A JUNIOR HIGH COURSE IN CURRENT EVENTS

A Thesis Presented for the
Degree of Master of Arts

by

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The Ohio State University
1947

Approved by:
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Dr. Alan Griffin of Ohio State University for his helpful suggestions and constructive criticisms throughout the preparation of this thesis.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Challenge of Current Events Instruction

"One of the liabilities of modern education is that it has contributed to a dangerous compartmentalization both of knowledge and progress. Dangerous, because what is needed today is an understanding of the interconnections and interrelationships within the entire province of organized knowledge. This understanding can help avoid a tragically compartmentalized approach to the building of a new world. Already man is being offered unilateral solutions in terms of economics alone or politics alone or ideology alone or science alone or religion alone. But it is not Economic Man or Political Man or Ideological Man or Scientific Man or Religious Man by himself who holds the solution. Only the Whole Man is equipped to find and act on whatever solutions may exist."\(^1\)

"And the Whole Man requires Whole education. This does not mean that he must become a specialist in every branch of the sciences and the arts, nor does it

mean that specialization must give way to superficial general study. What it does mean is that over and above specialized training there is a vast area to be cultivated in making a new science of integration—a science built on the interdependence of knowledge. It stands to reason that if we're living in an interdependent world we must educate for interdependent living.²

The changes now taking place in the world are in some ways more sweeping than those of the Industrial Revolution itself.

Before 1807 the change in a man's way of life was almost unnoticeable. A wheel turned no faster in Thomas Jefferson's day than it did in Caesar's day. It took as long to cultivate a wheat field in the early part of the nineteenth century as it did in Egypt in 3000 B.C.

One World. But modern society operates technologically and economically on a world scale. Travel time over the planet continues to contract.

In 1812 the traveler from Berlin who used the fastest available means of transit needed five days to

²Norman Cousins, op. cit., p. 20.
reach Vienna, ten to northern Italy, and a full month to the Caspian. In 1790 the traveler from Boston needed one day to reach Providence, four days to New York, eighteen to Savannah, and twenty to Knoxville. In 1938 any European could span the continent by air in little more than a day. In 1944 our aircraft made shuttle bombing raids from Italy by way of Germany to Great Britain in a night’s time. The hurrying Bostonian with one day to travel could reach Bermuda, Vancouver, Los Angeles, or Mexico City. In two days he could reach Panama or Honolulu.³

Orville Wright’s plane at Kitty Hawk in 1903 flew about 30 miles an hour. The fastest planes of 1913 reached 128 miles; those of 1919 reached 162 miles; those of 1938 reached 440 miles; and those of 1947 reached and passed 600 miles per hour.⁴

The inauguration of regular trans-Atlantic air service in the summer of 1939 shortened the time between Europe and North America from five days to less than two. Australia and New Zealand could now be reached from the United States in four days instead of

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⁴Ibid., p. 248.
the fifteen needed at the time of the Peace of Munich.⁵

In travel time, the entire planet is now only half the size of western Europe or the thirteen American States a century and a half ago.⁶ A person in Boston can travel to Hong Kong today as quickly as he could travel from Boston to New York in 1790. Thus the members of the Thirteen Colonies were as far apart in travel time as are the citizens of the various countries of the world.

Speed of travel is but one of the indices of the unity of the world. Communication of messages, pictures, and voices has become almost instantaneous from each of the great centers of the globe to all the others. Modern man expects to listen to the notables of the various countries. He takes it for granted that he can talk to anyone in London or Tokyo. As he talks he may not reflect that the small device into which he speaks contains chromium from Rhodesia, the U.S.S.R., or Turkey; cobalt from the Belgian Congo; nickel from Canada; antimony from China, Belgium, or Mexico; tin from the East Indies or Bolivia; rubber from Malaya; silk from Japan; gum enamel from New Zealand; hemp from the

⁵F. L. Schuman, op. cit., p. 248.
⁶Ibid., p. 248.
Philippines; wax from Brazil; shellac from Siam and India; asphalt from Trinidad; and sundry other ingredients from all over the globe.\footnote{F. L. Schuman, op. cit., p. 249 (statements originally from "From the Far Corners of the Earth," published by the Western Electric Company).}

The products of the machine age are representative of many nations of the world. The recent war brought this home forcibly to the American people. Rationing of gasoline, tires, and sugar, plus shortages of chromium, antimony, tin, quinine, kapok, palm oil, tapioca, tung oil, etc., belatedly convinced our people that the world is a geographical unit. Failure to recognize this unity was one of the underlying causes of World War II. The leaders of the so-called "have-not" nations were able to exploit the half-truth that their nations were being denied access to the materials necessary for an industrial society because of a policy of economic nationalism and imperialism on the part of the "have" nations.

This country's dwindling supply of natural resources and need of certain imports should warn our citizens that the United States could become a "have-not"
nation. Indeed, to some degree it is almost certain to do so. The inevitability of the depletion of certain of our natural resources in a world dominated by states pursuing policies of economic nationalism holds a warning. Only as nations become cooperative members of a world society by permitting the relatively free exchange of natural resources and goods can the economic seeds of war be eliminated.

Our young citizens must be made aware of the economic facts of our time if they are to become effective citizens in a world society. The theme of "Interdependence of All Nations and People" or "One World" must be re-emphasized to meet rapidly changing global situations.

America's part in winning the War has placed her in a position of leadership in shaping the post-war world. During the pre-war years, major emphasis was on domestic problems; during the war, on technical and military skills. In the post-war world emphasis must, of necessity, fall upon securing the peace through international cooperation.

Teachers of current history have a special responsibility and opportunity for enabling students to bring informed and purposeful intelligence to bear on
the difficulties involved in international relations. The lessons learned in geography, which clearly show the world as an economic unit, must be applied to the political world.

Some of the international problems with which we must somehow come to grips include organizing a workable United Nations, making peace treaties, feeding the world's hungry masses, establishing homes for the "Displaced Persons," safeguarding the rights of minorities, and developing friendly relations among the nations.

**Relationship Between National And International Problems**

Closely interwoven with our international problems are our domestic ones. A case in point is the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930. This act was followed by foreign retaliation and by a disastrous decline in international trade. Great Britain, in turn, resorted to "temporary" protectionism in the autumn of 1931 and other increases followed as a result of the Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa during the summer of 1932. The French government increased its import duties and restricted imports by a system of quotas. On September 6, 1932, Germany
adopted a new scale of tariff duties, in many cases 100 per cent higher than those hitherto prevailing. Everywhere, among large and small nations, similar prohibitions, quotas, and other insurmountable trade barriers were resorted to, all in the face of such a rapid decline in international trade as to threaten its disappearance. Many authorities believe that this erection of trade barriers which drastically restricted world commerce had its beginnings in the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930. If this be true, and there is much supporting evidence, then an act of the United States Congress greatly influenced the course of world history.

Among a myriad of domestic issues awaiting solution are: labor-management cooperation, a sound government fiscal policy, tariff, maintenance of high level of employment, elimination of racial prejudices, conservation of natural resources, a more equitable distribution of wealth, and a desirable delimitation in our mixed economy between government planning and control on one hand and private enterprise on the other.

"The teaching of current events should enable the student to understand that these problems and others must be faced realistically; that while some can be solved in the foreseeable future, it will be necessary
to live long with others; that to work for a better world is worthy of continuing endeavor of everyone; that satisfactory post-war settlements are dependent upon willingness and ability to apply enduring ethical principles in changed and constantly changing conditions."

Plan Of The Thesis

Need For A Realistic Course In Current Events.

The right of free speech is a fundamental part of the American way of life. Underlying this right is the basic assumption that people are intelligent. Citizens are largely dependent for information upon the press and the radio. Because these agencies are not always careful to give only objective evidence and to present all sides of an issue, the teacher must help youth to understand the forces that play upon our news sources and to read or listen critically enough to avoid having their judgments on public issues deliberately molded by others to suit their private purposes.

It is quite hopeless to suppose that the student can find time to ferret out the news himself from more reliable sources. Moreover, the facts are generally

available from press and radio if their audience is critical enough to sort them out. These sources of public opinion will infringe upon the student throughout his life, and he must either learn to use them or be used by them.

Greater emphasis than ever is now being placed on current affairs. This fact has led to the practice of using text periodicals prepared especially for the teaching of current events. Some of these periodicals are: Current Events, Our Times, Every Week, American Observer, Young America, etc. Circulation figures for such publications are not available for two reasons: (1) these publications do not carry advertising so are not required by law to register their circulation; (2) as this field is highly competitive, publishing houses do not wish to let rival publishers know the extent of their circulation. However, the Circulation Editor of the American Education Press told the writer, "Our increase in subscriptions has been phenomenal these past few years."

With the realization that students will not be securing their information about current affairs from relatively unbiased text periodicals, this writer believes that a course in current events is urgently needed in the schools. This course should be so organized that, at its completion, students can evaluate accurately the news
heard on the radio and read in the newspapers and periodicals.

Moreover, this course in current events should be introduced in the junior high school. A small fraction of a student's life is spent in school, a short time is allocated to a social studies classroom, and an even smaller period is given to contemporary affairs. The above facts underscore the need for an early emphasis upon a course in current events instruction.

Newseums as molders of public opinion are eliminated from this study for four reasons. One is the difficulty in securing up-to-date newsreels for classroom study. The Visual Aids Division of the State Department of Education cannot possibly book the films at the time they are needed by the teachers. Then, too, current events are of such a nature that by the time newsreels are made available they are irrelevant except for background material. Two, the obsolescence of the out-of-school newsreels viewed by most students at the neighborhood theater drastically limits the newsreel's effectiveness as a molder of public opinion. Three, the brevity of the scenes is not conducive to complete understanding. Four, the nature of the newsreel itself is another important factor for eliminating it from this study. In
newsreels, emphasis is on the unusual or the sensational.

**Definition of a Current Event.** For the purpose of this thesis the term "current events" is used synonymously with such terms as "current affairs," "current history," "contemporary affairs," "current happenings," and "current problems." A current event is defined as a contemporary occurrence that has social significance.

**Plan of Attack.** The problem has been attacked through research into the literature that treats of it, interviews with social studies teachers, and experiences of the writer.
CHAPTER II

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF CURRENT EVENTS INSTRUCTION

Public Apathy

"On July 1, 1946, the number of persons in the United States entitled to vote was more than 91 million. Yet, in the congressional election of that year, only 35 million voted. There is, of course, more interest in presidential elections, but in 1944, the total votes cast was only 48 million.... In July of 1945, the month which witnessed the inauguration of the President and the Vice President, only 68 per cent of all the voters, slightly more than two-thirds, could name the man who was elected Vice President -- the man who is now our President."¹

It is reasonable to surmise that if 32 per cent of the voters in 1945 did not know who was elected Vice President they in turn would be unfamiliar with many current happenings that would be important in a democracy. When 30 to 60 per cent of the eligible voters stay away from the polls there is evidence that many of our citizens are not responsibly active.

¹*Reader's Digest*, Volume 50, Number 300 (April, 1947), pp. 76-78 (condensed from article in *National Municipal Review* by George A. Gallup).
A Review Of Objectives

It is this writer's belief that a course in current history can do much to dispell such ignorances as the above quotation portrays. An examination of the possible values that may be realized from current events instruction as listed by authorities in this field follows.

R. S. Kimball. R. S. Kimball, one of the outstanding authorities in this phase of the social studies, submits the following:

1. Current events must prepare students for meeting 'real-life' situations. This may best be done by cultivating an interest in civic problems.

2. Current events should train students in the ability to withhold judgment until both sides of a case have been presented. We may expect that the student will learn how to make wise choices among the views presented.

3. Through their use of newspapers and magazines the student should gain considerable use of periodicals. They should know how to distinguish between the authentic and the dubious, the sensational and the reliable, the worthwhile and the trashy magazines. They should know what papers have an editorial policy that can be trusted, which are partisan or biased, and which have at heart the best interests of the public.

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2R. S. Kimball, Current Events Instruction, p. 10.
Civic Training. Civic Training, a publication of the American Education Press, suggests the following general objectives in a program of current events instruction: 3

1. To arouse and extend an interest in world affairs.

2. To give knowledge and understanding to students as enlightened young citizens.

3. To keep the social studies abreast of social changes.

4. To link continuing present-day problems with their historic counterparts in social studies courses.

5. To give guidance in critical thinking on social problems.

6. To develop the habit of reading about current affairs.

7. To encourage active citizenship in the school and community.

A. C. and D. H. Bining. These authors suggest, "The chief aim of the subject, then, is to enable pupils to realize and understand the major problems and events of the world in which they live. It is the aim of the educator that the pupil develop an interest

in the events of the present-day world, so that after school days are over, he will have an intelligent desire to learn all about these occurrences and keep well informed."\(^4\)

Richard Tuthill. Richard Tuthill, educational writer for the *Newsweek* magazine, lists the following general objectives:\(^5\)

1. To make the social (and political) world intelligible.

2. To develop good citizenship.

He states that in order to achieve the above general objectives more specific goals must be set up. These are:

1. To present factual information on local, national and international affairs.

2. To help the pupils evolve a reasonable accurate interpretation of the information presented.

3. To develop an understanding of the relationship involved in the total current scene.

4. To assist pupils in developing the ability to be intelligently critical of the vast fund of existing current information.


Summary Of Objectives. Summarizing these objectives it can be observed that all of these authors agree that the ultimate end of current events instruction is the development of an enlightened citizenship. These specialists propose to achieve this objective by having the teacher develop within the student an interest, knowledge, and a habit of thinking critically.

The Problem Of Achieving These Objectives. To accomplish the above objective, to any great degree, would be difficult, when one considers the few hours a pupil spends in school under the direct influence of the social studies teacher, and the small amount of time given to current events instruction.

In 1942, Edna Siewart made a survey to discover what was actually being done with current events instruction in the junior high schools in Ohio. Over three-fourths of the contacted schools responded. Seventy-seven of the ninety-seven junior high schools which answered the questionnaire stated that this subject was taught one period per week; seven stated two periods per week. Teachers were asked to double check the objective that most nearly expressed their reasons for teaching the subject. Forty-two checked, "To keep the pupils informed about present-day problems;"
twenty-eight, "To give guidance in critical thinking on social problems;" twenty-one, "To link present-day problems with their historic counterparts;" and nine, "To develop reading skills necessary to read and interpret current affairs." 6

It is difficult to envision how present practices in contemporary history instruction can achieve to any great degree the objectives as agreed upon by educators in this field of study when a majority of the junior high school teachers in Ohio are spending one forty-five minute period per week on instruction in this vital area and are placing major emphasis upon the objective, "To keep the pupils informed about present-day problems."

The word "informed" may not mean the same to all teachers. To some instructors this word would mean mere knowledge of facts; to others, not only knowledge but an application of these facts. The use of the objective type tests which accompany current events periodicals subscribed to by a majority of the teachers in Ohio is supporting evidence for this writer's belief that, in many cases, facts are being taught for fact's sake.

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The belief that some teachers of current events are failing to realize the potential values inherent in a course of this type should make one more critical of his own efforts to see that he's not making the same mistakes.

The Writer's Views

It is this writer's earnest conviction that teaching a course in current events can be made quite valuable to the student. Current events is compartmentalized differently from history, sociology, or economics. These courses are arranged by subject materials.

In contrast, current events is not divided on the basis of subject material but is divided on the basis of time. The value of this type of arrangement is that the student gets the "cross-section view" and can see the interconnections and interrelationships within the social studies.

This writer believes that the objective, the development of an enlightened citizenship, as agreed upon by authorities in the current history field, needs to be re-examined. This citizenship must take into account global situations. The position of world leadership which this country has attained as a result of World War
II makes it imperative that the narrow nationalistic citizenship of the past which is expressed in the phrase, "My country, my country, right or wrong" be re-oriented toward a world citizenship. How can students develop the habit of thinking in terms of a world citizenship?

The technique to be used in achieving this broader attitude is the development of the habit of reflective thinking. Before reflective thinking can take place, one must have something with which to work. The tools with which one thinks are ideas. These ideas are expressed in words. Therefore, a stock of ideas and words which are both derived from experience and study is essential to thought. "An idea is a meaning used as a tool of judgment." Meanings account for, explain, interpret, and render events significant. One's power to think effectively depends upon possession of a capital fund of meanings which can be applied when desired.

"The habit, however, of accepting any meaning offered, without regard for its fitness, results in an uncritical and slovenly habit of thought. It is but one step from this to the stage of accepting as gospel truth, every empty phrase of those who spread propaganda."
Finding meanings is natural; testing meanings is a matter of training."7 The finding and testing of meanings constitutes reflective thinking. John Dewey places sharp emphasis upon the "testing" aspect of the process when he defines reflective thinking as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends."8

Reflective thinking always involves a state of perplexity, hesitation, and doubt. "Thinking begins in what may fairly enough be called a forked road situation, a situation which presents a dilemma, which proposes alternatives. As long as our activity glides smoothly along from one thing to another, or as long as we permit our imagination to entertain fancies at pleasure, there is no call for reflection. Difficulty or obstruction in the way of reaching a belief brings us, however, to a pause."9

But sheer wondering is not the whole of thinking.

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8John Dewey, How We Think, p. 9.
9John Dewey, op. cit., p. 11.
Reflective thinking also involves an act of search or investigation directed toward bringing to light further facts which serve to corroborate or to nullify the suggested belief. "In the suspense of uncertainty, we metaphorically climb a tree; we try to find some standpoint from which we may survey additional facts, and getting a more commanding view of the situation may decide how the facts stand related to one another."¹⁰

The student's reaction, then, should be aimed at the discovery of facts that guide him in a "forked road" situation. These facts are not complete in the sense that the scientist's information is complete. A lack of completeness of information is met with at every turn in the study of social problems, whether these problems are related to the past or to the present. Moreover, the ordinary student in the social sciences must be satisfied with "available information;" and that is likely to be far less than "all information." In other words, most of his thinking about social problems must be based on such information as he happens to encounter. He should make the best use

¹⁰ John Dewey, op. cit., p. 11.
of available materials, refusing to end his search for a solution until he is satisfied that the available information is nil or is so scanty as to form the basis for no conclusion.\textsuperscript{11}

When the student is satisfied that he has enough facts to warrant a conclusion, he will inevitably draw one. And once conclusions have been reached, judgments have been made. "Good judgment is a sense of respective or proportional values. The one who has judgment is the one who has ability to size up a situation. He is the one who can grasp the scene or situation before him, ignoring what is irrelevant, or what for the time being is unimportant, who can seize upon the factors which demand attention and grade them according to their respective claims."\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{11} Teaching Critical Thinking in the Social Studies, Thirteenth Yearbook, National Council for the Social Studies, 1942, p. 34.

\textsuperscript{12} John Dewey, Moral Principles in Education, p. 51.
CHAPTER III

THE MEANING OF CURRENT EVENTS

Finding Meaning In A Forest Of Words

Private thoughts and personal opinions of the ordinary citizen can often be traced back to the publishers of newspapers, to the owners of news syndicates, to the people who write for them, to the owners of radio programs. As a result of the diversity and multiplicity of news media, different versions of the same event are often presented.

If one spends fifteen minutes a day, six days a week, reading daily papers, he reads one million words a year. Another thirty minutes on Sunday adds an additional half million words, thirty minutes of magazine reading a week another half million, and a radio news broadcast fifteen minutes a day another million words. This makes a total of three million words a year.

What effect are these words supposed to have? How can one get the most out of them? Just how is the present school program of current events instruction aiding the student to find paths in the jungle of words and opinion? A compass is useless if the user doesn’t know how to shoot an azimuth. Forty-five minutes a week
of current events "recitation" is definitely not the azimuth to this trail.

This proposed course in current history instruction plans to set up several compass points to aid the pupil to wend his way through the maze of undergrowth. Four azimuths are set up to aid the student in finding his way in this forest of words and opinions. At the first azimuth, a definition of current events is formulated and a distinction made between current events and news items. At the second, criteria are developed by the pupil and the teacher to measure the significance of current events. At the third and fourth, patterns to evaluate the newspaper and the radio are evolved.

This chapter is concerned with a definition and a pattern by which to measure the significance of the current events.

A Definition Of Current Events

One of the specific objectives of current events teaching listed by Richard Tuthill is, "To assist pupils in developing the ability to be intelligently critical of the vast fund of existing current information."¹ Not everything that appears in the news columns

¹Richard Tuthill, A Manual For The Teaching Of Current Events, p. 11.
of the daily press is news and not all the news is of lasting importance.

Before much can be accomplished in planning for a contemporary affairs class, a distinction must be made between happenings of current events value and those of mere news value.

"One of the basis functions of the teacher in the study of current events will be to decide what factual material shall be presented in the classroom. He must formulate for himself an interpretation of the significance of the events discussed. This suggests that the alert teacher will be familiar with all aspects of the current scene, and sensitive to their social, political and economic implications. He will disentangle from complex life situations the innumerable historical, geographical, political, social and economic strands of which it is composed. He will evolve criteria to assist him in differentiating between fact and fiction. And as a teacher, he will be continuously developing these same abilities in his pupils."²

In order to decide what factual material to

²Richard Tuthill, op. cit., p. 11.
examine or consider in the classroom, we must be clear about what constitutes a current event. On this point Tuthill writes, "Current events are usually thought of as present happenings which have significance in the educational program, for education and life are synonymous. They may also be defined as the sum total of facts which comprise the composite social, economic, and political scene at any given time." The above definition is useful in focusing attention not only on the present but also on the antecedent causes as well as the possible implications for the future.

R. S. Kimball states, "Current events is concerned with all those happenings -- both domestic and international; whether social, political, or economic -- a knowledge and understanding of which is necessary for a citizenship of loyalty and service." This definition suggests the interrelationships of current events to all the social sciences.

Summarizing the foregoing definitions, it can be said that a current event is a contemporary occurrence which has social significance. Such an event always

3Richard Tuthill, op. cit., p. 11.
4R. S. Kimball, Current Events Instruction, p. 12.
has not only a past and a present, but also a probable future in history.

If this definition is accepted, it is apparent that current events can be classed as news but that not all news can be classed as current events. If Ewell Blackwell pitches a "no-hitter," that is news; but it is not a current event. It has -- on the face of things, at least -- no social significance. If a man steals something from his neighbor, that fact is more news. But the line cannot be drawn too sharply -- for example, if the fact of stealing can be shown to be a striking manifestation of some particular aspect of the times, or a result of some specific inadequacy in our society, then it may well be a current event.

The news stories telling about the controversy over "The Voice of America" would most certainly meet all the qualifications set up for a current event. In the first place, the controversy has a past in history. Why does the United States want to broadcast direct to the Soviet people who were our allies during World War II? One reasonable answer would seem to be that the United States government thinks it is being misunderstood by the Russian people, that it thinks they have a false idea of our ambitions, and that it is afraid this misunderstanding may jeopardize world peace. A quest
for evidence to support or reject these conclusions would be in order. A study of the relative positions and the functions of the radio and press in the United States and Russia could be one approach to the problem. This study would have a rich past in history. It might even lead into a consideration of the parallel question, "What are the United States government, the press, and the radio doing to foster understanding of the Russians?"

**Student Interest**

Another problem that faces the teacher of current events is that of student interest. The boy or girl may not show much enthusiasm for an event unless it is of controversial contemporary interest. If the student hears the issue discussed at home, on the radio, or in the local newspaper, he will probably show some concern about it.

The natural interests of the student, then, should be the starting point for discussion in a contemporary history class. He should not have to "think up" questions; they should ask themselves. For example, he might notice that he can now have all the sugar he wants on his cereal for breakfast. He might wonder about this sudden change, and his curiosity could lead
to a whole series of questions and studies that would show the world interrelationship of social, economic, and political problems. An investigation of sugar rationing could familiarize the pupil with many aspects of the working of the law of supply and demand -- often a very dull study for anyone who cannot see the relationship between a so-called economic law and his own personal welfare or happiness. There is an old saying, "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink." But you can if you give him enough salt!

A Point Of View

It has been shown thus far that teacher and student need criteria for ferreting out current events from the mass of news. The writer has tried also to emphasize the approach through student interest. But these two approaches are not, in themselves, a guarantee of understanding. The boy or girl must gradually formulate a point of view to guide his reading if current events are to have meaning for him.

Practically every student shows interest in some phase of current events work. This interest means that there is some point of view, however inchoate or confused, around which reading and listening can be organized. One who knows the questions he wants answered
will get much more out of what he reads or hears. This does not mean, of course, that a rigid set of convictions should be clung to doggedly. "Of all human ambitions an open mind eagerly expectant of new discoveries and ready to remold convictions in the light of added knowledge and dispelled ignorances and misapprehensions is the noblest, the rarest, and the most difficult to achieve."\(^5\) But it is equally true that a totally open mind, which takes on uncritically everything it encounters, is no mind at all. The teacher should develop within the student the ability to recognize convictions, allow for them, understand them, and change them when additional facts warrant so doing.

It would be foolish for the pupil to have no opinion around which to do his reading. The student who has literally no convictions on social and economic questions would find it impossible to follow the current scene. He would believe everything he reads. Being what Professor Dale calls "sponge-minded" does not develop a person into a responsibly active citizen of the world.

We want the student to have a point of view or set of convictions. Most people accept this obligation,

and can offer a wealth of "facts" to back up their opinions. How these facts are selected and used is the core of evaluating a point of view.

Establishing meaning, if it can be substantiated, is the problem in using facts to develop or justify any point of view. John Dewey emphasizes "meaning" when he states:  

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The characteristic outcome of thinking we say to be the organization of facts and conditions which, just as they stand, are isolated, fragmentary, and discrepant, the organization being effected through the introduction of connecting links, or middle terms. The facts as they stand are the data, the raw material of reflection; their lack of coherence perplexes and stimulates to reflection. There follows the suggestion of some meaning which, if it can be substantiated, will give a whole in which various fragmentary and seemingly incompatible data find their proper place. The meaning suggested supplies a mental platform, an intellectual point of view, from which to note and define the data more carefully, to seek for additional observations, and to institute, experimentally, changed conditions.

The following example by Dewey shows the relationship between fact and meaning:  

7 A man who has left his rooms in order finds them upon his return in a state of

6 John Dewey, How We Think, p. 79.
7 Ibid., p. 82.
confusion, articles being scattered at random. Automatically, the notion comes to his mind that burglary would account for the disorder. He has not seen the burglars; their presence is not a fact of observation, but is a thought, an idea. Moreover, the man has no special burglars in mind; it is the relation, the meaning of burglary -- something general -- that comes to mind. The state of his room is perceived and is particular, definite, -- exactly as it is; burglars are inferred, and have a general status. The state of the room is a fact, certain and speaking for itself; the presence of burglars is a possible meaning which may explain the facts.

However, the possible meaning which may explain the facts is not accepted at once. Judgment is held in suspense until rival hypotheses have been explored.

Students, in justifying a point of view, should reason as to the possible relationship among the ideas in order to establish meaning. "As an idea is inferred from given facts, so reasoning sets out from an idea."\(^8\) Therefore, before reasoning can take place the student must have ideas. These ideas, in turn, are inferred from given facts -- "the raw material of reflection."\(^9\) In order for a student to have a basis for understanding current events two kinds of facts

\(^8\)John Dewey, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 79.
are pertinent: the present or News facts, and the past or Background facts.¹⁰

The News Facts

The News facts answer the following questions:
What? Who? Where? When?

What. The "What" of the News face refers to the event. An act or a change in a situation that is the center of interest may be the beginning. The student might read the headline, "16-NATION PARLEY OPENS TODAY." The "What" of the News fact would be the conference in Paris. For a student to have an understanding of the "What" of this News fact he must have a knowledge of the "What's" of the recent past that culminated in the present event.

Who. The "Who" of the News fact refers to the person or persons involved. The principal actors must be clearly identified. Describing Robert A. Taft as the Senator from Ohio who may be a Republican candidate for the presidency in 1948 would be insufficient. Another Senator from Ohio also has presidential aspirations. This type of description leaves the student with

¹⁰Leon Whipple, How To Understand Current Events, p. 21.
spotty, stereotyped information. He should be more clearly identified with his full name, age, party, position, education, experience, etc., as follows:¹¹

ROBERT ALPHONSO TAFT, 57, Yale and Harvard-trained son of the twenty-sixth President of the United States (William Howard Taft); member of the Ohio House of Representatives from 1921-26; member of the Ohio Senate 1931-32; United States Senator (Republican) from Ohio since 1939; a bitter foe of the New Deal philosophy for which President Roosevelt stood; principal architect of the Taft-Hartley Labor Bill; a leading contender for the Republican Presidential nomination 1948.

This brief sketch gives one the bare facts. In many cases these few facts would be sufficient. To identify completely all the people in the news would be an impossibility and a waste of time. Only when a person's action, or proposed action, has social significance is it deemed worthwhile to know more than the bare news facts about a person. However, a student, as training for future participation in government, should know many things about Robert A. Taft or any influential member of our government. What has he accomplished in his positions? Is he forceful? Why does he take the positions he does on congressional

legislation?

A man's age may be a clue to his actions. It indicates what his times were, something of the tradition, education, and folkways that formed him.

A man's race and religion may influence his political, social, and economic views and thereby be determining factors in the success of his proposals. If this is the case then students should most certainly be made aware of the facts. For example, the election of 1928 could not be discussed without knowing the part religion played in the final results.

Travel is education. An intelligent person who has traveled in various parts of the world must have learned intimate things about international affairs that have less significance to one who has never traveled abroad.

The way of life into which a man is born conditions him to some degree in manners and morals and attitudes toward society. Thus the son of a doctor would probably not support a program of socialized medicine; the son of a real estate man, rent ceilings; etc.

To know a man's income and how it comes to him is to establish a cardinal point. A man's financial
standing may influence his views on taxation and social legislation.

To know what a man believes is an excellent yardstick to determine what he will do. Faith is an inspiration of deeds. Only after a careful study of a man's writings, speeches, and actions can a judgment be made as to the person's faith.

An examination of a person's positions, achievements, and honors are concrete facts by which to judge a man's fitness for an office.

To measure a man's success is difficult. Two questions might be asked. Has he done the things he was chosen to do? Did he fulfill expectations of the people who elected him?

People who influence our times have special talents. The diversity of human talents makes it impossible to draw up a list and say these qualities are what it takes to make a public leader. Some talents may be the requirement of one society that would be wholly unacceptable in another. Adolph Hitler's militant rantings would have made it highly unlikely for him to have gained any elective office in the United States. However, there are a few basic talents that society usually requires in its leaders.
People who hold responsible positions or who seek to hold responsible positions should have self-confidence. Responsible leaders should have energy, drive, and foresight. There must be a willingness to assume responsibilities without counting costs or expectations of personal reward.

Some people make desirable leaders because they possess executive ability and can get things done through other people. It is fair to ask of people in responsible positions: Do they get things done? Can they handle men? Can they pick qualified aides, and inspire them? Thus the test of a President is often his choice of a Cabinet, or how he gets along with the Congress. To discover a man’s relationship to his subordinates and his superiors is essential. To note if he surrounds himself with "yes" men, to see if he seeks to curb the initiative of his co-workers, to see if he takes credit for the successes but blames the failures on his subordinates -- all of these further understanding of the "Who" of the News fact.

Where. The "Where" of the News fact may be as important as the "Who". With the development of modern methods of travel and communication the whole world
is in our backyard. The "Where" has become increasingly important with the shrinking of the world in relation to the time and space concepts.

The "Where" of an event oftentimes determines its significance. For example, criticism of the United States government by our press would be commonplace, but criticism of the Soviet government by its press would be sensational and would be indicative of a major change in policy. From this example a student could see that in order to have understanding of the "Where" of an event, a knowledge of the history of the country is necessary.

*When*. The "When" or time of an event is often of some importance. However, in the long view of history it rarely makes any difference if an event happened in 1936 or 1935. From the contemporary viewpoint the time for an event is important. Performance during a campaign year should be taken with "a grain of salt."

**The Background Facts**

Current happenings cannot be understood without a knowledge of what has preceded the event. Therefore, the News facts must be supplemented by Background facts. Events have a past; they are rooted in history.
An understanding of the "yesterdays" is necessary for a comprehension and an evaluation of an event. A word removed from a sentence and defined often has a different meaning than when the word was part of a sentence. Thus present day events cannot be adequately understood if viewed in isolation. James Harvey Robinson states, "The past should be studied not because it would furnish a basis for action, but because this action would be based upon a perfect understanding of existing conditions founded upon a scholarly knowledge of the past."\(^{12}\)

As a rule, very few of the background facts are actually known unless the student has previously made a special study of that problem. The amount of pertinent material is enormous. There are two consolations. First, today's news becomes background. The student who has made a study of the Truman Doctrine will have information for understanding the Marshall Plan. Second, knowledge is added to the "tools" in the "workshop."

Three things to be considered by the pupil in studying the background facts are: the origin of the

problem, the interdependence of events on different backgrounds, and the principal historic views or programs.

The Origin Of The Problem. In studying the World Wars in the Twentieth Century it can be observed that they were conflicts between or among nations. The roots of these wars might be found in nationalism -- both economic and political. After World War I many nations resorted to a policy of economic nationalism. Tariff barriers were erected. Other nations retaliated and the merry circle of raises went on. Each country adopted slogans, "Buy Home Manufactured Goods." Although nations did not want to import any goods that would compete with the home products, they still desired to export their surpluses. The nations that had colonies were at an advantage here in that they could use their possessions as markets for surplus goods and sources of raw materials. The nations that did not have colonies wanted a revision of territory. International intrigue and jealousies resulted. Desires of minorities, incorporated into foreign nations, to return to their fatherland were manifest. Europe was a patchwork of irrendentas.

From these examples the student might conclude
that something should be done to curb an extension of the nationalistic spirit.

This conclusion, or any similar one, furnishes the justification for having pushed our study of the World Wars back toward their origins. Obviously, this "pushing back" could go on forever, since any events selected as "causes" have in turn been "caused" by prior events. The teacher must avoid "pushing back" for its own sake. The origins of any problem should be studied only insofar as they throw light upon or offer some solution to the difficulties and problems involved in the present event.

Interdependence of Events on Different Backgrounds. An example of the interdependence of events on different backgrounds would be the relationship between advancement in medicine and the success of the American troops in the Southwest Pacific during the recent war. Without the development of atabrine as a substitute for quinine, this phase of the war would have been more difficult. The development of atomic energy is another instance that shows the interrelationship existing between foreign policy and science.

Historic Views. The student should be aware of the principal traditions and policies of a country.
For example, a foreigner coming to our shores would find it difficult to understand opposition to the Reciprocal Trade Agreements. A knowledge of this country's tariff policy for the past few decades would aid understanding of present opposition to further extension of these Agreements. In the same way the "aggressive" foreign policy of the Soviet Union is better understood when Russia's historic desire for the Dardanelles and the fear of another Gorden Sanitarie is comprehended.

The Significance Of The Event

After the student has studied the News and the Background facts he must interpret the event. How does the average person go about this interpretation? He guesses, obeys his prejudices, forms superficial opinions based on conventions or tradition, or lets other people tell him what to think. Although the citizens of the United States probably have the opportunity to be the best informed in the world, their actions do not always lead one to believe that they are.

As has been previously stated, the purpose of this proposed course in current events is to enable the student to understand the significance of the contemporary affairs read about in the newspapers and magazines and
heard on the radio. Until the significance of an event is understood, personal judgment by the student is unwarranted, though he will assuredly make some.

The Meaning Of The Words. The first difficulty in measuring the significance of a described event is the matter of making sure what the words of the description are intended to mean.

How many of the following words can the average junior high school student define accurately, offhand? More to the point, how many can he illustrate with clear examples?

- phenomena
- synthetic
- verbose
- bureaucrats
- adherents
- potential
- mandate
- obviously
- appropriations
- diplomatic
- catastrophe
- capitalism

These words were selected from the editorial page of one issue of the *Ohio State Journal*, a newspaper which does not, on the face of it, appear to be directed toward a select or exceptionally erudite audience. Students see these words quite frequently but may not stop to discover their meaning. When words are checked in the dictionary, the first step in interpretation has begun. However, the meanings given in the
dictionary may not correspond with actual usage of the word in this particular instance. Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* defines a "bureaucrat" as "an official of a bureau, especially one typical of a bureaucracy." "Bureau" is defined as "a government department or office, or one of its subdivisions, for the transaction of business." Nevertheless, the press has the habit of using the word "bureaucrat" to mean something like "a political parasite who is feeding upon the taxpayer." The student must become familiar with the connotation as well as the denotation of the word if he is to comprehend what a writer is driving at.

**The Motives Back Of An Event.** A second problem is to recognize the motives back of an event. A favorite trick of some Congressmen is to give lip service to worthwhile ideas that would benefit large groups of people, and then to "kill" the project by voting against the appropriation of the necessary money. Sometimes a smokescreen is put up to hide the basic motives. For example, one alleged motive for certain senatorial opposition to David Lilienthal was that Mr. Lilienthal was a friend of the "Communists." When this charge seemed to collapse, it was modified to read that Lilienthal was not harsh enough in his opposition to
Communists. Many close students of politics believe the real reason for this opposition was related not to "communism" but to "public power."

The Identity Of The Parties. A third problem is to identify the parties at interest and the side that each is taking. Who is for the proposition and who is against it? A student should recognize the opposing factions in order to fix responsibility. To blame all the members of a Town Council, all the members of the General Assembly, or all the members of Congress for undesirable legislation is unfair. Decisions are seldom unanimous. The sheep should be separated from the goats. This may be done in a number of ways. A close study of the speeches, a check on statements given to the press, an investigation of the records of governmental bodies -- all shed light on the fixing of responsibility.

The Value Of The Event As Evidence. A fourth step is to examine the event for its value as evidence. What general ideas about our common life does it tend to cast doubt upon or to support? Does it fit into the pattern of behavior which our previous views have led us to expect? If not, how do we explain the variation? Or do our previously held ideas perhaps need to be revised?
The Processes Involved. A fifth step is to understand the legal processes, parliamentary laws, customs, and traditions involved. The student, in his newspaper reading, might note the following:13

The brunt of the filibuster, was borne by Democrat Glen H. Taylor of Idaho, and a rebel Republican, Wayne Morse of Oregon. Mr. Taylor had at his desk a box of cough drops, a glass of water, and a container of milk. He began talking at 6:50 P.M. Friday and carried through to the small hours of Saturday morning. A former tent-show performer, he talked about fishing, Wall Street, baptism and his children.

Mr. Morse pitches in shortly after dawn. Collar opened and tie loosened, he leaned on a stack of books on his desk, said he was merely "laying the foundation" for a speech he would make in a day or two.

This was the filibuster's time-table:

**FRIDAY**

2:20 P.M.-- Clerk began reading veto message.
3:07 P.M.-- Mr. Morse blocked move for an immediate vote.
3:10 P.M.-- Claude Pepper, Florida Democrat, began speaking.
6:50 P.M.-- Mr. Pepper yielded floor to Mr. Taylor.

**SATURDAY**

3:15 A.M.-- Mr. Taylor yielded floor.
3:25 A.M.-- A quorum call roused fifty-eight sleepy Senators.

4:30 P.M.-- The agreement was voted, Mr. Morse yielded the floor and the filibuster ended.

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The pupil would need to know something of the legal processes, parliamentary laws, customs, and traditions of the Senate in order to interpret this "circus" act. The boy or girl should know that "under ordinary Senate rules a Senator may speak as long as he likes, and need not confine himself to the matter under debate. When he wearsies, he may yield the floor temporarily for a 'question' by another Senator; if the second Senator is also filibustering, the 'question' may take several hours. The first speaker then resumes."\(^{14}\)

The student might wonder if there is any way to put an end to a filibuster. "There is only one way to halt a filibuster; it is the rarely used device of 'closure.' Under this rule, if fifteen Senators sign a petition and two thirds of the Senate approves it, debate may be limited to one hour for each Senator. But closure is rarely invoked. One reason is the Senate tradition of free speech. The other is fear of reprisal in later controversies."\(^{15}\)

Understanding the pattern of these processes will help the pupil interpret the important news that flows

\(^{14}\)The New York Times, op. cit., Section 4, p. 1E.

\(^{15}\)Ibid., Section 4, p. 1E.
regularly from Congress.

The Theories Of Social Change. A sixth problem is to develop general theories of social change. Students should be encouraged to generalize at the level of theory in their efforts to explain the life around them, and to test their theories steadily against the day-to-day flow of events. They will encounter such theories in editorials and syndicated columns, and will pick up some from parents and other adults. They may even make up a few of their own. These theories can not be followed blindly but can be used as patterns subject to constant re-examination.

For example, they are almost certain to encounter in their reading the idea that social change cannot be permanently suppressed by force. This proposition amounts to a theory, and history bristles with events that illustrate it and seem to bear it out. Some examples are:

1. Attempts to suppress Christianity.
2. Efforts of the Roman Catholic Church to maintain a monopoly in religion by use of such devices as excommunication, interdicts, and execution of heretics.
3. Maintenance of divine right of kings.
4. Struggles of feudalism to survive.
5. Attempts of capitalistic society to suppress the labor movement.
6. Persistency of the Jews for survival as a national group.

Another generalization that the students may make is that the capabilities of the human species for advancement are not limited by race or nationality. Throughout history various national and racial groups have made marked contributions to our cultural heritage. The Arabs gave us the sciences of mathematics and astronomy; the Greeks, democracy and art; the Romans, law; the Chinese, philosophy; the Germans, music and science; and the Jews, religion and business organization.

Students would most certainly generalize that social progress has not kept pace with scientific advancement. Some evidences of the social lag is the spectable of man investing most of his efforts in atomic research for the making of more powerful atomic bombs.

In noting that countries which were once great are now second rate powers, the boys and girls might theorize that nations which maintain the status quo -- those that do not advance socially and scientifically with the times -- soon lose any position of leadership or importance which they may have had in the family of nations. Examples of nations that fell by the wayside
because they did not adapt themselves to changing conditions are:

1. Italian City States, when their trade routes to the East were blocked, made few attempts to find new routes.

2. Spain, by not modernizing her fleet and overhauling her colonial administration, lost the leadership in these fields to England in the sixteenth century.

3. China, through her ancestral worship, never advanced her civilization much after the time of Confucius.

The Hypothesis About The Future. Another important step in reaching an understanding of current affairs is to form hypotheses about the future when considering present meanings. In charting a course or policy for the present, conjectures as to its future effects must be made. For example, the Congress and the people of the United States can judge whether to adopt the Marshall Plan only by speculating as to its possible effects upon Europe, upon the United Nations, and upon the United States.
CHAPTER IV

CURRENT EVENTS IN THE PRESS

Under the typical set-up in secondary schools, the social studies teacher usually requires the student to come before the class and recite something he has read. Seldom does a critical discussion follow. It is even rarer for anyone to question the source of the report. One of two procedures is generally followed. Sometimes the teacher has the student bring a clipping from a newspaper, and sometimes the class is asked to subscribe to the Junior Scholastic, Current Events, Young America, or some other special publication for the junior high schools.

In the latter case, there is no question that the student is reading carefully edited and unbiased news. However, these easier-to-read publications should not be used exclusively, in place of newspapers and magazines of opinion. After graduation, the student will almost certainly not continue to read junior and senior high school publications. If the boy or girl has had a steady diet of "sterilized" news, and upon graduation is exposed for the first time to the "contaminated" press, he will be doubly gullible.

The Question Of A Free Press

Much has been written about the influence of a free press on public opinion and the actuality of a free press in our society.
A Report Of The Commission On Freedom Of The Press. A report has just been released (1947) by thirteen prominent Americans who for three years have studied the problems of a free press in a world in which power has become increasingly more centralized. Chairman of the "Commission on Freedom of the Press" was Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins, of the University of Chicago. Their study was financed by grants from Time, Incorporated, and the Encyclopedia Britannica.

This report states that public discussion is a necessary condition of a free society and that freedom of expression is a necessary condition of adequate public discussion. "Today our society needs, first, a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning; second, a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism; third, a means of projecting the opinions and attitudes of the groups in the society to one another; fourth, a method of presenting and clarifying the goals and values of the society; and fifth, a way of reaching every member of the society by the currents of information, thought and feeling which the press supplies."

This Commission decided that the freedom of the

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press is in danger for three reasons:

First, the importance of the press to the people has greatly increased with the development of the press as an instrument of mass communication. At the same time the development of the press as an instrument of mass communication has greatly decreased the proportion of the people who express their opinions and ideas through the press.

Second, the few who are able to use the machinery of the press as an instrument of mass communication have not provided a service adequate to the needs of the society.

Third, those who direct the machinery of the press have engaged from time to time in practices which the society condemns and which, if continued, it will inevitably undertake to regulate or control.

The Russian View. On Pravda's thirty-third anniversary, its editor, David Iosifovitch Zaslovsky, wrote a lecture on freedom of the press. He stated: "What some countries of the West call freedom of the press is nothing but a rope on which a capitalist publisher keeps his journalists. If the rope is long enough, freedom of speech is relatively long. If the rope is short, freedom of speech is short-cropped."

The Question. The question that presents itself then is: Are the foregoing criticisms in any degree

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justified, and if so, what are the schools doing to correct the situation? The answer to this question would not induce those who are apprehensive of the future of a free press in this country to turn handsprings with joy. If the question were reworded, "What can the schools do to ameliorate the effects of the modern trend toward a monopolistic press?" the answer would be more encouraging to the friends of democracy.

**Intelligent Reading Of The Newspaper.** Edgar Dale describes the newspaper as "democracy's textbook." He states that "if it is clearly and truthfully written -- and if it is read intelligently -- then and only then will we have an informed, alert citizenry here in America."\(^4\)

The phrase "if it is read intelligently" is the key to the problem. Teachers can do something about this, whereas the task of reforming the press would take the concerted efforts of many people for many years.

It is generally agreed that intelligent reading of any daily paper furthers better understanding of the problems that confront mankind. But if a citizen living in a machine-age "one world" has not learned to

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\(^4\)Edgar Dale, *How To Read A Newspaper*, p. iv.
look for what lies behind the news story, if he passes
snap judgments based on partial information and strong-
ly biased accounts, then the future of our country and
of the world arouses apprehension.

Education for democracy cannot be achieved with-
out a critical evaluation of the events recorded by
the press. Sheer literacy, if used only to read about
Hal Newhouser and L'il Abner, does little to further
intelligent public opinion. Many a high school graduate
has told this writer that he has never read the editor-
ial page in a newspaper or in any of the better news
magazines. If the school can foster more extensive and
intelligent reading habits it will be doing a great
deal to fit pupils for their inevitable place in so-
ciety.

In an explanation for students at the beginning
of Edgar Dale's text, How To Read A Newspaper, he
states the main purposes of his book as follows: 5

1. To help students become aware of the influ-
ence of the newspaper on their information, attitudes,
and actions.

2. To help students build their own standards
for judging newspapers.

5Edgar Dale, op. cit., p. v.
3. To help students select and read efficiently and intelligently the newspapers that meet these standards.

4. To help students discover their individual and social responsibility for improving the press here in America.

These aims might well be adopted for any unit on the press. An intensive study should enable most students to achieve these goals.

**Functions Of The Press**

Of primary importance in introducing a unit on the press in any classroom is the capturing of the interest and enthusiasm of the boys and girls. A desire to study newspapers may be aroused by asking them why they or their parents subscribe to newspapers and magazines. Answers which this writer has received from students are:

"I like to read 'Little Orphan Annie.'"

"My mother looks for bargains in the ads."

"I like to read the sports page."

"My dad likes to read the editorial page. He says Pegler knows what he is talking about."

"I want to know what is showing at the movies."
From these and similar responses the class can proceed with what it believes to be the functions of the press. James is sent to the blackboard to act as recorder.

**The Amusement Function.** The responses "I like to read 'Little Orphan Annie'" and "I like to read the sports page," and "I want to know what is showing at the movies" are then classed under the "Amusement Function." Perhaps reading of newspapers for relaxation and enjoyment is the most common reason for their purchase.

**The Business Function.** The boy who remarked that his father (a real estate agent) read the paper for business reasons, and the student who stated that her mother looked for bargain ads thought these reasons would be classified under the "Advertising" or "Business" function of the press.

**The News And The Propaganda Functions.** Another member volunteered the suggestion that the statements "Dad likes to read the editorials" and "Pegler knows what he is talking about," could be classified under the "News Function." Such a "wrong" answer can contribute to clarification of thinking and lead to an informative class discussion. This response would provide an excellent chance to emphasize the difference between
straight reporting of the actual happenings and the opinions of editorial writers and columnists.

After talking about these differences, the class might decide to list writings of columnists and editors under a "Propaganda Function" and news stories under the "News Function."

The Conflict. In discussing the functions of the press, as agreed upon by the class, the students should see that the press has many conflicting things to do. At this point the teacher should have the class bring clippings from newspapers to show how the various functions of the press sometimes work in opposition to each other.

The outline that follows attempts to show how each newspaper function may conflict with some other function or with the interests of a given group and will also aid the students with the assignment:

1. The News Function
   a. Conflicts with
      (1) Public welfare (selection of news)
      (2) Persons features in the news (regard for private rights and reputations)

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2. The Propaganda Function
   a. Conflicts with
      (1) News function (bias, suppression, falsification, distortion)
      (2) Public welfare
      (3) Individual welfare

3. The Advertising Function
   a. Conflicts with
      (1) Welfare of consumer (misleading advertising)

4. The Amusement Function may conflict with public welfare by convincing the reader that he should squander his money on frivolities.

The purpose of this type of introductory assignment would be:

1. To arouse the student's curiosity.
2. To give the student a motive for reading the newspaper.
3. To acquaint the student with the various sections of the newspaper.
4. To stimulate reflective thinking by making it imperative that the student document his judgment with specific facts.

The Newspapers To Be Used

When the pupils have decided they would like to know more about the newspapers that come into their homes, they may be asked to bring copies to class. In addition to the local papers, the teacher should have
the following newspapers in case they may not be supplied by the students:

The Christian Science Monitor. The Christian Science Monitor is different from others in that emphasis is placed on constructive news. Crime and disasters are played down or not published at all. Then, too, the Monitor is free from all the evils of business office control as it is published without the profit motive.

The Columbus Citizen. The Columbus Citizen is representative of the Scripps-Howard Chain and its editorial page often reflects the opinions of Roy Howard, head of the organization: The Cleveland Press, New York World-Telegram, or Cincinnati Post would do as well.

The Chicago Tribune. The Chicago Tribune is an example of an organ of the press dominated by one man, Colonel McCormick, and is often charged with displaying strong biases. This accusation would make classroom study of the Tribune worthwhile in order to see if these charges are justified.

The Detroit Times or The Chicago Herald American. The Detroit Times and the Chicago Herald American are representative of the Hearst Chain, an organization that has the reputation for playing up sensational news and displaying biased opinions.
The New York Times. The New York Times is rated by many authorities as of outstanding quality. The practice of publishing in full speeches of world notables and congressional acts makes The New York Times important source material. Students can compare the acts of Congress with news dispatches and editorial opinions relating to them and have some basis for judgments.

PM. PM would present to the students a different style of newspaper. This crusading daily presents "liberal" viewpoints. PM could be used to compare the "liberal" or "left" wing with the "conservative" or "right" wing of the press.

The News Story

The Headline. After a collection of newspapers has been made, a period or two devoted to studying the headlines would aid the student in gaining insight into newspaper policy.

Newspaper headlines seek to catch attention. So far as is consistent with the purpose, most headlines are probably intended to be fair and accurate summaries of the stories which they surmount, although there is evidence that some powerful organs of the press
deliberately distort headlines to influence careless readers in predetermined directions. These unwary people repeat misinformation for facts and hinder the development of intelligent public opinion. This study should make clear to the class that the headline is not the story, and that it cannot provide an adequate basis for judgment. A headline merely reveals a particular editor’s view of the news value of a particular story for his readers and not the social significance of the news. By the inevitable omission of qualifying parts, the headline often misleadingly misleads the reader, and it is in any case too short for clarity. After summarizing several news stories to gain a basis for an evaluation of a headline, the class would probably decide that a headline should sum up in clear, terse fashion the central point of the news story.

If students discover that certain newspapers use slanted headlines as little editorials to trap the careless reader, they will have one clue by which to judge the reliability of the paper.

This outline could be followed in helping the student develop this assignment on headlines.

1. Headlines
   a. Purpose
b. Collection of headlines from different papers, same date
   
   (1) Comparison and contrast
   
   (2) Conclusions.

The Body Of The Story. In studying the headlines, the boys and girls would notice that under a bold type is often a signature, a press association notation, a city, and a date.

WORLD HONORS AMERICAN HEROES TOMORROW

by Alexander R. George
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON, May 29 -- ....

An assignment outline like the following could be placed on the blackboard.

1. By-line
   a. Definition
   b. Importance

2. Source of Story
   a. Meaning of AP, UP, and INS
   b. Student reports on each

3. Date-line
   a. Definition
   b. Importance

4. The News Story
   a. The lead sentence
   b. Evidence of accidental distortion
      (1) Inaccurate observations
(2) Unintentional prejudices

c. Completeness of news facts

The by-line of a political reporter or of a columnist helps the students to evaluate the story. As much as is practicable, the "Who" of the News Facts as listed in Chapter Three should be applied to the reporter.

The source of the story means the news service responsible, usually the Associated Press (AP), the United Press (UP, Scripps-Howard), the International News Service (INS, Hearst papers). Student reports on these press associations and critical observation and evaluation of the type of stories and news service carried by each should give grounds for making judgments of the relative merits of each.

The date-line, the "When" and the "Where" of the News Facts, "WASHINGTON, May 29", reveals the time and place from which the story came -- and is often highly significant. Stories are thus identified as local, national, or foreign. The undated story is of local source and uses today in reference to the date of the paper, whereas in telegraphic stories today refers to the date-line of the story. The tone of the story is often determined by the date-line. An example, in the
spring of 1947, was the "restrained" reporting of the Hungarian coup under the date-line, Budapest, as compared with the vociferous reporting of the incident under a local date-line. Students should be made aware that the locale of the reporter may be a factor of difference.

Practically all beginning books on journalism give the following quotation from Rudyard Kipling:

I have six honest serving men;
They taught me all I know.
Their names are 'How' and 'What' and 'When'
And 'Where' and 'Why' and 'Who'.

The information in a good "lead" should ordinarily answer all these questions. The rest of the paragraph should be a brief summary of the article. This style of writing is peculiar to journalism in that it provides the essential features of the story in the first paragraph and permits the editor to cut the story as much as space limits require. A deletion of a part of the dispatch doesn't destroy the main theme but merely eliminates some details.

The Evaluation Of A News Story. The process of passing judgment on a news story by students of the junior high level is difficult and calls for skillful teacher guidance.
Some editors may be guilty of deliberately slanting the news. But distortion of the news may also be the accidental result of an unintentional prejudice or of inaccurate observations.

If a comparison is made of the way several different newspapers and reporters handle the same story, then a fairly accurate appraisal of the merits of the story may become possible. Distortions can be discovered, and it is sometimes possible to reach judgments as to whether these are accidental or deliberate. A bias may not be evident in the text of the news dispatch, but may reveal itself in the way the individual newspaper presents the material. A comparison of different newspapers for the relative amount of space given to the same story, the position in the paper, the way the news facts are presented, the slanting of headlines may yield clues to evaluating the policy of the paper.

The average newspaper reader, according to Edgar Dale, should evaluate the news by asking the following questions: 6

1. Who wrote the dispatch? If unsigned, does it have the authority of a particular press association? (Sometimes even this authority is not enough to insure accuracy).

6 Edgar Dale, op. cit., p. 113.
2. What is the previous record of this press association or this correspondent?

3. Is its record in most things good, or are these certain issues where we must be on our guard?

4. Does this news account agree with other supposedly accurate information which we have previously read? If it doesn't, the news isn't necessarily untrue, but it may need further investigation.

5. Does this account agree with other good news observers who are on the spot and in position to write accurately about the event?

6. Where does the story come from?

7. Is the correspondent sending the story from the point where the news originated, or is he getting it second-hand?

8. Was the reporter in position to get a good first-hand story of the event he is writing about?

9. Has prejudice entered into writing or editing of the news dispatch?

10. Is the reporter likely to have such a deep personal interest in some possible outcome of a question that he cannot, even though he tries, write accurately about it?

Students can use these questions and others stated previously in this chapter as yardsticks or standards by which to judge news dispatches efficiently and intelligently.
The Editorial Page

As the mouthpiece of the editor and the readers, newspapers reserve a page where the news and tendencies of the day are discussed and analyzed and where debate clarifies issues and shapes convictions. In comments and appraisals, the editorial writers interpret the news of the day, generally in accordance with the particular policies of the newspaper which they serve.

The assignment for the editorial page may be handled as shown below. This outline can be placed before the students to guide their study.

1. Editorial page
   a. The Masthead
      (1) Meaning, if any
   b. Editorials
      (1) Types
      (2) Comparisons in many newspapers

2. "Letters-to-the-editor" Section
   a. Causes
   b. Values
   c. Need for presentation of both sides of a controversy

3. Columnists
   a. List of most prominent columnists
      (1) Detecting prejudices
      (2) Noting strengths and weaknesses
The Masthead. Some one will notice a motto, such as, "All the News That's Fit to Print," in The New York Times; or emblem, such as the lighthouse on the Scripps-Howard papers. Many newspapers codify their policies in "platforms." These platforms are usually published at the beginning of the editorial page often under the "flag," or "masthead," or heading beginning the editorial page, or at the top of page one. Slogans frequently are statements of policy regarding public issues. An examination of the masthead would probably lead students to the conclusion that they are of little value.

The Editorial. Over a period of time a collection and comparison of editorials from newspapers would be quite enlightening for students and give them a deep insight into the actual policies of the paper. Amount of space given to editorials about local, national, and international matters would be noted. The provincialism of the editorial page is largely determined by the geographical circulation. One would expect much space devoted to national and international affairs in the New York papers but very little in the Green County Journal. The editorials show the interests of the readers by the nature of the discussion on social,
economic, political, and religious questions. Here, also, is indicated the pressure of the men and groups to which the newspaper particularly appeals. The editorial page may be influenced directly or indirectly by the owner and the advertiser. The publisher necessarily has capital, and secures other capital in the form of revenue from advertisers. He may then wish his editorial page to reflect the views of the business interests and employers rather than of wage earners and similar reader classes. One of the charges made by the "Commission on Freedom of the Press" was, "The voice of the press, so far as by a drift toward monopoly it tends to become exclusive in its wisdom and observation, deprives other voices of a hearing and the public of their contribution." As the press tends to become monopolistic there is also an accompanying concentration of wealth. Thus the owner of the press and the wealthy business man have much in common. Furthermore, since all of them belong in the field of big business, they may give the news as conservative a slant as the traffic will bear. This may tend to eliminate potential worthwhile contributions that some

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ultra-liberal group may try to make. "It is vital to
a free society that ideas should not be stifled by the
circumstances of its birth."\(^8\)

The form of an editorial depends upon its spe-
cific function, which in turn is modified by the im-
portance of the subject, the aggressiveness of the
editor, its relationship to other editorials in a
series or campaign, and what particular response it is
expected to elicit.

After a thorough study and collection of edi-
torials, students might group them as follows: \(^9\)

1. Editorials that inform. When editorials
restate the facts of news stories without
explanation, their function is informa-
tive only. Such editorials are most fre-
quently used when the editor has not had
time to consider the stand his newspaper
will take.

2. Editorials that explain. In this form of
editorial the editor finds it possible
to avoid stating his convictions. He
merely goes into more detail than is pos-
sible in a news story because of its
brevity and rigid structure.

3. Editorials that interpret. When the edi-
tor indicates the real significance of an
event he is performing for the readers
the valuable service of interpretation.
To many isolated items bearing on the
same subject he may bring the thread of
interpretation which correlates and guides
them, thus disclosing their true meaning.

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\(^8\)Robert M. Hutchins et al., _op. cit._, p. 25.

\(^9\)George Mott et al, _An Outline Survey of Journalism_,
pp. 252-257.
4. Editorials that crusade. When editors feel that a cause is particularly important they may run a series of editorials culminating in editorials of action. They most clearly indicate the policy of the editor and his courage or lack of it.

The following standards could be used to judge an editorial:¹⁰

1. Editorials should be written in a language that is easily understood.

2. Editorials should give evidence of competence, and should be informed opinion, not just an opinion.

3. Editorials should aid in the interpretation of the news, thus helping the readers solve vital problems.

The "Letters-to-the-editor" Section. The student will find "letters-to-the-editor" interesting and may discover some value in it. It may indicate a trend in public opinion. Letters are usually written for one or both of two reasons. Some news item or some previous letter in the paper may have been irritating; editorials in the paper may be the recipient of comment.

¹⁰Edgar Dale, op. cit., p. 95.
This public forum serves a two-fold purpose: (1) It furnishes a means whereby the readers can release emotional and intellectual promptings; (2) It keeps the editor in touch with his readers by throwing into emphasis those policies in which the readers are most interested and about which they are most articulate. 11

Students should be made aware of the fact that here is a place where the reader can voice his disapproval of newspaper policy. His disapproval, if it is widely enough shared by others who take the trouble to write to the editor, may in turn lead to a revision in newspaper policy.

The Columnist. The easiest way to handle the syndicated columns is to have students list the most prominent columnists. This group might include Lippmann, Childs, Thompson, Pegler, Stokes, Sullivan, Mallon, Franklin, Moley, Pearson, and Joseph and Stewart Alsop. Reports should be assigned on the background of these persons. The students could find material on the lives of the columnists in Current Biography and Who's Who In America. The "Who" of the

11 George Mott et al, op. cit., p. 252.
News Facts as analyzed in Chapter Three should form the basis for these reports. A study and comparison of these syndicated columns would probably reveal that writers may be specialists in some fields but know very little about other areas.

Students may be cautioned that the columnist represents, in most cases, the opinion of one man, and he is not all-wise but limited by his range of experience and sources, by natural bias, and by character. The following quote from a column appearing in an issue of The Columbus Citizen illustrates the point.

It is pathetic that at this late date two committees of each House should have to waste time proving the obvious and conceded fact that the conduct of unions toward the individual worker has been brutal and degrading....

**The Newspaper Policy**

Sources of evidence that reveal the newspaper policy may be listed as:

1. Editorials
2. Space and prominence given to news stories
3. Cartoons

The section on newspaper policy could well include a summary of judgments made during other parts of the study. By linking the seemingly disconnected
threads of evidence, a fairly accurate appraisal of the policy of an individual paper can often be made. This unit on the newspaper should have developed within the student a healthy skepticism of the printed page. In reference to the policy of the paper he may be expected to ask such questions as:

1. What is the political party with which this paper is affiliated?
2. What is its policy toward new ideas?
3. Are news stories curtailed by editorial policy?
4. Are speeches printed in full, or do only selected excerpts appear?
5. What consideration is given to problems of public welfare?

**The Newspaper Handicaps**

Newspapers labor under several handicaps. First, newspapers derive much of their revenue from advertising. This does not encourage a spirit of complete independence on the part of the owner. Second, the newspaper operates on a twenty-four hour schedule and cannot or does not take the long view on world affairs. Third, a newspaper is subject to space limitations and cannot give the complete background for every story. Fourth, a newspaper must appeal to so many different kinds of people that its selections and interpretations
are subject to many limitations.\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{Magazines}

Students should supplement their newspaper with magazine reading as much as possible. Periodicals of news import depend upon excellence of editorial comment and news selection for sale. Popular news magazines such as \textit{Time}, \textit{Newsweek}, and \textit{Life} are constructed to appeal to the masses and are colorful and interesting to the average adult reader.

\textbf{The Reading Difficulty.} This writer, in attempting to use these periodicals in his current events teaching over a period of years, has encountered one major stumbling block -- reading comprehension. Partial success in using these periodicals for current events work was achieved in senior but not in junior high school. A few students at the ninth grade level were able to handle assignments in these news magazines, but they possessed superior reading ability. A majority of the junior high classes found the language too difficult for comprehension.

\textbf{The Possible Uses.} Although the news contents of \textit{Time}, \textit{Newsweek} and \textit{Life} do not lend themselves easily

\textsuperscript{11}Quincy Howe, \textit{The News and How To Understand It}, p. 127.
to junior high school use, the pictures, charts, and maps are usually understandable. These illustrative devices can be used for bulletin board displays and supplemental materials for newspaper and radio news.

A study of current affairs magazines is not wasted effort providing the teacher does not spend too much time with the study or try to analyse too thoroughly the contents. That many students, upon attaining adulthood, are going to read and be influenced by these magazines is a foregoing conclusion.

A brief survey of *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, *United News*, etc. could very profitably follow a study of the newspaper. Criteria set up in Chapter Three relative to the News and Background facts are applicable to magazine articles. The procedures in Chapter Three for the evaluation of a current event should also be applied. The plans for studying news dispatches, editorials, and syndicated writers as developed during the study of newspapers apply to news periodicals as well.

In addition to the popular news magazines the teacher should indicate to the students some of the more serious and worthwhile periodicals such as *Current History*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Atlantic Monthly*,
New Republic, and Survey Graphic. Many students grow to adulthood without knowing that the above types of magazines exist.
CHAPTER V

CURRENT EVENTS ON THE AIR\textsuperscript{1}

Extent Of Radio's Influence\textsuperscript{2}

The Number Of Radios. At the beginning of 1945, at least 33,000,000 American families had radio receiving sets in their homes. Applications for War Ration Book Number 4, the first week in November, 1943, set the total number of American families at approximately 36,544,000; and a study made during the same month by the Office of Civilian Requirements showed that 88.9 per cent of all families had radio sets in their homes. From these two figures comes an industry estimate of 32,000,000 radio homes at the end of 1945. And by 1945, it is estimated that the number of radio homes had increased to 33,000,000, nearly 90 per cent of all the homes in the United States.

The Listening Time. The average man or woman,

\textsuperscript{1}The purpose of this unit on radio is merely to skim the surface. Dealing adequately with the educational aspects of radio as related to the social studies would require years of research and volumes of space.

\textsuperscript{2}Information based upon material sent to this writer by the American Broadcasting Company and \textit{Motion Pictures and Radio}, by Elizabeth Laine.
boy or girl, spends from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $4$ hours, every day, listening to radio programs. A study of "Urban Radio Listening," made by Crossley, Inc., in March, 1941, and based on 65,000 interviews in 338 American cities, shows that for all families interviewed, radio listening averaged $4$ hours and seventeen minutes per day. A series of personal interview studies in the states of Iowa and Kansas conducted each year from 1940 through 1944 by Dr. Forest L. Whan shows average radio listening of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ for men, approximately the same amount for children of school age during the months when school is in session, and slightly more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours per day for women. Dr. Whan's figures are based on an average of 16,000 interviews per year in the two states considered.

A Comparison. The amount of time devoted to radio listening should assume greater meaning to the social studies teacher when compared with the time the average adult gives to other activities. The number of paid admissions to all motion picture theaters is roughly 70,000,000 a week.

In his studies in Iowa and Kansas, Dr. Whan discovered that in homes in which daily newspapers are received, the average adult devotes about 30 minutes per
day reading newspapers, and an additional 16 minutes per day reading magazines.

Thus the average American listens to the radio 4 hours a day, reads 46 minutes a day, and spends less than one hour in the theater.

A student spends approximately 30 hours a week, 36 weeks a year, in school. In a calendar year this total means 1080 hours. But this same student spends about 25 hours per week, 52 weeks a year, listening to the radio. The total number of hours the student spends each year in listening to the radio is 1380 hours as compared with the 1080 hours that he spends in school.

These comparisons are given to emphasize the importance of radio listening in the life of the average person. Of course the radio listener does not give his undivided attention to radio during all of those hours he is reported to be "listening." During a part of the evening the schoolboy may be dividing his attention between radio listening and studying. But even when interest is divided, some part of the listener's attention is usually given to the program coming from the family radio.
An Analysis Of Radio Time

The Time Allocated To Educational Programs. Of the radio programs to which people listen on an average of four hours a day, what proportions have educational values?

Certainly many of radio's special feature broadcasts have direct educational values. The July 4, 1947, address of President Truman would be classed as having educational value. This speech restated and clarified the role of the United States in a world society. Talks by the leading political figures of this nation and other nations, the detailed coverage of important Congressional sessions, the numerous broadcasts of the United Nation's meetings -- these, and many similar features, have the effect of stimulating the listener's interest in national and world affairs.

Many of the regularly scheduled programs of radio stations and networks also have direct educational values. Few people are aware of the number of such programs or the amount of time devoted to them. The teacher should develop an awareness on the part of the student to the many educational features of radio. The amount of time devoted to various types of "educational" programs by the four national networks -- ABC, CBS, NBC, and
Mutual for which published schedules are available, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Program Material</th>
<th>Total Time per Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Figures for a typical week in February, 1945)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symphony and opera music</td>
<td>9 hrs. 45 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other classical and semiclassical music</td>
<td>10 hrs. 10 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative drama; in fields of current affairs, history, literature</td>
<td>14 hrs. 20 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other programs in similar fields</td>
<td>3 hrs. 50 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forums and other programs dealing with public affairs</td>
<td>5 hrs. 30 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on health, farming, homemaking, etc.</td>
<td>4 hrs. 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious programs carried on sustaining basis</td>
<td>6 hrs. 0 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs of Religious music</td>
<td>4 hrs. 14 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs relating to the nation's war effort</td>
<td>19 hrs. 40 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News and commentary programs</td>
<td>63 hrs. 30 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total time devoted to "educational" materials ...................... 141 hrs. 15 min.

Of the time devoted to "educational" programs, about half is allocated to the fields of current affairs. Of the total, 141 hours and 15 minutes, 41 per cent of the news and commentary programs and 67 per cent of other programs listed were carried by the networks on a sustaining basis.

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3Statistics compiled by the American Broadcasting Company and printed in the pamphlet, Radio and Education, p. 2.
Programs presented without advertising are known as sustaining programs. While nearly 40 per cent of all station broadcasting time is sold to advertisers (these programs are classed as sponsored) the remaining time is not sold but is programmed by the networks or stations themselves, at their own expense.

The Time Allocated To All Programs. In order to get a complete picture of the role of radio in society, an examination of the various types of programs, the amount of time devoted to each, and the time they are scheduled, is necessary.

The proportions of programs in each major classification varies considerably at different hours. The table below suggests the extent of these differences; it shows the number of quarter-hours devoted to each type of program, whether commercial or sustaining, during each broadcasting period. Programs on all four networks are included in the figures and are based on a typical week in the spring of 1944.4

4Those Programs You Hear On The Radio, a pamphlet published by the American Broadcasting Company.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Types</th>
<th>Mon.thru Fri. Daytime</th>
<th>Sat.-Sun. only Daytime</th>
<th>Entire week 6-11P.M.</th>
<th>Entire week 11P.M.-1A.M.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comedy Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety Programs</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Participation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular Music</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodrama, Complete</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Complete Drama</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Series</td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Programs</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks and Misc.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>739</strong></td>
<td><strong>304</strong></td>
<td><strong>284</strong></td>
<td><strong>218</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures show that news programs are allocated 14 per cent of the daytime, Monday through Friday; 8 per cent, Saturday and Sunday; 32 per cent of the entire week from 6-11 P.M.; and 14 per cent of the entire week from 11 P.M. to 1 A.M. Ample opportunity is provided by the radio, especially between 6-11 P.M., for listeners to acquaint themselves with current happenings.

**The Development Of Desirable Listening Habits With Reference To Contemporary Affairs**

So far an analysis has been presented of the total "educational" time, the types, and the schedules of radio programs. These facts in themselves are not very important unless an estimate can be made of the listening audience.
Indices To Listening Time. The following table, covering all sponsored network programs, gives an index to the ratings of programs with the American audience. This table covers the months of January and February, 1944.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Types</th>
<th>Evenings</th>
<th>Daytime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q-Hrs.</td>
<td>Av. Rat'g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comedy Programs</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Drama</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Participation</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodrama</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety Programs</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular Music</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Programs</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Serials</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Music</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks and Miscellaneous</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program ratings of the type used in the table are secured for individual sponsored programs, and based on telephone surveys conducted in 32 or 33 of the largest cities in the country -- cities in which all four of the networks have affiliated stations. Interviewers use the telephone to call the homes of telephone subscribers; the member of the family who answers the telephone is asked whether or not the family radio is turned on, and if so, to what program the family is listening. Results are tabulated,

5 Those Programs You Hear On The Radio, op. cit., p. 6.
and the percentage of all homes called while any given program is on the air, which report family listening to that program, becomes the program rating. If in all the thirty-three cities covered, 15 per cent of the families called report that their sets are tuned to Program A, then Program A is said to have a rating of 15.0.

The program audience ratings based on *Network Program Hooperatings*, Volume 13, Number 11, June 1947, are quite revealing as to current radio tastes. The following list shows the most widely dialed radio programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Percentage of homes called listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Radio Theater</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Screen Guild Players</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mr. District Attorney</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Walter Winchell</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Fiber McGee and Molly</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bing Crosby</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Duffy's Tavern</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fred Allen</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Your Hit Parade</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Dashiell Hammett's Fat Man</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following list is for some of the more prominent current affairs programs and news commentators for which "Hooperatings" are available.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Percentage of homes called listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lowell Thomas</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Drew Pearson</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. H. V. Kaltenborn</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fulton Lewis</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. America's Town Meeting of the Air</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. World Front</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gabriel Heatter</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Cedric Foster</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Eric Severeid</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Leland Stowe</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Elmer Davis</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Conclusion. The data presented by the above table emphasize the apathy of the radio audience to programs dealing with current affairs. One might be justified in drawing the conclusion that the listening public is more interested in radio as an entertainment media than a means of being informed about contemporary happenings.

The Suggested Remedy. The conclusion, as stated in the above paragraph, can serve as a guide to a current history teacher. The first problem of the teacher is to develop within the student an acquaintance with radio programs that deal with contemporary affairs. Mere awareness, in itself, does not guarantee that the boy or girl will listen to the program but serves as a first step in developing desirable listening habits with
reference to contemporary history.

The teacher would next want to take a census of the listening habits of his students. The boys and girls could be asked to log their radio listening for a few days. Then the class could take these individual logs and compile a master log. All those programs that did not pertain to the current events course would be eliminated. Next, the pupils could be asked to compare the master log with the program listings in the newspapers and radio magazines.

Discussion Programs On The Air. Some of the programs that the pupils would most certainly want to hear on the radio and discuss in class follow. 5

"The American Forum Of The Air" presents national and international controversial issues that headline the front pages. The speakers are the legislators and high officials, the business, labor and professional leaders whose names are headlines themselves. Within a single year, more than one-fourth of the entire United States Senate and half a hundred members of the House of Representatives were programmed. The Forum is spontaneous and unrehearsed, and the listeners get timely,

5Carroll Atkinson, Radio Network Contribution To Education, pp. 22-44.
enlightening arguments on vital issues of the day. Theodore Granik is moderator. This program is heard over the Mutual Broadcasting System, Tuesdays, 9:30-10:15 PM, EST. (Copies of the discussion are available upon request from: Ransdell, Inc., 810 Rhode Island Ave., N. E., Washington 3, D. C. The cost is ten cents per program.)

"Meet the Press" is an unrehearsed "press conference of the air" in which four reporters from the nation's leading newspapers question the most prominent person in the news that week. No punches are pulled. The personality interviewed is asked to explain or justify his position and statements on subjects of national interest. "Meet The Press" has attained the signal distinction of being covered every week by the Associated Press, United Press, and International News Service. The program is moderated by Albert Warner, Mutual's Washington News Chief. With the exception of the moderator, the program's personalities change from week to week -- both in the persons of the interviewing reporters and in the person of the interviewed guest. "Meet The Press" is in cooperation with the "American Mercury" magazine and is broadcast on Fridays, 10:00-10:30 PM, by the Mutual Broadcasting Company.

"The Northwestern Reviewing Stand" is a panel
discussion on questions of national interest and significance. The speakers are carefully selected from their respective fields, and the program is under the direction of James H. McBurney, Dean of the School of Speech at Northwestern University, who also moderates the program. The panel consists of from three to five participants. This program is heard over the Mutual Broadcasting System, Sundays, 11:30 AM-12:00 M.

(Copies of the discussion are available upon request from: The Reviewing Stand, Northwestern University Radio Department, Evanston, Illinois. The cost is ten cents per program.)

"The University of Chicago Roundtable" is produced in cooperation with the University of Chicago. Speakers come largely from the University faculties but there have been included many notable guests such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Bertrand Russell. Discussions are of current social, political, and economic issues. A yearly grant of $45,000 from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation maintains the program, but exercises no control over it. Out-of-town guests are paid $75 and expenses; local guests $50 and expenses. This program is heard over the National Broadcasting System, Sundays, 1:30-2:00 PM.
"America's Town Meeting Of The Air" is the most popular forum program on the air. Every Thursday evening, for twenty-six weeks each season, Town Hall reaches through the radio into millions of American homes and to listening groups of every variety, with uncensored, unrehearsed discussions of the most vital issues of American life. Based on the idea of the old New England town meeting, each broadcast requires affirmative presentations of the subject by the speakers representing different points of view. The speakers may then be questioned by the audience present, subject only to the rules of good taste. Moderator and director of this program is its founder, George V. Denny, Jr. Broadcasts and preliminary discussion forums are open to members of the Town Hall's Lecture and Short Course Divisions, and to Forum members.

A Log For NBC. Listings of programs of public affairs and news would be required of the students for all the major networks. An example, as shown below, is for the NBC.

SUNDAY: WORLD NEWS ROUNDDUP -- Shortwave reports by NBC newsmen all over the world. John McVane, Bjorn Bjornson ....9:00 AM

WORLD FRONT -- (Sponsored by Bunte Bros.)
News Commentary .....12:00-12:30 PM
SUNDAY: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ROUND TABLE -- (Pro-
duced in cooperation with the University of Chicago) Discussions of current social,
political and economic issue.....1:30-2:00 PM

STORY BEHIND THE HEADLINES -- Cesar Saerchinger,
presented under the auspices of the American Historical Association....11:15 PM

MONDAY WORLD NEWS ROUNDUP ...... 8:00 AM

Through FRIDAY:

ROB'T McCORMICK -- News analysis ..1:45 PM

LOWELL THOMAS -- (Sponsored by Sun Oil Co.)
Highlights of the World's News..... 6:45 PM

NEWS OF THE WORLD -- (Sponsored by Miles
Labs., Inc.) Morgan Beatty and overseas reporters... 7:15 PM

KALTENBORN EDITS THE NEWS -- (Sponsored by
Pure Oil Co.).... 7:45 PM

HARKNESS OF WASHINGTON.... 11:15 PM

SATURDAY: WORLD NEWS ROUNDUP.....8:00 AM

CONSUMER TIME -- (Produced in cooperation with
the U. S. Department of Agriculture) Dramat-
izations, interviews, questions and answers
on consumers' problems.... 12:15-12:30 PM

KIMBER PETERSON -- News analysis...1:45 PM

EDWARD TOMLINSON -- THE AMERICAN WORLD --
Advisor on Inter-American Affairs to NBC,
discusses important developments in hemi-
spheric relations .....11:15 PM

The Method. Acquaintance of the student with
the more worthwhile programs of current history signifi-
cance must continually be emphasized. To insure against
the student's forgetting about programs, the teacher can select or have the class elect a "radio program committee." These students can be assigned the task of listing the better current affairs programs the day before these programs are scheduled on the radio. Blackboard or bulletin board space can be assigned to this committee. The program group can be changed quite frequently; every week is not too often. This change will give more members of the class the opportunity of becoming familiar with program listings in newspapers and magazines.

Another group, "radio program assignment committee," can be selected, or elected, to give students listening assignments. Several students should be assigned to the same program or broadcast and listen until they become acquainted with the program. The pupils dialing the same program can compare and contrast their impressions of the broadcast and can select one of their members to present its findings to the class.

The boys and girls should be assigned different programs after a period of time. Only by listening widely will the students have grounds upon which to judge and develop program discrimination.

Concurrent with the listening assignments the
teacher and the class should develop some standards to be used in judging the programs. The order of discussing criteria by which to judge a program's contribution would depend upon student responses.

The teacher can play recordings of the various programs of current affairs significance. By comparing these recordings, the students may be able to notice contrasts and thus arrive at some significant conclusions. They might notice that several commentators present material that is almost identical. This could lead to questions about sources of news. James might notice that some news broadcasters quote the sources of their information while others do not. Joe might comment that some programs were accompanied by commercials. Mary might remark that the person who selects the news for broadcast exercises considerable control in that he could present items with which he is in sympathy. Jane might note that a particular news analyst spent considerable time talking about labor difficulties, another about foreign policy, and a third just reported news facts.

As these class contributions are being presented, they can be placed on the blackboard by the teacher or a student. After the class has given all their suggestions,
teacher and students might regroup for student guidance, the contribution and arrange them as follows:

1. Standards for judging the reliability and value of news and public affairs programs
   a. Source of the news
   b. Type of program
      (1) Commercial or sustained
         (a) If commercial, evidence, if any, of influence of sponsor
      (2) News report or analysis
   c. The Commentator
      (1) Application of the “Who” of the News facts as discussed in Chapter III
      (2) Auditory emphasis - shades of meaning and impression by vocal stress, etc.
   d. Comparison of views expressed by different commentators on various networks
   e. Comparison of radio with news dispatches
   f. Application of the procedures that measure the significance of an event as listed in Chapter III, pages 43-51.

At the conclusion of this unit, Current Events On The Air, students might wish to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of radio, as compared to the newspaper, as a medium for the transmission of news.  

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of Radio</th>
<th>Advantages of The Newspaper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivers the news first</td>
<td>Delivers news more fully (at least, the routine news)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be heard without cost, once the overhead for the radio and current is paid</td>
<td>Costs the subscriber each day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be heard while one is doing other work</td>
<td>Does not require attention at some specific hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be heard with a minimum of mental effort</td>
<td>Permits selections by reader and skipping of uninterested news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In special events, can give sense of intimate participation through sound effects and voices of personalities</td>
<td>Presents news pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permits reader to set his own pace and to reread where he does not understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Armed with an understanding of the major public opinion shaping agencies -- the newspaper and the radio -- the student is ready to study current day problems more intelligently.
CHAPTER VI
PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

Basis For A Course In Current Events

One of the purposes of the course in current events proposed in this thesis is to develop a pattern for helping the student to evaluate the meaning of contemporary history. The course seeks to acquaint the student with a method for analyzing not only current happenings but also sources of news. The hope is that the student, as a result of this training, may be able to assume a more intelligent role as a future citizen in a democratic society.

The first part of the proposed course seeks to set up criteria for measuring the meaning of current events. The unit in which this purpose is central is presented in full in Chapter III. Although class procedures vary from year to year and class to class according to student interests, needs, and school situations, some such unit must be preliminary to the study of any particular medium of public information, such as the radio or the newspaper. Until a student is able to distinguish between events of mere "news value" and those of genuine current events significance by
some method of analysis, he will have difficulty in evaluating the major sources of news -- the press and the radio.

By permitting the students to report on any news items which they select, the teacher can illustrate how a planless approach to current events is usually a waste of time. By questioning the pupils as to the source of the report, the reliability of the source, the meaning of words, the relative significance of the event, the reasons for the choice of the event, the effects of the reported incident on the lives of the students, or the future importance of the event, the teacher can demonstrate that a course in current events must of necessity be more than a recitation of what is printed in the paper or heard over the radio.

The teacher, by skillful questioning, could aid the students in developing a working definition of the term "current events." A few class periods spent in measuring this definition against student reports, should enable most of the class to "catch on," and should decrease, at least, the number of reports that are altogether without current events significance.

From various student reports on contemporary affairs, the teacher could show the need for knowing the
news and background facts. Once these facts have been clarified, the boys and girls could be asked, "What do these facts mean? What are their significance?"

By a careful analysis of student responses, the patterns as developed in Chapter III could be followed. As these patterns are being developed, they can be placed in outline form on the blackboard. At the conclusion of this unit, the teacher can ask a member of the class to volunteer to cut a stencil so this material can be mimeographed for future use. Copies of this mimeographed unit outline can then be placed in the hands of every student.

Similar procedures can be followed for Chapters IV and V. With the conclusion of these three units, the students will have in their possession the basis for this course in current events, and a pattern for analysis that has some promise of being useful throughout their lives.

No time limit can be set for the developing of the basic units dealing with the meaning of a current event, current events in the press, and current events on the air. Student interests and abilities would be among the determining factors. In this proposed course, scheduled for two semesters of five 45 minute
periods a week, it would seem reasonable to plan on using the first semester for these three units.

The Committee Method

This writer proposes to divide his class into a number of committees, each of which is to be responsible for some particular type of news or some special topic. These committees will organize the material they collect and present reports to the class as a whole. The research on specific topics is done by a small number of students, and the difficulty of securing enough copies of works of reference for the whole class is obviated.

Working through the Committee method has many advantages. The students learn how to work together, each performing his part of the work and relying upon other members of the committee to perform their allotted portions. The student is more interested in working with others who share his problem than in performing a solitary task which is but slightly appreciated by others. Furthermore, after students leave school they are frequently called upon to participate in group activities; and they are more likely to be able to perform their tasks harmoniously if they have had considerable experience in working as responsible members of groups.
The possibilities in the Committee method are manifold. So many different classifications of current events material are possible that a wide variety of committees may be set up. This variety gives the teacher the opportunity of permitting students to select committees in which they have genuine interest.

**A Basis For Assigning Committees.** The teacher and the students can work out a list of assignments for major committees. The teacher can then ask the students to list their first, second, and third choices. The range of possible topics within each committee should be so great that any student could find some interest in each. Working on this supposition, the teacher can assign the students to the groups in which they show initial interests and then change the committee groupings at intervals -- perhaps every six weeks or each grading period.

No one can predict exactly what organization will emerge from the interaction of teacher and students. A possible plan of organization might include three major committees: Local News, National News, and International News. These groups might be further divided; for example, the Local News could be separated into town and county news and state news. The National
News Committee could be grouped into a number of subcommittees, one assigned to cover news about Congress, another to cover news about the Executive Branch, and a third to cover the activities of the Judicial Branch. The International News Committee could be sub-divided in many ways, and it would make no particular difference if the categories occasionally overlapped. For example, one group could cover the United Nations news; another, Latin American news; a third, European; and a fourth, Asiatic. The first group would deal with nothing that could not, in a sense, be handled by one of the others; but it would have an emphasis of its own, and the occasional "jurisdictional disputes" of committees should help the class to realize the tendency of all classifications of experience to "run together," and the difficulty of drawing hard and fast lines of separation.

The Responsibilities of the Chairman. After committee assignments have been given out, the various groups can meet and elect their chairmen. The number of persons assigned to the different groups depends upon the size of the class.

The chairmen of the three major committees -- Local, National, and International News -- would have to
maintain close liaison, for problems can be isolated on the basis of locality only in the sense that they arise, or seem to originate, in a particular place. Their effects are nearly always world-wide. Local attitudes and acts foreshadow and influence national attitudes and acts; national attitudes and acts in turn have international repercussions.

The chairmen would also be responsible for the division of work in the respective committees. Thus, specific members would be assigned to listen to certain news commentators, read syndicated columns, or check source materials.

Careful record would be kept of all materials gathered by the groups. Checking the reports or folders of materials of the various groups with the teacher at the end of the period would be another task for the chairmen.

**Class Discussion.** In order to maintain desirable working conditions and to enable the groups to plan their work, the teacher must be careful not to interrupt whenever the fancy seizes him to carry on impromptu discussion with the group. The attention of the students must not be demanded by the teacher every few minutes. Chairmen would presumably schedule class
time in advance with the teacher when they have reports to make or problems to discuss with the group. For the most part, members of the various committees could expect to work together without interruption during the class period.

**Seating Arrangement.** Committees would be grouped together in order to facilitate work, but individual seats would not need to be assigned. Tables and chairs are obviously much more convenient for work of this type than the traditional immovable seats. If the teacher has these immovable seats in his classroom, then a conference table is a necessity.

**Equipment And Materials**

As much reference material as possible should be filed in the classroom. Most schools have funds available for the purchase of additional equipment, so that it is obtainable whenever the teacher can convince the principal that a proposed purchase is worthwhile.

The writer proposes to keep two newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Christian Science Monitor* available in the classroom at all times. Various local papers should also be available. Chairman of committees can assume the responsibility of seeing that local papers are in the class for use.
The class should also have a collection of at least the more popular news magazines. Students will usually volunteer to bring back issues of *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, etc. for classroom use. Current issues are in nearly every school library and can be withdrawn for class use.

Certain equipment is usually found and needed in any social studies classroom. A small portable radio, if the school doesn't have a radio, can be valuable for listening to special broadcasts of current events significance. Extensive bulletin-board space is needed to display the work of the students as well as clippings and other types of supplementary materials. If the standard bulletin-board is not available, the teacher can purchase green burlap very cheaply and use it as a substitute. Blackboard space is usually available. Certainly a globe and up-to-date maps and charts are needed in every social studies classroom. The class could also use a filing cabinet to keep the various types of materials which they will add to their collection: pamphlets, pictures, clippings, maps, graphs, charts, etc.
Special Projects

Cartoons. Many students like to draw, and this interest can be used to advantage in a current events class. There are obvious advantages from the point of view of motivation in approaching a contemporary problem through a medium that gives pleasure to the student.

Students can be asked to make a collection of cartoons for a bulletin board display. However, the teacher is well advised to insist that the boys and girls be able to explain the meanings of the drawings before their cartoons are displayed; otherwise, the cartoon-making may become, for them, an end in itself, unrelated to the major purposes of the course. After the students become thoroughly familiar with this type of art the teacher can propose a cartoon contest. Student drawings have value only to the extent that they reveal original ideas, and great care must be taken to discourage sheer copying. For this reason, the teacher will need to be fairly familiar with the cartoons appearing in widely-circulated publications. The art teacher is often willing to cooperate in the cartoon project.

Charts and Graphs. Many charts and graphs in magazines and newspapers are too minute for effective use. Students can be asked to reproduce these aids on a
larger scale. The reproductions can then be displayed and used by the appropriate groups. An occasional student may be able to work out an effective chart or graph independently. This writer has always made use of his students who were taking mechanical drawing. One of his junior high school students made a series of charts for classroom use on such subjects as: United Nations Organization, Comparison of National Debt Levels for the Past Century, Comparison of Exports with Imports of Major Products, Costs of World War II as compared with World War I, and Population Growth for the United States from 1790 to 1945 (showing per cent in various age groups and races).

Special Class Sessions

A round table or a panel discussion often serves to round out an extensive study of some special problem and tie up the loose ends. Members of the committees who have investigated the problem should of course take a leading part in this special discussion.

The Round Table. This group discussion can be planned to include all the members of a committee that have made an extensive study of the problem at hand. This group of "experts," usually three to five, analyses
a topic for the benefit of the audience.

The chairman does not take a dominating role. He starts the session, keeps it flowing freely and smoothly, and occasionally gives his own views. He may conclude the discussion by giving a summary of the positions taken by each participant.

If the round table members read prepared papers, the discussion is seldom encouraged. The writer does not permit the use of prepared speeches. However, he does permit and even encourage students to use written outlines, since sheer extemporizing often runs off into side issues and heads up nowhere. In most cases, an outline helps to keep discussion moving more smoothly.

As preparation for the round table, copies of radio programs such as the "University of Chicago Round Table" can be secured to serve as guides. Students "catch on" quickly to the "round table" forum, and once they have heard such discussion over the radio or in the classroom, they will need little instruction about the mechanics of the procedure.

The Panel Discussion. As in the round table, responsibility for the conduct of a panel discussion rests with a panel of "experts," one of whom acts as chairman. The round table is conversational throughout;
the panel usually begins with brief statements from each of its members before less formal discussion begins. The panel is usually seated behind a table, facing the audience. The participants should represent varying points of view on the subject chosen.

The audience can be brought into the picture either immediately after completion of the opening statements or after some discussion among the panel participants. Both questions and statements from the audience may be permitted, so long as they are brief. The chairman, although to some extent a participant, devotes most of his attention to presiding over the discussion. He watches the timing and sees that things move steadily forward.

A panel will ordinarily be made up of pupils who have made a special study of the problem in the course of their committee work. The topic can be divided in a number of ways. The division may be a sharp one on the basis of an issue, with some members speaking in favor of a proposition and others speaking against it. Or the division may be on the basis of subject matter, with one student handling the economic aspects, another the historical, another the geographical, etc.
CHAPTER VII

EVALUATION

The Nature Of Evaluation

Definition. "An educational program is appraised by finding out how far the objectives of the program are actually being realized. Since the program seeks to bring about certain changes in the behavior of students, and since these are the fundamental educational objectives, then it follows that an evaluation of the educational program is a process for finding out to what degree these changes are actually taking place."¹

As evaluation is an appraisal to see if the objectives are actually being realized, the objectives must be defined in terms of behavior that can be measured.

Objective. The objective for this proposed course in current events, the development of an enlightened participant citizen of the world, is so nebulous that the kinds of behavior it implies are indefinite.

What evidence can be offered to show that the student is developing into an enlightened participant citizen of the world? The above question cannot be answered directly, but certain ways of thinking and attitudes contribute to a pattern that might be construed as evidence to show student development toward the selected objective.

The writer has proposed that the general objective of this course in current events can be furthered by the development of reflective thinking on the part of the pupils. In order to have a sound basis for thinking reflectively on current problems, the student must have an understanding of the agencies that mold public opinion. The pupil's ability to think reflectively and to understand the agencies that mold public opinion can be evaluated. These changes in the behavior of the student can be recorded. An evaluation of this course can be made only in so far as reflective thinking and an understanding of the agencies that mold public opinion contribute to the achievement of the proposed objective.
The "Paper And Pencil" Method Of Evaluation

To many teachers the "paper and pencil" exercise is the "be all, and all," of evaluation. In many cases, written tests are used to measure the pupil's mastery of facts. This fact-testing is sometimes justified, as, for example, in cases where the ability to solve new problems is dependent on mastery of certain types of information. However, students' lack of ability in establishing connections between facts may be caused to some extent by their dependence on "tailor-made" tests which measure only recall of factual information. If the information is stored in the brain but the ability to read the "blue print" is lacking, the information becomes so much excess baggage. If the boy or girl cannot establish meanings or relationships among the facts, he has wasted his time and energy in "acquiring" them.

The teacher should shift the center of emphasis from measuring progress in the mastery of facts, where it frequently abides, to a program of evaluation where the student's ability to use the information is measured. If written tests are properly constructed, they can be valuable as an evaluation device; but they cannot give the whole picture.
Information Tests. Where the ability to solve problems is dependent upon certain types of data, information tests are justified. The writer proposes to use these types of tests to measure the student's mastery of the patterns developed in Chapters III, IV, V. However, mastery of these patterns would not be the end product of the testing program. Applications of these patterns to increase understanding and to aid in the solution of present day problems would be the goal. Students cannot think in a vacuum. When they reach John Dewey's "forked road" situation, they must have some knowledge of direction in order to decide which road will lead to their destination.

Beliefs On Social Issues. The Evaluation Staff of the Progressive Education Association has constructed Tests 4.2 and 4.3 which are useful in measuring student beliefs on social issues. The statements represent opinions about various problems. Since statements deal with unsettled questions, there are no right or wrong answers. The student expresses his point of view about them. Three answers are possible.

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for the student. He can agree, disagree, or indicate that he is uncertain.

The Evaluation Staff classified the responses to the whole test under four headings: liberalism, conservatism, uncertainty, and consistency. The results of this test would indicate whether or not the student has a consistent viewpoint. If the boy or girl indicated many uncertainties about social issues, it could mean that the student has not given much thought to current problems, or that he has reserved an open-mind and is seeking more relevant information before establishing a point of view. High scores in either direction, uniformly distributed, would mean a fairly well thought-out position.

While high consistency can be generally regarded as a desired characteristic, one must be aware that often inconsistency is a by-product of transition from one pattern of beliefs to another. In the latter case, low consistency may be an index of change and may be temporary.

By readministering these tests after appropriate intervals of time, a knowledge of the kinds of changes taking place in student beliefs can be secured.

These tests, 4.2 and 4.3, could be offered as
evidence that students are developing reflective thinking in so far as reflective thinking tends to develop consistency in viewpoints about social issues.

Applying Social Facts And Generalizations To Social Problems. Another test devised by the Evaluation Staff, Test 1.5, measures the student's ability to apply social facts and generalizations to social problems. It shows the pupil's ability to see logical relations between general principles and specific information on one hand and issues involved in a given social problem on the other; that is, to see whether a statement supports, contradicts, or is irrelevant to a conclusion.

Using this test, or one constructed along similar lines, would give evidence as to whether or not reflective thinking is being developed. It would indicate (1) the student's ability to formulate reasonable generalizations from specific data, (2) the ability to apply principles to a given situation, and (3) the ability to judge the logic of the argument.

Newspaper, Magazine, And Radio Checklists. Newspaper, magazine, and radio checklists given several times during the school term would indicate something of the

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quantity and quality of reading being done by students.

In appraising the students' reading of newspapers, the teacher should attempt to determine what papers are read regularly or occasionally, the amount of time devoted to newspaper reading, and the sections they read consistently. Headings such as editorials, news, comics, and sports could be listed for them to check. The pupils could be asked to check the amount of time they spend each week in reading newspapers, and to indicate the editorial policy of each paper as "liberal," "conservative," and Republican, Democratic, or Independent. Possibly few students could properly answer the latter accurately.

Students could be asked to check each magazine they had read in three columns: one, indicating whether they read it seldom, occasionally, or regularly; another, indicating whether they usually skimmed it, read parts of it, or read it in full; and a third, indicating whether they obtained the magazine in school, at home, from a friend, a public library, a newsstand, or elsewhere.

Another checklist could list the popular programs heard over national networks between four and
ten p.m. and all day Saturday and Sunday under headings such as variety shows, comedians, religious programs, dance music, classical music, news commentators, sports broadcasts, and discussion programs. The pupils would check each program heard in columns indicating whether he likes it very much and listens to it whenever he can, likes it fairly well but does not go out of his way to listen to it, or dislikes and avoids it.

**Other Methods Of Evaluation**

**Observation.** In the employment of the observational technique, certain personal qualities are demanded of the teacher. He must not be influenced by prejudices. Before his observations will have validity he must enjoy the confidence and trust of the pupil. The reason is obvious. A pupil's dislike for the teacher might be translated to his work. Therefore, it would be wrong to infer that the pupil had an undesirable attitude toward the subject or activity in which he is engaged, whereas in reality, it is a dislike for the teacher.

Although a teacher is constantly using the observational technique almost unconsciously, he should be systematic. By an analysis of the student's written
work, oral contributions, attitudes, and committee work, the teacher will have a basis for determining what adjustments are necessary before the student can make progress. The student should be observed for evidence that either refutes or verifies that mental growth and desired attitudes (consistent with the objective) are being developed.

These observations can be recorded in an anecdotal record and the analysis used by the teacher and the pupil for correction of undesirable tendencies.

Expression-Of-Opinion. The "expression-of-opinion" technique has value only when a close and harmonious relationship exists between the pupil and the teacher. If the teacher does not respect "the dignity of the individual," then "parrot" expressions will be handed back. If a democratic attitude is lacking in the classroom, the pupil's spoken evidence of his attitude or appreciation for anyone or anything might be entirely superficial, conditioned by how the teacher would like to have him feel toward the element for which he is revealing his attitude or appreciation.

Use Of The Library. A student's reading usually conditions his thinking. The way the boy or girl uses the library would be some evidence in evaluating
the success of a course in current events. An examination of the pupil's library card would show whether or not reading tastes have changed during the course of the school year. If the student's card shows an increased percentage of withdrawals of magazines, periodicals, and books dealing with contemporary problems one might assume that this increased interest was, in part, due to the current events course.

Evidence of increased reading of materials pertinent to this course is only quantitative. The teacher will have to use other methods to discover if this quantitative reading is also qualitative.

School Conversations. Informal conversation among the students and with the teachers often reveals significant attitudes and ways of thinking. The remarks that pupils make about current issues may be of value in determining growth in interest and understanding. Informal discussions of current issues among students during lunch periods, at school parties, etc. are indices of interest and concern about contemporary living.

Committee Reports. A careful study of committee reports would indicate the quantity and quality of work being done by the boys and girls. Work habits might show how effective students are in carrying their portion
of the load in a democratic procedure. Students who participate in class activities are developing habits that will stand them in good stead in a democracy. A study of committee reports would also reveal not only the paper contribution of each member but also the meanings they attach to the information.

**The Purpose Of Evaluation**

Evaluation techniques should be used as guideposts along the way to see that the teacher and the students do not get lost or stranded at the "forked road" situation.

Since reflective thinking and the student's ability to understand the agencies that mold public opinion are the important purposes of evaluation in this course, it is better to carry on the appraisal continuously rather than concentrate it at the end of the grading period. Frequent checks are helpful in showing how students are progressing and how effective the teaching has been. In this connection the importance of using informal methods of evaluation procedures such as observation, expression-of-opinion, school conversations, committee reports, and library check-ups, cannot be over-emphasized. The evidence gathered from the above informal methods can be fairly accurate if the teacher
has in mind specific behaviors for which to look.

The informal techniques listed in the preceding paragraph and the "paper and pencil" techniques should give the teacher a more complete picture of the child and his developmental potentialities. The teacher and the pupil, working as a team, should be able to make progress in helping the boy or girl to develop his critical faculties and the faculties of self-appraisal. The student, by developing the habit of thinking reflectively and by having a knowledge and understanding of the major public opinion shaping agencies, should be able to assume a position in society that would give direction and leadership for a better world.
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