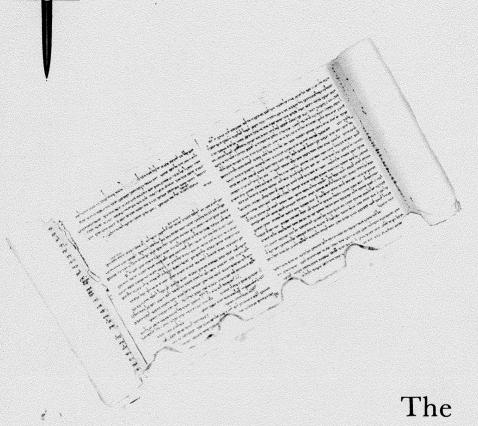
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THE PHILOSOPHIC AND RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN EDUCATION

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THE PHILOSOPHIC AND RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN EDUCATION

The purpose of this paper is to examine some of the assumptions that are made regarding modern state education today; also to study some of the shapers of thought in modern education, seeking to find their basic philosophic premises and then observing how these ideas have become an integral part of modern education.

A common assumption that needs to be put under the microscope is that the state school system is neutral when it comes to moral and religious teaching. This assumption, so widely held also in our circles, is maintained with great insistence, although it may be granted that perhaps sometimes one may find some peripheral elements of religion attached to the state system, such as Bible reading, a generalized prayer, and that particular bane of the Lutheran pastor, the baccalaureate service. Who has not heard this assumption stated in words similar to this: In the public school or college character-molding takes place outside the classroom. We want Christian schools and colleges to do what is not being done elsewhere, namely, to train the whole person.

A recent writer to the <u>St. Paul Pioneer Press</u> (3/17/65) assumes that from a religious point of view the public school is neutral and therefore its total support is the only way to maintain religious liberty in our country. He writes: "Sir: The advocates of public aid to private and parochial schools are their own worst enemies. They consider those of us who defend the principle of church-state separation as guaranteed to us under our Constitution as antago-

nistic, whereas, on the contrary, we have their best interests at heart when we object to having public funds used to aid in any degree whatsoever private and sectarian schools." (This letter was directed especially against the 1965 bill before the Minnesota legislature to provide school bus aid for all children no matter what school they attend.)

One does not question the laudable intent of such pronouncements, and one does not have any doubt that those who have this view are trying to be helpful in solving some knotty problems that confront all of us today. There is nevertheless a slumbering assumption here that must be carefully examined, namely, that certain schools can be neutral with regard to the inculcation of religious beliefs and values. 1

But suppose, for a moment, that modern education as exemplified in the state school system from kindergarten through graduate school does have some pretty important philosophical and religious presuppositions, and which, by being superbly inculcated, bring about some real consequences in the spiritual and moral makeup of its products, we should then be fully informed regarding them. If these assumptions should fly directly in the face of our deepest convictions, we have a real problem on our hands as to what we shall do with our children. This problem not only confronts the individual Christian parent but also the church. The magnitude of this problem, considering the all-embracing influence of the modern state school, staggers one so that it almost paralyzes the mind. One is tempted to say with the Hemingway character when faced with the problem of the discovery of evil and disorder: "You better not think about it. "

Suppose, further, that perhaps you can make your peace with the religious presuppositions of the state school system as it works itself out into all the areas of life which this system encompasses, but you become aware that there are some of your fellow-citizens whose conscience does not permit them to make this kind of peace and turn their children over to this kind of education, how is their constitutional freedom to be protected under these conditions? Years ago this problem may have appeared to be academic. Since not so much money went towards education, the objector could pay his taxes to the state for its established school and still support his own voluntary but independent school. The problem of freedom was always there but it was camouflaged, chiefly by the factor that money was not as central as it is today in establishing and maintaining schools. But because of sky-rocketing school costs today and compulsory education laws, a virtual state monopoly in education seems inevitable, with the result that individual liberty is lost.

It is apparent, then, that both as Christians and as citizens of these United States we should try to ascertain whether modern state education has religious and philosophic foundations that have a bearing on the moral and spiritual beliefs of its products, and if so, what are these presuppositions?

A word of caution before we proceed much further. We are thinking in broad terms of modern education as a movement; for the most part this will be the government-supported educational system; this movement, however, will also include some independent schools and colleges and of course independent leaders and thinkers who are not attached to a school system. Let it also be said that we are not

thinking of individuals as such (although they make up the Great Society); and much less are we thinking of that wonderful fifth grade teacher you had who left such an impression upon you with the pureness of her piety and her self-sacrificing interest in your future development. Least of all, I am not thinking of those fine Christian public school teachers in your congregation who serve as your Sunday School teachers, never miss church, and virtually tithe their fairly adequate salaries. It is that group of intelligent and serious-minded people who together with you will, I hope, devote their greatest energies in finding a solution to what I, as a Christian and an American citizen, consider one of the greatest problems confronting us.

Let us also, by way of preliminary, outline a little more closely what we mean by "education" or "an educational program." Perhaps Paul Dressel of Michigan State University has given us as practical a definition as possible: "An educational program is an attempt by mature individuals of a society to influence the development of its youth. 2 I take this definition because it is made by one of the most influential educators of our time and recorded in a most influential book for the study of modern public education. The definition shows that modern education practioners really want to influence the development of the youth in their keeping. We can use it as a definition of Christian educational purpose, remembering that it is God who works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It is in harmony with Paul's exhortation: "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. 2:2)

If one begins to look into the literature, surprisingly enough, one does not find any reluctance on the part of the modern educationalist to declare that he does and must teach religion. The Educational Policy Commission, an arm of the powerful NEA, holds that "knowledge about religion is essential for a full understanding of our culture, literature, art, history and current affairs."

Prof. Phenix of Teachers College, Columbia University, said: (There is) "no teacher, no school which can escape the problem of life orientation, the ultimate commitments by which each person must live. Every analysis of life culture must take account either implicitly or explicitly of those fundamental commitments which underlie every human action. This is precisely the domain of religion.... Thus, we teach religion in the schools, whether we would or not."

The January 1965 issue of the NEA Journal carries an article called "Moral Values and our Universities" by William Sloan Coffin Jr. The article begins by quoting approvingly the words of the late President Whitney Griswold of Yale: "Every basic institution bears a direct responsibility for society's moral health. The university bears a large and exceptionally important part of this responsibility" (p. 8). The MEA Journal of Education (April 1965) has a full page on "Faith of American Teachers." It begins with Henry B. Adams' quotation: "A teacher affects eternity. He can never tell where his influence stops" (p. 11). There is a religious fervor about the whole page that would make it fit into a denominational paper: gladly, reverently, confidently, proud-

ly, hopefully -- do I teach etc. Frederick J. McDonald, writing in the 63rd Yearbook, Part I, of the NSSE, Theories of Learning and Instruction (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1964) says: "Because education is a moral enterprise, educators have always felt that they needed a philosophy. John Dewey provided one that had enormous appeal and seemed peculiarly adapted to the problem of the school in American Society. No viable substitute has been offered for Dewey's philosophy." (p. 24)

These are fairly typical statements which could be multiplied without a great deal of research. Character-training is of course an important part of public education. The average teacher on the firing line is tremendously interested in this. As an example of this working down to the grass-roots level let me quote from a dispatch from the Mankato Free Press (8/27/62) which reported on the MEA workshop at St. Cloud State College attended by 250 teachers. The chief speaker was Dr. Lawrence Derthick, Commissioner of Education for four years under President Eisenhower and later the NEA's Assistant Executive Secretary for educational service: "Derthick discussed senses. 'Do we want brains alone or character too?', he asked. 'I don't want a brain who is a Klaus Fuchs (British atom scientist who spied for Russia). We waste our resources if we concern ourselves only with those who have academic skills. We need people with a sense of selfishness (selflessness?). We need a responsible citizenship'. "

These are simply repetitions of the statement of the naturalist philosopher, Herbert Spencer: "Education has for its object the formation of character."

One would agree with these goals as far as they go but they would be unsatisfactory if this was the total extent of them. And then one would want to know above all what is the motivation for such goals. For example, if nothing more is meant than what the Rev. William A. Wendt reports about the Unitarian minister, the Rev. James Reeb, recently killed in Alabama, a Lutheran Christian (all Christians for that matter) would be horrified: "He had a great love for people and their needs. He could not have cared less about whether they were going to heaven. He cared where they were going now." This summarizes the great secularistic religion of today.

II.

To get at the kind of religion which serves as the basis for the morality taught in modern education, one should look at its beginnings, and trace through the history of thought that has accompanied it development.

Originally in this country education was totally in the hands of private and independent agencies. For all practical purposes it was the church (in its various organizational expressions) which fostered education. In general, presuppositions which served as the basis for education were Christian, evangelical, Protestant, and Calvinistic. There were, however, variations depending on the settlement.

The public school took shape in the first half of the 19th Century under the direction of Horace Mann (1796-1858). In 1837, at the passage in Massachusetts of the Education Law, Mr. Mann (who had been president of the Massachusetts Senate) became State Secretary of Education. In this position and later as the first president of Antioch College, and through his activities in writing, he was so influential in the development of the public school that he has been aptly called the "father of the common school," the founder of American state education.

From your church history you will recall that by this time in New England there had already occurred the great defection from the evangelical religion embodied in historical Congregationalism and Anglicanism, to Unitarianism. While Yale was still fairly conservative, Harvard and Boston are Unitarian. Horace Mann is a Unitarian, a product of the Age of Reason, and as such his educational philosophy will represent his views. Associate Prof. Timothy Smith of the University of Minnesota summarizes his theological position in these words: "Equally great confusion has stemmed from the myth that the taxsupported school system established in mid-19th Century America was essentially and necessarily secular in character. A much more accurate description would call it a non-sectarian Protestant System, though this designation too, would be subject to numerous local variations. I sometimes tease my friends by reminding them that Horace Mann himself sought to remove from the public school classrooms only those evangelical exercises and teachings which he and other good Unitarians found objectionable. He was perfectly agreeable that the reading of the Bible be retained. Methodists, as it happened, took the same position, in part, no doubt from the fact that up until that time they also had been a religious minority."7

Mann believed that "if God is our <u>Father</u>, all men must be our brethren." 8

Professor Lawrence A. Cremin of Columbia University says that Mann "came increasingly to believe that certain common principles could be culled from the several sectarian creeds and made the core of a body of religious doctrine on which all could agree. For Mann, these were the great principles of 'natural religion' -- these truths which had been given in the Bible and demonstrated in the course of history. The fact that this new corpus of knowledge closely resembled his own optimistic humanistic Unitarianism did not seem to trouble him. Nor did questions about 'which version of the Bible' from Catholic and Tewish citizens. If the Word of God -personified in the King Tames Bible -- were taught without comment, how could that conceivably be sectarian? If the Fatherhood of God were taught as the foundation of the brotherhood of men, how could that be sectarian? Mann really raised these guestions rhetorically, and the overwhelmingly Protestant people of Massachusetts seemed willing to go along with him, once he had fought and defeated the more vigorous sectarians among them. "9

Further, Rushdoony, on the basis of amply documentation, declares that according to Mann, "the state thus is the basic institution and therefore the basic educational institution." (p. 26) Hence, R. Rushdoony draws the further conclusion, "Mann's work was two-fold, first, to secularize education, second, to make it the province of the state rather than the community and parents." (p. 27) Professor Borrowman of the University of Wisconsin, declares that according to Mann, "the school was the greatest instrument ever created to build a good society, and its central purpose was to create among all a common faith, a sharp sense of common interest, and love for political order that served this faith and

Mann made two basic claims that professional educators have made since his time: the public school is the agency which can change society and create a true paradise here on earth. And second, "let it be worked with efficiency," that is, give us the money and we can do it; failure thus far is your fault in that we have received insufficient funds. Rightly does Rushdoony summarize Mann's basic convictions: "In terms of Mann's presuppositions, what he envisioned was a new religion, with the state as its true church, and Education as its Messiah. Mann's heirs were to make this implicit faith explicit." (p. 32)

All this is not to say that as soon as they were created and developed, public schools were liberal Unitarian. Local conditions had much to say about the religious character of the school. But the Harvard Unitarian influence in intellectual circles was ultimately overwhelming. In the Midwest, the swing to Unitarian liberalism was slow--too many conservatives in the Midwest. For example, my father used to tell me that when he attended the University of Minnesota (1895-97) President Cyrus Northrup regularly conducted devotions; and what's more, he asserted that they were quite orthodox. This is not to be taken lightly, coming from a conservative Norwegian Synod Lutheran. President Northrup was theologically conservative by Harvard standards at that time. he was a Yale man.

I shall direct your attention very briefly to some of the other American educators who were influential in the movement for state control and support of the common schools. James G. Carter (1795-1849), a contemporary of Mann, saw education as a means

whereby the managers of the state could control society, although it should be done democratically. His contribution to the developing thought in education was that the state must train the teachers. Teacher's training, he saw as the great "engine" of social control. He saw the need for an institution for the education of teachers, but "it should be emphatically the state's institution." Hence we have springing up all these normal schools throughout the entire nation in the mid-19th century.

Henry Barnard (1811-1900), the first United States Commissioner of Education and also a Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin (1858-60), is certainly to be classified with Mann and Carter as one of the three most important founders of the present system of public education. Barnard opposed the private schools because, in his words, "They classify society at the root and open a real chasm between members of the same society, broad and deep, which equal laws and political theories cannot close." 12 This of course you still hear: the fear of fragmentation. Even a writer in the Lutheran News for March 22, 1965, is afraid of "a rash of weird little sectarian schools springing up everywhere." (p. 3) It would be well to hear what Prof. Timothy Smith had to say about this in 1962: "A third myth alleges that parochial schools have been maintained by adult leaders in immigrant communities in order to retard the Americanization of their youngsters." (Smith, p. 10) Smith goes on to show that on the contrary parish schools were in fact "prime agents of group adjustment."

Let me direct you to another example of an early educator whose ideas have had a profound effect on the presuppositions of modern educational philoso-

phy. John Swett (1830-1913), state school superintendent in California (1862-68), in his first biennial report (1864-65), maintained the following propositions, among several others: "1) The Schoolmaster and the King. In school, where the mind is first placed under care to be fitted for the grand purposes of life, the child should be taught to consider his instructor, in many respects superior to the parents in point of authority. 2) Every man's house is his castle. This old maxim of English law is as applicable to the schoolmaster as to any other person who is in the lawful possession of a house. 3) The vulgar impression that parents have a legal right to dictate to teachers is entirely erroneous. 4) The statutory law as to disturbing schools. There is no clause in it favoring parents; consequently, if they disturb or disquiet the school they are subject to the same penalty as others. 5) Parents have no remedy against the teacher. "13

Meanwhile, back on the European continent, Darwin has in 1859 published The Origin of Species, Marx, his Communist Manifesto, and Herbert Spencer has become the popular philosopher in England and America. The importance of Darwin is that he seemed to give some scientific basis for the philosophy of determinism and naturalism. He seemed to establish a relationship of cause and effect without the need of the supernatural. This was easy to accept for the Deist, the Unitarian, and the French rationalist. They believed that man by strength of the exercise of his reason could achieve progress, and now they had a basis for this belief. Let me use the words of Paul Roubiczek, Fellow in Clare College, Cambridge, in his recent work Existentialism: For and Against, to summarize the profound effect the Darwinian theory has had on our modern life: "At

long last it was possible to explain everything in the normal, scientific, mechanical way, the Bible finally becoming superfluous in the realm of science. and, now that it could also be seen at work in nature, the existence of progress seemed to have been proved conclusively.... It (i.e. the theory of evolution) exercised a very great influence upon philosophy. Materialism was changed; all materialistic teachings since then, including that of Marx, are based on the theory of evolution. Philosophers like Herbert Spencer have made this theory the basis of all philosophy, of metaphysics, psychology, ethics." 14 Mr. Roubiczek summarizes by saying that "evolution has been made the basis of a complete philosophy; it provides philosophers with a metaphysical, ethical system, thus deeply influencing their ideas about the nature of man and his behavior. In fact, philosophy based on Darwinism has exercised an extremely strong influence, often far beyond the realms of science and philosophy, upon the whole development of European thought. The ruthless life and death struggle of survival has been translated into a new morality, as ruthless competition in the capitalist world, as ruthless class warfare in the Communist world, and as ruthless nationalism everywhere. Moreover, for the first time in human history, mind and reason are no longer seen as some mysterious higher power, as part of a supernatural, divine sphere breaking in upon human existence, but as the product of lower biological factors, and nothing has done more to fortify materialism" (p. 23).

John Dewey (1859-1952), above all others, imported these ideas of Darwin into public education. He spent a lifetime expounding and applying and preaching with a revivalist fervor this secularist,

naturalist religion. The school for Dewey was a social institution designed to train the child in "the inherited resources of the race and to use his own powers for social ends." He also said that "education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform." You will notice that he very carefully bypasses religion. In a creed that he formulated he says: "I believe that the teacher is engaged not simply in the training of individuals, but in the formation of the proper social life.... In this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God." 15 Dewey believed in a new society which was to supersede the present order. He believed that this new society was to be democratic but anti-supernatural, since supernaturalism is destructive of the concept of continuity. Religion should not be identified with the supernatural, for the supernatural is divisive, hence anti-democratic and unmanly: "Depending upon an eternal power is the counterpart of surrender of human endeavor. "16 Dewey also said in this book, A Common Faith, (p. 84): "I cannot understand how any realization of the Democratic ideal as a vital moral and spiritual ideal in human affairs is possible without surrender of the conception of the basic division to which supernatural Christianity is committed." You will notice that Christianity is anti-democratic because it is exclusive and holds that some are saved and some are lost.

Values according to Dewey are formed by men. He spoke of "the necessity for the participation of every mature being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together: which is necessary from the standpoint of "the general social welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals." He also put it this way: "The founda-

tion of democracy is faith in the capacity of human nature". $^{17}\,$

Gordon Clark, head of the Philosophy Departmant, Butler University, summarizes Dewey's concept of ethics and the state in these words: "The state can do no wrong, for right is determined by what the state does." 18

Lest one be thought to have slanted this summary of Dewey's basic beliefs, let me quote what Leonard Carmichael says regarding Dewey's ideas in his "Introduction" to Dewey's, The Child and the Curriculum and The School and Society 19. "Dewey was a consistent relativist. He opposed the idea of fixed value systems in any human area. Because of this conviction, he faced the difficult problem of accounting for the nature of truth. For him truth was a dynamic series of ideas, beliefs, and other processes which were the instruments by means of which the purposes of life can be achieved. Because of the importance of this idea, Dewey's philosophy has been known as Instrumentalism."

Dewey's influence upon contemporary life has been extensive, especially in philosophy and in education. He was an instructor in philosophy in the universities of Michigan and Minnesota and the University of Chicago, where he opened a "laboratory school for progressive education." He moved to Columbia University as Professor of Philosophy in 1904, continuing until 1930. He published about thirty books in his lifetime. His influence has been expanded immensely through his pupils who staffed the country's teacher colleges during the past fifty years. For example, one of his students, John Broadus Watson (1878-1958), through his psychology

of behaviorism has made a major impact on modern science, sociology, and education. Watson has said: "In one sweeping assumption after another, the behaviorist threw out the concepts of both mind and consciousness, calling them carry-overs from the church dogma of the Middle-ages.... The behaviorist finds no mind in his laboratory, sees it nowhere in his subjects." 20

Watson's studies of behavior including conditioning and unconditioning have had a profound effect on modern psychology. The supernatural is ruled out completely. For example, it is said, "Current investigators consider morality or conscience to be a set of cultural rules of social action which have been internalized by the individual". 21

William Heard Kilpatrick (1871-1964) of Teacher's College, Columbia University, was regarded by Dewey as his model disciple. He has been called the "million dollar professor" because his students paid over a million dollars in fees to Columbia University. To Kilpatrick democracy was his religion. He was convinced that private and parochial schools isolate their students from democratic society, and hence he "calls in question the practice found in certain of our cities of having three school systems. a public school system, a private school system, and a parochial school system."22 By this time it will be noted that men such as this believe that they have a corner on the absolute truth of democracy and that no one else is fit to teach it unless he has been ordained by one of this group.

Kilpatrick believed that man is an evolving animal and through social change exerted by education, he can learn to seek the common good, create a defensible social program, each thinking for himself and in behalf of the whole. You will note that these so-called scientific objective educators are not above propaganda and "indoctrination."

While I was taking graduate seminars in higher education at the University of Minnesota about ten years ago, this type of literature was nearly all that we read. There were only two books that I remember as exceptions to this philosophy of anti-supernatu-ralism and democractic materialism: One, Sir Walter Moberly's <u>Crisis in the University</u> and the other, Canon Bernard Iddings Bell's <u>Crisis in Education</u>. They were two respected books but definitely in the minority and they did not get much of a hearing.

One man highly regarded and greatly read at the University was Theodore Brameld (1904-). This was possibly because he had already taught Philosophy at the University of Minnesota from 1939-47. although he has considerable stature among all modern educational theorists, apart from this. He later became Professor of Education and Philosophy at New York University, and in 1958 he moved to Boston University. We read a great deal from his Patterns of Educational Philosophy, A Democratic Interpretation (1950). He is in the Mann-Dewey-Kilpatrick tradition. He is an advocate of relativism, and he believes that the State should control all education, because the powers of the democratic state are good powers. When the schools "come under the indisputable control of that immense majority which alone is sure to care that free education should become the revolutionary weapon of a people's peace," then they will be "directed toward the future of democracy."23 Brameld also holds that public education seen in its true perspective and development

"can and should become one highly effective instrument in the struggle of organized labor against the inhuman forces which would destroy it." 24 It is Brameld's "conviction" that "democracy more than any form of society devised thus far by man, is capable of providing greatest happiness for the largest number of people on earth." 25

Organized religion is to be barred from education because it is authoritarian. ²⁶ Also to Brameld the majority is always right and always the law. Majorities are: "The supreme judges of values," and one must resort to them or else "to a supernatural or metaphysical authority." Hence Rushdoony rightly says: "Thus if churches, private schools, private property, or any other thing be outlawed by the majority, the minority has no right to do other than obey the great God Census, beyond whom and apart from whom no value exists."

III.

All educators are extremely interested in finding an integrating factor in their educational program. Modern educational philosophers recognize that every educational system and institution is philosophically and theologically oriented. There is some type of integrating agent which selects and rejects what is to be taught and indicates how one is to view all knowledge.

In preparing materials for a University of Minnesota seminar ten years ago (Ed CI 228), I studied a thought-provoking book that wrestled with these problems, <u>Fundamentals of Curriculum Development</u>, edited by B. Othanel Smith. The following summary is from my notes taken on Chapter six, "The Source

of Authority in Curriculum Building" (p. 136-155). Insisting that every educator must face the question of the source and character of his moral authority (as well as intellectual), since it will influence the type of education he will give, the author identifies four sources of authority:

The divine will as the basis of educational I. authority; the revealed will of God - employed as a basis by the Roman Catholics. and others who have Scripture as authority. The author calls it an "ancient and powerful position even today," but he rules it out for modern American education: "In America the doctrine of separation of church and state precludes the possibility of the public educator grounding his authority in this." (This writer is undoubtedly thinking of the McCollum case, 1948, where the court held that the first Amendment prohibits the teaching of religion in the public schools, allowing only a secularist educational philosophy in the public school.)

But to return to Smith's four sources of authority, we note that the other three alternatives are similar, because all three are grounded in the mind of man as the measure of all things.

II. Education grounded in eternal truth. This is the position of Hutchins: "Absolute and eternal truth revealed by human reason, and imbedded in the great books of the past." One is to discover principles that lie at the basis of all knowledge and deduce secondary truths from these first principles. This is done by reason, i.e.,

"defined as the intuitive grasp of the first principles or axioms of thought and the logical deductions of other truths from these first principles, very much after the manner of geometry." (p. 414)

- III. Science as the source of educational authority, i.e., the method of science. Smith admits that "the chief difficulty lies in the realm of values and esthetics."
- Finally, the one that is most congenial IV. to the modern educator, and which certainly represents the modern secularist view of education: Education as a social agent derives its authority from the society that maintains it. (p. 147) Smith finds three views of society as the authority, 1) the teacher is the agent of the State -- widely held by some political scientists, but not universal. 2) Educational authority is grounded in the society which it serves; the teacher's authority rests upon the consensus of opinion in the local community in which he teaches. 3) The educator derives his authority from the society he serves, but the authority resides in the "fundamental moral and intellectual commitments constituting the core of culture." (p. 150) Hence the educator derives his authority from the democratic tradition, but that tradition represents the deepest moral and intellectual commitment of the American people." (p. 150)

In this view education is a spearhead of social change. The educator derives his

moral authority from ethical and methodological tenets of American democratic tradition. (See Chapter 8 of this book, pp. 174-197). But "education is reconstruction, because there must be constant change, progression, and continuity through clarification and definition of the meaning of democratic tradition." Such education is "an affair of the whole person and not only of the intellect."

It should be noted that this type of education not only removes eternal sanctions and absolute standards but also eliminates the centrality of the individual and subordinates him to some kind of democratic majority. This eliminates also his personal freedom with regard to his fundamental rights.

The professional educators who constituted the NSSE committee on the integration of educational experiences said: "The members of the committee in agreeing upon the importance of the integrating individual, have indicated their preference for the pragmatic philosophy of education."²⁹ This philosophy of pragmatism, they describe in these terms: "In our schools we teach John, James, Sue and Mary; we do not teach an abstraction known as human nature or man in general. In a democracy each individual is unique. Each can be expected to differ in opinion as to what it means to live, healthily, happily, justly. Each is to be judged as good or bad, not against any absolute standards, but in the terms of the direction of his growth.... The world is whatever man experiences it to be. ... The world is no finished product. It is growing and developing. Man is the keystone in this conception of the world. He is capable of shaping himself, his world, and his

destiny. If he exercises courage, intelligence, effort, he may bring forth the society of his dreams. (p. 34)

After hearing these strong religious commitments and seeing on what they are based, must we not agree with Professor Blum's axiom: "A system of education that, as a matter of policy, ignores Ultimate Truth engages in false teaching. And this false teaching is destructive of both the integrity of the human person and of the fabric of our American culture and freedom." 30

This judgment that the State school system today is built on the foundation of secularism is not idly made. President Nathan Pusey of Harvard in 1958 said that so great have been the successes of secularism that it "has itself become a faith and raised a hope that man can through his own efforts — without God — solve all the remaining problems which stand between him and a secular paradise on earth." He maintains that secularism forms a new kind of fundamentalism whose "temples may be laboratories and factories, perhaps also libraries. Its noxious influence — noxious, I believe to spirit, imagination and to mind — works among us almost unopposed." (Time, June 23, 1958, p. 54)

Fifteen years ago Sir Walter Moberly made an analysis of modern education as it works itself out in the universities of England. When first published, the book was something of a sensation. A second reading of it made in 1965 confirms one in the conviction that Moberly was both a keen analyst and a good prophet. From the vantage point of his official position as chairman of the University Grants Committee of England, he had an overall view and an in-

side view of education as very few have had. When he analyzes the approach of modern education (especially in the university) to the question of God and the supernatural, he arrives at conclusions like these: "Today many university teachers and administrators are Christian (I would say the same today of many of our public school educators - B.W.T.). But few if any of us are Christian teachers or Christian administrators (Moberly's emphasis) ... One thing, as yet too little realized, is now becoming clear. In the assumptions governing syllabus and academic methods, universities today are, implicitly, if unintentionally, hostile to the Christian faith and even to liberal humanism." 31

Proceeding further with his analysis, Moberly declares: "In the field of religion the profession of neutrality is equally a pretense (i.e., as in the case of politics) ... On the fundamental religious issue, the university intends to be, and supposes it is, neutral, but it is not. Certainly, it neither inculcates nor expressly repudiates belief in God. But it does what is far more deadly than open rejection; it ignores Him. ... Atheism is no speculative opinion. It is leaving God on one side, having 'no need of that hypothesis'. In that case one need not bother to deny the existence of God, one is simply not interested; and that is precisely the condition of a large part of the world today. It is in this sense that the university today is atheistic." (pp. 55-56) President Pusey, in his address of June 1958, declares that the following words of Sir Walter Moberly are increasingly true: "Some think God exists, some think not, some think it is impossible to tell, and the impression grows that it does not matter." (Time, Tune 23, 1958, p. 54)

Now is this not the case with the entire state educational system? Canon Bernard Iddings Bell, an Episcopal clergyman and educator, writing out of a background of more than thirty years of teaching experience on every level of education, makes virtually the same judgment as Sir Walter Moberly: "Our public schools and colleges are rarely anti-religious; they simply ignore religion. They look on it as a minor amusement to be practiced by those who find it fun, to be neglected if one desires. Obviously this outlook is quickly communicated to the young. If a child is taught in school about a vast number of things - for 25 hours a week, eight or nine months a year, for ten to sixteen years or more - and if for all this time, matters of religion are never seriously treated, the child can only come to view religion as, at best, an innocuous pastime preferred by a few to golf or Canasta."32 Canon Bell concludes this part of his essay contributed to Life's special issue on U. S. schools with these words: "By treating religion as a dispensable diversion, it deprived the young of allegiance to any spiritual compulsion greater than love of country." (p. 98)

At greater length Canon Bell has expounded these ideas in his book, <u>Crisis in Education</u>: "As American school is now conducted more and more, there is no such thing as religious liberty in American education. There is liberty only to be unreligious." (p. 222)

I do not want to belabor this point, but it needs emphasis in our circles today, because of the reluctance of so many people to accept the obvious.

"By their fruits shall ye know them." Without playing god, we can see some of the fruits. John S. Brubacher, professor of the History and the Philosophy of Education, Yale University, has pointed out that "the study of educational philosophy has flourished in the twentieth century as never before in the whole history of education," and that this study has produced at least one "major philosophy of education - Dewey's Democracy in Education, which is the foundation for the so-called 'progressive education' movement." Brubacher observes that "the experimental schools which made up progressive education were but the vanguard of that larger twentieth century endeavor to assume more and more intentional control of the social progress. ... Progressive schools, for instance, deliberately fashioned their practices on scientific findings. As these often were in conflict with cherished traditional convictions, there was an urgent demand for a fresh philosophical approach to resolve the conflict. ... Techniques of measurement devised by the new psychology have demanded a different conception of human nature, a conception which traditional education has often found repugnant to its metaphysical psychology. Again, the interpretation of biological findings, especially the theory of organic evolution, has widened the differences between traditional and 'progressive' education. To attach the adjective 'progressive' to education can mean quite different things, depending on whether one uses an Aristotelian or Darwinian conception of development. $^{"33}$

There should be no doubt that these ideas of the educational philosophers are being put into action in the modern school system. Prof. Jack Culbertson of

Ohio State University, currently outlining "The Preparation of Administrators, "describes the "concepts which were to constitute the basis for a new science of administration: The approach was strongly influenced by logical positivism, a school of thought which Dwight Waldo has defined as follows: 'Logical positivism is a would-be tough-minded school of thought that asserts its close connection with modern physical science. It abhors metaphysics, dismisses ethics, emphasizes empiricism, places a high premium upon rigorous logical analysis."34 Professor Culbertson declares further, that this new movement places "high value on theory. Contrary to the popular view that theory is for those in ivory towers, adherents of the new science maintained that theory was one of the most practical of human invention." (p. 308) This new breed of administrators, "in making decisions as leaders, must rely ultimately upon basic human values whose ethical dimensions are treated more adequately in philosophy and other aspects of the humanities than in the social sciences." (p. 329)

With the demise of a few old-time school administrators, schooled in an absolute value system of some kind, we can look for some real changes in our educational system. The fruits are already appearing, but they will ripen fast under the leadership of the new type of administrator.

Picking a few fruits at random of this type of education, we note that even though in the last sixty or seventy years our nation was preponderantly Christian, nevertheless most of our literary works have been written with naturalistic pre-suppositions. Professor Willard Thorp, who is the Holmes Professor of Belles Lettres at Princeton University, exam-

ines this phenomenon in a chapter in his authoritative book, American Writing in the Twentieth Century. "The Persistence of Naturalism in the Novel": "For more than fifty years there has been a persistent bias toward naturalism in American thought as well as in the novel. This bias has become deeply ingrained in the American mind. Events and ideas. decade by decade, have combined to strengthen it."35 "Almost without exception these American naturalistic novelists (i.e., Hamlin Garland, Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Jack London, Theodore Dreiser) denied man's relation to any supernatural order. Even Herbert Spencer's 'Unknowable' did not seem a very useful concept." (p. 155) "Literary naturalism refuses to die. ... One can predict that it will be with us for some time to come because of its essential flexibility." (p. 180) "Spencer's name was once a household word; today few Americans could list the philosophical naturalists of our time. but nearly every child who has gone to a public school has had the chance of becoming an unwitting follower of John Dewey. The schools of education have attended to this matter well. As a result philosophical naturalism comes nearer to being a universal American belief than any other one might name, and one might expect contemporary fiction to reflect its influence as it does." (p. 181)

Item: In 1959, Dr. Edward D. Eddy, in his now famous report on the college influence on student character, reveals how the college influences student character from an on-th-spot study of 20 campuses in 17 states throughtout the country. He made these general observations: "We observed also the profound effect of secularization in American education.... We are led to believe that the student response to religion is conditioned heavily by the cur-

rent strongly relativistic social thought."³⁶ Dr. Eddy then goes on in detail to show how the students obviously had not given much thought to their basic notions about life. "They were at a loss to state what convictions they had about which they were absolutely certain, although a few mentioned faith in the dignity of man or individualism of some form."

Item: Recently I called attention to two sets of statistics which reveal how corrosive the naturalistic philosophy is on young people, especially in the college. The December 1963, <u>Journal of Educational Psychology</u> pointed out from a study of Michigan State University students that 36% of those studied after their collegiate experience became less attached to a religion they can believe in and defend. Nearly three times as many students (363 vs. 132) "become less inclined rather than more inclined to accept the Bible as absolute and infallible."

I also sent out copies of the magazine Off To College for 1965 where, on page 30, Dr. J. Wesley Robb in an article, "Your Faith at College," informs us that the Center for the Study of Higher Education in Berkeley has been conducting a long-range study of Merit Scholars which includes an examination of their religious beliefs. At the time of their entrance into college, 88% of 395 men and 91% of 175 women acknowledged a felt need for religious faith, but by the end of their sophomore year, the percentage of affirmative responses dropped to 61% of the men and 74% of the women, and by the close of their junior year, the percentages were 51 and 69%, respectively.

Using this same set of statistics, the recent book, <u>College</u> and <u>Character</u>, makes the following

judgment: "Responses to this and other questions about religion make it clear that a sizable minority of highly able students change their religious attitudes during three years of college. Not only is the need for religious faith felt less and less, especially among men, but the belief that colleges should teach religious values dwindles." 37

Professor Mervin B. Freedman, writing in the same volume on "What Happens after College: Studies of Alumni," concludes that "there is evidence that the values, attitudes, and opinions with which one leaves college are likely to persist into later life with but little modification. Consequently the college years take on enormous importance; one cannot think of them as simply one period among others in which substantial modification also takes place. For many students, apparently, any changes that may occur in values, attitudes, and opinions end with graduation." (p. 245)

In his 1964 commencement address at Bethany, Pastor H. A. Theiste quoted very effectively the letter of a young college graduate written to the president of a large eastern university and which was reported by Dr. Van Dusen in his book God in Education (pp. 53, 54). Among some of the things this young man said are: "Have we not gleaned from your very own professors of natural science, philosophy, and ancient history that religions are the product of myth and superstition, and men create gods in their own image? That if there is such a thing as the soul no scientist has ever isolated it in the laboratory. If men are but animals, why not treat them as such? An animal has no rights. The law among animals is the law of the strong. If there is no natural law in this universe, how do you justify those inalienable rights which the Declaration of Independence asserts men to possess? If patriotic fervor is just a manifestation of an enlarged tribalism why do you think America is worth defending? Personally, I fail to understand how you or any other college president can expect us to become ardent Christian democrats when the vital postulates on which these faiths are supposed to rest are daily undermined in the classroom? ³⁸

Item: Rousas J. Rushdoony, after 295 pages of documentation, summarizes the authoritarian faith of the modern university, or as he calls it, "The hard core of doctrine of this new 'catholic' faith," in these eleven propositions:

- 1. The autonomy of man and his reason are assumed and the penetrability of all things to man's reason and its scientific or philosophical methodology. Thus, what cannot be comprehended by this methodology or measured by it is not real. ...
- 2. The evolutionary hypothesis is similarly assumed as an article of faith.
- 3. The natural order is assumed to be self-sufficient and a law in and of itself.
- 4. Education is held to be the instrument of social salvation.
- 5. The state is viewed to be the primary order of man's life.
- 6. The primary responsibility and accountability of man to man (as against man to

God) is maintained.

- 7. True learning is of necessity assumed to be religiously secular, i.e., divorced from God, and academic freedom requires a radical absolution from all theistic ties.
- 8. The priority of science and learning to ethics, and the determination of true ethics by means of autonomous man's own resources is maintained. Furthermore, even as morality is subordinate to and a product of human activity and intelligence, so true religion is subordinate to and a product of ethics.
- 9. Intelligence is the desire and necessary agency of social planning and control.
- 10. Evil is a social product because man is essentially a passive creature so that the 'moral education of the individual is purely and simply the management of his environment'. The mind is passive in that its every activity or idea is empirically aroused. Nothing can exist in the mind that is not first in the senses. While in the Kantian sense, knowledge is not the correlation of mind and object, it is still passive in that it is a synthesis which stimulus produces. Thus, delinquency is not seen as any more than a response, i. e., to a lack of love in the environment, and social evils as responses to environmental facts. ...
- 11. Nature is infinite and uncreated; hence the

problem in economics and life is not one of limitations of creation and of scarcity, but a problem of distribution and use." (Rushdoony pp. 296,297)

It is just too late for anyone to hold that the modern state school system is neutral with regard to its religious and philosophical foundations. It never was. Canon Bell gives a good summary of its development in four or five paragraphs in Life, October 16, 1950, pp. 97,98. In the Midwest the system was, for years, a fairly orthodox Protestant Reformed system, but Unitarianism, even at an early time, was creeping into and overcoming it. One should not forget that the McGuffey Reader was Unitarian in the Horace Mann tradition. This system of beliefs at least accepted some moral absolutes, but long ago this has gone by the board; instead we have the religion of secularism, defined by President Pusey as "An attachment to a way of life of which there is neither need or place for religion."

In retrospect, it is surprising that our fathers did not perceive more clearly the essential quality of public secular education, and where its fundamental presuppositions would lead us. Recently, I read a statement made in 1885 by the Presbyterian theologian, Prof. A. A. Hodge, which 80 years later, shocks one with its analysis of present-day irreligion: "The tendency is to hold that this system must be altogether secular. The atheistic doctrine is gaining currency, even among professed Christians and even among some bewildered Christian ministers, that an education provided by the common government for the children of diverse religious parties should be entirely emptied of all religious character. The Protestants object to the government schools

being used for the purpose of inculcating the doctrines of the Catholic church, and Romanists object to the use of the Protestant version of the Bible and to the inculcation of the peculiar doctrines of the Protestant churches. The Jews protest against the schools being used to inculcate Christianity in any form, and the atheists and agnostics protest any teaching that implies the existence and moral government of God. ... Then he that believes most must give way to him that believes least, and then he that believes least must give way to him that believes nothing, no matter in how small a minority the atheists or the agnostics may be. It is self-evident that on this scheme, if it is consistently and persistently carried out in all parts of the country, the U. S. system of national popular education will be the most efficient and wide instrument for the propagation of atheism which the world has ever seen...A comprehensive and centralized system of national education, separated from religion, as is now commonly proposed, will prove the most appalling enginery for the propagation of anti-Christian and atheistic unbelief, and of anti-social nihilistic ethics, individual, social and political, which this sin-rent world has ever seen. "39

The established religion of secularism is the heart of the church-state separation argument raging in education at the present time. We have an established state religion in the public school system today. Time (September 14, 1959, p. 70), in discussing the future of the public high school as envisioned by men such as Dr. James Bryant Conant, quite matter of factly stated: "The focus of a European town remained the cathedral; the focus of an American town became the high school. By the 20th century, quipped Britain's historian Dennis Brogan,

U. S. Public Education was a 'formally unestablished national church'."

And since this is true, are we not abridging, if not prohibiting, the free exercise of our religion and our fellow-American's religion when we make school attendance compulsory by law for the lower grades and by custom for higher education, but we make the state school free, while the independent school must charge a price that puts it out of competition for most Americans? I find myself of necessity agreeing with Prof. Virgil Blum: "If a nonconforming student's pursuit of truth is obstructed by government denial of equal educational benefits, then government is guilty of depriving him of freedom of thought. He is deprived of the right to think and investigate freely, to develop his individual personality and to share his thoughts with his fellow citizens in the elemental process of democracy. He is deprived of a fundamental liberty, a liberty which is the basis of all others. ... Put in another way, when government enforces a conformity to the philosophical and theological orientation of a particular school as a condition for sharing an educational benefit, it violates freedom of thought and freedom of religion."40

B. W. Teigen

NOTES AND DOCUMENTATION

Once one has become aware of this slumbering assumption, it is amazing to note how pervasive it is in our ways of thinking even though we may vociferously deny it. Dr. August W. Brustat, in an article, "Return Christ to the Classroom," rightfully insists that the only acceptable education to us is one that is centered around the basic truths of Christianity, but he feels that one could not bring this kind of education into a public or government school because of the admixture of children from various religious backgrounds; he asserts that "serious complications would easily develop if religion in any form (my emphasis) would be brought into the public classroom." And yet the good doctor's article is among us one of the first and most incisive analyses of the prevailing philosophy or religion which dominates the public school room, namelv. Secularistic Naturalism, whose fundamental tenet is, according to Dr. Brustat, that "man is no longer considered to be a child of God fallen from grace, but part of the continuity of Nature." (American Lutheran, June 1956)

In 1963 the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod adopted a statement regarding governmental aid. It appears to me that in the minds of the framers of this document there lurks the assumption that the state school system into which we pour nearly all educational tax money, provides an education which, religiously considered, is neutral. Paragraph seven of the document holds that it is a violation of the constitution to use tax monies gathered from all citizens for the support of independent or reli-

gious schools, but the document at the same time, at least tacitly, implies that it is perfectly appropriate that the entire educational tax dollar should go to the state school system.

Writers in the Lutheran Sentinel present mixed points of view with regard to the matter of whether the public school has a religion or not. In the August 8, 1963 issue, a writer examines this problem in an article, "Does Your School Teach Religion?" After reviewing a social studies textbook the writer makes the judgment: "It can hardly be denied that public schools are teaching religion. They can't help but teach it -- and so long as this teaching, even if incidental is not based on the Word of God, it can't help but teach false religion." But apparently the problem of having our educational tax dollars support only this teaching of a "false religion" (Sentinel emphasis) does not seem to cause the writer any questions, for he not only says that we are not "to condemn public instruction. We rather commend the spirit that makes our school among the most elegant and conspicuous of buildings." And he then significantly adds: "Neither should we begrudge the billions of dollars spent for education of our country's 50 million youth." One wonders whether the writer would begrudge a few educational tax dollars following the scholar to a school where the pure doctrine is taught. Two weeks later (August 22. 1963) another writer in the Lutheran Sentinel favors the decisions of the Supreme Court eliminating state-prepared prayers, Bible reading and use of the Lord's prayer, because "in the public schools there are children of various faiths and some of no faith at all." There seems to be a

tacit assumption that the public school can become neutral by omitting such formal references to religion. Then in the Lutheran Sentinel for November 23, 1963, a writer commends the proposal made by the Red Wing, Minnesota Public School Board that "all religious connotations will be removed from the graduation exercises and from Christmas and Easter concerts." The writer goes on to state that "we know that many have not seen the wrong done the church when the public schools have usurped the place of the church and the home." The assumption seems to be that if certain outward religious connotations will be removed from some public school exercises, the public school will be neutral. This interpretation seems to me to be inescapable in view of the writer's further words: "We pray for the success of the public schools. Let them flourish in the teaching of the 3 R's. The first R, Religion is the sacred province of the home and church. Religion is usually called the Fourth R. We insist that it is the First, for our Savior tells us: Seek ye first the kingdom of God in his righteousness. So long before we entrust the state school with the task of training our children for this world's citizenship, our children should be trained to show forth the praises of Him that has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light."

This widespread diffusion of the silent assumption that the secularized public school system is neutral with regard to religious (or irreligious) principles, is not surprising when one recalls that it has found expression in the majority opinion of the United States Supreme Court, Justice Jackson, in the West Virginia State Board of

Education vs Barnette, 1943 (the "Flag Salute Case") declared: "Free public education, if faithful to the ideal of secular instruction and political neutrality will not be partisan or enemy of any class, creed, party, or faction" (319 U. S. 624, 1943). But even at that time, in a dissenting opinion, Justice Frankfurter began to sense the inadequacy of such a view: "What of the claims for equality of treatment of those parents who, because of religious scruples, cannot send their children to public schools?". Subsequent examinations of this problem has led men such as Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, Walter Lippmann, etc., to realize the virtual impossibility of keeping a school neutral and yet avoiding inculcation of secularism (i.e., a philosophy of life which leaves no place for religion). Justice Stewart, in his dissent from the majority opinion in the Schempp and Murray Case (Bible Reading and The Lord's Prayer, 1963) was convinced that to preclude the religious ceremonies in the schools is to establish secularism by "the ritualistic invocation of the non-constitutional phrase 'separation of church and state.'" Dr. Robert Hutchins insists that "Since the object of the First Amendment is to guarantee and promote religious freedom, including freedom from religion, it is a violation of the amendment to apply pressure, directly or indirectly, upon the conscience of any person." ("The Future of the Wall", in "The Wall Between Church and State, Dallin H. Oaks, ed., Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 22) And he asks the basic question regarding the present-day position that knowledge about religion should be taught in all schools for a full understanding of our culture: "But if knowledge about religion is

to be communicated, it will presumably be communicated by somebody who has a view of the subject and who cannot be expected to conceal it. If he is paid by the state, what has happened to the wall?" (p. 20)

Henry, Nelson B., ed., <u>The Integration of Educational Experiences</u>, 57th Yearbook, The National Society for the Study of Education, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, p. 5.

As it will be seen. I have taken a considerable amount of material from the annual yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education. This is a loosely organized group of persons interested in the "investigation of educational problems." It is governed by a Board of Directors whose chief duty is to create and appoint special committees to study problems in education. Each year two or three committees report their findings, which are published as "yearbooks." These vearbook committees are truly blue ribbon committees, as a knowledgeable glance at their roster will demonstrate. The yearbooks are well-written and widely distributed, a first printing currently being at least 10,000 copies. As indicative of the respect with which these vearbooks are held. I have heard graduate students say: "If it is in the NSSE Yearbook, check it carefully, for it will be in the educational textbooks in three or four vears."

Quoted by Dr. R. Hutchins in <u>The Wall Between</u> <u>Church and State</u>, Dallin Oaks, ed. (University of Chicago Press, 1964) p. 20.

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- ⁶ <u>Time</u>, 3/19/65, p. 26.
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- From Kilpatrick's <u>Philosophy of Education</u>, p. 213, quoted by Rushdoony, p. 207.

- From Toward a Democratic Faith, p. 187, quoted by Rushdoony, p. 256.
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- Toward a <u>Democratic Faith</u>, p. 177, quoted by Rushdoony, p. 256.
- See Brameld's <u>Ends</u> and <u>Means</u>, pp. 81-85; compare Rushdoony, p. 261.
- Patterns of Educational Philosophy, p. 465, quoted by Rushdoony, p. 264.
- 28 See Rushdoony, p. 264.
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