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FROM SCHOOLING TO CONSCIENTIZATION - or the insidious myth of American
democracy and related matters

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FROM SCHOOLING TO CONSCIENTIZATION - or the insidious myth of American
democracy and related matters

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When invited as a North American to write a CICOP position paper entitled "From Schooling to Conscientization," I accepted the task, thinking it would be relatively simple. I was wrong. My difficulty began when I started asking myself how many prior questions and assumptions I could detect in the topic as stated. This exercise led me to what I see as the most fundamental of the many prior questions and assumptions implied in that seemingly harmless phrase -- "From Schooling to Conscientization."

For me, the most fundamental assumption underlying the title phrase is that we North Americans are experiencing democracy at the present time. Before starting this paper I felt I had to question that basic assumption to see if it is true.

First, I will tell you why I thought it necessary to question that assumption. Second, I will try to explain why, in my view, the assumption is not only a false assumption, but insidiously so.

This conference population is made up of Latin Americans and North Americans. Latin America is of the third world; we North Americans are first-worlders. The theme of this conference is "hemispheric

conscientization". So the entire conference, if I understand correctly, is to be an intercontinental exploration of the meanings and possibilities contained in that term, "conscientization," brought into prominence by Paulo Freire.

You will recall that Paulo Freire discussed conscientization in his book (La Educacion como Practica de la Libertad - ICIRA, Santiago de Chile, 1969) within the context of his native Brazil. Freire poses conscientization as an alternative to massification for Brazil as she moves from being a closed toward becoming (hopefully) an open society. As Brazil moves through this phase of profound sociocultural transition, Freire points out that the "democratic inexperience" of the Brazilian people makes this transitional phase painful because democracy must be experienced to be understood and properly appreciated.

Now, as every North American knows, the historic role and vocation of schools in this country has been the democratic socialization of those who are schooled. For democracy to work the public must be an informed public. Public decisions must be informed decisions. The public, then, in a democracy, should be well educated. And education is what happens in our schools here in the United States. This is the conventional wisdom.

On the one hand - and at the risk of dangerously oversimplifying - one could say that Brazil is a nation that has never really had a public forum in which issues affecting Brazilians are so handled that every Brazilian participates in the decision-making processes that shape and determine Brazilian life to the degree that each is affected by the

consequences of each public decision. So Brazilians should be shaping their public forum. On the other hand, we citizens of the United States do, I believe, have a tradition of national democracy. I really believe that when John Dewey wrote his book, The Public and its Problems, he was talking about a national reality. An American public did exist. And it did have problems. And there was a public forum.

To put it as directly as possible so as not to be misunderstood, I am convinced that, since roughly the end of World War II, the public forum in this country has become increasingly a ghost town. And now it hardly exists at all. The American public has become privatized. So, from my view, we are a people who, for very different reasons than Brazil, must build a public forum for ourselves. If the peasants of Brazil have had their voices stolen from them so they cannot make themselves heard, we North Americans are their brothers in silence. We have basically the same problem. The parallel between Freire's "culture of silence,"¹ and Nixon's "silent majority" is too frightening not to take seriously here. I am bringing a somewhat different meaning and analysis to that term "silent majority" than does Mr. Nixon. My meaning will explain why I think democracy, once a reality in this country, has become a myth - an insidious myth.

If Paulo Freire's psycho-social method conscientizes Latin American people as they teach themselves how to read, then were Paulo Freire to live here in our country long enough, he would probably try to design a way to help us in the great silent majority to forget how to read. If we understand reading as something that is not just a matter of course

but a very special and useful art with its own proper subject matter, imagination and truth, then the ability to read and write is seen as prostituted when it becomes a means for communicating top-down decisions. Paul Goodman once commented that originally advertising was a useful way of communicating public information (e.g. "Fresh shipment of cod fish arrived, very good, at foot of pier 2"). Then, it was really useful to know how to read. But when the point of advertising and the mass media is to create synthetic demands, not only can it be intelligently argued that it is better not to know how to read, but that the ability to read itself becomes a formidable barrier to developing social literacy. An example of how reading and writing are prostituted, from page 37 of the January 5, 1970 issue of Time magazine:

"English is not one language. It is dozens of languages, depending on the market (underlining mine) you want to reach. - We speak most of them."

- W. H. Schneider, Inc.
Advertising and Promotion
15 West 44th Street
New York, New York 10036

The difference between a public and a market is about the same as the difference between conscientization and massification of people.

In my view, the deepest and subtlest of the many reasons why the North American public has been reduced to a massified market is the tenacity with which we cling to the individualist conception of knowledge. Within the tradition of individualism that has done so much to shape us as a people, we are led to believe that knowledge is the acquisition of the individual man rather than fundamentally a social reality - as though humane learning, science and wisdom can be removed from the setting of the total human community from which they come.

The technical knowledge explosion that has occurred since World War II, and the harnessing of that knowledge to shape our "technetronic society,"^{2.} has itself been embodied in the strong and still stultifying individualistic aspects of our traditions, aspects that divide rather than unite us as a people. Not until we free ourselves from these individualistic aspects of our traditions will we see that intellectual individualism sets us in the wrong direction for conscientization. It is individualism in yet another form that makes the very notions of social rationality, collective and collaborative intelligence, the necessity of reintegrating and socializing speculative and practical intelligence, all but impossible even to talk about.

I. A. Richards once said that language has succeeded until recently "in hiding from us almost all the things we talk about." Freire's word, "conscientization," is a perfect example. The reason we North Americans have such a hard time wrapping our heads around the meaning Freire brings to that word is that conscientization, or the state of being conscientized, is a profoundly public, communal and social reality. It is not an individual affair at all. A conscientized people would see that the competitive rather than collaborative use of intelligence, the dichotomizing of speculative and practical intelligence, the privatizing of social rationality, the bureaucratic functionalizing of substantial rationality, are all frontal attacks on the humanization of the global community.

John Kenneth Galbraith - that would-be Marx of our mind-making class - gives an account of what has happened to us since World War II. In his

book, The New Industrial State, he discusses the imperatives of the new technology by comparing the production processes of the first Ford automobile in 1903 to the decision to produce and distribute a new kind of car - the Mustang in the 1960's. The coordination of the myriad of micro-skills, the planning, the millions and millions of dollars spent on new machinery, the time it takes for such an industrial conversion process - from 1962 to 1964 - demands that the producers also produce Mustang consumers prepared and waiting by the Spring of 1964. Ford's corporate managers utilized the knowledge explosion, according to Galbraith, to develop a Mustang market long before the first Mustangs rolled off the lines. But the social insanity of our transportation systems, the social effects on the rest of us of what the auto companies do are not even discussed by the celebrated author. I submit that the absence of such discussion in his very interesting book is clear indication that Galbraith, like others in the knowledge industry, is part of the problem I am talking about, and not a part of the solution.

Were schooling in our country actually doing the job of democratic socialization, then the "products" of the schools would have a feel for the general contours of knowledge and human experience and the possibilities of undetermined futures. School graduates would recreate, participate in and deepen the social rationality of the American public. But even as moderate and respected an educational critic as Christopher Jencks suggests that to entertain such notions as though they were realities is sheer dream-talk, for

The basic reason why schools and colleges cannot cure our major social disorders is not, however, their lack of resources; it is that they are part of the system which produces the disorders. 3.

In other words, the bright, budding young economists now sitting at the feet of Galbraith will not grow much in social rationality because of Galbraith, for Galbraith himself is part of the research-centered multiversity which was the seedbed for the scientific-technological knowledge explosion that made our technetronic society a possibility in the first place. For the scientists and technologists that knowingly or unknowingly midwife the technetronic society into being are "products" of the research-centered multiversities, which, in turn, have become, as Henry David Aiken puts it, "the indispensable feeder institutions to the immensely rich and powerful post-industrial national society."⁴

In short, it is the schools themselves, the most prestigious and most elitist in particular, that engender and foster the society-manager mentality and give us the society-managers of today and tomorrow, the very ones who are convinced of the rightness of their deciding for others - for all the others - how an entire people should live.⁵

We at this conference are, indeed, familiar with the kind of mentality I am talking about. Dostolevski was, to my knowledge, the first to analyze the inner workings of the salvation manager's mentality in The Brothers Karamazov, when he describes the Grand Inquisitor - the arch-paradigm after which the minds of our so-called meritocratic elite are fashioned. The brilliance of Dostolevski's insight is not simply that the oppressed tend to identify with their oppressors, as Freud later pointed out, but that when the manner of oppression is hidden, unfelt,

subtle and sophisticated, the dynamic still operates. Dostolevski's reader finds himself identifying with the aged and evil Spanish cardinal.

Earlier, I mentioned the similarity between Freire's "culture of silence" and Nixon's "silent majority." Both groups are oppressed. The silent Brazilians, and most of the silent third worlders for that matter, know the oppression of being colonized from without. Most third worlders have suffered at the hands of foreign missionaries - be they ecclesiastical or economic - itching to engage in the laying on of culture. But we North Americans have not had that experience; we ourselves have been very busy laying our culture on other peoples. But we of the silent majority are ourselves being oppressed by a very special kind of internal colonialization both of body and spirit. It is special because it is new and an only vaguely understood phenomenon.

In Brazil, as in other third world countries, the key to understanding the social oppression of internal colonialism is maldistribution of national property and wealth. This is the root cause of oppressive overclass-underclass social power arrangements within most third world countries. But in this country of technetronic culture it is not maldistribution of property that explains the oppressive new class structures now emerging. Rather, it is the maldistribution of socially useful knowledge that explains the growing internal colonialism of contemporary America.

Knowledge, including abstract scientific inquiry, raw data for the computers, advanced industrial "techniques," and the practical judgments of

the meritocratic technical elite, is now the independent variable in the formula for contemporary social power in America. Technical knowledge is fast replacing social organization, national wealth, real property, and even individual entrepreneurial skills and learnings as the decisive element in social power.

The explosion of technical knowledge has made American politics and the public forum an empty wasteland and our intellectual individualism makes it all but impossible for us to see right now that it is a wasteland.

I subscribe to the thesis that "if religion was formerly the opiate of the masses, then surely technology is the opiate of the educated"^{6.}

today in advanced industrial America. Technology itself is the new golden calf fashioned and worshipped by our society managers. And technical knowledge has become for them the new source of their enormous social power, technology being "merely the organization of knowledge for practical purposes."^{7.}

This shift of the very source of public power and control happened since World War II, within the research-centered multiversities, government agencies and major corporations which now have a virtual monopoly over the effective use of technical knowledge. The explosion of technical knowledge was made possible by micro-specialized research. But although small segments and scraps of new knowledge may belong to the technical micro-specialists and to a few of the well educated, only very large organizations have the resources to bring these scraps of new knowledge together into any kind of coherent and integrated system. Whether these

systems should be organized for total democratization or conscientization of all the people, or for other purposes such as profit and power maximization for a few is, at this point, another discussion. But because we North Americans, shaped by the Enlightenment tradition, still believe uncritically in "progress," and our academics are still writing articles with such titles as "The Inevitability of Democracy,"⁸ free rein is given to the very large corporations in which technology can be harnessed. Because we believe in "pluralism," under the guise of equal opportunity for all, we have a monstrous meritocratic democracy in which a very few are ever so much more equal than the rest of us.

From reading the chapters on "The Technostructure," and "The Corporation," in Galbraith's book, it is clear that technological progress demanded fantastic corporate expansion both on an institutional scale and in a more important way - diversification. When industrial institutions get beyond a certain size they can go beyond their original activity and purposes. So, our biggest institutions have become diversified corporations. The more diversified they become the more successful they are. Corporate managers have not missed the opportunities and challenges presented by the knowledge explosion. The corporate managers have mastered an ever expanding range of technical and scientific disciplines so as to integrate them into production and distribution of newer and more varied goods and services. Now, for example, the University of Michigan pacifies Thailand peasants, advises Detroit's welfare mothers, and still teaches tens of thousands of students, Sarnoff's RCA, while it still produces radios and televisions, also publishes books, manages

missile tracking systems, does research in linear algebra, experiments in electronic music, and plans whole new educational systems.

An astute social observer has this to say about the effects of our diversified corporations:

The most impressive example of diversification is found, as one might expect, in the Department of Defense. High energy physics, transoceanic logistics, infantry tactics, elementary and secondary education, comparative linguistics, Greek political studies, psychiatry and astronomy are but a handful of the knowledges the Pentagon employs in its far-flung activities. Among corporate bodies like these the words private and public, industrial and educational, national and international, military and civilian, no longer define significant distinctions. For, in the case of each pairing, a single group of managers, acting through bureaucratic hierarchy, has disciplined the babble of modern specialisms to its own expanding purposes. 9.

The technical knowledge explosion then has been an impetus to further bureaucratize intelligence. 10. It also diminishes the microspecialist's general social vision and enhances the intellectual technician's sense of alienation and anomie. At the same time the knowledge explosion has been seized upon by the diversified megacorporations and they have become today's knowledge generalists. They have the grandest social overview. The technical knowledge explosion, while it has been an enormous barrier to general social literacy or conscientization for most of us as individuals has been the underlying occasion for gigantic corporate expansion and diversification in this country these past two and a half decades. And while throughout middle management the intellectual technicians of the knowledge industry may be alienated from what they are doing, whether at M.I.T., the Pentagon, or General Motors, in the rooms at the top, the old phrase "Knowledge is power" has taken on new meaning.

As social analysts from Karl Marx to C. Wright Mills have rightly described the concentration and control of the means of production as being in the hands of the few, the "power elite," so now the concentration of socially effective knowledge of and about our advanced industrial society rests deeply within several giant institutions with their interchangeable managers. This concentration of knowledge is not only a sort of mental monopoly, but it incapacitates ordinary American citizens, taking social control from the public, privatizing the American public. We feel in our guts that something has gone wrong, very wrong with our country. We are like Ken Kesey's McMurphy in One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, after a frontal lobotomy was performed to make him conform and become predictable. Now it is terribly hard for us to get our heads together.

Weathermen might say, "You don't need a weatherman to know how the wind blows,"^{11.} but we in the silent majority have undergone a new kind of trained incapacity so that now it is all but impossible for us to know how the wind blows. We have that vague feeling of powerlessness for a number of reasons. For one thing, as several corporations have burgeoned, diversified and monopolized both technical information and the products and services dependent on it, their relationships to us as uninformed and unorganized citizens who constitute their publics, their clientele, have undergone a total, if subtle, change. Before, the relationships of consumers to the producing corporations was much more a political relationship, as that between negotiators, with bargaining power on each side. Now, the relationship is one of superordinate to subordinate - a bureaucratic relationship of administration wherein the interests of the weaker are

subordinated to the interests of the stronger, a relationship made possible because the diversified megacorporations now control and administer to the people.

It seems to me that Warren Bennis prematurely entones his requiem to celebrate the coming death of bureaucracy.^{12.} For Weber can still be used as a handbook and guide through the maze of our gigantic diversified corporations.^{13.} As any fairly sensitive person knows, the oversized institutions have more effect in shaping the individuals within them than the other way about. More than ever today, to be an employee of, a citizen of, a client of, a taxpayer of, a reader of, a student of, or merely a member of a large institution is more and more to be its victim than master.

A second reason why we of the silent majority find it hard to get our heads together to know the way the wind blows, is that as the diversified megacorporations have learned to administer to rather than negotiate with their consumers, so too have the most highly placed managers increased their power to control human behavior within their mega-institutions. When McNamara was Secretary of Defense he revolutionized by centralizing decision-making power within the military. He did this by introducing cost-benefit analysis procedures. In so doing he dramatized an instance of a trend by which highest level managers exert more and more internal control over the largest and most diversified institutions that make up and direct our technetronic society. This trend of greater internal control, combined with the radically changed relationship of megacorporation

to consumer, or "public," to use an anachronism, join to control the central forces of American life, giving the mind-managers almost complete control over national consciousness and the general national thrust. Moreover, as these giant institutions synthesize more and more scraps of information into ever expanding systems and continue diversifying, they destroy boundaries between public right and private privilege. What is decided upon within the giant corporations becomes, in the popular wisdom, a matter that concerns only the intellectual technicians and the top managers who control them.

The mind-makers have far more to fear from Ralph Nader, for example, than they do from the industrial mission movement in this country. The latter follow top management as the church follows the flag, or as a whore follows an army camp. But Nader exposes for all to see the effects of professionalized mind-making on the rest of us. Little wonder he is unpopular and unwelcome in the corridors of corporate America. But Nader notwithstanding, it has ceased to make any difference whether an institution is controlled publicly or privately. Our laws and understanding of academic freedom and private property guarantees the "privacy" of General Motors Corporation, while popular wisdom legitimizes a "need for national security" that screens away from the view of American people the decision-making activities of the giant governmental agencies. The sad result is that even politics has ceased to be a means by which the public can control the private and public governmental megabureaucracies, the seats of social power.

This unseen but real privatization of the American public has made a myth of American democracy. To the degree that we accept the myth as real, to that degree do we postpone the task of reconstructing what is rightfully ours - a public forum. Because this privatization is so subtle, deep, and unseen, it is insidious. And the "overeducated left" seriously misjudge the "undereducated right" who supported Goldwater in 1964 and Wallace in 1968. Labelling what is called the "white backlash" as a "new irrationalism,"^{14.} supposes that the Wallaceites are acting from the emptiness and inadequacies of their individual lives. What the "undereducated right," farthest from the newly defined centers of social power in our technetronic society, are actually doing when they rally around Wallace is this: They are making a socially rational, if misguided, effort to respond to the growing powerlessness of their public lives.^{15.} They accurately sense that public politics is moving to render them helpless in the defense of their own interests. They see that conventional processes of two party politics are already closed to them. It makes great sense for them to form a third party. People in the Wallace movement then, are making a valiant if twisted effort at collective and social rationality. They are trying to maintain a public forum.

The sinking feeling of political impotency is not unique with Wallace supporters. The same public malaise is acutely felt on the left, as the outcome of the McCarthy campaign and the Democratic convention at Chicago demonstrated. What the liberal McCarthyites never understood was that their strength within the Democratic Party, which was never very much, could never possibly be greater because it was dependent upon their

support outside the party. The dissenters, the conscientious objectors, the protesting peaceniks, the draft resisters, in short, the unevenly growing movement of dissent, unrespectables and respectables alike, was the real base for any public power that the McCarthyites could have generated. This ghost town of American politics is one aspect of the privatization of our public forum. Another and equally important aspect to understand is the effect of privatization on public information flow through the mass media.

American mind-makers and mind-managers control and have curtailed that flow. It is no longer possible for ordinary Americans to keep informed on national issues simply by reading the conventional newspapers. No matter how carefully and thoroughly one pours over the New York Times, the Washington Post, or the Wall Street Journal, one can no longer make confident judgments on national and international events. One guerrilla journalist cites an instance that dramatically documents and clarifies this point:

During 1965 repeated press stories reported that neutral Thailand was being used as the base from which most of the air offensive against North Vietnam was being launched. This should have been a singularly important fact for the public debate of the time. It not only made possible a quantitatively heavier offensive against the North but represented a qualitative escalation of the war as well. Once Thai bases were used, the conflict was no longer confined to Vietnam. And, since it was likely that the Thais had exacted some price for the use of their airfields, it was also likely that the diplomacy of the war had become more complex: presumably the Thais too would now have to be satisfied in any war settlement. Finally, of course, the bases raised the possibility that the North Vietnamese would henceforth feel justified in causing the Thai dictatorship some equivalent grief, thus increasing still further the military-political complexity.

This singularly important information about the bases never really penetrated the public debate, for it was never permitted to become a public fact. By the technique of issuing "unofficial," "informed sources," "nonattributable," "off-the-record," "official" and "attributable" denials - as the situation demanded - to accompany each new press report (which were dutifully printed by the newspapers in tandem with their own stories), the government managed to obscure from the public both the seriousness of the Vietnam escalation and the gravity of its probable development. However, no such clouding of the situation affected the technical press. Journals like Air Force and Space Digest early carried and soon confirmed the reports and, as if to underline my point, were careful to emphasize that the government was making a major effort to hide their importance from the general public. The reason for this difference in news dissemination is plain. The climate, geography, dust and logistic peculiarities of Thailand affected the procurement of technical equipment for the short future and its design for the middle future. Persons engaged in the aircraft and electronics industries had to know about the Thai bases because they were expected to develop and act on that knowledge. They belonged to the private institutional world, and in the private world one has rights based on function. No equivalent rights exist in the public world. It is a world which, increasingly in our society, has no function. 16.

This paper is meant to deal with schooling and conscientization. Lest my remarks about the decline of public politics and the demise of our public forum seem to have taken us too far afield, I recall to your mind the fundamental point made by Allison Davis that social class has an enormous if not totally determinative influence on learning. 17.

And my point in discussing politics and the public forum is that

I agree with John McDermott, a new American overclass and underclass has emerged. The overclass manages the lives of our greatest institutions and controls the uses of technical information. The underclass have their lives managed by the great institutions. Moreover, if I have any understanding at all of the social dimension of what Paulo Freire means by "conscientization," then it is crucial for us North Americans

to see that the demise of our public forum is understood only within the institutional framework that was the setting for the knowledge explosion in the first place. Because of that institutional framework as well as our legacy of capitalism and the cold war, the conscientization of our people cannot happen simply by pumping technical information into the news flow through the media. That will do nothing, for conscientization is fundamentally a public, not a private matter. It is not merely making people better informed that is at issue here. For the vast new underclass of our technetronic nation-state is the real "silent majority." And we do not have the social, cultural or institutional framework within which the technical information can be integrated, synthesized, and systematized so it can be acted upon.

There is no question that we North Americans must move from schooling to conscientization. But particular prescriptions are hard to come by. Generally, a giant first step is any work that destroys elitist separations of high and popular culture, particularly in our schooling institutions from the humblest preschool nursery to the most sophisticated post-doctoral programs at Harvard. To my knowledge the only ones who are doing this effectively - at least visibly - are the student radicals and activists. I am by no means suggesting that all is well in the New Left, or that the oversupply of intellectual arrogance and elitism is not a crippling reality. But that is not the point here. The greatest enemy of conscientization of a people is also the greatest enemy of democratization, that is, anti-egalitarianism in any and every form. At the deepest level, anti-egalitarianism produced the clericalism of the grand inquisitor

who was convinced of the rightness of his deciding for others. The contemporary counterpart of the ecclesiastical salvation-managers are the
18.
George Kennans, the society managing secular clerics who are as deeply convinced of the rightness of their deciding for others as the evil old Spanish cardinal ever was.

I see another possibility for conscientization of our people in the human relations movement if that movement can become radicalized. But the exploration of that possibility is impossible here. Suffice it to say that T-Groups, Organization Development laboratories and workshops have the potential of being exercises in the reconstruction of social rationality by enhancing the structural perceptions of the true limits of human situations. The actualization of those potentialities is another matter.

I will conclude here, however, by quoting a poem written by one of the founders of the human relations movement, Kenneth D. Benne, a conscientized and radical Kansas populist who is also the most exciting educational philosopher and worker I have ever known. Convinced that a conscientized people realize that "no" precedes "yes," and gives yay-saying human meaning, Mr. Benne wrote

A DREAM

The light - so dim it drew the horizon near -
 Showed giant figures, almost human, hemming me round,
 Faceless or with averted faces. I stood alone and I could hear
 Their almost human voices - impressive sound
 Well-amplified, most high fidelity - commanding "Kneel!"
 I did not kneel. And from me came a bleat -
 Most poorly modulated, low fidelity - "I do not feel
 Your right to make me kneel." Came their repeat
 "Kneel!" - computer-programmed, nuclear-driven now - "We have the power.
 We are the nations, churches, races, collectivities.
 You are a piece of us - without us, nothing. In this dark hour
 Of dire emergency, to stand upright is treason, sacrilege, disloyalty -
 down on your knees!"
 Darkness had further dimmed the scene and it was cold.
 Wavering, my voice came to my ears, perhaps into their almost
 human ears, whispering "No!"
 From near around me, like a significant secret told
 By friend to friend in private, came fellow-sounds - at first low
 Then amplified by human power - a chorus free
 Praising man and singing "No!" Above me dawned a dim but
 brightening star.
 I saw faces of men - a company of little men standing tall and
 welcoming me.
 Now there was light enough to fling the horizon far. 19.

Footnotes

- 1.) "Culture of silence" is a key concept in Paulo Freire's thought: "We are convinced - and today more than ever - that that which we call the 'culture of silence,' introjected as 'collective unconscious' by the peasants, could not mechanically or automatically be transformed by infrastructural change achieved through the process of agrarian reform.
This culture of silence, characteristic of our colonial past, lives on, rooted in the favorable spoils of Latin American land tenure. Historically and culturally, this 'culture of silence' has taken the form of 'peasant consciousness,' or as Hegel put it, 'servile consciousness.' " - Cf. Agrarian Reform Training and Research Institute (ICIRA), Annual Report, 1968, by Paulo Freire, translated from Spanish to English to John J. DeWitt and circulated in Harvard University's Graduate School of Education at The Center for Studies in Education and Development Seminar on: "Adult Education as Cultural Action," conducted by Paulo Freire, Fall, 1969., pp.1-2.
- 2.) Cf. Revolution and Counterrevolution (but not necessarily about Columbia!), by Zbigniew Brzezinski, in The New Republic, June 1, 1968, pp.23-25. Professor Brzezinski coined the term "technetronic society;" Brzezinski teaches at Columbia, is a former member of the State Department Planning Council, author of Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics, was one of Hubert Humphrey's advisors, and is an excellent example of a meritocratic mind-manager who confuses being an intellectual with being an intellectual technician.
- 3.) Cf. The Future of American Education, by Christopher Jencks, in The Radical Papers, edited by Irving Howe, Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, New York, 1966, p.276.
- 4.) Cf. The Revolting Academy, by Henry David Aiken, in The New York Review of Books, Vol. XI, #1, July, 1968.
- 5.) For an excellent contemporary analysis of the managerial mentality and how it operates in the realm of American government, cf. The Crisis Managers, by John McDermott, in The New York Review of Books, Vol. IX, #4, September 11, 1967.
- 6.) Cf. Technology: The Opiate of the Intellectual, by John McDermott, in The New York Review of Books, Vol. XIII, #2, July 31, 1969, p.25.
- 7.) This is Professor Emmanuel G. Mesthene's definition of technology. Mesthene is director of Harvard University's program on Technology and Society. Cf. ibid., John McDermott.
- 8.) Actually, the article I had in mind is by Warren G. Bennis and originally appeared in the March-April, 1964 Harvard Business Review. The article was reprinted as the second chapter of Mr.

Footnotes (continued)

- Bennis recent book, Changing Organizations, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1966.
- 9.) Cf. Knowledge is Power, by John McDermott, in The Nation, April 14, 1969, pp.458-459.
- 10.) On the bureaucratization of intelligence, cf. From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, translated, edited, and with an introduction by H.H.Gerth and C.Wright Mills, Oxford University Press, New York, 1946, especially the last section of chapter eight, pp. 240-245.
- 11.) Cf. America First, by Conor Cruise O'Brien, in The New York Review of Books, Vol.XIV, Numbers 1&2, January 29,1970.
- 12.) Cf. The Coming Death of Bureaucracy, by Warren G. Bennis, in Think magazine, Vol. 32, No.6.
- 13.) The entire eighth chapter of the abovementioned book by Max Weber could hardly be improved upon as a general guide to present day institutional life in North America.
- 14.) Professor Kenneth D. Benne, in his recent essay, The New Irrationalisms, mistakenly, I think, judges people who constitute the white backlash to be manifesting a species of individual irrationality, without entertaining the possibility that the backlash itself is actually an attempt at social rationality and is best understood as such. Cf. The New Irrationalisms, by Kenneth D. Benne, mimeographed and privately distributed from Boston University's Human Relations Center, 1969.
- 15.) For a somewhat developed analysis of how social rationality can be mistaken for individual irrationality, cf. Thoughts on the Movement: Who does the Movement Move?, by John McDermott, published by New England Free Press, 791 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass., 02218.
- 16.) Cf. Knowledge is Power, by John McDermott, in The Nation, April 14,1969,pp.459-460.
- 17.) Cf. Social-Class Influences upon Learning, by Allison Davis, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1948.
- 18.) For a brilliant analysis of what I would call the society-manager mentality, cf. The Roots of Rhetoric: The Professional Ideology of America's China Watchers, by James Peck, in the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, Vol.2, #1, October,1969, Room 305, 1737 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

Footnotes (concluded)

19.) Cf. The Soul of Post-Contemporary Man, by Kenneth D. Benne, soon to be published as The First Eda Hurwitz Memorial Lecture in Human Relations, at Boston University, 1970.

Focal Questions for "Conscientization"

John J. DeWitt

As Brazil moves from being a closed to becoming (hopefully) an open society, her people can move toward massification on the one hand, or "conscientization" on the other. The present fact of what Paulo Freire calls the "democratic inexperience" of the Brazilian people and the future Brazilian possibility of an entire people conscientized raises, for me, three prior questions, focal questions if you will, that can provide a needed framework for discussion of conscientization.

Before presenting the framework questions however, I think we should have a generally agreed upon idea of what Freire means by "conscientization." Let us agree that "conscientization" refers to a social process by which an entire people attain a level of critical consciousness, and that by critical consciousness is meant "the representation of things and data as they actually are in empirical existence, in their causal and circumstantial correlations" (so Alvaro Vierira Pinto, quoted by Freire - Cf. p.98 of La Educación como la Práctica de la Libertad - ICIRA, Santiago de Chile, 1969). Another way of identifying critical consciousness would be to use Karl Mannheim's distinction between substantial and functional rationality and to agree that what Mannheim means by a substantially rational act (i.e. "an act of thought which reveals intelligent insight into the inter-relations of events in a given situation," - Cf. p. 53 of Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction - Harcourt, Brace and World, New York, 1940) is what Freire would mean by an act of critical consciousness. For discussion purposes, then, let "conscientization" refer to a social process by which a people attain the habitual practice of substantial rationality. And bypassing the question of whether values are or are not facts, we turn to the larger questions implied by conscientization - the value questions.

These framework questions are designed to elicit and help clarify each discussant's own views and convictions regarding conscientization.

- 1.) What, in your view, are the main features of a decent society?
On what basis would you justify your view over against other views?
- 2.) What, in your view, are the principal barriers to achieving a decent society at the present time? On what basis do you defend your diagnosis?
- 3.) To what courses of thought, influence and action (change strategies) do you commit yourself in overcoming the barriers to actualizing a decent society? On what grounds do you defend your commitment and change strategies over others?

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Focal Questions for Schooling and Conscientization

John J. DeWitt

In western countries, socialization of the young has been a primary and manifest function of 3 institutions - the family, the church, and schools. Socialization is a secondary function of most of the institutions that make up society. In total institutions such as prisons, the military, asylums, convents, seminaries and the like, the influence of institutions on socializing the people within them is obvious. Whatever your views of the relationships between schools (here I include schooling institutions on all levels, from pre-school schools to post-doctoral programs within our most prestigious universities) and our advanced industrial society, the following questions are based on the assumption that as our advanced, industrial nation-state moves into the future, schools will continue to exist as institutions that socialize those within them. These questions, then, are designed to elicit and help clarify each discussant's own views and convictions regarding the relationships of schooling to conscientization.

- 1.) What purposes and functions do you believe schools should serve in contemporary societies? Take into account the various and sometimes conflicting functions and purposes that schools do serve. Give the reasons or bases for your prescription of particular purposes and functions.
- 2.) What mode of internal organization for schools is, in your view, best designed to serve the purposes and functions you have prescribed in your response to the first question? In what respects are existing schooling institutions most at odds with your views of ideal organization?
- 3.) Who should control the schooling institutions? Take into account the often conflicting claims of various groups for power over schools, over school policies, programs and procedures - e.g. students, faculty, administrators, parents, alumni, taxpayers, government, industry, the military, learned societies, etc. in making your response. Give the reasons for your position.
- 4.) What general change strategies do you suggest (and to which you could commit yourself) for changing present arrangements and patterns of schools in our society (and in other societies) to what you would consider better. State why you view your change strategies as the best.