

Kenneth B. Clark | *Educational Stimulation of Racially Disadvantaged Children*

Within the past ten years, there has been increasing concern with the problem of providing the maximum educational stimulation for children from socially and racially disadvantaged groups. Probably the most dramatic single stimulus which aroused widespread discussion of this problem, as related to the education of Negroes, was the May 17, 1954, decision of the United States Supreme Court which ruled that state laws requiring or permitting racially segregated schools violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. The decision discussed in rather simple direct language the general social significance of public education in American democracy. It stated:¹

Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

Widespread public discussion of problems of education for any group of children in America necessarily involves discussions of general problems of education affecting all children. Once the emotional reaction to the Supreme Court's desegregation decisions and the various patterns of resistance to the demanded changes have decreased, it will be seen that an effective transition from segregated to non-segregated schools tends to raise the general level of democratic public education for all children.

¹ *Brown versus Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

The interim reports which have been published by the Superintendent of Schools of Washington, D.C. indicates that since the desegregation of these schools, there has been a measurable improvement in the average academic achievement level of both Negro and white children (6, 7).

More recently—since the launching of the first Sputnik—some observers have expressed concern about the comparative effectiveness of the American and Soviet systems of public education. These discussions generally resulted in demands for re-examination of standards, methods, curriculum, effectiveness of teaching, and an insistence that the general level of achievement of the students in American schools be raised. It would be expected that discussions of the quality of education in terms of problems of international competition and demands for military superiority would result in the tendency to equate general educational excellence with the specifics of high achievement in mathematics, science, and technology.

An article published in 1956 in the *College Board Review* (1) presented evidence which pointed to the grave shortage in scientific, technical and other college trained individuals in America. This evidence indicated that during that year the Soviet Union would graduate 138,000 students in various scientific fields while the United States, at best, would graduate only 78,000 similarly trained students. It was also clear that while the number of individuals receiving Ph.D. degrees in all fields had remained constant during the preceding five years in the United States, it had increased dramatically in the Soviet Union. At that time, that nation awarded nearly twice as many Ph.D. degrees annually as were awarded in the United States. This evidence which suggested at least a quantitative inferiority of American education in stimulating and training individuals of superior intellect was being discussed before the Russians launched their first Sputnik. In the six years since the publication of that article, there has been no evidence to suggest that there has been any significant changes in the trends observed at that time. There is still no evidence that America has developed the procedures and facilities necessary to increase the number of trained intellectuals or that the effectiveness of Russian education has declined.²

In spite of this seeming difference in educational effectiveness, it is questionable whether competition with the Russians and the factor of national prestige are the significant reasons for being concerned with ob-

² There was a newspaper report to the effect that Premier Khrushchev was publicly dissatisfied with the overwhelming success of the Russian educational system which produced a disproportionate number of "intellectuals." It was reported that he was concerned that an overeducated population would develop a contempt for manual labor. He, therefore, suggested, or demanded that henceforth the curriculum in Russian schools must include vocational education and manual training.

taining for each child in America the most effective education without regard to such educationally irrelevant barriers as race, nationality, religion or low social and economic background. The goals of assuring equality of educational opportunity and providing the most effective education for every child are inherent imperatives of American education in this latter half of the twentieth century.

Any society which is to remain viable and dynamic must raise the educational standards for all of its people and must exploit and use constructively high intellectual potential wherever it is to be found. The argument in support of this is no longer sentimental.

The dangers inherent in not developing an effective approach to the discovery, stimulation and training of superior intellectual potential in all groups of American children seem to be greater than the dangers inherent in an inefficient and wasteful exploitation of our natural material resources. It is now axiomatic that trained human intelligence is the most valuable resource of a civilized nation. Like other natural resources, it must be discovered and transformed creatively into its most effective and usable form. At this period in world history, no nation can afford to waste any of its potential intelligence through indifference, inefficiency, ignorance or the anachronistic luxury of racial and social class prejudices. The economic, social, political, international, and, of course, primary, humanitarian reasons for this are becoming increasingly clear.

Another factor which must be taken into account in understanding these demands for more effective use of the intellectual potentials in previously disadvantaged groups is to be found in the pressure and demands which are coming from these groups themselves. One of the significant changes which characterizes the modern world is the fact that increasing automation in business and industry is relentlessly leading to an increase in leisure for the masses of working people. With this increasing automation and leisure, there will be a smaller proportion of the population required for unskilled or manual work. The educational implications of this social and economic change may be further complicated by the probably irreversible trend toward higher and higher wages and higher and higher living standards for the masses of people who earn their living through wages. If this trend continues, one may expect that there will be a raising of the social-class aspirations of these previously working class groups and that this will eventually result in an increasing desire for higher education for their children.

Education has been one of the most effective means for social mobility in the American society. This problem in the future may be different from the similar problem in the past only in that it will involve different and

larger groups of previously disadvantaged individuals. The rising pressure for higher education which can be expected to come from the presently disadvantaged groups in our society must be met by appropriate and effective adjustments on the part of our educational institutions. If these pressures are not met effectively, then one could anticipate major consequences of frustration among the members of these groups. Some of the social manifestations of these personal frustrations which could be anticipated are: an increase in delinquency and criminality; intensification of bigotry, provincialism, intergroup tensions and hostility; increase in the chances of successful manipulation of the primitive passions of the masses by political cynics, fanatics or demagogues; an increase in the incidence of emotional instability among those upwardly mobile groups whose aspirations are being blocked; and other symptoms of personal and social disorganization.

Creative educators can help to prevent these personal and social disturbances by making the necessary modifications in curriculum and methods and by providing the educational leadership, guidance and stimulation which will make it possible for American society to strengthen and improve our system of democratic public education. When this is done, our schools will continue to function as the chief vehicles of upward class mobility and as a major source of social and economic vitality. If it is not done, our schools will contribute to social stagnation and more insidious forms of social-class cleavages and distinctions.

The most compelling argument for providing the maximum educational stimulation for all American children without regard to the social, economic, national, or racial backgrounds of their parents is the fact that the effective functioning of a dynamic democracy demands this. It is one of the cardinal assumptions of our American democracy that significant social changes may be brought about through education—through providing that type of intellectual training and information which will make it possible for the citizen to make the types of decisions which he must make in a democracy—rather than through tyranny or violence. The substance, rather than the verbalization, of democracy depends upon our ability to extend and deepen the insights of the people. Only an educated people can be expected to make the type of choices which assert their freedoms and reinforce their sense of social responsibility.

Some Research Problems and Findings Relevant to the Education of Deprived Children

During the past year a number of books dealing directly or indirectly with the problem of the education of children in depressed urban areas

have been published. Among the more significant of these books are James B. Conant's *Slums and Suburbs* (4), Frank Riessman's *The Culturally Deprived Child* (9), and Patricia Sexton's *Education and Income* (10).

Dr. Sexton's analysis of the relationship between social and economic status and the quality of education provided for children in the public schools of a northern urban community is a model of objective social science and educational research. The data presented by her demonstrate conclusively that curricula, educational standards, quality of teaching, educational facilities and materials, and academic achievement of the children are directly related to the socio-economic status of the majority of children attending a particular school. Her findings add another significant dimension to the well known and often repeated fact that academic achievement varies directly with socio-economic status. Usually this fact is interpreted as reflecting some type of selective factor wherein individuals of high intelligence attain high socio-economic status and produce more intelligent children and that higher status families provide their children with more stimulation for academic achievement. The data presented by Dr. Sexton, however, make clear, at least to this observer, the crucial role of the school in determining the level of academic achievement of the children. The traditional interpretation would continue to argue that the standards and quality of the school reflect the limitations of the home and the immediate community from which the child comes and that the school must gear its level to these limitations. This interpretation has so far not been verified through objective research although it is widely accepted as if it were.

Attempts to determine the specific role of a particular school on the average level of academic performance of the children in that school must obtain data on the general attitudes of teachers in that school towards their children—particularly if there is a marked class discrepancy between teachers and students; the expectations of these teachers and the effect of these expectations on the actual performance of their children; and the children's perspective of themselves, their teachers, and their school. It is now imperative that social scientists study with rigorous objectivity and precision the complex and interrelated problems which seem relevant to an understanding of how children from depressed backgrounds can be motivated for maximum academic achievement.

At present, the work of Allison Davis and his colleagues, which demonstrates the educationally depressing effects of the gap between working-class children and middle-class teachers, is an important starting point for future more detailed research. It is important to know, for example, not

only the particular attitudinal patterns which the teacher communicates to these children but also the particular ways in which she communicates her attitudes and how these block or facilitate the academic motivation of lower-class children. The empirical data on these specific problems are sparse, and one is required to speculate on the nature of the manner in which these blockages operate. Probably a core factor in the complex inhibiting dynamics involved in the interplay between middle-class and higher-status teachers and working-class and lower-status children is the pervasive and archaic belief that children from culturally deprived backgrounds are by virtue of their deprivation of lower status position inherently uneducable.

Professor Goodwin Watson, in his introduction to Frank Riessman's book (9), has defined this problem and suggested a general solution as follows:

In recent decades a spate of anthropological, sociological, and social-psychological studies, many of them mentioned by Professor Riessman, has revealed the appalling gap between our pretensions and our practices. We do not give the same kind of food, clothing, housing, medical care, recreation, or justice to the deprived children that we give to those in comfortably-well-off homes. We don't like to think of class distinctions in American life, so we tend to shy away from these unacceptable facts. Opportunities are far from equal.

The American public school is a curious hybrid: it is managed by a school board drawn largely from upper-class circles; it is taught by teachers who come largely from middle-class backgrounds; and it is attended mainly by children from working-class homes. These three groups do not talk the same language. They differ in their manners, power, and hierarchies of values . . .

Under-cultured children have much to learn from education, but educators could well take some lessons from some of these youngsters. Their language may not be grammatical, but it is often more vivid and expressive than is the turgid prose of textbooks. These children face some of the "facts of life" more realistically than many of their teachers do. Even their pugnacity might be worth attention by some long-suffering, overworked, underpaid teachers. When it comes to making friends and standing by their pals, some children from under-privileged neighborhoods far outshine their priggish teachers.

The starting point is respect. Nothing else that we have to give will help very much if it is offered with a resentful, contemptuous, or patronizing attitude. We don't understand these neighborhoods, these homes, these children, because we haven't respected them enough to think them worthy of study and attention. Professor Riessman's book is likely to be the pioneer in a series of investigations that will reveal to America that we have neglected a major source of manpower and of creative talent. The stone which the builders rejected may even become the head of the corner.

One may assume that if a child is not treated with the respect which is due him as a human being, and if those who are charged with the re-

sponsibility of teaching him believe that he cannot learn, then his motivation and ability to learn may become impaired. If a teacher believes that a child is incapable of being educated, it is likely that this belief will in some way be communicated to the child in one or more of the many forms of contacts inherent in the teacher-pupil relationship.

Because of the importance of the role of teachers in the developing self-image, academic aspirations and achievements of their students, it was thought desirable to conduct a preliminary study of the attitudes of teachers in ten public schools located in depressed areas of a large northern city. The children in these schools came generally from homes and communities which were so lacking in educational stimulation and other determinants of self-respect that they seemed even more dependent upon their teachers for self-esteem, encouragement, and stimulation. These children, like most deprived human beings, were hypersensitive and desperate in their desire for acceptance.

The findings of this preliminary study revealed that while there were some outstanding exceptions—individual principals and teachers who respected the human dignity and potentialities of their students—the overwhelming majority of these teachers and their supervisors rejected these children and looked upon them as inherently inferior.

For the most, the teachers indicated that they considered these children to be incapable of profiting from a normal curriculum. The children were seen as intellectually inferior and therefore not capable of learning. The qualitative flavor of this complex pattern of negative attitudes can best be communicated by the verbatim reports written by our observers:

As soon as I entered the classroom, Mrs. X told me in front of the class, that the parents of these children are not professionals and therefore they do not have much background or interest in going ahead to college. . . . She discussed each child openly in front of the entire class and myself. . . . She spoke about the children in a belittling manner. She tried to give each child encouragement, but her over-all attitude was negative in that she did not think much of the abilities of her students. She told me in private that "heredity is what really counts," and since they didn't have a high culture in Africa and have not as yet built one in New York, they are intellectually inferior from birth.

Another teacher was described as follows:

The teacher was a lady of about 50 who had no understanding of these children. She kept pointing to them when talking about them so that even I was slightly embarrassed. She kept repeating "You see what I mean?", which I didn't at all. . . . She took it for granted that these children were stupid and that there was little that she could do with them.

A third description illustrates some of the subtleties of the problem:

Mr. G. is a rather tense and nervous man. He continually played with his finger or with a pencil or tapped his fingers on the desk. What disturbed him most was the cultural deprivation that most of the students in his school suffered from. He said that often the teacher will refer to everyday facts which the children will be completely ignorant of. He says that it is most difficult if not impossible to teach them.

These and other examples clearly suggest that among many of the teachers who are required to teach children from culturally deprived backgrounds there exists a pervasive negative attitude toward these children. These teachers say repeatedly, and appear to believe, that it is not possible to teach these children. They offer, in support of their conclusion, the belief that these children cannot learn because of "poor heredity," "poor home background," "cultural deprivation," and "low IQ."

The Problem of the IQ

Probably as disturbing as these examples of rejection of these children on the part of those who are required to teach them, are the many examples of well-intentioned teachers who point to the low intelligence- and achievement-test scores of these children as the basis for their belief that these children cannot be educated. These teachers generally do not base their judgment on conscious racial bias or rejection of these children as human beings or necessarily on their "poor heredity." They point to the realities of a poor environment, cultural deprivation and lack of educational stimulation in the home as the determinants of low academic achievement of these children. They maintain that these children should not be expected to function up to the academic level of other children because the test scores clearly indicate that they cannot. Further, they state that to pressure these children for an academic achievement that they are incapable of reaching only creates frustrations and anxieties which will make even more difficult the possibility of adequate functioning on their own level. These individuals, therefore, argue that a special curriculum and a special form of education should be devised for these children from culturally deprived backgrounds who have consistently low IQs and achievement-test scores.

A disturbing aspect of this type of argument is that it does come under the guise of humanitarianism, psychology, and modern educational theory. It becomes necessary, therefore, to look with thorough objectivity at the basis of this argument; namely, the validity of test scores as an index of the intellectual potential of children from culturally deprived backgrounds. Do these test scores indicate some immutable level of intelligence, or do they reflect primarily the obvious cultural and educational deprivations and discriminations suffered by these children?

Modern psychology findings and interpretations would seem to leave no further room for argument that test scores must be interpreted in the light of the general social and cultural milieu of a child and the specific educational opportunities to which he has been exposed. It is generally known that children from deprived educational backgrounds will score lower on available standardized tests. The pioneer work of Otto Klineberg in the 1930's clearly established the fact that intelligence test score will increase on the average as children are moved from a deprived, inferior educational situation to a more positive and stimulating one (8).

We now know that children who are not stimulated at home or in the community or in school will have low scores. Their scores and, what is even more important, their day-to-day academic performance can be improved if they are provided with adequate stimulation in one or more of these areas. When a child from a deprived background is treated as if he is uneducable because he has a low test score, he becomes uneducable and the low test score is thereby reinforced. If a child scores low on an intelligence test because he cannot read and then is not taught to read because he has a low score, then such a child is being imprisoned in an iron circle and becomes the victim of an educational self-fulfilling prophecy.

Another aspect of the problem of the meaning of the IQ, which is not generally discussed and which seems to have been lost sight of by educators and the general public, is the simple fact that the IQ is merely a score that is offered as an index of a given individual's rate of learning compared with the learning rate of others with whom he can be reasonably compared. This interpretation of the IQ is consistent with the fact that a child with a lower IQ can be expected to take longer to learn that which a child with a higher IQ will learn more rapidly. The IQ itself—at least in the normal ranges and above—does not necessarily determine how much a child will learn or for that matter even the ceiling of what he can learn. Rather it reflects the rate of his learning or the amount of effort which will be required for him to learn. In other words, it is quite conceivable that children with lower IQs, even those low IQs which more nearly reflect inherent intellectual limitations, can and do learn substantively what other children can learn. But it will take a longer time, will require more care and skill on the part of the teachers and probably more encouragement and acceptance of the child.

IQ, Snobbery, and Humiliation

Unfortunately, an objective discussion of the problem of the meaning of the IQ is made even more difficult by the fact that this problem has been contaminated by non-educational considerations such as social class

status factors. This point can be illustrated by an examination of the arguments in favor of homogeneous groupings. The most persistent arguments for grouping children in homogeneous classes according to IQs are largely assertions of the convenience of such groupings for overworked teachers. The proponents of the procedure of segregating children according to intelligence for educational purposes seem to base their argument on some assumptions of special privilege, special status, special educational advantages and conspicuous recognition which are to be given to an intellectual elite. It is implied and sometimes stated that these conditions will facilitate the maximum use of the already high intelligence of the gifted children and will reduce the frustrations of those children who are not gifted. It is further suggested that if the gifted child is not given special treatment in special classes, he will somehow not fulfill his intellectual potentials—"he will be brought down to the level of the average or the dull child." So far there seems to be little empirical evidence in support of these assertions in spite of their wide acceptance by the public and by many educators.

Those who argue against this form of educational intellectual segregation must nonetheless, eventually demonstrate by empirical research that it is not the most effective educational procedure. Are children who are segregated according to IQ in the classrooms of our schools being educated in a socially realistic and democratic atmosphere? The world consists of individuals of varying levels of intellectual potential and power. Those individuals of high intelligence must be prepared to function effectively with individuals of average or below average intelligence. One important function of the schools is to train children in a socially responsible use of human intelligence. A manifestation of this social responsibility would be the ability of children of high intelligence to use their superior intelligence creatively in working with and helping children of lower intelligence to function more effectively. Children of lower intelligence could be stimulated and encouraged, in a realistic school atmosphere, by the accomplishments of other children. This would be true only if the over-all school atmosphere is one consistent with the self-respect of all children. Children who are stigmatized by being placed in classes designated as "slow" or "dull" or for "children of retarded mental ability" cannot be expected to be stimulated and motivated to improve their academic performance. Such children understandably will become burdened with resentment and humiliation and will seek to escape the humiliating school situation as quickly as possible.

Probably the chief argument against homogeneous groupings is the fact that children who are so segregated lose their individuality in the

educational situation. It would seem that the development of a creative individuality would be among the high priority goals of education. Homogeneous groupings tend to require that children be seen in terms of group characteristics rather than in terms of their own individual characteristics. This would seem to be true equally for the bright children as it is for average or dull children. Furthermore, it is questionable whether it is possible to establish a homogeneous group of children on any grounds other than the arbitrary selection of some single aspect of the total complexity that is the human being.

It may be argued on the basis of evidence that even the selection of children in terms of similarity in IQ is arbitrary in that the same range of IQs may mask significant differences in intellectual abilities, patterns, interests, and propensities among children who seem similar in level of general intelligence. Any oversimplification of this fact, concretized into an educational procedure, may not be worth the human and social cost.

It is conceivable that the detrimental effects of segregation based upon intellect is similar to the known detrimental effects of schools segregated on the basis of class, nationality, or race (2). This similarity, if it is found to exist, may reflect the fact that, in general, the average intellectual level of groups of children is related to the social and racial status of their parents. The educational level and achievement of lower-status children are depressed in segregated lower-status schools for those reasons already stated, plus the fact that the morale of their teachers tend to be depressed when they are identified with low prestige schools. Furthermore, some of these teachers may accept assignments in these schools because they may be aware of the fact that the staff in these schools is generally not held to the same high professional standards which prevail in schools where it is believed that the children can learn. Teachers in more privileged schools are probably held to more strict standards of professional evaluation and supervision.

Whatever the determining factors responsible for the low educational achievement of children from lower status groups, the fact remains that up to the present, the overwhelming majority of these children attend schools that do not have a systematic educational program designed to provide the extra stimulation and encouragement which they need if they are to develop their intellectual potential. Some school officials may question whether it is the proper function of the schools to attempt to compensate for the cultural deprivations which burden these children in their homes and in the larger community. As long as this is not done by the schools or some other appropriate social institutions, the motivation and academic achievement of these deprived children will re-

main depressed, inferior, and socially wasteful. What is more, the schools will have failed to provide them with an effective education and thereby failed to meet a pressing contemporary need.

Mr. Conant and the Education of Culturally Disadvantaged Children

Probably the most widely discussed, if not uncritically accepted, of the recent books dealing with the problem of the education of deprived and privileged children in American cities is James B. Conant's *Slums and Suburbs* (4). In spite of the fact that Mr. Conant is by training, background and experience a chemist, college president, and statesman—and not a professional educator or social scientist—he has assumed with the aid of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the role of educational expert and spokesman to the nation. His book was reviewed extensively—and for the most part praised—by the important education editors of newspapers throughout the nation. In discussing the complexity of educational problems found in the schools in “slum neighborhoods,” Mr. Conant coined the phrase “social dynamite” which has become part of the jargon of these discussions.

Before one engages in a critical analysis of Mr. Conant's assumptions and recommendations for the improvement of the education of deprived and privileged children, it should be stated that this book presents vividly some facts which help to clarify some of the issues related to the basic problem of the inferiority of educational opportunities provided for children of the lower socio-economic classes in the public schools of the ten largest cities in our nation. For example, the book states that half of the children in deprived neighborhoods drop out of school in grades 9, 10, and 11; that the per pupil expenditure in deprived schools is less than half the per pupil expenditure in a privileged school; and that there are seventy professionals per thousand pupils in privileged schools and forty or fewer professionals per thousand pupils in deprived schools. Mr. Conant appeals to the conscience of the American public and asserts that this consistent discrepancy “jolts one's notions of the meaning of equality of opportunity.”

Critical reading and analysis of this book, however, reveal that Mr. Conant's prescription for this educational disease will not cure the patient, but, on the contrary, will intensify the illness. The implicit assumptions and explicit suggestions, if accepted by American education would concretize the very discrepancies which Mr. Conant calls “social dynamite” and would lead, if not to an educational explosion to educational dry rot and social stagnation.

The basic assumptions of this book are appalling, anachronistic, and

reflect the social science naiveté of its author. The unmodified theme that runs throughout the book is that there are two types of human beings—those who can be educated and those who cannot be educated. Those who can be educated live in suburbs and those who cannot be educated live in slums. And for the most part, those who live in slums are Negroes and those who live in suburbs are white. Children who live in the slums should be provided with practical, vocational—job oriented—education and children in the suburbs should be provided with that level of academic education which is appropriate to their level of intelligence.

Mr. Conant's own words are quite explicit: "The lesson is that to a considerable degree what a school should do and can do is determined by the status and ambitions of the families being served." What changes the status and ambitions of the families?

One needs only to visit such a school (slum school) to be convinced that the nature of the community largely determines what goes on in the school... . The community and the school are inseparable.

Why then have schools?

Foreign languages in Grade 7 or algebra in Grade 8 (recommendations in my Junior High School report) have little place in a school in which half the pupils in that grade read at the fourth grade level or below.

Why are these children reading at the fourth grade level or below?

Mr. Conant is most explicit in his defense of *de facto* segregated schools and in his support of the outmoded and impossible doctrine of "separate but equal" education for Negroes, and his aversion to the open enrollment program.

In some cities, political leaders have attempted to put pressure on the school authorities to have Negro children attend essentially white schools. In my judgment the cities in which the authorities have yielded to this pressure are on the wrong track. Those which have not done so, like Chicago, are more likely to make progress in improving Negro education. It is my belief that satisfactory education can be provided in an all-Negro school through the expenditure of more money for needed staff and facilities.

It would seem as if this opinion is contradicted by the very facts which Mr. Conant presents in his book and describes as "social dynamite." Mr. Conant's lack of social science training and insights probably accounts for his belief that mere money will make a "Negro" school equal—if indeed, he does mean "equal" when he uses the word "satisfactory" in describing education in an all-Negro school. Mr. Conant obviously does not understand the role of such psychological subtleties as the depressed morale,

lowered aspirations, inadequate standards of performance which seem inherent in a stigmatized, rejected, segregated situation.

The following gratuitous advice must therefore be rejected:

... I think it would be far better for these who are agitating for the deliberate mixing of children to accept *de facto* segregated schools as a consequence of a present housing situation and to work for the improvement of slum schools whether Negro or white.

It seems incredible that a distinguished American statesman could continue to talk about American schools in terms of the designations "Negro" and "white" as if such racial designations were compatible with the American educational imperatives in this latter part of the twentieth century. This fact merely highlights a general deficiency of this book; namely, that it discusses problems of contemporary education in terms of the static assumptions and procedures of the past rather than in terms of the dynamic imperatives of the future. This book and its recommendations might have been acceptable in the first two decades of the twentieth century. It cannot be taken seriously now when it advocates without adequate supporting evidence:

An elementary syllabus varied according to socio-economic status of the children; ability groupings and tracks for students in grades 7 through 12; matching neighborhood needs and school services; and generally determining the nature of academic standards and expectations in terms of the "kinds of schools one is considering."

Aside from the archaic educational snobbery which permeates this book—its matter-of-fact assertion of the idea that American education should gear itself to train more efficiently the "hewers of wood and the drawers of water" and provide effective academic education to an "intellectual elite" to be drawn from the socially and economically privileged groups—its author does not seem to understand the crucial role that an imaginative, creative education must play in the contemporary world. He does not understand that it is the function of contemporary American education to discover and implement techniques for uncovering every ounce of the intellectual potential in all our children without regard to their racial, national, or economic background. Creative human intelligence is an all-too-rare resource and must be trained and conserved wherever it is found. It should now be clear that it is not likely to be found in sufficient abundance in the privileged minority. The best of educational stimulation of this group will still produce an inadequate yield. It is now the obligation of our public schools to adopt those procedures, whether open enrollment, higher horizon or other forms of special stimu-

lation and techniques for raising the aspiration of previously deprived children which are necessary to increase the yield of trained intelligence from children whose potential would be lost to a society desperately in need of their future contributions.

Equally important is the fact that Mr. Conant seems unaware of the fact that segregated schools for the privileged suburban white child provide non-adaptive and unrealistic education. He does not seem to grasp that:

Segregated education is inferior and nonadaptive for whites as well as Negroes. Put simply, no child can receive a democratic education in a nondemocratic school. A white youngster in a homogeneous, isolated, "hot house" type of school situation is not being prepared for the realities of the contemporary and future world. Such a child may have brilliant college entrance scores, be extraordinary in his mathematical ability, or read and speak a foreign language with skill and precision, but he is likely to be blocked in many circumstances in his ability to use these intellectual abilities with the poise and effectiveness essential to personal and social creativity. A racially segregated school imposes upon white children the inevitable stultifying burdens of petty provincialism, irrational fears and hatreds of people who are different, and a distorted image of themselves. Psychologically, the racial segregated school at this period of American and world history is an anachronism which our nation cannot afford. This point must be made over and over again until it is understood by those who have the power to make the decisions which control our destiny (3).

Conclusion

What recommendations for curriculum and materials for culturally disadvantaged children can now be made on the basis of social psychological research, theory, and the imperatives of the contemporary world?

The available and most relevant research data on the effects of minority status—culturally disadvantaged, rejected, and stigmatized children—on personality development may be summarized as follows:

As minority-group children learn the inferior status to which they are assigned and observe that they are usually segregated and isolated from the more privileged members of their society, they react with deep feelings of inferiority and with a sense of personal humiliation. Many of them become confused about their own personal worth. Like all other human beings, they require a sense of personal dignity and social support for positive self-esteem. Almost nowhere in the larger society, however, do they find their own dignity as human beings respected or protected. Under these conditions, minority-group children develop conflicts with regard to their feelings about themselves and about the values of the group with which they are identified. . . . These conflicts, confusions, and doubts give rise under certain circumstances to self-hatred and rejection of their own group. . . .

Minority-group children of all social and economic classes often react to

their group conflicts by the adoption of a generally defeatist attitude and a lowering of personal ambition (2).

Upon the basis of these findings it is clear that a fundamental task of the schools in stimulating academic achievement in disadvantaged children is to provide the conditions necessary for building in them positive images of themselves—building in these children a positive self-esteem to supplant the feelings of inferiority and sense of hopelessness which are supported by an all-too-pervasive pattern of social realities. A non-segregated school situation seems basic (necessary if not a sufficient condition) to all other attempts to raise the self-esteem of these children. A child cannot be expected to respect himself if he perceives himself as rejected and set apart in a compound for those of inferior status or caste.

An important determinant of a reality-based, positive self-esteem for children is the opportunity to have successful experiences in meeting challenges. A minority-group child who is expected to fail will almost always fail. His failure will reinforce his sense of inferiority and the related resentments and hostility. A normal child who is expected to learn, who is taught, and who is required to learn will learn. His experiences of success will generally increase his self-respect, enhance his sense of his own worth. He might not need to engage in compensatory forms of anti-social behavior as attention-getting devices. Nor would he need to escape from the school situation which is a constant reminder of failure and personal inferiority. A single standard of academic expectations, a demanding syllabus, and skillful and understanding teaching are essential to the raising of the self-esteem of disadvantaged children, increasing their motivation for academic achievement and providing our society with the benefits of their intellectual potential.

Some attention should be given to the textbooks and materials which are used in our classrooms in order to be sure that they do not directly or indirectly add to the burdens of already psychologically overburdened disadvantaged minority-group children. Indeed it might be necessary to select or devise materials which would raise the self-esteem of these children at the same time that it broadens the perspectives and deepens the social and ethnical insights of more privileged children. Some students of this problem have been rather specific in their criticisms of available materials.

Frank Riessman (9) quotes Dr. Eleanor Leacock's observation:

A critical look at basic readers from the viewpoint of their discordance with "lower-class culture," reveals at a second look a discordance also with what is real experience for most middle class children. One might ask how typical are Dick and Jane, or more important, how meaningful are they and their neat

white house in the suburbs to children whose world includes all the blood and thunder, as well as the sophisticated reportage, of television. In what sense do Dick and Jane even reflect middle class ideal patterns in the contemporary world? That such textbook characters help form ideal patterns in the early years is true, but does this not only create a problem for children, when the norms for behavior Dick and Jane express are so far removed from reality? One can even play with the idea of cultural deprivation for middle class children, since home and school join in building a protective barrier between them and so much of the modern world; and one can wonder what the implications of this protection are for their mental health. Certainly such readers do not arouse interest in reading, which develops in spite of, not because of, their content.

It would be an exciting idea to have primers which deal more directly with people and events which arouse the emotions of sympathy, curiosity and wonder in children, texts which recognize whimsy as important in the building of values, which accept the adventurous hero as a valid character for children to respond to, which deal with the "child's world" as reaching from home and family to the moon. What contrast to the vapid amiability of Dick and Jane! And how important to have basic readers in which some children live in white houses in suburbs, but many more, equally important as human beings, live in tenements, or apartments, or on farms, in the west, the north, the south, so that all children can read about all others, and, as Americans, get to know their world as it is. Nor, it should be added, is the same purpose served by a mechanical translation of Dicks and Janes to other places and periods in upper-grade readers.

The complex problem of increasing the effectiveness of education for culturally disadvantaged children cannot be resolved effectively by fragmentary approaches. Rather the gravity of the problem requires the development of bold, imaginative and comprehensive approaches. The Junior High School 43 Project, the forerunner of the Higher Horizons Program of the New York City Public Schools, is an example of the possible success of such a comprehensive approach to this problem. This project was designed to test whether it was possible to raise significantly the academic performance of disadvantaged children through the activities of the school itself in spite of the fact that the conditions of home and community deprivations remained constant.

An important aspect of the 43 Project was the fact that in its methodology it did not rely exclusively on test scores as the basis for selecting those students who were believed to have academic potential. Teacher's estimates, the judgment of guidance counselors, and any evidence of the capacity for superior intellectual interests or functioning were some of the criteria, in addition to tests results, which were used in selecting those children who were to be involved in the special program of the project. Once these children were selected they were subjected to a special program of educational stimulation. The ingredients of this program were

systematic guidance and counseling; clinical services when indicated; a cultural enrichment program which consisted of trips to the theatre, museums, opera, college campuses; a parent education program; and a systematic supplementary remedial program in reading, mathematics and languages.

The results of this project as reported in the Third Annual Progress Report published by the Board of Education of the City of New York have justified the most optimistic expectations of those who planned and proposed this demonstration of the positive modifiability of human beings. These results may be summarized by the following quotation taken from this report:

Although it is too early to assess completely the project academically, we have been heartened by some of the progress we have noted. In comparing the achievement of the pupils who entered the George Washington High School from Junior High School 43 in 1953 with that of the project classes that entered in 1957 and 1958, we find a tremendous difference. In the 1953 group, 5 out of 105 pupils (5%) passed all their academic subjects at the end of the first year; and 2 had averages of 80% or better. In the 1957 project group, 38 out of 148 pupils (25%) passed all their subjects at the end of the first year, and 18 had averages of 80% or better. In the 1958 project group, 43 out of 111 pupils (38%) passed all their subjects at the end of the first year, and 16 had averages of 80% or better.

The evidence is conclusive that the scholastic accomplishment of the project students is far better than that of previous classes from Junior High School 43.

Those who are still concerned with the ubiquitous IQ, might be interested to note that, of the 105 children who were tested at the beginning of the project and three years later, 78 of them showed an increase in IQ. Forty of these students gained more than 10 points; 13 gained more than 20 points. One child gained as much as 40 points in his tested IQ.

While these measurable demonstrations of the success of this project are impressive, probably of even greater social significance are the positive qualitative and by product results which were observed. For example, while the drop-out rate from high school for these children prior to the project was around 40 per cent; the drop-out rate for the project children was less than 20 per cent.

The principal of George Washington High School made the following observation:

In the past, students from 43 were our worst behaved. More teacher and administrative time was spent on them than on any other group. Since we had the project group, this has changed. Not a single student in the project group has been reported to the Dean's office for discipline. Today, they are our best behaved.

The following quotation from the report may serve as summary evaluation of the profound positive effects of this approach to the special education of children from deprived backgrounds:

Judging by the reactions of the students themselves and our observations of them from day to day, it is our belief that all of them, whether they go to college or end their formal education with graduation from high school, will have higher horizons and a greater sense of commitment and purpose in their lives. In our opinion, it is these expected outcomes that make this project so significant, and so far-reaching in its influence.

Probably the fundamental dynamics for the success of this project is the fact that the project itself raised the self-esteem of these children, increased the aspirations of their parents and bolstered the morale of their teachers. The project and its ingredients of special stimulation, encouragement, and remedial help indicated to these children that someone—the principal, the guidance counsellor, the teacher—believed that they could learn. Someone believed in them—believed in their educability and respected them as human beings. The cumulative effects of these changes in the psychological atmosphere and the changes in the self-image of these children were found in the higher academic achievements and the marked improvement in self-respect and general social behavior.

The special stimulation, the creative approach to the education of these deprived children, can be and should be provided for all children. These positive results can be duplicated in every school of this type. The Superintendent of Schools of the City of New York has extended some aspects of the 43 project to nearly forty other schools. This expanded program is now known as the Higher Horizons Program.

The Challenge of the Future:

There are aspects of the problem of raising the level of educational achievement among deprived children which cannot be solved by the public schools and teachers without the help and understanding of the total community and our teacher training institutions. Certainly the community and its leaders must come to understand the importance of providing adequate education for all children and must through this understanding be prepared to pay the cost of socially effective and democratic education. It can be demonstrated that this would be more economical than the cost of delinquency, crime, bigotry, and other symptoms of personal and social disorganization.

The curricula of our teacher training institutions must be re-examined to determine whether they make adequate and systematic use of that fund of modern psychological knowledge which deals with such problems as:

the meaning of intelligence and problems related to the IQ and its interpretation; the contemporary interpretation of racial and nationality differences in intelligence and academic achievement; the role of motivation, self-confidence and the self-image in the level of academic achievement; and general problems of the modifiability and resilience of the human being.

The evidence is now overwhelming that high intellectual potential exists in a larger percentage of individuals from lower status groups than was previously discovered, stimulated and trained for socially beneficial purposes. In order to increase the yield of desperately needed trained intellects from these previously deprived groups, it will be necessary to develop systematic educational programs designed to attain this specific goal. These programs must raise the aspirational levels of these children and their parents. They must change the attitudes of teachers and school officials from one of rejection and fatalistic negation to one of acceptance and a belief in the educability and human dignity of these children. And, of course, the programs must provide appropriate guidance and remedial services designed to compensate for the past educational inferiorities and the deprivations in their homes and communities. It would seem that the chances of success for such an imperative educational program would be minimal in a non-democratic school atmosphere characterized by intellectual, social, national or racial segregation.

In providing the necessary conditions for a more effective education of children from lower status groups, the education of the more privileged children at the same time will be made more realistic, more meaningful, and more consistent with the demands of the contemporary and future world. One of the realities of the contemporary world is the fact that the destiny of one group of children is tied to the destiny of all other groups of children. Our schools can no longer afford the luxury of a snobbish, status-dominated approach to the hard problems of increasing educational effectiveness for all children. The democratic pressures on our educational institutions are no longer merely verbal or sentimental. They now seem to have the imperative realities of survival.

REFERENCES

1. Clark, Kenneth B., "The Most Valuable Hidden Resources," *College Board Review*, No. 29, pp. 23-26, Spring, 1956.
2. _____, *Prejudice and Your Child*, Boston: Beacon, 1955.
3. _____, "Desegregation: The Role of the Social Sciences," *Teachers College Record*, 62 (1) 1-17, October 1960.
4. Conant, James B., *Slums and Suburbs*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.

5. Davis A., "American Status Systems and the Socialization of the Child," *Amer. sociol. Rev.*, 6:345-354, 1941.
6. Hansen, C. F., *Addendum: A Five Year Report on Desegregation in the Washington, D. C. Schools*, New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1960.
7. ———, *Miracle of Social Adjustment*, New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1957.
8. Klineberg, Otto, *Negro Intelligence and Selective Migration*, New York: Columbia University Press. 1955.
9. Riessman, Frank, *The Culturally Deprived Child*, New York: Harper, 1962.
10. Sexton, Patricia C., *Education and Income*, New York: Viking, 1961.