A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRUCT "LIFE ADJUSTMENT" AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRUCT "LIFE ADJUSTMENT" AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

by Frank H. Blackington, III

Out of the war came many problems. Chief among those that had to be resolved in the post-war period was the purpose of secondary education. Controversy concerning education was only a part of the total controversy sweeping the nation concerning its institutions, their purpose, roles and relationship with each other and with individuals in the society of which they were a part.

The life adjustment education movement purported to give educational direction during this period. The hypothesis under consideration in this thesis, however, is that "the term 'life adjustment' education to date is lacking in cognitive significance, i.e., does not denote any particular observable range and level of human activity."

In order to test the hypothesis under consideration, the writer proceeds to locate certain demands made upon secondary education in historical perspective, to review the history of the life adjustment movement, to review the literature penned by friend and foe of the movement and finally to an analysis of the concept "life adjustment" as such with conclusions concerning the relation-

ship of such an analysis with past and future educational practice.

The above mentioned procedure revealed an identity of claims for the central emphasis in education on the part of educators prior to the life adjustment movement and those operating under the name of life adjustment education. Two things have been achieved by the movement, i.e., nominal and organizational novelty and unity. The nominal unity, however, was a source of confusion as it perpetuated traditional conflicts in fact although not particularly in name. Those opposed to the life adjustment movement were judged not to really oppose life adjustment but certain activities carried on in the name of life adjustment.

An analysis of the term "life adjustment" revealed that ignoring normative qualities of the term made it all inclusive. Even with normative aspects considered, certain specified levels of human activity needed to be established when considering the construct "life adjustment" in connection with education, lest "education" lose its customary meaning.

A deterministic analysis indicated that life adjustment was a preferred state and equivalent to the good life in both the relative and absolute sense. Such a state needs clear definition before a test can be made for the truth claims of activities purporting

to be life adjusting. The resolution of such claims is seen to be a matter of empirical test. The institution of education is seen as ready for this step beyond the 2500 years of assertion of hypotheses in reified form. The method discussed is seen as a way out of the present low level of argumentation.

A crucial problem, raised at the conclusion, is the problem of getting the correct definition of the good life. Some doubt is expressed as to the ability of this method of analysis to get beyond Kant's hypothetical imperative to this categorical imperative, though it is asserted that the method of analysis may well generate knowledge for that end. This problem is asserted to be of the most pressing importance and worthy of continued study.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER Page

INTRODUCTION

In the years following the second World War, Americans turned their attention back, in part at least, to some of their more pressing domestic problems. Among these was the problem of education in a democracy. The war had shown some of the deficiencies of American education in terms of the large number of men rejected as unsuited for military service. At the same time the gigantic mobilization effort gave evidence of the considerable successes of the educational system. Added pressures caused largely by population growth and increasing rapidity of technological change tended to intensify old problems and create new ones.

The rapid population increase provided a demand for elementary education with implications for higher levels of education. The GI Bill proved a shot in the arm for institutions of higher learning enabling many of them to recover from the lean war years. Secondary education became a matter of grave concern for many educators as they anticipated an agonizing period of economic readjustment following the war-time boom period. Many envisioned a return of economic activity to the levels of the 1930's.

The educational institutions were hardly prepared for what followed. They had witnessed a period of some six years with little or no expansion of physical plants. They had functioned with a more or less static supply of teachers - many of whom were inadequate for the task

at hand. In spite of many educational pronouncements to the contrary, they had remained very close to the traditional classical orientation of American public schools in terms of curriculum organization and classroom procedure. Of equal importance was the fact that the American public school was getting its traditionally niggardly support from the general public. Teachers were poorly paid, classrooms poorly furnished, and a great number of the students poorly educated for the challenges of life in modern America.

It became apparent to the general public that something had to be done in the way of plant construction. Sheer numbers flooding schools throughout the land took care of that. It became increasingly apparent that something had to be done to secure more teachers. This, too, was a matter of numbers, i.e., the shortage of teachers and the necessity for increased financial support to obtain them. Education became a bigger and bigger investment in the eyes of the general public. Educators were increasingly concerned with curriculum problems along with the physical aspects of the school expansion.

Amidst the tremendous and often conflicting demands, educators were striving to produce an educational program for all the youth of the nation. In the succeeding years, perhaps no other institution of American society has received so much concerted public attention and so much concerted criticism as the public school. It has come from all types of sources - the erudite and

the ignorant, the well intentioned and the enemies (admitted and unadmitted) of public education. Although public institutions have always been under attack, this particular period witnessed a concerted attack on the schools which has been unparalleled in the history of American public education.

Among the many aspects of American education that were under attack at the mid-century point was something called "Life Adjustment Education." As "progressive education" was the whipping boy of the thirties and forties, "Life Adjustment Education" took on, or at least shared, the role during the fifties. An additional impetus has been given to the public flogging of these two by the challenge of the Soviet Union to the nation's position of leadership and perhaps to its very ability to survive.

Though the movement is now as dead as the proverbial "dodo," at least in terms of admitting to the name, it would seem that an evaluation of life adjustment education might be fruitful. Much that went on in the name of the formal movement was a matter of common practice prior to the movement. Similarly, there is much in current practice that found expression under the auspices of the formal movement. Thus the existence of or the lack of a formal movement by that name is of little import in regard to the hypothesis under consideration. The fact that such a movement did exist is important, however, in the sense that it indicated the depth of

concern with a particular problem. The results of the thinking of its participants and opponents can be helpful in evaluating the movement and can be suggestive in terms of evaluating the concept itself.

Moreover, the controversy concerning education was only one aspect of the general controversy in the nation concerning a wide variety of institutions, their proper roles, purposes, and relationships to each other and to individuals, which found expression in the literature of the day. Perhaps the most widely read, at the moment, is Whyte's "Organization Man." One need not confine his reading to the more "popular" works, however. One need only scan the publications of Walter Lippman, The Rockefeller Foundation, Eric Fromm, A. Huxley, The National Association of Manufacturers, The Americans For Democratic Action, Monsignor Sheen and a host of contemporaries of varying stature and interests to find indications of similar concern. Consequently the scope and the pregnancy of the implications of this study depend only upon the background and interests of the reader.

The central purpose of this study, however, is to subject the concept of "life adjustment" to a philosophical analysis in terms of its implications for education. Due to the fact that a movement by that name, purporting to give direction to educational activity and, by implication, to life viewed as human activity, was a matter of considerable controversy, concern with it and the assertions of its friends and foes will

occupy a major portion of the writer's attention in his attempt to explicate what the cognitively significant formulation of such a concept involves.

The hypothesis under consideration by the writer is that the term "life adjustment" education to date is lacking in cognitive significance, i.e., does not denote any particular observable range and level of human activity. In view of the foregoing, we must ask - does the term denote any substantial philosophical position and does it provide the criteria upon which to build an educational structure? Precisely, what does the phrase "life adjustment education" mean? These questions are indicative of the scope of this study.

No attempt will be made by the writer to develop a life adjustment education program either on the basis of a comparison of the relative merits of particular programs or basic positions, or on the basis of an ex cathedra pronouncement. Neither will the writer attempt to develop a definition of "life adjustment" as such, though it is probable that equivalent terms may be noted. These tasks all lie beyond the scope of this study.

In order that such an analysis may be fruitfully developed the writer will proceed, initially, to locate certain demands made upon the institution of secondary education in historical perspective in order to compare those demands and the services developed to meet those demands with those obtaining in the "life adjustment" movement. Secondly, a review of the history of the

movement will be undertaken in order to locate the causes of its establishment and the purpose as well as some attempts to realize its purpose. Thirdly, a review of the literature produced by both friends and foes of the organized movement will be undertaken in order to develop the range of thinking surrounding the movement and to give possible insight to the basic problems inherent in the development of such a concept. Finally, the writer will devote a section to the analysis of the concept "life adjustment" as such, with conclusions concerning the relationship of such an analysis with past and future educational practice.

Consequently, it is now necessary to turn to our first task - a look at the past history of the American secondary school to locate changes in its character. These changes, for better or worse, have in large measure reflected changes in American society. Here we may locate the function or functions that it, society, expected the secondary school to perform. Were they then significantly different than today?

CHAPTER I

AMERICAN EDUCATION BETWEEN 1620-1900

Pre-Revolutionary America

The roots of early English colonial secondary education reach back to the European traditions accepted by the early settlers. The general character of secondary education in Europe had been established during the Humanistic revival of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These schools gave most of their attention to the classical studies with considerable emphasis on ancient language - Latin, Greek, and Hebrew - in preparation for college. It was necessary to have a command of Latin and often Greek if one were to become a member of one of the learned professions.

In thinking of colonial patterns of education it is customary to turn to the experience of Massachusetts as an example. This is a legitimate source if one is careful to avoid the mistake of considering it typical of colonial education. Massachusetts did, however, establish legislative precedent, establish a two class system of education, and did represent a major influence on subsequent educational development not only in the New England area, but in the entire United States.

The early founders of Harvard expressed the need for an institution of higher education as a means of avoiding an illiterate ministry for future generations. Here was a group of people devoted to the establishment

of a "Christian State" whose interests were directed primarily toward life in the other world. The present world was viewed as a transitory measuring device to determine by faith, individual communion with God, and action whether its members were among the elect. This attitude set the temper of their whole lives, not a small portion of which was education. Education was seen as the protecting and sustaining arm of the Church and Commonwealth.

Truly the substitution of the authority of the Bible in religious matters for the authority of the Church had caused an educational revolution as well as a religious one. Previously, with the judgment of the Church sufficient, there was little need for universal education in primarily agrarian civilizations. The individual judgment and responsibility that was basic to Puritanism meant that mass education was a necessity. Jackson states:

> "The Bible was put into the hands of the people to be for each one an individual guide and help and at least an education sufficient to read and understand it was a necessary corollary."1/

The majority of the early settlers were educated and were able to supply home instruction if the time was available and the spirit willing. The results of the dependence on home training were considered unsatis-

1/George LeRoy Jackson, The Development of School Support In Colonial Massachusetts, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1909, p. 7.

factory and Harvard's establishment implied a system that would supply scholars to the college. Consequently the General Court passed the Massachusetts School Law of 1642 and the "old deluder Satan" law of 1647.1/ It would be a mistake to assume that no formal education of an institutional nature was available prior to these laws. Boston Latin Grammar School (1635) and Harvard University (1636) are perhaps the most notable of the institutions which preceded this legislation. This legislation, consistent with Puritan theology, was the first example in the English-speaking world of the state requiring that all children be taught to read.

The influence of the early Puritans on American education can be divided into two areas. One is the establishment of certain governing principles through legislation and the second is the shaping of the American mind in an area of attitudes, value judgments and morals which, difficult to measure and secularized though they may have become, have had a tremendous impact on American culture.

In the area of legislation, the laws of 1642 and 1647 form the cornerstone of public education in America. These laws established the right of the state to require communities to establish and maintain schools. Moreover, fines were in the offing if they did not comply. The

1/Henry Steele Commanger (ed.), Documents of American History, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1949, pp. 28-29.

General Court established several principles of importance which were then foreign to the English-speaking world, i.e., education of all youth is essential for the well-being of the state; obligation to furnish this education rests primarily with the parent or master and the state may compel him to fulfill the obligation; the state may fix a standard determining the kind and quantity of education; general taxation may be used to support the institutions regardless of attendance and the state may require that secondary education be made available at public expense.

Regardless of the church influences involved, these precedents were established by public legislative action. The practice of these principles has continued to the present day - a day of secular control in public education. It may be noted that a large portion of the history of American education revolves around the battles to maintain, establish, and in some cases re-establish these principles.

The second area of influence - the domain of morals, values, and attitudes - finds us able to trace many of the so-called "middle class virtues" or attitudes back to Puritanism. It is to be readily admitted that all these virtues are not peculiar to Puritanism but Puritanism provided the militant force for their acceptance with an assist going to Benjamin Franklin's writings which did much to secularize them and make them popular. So, too, have the militant revivalistic,

evangelical religious sects. What are they but thunderous reverberations of Puritanism?

The modern day counterpart of the attitude toward poverty is instructive in reference to the above. Poverty was lack of success and regarded by the Puritans as a sign of rejection. The elect proved their grace by success. Today, poverty is not quite a disgrace (due in part to the crash of 1929) but in all events it is, at best, a subtle criticism.

H. L. Mencken summed it up nicely when he wrote:

> "Great is the influence of the original Puritans -- whether of New England or of the South -- who came to the New World with a ready-made philosophy of the utmost clarity, positiveness and inclusiveness of scope, and who attained to such a position of political and intellectual leadership that they were able to force it almost unchallenged upon the whole population, and endow it with such vitality that it successfully resisted alien opposition later on."1/

Education in the south reflected the Anglican influence. The church had maintained considerable control and responsibility for education. The state considered education a civil affair only insofar as it concerned apprenticeship, the education of poor children, orphans and the illegitimate.

In the middle states the great diversity of religious and national origins led to private and church oriented education. Consequently there was no dis-

1/H. L. Mencken, A Book of Prefaces, Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., Garden City, 1930, pp. 207-208.

cernible trend toward a common school system. This private and church oriented schooling, in the sense of greatly varied institutional and cultural loyalties, was very apparent in the more heterogeneous middle states. The tendency in this direction became stronger in the New England area after the "Glorious Revolution of 1688" with an increase in the heterogeneity of population, the disestablishment of the church, the westward movement, and the general diminution of the religious fervor that marked the activities of the earlier colonial period. In spite of the legislation passed by the General Court of Massachusetts, there was a trend toward private and denominational schools coupled with an outright refusal to be bound by the legislation or merely a token compliance with it.

Throughout the colonies the major task of the secondary school was that of providing a classical education for those who attended the institution. Initially there was a strong theological basis for this education. A slow, but marked, diminution of the influence of the theologians resulted in an increasing concern with earthly affairs - not as a measuring device for one's salvation potential but as a practical necessity for the business of this life. Classical education was still considered the best education for the role of gentleman and leader.

Generally speaking, the pre-Revolutionary period was one of very nearly universal acceptance of a dual

system of education. This is true regardless of whether education was regarded as a province of the family, church or state. Elementary schools and the apprentice system were considered appropriate and adequate for the lower classes while the Latin grammar schools and colleges were designed for the upper classes. This was especially true of education in the seventeenth century but was increasingly less true at the close of the eighteenth century as merchant interests began to play a more dominant role in colonial society. These interests became committed to a more utilitarian curriculum at the secondary level and in fact joined battle with the classicists. This persistent utilitarian concern underlies many of the struggles in present-day American secondary education. This demand by the business interests for an institution which would minister more appropriately to its immediate needs led to the development of private English schools. These were sometimes called English grammar schools. The Latin grammar school had been committed to the classical form and content of education by tradition and by the heavy hand of college entrance requirements. This lack of flexibility left those, dissatisfied with its operation, no other choice than the establishment of a new institution. At this point, it would be instructive to note that this is another pattern that holds throughout the history of American secondary education.

Perhaps the most significant development in the

English school was the elevation of the study of English to academic respectability. It gave assurance of a unilingual population and in the same way that the Reformation gave respectability to the vernacular in the religious realm, this vernacular respectability in education lead to the removal of an artificial barrier to the knowledge of the day in the things of secular concern. Also included in the curriculum were such subjects as mathematics, science, and modern foreign languages. Consequently this type of school had a much broader clientele than the Latin grammar school.

The English grammar school gave way in the latter part of the eighteenth century to the academy. The academy became the dominant force in secondary education at the end of the colonial period and continued in this role well into the nineteenth century. The academy movement was an attempt to combine the curricula offerings of the Latin and English grammar schools. One of the more elaborate of these arrangements was described by Benjamin Franklin in his "Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania" published in 1749. As Franklin found out, much to his dismay upon his return from his European assignments, there was an exceedingly strong tendency for the traditional subject areas to become dominant and push the newer aspects of the English curriculum into the background. Consequently the original character of the academy as a multipurpose institution was changed to that of an

institution serving a more restricted clientele chiefly for the purpose of college preparation. Nevertheless, the academy movement did force the broadening of the curriculum to the point where some attention was given to English grammar, literature, rhetoric, mathematics, social science, modern language, science, art and music. None of these had been considered as worthy of attention by the Latin grammar school.

Colonial society thus saw the purpose of education as preparation for and a concern with other worldly conditions. Competing with this goal was a developing concern with earthly affairs and the qualities of leadership necessary for the role of the gentleman of the times. Classical education was assumed to provide the basis for such activities. The latter part of the colonial period saw spokesmen for another purpose becoming more articulate and effective. This final purpose of note was essentially vocational, immediately vocational, in nature.

Education in the Early Years of the Republic

The establishment of a republic and the general commitment of the new colonies to the basic philosophy of the Declaration of Independence, Paine's Common Sense, and the Constitution, with all its implications concerning universal participation in the affairs of state, also implied a commitment to universal education. The educational thinking of Thomas Jefferson and Dr.

Benjamin Rush were indicative of this commitment. Thus with the explication of the political ideals of democracy came the necessary accompanying explication of educational ideals necessary to sustain it.

Education was seen as more than a matter solely of ecclesiastical concern. It was conceived as essentially a matter of civic and national concern, as the first line of defense for a way of life. Would the academy system be adequate for such a task? Men like John and Samuel Phillips, who established Phillips Andover Academy, felt that the private academy was the answer to the divergent demands of the varying locales. The academy served a broad age group and often was coeducational. A number of them were established solely for ladies. Academies were usually established through private endowment and later often received a measure of public support. Nevertheless, control usually remained in private hands. Due to the tuition factor, the academy still left a large element of the population with no vehicle for formal education at the secondary level. Thus it, too, was found wanting. Consequently, there was increasing popular demand for the establishment of publicly supported secondary schools.

The increase of nationalistic feeling following the War of 1812, the broadening of the democratic base with the advent of Jackson, and the ever-swelling tide of immigration offered excellent sources of support for the advocates of the public secondary school. Sup-

porters of public secondary education concerned themselves with the strength of the nation and argued in favor of the movement on the grounds that the nation could ill afford an uneducated immigrant class functioning as a "Trojan horse" in a democratic society. They saw in education the vehicle for Americanization of the immigrant, for increasing responsible citizenship, for increasing the national wealth, for the diminution of crime, and the abolition of poverty. This group also embraced the doctrine of "natural law" including education along with freedom of speech, conscience and assembly. Thus education was conceived as an inalienable right of the individual that the society was duty-bound to recognize, supply and defend. These schools were to be available to all so that children from all walks of life could sit at the "great bench of learning" in the spirit of brotherhood.

The common needs of the common man was the major concern here. The school was to prepare youth for general participation in American community life.

The pressure of this movement was irresistible and the concept of public support for education eventually included the university level. This movement was not without violent and tenacious opposition however. Even those who could be considered as thinking that universal education was essential were not unanimous in thinking that it should be established at public expense. Many who were not committed to the necessity of universal

secondary education felt that they would only create a large group of non-productive malcontents inasmuch as such education was a luxury and had no utilitarian end, that secular education would create an atmosphere of godlessness and atheism, that the taxation necessary for their support was discriminatory and unjust, that state control would "Prussianize" American education, and that education was primarily a local, family or religious concern.

The arguments, both pro and con, had been seen before in the battle over public elementary education. They were to be trotted out again in one form or another in the period of the great debate concerning public support of university education. They continue to appear in one guise or another on the current scene. Generally speaking, the proponents of public support have tended to be the dominant force on the American educational scene.

At the outset of the Civil War the people of the nation were generally committed to public support of elementary education. There were indications that the academy movement was dying and that a substantial portion of the people were becoming favorably disposed toward the concept of a public high school which would serve both a terminal and college preparatory function. By this time a number of public high schools had been established particularly in New England and in the urban centers elsewhere in the nation. This development was a signifi-

cant advance in the logical extension of opportunities implicit in Jacksonian democracy. This publicly-supported institution, controlled by boards of elected officials ultimately responsible to the general public, was available to all, in theory at least, who had completed elementary school. It offered promise of destroying the self-generating socio-economic disenfranchisement which grew out of the lack of educational opportunity and the equally pernicious self-generation of an educational elite to which the economic, social and political power tended to gravitate. In short, there was a tremendous blow being struck against the development of an inflexible class structure. It was another rung in the yet to be completed ladder of public education.

The curriculum. -- Even the tradition bound Latin grammar school made modifications in its educational offerings during the nineteenth century.

> "Through the end of the eighteenth century Latin, Greek and arithmetic were the only subjects required for admission to the leading American colleges. In the years between 1800 and the Civil War five new ones were added to this list: geography, English grammar, algebra, geometry, and ancient history. Within the scope of these eight areas, then, lay the curriculum of the Latin grammar school."1/

Inasmuch as the Latin grammar school was almost entirely devoted to college preparation, they were committed to following the lead of the colleges.

1/R. Freeman Butts and Lawrence A. Cremin, A History of Education in American Culture, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1953, pp. 275-276.

The academy, by and large, recognized the college demands but felt in no way limited by them. Consequently there was a development of English, science, social science (including a goodly portion of nationalistic American history), navigation, surveying, bookkeeping, military science, teacher training and various assortments of courses. The inclusion of technical and scientific courses is an indication of the attempt to make the teachings of these schools appear more immediately useful to the recipients of this education. This, of course, included political and social as well as "vocational" utility.

There was little common organization but the tendency was strong for the academies to establish parallel courses, the classical and English courses, thus attempting to serve a number of masters. The classical course had the advantage of tradition and prestige. This, combined with the fact that its clientele were the most articulate members of the community, made the classical course an increasingly dominant force within the institution. Thus, the end result was not particularly different, in the experience of the nineteenth century academy, from Franklin's experience with his academy. In the main, the public high school tended to adopt the parallel course approach of the academy. At the outset it, too, put considerable emphasis on the non-classical aspects of the curriculum. This was, in part, a reaction to the developing conservatism of the academy

which became more and more a college preparatory institution as the publicly supported secondary school became the dominant force on the American educational scene. The same forces which resulted in a diminution of the stature of the non-classical aspects of the curriculum in the academy were to operate in a very similar fashion as the public high school came of age.

Post Civil War Secondary Education

The antebellum public high school inherited a set of relatively established masters - the classicist who viewed secondary education as selective and preparatory for college - a particular type of preparation for a particular type of college, i.e., one that provided the traditional liberal arts or classical education; the group who viewed the high school as a source of general education beyond the elementary level of a terminal nature which would prepare the youth for general participation in American community life and who tended to support a curriculum oriented in the direction of the English grammar school; and the business and labor interests who saw the high school as a source of some sort of technical or vocational instruction. In the last quarter of the century, organizations like the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Labor made demands for an increased emphasis on industrial and commercial education at this level.

Early secondary education, as typified by the Latin grammar school, served the first master with considerable distinction. The English grammar school served the second and third masters well in some areas. The academy attempted initially to serve all masters with varying success. It was eventually dominated by the classical elements and, in any event, failed to serve the economically disenfranchised elements of the population who were, for the most part, unable to participate in the activities of the academy. The pre-Civil War embryonic development and the post-war fruition of the public high school was the result of the inability of the previously mentioned institutions to directly involve the total population of secondary school age in their educational activities. In a sense this is the fourth and ultimate master.

Public secondary education has been torn by these conflicting demands since its establishment. These various masters, particularly the latter, brought the system into existence. They constitute the broad general basis of support which the institution receives while at the same time cause the gravest tensions within the public high school movement.

The ebb and flow of general economic and political fortunes affected the growth of the public high school as it did the institutions prior to it. The tendency toward expansion was limited in times of war and depression generally and more specifically by primarily

local issues. A number of court decisions, the most famous being the Kalamazoo decision in 1874, established the right to tax for the support of public secondary education. The succeeding years, especially the decade prior to the turn of the century, was marked by a rapid development of the system throughout the country. Because of the varied demands upon it, the comprehensive high school became the dominant type in America although the prevailing European influences in America at the time encouraged the development of specialized schools of a secondary nature, a considerable number of which are still with us.

The Development of Professional Organizations

In the post-war period there was another significant development that has had a considerable impact on American education at all levels. This may be described merely as professional organizational growth at the state and national levels. The National Education Association, established in 1856, became exceedingly active and served to focus the attention of educators and the general public on the current issues in education. It did this largely at first through the establishment of committees who were to conduct studies of various issues and who from time to time submitted major reports. This pattern of activity has been utilized by the numerous professional educational associations which have been established in the past sixty years.

Two important committees of the National Education Association studied secondary education and submitted reports in the decade prior to the turn of the century. The work of the Committee of Ten was undoubtedly the most significant. Its membership was heavily college oriented though it included some secondary school administrators and the United States Commissioner of Education. The purpose of this committee was to survey the entire educational scene and ascertain possible economies of time at all levels of educational endeavor. Nine sub-committees were formed and they held conferences concerning the specialized areas of interest. In reference to the length of some of the sub-committee reports the Committee of Ten stated:

> "The conferences which found their tasks most difficult were the Conferences on Physics, Astronomy and Chemistry; Natural History, History, Civil Government and Political Economy; and Geography; and these four Conferences make the longest and most elaborate reports, for the reason that these subjects are to-day more imperfectly dealt with in primary and secondary schools than are the subjects of the first five Conferences. The experts who met to confer together concerning the teaching of the last four subjects in the list of Conferences all felt the need of setting forth in an ample way what ought to be taught, in what order, and by what method. They ardently desired to have their respective subjects made equal to Latin, Greek and Mathematics in weight and influence in the schools; but they knew that educational tradition was adverse to that desire, and felt no confidence in these subjects as disciplinary material. Hence the length and elaboration of these reports. In less degree the Conferences on English and Other Modern Languages felt the same difficulties, these subjects being relatively new as

substantial elements in school programmes."1/

These remarks give evidence to the very real impact of the heavy hand of tradition on those who would increase the scope of the curriculum. All these conferences dealt with the question concerning the treatment of the various subjects in terms of the goals of the students who were involved. There was remarkable unanimity between the several conference groups and the Committee of Ten itself on this question. The nature of the agreement and the unanimity is evidenced by the statement that:

> "The Committee of Ten unanimously agree with the Conferences. Ninety-eight teachers, intimately concerned either with the actual work of American Secondary Schools, or with the results of that work as they appear in students who come to college, unanimously declare that every subject which is taught at all in a secondary school should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil so long as he pursues it, no matter what the probable destination of the pupil may be, or at which point his education is to cease.... It has been a very general custom in American high schools and academies to make up separate courses of study for pupils of supposed different destinations, the proportions of the several studies in the different courses being various. The principle laid down by the conferences will, if logically carried out, make a great simplification in secondary school programmes."2/

The report recommended the establishment of four different curricula which were basically academic in nature. The most significant differences among them

1/Report Of The Committee Of Ten On Secondary School Studies, American Book Company, New York, 1894, p. 13.

2/Ibid., p. 17.

was the number and kind of foreign languages required. Moreover, the committee was convinced that the subjects to be dealt with on the secondary level were so numerous that it would be advisable to abandon the traditional eight-four division and either include some secondary subjects in the elementary level or extend secondary education downward to include grades seven and eight. To this date some states require a secondary certificate to teach in grades seven and eight while others require an elementary certificate - a result of this report.

The report saw the high school primarily as a source of terminal education.

> "The secondary schools of the United States taken as a whole, do not exist for the purpose of preparing boys and girls for colleges. Only an insignificant percentage of the graduates of these schools go to colleges or scientific schools. Their main function is to prepare for the duties of life that small portion of all the children in the country - a proportion small in number, but very important to the welfare of the nation - who show themselves able to profit by an education prolonged to the eighteenth year, and whose parents are able to support them while they remain so long at school."1/

It seems somewhat paradoxical that the report then proceeded to recommend a curriculum organization that was almost completely college oriented. However, one must remember that the members conceived this type of education as the only suitable education for anyone regardless of his end goal in life. The Committee of

1/Ibid., p. 51.

Ten was concerned that secondary education provide at least four years of strong "mental training" and conceded that the newer subjects, correctly taught, would be equally effective in terms of mental discipline. The doctrine of mental discipline permeated the whole report. Zeran notes in regard to this aspect of the report:

> "It is significant that the doctrine of mental discipline taken for granted by this committee was never again defended by a major, first-rate group of public school leaders as a sound criterion for developing the secondary school curriculum."1/

It must be admitted, however, that the mental discipline theory has been a most persistent myth both within the profession and among the general population. First shattered by William James in his famous Chapter 16 on "Memory" in his Psychology (1918) and subsequently proven by experimentation, it returns again and again as will be evidenced by some later comments concerning life adjustment education.

The Committee on College Entrance Requirements, in 1899, added little to educational thought except to define the requirements in terms of the conclusions of the Committee of Ten. Electives were considered acceptable parts of a general educational program as long as they were generally confined to the major studies proposed by that committee. They also proposed a six-year secondary program beginning at the

1/Franklin R. Zeran (ed.), Life Adjustment Education In Action, Chartwell House, Inc., New York, 1953, p. 9.

seventh grade. The Committee of Fifteen on Elementary Studies opposed a change in the eight-four system fearing that a shortened elementary program would cause many children to leave school at an earlier age. The National Education Association appointed a standing committee to consider this particular question. In its three reports (1907, 1908, 1909) there was the strong recommendation that the elementary programs be six years in length followed by a secondary program of similar length.

Such were the conditions in education at the turn of the twentieth century. While modifications were slowly being made in the curriculum the greatest changes had been made in the areas of public commitment to school support, public control, and the character of the population directly participating in formal education. Traditional aims and content tended to dominate the activities of the public institution. Yet a vocational tendency stemming back to Franklin's Academy and the earlier apprentice system was a persistent force which became increasingly strong as the American vocational scene became more thoroughly dominated by specialization and the mutual interdependency of the many cultural institutions and the individual members of those institutions. It must be admitted that secondary education has always had a vocational value for some elements of the population but the vocational tendency referred to here is one not aimed, of necessity, at the learned professions but at the ordinary citizen who aspired only to

a productive existence somewhere below the learned professions in the occupational hierarchy.

The report of the Committee of Ten was a most influential document in the years prior to 1918. It served, in a sense, to bridge the gap between the thinking of the eighteenth and nineteenth century conception of secondary education as a selective instrument and the twentieth century view which emphasized secondary education as a universal necessity. It is true that the orientation toward the subjects to be learned rather than the learner and conditions conducive to learning was an inheritance from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as was the dominant theme of faculty psychology which permeated the report. Nevertheless, there were unmistakable signs of a softening of the classical position with the recognition of the elective system, the grant of academic respectability to a limited number of new subjects, and the recognition of the public high school as primarily a terminal institution for the majority of the people attending it.

Despite the prestige of these organizations the well established masters, previously described, demanded to be heard. They were not all sure that the curriculum prescribed by these committees would effect the purposes they had in mind.

A more radical departure from the traditions of the Latin grammar school and the private academy were to appear after World War I. This departure was signaled

by the "Seven Cardinal Principles of Education" published in 1918 and reaffirmed in one manner or another in numerous educational pronouncements culminating in the life adjustment movement at mid-century. Thus to understand the concept to which this study is addressed, we must move into the twentieth century for a look at secondary education in terms of these Seven Cardinal Principles and the society which spawned them.

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE ADJUSTMENT EDUCATION MOVEMENT - THE RESULT OF 50 YEARS OF DELIBERATIONS

The Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, established in 1912 by the National Education Association, produced its most influential report entitled "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education" in 1918. This document represented a radical departure from the approach of the Committee of Ten and other previous conceptions of American secondary education. The rapid social and economic changes since the Civil War had created stresses within American society that cried out for attention. The increasing body of scientific information concerning human behavior and the influence of the work and writing dealing with the activities of Froebel and Pestalozzi involving the individual child as the central concern of educational endeavors undoubtedly contributed to the thinking of the framers of this document. Gaumnitz cites the composition of the membership of the Commission as the reason for this radical change.

> "The explanation of the difference between the recommendations of this Commission and those of several other committees which preceded it is found in the backgrounds of the men who made up this Commission. The earlier groups consisted chiefly of college presidents and professors concerned primarily with making the high school serve better the needs of youth entering the colleges. The Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education was made up chiefly of professionals directly concerned with the secondary schools. It was the first

> national commission for which the majority of members was drawn directly from the high schools. Its many subcommittees studied and reported specifically on the various high school curriculum fields. Such nonacademic fields as music, art, physical education and manual arts were as strongly represented on these committees as were the liberal arts."1/

This factor was no doubt a significant one in determining the general outlook of the Commission though it is unlikely that it can be maintained as the only factor as Gaumnitz suggests unless one were to use the term background in the widest sense. This does not seem to be Gaumnitz's intent.

The report received additional prestige and circulation from the fact that it was published as a bulletin of the United States Office of Education. The Commission explained its existence and purpose at the outset of the report saying:

> "Secondary education should be determined by the needs of the society to be served, the character of the individuals to be educated, and the knowledge of educational theory and practice available. These factors are by no means static. Society is always in the process of development; the character of the secondary-school population undergoes modification; and the sciences on which educational theory and practice depend constantly furnish new information. Secondary education, however, like any other established agency or society, is conservative and tends to resist modification. Failure to make adjustments when the need arises leads to the necessity for extensive reorganization at irregular intervals. The evidence is strong that such a comprehensive reorganization

1/ Franklin R. Zeran (ed.), Life Adjustment In Action, Chartwell House, Inc., New York, 1953, p. 14.

of secondary education is imperative at the present time."1/

The Commission cited the growth of a more complex political and economic order, increasing amounts of leisure time, decreasing impact of other social institutions on the individual, and the breakdown of the apprentice system, among other things, as demanding a reorganization of secondary public education. The Commission also noted with concern that:

> "In the past 25 years there have been marked changes in the secondary-school population of the United States. The number has increased, according to Federal returns, from one for every 210 of the total population in 1889-90, to one for every 121 in 1899-1900, to one for every 89 in 1909-10, and to one for every 73 of the estimated total population in 1914-15. The character of the secondary school population has been modified by the entrance of large numbers of pupils of widely varying capacities, aptitudes, social heredity, and destination in life."2/

The Commission also noted that there had been considerable change in educational theory due largely to the contributions of psychology; that these contributions had made educators much more aware of individual differences, had indicated real doubts about the general values asserted by faculty psychology and called for a thorough-going revision of the concept of general values. These contributions led to the conclusion that subject values and methodology must be evaluated in

1/Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education, U.S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 35, 1918, p. 1.

2/Ibid., p. 2.

terms of the application of knowledge to "activities of life" rather than the requirements of some logically ordered discipline. They also noted that there were indications that psychological development is continuous thus indicating that there was no legitimate reason for the present sharp separation of secondary and elementary education.

The brief citation of the changing needs of the society, the changing character of the school population and the advances of theoretical knowledge are illustrative of the thinking of the Commission and the authority to which they appealed in developing the "cardinal principles." Committed as they were to the notion that each individual should develop its peculiar capacities to their utmost within the general framework of democratic principles, the Commission stated the purpose of education in the public schools in terms of seven major objectives. These objectives were: health, command of the fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, civic education, worthy use of leisure time and ethical character. All school work should proceed with a view to these ends.

In establishing these as criteria for an appropriate secondary education the Commission obviously looked at logically organized disciplines as means rather than ends. The justification of a particular subject area was to be found in its utility in terms of the seven stated principles. The Commission implicitly denied

any intrinsic value in a particular subject. This is a direct about-face from much previous thinking where the justification for the existence of a subject in the curriculum was the existence of that subject, i.e., that one should study it for the sake of studying it. The questioning of the concept of mental discipline quite naturally destroyed the idea that a particular subject was essential for the developing of a strong mind. The value of a subject is seen as relative to these criteria as the specific end goals of the student.

Acceptance of this view would of course revolutionize secondary education in terms of curriculum, financial support, and methodology. The Commission recognized the tendency and need within our society for increased specialization. Due to this tendency they called for an emphasis on the unifying function of the secondary school which would provide common ideals, modes of thought - feeling - and action that make for cooperation, social cohesion and social solidarity. It recommended that curriculum constants should be established for all or nearly all pupils in terms of the criteria postulated in the cardinal principles.

The Commission also advanced ideas that had received a measure of support from the reports of previous committees such as approval of the junior high school, the comprehensive high school, curriculum constants and electives, recognized that high school was primarily a terminal institution and called for more universal

attendance and asserted that secondary education was essential for all youth.

In spite of the widespread discussion caused by this document and its contribution to the thinking of educational leaders, the typical secondary school continued to operate very much as it had operated in the past. If the educators were to be committed to universal secondary education, it was quite obvious that this secondary education must be of quite a different sort than that which was traditional. Nevertheless, the American educator embraced both the ideal of universal secondary education and traditional objectives, methodology and content. The profession and the general public had accepted the traditional and assumed that exposure to it would make one better prepared for life. Teachers and administrators were not trained to make the adaptations required, were not prepared for the battles that would be certain to follow, and even if the former conditions were realized, were unlikely to have the time to prepare for such a thorough-going revision of the aim and activity of the institution. The time problem was accentuated by the fact that textbooks were oriented toward the existing scheme and traditional philosophy. Perhaps more important than the reasons previously advanced was a rather widespread acceptance of three theories of educational value which Douglass refers to as "the decoration theory, the discipline theory and the

college preparation theory."[1] These attitudes tended to preserve the status quo.

The "decoration theory" involved a selective concept of secondary education. Limited opportunity for secondary education afforded those who had received it certain distinguishing characteristics, such as improved speech and a collection of isolated bits of knowledge which gave a certain veneer of culture and knowledge to its possessors. This was a mark of social and academic distinction much like that which accrued to the recent parade of television quiz contestants who made similar displays regardless of the integrity of the particular contest operators. This theory has become increasingly ineffective as secondary education became more popularly available. It is a value often attributed to college education at present.

The "discipline theory" was advocated by the sincere and the insincere. The sincere were overly impressed by the idea of the training of general intellectual powers and the general transfer of training. Those who could claim less intellectual honesty found in the doctrine a convenient defense of the traditional subjects. Thus they both could maintain that there was no need for the subjects of specific "practical" value. This theory remains to be limbered up whenever the

1/Harl R. Douglass (ed.), Education For Life Adjustment, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1950, pp. 24-27.

occasion demands and used to defend activities that have no other defense or to reinforce the defenders of activities which can be defended more properly on other grounds.

Even more important was the theory that certain subjects better prepare one for general college success. The interesting fact is that after World Wars I and II many colleges accepted veterans who would not have qualified for entrance in more normal times. These men did well in college as did occasional "substandard" students who had been admitted over the years. This raised the suspicion that no subject with the possible exception of English had values not obtaining in comparable degree by other subjects as preparation for college. This led to considerable research on this problem, some of which Douglass cites in stating:

> "The uniform conclusion from the many researches on this question, among which were those of Stinnett and Gebhart at Colorado State College of Education, Clark at the University of Southern California, Brammell at the University of Washington, Sorenson at Northwestern, Proctor and Balenbaugh at Stanford, Douglass at Oregon, Douglass and Boardman at Minnesota, and Yates at the universities of Cincinnati, Kentucky, and Indiana, was that the pattern of subjects taken in high school has a negligible effect upon grades made in college. Students who had taken traditional required college preparatory subjects were matched on the basis of intelligence test scores with students who had not. The grades of the two groups, when compared, showed no statistically reliable or quantitatively significant difference. As a matter of fact, the difference in every instance was found to be negligible. More recently, a considerable number of institutions, now totaling more than one hundred, led by Stanford University and including such institutions as the University of Michigan,

> University of Illinois, University of Iowa, University of Colorado, and the University of Kansas, require no specific detailed pattern of high school credits for general entrance to the study of nonprofessional subjects. Indeed most universities and teachers colleges have altered their requirements for entrance to professional schools other than engineering and medicine."1/

There has been a general decline in the force of these educational criteria as yardsticks by which to measure the quality of the secondary school on the national level. By no means, however, can one assume that these values have been abandoned or that the previously mentioned deterrents to educational change have evaporated. They have not and are quite often the deciding influences at the local level. In fact, it would be quite safe to say that the past decade has witnessed a resurgence of the ideas concerning mental discipline and the college preparatory attributes of certain courses in the many popular polemics, published for pecuniary and/or professional rewards, against public secondary education.

The years following the publication of the "Cardinal Principles" brought forth a number of significant publications by national organizations on the subject of secondary education. Chief among the contributors were the National Education Association Department (later the National Association) of Secondary School Principals, the American Council on Education's

1/Ibid., pp. 26-27.

American Youth Commission, the Educational Policies Commission jointly sponsored by the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators, the various studies of secondary school standards sponsored by the several accrediting agencies and the General Education Board and published by the American Council on Education, the Harvard Committee's report on "General Education in a Free Society" and the publication of "Vocational Education in the Years Ahead" by the U. S. Office of Education.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals published "Issues in Secondary Education" (1936), "Functions of Secondary Education" (1937), "That All May Learn" (1939), "Planning for American Youth" (1944), "The Imperative Needs of Youth of Secondary School Age" (1947), and "Secondary Education Programs for Improved Living" (1948). These reports were developed by men who were primarily active leaders in the American secondary school. They were widely distributed and discussed among their colleagues. These were not essentially pious pronouncements from educational philosophers but reflections of administrators who faced the task of implementing their thinking. In fact, three of the last four mentioned reports deal largely with the problem of implementing the commitment to an education at the secondary level for all American youth.

The American Youth Commission also published a number of significant studies in the same period. These

studies showed the great gap between the educational theory and practice in terms of a failure to achieve the goals set up in the "Cardinal Principles of Education." In publications such as "How Fare Our Youth" (Rainey, 1937), "Youth Tell Their Story" (Bell, 1938), "Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth" (Edwards, 1939), "What the High Schools Ought to Teach" (Graham, 1940), "Time on Their Hands" (Wrenn and Harley, 1941), "Color, Class, and Personality" (Sutherland, 1942), and "Youth and the Future" (The Commission, 1942), this group focused the attention of educators on the youth and the nature of youths' problems rather than on the curriculum. The nature of youth and modern American society were the objects of investigation with this variable seen as important in the determination of the nature of the secondary school. The previous tendency had been to examine the purposes of education and recommend reorganization in the light of the purposes of education with little systematic study of the individual to be educated or to the social milieu in which he was being educated. The previously noted "Imperative Needs of Youth" (National Association of Secondary School Principals) was a logical addition to this collection. In spite of the 1942 date of publication on "Color, Class and Personality," and "Youth and the Future," they were really pre-war publications. The involvement in the Second World War forced the issues raised by the American Youth Commission into the background as the nation faced the immediately more

pressing challenge of survival, which was that of winning the war. The war did, in fact, ease some of the tensions brought about by the depression. That this was a temporary respite was the great fear of many public figures as the war neared an end.

The publications of the Educational Policies Commission straddled the war period and provided, with the publications of the National Association of Secondary School Principals namely - "Planning for American Youth" (1944), and "The Imperative Needs of Youth of Secondary School Age" (1947) - a connecting link between the pre-war publication of educational thought and the life adjustment movement. Three publications - "Learning the Ways of Democracy" (1940), "Education for All American Youth" (1944), and "Policies for Education in American Democracy" (1946) - amounted to a review or restatement of past pronouncements concerning the issues and functions of the secondary school in a democracy made in the 1930's and the general failure of the secondary school to minister to the needs of all the youth of secondary school age.

The Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards was initiated by the various accrediting agencies in 1935. The results of this study were published under the following titles: "How to Evaluate a Secondary School," "Evaluative Criteria," and "Educational Temperatures." College entrance requirements played a much less dominant role in evaluating the school than had previously been

the case although they were by no means ignored. A greater emphasis was placed upon the development of an explicit educational philosophy, the importance of objectives related to the needs of particular individuals and communities, the adequacy and use of the library, the nature and effectiveness of instruction, guidance, administration and school plant in regard to accomplishing the stated objectives. This rather complete revision of evaluative criteria toward a concern with objectives and quality of services serving a broad population was accompanied by a methodological development of tests and scales to be used by the two interested groups. One of these groups was the local school staff. Accreditation involved an extended period of reflection and research on the part of the local staff. This proved to be a worthwhile in-service educational device for many faculties. Following the accomplishment of this task, an outside group usually composed of individuals from state departments, colleges of education and neighboring high schools, studied the school and the surveys made by the local staff. The findings were discussed by the visiting committee and the local staff and recommendations were made for improvements at the time of final evaluation.

This accreditation device gave local officials a powerful weapon for changing the school in many ways. It was effective in formation of public opinion and support for new activities such as the establishment

of guidance programs. Moreover, the staff involvement gave promise of developing the understanding of and the willingness to change numerous policies and procedures.

Unfortunately, the prestige of the accreditation groups was often not used to the best advantage by administrators. The school being surveyed and the individuals concerned with the local school evaluation were defensive to the point where criticism of shortcomings was to be reacted to not with acknowledgment but with justification. Moreover, there developed a tendency toward evaluative logrolling on the part of the participants who expected their own schools to be involved in similar processes in the immediate future.

The criteria were revised in 1950 to place more emphasis on the needs peculiar to the local communities and the simplification of the evaluative instruments. The widespread use of accrediting agencies, in spite of the aforementioned difficulties, seems to be a healthy development if it only serves to make people in secondary education ask some important questions of themselves in spite of the fact that the answers may be extremely slow in coming.

The Harvard Committee reaffirmed a concern for general education mentioned in the "Cardinal Principles of Education" in their widely read "General Education In A Free Society." It is no doubt the case that increasing specialization is a powerful increment to the centrifugal forces within our society. The demands of the day cry

for this specialization and seemingly will be met. The resultant increase of interdependence cries out with equal vehemence for some unifying force which would provide a measure of understanding of these forces and a commitment to certain general values. The Harvard Committee saw general education as the means to this essential social unity. By way of definition the Committee stated:

> "The term, general education, is somewhat vague and colorless; it does not mean some airy education in knowledge in general (if there be such knowledge), nor does it mean education for all in the sense of universal education. It is used to indicate that part of a student's whole education which looks first of all to his life as a responsible human being and citizen; while the term special education indicates that part which looks to the student's competence in some education."1/

Looking at the modern industrial complex that is America, they state of modern secondary education:

> "....the modern high school must find a place for every kind of student whatever his hopes and talents.... We are stating the simple fact that, in an industrial age, no alternative exists to the widespread employment of minors (or, more likely their widespread unemployment) except some concept of schooling which recognizes and meets the vast actual differences among students.... The ideal is a system which shall be as fair to the fast as to the slow, to the hand-minded as to the bookminded, but which, while meeting the separate needs of each, shall yet foster that fellow feeling between human being and human being which is the deepest root of democracy."2/

There are many factors, at present, making the

1/Harvard Committee, General Education In A Free Society, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1948, p. 51.

2/Ibid., p. 9.

school just one more of the divisive elements in the society rather than an institution which acts as a balance against these divisive forces.

> "....the fact that some students prolong their education far beyond high school, while the great majority do not, could become - to some extent has already become - a strongly dividing force. For to the degree that high schools try to prepare the majority for early entrance into active life by giving them all sorts of practical, immediately effective training, to that degree something like a chasm opens between them and others whose education is longer. And in this chasm are the possibilities of misunderstanding and class distinction."1/

The Harvard Committee recognized, as did the Committee of Ten some fifty years prior to it, that the high school was primarily a terminal institution. Consequently they decried the tendency to make the unhappy distinction between the academic and the vocational with the latter tending to be the dumping ground for those who failed to succeed in the former. They pointed out:

> "....that it is a strange state of affairs in an industrial democracy when those very subjects are held in disrepute which are at the heart of the national economy and those students by implication condemned who will become its operators."2/

The Report goes on to indicate that the distinction between the two groups leaves a large number of American students unaccounted for. They estimated that some 10 per cent of the jobs in the United States were professional or managerial, some 25 to 30 per cent demand some

1/Ibid., p. 12.

2/Ibid., p. 27.

technical training, while the great majority of jobs require no previous specific training. Inasmuch as colleges, professional schools, junior colleges, technical high schools and trade schools supply professional and technical education, the responsibility for general education rests with the elementary and comprehensive high school. If the population of the American high school was limited to a selected 40 per cent there would be little need for any radical changes in the curriculum. The population facts are of quite a different order however.

> "The unsolved problem, the Jacksonian task, of the high school is to reach students who do not read well yet are not skilled in hand, whose backgrounds are bad, who in cities especially are prey to a thousand mercenary interests - the kind of young people who, as said, in simpler times would have left school early and found self-respect in some work but who now, if they leave school, are simply unemployed. To them particularly, though for all to some extent, the whole range of the school must be general education - sports, activities, provisions for health, opportunities for avocation and part-time work, quite as much as courses. And a quite untried realm of community and national work, foreshadowed in the C.C.C. and in the instructional programs of this war, is yet to be formulated. These are the young people for whom experience of this kind has meant higher standards, improved health, greater self-respect, and wider experience of life. Other nations have met the same problem by regimenting the young even in peace. But such regimentation cannot safely be our solution. That solution is rather in a vision of the scope of the high school and of the equal dignity and importance of teaching in the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian senses - that is to say, of teaching not by books and information alone, which are necessarily for

> the brighter, but by work, guidance, and atmosphere."1/

The concern evidenced in the course of this whole study for the need of coherence within the society and the commitment to educate, in some manner, all the youth at the secondary level are illustrative of the concerns expressed in the "Cardinal Principles of Education." The publication cited, in one way or the other, greatly expanded expressions of this concern in a similar framework.

The space allotted to remarks concerning "General Education In A Free Society" is justified by the fact that it was a highly influential document in the thinking of the originators of the life adjustment movement. Before proceeding to the life adjustment movement as such, it would be instructive to look at the prevailing tendencies in high school organization in America in the twentieth century.

The Modern American High School

A description of the variations in course offerings and requirements within the several states and territories comprising the American domain within the past 60 years is beyond the scope of this work. As has been previously noted, the American public high school developed as a result of the failure of other educational institutions, namely the academy, to serve the demands

1/Ibid., pp. 28-29.

of the American society as a whole. Due to the many demands placed upon the public school system, the dominant type of secondary institution in this country has been the comprehensive public high school. A number of metropolitan centers, in the early part of the twentieth century, followed the European pattern of technical high schools, classical high schools and commercial high schools. Their experience has been in contrast with the general practice. The general pattern has been the establishment of one or more high schools in a community - each offering curricula described as academic, vocational and general. These high schools were designed to prepare pupils for college and skilled trades. The large block of students who made no commitment to either college or particular skilled trades often found themselves in the general curriculum. Many others who were likewise uncommitted were to be found in the college preparatory or the vocational curriculum because of prestige, peer relationship and other factors essentially irrelevant to the objectives of these curricula areas. Certain subjects were required for all students such as English, history, mathematics and science although the amount and sequence varied from state to state and often from community to community. It is safe to say that the quality of instruction was equally, if not more, varied.

An increasing number of young people were entering high schools and graduating from them. Nevertheless, large numbers either never entered high school or failed

to complete a particular 4-year sequence of studies. Many of the "comprehensive" high schools in the smaller communities had very limited offerings in spite of the move away from a strictly college preparatory curriculum. It was generally conceded by educators that the public high school was doing a reasonably decent job in serving the college bound and, in larger communities, a similar job for those of a specialized vocational interest.

It was becoming apparent to many, however, that a large number of tasks performed in the American commercial complex either required little or no previous training or involved types of equipment not available to the public school. What could the public secondary school offer these people who were not particularly well served by deferred vocational education (college preparatory curriculum) or the terminal vocational education curricula such as agricultural education, home economics education, distributive education, etc.?

The large rate of "drop-outs" indicated that either the secondary schools were not serving these youths adequately or that the secondary schools had failed to show the students the values in what services they were offering. Many youths saw absolutely no connection between what was going on inside the school and what was going on outside the school. Apparently there were two different worlds and many young people chose the "outside" world.

The "outside" world was not anxious to or really

able to digest comfortably these large numbers. Many of these escapees from the classroom were to become candidates for chronic unemployment or dead end, unskilled, and semi-skilled employment in the decades to follow. As technological change raced on at an unchecked pace, these problems, not new to the society, became a matter of increasingly grave concern.

A half a century of deliberations and educational pronouncements had emphasized concern with the individual and his particular needs which were to be satisfied by the use of particular areas of knowledge - not as ends in themselves but as the means to the realization of individual development. The facts concerning the everyday operation of the public school indicated that these pronouncements had not been translated into action for a sizable number of people that public education purported to serve.

National Commissions on Life Adjustment Education for Every Youth

The concern with the war had dulled the increasingly sharp edge of discontent, everywhere evident in the decade prior to it. The general education movement was stalled in the effort to simply maintain the nation's schools - no small task in the midst of a major mobilization of the nation's war potential. With the possible exception of the accreditation agencies previously described, there was no organization reaching individual

schools with imperative force to serve as a transforming vehicle even if conditions had been more favorable.

The visible end of the war brought many of the problems of the 1930's back to the attention of educators and later to our society in general. These problems were to be complicated by the immense increase (rate and amount) in population and technological change experienced by the nation in the war years continuing into the post-war period. Educators were, in the main, unwilling to see the reestablishment of independent programs sponsored by the federal government such as were operated by the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration in the depression years. Among their many considerations concerning this matter was the judgment that programs of this type would tend to restrict the development of more meaningful curricula in the public secondary schools. Many educators would quickly admit that youths saw connections between classroom instruction and life in these work programs, to a degree rarely found in the average American secondary school. Nevertheless they felt that the nation would be better served by including these activities in the curriculum of the public secondary school. Consequently, much that was reasonably common practice in the CCC and NYA programs became a matter of serious consideration for possible inclusion in the secondary school curriculum.

In an attempt to anticipate the return to a peacetime economy, the Division of Vocational Education of

the Office of Education in the Federal Security Agency began, in 1944, a study of the American secondary school. It published "Vocational Education in the Years Ahead" in 1945. Perhaps its most influential contribution to American education was a resolution coming out of the final conference held at the Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. on May 31 and June 1, 1945. The chairman called upon Dr. Charles A. Prosser, long-time leader in vocational education circles to summarize the conference. Dr. Prosser said in part:

> "It is the belief of this conference that, with the aid of this report in final form, the vocational school of a community will be better able to prepare 20 per cent of its youth of secondary school age for entrance upon desirable skilled occupations; and that the high school will continue to prepare 20 per cent of its students for entrance to college. We do not believe that the remaining 60 per cent of our youth of secondary school age will receive the life adjustment training they need and to which they are entitled as American citizens - unless and until the administrators of public education with the assistance of the vocational education leaders formulate a similar program for this group."1/

He, then, asked the U.S. Commissioner of Education and the Assistant Commissioner for Vocational Education to exercise their leadership by calling representatives of vocational and general education together for a study of this problem and the means of resolving it.

Some objections were raised concerning the terminology in the Prosser resolution. These revolved around

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1/Harl R. Douglass (ed.), Education For Life Adjustment, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1950, pp. 3-4.

the desirability of identifying a particular group as the sole concern of the educators. Consequently, a modified resolution, omitting references to percentages and indicating a concern for the total group served by the schools, was introduced and accepted.

As a result of this resolution's unanimous acceptance, the United States Commissioner of Education established a committee to prepare for five regional conferences. The chairman was Galen Jones, Director, Division of Secondary Education and included the following members: Roosevelt Basler, Chief of Instructional Problems - Secondary Education; Maris M. Proffitt, Assistant Director - Vocational Education; R. W. Gregory, Assistant Commissioner for Vocational Education since July 1, 1946; Layton S. Hawkins, Chief of Trade and Industrial Education; J. C. Wright, Assistant Commissioner for Vocational Education until July 1, 1946.

During the year 1946 regional conferences were held in New York City, Chicago, Cheyenne, Sacramento and Birmingham. The conferences all indicated essential agreement that the problem pointed up by the Prosser Resolution was a real one and, moreover, that it was one of pressing importance. Each of the regional conferences recommended that the United States Office of Education sponsor a national conference to consider possible approaches to the solution of the problem. Franklin R. Zeran, then a member of the U.S. Office staff and a consultant at the first national conference, reports the

consensus of opinion at the regional conferences in the following nine points:

> "(1) That secondary education today is failing to provide adequately and properly for the life adjustment of perhaps a major fraction of the persons of secondary school age.
>
> (2) That public opinion can be created to support the movement to provide appropriate life adjustment education for these youth.
>
> (3) That the solution is to be found in the provision of educational experiences based on the diverse individual needs of youth of secondary school age.
>
> (4) That a broadened viewpoint and a genuine desire to serve all youth is needed on the part of teachers and of those who plan the curricula of teacher training institutions.
>
> (5) That local resources must be utilized in every community to a degree as yet only achieved in a few places.
>
> (6) That functional experiences in the areas of practical arts, home and family life, health and physical fitness, and civic competence are basic in any program designed to meet the needs of youth today.
>
> (7) That a supervised program of work experience is a 'must' for the youth with whom the Resolution is concerned.
>
> (8) That one of the principal barriers to the achievement of the ideals of the Resolution is the multiplicity of small, understaffed and underfinanced school districts in this country.
>
> (9) That an intimate, comprehensive, and continuous program of guidance and pupil personnel services must constitute the basis on which any effort to provide life adjustment education must rest."1/

1/Franklin R. Zeran (ed.), Life Adjustment Education In Action, Chartwell House, Inc., New York, 1953, pp. 36-37.

Armed with the opinions generated in the regional conferences, the United States Office of Education Committee made arrangements for the National Conference on the Prosser Resolution to be held in Chicago, May 8-10, 1947. The purpose of this conference was to prepare a workable plan for organizing, financing and administering a program to implement the purposes of the Prosser Resolution. The first step in such implementation was seen as the development of the widest possible understanding of the problem among educators and the general public, establishing pilot programs in states and selected communities with the hope that such examples would enable them to do likewise in every community.

There was a deep concern among those assembled to make sure that the suggestion of Mr. Prosser be actualized and not go the way of so many summary recommendations of national, regional or local conferences. Consequently a request was made that the United States Commissioner of Education establish a Commission designated as the "Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Secondary School Youth." This Commission was to have a life of 3 years. The national conference approved the substitution of the term "Life Adjustment Education" for the "Prosser Resolution." This was not done without a fight however.

> "That the thinking of conference participants had progressed considerably beyond the original Prosser Resolution may be judged from the fact that it was only by a narrow margin of votes in a sub-committee that the words 'life

> adjustment' were included in the title of the Commission. A number of committee members wished to call it instead a Commission on Education for All American Youth. By this time it was evident to many that the implications of the Prosser Resolution lead to a consideration of all youth even though there was to be maintained a special consideration for youth ordinarily neglected."1/

So by a narrow vote a term was accepted that was to prove a target for much enthusiasm, criticism and general discussion - even an inspiring target for the lowly doctoral dissertation.

The purpose of the Commission was to promote the improvement of life adjustment education for all American youth of secondary school age in every possible manner. Prior to the achievement of this goal, the Commission was forced to face up to the task of defining the concept. The first national work conference, held in Washington, D.C., October 11 to 15, 1948, developed and accepted the following definition and set of guiding principles.

The definition:

> "Life adjustment education is designed to equip all American youth to live democratically with satisfaction to themselves and profit to society as home members, workers, and citizens. It is concerned especially with a sizable proportion of youth of high school age (both in school and out) whose objectives are less well served by our schools than the objectives of preparation for either a skilled occupation

1/Galen Jones, "Life Adjustment Education For Every Youth," Educational Outlook (January, 1950), 24:62.

or higher education."1/

To this definition the conference added 7 guiding principles for those wishing to embrace the concept of life adjustment education.

> "(1) Respects Individual Worth and Personality
> The supreme test of life adjustment education shall be in terms of individual development identified by accurate knowledge of each individual pupil's characteristics, his purposes, and those of society. This is in contradistinction to the prevailing goal of pupil 'adjustment' to statistical norms such as 'typical' or 'average' and to rigidly patterned curricula.
>
> (2) Enrolls and Retains All Youth
> Secondary schools developing life adjustment education seek to enroll, retain, and meet the needs of all normal (noninstitutionalized) adolescents who are not yet ready for next steps such as full-time participation in safe and gainful occupations or for further formal education.
>
> (3) Required Courses and Course Content Concerned with Problems of Living
> Learning experiences required of all are selected and planned for inclusion in life adjustment education programs in terms of common, recurring problems of living faced by all people rather than restricted to college entrance requirements or other specialized needs of the relatively few.
>
> (4) Emphasis Is on Direct Experience
> In life adjustment education programs the common, personal, political, social, and economic problems of individuals, along with those of the local community, state, region, and nation, are made the basis of special concern and study. The emphasis is on direct pupil-teacher planning, sharing, and participation in real life experiences while seeking solutions to individual, social, and civic problems. Such an approach requires the

1/The First Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Youth, Vitalizing Secondary Education, Bulletin 1951, No. 3, United States Office of Education, Washington, D.C., p. 36.

abandonment of the concept of 'extracurricular activities' and makes excursions, travel, community surveys, school-work programs, study and hobby clubs, and any other form of direct experience for pupils integral parts of the educational program.

(5) Planning, Organization, Operation, and Administration Are Democratic

Administrators in schools which stress life adjustment education for every youth will organize and administer through the active participation of pupils, parents, and teachers, as well as of organized civic, lay, industrial, and business groups. Neither the administrator nor one or more departments will undertake the independent development of part or all of the program, which by its nature is integral. In no case is a suggested change abandoned because of an administrative prejudgment that it 'will not fit into the schedule.'

(6) Records and Data Are Used Constructively

Life adjustment schools include services which will assist all teachers in accumulating and using information for planning how each pupil may learn under conditions necessary because of his particular traits and feasible objectives. Such information will include test results, grades, progress evaluation, physical and health data, and individual record forms for use principally in (a) counseling with pupils and parents, (b) improving instruction, (c) developing all desirable latent qualities of pupils, (d) for placement purposes in advanced training courses or in securing a position, and (e) individual self-appraisal. Such data and records should be used constructively rather than as instruments for eliminating certain pupils from the school and advancing others to higher grades or schools. They are also basic material for continuing curriculum evolution.

(7) Evaluation Is for Desirable Changes in Pupil Behavior

Life adjustment education programs are evaluated in terms of each pupil's educational progress evidenced by skills, habits, attitudes, understandings, and appreciations. Through these he works out his participation in individual, family, work, community, and civic activities rather than in terms of ability to master abstract concepts in logically organized subject matter courses. When the pupil leaves school he not only has a realistic picture of his

> abilities and attainments, but also has a readiness to solve the adjustment problems of post-school life on the basis of an objective evaluation of himself and his environment."1/

The second national work conference was held in Washington, D.C., October 10-13, 1949. After being brought up to date on the developments of the previous year, the conferees turned their attention to how to determine the needs of youth and society and to a variety of case studies suggestive of techniques of meeting particular needs of individuals and communities. Zeran lists what he considers to be "pithy" recommendations and points essential to a well rounded education to meet youth's life needs. They were:

> "Individual differences must be identified before individual needs can be met.
>
> The needs of youngsters cannot be met in a school that functions in isolation with respect to the community.
>
> Every teacher should be a skillful and competent person in the area of human relations, in the greater and better understanding of pupils and their problems, not as groups, but as individuals in the group.
>
> Every child should be known intimately by at least one member of the faculty, preferably more.
>
> Find successes for pupils who have had a series of failures.
>
> Standards of achievement should be adjusted to fit various standards of ability.
>
> Work experience should be provided for more and more, if not all students.

1/Franklin R. Zeran (ed.), Life Adjustment Education In Action, Chartwell House, Inc., New York, 1953, pp. 43-45.

Include so-called extracurricular activities in the regular school program.

Expand the school program of health and recreation.

Explore the possibility of having the school open 12 months a year, and longer than 6 hours a day.

Restudy the total school program, making deletions and additions in curriculum as required.

Redefine the teacher's job to include time to study the pupil.

Give recognition in the community for significant contributions by teachers.

Allow pupils and teachers to participate in administrative decisions.

State department of education leadership is essential, with participation by lay people a cardinal principle.

Study resources available to educators to do the work assigned them.

Any decision affecting schools or their services should be made in light of the needs of the individual in the community."1/

Second National Conference on Life Adjustment Education

Chicago, October 16-18, 1950[2]/

Out of this conference came the general consensus that the First Commission had done a fine job in organizing and publicizing its objectives and that a second Commission should be established and should devote its attention to the identification and description of

1/Ibid., p. 46.

2/The writer takes Zeran's suggestion that this is the second inasmuch as the 1948 and 1949 conferences were called work conferences. The 1947 conference established the Commission and this one's purpose was to evaluate its work.

procedures that promised to achieve the objectives of the Commission, namely these objectives previously described as the work of the First National Work Conference held in Washington in October of 1948.

Listed below are selected portions of the general recommendations of the 1950 conference:

> "Recommendation No. 3: That the U.S. Commissioner of Education appoint a new Commission for a period of 3 years to continue the study and to promote action programs for education of youth for life adjustment. The membership of this Commission should represent the organizations represented in the preceding Commission, with the addition of lay representation, a representative of teacher education, a representative of classroom teachers, and representatives of such other groups as the Commissioner may designate. The original organizations represented are as follows:
>
> American Association of Junior Colleges
> American Association of School Administrators
> American Vocational Association
> National Association of High-School Supervisors and Directors of Secondary Education
> National Association of Secondary School Principals
> National Association of State Directors for Vocational Education
> National Catholic Welfare Conference
> National Council of Chief State School Officers
> National Education Association[1]/
>
> Recommendation No. 4: That since the Commission is to be appointed by the Commissioner of Education, it is anticipated and expected that the Commission continue to operate under the

1/As a result of "Recommendation No. 3," Commissioner McGrath named a representative from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National School Boards Association to the Second Commission on Life Adjustment Education in addition to the original group.

auspices of the Office of Education. The U.S. Commissioner of Education is requested to assign professional personnel, representing both vocational and general education, to a continuing staff for the purpose of carrying on the work of the Commission.

Recommendation No. 5: That the function of the Commission shall be to promote action programs in all public and private secondary schools and to coordinate the efforts of all special interest groups in education toward providing better education for American youth.

Recommendation No. 6: That the Commission promote regional and national conferences during its tenure of office.

Recommendation No. 7: That the organization on the State level should function under the State department of education and/or some organized State education authority, and should function through an advisory committee or committee representative of State professional education organizations, including classroom teachers, industry, business, agriculture, labor, parents, and other interested lay groups.

Because life adjustment education deals with vocational and general education aims, the organization of working groups should include representatives of both groups. We also recommend that the future Commission be guided by the Statement of Purpose outlined by the National Conference on Life Adjustment Education in Chicago, 1947."1/

Thus it is that we come to the end of the First Commission and the beginning of the Second Commission. In "A Look Ahead in Secondary Education" published by the Second Commission, the authors make some significant remarks concerning the purposes of the Commissions on Life Adjustment Education. These goals were seen as (1) the retention in high school of all youths of high

1/"Report of the National Conference on Life Adjustment Education, Chicago, Ill., Oct. 16-18, 1950," Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Washington 25, D.C., pp. 21-22.

school age and (2) the provision of appropriate educational programs for all high school age youth. It was recognized by the Commission members that the Commission was not unique in its concern with general education or with the above stated goals as both had been stated at some length elsewhere. The point of their remarks is illustrated by the following quotation:

> "The Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Youth was not appointed to make a new statement of these goals but to promote action in achieving them. It was a joint effort of both vocational and general educators."1/

Consequently the final report of the Second Commission concerns itself with a definition of life adjustment education only on the front and rear flaps of the bulletin.

The members of the Second Commission were most active - each member accepting the responsibility for developing and supporting life adjustment education ideas in his own geographical area and in the professional association he represented. They were responsible for numerous state and regional conferences. Materials on life adjustment education were distributed to the State chairmen of High School Service committees of every State Parent-Teacher Congress and to State school board organizations in 42 states.

In one or more of the national conventions the

1/The Second Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Youth, A Look Ahead in Secondary Education, Bulletin 1954, No. 3, United States Department of Health Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., p. 1.

American Association of Junior Colleges, American Association of School Administrators Education Association, National Association of Secondary School Principals considered the topic of life adjustment education either in section meetings or general sessions.

The Office of Education published reports of three conferences sponsored by the Second Commission. "Improving School Holding Power" (Circular No. 291) set up a schedule for uniform accounting and some research proposals concerning cities of more than 200,000 population. In the wake of these proposals two cooperative research projects were undertaken in more than 20 cities. In one study a detailed accounting of the number of high school drop-outs with the purpose of securing accurate and comparable figures in the different systems. The other project undertaken was a longitudinal study attempting to locate the causes of maladjustment and drop-out.

"Life Adjustment Education in the American Culture" (Circular No. 335) was the report of the national conference in Washington, October 8-10, 1951. All sessions were directed to the exploration and definition of current individual and social problems that American youth must face.

"Pupil Appraisal Practices in Secondary Schools" (Circular No. 363) reported the deliberations of the national conference in Washington, October 6-8, 1952. Problems such as evaluation, marking, reporting, accreditation and graduation practices were discussed.

The Commission felt that potentialities to be realized in curriculum improvement were limited until these problems were resolved.

The Commission estimated that some 20,000 teachers and administrators participated in workshops and conferences during the years 1951, 1952 and 1953. Twenty state committees had been involved in cooperation with the National Commissions and many State departments had cooperated informally with the Commissions. The report, A Look Ahead in Secondary Education, describes at some length the activities of selected states including courses offered, committees formed, conferences held, et cetera, without ever more clearly delineating the concept "life adjustment" education in distinction to some other kind of education. In describing the developments in Catholic schools, the report notes that "....more than any other movement in American education, life adjustment education has enlisted Catholic educators and public school educators in a common cause."1/

The Commission obviously felt that the movement was developing a unity of purpose to which all educators could subscribe. The report also notes, in connection with the work of Archbishop Williams High School in Braintree, Massachusetts, that:

"At the end of its first 4 years this

1/The Second Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Youth, A Look Ahead in Secondary Education, Bulletin 1954, No. 3, United States Department of Health Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., p. 57.

> high school sent a large number of graduates on to college. Twelve of these received scholarships as a result of their success in competitive examinations. All have been reported as doing well in college, which is an indication that the Life Adjustment program has not interfered with scholarship."1/

The latter portions of the quotation give rise to the suspicion that one can have both scholarship and life adjustment and that if they are not in conflict, neither are they in harmony in the sense that one supports the other. It could be viewed, however, as a sort of a left-handed re-emphasis on the fact that we are primarily concerned with Prosser's "60 per cent."

At any rate the Commissions on Life Adjustment Education for Youth had a total life of 6 years. In that period it had involved thousands of students, educators, and lay personnel in its activities at either national, regional, state or local levels. These people of widely differing world views and backgrounds all found themselves in apparent unity under a benevolent protective umbrella provided by the term or phrase "life adjustment education." The Commission had emphasized the meeting of the needs of individual students, schools and communities so that life adjustment could be effected. Who among them could be against such a state of affairs as life adjustment? Nevertheless, we are still plagued by the question of whether the term under discussion denotes any specific range of educational experiences,

1/Ibid., pp. 54-55.

i.e., describes any particular education as life adjusting as opposed to types of education that inhibit this life adjustment either in regard to education in the United States or in regard to education generally speaking without regard to its geographical and cultural setting.

If it is merely a matter of paying close attention to all individual needs, which is suggested as a major point of emphasis by the Commissions, then the remarks concerning the fact that "life adjustment education" did not interfere with the scholarship of the students from Archbishop Williams High School is most peculiar. Quite obviously, it might well be argued that for those preparing to enter college, certain courses such as algebra, trigonometry, certain foreign languages etc., are life adjustment courses just as much as consumer economics or child care would be for the young lady getting married immediately upon the completion of her high school curriculum. This position would drive one rather quickly to conclusions similar to those of Aristotle on the definition of liberal studies, i.e., the liberal quality being in large part determined by the purposes of the student. Considerations of this type will be developed further in future chapters.

Inasmuch as the Commissions did not see that their initial definition left much to be desired, they merely asserted the same, assuming that it gave clear direction. This is the case, in spite of the fact that the

definition includes the locution "live democratically with satisfaction to themselves and profit to society" which is in itself in need of definition. A review of the literature concerning life adjustment education certainly seems in order in the hope that it will help to clarify the phrase "life adjustment education."

CHAPTER III

THE LITERATURE AND LIFE ADJUSTMENT EDUCATION

Much has been written concerning life adjustment education. Well over one hundred articles have been penned in pursuit of the concept. Three professional books, also, have been offered concerning the same topic. No attempt will be made to reproduce the literature concerning life adjustment education in this chapter. Rather, the writer will attempt to give the reader a representative sample of the published thinking concerning the topic in question with appropriate evaluative remarks. If one should wish to wade through the veritable sea of articles concerning life adjustment education for a more extended exposure, he may consult the bibliography. First to be considered are the publications friendly to the movement. Those publications of a critical nature will be considered in the following chapter.

It should be noted that, once we move beyond the initial framework of the concept, a wide variety of views are explicated concerning life adjustment education. This is due to the fact that the official definition of "life adjustment education" is quite broad. Consequently a variety of interpretations follow. These interpretations, by those on the Commission as well as those merely interested in the Commission's activities, are so varied that they practically defy classification. Consequently this chapter has an unavoidable rambling quality which,

though unfortunate in some respects, gives one insight to the character of the movement and the problem of defining the locution "life adjustment" itself.

The initial framework of the concept. -- A convenient starting point would be a restatement of the official definition of "life adjustment" education.

> "Life adjustment education is designed to equip all American Youth to live democratically with satisfaction to themselves and profit to society as home members, workers and citizens. It is concerned especially with a sizable proportion of youth of high school age (both in school and out) whose objectives are less well served by our schools than are the objectives of preparation for either a skilled occupation or higher education."1/

Interpretations and comments. -- Serving of youth's objectives, then, might seem to constitute life adjustment education provided that those objectives were consistent with the first portion of the definition. Education, in this conception, is considered a tool. The utilitarian bent of this thinking is demonstrated by the statement concerning life adjustment education issued by the U.S. Office of Education.

> "It is education fashioned to achieve desired outcomes in terms of character and behavior. It is not an education which holds any aspect of the school as an end in itself."2/

The article in which this statement is imbedded

1/The First Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Youth, Vitalizing Secondary Education, Bulletin 1951, No. 3, United States Office of Education, Washington, D.C., p. 36.

2/"Life Adjustment Education For Every Youth," Education Digest (November, 1948), 14:29-31.

makes no effort to make a distinction between desired outcomes and desirable outcomes and thus it is not clear that the necessity of the distinction is recognized.

A report on the press conference of the First Commission's initial deliberations indicates that they would urge the replacement of "obsolete" courses with large doses of guidance, work experience, leisure-time activities, consumer education, health and safety work, and practical citizenship activities. This report went on to state:

> "Commission members added, however, that for some pupils a study of the great books might be good life-adjustment preparation. For still others, a strictly academic college preparatory course would also be good life adjustment education. In other words, life adjustment courses will differ from school to school, from area to area, and from individual to individual."1/

Here we have a suggestion that there is no inherently life adjusting education - not even the vernacular facility which allows verbal communication among members of the same culture. Moreover, it admits to a concern with something more universal than Prosser's "60 per cent." J. Dan Hull, secretary to the Commission, seconded the above thoughts by stating:

> "....each school should attempt to enroll and retain all the youth of the community; for each pupil, life adjustment education is an individual matter. The commission believes that in each local school the program should be built

1/"Nine Educators With A Plan," Ohio Schools (January, 1948), 26:9.

upon the discovered needs of youth and society."1/

Hull goes on to include life adjustment education for all youth as the goal of the Commission in asserting:

> "Dr. Prosser had used the words 'sixty percent' to indicate approximately the portion of adults who are working at tasks for which they could have been given little specialized education. He was pointing to the need for the common activities of life. Obviously youth in college preparatory courses and in vocational classes need life adjustment education just as much as other youth do. Therefore the Commission decided to focus attention on the individual pupil and to avoid emphasis on dividing American youth into separate and distinct groups."2/

Precisely what is meant by the assertion that those who are enrolled in college preparatory courses and vocational classes need life adjustment education just as much as others do, is not clear. Does this mean that the curriculum in which they are enrolled is not life adjusting and that additional courses are needed? If so, his point of view is at odds with the previous statement of the Commission to which he was secretary and perhaps to his earlier statement to wit: that life adjustment education is an individual matter.

In addressing the 49th Annual Meeting of the Catholic Education Association in Kansas City, Missouri, April 18, 1952, Mr. Hull made another attempt to define life adjustment education by defining the function of

1/J. Dan Hull, "Progress in Life Adjustment Education," Educational Leadership (March, 1950), 7:360.

2/Ibid., p. 361.

the National Commissions. He said:

> "A terse way of describing the function of the National Commission on Life Adjustment Education for Youth would be to say that it exists to promote action in achieving 'The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education' and the hopes expressed in 'Education for All American Youth.'"1/

These documents, though asserting a desired commonality of ends, in no way imply that a variety of means may not be employed to achieve these ends. In other words, they do not imply that college preparatory or vocational classes would not prepare people of certain aspirations to realize those aspirations. Thus Hull's position remains unclear.

Douglass saw the life adjustment movement as one which would counteract the evils resulting from the abuses of the elective system. According to Douglass life adjustment education is an outgrowth of the "general education" and "common learnings" movements. The former is described by McGrath as follows:

> "1. It is that which prepared the young man for the common life of his time and his kind.
>
> 2. It is not concerned with the esoteric and highly specialized knowledge of the scholar.
>
> 3. The salient feature of this movement is a revolt against specialism.
>
> 4. Another characteristic of the general education movement is its reaction against overemphasis of vocationalism.

1/J. Dan Hull, "The Life Adjustment Program," National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin (August, 1952), 49:334.

5. The reaction against specialism and vocationalism is accompanied by an effort to integrate the subject matter of related disciplines.

6. To increase further the scope of education and to combat specialism, a larger proportion of the total program is being prescribed.

7. Exponents of general education believe that education should be more closely related to the vital needs and problems of human beings.

8. And, lastly, those interested in general education seek an improvement in the teaching of the general student."1/

Concerning the above, Douglass remarks:

> "It is easy to see that general education and Education for Life Adjustment are very much the same thing. Education for Life Adjustment envisages the principal areas of living which are common to us all. It calls for a functional program of secondary education as, indeed, does general education. The difference, perhaps, may be that Education for Life Adjustment should also involve adjustment in the vocational field and, therefore, general vocational preparation as well as, at least for some, specific preparation for specific vocations."2/

He proceeds to state the definition of "common learnings" proposed in "Education for All American Youth," namely:

> "Common learnings consist of learning experiences which everyone needs to have, regardless of what occupation he may expect

1/Earl J. McGrath, "The General Education Movement," Journal of General Education, I (October, 1946), pp. 3-8, as reported by Harl R. Douglass (ed.), Education For Life Adjustment, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1950, p. 35.

2/Harl R. Douglass (ed.), Education For Life Adjustment, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1950, p. 35.

to follow or where he may happen to live."1/

Douglass then cautions the reader to remember that life adjustment education includes special education as well as general education and common learnings. With an examination of the revised Prosser Resolution he concludes that:

> "From this it is clear that the Life Adjustment Education movement, Common Learnings, and Education for All American Youth, are merging in a nationwide movement which would continue to be very effective in influencing secondary school practice."2/

The remarks of Douglass seem to reinforce the position articulated in the previously mentioned press conference - namely a wide inclusion of activities that could be considered life adjusting.

Roosevelt Basler, participant in the many conferences on life adjustment education and in the writing of many of the original documents published in connection with it, states a basic assumption of the movement as:

> "Life adjustment education is for all children; the movement recognizes, however, that those youth who are headed neither for higher education nor for skilled occupations have received markedly less life adjustment education in our schools than have those who were motivated by one or the other of these clearly defined goals."3/

Here, again, we find an implicit admission that the content of life adjustment education depends upon the

1/Ibid., p. 36.

2/Ibid., p. 37.

3/Franklin R. Zeran (ed.), Life Adjustment Education In Action, Chartwell House, Inc., New York, 1953, pp. 53-54.

goals of the individual to be educated. Again it notes a particular concern with a particular group - namely Prosser's "60 per cent."

Latta saw life adjustment education as an attempt to meet the rising tide of anti-social behavior, causes for draftee rejection, high divorce rates, and employment instability due to human relations problems. He wrote:

> "In its strictest sense it is not a program. It does not suggest a new pattern. It does not offer a philosophy. It is rather a united effort to find ways and means of closing the gap between our educational theory and our practice."1/

He might better have said, to close the gap between the theory we pontificate and the theory we practice. Nevertheless, he also recognized an affinity between life adjustment education and previous expressions of principle. He went on to say:

> "We are reaching a point in our public education experience where we must 'put up or shut up.' We must find ways and means to educate and train all or cease to assume that it can be done."2/

The fact of the matter is that it might not be essentially a methodological problem but a substantive one and Latta makes no distinction here.

Another contributor sees life adjustment education as:

1/Howard A. Latta, "Implications of Life Adjustment Education for High School-College Relations," North Central Association Quarterly (October, 1950), 25:217.

2/Ibid., p. 219.

> "....an action program to increase the emphasis on the practical applications of school learnings, on fulfilling the specific needs of individual pupils, and on democratic practices to lead pupils toward effective citizenship."1/

The substance of this education is to revolve about the problems of the pupil's own experience and the formulation of these problems for study is conceived to be a joint activity. The formulation process is considered an important part of the educational activity.

Nickell's concept of life adjustment education makes the public school take the total responsibility for life success of its graduates - a position that few schoolmen would be foolhardy enough to agree with. He asserts:

> "If the products of our schools turn out to be healthy and patriotic citizens who are good husbands, good wives, good fathers, good mothers, good neighbors, good workers, good employers, wise spenders of income, wholesome users of leisure time and so forth, we know that our schools are good.
>
> This is simply another way of saying that no public secondary school can be said to be good unless it plans its program around the problems of living which its pupils are currently confronting and those which they will certainly encounter in the foreseeable future."2/

Aside from Nickell's rather frightening willingness

1/John W. McFarland, "What About Life Adjustment Education?" High School Journal (May, 1954), 37:243.

2/Vernon L. Nickell, "How Can We Develop An Effective Program for Life Adjustment?" National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (April, 1949), 33:154.

to accept the school as the single causal factor in adult behavior, his logic is somewhat less than impeccable for it is conceivable that a school could plan its program around the problems of living in such a way as to negate the desired products mentioned in his first paragraph. Thus the second paragraph is not simply another way of stating the first. Moreover, it confuses goals with the means to achieve them and thus illicitly attempts to prove the worth of the means - something that can be accomplished only by empirical test.

Miller states that:

> "....life adjustment is the aim of all good programs of secondary school instruction. The other features mentioned - the continuance of general education with a postponement of specialization, consideration of the problems of living in our democratic society, more thorough mastery of fundamental skills and processes, and improved methods of instruction - have as their aim the preparation of the pupil for his life work, for service to his community and for acceptance of the values esteemed by his generation."1/

The question again arises as to what education would be non-adjustive. Such a consideration would, however, be out of place at this moment. It is interesting to note the relativistic value orientation in the last phrase "preparation....for acceptance of the values esteemed by his generation." This preparation would undoubtedly include both good and bad values. It would

1/Ward I. Miller, "A New Atmosphere Is Needed To Promote Education For Life Adjustment," American School and University (1952), 24:140.

appear, on this view, that life adjustment education might have no normative concerns other than an acceptance of what is as the definition of what ought to be.

A series of statements by Klotz are included because of the frame of reference they provide as well as the sense of confusion they inspire toward the end of his statement.

> "The basic principles of the Life Adjustment Program have been discussed under such titles as common learnings, functionalizing the high-school subjects, core curriculums, pupil centered schools, experience-centered schools, imperative needs of youth, and many others.
>
> The new program of life adjustment education is another step of the many which have been taken in an attempt to vitalize the secondary-school program. This program has nothing new to offer in the field of philosophy, in the statement of objectives, or in listing the imperative needs.
>
> As I see it, education for life adjustment will have to be constructed around the developmental needs of the boys and girls in the community. This requires that a school system must study its community, must analyze the needs of the pupils, and must accumulate all the facts and data possible about the pupils.
>
> Subject matter outcomes, or the accumulation of facts become only a means to an end in the life adjustment program. If these means change the attitudes, beliefs and behavior of the pupils, life adjustment is taking place. Schools are faced with the responsibility of so developing the youth that they become better citizens, better workmen, and better members in families."1/

1/V. A. Klotz, "What Is Education for Life Adjustment?" National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (March, 1950), 34:129-131.

In one place Klotz equates change with life adjustment and he immediately offers the opinion that it is a particular type of change under the vague locution "better." He goes on to indicate that:

> "There is general agreement that schools providing life adjustment education should include opportunities to receive training in family living, consumer economics, citizenship, leisure time, and work. Also there is general agreement on skills that should be developed as a component part of a common learnings program. They are: ability to think critically, ability to express ideas, ability to work with and comprehend numbers, ability to enjoy the beautiful, ability to work and play cooperatively with others, and the ability to use one's body for useful and productive work."1/

What ends these skills are to be put is not specified, i.e., express what ideas, work what numbers - "the racket"?, work and play cooperatively toward what goals? to use one's body in useful and productive work - the prostitute? What direction does Klotz's formulation really give to education?

Franzen states the problem in another way - the problem of retaining a framework of content within the goals of life adjustment education. He states his position as follows:

> "How then can we preserve subject fields as an important part of our educational offerings and, at the same time, have them contribute to a better understanding and utilization of life? The answer is one that was embodied in the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education. In this important monograph, the attempt was made to organize the content

1/Ibid., p. 132.

> and teaching materials of the different subject fields so that each one might contribute to the seven objectives....
>
> The theory is this. Let us retain the major subject areas in our curriculum but let us teach them, not as ends in themselves, but as contributions to achieving better living. If we can agree on what we mean by better living, we may be stepping out upon a highway to a vastly improved type of content."1/

The key phrase is "if we can agree upon what we mean by better living." To this we shall return at a later date. Nevertheless, it is a significant phrase and should be so noted.

Franzen2/ lists as his ultimate objectives (1) health (physical, mental), (2) leisure time, (3) social living (family, community, state), and (4) economic efficiency (consumer education, guidance, possible job preparation). He also lists 4 immediate objectives, i.e., those employed to gain the ultimate objectives:

> "(1) basic and selected information, (2) creation of desirable emotional reactions, attitudes, feelings, and appreciations, (3) creation of desirable mental techniques of reasoning, judgment, and imagination, and (4) the creation of desirable habits and skills."3/

1/Carl G. F. Franzen, "Life Adjustment and the Four Major Objectives of Secondary Education," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (October, 1951), 35:101.

2/Ibid., p. 102.

3/Ibid., p. 102.

Hankin[1] sees the problem of school drop-outs, one of the major concerns of the life adjustment movement, as largely a methodological question. He states that we have a pretty good idea as to what youths need but that we have not devised activities of appeal that will cause them to stay in school. Those students enrolled in the college preparatory or vocational curriculum stay because of a recognized purpose - recognized by the students themselves and by the school through its activities. Other groups do not have such a recognized purpose - at least the boys do not. The girls often see marriage as their purpose. On his view then the problem is to "sell" the offerings of the school to the students.

Gaumnitz sees the problem of life adjustment education as boiling down to the following:

> "1) Can we develop curriculums and other high school activities which will have such meaning, value, and appeal as to attract and retain all youth of high-school age, and especially those not now in school?
>
> 2) Can we produce an administrative and instructional climate which will be conducive to the happy and successful growth of all youth and especially to those now lost by our schools?
>
> 3) Can we develop positive and recurrent opportunities for the high-school staff, the students, and their parents to study, evaluate and plan so that their high school program will better serve the real needs of the youth today and tomorrow rather than the traditional

1/Edward K. Hankin, "The Crux of Life Adjustment Education," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (November, 1953), 37:71-73.

> academic needs which now so largely rule the situation?"1/

A positive formulation of these statements would indicate a lack of criteria of what was happy and successful growth, meaning, value, needs, etc. There is also an undertone of salesmanship or packaging in order to make something palatable in the remarks of both Hankin and Gaumnitz. It is doubtful if many would object to making the unpalatable, palatable, if it should be palatable. Nevertheless, we still fail to find a criterion by which we can distinguish that which ought to be palatable from that which ought to remain unpalatable.

The term "needs" has appeared with some regularity here and a concern with individual needs is a familiar one in general educational literature. It is equally familiar to the reader of life adjustment education literature. The National Association of Secondary School Principals made this an object of study and issued a list of 10 needs for all secondary-school youth. They were conceived to be:

> "1) All youth need to develop salable skills and those understandings and attitudes that make the worker an intelligent and productive participant in economic life. To this end, most youth need supervised work experience as well as education in the skills and knowledge of their occupations.

1/Walter H. Gaumnitz, "'Road Blocks' to Life Adjustment Education," School Life (November, 1949), 32:20.

2) All youth need to develop and maintain good health and physical fitness.

3) All youth need to understand the rights and duties of a citizen of a democratic society, and to be diligent and competent in the performance of their obligations as members of the community and citizens of the state and nation, and of the world.

4) All youth need to understand the significance of the family for the individual and society and conditions conducive to successful family life.

5) All youth need to know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently, understanding both the values received by the consumer and the economic consequences of their acts.

6) All youth need to understand the methods of science, the influence of science on human life, and the main scientific facts concerning the nature of the world and of man.

7) All youth need opportunities to develop their capacities to appreciate beauty in literature, art, music, and nature.

8) All youth need to be able to use their leisure time well and to budget it wisely, balancing activities that yield satisfactions to the individual with those that are socially useful.

9) All youth need to develop respect for other persons, to grow in their insight into ethical values and principles, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others.

10) All youth need to grow in their ability to think rationally, to express their thoughts clearly, and to read and listen with understanding."1/

This list is another way of formulating the

1/"The Imperative Needs of Youth of Secondary-School Age," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (March, 1947), 31:7-130.

"Cardinal Principles" in terms of the universal needs of youth. Even if we are agreed to these criteria and the content implied by these criteria, and this is an unwarranted assumption, we still face the question of what kinds of experiences will best satisfy these needs.

The mental health movement used the term "adjustment" with considerable frequency. They saw no conflict between their goals and those of education.1/ On their view, both are concerned with the adjustment of youth. The mental health advocates, however, put an emphasis on the satisfaction of emotional needs as the major factor in adjustment. Cronbach states:

> "All else the school does for a pupil is wasted if, in the end, his emotional conflicts incapacitate him. ....Adjustment is a means to the end of accomplishment. The adjusted person is one who commits himself to socially desirable goals and uses his energies effectively in working toward them."2/

Those associated with the movement view their activities and concerns as dealing with the emotional needs of individuals. Their work thus constitutes an expression, in a psychological framework, of the "Imperative Needs of Youth" published by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. This latter mentioned expression of the needs of youth dealt with

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1/Committee on Mental Health in Modern Education, National Society for the Study of Education, Mental Health in Modern Education, Fifty-fourth Yearbook, 1955, Part II, The National Society For The Study Of Education, Chicago, p. 19.

2/Lee J. Cronbach, Educational Psychology, Harcourt, Brace And Company, Inc., New York, 1954, p. 557.

what youth needed to know. These varying expressions, however, are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Unfortunately, one has but to scan the article on "Mental Health" by Ruth Strang[1] in the latest edition of the Encyclopedia Of Educational Research to note a variety of definitions of the goals of mental health. These definitions of goals constitute various definitions of mental health. As a result, a wide variety of concepts of just what constitutes adjustment within this framework develops. In a narrow sense of the term, "adjustment" is, on their view, a matter of emotions and is preliminary to the accomplishment of other things.

Though it is doubtful that modern thinkers would deny the importance of emotions as a factor in human behavior, it is unlikely that they would wish to consider this as more than one aspect of the total adjustment problem. Moreover, inasmuch as manifestations of emotion are culturally determined to a large extent, it would appear that such an adjustment is part and parcel of the total accomplishment which is seen by the mental health advocates as an end. In other words the attempt to divorce emotional satisfaction from its context - the interaction of human beings with other aspects of their environment is unfortunate. It might well be held that the accomplishment of desired or desirable goals would result in the type of emotional climate that would be

1/Chester W. Harris and Marie R. Liba (editors), Encyclopedia Of Educational Research, The MacMillan Company, New York, 1960, pp. 823-833.

described as good mental health. At any rate it would seem that those in the mental health movement are plagued by difficulties not dissimilar to those in the life adjustment movement - namely defining the state they wish to achieve and arranging the experiences so that such a state may be achieved with personal satisfaction.

As excerpts from Collier's writings, shown below, indicate, elementary education, common and uncommon learnings and a general balance between the traditional education and vocational education for the few, special education, elementary education, and advanced education for the superior and the talented are central to his concept of life adjustment education. He states the ultimate goal of life adjustment education in the following manner:

> "From the time the youngster enters nursery school until he is graduated from the twelfth grade, he is expected to increase in the ability to plan and direct his own activities. This is the supreme goal of life adjustment education."1/

Merely plan and direct his own activities or plan and direct them wisely? To this end he would commit the secondary school to several tasks, i.e.:

> "Whatever the cause of low achievement, education on the elementary level is now accepted as the responsibility of the secondary school for a large number of pupils. Group or grade standards must yield to the

1/Paul D. Collier, "What is Education for Life Adjustment?" National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (March, 1950), 34:128.

> sounder individual standard suitable to the growth and developmental needs of each pupil."1/

In addition to this task which is, in fact, not accepted by the majority of secondary schools, he asserts that:

> "Every youth is entitled to a realistic program of common learnings, and in addition to this, a special education tailored to his dominant interests and abilities, such as preparation for a particular post-secondary institution, a vocation, or both."2/

Martens notes that although special education has been thought of as the province of the elementary school, it has received more attention at the secondary level in recent years due to life adjustment education.

> "In secondary schools its growth has had real impetus in recent years through introduction of the concept of 'life adjustment education.' This concept is proving a potent influence in bringing about greater flexibility in traditional high-school programs and greater emphasis upon the need of providing 'special' educational services for youth who have serious mental, physical, or emotional problems. For such children, 'life adjustment education' and special education have much in common. Both would offer to the blind, the deaf, the crippled, the mentally-retarded, the mentally gifted, and those with serious personality maladjustments the opportunities of a school program tailor-made to fit them for adult living."3/

1/Ibid., p. 123.

2/Ibid., p. 123.

3/Elise H. Martens, "Toward Life Adjustment Through 'Special Education,'" School Life (January, 1951), 33:52.

Smith[1] views work in speech correction, ear, eye and general health improvement as residing within the realm of life adjustment education. He would also say kind words for art and music education. The former would carry over into home beautification and both would develop an appreciation for the aesthetic values - so important in the framework of a real adjustment to life.

Walls[2] extolls the therapeutic, aesthetic, vocational, recreational and creative virtues of music and indicates these as examples of what music can do by way of life adjustment.

Olsen[3] sees traditional English originating as a study "about" language - "not a series of experiences in the use of language." Johnson[4] notes that the increasing concern with textbooks in general science courses have moved the course away from the study of science to a study "about" science. These are both rather odd ways of saying that courses are removed from the day to day experiences of the students and that to be properly life adjusting they must be intimately involved with the student's present experiences or with those of his foreseeable future.

1/Woodward C. Smith, "The Usable Now - An Active Program," Educational Outlook (January, 1950), 24:80-83.

2/Franklin R. Zeran (ed.), Life Adjustment Education In Action, Chartwell House, Inc., New York, 1953, pp. 220-245.

3/Ibid., pp. 156-182.

4/Ibid., pp. 183-200.

In the volumes compiled by Zeran[1] and Douglass,[2] the interested reader will find a gold mine of similar remarks by an assortment of authors staking out their respective claims to remain within the curriculum by virtue of what they contribute to the needs of youth. No attempt is made to see whether these contributions are unique to the particular discipline. Upon the reading of these books, it is difficult, indeed, to deny that alleged life adjustment qualities may be found in a wide variety of places. Not only are they found, but methodological suggestions are available.

The list grows impressive in length, if in no other quality. However, the surface is barely being scratched. The vocational aspects of the concept are more firmly asserted in the writings of professionals in that area. An example of this is the statement of Gregory (Assistant U.S. Commissioner for Vocational Education) to wit:

> "The central contribution that vocational education can and must make to life-adjustment education is to the absolutely certain development of the occupational competencies among our working people. As never before we shall have to be certain that the education and training for which we have the great responsibility culminates in the skills and ability to grow, produce, and distribute in quantity

1/ Ibid., pp. 1-517.

2/ Harl R. Douglass (ed.), Education For Life Adjustment, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1950.

> and kind the things that spell out good living for all."1/

Other vocational writers saw a similar challenge. Nevertheless, some departure is indicated in the above if we look back to Prosser's original resolution. The basis of his thinking was that "60 per cent" of the youth went into jobs for which the school could provide no specific training. It would seem that Gregory's view is oriented to the "20 per cent" of those already rather adequately served by specialized vocational education.

Sylvester (Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Baltimore, Maryland), directs his attention, as a vocational educator, back to Prosser's "60 per cent" with some force. He wrote:

> "Life Adjustment Education is no doubt good for all youth, and no one advocates the denial of this kind of education which will be helpful to all youth. Just why the spreading of the objectives of Life Adjustment Education at this time is necessary, however, is hard to understand. Specific attention must be given to the youth in the so-called '60 per cent group.' This includes the unadjusted, the uninterested, the discontented, the misfits and the non or mediocre achievers."2/

He proceeds to deal with some things essential to the program. On his view:

> "Attractive courses, adjusted to the working ability of the students, the majority of which should have definite job objectives,

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1/Raymond W. Gregory, "Vocational Education and Life Adjustment," Education Digest (November, 1949), 15:10.

2/Dr. Charles W. Sylvester, "Vital Aspects of Life Adjustment Education," American Vocational Journal (March, 1950), 25:13.

> must be made available. Suitable buildings, modern in every respect, with adequate, complete shops and laboratories, are a 'must' to the success of this program. The goals of the present secondary schools are not the goals which can ever be reached by many of the youth in the '60 per cent' category. The goals and offerings are not attractive in the eyes of these youth. They are not interesting, have little meaning, and beyond that are not achievable."1/

There is a hint here that life adjustment education might be conceived as an education in which course content is adjusted to the capacities and interests of the student. This is not to say that this is Sylvester's intent. It is to say that the above statement could be so conceived with the student being the measure of all things. In spite of Sylvester's concern for the "60 per cent," he perceives the resolution of their difficulties in vocational education. This is in conflict with Prosser's concept of the problem. He proceeds to admit that the majority will be employed in jobs requiring little training but sees no reason

> "....why they cannot be given an attractive, interesting type of education in school-shop or laboratory experience - for the sake of interest if not for any other purpose? While there should be a reasonable proportion of good old academic or the three 'R' subjects, why require these students to submit to the same or slightly modified traditional program of general education? Why increase their resentment toward education? It is quite possible that, through attractive and achievable education, some pupils may emerge as geniuses at some craft, or highly skilled occupation, or even one of the professions. Certainly all such children will be

1/Ibid., p. 14.

> prepared for life's activities agreeable and suitable for them."1/

There is a custodial flavor in these remarks indicating a willingness to entertain, to keep off the streets this sizable group in the hope that good results will be obtained. Interest as a criterion for course structuring may have its merits, but Sylvester declines to make a distinction between that which is interesting and that which is worthy of interest. To follow one's interest can hardly be regarded as certain to lead one down the royal road to preparation for life activities that are suitable and agreeable. A moment's reflection will certainly make clear that although grand larceny may be an interest of a particular group of students, it certainly is not a suitable activity by common standards, however agreeable it might be to the participants.

Schmid suggests that all students should not enroll in trade and industrial classes. Such a procedure would wreck the fine life adjustment program now in operation. Nevertheless, instruction could and should be offered to those who will go into the semi-skilled labor pool. One or two semesters of work should be adequate training for such a goal.

> "Two cautions must be exercised in setting up this program. (1) The training classes for semiskilled industrial jobs should be added to the regular program of trade and industrial education and should not in any way dilute the instruction in existing trade and industrial classes.

1/Ibid., p. 14.

> (2) These special classes in industrial education should not be labeled life adjustment classes, because all education should be life adjustment education. By providing special courses of training for semiskilled industrial jobs, trade and industrial education can make a further contribution to life adjustment education."1/

Here, contrary to other assertions, life adjustment education requires more than modification of old course offerings. It involves the building of new courses and the establishment of new curricula.

Benjamin Willis, Chairman of the First Commission, presents one of the chief arguments against a concentration or limitation of attention to Prosser's "60 per cent."

> "At the present time many would like to sharpen the aim and limit life adjustment education to an attempt to meet the needs of the neglected majority. However, when a youth enters high school at the age of twelve or fourteen, no one can determine the group to which he is going to belong. He must be dealt with as an individual."2/

Most would accept this as a plausible argument. In fact, most did. His next statement brings us back to the issue repeatedly raised, i.e., what is life adjustment education?

> "And many who go to college lack life adjustment as well as those who drop out

1/Franklin R. Zeran (ed.), Life Adjustment Education In Action, Chartwell House, Inc., New York, 1953, p. 283.

2/Benjamin C. Willis, "Life Adjustment Education for Youth," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (April, 1949), 33:97.

> of school. And so, those who are trying to achieve life adjustment education must be concerned with all youth."1/

Without an adequate definition of life adjustment education this latter statement falls flat. Somehow the going to college or the leaving public school is not seen as an adjustment to life. Good or bad, better or worse, it is still an adjustment. Moreover, it is an adjustment caused by certain learning experiences. What, then, can Mr. Willis mean by life adjustment education?

We now have looked at typical selections from professional journals covering a span of some six years. Moving from 1953 to March of 1960, let us examine some remarks concerning life adjustment education which were penned in the warm afterglow of a decade of controversy. Franzen, closely associated with the movement and previously noted,2/ explains the intent of the participants in this manner:

> "It was not the intent of conference participants to introduce a life-adjustment curriculum, although there were some crackpots out in the field who interpreted the committee recommendations that way. The idea was to render what was already being taught more meaningful to students, and, if necessary, introduce homogeneous grouping in order to do so. What was sauce for the goose was not necessarily sauce for the gander."3/

1/Ibid., p. 97.

2/See pp. 81-82, this chapter.

3/Carl G. F. Franzen, "What Has Happened to Life-Adjustment Education?" Phi Delta Kappan (March, 1960), XLI:249.

Although it is curious that there is no particular emphasis on homogeneous grouping recorded in the documentation of these meetings, it is certainly logical that individualized programs, emphasized so often in this literature, would in fact result in a homogeneous grouping of one individual - the only truly homogeneous grouping. More interesting are remarks like that of Willis, just cited, that indicate that whatever life adjustment education must be, it is certainly in addition to what the college preparatory student or the drop-out usually receives. Again, this would tend to indicate that provision for additions to the curriculum if not an addition of a new curriculum might be needed. The abusive description of those "in the field" might well be applied to those not "in the field" wherever that might be.

More astonishing, and perhaps this is a poor term at this date for the reader is undoubtedly beyond that state by now, is the following from the same pen:

> "....education has been and always should be an effort to help boys and girls adjust to the world in which they have to live. There's the problem of adjusting to college, of adjusting to one's associates, of adjusting to one's economic status, of adjusting to one's job, of adjusting to one's own potentialities. Life is a constant struggle on the part of an individual to adjust to every phase of it. The word 'adjustment' is one of the most significant ones in the whole educational process. In fact, it might be substituted for the word 'education.' Really the two are synonymous."1/

1/Ibid., p. 249.

Aside from objections one might entertain to a possible passive interpretation of the concept "adjustment" described above, the synonymity is the truly startling aspect of his statement.

If the terms are synonymous, then statements involving them are analytic rather than synthetic and to say that "all life adjustment is education" or that "all education is life adjustment" would be to say something less than controversial. Moreover, the locution "life adjustment education" is equivalent to the locution "education education" or if you prefer, "life adjustment life adjustment." This use would be ridiculous, if only for the reason of notational convenience. More important, is the fact that such a use of the term "life adjustment" leaves it bereft of any descriptive power. The implication of other publications was that something was being described - namely a particular type of education - even if one suspected that such a description was a candidate for Locke's celebrated domain of "something, I know not what."

The tautological concept of "life adjustment education" leaves the users of said term still in need of a definition for either "education" or "life adjustment." This is necessary if the terms are going to denote anything whether they are synonymous or not. On the basis of Franzen's remarks, it seems that the question of definition can be legitimately structured into a very old one, i.e., what is education?

Supernaturalism and life adjustment education. -- One group, cooperating with public school people in a fashion unique to them, took life adjustment education to their hearts and found it to be in concert with their definition of education. Roman Catholic educators joined the movement with considerable enthusiasm though they were not always agreed with fellow educators within or outside the authority of the church.

Brother Bertram was willing to accept some of the ideas that were expressed by many supporters of the movement. He said:

> "....Life Adjustment Education has several noble guiding principles that we, as Catholic educators, cannot ignore. Certainly its emphasis on the dignity and worth of the individual child corresponds to our appreciation of each individual immortal soul. What it is doing to make it possible for all our youth to profit by secondary education should be encouraged by our support and participation in its program. However, our own experience bears out some of our apprehensions in following such guiding principles that overemphasize teacher-pupil planning of curriculum, that belittle the mental discipline in the academic and classical studies, that encourage the vague 'democratic' procedures in the classroom and that relegate the teacher to the position of a consultant instead of one who is trained to speak with some authority and be so regarded by the pupils."1/

The consultant's role does not preclude the possibility that it will be a role with recognized authority. The main point, however, seems to be a desire

1/Brother Bertram, F.S.C., "Meeting the Needs of Modern Youth," National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin (August, 1952), 49:346.

to retain the traditional authority structure while being concerned with individual needs.

While Brother Bertram would tend to keep the "hair shirt" on his pupils, Rev. Goebel is quite willing to don it himself. Moreover he encourages his fellows to do the same.

> "The very fact that the government has made extensive recommendations for life adjustment in schools tells us that there is something wrong with our educational system. We have failed to administer our schools democratically. We have failed to provide a democratic education for all pupils. We have ourselves to blame, not the lack of salaries, not the lack of space, but the lack of democratic understanding for the inadequacies of our adjustment pattern. If we do not change, or are unwilling to change our policy, we shall have only ourselves to blame if the direction of education falls into the hands of the government."1/

With somewhat less than impeccable logic Rev. Goebel would have his colleagues avoid government direction by taking government direction. Moreover, government recommendation has never been accepted as a legitimate criterion for Church action especially in areas the Church considered her own domain - education. There may have been times that the Church has accepted state direction but this has been done on the principle of expediency not on the principle of recognized state authority. Be this as it may, Rev. Goebel seems out of sympathy with the traditional orientation of Brother

1/Rev. Edmund J. Goebel, "The Total Experience Of The School for Life Adjustment," National Catholic Educational Association (Proceedings, 1948), 45:378.

Bertram. Rev. Goebel proceeds to assert that:

> "The purpose of education is far more embracing than the teaching of the tool subjects. Tool subjects, skills, and techniques, divorced from life, create men and women destitute of social responsibility."1/

Further, he proposes that:

> "We must aim to produce the true Christian whom the 'Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth' says, 'Is the supernatural man who thinks, judges, and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason, illuminated by the supernatural light of example and teaching of Jesus Christ.'"2/

To accomplish this end he said:

> "We need schools where initiative is fostered and confidence nourished; where self-control takes precedence over self-expression; where the child's interests, attitudes, ideals, habits, skills, knowledge and conduct are nurtured through the continuity of experience. As St. Augustine said: 'In essentials let there be unity; in non-essentials, liberty, in all things charity.'"3/

The familiar device of invoking a revered authority fails to clear the air here. It appears now that the "hair shirt" may be going back to the pupil,i.e., self-control is preferred to self-expression. However, initiative is to be nurtured. On some views self-control and self-expression are antithetical but this is not necessarily so. Moreover, if there is such a thing as "the continuity of experience," it is difficult, indeed, to say that the several attributes mentioned ought to be

1/Ibid., p. 378.

2/Ibid., p. 380.

3/Ibid., p. 381.

developed in such a continuity. They will be so developed whether we think they ought to be or not. More important to our immediate purpose is to note the fact that life adjustment education is now viewed as Christian education as defined by the Church. What is essential will also be so defined.

In another article Rev. Goebel attempts to make this concept of Christian education and "life adjustment" more precise.

> "All through the centuries Catholic education has been deeply concerned with the spiritual and temporal welfare of the individual but we have not always focused our thinking and our planning on his immediate life needs. Far too often we have followed a rigid, formalized pattern constructed on credit needs without consideration for the needs of the individual in his relationship to society, to the family, to the church, to work or to recreation. In too many instances we have forgotten to teach him those understandings, attitudes, appreciations and habits which are necessary for Christian living in all walks of life. We have looked upon education as a function that is performed solely within the four walls of the schoolhouse without any thought of its social setting.
>
> In the life adjustment program we have a design for Christian social living. Its whole philosophy is centered on the individual and his life needs. Though it does not directly provide for the spiritual needs of the individual in terms of Catholic philosophy, it does open the door for the application of those principles. No other program in recent years has so easily become the medium for the transmission of our Christian inheritance."1/

1/Very Rev. Msgr. Edmund V. Goebel, Ph.D., "The Christian Philosophy Of The Life Adjustment Program," National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin (August, 1952), 49:349.

This position is supported by J. Dan Hull's remarks to the annual meeting of the National Catholic Education Association, April 18, 1952 in Kansas City, Missouri. He said:

> "Our primary aim is to build in every youth an enlightened devotion to the general welfare and a willingness to sacrifice for the public good. There is involved here education for ethical character and high moral living. Few of us believe that this objective can be attained through specific courses. It can be done by (1) giving youth accurate information concerning our national history and traditions, and the fundamental institutions upon which the Republic is based, and (2) providing them with varied opportunities for personal participation in activities which are important."1/

More specifically he said:

> "When the Commission emphasized education for home members, workers, and citizens, it did not mean to neglect education for moral and spiritual values, education for better communication skills, education for health, or education for scientific understanding. It might have named these and other commonly accepted educational objectives, but most of these are involved in the common activities of home members, workers and citizens."2/

Thus Rev. Goebel's assertion that Roman Catholics could be comfortable within the movement, has considerable support. Rev. Goebel states the tasks for Catholic education of balance.

> "Though the first objective of Catholic education is to teach the child how to save his soul, it may not overlook the

1/J. Dan Hull, "The Life Adjustment Program," National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin (August, 1952), 49:338.

2/Ibid., pp. 336-337.

fact that he is a social being."1/

In further defining the secondary purpose of Catholic education he says:

> "It is the function of Catholic education to prepare man not only for citizenship in heaven, but also for citizenship in this life. He must be shown that as an individual, he has a task to fulfill in this material world, a vocation or an avocation to follow. He must be taught the dignity of earning a living and the fact that labor is a means to eternal salvation. Hence, his education must be adjusted to prepare him according to his specific needs."2/

It is not clear whether real life adjustment education is that which prepares one for life in this world, the next world or that which prepares one for life in this world in order that one might deserve a place at the feet of the Almighty. Either position might be maintained from the previous statements.

In regard to life adjustment education, Brother Sibbing said:

> "....in adjustment education for the Christian life, the Catholic school must give its students some theoretical instruction and some practical training in what might be called the essence of Catholic Action, namely, organized lay campaigns to capture the moral leadership of any level of life in order to restore all things in Christ."3/

1/Very Rev. Msgr. Edmund V. Goebel, Ph.D., "The Christian Philosophy Of The Life Adjustment Program," National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin (August, 1952), 49:349.

2/Ibid., p. 350.

3/Brother Paul Sibbing, "Life Adjustment Through Catholic Action - The Spiritual Outcomes of Catholic Education," National Catholic Educational Association (Proceedings, 1948), 45:445.

He goes on to describe, in broad terms, what is meant by "Catholic Action" and school programs designed to achieve it.

> "Many schools have set up what might be called laboratory practice in Catholic Action work, which is carried out in the school life of the students, and which it is hoped, will be continued by them in adult life, adjusting them to their future role as apostles.
>
> Through their apostolic consecration to the Blessed Virgin, the sodalists publicly express their eagerness to become more truly other Christs, other sons of Mary, and they promise to demonstrate this eagerness by an open profession of their Christianity, by their militant Catholicity and by a genuine family spirit. Having promised to assist the Blessed Virgin in her apostolate, as other Christs, the sodalists endeavor to become Christian leaders by improving themselves, their fellow-students and their school, spiritually, scholastically and socially.
>
> The code to which they pledge themselves and which is likewise their guide in formulating projects, can be summarized as follows:
>
> To observe worthily the Sacraments at least twice monthly;
> To observe loyally all the regulations of the school;
> To obey cheerfully and to honor parents, teachers and civil authorities;
> To keep constantly one's thoughts, works and actions pure;
> To practice faithfully, each day some mark of filial piety to Mary Immaculate, Patroness of Purity;
> To maintain both honesty and regularity in school assignments;
> To take an active part in the affairs of the parish;
> To support enthusiastically all school activities;
> To discourage improper conduct in others by word and example;
> To respect the rights of fellow-students and neighbors, regardless

of race, creed or color, because they are all the children of Mary."1/

This creed and remarks previous to it, divorced of a theological flavor, would not be unlike many others such as that of the Boy Scouts of America. It is clear that whatever else life adjustment education may be, on the Catholic view, it just does not exist unless it rests on and includes a supernatural base.

Rev. Lawless, in a rather militant address to a San Francisco meeting of the National Catholic Educational Association in 1949, said of life adjustment:

> "Now if there be any one of these educative toy-words in which religion must play the supreme part, it is in the field of this newest toy called life adjustment education. Outside our particular arena they have groped in the dark so much - they know they have missed the boat somewhere along the line. They try to swim out to catch the boat, and they grab at any straw which gives hope of keeping them afloat for another while. And their latest straw is life adjustment education. Now, from the very beginning, that is the only kind of education we ever visualized - that's the only kind of education we care to fool around with now.
>
> To be logical about this idea of life adjustment we should first inquire into the meaning we give to life and then we should inquire into the individual we are trying to adjust, and then we should come to the question as to what we are trying to adjust this individual - and all this would bring us back to the fundamentals of the Catholic philosophy of education. Of course, to many of the near-sighted, life adjustment has to do in a general way, with jobs, and trades and skills, and all that.
>
> ....If the idea imparts adjustment in vocation fields, that would seem too

1/Ibid., pp. 445-447.

large an order for the high school area. Of the thousands of possible vocational activities, even the largest and best equipped of our vocational schools can give only a passing insight into a relatively small number....

Our life adjustment education must visualize the student, not as an electrician, nor as a banker, but should specialize on the wide and broad general eventualities of man's everyday life, the things to which a man must adjust himself no matter what his particular vocation may be, the universal facts of life - living, suffering, pain, death.

Our objective should be to give the student a basic maximum of the very essentials of living in every life, in every age, in every circumstance - essentials which are unchangeable - as old as the world - as modern as the 'New Look' - as powerful as the atomic bomb - as fresh as the violets of spring - as everlasting as the eternal years of God.

To date, educators have failed to give us any logical plan for what they call 'general education.' But you have a clear-cut plan for 'general life adjustment education' on the very first page of the old 'penny' catechism: to know God, to love Him and serve Him in this world, so as to be happy with Him forever in the next. General life adjustment means adjustment to the universal and unchanging laws of nature which are God's laws, against which if a man sin, he must needs pay the penalty. Since all men are subject to the basic natural and divine laws of God, it is with these laws that basic and general life adjustment education must concern itself. Since all men are subject at one time or another to suffering, pain, sorrow, heartaches, and heartbreaks, life adjustment education must prepare youth for all that. Since all men must face the hardships of inequalities and injustices, life adjustment education must prepare them for that. Since all men must face the great ordeal of death, any kind of life adjustment education which sidesteps this issue is necessarily imperfect and incomplete. Now the only system of education which carries all these things through consistently and logically is to be formed in the Catholic philosophy of education.

> Thus, to have a general adjustment for life, your pupils must be imbued, impregnated with the Catholic philosophy of life. A man cannot be truly adjusted socially or vocationally or economically or emotionally or domestically or mentally until he is rightly adjusted spiritually. And if he be adjusted spiritually, all else follows as day follows night. Just as happiness is an attitude of mind rather than a condition of body, so real life adjustment must be in the soul more than in the fingertips - in the heart more than in any material accomplishment. ....There are no inhibitions, no complexes for the spiritually adjusted.
>
> All this leads up to the sublime phase of Catholic mysticism, which, in the present economy of Redemption is called vicarious suffering, atonement, oblation, self-renunciation. And that leads to that particular part of this doctrine that is called self-discipline, and which must necessarily be a main factor in any life adjustment program. Naturally, this is diametrically opposed to all those beautiful theories of 'self expression' about which we have heard so much in recent years, particularly from the 'progressive education school.' And to the materialistic program of 'self expression' we oppose a Christian program of 'self-repression.' The thing that gets most of us into most of the trouble we get into in this world is just that inclination towards 'self expression.' Witness your own daily lives. Self expression, particularly in certain areas, is the cause of so much physical disease, and social maladjustments, and aberrations of all kinds - even wars, public or private. What contributes most towards adjustment in every walk of life is 'self-repression, self-discipline.' It's self-repression that makes for healthy bodies and clean minds and peace."1/

An extended analysis of the above passage is not appropriate to the purpose of this chapter and the writer will content himself with pointing out that

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1/Rev. Thomas A. Lawless, "Self-Discipline Through Religious Motivation - The Practical Christian Basis For Life Adjustment Education," National Catholic Educational Association (Proceedings, 1948), 45:417-421.

here we have a definition of life adjustment education ably stated and resting well within the philosophic paradigm of St. Thomas Acquinas.

Rev. Lawless continues his sometimes abusive remarks to the effect that this task is one that his colleagues are singularly well prepared to face and that those operating in the vineyard of public education are, on his view, singularly unprepared to face.

> "....what puts you on top of the list as life adjustment educators is your religious training, particularly your novitiate training, for which you receive no credit from your evaluating agencies. They haven't got the brains to understand what that's all about, nor have they the religious sense to perceive its tremendous value. They insist on teacher preparation in every field, but they never had a course in teacher preparation for life adjustment education. We are the only group that understands this thing. We are the only group whose teachers have had training, hard training, in this thing. We are the only group really qualified to give life adjustment education. This is our major task."1/

Life adjustment education properly conceived, undoubtedly in accord with the canons of "right reason," is Catholic education. The ultimate goal is to be in concert with the "laws" of God. This does not deny, of course, any wish to look at the curriculum with regard to immediately apparent needs of the student. It does deny that this can properly be done without reference to the aims of Catholic education.

Sister Lenore operates within this framework in discussing the contributions of English to life

1/Ibid., pp. 423-424.

adjustment education.

> "....our basic philosophy commits us to a program that centers in the need and the development of the individual, since we believe that each student is a person with potentialities of mind and spirit which are uniquely his own. Hence our chief duty as a teacher, whether of math, home economics or English, is the development in that student of his maximum powers for living fully himself and contributing to his community and nation."1/

More particularly in regard to literature she said:

> "Because the study of literature is useless unless it is related to life and experience here and now, the teacher of English makes these lessons a guide to ideals, to norms of judgment, to awareness and use of experience. ....If I have given Mary Day with an I.Q. of 85 the ability to see something in her backyard and tell us about it in a clear sentence, I have aided growth. If I have given Mary Hope a line of poetry to carry with her to the assembly line, I have helped her to be a person. If I have used my subject matter to give increased awareness, power, and personal integration, I have aided the pupil to 'life adjustment.'"2/

She said, further, that:

> "The points at which literature has relation to life adjustment are limited only by the teacher's interest and the breadth of her knowledge."3/

Continuing the emphasis on the key role of the teacher, Sister Lenore asserts that:

> "The teacher and the teacher's attitude are at the root of the problem. The most flexible syllabi, the most perfectly

1/Sister Gertrude Lenore, S.S.J., "Life Adjustment In An English Class," Catholic Educational Review (March, 1950), 48:163.

2/Ibid., p. 164.

3/Ibid., p. 169.

> equipped English laboratory, the most modern textbooks, not any one of these or all of them combined, will help our children to be adjusted to life. Only a teacher whose primary desire and purpose is to produce a mentally, physically and spiritually integrated personality can teach for life adjustment. It is on the teacher that the program must be centered."1/

This, of course, assumes a certain kind and a certain quality of training for teachers which we may presume to be in harmony with the remarks on the subject by Rev. Lawless.

Rev. Townsend says in regard to literature - Shakespeare in particular - "Far rather that a boy be profoundly moved by the great speeches than be able to analyze them."2/ No doubt many would agree if by "analyze" he means the type of analysis that a professional in the field of composition might undertake. Nevertheless, there are many who would argue that the Louisiana Longs, Hitler and a host of past and contemporary figures, including theologians, have made great speeches, profoundly moving great numbers of people that ought not to have been so moved. If this is so, it would appear that some type of content analysis would be salutary in order that youths would be moved by that which ought to move them and not moved by that which ought not to move them. This skill would appear to be

1/Ibid., p. 170.

2/Rev. Anselm M. Townsend, O.P., "Implications Contained In The Life Adjustment Program Concerning The Tools of Learning," National Catholic Educational Association (Proceedings, 1948), 45:372.

one of the major tools for intelligent living. On Townsend's view, the reader gets the impression that technicalities should be avoided. The question might better be, what types of technicalities should be avoided?

Sister Mary Janet[1] member of both National Commissions, saw in the common introduction of courses in home and family living in Catholic schools, a manifestation of the influence of the life adjustment education movement.

Sister McFeeley describes the position of the people at the Convent of The Presentation in San Francisco concerning the necessity and the purpose of their four-year program in home and family living.

> "....we have to prepare girls to live as Christian women in a world whose whole philosophy is purely naturalistic and, therefore, runs counter to all that is Christian, ...even the attitudes of modern parents have so trifled with the worthy estimation of woman that children, even before they have reached the secondary level, have already acquired distorted notions of woman, her place, and her prerogatives."[2]

Life adjustment education here becomes a concern with the proper roles of a "Christian" woman.

Catholic educators were also concerned with

1/Sister Mary Janet, S.C., "The Catholic Schools and Life Adjustment Education," National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin (August, 1952), 49:341-345.

2/Sister Mary Annetta McFeeley, "Implications Concerning Home and Family Life," National Catholic Educational Association (Proceedings, 1948), 45:393.

vocational education and one of them, Rev. Egging, made an interesting historical observation. Speaking of the trade guilds of medieval times, he said that they:

> "....became highly organized and perfected, not only as to their educational procedures and standards, but they seemed to have provided a rather complete 'Life Adjustment Program,' since they were also concerned with the economic, social and spiritual needs of their members."1/

Although Catholic educators were interested in "vocational" education and work experience, they were concerned that it be kept within the framework of the Catholic position on education.

> "....all work experience is not life adjustment education. Some of it is definitely child exploitation, or simply child labor. The boy at the soda fountain at the corner drug store, or the errand boy for the grocery store, working from after school until 8 or 9 or later at night, is not gaining educational experience. First of all, he has no time for study, for home work, for normal recreation, for proper physical development. This situation is bad from every angle for the boy's future life."2/

Life adjustment in this light is rather explicitly not just adjustment, for everything mentioned involves adjustment. It, the phrase, has a normative quality, i.e., good adjustment. The purpose of vocational education is described by Rev. Gainor in an evaluation of

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1/Rev. A. E. Egging, "Implications Concerning Work Experience," National Catholic Educational Association (Proceedings, 1948), 45:403.

2/Rev. Leo C. Gainor, "Discussion of Implications Concerning Work Experience," National Catholic Educational Association (Proceedings, 1948), 45:414.

the present condition of vocational education.

> "Much work....remains to be done.... in making the youth of the land vitally conscious of their personal responsibility towards developing a better land for their own children and making themselves better citizens of our country and future citizens of Heaven."1/

These statements indicate the general position of the Churchmen on life adjustment education. Quite obviously, this position is one that many others, openly espousing the virtues of life adjustment education, would not accept. They might ask that those espousing the Catholic position make a distinction between descriptive and prescriptive laws in reference to the phrase "laws of God." They might challenge them on a wide variety of points, not the least important of which might be the alleged cognitive significance of the construct "God." Nevertheless, it is another position, quite ably defended, and must enter into our consideration.

Not only were there wide differences of opinion concerning the meaning of life adjustment education among those who supported it, there were differences among those who opposed it. These should be investigated prior to any final analysis of the total problem.

Before turning to opponents of life adjustment education, it will be instructive to look at a false prophet in the person of Commissioner McGrath who said:

> "Terms such as flapdoodle have been ruinous to certain educational projects

1/Ibid., p. 415.

but I am confident that no incident of name calling can similarly endanger Life Adjustment Education. It is too well established in the public confidence."1/

1/"Life Adjustment Education for Youth," School Life (December, 1949), 32:40.

CHAPTER IV

SELECTED CRITICISMS OF LIFE ADJUSTMENT EDUCATION

The ideas expressed in the literature reviewed in the last chapter did not go unchallenged. These ideas were part of the lively public discussion concerning public education in the period following World War II. It should be remembered that whatever life adjustment education was conceived to be, its supporters considered the movement in the light of a reformation.

Viewed within the framework of the times, the life adjustment movement was a significant part of the discussion concerning public education. Moreover, it was essentially critical in nature, i.e., critical of the present status of public education in America.

There were other critics of the state of public education. The complaints concerning the activities and accomplishments of the public school have been many in the past 15 years. Those who opposed some of the programs advocated by "life adjustors" viewed the movement, in the words of Thayer, as a "Hydra-headed monster."[1]

In the two decades prior to the advent of the life adjustment movement, progressive education had been the main target of criticism by the classicists and essentialists. Due to the sharp edge of a well organized program, at least blessed if not sponsored by the U.S.

1/V. T. Thayer, "Life Adjustment Vs. Basic Education," Phi Delta Kappan (March, 1960), XLI:251.

Office of Education, life adjustment education became the prime target for attack from similar sources. Thus progressive education became a second rate candidate for criticism though still thoroughly castigated in much popular literature.

The main tendency was to lay the blame for whatever failures demonstrated by American education in particular and by American society in general at the feet of life adjustment education, progressive education, and John Dewey. The point of emphasis differed from author to author. Nevertheless, the dominant tendency was to deal with the immediate "threat" - life adjustment education.

As one studies this particular portion of the critical literature concerning education, one is forced to the conclusion that the critics were really not against life adjustment but rather a particular type of "education" which, on their view, could never bring about real life adjustment. It is unfortunate that many of the critics, some of them supposedly learned individuals, were unable to see this. Had they seen the real issue, much more fruitful discussions might have ensued. Their attention could have been directed to the more fundamental question of the nature of life adjustment and the nature of variables that could be introduced to achieve that adjustment. Unfortunately, much time was spent, by the proponents and opponents of the movement, cataloguing the alleged excesses of the other party while blithely refusing to face the real issues involved.

It would appear, then, that many of the critics of life adjustment education were as confused as those they attacked. Some critics[1] of the movement, however briefly, did recognize the real import of what they were doing in the aforementioned sense.

Soundings taken from the disenchanted. -- Inasmuch as a great deal of the critical literature is repetitious, though of varying authorship, the writer has chosen to present a limited account. As in the last chapter the writer will attempt to present a representative sample of the thinking published concerning the topic in question with appropriate comments. The general position of the authors, in opposition to life adjustment education, will be stated wherever possible. This is done precisely because the writer holds that these authors are also "life adjustors," however much they might dislike the term.

Mortimer Smith, well known critic of "modern trends" in the public schools, has indicated, in some bibliographical notes at the end of his work "And Madly Teach," an enthusiasm for the work of Maritain, Barzun, Hutchins and Van Doren. Writing of life adjustment education he says:

> "It is the latest manifestation of the

1/See John Keats, Schools Without Scholars, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1958, Chapters 4 and 5 in which Keats sees the problem as a philosophical one. Unhappily, he proceeds to ignore this point in the rest of his work. Wheat, another critic, is dealt with at length in this present chapter.

> idea that the school's task is only incidentally to train the intelligence and impart knowledge, that its real function is to serve as a gigantic bureau of social services where the attempt will be made to adjust the student to all 'real life problems.'"1/

Because of the foregoing, Smith asserts that the "60 per cent" are not getting any real education. Real education does not place immediate particulars as the center of learning activity although such may be useful illustrations in conjunction with what is being taught. Nevertheless, on his view, the concern with immediate particulars in life adjustment education moves the school away from its primary function. Of this function he states:

> "I would grant a lot of ancillary functions, but I think the primary function of the school is to transmit the intellectual and cultural heritage of the race, and in the process teach young people to think, and to buttress moral values."2/

Moreover, he states:

> "I believe there are universal values of education that are good for everyone, whether he intends to become a butcher or a banker, a minister or a motorman, a professor or a plumber."3/

Mr. Smith places himself on the side of "basic education" which, though not classical in the sense that Hutchins uses the term, not liberal in the sense that

1/Mortimer Smith, The Diminished Mind, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1954, p. 22.

2/Ibid., p. 6.

3/Ibid., p. 7.

Bestor uses the term, is, nevertheless, traditional in the sense that it calls for a very large proportion of required subjects with an emphasis on the skills of communication and the accumulation of a considerable amount of general information about the world in which the student lives.

Mr. Smith also sees education as individual in nature. He feels that life adjustment education tends to submerge the individual through an emphasis on cooperative action with the group. Insofar as these things are true, then the sum total of life adjustment education is mis-education.

Smith's concern about the passive tone of life adjustment education is echoed by Whyte. Whyte calls the result of life adjustment education the "new illiteracy," because such education seeks to enable students to "get along" - to adapt himself to whatever is. This type of adaptation, to Whyte, is really maladjustment and is especially dangerous when the times cry out for vigorous leadership, creativity and nonconformity.

> "It is time to put the technician of the new illiteracy in his place - and that's way, way down. He is fit only to be a lackey, not a leader. He can't conjure, he can't speculate, he can't dream; I imagine he has a terrible sense of humor."1/

If the alleged passivity of the majority of the populace is in fact the condition of American culture

1/Mortimer Smith (ed.), The Public Schools in Crisis, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1956, p. 113.

at the moment, and if it has witnessed a considerable increase in passivity in the years following World War II, then life adjustment education might well be a candidate for the role of causal factor. It is doubtful if it can accept the sole responsibility and it is equally doubtful that life adjustment education must be considered as essentially passive. If his assertions are true, and Whyte regards them as such, then he would place the type of education responsible in its place, i.e., "way, way down."

Even if Whyte's assertions are granted, the fact of the matter is that the sociology of knowledge is but ill developed at this point, and that societies laboring under very much restricted individual options have not been devoid of individuals with significant creative, leadership attributes.

Wheat, a unique contributor to the critical literature in that he at least initially clearly states the problem, declines to work under the burden of a topic such as "Life Adjustment Versus Traditional Education." He much prefers the topic "Life Adjustment Through Traditional Education." He condemns the limited vision and aspirations of those connected with life adjustment education while saying that anyone could agree with much in the program. On his view, it is a low level program because it is without adequate foundations.

> "Consider, if you will, the multifarious activities and procedures the program provides in order to ensure the

> successful participation of all students. No student gets the chance to reach beyond his grasp; none can experience the penalty of failure through increased difficulty of succeeding requirements; none can meet an intellectual challenge and gain the thrill of successful achievement. The system and sequences of the traditional program find no place in the program of life adjustment, as many conceive and foster it. And for good reason, if we but take the view of the 'life adjustors.' What is there about a foundation that attracts? It is in large part concealed. Its enclosures are drab and dull and often damp, good only for storage of useless things we think sometime may be useful. For present and obvious usage, to apply the current pragmatic criterion, a foundation is not worth its painful cost in time and effort. All of which is undoubtedly true, if we must content ourselves with a one-room shack, and have no wish for a superstructure that reaches into the sky."1/

Wheat feels that it is really the cost of traditional education that disturbs the life adjustment educators. These educators, on his view, do not believe that the pupils have the ability to pay the price for such an education. Moreover, the "life adjustors" are, as teachers, unwilling to pay the price. The price, of course, is hard persistent work. Many people who were involved in the life adjustment movement would claim that the "price" involved a good deal more than hard persistent work. They would claim that it all too often resulted in a high rate of school drop-outs, emotionally disturbed and frustrated children, discipline problems and similar related difficulties resulting from a

1/Ibid., p. 115.

truncated view of the variables involved in the learning situation.

Whatever the real price might be, Wheat states his view as to the educational consequences of a mistaken evaluation of the students and a lack of fortitude on the part of educators.

> "In consequence when they discover no effortless mathematics, they substitute a field trip, when they are disconcerted by a pupil's inability to read his literature and history, they let him carry a spear in the school play, or watch a motion picture."1/

The teachers, then, are lacking in fortitude and the children are deprived of the opportunity to justify the fortitude that the teachers ought to have. Teachers, as is true of many Americans, stand for nothing and consequently stand for anything in the name of life adjustment. Nevertheless, Wheat considers himself in favor of life adjustment education.

> "Our quarrel, then, if we have a quarrel, is not with life adjustment, but with 'life adjustors,' and their scorn of the social capital tradition has banked for their pupils - social capital which can set their pupils up in the business of real life adjustment."2/

Wheat would maintain that one has to have knowledge before one can apply it and that the proper vehicle for the gaining of this knowledge is traditional education. The knowledge of which he speaks is the funded wisdom of

1/Ibid., p. 115.

2/Ibid., p. 116.

the culture. He offers the following analogy to prove his point.

> "An old recipe for roast turkey began with the requirement, first, 'catch your turkey.' The modern, as well as the ancient, recipe for the usage of learning begins with a similar requirement, 'first, capture your learning.'"1/

A careful reader will immediately note that the turkey is singular while learning is plural. Consequently, the analogy is an unhappy one. If learning has to be accomplished before application is made, in the same sense that the turkey has to be caught before cooking, it is quite evident that no application could ever be made. This is somewhat like saying that all the turkeys must be caught before one can be cooked. The real question would appear to be, how much and what kind of learnings or knowledges does one need in order to function efficiently in a given situation or in the total domain of all possible situations.

Moreover, it would appear that much action occurs on hypotheses which one might not wish to call knowledge - these hypotheses acted upon in order to reach the domain of verification rather than as a result of said domain already having been reached. Granted that these hypotheses may well be generated out of past learnings, this does not negate the fact that the question with which Wheat deals is a very complicated one, worthy of considerable study and test. Ex cathedra pronouncements

1/Ibid., p. 120.

shored up by questionable logic merely serve to confuse the issue.

According to Wheat, the four cornerposts of learning are language, methods of exact thinking exemplified by arithmetic, a broad view of the world, and the care of individual needs. His major complaint is that "life adjustors" concentrate too much attention on the fourth cornerpost, i.e., individual needs. A moment's reflection would indicate that the first three could be subsumed under the category of individual needs. Though his selection of categories is unfortunate, it becomes clear that he views the category of individual needs as primarily social rather than "intellectual" in nature.

Finally he makes an observation considerably less acute than his recognition that opponents of life adjustment education really oppose "life adjustors" rather than life adjustment. The observation in question is that life adjustment is only one aspect of education and perhaps a less distinguished aspect than some of its devotees might wish to admit. This observation is undoubtedly made in the light of the above classification of the four cornerposts of learning which neglected to view the first three as aspects of the fourth - the care of individual needs. This unhappy turn of events, symptomatic of the confusion obtaining in the literature of proponents and opponents alike, is in contradiction to the assertion that he had no quarrel with life adjustment as such - that his quarrel was with certain

"life adjustors." He proceeds to state his concern with life adjustment as such:

> "For adjustment, in the final analysis, is not the highest kind of human behavior. Complaisant satisfaction with things as they are may mark a certain type of integrated personality, but it does not distinguish those individuals, however humble their station, who contribute to the betterment of themselves and their associates. Those who make the world a better place, because they have lived in it, are the persons who sometimes refuse to adjust to their surroundings, and instead seek ways of adjusting surroundings to their ideas and dreams."1/

This passage obviously looks at adjustment as a passive behavior and Wheat objects to that passivity in spite of the fact that education to him is primarily a matter of transmitting the culture to the young - functioning as a sort of "rite of passage" into the adult world. It should be clear, Wheat, Smith, Whyte et al to the contrary notwithstanding, that there is no necessary reason to view adjustment as passive. One could quite correctly maintain that the seeking of ways to adjust one's surroundings to one's aspirations is no less an adjustment than the acceptance of those surroundings as they are.

In fact, another critic of the movement, Keats, objects to life adjustment education on precisely these grounds, i.e., on its alleged social reconstruction bias. Believing the present school situation prior to life adjustment education to accurately represent

1/Ibid., p. 121.

the values of society, he states:

> "If 'life adjustment' is a phrase having no meaning in a school really representative of the public sense of values - for such a school would automatically tend to adjust children to those values - it is also a meaningless phrase in any other kind of school - also by automatic definition. In its most usual sense, however, 'life adjustment' has a hidden meaning. It is a name to call an educational philosophy now widely accepted. The philosophy is compounded of the pragmatic thoughts of the late John Dewey plus a dollop of sentimentality and a generous helping of the oversensitive conscience of the social worker whose life is chiefly spent among those who do not seem to be able to help themselves."1/

A proponent of rugged individualism, Keats is much disturbed by that "oversensitive conscience" of the social worker. He sees proper life adjustment as involving an acceptance of the values of the public - the public will. Perhaps Keats might become a tireless worker for social reconstruction if the nation were more highly populated with people of "oversensitive consciences." Be that as it may, he strongly objects to what he conceives to be the social reconstruction flavor in life adjustment education. A good example of the above, on his view, is the prevalent attitude toward competition in the public school.

> "....deliberately to discourage competition in the classroom and to emphasize the value of conformity in the name of life adjustment is a curious way, indeed,

1/John Keats, Schools Without Scholars, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1958, p. 83.

> of adjusting children to this national life of ours...."1/

This type of activity, according to Keats is merely one more in the present trend of making the individual amount to naught and the group aught. It may be admitted that Keats objects to this life adjustment education on the grounds that its end result is not active but passive. Thus it might not be the activist tendency that is being decried here but the nature of the activity.

In order to avoid the social reconstruction flavor currently threatening the temple of childhood, Keats would prescribe a program of fundamentals or real education, i.e., that which has the authority coming from the consensus of popular opinion throughout the ages.

Presumably it is an education which accepts cultural relativism - for our culture - a particular version of "laissez faire" liberalism. Of these fundamentals, quoting or referring to the professor or professors in a way that leaves the reader a bit confused as to the particular source, Keats writes:

> "At worst, the professor says, let's presume for the sake of argument that a study of the fundamental disciplines cannot train the mind. This does not mean that the fundamentals are not fundamental. Nor does it mean that the students should not at least be asked to use what minds they might have."2/

1/Ibid., p. 82.

2/Ibid., p. 91.

In short, Keats enthusiastically supports the educational program of "Mental Prep" where there is no vocational training. Here "self-contained" courses are presented historically and in no sense, according to Keats, are they considered exploratory. The offerings of this school would differ in quality but not in "kind." This departure from lock-step is to take care of individual differences as would the diplomas granted - one type being a certificate of attendance. Admittedly this is not a dominant educational pattern in America and though Keats is against social reconstruction in the schools, he would reconstruct those institutions in the image of "Mental Prep." "Mental Prep," incidentally, has no over-developed social conscience and this simplifies its task enormously due to the fact that it can simply ignore the problems of the society at large, maintaining essentially that its concerns are divorced from those of the larger society and other institutions within it. At least "Mental Prep" has the virtue of consistency - its courses are atomistic in structure as is its view of the society in which it operates. This position is again manifested in its attitudes concerning graduation.

> "Students who do not reach minimum standards are not eligible for diplomas, nor are they encouraged to remain in school, for Mental Prep thinks it is in the mind-training business, and in that business alone, and that people who have no minds to train do not belong in school. They would be better employed somewhere else, Mental Prep believes, and the school

> takes what steps it can to rid itself of its ineducable children."1/

Adams supports "fundamental" education by posing two more or less rhetorical questions with an implicit criticism of life adjustment education. He asks:

> "....are we putting a futile attempt to furnish in advance correct answers to all of life's difficulties in place of adequate training in the methods and procedures of solving such problems as they confront us?"2/

The point made here is the oft-made criticism, a favorite of Admiral Rickover, that life adjustment education deals with the "minutiae of daily living." In doing this, it is failing to give students the proper foundation of knowledges necessary to make decisions - decisions which must be made as a result of a knowledge of general principles concerning this world. This can be gained not by a random study of particulars of the present but by a thorough and systematic study of the traditional disciplines. A particular content is recommended as a cure by way of his second question, i.e., traditional content.

> "As a matter of fact, are not Life-Adjustment courses in many cases the means by which the schools escape from the difficult and discouraging but still vital task of teaching unresponsive pupils material in the fields of English, science, mathematics, and social studies which is still needed,

1/John Keats, Schools Without Scholars, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1958, p. 72.

2/Henry J. Adams, "Life Adjustment for Their Stomachs," Clearing House (January, 1951), 25:292.

> even in 1950, for a satisfactory adjustment to life's many requirements."1/

We have again the assertion of the need to return to the fundamentals even though Adams uses the term social studies rather than social science.

Bestor, an author of popular polemics on education rivaled only by Smith in regard to the number of publications on the subject in the past decade, is sure that life adjustment education threatens the downfall of the intellectual and moral leadership of the nation. Bestor fervently believes in the "fundamentals" and asserts that liberal education is the only real education. He sees the modern public school as losing its sense of values as evidenced by its subordination of essential activities to incidental activities. Decrying vocationalism in the schools he writes:

> "One perfectly good reason for refusing to devote an extensive amount of time to instruction of this kind is its relative ineffectiveness. The popular sneers at book-learning are not really directed at learning in the liberal sense. They arise because of the bumbling inefficiency shown in real life by students who have learned so-called 'practical' subjects from a book, under an instructor who perhaps never practiced the trade he purports to teach. It is not the liberally educated man who becomes a laughing-stock. It is the journalism major whose sentences no editor would print, the speech major whom no one would hear with patience in a public hall, the home-economics major who is unable to run her own house, the education major who knows less about the subject she teaches than the parents of her own pupils, the commerce major who

1/Ibid., pp. 292-293.

> cannot carry on a business as successfully as the man who never took a commercial course in his life. The school makes itself ridiculous whenever it undertakes to deal directly with 'real-life' problems, instead of indirectly through the development of generalized intellectual powers."1/

The assertion that the school cannot successfully deal with vocational skills is of most questionable validity. Similar doubt may be accorded the implication that one must have direct experience in the field in order to successfully teach a student entering that particular field. Helpful though such experience might be, it is neither necessary nor sufficient for good teaching. The familiar argument that you must be a cow in order to know what milk is says little for the author. These types of assertions some would take as evidence of Bestor's selfless devotion to the pursuit of truth inasmuch as such assertions are tantamount to cutting his own vocational throat. More important than the purely personal vocational considerations of historian Bestor is the implication that all schools of applied knowledge, including professional schools, would be well advised to close their doors.

Happily for those interested in vocational education, Bestor states elsewhere that:

> "Liberal education and vocational training may exist side by side in a sound school system, provided the role of each is understood and respected. The school should pay attention to certain non-educational needs

1/Arthur E. Bestor, The Restoration of Learning, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1955, p. 79.

> of youth provided the effort does not interfere with its fundamental task of intellectual training."1/

The use of such phrases as the development of "general intellectual powers" and "intellectual training" gives rise to the suspicion that Bestor has an affinity for the psychological knowledges affirmed by the "Committee of Ten." The faculty psychology underlying his position is of very doubtful validity and has been increasingly in disrepute since the initial work on the subject by William James. Quite aside from these problems is his call for a fundamental education laced with the standards and standbys of the traditional curriculum. On his view, if we must have training, then we must. Let us call it, however, by its proper name, even though it cannot be accomplished effectively in schools, and put it in its proper place.

Real life adjustment education then, though Bestor would undoubtedly object to this writer's phrasing, is to be achieved through the vehicle of liberal education - the only thing that rightly qualifies for the appellation - education.

> "Liberal education is designed to produce self-reliance. It expects man to use his general intelligence to solve particular problems. Vocational and 'Life-adjustment' programs, on the other hand, breed servile dependence."2/

1/Arthur E. Bestor, Educational Wastelands, The University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1953, p. 81.

2/Arthur E. Bestor, The Restoration of Learning, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1955, p. 79.

The question of what education is truly liberating is not dealt with. Neither is the question of what constitutes a vocational program. Is the liberal or vocational quality of the educational offering inherent in the offering or do these qualities inhere in the aspirations of those who seek to undertake their study? If the former is the case, then it would seem reasonable to ask Bestor for some criterion by which we might recognize the non-vocational activities. If the latter is the case, then it would seem that either men who are vocationally interested in certain areas of knowledge should seek it outside the school where it may be more effectively learned - incidentally where Bestor should have studied history and related subjects - or seek it within a "formal" situation with its limitations, corrupting the school with an essentially illiberal air. Perhaps, though, some vocations are more liberal than others and such a distinction could or should be made. This is a possible avenue of investigation for the setting up of a criterion. Another avenue that might be fruitfully explored is provided by the possibility that the liberal quality referred to might reside in both the educational offering and the aspirations of those seeking the particular experience. At least these questions and possibly many others should be effectively dealt with before one could hope to assess the worth of Bestor's contribution.

The most influential modern writer of the classicist bent is Hutchins. Of the theory of adjustment he writes:

> "Here the object is to fit the student into his physical, social, political, economic, and intellectual environment with a minimum of discomfort to the society."1/

He asserts that the emphasis on vocational adjustment neither prepares the youth of the nation adequately for the vocations which occupy an ever decreasing amount of our energies nor for adequate use of our leisure time - time that is ever-increasing. Moreover, on his view, we should not seek an adaptation to present conditions but a modification of these conditions toward the goal of the good life.

He deplores needs as a criterion for direction of education. There are too many. Moreover, there is difficulty in determining a need when you meet one. Operating on a needs criterion, on his view, inevitably leads education to public relations and a prolonged ad hoc binge where the educational system becomes the victim of one pressure group after another.

The problem of distinguishing between a legitimate need and a mere desire is indeed a difficult one at best, but for Hutchins to throw out legitimate needs as a criterion because too often mere desires have ruled the day promises little. The problem is not necessarily

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1/Robert M. Hutchins, Freedom, Education, And The Fund, Meridian Books, New York, 1956, p. 106.

the simple identification of "needs." It would seem that the real problem is to set up criteria to distinguish the legitimate from the illegitimate. He deals with the surface manifestation of the problem and implies that the basic problem cannot be solved. Yet he also talks of needs in his statements concerning President Truman's Commission on Higher Education.

> "There is no doubt that men are different. But that they are also the same. One trouble with education in the West is that it has emphasized those respects in which men are different; this is what excessive specialization means. The purpose of basic education is to bring out our common humanity, a consummation more urgently needed today than at any time in the last five hundred years. To confuse at every point, as the Commission does, the education of our common humanity, which is primary and indispensable, with education of our individual differences, which is secondary and in many cases unnecessary, is to get bad education at every point. What we have here is a prescription for the disintegration of society through the disintegration of the educational system. This process is now going on in the United States."1/

The position of Hutchins is well known concerning the remedy.

> "Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence education is everywhere the same. I do not overlook the possibilities of differences in organization, in administration, in local habits and customs. These are details. I suggest that the heart of any course of study designed for the whole people will be, if education is rightly understood, the same at any time, in any

1/Ibid., p. 133.

> place, under any political, social, or economic conditions."1/

Details concerning the classical curriculum and the place of the "great books" find their operational definition in the St. John's curriculum.

In examining the literature previously cited, it is quite clear that the critics are agreed on a number of points. They feel that the public schools have neglected the basic tool subjects, have failed to insist upon rigorously organized disciplines and the mastery of the same, have failed to teach principles and in the process substituted trivial, watered-down versions of the basic disciplines in helter-skelter fashion more apt to confuse and amuse than to instruct. Most important, they charge the schools with being anti-intellectual and primarily concerned with social, civic, vocational adjustment than they are with the development of the intellect.

In consequence of the above, the critics would have us return to basic education, fundamental education, liberal education, classical education or whatever adjective one might wish to set before the word education except "life adjustment." This writer is making no attempt to identify these adjectives as synonymous but would point out that these critics are generally agreed as to the charges, with the one possible exception

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1/Robert Maynard Hutchins, The Higher Learning in America, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1936, pp. 66-67.

concerning the passive or activist qualities of life adjustment education, and are also generally agreed as to the primary task of the school, i.e., training of the intellect, development of general powers, development of general intelligence, disciplining the mind through the mastery of accepted bodies of content.

It is significant to note that these critics left the Roman Catholic educators, who were staunch supporters of the life adjustment movement singularly untouched.

This is true in spite of the open admission on the part of Churchmen that the basic assumptions of the Church must be accepted on faith and equally evident activity on the part of Churchmen who proceed to reify their assumption - and would indoctrinate all present, would-be and should-be members with the faith (Truth). It is possible that the critics preferred to deal solely with public education. A more plausible reason for the gentle or non-treatment of the Church position is that the critics felt an affinity to the rationalistic predispositions of the Churchmen.

This was no cause for joy among Catholic educators. Sister Mary Janet, S.C.,[1] takes the critics to task and vehemently denies the charges of the critics.

It is likewise significant to note that these critics say nothing of those in the movement who are

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1/Sister Mary Janet, S.C., "Life Adjustment Opens New Doors to Youth," Educational Leadership (December, 1954), 12:137-141.

identified with "general education" in the sense in which the Harvard Committee used the term in its report "General Education In A Free Society." Nor did the critics condemn those who admitted that the "great" books and college preparatory courses might be good life adjustment for some.

It seems safe to conclude that these critics were after "progressives" parading in "life adjustment education" clothing. The pronouncements of these "progressives" made the "life adjustment" clothing as invisible as the emperor's new clothes.1/ The latter part of the title of Fuller's article refers to the Latin sentence - "Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat" - "Whom the Gods seek to destroy they first make mad."

It would appear that they, the "progressives," have certainly made the writers considered in this chapter "mad." Recognizing the ambiguity of the word "mad," as the reader no doubt is able to do at this point - having dealt with a fair share of ambiguities concerning "life adjustment," it must be pointed out that these authors are thoroughly disturbed, angry men. They are dealing with something of vital concern to themselves and to their civilization. The tone of their writing gives no

1/See Harry J. Fuller, "The Emperor's New Clothes, Or Prius Dementat," The Scientific Monthly (January, 1951), 72:32-41, in which Fuller makes the analogy between the story of Hans Christian Andersen and the nakedness of the profession of education.

evidence of an attempt to play the role of the impartial observer.

The point this writer wishes to make is that in their concern for their cause they have been beating the wrong "horse," i.e., life adjustment education. It is the wrong "horse" because they too believe in life adjustment education, however faintly they perceive it, though they may oppose, and vehemently do oppose, some of what parades before us in the name of "life adjustment education."

It is quite certain that the "Gods" will destroy or can destroy those whom they first make mad - in either sense of the term "mad." The withdrawal from the domain of rational discourse due to anger or an inability to relate to reality indeed constitutes a major threat to one's survival. This is as true of societies as it is of individuals. It is the contention of the writer that a continuation of the exchanges at their present levels between rival groups of educators continues to deny a rational discussion of the real issues, and that to the extent that such a discussion is avoided and to precisely that extent, these men, who purport to be the intellectual leaders of the institution, contribute to the anti-rational resolution of their problems and thus participate in the ever-present threat to the continuation and/or development of a civilization worthy of the name.

The crucial issue is still before us. The issue is nothing more and nothing less than what constitutes life adjustment and what kind of an education is needed to bring such a desired state to pass. It is to this issue, underlying the controversy, that we must now turn.

CHAPTER V

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRUCT "LIFE ADJUSTMENT" AND ITS EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

On the surface it would appear that the term "life adjustment education" might properly describe the activities falling under the classification "general education of a terminal nature." In reviewing the past chapters one finds life adjustment education as education for the common activities of life, an outgrowth of the "general education" and "common learnings" movements, a revolt against specialization; general education plus general vocational education for all and for some - specific preparation for specific vocations; a program emphasizing practical applications of in-school learnings, a program presently revolving around current and probable future problems of pupils; a more thorough mastery of skills and processes, the reframing of the traditional subject matter - not as an end in itself but as a means to the realization of the seven objectives postulated in the "Cardinal Principles of Education;" and an education for aesthetic appreciation and leisure-time activities.

These and similar views would give rise to the idea that life adjustment education was primarily concerned with "general education of a terminal nature" and that if this was not its primary concern, then these above listed attributes of life adjustment education, at the

very least, demanded inclusion in any scheme which purported to be life adjusting.

Educators were not content to limit the domain of life adjustment education to the above, however. Statements of a classical emphasis are readily found which purport to be the core of life adjustment education. Here, life adjustment education is considered to involve the "great books," mental discipline, the fundamental skills; productive of the true Christians - "the supernatural man who thinks, judges, and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason, illuminated by the supernatural light of example and teachings of Jesus Christ," as that which aids one to save his soul, prepares him for citizenship in heaven as well as earth; prepares for "adjustment" to Christ, to the role of future apostles, to living, suffering, pain, death, to prepare man "to know God, to love Him and serve Him in this world, so as to be happy with Him forever in the next," and self repression, as supplying inner peace, as retreat from the world to find essentials akin to certain psychologies which would have man find peace and his place in this world by withdrawing from it.

These educators also have vigorously carried the banner of life adjustment education. Thus we have a concept[1] of life adjustment education which falls under

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1/The terms "concept, construct, and locution" are considered as synonymous for the purposes of this chapter.

two of the previously established classifications, i.e., classical, and general education of a terminal nature.

Terminal vocational education also lays claim to the title life adjustment education. It would assert that the major adjustment one has to make in this life is maintaining that condition - namely, life. In order to do this, specific vocational skills are essential. Life adjustment education then is seen as education for specialized vocational skills, general vocational skills, special education for handicapped for vocational and social utility, etc. This is the real adjustment to life.

Thus we have classicists, supporters of general education, and vocational educators all asserting either explicitly or implicitly that their positions supply the wherewithal for real life adjustment. All crowd around the banner of life adjustment education. They all agree that there are needs to be realized but there is little agreement on criteria that would distinguish needs from desires. They are agreed that there are individual differences but are not agreed as to whether these differences are of essentials or incidentals - a matter of degree or kind. They are agreed that there must be adjustment but not agreed as to whether this condition is manifested by a passive acquiescence to immutable laws or by an active manipulation of the environment for man's own purpose. Moreover, they agree to look to evidence but are not agreed as to the canons of evidence

by which they will operate nor are they agreed to the nature of life - theocentric, anthropocentric or otherwise. In short, there is an essential unity here which is more apparent than real. It is merely a nominal unity.

As has been pointed out by the writer, even nominal unity was threatened by those who confused opposition to certain activities with opposition to the name of the activity. Equally important was the confusion of those who, having achieved nominal unity, believed that they had achieved more than that.

In so doing the participants of this great controversy did a great disservice to education. They further confused issues that were already far from clear and persuaded themselves that, under the protective umbrella of the phrase "life adjustment education," all fundamental differences had disappeared and that they all could then march forward in sweetness and light to a brighter and braver new world. Such a spirit, such a felt unity, such naivete, led educators to redouble their efforts and ignore the issues - an all too common approach to problems in all aspects of our society. This spirit precluded any systematic analysis of the nature of the concept "life adjustment" and resulted in a reply in kind from the opposition.

A new phrase for old demands. -- The preceding remarks indicate a diversity of purposes housed under the phrase "life adjustment education." Careful examination

of these positions indicates a remarkable resemblance between these concepts of secondary education and its purpose and earlier concepts noted in Chapters I and II of this work.

Those in the life adjustment movement who view the secondary school as the institution providing a general education of a terminal nature, preparing the youth for general participation in American community life, will find their generic base in America in the English grammar school. The post Civil War public high school was also a reflection of this demand. Its best modern exposition is found in "General Education In A Free Society."

Those in the movement who viewed the secondary school as a selective instrument, providing an education for college preparation, will find their generic base in the colonial period. This group would view this education as a particular type of preparation for a particular type of college, i.e., liberal arts college. This position may be subdivided into two groups. The theologically oriented find their generic base, in America, in Puritanism with its other-worldly concerns. Its largest, best organized, most militant present manifestation is to be found within the activities of the Roman Catholic Church. The non-theologically oriented find their generic base in the Latin grammar schools and academies established in the late eighteenth century after the white heat of militant Puritanism had abated. Its outlook is currently espoused by Hutchins and his

followers who would promote the "great books" as the fund of knowledge really worthy of possession. The critics of life adjustment education, noted in the previous chapter, would also be comfortable in this group.

Those in the movement who viewed the task of the secondary school as providing terminal vocational education, providing salable skills for job opportunities within the present economic complex, find their generic base in the apprentice system. A persistent demand for this type of education has existed in this country and as has been previously noted, the English grammar school, the academy, the public high school and the public secondary vocational schools have all tried to face up to this demand with varying degrees of success.

It is the writer's contention that these three are and have been the dominant contenders for loyalty on the American educational scene. Moreover, it is asserted that they will continue to be the dominant forces contending for the direction of the public secondary schools. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories. More often than not, they represent matters involving the question of emphasis. The contenders view their positions as the proper point of primary emphasis and the other positions as of secondary, if any, importance.

The essential point the writer wishes to make is that the contenders, in the past fairly easily identified, now find themselves grouped under the all-inclusive term of "life adjustment education." There is, then,

only nominal and organizational novelty in this movement to date. The important question, which one is forced to address, is whether this is necessarily the case, i.e., inherent within the locution, "life adjustment education."

As was noted in earlier remarks concerning the life adjustment movement, the import of the movement in regard to our purpose is confined to an indication of the "depth of the concern with and the level of understanding of the particular problem" by mid-century educators. The examination of the published remarks concerning life adjustment education indicates a need for a thorough analysis of the construct "life adjustment" and the relationship of education to "life adjustment."

An analysis of the concept - "life adjustment." -- An analysis of this concept would certainly move one to the idea that the phrase, "life adjustment," involved the adjustment of some thing to life or the adjustment of life to some thing. Now it is common to assert that all things are caused. Certain individuals of varying theological and philosophical persuasions would accept this with the single exception of an "unmoved mover" or its equivalent. Those of a Humean bent would assert that we have no evidence of cause - that it is an assumption rather than a fact of our experience. Nevertheless, they proceed to operate on this assumption as, indeed, we all do. The last mentioned assumption seems necessary to explain the world whereas the notion of the

"unmoved mover," with possible exception of the psychological necessity in some, does not. Though such assumptions may very well tell us more about ourselves than about the "real" world, we seem imprisoned within our capacities with no apparent escape possible - at least as far as the notion of cause is concerned.

The notion of cause, as used in the remainder of this discussion, is conceived to be describing the relationship of the relevant variables involved in any interaction to the end product or products of that interaction. There is here an assertion that all things are deterministic in relation to their relevant variables, i.e., are capable of explanation in the sense that one expects a real explanation to be capable of test and have predictive power. Another way of framing this assertion is to say that nothing is uncaused or absolutely emergent.

Implicit in the use of the term "adjustment" is the acceptance of causal relationships. In common usage the term "adjustment" indicates some sort of interaction with other factors in the environment. If this is, in fact, the case, it would seem that the interaction and the results of the interaction can be justly conceived as an adjustment.

When we speak of adjustment to life we may view it as an essentially passive reaction accepting with more or less grace, as the case may be, whatever exists in the environment. We might also conceive it as an essentially

active operation by which man rearranges the factors in a given environment to suit his own purposes. In either case there is an interaction with the environment - one which is primarily passive - though not without causal force - i.e., namely that of tending to sustain the present equilibrium, and the other primarily active - also having causal force - seeking to establish a new equilibrium.

Now passivity may be the result of either an investigation upon which one concludes that no options are available, that the better option is the one already available, or the result of more or less unthinking acceptance of what is. Activity may be the result of similar investigations or blind, random actions resisting what is.

The normative flavor is most pronounced in the customary use of the term "life adjustment." The "neutral" cause-and-effect description alone leaves a gap in the significance of the term. In ordinary usage people are not speaking of just any old adjustment but rather a particular kind of adjustment - namely, a "good" adjustment. This usage is similar to that of those who would say that education is experience but not just any old experience. They would call poor experiences miseducative just as poor interactions would receive the appellation maladjustive.

The people in the life adjustment education movement were concerned, beyond a doubt, with the normative use

of the term "adjustment." Thus life adjustment education had as its goal the good adjustment to or of life, or both.

Before we press on to the central question of what is life and the implication that if one makes a good adjustment to it then one must be living the "good life" or at least the best possible life, we must face the fact that there are various levels of adjustment. This has already been alluded to in reference to possible types of active and passive qualities of one's adjustment to life. It must be admitted that even the lowly amoeba adjusts. If it survives we call the adjustment "good." As far as we know, the amoeba calls it nothing. It either succeeds or does not.

Avoiding normative concerns, it is possible to view life or living and adjustment as synonymous terms. This, of course, would make the phrase "life adjustment" a tautology and thus subject to the same criticism as that given to Franzen's attempt to consider "life adjustment" and "education" as synonymous terms.1/ This view begs the important metaphysical question of what is rightly described by the term "life" or "living." Some would assert that without adjustment, life cannot be maintained. This suggests an adjustment to something static in the sense that one adjusts in order to maintain an established equilibrium - some sort of biological

1/See this work, pp. 97-98.

preferred state. Others would assert that this static view is incorrect and that adjustment is concerned with the concept of "living" - emphasizing the dynamic changing equilibria that must be adjusted to. Others would maintain that you are not "really living" until you are not. This is suggestive in that earthly survival may well be considered not sufficient for adjustment in the normative sense. It is possible that it is not even necessary for such adjustment. On certain views, the earlier one leaves his earthly cares the more rapidly he may take his place at the feet of the Almighty - this being real adjustment. An excellent motivational study might revolve around the relationship obtaining between this type of belief and those who have pursued the "noble" death or, for that matter, the ignoble death. However interesting such speculations and investigations might be, our concern is with the fact that there are different levels of adjustment.

The human body makes adjustments at what is commonly acknowledged to be a sub-rational level. It makes all sorts of "automatic" adjustments to temperature, humidity, age, disease, nutrition and so on. This is known to be the case and is accepted by medical authorities as well as by the general public. Before we were blessed with medical authorities, it found expression in the folklore of various cultures.

In spite of the fact that many philosophers have held the rational nature of man to be supreme, there

are indications that the body may be supreme in certain areas, e.g., the case where the body cries out for certain nutrients without the mind having any knowledge of why certain nutrients are required. In this sense the body can be said to be superior to the mind in what might be considered its own domain.

No doubt, one could argue that data of this type can be recorded and that in time we can predict that such needs will occur and that certain foods containing these nutrients will satisfy these needs, that we can so manipulate the environment so that these needs will either be or not be satisfied.

The writer's point, here, is not to deny this but to assert that there are certain visceral activities that are carried on before any conscious knowledge is established - that the body is superior, at least in the sense of empirical priority, over a certain domain. Presumably there is much of this type of activity that occurs that we still "know" little, if anything, about. What kind of education is necessary for this level of life adjustment is a moot question. Perhaps some type of Pavlovian exercise might achieve proper results in this direction. It is possible that this is not what anyone had in mind when life adjustment education was conceived. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that interactions at this level constitute a type of life adjustment. Moreover, it is called "good" or "bad," as the case may be, depending upon the fact that it

contributes or does not contribute to survival.

Some problems of this nature may be avoided if we refuse to call the experience of visceral interaction - "education." In refusing to call experience at this level - "education," we may reserve the term "education" for activities of a different level - in this case - a study of visceral interactions. For a more clear-cut example, we might refuse to call the experience of having an injection of medicines to relieve tension an "education" but be perfectly willing to call the studies that would bring the doctor to such an action - "education."

On these grounds, one might not wish to equate life adjustment with education. If this is the case, then Franzen's assertion that "life adjustment" and "education" are identical terms, thus making the locution "life adjustment education" a redundancy - a tautological phrase, will not stand. If it does stand, then it would seem that Franzen would be hard pressed to assert that experiences at a sub-conscious or non-rational level are a constituent part of education. This could be done, of course, if one wishes to make a significant change in the customary meaning of the term "education." Such a change would seem, however, to serve no good purpose. Franzen's position then, the identity of the two terms, is saved only if we specify a particular level of human activity for the context in which these two terms may be used.

In view of the foregoing, it should be clear that to speak of "life adjustment education," is to speak of a normative construct in that the construct "life adjustment" involves more than a random collection of interactions. It concerns interactions that are regarded as desirable. Those that are not desirable are called "maladjustments." It should be equally clear that, inasmuch as education is conceived as a conscious process, life adjustment in this context refers to a limited range or level of human activity - namely those activities that are capable of direction at a conscious, purposive level.

In another sense, levels of adjustment may be considered as involving various degrees of adjustment within a certain specified range or level of human activity. It may also be thought of in terms of certain degrees of adjustment relative to varying capacities of the individuals involved. Thus in speaking of levels of adjustment, one is clearly not limited to an examination of sub-conscious and conscious behavior. One may fruitfully examine degrees of adjustment in relation to particular types or ranges of desirable human activity, to particular types or ranges of capacities for that activity, both, or the relationships obtaining between them.

A deterministic analysis of "life adjustment" education. -- To date, it has been indicated that the construct "life adjustment" under discussion is, from

the point of educational implication, a construct dealing with a certain level and range of activities in more than a neutral cause and effect analysis. The construct purports to describe a particular desired state. Because of this normative factor it, life adjustment education, is not susceptible to a deterministic analysis in the sense of classical Newtonian celestial mechanics in which a list of entities was located along with the state variables (location and momentum), a state description at a given time developed and combined with the general laws of celestial mechanics in order to allow a predicted or postdicted state description at another time. Lacking purpose, there is among celestial bodies only an apparent tendency to maintain a certain equilibrium, barring intervening variables. This allows for a prediction or postdiction of the several relationships obtaining among the entities concerned. The system is deterministic in regard to the state variables and the formulas developed concerning this phenomena merely describe what exists. Within the range of the system there is an equal distribution of state descriptions in the long run. No effort is made, or in all probability could be seriously made, to establish and maintain a particular state description, i.e., a preferred state.

Our task can be similarly viewed with the exception of the end result. We are not concerned with merely describing what happens, i.e., describing any old adjustment. We are concerned with achieving a particular

preferred state. The task is, then, to locate the entities with which we must deal, find the relevant variables, describe these entities in terms of these variables and in connection with general laws of human behavior we shall be able to predict that the particular desired outcome will be achieved at a particular time. In short, we will be able to explain a particular domain of human activity.

Much low level description is available in the behavorial sciences. The explanatory power of these descriptions varies considerably. It is safe to say, certainly, that no well-developed theory or explanation of human behavior is presently available. This, however, is precisely one of the urgent needs if the locution "life adjustment education" is to have any cognitive significance.

If there are knowledges, skills, and attitudes that human beings ought to have, one might assume that the criteria for the selection of these would involve the judgment that these knowledges, skills, and attitudes would be instrumental to life adjustment. The value of such a judgment is, however, a matter of empirical test. The answer to the question of whether these attributes do or do not contribute - and if so, in what manner and to what extent - to a particular preferred state, i.e., life adjustment, can be determined only after two operations. Incidentally, the same may be said concerning the experiences designed to bring about these particular

knowledges, skills and attitudes.

Assuming that a considerable body of knowledge has been accumulated concerning the attributes possessed by those to be educated, the task of the highest priority is the determination of what is meant by the locution "life adjustment." The locution is, after all is said and done, merely a sort of shorthand for a very complicated series of relationships.

The task of secondary priority is an empirical study addressing itself to the problem of what types of experiences and results of the same, in what sequence, and in what frame of emphasis is most efficacious in moving those to be educated to the particular preferred state we have in mind. In short what is needed is an operational definition of "life adjustment" so that an adequate evaluation of educational activities may proceed.

To argue that such a definition would be incomplete and thus inadequate for our purposes is to argue that all definitions are incomplete. So they are - but this is as much a strength as a weakness. As our knowledge grows we are forced to modify our classificatory systems. We build and modify our classifications for the purpose of developing some order in our view of the universe. In this activity of building and modification we acknowledge the inbuilt corrective inherent in the empirical outlook. To seek absolute, unchanging categories leaves us in the position of accepting what might

be described as the hardening of the categories caused by the fatty deposits of unexamined tradition; the result is an intellectual occlusion which can be fatal to the progress of civilization because it denies implicitly at least, the possibility of the incrementation of knowledge and fails, obviously, to foster the search for the same. The building and modification of classifications demonstrates precisely the activity and attitude, denied by straight-jacket categorization, in which progress finds its roots.

Even a modest initial definition of the construct "life adjustment" is an immensely difficult task, for the construct building involves commitments of meta-
1.0. physical, epistemological, and axiological nature that are indeed hard to come by in any well formed way. Moreover, only the naive might expect that there would be any considerable unanimity of opinion concerning these issues. Nevertheless, it behooves us to address ourselves to the formulation of the construct "life adjustment," in some non-trivial manner.

Such a definition involves a particular type of relationship between man and life. Just as those who sought identity between "experience" and "education" did not mean just any old experience and those seeking an identity between "life adjustment" and "education" did not mean any old adjustment, so those who seek the relationship between man and "life," as described by "adjustment," do not mean just any old life. They refer

to good experience, good adjustment, good life.

Quite obviously, the probability that our initial formulations concerning the definition of the "good life" and consequently of "life adjustment" will be something less than we might aspire to, is strong. This is to be expected.

The writer would point out the fact that a major intellectual advance is being called for here, i.e., the definition of the locution - "life adjustment" or "good life" - which is commodious enough to house all the respectable attributes we wish to include under that locution and yet restrictive enough to exclude all the attributes we wish not to include. Of greatest import is the necessity to exclude the attributes that we wish not to include. That some desirable attributes may not be in the developed definition is clear and the addition of the same would constitute a desirable expansion of the concept.

It has been suggested that definitions of the "good life" may differ. If we have major or minor disagreements as to the formulation of such a category, we are not lost. Each formulation, assuming its cognitive significance, is equally capable of serving as a point of reference for test. Those who would prefer one definition of the "good life" to another would at least be able to proceed to locate the types of experiences, emphases, and sequences that would produce their desired state.

To date, there is no group or individual who can make a valid claim to such an accomplishment. Twenty-five centuries of modern man's experience have resulted in speculation, low-level observation, and argumentation with the leading contenders still in the field. No real evidence has been brought forth to indicate with any assurance what the important variables are in regard to achieving any comprehensive preferred state - in general - much less in regard to particular individuals. This much is a fact in spite of assumptions of educators of all types to the contrary.

As necessary as this process just described may have been, man is now at the point where a number of these hypotheses have been developed and deserve a test. Past experience has not been fruitless because it has generated these hypotheses. Reification of these hypotheses which are, in fact not stated as hypotheses, will get us nowhere. It is high time that educators move to a higher level - the level of test and verification.

Whether such activities can separate that which is merely desired from that which is desirable is a moot question. One can at least expect that the results of such experimentation may tell us a great deal about the causal relations obtaining between types of experiences and desired outcomes. Among the things we may learn might be that certain outcomes are impossible with particular individuals, large numbers of individuals, or all individuals. Moreover, such experimentation might

indicate that outcomes, hitherto regarded impossible, are capable of attainment. To that extent this approach may be most fruitful even in refining our definition of the "good life." This is asserted on the grounds that a description of the "good life," if it is to have any import for the human race, must take into account the capacities of its members.

The development of the construct "good life," i.e., "life adjustment," would be that of an ideal type. In the behavioral sciences it is not without heuristic value. It is an extreme value without, alas, the means of extrapolation to less extreme values afforded to extreme values in physical science such as absolute zero. The latter mentioned value is most useful because it is already imbedded in a well developed theory of physical science. Unfortunately, as previously mentioned, there is no similarly well developed theory of human behavior. The suggested approach, however, can materially contribute to the development of such a theory and this is the great promise afforded to those who would follow its lead.

A final consideration is necessary. Should those, bold enough to take the above considerations to their bosoms and attempt to actualize them, deal with an absolute conception of the "good life" or should they entertain a study of the relative concept of the "good life" - one that would be absolute, relative to individuals, if you prefer to steer away from the "dirty word" of the ancients - namely relativism, or both?

Aristotle suggests that each man's excellence might well be different due to his function in society. Witness the lowly garbage collector. Granted that such activity is far removed from the contemplative life, it is a necessary and worthwhile activity. It is clear that, if one holds that human excellence is relative to the capacities and that human functions should likewise be related, for some this task would be an illiberal one and for others it would be a liberal one.

Most men would decline to say that the collector of garbage was leading the "good life." They would prefer to reserve that appellation for the man who was able to see the relationships of all things in the universe - both as they are and as they should be - and assign each its proper function so that each man could be liberated to the extent that would enable him to live in a healthy individual state and thereby contribute to the creation or maintenance of a society where men could reasonably aspire to live the "good life."

It would seem wise to clearly distinguish between two justifiable uses of the term "good life." In one sense it may be used as a model describing that to which all men might aspire so that they might gain direction in terms of their own striving, direction in terms of the strivings of their fellow man, and thus direction in terms of locating leadership (based on knowledge) which they ought to follow and emulate as much as possible.

Secondly, the term may be used in the sense of a "qualified good life" - qualified, that is, within the framework of their function and their capacity to perform and understand that function. Here, we consider the various levels of adjustment within a specified range of human activity and the capacities that the individual brings to this range of activity. Obviously, there are individuals of limited capacity who utilize to a high degree those capacities, such as they are. There are also many individuals of high capacity who fail to utilize those capacities to a significant extent. This disproportionate development of capacity is sometimes so marked that those of limited capacity are more productive. This construct, "qualified" good life, can also be thought of as a model or sub-model serving the same function as the previously mentioned model. Clearly it is hardly just to withhold approbation for the accomplishment of either of the states just described - relative or absolute "good life." It would be equally unjust to blame men for not having achieved either state if nature or society does not provide the opportunity.

The extreme value, the greatest absolute good, is then that which the greatest of men might achieve, i.e., within the natural capacity of the greatest man under the most favorable of circumstances. The sub-model, previously mentioned, is another extreme value - extreme, that is, in relation to more restricted conditions.

In a sense, then, man becomes the measure of man individually, for he has established for him his limits and he, individually and collectively, establishes limits on individuals that may often be below those established by nature.

It would seem that any adequate theory of education must account for both types of extreme values discussed. Inasmuch as it must deal with a wide dispersion of talents and functions it must provide for an evaluation for what it has previously assumed to be efficacious in bringing about desired results.

Conclusion. -- The task set before us is a complex one. Staggering though it may be, it is clearly one of the greatest importance for no descriptive power may be allotted to the locution "life adjustment education" until such tasks are undertaken. Essential to the task is a formulation of the attributes of the individuals to be educated, the formulation of the preferred state or goal in both the relative and absolute senses, and a testing program seeking the variables that do lead to the particular preferred state or states. Having undertaken this task, educators would be on the road to the development of a theory of education adequate to perform the task that good theories do perform, i.e., merely describe or explain a particular range of phenomena. At this point, we can begin to determine whether certain experiences are or are not "life adjusting." Until such time, assertions that such is the case must be relegated

to the some-time amusing and oft-times dangerous domain of armchair speculation.

The initial hypothesis was "that the term 'life adjustment' education to date is lacking in cognitive significance, i.e., does not denote any particular observable range and level of human activity." It should be clear at this point that pronouncements of opponents and proponents of life adjustment education fail to meet the requirements for cognitive significance, i.e., fail to define the concept to the extent that some test can be made concerning their truth claims. The truth claim in question would be the assertion that their particular program is life adjusting in some non-vacuous sense of the locution "life adjustment." Without belaboring the obvious the writer would merely like to refer the reader to the identity of purposes seen by those concerned with secondary education prior to the life adjustment education movement - college preparation with the school as a selective instrument, general education of a terminal nature for general participation in American society, and vocational education of a terminal nature - with those seen by those active in the life adjustment education movement. This identity needs no further explication as it has been described in some detail previously.

As a result of the above, the writer asserts that no basic philosophical problems were solved by the controversy which ensued and, in fact, the real problems

were hidden midst a smoke screen of pseudo-problems which tended to inhibit a discussion of the basic problems involved. The basic problem is seen as the determination of the nature of the "good life" in both the absolute and relative senses and the establishment of a test situation to determine what variables can be introduced, under what conditions to bring the "good life" to pass.

The analysis just completed, the writer believes to suggest a fruitful approach to the analysis of a wide variety of constructs in current use on the educational scene such as "experience," "growth," "education," and "learning." It would be equally valuable in assessing the meaning of constructs in popular use such as "success" and "leadership." Correct cognitively significant definitions of terms like these would constitute a contribution to mankind that would be unsurpassed by all the scientific accomplishments to date. Modest steps in the direction of correct definitions, in the above stated sense, would in any event, constitute a major advance in that direction.

An additional problem, only alluded to in the previous considerations, lies above and beyond the scope of this paper as does the definition of terms under discussion and the actual testing proposed. This problem is one of the greatest importance. Briefly, it revolves around the question of whether the suggestions made by the writer can carry educators beyond Kant's hypothetical

imperative to a categorical imperative. This is central to the determination of the nature of the "good life." The writer's suggestions concerning the means to reach a determination of the life adjustment qualities of any particular experience or range of experiences are, he believes, most promising. The real resolution of the problem, assuming that suggestions within this analysis are followed, will depend in the last analysis upon the degree of validity obtaining in the definition of the "good life." Some axiological criteria are essential for separating those essentially false definitions from the true. That the methods suggested will suffice, if the value question is resolved, is asserted to be true. It is by no means clear, unfortunately, that these methods are capable of resolving the value question. This problem awaits and demands intensive study lest our technical advances in logic and our increasing sophistication in empirical studies lead us to an exceedingly efficient means of self-destruction.

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