

Schools Make News



Trouble in California

THE DISSIDENT Berkeley students who threatened to "bring the university to a grinding halt" got an assist last month from Ronald Reagan, who, in one of his first acts as California's new Governor, provoked a series of sudden moves culminating in the dismissal of Clark Kerr as president.

Dr. Kerr's position with the Board of Regents had become increasingly tenuous since the free speech disorders in 1964-65, but his removal at this time was unexpected. The Governor, as a member of the Board, was among the majority of 14 to 8 who voted to oust Dr. Kerr.

But the events preceding the President's dismissal may bode even greater consequences for the university. Early in January Governor Reagan, in an "economy" move, proposed drastic cuts in the university budget and a tuition charge

to students of \$400 a year in addition to present fees. At the same time Reagan proposed a tuition charge of \$200 per year in the state colleges. Dr. Kerr and Glenn S. Dumke, chancellor of the state colleges, responded by freezing student applications to all the colleges and universities involved, declaring that if there had to be a cutback, it would be in quantity rather than quality.

The budget cut, with or without tuition, could have a serious effect on a university and college system considered one of the best in the nation. Faculty salary cuts would undoubtedly cause the university to lose some of its most distinguished professors, for academic men are highly mobile. If the university attempts to maintain quality by reducing the size of the faculty it must also substantially reduce the size of the student body. If both the university and the state colleges restrict enrollments, many more

students will seek admission to the public junior colleges, which also are supported by tax funds.

Reagan's proposed tax cut may please the many California citizens who think of themselves primarily as "taxpayers." It will also please those who have been eager to see a crackdown on the disorders on the Berkeley campus. But it may prove a political boomerang. Berkeley is only one of many campuses in California's vast system of higher education and most of the campuses have been orderly. Many California parents who count on free higher education for their children in one of the nation's great institutions are frightened by the prospect of higher costs to students and lower quality of education. In any case, the budget must be passed by the state legislature, which will be responsive to public pressures.

Chicago Report

A U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION study has spelled out evidence of violations of the Civil Rights Act in Chicago public schools. In its first major report on school segregation in the North, the USOE rejected the theory that segregated housing patterns are the sole cause of racial segregation in the schools, and declared that school officials bear part of the blame for segregated schooling and must take responsibility for correcting it.

The report does not charge the school system with deliberate segregation, but states that current policies result in unequal treatment of minority students. In order to avoid suspension of federal aid (under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act), Chicago must make changes in four major areas outlined in the report:

► Teacher assignment—currently 89.8 per cent of Negro teachers are assigned to Negro schools.

► School boundaries—last year 85.3 per cent of white elementary students and 87.8 per cent of Negro elementary students attended segregated schools, having more than 90 per cent of their pupils of one race.

► Open enrollment in vocational schools—the present procedure is ineffective since enrollment in most vocational schools is predominantly of one race.

► Apprenticeship training programs—last fall 2,304 white students and 112 Negro students were enrolled; review of recruitment procedures is called for.

Superintendent of Schools James F. Redmond pledged swift action to meet the USOE's demands.



—The Register and Tribune Syndicate.

"We'll bring UC to a grinding halt! Right, Ronnie baby?"

Aggiornamento on Campus

ONE OF THE MAJOR consequences of Vatican II was a call for increasing participation by laymen in the activities of the Catholic Church. In recent weeks the concept of the open church has been dramatically reflected in developments in American Catholic universities. A number of major institutions, among them the University of Notre Dame, the University of Detroit, and St. Louis University, are moving to give laymen an equal voice in university government.

But perhaps the most dramatic of these developments is the decision to convert Webster College at Webster Groves, Missouri—now operated by the Sisters of Loretto—into a secular institution. Sister Jacqueline Grennan, president of Webster and a major voice for innovation in higher education, requested and was granted permission to be relieved of her vows as a nun; she will remain as president of the institution. Miss Grennan said, "It is my personal conviction that the very nature of higher education is opposed to juridical control by the Church. The academic freedom which most characterizes a college or university would provide continuing embarrassment for the Church if her hierarchy were forced into endorsing or negating the action of the college or university."

At the same time serious consideration is being given to a proposal to increase lay representation on the Board of Trustees of the University of Notre Dame and the University of Portland, both operated by the Congregation of Holy Cross. Notre Dame's President, the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, endorsed the proposal as "an inevitable development" linked to changes stimulated by Vatican II and other contemporary conditions. "Every human institution must renew itself as it faces the new problems of each new age," he said. "Otherwise, it will develop organizational arteriosclerosis." Notre Dame will remain a Catholic institution, but if the proposal now before the Holy Cross Fathers is approved, the present six clerical trustees would elect six lay trustees to form the university's highest governing body.

St. Louis University also reconstituted its Board of Trustees, giving eighteen laymen and ten Jesuits control of the institution. Among the new lay members of the board there will be several who are not Catholic.

Assessment Preview

A TRIAL RUN of a national educational assessment, financed by the Carnegie Corporation and directed by Professor Ralph Tyler, was launched last month, and already the response is vociferous. The American Association of School Ad-

ministrators condemned it as "coercive" and called on school systems not to cooperate with the assessment program. Eight faculty members of the Harvard Graduate School of Education replied to the AASA with equal vigor, saying it "seriously misconstrues the problems and possibilities of national assessment."

A national assessment is still at least a year away. Using modern opinion-sampling techniques to measure what different segments of the population know about reading, writing, science, literature, and other fields, the assessment program is expected to provide an accurate measure of the educational success of American schools. The purpose of the trial run is to see how much the test questions disclose about the quality of education and to determine how much of the lengthy questionnaire an individual can answer comfortably.

Once under way, the assessment will involve perhaps a million participants sampled from four age groups—youngsters aged nine, thirteen, and seventeen, and adults between the ages of twenty-nine and thirty-five. They will include school dropouts and students in public, private, and parochial schools. The sample will be broken down according to sex, family income, and geographical background.

Planners say it would take about twenty hours to test a single person on all the subjects involved, so no one will take the whole test. Instead, each person will spend about an hour answering only a small piece of it, and a composite picture will be drawn from the pieces.

But neither these facts nor the prestige of the educators devising the assessment has allayed fears. The AASA statement claims assessment will produce unfair comparisons of school systems, force teachers to teach for the test, and reveal little not already known.

The Harvard reply declares that the sampling techniques obviate pernicious comparisons. "We believe," the message continues, "that teachers and administrators will be freer than they now are from undesirable pressures once they possess greater knowledge about what different sorts of Americans know at various ages. . . . Is it better for public educational authorities on all levels to establish priorities, as inevitably they must, on the basis of ignorance, or on the basis of some knowledge?"

Notes

AN EARNEST EFFORT in prison education is being made in Texas, where convicts can earn college credits that will be recognized by any university in the nation. Faculty from Alvin Junior College and Lee College (both near Houston) teach general academic courses at four prisons in the area and are hoping to expand the curriculum soon. The pro-



—Wide World.

Jacqueline Grennan—a major voice for innovation.

gram, an outgrowth of a project conducted by Southern Illinois University at Menard Prison in that state, is said to have more depth than any in the nation.

The National Council of Churches is preparing to launch a major campaign to get public schools to offer objective courses about religion. When the Supreme Court ruled against devotional exercises in schools, it expressly declared there would be no constitutional objection to teaching about religion in the same way schools teach about other subjects on which Americans disagree. But few public schools have responded to this invitation. To generate demand and minimize controversy, the Council will urge its local affiliates across the country to get together with Catholic and Jewish groups on a program of public school instruction acceptable to all faiths.

New Man in the Chair

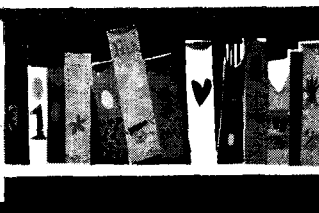


Perkins

ADAM CLAYTON Powell was deposed last month as chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee and Representative Carl D. Perkins (Democrat of Kentucky) replaced him.

Representative Perkins is a liberal with a long record for sponsoring major education legislation. He co-sponsored the Area Redevelopment Act and the Manpower Development and Training Act, and helped formulate the Appalachian Regional Development Act. As chairman of the General Education Subcommittee, Mr. Perkins sponsored and brought to passage the Vocational Education Act of 1963. He was a sponsor of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and chairman of the subcommittee which saw it through the House.

the Editor's Bookshelf



Theories of child rearing and education alternate between two extreme views of the natural condition of childhood. One is that untrained children are little savages who can be brought to maturity as civilized adults only by firm discipline during the formative years. The opposing view is that the uncorrupted impulses of children are so pure and good that it is best to let them develop naturally with a minimum of adult control. Though most psychologists reject both views, it is these extremes that get the attention.

A. S. Neill's *Summerhill*, which appeared six years ago, was a restatement of the second view and a vigorous defense of extreme permissiveness in education. It describes a small boarding school in England in which children are free of all restrictions and inhibitions and are allowed to decide for themselves what, when, and whether they will study, how they will dress, and how they will spend their time. Such group decisions as are necessary are made by a school council in which the vote of a six-year-old child counts as much as that of the headmaster.

When I reviewed the book I saw Summerhill as an extreme form of progressive education based on a philosophy that seemed to be a blend of Rousseau and misinterpreted Freud. Though I applauded Neill for his courage and his humane approach to child rearing, I refused to take Summerhill seriously as a model for American schools. But many readers, including some psychiatrists and ministers, vigorously disagreed. Some were so enthusiastic that they set about establishing schools in this country based on Neill's philosophy. The book was vigorously promoted by its publishers and widely read. Summerhill founded a cult.

In part this reflects the swing of the pendulum. Throughout the Fifties the trend was away from permissiveness. There was a widespread demand for firmer discipline, greater rigor, and higher academic standards. By 1960 the growing pressure on students to make high grades in preparation for getting into the "right" colleges was causing widespread alarm. Many joined the new cult because it promised a return to natural uninhibited childhood, free of such pressures. Still others were no doubt reacting to their own unhappy experiences in schools where the discipline was harsh or unreasonable. But all these

added up to only a small minority. The trend toward firmer discipline and academic rigor has continued. Summerhill did not gain much of a following among professional educators and its total effect on American education has been negligible.

Freedom—Not License! Neill's latest book (Hart, 192 pp., \$4.95), is a short volume of advice to parents in the form of questions and answers. It was written in response to a request from his publisher that he explain the distinction between the words in the title. Neill reaffirms his view that academic work should never be required but wants it understood that he does not defend license which he defines as interfering with another's freedom. "In my school," he says, "a child is free to go to lessons or stay away from lessons because that is his own affair, but he is not free to play a trumpet when others want to study or sleep."

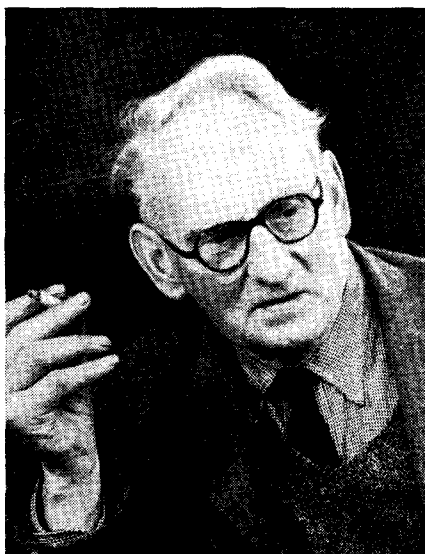
Some of the advice given sounds like straightforward common sense which might have come from a Dr. Spock or an Ann Landers. To a mother who says, "My child is four. He yells and screams and makes a great deal of noise. Is he of an age when I can teach him that he should be mindful of the rights of others?" Neill replies, "Yes, tell him to shut up, but do not clothe the protection in morality. To garnish with sermons is both wrong and futile." To another parent who asks, "Should I censor my

daughter's reading? She is fifteen and brings home books that to me are objectionable," he responds, "If you want her to acquire a good taste in pornography, certainly ban her books."

At other times Neill takes a more clinical approach. To a mother who reports that her eighteen-year-old son stops off at a bar every day on the way home from school he says, "When a lad of eighteen takes to whisky, there is something sadly lacking in his immediate environment. To drink compulsively always denotes an escape from reality." And to another who says, "My son is a student at Berkeley . . . is there anything I can say to keep him from embarking on a course in drug-taking?" Neill says, in part, "No one who has a full, creative life will seek drugs as an escape . . . the root of drug-taking is unhappiness, misery, ultimately due to the conflict between unconscious desires and moral principles. Abolish the guilt we call sin, and the drug merchants will go bankrupt."

Neill distinguishes between good manners, by which he means consideration for others, and etiquette, which he defines as surface politeness. "In my school," he says, "we do not teach etiquette; if a child licks his plate, no one cares—indeed no one notices. We never groom a child to say 'Thank You' or 'Good Morning.' But when a boy mocked a new lad who was lame, the other children called a special meeting and the offender was told by the community, and in no uncertain terms, that the school did not relish bad manners." This is fair enough, though it would seem that plate-licking might also be discouraged without doing any great harm to a child's psyche.

Neill believes that most of the evils in the world result from the inhibitions and restrictions placed upon sexual activities that a more enlightened society would regard as healthy and proper. To avoid guilt feelings on the part of pupils at Summerhill he encourages what he calls "genital play" in young children. When they reach adolescence, he says the parents should not only approve of sexual activities—they should aid and abet them: ". . . a girl or boy should be free to have a sex life when she or he wants it. Without parental approval, such a sex life would be apt to be a guilty one, without contraceptives, a dangerous one." He is aware that the degree of freedom he desires would require some legal changes but he thinks the present laws are archaic. He speaks specifically of ". . . our insane divorce laws, our cruel laws against homosexuals, our laws against abortion (in spite of the fact that there are thousands of illegal and dangerous abortions each year)." Neill's vigorous attack on the sexual morality that has been variously



A. S. Neill—"a humane approach to child rearing."