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This paper analyzes some of the causes of urban educational problems. The major focus is on poverty, racial isolation, and the educational bureaucracy. These factors are discussed in some detail. In a section devoted to attempts to change the educational situation several avenues and approaches are presented. Most crucial is the broadening of attendance areas to promote effective school desegregation. Also important are such remedies for educational improvement as team teaching, a nongraded system, flexible scheduling, independent study, a continuous progress curriculum, and flexible facilities. However, the major obstacle to change is the deeply entrenched bureaucracies and power structures in urban school systems and in city politics. (NY)

U R B A N E D U C A T I O N

- and -

"THE HERITAGE OF THE GREATER CULTURES

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The Schools and the Urban Crisis, (1965)

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URBAN EDUCATION

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This paper explores some of the factors that make the task formidable, and why our urban schools have thus far, largely, failed.

Education as an urban problem cannot be divorced from the complex of problems in housing, employment, segregation, and organized welfare. Obviously, it is fundamental to the solution of these problems, but its contribution to that solution requires not only re-thinking, but also a time lag before its progress will yield sufficient rewards. If we are to set the educational forces of reform in motion to attain significant results, rather than the quick and "gimmicky" programs which have characterized recent urban attempts, our re-thinking must look at the causes of the problems, rather than only their symptoms.

In this paper, I will offer my analysis of some of the causes of our urban educational problems, based both on the published material available and on personal experience. The causes which I feel should most immediately concern educational policy makers are: poverty, racial isolation, and the urban educational bureaucracy.

I. The Dimensions of Poverty

The Office of Economic Opportunity has defined the state of poverty as one in which a person's income is not sufficient to purchase the goods and services necessary to sustain a minimum existence in the U. S. It assumes, based on substantial research, that all income is spent, and 1/3 is spent on food. Food is computed on minimum daily essentials at USDA price report figures and assumes that farm families require only 70% the income of urban families. Thus a sliding scale defining poverty was computed, which ranges from $1,000 for a single person on a farm to $5,000 for an urban family with seven children. (Dimensions of Poverty in 1966, OEO) According to this scale, thirty-five million persons, or 1/5 of U. S. population, reside in poverty, Over 1/3 are non-white (but only 1/10 of U. S. population is non-white). The result is that 3/5 of the non-whites live in poverty. Thus, it is impossible to separate the problems of poverty from those of race. The following table illustrates the poverty and race percentages:

U.S. Population Percentage '66	Non-Poor	Poor	Total
White	76%	14% (1/7)	90%
Non-white	4%	6% (3/5)	10%
Total	80%	20% (1/5)	100%

Half of the poor live in urban areas (2/3 of U. S. population is urban), the other half are rural where only 1/3 of U. S. population resides. Half are under twenty-one years of age. Half are in households headed by women in which only 1/5 were employed full-time last year.

When we add the disadvantaged to those in poverty, the case can easily be made for including almost 1/4 of the children in all U. S. public schools, as high as 1/2 of the children in urban schools, and 90% of the children in ghetto schools. The definition of such disadvantaged youth was prescribed by the NDEA amendments to include "culturally, economically, socially, and educationally handicapped youth" (Public Law 88-665, sec. 1101). I believe a more appropriate term might be "opportunity deprived", for the opportunity to achieve commensurate with their abilities is what the poor are deprived of. The NDEA Title XI Institutes for Teachers of Disadvantaged Youth define such youth as...

> "Children (who) lack the experiences, attitudes, values, language, and skills necessary for success in school. The result is lowered accomplishment, school failure, a higher percentage of school dropouts, and a greater likelihood of conflict with society. In general, such youth live in neighborhoods, communities, or areas characterized by large proportions of out-of-school, unemployed youth; by family incomes at the poverty level; by high rates of unemployment and low levels of occupational skill; by adults with limited formal schooling; and by high proportions of substandard, overcrowded, and inadequate housing."

II. Racial Isolation

After intense and scholarly studies by James Coleman (Equality of Educational Opportunity) and the Civil Rights Commission (Racial Isolation in the Public Schools) their conclusions for education were succinctly stated by Frank Freeman (a member of the Civil Rights Commission). He wrote ---

> "...racial isolation... apart from being poor democracy... (is) poor economy, and criminally poor educational policy... when it is in the inter-action with advantaged children which appears to be the single most effective factor in narrowing the learning gap." (Racial Isolation, '67)

When Negro and whites attend schools together, the achievement of whites is not significantly decreased. In fact, the case for increased cultural understandings by both white and Negro can easily be made. The summary statement of the Civil Rights Commission's Racial Isolation Study (pp. 202-204) lists the extent of the educational problems in these words:

> " 1. There are marked disparities in the outcomes of education for Negro and white Americans. Negro students typically do not achieve as well in school as white students. The longer they are in school the further they fall behind. Negroes are enrolled less often in college than whites and are much more likely to attend high schools which send a relatively small proportion of their graduates to college. Negroes with college education are less likely than similarly educated whites to be employed in white-collar trades. Negroes with college education earn less on the average than high-school educated whites. These disparities result, in part, from factors that influence the achievement, aspirations, and attitudes of school children.
>
> 2. There is a strong relationship between the achievement and attitudes of a school child and the economic circumstances and educational background of his family. Relevant factors that contribute to this relationship include the material deprivation and inadequate health care that children from backgrounds of poverty often experience, the fact that disadvantaged children frequently have less facility in verbal and written communication - the chief vehicle by which schools measure student achievement - and the inability of parents in poor neighborhoods to become as involved in school affairs and affect school policy as much as more affluent parents.
>
> 3. The social class of a student's schoolmates - as measured by the economic circumstances and educational background of their families - also strongly influences his achievement and attitudes. Regardless of his own family background, an individual student achieves better in schools where most of his fellow students are from advantaged backgrounds than in schools where most of his fellow students are from disadvantaged backgrounds. The relationship between a student's achievement and the social class composition of his school grows stronger as the student progresses through school.
>
> 4. Negro students are much more likely than white students to attend schools in which a majority of the students are disadvantaged. The social class composition of the schools is more important to the achievement and attitudes of Negro students than whites.

5. There are noticeable differences in the quality of schools which Negroes attend and those which whites attend. Negro students are less likely than whites to attend schools that have well-stocked libraries. Negro students also are less likely to attend schools which offer advanced courses in subjects such as science and languages and are more likely to be in overcrowded schools than white students. There is some relationship between such disparities and the achievement of Negro students.

6. The quality of teaching has an important influence on the achievement of students, both advantaged and disadvantaged. Negro students are more likely than white students to have teachers with low verbal achievement, to have substitute teachers, and to have teachers who are dissatisfied with their school assignment.

7. The relationship between the quality of teaching and the achievement of Negro students generally is greater in majority-Negro schools than in majority-white schools. Negro students in majority-white schools with poorer teachers generally achieve better than similar Negro students in majority-Negro schools with better teachers.

8. There is also a relationship between the racial composition of schools and the achievement and attitudes of most Negro students, which exists when all other factors are taken into account.

(a) Disadvantaged Negro students in school with a majority of equally disadvantaged white students achieve better than Negro students in school with a majority of equally disadvantaged Negro students.

(b) Differences are even greater when disadvantaged Negro students in school with a majority of disadvantaged Negro students are compared with similarly disadvantaged Negro students in school with a majority of advantaged white students. The difference in achievement for 12th-grade students amounts to more than two entire grade levels.

(c) Negroes in predominantly Negro schools tend to have lower educational aspirations and more frequently express a sense of inability to influence their futures by their own choices than Negro students with similar backgrounds attending majority-white schools. Their fellow students are less likely to offer academic stimulation.

(d) Predominantly Negro schools generally are regarded by the community as inferior institutions. Negro students in such schools are sensitive to such views and often come to share them. Teachers and administrative staff frequently recognize or share the community's view and communicate it to the students. This stigma affects the achievement and attitudes of Negro students.

9. The effects of racial composition of schools are cumulative. The longer Negro students are in desegregated schools, the better is their academic achievement and their attitudes. Conversely, there is a growing deficit for Negroes who remain in racially isolated schools.

10. Racial isolation in school limits job opportunities for Negroes. In general, Negro adults who attended desegregated schools tend to have higher incomes and more often fill white-collar jobs than Negro adults who went to racially isolated schools.

11. Racial isolation is self-perpetuating. School attendance in racial isolation generates attitudes on the part of both Negroes and whites which tend to alienate them from members of the other race. These attitudes are reflected in behavior. Negroes who attended majority-white schools are more likely to reside in interracial neighborhoods, to have children in majority-white schools, and to have white friends. Similarly, white persons who attended school with Negroes are more likely to live in an interracial neighborhood, to have children who attend school with Negroes, and to have Negro friends."

When the heritage of the greater culture is transmitted to Negroes under these conditions, the lack of trust of the white man by Negro youths is not difficult to understand. The Civil Rights Commission's concluding statement explains the causes for these attitudes (p. 193) ---

"Negro children who attend predominantly Negro schools do not achieve as well as other children, Negro and white. Their aspirations are more restricted than those of other children and they do not have as much confidence that they can influence their own futures. When they become adults, they are less likely to participate in the mainstream of American society, and more likely to fear, dislike, and avoid white Americans. The conclusion drawn by the U. S. Supreme Court about the impact upon children of segregation compelled by law -- that it 'affects their hearts and minds in ways unlikely ever to be undone' -- applies to segregation not compelled by law.

The major source of the harm which racial isolation inflicts upon Negro children is not difficult to discover. It lies in the attitudes which such segregation generates in children and the effect these attitudes have upon motivation to learn and achievement. Negro children believe that their schools are stigmatized and regarded as inferior by the community as a whole. Their belief is founded in fact. Isolation of Negroes in the schools has a significance different from the meaning that religious or ethnic separation may have had for other minority groups because the history of Negroes in the United States has been

different from the history of all other minority groups. Negroes in this country were first enslaved, later segregated by law, and now are segregated and discriminated against by a combination of governmental and private action. They do not reside today in ghettos and the result of an exercise of free choice, and the attendance of their children in racially isolated schools is not an accident of fate wholly unconnected with deliberate segregation and other forms of discrimination. In the light of this history, the feelings of stigma generated in Negro children by attendance at racially-isolated schools are realistic and cannot easily be overcome."

III. The Poverty Cycle

Now I would like to talk about the combination of poverty and racial isolation and explain the famous poverty cycle --- from which very few average citizens can escape. President Kennedy, in his Civil Rights Message, summed up the escape probabilities as follows:

> "The Negro baby born in America today, regardless of the section of the nation ... has about one-half as much chance of completing high school as a white baby, one-third as much chance of completing college, one-third as much chance of becoming a professional man, twice as much chance of becoming unemployed, about one-seventh as much chance of earning $10,000 a year, a life expectancy... seven years shorter, and the prospect of earning only half as much."

A. Family and Community

1. The child of poverty is born into a family with more children. (2.0 mean for U. S. non-poor vs. 3.5 mean U. S. poor) - the extra 1.5 children represent an average of $900 income on the OEO sliding scale, which is an amount equal to almost half of the average annual income of the 1/5 of the nation who reside in poverty. Thus, they have more mouths to feed and persons to educate and less funds to do it on.

2. The poverty family has a 50% chance of having a woman head of the household or main "breadwinner"; while the majority middle class has a distinctly male-dominated family economic structure. There are many reasons for this.

   a. The Welfare system "encourages" absence of the father by allowing an increased payment to households where there is no employed male "breadwinner" in permanent residence. This differential, in some locales, can be as much as half of the total family income.

   b. The father is less employable. Given little education and skills, his only options are jobs which are personally degrading, in the lowest pay bracket, and usually temporary. The largest source of employment is domestic, and that is for women.

   c. If the family is Negro, the matriarchal tradition has been economically and socially grounded in U. S. civilization since the days of slavery. Women are the only ones who can get "respectable jobs"; girls are the only ones encouraged to continue their schooling because they are the only ones for whom it has a pay off. Educated Negro males, until very recently, were no more employable than uneducated ones.

   d. Thus: no adult male model is established which is "acceptable" to U. S. middle-class society. Even in elementary schools, less than 2% have male teachers in the inner cities. Since children learn by models --- no models = less learning.

3. The working mother is rarely at home after school. Ask your wife how much time she spent each day listening to your children talk about their day's school experience when they return from the early elementary grades, and you'll get a glimpse of what no one at home can mean. It means communicate with and get your rewards from the gang.

4. All income is spent, all gratifications are immediate -- no encouragement or models for middle class delayed gratification. Rewards must be NOW! There is no tomorrow. The way of life simply doesn't include saving up for a later and larger prize, whether the commodity being saved is money or education. And this is not so strange; it is typical of all more primitive societies. Only they don't live in the affluent U. S. and have the comparison thrown at them daily.

5. Rewards and punishments are physical. You get beat if you do something wrong; you don't get beat if you do it right. But you don't get allowances, material rewards, or an excess of affection for behaving "right" either. In the rare instances where the school has been able to reverse this, and use positive reinforcement for whatever the substandard level of performance was, that performance dramatically increased. Unfortunately, years of no positive reinforcement create such a vacuum that few schools are equipped to continually fill it.

Even more unfortunate is the fact that few schools have made an attempt. The pressures to revert to traditional ways soon prevail.

6. Thus, the positive reinforcement emerges as peer or gang acceptance at a much earlier age. And you soon learn to play the game --- or there simply are no rewards. Peer approval so far outweighs family approval (since there is no school approval as an option) that there is no choice.

7. The models of older siblings are much closer at home, not removed by middle class schools and social rites; and siblings before you have learned and are copying the society of the streets. Thus the continued "negative" reinforcement becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you keep telling me that I am no good, I'll certainly become no good.

8. Family physical health is similarly inadequate due to lack of knowledge, information, education, money and accessibility to medical attention except for the degrading welfare clinics. Even the prices for over-the-counter medication are inflated in the ghetto, as the recent Congressional hearings have pointed out.

9. Housing is similarly inadequate. Miller, in his study of urban housing, states that nearly half of the non-whites live in homes that are or should be condemned. For this privilege the slum tenant in New York City pays $2.10 per square foot while the elevator apartments along Central Park West average $1.02. Even at this price, the slum families

must share apartments because there are no others available to their relatives immigrating to "The Promised Land" (as Claude Brown calls it) from the farms, the South, and Puerto Rico. Even if there were, there is no money to pay for them.

10. Thus the family has no choice but to exist on the economy of cheap hand-me-downs in housing, clothing, food and education, because they can never scrape up enough money to buy quality, and the case has repeatedly been made that two cheap commodities are more expensive than one good one.

B. Employment

A Labor Department study of ten urban ghettos published in March, 1967 reported that --

> "unemployment -- or subemployment -- in the city slums is so much worse than it is in the country as a whole that the national measurements of unemployment are utterly irrelevant."

The survey revealed:

> "The unemployment rate in city slums was about 10%, three times the national average. 37% of slum families had annual incomes under $3,000, compared with 25% nationally. 47% of the families received income from unemployment insurance, welfare, etc."

Employment consists of domestic, service industries, and assembly lines for women. There is almost nothing for urban men that has any dignity (e.g., push carts in the garment district, janitors, etc.). If Negro, there is even less chance of employment, with discrimination in unions and in the unskilled labor fields. There frequently is no choice but welfare or crime.

The Moreland Commission in New York State, after a very careful and systematic study, concluded that 1/4 to 1/2 of the persons on welfare have no other choice. Yet, the same study showed that, when given any possible alternative, from 79% to 87% of the residents of low-income housing projects in Spanish Harlem (New York City's lowest socio-economic section) did NOT go on welfare. The problem is that there are no alternatives except those artificially created. Even welfare can result in fewer funds, as can be illustrated by the case history of urban renewal, or its more accurate title, "urban removal". Few, if any, benefit economically by relocation. The rents usually are higher than before. The relocation allowance is inadequate to cover the difference for more than a few months. The cost of commuting to work increases. What little credit was established in the former location is wiped out, and the loan sharks rapidly "eat up" the newcomers. Then, too, the all-important peer relationships are shattered, and one has to prove himself all over again, with much less economic or psychological security to do it on than the middle-class relocated person.

C. Education

Look at the conditions reported by teachers in a ghetto school, and then think of how much more intolerable they must be for students. The following was exerpted from an article in the National Observer (September 18, 1967) on why the New York City teachers resigned in a mass protest.

Junior High 145 is neither the worst nor the best of New York City's slum schools. Built to accommodate 1,600 students, it now has 1,550. Its student body is 47 per cent Puerto Rican, 52 per cent Negro, and 1 per cent white.

The school opened with only 70 of 100 teaching positions filled; 50 of the teachers were "totally inexperienced, and many were forced to teach subjects other than for which they were trained." The principal, himself newly appointed, had only one assistant although the organization table called for four.

The building itself was unfinished. Books didn't arrive. The cafeteria was not open. Eleven shops were unusable, and six months later 75 per cent of the shop equipment was still not delivered. The science wing had no teachers and only 10 per cent of its equipment. Only 10 per cent of the audio-visual equipment had been delivered, and JHS 145 had to borrow books from surrounding schools.

In short, says a report written for UFT in June 1966, "we were forced to be in a building cluttered with the debris and dangers of construction. We were without adequate books and supplies. We were short 30 teachers. We lacked an experienced administrative staff. We witnessed children deprived of a year's education and damaged to a degree that probably can never be determined. We witnessed fights between children, assaults on teachers, and mass hysteria."

'WE BLAMED THE CHILDREN'

Though the principal did all he could to get more staff and equipment, "the situation worsened...The staff started to lose heart. Our resentment began to build up and we began to direct our frustrations against tangible things in the school itself. We began to argue with and mistrust each other. We attacked the principal. We blamed the children...

"Per diem substitutes were hired. Some stayed and were assets to the school. But most remained a day or two, leaving books, supplies, and the children in disarray, and adding to the confusion. Many children were faced with the ordeal of a different teacher a day with the prospect of many days without a teacher at all. Children who were bewildered and embittered by indifference or absent parents at home intensified their bitterness at finding the same thing happening in school. Cutting of classes, ringing of fire alarms, physical abuse to the building, assaults on teachers, and fights between the children increased."

This is the educational environment committed, as our opening quotation from Havighurst said, "...to transmitting the heritage of the greater cultures". Whatever educational achievement occurs in this environment can hardly be attributed to the school.

Studies by the Russell Sage Foundation and Martin Deutsch in New York City schools clearly indicate that pupils regress in ghetto schools. The distance between their measured achievement and the norms for their grade level progressively increases. So we find that the longer a kid remains in a ghetto school, the lower he achieves in proportion to his middle-class peers. Not only do they not maintain grade level achievement, but in some schools, they actually decrease in academic performance as they progress through elementary school. This, of course, is closely associated with the educational problems resulting from racial isolation.

Dr. Robert Dentler (Director of the Center for Urban Studies) claims that we could not have designed a more inefficient educational system if we had tried. The inefficiency of the system in academic performance is statistically worse than what could occur purely by the probability of chance.

The truth is that the education a child of the ghetto receives is totally irrelevant to what his immediate society is forcing him to learn in order to immediately survive in it.

1. The content is irrelevant to his needs. It is based on middle-class norms. The means of assessing content -- the testing system -- is also based on middle-class norms. From "Dick and Jane" to American history, the curriculum is as irrelevant and as self-debasing (by continually illustrating the comparison) as watching "Whitey's" TV is to the Negro adults. Even the new integrated readers are only black "Dick and Janes". Not really new, and no more relevant.
2. The teaching methods are irrelevant to his way of life. They are in no way congruent with the persons and environmental forces that created him. Lecturing persists, and every shred of research evidence indicates that this is the lowest level of teaching. On the streets, though, group discussion, a much higher level of teaching, is doing whatever teaching is really taking place for the ghetto kid.
3. The reward system of tokenism and delayed gratification, epitomized by the grading system, is meaningless. It is as meaningless as talking to a peasant starving in India about the U. N. and brotherhood.
4. The teachers are the "occupation army" who are not part of his community, and who not only do not understand it, but who degrade the only things the ghetto kid knows or has to cling to.
5. The school organization is often over-structured, regimented, and almost completely opposite to the environment in which the child has learned whatever he has learned to date.

6. The buildings themselves are out of date. Over half of the schools in the ghettos of New York City and Washington, D. C., were constructed prior to 1935.
7. The curricular materials are usually mass ordered more than a year in advance with little provision for individualization.
8. The track system used in many cities reinforces all the negative stereotypes by classifying kids as the bottom of the barrel, and that is the most certain way of insuring that they remain there. The psychology of defeatism is pervasive in slum schools.
9. Add to the school problems the mobility rates of students and teachers, and you can understand why the only stability is that enforced by the bureaucratic system. Pupil transfer is enormous in slum schools --- 100% in many Harlem schools. This is partially because of urban renewal and family relocation, and because families must go where the jobs are --- from city to city in the human search for self-improvement. I can tell you of several of my friends who have never attended a school for more than 1/2 year. The highest teacher transfer rates are from the ghetto schools, and then it is usually the worst teachers who remain or those who are religiously dedicated to the cause of improving urban schools. And these are darn few!
10. Even the food in cafeteria is alien to them. In this, as in other aspects of their education, the consumers are rarely consulted.

11. It is no wonder that kids are dropouts, kickouts, or pushouts in urban ghetto schools. There is simply nothing of meaning in there for them. This is evident when you talk to ghetto kids; they can give you answers on housing problems, union discrimination, employment, and most other poverty-related areas. But when it comes to education --- no answer. It is just too ridiculously irrelevant. When you get any honest answers at all, what do you get? The learning the schools reinforced goes like this: They taught me to lie --- because the truth was unacceptable. They taught me to cheat --- because that was the only way to get by. There was no payoff in honesty. They taught me to con --- because I could perfect it there. The gang was far to savvy. And they <u>FORCED</u> me to learn reading and arithmetic. Thus, we find that in the fourteen largest cities, the dropout rate in ghettos exceeds 80%.

12. In the adolescent code (which has been cross-culturally researched by Gottlieb and others), adults, peers, family, and friends are consciously or unconsciously ranked in the order of both their desire and ability to help the youth reach his goal, however vague, unrealistic, or immediate that goal may be. (It is similar to the Bill's plus-minus system. Desire and ability is the top (+,+) and no desire and no ability to assist the kid obtain his goals is on the bottom.)

Urban schools rate minus-minus; the kids perceive them as having neither the desire nor the ability to help them reach their goals. Thus, only the physical force and the pleading of parents keeps ghetto kids in schools. And this lasts only until adolescence, when peer pressures increase and the natural urge to resist parents' advice asserts itself.

D. Summary

The poverty cycle then is a vicious spiral of too many children, too little money, no meaningful employment, poor houses, broken families, immediate gratification needs, inadequate medical attention. The necessity of buying cheap goods which wear out faster and must be replaced more frequently, few acceptable adult models appropriate to middle-class society, high starch diets forced by cheap foods, insufficient sleep because several share the same bed, insufficient clothing which frequently must be shared in winter, younger siblings to take care of during school hours so mother can work, higher interest rates, higher food, housing, and medical costs, no knowledge of where to turn for advice and a distrust of the usual avenues for assistance, an irrelevant educational system, etc., etc., etc. Any and all of these are highly correlated with disease, school droupouts, illegitimacy, delinquency, crime, alcoholism, and dope addiction. These are the cultural heritages each generation passes down to the next as the distance between the middle class in our affluent society and the bottom of the barrel continues to increase. (In no other

country is the distinction between the middle class and the poor so pronounced and in such proportions, because in no other society is the middle class so affluent.)

The cycle of poverty has been documented in numerous books, from Harrington's "The Other American" to the latest report by the Council of Economic Advisors. In this, they write:

> "Poverty breeds poverty. A poor individual or family has a high probability of staying poor. Low incomes carry with them high risks of illness; limitations on mobility; and limited access to education, information, and training. Poor parents cannot give their children the opportunities for better health and education needed to improve their lot. Lack of motivation, hope and incentive is a more subtle but no less powerful barrier than lack of financial means. Thus the cruel legacy of poverty is passed from parents to children."

IV. The System of Urban Education and Factors Influencing its Change

A. The Urban Bureaucracy

The above statement is equally valid for the system of power structures which comprize the urban school system. Urban education is a bureaucracy, with all its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of increased efficience are obvious almost by default simply because man has not yet devised another system for administrating large numbers of people. To attack the bureaucracy with an eye toward replacing it would only result in the creation of another bureaucracy. Yet the disadvantages of a bureaucracy in the face of the necessity for drastic and immediate changes are equally obvious. I have chosen to illustrate these disadvantages by the following statements which I have gleaned from the literature and personal experience about the nature of bureaucracies, the role of the school superintendent, board of education, the central power structure, and the community. They explain why the system must inhibit creative action and resist change.

1. "Each government agency operates under its own rules, impulses, and drives, responsive not so much to the citizens' needs as to its own internal organizational modes. These modes commit the staffs to never challenging the status quo, never taking risks, and never listening to voices which question." (Paul Jacobs, Harper's Magazine, October, 1967)

2. In a bureaucracy, each person's primary allegiance is to the man above him.

3. In a crisis, only the exceptional bureaucrat can afford to place his allegiance to those below him ahead of his allegiance to those above him; and the risks for doing this are high and the

sanctions great. The primary one is the lack of progressing through the promotion channels -- a factor quite contrary to the American ethic.

4. Power is concentrated at the top. This can be a tremendous advantage, but it has traditionally been a severe limitation on quality and creativity.
5. There is a host of middle management between the decision makers and the teachers. Each is a subsystem which can block the carrying out of a policy.
6. The creative and strong-willed cannot survive in the middle of this system. The price they must pay is too severe, and either they leave or their modus operandi is severely altered.
7. Thus, primarily only the mediocre can survive; and they are rewarded for doing so.
8. The system of continuous feedback, so important to the change process, is inefficient since it must filter through the various systems who alter it accordingly.
9. Reorganization is a frequent occurrence, but changes in the end product are extremely rare; and when they occur, it is the result of a brutal personnel shake-up.

Who are the most significant people in the urban educational bureaucracy? I submit there are four groups: superintendents, the board of education, the central administrative hierarchy, and the community. The community, however, is significant because of its total lack of involvement. Unfortunately, the teachers are, in

Haubrich's words, "functionaries" -- they don't enter the power picture, except as they unionize, which has some severe professional restrictions.

Let me offer some brief comments on each of the four controlling groups:

Superintendents

Most superintendents, deputy and assistant superintendents come from within the system. (New York City had only one outside superintendent; in the 14 largest cities, only Pittsburgh and San Francisco have had more "outsiders" than "insiders" in their 10 top administrative offices since 1960.) Yet research indicates that change is maximized by new top administrators from outside the system.

New York City in 1965 had 46,000 teachers and 6,500 supervisory personnel -- a ratio of almost 1 to 7. Power was concentrated in a headquarters staff of 30 persons (Executive Deputy Superintendent, Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, Board of Examiners, and 20 Assistant Superintendents). Of these 30 only 2 were appointed from outside the New York City School System.

Gettell stated that,

> "The procedures and influences in the choice of the Superintendent precondition his ability to control the system he must direct. His choice is so much dependent upon his ability to rise within that system that he can hardly be expected to challenge it once he takes over. His own rise to power is an indication of his acceptance of established interests and loyalties; his success as superintendent is a further measure of his willingness to support and enhance those interests."

The relatively short tenure of office of city superintendents has undoubtedly taken its toll as far as the power of the office is concerned. They average 3.5 years. The main reasons given in the literature were: inability to choose his own staff, administrative detail, highly-volatile political circumstances of large cities, and lack of budgetary control.

(Budget estimates are based on pre-established ratios of books and teachers to pupils and are ordered sometimes years in advance. In New York City the last Superintendent (Gross) met with his budget director only once a year.)

In addition, superintendents in cities lack the most essential power of a strong executive, the power of appointment and removal.

Central Hierarchy

Tenured supervisors hold top policy-making jobs, allowing the superintendents little flexibility; they provide him with a list from which his appointments must be made. They can block any appointment or policy decisions. Thus, no superintendent in most cities can rely on his own team of trusted advisors.

Boards of Education

The role of the board of education has been largely one of balancing conflicts, pressures, and interests; essentially, it is a mediator rather than an initiator of policy.

From the limited data available on the functioning of school boards in large cities, it seems clear that there has been an evident decline in the participation of the board in school policy formulation. Gettell, in her study of N.Y.C.,

says:

> "It appears to be related to the professionalization of the school bureaucracy and to the feeling, which pervades school boards, that its members are not competent to make certain judgments."

Community

All studies which have considered the specific role of parent or citizens groups seem to agree that they serve to reinforce official policy and rarely raise meaningful policy alternatives. Their concern is with local school problems and their impact on central policy is negligible.

The most significant trend in urban education over the past two decades has been the isolation of school administration from city government.

The elimination of public nonprofessional participants from school policy-making leaves a vacuum of leadership and diminishes, almost to the vanishing point, competition and interest. Thus, the basic test for the ability of a political system -- the converting of demands into practice -- is absent, and the result is the preservation of the status quo.

From the school studies that now exist, it seems clear that there is a greater involvement on the part of political notables in smaller communities than in cities. In cities, such notables are either more concerned with State and Federal policy, or don't live in the city, or have their children in private schools.

Thus, the lack of responsiveness to change and defense of the status quo are natural outgrowths of the "closed" policy-making that exists within school districts.

B. Decentralization

The overwhelming consensus of the researchers is that decentralization is the natural solution, but look at the obstacles to that:

1. All of the vested interest in school politics oppose decentralization -- except, possibly, the superintendent; because he alone would maximize his authority on many small blocks of power more readily than he can over the few large power blocks that now exist.
2. Other high-level administrators at central headquarters derive their power from the weight of their hierarchical responsibilities.
3. Even district superintendents, who conceivably might gain in power, are products of the system and may see any new power negated by the pressure of parents and other local groups that would be channeled locally.
4. The board of education obviously would find its power diminished by strong local boards.
5. Teacher organizations prefer to negotiate their demands centrally, backed by the weight of the entire force of a city's schools.
6. Unions would naturally view decentralization as a threat to their solidified power. Furthermore, unions would oppose arrangements flexible enough to permit district variations in such areas as teaching responsibility, class size, basis for achievement, and material purchasing.

7. The forces outside the system would probably oppose decentralization because most civic groups and civil rights groups are structured in a centralized fashion -- that is how they amass their power.
8. Then there is the yet unreconcilable problem of how you would draw district lines in a city -- by geography, by socio-economic indices, by race, by political subdivisions?

What is an urban community? In each geographic neighborhood there are many -- all competing for control of OEO Community Action funds as representatives of the poor under the "maximum feasible participation of the poor" line of the law. Whoever wins obtains a tremendous advantage in solidifying his power because, among other things, he can give jobs; and employment is the central issue in poverty.

> "The results of the study of school policymaking in New York City indicate that only minor procedural changes can be expected from the present educational system given the distribution of power within it. This power can be redistributed only through a thorough reorganization that will dislodge the central headquarters staff from its almost complete control of policy. Decentralization alone cannot create broader participation, but it can encourage participation through making the decision process more visible and by increasing competition among the participants. Additional mechanisms must be developed to stimulate greater involvement by the mayor, a diverse body of interest groups (professional and nonprofessional alike), and teachers and citizens concerned with broad aspects of educational policy. Such changes can only be achieved if the school system's ties to the community are more immediate and more direct." (Gettell, Participants & Participation)

V. Some Factors Effecting Change

The obvious question is: how do you effect changes in urban education? First, you must realize what the problems are. Some of those we have just covered. Then you should

understand the factors which effect and inhibit change.

In addition to those general principles of organizational and bureaucratic change, Griffith has written incisively about the nature of administrative change. He lists four characteristics of change in an educational setting. These are:

1. The major impetus for change in organizations is from the outside,
2. The degree and duration of the change is directly proportional to the intensity of the stimulus from the supra-system,
3. Change in an organization is more probable if the successor to the administrator is from outside the organization than if he is from inside the organization,
4. Systems respond to continuously-increasing stress, first by a lag in response, then by an over-compensatory response, and finally by catastrophic collapse of the system.

He further defines these points in the following observations:

1. The number of innovations is inversely proportional to the tenure of the chief administrator,
2. The more hierarchical the structure of the organization, the less the possibility of change,
3. When change in an organization does occur, it will tend to occur from the top down, not from the bottom up,
4. The more powerful each middle management unit is, the less change in an organization.

Research and common sense indicate that changes in bureaucratic structures cannot be revolutionary, nor can they be institutionalized from the bottom up, or by creating an isolated demonstration. Those interested in change must understand the system and employ the strengths of the establishment. The pressures which created the system and the forces which sustain it are too great to allow a severe threat to the vested interests without the high probability of a total collapse of the system. There is no single conventional lever powerful enough to immediately move the big white elephant which lumbers through the corridors of our schools. Only a carefully-contrived combination of levers can do the trick.

VI. Some Attempts at Change

What can we learn from the attempts of others to change urban education? There is an excellent film produced by N.E.T. called, "The Way It Is." This is a report of the efforts of a team of NYU experts on the teaching of the disadvantaged headed by Dr. Jack Robertson, to make some changes in schools in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. It is part of an almost 4 million dollar project put together out of funds from OE, OEO, Department of Labor, Civil Rights, HUD, NSF, and other state, city, and Federal agencies. The results to date have shown no significant changes in academic performance. The experts (on an 11-1 student-teacher ratio) have had a 50% turnover during the first year and give reports which magnify the enormity of the problem but offer no easy solution for it.

Ford Foundation's sponsoring of such programs as the Great Cities, Crusade for Opportunity, The Madison Area Project in Syracuse, Higher Horizons, and Haryou Act has led them to conclude that dumping funds into an area helps only those who receive those funds and only while the funds are available. In fact, Mario Fantini of Ford claims that Title I is making the same mistakes all over again that Ford made earlier.

There is little evidence that experimental or demonstration programs based on soft money have any substantial ripple effect throughout the system or that they become institutionalized.

Efforts at producing change in school personnel which were outside of their job environment have proven ineffective. Summer programs, evening classes, etc. have little effect when the person returns to his everyday job. Similar compensatory education programs for children have been generally ineffective simply because they are compensatory. They do not change the mainstream. The difficulty, the Civil Rights Commission pointed out, is that "compensatory education programs have attempted to solve problems that stem primarily from racial and social class isolation

in schools which themselves are isolated by race and social class."

Fantini's summary to the meeting of educational leaders in last summer's National Conference on Education of the Disadvantaged was, "If you're going to lead you've got to cope with power. You need to be responsive to other sources of power and mobilize them. The schoolman cannot lead today because he does not have sufficient power." This, of course, makes basic sense. In a crisis you cannot negotiate effectively out of a position of moral righteousness, only out of a position of power. The history of labor unions has made that very clear; so has the U. N.

The problem is further complicated in urban school systems because of the inverse power system which operates there. In rural and suburban schools we have an upright pyramid with the foundation for power, the taxpayers, at the bottom and the superintendent and the board at the top. While decisions filter down the pyramid, the top is always responsible to the people who elected it. In the cities we have just the reverse, an inverted pyramid. In this the power is concentrated on an appointed board of education and central administration at the top who are responsible to practically no one, as Gettell's study of policy in New York City points out. Decisions then funnel down to the vertex where the teachers and kids are. They have no course of action but up through the pyramid. Whereas, the rural and suburban schools have access to those who elected the power structure, the urban school has none. Thus, in cities the only recourse for the public is political pressure, for only the mayor is over the

school board and he is ultimately responsible to the electorate.

The alternate to this avenue of political pressure seems to be the riot. This is psychologically understandable. In a society that attaches all its important feelings to the possession of things, there is bound to be a gulf between anyone who has something and someone who has nothing. When you are fed up to the neck with hopelessness, when your hopes have been raised by the highest officials in local and federal government, when promises are broken, when you feel that you are getting screwed from every angle, any straw is enough to tip the balance between rational and irrational action. The difficulty is that rational action is what the heritage of thegreater culture is supposed to be teaching the younger generation through its educational system. When this system fails, and when there is no realistic hope of obtaining possessions and acceptance, the person with nothing has nothing to lose in a riot. And the question becomes not "why riot?" but "why not?"

Unquestionably, education is the key to the solution of this social disgrace. It alone can unlock the opportunities of employment, housing, and social acceptance. Education is at the base of every civil rights and anti-poverty program. It is there because the schools are not meeting this challenge. If anything, they are perpetuating the problem. In my opinion, the battle for America as a civilization will be fought between education and catastrophy in 20 urban centers.

We cannot continue to do nothing about urban education simply because we do not know what to do. We must capitalize upon the

advantages of centralized bureaucratic organization and cause a reform to happen much faster than it would in the more democratically oriented suburbs. Traditionally, urban schools have lead American education. They have lost this leadership only in the last 15 years. If education were recognized in its totality, and we admitted that the schoolhouse was not its only source, then perhaps the cities, with their advantages of bigness and centralized control, could create new educational systems that would be the envy of the small and diffuse suburbs. Until this is accomplished, the out migration of the middle class from the cities and the internal degeneration of the cities will continue.

VII. Suggested Remedies

We know how to create a good educational system. We know how to make schools relevant. But we know how to do it only in suburbs. We must apply these principles and others to the cities. These principles involve the redeployment of teachers into teams, nongradedness, flexible scheduling, independent study, a continuous progress curriculum, and flexible facilities. In cities, the single and most crucial first step is to broaden attendance areas both for a single building and for the entire city. To do this, though, usually requires a dramatic change in the entrenched bureaucratic personnel. As Woodrow Wilson said in 1913, "You cannot find your way to social reform through the forces that have made social reform necessary." New, high calibre, probably high priced

talent, must be brought in at the top and at every key office in the central staff. But this is a severe, courageous, and very threatening step to take. Yet, not to take it, or some equally drastic alternative, will sacrifice another generation of kids and merely fan the fires of social discontent.

The problem certainly is not a simple one, as John Fisher points out in his review of school desegregation in big cities:

> "Twelve years of effort, some ingeniously pro forma and some laboriously genuine, have proved that desegregating schools...is much more difficult than it first appeared. Attendance area boundaries have been redrawn; new schools have been built in border areas; parents have been permitted, even encouraged, to choose more desirable schools for their children; pupils from crowded slum schools have been bused to outlying schools; "Negro" and "white" schools have been paired and their student bodies merged; but in few cases have the results been wholly satisfactory. Despite some initial success and a few stable solutions, the consequences, for the most part, have proved disappointing. Steady increases in urban Negro population, continuing shifts in the racial character of neighborhoods...produce new problems faster than old ones could be solved."

Yet there are known ways to promote effective school desegregation. They are reviewed in the following exerpt from the Civil Rights Commission's Report. Whether the plan chosen is effective, however, depends on a number of factors. These include the leadership given by State and local officials; the application of the plan to all schools in the community; the measures taken to minimize the possibility of racial friction in the newly desegregated schools; the maintenance or improvement of educational standards; the desegregation of classes within the schools as well as the schools themselves, and the availability of supportive services for individual students who lag in achievement.

The major question is one of policy --- whether the desegregation of public schools and the improvement of the quality of education for all children are goals of sufficient importance to justify the required investment of energy and resources.

VIII. Civil Rights Commission's Recommendations

"RACIAL ISOLATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights *1967 (PP. 205-207)

REMEDY

Compensatory Programs in Isolated Schools

1. Evaluations of programs of compensatory education conducted in schools that are isolated by race and social class suggest that these programs have not had lasting effects in improving the achievement of the students. The evidence indicates that Negro children attending desegregated schools that do not have compensatory education programs perform better than Negro children in racially isolated schools with such programs.

2. Compensatory education programs have been of limited effectiveness because they have attempted to solve problems that stem, in large part, from racial and social class isolation in schools which themselves are isolated by race and social class.

3. Large-scale increases in expenditures for remedial techniques, such as those used in preschool projects funded under the Head Start Program, which improve teaching and permit more attention to the individual needs of children, undoubtedly would be helpful to many students, although it is uncertain that they could overcome the problems of racial and social class isolation.

4. Compensatory education programs on the present scale are unlikely to improve significantly the achievement of Negro students isolated by race and social class.

DESEGREGATION

5. Several small cities and suburban communities have desegregated their schools effectively. Although a variety of techniques have been used in these communities, a major part of each plan has been the enlargement of attendance areas. Desegregation generally has been accepted as successful by these communities.

6. Factors contributing to successful school desegregation include the exercise of strong leadership by State and local officials to help implement desegregation, the involvement of all schools in the community, the desegregation of classes within desegregated schools, steps to avoid the possibility of interracial friction, and the provision of remedial assistance to children who need it. The available evidence suggests that the academic achievement of white students in desegregated classrooms generally does not suffer by comparison with the

achievement of such students in all-white classrooms. Steps have been taken in communities that have desegregated their schools successfully to maintain or improve educational standards. There is also evidence that non-academic benefits accrue to white students who attend desegregated schools.

7. The techniques employed by large city school systems generally have not produced any substantial school desegregation.

(a) Techniques such as open enrollment which do not involve the alteration of attendance areas have not produced significant school desegregation. The effectiveness of open enrollment is limited significantly by the availability of space in majority-white schools and the requirement in many cases that parents initiate transfer requests and pay transportation costs. Open enrollment also does not result in desegregation of majority-Negro schools.

(b) Other techniques which do involve the alteration of attendance areas, such as school pairing, have not been as successful in producing desegregation in large cities as in smaller cities.

8. The large proportion of Negro children in many central city school systems makes effective desegregation possible only with the cooperation of suburban school systems.

9. Programs involving urban-suburban cooperation in the desegregation of schools, while only beginning and presently very limited, show promise as techniques for desegregating the schools in the Nation's larger metropolitan areas.

10. In large cities, promising proposals have been developed which seek to desegregate schools by broadening attendance areas so that school populations will be more representative of the community as a whole and to improve the quality of education by providing additional resources and innovations in the educational program.

(a) Proposals for educational facilities such as supplementary education centers and magnet schools, which contemplate a system of specialized school programs located either in existing schools or in new facilities, and education complexes, which would consist of clusters of existing schools reorganized to provide centralized services for school children in an enlarged attendance area, would contribute to improving the quality of education and would provide some progress in school desegregation.

(b) Proposals for education parks, designed to improve the quality of education and desegregate the schools by providing new centralized school facilities serving a range of grade levels

in a single campus, are most promising. Such parks could contribute to improving the quality of education by permitting advances and innovations in educational techniques not possible in smaller schools and could facilitate desegregation by enlarging attendance areas, in some cases to draw students both from the central city and the suburbs. Although legitimate concerns have been raised about the size and complexity of education parks, the new and flexible approaches to teaching and learning they would make possible could provide greater individual attention for each child's needs than is now possible in smaller schools. Additional problems relating to the cost and feasibility of education parks can be met in some measure by the economies which are made possible by the consolidation of resources in larger facilities. Although education parks would require a substantial new investment, it is within the range of what is feasible if the costs are shared by the Federal, State, and local governments."