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A new reverence for man's mind and spirit, 1958.

Address delivered before the
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
Eastern Regional Convention
Cleveland, Ohio March 30, 1958

THE NEW REVERENCE FOR MAN'S MIND AND SPIRIT

by

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

For some months now we have been chewing the bitter cud of frustration and disquiet. We have been searching our souls and beating our breasts. What is wrong with us? we have been asking ourselves. Why are we lagging behind the Russians? The American people is frequently given to self-criticism - sometimes to excess. In moments when our self-confidence is shaken and we are suddenly stabbed into an awareness of some serious short-coming in our national life, we become severely critical of ourselves. The mood of course does not last long. After a while we return to our customary complacency; but as long as it does last we ^{do} manage to flagellate ourselves most unmercifully.

Some have put the blame for what has happened upon the American people as such. The American people ^{have} waxed fat, slothful, smug and complacent. ~~It~~ They are ~~so~~ the victims of "a neurotic compulsion for gadgets, comforts and conveniences. They are ~~It is~~ lost to all things and to all values except those of the market place".

I doubt this very much. The American people are still the most ~~charitable~~ and the most generous people on earth. Their generosity is not limited to their ^{With and kin} own; nor does it stop at their national boundaries. The American people are still spending -- and increasingly so -- billions of dollars upon education, ~~and~~ religion and social welfare ^{upon} the care of the aged, the sick and the handicapped. The American people are still waging war, ^{even to rally} ~~determinedly~~, upon disease and poverty and slums, and upon intolerance and discrimination. I do not believe that one is justified in indicting our people with such rash abandon. The things which these critics find fault with are the very things, I am sure, which the Russians are reaching out for, most longingly, as do the peoples of the whole world. There

is nothing wrong with wanting to be well-fed and well-clothed and well-housed and to have the comforts of life. Austerity and frugality are not the answer to the problem which confronts the American people today. A people can be poor and vicious. A people can be prosperous and socially minded. We may not have been wise in our foreign diplomacy -- we have certainly not been corrupt. We should have concentrated perhaps more upon the scientific and technological training of our youth, but after all, an intercontinental ballistic missile is not the supreme symbol of civilization. Perhaps a Salk anti-polio vaccine is a greater and more inspiring symbol.....

Of course there is much room for improvement in our national life -- in its every department as there is in the national life of any people. ~~That~~ *This* has to do with ~~meeting the~~ challenge of crime ^{and} juvenile delinquency, divorce and racism -- grave problems, indeed, confronting the American people today. There is room for improvement as regards firmer disciplines in education, whether it be in the field of the sciences or the humanities. It has to do with the encouragement of the exceptionally gifted student and the acceleration of his educational pace.

It is desirable that we take stock, from time to time, of our educational system -- the most vital and important institution in our national life; ~~and~~ *We have,* in fact, ~~we have~~, from time to time, made such critical re-examinations of our schools, their curricula, and their underlying philosophy. The aims and methods of instruction have been subjected, not infrequently in the past, to frank and searching analysis by outstanding educators. New theories have been advanced and new pedagogic techniques. Some have been widely accepted; others, having been found wanting after an experimental stage, were abandoned.

What has given urgency and a ^{billip} ~~bit~~ of hysteria to the present demand for an educational stock-taking is the military contingency in which it has become involved. Education ^{is} ~~has~~ now ^{entangled} ~~become involved~~ in the propaganda of the Cold War. *It has become* ~~it is~~ a question of political prestige. Some would have it even of national survival. The satellite and the missile must now determine the kind of education which we should give our children!

Because our educational system, intended for free men in a progressive society, has not been entirely dragooned to the belligerent purposes of the East-West conflict, ^{by now} ~~it is~~ ^{- declared to be irreconcilable} being subjected to a ^a blanket indictment of inefficiency ^{and inadequacy.}

What has happened in the last few months may well work out to our national advantage, if it sobers us, as a people - if ^{it makes us} we come to realize that we are not sitting on top of the world any more, but rather on the top of a powder keg.

What has happened may prove all to the good if it teaches our statesmen, politicians and generals, ^{alike,} ~~the quality of~~ humility -- a realization that we cannot go it alone -- that we no longer have, if we ever did have, a monopoly of wealth, or power, or scientific skill, or genius. Our public officials, charged with the conduct of our foreign policies need the humility to ^{acknowledge} realize that the enemy whom we are facing is neither politically weak nor scientifically backward nor economically on the verge of collapse. The enemy we are facing is too powerful to be ignored. He cannot be quarantined and we must find ways of living in the same world with him. The only road open to civilization is the road to mutual accommodation, reconciliation and cooperation. Every other road leads to chaos, ruin and death.

After all is said and done, with or without Sputniks or counter-Sputniks - the major problem of our day is not how to match our intercontinental ballistic missiles with those of the Russians, or our artificial moons with theirs, but how to live in the same world with them. The persistent human problem is not how to make interstellar space ^{safe} ~~safe~~ for missiles but how to make this world safe for man! The fundamental human problem is how to do away with the need for ballistic missiles and the A-bombs and the H-bombs altogether! The human problem still remains how to accommodate ourselves one to another - nation to nation, system to system, race to race, religion to religion. Surely there must set in, sooner or later, unless we are resigned to catastrophe - I might almost say to annihilation - some rapprochement between the East and the West, consequent upon the realization - the simple realization - that one power bloc cannot destroy the other without destroying itself. Surely the time must come when the war-obsessed in both camps, the East and the West, and their incessant war-scares and war-cries

~~will~~ ^{will} be thrust aside, and others who are not war-obsessed, but peace-obsessed ^{will} ~~must~~ come to take their place of leadership in their respective worlds. Surely some day the concept of co-existence which has been derided and ~~made tantamount~~ ^{accounted} to heresy and disloyalty must come to be regarded not merely as practical, but as mandatory and inevitable. Therefore our responsible public officials must, ^{move}, in a new spirit of humility and in dedication to their country's and to mankind's supreme good, ~~move~~ ^{move} resolutely in ^{the} ~~this~~ direction, ~~that~~ of finding ways of mutual accommodation and reconciliation. If that happens, then Sputnik and what followed may well prove to have been the overture to the pacification of our world.

What has happened may ^{also} prove to our good in the long run, if it helps us to work for a new climate in the education of our ^{youth} ~~people~~ -- if it helps us to raise a new generation of men and women who will be more reverent of learning and more ^{devoted} ~~devoted~~ to the exacting disciplines of the mind, not only in the field of ^{the} ~~science~~ ^{science}, but also in the field of the humanities - and not in order that we might have a greater fighting machine, but in order that we might have greater scientists, greater scholars and greater ~~men~~ ^{human beings} generally. ^{human beings}!

In my judgment, it would be a great loss to our people and to American civilization, if our present discontent should catapult our entire educational system in an all-out technological direction - into a pure science program and degrade the importance of what we used to call the liberal arts. Of course civilization needs scientific research in all fields. Of course civilization needs the physicist, the chemist, the mathematician, the engineer and the biologist -- there is no civilization without them -- but it also needs, if it is to be a wholesome civilization, the artist, the musician, the writer, the poet, the philosopher, the minister, the lawyer, the statesman, the economist and the sociologist. Above all, it needs the cultured well-rounded individual, whatever his profession or station in life may be. It needs men trained in the art of living who will contribute to the well-being of their communities and to the building of the good society. What civilization needs are wholesome, clean-living, high-thinking, socially-minded human beings. The study of science alone will not give them to us. When you look about you in your community, you

must realize, I am sure, that the increase in the unhappiness of our young generation, which finds vent in so much delinquency and crime, is not due to the fact that we do not teach enough of the sciences in our schools...

Perhaps where we have failed most grievously is in education for character - which is not the sole or even the primary function of the school. Pre-eminently it is the function of the ~~house~~ ^{home, and the church}, though the school can help. With so many broken homes, this problem of educating our children in character, becomes increasingly more desperate.

But if we are to have a generation of men and women capable of facing the complexities of the world into which they are growing up, ~~and~~ ^{possessed of} with proper attitudes towards the requirements of cooperative living in a free society, they must be trained ⁱⁿ ~~to be men and women of~~ integrity and honor, possessed of sound habits of industry, of high standards of craftsmanship, of self-control, of unselfishness. The Psalmist had such men and women in mind when ~~he~~ ^{he} spoke of those who are trained "to walk blamelessly, to do what is right; to speak the truth from ^{their} ~~his~~ heart; not to slander with ~~his~~ ^{their} tongue and do no evil to ~~his~~ ^{their} neighbor".

We must train our children, in a code of personal conduct which will guide them in all their ~~future~~ relationship in life, as sons, daughters, husbands, wives, as fathers and mothers, friends and citizens.

~~And~~ All this has nothing to do with Sputniks and missiles and nuclear fission or space travel, with progress or failure in our atomic laboratories. Nothing whatever to do with them!

And this is the most important phase ^{in the} ~~of~~ education, ^{given} for it is the most directly related to the happiness of the human being. It is this training in character ^{which} ~~that will~~ either make ^{a man} ~~him~~ or destroy ~~him~~, regardless of how much knowledge he accumulates, or the position in society which he comes to occupy. It will either yield him or deny him life's deepest satisfactions.

Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that not all pupils are able to master abstract sciences, or are qualified for theoretic scientific research.

And ~~again - that~~ we cannot train men for genius! All this means that what we need is not a one-sided program of education but a comprehensive ^{program} ~~form of~~ education.

And ~~what~~ ^{is} essential, is that whatever is taught, whether in the fields of the sciences or the humanities, ~~it~~ ^{ever} should be well-taught. What is learned should be thoroughly learned. What is pre-requisite is that the disciplines of study and instruction should be high and exacting for teacher and pupil, and that adequate facilities and adequate financial support should be made available for education.

We need a new reverence for learning, for the human intellect. We must demand more of our schools, of our colleges and of our children in terms of the hard, exacting disciplines of education. And here, I am afraid, some measure of criticism is warranted. Many of our pupils are not returning a dollar's worth of conscientious educational effort, hard self-training, for every tax-payer's dollar which is invested in them. Only hard-disciplined work is the key to any real education. Every advanced country in western Europe makes such demands. We have not, in some instances, made similar exacting demands. The brains are here and, in the main, the educational facilities are here, but the attitudes and the disciplines and the standards are not all here.

We must find our way back to a great reverence which we must transmit to our children; reverence for learning, for scholarship, for the accumulated intellectual treasure of the human race; reverence for doing supremely competent work in whatever field of study ^{we} ~~they~~ ^{find in self} ~~find themselves~~. Reverence for the human intellect, for man's heroic search for knowledge and understanding, - admiration and adulation of superior intellectual achievements, and a great urge for ^{that} ~~emulating~~ ^{their} ~~emulating~~ ^{their} have not been outstanding characteristics of our student population.

Now, not every man or woman can be great intellectually, but every one can be greatly reverent of the human mind and of man's immemorial adventure into the undiscovered continents of knowledge and truth. "The beginning of wisdom", says the Bible, "is get wisdom!" And in another chapter of the Book of Proverbs, it ^{is written} ~~says~~, "the beginning of wisdom is reverence for God". There is no contradiction here - one supplements the other. It is with wisdom that God created His world, we are told in the same book. To penetrate even into an infinitesimal fragment

of that ^{cosmic} creative wisdom is to show supreme reverence ^{for} God!

Training for thinking! This is more important than training for any profession or any calling. Whether one is educated in the sciences or in the humanities is not nearly as important as whether one is educated to think! The hardest thing in the world is to think and the greatest discovery is a new thought, an emancipating new thought.

In this nuclear, electronic and space age, with its vast potentialities for good and evil -- for survival or extinction -- ^{an age} which has become so terribly involved and complex by virtue of the ^{very} speed with which the new revelations have come ~~to it~~ and the new power which has been made available ~~to it~~, man's mind must keep pace with the new revelations, the new challenges and opportunities. Man's mind is capable of keeping pace if it is trained in the exacting disciplines of thought -- if the new generation is trained in a new reverence for learning -- if the human mind is not abused by shoddy methods and by false propaganda.

Today our most advanced sciences of psychology and psychiatry are being employed to influence the processes of our thought and our action and to influence them at times below the level of awareness. Techniques have been elaborated which seek to pre-condition us -- to move us in a non-rational way and to channel us towards goals which others have set for us ~~and~~ for their own ends. Governments have gone into this business of propaganda in a big way, which does not exclude the big lie or the half truth. Fascism, Naziism and Communism developed the technique of patriotic lying, of keeping unpalatable facts away from the people to a frightening degree. When the human mind is denied dependable data upon which to base conclusions, it is helpless.

The mind of man was never under such concentrated attack as it is today. The goal of education we were led to believe, was to help ~~a~~ ^{to} man think! The goal of this high-powered pseudo-science today is subtly to influence and direct, ~~to certain selfish ends~~, the processes of the human mind. Therefore, it is especially important, in our generation, to educate our people to think, critically, analytically, to sift, to screen, to ask of every assertion which is made in our

public press, or on television or the radio, on all the mass media of communication, its credentials.

The first function of education, therefore, is to teach man to think intensively, to think critically, and to think imaginatively; to endow his mental life as far as possible with the power of concentration, with canons of judgment and with the urge to adventure in the undiscovered continents of truth. But this is not the whole of education. Education for efficiency is only one-half of education. Education which stops with efficiency may prove to be the greatest menace to man and to society. The most dangerous criminal in the world may be the man who is plentifully endowed with the gifts of concentration, reason and imagination, but with no morals. Perhaps the most dangerous epochs in civilization are those in which the mind of the race has outdistanced its spirit, in which the increased power of the race, made available through new discoveries and inventions, is not harnessed and guided by an equally increased ethical purpose and by higher consecrations.

Intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character -- that is the goal of true education. To integrate human life around central, focusing ideals, and to supply the motive power as well as the technique for attaining these ideals -- that is the highest effort of education. The complete education gives us not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate, not only a critical faculty for precise judgment, but also profound sympathies with which to temper the asperity of our judgments; not only a quickened imagination but also an enkindling enthusiasm for the objects of our imagination. It is not enough to be quick of perception. We must be quick to respond to the appeal of human loyalties. Our lives need much more than a precise, eager and powerful intellect. They need not only knowledge which is power, but wisdom which is control. They need not only truth which is light, but goodness which is warmth. They need love and loyalties and the lift of aspirations. They need ~~charm and~~ dignity and a splendid restraint. ~~They need quietness and peace and kindly human contacts.~~ The broad education will, therefore, transmit to us not only

the accumulated knowledge of the race, but also the accumulated experiences of social living. It will translate truth for us into a way of life. It will educate us for the good life.

In this total program of education home, school, ~~and~~
church, ^{and government} must cooperate. Home can be taxed with the total responsibility. Home can be absolved of its proper share of responsibility. All need to rediscover in our day a new reverence for the mind and spirit of man.



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I doubt this very much. The American people are still the most charitable and the most generous people on earth. Their generosity is not limited to their own, nor does it stop at their national boundaries. The American people are still spending -- and increasingly so -- billions of dollars upon education and religion and social welfare and the care of the aged, the sick and the handicapped. The American people are still waging war, determinedly, upon disease and poverty and slums, and upon intolerance and discrimination. I do not believe that one is justified in indicting our people with such rash abandon. The things which these critics find fault with are the very things, I am sure, which the Russians are reaching out for most longingly, as do the peoples of the whole world. There

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It is desirable that we take stock, from time to time, of our educational system -- the most vital and important institution in our national life; and, in fact, we have, from time to time, made such critical re-examinations of our schools, their curricula, and their underlying philosophy. The aims and methods of instruction have been subjected, not infrequently in the past, to frank and searching analysis by outstanding educators. New theories have been advanced and new pedagogic techniques. Some have been widely accepted; others, having been found wanting after an experimental stage, were abandoned.

What has given urgency and a bit of hysteria to the present demand for an educational stock-taking is the military contingency in which it has become involved. Education has now become involved in the propaganda of the Cold War. It is a question of political prestige. Some would have it even of national survival. The satellite and the missile must now determine the kind of education which we should give our children!

Because our educational system, intended for free men in a progressive society, has not been entirely dragooned to the belligerent purposes of the East-West conflict, it is being subjected to a blanket indictment of inefficiency.

What has happened in the last few months may well work out to our national advantage, if it sobers us, as a people - if we come to realize that we are not sitting on top of the world any more, but rather on the top of a powder keg. What has happened may prove all to the good if it teaches our statesmen, politicians and generals, the quality of humility -- a realization that we cannot go it alone -- that we no longer have, if we ever did have, a monopoly of wealth, or power, or scientific skill, or genius. Our public officials, charged with the conduct of our foreign policies need the humility to realize that the enemy whom we are facing is neither politically weak nor scientifically backward nor economically on the verge of collapse. The enemy we are facing is too powerful to be ignored. He cannot be quarantined and we must find ways of living in the same world with him. The only road open to civilization is the road to mutual accommodation, reconciliation and cooperation. Every other road leads to chaos, ruin and death.

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must be thrust aside, and others who are not war-obsessed, but peace-obsessed must come to take their place of leadership in their respective worlds. Surely some day the concept of co-existence which has been derided and made tantamount to heresy and disloyalty must come to be regarded not merely as practical, but as mandatory and inevitable. Therefore our responsible public officials must, in a new spirit of humility and in dedication to their country's and to mankind's supreme good, move resolutely in this direction -- of finding ways of mutual accommodation and reconciliation. If that happens, then Sputnik and what followed may well prove to have been the overture to the pacification of our world.

What has happened may prove to our good in the long run, if it helps us to work for a new climate in the education of our people -- if it helps us to raise a new generation of men and women who will be more reverent of learning and more devoted to the exacting disciplines of the mind, not only in the field of science but also in the field of the humanities -- and not in order that we might have a greater fighting machine, but in order that we might have greater scientists, greater scholars and greater men generally.

In my judgment it would be a great loss to our people and to American civilization, if our present discontent should catapult our entire educational system in an all-out technological direction -- into a pure science program and degrade the importance of what we used to call the liberal arts. Of course civilization needs scientific research in all fields. Of course civilization needs the physicist, the chemist, the mathematician, the engineer and the biologist -- there is no civilization without them -- but it also needs, if it is to be a wholesome civilization, the artist, the musician, the writer, the poet, the philosopher, the minister, the lawyer, the statesman, the economist and the sociologist. Above all, it needs the cultured well-rounded individual, whatever his profession or station in life may be. It needs men trained in the art of living who will contribute to the well-being of their communities and to the building of the good society. What civilization needs are wholesome, clean-living, high-thinking, socially-minded human beings. The study of science alone will not give them to us. When you look about you in your community, you

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But if we are to have a generation of men and women capable of facing the complexities of the world into which they are growing up - and with proper attitudes towards the requirements of cooperative living in a free society, they must be trained to be men and women of integrity and honor, possessed of sound habits of industry, of high standards of craftsmanship, of self-control, of unselfishness. The Psalmist had such men and women in mind when it spoke of those who are trained "to walk blamelessly, to do what is right; to speak the truth from his heart; not to slander with his tongue and do no evil to his neighbor".

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And this is the most important phase of education, for it is the most directly related to the happiness of the human being. It is this training in character that will either make him or destroy him, regardless of how much knowledge he accumulates, or the position in society which he comes to occupy. It will either yield him or deny him life's deepest satisfactions.

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We need a new reverence for learning, for the human intellect. We must demand more of our schools, of our colleges and of our children in terms of the hard, exacting disciplines of education. And here, I am afraid, some measure of criticism is warranted. Many of our pupils are not returning a dollar's worth of conscientious educational effort, hard self-training, for every tax-payer's dollar which is invested in them. Only hard-disciplined work is the key to any real education. Every advanced country in western Europe makes such demands. We have not, in some instances, made similar exacting demands. The brains are here and in the main the educational facilities are here, but the attitudes and the disciplines and the standards are not all here.

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Intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character -- that is the goal of true education. To integrate human life around central, focusing ideals, and to supply the motive power as well as the technique for attaining these ideals -- that is the highest effort of education. The complete education gives us not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate, not only a critical faculty for precise judgment, but also profound sympathies with which to temper the asperity of our judgments; not only a quickened imagination but also an enkindling enthusiasm for the objects of our imagination. It is not enough to be quick of perception. We must be quick to respond to the appeal of human loyalties. Our lives need much more than a precise, eager and powerful intellect. They need not only knowledge which is power, but wisdom which is control. They need not only truth which is light, but goodness which is warmth. They need love and loyalties and the lift of aspirations. They need charm and dignity and a splendid restraint. They need quietness and peace and kindly human contacts. The broad education will, therefore, transmit to us not only

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Dr. Silver

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF

FINIS E. ENGLEMAN, *Executive Secretary*

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

A DEPARTMENT OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

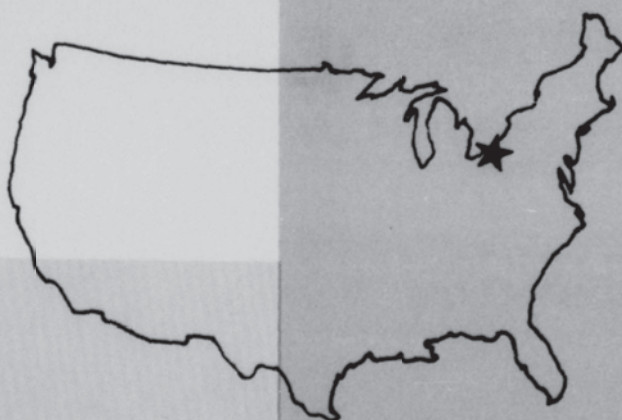
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AASA

official program regional convention



MARCH 29-APRIL 1, 1958

CLEVELAND, OHIO

MAJOR SPEAKERS, AASA GENERAL SESSIONS

(For complete index of program participants, see pages 74-77.)



CHESTER BOWLES former Ambassador to India and Nepal and former Governor of Connecticut. Original partner in New York adv. agency of Benton & Bowles; head of Office of Price Administration under Roosevelt and director of the Office of Economic Stabilization under Truman. American delegate to first UNESCO conference, Paris, 1946; special consultant to Secretary General, United Nations, 1947. Author of *Tomorrow Without Fear*, *Ambassador's Report*, *Africa's Challenge to America*, and *American Politics in a Revolutionary World*. Director of the Institute of International Education and the Institute of African-American Relations. (See page 17.)



JAMES BRYANT CONANT president emeritus, Harvard University, former U. S. Ambassador to Federal Republic of Germany, 1955-57. Now engaged in two-year study of American public high school under grant from Carnegie Corp. Research chemist; teacher of organic chemistry, Harvard, 1919-33. Served as chmn., Natl. Defense Research Com.; deputy dir., Office of Scientific Research and Development; member, steering committee, Manhattan District charged with atomic bomb production; member, General Advisory Com., Atomic Energy Commn.; past chmn., Educational Policies Commn.; past pres., American Association for Advancement of Science. (See page 11.)



REUBEN G. GUSTAVSON president and executive director, Resources for the Future, Washington, D. C. Assoc. prof. of chem., Colo. Agri. Col.; prof., U. of Denver; chmn. of dept., dean, grad. sch., and pres., U. of Colo.; vicepres., dean of faculties, U. of Chgo.; chancellor, U. of Nebr.; Bd. govs., Argonne Natl. Lab., Chgo.; mem., medical advis. com., U. S. Pub. Health Serv., 1944-47. Del. 2nd Internatl. Congress for Glandular Research, London. Liaison officer, U. of Chgo. and War Dept., 1945-46. Mem., Am. Fedn. Biochem., Soc. for Study Internal Secretions, Am. Inst. of Chem., Am. Chem. Soc.; Fellow, Chgo. Gynecol. Soc. (hon.). (See page 18.)

MAJOR SPEAKERS, AASA GENERAL SESSIONS



HEROLD C. HUNT . . . Charles W. Eliot Professor of Education, Harvard University. A.B., 1923, M.A., 1927, Univ. of Mich.; Ed.D., 1940, Teachers College, Columbia Univ. Supt. of Schools, St. Johns and Kalamazoo, Mich., New Rochelle, N. Y., Kansas City, Mo., and Chicago, Ill. Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1955-57. Pres., AASA, 1947-48. Chmn., Development Com., CPEA, 1950-55. Past chmn., American Council on Education; Board of Trustees, Educational Testing Service. Member, U. S. delegation, UNESCO conference, New Delhi, India, 1956; Advisory Com. on Cultural Information, U. S. Information Agency. (See page 19.)



JOHN ALANSON PERKINS . . . Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare since 1957. B.A., 1938, M.A., 1939, Ph.D., 1941, Univ. of Mich. Since 1953, member, Exec. Board of UNESCO. Also served as: member, Social Science Research Council's Com. on Organization for Research; State Planning Commn.; and Educ'l Policies Commn.; pres., American Soc. of Public Admin., 1953; secy. to the late Senator Vandenberg of Mich., 1936-37; became budget dir., State of Mich., 1946, and controller of the Dept. of Admin., 1948. Taught political science at Univ. of Michigan. Became president, Univ. of Delaware, 1950. (See page 18.)



ABBA HILLEL SILVER . . . spiritual leader of The Temple in Cleveland for forty years. Served as chairman, American Section, Jewish Agency for Israel; president, Central Conference of American Rabbis; and president, Zionist Organization of America, of which he is now honorary president. One of the leaders responsible for the establishment of the State of Israel. Author of *Religion in a Changing World*, *Vision and Victory*, and *Where Judaism Differed*. Honored in *Life* as one of the twelve leading preachers in the United States. Numerous awards include Annual Award of Zeta Beta Tau in 1953 and Cardozo Memorial Award in 1949. (See page 12.)



G. MENNEN WILLIAMS . . . Governor of Michigan since 1948. A.B., Princeton University, 1933; J.D., University of Michigan Law School, 1936. Attorney, Social Security Board, Washington, D. C., 1936-37; Asst. Attorney General, Michigan, 1938; Executive Asst. to U. S. Attorney General, 1939-40; Special Asst. to U. S. Attorney General, Criminal Division, 1940-41. Active duty as Naval Air Combat Intelligence Officer, World War II. Received ten battle stars, Legion of Merit with Combat V, and participated in three Presidential unit citations. Served as Deputy Director, OPA, Michigan, 1946-47. Member of the Federal, Michigan, and Detroit Bar Associations. (See page 16.)

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

The New Reverence for Man's Mind and Spirit

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER

The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

MY DEAR friends, for some months now we have been chewing the bitter cud of frustration and disquiet. We have been searching our souls and in some way beating our breasts. What is wrong with us, we ask ourselves. Why are we riding behind some other people? The American people is frequently given to self-criticism, sometimes to excess. In months when our self-confidence is shaken and we are suddenly stabbed into an awareness of some serious shortcoming in our national life, we become severely critical of ourselves. The mood does not last long. After a while we return to our customary complacency, but as long as the mood does last we do flagellate ourselves most unmercifully.

Some have put the blame of what has happened upon the American people as such—the American people has waxed fat, slothful, smug, and complacent. It is the victim of “a neurotic compulsion for gadgets, comforts, and conveniences. It is lost to all things and to all values except those of the market place.”

I doubt this very much. The American people are still the most charitable and the most generous people on earth. Their generosity is not limited to their own kith and kin, nor does it stop at their national boundaries. The American people are still spending—and increasingly so—billions of dollars upon education and religion and social welfare and the care of the aged, the sick, and the handicapped. The American people are still waging war determinedly upon disease and poverty and slums, yes, and on intolerance and discrimination. I don't think we ought to indict our people with such rash abandon. The things which these critics find fault with are the very things, I am sure, which the Russians are reaching out most longingly for, as do the peoples of the whole world. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be well fed and well clothed and well housed and to have the comforts of life. Austerity and frugality are not the answer to the problem which confronts the American people today. A people can be poor and vicious. A people can be prosperous and socially-minded. We may not have been wise

in our foreign diplomacy—we have certainly not been corrupt. We should have concentrated perhaps more upon scientific and technological training of our youth, but after all an intercontinental ballistic missile is not the supreme symbol of civilization. Perhaps a Salk anti-polio vaccine is a greater and more inspiring symbol and achievement of civilization.

Of course, there is much room for improvement in our national life—in every department of our national life—as there is in the national life of every people. That has to do with questions of crime and juvenile delinquency and divorce and racism. Great problems like these confront our people today, and there is room for improvement as regards firmer disciplines in education, whether it be in the field of the sciences or the humanities. It has to do with the encouragement of the exceptionally gifted student and the acceleration of his educational pace. It is desirable that we take stock from time to time of our educational system, the most vital and important institution in our national life, and we have in fact from time to time made such critical re-examinations of our schools, their curricula and their underlying philosophy.

The aims and methods of the structure have been subjected not infrequently in the past to appraisal and searching analysis by outstanding educators. New theories have been advanced and new pedagogic techniques. Some have been widely accepted. Others have been found wanting after an experimental stage and abandoned.

What seems to have given urgency and a feeling of hysteria to the present demand for an educational stocktaking is the military contingency in which education has become involved. Education is now entangled in the propaganda of the cold war. It has become a question of political prestige. Some would have it even of national survival. Satellites and Sputniks must now determine the kind of education which we should give our children. Because our educational system, intended for free men in a progressive society, has not served the belligerent purposes of the East-West conflict, declared by some to be irreconcilable, our educational system has been subjected to indictment of inefficiency and inadequacy.

What has happened in the last few months may, in my judgment, well work out to our advantage if it sobers us as a people, if it makes us realize that we are not sitting on top of the world anymore but rather on top of a powder keg. What has happened may prove all to the good if it teaches our statesmen and politicians and generals alike humility, a realization that we cannot go it alone, that we no longer have, if we ever did have, a monopoly of wealth or power or scientific skill or genius. Our public officials charged with the conduct of our

foreign policies need the humility to acknowledge that the enemy whom we are facing is neither politically weak nor scientifically backward nor economically on the verge of collapse. The enemy we are facing is too powerful to be ignored. He cannot be quarantined and we must find ways of living in the same world with him. The only road open to civilization is the road to mutual accommodation, reconciliation, and cooperation. Every other road leads to chaos and ruin and death.

After all is said and done, with or without Sputniks and counter-Sputniks, the major problem of our day is not how to match our intercontinental ballistic missiles with those of the Russians, or our artificial moon with theirs, but how to live in the same world with them. The persistent human problem is not how to make interstellar space safe for missiles but how to make this world of ours safe for man. The fundamental human problem is how to do away with the need for ballistic missiles and the A-bombs and the H-bombs altogether. The human situation remains what it was before the Russians launched their satellites. The human problem still remains how to accommodate ourselves one to another—nation to nation, system to system, race to race, religion to religion. Surely there must set in sooner or later, unless we are resigned to catastrophe—and I might almost say to annihilation—surely there must set in sooner or later some rapprochement between the East and the West consequent upon the realization, the simple realization, that one power bloc cannot destroy the other without destroying itself. Surely the time must come sooner or later when the war-obsessed in both camps, the East and the West, and their incessant war scares and war cries must be pushed aside, and others who are not war-obsessed but peace-obsessed will come to take their place of leadership in their respective worlds. Surely some day the concept of co-existence which has been derided and held in contempt and made tantamount to black heresy and disloyalty—when the concept of co-existence will come to be regarded not merely as practical but also as mandatory, as inevitable. And therefore our responsible public officials today must, in a new spirit of humility and in dedication to our country's and to mankind's supreme good, move resolutely in this direction—of finding ways of mutual accommodation and reconciliation. And if that happens, then Sputnik and what followed Sputnik may well be the overture to the pacification of our world.

What has happened may prove to our good in the long run, if it helps us to work for a new climate in the education of our youth, if it helps us to raise a new generation of men and women who will be more reverent of learning and more devoted to the exacting disciplines of the mind, not only in the field of science but also in the field of

humanities, and not in order that we might have a greater and a more powerful fighting machine but in order that we might have greater scientists, greater scholars, and greater human beings generally. In my humble judgment it would be a great loss to our people and to American civilization if our present discontent should catapult our entire educational system in an all-out technological direction—in an all-out pure science program and degrade the importance of what we used to call liberal education. We used to call it liberal arts. Of course, civilization needs scientific research in every field. Of course, civilization needs the physicist, the chemist, the mathematician, the engineer, and the biologist—there is no civilization without them—but it also needs, to be a wholesome civilization, the artist, the musician, the writer, the poet, the philosopher, the minister, the lawyer, the statesman, the economist, and the sociologist, and above all it needs the cultured well-rounded individual, whatever his profession or station in life may be. It needs men trained in the art of living who will contribute to the well-being of their communities and to the building of the good society. What civilization needs above all are wholesome, clean-living, high-thinking, socially-minded human beings. And the study of science alone will not give us that.

We must realize, I am sure, that the increase in the unhappiness of our young people which leads them to so much delinquency and crime is not due to the fact that we do not teach enough of the sciences in our schools. Perhaps where we have failed most is in education for character, which is not the sole or even the primary function of the school. Pre-eminently it is the function of the home and the church, though the school, of course, can greatly help.

With so many broken homes in our country, the problem of educating our children in character becomes increasingly more desperate. But if we are to have a generation of men and women capable of facing the complexities of the world in which they are growing up, possessed of the proper attitudes toward the requirements of cooperative living in a free society, children must be trained in the things we call character, in integrity and honor, possessed of sound habits of industry, of high standards of craftsmanship, of self-control, of unselfishness.

David had such men in mind when he spoke of those who are trained to walk blamelessly, to do that which is right, to speak the truth from their hearts, not to slander with their tongues, and do no evil to their neighbors.

We must train our children in the code of personal conduct which will guide them in all their relations through life—as sons and daughters, husbands, wives and mothers, as friends, as citizens.

All this has nothing whatever to do with Sputniks and missiles and nuclear fission or space travel, with progress or failure in our atomic laboratories, nothing whatever to do with it. And this is the most important phase in the education of men, for it is most directly related to the happiness of the human being. It is this training in character which either makes a man or destroys him, regardless of how much money he accumulates or the position in society he comes to occupy. It will either yield him or deny to him life's deepest satisfactions.

And then again it should be borne in mind that not all pupils are able to master abstract sciences or are qualified for theoretic scientific research, and we must also bear in mind that we cannot train men for genius. All this means that what we need is not a one-sided program of education but a comprehensive form of education. What is essential is that whatever is taught, whether in the field of the sciences or the humanities, it should be well taught. What is learned should be thoroughly learned. What is prerequisite is that the disciplines of study and instruction should be high and exacting for teacher and pupil and that adequate facilities and adequate financial support should be made available for education.

We need a new reverence for learning, for the human intellect. We must demand more of our schools, of our colleges, and of our children in terms of the hard, exacting disciplines of education. And here, I am afraid, is where we have gone soft. Here, I am afraid, some of the criticism is justified.

Many of our experts are not returning a dollar's worth of conscientious educational effort, hard self-training, for every taxpayer's dollar which is invested in them. Only hard discipline work is the key to any real education. Every advanced country in Western Europe makes these demands. We have not, in many instances, made similar exacting demands. The brains are here, and in the main the educational facilities are here, but the attitude and the discipline and the standards are not all here.

We must find our way back to a great reverence which we must transmit to our children: reverence for learning, for scholarship, for the accumulated intellectual treasure of the human race; reverence for doing supremely competent work in whatever field of study one finds himself; reverence of heroic research for knowledge and understanding. An admiration of superior intellectual achievements and a great urge for emulating them have not been outstanding characteristics of our student population.

Now, not every man or woman can be great intellectually, but everyone can be greatly reverent of the human mind and of man's im-

memorial adventure into the undiscovered continents of knowledge and truth.

The beginning of wisdom, says the Bible, is to get wisdom. And in another chapter of the same Book of Proverbs it is written: The beginning of wisdom is reverence for God. There are no contradictions here. One supplements the other. It is with wisdom that God created the world, we are told in the same book, and to penetrate even into an infinitesimal fragment of that costly creative wisdom is to show supreme reverence for God.

Training for thinking—this is more important than training for any profession or any calling. Whether one is educated in the sciences or in the humanities isn't nearly as important as whether one is educated to think. The hardest thing in the world is creative incentives, is to think, and the greatest discovery is a new thought, an emancipated new thought projected into the world.

In this nuclear atomic age, with its vast potentialities for good and evil, for survival or extinction, life has become so terribly involved and complex by virtue of the very speed with which the new revolutions have come and the new powers have been made available, man's mind must be faced with the new revolutions, the new challenging opportunity. And man's God-given mind is capable of keeping pace if it is trained in the exacting disciplines of thought, if the new generation is trained in a new reverence for learning as such, if the human mind is not abused by shoddy methods and by false propaganda.

Today our most advanced sciences in psychiatry and psychology are being employed to influence the processes of our thought and our action and to influence them at times below the level of the awareness. Techniques have been elaborated which seek to precondition us, to move us in a nonrational way and to channel us to a goal which others have set for us, for their own ends of course, and governments have gone into this business of propaganda in a big way, which does not exclude the half-truth and the big lie. Fascism and Nazism and Communism have developed the technique of patriotically keeping unpalatable facts away from the people to a frightening degree, and sometimes democracies stoop to those same processes. And when the human mind is denied the dependable data upon which to base sound conclusions, it is helpless. The mind of man was never under such concentrated attack as it is today.

The goal of education, we were led to believe in the past, was to help man to think. The goal of this high-power pseudo-science today is to undo the work of education, to influence and direct the processes of the human mind. Therefore it is especially important in our genera-

tion to educate our young people to think critically and analytically, to sift, to screen, to ask that every assertion which is made in our public press, on television or on radio or all the mass media of communication—to ask them for their credentials.

The first function then, dear friends, of education is to teach man to think intensively, to think critically, to think imaginatively, to endow his mental life as far as possible with the power of concentration, with character of judgment, and with the urge to adventure in the undiscovered world of truth, for intellectual efficiency is only one-half of education. Education which stops with efficiency may prove to be the greatest menace to man and society. The most dangerous criminal in the world may be the man who is plentifully endowed with the gifts of concentration and reasoning and imagination, but with no more. Perhaps the most dangerous epochs of civilization are those in which the minds of the race have outrun the spirit and in which the increased power of the race made available to new discoveries and invention is not honest and guided by an equally increased ethical purpose by high consecration. Intelligence is not enough for man or for society. Intelligence influenced by character: that in my humble judgment is the total and the true goal of education. To integrate human life around central focusing ideals and to supply the motive power and techniques for attaining these ideals: that is the highest epoch of education.

Complete education gives us not only the power of concentration but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate, not only a critical faculty for precise judgment but also profound sympathy with which to temper the exercises of our judgment, not only quickened imagination but also an enthusiasm for the objects of our imagination. It is not enough to be quick of perception. We must be quick to respond to the appeal of human loyalties. Our lives need much more than a precise, eager, and powerful intellect. They need not only knowledge which is power, but wisdom which is controlled. They need not only truth which is life, but goodness which is warmth. They need love and loyalties and the lift of aspirations. They need dignity and a splendid restraint.

The broad education, the comprehensive education will, therefore, transmit to us not only the accumulated knowledge of the race but also the accumulated experiences of social living. It will translate truth for us in a way of life. It will help to educate us for the good life.

In this total program of education, home, school, church, and government must cooperate. None can be taxed with total responsibility. None can be absolved of its proper share of responsibility, and all need to rediscover a new reverence for the sanctity of the human mind and the human spirit.—*Second General Session, Cleveland, March 30, 1958.*