DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 023 739 UD 006 341

Education Symposium on Urban Problems (Columbus, Ohio, December 13 and 14, 1966).
National Association of State Boards of Education, Columbus, Ohio. Northeast Region.; Ohio State Board of Education, Columbus.
Pub Date Dec 66
Note -21p.
EDRS Price MF -$0 25 HC -$1 15
Descriptors -City Problems, Civil Rights, Federal Government, Government Role, Leadership Responsibility, Negro Organizations, State Departments of Education, *Symposia, Teacher Associations, *Urban Education, *Urban Environment
Identifiers -Cleveland, Ohio

This symposium on urban education and urban environment heard addresses by several state and city superintendents of education, a representative of HEW, the director of the NAACP, the president of the National Association of State Boards of Education, and a professor and columnist. Discussed were such topics as the leadership role of state education departments in urban education, the activities of the federal government, the problems and experiences of Cleveland, the issues of the organization of the teaching profession, and the drive for racial equality. Also included are remarks on state boards and the rule of these boards in urban problems. (NH)

a report education symposium on urban problems

Sponsored by the
State Board of Education of Ohio
and the
Northeast Region of the National
Association of State Boards of Education
December 13 and 14, 1966
in Columbus, Ohio

Wayne A. Shaffer

Foreword

America's urban centers are population magnets, accounting for 80% of the nation's total growth between 1950 and 1960. Urbanization has brought problems — air and water pollution, slums, traffic congestion and scenic blight. But the biggest problems are human ones — how to adapt to the demands of an increasingly complex, industrialized and interdependent society.

Americans have turned to their schools for solutions to the challenges of technological, economic and cultural change. It was the city schools in the first half of the century which led the way in the nation's reach toward educational excellence. Now the urban schools confront a new frontier — that of changing the learning rate of the nation's disadvantaged masses, of breaking the poverty cycle and preparing them for employability and productive citizenship.

The challenge has been joined by the Federal Government with a new lexicon — NDEA, MDTA, VEA, EOA and ESEA — of legislation targeted at security, manpower and compensatory objectives. The flow of federal funds has greatly expanded the role and responsibilities of state departments of education. The dynamic thrusts of new and innovative approaches in turn challenge state boards of education in their important policy-making function.

It was to explore in depth the urban milieu and the emerging federal, state and city relationships that this symposium was directed. We are grateful to the speakers for sketching the dimensions of the problems and to the panels for probing their implications. This condensed report of the presentations and ensuing dialogue is made available in the hope that it will be useful to the state school board members, legislators, school administrators and state department of education officials who participated.

Mr. Shaffer is a member and past president of the State Board of Education of Ohio; Northeast Regional Vice President of the National Association of State Boards of Education; and chairman of The Education Symposium on Urban Problems.

Leadership In A School-Centered Society

It has been a 20th Century tradition for America's big cities to be self-sufficient; state departments of education have been rurally oriented. This was an appropriate allocation of manpower, resources and energy because it was the rural school which needed the services which the state department could offer.

Today nearly three-fourths of our population lives in the cities, and the end of urbanization is not in sight. With this changing demography and the new character of the American city, there appears to be widespread recognition that state and federal agencies should assume greater interest in what may be described as our modern frontier.

In addition to the demography, there are five specific issues which add dramatic urgency to the need for orientation of state departments to urban problems:

- Whereas a decade ago the core city and the suburbs were on a par financially, today the cities are approximately $150 per pupil behind.
- There is a growing concentration of human needs in our large cities. Mined-out mountains and mechanized cotton fields have pushed laborers from those areas to industrialized centers where technology has quickly outmoded the muscle power they brought with them. The machines that lifted the burden from man also made his strong back unsalable.
- The emergence of the vicious cycle of poverty begetting poverty has brought the spectre of the segregated city. Unfortunately, the spectre is so repugnant that few responsible Americans want to hear or speak of it.
- Another problem is that of redesigning the American school to serve the full gamut of abilities and backgrounds arrayed in an urban population. Job training to make a place for everyman's child is among the major challenges confronting our schools, along with finding a breakthrough in learning rates to compensate for cultural lag.
- A final concern is as old as our republic. America has been the haven for those in search of opportunity. Horatio Alger is fully embedded in our folklore. Yet, for the modern immigrant to the big cities, the American dream has become a nightmare. The children of these unfortunate families are the hostile, the alienated, the hate-filled generation.

• • •

As frustrating as the complexities of urban life may seem to have become, we may have overlooked some advantages. In the tendency to decry bigness — big cities, big corporations, big labor and big government — we may overlook the human betterment that population density can make possible.

First, there is the human element as a resource in our urban centers. Every major city is blessed with an abundance of business, industrial, professional and labor leadership — those who work in the central city but do not necessarily live there. We need to design the structure and create the willingness for human participation, and find new ways to involve this leadership meaningfully and effectively. I hope that we may be ingenious enough to activate this great force in on-going seminars to study and discuss the programs and problems of urban education; to bring this leadership together in citizens' assemblies to formulate suggestions and recommendations expressing the people's aspirations for their schools.

Secondly, there are the physical resources of our urban centers. Largeness can make possible economies and efficiencies in better and more abundant learning materials and opportunities. I refer to research and experimentation with new approaches to learning; to the richness of program adapted to the special needs of all learners; to the production of teaching aids and learning materials; and to the development of curriculum guides and inservice growth opportunities.

• • •

How best do state departments of education venture into this new frontier?

- *Through providing services that cities cannot perform as economically or as adequately alone.* For instance, coordinating area research and development councils, initiating statewide testing services, establishing a network of experimentation, using the "systems" approach to advancing the learning process, and setting up computer networks to save time and manpower.
- *Through encouraging sound district organization.* While the impact of organization studies is toward consolidation of small, inefficient districts,

there also emerge recommendations to initiate further studies of the desirability and feasibility of decentralizing some administrative functions in the largest districts.

• *Through coordinating research and development as a force in shaping the new design of education.* To make research economical, the operation must be lifted to the regional level. We must begin applying to the urban scene the tremendously successful research and demonstration practices of agriculture, such as the county agent's liaison with the land-grant college and the farmer.

• *Through developing a suitable concept of job education for the inner city.* We must be resourceful in designing a new pattern, particularly for the lower 20% in educational achievement for whom many new opportunities exist in the service occupations. Concurrently, we must re-examine the laws and regulations which restrict work experience and deprive many youth of the firsthand knowledge of our free enterprise system that prior generations had at their doorstep. It seems appropriate that part-time work experience or work-study programs ought to begin as early as the seventh and eighth grades, particularly for the inner-city youth who need to learn the satisfactions of honest work, the potential of the private enterprise system, and the motivation of money in the pocket.

• *Through breaking the lockstep in teaching manpower.* We must destroy the century-old myth that an outstanding person can be provided for every classroom. Talent is just not available in that abundant proportion. I believe one way to break the lockstep is to deploy manpower so that an executive teacher would manage a total instructional team or unit. Such a team would be composed of the executive teacher with a master's degree and proven ability, a professional teacher, also holding a master's degree, a provisional teacher at the bachelor's degree level, a teaching intern who might be a student teacher, an aide-technician and a clerical aide, both having the minimum of a high school education.

The team would be able to serve several traditional units of pupils at a cost comparable to present instructional costs and yet would bring to every group of children the talents of superior teachers.

martin essex

Superintendent of Public Instruction
State of Ohio

What Now For The Federal Government?

Any speculation on this question has to be based on facts of recent years, and these facts are impressive. More than 30 federal education statutes were enacted in the last two Congresses. Federal funds for education were $3 billion a year when President Kennedy took office. They had increased to $5 billion when President Johnson succeeded him. Today the Federal Government is spending more than $10 billion for education. In the four years from 1961 to 1966, the budget of the U. S. Office of Education multiplied 11 times. This is impressive growth for any organization.

We believe this expanded federal activity largely reflects certain basic socio-economic realities of life in mid-century America. Education is now widely viewed — perhaps too optimistically — as a solution to virtually every national problem, including military security, manpower shortages, unemployment, and equal rights. More important, the federal activity reflects the aspirations of the American people for more and better education.

Education is now an annual $50-billion growth industry, employing three million teachers, professors and administrators. Education constitutes the largest single occupational group in the nation. Educators and education are a potent political force, generating their own demands in the marketplace for the distribution of national resources. Thus, support for increased educational expenditures is rooted in both transformed values of our society and new social-political-economic realities. Future federal aid may vary in pace and in quality, but it will not be possible to reverse.

• • •

The new political climate in Washington suggests certain features of the immediate future.

• The principal struggle in education legislation will shift from the process of authorization to that of appropriations.

• Closely related to the issue of appropriations is the issue of evaluation. Educators have long said, "Give us the dollars to work with and we'll show you what we can do." In a political arena where there are never enough dollars to meet all demands, it will be increasingly important that we educators demonstrate the effectiveness of what we are doing.

• We can expect the 90th Congress to take a close, hard look at the consolidation of educational programs. I believe the new Congress will also try to "tidy up" and perfect existing federal commitments to American education.

• As Congress considers the proposed reorganization of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, we are assured of interesting debates on the state of American education.

Questions from the Panel —

Q: In the past two years, most of the Federal appropriations were received after the school term commenced. If we operated local schools and state departments with this kind of haphazard budgeting, we would be accused of being poor administrators. Is there any real possibility that local school officials, working through their Congressmen, could change this? — James Sensenbaugh, State Superintendent of Schools, Maryland

Halperin: Yes. We have to recognize that Congressmen are not behaving this way because they are trying to hurt people. They've been trying to help American education, and have been doing so. Our appropriations process developed in an earlier and quieter day. Congressmen need to learn (and you can teach, that's your job) the extent to which you are dependent on these federal funds. When they understand that they will not receive full value for every federal dollar unless funds are appropriated earlier, I am sure they will change their ways.

Congressmen, being politicians, want to make you happy; they don't want to make you unhappy. If you tell them you are unhappy, in time they will find a way to serve you better.

Q: Many local officials fear federal support to education because they feel the Federal Government is likely to take control away from them. What would you say to either confirm or soothe their feelings in this regard? — James Rowland, Member, Pennsylvania State Board of Education

Halperin: In the six years I have worked in the U. S. Office of Education, I have never found an important federal official who believes that the best interest of this country or of American education would be served by federal control of the schools.

You can't avoid the fact that there is going to

be increasing federal influence everytime a federal statute is passed. If the Federal Government provides money for handicapped children and not for visual aids, that's a form of influence. But the important things — the question of what the children learn, the materials they use, how teachers are recruited, trained and hired, what is done in the classroom and how the administrators run their schools — are areas in which there will be very little federal influence.

Q: With this massive money going into education, how can we, the private and denominational schools, survive? — Reverend C. E. Elwell, superintendent of the Cleveland, Ohio, Diocesan Schools

Halperin: The American people do not seem to have a coherent philosophy of what they want the private schools to do. The private school people themselves speak with many voices, and they do not seem to have a unified and agreed policy for what they want from the Federal Government. Our assignment, when I came to the Federal Government, was to try to pass as many school aid bills as possible to strengthen the public schools system. We gave money under ESEA to the public schools and the public schools alone — but only if they tried to meet some of the most pressing educational needs of all children in the community, including those in private schools as well as those not in any school at all. That's the philosophy of the ESEA.

Q: Is the Federal Government going to try to promote the racial integration of schools by withholding approval for programs using Federal funds? — Frank Dick, Superintendent of Toledo, Ohio, Schools

Halperin: The U. S. Office of Education is not a policing agency. It has to operate under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as all federal agencies must. Your Congress has said that federal funds may not be used, when taken from all the people, to support services for some of the people, or to support better services for some.

The function of the Office of Education is not to withhold funds but to keep those funds flowing so that children are helped. In the interpretations of what is legal and what is not legal, we will find controversies. If our interpretations are not correct, Congress will tell us.

samuel halperin

Deputy Assistant Secretary
(Legislative Program and Liaison)
U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare

The Cleveland Story

The problems of Cleveland are about the same as you would find in the other great urban centers of this country. Ours is a city that has been neglected for a long time. The problems have been going practically unnoticed for a period of many years while they were increasing and growing at a cancerous rate.

A new breed of cities has been growing around the big cities — suburban areas that are fine and healthy, wholesome and prosperous. And all the time, the suburbanites have been returning to the city to make a living. They either went over the problems daily, or they went under them, or around them. All of a sudden, the problems have come home to the big cities in such proportions that I am not sure we will be able to solve them in this decade.

I am sure of one thing — if we don't solve these problems of the urban centers, America is in for trouble like she has never seen before.

• • •

As we look at the profile of a city in trouble, I believe we must look at what happens as a city gets itself into trouble. Since 1950, the city of Cleveland has lost 114,000 people. In the same period, the number of pupils has increased by 50,000. We are told that we lose from 50 to 60 white families per day.

While we have been increasing in student enrollment, tax valuation behind each student has been continually decreasing. The tax dollar also decreases, even at a more rapid pace. Today we are spending $49 million a year on public assistance. This is $14 million more than the total spent on elementary education in the city.

The number of children from homes receiving AFDC funds (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) represents one-fifth to one-fourth of the total enrollment. Of 185 schools in our city, 101 have children from poverty homes numbering more than 9%. In two of our buildings, over 82% of the children are from poverty homes. Children from these homes come to school without adequate clothing or adequate nourishment. They have never heard good music, never had a pencil or paper, or even a box of crayons. These are homes where there is confusion and very little conversation, but great poverty. Many children come to kindergarten with a vocabulary of 200 words; the children of the inner city have about 20 words.

• • •

We had 4,000 dropouts from the Cleveland Public Schools last year. Some buildings have a dropout rate of over 72%. We are turning out on the streets each year, 4,000 ill-prepared youth who will become the fourth generation of poverty. Of these, possibily 2,000 will live to the age of retirement without holding, even for a short time, one single job. We have a vocational problem that is gigantic and we do not have the resources to even begin to scratch the surface.

I get tired of hearing that we have to confine the vocational training programs to the 11th and 12th grades. That's too late, we have lost the students by that time. We need a new breed of vocational education if we're going to meet the needs of urban education.

• • •

Unless we begin to prepare the disadvantaged in our ghettos for a better life than their parents had, we are going to hear from the disadvantaged and their voices are going to be so loud that you will not miss the sound no matter where you live. The only way we're going to work the child out of the ghettos is to give him the tools that allow him to work out. There is no need for an educated person in America to live in a ghetto.

We're on the brink of a great new day if we can develop the ways and the means and the know-how to do the job of educating disadvantaged youngsters. We've got to start earlier than kindergarten; we've got to stay with them beyond graduation from high school; we've got to develop new standards; and we've got to develop a new breed of teachers, realistically trained for urban jobs.

I'm optimistic today about the future of the big cities because I think there is a new concern and a new seriousness in this country about educating the disadvantaged. This is a country that has grown strong because it is proud of the fact that people can be born in lowly places and yet have the opportunity to rise to a higher position. We've got to be sure that this avenue is open for all children.

Questions from the Panel —

Q: What use can be made of the suburban leadership in solving the problems of the inner city? — Lorin Bixler, Member of the State Board of Education, Ohio

Briggs: We could do something about the quality of housing and of the schools if they would move back to the inner city. The quality of schools in the city should be so good that the people start moving back. Moving out because the schools are better someplace else only leads to trouble.

We have about 2,000 volunteers working in the Cleveland schools now and most live in suburbia. They're working in our libraries and in our schools. One group has practically adopted a junior high school where the problems are the toughest.

We have 560 business and industry men involved in 60 advisory committees. I won't be surprised if 548 of them live outside the school district.

Somehow we got ourselves in trouble by not expanding the boundaries of our cities so that the metropolitan area was one. In urban organization about the only places where we made sense was in area-wide sewage disposal plants and water distribution systems. If we had made that kind of sense in our educational organization, we wouldn't have the problems we have today.

Q: How can we get teachers to accept positions in the inner city schools and stay there? —J. H. Wanamaker, Superintendent of Youngstown, Ohio, Public Schools

Briggs: Part of the answer is in creating an atmosphere of excitement about progress. The Peace Corps has done this. Some of our best young people have gone to some of the very unsatisfactory places of the world to do some good things, without thinking in terms of monetary rewards.

We have some great challenges in our urban education. If these can become real challenges rather than just charges, if we try to solve our problems, we will get good teachers. But we should not try to motivate them to do something free.

It's ridiculous that we think of hiring a teacher anyplace in an urban center for a beginning salary of less than $6,000. It's time we took a look at what we're paying for the kind of talent we need to help disadvantaged youth.

paul briggs

Superintendent of Schools
Cleveland, Ohio

sidney p. marland, jr.

Superintendent of Schools
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Big Issues in the Big City Schools

The great issues of our society reside in the big cities. Education lies close to the solutions of these great issues, if not absolutely uppermost. In my view, two of the great issues are (1) erosion of the power of boards of education by the organized teaching profession, and (2) the search for racial equality and uplift of our minorities.

First, the erosion of the board of education. There are several factors at work at the conscious or unconscious subversion of local boards of education and their authority in big cities. Not the least of these is the recent federal plunge into local programs and the increasing state legislation mandating services. And here I call attention to laws I think trespass against local boards by mandating some things that do not require mandating — curriculum, salary, building standards and other conditions for learning and teaching.

But the most dramatic and significant force in the big cities is the swiftly emerging strength of the labor movement. The faculties of the big cities are now broadly unionized in America. Boards of education are committed to a course of bargaining in virtually all matters pertaining to teaching and learning.

Whether we accept the idea of organized labor in industry or not, we know it is here to stay — in my judgment rightly so, for the good of both parties and for the good of society as it relates to industry. Admitting my bias as a teacher, I am compelled to point up some basic concerns over labor's success in winning support of many urban teachers. Big labor with its muscle, money and know-how has undertaken the task of organizing teachers in the big cities. This creates a three-way conflict, the adversaries being the National Education Association, the board of education, and the labor movement.

Boards of education are different from corporate boards in industry and that's the fundamental difference to which I would lift my voice in opposing the conventional labor movement in the teaching profession. Boards of education are the people; they are society. They have been established in the laws very specifically state by state, and they have been given very specific responsibilities. Our American design for control of the schools by the people is at the headwaters of our system of

freedom. Public schools historically and literally are the chief instrument for our society as it seeks ever-increasing freedom for all through equality of opportunity. Still far from perfect, the design has served our people well and shows promise of increased effectiveness in the future if maintained.

The essence of the labor movement in our schools is that the establishment of school policies and programs, declared by law to be the responsibility of the people through the board of education, is now to be negotiated. This is the largest threat to the American design for free schools that I know of. It removes the school from the authority of the people and conceives of the process of policy determination as being up for grabs.

Given an honest and reasonable and representative board of education and given a body of professional staff who are worthy of their art and science, there is no significant and continuing conflict between the two parties. Both parties, each in its own way, are concerned with the optimum fulfillment of each child in those schools. There's no basic conflict, unless by repetitious and skillful union declarations the notion becomes a self-confirming hypothesis that boards and teachers must quarrel, and, indeed, both parties do drift into the permanent posture of adversaries.

More conciliatory in style and more conscious of the responsibility of the superintendent and the board, the NEA has nevertheless formally and officially declared itself for the process of negotiated policy.

• • •

What does the chief executive of the big city schools do about this? Does he default and let either the union or the professional association take over? Does he hold to one and reject the other? Does he pretend there is no issue, that he is such a good leader that his teachers won't do this to him?

I know that boards of education and superintendents are not blameless in this rebellion. Unenlightened management, including intransigent boards and superintendents, has for too long given only lip service to freedom for the public school teacher and has held firmly to autocratic decision-making, offensive to the dignity of professional

people. Professionals cannot be subservient.

In Pittsburgh, we have accepted neither the NEA nor the union as such. There is no bargaining or negotiating. We believe we have a better course of action for teachers as well as for the people; we call it the "Professional Advisory Commission." It is a body of 15 teachers, elected by their colleagues, who meet monthly or more often with the superintendent. It is working today. It could be destroyed tomorrow either by the union or the NEA. But the teacher in Pittsburgh does not need to turn to the union or the NEA to struggle for a right to share in his own destiny. That right and indeed that responsibility have been declared by the boards of education and the machinery has been contrived for its fulfillment.

Our position is that no good solutions in education come about either for teachers or children from deliberations in which one party holds a pistol to the other. That is what has happened in the big cities of our land. That is what's tragic about the erosion of boards of education in America.

• • •

I believe the struggle for racial equality in America is the largest of the many issues facing education in the big cities; it is also the largest domestic issue facing our nation today. The problem is especially acute in our big cities because that's where most of our Negro children are. Cities are therefore the places where something good can happen if we are sufficiently determined that it shall.

As teachers by definition, we superintendents are dedicated to the fulfillment of all the children we serve. The superintendent is also a champion of the law and the law says now very clearly that segregated schools shall not be tolerated. Thus by law, and moreover by reason of deep commitment to social justice, the school superintendent in big cities must believe in racial equality and racial integration. But it is one thing to believe and it is quite another to solve the real problems deriving from centuries of oppression. It is one thing to legislate equality and quite another to run a school system that honestly fulfills the intent of the civil rights law.

This aspect of the school's role in our society

has been suddenly and jarringly thrust upon us as educators. We know something of the process of teaching and learning, we know something of school organization and administration, but to be suddenly put in the high position of remaking a social order immediately finds us unprepared, ill-staffed and poorly trained for the job.

Unready as we are however, there is no other agency of government as appropriate as the school for this new charge. One of the responsible leaders of the civil rights movement in the schools stated to me that the schools are the city's soft underbelly in the matter of civil rights, and we are just that. Soft, sensitive, visible, white, luminous, responsive, tender, compassionate, vulnerable, the white belly . . . the soft, vulnerable white belly of civil rights.

• • •

What is a racially balanced school and how does it stay balanced. We have arranged for open enrollment in Pittsburgh and provide transportation. But, in some classes, we now have more transferred Negro children than white. Do we halt the transfer policy while there is still available space? Do we establish a quota at 40%, 50% or 60%? The law forbids quotas in housing. The Negro properly hates quotas. Does the school become resegregated as a product of our very act to integrate?

In 1950 there were eight Pittsburgh schools with 80% or more Negro children; in 1955 there were nine; in 1960 there were 13; now there are 23. The rate is accelerating and we don't know how to stop it. Populations do not arrange themselves into nearly balanced patterns in our big cities.

Good teaching is individualized whatever the school may be. If it is not completely individualized, it is performed in small homogeneous groups. Is it useful to integrate a school building and then immediately segregate the children by present ability, according to sound teaching techniques? Or do we make some pretext of artificial integration irrespective of good teaching? This is a basic and sober question for the teachers.

• • •

We are now at the end of two years of detailed planning of what we will call the great high schools of Pittsburgh. We now have 22 high schools, and we are going to wipe them out as high schools. We'll create four or five high schools enrolling up to 6,000 or more children. These schools will be big enough, excellent enough, comprehensive enough to leap across the boundaries and differences that have segregated parts of our cities, and all the reasons that held people apart. Railroad tracks, rivers, ravines and gullies, forests, parks and ridges will no longer be excuses.

This will be a rational and reasonable and logical approach to integration. We hold that first of all there must be such excellence of educational quality in the institution that everyone will want to go there. There must be a reversal of the trend for the very reason of education in the city being better. A fair share of the favored white will choose to stay in the city or return, on the basis of education opportunities available.

During the next three years, our entire city will go through a major revolution. The people have indicated their support through the largest possible bond issue we could raise, and it was supported three to one. These will be schools for the use of thousands, they will be concerned with excellence, they will be concerned with individuality, they will be comprehensive for the whole span, from the slowest to the swiftest.

• • •

No matter what boards of education may do in terms of finding solutions for racial equality, we should not expect gratitude from the Negro community. We should not expect someone to come around wringing his hands and saying "thanks." This is compensation long due.

I would say the racial problem in our cities was more serious when it was silent, when we could pretend that there was no problem. But now that the issue cries for an answer and that men stand on the barricades demanding help, the problem is in the process of solution. The times were never so good, in spite of the frustrations, the opportunities were never so large for the people's voice, the boards of education in companionship with administrators, to bring greatness to our big cities.

Meeting The Public Education Problems of Urban Minority Groups

roy wilkins

Executive Director
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

The gravity of the situation created by *de facto* school segregation and its accompanying inequality seems to escape the overwhelming majority of the persons who comprise the school establishment, and those in the urban communities who support the present procedures of their public education system. With the shifting currents in the present civil rights picture, nearly everyone asks sooner or later whether violent upheavals with distinct racial aspects will continue in our urban centers. It is my considered opinion that until we launch a crash program that seriously addresses itself to the gross and disgraceful racial discrimination and inequities in our public school systems in Northern and Western urban centers, we will have riotous outbreaks plaguing us with disturbing frequency.

We will have riots not because Negro extremist fringe elements and some Negro young people use such outbreaks to demand better schools but because the world of education has failed to teach the language of democracy, opportunity and dignity.

The Negro sense of responsibility, for which urban officials plead, is absent because these officials never took the trouble to be responsible in their relations with the ghetto. The rioters, actual and incipient, are as much the product of the school machine which never bothered to adapt itself to their special predictments, or to administer to their special needs, as they are the product of the more crass aspects of ghetto segregation, such as overcrowding, drug addiction, crime, juvenile delinquency, neglect, broken families and unemployment.

Thus whether they admit it or not, an awesome responsibility rests upon our public schoolmen. They can halt the deAmericanization of America and the destruction of our central cities by radically altering their leisurely and hair-splitting approach to the problems of the education of minority group children.

We must have a crash program because we are facing, as a nation, a crisis. Bluntly stated, the alternative to the dillydallying of the day is riots.

• ● •

Negro migration to the Northern cities began in World War I. Some came North because they were

recruited to take places in heavy industry which were empty because immigrants were staying in Europe to fight the Kaiser. They came North for educational opportunity for their children, for the exercise of the right to vote, and for general advancement.

When they got here they were placed in ghettos. It was easy to handle the influx of the Negro population, not by analyzing it, but by segregating it. It was easy to shove them off in a section of town — over by the railroad tracks, down by the warehouse, and in the older areas from which white families were moving. They were kept there by the forces which today wring their hands, look askance, and ask, "What are we going to do about the problems of the Negro in the cities?"

• • •

How was segregation instituted? The first and easiest way was to gerrymander the school district. This was coupled with an easy transfer system for white children, but not for Negro. Then there were teacher assignments whereby the new and inexperienced teachers were sent into the Negro district. They remained a year or two, until they could select a better assignment.

There were people who believed the Negro child was uneducable, so they marked time with them.

Reading materials and textbooks were lily-white. Buildings were overcrowded and the slogan seemed to be: Just keep them there, don't move them anyplace.

Why did this persist? Because Northern schoolmen felt that segregation didn't exist in their schools. They would tell you vehemently, "We don't have segregation." It was done so inobtrusively, so unofficially through administrative slickness, that actually some administrators and teachers didn't believe there was segregation.

It persisted because teachers gave up. The Negro background was just too complex for them. What do you do when you meet a family that isn't a family, lives in a funny place, comes from all kinds of backgrounds, whose concepts of things are naive? You either try to solve it and try to help the kids, or you give up. Most teachers gave up.

• • •

We're faced with a very real problem. What do we do about it? The answer is that some people will have to do different things about it. You can't do the same thing in Canton, Ohio, that you can do in Yakima, Washington. You may not be able to do the same thing in San Francisco that you do in Boston. But nevertheless you have to do something, according to your own lights.

You must utilize the aids provided in new federal legislation, for example, the teacher corps, Title I of the ESEA, and other allocations. You have to seek additional funds locally and in the state.

We need to explore better, more unorthodox methods of education for the deprived child.

Why shouldn't we have educational parks in medium-sized cities, even in large cities. If we are going to have urban civilization (and we are), let's give some thought to how we are going to develop it. Twenty years ago we didn't have shopping centers; we had the corner grocery store. Today we have shopping centers and walking plazas. If we can do it with commercial establishments, why can't we do it with schools?

The objective is to prepare youth for life in a multi-racial nation and world. Thus school people have a duty to do something about employment opportunities and housing opportunities for Negroes.

You have to be concerned about removing the barriers to education in housing. Instead of hiding behind a residential pattern of segregation, you've got to cooperate with the forces that are trying to get rid of ghettos.

Then you have to re-educate the white community and the Negro community. On the Negro side, you have to develop belief and trust in the fact that you are trying to do something for him. He has been skeptical so long, and he has been betrayed so often that he has difficulty in believing the sincerity of white people.

• • •

I don't envy you your job. This is a very complex, emotional, high-strung problem, but it has to be done. It is like de-activating a bomb. You have to be careful, you have to be bold, you have to be ingenious, or the bomb will go off and destroy you.

bernice s. frieder

President
National Association of
State Boards of Education

The State Board of Education

I am convinced that state boards of education have an important role to play in urbanized America. I know full well, however, that state boards stand in a very exposed position. They are being attacked by some, perhaps lauded by a few. They are being dismissed as unimportant and impotent. They are being condemned for inaction, at the same time they are being exhorted to flex their muscles and do something. In short, they are being deluged by advice from many others.

Charged with setting the policy for the departments of education in the several states, the state board ought to play a central role in a very sophisticated and complicated network of relationships. For example, the state board of education usually has supervision over the public schools in the state which implies there is interchange with local boards and superintendents. But what we, as state board members, do is based on the law. Here we see another central relationship which must be maintained, effective communications with the legislature and with other officials in the government. Educational programs must be planned as a part of a complete social and economic program.

State boards should be in a position to present effectively to the legislature and the governor the educational needs of the state. And in those instances where the representation of need is not successful, state boards ought to be prepared to make a stiff fight for what they believe is necessary.

• • •

State board members have innumerable roles to play, many of which are not clearly defined. The state board member, that man in the middle, is called upon to be a leader, to be an architect of change and adapt quickly to new social forces, to be an activist, to be a statesman, to be an intellectual, to be a politician, and to be, in the eyes of many of our constituents, a professional educator as well.

• • •

There is a direct relationship between a state school district reorganization program which makes educational, economic, social and political sense and the problem of the urban areas. It is clearly up to us to initiate action which will lead to the needed reform.

max lerner

Professor, Brandeis University
Columnist, New York Post

The Role of State Departments of Education in Urban Problems

A truism today is the revolutionary nature of the society in which all of us, as teachers, administrators, citizens and parents, are functioning. We have a revolutionary society, but I wonder to what extent we ask ourselves the meaning of the concept of revolution?

There are two meanings of the term "revolution." In one sense it means overthrow of the government by some kind of direct action, the transfer of power from one ruling group to another ruling group. Even in that sense we had a very early revolution. But there is a second sense in which the term has more meaning today. That is, a rapid change of pace within the society — within particular segments of it or within the society as a whole — so rapid that the accelerated pace achieves a breakthrough, shaking of the very foundations of society. In that sense, we are the most revolutionary society in the world today.

In speaking of revolution in this sense, you are speaking of things that are happening all around you, often that you are not aware of, and things that are happening at random without being directed, without being channeled, without being organized, without being planned. And our task within this revolutionary society is to recognize changes, to organize them, to plan them, and to channel them. These changes are not always healthy, often they are not necessarily creative, often they are destructive. The problem is to channel them into channels of human usefulness and human creativeness. What this means is that these revolutions represent both a glory and a burden.

• • •

As we study the great civilizations of the past, what have been the sources of their downfall and death? I have come up with some tentative hypotheses. (1) Some have died from overreaching. They have tried to do too much on too small a base. (2) Some have died from rigidity of their master institutions. (3) Some have died from lack of will and lack of cohesion. I'm talking now not of individual will, but collective will and the cohesion of groups within the civilization — the family, the neighborhood, the city, the region, the nation. (4) Some have died from a failure of collective intelligence.

As a civilization, how healthy are we? How sick are we? I am not able to give the answer sharply, not because I don't think there are answers to many of our problems, but because each of us must fashion the answer for himself through certain criteria. I do want to suggest the criteria for health and sickness in a civilization.

- Whatever in a civilization is exclusive is sick. Whatever is inclusive is healthy. Whatever draws a circle to shut certain groups out is sick. Whatever draws a circle and includes all groups, all human beings in a civilization, and includes them equally is healthy.
- Whatever is life-denying is sick. Whatever is life-approving is healthy.
- Whatever increases awareness and sensibility and perception in the human connection with others is healthy. Whatever desensitizes is sick.
- Whatever is unrooted is sick. Whatever is organic is healthy.
- Whatever prevents young people from actualizing themselves, from fulfilling themselves, from exploring their potentials and life's heights and depths is sick. Whatever leaves scars on the hearts of some, discriminating them from others, is sick. Whatever gives them a feeling that life is compassable for them, that they can stretch out their hands and claim the future, is healthy.

Now you will say these criteria are vague. Of course, they are. They're vague because they are value criteria. It is always very difficult to make values concrete. Values have to do with the things we affirm and believe.

However, I believe all of us need to think through and develop some kind of test for what is sick and healthy in a civilization or in a community. To me the greatest sin against our society, and against ourselves, is to waste our human resources.

This leads, of course, to the question of the social frame in which our young people are getting whatever chance they have to grow up, to develop and to fulfill their potentials. One part of social frame is the urban revolution, which is one of the multi-revolutions going on in our society. We're all aware of the problems that this revolution has raised — the problems of urban sprawl, of overlapping governmental units, of confusion in the government units, of traffic congestion, of pollution, of slums, and of violence and riots. We're aware of the problems of the schools, the problems in the relationships of young people to their families, and to agencies of control other than the schools.

I mention these problems because I want to make a rather strong proposition about them. There are few if any city problems that cannot be resolved by adequate funds, by thoughtful planning and by the use of imagination and intelligence. Money is only a limited instrument. We need more than that. We need thoughtful, reflective planning about what to do with the money, and we need imagination and intelligence.

• • •

The schools have become the residuary legatees in bankruptcy of the other institutions in the community that have failed, on the whole, to do their tasks. The burdens that are placed on the schools are unparalleled in the whole history of American education.

We are expecting the schools, within the big city frame, to become a kind of leverage principle for rectifying a good many of the unhealths in our society.

It isn't a question of whether we want the leverage task or not; the fact is, it has been thrust on us at the same time the school has another more coherent task that will go on even if we resolve the leverage task: that is, maintaining and raising constantly the level and quality of the educational process in the community. Much of our confusion, I believe, lies in the fact that there is this double burden and in the fact that we haven't quite understood it is there. We have not sharpened our agencies in such a way that we know what it is that we are doing within each situation, or what we are going to use to do it with.

• • •

Our teachers, administrators, and school board members are under the necessity of stretching themselves as never before. This is how the educational system has always grown in American history. It has grown through crisis. It has grown by having burdens put upon it.

• • •

There is a danger that, in spending moneys for the poverty programs, we will not ask ourselves

what is the social and psychological frame in which the money is being spent. One aspect of that frame is the whole question of the structure of the American family and the relation between it and the philosophy of American education.

The family is no longer a tight family, over-structured and over-disciplined. It has become an unstructured family with very little cohesion. There are still some groups in our society where you will find the over-structured discipline, but on the whole in most areas, both the slums and the gilded ghettos of the suburbs, the family is unstructured. This means that the impact of the unstructured family on the growing-up process is an impact to which we have to orient our whole educational thinking and approach.

Our society is becoming a Babylonian society. The things that surround a young boy or girl, no matter what stratum of society they come from, have to do with sexual seductiveness, freedom of living with no limits, the breaking of codes, and the journey into the interior with drugs. The advertisements that surround them, the TV shows, the book jackets, the magazine covers, the insides of books and magazines — all that surrounds them has a Babylonian image.

If you are a Puerto Rican, Haitian, Cuban or Negro in New York, you're at the bottom of the social heap. You look all around and see this Babylonian image. Deep within yourself, you know that your destiny lies in staying at the bottom of the heap — and there's violence within you.

Why should we be surprised at the violence?

• • •

One of the paradoxes is that the living standards for these young people and their families are improving all the time. The conditions of the city environment are improving, but expectations are increasing faster than the improvement of conditions. The gap that we have is the expectation gap. What these young people have is a terrible sense of helplessness and hopelessness, a feeling of being trapped at the bottom of the heap, a feeling of being trapped in whatever cage they are in, and the impulse to break out of the cage.

If they have this impulse to break out of the cage, how do they try to escape? Let me enumerate very quickly the ways; you will recognize every one of them. They break out by early sex with or without marriage, by drugs, by ethnic riots, ethnic violence between various ethnic groups, and hatred as a creed.

Growing up in America is one of the hardest things in the world. Much harder than in other cultures, not because we are so prosperous nor because there are such opportunities open, but because of the sense of the gap between expectation and opportunity.

• • •

In the growing-up years, you need to identify yourself with someone and you need to rebel against whomever you identify with. The effort to find someone in the family upon whom to model yourself is not easy in many families. This is true in the ghettos and in the suburbs. If you don't find someone with whom you can identify and when the time comes to rebel, what happens? Your rebellion becomes diffused; it becomes a rebellion against the whole society. Ultimately it turns in against yourself and it becomes destructive.

The problem of identity is very difficult in growing up because these young people don't have the opportunity for developing the potentials they have. This is what I meant when I said that just having money to spend is not enough. You need to know how to spend it in order to do something about the relationship between the child and his family, the child and the community, and the child and the teacher. The teacher may have to take on some of the added burdens of being a model.

• • •

In essence, I'm suggesting that with all the wealth, all the affluence, all the power of our civilization, and all the revolutionary changes taking place, we still have the task of trying to civilize our civilization.

If we are able to perform some of these tasks, I think these young people will be able to stretch out their hands and claim the future. If we don't do this, then what Adlai Stevenson said will be true: there will be other hands, more destructive hands, bloody hands that stretch out to that future to claim them.

Symposium Panelists and Presiding Officers

First Session

Introduction of the Speakers: **wayne shaffer,** Ohio Board of Education

frank dick (moderator)
Superintendent
Toledo, Ohio, Schools

james rowland
Member
Pennsylvania State Board

rev. c. e. elwell
Superintendent
Cleveland, Ohio, Diocesan Schools

james sensenbaugh
State Superintendent
Maryland

frank gorman
Legislator
Ohio House of Representatives

robert french
Superintendent
Dayton, Ohio, Schools

Second Session

Introduction of the Speaker and Panel Moderator: **robert grogan,** Ohio Board of Education

lorin bixler
Member
Ohio Board of Education

j. h. wanamaker
Superintendent
Youngstown, Ohio, Schools

byron hansford
Commissioner of Education
Colorado

harold nichols
Superintendent
Newark, Ohio, Schools

joseph hall
Executive Director
Urban League, Cincinnati, Ohio

freeman vaughn
Director, Special Services
National School Boards Association

Third Session

Introduction of the Speaker: **jeannette wagner,** Ohio Board of Education

mark schinnerer (moderator)
Legislator
Ohio House of Representatives

james fanner
Administrative Assistant
Cleveland, Ohio, Schools

richard p. gousha
State Superintendent
Delaware

m. morris jackson
Legislator
Ohio Senate

george young
Superintendent
Canton, Ohio, Schools

paul l. walker
Member
Ohio Board of Education

Fourth Session

Introduction of the Speaker: **chester k. gillespie,** Ohio Board of Education

hugh calkins (moderator)
Member
Cleveland, Ohio, Board

bernice s. frieder
President
National Association
of State Boards of Education

paul e. farnum
Commissioner of Education
New Hampshire

j. warren houston
Director, Midwest Region
National Urban League

george stone
President
American Federation of Teachers
Cleveland

william judd
Member
Ohio Board of Education

Fifth Session

Introduction of the Speaker: **ray kimmey,** Ohio Board of Education

lawrence hawkins (moderator)
Director
Economic Opportunity
Services, Cincinnati

peter opewall
Professor, Calvin College
Michigan Board Member

c. neale bogner
Dean, College of Education
Miami University (Ohio)

john weeks
Legislator
Ohio Senate

duane j. mattheis
Commissioner of Education
Minnesota

jay e. wagner, jr.
Member
Ohio Board of Education

Symposium Summary: **robert manchester,** Ohio Board of Education