

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 086 414

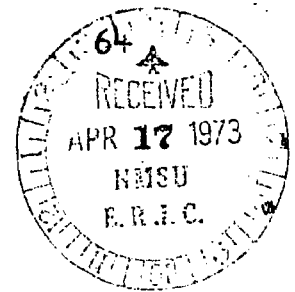
RC 007 564

AUTHOR Zephier, Richard
TITLE American Indian Education: Separation, Amalgamation, or What?
PUB DATE 28 Feb 73
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the American Association of School Administrators Annual Convention (105th, Atlantic City, N.J., February 24-28, 1973)
EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.65 HC-\$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *American Indians; Boarding Schools; *Community Control; *Educational Responsibility; Federal Programs; Government Role; History; *Individual Power; Legal Responsibility; Private Schools; Public Schools; Reservations (Indian); *School Community Relationship; Treaties
IDENTIFIERS American Association of School Administrators

ABSTRACT

This essay examines American Indian education from a historical perspective and analyzes the role of the school as an institution in an Indian community. Since the arrival of the white man in America, Indians have faced a world of cultural conflict. Throughout the history of Indian education, their values and way of life have been demeaned. The Indian people and the U.S. government are presently going through the era of self-determination for Indian people. If the Indian is to control the education of his children, he will be faced with the responsibility of determining the direction for that pedagogy. The following are 3 divisions of culture that exist in and characterize the Indian community, and that will be influential in directing that community's system: (1) the traditionalists or conservatives; (2) the moderates or biculturalists; and (3) the progressives. This essay emphasizes community control, by Indian people, of Indian schools. (FF)

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
105th Annual Convention
Atlantic City, N. J. February 24-28, 1973



ED 086414

SPEAKER: Richard Zephier, Education Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Washington, D. C.

TOPIC: AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION: SEPARATION, AMALGAMATION OR WHAT?

PLACE: Tent Room, Dennis Hotel

TIME: Tuesday, February 27, 2:30 P. M.

PROGRAM: Page 80

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY

Introduction

The American stratification system is governed by an open class ideology. This ideology placed great stress upon the Horatio Alger "Log Cabin to President success stories" which describe the many opportunities for those with ability to achieve higher positions in society. Individuals are expected and encouraged to aspire beyond their original station in life. Group differences in power, prestige, and wealth are not denied by the ideology, but are viewed as rewards to be earned by using opportunities for social mobility which are allegedly available to all.

This concept has become engulfed in the thinking of the modern day Indian. Unfortunately "there are some contradictions between the ideal of equal opportunity and the existence of established differences in power, prestige and wealth. The existence of such differences can limit the chances for those with ability, but not advantage, to obtain socially valued goals. The recent destruction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and conflict between American Indians and state officials in South Dakota reflects the growing concern with the manner in which the very existence of a system of stratification may make equality of opportunity a meaningless phase."

Scriber wrote in 1934 that the American people have a sublime faith in the school. They have traditionally view organized education as the one unailing remedy for every ill to which man is subject, and when faced with any trouble or difficulty they have commonly set their minds at rest sooner or later by an appeal to the school. Today as social institutions crumble and society is shaken by deep convulsions that threaten its very existence many persons are proclaiming that education provides the only true road to safety.

Once again, Indian people, generally speaking, have adopted the preceding concept in hopes that it will provide them with the means which will lead them to the promised land of equality.

One of the most controversial recent developments in Indian Education

-more-

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

and Indian life is the policy of self-determination. Of course in accomplishing self-determination this means community control of Indian schools. American Indians across the country have demanded the power to govern those schools serving Indian students and at least to be heard in public schools which have a small number of Indian students in them.

The purpose of this essay is to examine Indian Education from a historical perspective and to see what the role of the school as an institution is in an Indian community.

HISTORY AND CONSIDERATIONS

History

There are three types of schools which have contributed to Indian education. They are mission schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and public schools.

Throughout the four hundred year span of Indian education, nearly every religious sect has played a role in attempting to educate the American Indian. The first Indian school as established by the Jesuits in 1568, at Havana, Cuba, for Florida Indians. The primary goal of mission education was two-fold: "to Christianize and civilize" the Indian.

The early attempts to convert the Indian were met with disillusionment and frustration. Layman refers to the "almost complete failure of the Jesuits to attain their educational purpose."

In 1819, under President Monroe, the sum of \$10,000 was appropriated by Congress, thus inaugurating a period of modest governmental support for Indian education. These funds were distributed to the various mission groups, enabling them to expand their educational programs.

The move toward separation of church and state dealt a lethal blow to the federal support of mission education in the Act of March 12, 1917, which made it illegal to use federal funds for instruction in sectarian schools.

The missionaries did not abandon their efforts in Indian education; in fiscal year 1960, nearly 12,000 Indian students attended mission schools. There has, however, continued to be a steady decline in the availability of mission facilities with the increasing costs of education.

A study in 1968 reports only 3,760 students enrolled in mission schools.

In summary, one must realize the missionaries were the first to be concerned with the educational welfare of Indians.

The Civil War marked a turning point in the history of Indian educa-

-more-

tion. During the war relations between the races deteriorated, but immediately following the war there arose a great concern for the welfare of the Indians, and the federal government began to assume a larger role in their education. Mardock, in an interesting dissertation, explores the rise of this humanitarian movement and its involvement with Indians. A committee of the Congress published a report in 1868 revealing the deplorable status of the Indian, and the humanitarians began immediately to call for reform. The reform, similar to the philosophy of the missionaries, called for the education, Christianization, and civilization of Indian people. The two major consequences of this reform movement were: 1. increased responsibility for education by the federal government and 2. the off-reservation boarding school.

Congress then began to implement its responsibility of educating Indians. The Kennedy Special Subcommittee Report on Indian Education states that in 1870 Congress appropriated \$100,000 for the operation of federal industrial schools. In 1879 the first off-reservation boarding schools was established at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. In 1882 legislation was passed to convert army posts into Indian schools. In 1890 appropriations were made to cover the cost of tuition for Indians attending public schools. The policies that the federal government held for the federal school regarding Indian education were to civilize the aborigines, convert Indians from hunters to farmers, remove the Indian from the reservation and family life, and to strip the Indian of his native language and morés. That policy existed during the treaty era.

Following the treaty era came the New Deal era. The New Deal era came as a direct result of the Lewis Meriam Report. The Meriam report declared that the whole Indian problem is an educational one and regards as necessary the training of all Indians for the best type of American citizenship. The Meriam report was instrumental in applying pressure on Congress to legislate a new policy regarding Indian education. Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 which brought about the needed change in federal policy affecting Indian education. Federal schools instituted programs in bilingual education, adult basic education, boarding schools were closed and day schools near Indian communities were opened.

With the advent of World War II, the United States Government ran short on funds and consequently cut funds for Indian education. This action called for a change in policy concerning Indian education. The Kennedy Subcommittee Report states that in 1944 a House Select Committee on Indian Affairs offered recommendations on achieving the final solution of the Indian problem. It stated that "real progress" would be made when Indian children were once again taken from their homes and placed in off-reservation boarding schools. This period in time was referred to as the termination era.

The Indian people and the United States Government are presently going through the era of self-determination for Indian people.

This era came about as a result of the deep mistrust Indian people had for federal policies preceding the 1960's. They developed what Alvin M. Josephy termed "termination psychosis."

Termination psychosis prevails today. However, this attitude has been the catalyst for the changes that have occurred in the 1960's and 1970's.

A formal reaction to the termination policy was the publication of the Fund for the Republic Study by the Commission on Rights, Liberties and Responsibilities of the American Indian. This report focused attention on the injustices of termination policies, paternalistic attitudes and practices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Following the publication of the Fund for the Republic report, a conference was held in which a "Declaration of Indian Purpose" was formulated. The Indian people expressed a desire to play a decisive role in planning their own programs. This move by the Indian leaders was instrumental in getting the newly elected Kennedy administration to act in terms of a Task Force to investigate the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Kennedy Administration responded favorably to the request of Indian people with its own study of the Indian Affairs. This study was headed by Interior Secretary Stewart Udall.

In July, 1961, the study reported its findings, and made the following recommendations: that the Bureau of Indian Affairs begin new activities in Indian education such as increases in funds for scholarships, the encouragement of Indian parents to participate in the formulation of school programs.

Between 1961 and 1965, as a result of the study, the Bureau of Indian Affairs changed the existing policy and embarked on a program of economic and community development. Two significant pieces of legislation that Congress had passed had a direct bearing on the implementation of the newly established policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Economic Opportunity Act and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Programs benefiting Indians which came from the Economic Opportunity Act were Upward Bound, VISTA, and Headstart. From ESEA came Title I which gave to Indian education nine million dollars. Title I guaranteed Indian input in determining educational programs.

As early as 1890, the federal government was given the authority to subsidize the public schools that were accepting Indian children. This money was to reimburse public schools for the extra expense incurred for the instruction given to Indian children. In 1900, 246 Indian children were enrolled in public schools. Between 1930 and the present, the number of Indian children who enrolled in public schools has increased from one-half to two-thirds of all Indian children enrolled in school. Congress made this increase possible by bringing into law some acts to subsidize the public schools for educating the Indian children.

The Johnson O'Malley Act became law in 1934 and authorizes the Secretary of Interior to enter into contracts with states for the education of Indian children. The act gave money to school districts that accepted the responsibility of educating the Indian children in their areas. The Indian children have to be one-quarter Indian ancestry whose parents live on or near Indian reservations under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Presently California, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin have accepted almost the entire responsibility of educating the Indian children in their state in public schools. Other states have a large portion of that responsibility.

In 1950 Congress put into law two pieces of legislation to aid the districts that have an influx of school enrollment because of military activities. Public Law 81-815 provided financial assistance for construction of school facilities. Public Law 81-874 provided the additional expenses of education incurred by the sudden increase of enrollment. These laws did not affect Indian children until they were amended to include them. Public Law 81-815 was amended in 1953 and Public Law 81-874 was amended in 1958.

It is the legislature's duty to establish and maintain a general and uniform system of public schools wherein tuition shall be without charge, and equally open to all. If a community has a diversity of incomes, problems arise. The educational gap between the high income children and the low-income children occurs. Title I is the first federal aid program recognizing the economically and educationally deprived child. It provides financial assistance to the districts that have a high concentration of low-income children. Virtually all Indian children qualify for Title I money.

The goals for education given at the White House Conference on Education in 1965 are as follows:

Objectives which will develop:

1. Fundamental skills of communication, arithmetic, and mathematics
2. Appreciation for our democratic heritage
3. Civic rights and responsibilities
4. Respect and appreciation for human values
5. Ability to think and evaluate constructively
6. Effective work habits and self-discipline
7. Social competency
8. Ethical behavior
9. Intellectual curiosity
10. Aesthetic appreciation
11. Physical and mental health
12. Wise use of time
13. Understanding of the physical world
14. Awareness of our relationship with the world community

These objectives give a general idea of the objectives of many public schools that served Indian children.

One theme runs throughout the literature on Indian education, namely, the realization that formal education has fallen far short of its goal. In the 1920's the Meriam Report found shortcomings in Indian education numerous and serious, and a more recent survey concludes: "The majority of Indian pupils today are either above the general age level for their respective classes or are below academic norms, and they drop out of school more frequently than do their non-Indian classmates."

-more-

The Special Subcommittee on Indian Education indicates that Indians have been condemned to a life of poverty and despair as a result of an inadequate education.

A recent report, however, shows a brighter picture of Indian education. Coombs in his examination of literature states that the educational gains of Indian people during the past ten years have been substantial and even dramatic. He states, for example, that the dropout rate has declined 18 percentage points from the BIA estimate made in 1959. Even if Coombs is right, his findings still show Indian education as inadequate. For example, he shows the dropout rate now to be somewhat more than one and one-half times that of the general population.

Considerations

Since the arrival of the white man in America, the Indian community has faced a world of cultural conflict. Throughout the history of the education of Indians, their values and way of life have been demeaned and constantly trampled upon.

If the Indian is to control the education of his children, he will be faced with the responsibility of determining the direction for that pedagogy.

The following are three divisions of culture that exist in and characterize the Indian community, and that will be influential in determining the direction of the educational system in that community:

The traditionalists or the conservatives are usually made up of a large number of the older uneducated Indians. They still adhere to their own religion and the old cultural pattern. They would believe that the cause of their problems today is the fact that Indians did not follow the old way of life. The conviction that all traditionalists have is that the old way is the right way. Some tribes will adhere to this philosophy more than others.

The second division, moderates or biculturalists, want to combine the best values of the Indian heritage with the best values of the white heritage. They are usually very proud of their Indian heritage and sincere in their desires to retain the Indian way of life. They also understand and realize many ways of the white man that have become part of their way of life. They believe that time will not stand still and that Indians must learn to adjust to the dominant society. The moderates' approach has been identified by some as the "realistic position." Large numbers of educated Indians are advocates of this position." They believe that many of the problems facing the Indian tribes today are created or compounded by taking either of the two extreme positions.

The third group is known as the progressives, those who want total assimilation. These people disinherit their culture. They believe that the advancement in the white society is dependent upon the complete abandonment of the old cultural pattern and by replacing it with the modern white values and beliefs. They believe that the present problems facing the Indian are due to the fact the Indian people are still living in the past and still trying to follow their outmoded beliefs and culture. They also believe that education is an end in itself.

There are, then, a number of philosophies which Indian people might have concerning education.

Community Control

It has been documented, then, that the highly centralized authority of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and of public school districts that have a concentration of Indian students have both failed to educate American Indian children. As one step toward resolving this inequality in educational opportunity, President Nixon in a speech to the Congress of the United States on July 8, 1970 stated in regards to Indian policy that "Self-determination among the Indian people can and must be encouraged without the threat of eventual termination." And specifically in regards to education, he stated that the past record of Indian education is proof"....that the Federal Government is trying to do for Indians what many Indians could do better for themselves." And in regards to those schools directly controlled by the Federal Government through the BIA he stated:

Consistent with our policy that the Indian community should have the right to take over the control and operation of federally funded programs, we believe every Indian community wishing to do so should be able to control its own Indian schools.

With this speech, the interest in community control of Indian schools has become a paramount issue in Indian education.

The purpose, then, of this section is to define the term community and its application to Indian people located on reservations. The education itself be examined in terms of its relationship to the total socialization

process. But unintended consequences may also appear. The last part of this section will include those issues which may prove community control to be a questionable approach to equalizing the educational opportunities of Indian children.

Historically, Indians located on reservations were placed there against their will. As a result of defeat at the hands of the superior military forces of the United States government and as a result of that government's superior bargaining position, it can be understated that the scales of negotiations were somewhat weighted in favor of the United States. Because the Congress of the United States is responsible for all treaty negotiations, it was with its approval that Indian people were assigned to lands that can support as little as twenty percent of the total population, thereby accounting for the high level of unemployment and economic paternalism of the United States government toward American Indians. The Congress of the United States continues to control these reservations and those Indians that inhabit them and can at any time terminate its responsibilities by subsequent acts. Indeed, the jurisdiction of the United States government over Indian people is carefully outlined in Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations. That which becomes clear as one reads these regulations is that any decision made by Indian people concerning their own affairs is subject to the veto of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs whose decision in turn is final. It is with this backdrop in mind that the definition of community on Indian reservations must be examined.

The definition of community as written by Robert Nisbet refers to ties that "are characterized by a high degree of personal intimacy, emotional depth, moral commitment, social cohesion, and continuity in time." He goes on to say "Community is founded on man conceived in his wholeness than in one another of the roles, taken separately, that he may hold in a social order....It achieves its fulfillment in a submergence of individual will that is not possible in unions of more convenience or rational assent....Its archetype, both historically and symbolically, is the family, and in almost every type of genuine community the nomenclature of family is prominent. The most common basis for such ties in contemporary America are family, ethnicity, race,....occupation, and income class."

Because there is an insufficient economic base on most reservations as mentioned earlier and because all political decisions are subject to review by Department of Interior, these two elements play a lesser role in community cohesiveness on reservations than in middle class communities. Because all decisions involving politics and economics must be reviewed by local BIA agency superintendent, government officials resemble a "white army of occupation." Therefore, there is little effective leadership among the Indian community in terms of political activity. Thus the real sense of community on Indian reservations comes through social activities and most importantly through family identification.

Therefore, in order to strengthen the community structure on Indian reservations, President Nixon has proposed self-determination through community control by Indian people of their own schools. But before community control can be examined, the role of education in the socialization process must be defined.

"In the broadest sense, the socialization process refers to the abiding social transactions that take place between an individual and others that are responsible for the achievement and maintenance of selfhood and society. While its aim is to prepare its youth to fill the social responsibilities given to them by society. Education, then, is simply a part of the more general socialization process, especially when information and cognitive skills are basic to developing interpersonal relationships." This states that education is only a part of the total socialization process. In terms of the total process, many people believe that schools play a less influential role than the other factors involved. "...in fact, it is useful to view the output of the education process as resulting from at least four different inputs for each child: (1) genetically determined capabilities inherited from parents; (2) the child's home environment, both present and past (particularly during the first few years of life); (3) the school system and all its component parts (including teachers, buildings, other facilities, methods, systems of mixing students); and (4) the child's non-home, non-school environment..." Because white, middle-class students perform higher on standardized tests than Indian students, the superior achievement might be entirely attributable to the three non-school factors. In fact, the more integrated Indian students are with white students, the better their achievement scores tend to be. This was documented in a publication distributed by the Far West Educational Laboratory titled Who Should Control Indian Education? Because Indian students, especially those in boarding schools, are at a particular disadvantage compared to their white counterparts in the non-school factors contributing to success in school, the school environment becomes most important in determining academic success. To date, the inschool factor has not been sufficiently organized to equalize the educational opportunity of Indian students.

As mentioned earlier, Indian education has been administered from highly centralized bureaucracies, the BIA and individual school districts, with little or no input from Indian people. The failure of centralization to meet the needs of Indian students has been documented throughout the years and reported in the first part of this paper. An alternative to the existing structure is community control of Indian schools by Indian people.

Community control can be defined as "the exercise of authority by the democratically organized government of neighborhood-sized jurisdiction.....What the term does clearly denote is a category of proposed reforms: transfers of authority from the governments of large cities to the governments of much smaller subunits within them. Such transfers would constitute political decentralization. At the same time, it should be emphasized that they would remain subject to higher levels of government."

If neighborhood can be interpreted as "spatial continuity" and community as previously defined as involving family and racial ties, certainly Indian communities on reservations, even though its members are widely dispersed, can still fall within the parameters of the definition for community control. And decentralization alone must not be confused with community control.

To decentralize is "to distribute authority more widely, that is, to a greater number of individuals.....that within government, from officials at the center of a jurisdiction to those in geographically defined subjurisdictions (i.e. state within the nation, localities within states, and so on)." Decentralization does not take into account racial and family ties. So even though particular reservations may gain control of the schools within its boundaries, family ties or "spatial continuity" may require further decentralization into true community schools.

If then, Indian communities are dissatisfied with the quality of education provided their children, what might be the objectives of community control in regards to education?

The request for community control arises from two factors: First, the effect on Indian children of the prevailing white middle-class culture as embodied in the staff and tone of the schools, and second, the emerging sense of racial pride and an intense search for racial and personal identity. These needs are concurrent with the need for attainment of marketable and academic skills. The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The equality of educational opportunity can be defined as the attainment of "relatively high status positions" through formal education. Because Indians are conspicuously absent from these high status positions, certainly something must be lacking from the caliber of their education.

A new quality education of Indian children must include skill and knowledge development, personal talent and interest-identification development, and social exploration of self and others.

Community schools must emphasize the mastery of basic skills of learning that are essential building blocks for cognitive development of the child. Personal talents in the arts as well as vocational education must be included as well. And the affective aspects of education must be recognized as equally important. The new community must also include the following alterations: "(1) governance-a shift from professional dominance to a meaningful parental and community in the education process; (2) goals-an evolution to a humanistically oriented curriculum, modifying the skill-performance standard by which education quality is primarily measured; and (3) personnel-opening the educational system to a far broader base of talent than the conventionally prepared career educator and

ning teachers through the reality of community needs and expression."

These then are the alterations that a community controlled school can bring to the current educational system. But there can be unintended consequences as well.

If Indian students now enrolled in public schools with white students are returned to locally controlled, segregated schools, this will certainly lead to greater racial separatism. And if "separate but equal" facilities are "inherently inferior" as stated by the Supreme Court, certainly community control can only lead to a still more inadequate education for Indian children. As stated earlier those Indian students more integrated with white students perform better in school regardless of the manner of evaluation.

A parallel can also be drawn between education in the prairie provinces of Canada and an operational model of a community school on an Indian reservation. Canadians in these areas are also widely dispersed and somewhat isolated from the greater society. But in contrast to the desire for community control, they have centralized their community schools into a larger network. "The price for having 5,000 or more local school boards was an inadequate education in many parts of the province, badly trained and poorly paid teachers,.....limited facilities, and isolation from the larger culture for many children." Isolated Indian communities must realize that they will encounter difficulties in attracting quality teachers. And because they must operate on a fixed budget, salaries will have to be cut back to hire community para-professionals as well as competent teachers. And poor roads together with remote locations will isolate the students from the larger culture.

And finally, because local boards tend to be so arbitrary in treatment of professionals, those employed by local boards could hardly be described as "risk takers." "Thus the pattern of local control can be very conservatizing influence. School administrators will be reluctant to experiment, to adopt new methods-- particularly the more costly ones--if these seem likely to create political issues. And the smaller the school district and the greater its control by local citizens, the more inhibited the administrator will be. Small, vocal groups may veto reforms." These, then, are some of the unintended consequences that might arise from community control.

Since community control is well on its way to becoming a fact of life for Indian communities, Indian leaders have begun directing their attention to other issues in education. Among these issues are: relevant curriculum, student academic achievement, teacher and paraprofessional training, goals of education and the purpose for which schools should exist.

Indian people should seriously consider what the role of the school will be in their communities before they confront other issues in education. What will schools in Indian communities be for? For too long Indian people have been duped and conned into accepting wrong answers to this question. Robert L. Ebel mentions a few of these wrong answers that I believe are applicable to the Indians educational dilemma.

1. Schools are not custodial institutions responsible for coping with emotionally disturbed or incorrigible young people, for keeping non-students off the streets or out of the job market.

2. Schools are not adjustment centers, responsible for helping young people develop favorable self-concepts, solve personal problems, and come to terms with life.
3. Schools are not recreational facilities designed to entertain and amuse, to cultivate the enjoyment of freedom, to help young people find strength through joy.
4. Schools are not social research agencies, to which a society can properly delegate responsibility for the discovery of solutions to the problems that are currently troubling society.

Recent literature indicates that the public schools have lost sight of, or have become confused about their principal goals and the reasons for their existence. Perhaps, if the Indian people take a look at the failures administrators of public schools have had, this would give them an advantage in their planning of a school program.

When planning educational goals Indian people should consider their cultural heritage and the relationship it has with other cultures. Substantively speaking the Indian culture is as rich as any other.

Indian people are not going through an identity crisis. Indian people are experiencing a crisis of getting non-Indian people to accept what cannot be changed. What cannot be changed is the totality of Indian thinking. Values about oneself cannot be changed in a day, year or a 100 years. What the non-Indian world must realize is that the Indian people as a group are aware of themselves.

By being aware of themselves it means Indian people know who they are, they know how to get there. All they ask is that people in responsible positions cooperate with them in accomplishing this, Indian people need the expertise of people in the professions to provide technical assistance in attaining their objectives. They need people who will be willing to do the actual work of operating programs, until they train or have trained their own people.

Federal agencies are going to continue to have a role in Indian education programs. The Federal government should stress the need to adopt a policy of extensive consultation with Indian tribes before embarking on any program involving Indian people.

This brings us to the point of to what extent do Indian people want to participate as a group in the dominant society with regard to education.

From a historical perspective all the policies of participation in the dominant society have been determined for and not by Indian people.

In summary most minority groups in the United States desire full participation in American life. The majority of Indian people are no different. I believe that the Indian people should determine the degree and extent of participation.

Barbara Sizemore states: "the option for separatism is neither new nor revolutionary. In fact, it seems to be the basic route to full

participation chosen by excluded groups because it gives the initiative to the excluded group." For Indian people, this choice may be a response to the failure of the Federal government and the states to provide equitable educational opportunities for Indian people.

Indian people now need to be given the latitude to determine the extent and form of their participation in the dominant society. It has been suggested that amalgamation may be considered as an educational alternative for minorities. Amalgamation according to Milton M. Gordon is "a biological fusion of races by inbreeding and intermarriage." From an educational perspective amalgamation is not a viable process by which minorities can be brought into the mainstream of the American culture, in this sense education as a force has been utilized by the dominant society as a means of remolding minorities such as Indians into the likeness of the dominant society.

Education as a force, then, can be both negative and positive. Traditionally, education for Indians has been a negative force. Education has been used by the dominant society primarily as a means of developing a carbon copy of the dominant society. Indians have traditionally rejected the concept of amalgamation. In other words they have rejected the "melting pot" concept which is so prevalent in American thinking in the last few decades.

Indian people have rejected the "melting pot" concept for a number of reasons: Indians have always maintained they have the right to be an Indian, nothing less and nothing more. Indians have and will continue to resist any attempt by any group who would deny him his Indianess. This is not to say that Indians do not wish to participate in the mainstream of society. They do, but not at the expense of cultural genocide. Indian people will be more than willing to participate in the education process, providing his indecision will be done by not only considering his cultural heritage but by drawing from it to develop constructive educational programs.

###