to Mrs. Emmons Blaine from Carleton Washburne, September 16, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹²⁵"Miss [Flora] Cooke and Perry [Smith]" were respectively principal of the Francis W. Parker School, Chicago and headmaster of North Shore Country Day School, Winnetka. These two, with Washburne, were the "educational directors" of the Graduate Teachers College. Cf., infra, pp. 222 ff.

¹²⁶Letter to Mrs. Emmons Blaine from Carleton Washburne, September 16, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

costs for his year at the Graduate Teachers College.¹²⁷
 The money slowly trickled in and, finally, Miss Flora Cooke "rightly or wrongly" took \$120 from a special account at Parker school over which she had jurisdiction. "If it does not seem right in the final accounting," she wrote Washburne, "and is not forthcoming from some other source I shall make it up, so that it is safe in any case."¹²⁸ So at last Basu was on his way.

¹²⁷Washburne first appealed to Mrs. Emmons Blaine in a lengthy letter describing Basu and giving the reasons that a year at the Graduate Teachers College would be of mutual advantage. "If you can grant Basu a \$1,5000 fellowship, payable, let us say, \$500 now, \$500 in January, and \$500 in April, will you please telegraph me immediately on receipt of this letter, so that I can cable Basu, and so that he can get here in time for the opening of the college?" (Letter to Mrs. Emmons Blaine from Carleton Washburne, September 16, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.) Apparently, Mrs. Blaine couldn't see her way clear to granting the fellowship Dr. Washburne had requested. He, then, took the basic letter that he had written Mrs. Blaine and mimeographed it and sent it to friends of the Winnetka schools and the new college. (There is no available list of persons to whom he sent this request.) In the closing paragraphs of this circular appeal for Basu, Washburne wrote: "If fifteen people would give \$10 a month for ten months we could do it. I know how income has shrunk. It is therefore with real hesitancy that I am seeking this fellowship fund. I am doing it, however, because I believe that \$1,500 could not be spent in a more constructive way than in giving Basu this chance to take from America some of its educational ideals and methods and to spread them in India. Can you and will you contribute \$10 a month for ten months toward such a fellowship? If you cannot do this much, will you contribute a fraction of this amount to be combined with the contributions of others?" (A mimeographed letter of appeal from Carleton Washburne, [circa], October, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.)

¹²⁸Letter to Carleton Washburne from Miss Flora J. Cooke, December 2, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

While the Graduate Teachers College was incorporated, financed, and functioned independently of the Winnetka public schools, the graduate students took their practice teaching in the schools of each of the three educational directors of the college. When the Winnetka School Board learned that an East Indian would be attending the Graduate Teachers College, some members balked at the idea of his practice teaching in their schools because of his dark skin and radical social views. The board was letting its conservatism show through. Washburne wrote the board members the following memorandum:

It has long been the custom of the Board of Education to leave entirely to the Superintendent of Schools and the educational staff the selection of regular Winnetka teachers. Practice teachers of various races, religions, nationalities, and political views have been used in our class rooms. The Superintendent and educational staff generally have felt and now feel that there are decided educational values, with no balancing disadvantages, in using practice teachers, under adequate supervision, who have such diversity of background. They believe that it is in their province to decide this question of educational values and the desirability of any particular practice teacher to the schools.

In the questioning, by some members of the Board, of the wisdom of permitting an East Indian student to do practice teaching in the schools this year, there is the possibility not only of the issue of political expediency, but also the issue as to whether the educational staff shall continue to determine the educational desirability of the use of a given practice teacher.

If the latter issue is to come up, it would be best to discuss it at some future time in an atmosphere free from feeling as to a particular

student, and free from the feeling engendered by the present situation. The Superintendent therefore has decided not to use Basu, the East Indian student, in the Graduate Teachers College, as a practice teacher in the Winnetka Public Schools. Instead, he will do his practice teaching at Francis Parker and North Shore Country Day Schools, and do six weeks of observation in our schools, and talk to children in assemblies, etc. He will get his Winnetka practice teaching in the Winnetka Summer School.

It is hoped that this will take care of the individual problem satisfactorily, and that the matter need not be further discussed.¹²⁹

Washburne had given in--yet, somehow, at the same time he had pulled the ground out from under the loudly objecting school board by conceding to them--all they could do was whimper an apology for their bigotry.

Anathnath Basu became, perhaps, the most influential of the graduates of the Graduate Teachers College across its twenty-two years of existence. "He organized and headed the faculty at the University of Calcutta, and then developed and directed the Central Institute of Education in Delhi. On retirement from this in 1957, he took charge of the training of teachers at the University founded by Rabindranath Tagore at Santiniketan."¹³⁰ All this accomplished by a man whom the school board barred from teaching in Winnetka--in part at least--because he was dark-skinned.

¹²⁹C. W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930-February 1934), November 15, 1932, pp. 2179-2180.

¹³⁰Washburne and Marland, op. cit., p. 127.

The Library Mural

Through the depression years, the Winnetka schools received assistance through some of the federal relief programs. Mr. Logan, assistant superintendent served as co-ordinator in these matters; he had men landscaping, repairing, remodeling, and redecorating the various school buildings and sites.

In March of 1934,¹³¹ Dr. Washburne received confirmation from the Public Works of Art Project that a number of murals and bas-reliefs had been authorized for the four schools of the Winnetka district. One of the art works authorized was a ten by forty foot mural for the Skokie Junior High Library to be executed by artist Raymond Breinin. The women of the board had been delegated as a committee to approve the preliminary sketches prepared by the artists before they carried out their work.¹³² Breinin submitted his sketch¹³³ and urged Washburne to let him paint the mural directly on

¹³¹Letter to Carleton Washburne from (Mrs.) Increase Robinson (Regional Director, Treasury Department: Public Works of Art Project), March 20, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹³²Letter to Mrs. Increase Robinson from Carleton Washburne, July 16, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹³³Later when questioned about their approval of the Breinin sketch, the women confessed to a misunderstanding. One woman had not expressed the disapproval that she had felt because she was under the impression that it had already been decided that Breinin was not to carry out the mural as sketched.

the library wall without waiting to have a huge canvas ordered and mounted.¹³⁴ Washburne acceded to his request and the work progressed apace. The Chicago press was barred from viewing the mural in-progress. And it came to be called the "mystery mural."¹³⁵ Finally, just as Breinin was putting the finishing touches on the library mural, certain board members began to feel strongly that the painting was highly inappropriate for a schoolroom decoration. The Tribune described the mural as having "an industrial background and a motto: Give Us the Unity of Man and We Shall Build a New World. The largest group in the mural depicts a Caucasian, a Negro and an oriental, all together." Board members took a thoroughly unsympathetic view toward the nearly completed mural. It "is inappropriate because industrial in subject matter; it is communistic in character; the workers are dejected; the atmosphere is sinister and threatening; it is unsuitable for children of the Junior High School."¹³⁶

¹³⁴Letter to Edward B. Bowan from Carleton Washburne, August 13, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹³⁵News item, Chicago Tribune (July 27, 1934). A clipping.

¹³⁶"Report of Informal Meeting for Consideration of The RAYMOND BREININ MURAL PAINTING at SKOKIE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, WINNETKA." July 31, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

In a letter to members of the board, Washburne rose to the painter's defense: "I suppose any great piece of work somewhat in advance of its time would cause such feeling. I am not sure that this is a great piece of work, but I do think it is a fine piece of work."¹³⁷ However, in a letter to the project's director, Washburne expressed his feeling that the artist possessed a certain "limitation of his personality, since he seems unable to put any hope or idealism into the picture."¹³⁸

Having only the year before, in the school board election of 1933, come under the most severe criticism for his socially radical views, Washburne realized that "there is no question but that if it has caused such violent feeling within the Board, it will cause equally violent feeling among some of the community."¹³⁹ He tried neither to convince the board of the artistic merits of the painting nor the significance of its social message; while he may have been able to succeed

¹³⁷Letter to the Members of the Board of Education from Carleton Washburne, July 16, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹³⁸Letter to Mrs. Increase Robinson from Carleton Washburne, July 16, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹³⁹Letter to the Members of the Board of Education from Carleton Washburne, July 16, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

with the board, he knew that with the community it might well be the opening of a Pandora's box. "I don't want a rumpus . . . and I certainly sympathize with the Board for not wanting one," he continued. "I wish it were on canvas so that it could be easily removed and exhibited and preserved, without causing a lot of vehement discussion. But the thing isn't on canvas and can't be removed and preserved."

While realizing that it would be foolhardy to insist on keeping the mural on display in the Skokie library, Washburne was determined that the mural be preserved: "No one knows what kind of things people will want ten or fifteen years from now."

I should hate to have it said of us that we deliberately destroyed a work of art because of fear of its political consequences. It is something too much like the depredations of the Goths and Visigoths who, not appreciating the fine things of the Roman Empire, ruthlessly destroyed them. History is full of such incidents. Breinin, the artist, certainly has power in his paint brush. He may be an artist who will go down in history. My pride in Winnetka and my respect for creative work combine to make me shudder at the idea of ruthlessly destroying his work because we don't want a rumpus.

Washburne's idea was that the board request from the P.W.A.P. another mural painted on canvas which could be hung so as to completely obscure the objectionable one, but "could be rolled up to expose the other picture for exhibition purpose if at any future

time we should want to exhibit it."¹⁴⁰ This compromise, however, frightened the board; it lacked a certain permanency that board members wanted to insure. Their inclination was to have the entire mural painted-out. Washburne was appalled: "Just think if they had made Leonardo da Vinci paint out his Last Supper!" he retorted.¹⁴¹ Such a thought sobered the board and they began to feel a sense of responsibility to the artist. They were, however, no less convinced that the painting--whether great art or not--remained "in the judgment of the majority of the Board, unsuitable as a mural decoration of the school."¹⁴²

Finally, the board and the superintendent reached a compromise whereby "a new partition be erected by the Board sufficiently in advance of the present painting so that the room may be restored to its former appearance without in any way damaging the painting."¹⁴³

Washburne predicted that "some day some future Board of Education will remove the occluding partition."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Recalled by Mrs. Rose Alschuler in an interview on December 13, 1969.

¹⁴² Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 10 (April 26, 1932-February 19, 1939), July 26, 1934, p. 51.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Letter to Mr. Edward B. Rowan from Carleton Washburne, August 13, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Events did not bear this out, however; and, sometime down through the years in one of the several remodelings of the Skokie school, a mural that had offended a conservative Winnetka was permanently destroyed.

The Strachey Incident

In March of 1935, Carleton Washburne was one of the thirty-or-so signers¹⁴⁵ of a telegram addressed to Miss Frances Perkins, Roosevelt's Secretary of Labor, who was in Chicago for a talk on pending social security legislation. The telegram was drafted by the Civil Liberties Union protesting the government's action in the deportation proceedings of "John Strachey the Britist author who has been explaining communism to United States audiences."¹⁴⁶ The telegram further asked "asylum for Strachey and others charged with disseminating communistic doctrines." Secretary Perkins refused delivery of the telegram, but the secretary of the local Civil Liberties Union released the text of the telegram and a list of signers to the press which gave the incident prominent coverage.

¹⁴⁵Probably best known of the signers was Clarence Darrow.

¹⁴⁶News item, Chicago Herald and Examiner (March 20, 1935). A clipping.

Mr. Raymond Koch¹⁴⁷ wrote Washburne that "it is reported that you were a signer to a telegram sent by the Civil Liberties Union to Mrs. [sic] Perkins asking asylum for John Strachey, the Britist Socialist. I would indeed appreciate your advising me whether the report as it concerns you is correct."¹⁴⁸ Washburne responded in part:

I am glad to answer not only your question but also its implication . . .

In common with those who have made our nation, I believe in open and free discussion of all questions. I believe Americans have a right to hear all sides of any question and that none of us have the right to decide what our neighbors may or may not hear. I strongly condemn Hitler; but I recently presided at a meeting where a pro-Hitler German spoke, and if anyone had wished to deport him for defending Hitler's views, I should have been quick to protest. I would disagree with much that Strachey is saying. But I gladly signed the telegram protesting against his deportation.

I have enough faith in America to believe that its institutions can stand criticism. As a citizen, I believe we should be ever alert to weaknesses in our organization and ready, by constitutional means, to increase our country's strength. To close our ears--and our doors--to critics leads to complacency and self-righteousness, not to growth.

¹⁴⁷Mr. Koch was the man principally responsible during the election of 1933 for the allegation that communism was being taught and advocated in the Skokie school social science curriculum. Cf., supra, p. 64 ff.

¹⁴⁸Letter to Carleton Washburne from Raymond Joseph Koch, March 26, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix F, p. 340.

Refusal of the right of asylum and the right of free speech is treachery to the founders of our nation.¹⁴⁹

Clarence Randall, once again, drew a barrage of criticism over the Strachey incident. Finally, Randall wrote his superintendent a strong letter of admonition after a Mr. Badgerow of the American Legion "tackled me about it very strenuously in the presence of a large group who thought it rare sport to watch the gladiatorial combat that followed."¹⁵⁰

The encounter with Badgerow put Randall in an awkward position:

The things that he said were for the most part logical, and agreed pretty closely with the viewpoint that I have expressed privately to you, namely that regardless of your personal views it limits your usefulness in your job to participate in controversial matters, but to protect the institution I had to spring vigorously to your defense, and challenge every thing that he said.

Randall went on to tell Washburne that he didn't like having to do this as it put him in a false light with many of his friends; however, Randall continued, "I instinctively refuse to admit in public that I think

¹⁴⁹Letter to Mr. Raymond Joseph Koch from Carleton Washburne, March 29, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. For full text of letter see Appendix F, pp. 341-342.

¹⁵⁰Letter to Carleton Washburne from Clarence Randall, April 2, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

you have made a mistake, as that leads directly to the question of why I tolerate it."

Washburne contritely responded to his board president that

the incident would not have occurred at all had I even remotely suspected that the telegram and the signatures were to be given publicity. I assumed it was simply a private telegram from a group of us to the Secretary of Labor. I suppose this was sort of dumb, but at least I'll know better next time.

Both for your sake and my own, as well as my work, I want to avoid situations of this kind insofar as I can do so without pussyfooting and cringing. For my own self-respect and my own real usefulness as a citizen, I have to be able to stand squarely for the things in which I believe.¹⁵¹

Recapitulation

This chapter has portrayed Washburne in relationship to the school board of the Winnetka schools. Washburne strongly felt that the board should involve itself only with the direction-setting policies of the schools. All professional and technical school matters, he felt, were best--and properly--handled by the superintendent and his supervisory staff. He insisted that the board had only to maintain its confidence in him. But he realized the necessity, moreover--if he were to retain control of the administrative details of the

¹⁵¹Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, April 8, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

schools--of educating the board. In this he was eminently effective. Even after the election of 1933, when the Village Caucus attempted to put representative members on the board who were opposed to the Winnetka technique and to Dr. Washburne, he had changed their opinions within a few months' time.¹⁵²

For the first five or six years of Washburne's superintendency, the board accepted the role that he had assigned to it and worked in closest harmony with him. In 1925, however, the board attempted--through its Education Committee--to alter some aspects of the new curriculum, particularly in the arithmetic materials. Washburne resisted the board mightily. He felt that any compromise with the board in these matters would be dangerously precedent-setting. This marked the initial incident in a lengthy power struggle between Washburne and the board; the superintendent won the first bout. In 1933 following the hard-fought board election and, again, in 1940 the board threatened Washburne with interference in, what he considered, professional matters. On both occasions, Washburne re-affirmed his stance and persuaded the board to accede to his viewpoint. Throughout the superintendency, Washburne exercised complete executive powers over the Winnetka schools.

¹⁵²Mrs. Frances Murray, in an interview, December 11, 1969. Also see Chapter II, p. 84.

Even though Washburne was ideologically more liberal than the majority of board members who hired him through the years, he was able to maintain almost universally cordial relations with individual board members. There were, indeed, many clashes between board and superintendent, but in the vast majority of instances, the superintendent emerged victorious.

CHAPTER IV

WASHBURNE AND THE

TEACHING STAFF

". . . women are sometimes unaccountable."¹

¹Superintendent's Reports, vol. 6 (June 1937 - March 1940), June 6, 1938, p. 2989.

Introduction

Washburne once wrote:

A school system is only as good as its teachers. Methods, textbooks, equipment, buildings are secondary considerations. If these things are good, they enable the good teacher to do a better job, but the poor teacher will bungle her work no matter how fine the materials at her disposal. A good carpenter can do fair work with poor tools, but can do far better work if he has the right tools. A poor carpenter will not do good work no matter how fine the tools are!²

The one quality that Washburne felt was indispensable for an effective faculty was an intense loyalty to the school system of which they were a part and to him as their superintendent. Once a teacher had convinced Washburne of her loyalty, she could expect much of him in return. To some extent Washburne attempted to be "all things" to his teaching staff. He was primarily their leader and mentor, but secondarily he was their counselor and friend. Teachers in need--whether professional, emotional, or financial--often turned first to their superintendent, Carleton Washburne.

One of the significant aspects of Washburne's relationship with his staff was the evolution that his theory of administrative leadership underwent and the personal growth within him that this evolution evinces.

²Carleton Washburne, "The Teachers," manuscript of an article prepared for the Winnetka Talk, n.d. [circa], 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

While the early years of his superintendency can accurately be labelled the benevolent dictatorship,³ the later years mark a great change in his conception of the proper role of the superintendent and his relationship to the staff. This evolution of Washburne's educational thought is sketched in the section of this chapter Toward Staff Autonomy.⁴

Washburne found most teachers who came to the Winnetka schools rather ill-prepared for the progressive techniques that Winnetka was attempting to develop and use. The traditional teacher training institutions failed to produce the desirable teacher for the "newer education." Washburne and his supervisory staff expended vast amounts of both time and energy in forming and developing a staff around the needs and principles of the progressive techniques. On Teacher Formation,⁵ a section of this chapter, essays to trace Washburne's attempts to effect better teacher preparation first through his inservice efforts, then through the Winnetka Summer School for Teachers--an outgrowth of the Minneapolis workshop--and, finally, in its ultimate

³Cf., infra, pp. 190-200.

⁴Cf., infra, pp. 201-209.

⁵Cf., infra, pp. 209-233.

culmination in the establishment of the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka.

A final section of this chapter, The Teacher as an Individual,⁶ relates the interaction of Washburne in coping with the needs and limitations of one member of his staff or another on an individual basis.

From Autocracy to Autonomy

The Early Years: The Benevolent Dictator

Carleton Washburne, in relationship to the teaching staff, has been characterized as a "benevolent dictator."⁷ The one quality that Washburne considered indispensable in the teachers was an intense loyalty to him as their superintendent. The following comment to one of his teachers makes his feeling on this matter amply clear: "Your writing directly to Dr. Wager showed a certain lack of confidence on your part in my judgment. I never object to your expressing such lack of confidence directly to me, but I think you might avoid expressing it to others unless necessity demands that you do."⁸

⁶Cf., infra, pp. 233-249.

⁷Dr. Sidney P. Marland, Jr. in a speech at the dedication of the Carleton Washburne School, Winnetka: October 12, 1969.

⁸Letter to Frances Presler from Carleton Washburne, November 15, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

When this loyalty was blatantly lacking, Washburne's retribution came swift and uncompromised. In the fall of 1926, he had hired a woman, Miss Marie Jordan, to teach piano on a part-time basis at the Hubbard Woods school. He paid Miss Jordan a fraction (16/25) of the regular salary schedule corresponding to the amount of time that she taught each week:

The fact that we are giving free rent, free pianos, free advertising, is expected to compensate for a lower per hour rate than a teacher would get if she were opening her own studio, equipping it, doing her own advertising, and running her own risks. Our attempt is to get the cost lower for the children. Temporarily I plan to leave the tuition rates as they are at present, so as to secure additional pianos for this work and so as to protect ourselves against any falling off in enthusiasm later.⁹

Miss Jordan grew dissatisfied with the arrangement, however, and appealed to a parent in a note that she sent home with one of her pupils:

My dear Mrs. Hammond--

The future of "Melody Way" and its present teachers hangs in the balance on the scales of justice--and all depends on the parents as to whether we go or stay.

Conditions have not been fair to me from the start (especially financially) but I have hoped that Mr. Washburne would come to his senses and see that the teacher earned a fair amount of the cash paid in by the parent for music lessons. On this ten week term he has cleared \$250 for the Winnetka Schools, to be spent when and where he saw fit--while I have never worked so hard and long for so little.

⁹Letter to Miss [Marie Jordan] from Carleton Washburne, November 4, 1926. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

On Sat. eve of this week I plan a recital
and action must be taken. May I hear from you?

Hastily,

[signed] Marie Jordan¹⁰

Miss Jordan's note made its way back to Dr. Washburne through Marion Carswell, principal at Hubbard Woods. "You are being employed on exactly the same basis as all teachers in the Winnetka Public Schools," he wrote her. "I feel therefore that you are being treated in an extremely fair manner." His letter continued:

Since you are clearly dissatisfied with our arrangement, and since your attitude as expressed in this letter [to Mrs. Hammond] is not one which I desire in any teacher in our schools, we shall not require your services after this week . . . I have written the parents concerned that the recital which was planned for Saturday evening, January 8th, will not take place.¹¹

Once the head of his creative activities department wrote Washburne:

. . . if I can spare the time I will run over to hear your explanation. If I can come I give you my word of honor I will not utter a sound, or show one particle of reaction.

It would perhaps be a good opportunity for you to show me if I have been unfair in judging your information on our activity philosophy and work from your written accounts of activities.

¹⁰Note to Mrs. Hammond from [Marie Jordan] [circa] January 5, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹¹Letter to Miss [Marie Jordan] from Carleton Washburne, January 6, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

I refer to the fact that nothing you have published up to the present time has been nearer than four (and six and eight) years behind our thinking in this work. The "half loaf" I suppose.

This particular reaction started with the woman from the Deaf School in St. Louis insisting on checking all I tried to tell her with your activity chapter in "Adjusting the School to the Child"--saying continually "but Washburne says _____" until I was forced to say. "I am sorry but it is a fact that Mr. Washburne knows very little about the activity work. His accounts in that book are largely fictitious or out of date. The material was four years old when it was printed--and mostly out of date then--because we have greatly changed. It is now eight years old. If you are interested in Winnetka's activity program as it is now you will have to disregard this book for information."¹²

Washburne replied to this teacher, once again underlining his demand of her loyalty:

This is in reply to your note of yesterday morning. The note had the usual honesty. Unfortunately it also had the usual lack of graciousness and showed the growing arrogance which has characterized so much of your attitude toward me this year.

It was entirely legitimate and desirable for you to tell the visitor, as you say you did, that my account of the activities work in Adjusting the School to the Child was written several years ago and that we have grown considerably since that time. It was unnecessary, untrue, and disloyal to say that my accounts are "largely fictitious" and that I know very little about the work of your department.

.

This incident brings up a previous one concerning which I have not spoken to you. Your attitude in

¹²Note to Carleton Washburne from Frances Presler, April 18, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

my seminar last fall, when, before my students you rudely and officiously contradicted me over and over, would not have been tolerated but for my recognition of your unawareness of what you did.

.

If, Frances, you cannot work with me, as the responsible head of these schools, harmoniously, cooperatively, happily, and loyally, I think you should during the next year or two try to find someone with whom you can so work. But, if as I very much hope, you will continue to give to the Winnetka Schools from your rich treasure--and as I have repeatedly told you, no one has given more--I trust that the giving may be gracious and happy and that your relations with me, and with all others on the faculty may be friendly and harmonious.¹³

Washburne demanded from his teachers loyalty not only to himself, but also to the Winnetka schools. In 1931 when the depression was severely straining the school finances the board decided "to ask the faculty to accept 10% of their salary next school year in some sort of warrant or script which would be redeemable eighteen months later, or during the second tax collection period following. That would avoid the necessity of selling some twenty five or thirty thousand dollars worth of warrants, which are going to be hard to sell."¹⁴ The board put the matter before the faculty strictly on a voluntary basis; practically every teacher

¹³Letter to Frances Presler from Carleton Washburne, April 19, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁴Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowen Brown, June 1, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

cheerfully complied with the board's request. Washburne fired one teacher who had refused to accept part of her salary in warrants:

She was a moderately good teacher this year, her first in Winnetka, but not sufficiently outstanding to justify re-election at the present time of over-supply The girl was one of the very few who refused to subscribe for anticipation warrants. I am afraid that fact weighed a little when I was considering whether or not to retain her. But her work was mediocre enough judged from our standards to justify firing her even if she had taken warrants.¹⁵

From almost every teacher, however, Washburne won the loyalty that he sought. The following year, as the depression deepened, the board had to authorize a flat 12 1/2 per cent salary cut of all the Winnetka personnel. After a faculty meeting at which the board's decision was announced, Washburne wrote his teachers:

I was very proud of you Monday night. I think you met a difficult situation bravely, cheerfully, co-operatively. I know that in the case of a number of you the acceptance of the immediate cut is going to make things difficult, and I sympathize with you. But I congratulate you all on the spirit in which you made the sacrifice. I can assure you that the Board of Education is deeply appreciative.¹⁶

Perhaps nowhere is the loyalty that the Winnetka teachers extended to their superintendent more evident

¹⁵Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, April 1, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁶Letter to the Faculty from Carleton Washburne, March 31, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

than at the time of the school board campaign of 1933.¹⁷
 Twenty-five of his teachers composed and signed the
 following statement of support:

Dear Mr. Washburne,

We feel sure you know that we are solidly back
 of you. Yet for our own satisfaction we want to
 say: "We are with you. Your cause is our cause."

A prophet may be without full honor in his own
 country, yet his true greatness is best known by
 those who know him most intimately in the numerous
 tests of daily living and working.

It is we then who know best your true kindness,
 who know directly your untiring helpfulness, magnetic
 leadership, and colossal ability.

It is we who are uplifted by your vision--a
 vision which knows no world bounds or time limits.

It is we who grow most from a comradeship and
 fellow feeling--fine enough to take in the smallest
 child and great enough to find kinship with the
 greatest leaders.

It is to Carleton Washburne--the man we know
 and love--the truly great man we follow, that we
 wish to say, "We are with you to a man."

Olga Leap	Helen Hambright	Esther M. Wetzel
Ruth Damberg	Margaret Carpenter	Helen Schmidt
Margaret Carswell	Florence L. Poole	Grace L. Bebb
Mildred C. Hughes	Anne M. Henry	Eleanor Wilder
Emilie J. Borbrich	Rose Damberg	Maurine Lamb
Frieda C. Barnett	Helen Spoelstra	Winifred K. Weedon
Frances Presler	Peter Uedelhofen	Marion Carswell ¹⁸
Ethel Van Cleve	Mary Garretson	
Ella Free	Signe Norling	

¹⁷Cf., supra, Chapter II, pp. 57-83.

¹⁸Letter to Carleton Washburne, n.d. [circa],
 March, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public
 Schools.

Albeit a dictator to his staff, Washburne-- particularly in the early years--took an attitude of almost paternalistic benevolence towards it. He concerned himself that his teachers should have a satisfactory social life. During his first year in Winnetka, Washburne encouraged his teachers to attend the young people's dances at the Village Community House;¹⁹ he and his wife entertained the teachers with a "sense party" at their home;²⁰ and, his first winter in Winnetka, he arranged a sleigh ride for them.²¹ At a time when the unmarried female teacher was the rule, Washburne encouraged his teachers to marry:

Many school boards refuse to employ married women, and even dismiss a woman teacher who marries! They act as if the schools existed in order to give employment to unmarried females rather than to find the best possible persons to educate the children. They fail to recognize their responsibility for helping to give their teachers the fullest and most satisfying kind of life. A married teacher is often a much more wholesome human being than an unmarried one and is therefore, other things being equal, a better teacher.²²

Whatsmore, Washburne took a paternal delight whenever one of his teachers married. In 1928, for example,

¹⁹Superintendent's Reports, vol. 1 (June 1919 - April 1923), November 13, 1919, p. 35.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., January 8, 1920, p. 55.

²²Carleton Washburne, "Are Teachers People?" Parents Magazine, September, 1938. A Reprint.

Washburne reported to the board that "Hazel Hartwell, principal of the Horace Mann School, after completing the demonstration work at the University of Minnesota, borrowed my canoe, plunged into matrimony, and spent a honeymoon in the north woods between Lake Superior and the Canadian border."²³ He was still very much the autocrat, however, if a teacher's marriage necessitated the breaking of her contract during the school year: "Miss Vera Barnes wired me during the Christmas Holidays that she would not be back after Christmas, the reason being matrimony," he wrote the board. "This sudden decision of hers to marry was embarrassing to us and was, I think, highly unprofessional on her part."²⁴

When the day-to-day cares of teaching had a teacher upset or depressed, Washburne would get out the car and take the teacher for a drive. Together they would talk out her problem.²⁵ Often a teacher would call upon Dr. Washburne for advice on some deeper concern out of her personal life. One of his former teachers described him as "a very spiritual person--there wasn't a thing in

²³Superintendent's Reports, vol. 3 (April 1927 - September 1930), October 11, 1928, p. 1364.

²⁴Ibid., January 12, 1928, p. 1264.

²⁵Interview with Miss Marion Carswell, December 12, 1969.

your life that you didn't share with him."²⁶ Once a deeply troubled teacher wrote him:

One of the reasons that I have hesitated so long to take the final step of divorce has been that I . . . have feared the possibility that I might not be able to provide adequately for my child. This I want you to know. [My son's] future, [my son's] life means far more to me than does my own. I had a good, full happy childhood. In the last thirteen years I have had some moments of great happiness. Through my son, and through all the children I have worked with, I have had hours and years of pleasure and satisfaction. I have also had so many disappointments that I have become rather dulled to them. I have had moments of acute unhappiness, but I have found that by resolutely keeping myself busy, by deliberately refusing to recognize unhappiness that I can manage to get along. Whatever I decide to do will be decided on the basis of what, as far as I can see it, is best for [my son].

.

Suppose that I change my mind and do not break up our home. [My husband] says that he loves me and wants me on any terms. He promises that everything will be altogether different. In these last few weeks he has mended his conduct completely. He has made me promises before. In thirteen years he has taught me one thing: that I can never depend on any promise he makes me. The only emotion I have left is pity: pity for [my husband] because he is trying so hard now, and because he blames himself so; pity for [my son] because he has been cheated out of so much that is his right; and, though it shames me to admit it, pity for myself. I haven't any of the things a woman needs to make a marriage with: love for her man, respect for him, faith in him, and hope for the future with him. When I was nineteen years old and I promised to marry [him] I had all of those things. One by one I have lost each of them. The only things left are pity for all of us and self discipline.

.

²⁶Ibid.

I ask you as one who not only has had wide experience with human problems, but as one who has a rich and warm sympathy, what should I do? I haven't told you what is wrong with my marriage, nor should I care to do so. I ask you to accept the fact that there is no mending it.²⁷

Washburne replied, in part:

Dear _____:

Your letter quite tore my heart. I certainly want to do everything I possibly can for you.

-

You speak as if you were the sole support of [your son]. Certainly [your husband] is responsible for at least half of [your son's] support, and legally for all of it. Any settlement you make at the time of your divorce should include a clear-cut stipulation on this, and I should think that [your husband] would himself whole-heartedly want to carry his share. If at present he is able to support both you and [your son], in the future he certainly ought to be able to support [your son].

If I were in your place, I would not hesitate about asking a relative who could afford to lend me the money to get the divorce question settled and cleaned up. If your mind is made up with finality, as it appears to be, I think the longer you let things drag, the worse it is for everyone.

With sincere sympathy and warm good wishes, I am

Cordially yours²⁸

²⁷Letter to Carleton Washburne from Mrs. _____, March 26, 1941. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

²⁸Letter to Mrs. _____ from Carleton Washburne, April 4, 1941. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

The Later Years: Toward
Staff Autonomy

In the latter years of Washburne's superintendency the "benevolent dictatorship" gave way to a democratic administration in which the staff achieved a considerable measure of autonomy. It is difficult to attempt to attribute this change to any particular event or incident. It was, rather, a "concatenation of events;"²⁹ it resulted from both an evolution of Washburne's educational philosophy and a professional growth of the staff itself. These two factors are inextricably interdependent. Washburne "took on a mission to develop a staff. He gathered about him strong, individualistic people and over the years the staff grew in maturity, security, and sophistication."³⁰ However, "the more sophisticated teachers got, the more they came to resent him; both in being told about what to do and in having to work so hard."³¹

Washburne, himself, has been described as a "classicist."³² He was "world-minded" and wanted his teachers to understand cultures, philosophies, and

²⁹Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

³⁰Interview with Mr. James Mann, December 15, 1969.

³¹Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

³²Ibid.

religions.³³ Washburne educated his staff--and the natural outgrowth of his brand of liberal education had to be a rebellion against the autocratic superintendent of the early years.

When Washburne left Winnetka in 1943, he left a staff so independent that nobody else could handle it.³⁴ Washburne, however, knew his staff and could serve as its effective leader because he "had lifted the calf."³⁵ He could handle strength and he understood, appreciated, and supported flexibility.³⁶

Something, however, also effected a change in Washburne's philosophy of administration during the later years. Washburne's relationship to his staff underwent more radical change than any other aspect of his Winnetka superintendency. While in the early years Washburne did not hesitate to dictate in matters of curriculum, methods, and textbooks, in the later years in an article concerning these matters, he wrote:

³³Interview with Miss Marion Carswell, December 12, 1969.

³⁴Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969. Washburne had been superintendent of Winnetka for twenty-four years; in the twenty-four years following his resignation, Winnetka had six superintendents.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Interview with Mrs. Rose Alschuler, December 13, 1969.

the superintendent should have frequent meetings with his teachers, should bring to them all the knowledge he can gather that will bear upon their problem, and should co-ordinate their thinking. He should not, however, determine any of these matters. In those parts of the educational program where teachers affect each other, his duty as a co-ordinator calls for bringing about not uniformity, but harmony among the various parts . . . The enforcement of the decision, however, may rest in his hands when enforcement becomes necessary. Ordinarily, enforcement has little place in a democratic school system, unless calling a teacher's attention to a failure to live up to an agreed-upon policy is considered enforcement.³⁷

If a point of crisis in the development of staff autonomy can be identified, then it must have occurred in the late '30's when a group of teachers were working toward re-structuring the social studies program in the middle grades. It was a three year struggle between staff and superintendent, and much more was at stake than merely the parts of a social science curriculum. The staff was asserting itself; it was reaching toward autonomy and, finally, achieved it.

What the teachers were doing was right--they were trying to rethink the whole problem, to be free from bondage to past tradition, to explore all possible avenues. And what I was trying to do was right--I was trying to see that we retained the sound parts of our program, that the children received thorough, well-organized instruction, that we were definite and wise in our actions. But I seemed to the teachers to be clinging to a past

³⁷C. W. Washburne, "Democracy in School Administration," School Management, vol. 7, no. 7 (March, 1938), p. 218.

program, to be on the defensive, to be hampering their freedom of thought and subsequent action.

That situation was worked out largely by my putting more faith in them, by my cessation, for a considerable time, from arguing against any of their ideas, by my listening open mindedly and then clearly stating my revised point of view and a suggested working program. The essential thing I did was to let go--to give them freedom to explore any idea, however wild or unusual it seemed to me. Then their own good sense checked them--and their better ideas helped me. Our relationship became wholly co-operative.³⁸

While the staff strove for autonomy, Washburne was struggling to give form to his educational thought. He was about to produce his chef-d'oeuvre--the culminant thought of his twenty year experience as an educational leader--A Living Philosophy of Education.³⁹ One of his teachers, who reviewed the manuscript for him, insightfully wrote:

This book is obviously a product of your own growth and greater maturity--you could not have written it five years ago--nor completed it one year ago. The imprint of more than one Winnetka struggle is upon it. None more plainly I would say than that of the three year struggle of social science curriculum revision I now begin to see the picture clearly of what really happened. Your own evolution in connection with the writing of this book was going on--rebellion was going on in peoples' minds--interaction of influence took place. As your own evolutionary processes worked, and you reiterated--as you repeatedly said, it fanned the flame of revolution among us

³⁸Superintendent's Reports, vol. 7 (April 1940 - February 1943), September 24, 1940, p. 3382.

³⁹Carleton W. Washburne. A Living Philosophy of Education. New York: The John Day Company, 1940.

For to many it seemed merely defense of the old guns and fort. This experience made real to you the transition going on everywhere. Now that they have painfully brought you through this reality--and you have brought them through--but they do not know it yet--it is time for definite concreteness--quickly time for it, I would say.⁴⁰

For Washburne it was a long and painful struggle to **a**cknowledge that a truly democratic administration **i**mp**l**ied a measure of autonomy on the part of the staff. **W**h**i**le a group of teachers were asserting themselves **o**ver the social studies curricular revision, Washburne **g**ave "a great deal of thought to the question of **d**em**o**cracy in school administration" and came to the **r**ea**l**ization "that really democratic administration is **i**mp**o**ssible if the superintendent has the power to hire **a**nd fire and the teachers have no control."

Having arrived at the conclusion--in the logical **o**rd**e**r--that a democratic administration implied at **l**east some kind of ultimate control by the staff, Washburne attempted to translate it somehow into the **p**ra**c**tical order. The notion of a popular recall appealed to him. At first he merely announced to his faculty that he considered himself "subject to recall by them if at any time they felt that the schools would be improved by a change of administrators." After further

⁴⁰Letter to Carleton Washburne from Frances Presler, [circa] September, 1940. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

consideration, however, Washburne felt that a mere declaration on his part did not effect, of itself, staff autonomy. To be meaningful, he decided, the matter of the superintendent's recall would have to be made a part of the board policy. Hence, Washburne brought the subject up before his board and said: "I should like my declaration of policy on this matter to be officially filed with the Board of Education, spread on its minutes, and, if possible, approved by the Board as a part of its policy in regard to dismissal." He urged the board to accept his policy on recall of the superintendent because, he said:

I am convinced . . . from my conversation with other superintendents and with professors of school administration in universities, that it is a desirable and basic step in democracy in school administration.

In our own situation in Winnetka the likelihood of recall action by the teachers being applied against me is extremely remote, as we have always worked together in the closest harmony and with mutual respect and liking. [This policy should be adopted] as an example to other communities and as a policy which might be of real value in Winnetka under different circumstances.⁴¹

Somewhat to his dismay, Washburne ran into strong resistance not only from the Board of Education, but from a small group of teachers as well. The reluctance

⁴¹Superintendent's Reports, vol. 6 (June 1937 - March 1940), April 25, 1938, pp. 2957 - 2959.

of the board to empower the teachers to dismiss its superintendent was understandable enough; the superintendent was elected by the board, and it was naturally jealous of its right to dismissal. According to Washburne's recall proposal, the teachers could, in effect, completely circumvent the board and directly effect the dismissal of the superintendent. The board preferred to defer action on the matter until it had been further studied and reformulated to protect the board's rights as well as those of the teachers.

In the meantime, Washburne submitted his proposal to a vote of his faculty and reported to the board that

thirty-six of them [were] favorable and twenty-two opposed . . . Almost all of those opposed were in one building, where they seemed to have felt that it was an expression of personal loyalty to the superintendent to vote against the proposal--an unjustified feeling, not shared by the other members of the faculty and clearly counter-indicated in the bulletin that went to the teachers. But women are sometimes unaccountable.⁴²

Washburne revised his policy on recall so that the school board would be involved to the extent that once the teachers had voted a recall of the superintendent, it would request the board to so remove him:

If a majority of the faculty vote for the dismissal, the Board of Education declares that its policy will be either to dismiss the superintendent at the close of the school year or to keep him one more year on probation, reserving its final decision until a second similar referendum election to be held by

⁴²Ibid., June 6, 1938, pp. 2988-2989.

the Teacher's Council approximately one year after the first.⁴³

Still, six months later, "the majority of the members of the Board of Education did not approve the adoption of a policy providing for recall of the superintendent in case of dissatisfaction by the teachers."⁴⁴ And , at last, thirteen months after Washburne first asked the board to give the teachers the right to recall the superintendent, he compromised with it on a policy that gave the board's recognition to the Winnetka Teachers Council

as the official organization of teachers and the elected officers of the Council as their representatives and spokesmen . . . it recognizes the entire propriety of teachers, through their Council, bringing directly to the Board of Education any problems that they have not been able to work out satisfactorily through the superintendent The Board of Education as a matter of policy considers the ability of the superintendent to render satisfactory help to the teachers a major factor in retaining the superintendent.⁴⁵

So, while Washburne failed to give his teachers the power of dismissal by recall, he at least gave them a channel of recourse and gained for the teachers' organization official recognition by the Winnetka Board of Education. It marked one giant step forward for teacher autonomy, though it failed to put into the

⁴³Ibid., April 25, 1938, p. 2964b.

⁴⁴Ibid., January 24, 1939, p. 3075.

⁴⁵Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 11 (March 28, 1939 - February 15, 1943), May 23, 1939, pp. 13-14.

teachers' hands the ultimate power of recall that Washburne felt was necessary for truly democratic administration of schools.

On the Formation of Teachers

In-Service of the
Early Years

Teachers who came to Winnetka--whether directly from the teacher training institutions or after experienced years in more traditional schools--were not prepared for the Winnetka technique. Classroom management posed the biggest single problem to these teachers. It would often take the new teacher many months of adjustment before she was comfortable with the system; moreover, sometimes, she was simply not able to adjust to the particular demands of the progressive approach at all: "Miss Phoebe Ferguson, employed as sixth grade teacher at Horace Mann, has not proved entirely satisfactory. She has made an honest effort, but her training and background proved to be inadequate to the job. By mutual agreement she has resigned . . ."⁴⁶ Washburne tried to exercise the greatest care in teacher selection and, yet, still he had to admit to a certain number of failures. "In

⁴⁶Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), February 14, 1927, p. 1086.

spite of our very best efforts, we seem to miss fire on one or two teachers every year. As the old horse trader used to say: 'You never know what you've got until you've had the horse in your stall for three months.'"⁴⁷

In the early years of his superintendency, Washburne often required a new teacher to take one course or another in the summer before coming to Winnetka in order to be better prepared for the position:

Mr. Allen, who is to take Miss Kohl Saat's place in charge of music, is being required to go to Concord, Mass., this summer and study with Mr. Surette, so that he will be familiar with the general methods of teaching music which have been in use in the Winnetka Schools during the past seven years. He has not enough money to make the trip. It is therefore recommended that the Board of Education advance him \$300 of next year's salary Advancing part of the salary for special study required for our work here has been done by the Board of Education before in several instances.⁴⁸

Besides requiring this kind of additional study, Washburne and Beatty virtually ran a teacher-training program on an in-service basis for all the Winnetka teachers.⁴⁹ During the first twelve years that Washburne

⁴⁷Ibid., vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934), November 18, 1930, p. 1786.

⁴⁸Ibid., vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), June 11, 1925, p. 867.

⁴⁹Interview with Mrs. Frances Murrar, December 11, 1969.

was in Winnetka, he held "grade meetings with the teachers of each grade every two weeks from 3:30 or 4:00 until 5:30 or 6:00. These grade meetings have done much of the work of school organization, curriculum making, text book making, and research. They have been my point of closest contact with the teachers."⁵⁰

Notwithstanding, the adjustment of teachers to the Winnetka technique continued to be of perennial concern to Washburne: "Two or three of the new teachers are having difficulty in making adjustments, as usual, and one has been having real difficulty. We have succeeded in getting her on her feet and are now watching with bated breath to see if she can stand alone."⁵¹

In part Washburne blamed the "conventional training institutions" for teachers; they failed to prepare the beginning teacher for teaching in the progressive schools, he complained. He remarked that the young teachers manifested a "lack of general background; a lack of training in group and creative activities; a lack of modern psychological background; and a lack of originality and initiative."⁵² More specifically, Washburne wrote the

⁵⁰Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934), October 20, 1931, p. 2001.

⁵¹Ibid., October 21, 1930.

⁵²Letter to Dr. F. G. Bonser from Carleton Washburne, December 10, 1928. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

following criticism to the director of teacher training at the Milwaukee State Teachers College following an interview with three of her students:

All three of your candidates were likeable. All of them were lamentably lacking in any sort of knowledge of world events or literature. Their backgrounds were excessively meager. When one questioned them on method they showed that they received excellent training. The pretty Swedish girl (I can't remember her name this minute) didn't have much imagination even in the matter of method, but the other two girls did. Isn't there some way you can supplement the excellent training you are giving in method by some sort of stimulus along the line of contact with what's going on in the world, and with literature, art, and music? I don't expect teachers to be highly trained in these matters, but I do expect them to have shown some interest and to know a few of the most outstanding things. I should like them to know, for instance, that the Czar is no longer ruling in Russia, and that there is a socialist government there; and that Mussolini is not a volcano but the dictator of Italy; and that Teapot Dome has something to do with oil leases and corrupt government officials. I should like to have any teachers who come to us sufficiently interested in reading, so they that would have read at least two or three worth while books in the last two or three years.⁵³

A large amount of the principals' time and energy, as well as that of the superintendent, was expended in attempting to help the young, inexperienced teacher adjust to the particular demands of the progressive technique. Once, as a new school year was getting well underway, Washburne reported to his board that

⁵³Letter to Miss Adelaide Ayer from Carleton Washburne, February 10, 1928. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

there are, of course, a few weak spots. Miss Worthington, who is employed on a very reduced rate, as an assistant at the Greeley School, is not worth much more than she is getting as yet, although there is reason to believe that she may become first rate before the year is out. Miss Bentley at the Greeley School has better intentions than she has ability, although she too may work out satisfactorily when she has been with us longer. These are the only two really weak spots in the system and neither of them is hopeless. Both are young and new, both have pleasing personalities and a fair degree of intelligence . . . and the principal, Miss Brett, is giving a large part of her time toward helping them.⁵⁴

The Minneapolis Summer Workshop
and the Winnetka Summer School
for Teachers

Washburne began to cast about for a way to influence the teacher training institutions. For several successive summers Washburne conducted courses on the Winnetka technique at the Colorado State Teachers College in Greeley. In the summer of 1927, Washburne mapped out the details of a "Winnetka demonstration school" that he hoped to conduct on the Greeley campus the following summer. Several staff members at Greeley were enthusiastic about the prospect of such a demonstration school; however, for a number of reasons the administration at Greeley could not see itself clear to undertake the project.⁵⁵

⁵⁴Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), November 12, 1925, p. 917.

⁵⁵Letter to Earle Rugg from Carleton Washburne, June 30, 1927; letters to Carleton Washburne from Earle Rugg, September 14, 1927 and October 10, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Just as the plans fell through for Greeley, Washburne received a telegram from Leo J. Brueckner of the University of Minnesota asking whether he might be able to "give courses in supervision and adapting instruction to individual differences"⁵⁶ that summer. Washburne replied: "If you people would like to go ahead with the plans which I outlined for Greeley, I shall be very glad indeed to take the matter up with you at once."⁵⁷

Brueckner replied that

your outline appeals to us very much since the summer schools are given over almost entirely to helping pupils who are in need of special help, failures, or over-age pupils who are making up a grade. The Winnetka materials would be an excellent thing to use with them. It would be possible, I believe, for us to arrange to have classes to demonstrate this type of thing in a nearby city school so that they would be open to investigation by all of our students and the Minneapolis teaching group, as well as the N.E.A.⁵⁸ itself.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Copy of telegram to Carleton Washburne from L. J. Brueckner [circa] October 12, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁵⁷Letter to L. J. Brueckner from Carleton Washburne, October 13, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁵⁸The N.E.A. was to hold its annual convention in Minneapolis that summer. This was an additional reason that Washburne was anxious that the training school be conducted there.

⁵⁹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Leo J. Brueckner, October 13, 1927. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

So, at last, Washburne entered into the business of training teachers according to the principles of progressive education. That summer he required all newly employed Winnetka teachers to accompany him to Minneapolis and enroll in his teacher training program there. On his return to Winnetka, Washburne reported to the board that the training program had been a decided success and that the new teachers who had taken the training sessions with him were better prepared to adjust to the Winnetka system than teachers in previous years.⁶⁰

While Washburne had hoped to return the following summer to Minneapolis, the success of the Winnetka work there had engendered a feeling of professional jealousy⁶¹ and the local public school officials in Minneapolis demanded for the next summer a program that emphasized techniques in use in their own schools. Washburne turned for a second time to Greeley; however, the principal of the laboratory at the Colorado State Teachers College was not anxious to be upstaged by a Winnetka workshop there⁶² and blocked further plans for conducting a summer training school on that campus.

⁶⁰Superintendent's Reports, vol. 3 (April 1927 - September 1930), December 26, 1928, p. 1374.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 1375.

⁶²Ibid.

At last Washburne simply decided to carry on the program right in Winnetka:

We should have our own summer demonstration and training course right in Winnetka, beginning this next summer. By extending our present four-week summer course for children to six weeks, by making the summer work more of a feature less merely a make-up class, and by a slight increase in tuition we believe it would be possible to conduct such a demonstration course with very little risk and with possible large gains in an educational way.⁶³

The Winnetka summer school met Dr. Washburne's expectations for it. In a letter Washburne wrote:

. . . I am enjoying running my own show here
. . . . There is a satisfaction in feeling that each student who is taking any work here is concentrating in the various phases of our technique and will go away much more adequately prepared than has ever before been possible.⁶⁴

Thereafter, throughout Washburne's superintendency the Winnetka Summer School for Teachers was an integral part of the Winnetka program. Washburne chose to spend his summers with this project rather than accept lecture assignments at various colleges and universities as he had done during the early years. Once he reported to the board that

the Winnetka Summer School for Teachers has for the past ten years served Winnetka by training teachers who are going to be on our staff, making their work during the first year in Winnetka very

⁶³Ibid., p. 1376.

⁶⁴Letter to Dr. E. A. Cross from Carleton Washburne, June 21, 1929. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

much more effective than would otherwise be possible. It has also brought teachers from various parts of the United States and some foreign countries to Winnetka during the summer. In training these teachers our own teachers have been stimulated and made to rethink their own problems.⁶⁵

The Graduate Teachers
College of Winnetka

While the Winnetka Summer School was a step in the direction of a training school for the progressive techniques, Washburne was still less than satisfied:

. . . no training school at the present time is giving the kind of training that we need, particularly along the lines of mental hygiene and along the lines of group and creative activities. Our six-week summer course is helping, but is quite inadequate because of its short duration. Somehow or other we must find a way in the future of giving more complete training to teachers in other school systems who are trying to adopt the Winnetka Technique.⁶⁶

In Washburne there were the seeds of an idea. The form of the idea took shape at a conference on progressive education held in February of 1930. The conference was called by the Julius Rosenwald Fund and was convened

⁶⁵Superintendent's Reports, vol. 6 (June 1937 - March 1940), June 6, 1938, p. 2981.

⁶⁶Ibid., vol. 3 (April 1927 - September 1930), December 12, 1929, p. 1562.

at The Homestead, Hot Springs, Virginia.⁶⁷ This conference marks the inception--at least in the intentional order--of the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka.

At the conference, Dr. Washburne lectured on the need for adequate teacher training in the progressive techniques. Progressive schools--both public and private--desperately needed teachers "who have a philosophy of life and joy of living and who are trained in the new education," he told them. What was needed, he continued, was "a laboratory teacher-training institution to work out in practice and through research the best ways of training teachers for the new education."⁶⁸

Washburne determined that Winnetka was simply the most logical place for such a "laboratory teacher-training institution." In a letter to Miss Flora Cooke, principal of the Francis Parker School in Chicago, he wrote her the reasons that he had come to that conclusion:

⁶⁷List of participants at the conference. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. Prominent among the participants at this conference were Dr. Charles Judd (University of Chicago); Dr. William H. Kilpatrick (Teachers College, Columbia); Dr. Harold Rugg (Teachers College, Columbia), and of importance to the future of the Graduate Teachers College were Miss Flora Cooke (principal of Francis W. Parker School, Chicago); Perry Smith (headmaster, North Shore Country Day School, Winnetka); and, of course, Carleton Washburne.

⁶⁸Lecture notes: "Teacher Training--Hot Springs Conference, February, 1930." Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

The suitability of Winnetka for this project is fairly evident It is one of the few places where experiences in progressive public schools and progressive private schools can be obtained. It is a community dedicated to the best in education; it is geographically central and accessible. It is beautiful. It is within easy reach of two great universities [Northwestern and the University of Chicago] and an excellent undergraduate teachers' college (National). It has nursery school, parent education work, mental hygiene, research, individual work and activities programs combined as in no other center. It has close reciprocal relations with the Institute of Juvenile Research in Chicago, which has agreed to cooperate with the College. And the work is already started here.

.

This year we have seven graduate students registered with us for the year, pursuing a program very similar to that outlined for the College. You and Perry [Smith], likewise, have for years done informal teacher training by taking inexperienced teachers for observation and for either volunteer or paid assisting just as we have done in the Winnetka Public Schools. The Graduate Training College is a natural outgrowth of our joint activities.⁶⁹

At the Hot Springs conference, Washburne's mind was filled with the heady thoughts of establishing a Graduate Teacher's College as a part of his ever-growing educational complex at Winnetka. Later, he recalled lunching with Dr. Breadsley Ruml of the University of Chicago, who was also attending the conference on progressive education, and telling him "something of

⁶⁹Letter to Miss Flora Cooke from Carleton Washburne, January 4, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

my air castle for a teacher training institution that would really fit teachers for work in the newer type of school."⁷⁰

On his return to Winnetka following the Hot Springs Conference, Washburne continued to turn over in his mind the thought of founding a teacher-training institute. Finally, in April he requested of the board a leave of absence for the purpose of attaining a perspective on world-wide educational thought. His proposed leave was to take him to the orient, India, Turkey, Syria, Russia, and western Europe:

within the next four years I am going to have to make my decision as to whether my life work is to be here in Winnetka (provided the people want me to remain here) or whether to go into a larger city or accept a normal school presidency or a school of education deanship. The leave of absence which I propose will necessarily postpone any possible departure from Winnetka until at least two years after my return in September, 1931. If I am going to make any change, it should be done while I am still in my early forties. If, on the other hand, I am going to remain in Winnetka indefinitely, there will be certain new and important enterprises which I shall want to undertake and which once undertaken would make it difficult for me to get away for several years on such an extended leave. I do not feel quite ready yet to make any report to the Board as to the enterprise I have in mind. It is one, however, which ultimately would be of considerable magnitude, at least in terms of

⁷⁰Letter to Dr. Beardsley Ruml from Carleton Washburne, March 16, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

importance educationally to Winnetka, and which would, as just indicated, necessitate my remaining rather closely tied here.⁷¹

Later, in a letter to Miss Cooke of the Parker School, Washburne wrote:

You remember . . . that at the Hot Springs Conference on Progressive Education, called by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, it was the universal feeling that the greatest lack and need in the field of the newer education, was an adequate teacher training center. At that time I told you of our tentative plan for establishing such a center and of my hope that you and Perry Smith would join me in the undertaking. I took my trip around the world largely to get perspective for this new and vitally important piece of work,⁷² and since my return the plan has rapidly matured.

Washburne's world tour apparently confirmed him in his plan to go ahead with the teachers college. He had been back in Winnetka only about three weeks when he applied, through the schools' lawyer, for an application for incorporation for the new graduate college.⁷³

The founding of an institution of higher learning must be a monumental undertaking in even the best of times, but to attempt to do so at the height of the

⁷¹Superintendent's Reports, vol. 3 (April 1927 - September 1930), April 15, 1930, p. 1673.

⁷²Letter to Miss Flora Cooke from Carleton Washburne, January 4, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁷³Letter to Mr. Frederic O. Mason from Carleton Washburne, October 5, 1931. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

economic depression of the thirties seems almost unthinkable. Anyone less determined than Carleton Washburne would surely have deferred plans for the college to await better conditions; Washburne, however, was endowed with an unusual determination and merely re-doubled his efforts in the face of the financial difficulties of the times.

Washburne outlined his plan for the college to his board:

Winnetka would be doing, I believe, a real service to the educational world at large in establishing such a graduate training college I believe such a training college can be established without the blare of trumpets and with only the gradual need of financing. The financing would of course have to be done independently of the Board of Education . . . I very much hope that the Board will feel the same enthusiasm for the possibilities of this plan as I do, and that I may go ahead with it with the personal backing of each member of the Board.⁷⁴

Next, he appealed to Perry Smith, headmaster of the North Shore Country Day School, Winnetka and Miss Flora Cooke, principal of the Francis W. Parker School, Chicago to jointly found the Graduate Teachers College with him. The three of them would serve as the "educational directors" of the college. In undertaking the project jointly with Perry Smith and Flora Cooke,

⁷⁴Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934), October 20, 1931, pp. 2008; 2005; 2009.

Washburne was compensating for several limitations that such a college attached only to the Winnetka public schools would have. In the first place a co-operative effort of the three schools would represent a more catholic appeal to progressive educationists who might otherwise view the college as an apprenticeship program for the Winnetka Technique. In the second place, such co-operation among the three schools made it possible for students in the program to gain perspective on the principles and problems of progressive education as they manifested themselves in situations peculiar, on the one hand, to public education and, on the other hand, to private education. And, finally, both North Shore Country Day and the Parker School were able to provide experience at the senior high level which was lacking in the Winnetka Public Schools.

Perry Smith and Flora Cooke agreed to join Washburne in the establishment of the Graduate Teachers College;⁷⁵ and he began to carry through with the plans necessary to bring such an institution into existence. The college would be graduate and its purpose would be

to hew new pathways in the field of teacher-training on the graduate level--training which would be more nearly comparable to the training given to physicians, lawyers and engineers than

⁷⁵"Winnetka P.T.A. News," Winnetka Talk (March 17, 1932), p. 12.

to that ordinarily given to teachers, i.e. training which is professional and practical, built on a foundation of the usual college or university work.⁷⁶

It will be graduate so as not to involve the cost of duplicating existing undergraduate institutions, and because it would center its efforts on those likely to take positions of leadership. They in turn may in time man the undergraduate state and private teachers colleges, or supervise teachers in service, or demonstrate in their own class rooms the applicability of the newer principles of education . . .⁷⁷

In our Graduate Teachers College we are beginning from the bottom--the actual work with children. Instead of attaching a little laboratory to a big university, we are building a little college in the midst of a big laboratory. It happens that we have in the Francis Parker School, the North Shore Country Day School, and the Winnetka Public Schools, a rare combination of progressive private schools and progressive public schools, of schools running from the nursery through the senior high school, of scientific research and the child-centered education.⁷⁸

Washburne then formed a Board of Trustees,⁷⁹ and then appealed to prominent progressives to serve as an advisory board to the college to act "both as advisors and sponsors. Such people as Katherine Taylor, Eugene

⁷⁶Letter to Professor Edward Reed from Carleton Washburne, April 16, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁷⁷Letter to Miss Flora Cooke from Carleton Washburne, January 4, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁷⁸Letter to Frank Sulzberger from Carleton Washburne, n.d. [circa] March 15, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁷⁹"Winnetka P.T.A. News," Winnetka Talk (March 17, 1932), p. 12.

Randolph Smith, Harold Rugg, Wm. H. Kilpatrick, Willard Beatty, President Hutchins, Edna Dean Baker, Ernest Horn, Goodwin Thorne Thompson, Beatrice Ensor and Alfred Adler are the type we have in mind."⁸⁰ Washburne saw such an advisory committee as giving a prestige to the new college beyond that which the three educational directors were able to lend it in their own right. He also hoped, through the advisory board, to have referred to the college the most promising candidates possible. Washburne decided at the outset that the admission standards would be extremely selective. "We want to take just a small number of graduate students who give promise of being able to make ultimately a real contribution to American education"⁸¹ Just as the first term of the Graduate Teachers College was about to open, Washburne wrote a member of the college board of trustees: "We now have four sure students, all of top notch caliber. We rejected two yesterday that I think any university in the country would have

⁸⁰Letter to Flora Cooke from Carleton Washburne, January 4, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁸¹Letter to Miss Helen Curtis Davis from Carleton Washburne, March 11, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

accepted for graduate work--this by way of proving how high our standards are!"⁸¹

It hardly seems likely that one could even consider founding a graduate teachers college without an endowment fund, buildings, library facilities, or a paid faculty--let alone make a successful venture of it. Nonetheless, these were the very obstacles that, undaunted, Washburne overcame. "The College has no separate buildings. Classes are held in the cooperating schools in the form of late afternoon and evening seminar conferences. The students of the College spend most of their day in actual classrooms, working under the supervision of some of the best teachers." As far as overcoming the lack of adequate library facilities

the college has entered into reciprocal relations with Northwestern University, the National College of Education, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Institute for Juvenile Research in Chicago . . . [so] that our own students may have full use of the libraries of these institutions just as if they were regularly registered there. Our own professional library consists of only about 2,500 volumes of the books most likely to be used in our courses.⁸³

Washburne drew faculty for the Graduate Teachers College from his own staff and paid each teacher who

⁸²Letter to Edwin Fetcher from Carleton Washburne, September 16, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁸³Carleton Washburne, manuscript of an unpublished article, October 6, 1932, p. 3. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

helped with the college program a small honorarium more as a token of his appreciation than as a salary commensurate with the work involved. Washburne's staff, it should be noted, included such fully qualified specialists as both a psychologist and a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist, for example, would conduct a seminar course in mental hygiene while the psychologist would discuss with the students the use of tests, measurement, and research in the school program. The only paid, full-time staff member of the G.T.C. was Mrs. Frances Murray, whom Washburne recruited from his own staff and made Dean of the College.⁸⁴ Mrs. Murray served in that capacity during the entire 22 year existence of the G.T.C.

The Graduate Teachers College opened in the fall of 1932 with a class of six students. Washburne, moreover, was extremely pleased with the six: "Had we in imagination tried to draw up specifications for what the nucleus of our first class of students in the College would be, I don't think we could have drawn better specifications than those to which our little group of students conform."⁸⁵ Late that fall a seventh

⁸⁴Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930-February 1934), February 11, 1932, p. 2060.

⁸⁵Carleton Washburne, manuscript of an unpublished article, October 6, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

student, for whom Washburne had had to raise a fellowship fund,⁸⁶--an East Indian, Basu--joined the class.

As the first year of the Graduate Teachers College came to a close, Washburne declared that it has been an eminent success:

The reaction of the students at the close of the year was most gratifying. Mr. Basu said that he thought he had got more in his seven months here . . . than he had in his two years of graduate work at the University of London in the Londary Day Training College for Teachers. All of the others who had had graduate work in other institutions expressed themselves in the same way. And our own faculties have been greatly stimulated by contact with these keen, idealistic, and able young people.⁸⁷

The early years of the College, particularly, were financially painful ones. Washburne cast about everywhere for fellowship monies to fully support or assist promising applicants. Washburne appealed to well-to-do Winnetkans such as Max Epstein and Mrs. Rose Alschuler and foundations such as the Julius Rosenwald Fund, the General Education Board, and the Institute of International Education.⁸⁸ Everywhere, though, the response echoed the same:

⁸⁶Cf., infra, Chapter III, p. 172.

⁸⁷Carleton Washburne, "Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka," Manuscript of an unpublished article, n.d. [circa] August, 1933, p. 3. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁸⁸For example see letters to Max Epstein from Carleton Washburne, August 15, 1933; to Willoughby Walling from Carleton Washburne, October 3, 1933; and to Mr. Edwin Embree from Carleton Washburne, July 7, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

I wish it were possible for me to indicate to you where the Graduate Teachers College might turn for assistance in carrying out its program. I regret to say, however, that I do not know where you might turn. Even the big foundations have been compelled to retrench in activities because of loss of income due to the economic depression and although the foundations and probably other organizations and institutions might like to help in the matter, I doubt whether there will be much opportunity to do so in the immediate future.⁸⁹

The college, however, survived the depression and flourished. Washburne struggled long to have the work of the Graduate Teachers College accredited or at least recognized. He applied for accrediting to the North Central Association, to the State of Illinois, and to the American Association of Teachers Colleges.⁹⁰ No one seemed to know quite what to do with Washburne's new teachers college. He kept receiving communications such as the following: "I feel that it involves a question over which our Commission has no jurisdiction. I am, therefore, re-referring your letter to Dr. Works,"⁹¹ ". . . I think Mr. Hotz is wrong in his reply to you. The Commission on Higher Institutions has to deal only

⁸⁹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Stephen P. Duggan, director (Institute of International Education), July 21, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁹⁰Letter to H. A. Brown from Carleton Washburne, December 8, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁹¹Letter to Carleton Washburne from H. G. Hotz, October 15, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

with the accrediting of undergraduate institutions; and if it were to undertake the accrediting of graduate schools, it would call for a change in policy that is very farreaching."⁹² And, finally, "following the conference with you on Saturday, the Board of Review voted that the matter of acceptance of your work in education be referred to the respective state committees. The question, as you probably gathered from the discussion when you were present, is in the judgment of the Board a matter that does not come within its purview."⁹³

The American Association of Teachers Colleges wrote that "we should be glad to recognize the promising experiment which you are conducting, if we can do it within the scope of our standards."⁹⁴ The standard referred to was "that a Teachers College must have at least one four-year unified program." Washburne, at this point, was growing short of patience:

Of course we don't fulfill the requirement named in your definition of a teachers' college. The definition applies to an undergraduate college

⁹²Letter to Carleton Washburne from George Works, October 10, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁹³Letter to Carleton Washburne from George Works, February 6, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁹⁴Letter to Carleton Washburne from Charles W. Hunt, March 5, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

giving a bachelor's degree at the end of four years' work. We take students after they have their bachelor's degrees and give them one, two, or three years of graduate work. Our requirements for admission instead of being 15 units of secondary school work are a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, and so it goes all the way down the line. We're a brand new breed of animal apparently, and the judges of the stock show will have to judge us on our own merits instead of standards set up for another breed. What we would like would be to have the American Association of Teachers Colleges officially recognize that we are doing a satisfactory job of teacher training on the graduate level, and that those persons who have been trained with us have more than fulfilled the standard requirement of 15 hours of professional work in education. You can't recognize us as the kind of teachers colleges defined in your Section I, because we're not that kind at all. We should like to have your investigating committee come with a free mind, devoid of any limitations set by your undergraduate standards, and simply inquire into whether we are giving a kind of professional education that will equip our graduate students when they go out at least as well as they would be equipped taking 15 hours of education in some undergraduate teachers college. Of course I think we're doing very much more than is represented by this 15 hours.⁹⁵

The State of Illinois had many of the same difficulties in granting recognition to the work of the Graduate Teachers College:

The usual criteria by which we have inspected colleges applying for recognition since 1914 do not apply to this institution. The educational institution now operating under the direction of Mr. Washburne is a public elementary school embracing the lower eight grades. It is not a college. There appears some difficulty in the recognition of a graduate school that does not

⁹⁵Letter to Charles W. Hunt from Carleton Washburne, March 9, 1934. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

have as its foundation an organization of college rank.

Superintendent Washburne is offering a one year program. It is contrary to the policy of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Examining Board to recognize a one year program. The institution under discussion is obviously not a junior college. It is not a college. It is not a special or technical school, but it does exemplify a plan of instruction in public education that is worthy of the serious consideration of public school officials.

.

My own opinion is that we may accept a year's work done by the six students in the Winnetka school as satisfying the requirements in education for a teacher's certificate in Illinois, either high school or elementary, provided each of the students will file college credentials earned prior to entry into the Winnetka schools and for which a Bachelor's degree was conferred and provided all requirements for a teacher's certificate have been met by such credentials, except the courses in education.⁹⁶

The problem of accreditation was to be extended over eight years. Finally, in 1940 the state of Illinois empowered the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka to grant the Master of Education degree, and it was conferred retroactively on everyone who had successfully completed the program.⁹⁷

In his book in 1963, Washburne wrote the epitaph for the Graduate Teachers College:

⁹⁶ Copy of report to Superintendent Francis B. Blair filed by A. L. Whittenberg, June 13, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

⁹⁷ Interview with Mrs. Frances Murray, December 11, 1969.

Time and circumstances, however, brought an end to the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka in 1954. Flora Cooke retired in the earlier years of the college (1934) . . . I left Winnetka to become Director of Education for the Allied Military Government and Allied Commission in Italy in 1943, and was followed by five successive superintendents. Perry Smith retired in 1954. Those who had conceived the Graduate Teachers College were therefore no longer available to attract students and guide its destiny.

At the same time the education of teachers throughout the United States was greatly improving. Students were receiving a much broader liberal foundation and courses in education were improving markedly. Much of what distinguished the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka could by now be found in large, well-known institutions. The need for the Graduate Teachers College had diminished.

So, after 22 years of distinguished service, the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka ceased to be.⁹⁸

The Teacher as an Individual

Each teacher brought with him to Winnetka a complex of factors that made him to be the unique individual that he was. Often he brought certain skills and personality factors that made him eminently suited to successfully work with children. Because, though, he was a human being he also brought with him certain limitations in ability or personality that interfered with his effectiveness as a teacher.

Washburne once remarked to his school board: "I

⁹⁸Carleton Washburne and Sidney P. Marland, Jr., Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 128.

guess . . . teachers perfect in every respect don't exist."⁹⁹ That he demanded much of his teachers is obvious from the following excerpt of a letter which he wrote as a recommendation for a teacher whose contract he had decided not to renew after her three year period of trial with the Winnetka Schools:

That we do not consider her one of our most outstanding teachers is evident from the fact that we are letting her go at the end of her third year. That she has done good work is clearly evidenced by the fact that we have kept her as long as three years. She is conscientious to a fault. She knows our techniques thoroughly. She was decidedly successful before coming to us.

Her weak points are a tendency to work too hard and not get enough fun out of life; a tendency to carry something of this attitude into the classroom; a lack of complete sureness in discipline, although her discipline is not bad; a lack of self-confidence. To counteract these things there is her unusual background of study and travel and knowledge of our work, her extreme willingness to co-operate in every possible way, her capacity for a great deal of hard work on her part and ability to get fairly satisfactory results with her children.¹⁰⁰

Washburne accepted limitations in his staff as a fact of life. He and his supervisory staff worked toward helping every teacher to recognize his limitations

⁹⁹Carleton Washburne, "Response to the informal criticism of various members of the Special Committee on Education, as included in the stenographer's transcript of the meeting of December 7, 1925, and to the questions previously raised by President Ballard," Superintendent's Reports, vol. 2 (April 1923 - April 1927), June 10, 1926, p. 998-1.

¹⁰⁰Letter to Mr. V. L. Nickell from Carleton Washburne, January 29, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

and, whenever possible, to overcome them. Once when a teacher had struck a child, Washburne wrote the boy's parents:

[the incident] has already been made a basis for some very serious discussion with Miss Ronson on the more basic problem of her own tension and strain and what can be done to alleviate it. She is an unusually fine woman with a remarkable background of training and experience. She has such a lot to give that it is tragic to have it hampered by a sense of stress. We are trying to analyze the causes of the stress and to remove them as far as that is possible, in order to release her to do her work more effectively.¹⁰¹

Washburne went to extraordinary lengths to help his teachers overcome their limitations; once, for example, in 1933 he arranged a sabbatical for one of his teachers and sent her to Vienna for analysis under the direction of Dr. Alfred Adler:

I am arranging to have one of my teachers spend part of next year in Vienna . . . I hope that some one of your people can arrange to help her with the Adlerian equivalent of an analysis. She's quite a fine person, but I think would be helped by the sort of things you can do. She will have to arrange to pay for this gradually after she comes back to Winnetka and is earning a salary again, but I can vouch for her honesty and ability gradually to pay the necessary fees. I hope, however, that whoever is going to do this professional work for her will take into consideration that she is a teacher and the sole support of her mother, and therefore not able to pay high fees.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Roger A. Baldwin from Carleton Washburne, May 27, 1937. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁰²Letter to Dr. Alfred Adler (Vienna) from Carleton Washburne, April 1, 1932. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

If, however, a teacher had some deep-seated trait of personality that did not respond to remediation, Washburne was faced with one of two alternatives. On the one hand, if the teacher had other outstanding dimensions of personality that contributed to his overall effectiveness without adversely affecting the children under his charge in a serious way, Washburne was willing to accept--and even defend, if necessary--the teacher on the merits of his effectiveness while acknowledging as liabilities whatever limitations were a part of that teacher. John Thomas, chorus teacher at Skokie, was just such a teacher. On the other hand, however, if the teacher's personality limitation seriously impeded his effectiveness or seriously affected the children, Washburne felt forced--as a last resort--to dismiss the teacher. Mona Farrington¹⁰³ was a teacher who fell into this category and who subsequently embroiled Washburne and the Board in a lawsuit over her dismissal.

¹⁰³John Thomas and Mona Farrington--as well as Marie Jordan [p. 191], Phoebe Ferguson [p. 209], Miss Worthington and Miss Bentley [p. 213], and Miss Ronson [p. 235] are fictitious names employed to insure the privacy of the teachers spoken of; any semblance to actual names of teachers in the Winnetka schools is coincidental.

John Thomas: Skokie's
Pied Piper

In 1926 John Thomas came to the Winnetka schools with a doctorate in physics all but completed. "Tall, spare [and] with something of the zealot about him," he had "left a university professorship in Physics and the serene security of a beautiful campus" to become the chorus teacher at the Skokie junior high school.

His fresh viewpoint and unorthodox training made him realize the futility of talking about music to these children (music appreciation) and he quickly substituted actual singing throughout his curriculum. All music became of the order of the performing ensemble both instrumental and vocal.

Again using the direct approach, Mr. Thomas had no preconceived ideas as to the kind of music suitable to children. The music of the masters that thrilled him for its abstract beauty and purity of line he gave to these children. It was no surprise to him to find that children lapped it up and wanted more--and he gave them more. His technical approach was as direct as his musical one--the child dives in and swims from the first day he comes to chorus. Children who have never had any musical training sit side by side with those who have studied an instrument--and surprisingly enough it is those without previous training who often turn out to be the most proficient readers. There is no "do, re, mi," in their curriculum. They learn to read music as they learn to read language.¹⁰⁴

Thomas was very much what Washburne thought a teacher should be: direct, forceful, and--at times--even unorthodox. What was more important, moreover,

¹⁰⁴Jack Barrett, "The North Shore's Pied Piper of Songdom," Townfolk (November, 1938), p. 19.

was the fact that Thomas was able to cause children to sing well and to enjoy doing it. As far as Washburne was concerned that was recommendation enough for him. The music teacher, however, had a predilection for embarrassing both himself and the board; Washburne once referred to "John's reputation for tactlessness."¹⁰⁵ He was continually antagonizing the music department of the New Trier high school by "a slurring remark here and an innuendo there" until, at last, the superintendent at New Trier wrote Thomas:

I am not interested in your opinions and theories of music. You have a perfect right to them, but we have a perfect right to ours. You do not approve of some of our methods, frankly I do not approve of yours. It seems to be that is neither here nor there. We do not intend in any way to interfere with your work at Skokie . . .

On the other hand, I am determined that you are not going to interfere with our work at New Trier. Having been at New Trier eight years, and having come against unpleasant situations at many times, I feel quite convinced that you do create difficult situations for us. The charitable interpretation for us to put on it is that you do it quite unintentionally.

.

I realize that this letter sounds unfriendly. It is not intended to be unfriendly, but it is intended to be absolutely definite. If Skokie pupils are going to be unhappy here, or if your private pupils are going to be unhappy here because

¹⁰⁵Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, January 4, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

we do not have the same ideas about music that you do, it is possible that they should stay out of our music department. That would be a loss both to them and to us.¹⁰⁶

Sometime around Christmas of 1934, Thomas made a disparaging remark about a Christmas vesper service at New Trier. "You know," he told his Skokie class, "what I think of the music we heard yesterday at the concert. We should never allow flatted music like that to be sung in our school."¹⁰⁷ The board was barraged with complaints from New Trier, and it was about out of patience with Mr. Thomas' indiscretions:

While I appreciate the high caliber of singing instruction Mr. Thomas is giving to the children at Skokie School, and more particularly his ability to not only hold their interest but maintain an atmosphere of order and discipline in his classroom, I am not entirely in accord with your views regarding [him]. I recall your remarks in the Board meeting to the effect that Thomas was impossible for the first few years of his employment at Skokie and that you very often found it necessary to take him to task. Consequently it is evident that he has been the cause of embarrassment to the Board on a number of occasions and on various scores, and for this reason I for one believe that the time is ripe for a showdown¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶Letter to [John Thomas] from Matthew Gaffney, February 22, 1939. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁰⁷Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowen Brown, January 12, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹⁰⁸Letter to Carleton Washburne from Dick Aishton, January 9, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

And another board member upset by the same incident also wrote Washburne:

This, of course, is only one case. I can see no reason why we should permit a teacher of music to comment unfavorably on any Village institution. It certainly does not come within the scope of his work, and apparently it arises from a highly exaggerated ego which should be curbed . . . so far as I am concerned, he has got to confine himself to music or find another job.¹⁰⁹

Washburne continued, in the face of this growing opposition of the board, to back his teacher: "I think that the more we all lay off on the whole subject, the better all the way around for a while," he wrote a board member. "I am convinced that Thomas is sincerely sorry that he has caused any trouble and that he is doing his level best to avoid the sort of remark that brings this criticism. In the meantime he's doing a grand job with our kids and for that he deserves our appreciation and support."¹¹⁰

Washburne knew Thomas well enough, however, to know that his level best that he spoke to the board about wouldn't be good enough to keep him out of further scrapes. After one such later scrape, Washburne candidly acknowledged Thomas' limitations of temperament

¹⁰⁹Letter to Carleton Washburne from Robert Bowen Brown, January 12, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹¹⁰Letter to Robert Bowen Brown from Carleton Washburne, January 21, 1935. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

but defended the teacher because of the rare qualities that he brought to his job:

My past experience with him in such matters makes me believe that there will be a definite attempt on his part, lasting for a reasonable length of time, to be more cool and less sarcastic, but that in time he will break over again under stress of circumstances.

As I indicated to you when we were talking, both Rae¹¹¹ and I are keenly conscious of Thomas' faults and we have discussed them with him repeatedly. He makes an honest effort to respond to our criticism, but his temperament is his temperament, and simply has to be set down as one of the liabilities that we take when we keep him.

On the asset side, he is one of the very few junior high school music teachers that I have ever heard of who has children actually loving music and fine music. Children take several times as much music as they are required to do, they carry their love of it into the schools to which they go and on into life.

. . . . The thing we are trying to get is an understanding and love of fine music and the desire to participate in it after the children leave us. This Mr. Thomas gets in a consummate degree, and it seems to me that this asset outweighs heavily Mr. Thomas' admitted liabilities.¹¹²

So Washburne showed himself able to tolerate even rather consistent undesirable behavior on the part of some teachers who possessed at the same time certain very desirable traits which overbalanced the liabilities.

¹¹¹ S. R. Logan, assistant superintendent and principal of Skokie.

¹¹² Letter to Mr. Holman Pettibone from Carleton Washburne, March 16, 1938. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Mona Farrington vs. Board
of Education

In the spring of 1933, against his better judgment and "with some hesitancy" Washburne offered Mona Farrington a contract for the subsequent school year. She was just completing her fourth year of Winnetka teaching and "was not entirely satisfactory as a teacher." It was Washburne's usual practice to dismiss a teacher who, by the end of three years, had not proved satisfactory. He had made an exception for Mrs. Farrington because she was a widow with a fifteen-year-old son to support and because, after having been severely called on the carpet earlier in the year "for inefficient work, poor and inaccurate records, etc.," she had made a conscientious effort and "had done some good things."¹¹³ She signed her contract for the following school year on the 26th of April, 1933.

Within six weeks Washburne came to regret having offered her a contract for a fifth year in the Winnetka schools. On Thursday, June 15, 1933, Dr. Aubrey T. Williams called Washburne from his Chicago office to complain that his son, Raleigh, had come home from school for the third time "with his arm bleeding as

¹¹³Letter to Mr. Frederic O. Mason from Carleton Washburne, November 27, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

a result of Mrs. Farrington's digging her finger nails into it."¹¹⁴ Washburne was amazed at the report. Immediately he drove over to the Williams' home and found on the boy's arm not only fresh nail marks but also marks from an earlier incident confirming the father's complaint. From the Williams', Washburne drove to the Greeley school and confronted Mrs. Farrington with the accusations that Dr. Williams had made and with the evidence of his own visit to the boy's home. She lamely admitted that "I may have grabbed his arm a little hard and my nails are pretty sharp."¹¹⁵

When Washburne discussed the matter with Miss Brett, the principal of Greeley, he learned that one parent claimed that Mrs. Farrington in a fit of temper, had called one of the children in her room a "despicable little brat;" and, finally, that "a considerable number of parents had been to the principal of the school at one time or another to complain about Mrs. Farrington."

Washburne was convinced that such bursts of temper--resulting in physical mishandling of the children

¹¹⁴"Answer of Defendant to Plaintiff's Interrogatories," filed in Superior Court of Cook County: Mona Farrington vs. Board of Education, School District No. 36, Cook County, Illinois, January, 1935. Copy: Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹¹⁵Letter to Frederic O. Mason from Carleton Washburne, November 27, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

as well as verbal abuse--was inimical to the best interests of his schools. On Friday, June 16th--the last day of school--he laid the case before the Teachers Committee of the board, and the committee strongly concurred with Washburne that Mrs. Farrington "should definitely be dismissed for the following year."

Washburne attempted to tell Mrs. Farrington of the decision at 3:30 Friday afternoon, but she had already left for Chicago. He telephoned her at home and asked her to come out to Winnetka the next day, Saturday.

He had a lengthy conference with her:

I told her that the Board of Education was not willing to have her continue for this coming year. I told her that I would do my best as far as I could, without being dishonest, to help her in finding another position. . . . I told her that I had no choice but to accept her resignation, but that I would be glad to protect her by letting her departure be considered as a resignation. I offered to let her have a hearing before the Board of Education if she wanted such a hearing. She said she thought that would be useless. She was bitter about the dismissal and defended herself in every possible way, from tears to all kinds of accusations as to my trying to save my skin by making her a scapegoat--at least she felt that since I had been through the campaign and had had a great deal of criticism against me that somehow or other I was afraid to stand up for a teacher and was letting her go. She was the hardest teacher to fire that I've ever had to deal with.

"She appealed to me in desperation in the fall, saying that she had no money and was even going without food. I took the matter up immediately with the members of the Board of Education and received a check from one

of them to help her out financially."¹¹⁶ In November of 1933 the Board of Education received a communication from the law office of Swanson, Butler, Dodge & Ham stating that they had in their possession a legal and valid contract "notifying Mrs. Farrington of her election by your board to continue as an instructor in your schools for the school year 1933-34," and "that Mrs. Mona Farrington is and since the beginning of the 1933-34 school year, has been ready, willing and able to resume teaching in the public schools of School District No. 36 of Cook County, at your regularly established salary schedule."¹¹⁷ A second letter from the same law firm followed close on, stating that

unless we are in receipt of advise from you to the effect that Mrs. Farrington will be reinstated and assigned to duty on or before the first day of December 1933 and a settlement of back salary due her, we shall assume that you propose to disregard your contract obligation and shall avail ourselves of such legal remedies as we may deem most advisable.¹¹⁸

For a long while the matter lingered in the ponderous, slow-moving machinery of justice. At last,

¹¹⁶Superintendent's Reports, vol. 5 (March 1934 - May 1937), December 14, 1936, p. 2737.

¹¹⁷Letter to the Board of Education, Winnetka from Swanson, Butler, Dodge & Ham by Homer Dodge, November 18, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹¹⁸Ibid., November 24, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

in the fall of 1936, the case was nearing trial. By chance, in November of that year Washburne was lecturing in Milwaukee and following his talk Mrs. Farrington came up to him. "Our conversation was most amicable. She said she had never enjoyed teaching so much as she had while she was here." She feigned astonishment when Washburne told her that her suit was about to be tried: "She said she had been panicky in the fall three years ago when she had no job and had placed the case in the hands of these lawyers, but had heard nothing from them since, and thought the whole thing was dropped." She indicated to Dr. Washburne that, if sent a release, she would willingly sign it and call off the suit. He wrote his lawyer, Mr. Mason, to this effect--but added a note of caution:

Mona is not incapable of double dealing. She perfectly clearly indicated that she wanted to make a bargain and that she would call off the suit if I would get her a job in Oak Park. Naturally I didn't promise her anything of the sort, but I did tell her that I would be glad to write to her present superintendent in West Allis, and that if I found that she had been making good there, I would be glad to call this to the attention of the Superintendent of Schools in Oak Park. She says that I have her completely blocked in educational progress. I told her that she would block herself by going ahead with the suit, since no superintendent would employ a teacher who he knew had acted as she was doing.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹Letter to Frederic O. Mason from Carleton Washburne, November 13, 1936. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

A few days later, Washburne sent the release form to Mrs. Farrington "I always did think that suit was one of the most foolish things you ever did . . . now that you have voluntarily agreed to withdraw it, I want to congratulate you and tell you that you have removed one big stumbling stone from your path of progress," he wrote her. "It was nice to see you, Mona. I'm not sure you've always believed it, but I have always wished you well and wanted to be of help to you, insofar as I can be of help without evading my responsibilities toward children and my fellow superintendents."¹²⁰

Washburne's feeling that Mrs. Farrington was capable of "double-dealing" in the matter was well-founded:

It now appears that Mona Farrington far from signing the release we sent her, is stirred up about it and has sent the release unsigned, with a copy of your letter, to Dodge,¹²¹ so that nothing is to be expected from this proposed arrangement, and she apparently now wants to proceed with the case.¹²²

Mason, lawyer for the board, suggested the possibility of an out-of-court settlement; the case,

¹²⁰Letter to Mrs. [Mona Farrington] from Carleton Washburne, November 19, 1936. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

¹²¹Mr. Homer Dodge, lawyer to Mona Farrington.

¹²²Letter to Carleton Washburne from Frederic O. Mason, December 9, 1936. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

he felt, could be settled for about \$400. "I wish you would advise me whether you would authorize a settlement at \$400, or better."

Washburne expressed his feeling to the board:

"As a matter of principle and precedent, I would rather fight the thing through. As a matter of convenience and possible economy, the Board may feel that it prefers to settle the matter out of court by a cash payment to Mrs. Farrington. Naturally there is no provision for such a payment in our budget, but then the defense of the suit may run our budget over in legal expenses."¹²³

Washburne reported back to his lawyer that

at the School Board meeting last night it was decided that since it would probably cost in the neighborhood of \$250 to defend Mona Farrington's suit, the Board would be willing to spend that much in an out-of-court settlement. If Mrs. Farrington demands more, the Board prefers to fight. The offer is \$250, take it or leave it.¹²⁴

Mrs. Farrington's lawyer chose to leave it. The case of Mona Farrington vs. Board of Education came to trial at last on March 29, 1937. The suit brought against the Winnetka Board of Education was denied.

¹²³Superintendent's Reports, vol. 5 (March 1934 - May 1937), November 16, 1936, p. 2727.

¹²⁴Letter to Frederic O. Mason from Carleton Washburne, December 14, 1936. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Later that same year, when a child had been struck by a teacher, Washburne cited the Mona Farrington case in a letter to the child's parents:

You realize, of course, that it is completely counter to the policy of the Winnetka Public Schools to use any form of physical punishment on children. On very rare occasions a teacher reaches a point of exasperation where he or she forgets himself momentarily. I can think of four such incidents in the last ten years. None of them have been at all serious and in each case the teacher was thoroughly sorry that it had happened, and in no case has the same teacher repeated it--no, that is not quite true. One teacher four years ago lost her temper two or three times and grabbed a child's arm very roughly. We cancelled her contract and dropped her from the faculty, or more strictly speaking, I persuaded her to resign. We have just got through defending a suit brought by this teacher for breach of contract. It cost us \$300 to defend the suit, but we won the suit. I cite this merely to indicate how strongly the Board of Education and I feel on the subject of any form of corporal punishment.¹²⁵

Recapitulation

Through the early years of his superintendency, Washburne's relationship with his staff was autocratic but benevolent. His exercise of autocratic control probably resulted from an interaction of the dependency of the staff as Washburne found it on coming to Winnetka and his definite ideas of the curriculum and techniques that he sought to implement in Winnetka. He effected radical changes in the educational program

¹²⁵ Letter to Mr. and Mrs. Roger A. Baldwin from Carleton Washburne, May 27, 1937. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

at Winnetka that could be brought about so rapidly only through the exercise of a direct, forceful executive power.

He took upon himself the "mission of developing a staff."¹²⁶ He stretched the horizons of those teachers who already made up the staff and, as openings occurred, filled them with strong, individualistic, and liberal-minded persons. As the staff matured, however, it began to challenge Washburne's autocracy. It demanded the right to become responsible for professional matters and to share in the policy-making decisions of the administration of the schools. At the outset of this challenge, Washburne felt threatened and resisted his teachers strongly. Nevertheless, the more he examined his own philosophy of education the more he realized the validity of the teachers' demands. He also saw in their demands the natural fruition of the growth of the staff that he himself had done so much to effect. At last he came around to their point of view--and, in fact, surpassed their thinking. He championed the cause of teacher autonomy to the board, seeking to obtain for the teachers the right to recall the superintendent by a majority vote. The board, however, was jealous of its rights and refused to empower the teachers

¹²⁶Mr. James Mann in an interview, December 15, 1969.

to vote a recall of their superintendent. Finally, however, Washburne did gain for the teachers recognition of their own organization, the Winnetka Teachers Council, as the official representation of the Winnetka faculty. Washburne convinced the board to establish a policy of the right of the Winnetka Teachers Council to bring criticism and grievances against the superintendent before the board for action.

Much of Washburne's relationship with the teachers was on a mentor-student basis. Much of his time and energy was spent on the in-service training of the staff; he sought to instill in his teachers, not only the skills and techniques for effectively carrying out the Winnetka program, but also the philosophical, sociological, and psychological bases of progressive education. The Winnetka teacher received far more from Washburne than an apprenticeship training in the Winnetka technique; she gained a liberal education as well.

As a leader of the "larger progressive movement," Washburne was highly concerned about the inadequacy of teacher preparation, not only for his own schools, but for the whole of the "newer education." Washburne saw a need and with characteristic vigor and determination sought to meet it. He met certain practical and immediate needs with the Winnetka Summer School for Teachers and, ultimately, sought to establish a model--or laboratory--

teacher training institution through the founding of the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka.

In relationship to the staff, Washburne combined a professionalism with a great depth of emotional empathy and genuine generosity of spirit. He was not blinded, however, to a teacher's faults and limitations by an over-sentimentalism or personal attachment. He was able to fire a teacher and still say with genuine feeling "I've always wished you well and wanted to be of help to you . . ." ¹²⁷ He simply would not allow his personal feelings to stand in the way of his greater responsibilities as he saw them.

Washburne's relationship with his staff was one of mutual respect, warmth, genuine concern, and true friendship. One of the outstanding characteristics of this relationship was the ability that he had to draw from his teachers loyalty to a man. Washburne in relationship to his staff mixed strength with sensitivity; authority with understanding; and duty with friendship.

¹²⁷Letter to [Mona Farrington] from Carleton Washburne, November 19, 1936. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

CHAPTER V

IN CONCLUSION

"The results you have accomplished are reflected best in the thousands of children who have had the benefit of your leadership . . ."¹

¹Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 12 (April 19, 1943 - May 16, 1949), June 25, 1945.

In an article² in the Sixty-third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, James Lipham distinguished between leadership and administration. He defined leadership "as the initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing an organization's goals and objectives;" whereas, he viewed administration as the utilization of "existing structures or procedures to achieve an organizational goal or objective." The Lipham thesis concludes that "while leadership and administration have many factors in common, they basically are mutually exclusive." He poses an hypothesis concerning one type of leader--the type, it is suggested, that Carleton Washburne was--that his "commitment to individualistic goals may be so strong that he must challenge the existing organization."

Washburne was very much an "educational leader" if Lipham's distinction maintains. So effective, indeed, was his leadership that it has been, at least on one occasion, called "educational statesmanship."³ Washburne had a broad-visioned conception of the educational process:

²James M. Lipham, "Leadership and Administration," Behaviorial Science and Educational Administration: The Sixty-third Yearbook of the Society for the Study of Education, edited by Daniel E. Griffiths, Part II, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 119-141.

³Cf., supra, p. 12.

I have found it convenient to look at this whole process of education from four angles: First, we can think of it in terms of the child as a person, having certain basic needs in common with all other persons. These needs are for health and happiness, or to put it in another way, for physical well-being and for mental and emotional well-being. Second, we can think of education in terms of the child as an individual, a unique creation, differing from all others, with a need for self-expression, a need for following out his own characteristic pattern of development in work and play and thought. Third, we can see the child as part of an intricate society which depends for its existence upon inter-communication, and in which, therefore, to play one's part, one must have mastery of the skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, a common basis of knowledge of history, geography, and science, and, for comfort and acceptance, certain conventions like spelling, punctuation, and grammar. And fourth, we can see the organic unity of society and the need for helping each individual to realize the unity and to act in the light of this realization--much of character, all of citizenship and social responsibility, may be seen from this angle.⁴

It was, then, toward this educational ideal that Washburne exercised his brand of leadership. Washburne has been characterized as a pragmatic philosopher: "everything he believed in he tried to translate into educational practice."⁵ "He never set out to expound a theory of education; rather he tried to have the best education for each child."⁶ In implementing his own educational vision, Washburne at every turn challenged the existing

⁴Carleton Washburne, A Living Philosophy of Education, (New York: The John Day Co., 1940), pp. xix - xx.

⁵James Mann in an interview, December 15, 1969.

⁶Mrs. Frances Murray in an interview, December 11, 1969.

organization; he challenged it in its major arenas as well--the community, the board, and his staff.

The events of the previous chapters have been recounted so that from them might be distilled the qualities that made Washburne's superintendency an effective exercise of leadership. Underlying his exercise of educational leadership must be certain personality traits of Carleton Washburne as a man. It is, then, only logical that in defining the parameters of his leadership some prior dimensions of his personality will be discussed since they give character and direction to the exercise of his leadership.

His determination and tenacity are evident in practically every clash he had across the years with his board or the community. They are particularly evident, for example, during his 1925 crisis with the board⁷ when he refused to give-in to its demands and in his maintenance of manuscript penmanship in the face of perennial opposition to it.⁸ And, likewise, he was proud. On one occasion when he returned to Winnetka for one or another celebration⁹ of the Winnetka schools,

⁷Cf., supra, p. 130 ff.

⁸Cf., supra, p. 92 ff.

⁹Washburne attended the 25th anniversary of the Crow Island School, 1965; the 40th anniversary of the Winnetka Nursery School, 1963; and the centennial of the Winnetka public schools, 1959. Miss Carswell could not remember the specific occasion of his remark.

he brought along a cane that he had begun to lean upon. "Hide it," he told an old friend, "I don't want anyone to know I'm using it."¹⁰

Washburne was intelligent, broad-visioned, and intellectually stimulating. To those around him, he was an "endless well spring of ideas,"¹¹ and he "was interested in all the isms of the world."¹² These qualities are in evidence, particularly, in his leadership in relation to his staff. During the years of his superintendency, the staff matured and grew strong under the exercise of his leadership. "He knew how to sow the seeds of thought. You could disagree with him but he still put you to thinking."¹³

Washburne was a man of "tremendous intellectual and emotional energy."¹⁴ This energy is evident in the sheer amounts of time that he expended and in the sheer bulk of what he accomplished in Winnetka. Workdays for Washburne often extended well into the night; many of his Saturdays for fifteen years were spent in coordinating

¹⁰Miss Marion Carswell in an interview, December 12, 1969.

¹¹Mrs. Rose Alschuler in an interview, December 13, 1969.

¹²Miss Marion Carswell in an interview, December 12, 1969.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Mrs. Rose Alschuler in an interview, December 13, 1969.

and directing the work of the Committee of Seven. In addition to the work of the superintendency, Washburne carried out extensive research projects, organized the Winnetka Educational Press, directed each summer the Winnetka Summer School for Teachers, and founded the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka, serving--as well--as one of its educational directors and lecturers. He also served in leadership capacities in such organizations as the American Educational Research Association and the Progressive Education Association. His emotional energy must have been severely tested during the whispering campaign of the 1933 school board election and, yet through it, remained "generous in judgment toward people."¹⁵

Finally, Washburne had a depth of humanness about him; he was warm, empathetic, and understanding. It was these qualities that caused his staff to love and respect him and to pledge unflagging loyalty to him. In a word, he had "great will, great love, imagination and a sense of humor."¹⁶ Washburne was able to draw from these and other strengths of his inner-self to enhance, and make effective, his exercise of leadership.

¹⁵Mrs. Frances Murray in an interview, December 11, 1969.

¹⁶Ibid.

"Carleton's life overflowed and increased confidence in his staff that much could be accomplished."¹⁷

There are dimensions of Washburne's leadership that emerge from his dealings with community, board, and staff. One of the most striking features of Washburne's brand of leadership is the straight-forwardness of approach with which he met a need or problem: "when he felt a need for something he went to work to provide a way to supply that need."¹⁸ Two outstanding instances of this dimension of his leadership are the drive to build the Skokie School by voluntary contributions when the district's bonding power was too limited to afford the kind of building that he wanted and the founding of the Graduate Teachers College at the very height of the great economic depression of the thirties. He was completely undaunted by obstacles that others with more limited vision would simply have accepted as inevitable.

Related to this directness-in-approach was Washburne's "unbounded faith in reason"¹⁹ and in the scientific approach that he took to the solution of educational problems. Research was to serve always as

¹⁷Mr. Frederick Reed in an interview, February 24, 1970.

¹⁸Mr. James Mann in an interview, December 15, 1969.

¹⁹Mr. Frederick Reed in an interview, February 24, 1970.

the basis upon which educational change would be initiated during the years of his superintendency. He involved his whole staff in the on-going research projects which formed an integral part of the Winnetka technique.²⁰ Armed with facts harvested from research, Washburne's "leadership consisted in argumentative persuasion and a willingness to listen, learn, and explain."²¹ He had a skill in argumentation and a power of persuasion that was quite out of the ordinary. The reader might recall the comparison that an unhappy parent once made of Dr. Washburne to William Jennings Bryan.²² He often urged his board forward through persuasive argumentation. Two major policies adopted by the board mainly through Washburne's persuasion were (1) the recognition of the Winnetka Teachers Council as a step toward teacher autonomy;²³ and (2) the "due consideration" policy that protected all major features of the Winnetka program from the whim of any future board or superintendent.²⁴

Another significant aspect of Washburne's leadership was an unfailing confidence in his own convictions

²⁰Cf., supra, p. 7.

²¹Mr. Frederick Reed in an interview, February 24, 1970.

²²Cf., supra, p. 110.

²³Cf., supra, p. 208 ff.

²⁴Cf., supra, p. 169.

and the moral courage to stand behind these convictions in spite of their unpopularity. Washburne had very little use for sheer politics:

How, without being a hypocrite, one can give a parent a feeling of satisfaction, when that parent is absolutely determined upon a way which after most careful consideration seems to be fundamentally wrong, is an extremely difficult problem. It is, however, one with which I am wrestling.²⁵

Once when he had reached an apparent impasse with the Board of Education, he chose to tender his resignation rather than to concede in a matter that would have meant compromising one of his basic convictions concerning the respective roles of board and superintendent.²⁶ Strong, personal convictions led Washburne into conflict with both board and community over such matters as his support of a socialist who was faced with deportation²⁷ and his defense of an artist who had executed a mural on the wall of the Skokie school library.²⁸

Still one more quality of Washburne's leadership was the ability that he had of gaining the unanimous

²⁵Letter to Clarence Randall from Carleton Washburne, May 4, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools. Also see supra, p. 111.

²⁶Cf., supra, p. 150.

²⁷Cf., supra, p. 181 ff.

²⁸Cf., supra, p. 176 ff.

loyalty of both board and staff. It is this very loyalty that enabled Washburne to survive such crises with the community as the board election of 1933.²⁹ Only with this kind of loyalty and support could Washburne have effected such extensive changes within the Winnetka schools, and only with this loyalty could Washburne have maintained a twenty-four year tenure in the Village of Winnetka.

Nothing attests more to Washburne's effectiveness of leadership than the mere fact that he endured within Winnetka for twenty-four years. There were vast ideological differences that existed between the person of Carleton Washburne and the community of Winnetka. Notwithstanding, Washburne had something of value for the Village and Winnetka provided Washburne an educational laboratory with which he could attempt to shape the direction of American education.

In the late years of his superintendency, Washburne once offered advice to a school board that was seeking a new superintendent. He drew for that board a thumbnail sketch of the person that an effective superintendent would be:

The first basic and essential qualification of the man is belief and skill in democratic administration. By this I mean his ability to

²⁹Cf., supra, p. 57 ff.

stimulate, coordinate and use the thinking of all members of his teaching and administrative staff The second basic essential is ability to obtain the confidence and cooperation of the community and school board and to stimulate the interest of all elements in the city in developing and supporting an effective school system.

These are the basic essentials. The following qualifications are likewise very important; but a person who can really develop and use his staff and community can, to some extent, make up for his own deficiencies in other regards by the employment and use of persons with the qualifications he himself lacks.

Your superintendent should have:

1. A deep-seated interest in and understanding of children and adolescents and an understanding of modern psychology and mental hygiene;
2. A broad, tolerant, and thoughtful social vision--i.e., a real interest in the progress and well-being of the community and society as a whole;
3. Moral courage--he must be a man, who, while adaptable and willing to make practical compromises on details and to listen open mindedly to others, will stand absolutely firm against political, factional, and personal pressures where he is convinced of the rightness of his policies;
4. Sound judgment;
5. Energy and initiative;
6. First rate executive ability--skill in getting things done efficiently;
7. Knowledge and skill in school finances;
8. Knowledge and ideas in regard to school buildings;
9. Skill in addressing the public;
10. Good presence--he should have culture and friendliness, and, although less important, a pleasing appearance.

Of course the elements of character and personality that we expect in any good man and citizen--honesty,

dependability, kindness, etc., etc.--are taken for granted--I have only tried to enumerate the special factors that determine, over and above these, the qualifications of a superintendent of schools.³⁰

This, Washburne's statement on the superintendency, defines with a fair degree of accuracy the mature state of his own administration. Washburne had grown much; through the years there was a marked evolution of his leadership qualities. He fought many battles with both the board and community. In the early years--for instance, in the 1925 board crisis--he had taken an uncompromising stand. Seemingly he had felt a need to be in absolute control over every detail of the technical and professional aspects of his schools. In the later years, however, he had apparently established for himself a set of priorities. He had learned what was important to fight for and what wasn't worth the fight. He learned that in the long-run cause the loss of some minor scrimmages was not only inevitable but sometimes good strategy. In order to preserve the essential character of his system he could--and did--compromise on matters that were non-essential. He could, for example, accede to the board's wishes that an East Indian not practice-teacher in the schools³¹--or agree

³⁰Superintendent's Reports [S. R. Logan], vol. 8 (March 1943 - June 1945), June 26, 1945, pp. 4162-4163.

³¹Cf., supra, p. 174.

to the covering of a mural from the Skokie library that the board found too radical for its conservative taste.³² He even went to the extent of compromising on a choice of textbooks rather than risk the imposition of more stringent controls.³³

The later years of Washburne's superintendency reveal that he felt less need to control every aspect of his educational system. He came to recognize the legitimate claim that the teaching staff had for more autonomy. This is probably the area of greatest growth in Washburne over the years of his superintendency: his growing realization of the implications of democratic administration of schools followed close on by his efforts toward implementation.

By the very nature of the human condition, there must have been some distinct limitations in the leadership qualities of Carleton Washburne. He once remarked, in writing a "confession," that "one's faults are closely tied up with one's virtues":

One of my virtues, if it may be called a virtue when it requires no effort and is just a part of my nature, is that of clan loyalty toward my friends and toward institutions in which I believe. The accompanying fault is that when I believe such a friend or institution to be in jeopardy in any way I rush to its defense and sometimes I fail if I am not very much on guard to take into consideration

³²Cf., supra, p. 180.

³³Cf., supra, p. 108.

the persons or things on which I tread on my way,
and I therefore sometimes have reason to regret
damage that I have done in a perfectly good cause.³⁴

There are other limitations in Washburne's leadership that are similarly bound up with his virtues. His strong-willfulness that enabled the effecting of so much change within the Winnetka schools also acted as a limiting factor. Just one example of this limitation is in his maintenance of manuscript writing despite strong popular opposition³⁵ and in the face of the fact that it even sometimes proved a limitation to Winnetka graduates.

Finally one other limitation of Washburne's leadership was tied up closely with his skill at persuasive argumentation. A man of superior intelligence and logic of thought, Washburne often failed to satisfy an irate or concerned parent. It was not unusual for a parent to go away from a conference with Washburne madder than before he came in.³⁶ Washburne, himself, so loved the challenge of an argument that he failed to recognize that in "talking-down" a parent he was simply adding frustration to whatever concerns were already on that parent's mind.

³⁴Letter to Dean Franklin B. Snyder from Carleton Washburne, August 3, 1938. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

³⁵Cf., supra, p. 92 ff.

³⁶Cf., supra, p. 110.

In summary, Washburne was an educational leader who brought to the Winnetka superintendency a measure of strength, determination, intelligence, broad-vision, warmth, and kindness. He brought, too, certain concomitant limitations such as a lack of finesse in some human relations and a degree of pride that sometimes impeded his potential effectiveness. Washburne had something of that magnanimity of spirit that gives a man some claim to "greatness." There seems to be no more fitting concluding remark than the testimonial of the Winnetka Board of Education on the resignation of Carleton Washburne from the Winnetka superintendency:

TO CARLETON W. WASHBURNE

Lieutenant Colonel, A.U.S.

In recognition of your many years of outstanding service to the cause of education and citizenship in Winnetka, we present to you this token of appreciation and affection.

You came to the Winnetka Schools when they, in common with other forward looking communities, were searching for a better system of developing the potentialities of their children. Your deep insight into the child's world and your dynamic pioneering leadership have opened up new horizons in education.

The results you have accomplished are reflected best in the thousands of children who have had the benefit of your leadership; in the staff of teachers you have so carefully brought together and integrated into a common spirit; and in the world-wide reputation you have brought to our schools.³⁷

³⁷ Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education, vol. 12 (April 19, 1943 - May 16, 1949), June 25, 1945.

AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE

AN ESSAY ON SOURCES OF REFERENCE

Primary

Published

At the outset of this study, I knew very little about the "Winnetka Technique" or Dr. Carleton Washburne whose philosophy and leadership undergirded it. My first couple of weeks of research were spent in the Northwestern University library; there I read and thoroughly studied three of Washburne's published books: A Living Philosophy of Education (New York: The John Day Company, 1940); What is Progressive Education? A Book for Parents and Others (New York: The John Day Company, 1952); and [with Sidney P. Marland, Jr. as co-author] Winnetka: The History and Significance of an Educational Experiment (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963). These three books provided an orientation to the Winnetka technique and to Washburne's educational philosophy. They also provided a set of reference points for the various other materials on which this study has been based.

During the course of my research, I also perused several other of Washburne's books such as Remakers of Mankind (New York: The John Day Company, 1932) and Windows to Understanding (New York: Carleton Press, Inc.,

1968). While these books, indeed, broadened my understanding of the man that was Carleton Washburne, they did not--to the extent of the previously mentioned books--further the theme of my study.

A listing of well over one hundred articles by Washburne during the Winnetka superintendency would probably not constitute a complete bibliography. I located many of his articles, carefully read and took notes from a goodly number, and at least skimmed the others. While, indeed, there was some duplication of theme and content among these numerous publications, I was frankly surprised that in the greater number of articles there was in each some unique contribution.

A few of the more significant articles in respect to this study would include: "Winnetka" (School and Society, January, 1929, pp. 37-50); "Inception of the Winnetka Technique" (American Association of University Women's Journal, April, 1930, pp. 129-134); and, "Democracy in School Administration" (School Management, March, 1938, pp. 205; 218-219). References have been made to several other articles by Washburne in individual footnotes within the paper.

An invaluable source--particularly in discussion of Washburne's relationship to the community--was the local newspaper The Winnetka Talk [in the 20's it was The Winnetka Weekly Talk]. Practically all of the

information concerning the controversial Skokie school site and subscription drive came from its pages, and a wealth of information about the school board election of 1933 was garnered from it--particularly from the columns of its "public forum."

Incidental newspaper clippings from the Chicago Daily News, the Chicago Herald and Examiner, and the Chicago Tribune contributed--albeit in a small way--to the body of reference resources.

Unpublished

The major unpublished resources on which this paper were based must be (1) the Minutes of the Winnetka Board of Education: 1919-1943; (2) the Superintendent's Reports: 1919-1943; and, (3) the correspondence file. All three of these sources were located in the administrative offices of the Winnetka Public Schools.

The minutes were the least helpful of the three resources. Many of the workings of board and superintendent are simply not recorded in the minutes. Washburne--at least occasionally--acted first and informed the board only after the fact. The board, on its part, occasionally acted "extralegally" and carefully avoided mention of such actions on the pages of its minutes. As the official record of the school board, the minutes are an indispensable resource to such a study as this

one; taken in themselves, however, the minutes also prove to be a wholly inadequate reference source.

The Superintendent's Reports proved by far a more valuable source of information than the minutes. They comprise several thousand pages written by Washburne over the twenty-four year superintendency. A report was submitted to the board each month before its meeting. In these reports, Washburne outlined matters that lay before the board and recommended the actions he wanted the board to take. In them, too, he often brought matters to the attention of the board that, while not requiring any board action, were nonetheless matters of some concern to it.

Perhaps the single most important resource upon which this study has been based was the correspondence file. In these files had been meticulously preserved all school-related correspondence received by Washburne and carbon copies of correspondence prepared by him. Several minor dramas unfolded themselves through the pages of the correspondence file. Moreover, these files also contained materials useful to this study that were not properly correspondence. In addition to hundreds and hundreds of individual pieces of correspondence, the file contained a goodly number of article reprints, manuscripts of unpublished articles, newspaper clippings, stenographic transcripts of several significant meetings,

and the text of at least one speech delivered by Dr. Washburne. In short the correspondence file provided a wealth of information about the Washburne superintendency.

Interviews

I was fortunate enough to have had a number of interviews with persons closely associated with Washburne and the Winnetka technique. These interviews incalculably forwarded my own thought about Washburne's Winnetka superintendency. These several interviews added certain dimensions of depth to my study of Carleton Washburne that the more-or-less inert quality of the printed page could not convey. I had formal interviews with the following close associates and Winnetka staff members under Washburne: Mrs. Rose Alschuler, Miss Marion Carswell, Mr. James Mann, Mrs. Frances Murray, and Mr. Frederick Reed. I also had less formal interviews--perhaps, more correctly "chats"--with Miss Charlotte Carlson, Mrs. Florence Gail, Mrs. Virginia Holdredge, Mrs. Gertrude Kloepper, Mr. Lloyd Long, Mrs. Luella Murray, and Mrs. Sue Wells. Furthermore, I briefly interviewed both Dr. Robert Filbin and Mr. Frank Temmerman presently superintendent and assistant superintendent, respectively, of the Winnetka Schools.

I should like to comment briefly on several selected interviews:

Mrs. Rose Alschuler was associated with Washburne and the Winnetka schools from the early years of his superintendency. Mrs. Alschuler had already become involved with nursery school work when Washburne first met her. He asked her to establish a nursery school in conjunction with the Winnetka public schools. She not only established the nursery school and served as its supervisor through the Washburne years but--with her husband--contributed some \$30,000 to build a wing on the Skokie school to house it.

Mrs. Alschuler talked with me in her Highland Park home for two hours on Saturday afternoon, December 13, 1969. Mrs. Alschuler related many warm remembrances, and once remarked: "It's so nice to talk about him!" From Mrs. Alschuler I gained some insight into the human qualities that Washburne possessed and that made him a man so well-loved by his staff and associates.

Miss Marion Carswell has been called "the first lady of Winnetka education."¹ To her knowledge she was the first teacher that Washburne hired after assuming the Winnetka superintendency. As early as 1922 Miss Carswell during the summer term demonstrated the Winnetka

¹Sidney P. Marland, Jr. in the keynote address at the dedication of the Washburne School, October 12, 1969.

technique at the Horace Mann School at Teachers College, Columbia. Miss Carswell served as long-time principal of the Hubbard Woods school, Winnetka, with two lengthy leaves of absence to implement the Winnetka technique first in the public school system of Bronxville, New York (1924-25) and later at L'Ecole Internationale (1927-29) which had been established in Geneva in the early twenties for the children of the delegates to the secretariat of the League of Nations. Her two years in Geneva brought her in close contact with such prominent educators and psychologists as Bovet and Piaget.

In the fall of 1939, Miss Carswell left Winnetka to become professor of education at Smith College. Ten years later, following a couple of years' work with the occupation schools in Austria (1946-48), she returned to Winnetka as was the principal of the Crow Island School, Winnetka, and assistant superintendent of schools.

Miss Carswell talked with me for about five hours on Friday, December 12, 1969. She proved an invaluable source of information about Carleton Washburne and every aspect of the Winnetka technique during his superintendency. It is unfortunate that the scope of my paper was so limited that much of the information that Miss Carswell shared with me was not able to be incorporated into it. Much that I had read of Washburne and his

superintendency was made more meaningful through talking with Miss Carswell. She breathed a kind of life into the pages of history.

Mr. James Mann joined the Winnetka teaching staff in 1930. He was sometime head of the social studies department, president of the Winnetka Teachers' Council, and principal at the Hubbard Woods school after Marion Carswell went to Smith College. James Mann is a well-known and much-respected member of the Winnetka community; one of the Village's public parks has since been named the "James Mann Park." Presently, Mr. Mann is a professor in the department of education at Roosevelt University, Chicago.

Mr. Mann talked with me for an hour Monday evening, December 15, 1969. He contributed much to my understanding of the social and economic factors that characterized Winnetka as a community during the Washburne years. He also forwarded my understanding of the staff's striving toward autonomy and Washburne's reaction to it. Finally, James Mann contributed significantly to my understanding of the philosophy upon which Washburne built his system of education.

Mrs. Frances Murray served as the dean of the Graduate Teachers College of Winnetka during its entire twenty-two year existence. Washburne once called her "the heart of the college." Mrs. Murray is a woman

unusually articulate and intellectually keen. Her choice of vocabulary is precise and she has the ability to go directly to the essence of an issue. Mrs. Murray shared with me during a three-and-a-half hour interview on December 11, 1969, some perceptive insights into the person of Carleton Washburne.

She knew Washburne as well as any of the staff and probably understood him better than most. I came away from my interview with Mrs. Murray feeling that she had made an incalculable contribution to my understanding of Dr. Washburne. I had to re-evaluate certain tentative conclusions that I had reached before talking with her in the light of her comments and her insights.

Mr. Frederick Reed was a long-time member of the Winnetka faculty and a close, personal friend to Washburne. His first appointment was to the "creative activities department" when he joined the staff in the middle twenties but was made principal of the Greeley school, Winnetka, in the fall of 1933. He continued in that position until 1959 when he retired from Winnetka and joined Dr. Washburne at Brooklyn College. Sometime after Washburne had become affiliated with Michigan State University and had established a home in Okemos, Michigan, Reed and his wife also retired to that community in a home only a mile or so from Washburne's.

On February 24, 1970--just days prior to his departure for England, Frederick Reed talked with me for about

an hour-and-a-half about Washburne and the Winnetka technique. My interview with Mr. Reed tended to "round-out" my information. I had, by the time of my talk with him, completed most of the text of my dissertation, and he was able to reflect on my ideas and supply a detail here or there that my research had left wanting.

Mr. Reed's genuine affection for, and devotion to, Carleton Washburne were abundantly evident in the course of my interview with him.

Secondary

This study relies to a somewhat lesser extent on secondary references than it does on primary resources. Several significant secondary sources, however, must be mentioned.

Published

While most of the materials that were published about the Winnetka technique under Carleton Washburne were published by Washburne or some of his immediate staff, there were also articles published by others such as the article "The Winnetka Technique" by Mary Pepper (Welfare Magazine, October, 1928: a reprint) or the article by Jack Barrett, "The North Shore's Pied Piper of Songdom" (Townsfolk Magazine, November, 1938: a reprint). Other such articles appear in footnote references within the paper.

Unpublished

Two doctoral theses had bearing on this study. One, The Graduates of the Winnetka Public Schools Evaluate Their Elementary and Junior High School Experiences (an unpublished dissertation by Benedict J. Surwill, Jr. submitted in the School of Education, Boulder: The University of Colorado, 1962), gave some interesting insights into the perceived effectiveness of the Winnetka technique recollected across a number of years. The other by John Tewksbury, An Historical Study of the Winnetka Public Schools From 1919 to 1946 (3 vols. an unpublished doctoral thesis at Northwestern University, 1962), is a well-researched and detailed account of the Winnetka Public Schools during the Washburne superintendency. John Tewksbury has compiled what is probably the single most complete bibliography of both Carleton Washburne and the Winnetka Public Schools. He has included not only works in the English language, but a rather impressive foreign bibliography as well--both original pieces and translations. I have not attempted to approach or duplicate in my bibliographic essay what Mr. Tewksbury has already so ably done. The reader interested in what must approach an exhaustive bibliography of C. W. Washburne is unhesitatingly referred to volume 3 of Mr. Tewksbury's thesis at Northwestern's Deering Library.

A bibliography compiled by Washburne himself only shortly before his death is awaiting publication in an upcoming (1971) Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

CARLETON WASHBURNE¹

Washburne was born in Chicago in December, 1889. His mother (Marion Foster Washburne) was a lecturer and writer on parent education and child study; his father (George F.) was a physician. Washburne attended the primary grades of the Training School of Cook County Normal School. Later he was enrolled in the Chicago Institute which became the Francis W. Parker School. He attended The University of Chicago, Hahnemann Medical College in Chicago, and completed his undergraduate work at Stanford University, where he received an A.B. Degree in physiology in 1912. Following his graduation, he secured a position as an elementary school teacher in California. From 1914 to 1919 he was a member of the faculty at San Francisco State Normal School. He received an Ed.D. Degree from the University of California (Berkeley) in 1918.

Washburne's administration of the Winnetka Public Schools extended from 1919 to 1943. Four staff members who were interviewed said that as Superintendent he possessed tremendous energy and was a tireless worker. It was added that he enjoyed remarkable health, that he possessed a good sense of humor, and that he could be both fearless and humble. It was said that he was utterly resourceful, that he was extremely quick in his thinking and in the way he went about things, and that he possessed a most unusual breadth of interests and culture.

Prior to his move to Winnetka, Washburne had been interested in several organizations that advocated world unification. As the years passed, he became a stronger advocate of a "one-world" approach. His book The World's Good: Education for World-Mindedness (1954) reveals his thinking in this area very well. Washburne was a leader in international education. He traveled extensively. He studied European "progressive" schools in the winter of 1922-1923 and Russian education in 1927. His world tour--December, 1930, to September, 1931--was devoted to a study

¹From John Tewksbury, An Historical Study of the Winnetka Public Schools From 1919 to 1946 (3 vols, an unpublished doctoral thesis at Northwestern University, 1962) "APPENDIX F, BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION: CARLETON WASHBURNE AND S. R. LOGAN," pp. 782-785. In a footnote, Mr. Tewksbury remarks: "The information in this section was checked by Carleton Washburne (1961)."

of the aims of education as conceived by leaders of thought in sixteen countries. In the 1920's and 1930's, Washburne made a number of trips abroad during the summer vacation period. For four and one-half months in 1942 he visited five South American countries as a representative of the United States Department of State. After leaving Winnetka, he continued to travel extensively, making trips to Europe, Asia, Australia, and Africa.

Washburne married Heluiz Chandler in 1912. Prior to that time she had held a position as a commercial artist for a short time. She accompanied her husband on his travels and wrote a number of children's stories about life in other countries. These stories were published. She also lectured about her travels. The Washburnes raised three children. It was said by five persons who were interviewed that Mrs. Washburne's interest in literature and the arts, and her calmness and sensitivity provided a fine complement to her husband's dynamism and impulsiveness. It was also stated that as a family, the Washburnes surrounded themselves with persons, interests, and activities that were stimulating and creative.

In his earlier years in Winnetka, Washburne was interested in the work of various religious groups, but was a member of none. Late in the 1930's, however, he joined the Society of Friends (Quakers).

From September, 1941, through February, 1942, Washburne was on leave from Winnetka to direct a survey of the public schools of Louisiana. In 1943 he accepted a commission in the United States Army with the expectation that he would assist with the work of reconstructing education systems in countries captured by the Allies (World War II). He was sent to the Mediterranean theater of war and served as Director of Education for the Allied Military Government and Allied Commission in Italy. In 1946 he was appointed director of the United States Information Service in Northern Italy. In 1949 he accepted the directorship of the Division of Graduate Studies and Teacher Education Program at Brooklyn College. He retired from that position in 1960 at the age of seventy.

Biographical Sketch of
Carleton Washburne²

Carleton Washburne (B.A. Stanford University; Ed.D. University of California), was born in Chicago, December 2, 1889. He began his professional career as a teacher in a rural school in Los Angeles County then as teacher of the "special class": in a small town, Tulare, California. In 1914 he became a member of the staff of the San Francisco State Normal School (now San Francisco State College), where he organized and directed the science department for five years.

In 1919 he went to Winnetka, Illinois, as superintendent of schools, remaining there for twenty-four years. The Winnetka schools, under his superintendency, became an educational laboratory in which much research was done and new methods and materials for teaching were developed. Best known of the activities in the Winnetka public schools was the full adaptation to individual differences under public school conditions. The fifteen years of research in the grade placement of arithmetic, and that in reading and the suitability of various types of books to children of various degrees of reading ability, were perhaps the best known of the research projects carried on under his supervision.

In 1943 he was asked to join the army as a major (later lieutenant colonel) in the branch of the Military Government. He was assigned to education in Italy, where during the war he was Director of Education for the Allied Military Government, acting functionally as Minister of Education in those parts of Italy under the control of the Allied Armies. There he revised and published all elementary textbooks on a non-Fascist basis and directed the preparation of new syllabi for the schools. He was also responsible for the reopening and organization of the schools and universities during the war and immediately post war period.

²Autobiographical material prepared by Carleton Washburne for distribution to persons requesting such information. For still other interesting pieces of biographical material see S. R. Logan, "A Biographical Sketch of Carleton Washburne," Modern Education (October, 1929) and an expanded autobiographical sketch completed by Washburne shortly before his death for publication in an upcoming NSSE Yearbook (1971).

In 1946 after separation from the Army, he was assigned by the U. S. Department of State as Director of the United States Information Service for North Italy. At the close of two years in this service, he served as Educational Reconstruction Specialist for UNESCO during the winter of 1948-49.

In February, 1949, he joined the staff of Brooklyn College as Director of Teacher Education and Director of the Graduate Division. He remained there until the summer of 1960.

At Brooklyn College, under his supervision, the total program of teacher education was completely reorganized and important research was undertaken as to what constitutes an effective teacher and how such teachers can be prepared.

After leaving Brooklyn College he went to South Africa to participate in the 50th anniversary conference of the University of Natal. Beginning January 1, 1961, he joined the staff of the College of Education of Michigan State University.³

During his career he has traveled, lectured and participated in conferences on all six continents. He has also participated in educational activities in the United States, having been vice president of the American Educational Research Association, twice Yearbook Chairman of the National Society for the Study of Education, two terms president of the Progressive Education Association, and, during eight years, president of the International New Education Fellowship. He has written extensively, both books and articles, many of which have been translated into various foreign languages. For the U. S. State Department, in addition to his work in the United States Information Service, he studied the problems of elementary and secondary education in five South American countries, and, in 1958, he served as consultant for the teacher education program in Cambodia on a contract with the ICA and Unitarian Service Committee.

He has honorary degrees from the University of Messina and the Newark (New Jersey) State College, and, from the University of Rome, the "Grande Bene Merito." He has also been decorated by the Italian government, by the United States Army (Legion of Merit) and the Kingdom of Cambodia.

³Washburne remained at Michigan State University until his death in November, 1968.

APPENDIX B

THE GANDHI INCIDENT

Chicago -- March 31, 1931

Mr. Carleton Washburne,
Jerusalem, Palenstine,
Cook David St.

Dear Carleton:

I have been altogether too immersed in the grim business of making a living the past few months to do the normal things that I have wanted to, among which stands out prominently my desire to have expressed to you my keen interest in all that you are doing and to Heluiz my appreciation of her vivid word pictures of your many interesting experiences and adventures. Next to doing the things ourselves, this is certainly a most satisfactory way of learning about the world.

I am sorry that the present occasion which has brought me to the point of actually sending you such a belated letter is to confirm the cable which I sent you yesterday.

I have no doubt that what you are doing in India is carrying out the perfectly normal desire to see Ghandi [sic] and to learn at first-hand of the work that he is doing, but what you have done has apparently caught the fancy of some news hawk, and the results on our public in Winnetka are unfortunate.

I should perhaps explain that this has been a very rough winter for everyone quite apart from school problems. The business conditions have not improved, unemployment relief has been on everyone's mind, in Winnetka there are many families of excellent standing who are facing the most severe privations, and psychologically the public in Winnetka is certainly introspective and discouraged. Some of their dissatisfaction finds perhaps a more than normal outlet in criticizing public expenditures and more particularly the administration of the schools.

Your absence has come in for more and more discussion as the weeks have gone along, and to a certain extent there is a Carleton Washburne issue as distinguished from a Winnetka Schools issue. As you may perhaps know, I have made two addresses in the Hubbard Woods and Horace Mann Schools, at each of which I have dealt frankly with the various criticisms of the administration and among other topics very unqualifiedly expressed the approval of the Board to your taking your present trip. Out of those

meetings, I have come to feel that we have many staunch friends, but there is no blinking the fact that we also have a substantial group of real people who are entirely sincere in their disapproval of some phases of our work.

The opposition are now quite gleefully taking up yesterday's headlines, two of which are as follows:

"Winnetka's School Head Aids Ghandi [sic]
at All-India Meet"

"Winnetka Man Joins Ghandi's [sic] Freedom Fight"

The significant part of the situation is seen in these two headlines in that both use the word "Winnetka." The publicity value comes, if you will pardon me for saying so, not so much from the fact that Carleton Washburne appeared in a Hindu loin cloth, as from the fact that this costume was worn by the head of the schools in the proud suburb of Winnetka. The incident was on everyone's tongue yesterday, and on the trains and around the village last evening I was the butt of many wisecracks. I had expected, of course, letters such as the one enclosed from Replogle, which did not particularly worry me, but it is rather hard to face the thinly veiled ridicule of many of our responsible people.

I write you with entire frankness as I know you would want me to, and would like to suggest that you keep in mind in your further experiences that it is not possible for you to disassociate yourself even when on leave of absence from the fact that you are our Superintendent, and to have before you the thought that whatever is dramatic and bizarre in publicity about yourself tends, in my opinion, to reduce your effectiveness in our schools.

In general, I think things are going along very well in the schools. We have had a few headaches as usual, but Logan has been tireless in his devotion to his work, and has exercised sound judgment. He has been very good to keep me in close touch with all matters that might involve questions of policy.

I hope that you are all in your usual state of good health and high spirits and that you will come back to us greatly refreshed by your wonderful trip.

Very truly yours,

[signed] Clarence Randall

President.¹

¹Correspondence files. Winnetka Public Schools.

Robert Bowen Brown
725 West Van Buren Street
Chicago
April 2, 1931

Dear Carleton:

Though you go to the farthest corner of the earth, what you do there will inevitably be associated in the public mind with education in Winnetka. You cannot disassociate yourself from it. You belong to Winnetka, and as part of it the people of the Village feel, and justly so, that you are in a sense answerable to them, whether you are propounding a theory before educators or espousing the Ghandi [sic] cause in India. Hence, the accounts of your activities which have come out within the last few days in the Chicago papers have precipitated much unfavorable comment.

I hesitate to write you this, but Clarence Randall and I are frankly much concerned about it. I have not talked to any of the other members of the board, and I am writing at Clarence's request to let you know that the feeling which was expressed in his cable is shared by me.

I do not believe there has been any time since I have been particularly interested in the schools, when there has been more criticism, latent and spoken, than there is now. I don't mean that there is any particular issue, or that there is any concerted action imminent, but the accounts of the Ghandi [sic] incident have given people an excuse for speaking their minds and I have scarcely met anyone from Winnetka within the past few days who has not referred to it, usually in very caustic terms.

We all know, of course, when the leave was granted this year, that there would be some criticism from the old timers, but we could have confined it to them so long as the people generally felt that you were off on an educational tour, broadening your work and gaining experience which would ultimately enable you to do a better job as superintendent of the Winnetka schools. When they read of your taking active part in an international movement they see only that side of it, and wonder whether or not the trip is justified.

Probably the temper of the people at home this year has something to do with their reactions. Business is rotten; many people are living on considerably reduced

incomes; nerves are frazzled; and anything which is the least bit off the usual routine comes in for its share of comment and criticism.

Now the purpose of this letter is certainly not to detract one bit from the complete enjoyment and benefit of this time away from your regular work, -- a leave which we all felt you eminently deserved, -- but, on the other hand, to remind you that we who are back here are held responsible for your movements, and sometimes the going is none too easy.

It is my own personal feeling that our cause in Winnetka will be best furthered if there is no further publicity given to your movements during the balance of the time you are away. I am writing in a very frank vein because I know that you appreciate as well as any of us the local situation and the danger signals which come up periodically.

In closing I want to tell you how much we have enjoyed Mrs. Washburne's accounts of your experiences. They are not only interesting narratives, but are beautifully written, and we have read them to many of our friends. We hope that they will keep coming along regularly.

I hope that this will find you all well and happy, and Frances would join me in sending you our very kindest regards.

Yours very truly,

[signed] Bob²

²Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

En route Jerusalem to Cairo
May 8, 1931

Dear Clarence [Randall]:

Your cablegram in re. the Gandhi incident failed to reach me -- I don't know why. So your letter forwarded to me from Cairo to Jerusalem was the first indication I had of the apparently grossly distorted accounts of my activities in India which appeared in the press. Unfortunately neither you nor anyone else has sent me any clippings; so I am still in the dark as to just what was said. The facts, however, are simple and I believe harmless. They are as follows:

I went to Delhi to interview Gandhi, Mme. Naidu, Jawarhalal Nehru and Pandit Malaviya, nationalist leaders, as to their educational aims in India. These interviews were purely professional, not in any way sensational, and only political in so far as the leaders expressed the desire to develop a strong national consciousness in the children through education. I was of course interested in the stirring events that were taking place in India at the time, and without a background of understanding these I could not have grasped the general significance of the educational aims. I therefore went to Karachi to see the first two days of the Congress. I happened to have the good fortune to be on the same train, part of the way, as Gandhi, and rode from one station to another in his compartment talking to his English disciple, Miss Slade, and hearing from her of her difficulties the previous night when crowds tried to get into the compartment to see Gandhi.

At Karachi I wandered around the camp and chatted with various people informally and innocuously and attended the big open air meeting as a spectator, then returned to Lahore, and went with my family to the Vale of Kashmir for a few days' loafing.

The one thing which probably started the newspaper story was that on certain occasions I wore the white cap common to followers of Gandhi. I put it on first as a sort of joke; but when I saw how it opened people's hearts -- and minds -- to me, I wore it several times more seriously. I have sent Jessie [Knox] a manuscript describing the effects of wearing the cap, and unless you stopped it, it has been sent off for publication. I told part of my experience with this cap to a Mr. James in Karachi, he being a friend of an Associated press

representative. I met him casually and when he asked for an interview I saw no harm in telling this very simple and seemingly harmless tale. I also happened to be staying at the same hotel as Mr. Shirer of the Tribune, and had some friendly visits with him, and we went to a movie together. I did not give him an interview and he did not ask for one. But I did tell him informally about the way the little cap has proved an open sesame.

I took no part in any political activities, except as an interested spectator. The Gandhi cap served to identify me as American and thereby to avert the suspicion and dislike I would have had had I been supposed to be English -- as I was when I did not wear it. Except for the cap, I of course wore ordinary American or European clothes -- I never thought of such a thing as wearing Indian dress. I suppose your reference to a loin cloth was facetious -- I might as well suspect you [Clarence Randall] and [Ernest] Ballard and [Laird] Bell of walking arm in arm down State Street with nothing on but a pair of bloomers!

I am very sorry that any of my activities have embarrassed you and other members of the Board. I shall certainly do my best to avoid further publicity -- I had no desire for what I got. I assure you that my actual activities have been decidedly educational rather than political, and that I have been gathering experience and ideas which should be of real help to the Winnetka schools. It has been a thrilling and illuminating trip and I would have to be a moron not to profit tremendously by it. And obviously what broadens and deepens my own viewpoint and life will permeate through my faculty to the children of the village.

If you think it wise, you may publish any parts of this letter, or any facts therefrom, in the Talk.

I am sorry that business conditions have not yet recovered and that people's nerves are consequently frazzled. I know how hard that must be on you. I hear that you handled the P.T.A. situation admirably -- I don't wonder; you always do that sort of thing -- like everything else -- with characteristic efficiency.

Bob Brown's statement that he has never known more criticism of the schools than at present is distressing. When I get back I'll see whether I can trace it down and find what underlies it. Where it is justified we'll do our best to remedy conditions; where it is unjustified we'll have to try to convert our critics. It is, of course, utterly impossible to stem all criticism in any public affairs that affect closely the lives of the people.

The village government is pretty free from it -- but as long as it furnishes a few relatively mechanical things, like streets, lights, and fire and police protection, in an efficient way, there is not much opportunity for the kicker, but when a hundred teachers, no matter how carefully selected, are dealing with complicated human beings who are the first interest of their parents, the possibilities for dissatisfaction are too great ever to be completely eliminated. While I believe we should do everything in our power to listen open mindedly to criticism and to profit by it to the full, I do not think we should be too much disturbed by its existence -- it is bound to exist.

Similarly, the "Carleton Washburne question" to which you refer is unpleasant, especially for him, but quite inevitable. No man in public life can escape from it; and the better known he is the more pronounced it becomes. Even a Hoover has his bitter critics, to say nothing of the gentleman whose cap got me into notoriety. Again, I think the criticisms should be heard open mindedly by both me and the Board, and should be acted upon wisely when they are just; but their existence has to be expected and we must get used to the unpleasantness of them so that we shall not be diverted from clear thinking and earnest endeavor by them.

Will you please thank Bob for writing me, and share this letter with him?

I shall let Heluiz's letters give you the news of the trip. We had our first illness of any account in Baghdad where Margaret was laid up by an enteric germ which wasn't able to do serious damage thanks to Dr. Orvis's inoculation just before we left Winnetka, but the battle with which left her weak and Jaundiced. We had to lie over two weeks in Baghdad in consequence. Margaret is now as well as ever, and all sails smoothly except that our itinerary has had to be cut a little in the Near East. We got stuck in the mud in the desert three times on the way from Baghdad to Damascus, and spent three nights sleeping in the automobiles. Our food and water got down to the point of careful rationing; we even ate our orange skins. But we finally arrived safely, and have just now left Jerusalem after two days crammed with interest. Tonight we'll be in Cairo -- we only have two days there and a few hours in Athens next week. Izmir (Smyrna) we've had to cut out -- we'll go direct to Istanbul from Athens. And then Russia!

Please give my warm greetings to Emily and to the members of the Board. I'll try awfully hard to avoid any activities -- and especially publicity -- that will cause you additional worries. I appreciate immensely your hard work to hold the fort.

Sincerely,

[signed] Carleton

I apologize [sic] for this messy letter -- something's gone wrong with the typewriter and the train joggles and sways over the desert.³

³Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

APPENDIX C

THE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION OF 1933

THAT WHISPERING CAMPAIGN¹

(An open letter from Mr. Washburne)

One aspect of the present contest over the school board is a bit amusing, and, when one loses his sense of humor or perspective for a few minutes, irritating and even disgusting. That is the whispering campaign that seem to be going on in regard to the superintendent of schools.

I have lived among you in Winnetka for fourteen years. I have associated with you in many ways. I have been responsible for the education of a generation of your children who, after leaving me have made excellent records in high school and college, not only scholastically but in terms of civic responsibility and character. I have worked in close contact with many of Winnetka's most outstanding citizens. And now, of a sudden, I find preposterous rumors afloat about me, as if I were some new and unknown quantity about whom 'most anything could be true.

May I present a few facts, in the open, any of which can be readily verified by anyone interested in truth rather than slander?

1. I was married in Pasadena, California, September 15, 1912, a little over three months after finishing college at Stanford. My first child was born December 4, 1913, at Tulare, California. My wife and I have three children. Our home life is entirely regular and unusually happy.

2. I am American through and through. Except for one grandfather, a Canadian who was early naturalized as an American, all my ancestors have been in this country since colonial times, and helped build the republic. I am told that there were three hundred of my Washburne relatives and ancestors in Washington's army. My great-uncle was United States Secretary of the Interior. My grandfather practiced medicine in Chicago fifty years. My father was also a practicing physician and member of the Chicago Board of Health. I believe with my whole heart in the ideals on which our country was founded; and to our country I have the deepest loyalty and devotion.

3. I believe ardently in peace and the importance of world well being. I believe in the purpose of the Kellogg Pact. But I think it sheer stupidity to disarm and be unprepared in the midst of armed and imperialistic nations.

¹Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

I am therefore in favor of the R.O.T.C. and Citizens Training Camp. I would not hesitate to bear arms in defense of our country. I was opposed to our entering the world war, but once we had entered it I publicly advocated the importance of throwing our resources into it completely -- it seemed to me that having made the decision it was necessary to carry on with our whole strength.

4. I am not a regular church goer, but I am religious. I have been a small contributor to the Congregational Church here for many years; I sent both my daughters to Sunday School there; I taught its men's Bible class at one time. These facts are to me less important than my own attempt to lead an essentially Christian life -- too Christian, I hope, ever to indulge in the pastime of spreading slander about my fellow townsmen.

5. I am opposed to Communism. Communism stands for class war, for a dictatorship of the proletariat, for armed revolution -- three doctrines which to me, as an American with American ideals, are abhorrent. I believe in an orderly and thoughtful progress toward greater social justice. I believe these are to be achieved by careful, unprejudiced analysis of the evils that afflict our present society and of the fine things in this society, to the end that we may retain what is fine and discard what is false.

6. I believe that it is one of the primary objects of education to train boys and girls to think freely and fearlessly and without prejudice, but to think in terms of the actual facts of history, and with deep respect for the struggles and ideals which have gone into the making of our present institutions.

7. I believe in Winnetka. To me it has always seemed as fine and decent and fair a community as one could find anywhere in the world. I believe that the great substantial majority of Winnetka citizens care more for facts than for prejudice and gossip. I believe that they stand for fair play and for high ideals.

Is it asking too much of my neighbors and fellow townsmen to suggest that when they hear prejudicial statements about me they take the trouble to lift the telephone receiver off the hook and call my office (850) or my house (1245) and ask for the facts? Or if they feel hesitant about asking me directly, may I suggest that they telephone any member of the Board of Education or any officer of the Parent-Teacher Association? It takes less time than to pass the rumor on. And it is fairer.

Carleton Washburne

Mrs. Taliaferro Milton
530 Willow Road
Winnetka, Illinois

March 29, 1933

Dear Carleton,

Just a flash from the firing-line to tell you that all is well. I am confident now that the Powers of Darkness are licked!

I have never seen the village so thoroughly aroused. Adherents of the present school system are begging and clamoring for jobs -- men, who haven't paid any of their current bills are contributing to the Campaign Fund. It is perfectly phenomenal what the female of the species can accomplish when she believes the best interest of her children are endangered. Regardless of our personal affection and admiration for you, we are waging this war for our children!

Keep your sense of humor and retain your equilibrium by reading books like "The Mind of the Mob", "The Herd Instinct", etc., so that you may refresh your memory on what makes people believe in the extraordinary way they occasionally do.

Remember, too, that altho there may be some who devoutly believe that you feast on three Christian maidens each morning before breakfast, there are many more of us who look upon you as a prophet and a saint and of course we represent the forces of enlightenment!

Any man who is ahead of his times is going to be made to pay a penalty. Remember poor Socrates whose doctrines were considered subversive of youth, and thank your stars that you are living in the 20th century, when your enemies may make faces and call names but after all they won't make you drink the hemlock!

Good luck and be of good cheer for victory is in sight!

Faithfully yours,

[signed] Lucille F. Milton²

²Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

Chicago - April 13, 1933

Carleton Washburne, Supt.,
Winnetka Public Schools
Winnetka, Illinois

Dear Carleton:

The election has made a very deep impression upon my thought, and I hope it may help both of us if I try to put on paper some of my reactions.

The wide margin of victory was gratifying, but far from feeling elation over having smitten our enemies, I regard the result as a definite challenge to still broader achievement. I am firmly convinced in my own mind that if the opposition had been well led by striking personalities, who had wide influence in the Village, the result would have been far different, and I think it may be taken as certain that if the strategy of our opponents had led them to limit their ambition to securing representation on the Board instead of control they would have succeeded. As I have said to you in conversation, I think you are prone to underestimate the proportion of the vote which constituted an expression of confidence in the candidates as distinguished from vindication of yourself personally or of the schools.

In any event, I know that you and I are in entire accord in our desire to work out better public relationships in so far as we can do so without sacrificing anything that we regard as essential, and it is to that thought that this letter is directed.

Much of this improvement in contacts with the public can be accomplished by no one but yourself, and with entire frankness, I list below certain ideas which have been brought home to me during the campaign.

1. You must learn to listen. Parents come out of conference with you unsatisfied, and for that reason many parents stay away. Your extremely facile mind recognizes the question while it is still half framed in the mind of the timid mother, and your quick reply leaves her dazed. It is not until she gets out that she is able to think what she wishes she had said. A studied humility of manner and simplicity of expression would help in these situations.

2. Your supposedly radical social views have been pretty satisfactorily eliminated as an issue for the present, due chiefly to the wonderful job that Bob Brown did, but all of this good work could be undone over-night by carelessness

on your part or that of the teachers. I hope you will have this in mind in things that you may write or say, and also in your social contacts. There is no way by which at any time you may divest yourself of your character of being our Superintendent, and any linking of your name with known radicals will surely be misunderstood.

Those of us who were candidates have publicly backed your reputation with our own, and things that you might do which would be misunderstood in the Village would reflect at once upon us.

3. Alertness in public relationships. I have felt that in your commendable zeal for scientific research in education you occasionally forget the public aspects of your work. I think of you some times as I do the mechanical geniuses in our industry who may develop an invention that is revolutionary in its character, but who fail to grasp the necessity of selling to the industry the intrinsic merit of their idea. In Winnetka, we must not only be scientifically right, but we must sell our ideas to the people. To be helpful, I give below specific instances of where I think you and your staff have rendered us unnecessarily vulnerable in this particular:

(a) The summer school pamphlet. In trying to interest student teachers, I think you lost sight of the unfortunate public effect of a statement that the Winnetka schools are a laboratory.

(b) Your broadcast. While, of course, I am proud of the leadership which you are deservedly accorded in professional meetings, it seems to me to have been manifestly inexpedient for you to have expressed yourself on the question of school costs to the Winnetka public through the medium of the radio at any time, and most especially so just a short time before the election.

(c) Teachers at campaign meetings. Large numbers of teachers went to the Monday night meeting at Skokie, to which I made no objection although their presence attracted attention and kept other voters from being able to get into the hall. At the Tuesday night workers' meeting, I was greatly surprised to find a large number of teachers present, and I am told that Miss Carswell instructed all of her staff to go. This was, in my opinion, bad judgment.

In these and other situations which you and I have talked about, and which will occur to your mind, I have felt that you were apt to talk with me only after the thing in question had been done. I am very sensitive on the whole

subject of public relations, and am entirely willing at any time to assume responsibility for decisions, if I may be consulted in advance.

Educationally, I should like to see a thorough inventory taken. Self-satisfaction is so close to self-confidence that sometimes one follows the other before we know it, and I should like to see us reconsider everything searchingly in the light of the recent public criticism with an honest willingness to re-model the structure wherever there is a weakness. To that end, I have asked Marian Wilson to secure the best possible compendium of public opinion as reflected through her committee, and she will be present at our Board meeting next week to present that picture. I shall also present to the Board a plan for informal meetings by the Board, without you or any member of your staff present, to be held in each school building as soon as possible in an effort to let people get their ideas off their chests. From my present information, I should say that the thought most firmly imbedded in the minds of our people with regard to our educational program is that we are not doing enough to put pressure upon the child who does not respond spontaneously to the opportunities given him. This may be not so much a defect in principle as in its application, but the demand for better habits of study among the laggard children is so widely reflected among thoughtful people that in my judgment there must be some foundation for it.

I have already written too much at length, but I am intensely interested, and am looking forward to the next three years in the hope that together we may have the thrilling experience of solidifying our public behind the best possible schools. Our new members will bring a helpful freshness to our thinking on the Board, and I am certain that there will be a fine spirit of friendly cooperation. Those of us who have just been elected feel that we have a special responsibility to the people, and if differences of opinion should arise we shall expect you to accept our decisions with loyalty, but we have the highest regard for your ability both professionally and administratively, and we want to join with you in doing the best possible job for the schools in the Village.

Very truly yours,

[signed] Clarence Randall, President³

³Correspondence file: Winnetka Public Schools

Chicago - April 14, 1933

Carleton Washburne, Supt.,
Winnetka Public Schools,
Winnetka, Illinois.

Dear Carleton:

You will be swamped with letters from me when you return, but on my way home last evening I thought of several ideas that I had intended to express in my long letter.

The first is to urge you to extend your acquaintance in Winnetka as widely as you can, and to cultivate ways of meeting people on other than an educational basis. I have yet to find anyone who has had an opportunity to work intimately with you that does not both respect and like you, and those who have taken up the personal cudgel are principally those who have no acquaintance with you at all. There is one great melting pot of Winnetka opinion which obviously is closed to you, and that is the suburban train. Riding back and forth night and morning, we men who work in the loop have a great opportunity to rub elbows and exchange views. The best substitute for this that I can think of in your case is for you to participate wherever possible in village activities other than the schools. I hope particularly you may have frequent occasion to talk things out with the hard boiled business man type, who knows little about the schools, but who votes in large numbers.

I also think you should establish definite office hours in all four schools, and keep them scrupulously. I don't know why it is but many people who are new to the Village, and whose children are in the lower grades stand in awe of coming down to Skokie to see you. These office hours need not be so frequent as to become a burden, but they should be widely advertised by the Parent-Teachers Association, and people should be urged to talk with you informally. Please try to be on time for such appointments with parents.

In talking with parents, I would like to suggest that you humanize the relationship as far as possible, so that the mother may feel that her child is really "Johnnie" to you, and not just another educational problem.

Much was said to me by intelligent people during the campaign about your absences from Winnetka, and I am inclined to think there is still some merit in the criticism. As you know, I believe that whatever may be the case with teachers, you have a twelve month job. I do not want to be unreasonable about this, but urge you to keep it in mind. Even the

weekends that you so frequently spend out of Winnetka, and the long summers that you take away from the community tend to build up a barrier between you and our public. They want to feel that you are one of us in every sense, and that your biggest interest in life is in Winnetka.

Parallel to this idea is the thought that at times your writing, your lectures and your multiplicity of activities fill your life so full that it leaves people breathless who want to think out with you their own school problems. No one in my acquaintance has a greater capacity for work than you have, and I admire your ability to handle a great volume of detail effectively. I think you stand up under high pressure of work better than I do, but I do think there comes a time when this multifariousness of your activities interferes with your taking a normal place in Winnetka community life.

I hope I haven't forgotten anything this time, and will try not to write you any more letters for awhile.

Very truly yours,

[signed] Clarence B. Randall, President⁴

⁴Correspondence file: Winnetka Public Schools.

May 4, 1933

Mr. Clarence B. Randall,
Inland Steel Company,
38 S. Dearborn Street,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Clarence:

This is in response to your various letters written just after the close of the campaign. I shan't take your time to go into detail on all the points raised, but I'd like to comment on one or two of the matters.

First, I thoroughly agree with you that it is desirable to extend my acquaintance in Winnetka. I am doing it in all the ways that I can think of, but I shall be glad for further suggestions from you.

I am establishing definite office hours in all four schools, and am sending a note home to parents and making an announcement in the Weekly Talk to this effect.

I agree with you entirely that in interviewing parents I should humanize the relationship as far as possible. I have always attempted to do this, and I think often succeeded, but I shall try further.

You speak of my spending long summers away from Winnetka. Please remember that I'm never away from Winnetka more than five weeks in the summer; even last year when I went over to Europe my total absence was only about 5 1/2 weeks. I am here by necessity until the first of August because of my summer school work, and then I am naturally here right after Labor Day to get ready for the opening of school. I am not away week-ends more than about once a month, except in the summer. People have an exaggerated idea of my absence from the Village.

I agree with your criticism that the multifariousness of my activities sometimes interferes with my taking as active a part in Winnetka community life as is perhaps desirable. I shall attempt to remedy this situation.

I think your suggestion that if Rae and I go to Springfield again, we get in touch with Bert Kohler or Howell Murray, is a good one.

I am surprised that people have expressed horror that school boards have mingled the proceeds of their building fund levy with those of their educational fund levy. As far as I know every School Board does so, and there seems to

be considerable doubt as to just what belongs in which. We certainly mix them, and Mr. Andrew, the Township Treasurer, does not in any way keep a separate account of them as far as I know. I am quite uncertain as to what items are legitimately payable out of the building fund. I discussed the matter with Mr. Watts of Chapman & Cutler, and he seemed hazy. I have written to Mr. Mason for an opinion on this whole matter. If Mr. Watts' interpretation of what constitutes a legitimate expenditure from the building fund is correct, we would be in a bad jam if we tried to carry the thing through, since he believes that the operation of the building, including fuel and janitor service, come out of the educational fund. The educational fund is not large enough to cover these things, and if we levied up to the statutory limit, we would not have enough in our present condition of delinquent tax payments, to meet all of our running expenses. I believe we should continue to do what we always have done, and what all other districts are doing, but as I say I have written to Mr. Mason in regard to the matter.

I am doing my darnedest to learn to listen. The trouble is that the many cases where I succeed don't come to your attention or that of the opposition, while in the few cases where I apparently have not succeeded much is made of the matter. How, without being a hypocrite, one can give a parent a feeling of satisfaction, when that parent is absolutely determined upon a way which after most careful consideration seems to be fundamentally wrong, is an extremely difficult problem. It is, however, one with which I am wrestling. I agree with your suggestion in regard to a studied humility of manner and simplicity of expression.

You're the first person who has ever accused me of not seeing the importance of selling the merit of my ideas. I certainly see the importance of it, but will be glad always of suggestions as to how it can be done more effectively.

You refer to the teachers at the campaign meeting. I had no idea of the teachers going to the Tuesday workers meeting, nor did the teachers intend to do so until Marion Wilson, who was in charge of the campaign, told Marion Carswell the teachers were cordially invited. Marion Carswell called me in the matter and asked what she should do about allowing teachers to go. I expressed my astonishment, but said that since Marion Wilson was managing the campaign, I did not feel that I should stand out against her invitation. This all happened just an hour or so before the meeting, and there wasn't much time to act.

No one is more desirous than the school staff of getting better habits of study among Winnetka children. That we have made marked progress in this regard is evidenced by the fact

that our this year's freshmen at New Trier, when classified according to intelligence test scores show the greatest superiority at the lowest intelligence level. That is to say, the records of our children at New Trier with relatively low I.Q.'s are far superior to the records of children of similar I.Q.'s from the rest of the Township, the difference being greater at this level of intelligence than at any other. This does not, however, mean that we have been perfectly successful in getting every laggard child to study up to his capacity. It simply means that our methods have been more successful than the more traditional methods. It's a problem of which we are acutely aware and on which we are doing everything that we know how to do.

I think this covers the main points in your various letters. I am sorry to have delayed replying so long. I think you can count on the whole-hearted and loyal co-operation of the entire school staff in trying to profit by the criticisms which arose during the campaigning, wherever those criticisms have any foundation in fact, and in striving toward making the schools continuously better.

I wish you could stay out some day and visit the schools. It's quite a while since you have had any close touch with them. Recently, on going through all the classrooms after having been out of them for some little time as a result of the campaign and the budget, my general reaction was "what damn fools people are to want to destroy this thing!" There are plenty of places which need improvement and on which we are all working, there are plenty of things which we perhaps have not yet seen and which it will be good for us to have brought to our attention, but taking the schools as a whole they are doing a soul-satisfyingly fine job.

Sincerely,

[signed] Carleton Washburne⁵

⁵Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

An Excerpt from the Superintendent's Reports⁶

Sometimes the situation reminds me of the condition of the captain of a large passenger ship sailing the Atlantic and striking bad storms. He should perhaps be considered as having many of the stockholders of the company that owns the ship on board. Suppose these stockholders and the other passengers, alarmed by the storm, should insist upon the captain going by another course. Suppose he knows the other course and knows that the casualties on it are much greater than the casualties on the path he is pursuing. In such a case he would be indeed stupid were he to swerve because of the popular clamor of his passengers and their hysteria induced by the storm. And were the stockholders to radio to the Board of Directors of the shipping company, insisting that as stockholders they had a right to demand that the captain change his course or that the mate be made captain, it would be like our present situation. We know the course on which we are going. We know its vicissitudes and its dangers. We are aware of the fact that there are uncharted currents, an occasional floating iceberg, that the machinery gets out of order at times, that the ship needs constant inspection, guidance, and direction. But we are trained navigators, steering by the best charts available, maintaining radio communication with meteorological stations and all other sources that will be of help to us. All we can do with the popular clamor of some hysterical passengers and some reasonable one who nevertheless think they know navigation better than we is to treat them with courtesy and attempt to inspire confidence, listen attentively to any reports they may make as to failure on the part of any member of the ship's crew in the performance of his duties or the sighting of an iceberg or breakers. We cannot take their orders on the details of navigation.

Our schools are far from perfect. We who are in daily touch with the children are far more intimately acquainted with our weaknesses than are the parents. We know that our children do not make as much application of their arithmetic to real situations in life as they should do. We know that our method of teaching spelling has cumbersomeness, and that there is not anywhere nearly a perfect carry-over from ability to spell in lists to ability to spell in compositions. We know that our work in developing ability to write creatively is decidedly inferior to our work in creative art. We know that many of our teaching materials need revision. We know that too many of our children have serious trouble with

⁶Carleton Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934), June 13, 1933, pp. 2273-2276.

their reading. We know that certain teachers are not as artistic in their job as they might be -- and so on through the entire range of the school activities. The fact that we are better than the average in most of these regards is not sufficient. We are not satisfied as long as we are not doing for each child everything that can be done for him. There is not a touch of complacency in the entire faculty. The problems, however, are technical problems, involving research, technical knowledge, training and experience. They are problems that have to be attacked scientifically, rather than in response to popular demand. The Board may rest assured that every effort is being made by the entire faculty to find the places where improvement is most needed, and to make these improvements as rapidly as our knowledge and skill will permit. Perfection in our schools is impossible of attainment, but the Board may look with entire confidence, based on our record of the past fourteen years, to a consistent and intelligent improvement.

APPENDIX D

ON FOUNDING THE GRADUATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

An Excerpt from the Superintendent's Reports¹

. . . [I have] another plan which is well under way. I want to present that plan in a general outline tonight, so that I may have the Board's approval in continuing to work toward its consummation.

It has long been recognized by this Board that the most important phase of all of our work is the training and selection of teachers. Most complaints of parents, when they are justified at all, are due to the inadequacy of some teacher or other. For years we have been attempting to solve our problems in this regard. We have been more and more careful in our selection of teachers, and beginning three years ago we have been conducting a six-weeks summer training course for teachers. We have increased the supervisory organization of the schools during the past twelve years to a marked degree, in the attempt to train teachers while they are in service. On the whole, we have been successful, but we still do not have as much good material, nor as adequate training, as we desire. Our new salary schedule has been a great boon, both in getting good teachers and in retaining those whom we have. But even with all these gains, we still feel the need for a more adequate training on the part of the teachers who are coming to us, and a better group to select from. There is no adequate training school for teachers for the type of work we want done.

This being the case, we have each year for a number of years had from one to three graduate students or experienced teachers who have come to us during the school year to act as volunteer assistants to our teachers to get such training as they could. This year we have eight such people acting as volunteer assistants in exchange for the training that we can give them. This group forms a nucleus for what I hope will some day be a Winnetka graduate training college for teachers.

I believe such a training college can be established without blare of trumpets and with only a gradual need of financing. The financing would of course have to be done independently of the Board of Education. I would suggest the following procedure:

¹C.W. Washburne, Superintendent's Reports, vol. 4 (October 1930 - February 1934). October 20, 1931, pp. 2004 - 2009.

First appoint a Board of Trustees to consist of the President of the Winnetka Board of Education, ex-officio, and of a group of other men and women of the community whose moral support and advice would be helpful. Second, with this Board of Trustees, incorporate the Winnetka Graduate Training College for Teachers, securing for it a regular charter. Third, notify progressive schools in the country at large, and also notify various teachers colleges, and particularly eastern colleges like Smith and Wellesley, of the type of graduate training that we are offering as preparation for teaching in progressive schools. Fourth, select those whom we accept as students as carefully as we now select teachers for our children or more so, so that as far as possible we will be assured that those who take this training course can be recommended for first rate positions, either in other schools or our own. Fifth, accept these graduate students in the college as volunteer assistants in our own public schools, very much as we now have undergraduate students from National [Teachers College], and as we have had students from Northwestern. These graduate students, like the ones now working with us, would not only assist in the classrooms, but would take part in three of the teachers' groups, these teachers' groups serving as their courses. We would naturally advise with each graduate student as to which groups he or she would join, and would use these groups as a basis for assigning reading and field work to the students.

For the time being we would need no financing whatsoever, the graduate training college simply being amalgamated with our system as it now exists. We would need no lecture halls, nor other paraphernalia, yet we could give first rate training. Gradually as the number of students increased, we would of course have to have clerical work to take care of registrations, then gradually would have to increase those parts of our staff which are handling teachers' groups and graduate students. To a considerable extent this expense could probably be borne by the students' tuitions. In so far as it could not be so met, it would be necessary for us to raise money, either from some of the big foundations, or locally, or both. That, however, is far enough in the future so that it requires no more than to be envisaged as an ultimate problem.

The advantages of this plan are, I think, very obvious. First of all, it gives us a chance to observe over a period of time some of the potentially best teachers in the country before deciding whether or not we wish to employ them. In other words, we would to a considerable extent use our graduate training college as a recruiting ground and have a year to consider, under our own local conditions, the probability of a teacher making good with our children. I can't emphasize the advantage of such an opportunity too strongly.

These members of the Board who have helped us interview candidates know how extremely difficult it is to decide even with a whole day's interviews whether a person is going to make good or not. With a year's observation, we should be able to make decisions which would be almost uniformly successful.

Second, many of our teachers would be getting a full year of training before they came to us, instead of getting only six weeks. Those of us who have been giving the summer training course realize how much we have had to crowd our students, to give them the training that we felt they needed. A year's training in our methods would be of material advantage.

Third, we would be able to take into our system some of the young people whose salaries at the beginning are reasonably low, and yet who have many potentialities for the future. At present we do not dare to take inexperienced teachers. When we have given a teacher a year of experience in our graduate training college, however, and have found that person making good with our own children under all sorts of conditions, we would be able to relax this rule and take some people with this smaller amount of experience. This would be a material saving in our budget, each such teacher representing a saving of several hundred dollars a year for the first two or three years she was with us. In the fourth place there is the advantage to the educational world at large. I believe that we have, either potentially or actually, in Winnetka the means for giving more adequate training along certain lines than any institution is now giving. The five major fields of training would be: (a) mental hygiene and child adjustment, (b) nursery school and parent education, (c) adaptation of work to individual differences, (d) organization of group and creative activities, and (e) application of scientific research to school problems. Besides these major fields, we have a good deal to offer in the field of music and art and handicrafts and in the field of educational sociology and philosophy, even with our present staff. Winnetka would be doing, I believe, a real service to the educational world at large in establishing such a graduate training college. At the Hot Springs Conference held by the Rosenwald Fund two years ago when representative leaders of the progressive education field met for three days, the one biggest outstanding need which everyone felt was adequate training of teachers in these new fields. Winnetka would be at least partially meeting that need.

I would propose to co-operate with North Shore Country Day School and possibly even New Trier in carrying out our plans. Mr. Gaffney of New Trier seems to have a decidedly progressive slant on educational questions and Perry Smith

at Country Day has already expressed himself as enthusiastically interested in the new plan.

As far as the actual operation of the schools is concerned, the new plan offers no change in policy. It simply is a gradual development of a situation that has for a long time existed. It is making the training of teachers here more systematic and drawing to us, we hope, more and better material. I doubt if it is necessary for the Board to take any formal action on this question, but I would like to know informally whether the plan meets the Board's approval and whether they are willing to have me proceed with the incorporation of the college, the Board of course not having to pay any part of the expense of incorporation. Mr. Mason has kindly agreed to attend to the legal phases without extra charge. I have a small fund which I have been collecting against such a need, which will cover charter expenses, etc.

I very much hope that the Board will feel the same enthusiasm for the possibilities of this plan as I do, and that I may go ahead with it with the personal backing of each member of the Board.

January 4, 1932

Miss Flora Cooke,
Francis Parker School,
330 Webster Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Miss Cooke:

This is to confirm our various conversations concerning the establishment of a Graduate Training College for Teachers in connection with the Francis W. Parker School, the North Shore Country Day School, and the Winnetka Public Schools.

When Mrs. Blaine and Col. Parker established the Chicago Institute, teacher training was the dominant purpose. When the University of Chicago took over the Institute, the teacher training phase gradually gave way to research. And the Francis Parker School never developed a regular teacher training department.

You remember, too, that at the Hot Springs Conference on Progressive Education, called by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, it was the universal feeling that the greatest lack and need in the field of the newer education, was an adequate teacher training center. At that time I told you of our tentative plan for establishing such a center and of my hope that you and Perry Smith would join with me in the undertaking. I took my trip around the world largely to get perspective for this new and vitally important piece of work, and since my return the plan has rapidly matured.

The plan is to establish a Graduate Training College for Teachers. It will be graduate so as not to involve the costs of duplicating existing undergraduate institutions, and because it would center its efforts on those likely to take positions of leadership. They in turn may in time man the undergraduate state and private teachers colleges, or supervise teachers in service, or demonstrate in their own class rooms the applicability of the newer principles of education. We should select the students with much the same care that we use in selecting our own faculty members. They would be of two types: promising young, inexperienced graduates of colleges and universities; and experienced teachers coming back for more modern training.

Training would be the essential factor in the college, rather than lectures and class work. Normally a student would spend half of each day in a class room assisting one of our best teachers at either Parker, Country Day, or the

Winnetka Public Schools. The other half day would be given to seminar-conferences, directed reading, and specialized field work.

The seminar conferences would meet once a week after school hours. Some of our regular teachers attending as well as our students. In them reading and field work of the past week would be discussed, and work for the next week planned.

The directed reading would cover the field of the special courses to be undertaken by each student and would be entirely individual.

The field work would consist of actual work with children in connection with the particular course being pursued.

The courses would be in six major fields and a number of minor ones. The major fields proposed are:

1. Mental hygiene and child adjustment.
2. Nursery school.
3. Parent education.
4. Adaptation to individual differences.
5. Organization of group and creative activities.
6. Application of research to educational problems.

Among the minor fields would be:

Educational testing and measurement
 Educational Sociology and world events
 Handicrafts
 Art
 Music
 Appreciation of Literature
 Physical education and folk dancing

In addition to three of the above courses all students would be expected to take a lecture-discussion course throughout the year, led in turn by you, Perry Smith, and me, in which we would try to tie the whole thing together and to give our own slants in education as a whole.

The administration of the College is planned as follows:

Trustees -- One each from the Francis Parker, Country Day, and Winnetka Public Schools. One representing the New Trier Township High School which we hope may some day become sufficiently progressive to be drawn into the plan, and three trustees at large. Four of the trustees are already selected and have accepted, as follows:

Clarence Randall (Vice President, Inland Steel Co.)
President, Winnetka Board of Education.

Mrs. George Gordon, Member New Trier High School
Board of Education.

Mrs. Alfred S. Alschuler.

Mr. Edwin Fetcher.

As soon as you and Perry get your trustees, we shall have a trustees meeting to let the six select a seventh.

Executive Committee --

This consists of you, Perry, and me.

Faculty -- Each of us will select those members of our present staff who are most competent to conduct the seminar conferences to direct the reading and field work of the students and we will make it possible for them to do this work. At first, when the number of students is small, this would be done without extra compensation; but as the College grows the faculty members would either receive extra help or extra salary.

A dean would be appointed from the beginning to give personal advice to the students, to plan their work, and to give cohesion to the whole plan. The dean would receive a salary from the beginning.

Buildings: The Winnetka Board of Education has offered the use of its offices, class rooms, assemblies, library, etc., in so far as the college use does not interfere with public school use. Since seminar-conferences would be after school hours, and since field work would be in class rooms with children, there will be no interference, and no new buildings will be required, at least until the College has grown to considerable proportions.

Finance -- Students will pay tuition, equivalent to that paid at Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and National College of Education. These tuitions will be sufficient at the beginning to pay the dean and any incidental expenses. We shall not have to ask for donations until the College is a going concern and has demonstrated its value. Some day, of course, we shall have to raise funds. Funds for scholarships and fellowships will be extremely welcome from the beginning.

The suitability of Winnetka for this project is fairly evident. It is the habitat of two of our three schools, and within easy reach of yours. It is one of the few places where experiences in progressive public schools and progressive private schools can be obtained. It is a community dedicated to the best in education; it is geographically central and accessible. It is beautiful. It is within easy reach of two great universities and an excellent undergraduate teachers' college (National). It has nursery school, parent education work, mental hygiene, research, individual work and activities programs combined as in no other center. It has close reciprocal relations with the Institute of Juvenile Research in Chicago, which has agreed to cooperate with the College. And the work is already started here.

We established a summer school for teachers in Winnetka three and a half years ago. It has been highly successful, paying its own way and giving training to graduate and experienced teachers from every section of the United States, and from Canada, Scotland, Belgium, Germany, Norway, Russia, and South Africa.

This year we have seven graduate students registered with us for the year, pursuing a program very similar to that outlined for the College. You and Perry, likewise, have for years done informal teacher training by taking inexperienced teachers for observation and for either volunteer or paid assisting, just as we have done in the Winnetka Public Schools. The Graduate Training College is a natural outgrowth of our joint activities.

In carrying on our work, I think we should have an educational advisory committee both as advisors and sponsors. Such people as Katherine Taylor, Eugene Randolph Smith, Harold Rugg, Wm. H. Kilpatrick, Willard Beatty, President Hutchins, Edna Dean Baker, Ernest Horn, Goodwin Thorne Thompson, Beatrice Ensor, and Alfred Adler are the type we have in mind.

I am awfully happy about your enthusiasm for the idea and am earnestly hoping that you will be able to give to an increasing number of future educational leaders through the College, something of the experiences you have accumulated, some of the wisdom which is so characteristic of you, and something of your own sweet, spiritual self.

Affectionately,

[signed] Carleton Washburne²

²Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

APPENDIX E

ON THE TECHING OF HISTORY IN WINNETKA:
SUMMARY OF A SPEECH DELIVERED TO
THE AMERICAN LEGION

Summary of Talk by Superintendent Carleton
Washburne before the American Legion Monday evening
April 17th - 1933
Revised June 1, 1938¹

The Teaching of History in Winnetka

In the teaching of history in Winnetka we are trying to give the children useful knowledge, desirable attitudes, and sound mental habits. To accomplish these we have put much time and thought into the construction of our history course of study. We have prepared some textbooks and selected others with much care, and we have employed a variety of educational methods.

The knowledge which we are trying to give to the children requires selection. No one can possibly amass all the facts of American history, to say nothing of world history. The selection of the facts to be taught is therefore of prime importance. The facts included in the Winnetka course have been chosen from two stand-points. First, what facts does the usual American need to have in order to read and talk intelligently; what incidents in our history, what personalities, are so commonly known among intelligent people that they have become practically a part of our vocabulary? Second, what facts does an American citizen need in order to think and vote intelligently in regard to the problems now confronting the United States or likely to confront it during the next generation?

To find the first group of facts--those which are common currency in what one reads or in intelligent conversation--the Winnetka teachers in 1921 to 1923 organized themselves into a seminar and spent every Wednesday evening for two years in a detailed analysis of all allusions to persons, places, and events, in fifteen of the most widely read newspapers and magazines, scattered through a period of years from 1904 to 1922. The amount of data they gathered was so great that full time help was needed to bring the material together in usable form. The commonwealth Fund in New York was so impressed by the importance of this piece of research that they gave a special research grant to the Winnetka Public Schools--the first time they had ever made a grant to public schools--for the employment of a full time research worker and a full time clerk, to

¹Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

co-operate with the teachers' seminar in putting this material together. We were fortunate in securing as the research worker Miss Louise Mohr, a woman of profound scholarship and of great skill in writing things interestingly for young children. After she had completed her research work under the Commonwealth Fund grant she continued as a member of the Winnetka faculty and has made available to our own children and those of many other places a most fascinating story of those events in our history which give the key to an understanding of all the common allusions in American literature and conversation.

The second mass of material--those facts which are necessary for an intelligent approach to current American problems--was prepared by a group working at Teachers College, Columbia University under the direction of Professor Harold Rugg. Professor Rugg made a detailed survey with the help of thirty outstanding economists, political scientists, historians, and sociologists, of those problems which are most pressing in the American nation today, and which are likely to be pressing as the children now in school grow into manhood and womanhood. He and his co-workers then delved into the question of what facts, whether commonly known or not, were of great importance in an intelligent grasp of these problems. The resulting data were brought together in six large volumes, four of which are used by us in the junior high school, the other two of what are planned for senior high school use.

More recently, the entire faculty of grades 4, 5, and 6, and the Social Science teachers at Skokie have been going through a number of books and articles on the teaching of history in the schools and have been reevaluating, with the purpose of reconstructing, our whole social science curriculum in order to make it even more effective in the training of future citizens of a democracy.

In preparing textbooks and in preparing the course of study and handling class instruction, one is not exclusively concerned with facts. The facts must be woven together in such a way as to produce certain desirable attitudes. The two attitudes which we have had most definitely in mind in organizing our history work in Winnetka have been, first, a depth of understanding of American culture and institutions --a depth which goes down into the roots of these things and sees our nation as the outgrowth of long experience, much thought, some compromise, and primarily of human

yearnings and ideals; and second, a breadth of understanding which will include America's relationship to other nations, her debt to them and her contributions to them.

Depth of understanding of our country necessitates a world background. Our people have come from all parts of the world. Our music, our art, our laws, our social customs, our economic life, are none of them indigenous in America. To understand them we must go back to the art and philosophy of Greece, to the religion of Judea, to the laws of Rome, to the discoveries of the Renaissance, to Anglo-Saxon struggles for individual liberty and the struggle for liberty of thinking that came later in the Reformation, to the ideals of the Pilgrims and the early settlers in America, to our frontier days, to the Declaration of Independence and the making of the American Constitution, to the industrial revolution as factories and machines began to replace man's work, and so on up to the cementing of our nation in the Civil War and to the problems of the present day.

We must see our institutions as thus deep-rooted, not readily changed and moved about as if they were stood on the surface of the present time. But we must see them also as growing, changing, evolving things, not to be rigidly held in place by tradition or by a mold of any kind. We must realize that the spirit of our forefathers was one of pioneering, experimenting, changing, and that that spirit is essential if progress is to continue. It is those who try to stop growth by rigid molds of tradition or opinion who endanger our national safety, for a growing root can split a mighty boulder, and a growing society will not be impeded. If we grant room for growth, it is an orderly process, but when we try to hold it within rigid bounds, its force is explosive.

Breadth of attitude is likewise necessary if our children are to be effective members of American Society. There are two kinds of patriotism and two kinds of internationalism. The narrow, bigoted kind of patriotism is at swords points with the diffuse sort of internationalism which fails to recognize one's responsibility to one's own nation. But there is another kind of patriotism which includes a recognition of the fact that America is not isolated, that its well-being is bound up with the well-being of the other nations of the world.

The provincial, prejudiced, narrow form of patriotism which distorts facts to make tin gods of our heroes, which arrogantly claims America to be the best in all the world in all respects, which disregards the rights and the contributions of other nations, has no place in education. But to fail to have our children recognize that their first

duty is at home, to fail to have them recognize that we are primarily citizens of the United States with direct social responsibility to our country, to fail to give them an abiding love for this country and a reverence for the ideals which have gone into its making, would be to fail in transmitting to them their heritage.

True patriotism realizes that for the well-being of our own nation we must co-operate unselfishly and understandingly with other nations of the world. It is not opposed to internationalism, but is a part of a wise internationalism which recognizes the place of national loyalties and of the responsibility of each citizen toward his own nation. We must recognize that if America is to make her contribution to the world, we must make America as fine and as great as possible.

The mental habits which we wish to give to our children through the teaching of history are the habits of a scientific approach to problems, of looking at facts instead of prejudices, of guiding our emotions of loyalty and patriotism by means of free, honest, broad and courageous thinking.

We try to achieve this aim through presenting both sides of all controversial questions, through showing how facts are distorted by propaganda and by prejudice. We make much use, especially in the junior high school, of class discussion. During such discussions the teachers try to draw out by questioning the thought and the facts on which the children base their thought. As soon as the teacher sees a group swinging toward a particular point of view, he adroitly uses questions to bring out the facts in support of the opposite point of view. He tries to leave the class with a feeling not that the children can solve the problems which are troubling their elders, but that these problems require more thought and more study than has yet been given to them, and that a true solution is only going to come through thoroughgoing thinking and through an analysis of all the facts from every point of view.

Current events and problems are freely discussed, especially in the junior high school. All forms of propaganda are scrupulously avoided by the teachers. But the evils commonly recognized as existing in our present society are brought vividly to the attention of the children, and the ultimate ideals, held by all of us regardless of party or creed, are brought out in class discussion. The urge to cure existing and universally recognized evils (such as the prevalence of crime; slums; unemployment; international war, etc.) and to attain a happier, more prosperous, more wisely governed nation are thoroughly instilled -- for these

are not controversial. The paths away from existing evils and to our ultimate goal are the subjects of dispute. And it is concerning the selection of the most practicable and wisest paths that we avoid all partizanship and encourage factual and well-reasoned thinking.

In our teaching method as a whole we make use of two kinds of experience, vicarious and direct. The vicarious experience is first of all through books. Our children do much more reading in their history than we adults did when we were their age. The amount of American history material covered by our children is two or three times as great as the amount that was covered by us in our own school days. Where we went through one or at the most two textbooks of American history, our children go through at least three large volumes dealing with America's relation to other nations and the origins of American life and institutions.

In addition to this textbook work, the children do much supplementary reading and the preparation of special reports, and they relate a good deal of their reading of literature to their history work through historical fiction.

Speakers in our assemblies are used as another source of instruction. We have such speakers in connection with our celebration of the national holidays -- Columbus Day, Armistice Day, Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays, and Memorial Day -- and again whenever a person of notable achievement or experience is available to share his views with the children.

Discussions have already been mentioned as playing an important part in the teaching of history. Both the discussions and reading are made more real and vivid through field trips. Our children learn about the working of our local government by a visit to the Village Hall and a talk by the Village Manager. They learn something of the economic life of our country through visits to factories. They learn something about utilities through seeing how our own electric light and water plant here in Winnetka are operated. A visit to the stockyards in Chicago, to a big newspaper, to a shoe factory, to a large bank, etc., give concrete understanding of some phases of our economic life.

We cannot always take the children into the world outside. We therefore supplement field trips by exhibits of various kinds, organized in the schools themselves. The Parent-Teacher Association has been especially helpful in gathering all kinds of historical and geographical exhibit materials from the homes of Winnetka and bringing them into

the schools. The children themselves help to organize similar exhibits.

The motion picture is being used to give our children a visual education as to our history and as to the life of our country. A special supervisor of visual education gathers pertinent films from State universities and other sources to make our problems and attempted solutions live before the children. These are discussed in considerable detail in class then often shown again after the discussion.

Direct experience in citizenship is necessary in addition to the vicarious experience of books, speakers, discussions, trips, exhibits, and movies. Our children must learn by living how people live. In the earlier grades they carry out dramatizations, construction projects, and other group enterprises in which they relive the life of the American Indian, of the peasant homes from which many of our people have come, and of the farm and community life of our own nation.

Throughout the school system the children get practice in citizenship through their self-governing assemblies, through student responsibilities, through co-operative work of many kinds. They learn what representative government means by electing their own representatives. They learn the responsibilities of citizenship by being citizens in the small community of the school.

I should like to give much more time to these direct experiences, for they are a vital part of our school life and are the means whereby the indirect experiences of books are made real. They are the nucleus around which the broader views of history and American life can grow. Unfortunately time will not permit a fuller discussion of this important phase of the teaching of history.

It is through such direct experiences, however, and through the contacts with the experiences of Americans past and present as given in books, exhibits, and motion pictures, that we try to give our children a knowledge of those things which every American needs in his daily thinking and living, a knowledge which every citizen needs in an intelligent approach to American problems. It is through the same media that we attempt to give our children a depth of understanding of American culture and institutions and a breadth of understanding of America's relation to other countries of the world. And it is through approaching all these things in a scientific and factual way that we are trying to give our children the habit of approaching American problems in the light of facts instead of prejudices, to the end that they may be free thinking, clear thinking, courageous thinking citizens of our great nation.

APPENDIX F

ALLEGATIONS AND RESPONSES
THAT WASHBURNE WAS
A COMMUNIST

February 4, 1931

Senator Burton K. Wheeler,
United States Senate,
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Wheeler:

Although I am no longer a resident of Montana, I am relying upon old time acquaintance and your interest in academic freedom, which came to my attention some years ago, through a congratulatory letter you wrote me on the subject when I was Superintendent in Hardin, Montana, to ask a favor of you.

It is persistently rumored here that evidence taken by the Fish Committee investigating Communism in the United States referred to seven or eight leading educators as being dangerous in this connection. According to rumor, my friend and chief, Superintendent Carleton Washburne, is included. If there is such a list, it no doubt includes such eminent and estimable Americans as Dr. John Dewey. In order that I may be prepared to deal with such nonsense here, would you be so kind as to have the evidence examined, to see what truth, if any, there is in the rumor? If there are such charges, who are the persons against whom they are directed? If Mr. Washburne is among them, on what basis and by whom were the allegations made?

It is necessary that this be handled in such a way that no comments will be excited. So many people, particularly large owners, are now full of unreasoning, panicky fear that they are easily stampeded. Mr. Washburne was in Russia about two weeks with the unofficial Labor Delegation which visited that country two or three years ago. He was invited to make an impartial study of the educational situation there as far as his time permitted, while he was in Europe lecturing at the International Conference on Education held at Locarno. The experiments going on in the various revolutionary countries are of interest to him, as they are to every intelligent person, but he is not committed to any of them to any extent at all. His own views and attitudes are those of a fair-minded American citizen, who believes in democracy and universal enlightenment. Because he is known to have visited Russia briefly and to have found evidence of significant

experimentation, a certain type of person can easily be led to suspect and impugn his patriotism.

Summer before last I had the pleasure of sitting a little while in the gallery of the Senate while you were leading an attack upon the encroachment of the power interests. You may be sure that I am very proud of the accomplishments of yourself and Senator Walsh in looking after the interests of the public at large.

Very truly yours,

[signed]

S. R. Logan

Acting Superintendent¹

¹Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Memorandum Concerning Mr. Koch's
Visit to Marion Russell's Class Thursday
May 12th, 1932²

Mr. Koch was standing just outside the door when Miss Russell came in to her room with the class after Captain Hamilton had been giving an hour's talk on Morocco in the assembly. Mr. Koch asked if he could visit the class. Miss Russell of course agreed. After about five minutes transition from Captain Hamilton's talk, showing that the older people in Morocco had not liked the changes made by the youth there, and that similarly the older people in Russia probably did not like the changes that were being made there, one of the children asked Miss Russell if she wasn't going to read the chapter in Ilin's NEW RUSSIAN PRIMER which she had promised the day before. Miss Russell then read the chapter on the electrified country, and as she put it down said, "This is propaganda. Propaganda is sometimes true and sometimes not true. But in this case it is straight propaganda." She then went on to show that whether or not we like the things that Russia was doing, we ought to be familiar with them and we ought to know what the Russian point of view was. She then called for discussion as to whether or not the United States could be electrified as Russia was planning to become electrified. One child said she thought that the United States was too selfish to get such universal electrification. Another said not selfish but spoiled. Another said there was too much private business. Then one child asked Miss Russell whether she approved of the five-year plan. She avoided the direct issue, but said that whether or not one believed the five-year plan was practical or agreed with every detail of it, one must admire the people for having the vision to make such a plan, and whatever success they did achieve must also command recognition. The period was short so the class adjourned. Afterward Mr. Koch came up to Miss Russell and asked her why she did not tell the class of the fact that power was sent back and forth between Chicago and New York. She said that the children had been listening so long to the lecture and then to the reading that she felt that discussion was more important, but that she had herself thought of giving as an illustration the wide electrification of Montana, where nearly the whole state is furnished electricity by one company.

²Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Mr. Koch then asked how long the class was spending on Russia. Miss Russell said four days -- one day on the geography, a second day on the people and how they lived, the third day he had just heard, and the next day would be a general summing up. He then asked what the rest of the course was and she outlined the course for the year, the first half of the year being concerned largely with American geography and economics, the second half of the year beginning with a study of the British, French, and German Empires, then the small countries of Europe, then Russia, then the World War, and a study of Europe since the World War, which completes the seventh grade work. Mr. Koch did not act particularly critical or in any way offensive, and left.

MEMORANDUM³

[according to R.J. Koch]

May 12, 1932

This morning at 9:50 a.m. I attended the class in Social Problems conducted by the seventh grade teacher Miss Russell, in Room 14 of the Skokie school. The class should have convened at 9:30 a.m. but on account of a lecture on Morocco and the Foreign Legion, which was given by a Captain of the Foreign Legion, there was some delay in convening the class.

Upon calling the class to order, the teacher first called the children's specific attention to the fact that the captain had pointed out that the younger generation were taking up with modern European life, whereas the older generation fought the intrusion of this civilization on their own. She stated that likewise in Russia it was the young who were taking hold of change in the affairs of the country, as it is always the young people who overthrow the old state of affairs, which is cherished and maintained by the older people.

She then asked the children if they had thought any more and had reached any conclusions as to the hat factory situation which they read about yesterday. Some children thought it was a good idea to have only a few factories under government control, whereas others thought it wasn't such a good idea. One expressed the opinion that, with having only a few, they could limit the production to just the number of hats that the people needed, whereas the other way they might make a great many more hats than the people could use. As it was quite evident that there were no definite opinions one way or the other, Miss Russell then said that she would read a little more from the book which they had been studying, and proceeded to read a chapter on electricity in M. Ilin's book "New Russia's Plan (The Five Year Plan)," published in this country by Houghton Mifflin Company of New York. This book was translated from the Russian.

After she had read the chapter, she asked the children whether the idea to have centralized power development by large units was a good one. Those children who spoke up, with one exception agreed that it certainly sounded like a good idea, but one boy asked why Russia didn't take care of

³quoted by L.A. Weary in a letter to the editor, Winnetka Talk (April 6, 1933), p. 14.

the hordes of children who were roaming the streets, rather than worry about the industrial plan. To this Miss Russell replied that when Mr. Washburn [sic] was in Russia he found that the Russian government had large orphan asylums where they were taking care of the children, just the same as we have orphan asylums in this country to take care of the children. Still quoting Mr. Washburn [sic], she said that in the orphan asylums the children were getting the right kind of training and education, and the proper type of food; that they got better food and their living conditions were better than in the homes of the peasants, because the peasants still cling to the idea of sleeping in unventilated, dark rooms, whereas all this was changed in the orphan asylums.

The same boy who referred to the children asked her if she herself thought that the five year plan was a success. After hesitating for a moment, she stated that she was not enough of an economist to say whether it was a success or not, but that it had been pointed out that whether or not the five year plan was actually accomplished the strides that had been made were certainly worth the effort.

As the discussion waned, Miss Russell then asked whether they didn't think it would be a good idea if Congress would pass a law outlining a plan for industry and governmental activity similar to that of the Russian Five Year Plan. Some children spoke up and said that it wouldn't work -- that it would cost too much; others that we were individuals and that it wouldn't work for that reason, whereupon one girl took issue and stated that we were too selfish for a plan of that type to work.

One of the boys then asked whether Stalin was not an absolute dictator, to which she, after hesitating, said, "Well, he simply carried out the will of the Communist Party."

Some reference was then made about control, and Miss Russell then pointed out that we didn't have the opportunity here of regulating affairs for the good of everybody; that here we had a country that was oversupplied with wheat and still people were starving -- oversupplied with industry and people were unemployed. She said that last year the suggestion was made that the cotton-growers should omit every third row of cotton, so that there would be less cotton and the price would be much higher, and that the wheat-growers should not plant so much acreage, but that neither the cotton-growers nor the wheat-growers paid any attention to the suggestion. The implication was quite evident that if we had a dictator to have compelled such action that the

country today would be in better shape than we actually are.

After class was dismissed, I asked her why, after having read the Russian plan of electric distribution, she did not point out to the class that we actually have in this country a system of electrical distribution which is comparable to their plan; that through our inter-power connections New York is able to supply power to Chicago, or Chicago to New York; that Chicago is connected up to St. Louis and points to the west and north, as well as south, instead of asking the question of the children whether such a system of electrical development would not be well for this country.

Her reply was that the pupils had been sitting for an hour and a half this morning, were getting fidgety, and that she felt it better to have them do the talking than for her to talk any further.

THE RETURN FROM MOSCOW⁴

Editor, Winnetka Talk:

One of my neighbors buttonholed me recently on the way to the train and asked me if I knew that the federal government was watching Washburne, had had him down to the Federal building, and that he had a record as a communist. Asked if he had seen the evidence he admitted that he had not, but said that it came from a man who knew. After several repetitions of this story I decided to investigate and went to the Federal building to every department having to do with foreigners and foreign influence, ending up in the U.S. District Attorney's Office. There was nothing of any kind in the files and nobody was interested in Washburne.

My friend was surprised to hear this -- called his friend -- admitted that I was right but said that the detective bureau at Twelfth street had a card and a record. I went there, finally meeting Inspector Mills who has that particular department. He was irritated -- I was not the only visitor from Winnetka that day -- "I never heard of the man, and I'm not interested in him," he said. "This is all we have." And he showed me and let me make a copy of a mimeographed communication from the "American Vigilance Intelligence Federation" on Plymouth court. This has been mailed to him and presented as its sole factual information the statement that a Russian teacher had attended summer school in Winnetka once and that Washburne had visited Russia. There was a lot of nasty innuendo by the unnamed writer, but there were no other facts.

"Of course this isn't evidence," Inspector Mills said. "We only keep it here because it was mailed to us."

I came back to Winnetka and asked Washburne for the low-down on the subject. I quote his reply:

"I was crossing the Atlantic to speak at an Educational Conference in Locarno, Switzerland, in the summer of 1927. On the same ship were some university professors who had been asked by a group of trade unionists to make an unbiased study of the situation in Russia. They had no one to study Russian schools. One or two of them knew me and asked if I would go with them and do this job. I stipulated I would be given complete freedom and allowed to report on what I saw.

⁴Dudley K. French in a letter to the editor, Winnetka Talk (April 6, 1933), pp. 14-15.

They agreed these were the conditions on which they had agreed to go. I was naturally glad of the opportunity as Russia was one of the few countries where I had not studied the schools. So I went and made my report on how Russian schools were organized. It, with the other reports, was published unaltered by the John Day Co. in New York (publishers of the Good Earth, etc.).

"The other part of the story is also true -- a Russian teacher did attend the summer school in 1930. We have had students from Norway, Germany, Belgium, South Africa -- various parts of the world. One doesn't have to agree with the views of all one's students."

Out of curiosity I concluded my investigation with a visit to 323 Plymouth court where the bulletin had been mimeographed. I found the "Federation" still in existence, consisting of one man -- conscientious and 100% or more American. He admitted that he knew nothing of Washburne save what he had heard or read of his Russian visits or had read in his books. Questioned further, he referred to some of the gossip about Washburne. I enlightened him on this. He was a good sport in admitting that it was a "dirty shame" that people spread such stories.

And on the basis of such "evidence" there are people in Winnetka who will brand their neighbor and try to destroy the work he and his associates have done for the children of the village during the past fourteen years!

After Mr. Washburne returned from Russia in 1927 I received complaint by letter that he was suspected as a Communist. I investigated those complaints. I found that Mr. Washburne is not a Communist and the records do not classify him as such. I believe the charges being made against him now are purely of a political nature.

[signed] Lieut. Make Mills

Head of the Industrial Squad of the Chicago Police Department which keeps the entire record of Communist and Red agitators for Chicago and co-operates with the government on Communism in the entire Chicago area.⁵

⁵[circa] March, 1933. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

Winnetka, Illinois
November 2, 1934

To Members of the Board of Education:

There was recently a meeting at the Swedish Church in Winnetka, where Mrs. Albert W. Dilling of Kenilworth spoke on the menace of radicalism in this country. During her talk she took occasion to attack me as a radical. I was unable to attend the main part of the meeting, but my wife and several friends attended, and told me what had transpired. I got there during the question and answer period afterward. I invited Mrs. Dilling to come over to my house, so that we might get more acquainted with each other, and suggested that she might at least become convinced of my sincerity, as I was convinced of hers. She apparently did not wish to be dissuaded from her conviction that practically all university presidents, most social workers, all workers for peace, and I are part of one vast communistic conspiracy, for she refused my invitation. She seemed unwilling to talk to me, although quite willing to talk against me.

When I assured her that I was not a Communist she said, "Why don't you put it in writing?" I am therefore following her advice, because I think it only fair to the Winnetka people who heard her misinterpretation of my attitude that they should have the truth.

I honestly think that if I were to write my whole creed in life, she would wish to interpret it as red. And I know that any communist would denounce it just as bitterly, for I am not a communist -- I see too many evils inherent in the communist doctrine. I'm really not any kind of "ist" except an educationist. That is not to say that I have no opinions -- of course I have lots of them. But my one basic interest is to help boys and girls grow up thoughtfully, far-sightedly, with a passion for the ideals to which all of us give at least lip-service -- truth and honesty, social justice, responsibility.

I would try to arm them against propaganda -- propaganda for what Mrs. Dilling believes in, what I believe in, or what is believed in by any one person or group of persons. Where thoughtful, intelligent people disagree, children should grow up with open, fearless minds, able to look at both sides honestly and without prejudice, able to think problems through for themselves.

I think we all agree on certain fundamentals -- evils to be avoided, desirable aims to be achieved. These common beliefs I should try to have children share with us. They

would include the desirability of a democratic society, the desirability of the orderly process of just laws rather than the violence and terror of revolution, the necessity for government free from corruption, the importance of social responsibility and good citizenship -- and so on through a long non-controversial list.

Controversy arises not as to these aims but as to the means of reaching them. I would have young people, when they are mature enough and have enough factual background, look boldly and unemotionally at all the paths suggested, examine each critically, and decide, upon reaching adulthood, which path they think will lead most effectively to the accomplishment of the ultimate goals.

I personally happen to be opposed to the communist path -- I don't want class hatreds; I don't want revolution; I don't want indoctrination; I believe in God and revere Christ -- and so on. I personally am opposed to any war except one which expels actual invaders. And I have many other personal beliefs. But I feel that insofar as any of these beliefs are not universally shared by thoughtful, intelligent people I have no right to impose them on young minds. Indoctrination of religious beliefs in school is excluded by law. I think the imposition of all other controversial beliefs should likewise be prohibited in the schools. But I am convinced that all children should be taught to think about all important issues, and to guide their ultimate actions in the light of a fair minded weighing of arguments and facts, in a spirit of scientific study, but with a zeal to achieve the ultimate good of mankind.

Sincerely yours,

[signed] Carleton Washburne⁶

⁶Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

1110 Pine Street
Winnetka, Illinois
March 26, 1935

Mr. Carlton Washburn [sic], Superintendent

Winnetka Public Schools

Winnetka, Illinois

Dear Mr. Washburn:

In the attached clipping, taken from the Chicago Herald and Examiner of Wednesday, March 20th, it is reported that you were a signer to a telegram sent by the Civil Liberties Union to Mrs. [sic] Perkins asking asylum for John Strachey, the British Socialist. I would indeed appreciate your advising me whether this report as it concerns you is correct.

Yours very truly,

[signed] R.J. Koch⁷

⁷Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

March 29, 1935

Mr. Raymond Joseph Koch
1110 Pine Street
Winnetka, Illinois

Dear Mr. Koch:

I have your letter of March 26th inquiring whether I was one of the signers of a telegram to Secretary Perkins protesting against the deportation of John Strachey. I am glad to answer not only your question but also its implication.

My ancestors came to this country in the early seventeenth century in order to have freedom of conscience. For three hundred years they have been part of the great body of Americans who have made freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and the right of asylum fundamental American institutions. We who are imbued with American ideals will always protest when those ideals are violated. To assume that American institutions are so weak and American citizens so feeble of mind that they have to be protected from knowledge of what others are thinking is an affront to our country.

In common with those who have made our nation, I believe in open and free discussion of all questions. I believe Americans have a right to hear all sides of any question and that none of us have the right to decide what our neighbors may or may not hear. I strongly condemn Hitler; but I recently presided at a meeting where a pro-Hitler German spoke, and if anyone had wished to deport him for defending Hitler's views, I should have been quick to protest. I would disagree with much that Strachey is saying. But I gladly signed the telegram protesting against his deportation.

I have enough faith in America to believe that its institutions can stand criticism. As a citizen, I believe we should be ever alert to weaknesses in our organization and ready, by constitutional means, to increase our country's strength. To close our ears -- and our doors -- to critics leads to complacency and self-righteousness, not to growth.

Refusal of the right of asylum and the right of free speech is treachery to the founders of our nation.

Sincerely,

[signed] Carleton Washburne⁸

⁸Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

5 Stewart Building
Colorado Springs, Colo.
June 16, 1941

Dr. Carleton S. [sic] Washburne
Superintendent of Schools
Winnetka, Illinois

Dear Dr. Washburne:

I see from the Communist "Daily Worker" of June 6, 1941, that you are president of the P.E.A. and were a party to the petition to the New York City Board of Education to revoke the suspensions of City College (N.Y.C.) teachers. The petition was signed by some 250 college and church people (so the Daily Worker says) of radical pro-Marxist ideals, or just plain intellectual dupes. The teachers suspended were charged by their testimony before the Rapp-Coudert Committee investigating subversive activities in New York State schools and colleges with subversiveness in the form of either being or having been Communists and subverting students by their teaching.

I have heard from various sources that you are running the schools of Winnetka as a proving ground for the "progressive education" plan of teaching, indoctrinating and subverting the youth. The reason I say this is due to the fact that I have the record of the P.E.A. and know the records and planned manner which radical educators John Dewey, George S. Counts, Harold O. Rugg and quite a few others have for a "new social order." Counts has gone so far as to write a booklet entitled "Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?" I have had some experience with this "progressive education" business and am convinced, and it has not taken much convincing to prove to me, that it has no place in American education regardless of what some of these radical educators set forth in the form of promotion and propaganda. For the petition, of which you were one, (the petition being presented to the Board of Higher Education by the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, the chairman of which is Ned H. Dearborn of New York University), you were joined by E.A. Ross, national chairman of the red-aiding American Civil Liberties Union; Mitchell Franklin, vice president of the National Lawyers' Guild, a subversive organization; Philip Klein of the Socialist-Communist School for Social Work and of Columbia University; and radical educator Frank Boas, a former president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

It is clearly indicated to me that you use the public schools of Winnetka as a proving ground for the indoctrination of un-American ideals into the youth which is definitely subversive to the interests of its citizens, particularly since you are the president of the P.E.A. and joining a group of subversives in an effort to petition the New York City Board of Education to retain teachers who have been proven unfit.

Yours very truly,

[signed] Robert Donner⁹

⁹Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

June 18, 1941

Mr. Robert Donner
5 Stewart Building
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Dear Mr. Donner:

Thank you for your very frank letter of June 16th.

Communism is supposed to believe in armed revolution and in atheism. I am a Quaker. Communism is supposed to believe in the dictatorship of the proletariat. I am an ardent believer in democracy.

Communism as practiced in Russia and as preached by some people in this country involves indoctrination in the schools. I believe that indoctrination is the antithesis of education. Will you read in that regard my chapter on indoctrination in my last book, "A Living Philosophy of Education".

I think you need have no fear that I or any of the officers or directors of the Progressive Education Association are communistic either in affiliation or in sympathy.

I think there is far more danger to the American way of life through name-calling, through inflicting penalties on people without public trial and the full use of evidence in open court, through accusing people of Communism who are strongly opposed to it, through suppressing civil liberties, and through other fascistic actions than there is through the advocacy of the upholding of the spirit and letter of our Constitution and the defending of the right of every American to think freely for himself in the light of all facts and to express his thoughts.

I believe freely with Jefferson, "here we shall follow truth wherever it may lead, nor fear to tolerate error as long as reason is left free to combat it."

Yours truly,

[signed] Carleton Washburne¹⁰

¹⁰Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

5 Stewart Building
Colorado Springs, Colo.
July 26, 1941

Mr. Carleton Washburne, Supt.
Winnetka Public Schools
Winnetka, Illinois

Dear Mr. Washburne:-

Absence from the city has prevented my previous acknowledgement of your letter of July 18th in reply to my letter of the 16th.

I neglected to call your attention to the fact that the petition to the Board of higher education to revoke suspensions against City College teachers was presented by the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom which, to the best of my knowledge, is a subversive organization more or less controlled by radicals. Your letter is fine and you apparently know of the effort being made by subversives to undermine the youth of our country. It is also noted that you are an ardent believer in democracy -- a word, however, which is seeing tremendous mutilation and mis-use. You, no doubt, are aware of the fact that many in this country consider Russia a democracy and, of course, the Soviets consider themselves as such. Many also consider China a democracy which it is not. The heathen Chinese country has been a dictatorship and a country of revolutions and bandits for many centuries. I wish you would name to me one democracy in the true sense of the word. The nearest thing to a democracy is, of course, our own country which, however, is a Parliamentary Republic. The word democracy has been so lacerated and mangled at the hands of subversives, politicians, radical educators, and alien propagandists that it has lost all semblance of its true meaning. Their concept of "democracy" is nothing more or less than Marxian-Socialism.

I cannot understand how you would let your name be associated with a petition to revoke the suspensions against City College teachers of New York as a result of the Rapp-Coudert Committee investigating New York City Public schools and colleges. Apparently you don't believe in punishing anyone whose aims and objectives are not in the best interests of the citizens of this country.

I have written Brentano's to give me a price on your book, "A Living Philosophy of Education."

Yours very truly,

[signed] Robert Donner¹¹

¹¹Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

5 Stewart Building
Colorado Springs, Colo.
October 25, 1941

Mr. Carleton Washburne, Superintendent
Winnetka Public Schools
Winnetka, Illinois

Dear Mr. Washburne:

Apparently you did not see fit to reply to my letter of July 26th. I enclose herewith photostatic copy of your record which definitely classes you among that group of radical educators, some of whom are John Dewey, Lieberman, Rugg, Lindeman, Johnson, Counts, Curti, Hook, Newlon (deceased), and Redefer, executive secretary of the Progressive Education Association of which you are president.

How any community like Winnetka, Illinois, can have you as superintendent of their schools is beyond belief, as your record shows that you are a Communist or fellow traveler with Communists. You lectured in Moscow in 1931 and are a friend and supporter of Jew Einstein, ousted from Germany some years ago because of his either being a Communist or a very pronounced communist leanings. Some years ago in a Winnetka church when you were accused of being a Communist Party member, you only whimpered afterward that you were not. You have gushed over Soviet education and are one of the principle [sic] subverters of the youth of our country, and for that reason and the others listed above, you should be ousted as superintendent of the schools of Winnetka, and told to go to Bolshevik-Communist Russia which country you seem to like so much.

I have already written you about your connection with the subversives who were making an effort to defend subversive school teachers of the City College of New York City who were suspended due to their subversive teaching activities.

How you could write me and make the statements you did in your letter of June 18th is beyond belief because your record indicates that you believe just the opposite. You may rest assured that in my small way I will do everything possible to thwart you in your subversive program of teaching the youth along lines that are not in the best

interests of the citizens of Winnetka, Illinois, and this country as a whole.

Your reply is awaited.

Yours truly,

[signed] Robert Donner¹²

Enclosure

¹²Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

CARLETON WASHBURN¹³

Superintendent of Winnetka, Illinois, public schools since 1919; pro-Soviet co-author and technical staff member of Communistic First American Trade Union Delegation to Russia; contributing editor of Progressive Education Association (see revolutionary manifesto); member and contributing editor of the radical National Education Association journal; endorser of Open Road; admirer of "pacifist" Gandhi; joined party of persons "blacklisted as subversives" by American Legion report in welcoming Einstein (Chicago Daily News); lectured in Moscow in 1931; writer of articles for radical "Christian Century"; held "open house" for Communist of at least fellow traveler Karl Borders (January 20, 1930), who lectured to Winnetka public school teachers; president of the Progressive Education Association and formerly for some years a director and on its advisory board, along with other radical educators.

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Prog. Edu. Assn.

Hon. pres. John Dewey; Leroy Bowman, Arthur E. Morgan, Joshua Lieberman, Carleton Washburne, Harold Rugg, E.C. Lindeman, Alvin Johnson, and other radicals serve as directors and advisory board members.

Says Francis Ralston Welsh, Nov. 20, 1933: "We learn from yesterday's papers that the Progressive Education Association (Pink, yellow and red) is to hold a meeting on November 24th and 25th and that such people as Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt; Louis Montgomery Howe, the President's secretary; Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate, communist sympathizer and member of the A.C.L.U. national committee; William H. Kilpatrick of pink fame; Harry A. Overstreet, exposed in the Lusk Report on Revolutionary Radicalism; F. Ernest Johnson of the Federal Council of Churches and frequently exposed, and Reinhold Niebuhr, member of the openly communist National Council for the Protection of Foreign-Born Workers, are to be speakers. Mrs. Roosevelt will probably be in congenial company. Perhaps it will be even more congenial since Litvinoff's arrival."

¹³ copy of enclosure to Mr. Robert Donner's letter of October 25, 1941. Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools.

"We have always claimed that the Progressive Education Association, a competitor of the radical National Education Assn., was a radical left-wing teachers group . . . The following special release just issued by the John Day Co., Inc., leaves but little doubt as to the actual pro-revolutionary character of the Prog. Ed. Assn." (From report of Advisory Associates.) Its manifesto is written by a committee and entitled "A Call to the Teachers of the Nation."

To quote from the declarations of this committee: "our society has come to the parting of the ways. It has entered a revolutionary epoch. It stands in the presence of momentous decision. It is already at war with itself . . . If the teachers are to play a positive and creative role in building a better social order they will have to emancipate themselves completely from the domination of the business interests of the nation, cease cultivating the manners and associations of bankers and promotion agents . . . take up boldly the challenge of the present, recognize the corporate and inter-dependent character of the contemporary order and transfer the democratic tradition from individualistic to collectivist economic foundations . . . This would involve the frank abandonment of 'laissez faire,' . . . and the wide adoption of the principle of social and economic planning . . . First of all if the profession is to be a factor in the process of social reconstruction, its members must prepare to struggle co-operatively and valiantly for their rights and ideas. They must fight for tenure, for adequate compensation, for a voice in the formulation of educational policies; they must uphold the ancient doctrine of academic freedom . . . they must oppose every effort on the part of publishing houses, business interest, privileged classes and patriotic societies to prescribe the content of the curriculum" (note the opposition to patriotic societies). " . . . Consequently if the foregoing argument means anything it means that the progressive-minded teachers of the country must unite in a powerful organization, militantly devoted to the building of a better social order . . . In the defense of its members against the ignorance of the masses and the malevolence of the privileged such an organization would have to be equipped with the material resources, the legal talent, and the trained intelligence necessary to wage successful warfare in the press, the courts, and the legislative chambers of the nation. To serve the teaching profession of the country in this way should be one of the major purposes of the Progressive Education Association." A list of recommended books by radicals such as Paul H. Douglas, Lincoln Steffens, Stuart Chase, etc. is then appended.

This manifesto is printed as John Day Pamphlet No. 30 (other pamphlets of the series include such radical authors and subjects as V.F. Calverton "On Revolution," Albert

Einstein "The Fight Against War," Norman Thomas, Stuart Chase, Geo. S. Counts, etc.). Its full title is: "A Call to the Teachers of the Nation: by the Committee of the Progressive Education Association on Social and Economic Problems"; the author-committee-members listed are:

Geo. S. Counts, chairman; Merle E. Curti, Smith Coll., prof.; John S. Gamba, Teachers Coll., prof.; Sidney Hook, N.Y.U., prof.; Jesse H. Newlon, dir. Lincoln's School, Teachers Coll.; Chas. L.S. Easton, headmaster Staten Is. Acad.; Goodwin Watson, Teachers Coll., prof.; Willard W. Beatty, pres., and Frederick Redefer, exec. sec. of the Progressive Education Assn.

October 27, 1941

Mr. Robert Donner
5 Stewart Building
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Dear Mr. Donner:

Thank you very much for your interesting letter of October 25th. I am sorry that I seemed negligent in not replying to your letter of July 26th. I did not realize that you expected a reply to it, as I had already stated my position quite fully in my letter of June 18th. To enter into a long correspondence with you in regard to every detail on which you and I might disagree would, it seems to me, take an unnecessary amount of your time and mine. I happen to be a very busy person and I have no doubt that you are.

I think we are both sincere, that we both believe in America and in American ideals, but that as good Americans we recognize each other's right to conscientious and thoughtful interpretation of these ideals in our lives and activities; and we recognize that among sincere and intelligent people there are many differences of opinion. It is through the free play of these differences that society grows and improves.

As to the photostatic description of me, much of which I recognize as being from the "Red Network", the coloring is completely false, although many of the facts are correct. For example, I was asked to go, with complete freedom of observation and with no commitments of any kind, into Russia in 1927 and to make a report on the common schools of Russia. I made a purely factual study and reported both the good and bad things that I saw. This does not constitute me "a pro-Soviet co-author and technical staff member of the Communistic First American Trade Union Delegation to Russia". The technical experts who were, as far as I am aware, none of them Communistic, but regardless of the sympathies or political leanings of members of the Trade Union Delegation, I went in as an objective observer, making an objective report.

I have been a member of the National Education Association for many years and for a time was a contributing editor of their Journal. To call the N.E.A. radical, however, is to make the word "radical" lose all meaning.

I have endorsed the travel opportunities for young people provided by the Open Road. I believe in giving young

people the widest possible travel and understanding of people in all countries.

I am an admirer of Gandhi in many ways. That does not mean that I agree with him in all of his positions. I am also an admirer of Jesus Christ, who likewise believed in peace. How admiration for a person as deeply religious as Gandhi is and as opposed to violence can be construed as being Communistic, when Communism has stood for violent revolution and for atheism is more than I can see.

Because I had met and interviewed Einstein in Germany I was asked to serve on a committee to meet him when he went through Chicago. I was unable to do so, but I can hardly see how extending hospitality to a man recognized as one of the world's greatest mathematicians and scientists can be construed as Communistic. I have also greeted Robert Andrew Milliken, the great American physicist and Nobel prize winner, who is an ardent Republican. Science knows no politics.

I did lecture in Moscow in 1931. I also lectured in Japan, and China, and India, and Poland, and Turkey, and Iraq, and Austria, and France, and England. If lecturing in a country means that you approve of its principles, then surely I am a very good American since I have lectured a hundred times more in the United States than in all other countries put together.

I have written articles for the Christian Century, but I have also written articles for hundreds of other journals. Does one take on the coloring of every publication for which one writes. If so, I am a conservative, since I have written more articles in journals that could not possibly be classed as radical by any intelligent person, than I have for magazines some people choose to call radical.

I believe in an open forum and in my home I have had people speaking on many topics. When Karl Borders came back from Russia many people wanted to know what he thought about it. I was glad to have him tell them in my home. But I have also had Quakers telling of their work, I have had musicians playing their music, I have had a vehemently anti-Bolshevik Russian princess, and many others. I have too much faith in America to believe that citizens are going to be subverted by hearing the sincere point of view of people with whom they differ.

I am President of the Progressive Education Association and have been actively associated with it for many years. But as I told you in my previous letter, I do not know one Officer or director of the Association who is or ever has been

Communistic in his interests or sympathies, that is any person who has believed in the violent overthrow of government, in class hatred, in the destruction of church and family, or in the importation of the dictatorship methods of Russia into the United States.

If, instead of reading highly colored misinterpretations of me and my activities, you would read my own writings or accept the judgment of those who have worked closely with me for many years, your judgment would be more fair.

Don't you think that if I were a Communist or sympathetic with Communism, I would have been removed from the superintendency in Winnetka many years ago? I have served under Boards of Education for twenty-two years composed of some of Chicago's leading businessmen and lawyers and professional men, most of whom are ardent Republicans, many of whom have been capitalists, practically all of whom have believed in the capitalist economy. Winnetka is something like 90 percent Republican. On my School Board I have had the Vice-President of the Inland Steel Company, the President of a large bond house, the Vice-Presidents of two of Chicago's largest banks, the President of the Chicago Title & Trust Company, one of Chicago's most powerful and conservative corporations, leading corporation lawyers, and so on. I have been unanimously elected by this succession of Board every year for twenty-two years. These people know me. They naturally know my activities, which are adequately publicized. Don't you think that they are in better position to judge of my sincerity, my Americanism, and the kind of influence I am exerting on their own children and those of their neighbors than are the writers of such statements as you enclose?

Mr. Donner, if we are going to preserve the great values of our nation, the things for which my ancestors and I assume yours have fought and worked during the last two centuries on this soil, we must be tolerant of each other, have faith in the good sense of the American people, and give scope to that freedom of expression and freedom of conscience which are written into our Constitution and into the very fiber of the American people?

Sincerely yours,

[signed] Carleton Washburne¹⁴

¹⁴Correspondence files: Winnetka Public Schools

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