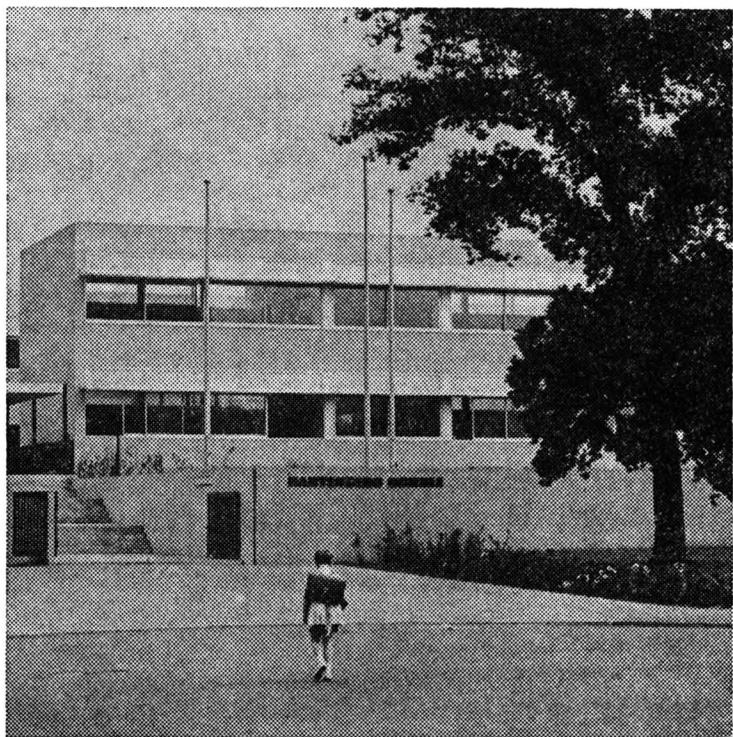


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**Social Studies in
West German Schools**



The photograph of the Hartenberg Schule has been provided by Heinz Heinicke of Mainz, West Germany.

**SOCIAL STUDIES IN
WEST GERMAN SCHOOLS
Firsthand Perspectives
For Educators**

**Wayne Dumas
William B. Lee**

**University of Missouri Press
Columbia & London, 1978**

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Preface

Traditionally, German educators have made rather sharp distinctions among the studies of history, geography, and other studies of society, and only recently have some Germans begun to find it useful to group all of these in a single category such as American social studies. On those occasions when it is feasible, the term most frequently employed is *politische Bildung*. The literal translation of the term is *political education*, but the German concept of *political* is more comprehensive than the usual American view. Like the Greek idea of polis it incorporates all the factors that influence man's life as a social being.

Germans also frequently use the term *social studies*, or several terms that translate either precisely or roughly as such, but their reference is always to a course or component of the larger program of *politische Bildung*. Therefore, we will hereafter use the term *politische Bildung* to refer to the German equivalent of American social studies.

This book presents the results of our study of curriculum and instruction in *politische Bildung* in the schools of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).

If the reader will pardon a brief intrusion of third-person narrative at this point, we must attempt to explain something of our professional backgrounds in relation to the subject of this book and the events that have led to our collaboration in this effort. In a limited sense, our work began as early as 1953 when William B. Lee took a position in Germany as an instructor in social studies with the United States Dependents Schools, European Area (USDESEA). During the next fifteen years, ten of which were spent in Germany and France, many opportunities were taken to gain some familiarity with the German teaching practices and curriculum trends. During this period Lee was granted a leave of absence to complete a doctorate at Michigan State University. In 1968 he resigned as coordinator of social studies, intercultural education, and foreign languages with USDESEA to accept an academic appointment with the

School of Education of the University of Southern California. Lee returned to Germany in 1971 as an Assistant Professor with the university's European graduate program. As a specialist in international education, Professor Lee has spent many days each year visiting with German educators; observing classroom practices; arranging for such observations by his graduate students; and debriefing graduate seminars after the completion of their observation experiences. Professor Lee returned from Germany to the Los Angeles campus during the spring semester of 1975.

Wayne Dumas is Professor of Education at the University of Missouri-Columbia. During the 1973-1974 school year he was granted a sabbatical leave to serve as a social-studies curriculum consultant to the United States Department of Defense Dependents School system in Germany and to conduct concurrently a comparative study of social-studies education in West German schools. Some support for the latter was provided by the University of Missouri Graduate Research Council. It was during the 1973-1974 school year that the authors first met. After considerable discussion of mutual interests and curiosity, it was agreed to collaborate in this effort. Much of the empirical data was gathered during that year, but the study was not completed at that time. During the late summer of 1975 Professor Lee returned to Germany, where he conducted another series of interviews that we considered vital to the completion of our work. Finally, during the autumn of 1975 Professor Dumas was invited to attend and participate in an International Conference on Political Education held at the University of Indiana. This conference was directed by Prof. Howard Mehlinger and cosponsored by the Indiana Institute of German Studies, the Volkswagen Foundation, the University of Indiana Social-Studies Development Center, and the West German *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*. The conference facilitated many lengthy interviews and discussions, both formal and informal, with most leading West German social educators and curriculum developers. Some of these were continuations of earlier interviews with now old friends, but we also had an opportunity to make new acquaintances and to talk

for the first time with specialists from such widely separated towns as Hamburg located on the North sea and Freiburg in the Black Forest.

The data upon which this report is based is quite varied. These include classroom observations by the authors—reinforced by the observations of hundreds of University of Southern California graduate students in education—and interviews with principals or headmasters, teachers of *politische Bildung*, teachers college professors, curriculum specialists in both state and federal ministries of culture or education, university professors, and leading developers of curriculum materials. We were also provided with numerous helpful documents and printed materials by the state and federal ministries, by many of the specialists with whom we visited, and by Inter Naciones of Bonn, an agency for the dissemination of information about German education and other facets of German institutional life. However, if this book has any special virtues, we suspect that one of the most important is that the core of the book is based upon firsthand observations and experiences in German schools and classrooms. State centralization of authority and traditions respecting the privacy of the teacher behind the big hardwood doors made visitations and observations more difficult to arrange than would typically be the case in an American school. Most comparative works on education that are generally available to Americans today would appear to be based upon documents, second- and third-hand accounts, or questionnaire surveys.

All of the data that we collected from observations, interviews, and printed materials are related to a framework of questions appropriate to both American social studies and German *politische Bildung*. These questions were simplified and revised over and over in order that the same questions might have essentially the same meaning to both an American and a German social educator. We were assisted throughout this effort by Dr. Friedrich Minssen of the *Hessen Studienburo Für politische Bildung* of Frankfurt. The purpose of his framework of questions was essentially to maximize the possibilities for directly comparing German and American social education

in such categories as goals and objectives, content and sequence, methods, materials, and classroom tone.

We were motivated to conduct this study by a number of considerations, apart from curiosity, but most importantly it has seemed to us that American social-studies educators, to a far greater extent than our colleagues in other disciplines, are afflicted by a serious and ironic blind spot. Though much of the content with which we deal is global in scope, our professional perspectives tend to be intensely national and inbred. The ideas that influence trends in social education in this country are, or tend to be, uniquely American ideas, which we then, in circular fashion, reinforce without adequate basis for reflection as right ideas. Certainly, we like to teach our students to be "critical thinkers," another "good" American idea, but we lack any adequate reflective basis for critically examining our own professional decisions regarding instruction and curriculum in social studies. Currently, American social-studies educators are riding the crest of a number of good American ideas. We believe in the rightness of strategies for value-conflict analysis and values clarification, in the validity of an inquiry approach as a component of the curriculum—if not the whole of it, in the correctness of a broad and diverse elective curriculum in social studies, in the primacy of national history, in the relative unimportance of conventional geographic studies, in the necessity for methodological diversity in instruction, and so forth. The current isolation of the American social-studies educator from international professional perspective has contributed to a comfortable sort of self-righteousness about our beliefs and practices, whether for better or worse. The problem is that we don't know whether it is for better or worse. The experience that we have had in visiting German schools and educators has, at the very least, caused us to reassess many of the practices of American social education. In some cases great doubts were created where previously none existed. In other instances, the experience has caused us to be more confident that our judgments have been sound all along. We think this book will, in fact must, provoke similar serious reflection among American social-studies teachers and

teacher-educators. If knowledge of other world cultures is important for our students as a basis for their intelligent reflection about world problems and lifestyles, how much less critical must it be for their teachers regarding their profession? E. T. Hall observed several years ago that years of comparative study had convinced him that

The real job is not to understand foreign culture, but to understand our own. I am also convinced that all that one ever gets from studying foreign cultures is a token understanding. The ultimate reason for such study is to learn more about how one's own system works.¹

This book's principal purpose is to look at *politische Bildung* in the Federal Republic of Germany and then to think about social studies in the United States. If, at the same time, we answer some interesting peripheral questions and, thereby, satisfy some idle curiosity, this is a welcome bonus.

Despite our frequent earlier uncertainty and apprehensions, we are inclined to make confident claims to scientific depth and rigor in presenting the results of this study. We have talked at length with most of those German educators repeatedly identified to us as the "Grand old men" or as the leaders in the field of *politische Bildung* nationally. Likewise, the observations upon which our conclusions are based are surely greater in number and diversity than any recent study of this subject. With regard to scientific randomness two possible limitations should be acknowledged. First, other responsibilities of both authors made classroom observations outside central Germany difficult to arrange. Therefore, classroom observation data from the geographic extremes of Germany are quite limited. Interview data, however, was not geographically biased. We took advantage of ample opportunities to interview leading specialists from all regions of Germany.

Secondly, one does not simply walk into a German school and begin exploring classrooms at will. Our observations were in most cases carefully scheduled for us by principals or their

1. E. T. Hall, *Silent Language* (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1968), p. 39.

designated subordinates. Whatever criteria the principals used in scheduling our days could of course have introduced a bias into the study if these criteria were systematic. Our judgment is that it was not. Some principals must surely have tried to steer us away from teachers who, in their views, were the weaker ones. Others seemed very deliberate in giving us an objective cross section, both substantively and qualitatively. Still others have arranged for us to observe those teachers who expressed a willingness to have a visitor in their classrooms. German classrooms, unlike American, are essentially private domains with heavy closed doors. Except for observers from the state ministry charged with responsibility for evaluating and certifying teachers, no one intrudes upon these private domains without, in effect, a personal invitation. Since we have heavily relied upon previously published books, manuscripts, and printed documents in the earlier chapters, we wish to especially acknowledge Prof. Ralf Dahrendorf's treatise *Democracy and Society in Germany*, a work without which Chapter 1, "The Cultural Context of German 'Politische Bildung,'" would have been exceedingly difficult. The observations, impressions, and conclusions that constitute most of the book require acknowledgment of a great many cooperative Germans, some now our very good friends. They made us feel welcome; they treated us as fellow professionals; and without their assistance and encouragement this present enterprise would have been impossible. To name all of those who should be publicly thanked would result in unlimited pages, but the list must include the following: Prof. Wolfgang Hilligen, Director of Seminars for Teaching of History and Social Studies, Justus-Liebig University, Giessen; Herr Gernot Scheid, teacher, Liebñitzschule, Offenbach; Frau Sigrid Lanzrath, English Language Specialist, Inter Nationes, Bonn; Herr Karl-Heinz Rimmel, principal, Luitpoldschule, Kaiserslautern; Dr. Dieter Schmidt-Sinns, specialist, *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, Bonn; Frau Gertrude Ziegler, teacher, Hauptschule, Kaiserslautern; Herr Hans Wildt, principal, Geschwisterschollschule, Kaiserslautern; Prof. Carter Kniffler, Director of *Studienseminar*, University of Frankfurt; Dr. Emmy Kipper, Edu-

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We are also deeply indebted to Prof. Howard Mehlinger of the University of Indiana Social-Studies Development Center, the Indiana Institute of German Studies, the Volkswagen Foundation, and the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* for their cosponsorship of the International Political Education Conference at Bloomington, Indiana, during the fall of 1975 and the opportunity of one of the authors to participate.

Wayne Dumas
Columbia, Missouri
January 1976

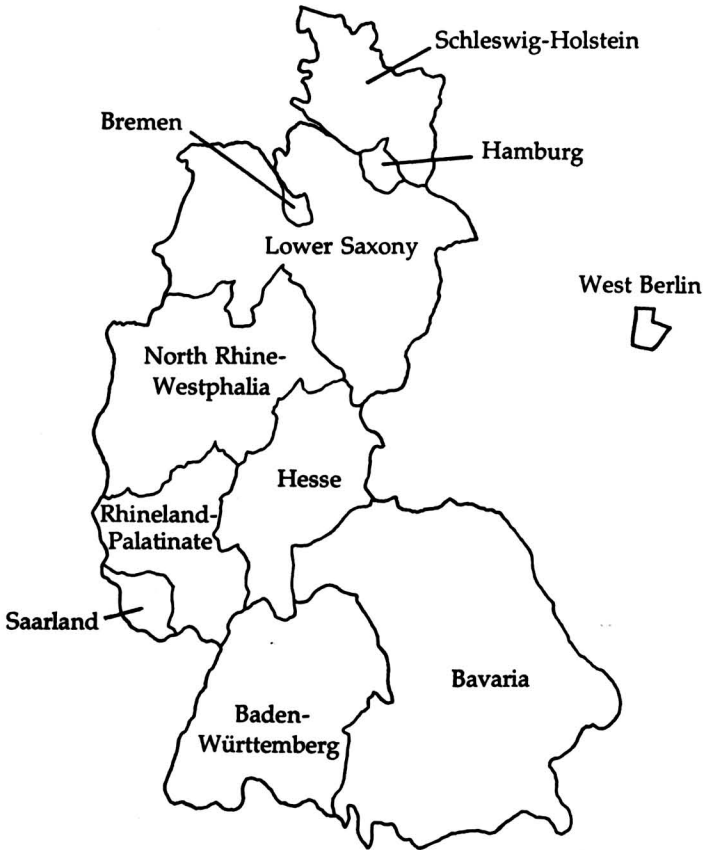
William B. Lee
Los Angeles, California
January 1976

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Federal Republic of Germany



Authority and the Unpolitical German

The Cultural Context of German "Politische Bildung"

Since the collapse of National Socialism in 1945, *politische Bildung*, social education in the Federal Republic of Germany, has been almost singularly devoted to politically socializing the German people for liberal democracy. Though the concept was imposed upon the Germans by the occupying powers after World War II, the people of West Germany today genuinely, intellectually consent to this motive. Schoolteachers, likewise, acknowledge the critical importance of the goal, and educational specialists in *politische Bildung* expend much of their professional energy on its implications for schools and curriculum. The perennial primacy and clear urgency assigned to this task from Berchtesgaden in the Alps to Hamburg on the North sea is evidence of the enormous complexity and difficulty of superimposing liberal democracy on a firmly established culture with cherished institutions and traditions. To outsiders and Germans alike, these institutions and traditions seem to be embedded deeply and with remarkable consistency in an illiberal dependence upon authority. We feel that it is essential at this point to examine this authority phenomenon and related aspects of the German culture in a historical perspective, in particular those characteristics that we believe must be understood in order to apprehend the contemporary educational system and the approach taken to social and political education.

Our principal purpose here is to investigate two interrelated aspects of German culture that are to us most basic in comprehending the phenomena described in the following chapters—social education in Germany. These two aspects are "authority" and the "unpolitical German."

We are as sensitive as most to the modern anthropologist's aversion to cultural stereotypes, and nothing is more stereotypical of Germans than their assumed extraordinary respect

for and dependence upon authority. In any case, we find no single term that better characterizes German culture than *authority*. The German sense of authority has apparently converged historically from several factors simultaneously. The intellectual tradition of authority as the legitimate basis for truth was universal before the Age of Reason in Europe. The humanistic Renaissance moved north during the sixteenth century from its birthplace in Italy and established itself in new German secondary schools for the elite—the *Gymnasia*. This classical humanist education found ideas, institutions, and styles worthy of emulation only in the classics, the “great languages and ideas” of ancient Greece and Rome. The curricula of these schools emphasized Latin grammar and, secondarily, Greek grammar, the classic works of logic and rhetoric, and the greatest examples of ancient oratory and history. These ancient authors and, in northern Europe, the Holy Scriptures were together, in all their logical disunity, the twin sources of truth, of intellectual authority. During the later interludes when natural philosophy, pure reason, and science became of primary importance in France and England, the studies of the *Gymnasia* and of the German universities were gradually liberalized to include a broader conception of the humanities incorporating modern foreign languages, German grammar and literature, history as history (history in early Renaissance *Gymnasia* had been studied as “great literature,” not as history), and geography. Finally, during the nineteenth century, modern natural sciences and mathematics were introduced. However, the latter consistently remained subordinate to the humanities to such a degree that German “slavery to the intellectual authority of ancient Greece” is widely accepted among liberal Germans today as properly characterizing the philosophical bondage of the people.¹ At the German universities, in particular, the new faculties in the sciences consistently found themselves substantially less prestigious than their well-established colleagues in the humanities. Experimental science has to this day hardly

1. E. M. Butler, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1935).

done more than survive its birth in Germany. Ralf Dahrendorf points out that the "Concept of empirical science carries with it an experimental attitude of doubt and a rejection of all authorities."² Experimental science, including the fledgling social sciences, in established German institutions of both secondary and higher education have therefore been often regarded, at best, as neglectful of the authoritative studies of the humanities, and at worst as actually threatening to the tried-and-tested ideas of Western literature. As such, German "science," though accepted and important to German educators today, is rarely experimental, inductive, and empirical. It is generally preceded by an "epistemological position" or, in the words of Wilhelm von Humboldt: "Genuine science must be pervaded and vitalized by the sense of a basic force, whose essence must present itself as in a mirror, in an original idea, and it must attach to it the totality of phenomena."³ Science to Humboldt, and we think to most German intellectuals, is speculation or a branch of classical metaphysics. Its logic is deductive—certainly not, to use the popular American term, *inquiry*.

The social sciences that were initiated during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as components of the humanities have suffered most from these anti-experimental attitudes. It would be almost accurate to conclude that even today *social science* in the American sense does not exist, though the Germans do use that term. The study encompasses first philosophy and secondarily, if at all, science. Such a course mostly begins with a philosophical premise, "corrected" by speculation, authority, and empirical observation. Knowledge acquired in this safe and unthreatening way is undebatable. Closure is assured in advance, and conflict, though it may occur, is illegitimate.

The German philosophical tradition leads to what Sir K. R. Popper calls the theory of "manifest truth," that is, that reason and the senses put us in a position to acquire truth, and only

2. Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1965), pp. 145-46.

3. Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Schriften* (W. Flemmer, Munich, 1964), p. 313.

a "conspiracy" of circumstances can prevent truth from becoming manifest.⁴ The truth is absolute and can be known. The tradition and the theory lead a step further to what Dahrendorf calls the "elite theory of manifest truth." "While there can be certainty, there cannot be certainty for all. In historical fact, some are called to communicate such certainty; thus some come to acquire an especially intimate relationship to truth." These "called" ones—geniuses, leaders, and experts—do exist and are the only ones to be trusted in their areas of expertise. More than other peoples, Germans search diligently for the "right people," the experts of certainty in all areas of life. "Authority belongs to them and they are made for its possession."⁵ This thought we believe characterizes the predominant intellectual position in Germany, largely uncontaminated by American relativism. Even those with whom we have visited who are most strongly committed to liberal democratic principles seem to us to operate well within the described framework.

Religion as authority in German culture is to some extent interwoven with the intellectual tradition. Unlike southern Europe where Renaissance humanism often served as a direct counter to established Christianity and to the Thomist Scholasticism of the universities, the classical humanist movement in northern Europe more frequently superimposed itself upon the religious and moral motives of all education. Even as students plodded painfully through volumes of rediscovered heathen Latin poetry and history, their purposes, those of the schools at any rate, generally focused on basic Christian morality—to become a "good" person.

Apart from its role as a component of an authority-oriented intellectual tradition, the Church, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, has contributed much to the strengthening of this tradition and little to the weakening of it. Among conservative Roman Catholics of southern Germany, the Church and its hierarchy was during the Renaissance, and remains today, the

4. Sir K. R. Popper, "On Sources of Knowledge and Ignorance." *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. 46 (London, 1960).

5. Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 152.

infallible authority as to the way life is to be lived. The German Catholic church has experienced less internal turmoil because of the liberal priesthood and perennial questioning of the traditional positions of the Church than most of the remainder of the Western world. However, far more significant to the northern and central German on authority is the Lutheran tradition. Luther, while breaking away from papal authority, substituted state authority. In his tract, "A Sincere Admonition to All Christians to Guard Against Insurrection and Rebellion," Luther dictated the principle that it was the duty of every subject to submit to the civil power, to the authority of his prince, and to the established order of the state.⁶ Furthermore, Luther, though thoroughly sensitive to injustice and a declared enemy of it, ominously forbade disobedience to state authority even when injustice or evil was apparent in the deeds of the state. The subject must be prepared to suffer injustice, not repel it. This fundamental principle seems to be a central thread in the fabric of North German culture, transcending its importance as a principle of the Lutheran church.

The political tradition of the Germans is also one that has been peculiarly compatible with the nourishment of uncritical authority acceptance. German history, before Hitler, was one of generally palatable, paternal authority, broken by short interludes of ineptitude or failure in its absence.

Politics in early modern German history took place within the framework of that famous nonentity, the Holy Roman Empire. Germany during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries actually consisted largely of a constellation of microstates. During the seventeenth century, there were fifty-one free imperial cities ranging from such important commercial towns as Hamburg, Nuremberg, Bremen, Ulm, Strasbourg, and Frankfort on the Main to rural villages of two thousand inhabitants. These towns were frequently run somewhat like a modern business with a small group of elite families typically making all decisions. There were also sixty-three

6. Martin Luther, "A Sincere Admonition by Martin Luther to All Christians to Guard Against Insurrection and Rebellion." *Luther's Works*, vol. 45 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962).

ecclesiastical principalities, ruled by archbishops, bishops, or lesser-ranking members of the priesthood. As the most obvious of rulers by divine right, their rule was generally entirely unenlightened. There were between one hundred seventy and two hundred temporal principalities and countships. The governments of these states were generally patriarchal, with the ruler knowing most of his subjects by name. He frequently was concerned with their family affairs and expected them in return to be concerned with his. In none of these instances was there any real possibility for political participation by the people. Politics was the business of one man, or in the imperial cities the business of a small elite group. Even in the larger states of Hesse, Prussia, Baden, and the constantly changing domain of the Hapsburgs, political opportunities were limited to a small elite corps of servants of the king, duke, or margrave. The significance of German rulers in both small and large states was that, unlike their neighbors in southern Europe, they were patriarchs instead of tyrants, at least it may be said that they usually succeeded in causing their subjects to view them in that light. They were typically humane and administratively efficient. Most allowed considerable liberty in individual life, administered justice in a reasonably equitable way, and usually observed rather strictly the rule of law. All of these factors made it rather easier for the German to abide by the Lutheran principle of obedience to the state and noninterference in its affairs.

After the Napoleonic wars and the collapse of all pretenses of a Holy Roman Empire, the German states enjoyed a brief period of liberal political theorizing, reflected by an increase of political interest and participation, much of it concentrated toward the goal of national unification. Liberalism and most ambitions directed toward increasing public participation in political decisionmaking died quickly with the failure of the revolution of 1848 and the following successes of Bismarck. Whereas the paragon of virtue during the first half of the nineteenth century had been the university professor of humanities, during the second half this role belonged to the military officer. Friedrich Minssen quotes the popular expression by Germans

during those decades as "Der Mensch beginnt erst beim Reservleutnant" (Man is not man until he is a lieutenant in the reserve).⁷ Under the empire all rewards lay in good conduct—in being obedient to the kaiser and in being politically uncritical.

Of course it was under the empire that the great "democratizing phenomenon of the Industrial Revolution occurred in Germany, but Dahrendorf says that instead of developing the liberal principle as elsewhere "industrialization swallowed it."⁸ Instead of promoting social equality, it served to reinforce an elitist society. The Industrial Revolution was from the beginning a political instrument of the imperial government that fully supported a small powerful group of industrial leaders to such an effective extent that the usual infrastructure of middle-class businessmen and powerful organizations of the working class did not emerge. Germany, in effect, borrowed and quickly excelled with the technological and industrial achievements of her neighbors without any remarkable change of the social and cultural context. The benevolence and the efficiency with which the kaiser and Bismarck pushed Germany to the forefront of the Industrial Revolution without the usual pains and conflicts of growth and radical cultural change was phenomenal. Rather than diminishing the authority consciousness of Germans, it enhanced it.

With the post-World War I collapse of the imperial government and the establishment of the Weimar Republic, the German people experienced their first formal opportunity to participate in politics and to reduce their dependence upon authority. Because the Weimar Republic had to pay for both the blunders and the strengths of the empire, it seemed administratively inept and powerless. Perhaps equally disturbing to many Germans was the apparent crudeness, the lack of manners and "class" of this new breed of republicans as compared to the old aristocracy. The new republic was referred to disdainfully as "Das System." The system offered no answers,

7. Friedrich Minssen, *Civic Education in West Germany* (Frankfurt: Hessen Bureau for *politische Bildung*, 1966), Mimeographed.

8. Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 39.

no leadership, and no ideals within comprehension. Both social and economic order were beyond its grasp. Worse yet, there was the persistent theory that Germany had suffered the "stab in the back," the infamous pretense that the German defeat was neither a military nor imperial nor administrative defeat but one imposed by revolutionist criminals from within—those who had come to power after the defeat. Fifteen years of republican government did little toward the planting of liberal democracy in the spirits of Germans and much to prepare them to accept an authoritarian reaction to surpass anything in their previous history.

That reaction came in the form of Adolf Hitler, transforming a patriarchal and essentially benevolent authoritarian tradition into a dictatorship of genocide and subversion of individual freedom. It would be redundant with most readers to elaborate. After twelve years of Hitler's reign, Germany was left as a physically, economically, and psychologically shattered nation. The physical and economic damage has been repaired, and the psychological damage has been repaired to the extent of largely erasing the deep feelings of guilt experienced by many for a generation. The German intellectual revulsion with political authority provoked by Hitler's excesses has resulted in a type of layered political schizophrenia. The idea of democratic government and the ideal of being personally liberal are widely embraced. With many younger Germans, the current democratic system is not even an adequate step. Anarchy is their answer, most frequently clothed in Marxist slogans. However, only slightly beneath the surface veneer of liberalism and radicalism, one generally finds firmly in place the cultural superstructure that we have already described. It seems to us that the average German espouses antiauthoritarian ideas, while basing his decision to do so upon certain authority. He thinks liberal, but he feels as a conservative. This internal conflict seems to exist within the individual German and within many of his institutions including, as we will see later, the schools.

The phenomenon of the "unpolitical German" is not unre-

lated to the authoritarian tradition. Where a few have all authority, many become accustomed to nonparticipation. Yet most nations and peoples have an authoritarian heritage of some type and to some degree without the unique cultural results achieved in Germany. Dahrendorf and other sociologists have concluded that an entangled complex of factors have produced this extraordinary characteristic.

The phenomenon itself is contradictory. On the one hand Germans generally vote in national elections on a scale exceeding that of most democratic nations. Since the 1880s the percentage of qualified voters casting their ballots has ranged between 70 and 90 percent.⁹ Likewise, Germans are usually well informed. Statistically, Germans may well be more avid readers of newspapers than are Americans, and most of them are additionally informed through television news and documentary. Furthermore, it is clear that since 1945 the majority of students in German schools develops on a high level an understanding of the formal rules of the democratic machinery of government.

Despite this, the typical German is "unpolitical." Dahrendorf decided after surveying all the significant research on the subject that

Political activity belongs, for the German, to the outer ring of those duties that are bothersome but inevitable under the circumstances—political activity remains an activity in quotation marks, from which one dissociates oneself in one's heart and therefore, if external circumstances demand it, in fact as well . . . he is unpolitical because the political is deeply unimportant to him.¹⁰

Many Germans typically vote because it is an understood obligation. It is something an adult is charged with doing, and Germans are uniquely disinclined to shirk their designated responsibilities. Erich Reigrotzki, in a definitive study of German political activity, observed that whereas approximately 80 percent of qualified Germans vote in elections, only 3 percent

9. *Ibid.*, p. 315.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 327.

identify themselves with political parties.¹¹ If party membership constitutes the most intensive form of political integration and voting the least intensive, this hypothesis may be taken as reflecting the condition of political participation in Germany.

Dahrendorf, in examining voting patterns in Germany, concludes that there is "no linear relationship between a liberal motivation for political participation and the level of voting."¹² Apart from being obliged voters, for one hundred years Germans have voted most heavily in times of crisis, from which Dahrendorf infers that with Germans, "Voting is not necessarily an expression of confident political interest."¹³

Reigrotzki conducted a study of "subsidiary social activities," beginning with an "index of small political activities," which combined such elements as frequency of political conversations, frequency of participation in election meetings, and interest in political commentaries made by the media. According to this index 22 percent of Germans were placed in the "higher activity" category; 28 percent in the "medium activity" category; and 50 percent in the "low activity" category.¹⁴

An opinion survey was given seven times between 1952 and 1962 based upon the question, "Speaking very generally, are you interested in politics?" Between 27 percent (1952) and 34 percent (1962) responded "yes"; between 24 percent (1962) and 35 percent (1952) responded "not at all"; and between 36 percent and 41 percent responded that they were "not particularly interested."¹⁵

Habermas conducted a study with one hundred seventy German university students in which he categorized the students according to their political habits. His summary conclusion was that three-fifths of the students had no conscious commitment to political participation whatever. Only 9 percent were in the fully "committed" category.¹⁶

11.^o Quoted by Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 318.

12. Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 315.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 316.

14. Quoted by Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 319.

15. Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 320.

16. J. Habermas, L. von Friedeburg, C. Oehler, and F. Weltz, *Student und Politik* (Nienwied: Luchterhand, 1961).

The degree to which Germans are nonpolitical is, to be sure, not uniform throughout the population. Several of the studies reported here found substantial differences between sexes, classes, and ages. German women are far more completely removed from political interest and participation than men. Young Germans of voting age are less political than older Germans, and the low-income working classes are substantially less political than those with higher incomes and education.¹⁷

Certainly one important contributor to the political abstinence of Germans is the priority that they give to "private virtues" over "public virtues." Dahrendorf's thesis characterizes public virtues as those "ruling values which aim at the frictionless mastery of relations with men."¹⁸ All values thereby related to behaviors increasing the smoothness, pleasantness, and effectiveness of working relationships among people are public virtues. "Private virtues," on the other hand, "provide the individual with standards for his own perfection, which is conceived as being devoid of society."¹⁹ Dahrendorf finds the prevailing values of the English and Americans to be public and those of Germans to be starkly in contrast. Whereas, an Englishman or an American would smile, try to make things easy, and do or say whatever seemed necessary to make a set of relationships work happily, their German counterpart would more likely emphasize being straightforward, telling the truth no matter its effect, showing no emotions not actually felt, and believing the Englishman or American a hypocrite. One must first do and say what is "natural," what a "good" man should say and do. If the results of doing so are negative, it cannot be otherwise. Dahrendorf further characterizes the public virtues as virtues of "participation" and the private virtues of the German as virtues that make social participation potentially unpleasant, ineffective, and basically unimportant.²⁰

A good example of the contrast between the private nature of the German and the public nature of the American is pro-

17. Quoted by Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 319.

18. Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 286.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 286.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

vided in Peter R. Hofstätter's study of loneliness in Americans and Germans. Hofstätter interviewed a sample of both nationalities to determine associations with "being lonely." Loneliness, it was determined, is for Americans a pitiful quality, associated with being small, weak, cowardly, empty, bad, ugly, and so forth; while for Germans it is more frequently associated with being big, strong, courageous, deep, and heroic.²¹

One is inclined to conclude that social and political participation for Germans sometimes runs the risk of being a bit personally degrading, gratingly unpleasant, and perhaps worse, prodding him toward the necessity of practicing the hypocrisy often despised in others.

Closely associated with the primacy of private virtues over public ones is the importance of the family as compared to other social institutions. In every aspect of German life, family considerations rank first, particularly with regard to schools. Most German parents feel that the family will be the primary educator of their children and that the school will perform only quite limited functions. Unlike the popular American approach, whereby schools assume major responsibilities for developing the child's personality, his basic values and character, his leisure-time interests, skills, and hobbies, and vocational or technical skills, the German school is generally expected to complement the family by offering basic academic instruction. If Janpeter Kob's study of the attitudes of German parents is valid, German parents also have little enthusiasm for such basic social-studies goals as "education for citizenship" and "social education for the community."²² German children attend school only five hours each morning before returning home to their parents. As long as schools do not overstep their bounds and assume parental prerogatives, German parents in turn do not participate in local school decisions just as they do not generally become politically involved. Dahrendorf concludes that Germany's schools face great difficulty

21. Peter R. Hofstätter, *Gruppendynamik* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1964), p. 66.

22. Janpeter Kob, *Erziehung in Elternhaus und Schule* (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1963).

in strengthening the public virtues of participation, because "they remain within the dominant world of the private values of the family."²³

We have discussed earlier the contributions of Lutheran doctrine to the reinforcement of secular authority in Germany. Likewise, obedience and passive submission to state authority, even in the face of injustice, has been and is a significant factor in promoting nonparticipation. Its impact is great not because there are so many enthusiastic followers of Martin Luther in Germany today. The Lutheran church in Germany is apparently declining in ardent membership. Rather its impact is great because much of Luther's dogma has been interwoven into German culture, quite apart from religion.

Too, the patriarchal political tradition of the former German states did much to make Luther's doctrine palatable. Nonparticipation in affairs governed by a reasonably benevolent prince could be profitable, unthreatening, and morally "right."

Finally, it would be a mistake to regard lightly the discouragement resulting from Germany's earlier forays into participatory politics. Both ended in disasters for the participants and quick and total withdrawal from the arena by most. The first episode ended, of course, with the rise to power of Bismarck; the second with Hitler; and both with a near total crushing of the liberal democratic spirit in the few who were just beginning to cherish it.

The complex cultural phenomena that we have described are certainly to a considerable extent the product of German historical experience, as likewise the German experience has to some extent been shaped by that culture. This spiral of culture and history characterizes the most fundamental of several contexts for social and political education in West Germany. More than that, this context constitutes the central problem that contemporary *politische Bildung* is determined to resolve during the next generation.

23. Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy*, p. 302.

The Contemporary Political-Educational Context

During the course of our investigations we were attracted to and often sought out commonalities between the German and American school systems. We suspect that many readers will be similarly inclined. These commonalities did enable us to utilize the time-honored pedagogical principle of relating the unknown (German education) to the known (American education). It is helpful, for example, to realize that in both countries the states (*Länder*) not the federal government control education and that it is free and compulsory from the ages of six to sixteen.

Even German and American school buildings resemble each other. The American visitor in Germany encounters as little difficulty recognizing schools from other buildings in the community as he does in the United States. This similarity is especially true of elementary schools in the newer suburbs.

American students and teachers who actually visit German schools and observe in classrooms often remark on the same wide range of behaviors that characterize and bedevil American schools. Some students are bored, others are attentive (All of them, however, are noisy and boisterous on the playground!), and they are taught by teachers whose styles range from lackadaisical to dynamic.

As accurate as these observations are they offer only a superficial glimpse of German education. Furthermore they can be misleading if they aim at the generalization that "children are children and schools are schools all over the world." If this were only true! We could then comprehend German schools by relying on that with which we are most familiar—our knowledge of American schools and our society. No need, then, to engage in the frustrating and uncertain task of learning about the German people and their historical and cultural context.

Though the necessity for developing a new frame of refer-

ence quickly became apparent to us, we had to be constantly on guard against violating that need during the investigations and this subsequent writing. There is no shortcut to understanding German education and the most seductive and the least productive attempt at one is to substitute an American for a German frame of reference. "German schools must be understood within a German context," we constantly reminded ourselves. We pass this admonition along to the reader.

Nevertheless, if these precautions are taken seriously the reader's familiarity with American schools and American social-studies education can serve as a valuable point of reference. Sometimes we will point out similarities between German and American schools, while at other times we will stress their differences but with continuous caution against interpreting or evaluating German education by using American assumptions. As we conducted this study we became increasingly aware of three particularly crucial areas concerned with contemporary politics, society, and education that transcend most of the topics with which this book deals and that are especially necessary to consider from a uniquely German point of view. These three areas are the (1) basic functions or societal expectations of the educational system; (2) unity and diversity in education; and (3) politics and education.

Basic Functions of Schools

First, we have found it necessary to return continually to the question "What are the most fundamental functions of the American and German systems of education?" This question lies just beneath the surface of every aspect of this study. After considerable sorting out of fundamental functions from secondary goals and objectives, we concluded that a system must give priority to (1) the development and self-realization of each individual or (2) the preparation of individuals for a social and economic niche. Both the United States and Germany accept both of these obligations for our respective schools, but it has become clear to us that our priorities are reversed. Americans, whether liberals or conservatives, tend to be humanists and "rugged individualists" of some stripe.

We place at the peak of our priorities such ideas as individual freedom, individual initiative, rights of individuals to be different and to act differently within reasonable limits. We, of course, would also desperately hope that our graduates will find a satisfying place in society after finishing school, but for Americans schools to prepare people for their "place" or "to fit in" would be looked upon as manipulation and subordination of individuality. We are generally a little frightened of the implications of a school system that begins by looking at the characteristics and needs of the national, social, political, and economic system. Germans, on the other hand, place higher priority on the preparation of individuals for a social and economic niche. They, like Americans, also accept the development and realization of each individual as a legitimate function of the school, but for Germans it is a secondary function, partly following from the first. For example, Americans suffer the frustration of approximately 20 percent youth unemployment, whereas until the current recession Germany experienced virtually no youth unemployment. Self-realization from a German perspective can perhaps best result from the assurance of a satisfying job within the social framework or within the social strata where one feels most comfortable. As we will see in a later chapter, the German system with its multiple channels for secondary schooling and complex interlacing of vocational-technical extensions is perennially sensitive to the demands of society and the preparation of a German child for his proper niche. For example, the threat of a slight surplus of teachers calls for immediate modification of the channels that lead to certification. In the United States, one follows his inclinations and prepares to teach social studies without systematic obstruction and often with general disregard for an extreme supply/demand imbalance in the profession.

This reversal of goal priorities is typically confusing to American visitors in German schools. One of the authors in escorting nearly two hundred American graduate students and teachers through German schools during the period between 1972 and 1974 was struck by the regularity with which German schools were judged harshly as being restrictive and repressive

to individual freedom and development. American schools are typically seen through American eyes as more free, more accepting of divergence, and more concerned with individual differences. It is important simply to be aware of the crucial fact that we are tempted to evaluate German schools by American priorities. We can, of course, quite legitimately question the wisdom of their priorities and their basic assumptions about education, but we would do well to question our own in the same context and with greater force. After all we can influence our own but there is little we can do to change German schools. Are we absolutely certain that individual freedom and human dignity are better served by helping an individual to develop maximally according to his own inclinations than by carefully fitting him for a socially and economically rewarding place in society?

Unity versus Diversity

Secondly, from the outset we were unsure of the extent to which we would be able to generalize about German education and German social education. We were acutely aware of the perplexing diversity within American education and reflected on how often in discussions with colleagues from other parts of the United States, we had been forced to qualify or modify our statements. Policies and practices that we had assumed to be nationwide were revealed to be but regional or local variations. At times the variety of American educational activities seems so bewildering that one despairs in generalizing at all; or when one insists, the statements can become so burdened with exceptions that they are virtually incomprehensible.

We were considerably relieved to find the situation in Germany much more manageable. The states and not the federal government control education, but quite unlike the United States, none of this authority is delegated to local school districts. German education is highly centralized at the state level. The result is that one finds fewer variations in curriculum within a German state than one would in an American state.

The overall pattern and organization of education are standardized. A student in a remote, rural area may find his choice

of schools more limited, but within a given type of school the curricula and the course content would be identical. And if they were not, the students would probably protest because the examinations that each must pass are statewide.

Teachers, too, must pass statewide examinations after their training. If they are successful they then become state civil servants, not employees of the local school district, and are paid according to a statewide salary schedule.

It is almost as if Germany is made up of eleven school districts—one for each state—instead of the more than sixteen thousand in the United States.

In addition, there are a number of national agencies and commissions formed by the state and federal governments whose specific purpose is to further narrow the range of educational differences that do exist among the eleven states. Having governmental sanction and working within the governmental structures these organizations have considerable impact. Ironically enough in the United States the federal government very often contributes to diversity, rather than unity, by funding projects to help or promote innovative curricula and different approaches to learning.

A related concern was our own non-German educational backgrounds. We attended American public schools and, as a result, had an insiders' view of the American school system and not the German. We wondered if this lack of intimate and personal knowledge would handicap us in our investigations. We were soon reassured on this point. We came to recognize that the socialization process granting the American or German access to insights and information about his own system erects at the same time a subtle and often unperceived barrier to understanding—lack of perspective. We were, of course, aware of our own uncertain knowledge of American education but were slower to realize that Germans, too, had partial and flawed views of their own educational systems. Perspective is an advantage of the outsider, detachment combined with a different frame of reference that enables him to observe that which is only partially seen or missed entirely by a group member. The native, we observed, is a peculiarly flawed ob-

server, a curious mixture of obvious advantages with serious and less appreciated disadvantages. He possesses an immense amount of information for he attends classes, does homework, socializes with other students, receives report cards, and participates in hundreds of other activities that are part of his school life. Still his knowledge is far from complete, an important consideration to which he may be completely oblivious. For as E. T. Hall the anthropologist observes, "Culture hides much more than it reveals and strangely enough what it hides it hides most effectively from its own participants."¹

Our conclusion toward the completion of this project was that we could generalize about German education with at least as much confidence—and perhaps more—than we could about American education.

Politics and Education

Finally, the third area that must be recognized early concerns the relationship between politics and education in West Germany. In both the United States and Germany education is immersed in politics. This declaration may shock some Americans who like to think of American education as being divorced from politics. Still, when the ultimate authority for education belongs to elected representatives who are directly or indirectly responsible to the electorate, which is the case in both countries, how can it be other than political? However, the pattern and the locus of educational politics differ sharply and one must be cognizant of these differences when examining German schools and German social studies.

In the United States there is much political activity and contention at the local school district level. Elections can turn into heated debates with rival candidates presenting conflicting views on tax overrides, the funding of the sports programs, teachers' salaries, the selection or removal of a superintendent, and the location of a new school.

Occasionally academic topics emerge such as sex education, the new mathematics, or more recently the demands for a re-

1. E. T. Hall, *Silent Language* (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1968), p. 39.

turn to fundamentals. Social-studies teachers, too, become involved when the issues are the teaching of controversial topics, academic freedom, and the inclusion or the exclusion of certain textbooks.

The most common political activity at the state level in the United States involves the amount of state moneys to be allocated to local school districts. Rival candidates, routinely, and as part of their campaign rhetoric, propose increased, or perhaps decreased, use of state funds. Occasionally an academic issue will receive statewide attention. Such was the case in the early seventies in California when new state guidelines for the social studies were drafted. These outlines created considerable fervor and a great deal of antagonism in educational and political circles before being rejected by the state board of education.

In Germany, educational politics bypass the local level. There are no local elections, no school boards, and indeed no need for them as the state does not share its centralized authority. Local governments are involved only to the extent that they are responsible for establishing and maintaining the school buildings. Decisionmaking begins at the state level where both the authority and the money are concentrated. The German state must mediate the monetary demands of conflicting educational interests: vocational versus academic, elementary versus secondary, as well as teachers' salaries versus other educational needs. Specific academic questions that in the United States could probably be resolved locally require statewide policy and practice: the pattern of school organization, the age and the method of selection for secondary schools, the relationship between vocational and academic schools, new mathematics, and sex education. The social-studies curriculum that has been an especially debatable issue will be described later.

Statewide elections in Germany often focus on educational issues and their results have political as well as educational repercussions. This factor was graphically illustrated in the election in the state of Hesse in November 1974. In the election, the ruling party, the Social Democratic Party (SPD), saw its large majority considerably reduced by its rival, the Chris-

tian Democratic Party (CDU). SPD leaders blamed the setback on the public's disenchantment with too hasty educational reforms. As a result, the timetable for their implementation was modified and the minister of education and culture was forced to resign.

Two crucial distinctions emerge. The first is that educational politics in the United States is typically nonpartisan, not usually related to Republicans and Democrats, whereas in Germany it is distinctly partisan. The two national political parties espouse comprehensive educational programs reflecting their own political philosophies and predictably are in basic conflict with each other. Education is so intertwined with party politics that one can predict with a great deal of certainty educational points of view by knowing party affiliation and vice versa. The same reciprocal relationship exists for school systems within a given state. If one knows the ruling party, current trends within the school system can be described reasonably accurately.

In the United States it would be dangerous to speculate on a person's educational views by knowing whether he is Republican or Democratic. Likewise, knowing that a state has a Democratic governor or a Republican legislative majority would generally be useless in predicting curriculum trends within the state.

The second distinction is related to the first. In the United States educational politics has a local-state focus. There is considerable educational politicking at the local level, and state-wide controversies have direct and immediate local significance but little impact on the national scene. (The current furor over busing may cause us to qualify this generalization in the future.) Certainly the nationwide attention given to the contest for state superintendent of public instruction in California in 1970 must be classified as a rarity. The post is elective—California being one of the few states where it is—and the confrontation pitted a flamboyant white incumbent and outspoken traditionalist, Max Rafferty, against a black educator with liberal leanings, Wilson Riles.

In Germany, educational politics have a state-national focus. In the absence of local political activity, any issue, however

trivial, automatically must be resolved at the state level, and implications are usually nationwide. Politicians are sensitive to voter moods and analyze the results of state elections in an attempt to determine trends applicable to other states or to the nation as a whole. Election strategies and political platforms are modified accordingly. The current educational-political mood in Germany, somewhat like the United States, is one of caution and a certain skepticism toward educational reform. Presently, leaders of both political parties have become aware of this educational-political pattern.

Educational politics tends toward a near religious fanaticism in Germany because of the convergence of partisan politics, the state-national focus, and the resultant concentration of educational power. It is almost as if the United States represents a pre-nuclear educational age where quarrels could be fought and resolved locally without calling in the superpowers. Germany represents the nuclear age where an educational issue of even minor significance is catapulted into a larger arena with inevitable partisan conflict between the two power blocs and national debate. A small educational squabble like a small nuclear war is impossible in West Germany.

Schools cannot be understood in isolation from their societies. However, we and the reader must be certain that the German, not the American society, is the initial reference point when attempting to analyze or evaluate ideas and information about German schools and social studies. In the three crucial areas just discussed, it is especially critical not to substitute societal contexts: basic functions of educational systems, unity and diversity in education, and educational politics. Guidelines in these areas can be briefly summarized as follows:

- 1. Educational Function of Schools.** Americans value personal development above a productive place in society while the Germans reverse the priority.
- 2. Unity and Diversity.** German education is highly unified as reflected by its state-centralized system of education and by national commissions specifically charged with decreasing variations among states. American education is still largely decentralized and diverse.

- 3. Educational Politics.** Educational politics in Germany as opposed to the United States are characterized by:
- a. Direct confrontation of national political parties versus contests between shifting alliances of local and state factions
 - b. State-national focus versus local-state focus
 - c. Concentration of power versus diffusion of power.

The School System

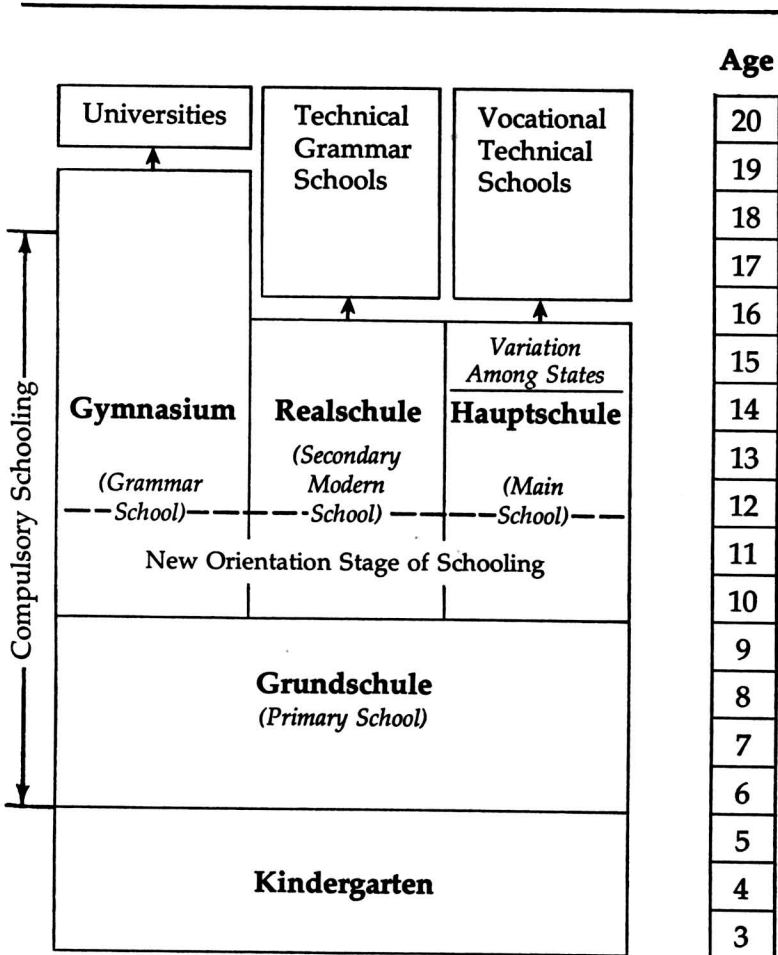
Each of the eleven German states has the ultimate authority for the system used in education within its borders. Throughout German history this traditional arrangement has always been technically true and it was reaffirmed in 1949 with the founding of the Federal Republic. The new constitution set forth only a few educational principles applicable to the nation as a whole and gave the federal government no power at all in the field of education. A strong reiteration of state sovereignty seemed to be the best way to correct the abuse and deterioration of the schools during the Hitler era and to prevent their reoccurrence in the future.

Still, to many Germans the formation of eleven discrete and entirely autonomous school systems has not been entirely satisfactory in a nation two-thirds the size of California. The need for greater cooperation, coordination, and uniformity among the states has seemed to them evident. In 1948, even before the founding of the new Republic, the Permanent Conference of the Ministers of Culture (Education) was formed to promote these ends.

The conference has a secretariat and a staff in Bonn to help the ministers prepare for their plenary sessions that are held several times each year. Educational issues are discussed, and if there is unanimous approval of all of the ministers, recommendations are made to the states. Recommendations, however, do not become official until acted upon by each state legislature. With this cumbersome decisionmaking process one might assume that agreements would rarely be reached and, if reached, would be even more rarely implemented nationally. This, however, is not the case.

For example, recommendations made by the conference have led to standardization of the structure of education nationally to the point where its general features can be depicted in a single diagram (Figure 3-1). In the United States, two,

Figure 3-1. Structure of the Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany*



*This diagram is adapted from one provided in Brigitte Mohr, "The School Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany," *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 17 (1975), p. 256.

three, or possibly more such diagrams would be necessary to illustrate the major variations.

Agreements recommending standardized educational structure and nomenclature (Düsseldorf, 1955 and Hamburg, 1964) also provided for a wide range of policies and practices that are now uniform throughout all of Germany. Some of these are compulsory education to begin at the age of six; full-time school attendance required for at least nine years; and the number of days for holidays and vacations limited to seventy-five.

In addition some curricular decisions have been agreed upon, such as when a student would begin the study of foreign languages in the *Gymnasien* (fifth grade). The conference has also recommended several curriculum changes for *politische Bildung*, which will be discussed in later chapters.

In 1969 when a coalition SPD-CDU government was in power, a constitutional amendment was required to give the federal government a legal voice in education, and shortly afterward the federal Ministry of Science was transformed into the Ministry of Education and Science. In 1970 the educational views of the federal government for the first time were set forth in its Education Report, a comprehensive document dealing with education for all of Germany.

Also in 1970 a new commission was formed to bring about a federal-state "partnership" in education—The Federal-State Commission for Educational Planning.¹ Its main responsibilities are for medium-range and long-range educational planning, especially in higher education, and to coordinate pilot projects and research that may take place in different regions of Germany. Recommendations can be made with a three-fourths majority, as opposed to the unanimity required for the Permanent Conference of Education Ministers, but decisions are again binding only in those states where the legislatures approve. This commission drew up a comprehensive education plan that was after long negotiations adopted by the federal and state governments in 1973.

Of most significance for social-studies education was the

1. *Reviews of National Policies for Education: Germany* (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1972), p. 31.

establishment of the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* as a component of the Federal Interior Ministry in Bonn. This agency supports experiments, advanced development of teaching materials used, and frequent conferences of educators to explore ways of improving instruction in *politische Bildung*. Its pronouncements and recommendations have often been influential, sometimes through the Conference of Culture Ministers, in promoting new programs and greater curricular uniformity among the German states.

Note should be made at this point of the influence of the recently disbanded Education Council (*Bildungsrat*), a national planning committee whose members were from lay groups, such as churches and trade unions, as well as from the academic community. By providing information and guidelines for the Permanent Council of Ministers of Culture it had considerable impact on German education.

In a press commentary (*Abendzeitung*, Munich, 3 January 1975) it was stated:

Whether smaller classes, comprehensive schools, equality of handicapped children or more codetermination for parents, teachers and pupils were concerned, with its recommendations, the Education Council has been the driving force behind progress since 1965.²

The Education Council was able to issue opinions and recommendations with the approval of a simple majority of its members, a fact that enabled it to take an activist role in educational reform but that also led to its demise in 1975. At that time its ten-year mandate was not renewed due to the vigorous opposition of the non-ruling CDU national party and the CDU states. They viewed these accomplishments as too leftish and too similar to the SPD educational platform.

After a year of political wrangling a new planning commission was approved and became effective on 1 January 1976. The commission is entrusted with much more modest powers

2. "The German Education Council in a State of Crisis." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 8 (1975):108.

and is more clearly responsible to the Federal-State Commission for Educational Planning.

What has been the collective impact of these national conferences, councils, ministries, commissions, reports, and plans? The results so far have certainly not been great enough to please many Germans, but the following have been effectively initiated: (1) coordination and unification of educational policies and practices; (2) provision of a national forum for continuous discussions on educational issues; (3) drawing upon new sources of information and research from the academic and scientific communities; and (4) conduct of educational planning on a long-range and national basis.

One must, however, never forget that legal authority for education continues to reside fully with the state governments. These national organizations can debate, suggest, recommend, or implore, but in the final analysis each state does exactly what it wishes. And what it desires depends largely on the political party in power, for, as explained in Chapter 2, educational power is not only concentrated at the state level but it is also politically partisan.

When the two major parties are in agreement, such as they were in favoring standardization of school structure, then educational harmony is possible, perhaps even inevitable. Mohr comments on this bipartisan desire for uniformity in education.

This strong desire for "uniformity" in the education system is not readily understandable to foreigners. Certain differences in the school systems from Federal State to Federal State, which by Anglo-Saxon standards would be minimal, are a thorn in the flesh of the citizen of the Federal Republic. He wants his school system as uniform as possible although quaking at the same time at the prospect of state dirigism.³

When political interests do not coincide then accommodations are extremely difficult, and when either party feels that its basic principles are threatened, the issues can be controversial indeed. One might generalize that the heat of the debate

3. Brigitte Mohr, "The School System in the Federal Republic of Germany." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 3 (1974):38.

or the force of the collision is in direct proportion to the involvement of partisan political interests. For better or for worse education and politics are inextricably interwoven and a change of the party in power means a corresponding shift in the direction of the school system. Unlike the United States the schools do not have their own local center of gravity and relative stability that insulation from partisan politics provides.

There is, of course, a considerable degree of stability in terms of the speed with which change is likely to come about after an election changes ministry leadership. That stability is provided by the permanent bureaucracy in each state's ministry. Most of the people who interpret policy and do the day-to-day work remain in place as parties and ministers come and go.

Preschool Education

Of all the German schools Americans find the kindergartens the most familiar. This was certainly the experience of one of the authors. His four-and-a-half-year-old son transferred from a German to an American preschool during January and February 1975 with no adjustment problem whatever. What the father observed, and the son undoubtedly sensed, were the similarities in room decor, teaching methods, and materials, as well as the activities of the children. These likenesses should come as no startling revelation. American kindergartens were established in the 1850s by the followers of the German Friedrich Froebel who is generally credited with starting the kindergarten movement. His emphasis on play, manual activities, and social development still generally characterize, if our observations are correct, the preschools of both countries.

Education before the age of six takes place in various nurseries, day-care centers, and kindergartens. These are independent of the state school system and are run by private associations, mainly churches, and the local communities. A monthly fee that varies from \$10 to \$40 is usually charged. Attendance is voluntary, but in 1974 about one-half of the three to five year olds actually enrolled, a figure that is intended by the federal government to be increased to 80 percent by 1980.

This education is not considered "schooling" and is regulated by federal rather than state legislation. To distinguish further these establishments from "schools," their teachers are trained as social workers rather than as schoolteachers and have a special limiting credential and title—"kindergarten teacher."

There are currently a number of problems in preschool education such as the limited number of places available and the inadequate training of the kindergarten teacher. (It is estimated that 50 percent have little or none.)⁴ No issue, however, is more explosive than the education of five year olds. This factor has a certain immediacy because in 1980 a decision will be made as to whether education of five year olds will remain voluntary or become mandatory nationally. If the age for compulsory education is reduced a political as well as an educational battle is shaping up.

The educational issue concerns how the child should be educated if his education at that age is mandatory; whether in the play-like atmosphere of the Froebelian kindergarten or in a more formal academic environment. Some proponents of the latter approach point to the research of Benjamin Bloom and other Americans that stresses the importance of the early years for formal cognitive development. Supporters of compensatory education, notably SPD members, find this argument especially convincing.⁵

"How" is linked to the "Where." If education of five year olds is to become more formal and academic, then its logical place would be with the regular state school systems. But if that were done, then it would constitute an intrusion by the state governments into present federal jurisdiction. This challenge would not go unanswered and would add a federal-state dimension to the predictable battle between the major political parties.

Experiments contrasting the Froebelian methods with a more

4. Emil Schmalohr, "Evaluation of Pre-School Education: Research in Federal Republic of Germany," *Problems in Evaluation of Pre-School Education* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1975), p. 79.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

academic training of five year olds and studies of the jurisdictional problems are presently being conducted in order to gather facts and provide data on which these decisions can be made.

A recent and more sensational development concerns the American Sesame Street. The federal Ministry of Education and Science contributed more than \$1 million to have 260 episodes translated and these are presently being transmitted by a number of state television stations. If popularity is any indication, then their impact is considerable. One recent survey reported: "By far the most popular pre-school and children's television program in the Federal Republic of Germany has proved to be the German version of the American Sesame Street."⁶

Perhaps this is America's way of repaying a century-old debt to the descendants of Froebel.

Elementary Schools

Formal schooling in the *Grundschule* or primary school begins for each German child at the age of six. The first day of school is an important occasion when, according to custom, the child is presented with a two to three foot long sack containing candies and other goodies. This tradition is followed perhaps to ease the transition from the play-like atmosphere of the home, or the kindergarten if he attended one, to the academic environment of the school.

The program that he will be following for the next four years is very similar to that shown in Figure 3-2. This particular example is the most recent for the state of Bavaria. Due to the standardization efforts already discussed, this pattern approximates the pattern for *Grundschule* in the other ten states also.

The first required subject, which is religious instruction, seems out of place to Americans. It is of course prohibited in American schools by the First Amendment to the Constitution. Paradoxically the German federal constitution mandates religious instruction in all German schools in one of its rare ref-

6. "Children Love Sesame Street." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 1 (1965): 16.

Figure 3-2. Required Subjects and Weekly Hours for Instruction in the Grundschule (Bavaria, 1975)

Subject	Grades			
	1	2	3	4
Religious instruction	2	3	3	3
German language	6	6	6	6
Mathematics	5	5	5	5
Local studies (<i>Heimatkunde</i> and <i>Sachkunde</i>)	3	3	4	4
Music	1	1	1	1
Art	1	1	1	1
Home economics, needlework, crafts	1	2	2	2
Sports	2	2	1	1
Flexible (school decides)	2	2	1	1
Total	23	25	24	24

ferences to education. Separate Catholic and Protestant sections are formed with instruction by an approved representative of the particular faith. The instructor could be someone who comes to school specifically for that purpose, or it could be a member of the regular school faculty as religion is a recognized teaching major.

In view of Germany's history of religious wars and strife,

one might expect the arrangement, or any other, to be contentious. However, this situation is not the case as this accommodation has resolved the church-state issue in relation to the schools. Such harmony is not evident in the United States where the issue is a perennial one.

Parents do have the option of "freeing" their children from the religion course requirement, though in some states students may be required to substitute an ethics course.

Of special interest to social-studies teachers is the double-category: (1) local history and community life, and (2) introduction to the social studies and sciences. The first is the *Heimatkunde*, a course of rather provincial presentations of local history, geography, legends, and, in some states like Bavaria, it includes church history. The second Bavarian category is the *Sachkunde*, which focuses on the local community but relates community concerns to some elementary aspects of history, geography, politics, and economics, as well as the natural and physical sciences.

Heimatkunde was thought by Bavarians to be too narrow and provincial. Therefore, in the early sixties it was replaced for a time by *Sachkunde*, which in turn was criticized as too abstract, theoretical, and unrelated to the life of a child. The present approach is a *politische Bildung* that combines the better aspects of both.

These subjects, however, are subordinate in importance to German language and mathematics—what Americans call the three Rs. This emphasis is not only reflected in the relative amount of time accorded them, which is over 40 percent, but also by virtue of the grades in these subjects determining the type of secondary school that the child will attend.

Formerly, special entrance examinations to the secondary schools were given in the fourth grade, but now in most German states this practice has been abandoned, and recommendations are made by the *Grundschule* on the basis of regular course grades. In Bavaria, however, these examinations are still given in December and March on various aspects of German language and math. The grades received are averaged with those of the regular school year and on that basis a secondary

school is recommended. The importance and the implications of this decision will be explained in the next section.

In any state the parent may disregard the official advice, and the pupil may take a special entrance examination at the *Gymnasium*, but the prognosis would not be good. One director of a *Gymnasium* in Rhineland-Palatinate reported to us that of the twelve students who took this special examination in the spring of 1974 all failed.

One of several striking features of the *Grundschule* schedule is the so-called long morning (see Figure 3-3). This feature is embedded in German tradition and has the child returning home for a warm lunch (no school cafeterias) and an afternoon of homework under the supervision of his mother. With so many working mothers this supervision is perhaps less prevalent today than it once was.

Schools are also in session on Saturday mornings. A few states, Hesse is one, also have the first Saturday of every month free to coincide with the all-day openings of stores and businesses. (German businesses close early on Saturdays excepting once monthly.) The five-day school week is often discussed but the movement to adopt it is not strong.

The distribution of holidays and vacations differs from American schools with more time off during the school year but a shorter summer vacation, only six weeks. The total amount of time in school is about the same however, two hundred-forty days of four-and-a-half hours as opposed to one hundred-eighty six-hour days.

The time of the summer vacation differs among the various states and changes from year to year. This staggered scheduling is necessary in such a small heavily populated country for better utilization of limited vacation facilities and to prevent further overloading of the heavily traveled autobahns. In the summer of 1975 it was said that there was only a single day, excepting Sundays, when schools in some German states were not in session.

The German *Grundschule* classroom is basically self-contained and under the direction of the regular classroom teacher.

Figure 3-3. Grundschule Student Schedules* (Erich-Simdnorn Schule, Hesse)

Grade 3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:00-8:45		German	Religion	German		Math
8:45-9:30		Math	Math	German	German	<i>Sachkunde</i>
9:30-10:00		Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
10:00-10:45		Crafts	German	Phys. ed.	Math	Music
10:45-11:30	<i>Sachkunde</i>	Crafts	German	Math	<i>Sachkunde</i>	
11:30-11:45	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	
11:45-12:30	Math	Art	Phys. ed.	<i>Sachkunde</i>	Religion	
12:30-1:15	German	Art	Phys. ed.	Music		

Grade 4	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:00-8:45	<i>Sachkunde</i>	German	German	<i>Sachkunde</i>	German	Phys. ed.
8:45-9:30	<i>Sachkunde</i>	German	Math	<i>Sachkunde</i>	Math	Phys. ed.
9:30-10:00	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	
10:00-10:45	Math	Math	<i>Sachkunde</i>	German	Art	
10:45-11:30		<i>Sachkunde</i>	Phys. ed.	Math	Art	
11:30-11:45		Recess		Recess	Recess	
11:45-12:30		Crafts		Music	Religion	
12:30-1:15		Crafts				

* During hours when no instruction is shown, children remain at home or return there.

However, this approach is sometimes modified when teachers are assigned to instruct in their special fields in other classrooms. In any event their total number of contact hours must reach twenty-eight. Even principals teach. One elementary principal whose school had five hundred pupils complained to us that she not only had to teach half time, but she would not even be eligible for a part-time secretary until enrollment reached six hundred.

Because of varying numbers of weekly hours of instruction, subjects vary from day to day quite unlike an American school. The weekly routine, however, remains the same with every Monday being like every other Monday. Moreover, the overall pattern becomes rather routinized as the teacher very seldom deviates from the established timetable. American teachers are far more likely to change daily and weekly schedules as long as overall time requirements are met.

Secondary Schools

In the next few pages we intend to provide a basic perspective of German secondary education. This intent may appear to be unduly optimistic to those already aware of its complex and confusing organizational structure and the many dissimilarities with American secondary education. The disorientation some experience in their initial exposures to these strange educational structures might even be called "pedagogical shock." Assuredly one is deprived of the comfortable assumptions and the familiar knowledge of the American frame of reference. One is even stripped of the convenient American rationalization that "Everything is in such a state of flux and changing so rapidly that we can't keep track of it." German secondary education is not changing that rapidly and that which is taking place is coordinated centrally and is relatively easy to identify. For that reason it is somewhat easier to keep abreast of German education than it is of the American.

Recall that this trait of unity in German education, as contrasted with American diversity, was discussed earlier in Chapter 2. It was one of the three unique reference points that we suggested and the only one that simplifies our task. The

other two hamper us. One of these latter two concerns the basic functions of the school system, in effect, societal demands prevail over individual considerations. While to various degrees all schools are places where the individual's personality is developed and where society selects and sorts for future roles, in Germany the latter unmistakably outranks the former; a reversal of the priorities that we find in the United States.

The other reference point concerned the partisan nature of educational politics and is further developed throughout this book. It should suffice to restate that there are no minor educational problems. Either change proceeds in an idyllic harmony or there is an explosive confrontation of the two major political parties. This may be detonated by an issue that in the American context appears trivial enough to be resolved unobtrusively by the superintendent or even a building principal (where the fifth and sixth grades should be housed, for example).

Some of the unfamiliar differences include the age groups of German secondary education as compared with the American, with German secondary schooling beginning for eleven year olds in grade five. (From this point the reader is advised to make frequent references to Figure 3-1.)

The next difference is more fundamental—secondary education is compartmentalized differently. German schools are not divided horizontally by the age of the student, such as the American junior high (ages twelve to fourteen) and senior high (fifteen to eighteen). They are separated vertically, three parallel school structures. This is the German tripartite system—famous or infamous—depending on your politics or your nationality.

This vertical cleavage is indigenous and as natural for Germans as the horizontal one is for Americans. The present *Hauptschule* (main school) has its historical roots in the elementary school of the village, *Volkschule*, which once provided education for the children of farmers and unskilled workers. It terminated after eight years at the age of fourteen and consisted of instruction in the basics, including religion. Instruction was given by a single teacher usually in one-room

schools that were usually separate for Catholics and Protestants. These "dwarf schools" have all but disappeared during the past decade although in 1964 they still accounted for 13 percent of the elementary school population. This consolidation has effected two simultaneous reforms, a denominational mix and increase of the number of students facilitating a more varied program.⁷

The forerunners of the *Realschule*, secondary modern school or the middle school, was located in the towns. It attracted the children of the middle-class, skilled workers, lower civil servants and small businessmen who could afford the modest fees. The school curriculum was more demanding and would include a foreign language, often English. Schooling was usually available up to the ninth grade at which time the student received a certificate making him eligible for further vocational training.

The third school, the *Gymnasium* or the classical grammar school, was also found in towns and was more expensive than the *Realschule*. It was the most prestigious and reserved for upper-class children whose fathers were rich landowners or professional men. The curriculum usually consisted of twelve years of academic instruction after which a rigorous examination was taken. If a student was successful he would be eligible for and would expect to attend the university.

At the primary level these barriers between the three kinds of schools began disintegrating after World War I. Most pupils began attending a common school, later to become the *Grundschule*, for the first four years, although a primary school remained a component of the *Gymnasium* until World War II.

At the secondary level this compartmentalization has persisted and even today reflects these three discrete segments. *Hauptschule* graduates are eligible after ten years of schooling for vocational schools that train them for skilled and semiskilled blue-collar jobs. Students successful in the *Realschule* also graduate after the tenth year to pursue additional technical training but for white-collar or middle-class management positions. As for the *Gymnasium* students, they

7. Mohr, "The School System," p. 41.

are even today the elite. Those who complete this rigorous academic program and pass the difficult *Abitur* examination after their thirteenth year almost always attend the university, the successful completion of which accords considerable prestige and social status.

A clear hierarchy of *Gymnasium*, *Realschule*, and *Hauptschule* is open and deliberate. There is no pretense of "separate but equal" doctrine of an earlier American era to mask the stratified nature of these schools. If one is seeking an analogy in the United States the recommendations of the California Coordinating Council on Higher Education perhaps come close. The top 12 percent of a high-school graduating class are eligible for the University of California; the next 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ percent for a California state college (now California state university); and the remainder would be eligible to attend the two-year community colleges.

German secondary education can most easily be understood by focusing on this tripartite arrangement. It is like a vortex around which continual and heated educational controversies swirl. By being aware of the historical origins, realizing their tenacity, and sensing the strong feelings aroused by attempts to change the tripartite system, one is well on the way to having a basic grasp of German secondary education.

One such controversy is the continued social-class bias of the three schools. A recent report on German secondary education describes the situation in this manner.

Recruitment into these three types of secondary schools is in fact still linked to the child's social class origin, as measured by the educational and occupational level of his parents even though selection is conducted on the basis of an ostensibly "objective" measure such as the level of marks in the main school subjects.⁸

The *Gymnasium* not only prepares students for high administrative positions and the professions but also recruits students from the same milieu. The school then has become a vital instrument in maintaining clearly delineated social-class

8. *Reviews of National Policies*, p. 58.

divisions. It is almost as if there is a tri-level conveyer belt that procures the raw materials from different layers, processes it, and then deposits the finished product at a corresponding level.

There is some evidence that this social-class bias may be changing and that students from more representative backgrounds are gaining admittance to the *Gymnasium*. In Lower Saxony a recent survey was made of thirty thousand students in thirty-four *Gymnasias*. It revealed that almost two-thirds of the students came from social groups other than the upper or aristocratic classes. The lower middle class accounted for about 40 percent and the blue-collar group over 20 percent.⁹

However, such liberal enrollment, when it occurs, does not assure graduation. Only about 60 percent of those entering the *Gymnasium* actually successfully complete it. While this percentage does represent a marked increase over previous figures one can only suspect that the lower classes will be overrepresented in the remaining 40 percent. One study on the rate of success at the *Abitur* examination given at the completion of the studies reported that the children of high grade professional workers were three times more successful than the children of manual workers.¹⁰

There is considerable criticism of the early selection of a secondary school and hence a career and a place in society. One especially outspoken critic, Frau Hamm-Bruecher, educational spokesman for the FDP (Federal Democratic Party, a minor party) declares with intense concern that "Germany is the only country in the world . . . where selection for one or another branch of the educational system occurs at the age of ten."¹¹

One of the current reform efforts has been to increase the possibility of transfer among the three schools. Downward transfer has always been practiced and still serves as an effective threat to the students of the two higher schools. Of course,

9. "Grammar School Teachers Defend the Grammar School." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 5 (1975):66.

10. *Reviews of National Policies*, p. 61.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

the receiving school has no choice but to accept its new student.

One deterrent to upward transfer has been expectancy. Everyone concerned—students, teachers, and parents—assumes that a student will complete the same school he started or perhaps a lower one but never a higher one. A more tangible barrier has been the curriculum, which has been different for each of the schools. For example, the *Gymnasium* introduces the first foreign language in fifth grade, the *Realschule* in seventh grade, and perhaps the *Hauptschule* in ninth. Even if a student were able to transfer after a year or two, he would be lacking the necessary knowledge to compete successfully with the other students.

These problems are now dealt with by establishing an orientation stage at grades five and six in all three types of schools (see Figure 3-1). The curriculum for the orientation stage has become considerably standardized so that students in the three separate schools are often studying the same subjects. Pupils are observed carefully during these two years and provisions exist for the "late bloomer" to move to another more appropriate school.

Expectancy and dissimilar school subjects are no longer the absolute impediments to transfer as they once were, but another formidable barrier remains intact—the academic ethos of the school. The *Gymnasium* is serious, academic, and competitive, resembling perhaps an exclusive American private academic preparatory school. The *Realschule* reflects distinct standards of competence without insisting on the academic excellence required in the *Gymnasium*. And the *Hauptschule*? One has only to glance briefly at its stated aims to visualize the degree of academic attainment expected there.

The *Hauptschule* is the school for those pupils with an aptitude for practical occupations, giving them the fundamental knowledge and skills to enable them to enter on a practical career, and on which to build up their further training in a vocational, a special vocational or a continuation school.¹²

12. Walter Schultze and Christoph Fuhr, *Schools in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Weinheim: Julius Beltz, 1967), p. 29.

One can readily comprehend the difficulties and frustrations involved when a student actually attempts to transfer to a higher, more competitive school. While some students do transfer, we were consistently told that the incidence of such transfer remains exceedingly rare, with substantially less than 5 percent graduating from a higher school than the one in which they matriculated.

The political parties again reenter the picture. The SPD and the less important FDP claim that the tripartite system discriminates against the "little man" who is the chief source of their political support. They criticize it as being elitist and contrary to the principle of "equality of opportunity," a slogan that has gained wide acceptance among the divergent political factions.

They endorse the recently initiated orientation stage, viewing it as the first step toward national acceptance of a *Gesamtschule*, or comprehensive secondary school. These currently experimental schools sometimes resemble the American high school but are not inspired by it. The Swedish and British comprehensive school models that have involved a change from vertical to horizontal structure have been much more influential. Adoption of the *Gesamtschule* and the ultimate elimination of the tripartite system seems a better answer to the SPD than making minor adjustments in the present system to facilitate equal opportunity.

The SPD position was set forth by Willy Brandt in March 1974 shortly before stepping down as chancellor. It was contained in a major address to the German Parliament (we cannot imagine an American president discussing high-school organizational patterns before the American Congress).

I know that there is still not complete agreement in one of the main areas; I mean the comprehensive school (*Gesamtschule*). Nevertheless, I have the impression that the two sides are drawing closer together on this problem, too. We of the Federal Government consider it neither just nor reasonable when parents are compelled to make a decision of such vital importance of whether to send their ten-year-old or twelve-year-old children to grammar school (*Gymnasium*), secondary

modern school (*Realschule*) or main school (*Hauptschule*). We are of the opinion . . . that such decisions should not be made before children reach the age of fifteen or sixteen. We base this view on a wide range of international experience and the demand by the greater majority of educationalists and scientists. This therefore is the main reason why the main school, the secondary modern school and the grammar school in the intermediate stage should be gradually developed into a comprehensive school system.¹³

This statement is especially informative because Brandt combines a noncontroversial description of the problem of early selection with the highly contentious SPD-FDP party solution.

The CDU too criticizes the early definitive selection and also endorses the principle of equality of opportunity. It is doubtful, however, if the two factions could ever agree on a common definition of either *equality* or *opportunity*. The CDU wishes to keep and if necessary reform the present system by internal modifications. For example, they approve of the orientation stage, but they would have it operate in the three separate schools and not in a single school. For many this reform is sufficient. As for Brandt's reference to the comprehensive school and his implication that the CDU's position was close to that of the SPD, it almost ignited a national political confrontation. On this point the CDU's position is clear: proceed with caution and change only after careful and rigorous experimentation. Even the type of comprehensive school appropriate for experimentation differs according to political affiliation. The SPD favors an "integrated" type with all students in a common building sharing similar instruction, while the CDU prefers the additive where the three schools exist as separate entities on the same campus.

Schools in the various states reflect the different political versions of the orientation stage and the experimental comprehensive schools. Dramatic evidence of politics can also be found in the distribution of comprehensive schools—one hun-

13. "Bundestag Debate on the Overall Education Plan." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 5 (1974): 74.

dred-fourteen in Hesse (SPD) as compared to three in the bordering state of the Rhineland-Palatinate (CDU).

The following summarizes the position of the two political parties on the comprehensive school.

The CDU is in favor of a long period of experimentation and it is arguing in favor of applying pedagogical criteria to evaluate the *Gesamtschule* ("standards must be maintained, quality must be preferred to quantity"). The SPD and FDP perceive the *Gesamtschule* as a powerful vehicle of social change; the CDU argues in favor of reforms that will increase possibilities of transferring pupils within the existing secondary school system.¹⁴

The comprehensive school then is a second educational system paralleling the tripartite system. It is not included in Figure 3-1 for the sake of simplicity, because only 3 percent of the eligible school population attend them and because they must be viewed for political reasons by Germans as an "experiment" and not as an established system.

Will the German secondary schools ever become comprehensive? Arnold Heidenheimer, after a detailed analysis of the German and Swedish experience, gives a pessimistic response.

Will West Germany, launching a comprehensivization drive two decades after Sweden, be likely to achieve a fully comprehensivized secondary system by 1990? Unless pertinent political variables change radically, it almost surely will not. Will it at least equal the British track record by having about half of its secondary school age groups in comprehensive schools by the mid-1980's? To achieve that goal in the face of CDU resistance would mean that by then the *Gesamtschule* would have to completely replace *Gymnasias* in all the SPD-led Laender, and that also seems very unlikely.¹⁵

14. *Reviews of National Policies*, p. 40.

15. Arnold Heidenheimer, "The Politics of Educational Reform: Explaining Different Outcomes of School Comprehensivization Attempts in Sweden and West Germany." *Comparative Education Review* (October 1974), pp. 209-10.

For Americans it is difficult not to be critical of the German tripartite system, though we have tried to give an impartial and balanced description of them. The normative power of the comprehensive school concept is such that it is difficult to admit the legitimacy of other arrangements, even though we are informed of the reasons for them. Let us draw the issue out into the open by posing the question "Does the German tripartite system have any redeeming features?"

We would respond to the question in three ways. The first refers to American schools and is blatantly an argumentum ad hominem. Americans who criticize the *Gymnasium* for elitism should become more fully aware of the single social-class characteristic of most high schools in suburban and urban America. Whether the *Gymnasium* is more elite or socially stratified than the high schools in Beverly Hills, California, Scarsdale, New York, or suburban St. Louis is highly doubtful. The American retains his right to exclusive schools by moving to upper middle-class neighborhoods, where his children can attend "better" schools. Germans have more of a social-class mix within the larger neighborhood areas and are clearly unable to do this. Forcing the German parent to send his child to a socially mixed school is somewhat analogous to forcing American parents to bus their children to schools mixed either by social class or by race. (The British also have an escape valve that the Germans lack—a well-established system of private schools.) If Americans are to judge German schools, we should perhaps be cautious about doing so according to idealized criteria of what American schools should be.

The second response concerns the educational goals of German schools. Schools are places where society selects and sorts for future roles in a community. If judged by that criterion German schools do well indeed. Up until the present oil-induced recession there was no unemployment in Germany for any age group as compared to the 6 to 10 percent adult unemployment in the United States and three times that for teenagers. In 1977 teenage unemployment was up to about 5 percent and all Germans agreed that a crisis exists. The school

with its opening toward society has generally succeeded in preparing everyone for a place in it.

The schools also function internally according to that principle. There may be drop-downs but no dropouts. One might even say that while any given institution is cruel or harsh, the system itself is kindly. There are a sufficient number of realistic options so that in both the school and society there is a niche for everyone. A case can be made that this system is much more attuned than the American system to the most basic of human needs. A sense of belonging, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, is a fundamental need superseded only by physical and biological needs. In Germany everyone does belong and has a place in an identifiable socioeconomic arrangement. Esteem and self-esteem are higher needs to be developed after the more basic ones have been fulfilled.

The third response has to do with the right of each society to determine the kind of school system it would like to have. There are two kinds of convincing evidence that Germans generally approve of their system even though Americans, other Europeans, and German reformers do not. Enrollment at the *Gymnasia* has increased to the point where one-third of the eligible age group attend. The actual numbers have increased from 850,000 in 1961 to 1,800,000 in 1974. In the latter year less than 50,000 students attended comprehensive schools.¹⁶ Where *Gymnasia* and comprehensive schools exist side by side, as in Hesse, and where the better students have a choice, they inevitably choose the *Gymnasium*, relegating the comprehensive school to a *Realschule-Hauptschule* combination. This situation has become so evident that planners now concede that there can be no comprehensive school with a *Gymnasium* in close proximity.

The second bit of evidence of their approval of the traditional system is at the ballot box. The public has shown some disenchantment with educational reform. As recounted earlier, the minister for education and culture in Hesse was recently forced to resign his position when the SPD leaders blamed a

16. "Latest Figures on the Number of Pupils of Schools Providing General Education." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 9 (1975):132-33.

near defeat at the polls on too much educational change too quickly. As a result nationwide educational reform has suffered a reduced priority in the party's goals. Certainly the present Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was much more cautious with his statements in 1976 than Willy Brandt was in 1974.

The extraordinary maze of German schools that should include consideration of multiple types of *Gymnasia* and vocational-technical schools, technical-grammar schools, the universities, and special colleges is yet more complicated than we have pictured it in this chapter. Our purpose at this point has been to provide social-studies educators with a relatively simple framework minimally adequate to relate the discussions that are to follow.

The New "Politische Bildung"

The Curriculum Plans of the Social Democratic Party

It isn't practical to initiate a discussion of *politische Bildung* without first establishing as a reference point the currently renowned *Rahmen Richtlinien*,¹ the curriculum guide for *politische Bildung* in the state of Hesse, and its somewhat less controversial companion piece, the North Rhine-Westphalia *Richtlinien*.² If Germany could be said to have a "new *politische Bildung*," comparable in any sense with the American "new social studies," these two curriculum guides must constitute the vanguard of the movement. Both guides are instruments in the larger plan of the SPD to promote a more egalitarian approach to education generally and to promote a more socially conscious and politically active populace. The Hessian *Rahmen Richtlinien*, in particular, has gained a degree of notoriety (or acclaim) nationally that would be difficult to comprehend in the United States where state curriculum guides are generally unread and unused in the schools. This three hundred-ten-page curriculum plan has provoked nationally televised debates and monopolized the professional literature in social education since its publication in 1972. Supporters of the Hessian plan see the new curriculum, which since 1973 has been "experimentally" (meaning slowly) implemented in the schools of Hesse, as one of the most important steps toward the liberalization of social and political education in Germany in many years. Its opponents, on the other hand, see the plan primarily as a devious design for marshaling students in a campaign for Marxist destruction of all capitalistic and/or democratic institutions. One of the few moderate assessments of the *Rahmen Richtlinien* that we encountered was that of

1. *Rahmen Richtlinien* (Wiesbaden: Hessen Kultur Minister, 1972).

2. *Richtlinien fuer den politischen Unterricht* (Düsseldorf: Der Kultus-Minister des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1973).

Dr. Dieter Schmidt-Sinns of the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* in Bonn. Schmidt-Sinns acknowledged that some overzealous socialist doctrine as well as some unpolished pedagogy probably does afflict the plan, but that the *Rahmen* plan is an important mechanism for opening up *politische Bildung* to more critical thinking about social and political questions and for promoting badly needed reforms in the organization of content.

The plan promotes a number of innovations. First, it establishes a common program of *politische Bildung* for all students, regardless of ability, aspirations, parental background, or type of secondary school. The purpose of this aspect of the plan is to eliminate this vestige of curriculum differentiation by socioeconomic class. Likewise, the assumption is apparent that the political education of youth should be a common experience, not a differentiated one, if all of them as adults are, indeed, to be equal in their status as citizens of the Federal Republic.

Secondly, the plan would eliminate as distinct entities the traditional subjects of history, geography, and *Sozialkunde* (literally meaning social studies), merging all such instruction into a new unified program—the *Gesellschaftslehre*. Several motivations are obvious here. The approach traditionally used in the selection of content in the studies of history and geography in particular is based upon the mysticism of the classical humanist, that is, the mastery of that knowledge without which a person cannot be truly considered educated and without which he cannot be a complete person. Relevance to current issues or problems was not a frequent criterion for content selection. The new *Gesellschaftslehre* would be organized around current social and political problems and the institutions that now exist to deal with those problems. Relevance is to be assured by the prescribed organization of the content. History, geography, and *Sozialkunde* would exist only as different types of sources from which useful information is available. There is also a sometimes stated hope that students will begin to see the sociopolitical milieu as a single "whole cloth" rather than as a series of separate and unrelated types of school recitations. This curriculum integration motive is

reminiscent of the Deweyan promotion of curriculum integration and of the "core curriculum" early in this century.

Thirdly, the new curriculum is designed to incorporate a program by which social, political, and economic institutions are critically examined. Critical thinking, as we will point out in other contexts, is not consistent with the German educational tradition. However, the *critical thinking*, advocated as central to the objectives of *Rahmen* plan, is quite different from the *critical thinking* that was advocated by such American theorists as John Dewey, Lawrence Metcalf, and others. For Americans, the intent is generally that students will master a process of reflective or rational thought and is generally methodological in its implications.

Critical thinking in contemporary liberal or SPD German pedagogy is a term derived from the critical socialization theories of Marx, Marcuse, Habermas, and the Frankfurter School. These theories promote a liberation of man from coercive and dominating forms of social control. The assumption is that social institutions and government perform like natural systems in that they cause certain consistent supportive patterns of behavior in their component parts—individuals and groups. Man naturally becomes an unwitting slave to his institutions. The *Rahmen* plan and other German curriculum programs based to some degree on these theories emphasize substance (not a method or formal thought process). The individual is freed by his new perspectives to recognize serious conflicts between his interests, society's interests, and the types of control imposed by established social institutions. In effect, students will develop a new critical view of contemporary social, political, and economic problems, and the coercive institutions that now exist for dealing with those problems.

Finally, the organization of the unified *Gesellschaftslehre* is based upon a prescribed set of basic concepts reflecting the full range of social institutions, with perhaps slightly greater weight given to the economic. These concepts are grouped within four areas of study. Each area and its subordinate concepts—socialization, economy, communal commitments, and inter-social conflict—are to be dealt with repetitively in dif-

ferent contexts each year and in greater depth and complexity as students mature. These elements immediately conjure up images of Prof. Jerome Bruner's advocacy of such a conceptual framework or structure for the social studies,³ Prof. Lawrence Senesh's rationale for his *Our Working World* program,⁴ and others of the conceptually organized American "new social-studies" programs. Our questioning revealed, however, little or no direct influence by Professor Bruner nor the American "new social studies" of the past decade in this case. Rather the framework or structure seems to be primarily a political stratagem to force classicist teachers to focus their attention upon current issues and institutions in Germany and the world by prescribing an organization of content that hopefully disallows historic and geographic escapades into irrelevance.

The opponents of the *Rahmen* plan seem to us to include virtually everyone who identifies himself with the CDU, some more conservative members of the SPD, most teachers and professors of history, and *Gymnasium* teachers. Most of these are distrustful of the "conflict theory" and "critical thinking" aspects of the plan. The feeling prevails among these critics that the plan is designed for anything but critical thinking, if by that one means being objective or open minded. It is charged by most of the teachers and educators with whom we talked that, taken as a whole, it becomes quite clear what types of political or economic ideas one ought to arrive at as a result of the recommended style of critical thought, namely, one that encompasses all of the political aims of the neo-Marxist wing of the SPD. In effect, the students are to critically analyze contemporary German institutions to discover that they are undemocratic and do not serve the best interests of the underprivileged majority of Germans.

Perhaps the most concerted and hostile opposition to the *Rahmen* plan is that of historians to the submergence of his-

3. Jerome Bruner, "After John Dewey, What?" *On Knowing: Essays for the Left Hand* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965).

4. See Lawrence Senesh, "Organizing a Curriculum Around Social Science Concepts." *Concepts and Structure in Social Science Curricula*. Edited by Irving Morrissett. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967).

tory into something (the *Gesellschaftslehre*) that is not history at all—in effect, the elimination of history in the schools. In a joint memorandum, the Association of German Teachers of History and the Association of German Historians have charged the advocates of both the Hessian plan and the North Rhine-Westphalian plan, which, to a lesser extent, also integrates history into a larger scheme, with “the misuse of history to justify preconceived opinions and onesided doctrines.”⁵ In addition the pronouncement warns that “If in the Federal Republic, unlike other countries—a scientifically enlightened consciousness of history were to be lost, the result will be spiritual provincialization.”⁶ Finally, the historians characterized the history component of the plan as: “Here history means the fragmentary pre-history of selected elements of present day social reality; in the main, it is only accepted as the history of forms of production and structures of domination.”⁷ The new history under the SPD curriculum plans would, indeed, consist of periodic brief excursions to provide perspective on contemporary conflict.

Finally, the collectivistic, utopian economic and political ends of the *Rahmen* plan have been criticized in a requested opinion to the Hessian Parents Association by Profs. Thomas Nipperdey of the University of Munich and Herman Lubbe of the University of Zurich, both members of the SPD, as educating young people away from democracy and toward a state within which the individual and the right of self-determination will be lost.⁸

The North Rhine-Westphalia plan now being implemented in that state is similar in its general orientation to the Hessian plan, but it has evoked less controversy outside the state itself, partly because it is apparently less partisan and indoctrinative than the Hessian plan. According to Prof. Wolfgang Hilligen of Giessen University, it is based more substantially upon modern teaching/learning theory than the better-known

5. Brigitte Mohr, “What Will Become of History Instruction?” *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 8 (1973):5.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Rahmen plan. The plan also avoided some of the organized opposition encountered by the Hessian plan by maintaining a degree of integrity for the academic disciplines, history, geography, and *Sozialkunde*. All three disciplines are challenged to become interdisciplinary through their common organization around themes related to contemporary issues and problems. Too, history and geography are reduced a bit in the curriculum relative to *Sozialkunde*, but they continue to exist as distinct entities. Within the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the original plan did provoke many of the same indoctrinative criticisms directed toward the *Rahmen* plan, but that state is now in the process of revising the plan to place stronger emphasis upon such concepts as the "dignity of man," the importance of tolerance toward alternative values and views, and it includes an entirely new section that emphasizes the teaching of youth to adhere to the federal constitution and to the laws of the Federal Republic and those of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. Sections of the original plan, published in 1973, which were criticized as possibly implying socialist doctrine will be removed in the new version, according to the state's education minister.⁹

The North Rhine-Westphalia guidelines, according to their group leader, Dr. Rolf Schorcken, were aimed to improve on other German state curriculum guidelines in three ways. First, the aims and objectives were to be explicit, definitive, behavioral, and observable or measurable, an innovation borrowed from the American behavioral objectives campaign of the last decade. Secondly, the new guidelines explain or justify each concept or theme selected for instruction. Finally, unlike other German curriculum guides, content and teaching methods are specified relative to each set of objectives for each grade level. The content proposed, however, is not dogmatic; rather a number of alternative themes, topics, or issues are suggested with each set of objectives.¹⁰

9. "Northrhine-Westphalia: Revised Guidelines." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 15 (1974):230.

10. Marlene Forsbach, "The School as a Democratic Institution." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 12 (1974):176.

Each section of the North Rhine-Westphalia plan begins with a broad goal or qualification. The following is an example:

Qualification 4: The ability and willingness to think in terms of political alternatives, to take sides and, if need be to attempt the realization of decisions even when subjected to the pressure of sanctions.¹¹

The qualification is followed by a brief narrative description of its components.

Qualification Description:

The qualification contains three elements: thinking in alternatives, taking sides, and realizing decisions. Thinking in alternatives demands prior knowledge of the various possible solutions to social problems. It is aimed at a questioning attitude to social processes and examines interests and their legitimation. Over and above this, thinking in alternative terms encourages the formulation of new suggested proposals.

The readiness to take sides is intended to prevent political education becoming bogged down in analysis and the assembling of suggested solutions. A definite partisan attitude based on carefully analyzed personal interests and convictions should be given every encouragement.

Partisanship and the reaching of decisions trigger off tensions which have to be endured if a committed attitude is to enjoy some degree of permanence. This is not possible without knowledge of negative as well as positive sanctions (counter-measures, punishments, rewards), of evasive and adaptive mechanisms and resistive tactics.¹²

Following the goal description, the teacher is provided with two orders of learning objectives:

Learning aims of the first and second order

1. The ability by means of thinking in alternative political terms to recognize dependencies
 - a. The ability to recognize the controversy in a given political area

11. *Ibid.*, p. 177.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

- b. The ability to establish the basic values, norms, and interests within controversies
 - c. The ability, within a given regulative process, to develop alternatives bearing the stamp of other norms and interests
2. The ability, via partisanship, to exercise the right of self-determination in political conflicts
 - a. The ability to offer an opinion after careful analysis of a political theme
 - b. The ability to discuss the relationship between factors governing existing regulations and those governing alternatives
 - c. The ability to distinguish between possible solutions to political problems proposed by a third party as opposed to oneself
 - d. The ability to take a definite decision on a possible solution to problems of a social nature because it seems expedient
 3. The ability to reach decisions in the face of sanctions
 - a. The ability, via partisanship in politically controversial questions, to reflect on and calculate the subsequent consequences
 - b. The ability and the readiness to express personal partisanship publicly
 - c. The ability to defend oneself against sanctions by suitable means, e.g., by acting in solidarity¹³

The objectives are followed by a prescription of alternative content with possible topics and issues listed under categories or situation areas that may be relevant to the child or youth at his current stage of development. Situation areas include such factors as school, family, spare time, occupation or profession, public issues, international relations, and so forth. Under the category spare time, for example, the following problems or topics are suggested, which vary with grade level: recreational activities and their ideals; environmental problems and the leisure industry; toward a leisure-time society; youth and commercial publicity; holidays for the masses; economic significance of leisure industry; "made to measure holidays";

13. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

leisure time as the *modus vivendi* of the future; and others.¹⁴

The impression should not be left that these SPD reform curricula and others of their current egalitarian efforts are entirely the result of unprovoked philosophical fervor. During much of the decade of the 1960s and early 1970s German universities at Berlin, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, and elsewhere have been rocked by student protests and disorder as were our own during that period. German youth, having no Vietnam, focused largely upon the elitism and the repressive structure of German political and social institutions, including the schools and universities themselves. The results of these protests have been many and complicated. Among socialist politicians the disorder signaled the need for immediate and major reforms such as comprehensive secondary schools, more critical thinking in classrooms, and a *Rahmen Richtlinien*. Among members of the opposition party, the unrest provoked greater fears of Marxist tendencies among students and among some members of the SPD. It is difficult for most Americans, separated by a generation from the McCarthy era and an ocean from Communist Eastern Europe, to fully comprehend the accelerating distrust and fear that conservative Germans feel when confronted with the radical ideas of some of their countrymen. Americans who are old enough to recall well Senator McCarthy's witch-hunt may sense something of the extraordinary anxiety of conservative Germans when confronted with a combination of violence, Marxist slogans, and social and educational programs that seem to them to have been transplanted across their eastern borders in irresistible waves.

In light of the conflicts that continue to exist around the socialist reforms and curriculum guidelines, just how great and long lasting may we anticipate their impact will be? Is there, indeed, an emerging new *politische Bildung*? The answer depends most heavily upon the fate of the SPD at the polls in future state elections. The institution of such major curriculum changes as those described will take time. The SPD will have to demonstrate more power in state elections than it has here-

14. *Ibid.*, p. 179.

tofore, and it must maintain that power over a considerable period. Even a modest change in the majority support that a party has within a state can make a considerable difference. For example, we have mentioned earlier that during the winter of 1974, the SPD government in Hesse was reelected but by a very narrow margin. An immediate result was the replacement of the education minister with a more moderate SPD member who has announced that, while there will be no backsliding with regard to the *Rahmen* plan, no immediate effort will be made to complete the process of implementation.

Effective implementation of such plans at any point in the future also will depend upon support for these plans by teachers in the schools. Based upon our observations and interviews, it seems certain that the majority of teachers is strongly opposed, often for political reasons, but also often for pedagogical reasons. Most German teachers, particularly those of the *Gymnasia*, are traditionalist and classicist in their view of the school curriculum and are in no frame of mind to tolerate meddling by political Utopianists.

One, therefore, has to suspect that, despite their prominence today, the SPD curriculum plans may prove to be temporary and isolated waves on a relatively smooth classicistic sea.

The Curriculum

Our initial anxiety in exploring the curriculum sequence and content in German schools was that with eleven educationally autonomous states and at least three different types of secondary schools, the task of coherently describing *politische Bildung* might prove to be a hopeless one. Our fears were for the most part not justified. There are, indeed, some differences among the three types of schools within each state, but most of these differences consist of modifications of scheduling and sequencing and more rarely of major differences in content. There are also distinctions among the states, but there is a tendency for the *politische Bildung* content and sequence to have a similar facade. The similarity is clearly the result of a number of forces among which are a common educational tradition, influence of the Allied occupying powers after World War II, particularly with regard to the national institution of the *Sozialkunde* to promote democratization, and, most importantly today, the persuasive influence toward commonality of the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* and the Permanent Council of Culture Ministers.

During the elementary school years, the *Grundschule*, instruction in *politische Bildung* is secondary to that in the basic skills. Those lessons that qualify as social education are largely grouped under the subject titled *Heimatkunde*, the study of local history, geography, mythology, and community life. In some states the term *Sachkunde* has been substituted. In still others the hours of weekly instruction are divided between the two. *Sachkunde* generally implies a more academic and discipline-oriented approach to local studies than the traditional *Heimatkunde*. In the state of Bavaria, for example, three hours each week during the first and second years of schooling are given to *Heimatkunde* or *Sachkunde*, while four hours are allotted to those studies during the third and fourth years.

Richard Warren in his *Education in Rebhausen* describes

the content for *Heimatkunde* during the second year in the state of Baden-Württemberg. The topics include:

1. Now we are second graders (school rules and acceptable behavior)
2. Traffic instruction (crossing streets, use of bikes)
3. Spring comes (flowers and animals wake up)
4. Our birds
5. Hay harvest (the work of the farmer)
6. The cherry tree and its guests
7. On the farm
8. A storm (how it develops, what we see, how we react)
9. Flowers in the fields
10. The grain harvest
11. A wine harvest
12. Protection of animals
13. People who serve us (doctors and nurses)
14. Health is the best protection
15. The time of Christmas
16. People prepare for winter
17. The work of people in the community
18. The important building of the community
19. At the gas station
20. At the post office
21. At the railroad station
22. Easter (the Easter rabbit comes)¹

Although topics vary widely, such subjects are typical of the first and second years of instruction in *Heimatkunde*. The content during the third and fourth years, while maintaining the local focus, is more likely to include some content dealing with physical geography of the region and governmental or economic structures.

What is clear nationally is that the child is expected to develop a growing realization of the unique features of his local community and immediate area, including their values. Furthermore, in most German classrooms, this awareness is to consist of ordered, discrete knowledge, not a vaguely defined satisfaction of the child's curiosity.

1. Richard Warren, *Education in Rebhausen* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967).

Secondary instruction in all three types of schools generally includes from one to four hours of weekly instruction in one or more of the following subjects: *Geschichte* (history), which is essentially the history of Western civilization; *Erdkunde* (geography), which is the study of cultures, economics, politics, and physical environments of peoples the world over; and *Sozialkunde*, which translates literally as social studies. This course is typically an integrated social-science course dealing with elements of German government or comparative political systems, economic systems, and contemporary social problems. In some states, courses translating as civics or political studies are offered instead of *Sozialkunde*. As of 1960 and based upon a recommendation of the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, a unified history and social-science course entitled *Gemeinschaftkunde* began to replace the three earlier subjects during the twelfth and thirteenth years of the *Gymnasium*. The *Gemeinschaftkunde* was intended to result in a synthesis of the earlier studies, but the actual form or focus that these last two years of instruction takes varies widely from state to state. An example of several approaches to the *Gemeinschaftkunde* will be discussed later in this chapter.

A typical sequence of studies is shown in Figure 5-1, currently the prescribed one (though perhaps destined to be eventually replaced by the *Rahmen* plan) for the secondary schools of the state of Hesse.

A second example is provided in the sequence of the much more conservative state of Bavaria. In that state, as in Hesse, instruction in world geography continues without disruption from grades five to nine in the *Hauptschule*, while history and *Sozialkunde* both commence with the seventh year. During the following two years, two weekly hours of history instruction and one weekly hour of *Sozialkunde* are required by Bavaria.

The Bavarians make numerous distinctions in scope and sequence for the *Realschule* and for the five different emphases of *Gymnasia* (humanities, Latin, English, mathematics/natural sciences, and music). Although the ratio of total class hours varies yearly, such schools tend to be on the order of: history

Figure 5-1. The Hessian Secondary Sequence

Grade	Subject	Hours of Weekly Instruction
5	Geography	2
6	Geography	2
7	Geography	2
	History	2
8	Geography	2
	History	2
	<i>Sozialkunde</i>	2
9*	Geography	2
	History	2
	History	2
	<i>Sozialkunde</i>	2
10**	Geography	2
	History	2
	<i>Sozialkunde</i>	2
11	Geography	3
	History	2
	<i>Sozialkunde</i>	2
12	<i>Gemeinschaftkunde</i>	4
13	<i>Gemeinschaftkunde</i>	4

* The *Hauptschule* is completed at this level.

** The *Realschule* is completed at this level.

(14), geography (14), *Sozialkunde* (6). The twelfth and thirteenth year *Gemeinschaftkunde* does exist, as elsewhere, as an umbrella title for this social-education program in Bavarian *Gymnasia*, but the Bavarians continue to distinguish history, geography, and *Sozialkunde* as separate components of *Gemeinschaftkunde* during the final two years of study. Aside from this, the principal difference between the two would seem to be a sharp contrast in their valuing of *Sozialkunde*, with the Hessians placing it essentially equal in importance with history and the Bavarians allotting it less than half the time given to history.

History

There are some variations as to the content implicit in the history curriculum of the German states, but it is possible to describe a sequence of content that would approach accuracy for most states. To begin with, one can be confident in those cases where a new SPD curriculum is not being implemented that the program will consist of a chronological revelation of the history of Western civilization, beginning with the sixth or seventh class and concluding with the ninth, tenth or eleventh class, depending upon the type of secondary school and the state. For example, the sixth class might begin with two recitations weekly dealing with archaeological information about prehistory; the seventh class would then learn about early civilization in the Tigris, Euphrates, and Nile valleys and the classic civilizations of Greece and Rome; the eighth class would study the history of medieval and Renaissance Europe; the ninth class would study the Age of Reason and revolutions; and the tenth class might conclude the story with the history of the twentieth century. Until 1960 the *Gymnasia* continued the study of the history of Western civilization during the twelfth and thirteenth years, but with the aforementioned recommendation of the *Gemeinschaftkunde*, most states have adopted this integrative program in some form that incorporates some additional aspects of history, but as only one of several sources of perspective on contemporary social problems and political or economic ideas. Throughout Germany,

there continues to be some agitation for a return of pure history to the final phase of the *Gymnasium*, but the present prospect is that history will continue to lose instructional time. The forces toward that end in Germany, as in America, appear irrepressible.

As to the content within the three-to-five year course, the following are our observations.

German national history, a former cornerstone of German political education, is never encountered as a distinct entity. A considerable amount of German history is taught but always within the context of the history of Western civilization. This practice is certainly to a great extent an outcome of the experience with the irrational nationalism of Hitler and the National Socialists and the specific pressures placed upon Germans by the Allied occupying powers after World War II to avoid nationalistic propagandizing in schools. There are, however, at least two additional reasons for the avoidance of distinctly national history. The first is that one of the principal goals of both German political parties since World War II has been pan-European internationalism, a united Western Europe economically and perhaps ultimately politically. Secondly, we were told that with the division of Germany into three parts, considering West Berlin as a separate entity, the entire concept of *nation* troubles and confuses the Germans. In effect, no one is sure what is or ought to be the German nation now and in the future. Therefore, it is uncertain what a history of Germany should be about. It should be noted for reflection at this point that Americans, who were among those most insistent upon eliminating every vestige of nationalism from German social education, still emphasize national history to the relative neglect of the histories of other peoples.

Local history or state history is rarely encountered outside of the *Heimatkunde* of the *Grundschule*, except in the state of Bavaria. Bavarians, like Texans, continue to have an intense pride in their national history and strong feelings of being set apart from the rest of Germany. Unity through pride in the history and traditions of the former kingdom of Bavaria seems to be the primary goal of such instruction. Whereas Texans are

frequently accused of spending most of their time in Texas history courses absorbing the glory of the defense of the Alamo, Bavarians are often charged, jokingly we think, with using most of their time to defend the sanity of King Ludwig II. The authors cannot confidently reinforce or refute that charge.

The histories of Africa south of the Sahara, South and East Asia, receive relatively little treatment in German schools. Germans have simply not encountered the same pressures that Americans have during the past decade to achieve better curriculum balance in this respect.

The study of American history by Germans is limited to its place in the chronological development of Western civilization. Most German students amass some knowledge of the American Revolution and the "new experiment with democracy"; some importance is frequently placed upon the period of the American Civil War and the abandonment of slavery; and major emphasis is placed upon the twentieth-century American history, as American involvement in European politics or wars becomes a continuous reality.

World War II, National Socialism, and Adolf Hitler remain difficult subjects to deal with in German schools, but German history teachers today are far less reluctant to deal with this period and with Hitler than was the case with the first generation after the war. During the period immediately following World War II, many history teachers had been teachers or soldiers under the Nazi regime, while many others had been actively or passively submissive to Nazism. There was a widespread sense of personal guilt among these teachers, whether justified or not. In addition, the crimes of their nation in which they had only recently had so much pride constituted a subject too unpleasant to discuss in a classroom. There were continuous urgings by the Allied occupying powers that the German youth be fully educated to all of the crimes of the Nazi regime, and these urgings were often shared by German state officials, but these were not effective. Until recently there was rarely time to deal with modern European history in German classrooms. Another factor, apart from those already mentioned, contributed to this omission. That factor was a con-

stantly recurring fear that if, indeed, the history of the Nazi epoch were taught by teachers who, in many cases, were educated under Nazism, the result might be a resurgence of Nazism or a Hitler cult. It is our impression that the new generation of German teachers and administrators do not feel that they share any guilt with Hitler, nor do we see any fear of neo-Nazism. At the same time, there is increasing interest among the German people about that period of their history and about Hitler himself. The subject is dealt with in some depth in most German classrooms, and it usually does not fail to include even the most difficult of topics, the Nazi concentration camps and the massive exterminations of the Jews. However, it also is clear that even today the approach generally taken to the study of this period is that of an examination of how and why Hitler was able to gain power, followed by an objective recitation of the events that followed his coming to power. Potentially controversial or explosive issues are carefully avoided.

As to the facets of history emphasized in German classrooms, political history, as in American schools, is predominant. Economic and social history receive relatively little emphasis except in those states where new SPD-sponsored curricula are implemented. In the new Hessian plan in particular, social and economic dimensions of history would become paramount, but the history would not be encountered in a traditional chronological framework. Intellectual history receives little emphasis before the eleventh class, but it is a major concern of the *Gemeinschaftkunde* during the last years of the *Gymnasium*.

Sozialkunde

Sozialkunde, social studies, became a significant component of the curriculum after World War II. The course was a somewhat vaguely defined effort to reeducate the German people for democracy, initiated by the occupying powers and by the Americans in particular. The early plan was that the introduction of a course that would provide the knowledge and training necessary for democratization was to be only one aspect of

a major restructuring of the German school system, but opposition from conservative German educators and more pressing problems soon resulted in the American military government dropping their demands for school reform. *Sozialkunde*, then, became virtually the central mechanism by which the Germans were to be rendered democratic.

Since there exists in Germany no college or university major in *politische Bildung*, German teachers of *Sozialkunde* and teachers of history are rarely one and the same, though there are efforts in SPD-governed states to bring about such a unification of teaching fields. Due to this separation of specialties, competition is often bitter between the two groups—the historians and the sociologists—the latter a term seemingly intended at times to be slightly degrading when used with reference to those advocating extensions of *Sozialkunde*. Many of the arguments that tend to divide them are similar to those mentioned earlier by proponents and opponents of the *Rahmen* plan. The trend during the past thirty years has been toward a gradual increase in the amount of class time allotted for instruction in *Sozialkunde* and a slow decrease in that allotted for history. Our observations in classrooms and our examination of currently used textbooks for *Sozialkunde* suggest that the course could be best compared regarding content with the rapidly expiring American course called civics, which for approximately fifty years before the present decade was a standard offering in grade nine of most American schools. Most texts and courses consist of a seeming potpourri of lessons and units dealing with the rights and responsibilities of German citizens; the structure of government in Germany and the German federal constitution; personal economics and the national economic system; comparative political and economic systems (principally a comparison of the Western democratic system, broadly defined, with Marxism); and study of critical social problems such as overpopulation, environmental pollution, school reform, and social inequality. Since *Sozialkunde*, like the American civics course, is quite vaguely defined as a discipline, and since the state curriculum guides are generally sketchy, the content varies widely. The single thread of na-

tional unity is the global objective of promoting political socialization. This thread has been further defined as ranging from "training towards community and partnership" and the teaching of "basic knowledge of formal regulations of democratic order and procedure" in the early postwar years to the currently popular training for critical thought or (more radically) training for conflict.² Implicit in the latter is the additional certainty that the political opinion of the teacher, of the textbook writer, and of the current state government has much to do with the substance of the course.

Though *Sozialkunde* is the most popular title for the most basic civic education course in Germany, this same course in essence occasionally carries other titles such as political studies, civics, or *Weltkunde* (world studies).

Geography

Germans have no operational "New Geography" in the current American sense nor anything equivalent in rationale to the "High School Geography Project (HSGP)," produced by the American Association of Geographers.³ There is, however, a curriculum development project in Niedersachsen that is currently putting together a German version of HSGP. The new curriculum when completed will feature a series of units emphasizing mastery of some of the intellectual tools of geographers and de-emphasizing area studies. The study of geography in German schools, as in the vast majority of American ones, is traditional in its factual surveying of lands, climates, peoples, and their interrelationships. The most important distinction we are compelled to note between geography in American schools and the study of that subject in German schools is that Germans clearly place far more importance on conventional geographic knowledge than do Americans. This major difference is reflected by the fact that Germans spend

2. Gerd Renken, "The Stony Path toward the Responsible Citizen: Forms of Political Education in West German Education." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 14 (1973):6.

3. See *Geography in an Urban Age* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1971).

more of their time in the study of geography than either history or *Sozialkunde*. The priority position of geography in American social-studies curriculum is comparatively minuscule.

In terms of time priorities, the major area emphasis in the study of geography is Germany and Europe. All other lands and peoples are dealt with in their turn, but somewhat more superficially. According to Professor Hilligen of Giessen University, it is not possible to identify any single non-European area as receiving greater time and emphasis than any other. There is, in fact, a growing inclination in some state curriculum guides to group peoples socioeconomically for study in such categories as "Developing Nations and People," and "Industrial Nations." The economics of world regions and their political divisions and forms rank as the highest priorities with most German geography teachers (though not with the theorists and teacher-educators). At a somewhat lower level of priority are knowledge of cultures and cultural differences, and knowledge of land forms and topography. Knowledge of analytic procedures and concepts used by professional geographers, a central objective of the American new geography, is not generally considered important, except by a few teacher-educators in northern Germany with whom we visited. Equally low in priority is a *National Geographic Magazine* type objective, the "appreciation of beauty and cultural uniqueness of exotic faraway places."

The most popular current demand by theorists and curriculum developers is that geography teachers build their courses around present social, economic, and political problems of world areas studied. Much of the new textbook material is, in fact, organized around problems, suggesting that with most teachers' disposition to follow the text, a problems approach may soon characterize German geographic studies. It should be clarified, however, that the study is aimed toward cognitive mastery, understanding of problems and alternative solutions, not a problem-solving approach to instruction.

The teaching of geography has been a distinct and separate area of specialization, as has the teaching of history and *Sozialkunde*. If those trends toward curriculum integration,

advocated by SPD ministries, continue, there will be considerably more cases in the future of a unified teaching specialty incorporating history, geography, and *Sozialkunde*.

Gemeinschaftkunde

In 1960 on recommendation by the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, the Permanent Conference of State Ministers of Culture recommended the *Gemeinschaftkunde* for all the *Gymnasien*. The *Gemeinschaftkunde*, like the Hessian *Rahmen Richtlinien*, is a major effort aimed at eliminating fragmentation of the studies of society and promoting a final closure for students. All previous *politische Bildung* was intended to be reduced during the twelfth and thirteenth years of the *Gymnasium* to a single context or subject. There was consensus among the ministers that the two years of study should combine the pursuits of history, geography, and *Sozialkunde*, and that the focus should be upon the most important political, social, or economic problem areas, rather than upon another cycle of chronological history. The standing conference also specified in rather broad terms the themes that should be used in each of the states for the purposes of unifying the contents of history, geography, and *Sozialkunde*. The themes are:

1. The basic facts of main political, economic, and social movements in Europe
2. The totalitarian ideologies and their political systems
3. Germany, her position in Europe and in the world
4. Europe in the world today
5. Europeanization and decolonization of the world, including problems of developing countries
6. Man in society, economics, and politics
7. One world—ways to secure world peace

There is considerable variation among the states as to how the program is organized and in the degree of actual integration.

An example of a *Gemeinschaftkunde* plan within the state of Hesse that exemplifies the fully integrated *Gemeinschaftkunde* is that of the *Liebnitzschule*,⁴ a *Gymnasium* in the city of

4. *Übersicht: Plan für Gemeinschaftkunde von der Liebnitzschule* (Offenbach: Liebnitzschule, 1973), Mimeographed.

Offenbach. There the emphasis is upon an intensive study of alternative political systems, with considerable focus upon basic theory and ideology. During the first semester, students study the "English Democratic Model" that includes both the English and American governmental and economic systems. Readings during the semester range from Hobbes and Locke to Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* and Reich's *The Greening of America*. During the second half of the twelfth year, the focus changes to the "Rousseau Democratic Model" beginning with the ideas of Rousseau and ranging from Karl Marx to Orwell's *1984*. The final two semesters, the thirteenth class, are concentrated upon the German political system as it developed before and after 1918. Most integrated *Gemeinschaftkunde* are generally highly philosophical and theoretical courses, with priority upon "great ideas" about government, politics, and economics. The structure of government and practical problems of government more likely to characterize an American government course, seem to be a substantially lower priority in the *Gemeinschaftkunde*. More conservative states (CDU governed) seem less inclined to follow through fully with the goal of a unified course of study. The states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Bavaria, for example, maintain *Sozialkunde*, history, and geography as separate elements under the title *Gemeinschaftkunde*, with a charge that teachers give all three a contemporary social-problems focus and integrate material from the other two subjects so far as possible. Baden-Württemberg has established *Gemeinschaftkunde* as a third course alongside history and geography. In that case the course seems to be little more than a renaming of *Sozialkunde* for the last two years of the *Gymnasium*.

Behavioral Sciences

Some comment needs to be made concerning a type of subject matter that is gaining ground rapidly in American social studies, but which is not found at all in German schools. The behavioral sciences—sociology, psychology, and anthropology—are university specialties in Germany, but even there their status is perennially in jeopardy. Behavioral science, with its

bent toward experimentation, its valuing of tentativeness, its tendency to reject philosophic authority as a final answer, seems to be in basic conflict with German culture and the German educational tradition, as noted earlier. Although there are occasional demands for the inclusion of some behavioral science in the curriculum, this does not appear to be a strong immediate prospect.⁵

Current Curriculum Development Projects

As in the United States during the sixties, West Germany now has a number of curriculum development projects that tell something about the directions of change desired by theorists—if perhaps it tells relatively less about actual change in the German classrooms. We have already discussed the state curriculum guides of Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia. In addition to these the following projects are now underway.

Detto and Son. This project at Bielefeld University involved translating and adapting to German needs and experiences Lippitt and Fox's elementary project materials, known as "Social Science Laboratory Units." The project staff made rather major revisions both in content and in modification of the inductive teaching strategies. This project has been completed and is now available for use in classrooms throughout West Germany.⁶

Schools Television Project in Social Studies. This project is being developed by a group of leading West German political educators, Dr. Karlheinz Rebel, Dr. Wolfgang Hilligen, and others representing the German Institute for Distance Studies in collaboration with the ministries of education of the three German states in Southwest Germany, Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Saarland, and with the Southwest Broadcasting Companies of Germany.

5. *Report of the Federal Government on Education* (Bonn: Federal Ministry for Science and Education, 1970), p. 199.

6. H. von Hentig, *Report on the Adaptation by a Group of German Educators of an American Social Studies Curriculum*. Paper delivered at International Conference on Political Education in September 1975, Bloomington, University of Indiana.

The project consists of twenty-five television tapes, radio programs, and teacher's guides with student text materials. The lessons emphasize a citizenship goal overall and present key concepts from sociology, economics, political science or philosophy, and law. The program, as are most new curriculum proposals, is designed to promote or provoke critical analysis of controversial issues.⁷

Poppy Pen. This project features a series of films produced by the North German Broadcasting System and later adopted by the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* at Bonn. Poppy Pen is pointed to as the best of this series promoting new and innovative teaching strategies for *politische Bildung*. The films essentially promote more active involvement on the part of learners, including in some cases inductive or inquiry techniques. The series is designed for the education of a teacher and, at this point, is too new to have had any impact whatever. The films are inexpensively produced in black and white.⁸

Project Party Democracy. This project was directed by Dr. Caesar Hagener at the University of Hamburg. The project was supported by the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* between 1971 and 1973. Unlike most German projects, there is no pretense of the usual sophisticated curriculum theory base. The project is a complete curriculum package that deals in a provocative and critical way with the German political party and parliamentary system. It consists of a three-hundred-page student textbook, filmstrips, and a teacher's guide that includes learning objectives, hints on methods and especially on the use of media, and guidelines for evaluation. The program is designed for grades nine and ten in all three types of secondary schools. The lesson sequence is flexible, and teachers have

7. Karlheinz Rebel, *Social Studies: A Multi-Media Project in the Schools Section of West Germany's Southwest Broadcasting Company*. Paper delivered at International Conference on Political Education in September 1975, Bloomington, University of Indiana.

8. Staff of the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, *Poppy Pen*. Paper delivered at International Conference on Political Education in September 1975, Bloomington, University of Indiana.

considerable freedom to choose what they want and to reject the remainder.⁹

The RCFP Curriculum Project. The *Raumwissenschaftliches Curriculum-Forschungsprojekt* is currently in the development stage in Lower Saxony. The program, when completed, is expected to be essentially a German version of the High School Geography Project—at least in terms of content, if with not quite the commitment to inductive methodology. It will not be an adaptation of HSGP, but it is inspired by it.

Project: Teaching Contemporary History at Lower Secondary Level. This project is currently in the early developmental stage in North Rhine-Westphalia under the leadership of Hans Süssmuth, Professor of History at the Rhineland Teachers College. Didactically, the project features a structural approach to curriculum development, heavily influenced by Professor Bruner. The new history program now being developed will be organized around a conceptual framework, actually a series of themes, with themes being selected on a basis of crucial current social, cultural, economic, and political problems, or in German terms, the *regressive-diachronic method*. The purpose of the course according to Süssmuth is to “provide guidelines for the future” and to get away from the traditional historian’s view of history as an end in itself. The project, like most of those mentioned, will place heavy emphasis upon increasing and varying the use of media in the teaching of history.¹⁰

Conclusion

In this chapter we have briefly discussed a number of rather stark differences between American social studies and German *politische Bildung*, such as the conflict between a national

9. Caesar Hagener, *On Project Party Democracy*. Paper delivered at International Conference on Political Education in September 1975, Bloomington, University of Indiana.

10. Hans Süssmuth, *Project: The Teaching of Contemporary History and Political Education at Lower Secondary Level*. Paper delivered at International Conference on Political Education, September 1975, Bloomington, University of Indiana.

versus an international approach to the study of history and the relative value that is placed upon conventional geographic knowledge. We urge the reader to consider carefully whether we or the Germans are guilty of a serious blunder, or if differences are justified on grounds of differences in experience, culture, or national need.

In addition to such distinctions as those just mentioned, two major conflicts between the American and German approaches require some elaboration. First, there is perhaps no phenomenon in American social-studies curriculum more characteristic of the current decade than the rapid diminishing of the common curriculum and the opening up of early elective opportunities in the social sciences, frequently including narrowly defined topical electives in American and world histories. German schools, on the other hand, are holding steadfastly to an entirely common curriculum, within school types, offering virtually no electives. To the extent that there exists any trend at all with respect to this topic, it is a trend toward a common curriculum transcending even the school types, particularly in SPD-governed states. A complete explanation of this conflict is not our purpose here, even if it were entirely within our competence to do so. However, the central difference is one of basic philosophic assumptions. German educators assume that some knowledge is of infinitely more worth than other knowledge—that the value of knowledge to people is not a matter of their individual perceptions of it, felt needs for it, nor immediate curiosity. Too, as we have already seen, the sorting and placing function of Germany's schools renders individual choice less critical than society's needs and expectations. American assumptions are far more humanistic and relativistic. We tend to assume, more so during the decade of the seventies than before, that knowledge, skills, and values that are related to individual student interests and needs will best promote individual happiness and success, and ultimately collective happiness and success. The American assumption would likely continue that, in any event, it should be the individual's right to choose and not society's right to impose. Furthermore, Americans and Germans, while sharing the elusive objective

of equal opportunity, are in a sense at opposite poles in deciding its curriculum implications. Americans generally feel that equal opportunity is possible only if we maximumly diversify the curriculum to meet every child's individual needs. Some German educators, on the other hand, see the differences in curriculum of the past (among the three types of secondary schools) as a major contributor to elitism in German schools, thereby concluding that an egalitarian curriculum should be a common curriculum.

Finally, there is the closely related conflict between diversification and unification. American social-studies curricula, in widening the range of elective opportunities for students, are in many cases fragmenting traditional survey courses in geography, American and world history, and government into a multitude of much more narrowly defined, topical courses of quarter or semester length such as Age of Jackson, the American Revolution, American Foreign Policy Since 1945, the Italian Renaissance, and Lands and Peoples of Southeast Asia. German social educators, by contrast, are moving now to eliminate even the small amount of curriculum differentiation of the past by establishing such integrative courses as the Hessian *Gesellschaftslehre*, and the *Gemeinschaftkunde* in the *Gymnasias* throughout West Germany.

Even the federal ministry loses no opportunity to push the curriculum toward further unification of content. In the 1970 Report of the Federal Government on Education, the federal Education Ministry complained that the "subjects of instruction remain isolated from one another, even when they so clearly overlap that they should at least for a time be presented as a comprehensive group of subjects." This recommendation was applied to both the social sciences and the natural sciences. The ministry also complained that the present fragmentation results in the complete omission of behavioral sciences and economics from the curriculum.¹¹ (This charge is quite significantly true with regard to behavioral science, less so regarding economics. Many lessons in *Sozialkunde* are clearly basic economics.)

11. *Report of the Federal Government on Education*, p. 199.

The American trend away from unification of content is, as already stated, supported largely by the overriding importance that we place upon allowing each individual to find within our schools that knowledge that will best satisfy his individual interests and needs. The countertrend in German schools seems to be secondarily supported by principles of Gestalt psychology emphasizing the importance of a global, integrated view of society, its problems, and its institutions. The trend, however, seems more politically supported than psychologically. The unified programs are born in our judgment more largely of frustration with history instruction that has not generally given enough attention to contemporary social and political problems and, thereby, has not been an effective instrument for promoting social change nor the perennially sought after "critical thinking democratic citizen." To the contrary, many Germans who wish to promote major change seem to see conventional history instruction, maintained as a separate entity, as an obstacle to change and to democratization.

Instructional Goals

In the logical order of things, a discussion of goals could reasonably be expected to precede that of the curriculum. We have chosen, however, to reverse that logical order because there is a certain concreteness to the curriculum, whereas educational goals in any society tend to be abstract and esoteric. We have made the judgment that the latter may be rendered somewhat more sensible by some prior knowledge of the former.

Consideration of goals for social education in Germany must begin with the goals of the federal and state governments and their respective ministries concerned with education. As we have pointed out previously, the system used for social education in Germany by the local schools and teachers are outlined by the ministries. Since the early days of Allied occupation after World War II, the primary aim, first of the occupiers, then quite sincerely of the German leaders themselves, was political socialization of the German people, namely, an eradication of all traces of Nazism and reeducation of Germans for democracy. In 1947, the Allied Control Commission directed the German ministers that "all schools should lay emphasis upon education for civic responsibility and a democratic way of life, by means of the content of the curriculum . . . and by the organization of the school itself."¹ In the case of curriculum change, the response of the German leadership was immediately positive and continues to be. In regard to the reorganization of the school, opposition to radical change was so strong that the occupiers soon eliminated such suggestions from their directives.

During the following years, all German states adopted formal statements of their intention to become a democratic peo-

1. Directive No. 54 in H. Merkt, *Dokumente zur Schulreform in Bayern* (Munich: Richard Pflaum, 1952), p. 163.

ple. A typical example is the state of Lower Saxony, which stated that "schools have the duty of preparing young people entrusted to them . . . to become independent minded and responsible citizens of a democratic, social and constitutionally governed state," a proclamation formulated in the Education Act of 1954.

Subsumed under the national goal of democratization are a number of more specific components. First, the schools through *politische Bildung* must find ways to promote what Dr. Gustav Heinemann, the federal president, called in 1973 a "conscious attitude toward state and society," as opposed to more knowledge about democracy and its institutions.² While this would seem to be a conventional bit of rhetoric to American social-studies teachers, for German educators, espousal of "attitude" education as a higher priority than knowledge accumulation is a radical proposal.

Secondly, and directly related to the above, is the urgency for an end to generations of political apathy that has continually plagued the German people. We referred earlier to Dahrendorf's claim that the political apathy of Germans is not a superficial characteristic, reflected by failure to vote on election day. In Germany, says Dahrendorf, "Politics never became a national passion or a respected part of national culture. Indeed, when German liberalism stumbled from defeat to defeat during the nineteenth century, the exact antithesis of the political being emerged, the deliberately unpolitical German."³ Stern goes further to conclude that "the unpolitical German is both the . . . cause and effect of Germany's persistent political failure."⁴

Finally, there are two national political objectives that are partly distinct from and yet partly components of the political

2. Remarks by President Gustav Heinemann on occasion of awarding of the Theodor Heuss Prize in 1973 in Gerd Renken, "The Stony Path toward the Responsible Citizen: Forms of Political Education in West German Education." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 14 (1973):6.

3. Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 314.

4. F. Stern, "The Political Consequences of the Unpolitical German." *Geschichte* 3 (1960).

socialization goal. The first is a determination by the leadership of both parties to eliminate through the schools the rigid class distinctions of imperial, preindustrial Germany—distinctions that are as often cultivated as countered by existing German social structures. Achieving social equality through curriculum content without revising the often revered social structures of which the school system itself is a prime example, structures that sustain and cultivate inequality, is another of the many discouraging enigmas with which German social educators and German leadership must deal. The achievement of this goal is doubly complicated in that the SPD and CDU remain poles apart on their perceptions of an egalitarian society and on their priorities. For example, the SPD would seemingly risk some loss of stability and tradition to attain their perception of the goal; whereas the CDU assuredly would not. The second major national goal that emerged even from the earliest days of recovery from World War II was the promotion of an international view of Germany's future. Disunity with its European neighbors and with the United States had clearly been a major cause of Germany's recent unhappiness. Therefore, the Germany of the future would be a partner with its neighbors and with the United States. It would be a partner socially, economically, militarily, and some day even politically in a united Europe. No longer would the flames of militant nationalism be fed by German history teachers. Instead students must come to see and accept Germany as one small nation among many with shared responsibilities, a shared cultural heritage, and shared hopes for the future.

Renken has identified five phases, in terms of major national goals for *politische Bildung*, which have marked its evolution since World War II. The goals implied have been essentially cumulative.

1. Beginning in about 1948, training of students towards community and partnership with other nations
2. Beginning in 1953, transmission of basic knowledge of formal regulations and principles of democratic order and procedure
3. After 1956, training for political involvement and the

- challenging of students to go to work in political groups or organizations supported by the state
4. Training for critical thought, for the ability to criticize the breach between the ideal and current practice which reveals itself in the democratic order, beginning in about 1962
 5. Building in students a consciousness of and an attitude of conflict in the sense of appreciating or implementing individual or group interests, after 1965.⁵

We have discussed earlier the sharp conflicts that exist in Germany between the major political parties on educational matters. With regard to the major national goals for *politische Bildung*, however, differences between the majority positions of the two parties are virtually imperceptible. The differences occur with regard to the instruments implied by such broad policies, the speed with which they are to be implemented, and the degree of implementation. For example, both parties support the principle of social equality and equal opportunity, but the SPD is prepared to launch a major restructuring of the curriculum and of the schools to bring it about; whereas the Christian Democrats are inclined toward more modest modifications of the current structures. Both parties are inclined to believe that in a democratic society, students must be taught to critically think about political and social problems and contemporary institutions, but for the Christian Democrats such thought should begin at a minimum with acceptance of the basic assumptions of the federal constitution; whereas, the SPD is sometimes accused of accepting the basic assumptions of Marx and leaving those of the federal constitution open to question. Most SPD members nationally would reject that charge as unfounded. In fact, the SPD would probably approve critical examination of a somewhat wider range of contemporary institutions and practices than would the CDU.

There is, of course, a substantial difference between major instructional goals as perceived by state and federal administrators and university specialists and those goals as perceived by classroom teachers. In pursuing this facet of our investiga-

5. Renken, "The Stony Path," p. 6.

tion, we began by developing a list of potential goals for social-studies instruction that were then used as a framework for characterizing our observations during interviews and classroom visitations.

We discovered a number of internal distinctions with regard to goal conflict between a practical aim such as "*politische Bildung* should help students understand and, if possible, resolve social and political problems," and such a classicistic goal as "history and social studies should provide that knowledge of culture and traditions without which a person cannot be considered to be truly educated—that which would produce the philosopher's 'good man.'" First, we found that there is generally more concern by teachers of the elementary schools and the *Hauptschule* than those of the higher secondary schools that the content have some reasonably direct potential application in the lives of students. Teachers in the *Gymnasia*, in particular, are likely to be considerably less concerned about practical application and more concerned with transmitting that classic knowledge of "great ideas and ideals" of which every educated person should be a master. One can also see to some extent the same conflict between the goals of history teachers and those of the *Sozialkunde*, with the concern for immediate and practical relevance being greater with the teachers of *Sozialkunde*. Likewise, the advocates of the new North Rhine-Westphalia and Hessian curriculum plans place far less importance on "history for history's sake" than upon the practical value in everyday life of what is known, or to be more precise in these cases what knowledge and participation skills are necessary to build a more perfect political, social, and economic system. Finally, in most instances, where teachers are inclined to reject the mysticism of classical humanist goals, the precise practical goals having higher priority do tend to be those democratization goals prescribed by the state and those previously discussed.

We also proposed the goal that "history and social science should promote pride in the national heritage, and thereby, promote unity and self respect." This goal, it seems to us, is still a popular goal in America despite the self-doubts created

by our involvement in Vietnam and the Watergate calamity. German teachers and educators viewed this goal with deep suspicion, and it was consistently rejected as a palatable goal for *politische Bildung*. We were told that some history teachers still hold this as a highly important objective, but we have encountered no teacher who professes to be in this group. The reasons for the rejection of this curriculum goal are essentially those discussed earlier relative to the absence of German history as a distinct entity in the curriculum; the abuses of nationalism and history by the National Socialists; the uncertainty as to what constitutes the German nation; and the national commitment to European unity.

We also proposed the objective of an American inquiry process to the effect that "History and social science should teach students how to think in the same kinds of critical, analytical ways in which a professional historian, geographer, or social scientist would think." This objective generally produced a quizzical expression and ten minutes of clarification by the interviewers. The collective response is that the American form of this goal is not relevant to German education. German teachers of *politische Bildung* do emphasize knowledge of "critical thinking" and "objective analysis," but two clear differences do exist between the German approach and the American inquiry orientation. First, most German teachers see these goals as implying knowledge and not a new method of instruction. For example, in an American history classroom with an inquiry orientation, students would be led to examine certain fundamental historical documents or raw data from which they would formulate hypotheses and ultimately draw inferences, much as a professional historian might do. German students, on the other hand, might well be expected to learn how the political or social background of a historian influences his interpretation of historical data and perhaps some others of the important principles of historiography, but class time would not be used for individual students or groups to actually analyze and interpret historical documents. Likewise, we visited a classroom in Offenbach where students were learning some of the criteria for interpreting the biases of newspaper reporting, propaganda

techniques to be alert for, and something about the particular editorial biases of certain frequently read newspapers, all of which are substantive knowledge to be mastered. Students do not use valuable class time critically analyzing newspaper materials. Rather they use the time to gain more information about various subjects.

Thus, we are led to make one of the following key generalizations. German *politische Bildung* is designed to transmit knowledge and to transmit it abundantly. German teachers do not generally accept the widespread American notion that a good social-studies program should reflect a balanced concern for substantive knowledge objectives, process or skills objectives, and affective objectives. Intellectual processes or skills, as illustrated above, are functions of knowledge, not a separate coequal category of educational objectives. The German assumption, based upon their practices, seems to be that if one knows enough, he will be able to think rationally, reflectively, inductively, critically, or any other way an educational theorist might recommend. American theorists from Dewey to Bruner have insisted, to the contrary, that to be an effective thinker according to any of the aforementioned models, one must internalize the process through rigorous and continuous experience. Empirical research has yet to conclusively demonstrate the validity of either assumption.

As is the case with intellectual processes and skills, values and attitudes are indistinguishable from knowledge in German classrooms. The German idea of truth does not accommodate well to relativism, to uncertainty, nor to the American concept of pluralism. Germany is a free society but not a pluralistic one in the American sense. One teaches that certain political and economic practices and institutions are right and others are based upon a false doctrine. Rarely, in our experience were these viewed as values and attitudes—rather this is additional knowledge to be mastered. Most German teachers, as individuals, have encountered no need whatever for a Donald Oliver, a Sid Simon, a James Shaver, nor a Lawrence Kohlberg (all leading American authorities on value education). By making no clear distinctions between value education and conven-

tional transmission of knowledge, a difficult irony is created in that the basic objectives of the government for *politische Bildung* are, in virtually all cases, more attitudinal than cognitive. How does one internalize a value or an attitude about the knowledge one has encountered when the system within which one operates has effectively denied the existence of such a thing, that is, if one accepts the currently fashionable American assumption that value education requires uniquely different teaching strategies from that of cognitive instruction.

Moral values are a somewhat different matter. Moral education in American social studies is presently the newest and most powerful wave for revision of the social-studies curriculum. In Germany, moral education in the form of religious education has, traditionally, been a separate and crucial component of the school curriculum. Though we are not considering this component of the German curriculum as *politische Bildung*, it is relevant because of its current importance to American social-studies educators. Religious instruction in German schools is offered in separate classes for Protestants and for Catholics, typically two sessions weekly. The instruction may include both religious dogma and moral precepts to be mastered. The courses are required of all students till an age (which varies from state to state) when they are allowed the freedom of choosing to withdraw from instruction. A growing number of students are choosing to do so. In Bavaria, for example, one-third of all Protestant students and one-fourth of all Catholic students leave the religion classes at their earliest opportunity.⁶ Predominantly Protestant states are consistently more affected by early withdrawals from such instruction than Catholic Bavaria.

Primarily in response to these withdrawals from religion classes, in the states of Bavaria and Rhineland-Palatinate, students withdrawing from religion classes will immediately be required to enroll in ethics instruction. The new ethics courses unlike the religion courses are even promotion subjects in that an unsatisfactory grade could result in the student not being

⁶ "Ethics Teaching in Bavaria: For Whom and How?" *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 4 (1973):3.

promoted to a higher class. The courses in secular-based morality deal with a wide range of moral issues and principles and the bases for these principles, but as with all other value education, the student is expected to become the master of a body of discrete knowledge, which is defined in considerable detail by the Bavarian curriculum guide. For example, during the seventh year "Conflicts and their Settlement" constitutes one of the major units of instruction. During that unit, students are to examine the causes of conflicts in the "inter-human sphere," develop the ability to settle inter-human conflicts while upholding the legitimate interests of all concerned, and to learn about possibilities of peaceful settlement of conflicts. In the tenth-grade segment of ethics instruction, there is a unit entitled "Authority and Self-Recognition." This unit deals with moral conflicts (concerning response to authority) ranging from the crises of puberty to public issues of politics and economics. Among the principal learning goals for this unit are "Realization that it is one of the basic needs of man to reassure himself by authority" but also the "Realization of the danger of uncritical allegiance to authority."⁷ The German acceptance of moral training as a legitimate function of the school is traditionally a much stronger commitment than in the United States where relativistic philosophy has frequently raised doubts as to the legitimacy of teaching the moral righteousness of any principle, human quality, or action. Even today, the popular approach in American social studies is the Kohlberg model, whereby students are to "mature as moral decision-makers" by frequently resolving moral dilemmas with a minimum of direction by the teachers.⁸ While it is true that a great many American social-studies teachers teach moral values directly each day, many would disclaim the plan or intent to do so.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

8. Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Education in the Social Studies." *Social Education* 37 (May 1973):369-75.

Methods, Materials, and Classroom Tone

The question "What method should I use today?" is one that is rarely asked by teachers of *politische Bildung*. To avoid any risk of overstatement, we would conclude that the question is far less important to German teachers than it is to American social-studies teachers. To begin with, teacher-educators in Germany place heavy emphasis upon making decisions about goals for instruction, upon content selection, and upon organization and sequencing of content but relatively little emphasis upon teaching techniques. Likewise, the agenda of in-service teacher conferences (In-service professional meetings are relatively rare by American standards. There are no incentives provided by schools for such activity.) are likely to focus on goal and content questions and rarely, if ever, on questions of method. Finally, most of the curriculum guides that we have examined include lengthy statements of objectives and proposed content, with typically a brief paragraph or two urging teachers to employ a variety of techniques and to take advantage of available audiovisual media in accomplishing the stated objectives. Most importantly, statements relating to methods of instruction are rarely connected directly with objectives or content of a particular type.

During the many hours of our observations, we saw little deviation from a daily routine of classic recitation, teacher questioning, students responding, with some intermittent lecture and explanation of difficult concepts. The teacher is without exception at the center of classroom activity, interrogating, explaining, directing, and evaluating.

In a typical class the teacher, through much of the hour if not all of it, moves through his list of questions for the day. Some teachers stand, move about the room, and enthusiastically pursue a correct response to their questions, while a few sit immobile behind their desks, read their questions, listen to responses, and record credits as discretely as possible on a

check sheet or grade booklet. A few teachers make use of chalkboards to structure or outline the developing concept as students provided the material in their responses. Most of the teachers, however, did not do so, requiring the students to interrelate the ideas themselves, as they were presented by their peers. For American social-studies teachers who wish to compare activities in German *politische Bildung* to popular classroom interaction analysis models, such as Amidon and Flanders, the following generalizations accurately summarize our experiences.¹ First, virtually all classroom interaction is teacher initiated. Secondly, interaction among students, related to the topic being dealt with in class, is quite rare. Small group work that would facilitate such interaction is even more rare. In the latter case, the authors recall only one instance of such an activity. This particular incident was in a *Grundschule* classroom in Hanau, and the small group work was being used in conjunction with an inductive lesson on the concepts of human roles and status, reminiscent of the materials and strategies produced by the *Sociological Resources for Secondary Schools* project.² The latter aspect of this observation experience was as rare as was the small group work aspect of it. Finally, we observed that serious deviations from the daily content and recitation plans do not generally occur, from which we are inclined to conclude that such deviations would not be tolerable to most teachers.

As to the nature of the questions asked by teachers during class recitations, several observations can be made. We do not recall witnessing the asking of any questions that seemed to us designed to elicit uncertain, nebulous, opinionated, evaluative, or entirely subjective responses. Our impression is that there is usually a correct or appropriate response. Despite current references to the method of critical thinking, we observed no open discussion of controversial public issues, an observa-

1. See Edmund J. Amidon and Ned Flanders, *The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom* (Minneapolis: Paul S. Amidon and Associates, Inc., 1963), p. 12, and R. F. Bales, *Interaction Process Analysis: A Method for the Study of Small Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1950).

2. *Sociological Resources for Secondary Schools*. Curriculum materials published by Allyn & Bacon, Inc., Boston, Mass.

tion that was reinforced as generally valid by several of the national authorities whom we interviewed. This is not to say that their questions were poor ones. Although most of the questions required factual recall of material from the assigned reading or from an earlier lecture, some questions were asked that required students to relate their personal experiences to class content. Although inductive logic or inquiry was rarely required of students, deductive logic was not infrequently required. One particular instance was in a *Sozialkunde* class in a Frankfurt *Hauptschule* during which the instructor frequently required students to suggest examples or applications for the several economic ideas that were his subject for the hour. Students were required, for example, to provide numerous examples that were, and were not, compatible with the concept of capital. This teacher was one of those who carefully structured responses of the students on the chalkboard during the hour, so that students at the end of the hour had a complete vision of the interrelationships discussed.

Partly as a result of a decade of unique curriculum development resulting in a new social studies, such unconventional teaching strategies as inquiry or the method of inductive logic, simulation, and several models for value conflict analysis or values clarification are currently popular with Americans. We have observed no evidence of any of these techniques in German schools, excepting the isolated instance in the elementary school at Hanau that we described earlier. Teacher-educators do consistently promote a greater variation in methods, including the method of inductive logic, but it was interesting to us that even the most innovative of methodological demonstrations, The Poppy Pen project that was mentioned earlier, would look exactly like any other recitation to a non-German-speaking observer. The teacher asks questions, and the students answer in turn. German classroom activities do not often vary in appearance between the conservative and the radical. Only the cognitive types and levels of questioning vary.

We are also convinced that teachers of *politische Bildung* rely far less upon educational media than do their counterparts in the United States. They do, of course, base their instruction

upon textbooks as do American teachers, and the many texts that we examined were well illustrated with colored photographs and pictures, charts, graphs, and maps. We were told this progress is relatively new in Germany, where only a few years ago textbooks were noted for their drabness and lack of visual appeal. Though we attempted no systematic textbook analysis, our impression is that the biases of omission concerning the Nazi years reported by Krug in 1961 have been largely remedied, implicit in our earlier discussions of curriculum and goals.³ German teachers generally base their courses directly upon the adopted text. Some teachers do supplement the text with outside readings, especially in the *Gymnasia*, but most teachers apparently do not do so.

Apart from the textbook and the always available, infrequently used, chalkboard, use of media is minimal. To some extent this seems to be due to the more limited and more theoretically isolated concept of method, but there is also an important practical reason. In German secondary schools, the usual practice is that the student will remain in his home-room all day while the teachers move from room to room. These hourly moves clearly discourage the use of heavy projectors, record players, and equipment that would need to be moved up and down hallways and stairways all day—or in some schools, requiring the competitive scheduling of the school projection or audiovisual room. There are excellent films, filmstrips, and sound recordings available, and administrators, supervisors, and teacher-educators often plead for more use of them, but we must conclude that such usage is quite infrequent. Statistics on the use of audiovisual equipment in the schools of Bavaria during the 1972–1973 school year reinforce our observations. A survey during that year found that teachers in the *Hauptschule* and the *Grundschule* claimed to employ audiovisual equipment 6 percent of the time during instruction; teachers in the *Realschule* indicated that they used such materials 5 percent of the time; and teachers in the *Gymnasia* claimed such usage about 4.5 percent of

3. Mark Krug, "History Textbooks in West Germany." *School Review* 69 (Winter 1961):461–87.

the time. In Bavaria, there was during 1972 and 1973 a mean of slightly more than one film projector, filmstrip projector, overhead projector, tape recorder, and record player per school.⁴ Implicit in that statistic is the assumption that no more than one teacher in the school is generally expected to employ a particular type of equipment during a period of instruction.

In visiting with German curriculum developers, it became apparent to us that increasing the use of audiovisual media in the classrooms is one of their top priorities today and one of the areas of greatest embarrassment to educational leaders. A reference back to the current curriculum development projects described in Chapter 5 reinforces this judgment. Most of these projects were either described as multimedia projects or incorporated media production as a major development component.

Another by-product of the earlier mentioned movement of teachers from room to room during the school day is the absence of wall and bulletin-board displays appropriate to the teacher's subject matter. Although in some classrooms we did see cartoons or posters related to the special interests of the students, most *politische Bildung* classrooms tend to be relatively bare of colorful and substantively relevant wall and bulletin-board displays, at least by American standards.

Many American social-studies teachers will be tempted to judge harshly many of the methodological aspects of German *politische Bildung*. Most American social-studies teachers are committed to the assumptions that methodological diversity is an unquestionable good; that classroom questioning should liberally sample the upper levels of Bloom's taxonomy; that classroom interaction is good only if there is a reasonable balance of student-initiated interaction with that which is teacher initiated; and that massive use of modern media is indispensable to effective instruction. More importantly, most American curriculum theorists, among them Dewey, Metcalf, Bruner, and Fenton, have inextricably interwoven instructional methods with their goals and content. With all of these theorists, a

4. "The School and Audio Visual Media." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 5 (1975):66-67.

method of problem solving, reflective thinking, discovery or inquiry was implied by the unique nature of the goals and content that they prescribed. Likewise, the several currently popular value-conflict analysis or clarification strategies seem to Americans to be implicit and inescapable if one accepts the legitimacy of certain types of affective goals for the social studies.

As with content, German educators do not start with our assumptions. If, for example, we begin with the assumption that the function of schools is primarily, if not solely, the transmission of knowledge and that intellectual processes and values are totally subsumed under that goal, one has quickly destroyed the central American argument for a wide range of teaching strategies. If knowledge of critical thinking and controversial problem areas produces critical thinkers, then a unique and more time-consuming methodology is not necessary and may even be counterproductive.

Americans must, of course, counter that for motivational reasons we still must use a varied approach to instruction because of the wide range of interests and abilities of individual pupils. Many German teachers, though not all, begin with the assumption that the problem of individualization has been adequately dealt with organizationally, by assigning students to separate schools that are appropriate to their special abilities and needs. Those German educators who do advocate a more varied methodology and greater use of media (typically government officials and professors from teachers colleges) generally seem to do so on the grounds of reducing boredom and increasing motivation.

A young history teacher from a *Gymnasium* in Heidelberg summed up the conflict in an informal assessment of American social studies. He stated that American social-studies teachers seemed to him to be "obsessed with methods and technology" and "too little concerned with theory." Essentially our interpretation of his criticism is that the German theory of education is largely concerned with the traditional philosophic question "What knowledge is of most worth?" Instructional methods and technology have not been components of such theory

in Germany; therefore, there is no theoretical, thus rational, basis for them. True, there are some practical benefits in using different methods from time to time, but a teacher-scholar should spend most of his time dealing with other far more important pedagogical questions and issues.

Finally, we pursued, with considerable curiosity, some apparent relationships between methods and classroom tone and some seemingly important contrasts between German and American classrooms.

American social-studies teachers are inclined to associate student interest and enthusiasm to a considerable extent with diversity in classroom activities and diversity of curriculum offerings. If this association is entirely valid, then German classrooms should be centers of boredom and disinterest. Our observations did not bear this out. It was, in fact, impossible to gain any confident impression of difference between the interest and enthusiasm of American students of social studies and German students of *politische Bildung*. Some German students were, indeed, clearly bored with their recitations as are a great many American students with their greater mix of classroom activities. More often than not, however, the majority of students seemed to be in a moderate-to-high state of enthusiasm during recitations as, with each new question asked by the teacher, hands would raise and fingers snap, attempting to be the privileged one of providing the correct response. One might expect that the recall-versus-analytical character of the questions being asked would make a clear difference in the amount of light in the students' eyes, but we again could see no difference. Since methodology proved to be a virtual invariable, it seemed to us that the personality and enthusiasm of the teachers were probably the most important factors in producing student enthusiasm. Our firm conclusion is that German students have become partly mesmerized and partly conditioned to being well rewarded in their frequent opportunities to provide right answers to the teacher's questions, immediately receiving a favorable mark on the teacher's near-at-hand grade pad. Those students who habitually come to class with plenty of right answers to give obviously take consid-

erable pleasure in these procedures and are driven to even greater efforts by them. Those students who, by virtue of poor study habits or lower ability, don't have many answers are very likely those who stare morosely at the classroom door in anticipation of the noon escape. As a whole, German students seemed equally as inspired during their recitations as a typical class of American students doing a Simon value clarification lesson, or trying to devise a way to achieve their nation's goals in the simulation *Dangerous Parallel*. It appears that motivation can be a function of many devices, devices that seem, as in this case, diametrically counter to one another. The question that both Americans and Germans must ask is where each approach to motivation must ultimately lead, and whether that ultimate end is in either or both cases desirable.

Finally, it is impossible to ignore the famous myth or fact of German classroom discipline and order. Despite the obvious difference in quality of discipline between the *Gymnasium* and the *Hauptschule*, our observations have convinced us that general classroom order on the whole is neither better nor worse in German schools than in American schools. However, there is an unmistakable difference. Discipline or order in German *politische Bildung* classrooms seems to an extraordinary extent to be a direct function of the teacher's activity or inactivity. We have observed in classroom after classroom the phenomenon of students remaining quiet and attentive as the teacher asks his question and a student responds, then to reach a crescendo of unrelated private conversations within seconds of the teacher's failure to ask the next question or to continue with an explanation. When the teacher continues, sometimes with the aid of a devastating glare at an offender, the quiet usually returns quickly. This sudden rising and falling off of private conversations seemed phenomenal in German classrooms. There are at least two explanations of it. The first, if one doesn't mind reinforcing stereotypes, is that they are totally conditioned to be dependent upon order by authority, having a less fully developed inner mechanism for self-discipline in the absence of this. A second, and probably more important, explanation is that after years of experience with the

rhythm of the recitation method, students have learned to adjust their desires for relief from class work and for interaction with friends to that rhythm. In all of these instances or explanations, the persistent thread is that of a sort of Skinnerian conditioning to patterns of activity and permissible behavior that are unchanging.

There are severe behavior problems in German schools as in American ones that must be dealt with by teachers and administrators. Though we strongly suspect that German schools have a much smaller share of these than American schools, we are in no position to statistically support that suspicion. What is certain is that in German schools, such problems are usually dealt with immediately and firmly. Tolerance for severe and chronic discipline problems is much lower than in American schools. Corporal punishment as a disciplinary device has become increasingly unpopular in German schools and is, in fact, unlawful in some states.

The principal defense against severe discipline problems may well be the tripartite educational system itself. There is an ever-present threat in the *Gymnasium* and the *Realschule* to move students who cause difficulties to a lower level school. In an American school, teachers generally have no option but to make the best of such situations. Even in the *Hauptschule*, if a student misbehaves he may be deprived of better apprenticeships and technical-training opportunities.

Classroom life in the self-contained classrooms of the *Grundschule* is a much longer and more complex story than the foregoing, though quite consistent with it. Richard Warren in his case study of education in the German village of Rebhausen has presented a typical example of this classroom life. We will not attempt to improve upon his masterful job. His conclusions are worthy of repetition here. He states that his observations reinforce the long-established characterization of the German teacher as *König im Klassenzimmer* (King of the Classroom).

The pattern of discipline reflects a markedly authoritarian implementation of teaching responsibilities. There is little deviation from this pattern; where it exists it seems more ideological than real. The use of physical punishment, shame,

public denunciation, and peer censorship to affect in the classroom acceptable behavior and academic performance are widely shared instructional and disciplinary devices.⁵

How do students react to this experience? Warren's observation is that their adjustment to such experience is uncertain and elusive. He states that

There are behavior patterns which appear to be compensatory in their function; the instances of crying among children when poor grades are announced, the erratic, almost frenzied, physical activity of boys during recess, the exercise of adult-like authority and discipline by older siblings toward younger siblings, the *esprit de corps* characterizing the cooperative efforts of students to circumvent or pool homework assignments. It might even be hypothesized that there is a causal relationship between the constraining environment of the classroom and the students' common delight in nature. . . . Of greater significance, I came to feel, is the kind of adjustment students routinely display in the classroom—an adjustment characterized by a certain resiliency directed toward the teacher. The exercise of authority, however forceful, is neither hesitant nor obtuse. A student may protest and seek to avoid the consequences of his behavior, but the dissent he manifests is usually short-lived; a few minutes later he is likely to be an eager participant, seeking the attention and approval of the teacher. The scene enacted day after day, seems to point to authority as the unalterable norm of school life and to the teacher as both the personification and the sole agent of release from it.⁶

There are not many German teachers at the elementary level who are believers in *Schwache Erziehung* (permissive education), but Warren's conclusions must be qualified a bit for the nation. His observations almost certainly are more accurate in their description of rural, as opposed to urban Germany. The differences, however, are more of degree than of basic character. Authority and conditioning do permeate the German classroom.

5. Richard Warren, *Education in Rebhausen* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967), p. 70.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

Education of Teachers

The German method of training teachers for *politische Bildung* and all other specialties is segmented in a manner resembling the school system itself. Recall the description in Chapter 3 of the sharp, horizontal delineations among preschool education, the primary school, and the secondary sphere, and within the latter the vertical, hierarchical barrier separating the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, and *Gymnasium*. This fragmentation is reflected in and nurtured by a system of teacher training that takes place in several different kinds of institutions. Before describing these institutions and their programs, however, attention must be called to a recent development that is transforming basic assumptions about the German method of training teachers.

One of the educational constants since World War II has been the chronic shortage of teachers of all kinds. Young people have been encouraged to enter the profession and have responded in record numbers, but still the undersupply persisted.¹ The demand seemed insatiable and some of the measures to meet it were imaginative, even desperate. For example, as late as 1973 the state of Hamburg recruited non-German-speaking math and science teachers from the United States to help staff their schools. The following statement from a 1969 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report was a typical statement of the problem and the routine prognosis for its resolution. "During the entire post-war period there has been a considerable teacher shortage in the Federal Republic. *It is clear now that this state of affairs will continue for the foreseeable future* (italics ours)."²

One now speaks of the shortage of teachers in the past

1. "Latest School Statistics." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 1 (1975):7-8.
2. *Training, Recruitment, and Utilisation of Teachers: Country Case Studies, Primary and Secondary Education, Germany, Belgium, United Kingdom* (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1969), p. 129.

tense, for what is apparent today is that the situation has dramatically reversed itself with the undersupply of teachers having been replaced by an oversupply. Governmental planners knew of course that the birthrate had been declining and that more teachers were completing training, but they had foreseen at least a near balance of supply and demand during the late seventies and eighties. What was not predicted, or even predictable, was the impact of the oil-induced recession of 1973 that decreased the employment possibilities in the private sector and caused an increasing number of young people to pursue teaching as a career.³ Meanwhile the state governments, due to financial problems, slowed plans for educational expansion, including the creation of new teaching posts. This new and unwelcome development is threatening to disrupt and dramatically alter all aspects of training teachers.

Preschool Education

Preschool education, as noted in Chapter 3, is not part of the public school system. Education for the three to five year olds is subject to federal rather than state laws, and the state ministry responsible for their supervision would more likely be youth, interior, or social, and labor ministries rather than education. Although the orientation may soon change for five year olds, the Froebel-inspired play atmosphere still prevails in the classroom and no academic work is expected or even attempted.

The training of kindergarten teachers takes place in schools and training centers below the level of higher education, half of which are controlled by nongovernmental organizations such as welfare associations. The academic requirement for matriculation is the completion of ten years of schooling, and while this is being increased, it is still lower than the thirteen required for regular schoolteachers. Often this training is preceded by an additional year at a special domestic science school or one year of preliminary practice, the latter being the recommended and emerging practice.

3. "Calculation Containing Numerous Unknown Factors." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 13 (1974):188.

The course of studies is mainly nonacademic concentrating on developing skills in the play and artistic activities that would later be taught in the classroom.

Although pedagogics and psychology are on the training plan, it can generally be said that artistic subjects predominate. Thus, German kindergarten teachers were trained to a standard of perfection undoubtedly far above what was necessary for infants in the kindergarten, in painting techniques, lino-printing, batik, enamelling and woodwork of all kinds, not forgetting music, dancing and gymnastics.⁴

(The past tense is being used because there are presently some changes anticipated due to the possible transition to academic training for the five year olds.)

After a year of professional practice and the successful completion of an examination, one would then become a licensed kindergarten teacher. Many of the girls who are attracted to the position by the lower academic requirements and the shorter training soon drop out to get married. One recent study showed a figure as high as two-thirds,⁵ and as later reentry into the profession is much more difficult than in the United States, this attrition has resulted in a relatively bright employment picture even today.

Although precise statistics are not available, it is believed that once trained the overwhelming majority of kindergarten teachers do not seek advancement in their profession.⁶ After three years of experience and two years of additional training, a few do become qualified as youth workers, and a few also take additional schooling and the examinations to become regular *Grundschule* teachers.⁷ This latter choice is especially appealing as civil-service status would be acquired and this involves higher pay and prestige as well as substantial fringe benefits such as longer vacations and shorter working hours. Some observers fear that the raising of academic standards and

4. Brigitte Mohr, "Pre-School Education in the Federal Republic of Germany," *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 4 (1973):5-14.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

the lengthening of the training period for kindergarten teachers to the point where they approximate those for primary school teaching would result in many girls choosing the latter. If this were the case an already critical situation would be aggravated.

Only about one-half the teachers have the proper nursery school qualifications. No figures exist to show the proportion of un-trained or half-trained among auxiliary staff but it is thought to be terrifyingly high.⁸

At this point we must conclude with a key generalization that applies to the training of kindergarten teachers within the German context and that, at the same time, will assist us in understanding the training of regular classroom teachers. It is all the more important for the reader to be aware of this because it is at variance with an American assumption.

The age of the pupil determines the length of training and also the prestige and pay of the teacher. Youth workers require more training than kindergarten teachers as their charges are older. This age factor will apply as well to primary and secondary schoolteachers. This fact is in sharp contrast to American practices where the length of training of early childhood, elementary, and secondary teachers is similar. While the American high-school teacher may have more prestige in the minds of some than his elementary school counterpart, if his education and experience are the same he would receive the same salary and the same official professional status.

Grundschule and Hauptschule

Teachers colleges, as contrasted with schools for kindergarten teachers, are a part of the system of higher education but in most German states not an integral part of the more prestigious university. Sometimes they are affiliated with other colleges within the same state, which is the case in North Rhine-Westphalia and also in Rhineland-Palatinate, where

8. Emil Schmalohr, "Evaluation of Pre-School Education: Research in the Federal Republic of Germany," *Problems in the Evaluation of Pre-School Education* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1975).

the three teachers colleges are considered branches of the same institution. Bavarian teachers colleges are designated as part of the state university system as an administrative convenience but the courses and the campuses remain separate. Only in the SPD states of Berlin, Hamburg, and Hesse does one find integration or affiliation with the university in a manner similar to schools of education on American university campuses. Only in these states could future teachers of the *Grundschule* and *Hauptschule* attend classes with future teachers for the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* or with other university students having different career objectives.

To matriculate, a student must have passed his *Abitur*, which of course represents thirteen years of study, and the successful passing of a rather rigorous examination. The teacher-training program requires six semesters or three years, and the various professional and academic activities in which the student will be involved can probably be best understood by grouping them as theoretical studies and practical training.⁹ The former takes place at the college and consists of classroom instruction in the educational sciences as well as in the academic disciplines of his teaching majors. Within educational sciences the three required areas are psychology, general teaching methods, and pedagogy. General teaching methods is highly theoretical in nature and broad in scope. It provides general principles of teaching and curriculum as opposed to specific methodology for teaching history or English and, as well, a theoretical background in preparation for the practical training to be described later.

Pedagogy deals with educational issues in a broader societal context and involves an examination of topics that are often found in the social foundations courses in American educa-

9. In this section the specific details apply to Rhineland-Palatinate. The authors are especially indebted to Prof. Heinz Helfrich of the teachers training college at Landau who cooperated in several lengthy interviews and supplied the following mimeographed documents: *Anhang zur Ordnung der Ersten Profung für das Lehramt an Grund- und Hauptschulen* and *Vorläufige Ordnung der Ersten Profung für das Lehramt an Grund- und Hauptschulen*.

tion. Among these are aims of education, the cultural background of education, education in historical perspective, and basic problems of contemporary education and training.

In addition to these three areas, one other would be selected from the following alternatives: (1) Catholic theology, (2) economics, (3) philosophy, (4) political science, (5) Protestant theology, and (6) sociology. These subjects should not be confused with the teaching majors that are part of the academic program, for even though they are theoretical they focus on aspects of the particular discipline that either apply in some way to education or those of special interest to teachers. In political science, for example, the historical and legal background of the German political system might be studied with possible emphasis upon political theory and teaching about the German political system.

Within theoretical studies, only one-third of the courses are in the educational sciences, while two-thirds are concerned with the academic subject matter that the student will later teach. From the available teaching majors listed below a student would select two; it was formerly three for specialization. Note that the *Grundschuldidaktik* would be chosen by primary schoolteachers as it covers basic knowledge in a number of different subjects. Note also the three teaching majors available under *politische Bildung*: geography, history, and *Sozialkunde*. Through the courses required in each of these majors the future teacher learns sufficient subject matter in required school subjects to be able to teach them at a later date.

1. Art education
2. Biology
3. Catholic religion
4. Chemistry
5. *Sozialkunde*
6. Elementary school subjects (*Grundschuldidaktik*)
7. English
8. Geography
9. German
10. History

11. Manual activities and handicrafts
12. Mathematics
13. Music
14. Physical education
15. Physics
16. Protestant religion

The second general grouping of activities, practical training, in contrast to the theoretical studies, takes place in the public schools and consists of three separate phases: (1) observations, (2) observation and general teaching, and (3) initial directed teaching. Among the German states one finds a great deal of variation in the amount of practical training. In Hesse we were told by teacher-educators that this phase is "not practical."

Observation takes place during the first two semesters at college. The student would spend one day a week in local schools and classrooms observing classroom activities and taking notes, and while he would not actually teach he would have an opportunity to discuss his observations and teaching in general with teachers college personnel.

The second in-school experience is observation and general teaching during the third and fourth semesters. Each student would have two of these intensive four-week exposures that are scheduled when the colleges are on vacation but the public schools are not; the first from mid-February to mid-March, and the second from mid-September to mid-October.

Traditionally one of these was in a town school and the other in a rural school, but today it is more likely that both would be in metropolitan areas. The student is assigned to a supervising teacher and would observe a minimum of fifty-five periods of forty-five minutes in duration. In addition he would teach at least fifteen periods, some of which would be observed and critiqued by a representative of the college. There can be no assurance that these lessons will be in one of his two teaching majors as these often do not coincide with those of his supervising teacher, especially if it were an older teacher with three majors.

During the fourth and fifth semesters the student takes

initial directed teaching that resembles an abbreviated form of student teaching combined with a seminar on methods. In these two semesters he learns how to prepare lesson plans, and he teaches a class in both of his teaching majors.

He and four or five of his classmates are assigned to a regular class where they alternate preparing and giving lessons under the supervision of the master teacher and a specialist from the college. A seminar follows in which the day's lesson is analyzed and evaluated. The actual teaching experience is quite limited in that it occurs only one day a week, and with four or five students alternating, each would teach only two or possibly three times during the semester. No grade is given on the lessons, but the professor from the college must attest that they have been satisfactorily completed.

At the end of the third year the student takes a comprehensive examination called the "first state examination." To be eligible he must complete six semesters of study and fulfill all of the course requirements in educational sciences and the academic disciplines of his teaching majors as well as the practical studies. In addition he must write a lengthy library research paper on some aspect of pedagogy or his teaching major.

The examination itself is comprehensive, based on what has been studied during the three-year program, and has both written and oral sections. Quite surprisingly few students fail the examination, a fact cited by an OECD report. "The dropout and failure rates are both low, so that nearly all students registering for a course of study at a College of Education pass the first State Examination three years later."¹⁰ Dr. Heinz Helfrich of the Speyer Teacher Training College confirmed this fact, stating that fewer than 10 percent fail but cautioning against concluding that the examination was easy. The examination is related to the material that the student has taken in courses, and a guide, or at least guidance, is available in preparing for it. The broad content areas are then known and the standards of performance relatively clear-cut so that students do know rather precisely what is expected from them.

It should be stressed that even though the studies and ex-

10. *Training, Recruitment, and Utilisation*, p. 130.

amination take place at the college, unlike the United States, the college is not empowered to grant a degree; so when a student passes the examination he receives a provisional certificate and not a college degree. This, however, is recognized as a significant accomplishment and until recently has meant automatic acceptance into the *Studienseminar* that is the advanced phase of teacher training to be described later.

Based on the preceding observations, we are now able to make a second dependable generalization about teacher training that also will guide us in the next section on the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. The amount of academic content to be taught determines the length of training and also the prestige and pay of the teacher. This explains, for example, why the *Hauptschule* teacher is trained with the *Grundschule* teacher even though the ages of their pupils are different. If age were the only consideration, this would not be the case, and it is another clear indication of the low academic orientation of the *Hauptschule*. The academic factor, as the age element, is contrary to prevailing American practices, so we must be especially cognizant of it. In the United States teachers of home economics, driver's education, and general math complete the same amount of training and receive the same salary as do teachers of Latin, history, physics, and trigonometry.

Realschule and Gymnasium

At first glance and in broad outline, the program used in training teachers for the *Realschule* and the *Gymnasium* resembles the one for the *Grundschule* and *Hauptschule*. A student must have the *Abitur* to matriculate and the program that he follows is also divided into two sections: the theoretical studies that are composed of academic subjects and educational science, and practical training. As in the teachers college, the teaching majors in *politische Bildung* are *Sozialkunde*, history, and geography, although at a university a wider selection of more specialized courses would be available. In the educational sciences he would again study psychology, general methods, and pedagogy with an elective chosen from alternatives like those listed earlier. In both aspects of the theoretical studies

a student must sign up for a certain number of lectures; he is free to attend them or not and complete a minimum number of seminars usually eight in both educational science and academic subjects. For the latter requirement the professor may, at his discretion, give a test, but it is more likely that he would require a scholarly term paper. Practical training is also included in the program. The minimum number of semesters is six for the prospective *Realschule* teacher and eight for the *Gymnasium* teacher, and during the final semester before the state examination a major library research paper would be written in one of the educational sciences or an academic discipline. The first state examination consists of written and oral sections, with the latter before a committee composed of university professors and representatives of the state ministry of education; a large majority of the candidates are successful although the success rate is not as high as in teachers colleges.

The preceding description, although accurate, if taken by itself is misleading. This explanation omits basic and profound dissimilarities between the two programs, attributable mainly to the differences between the two institutions preparing the future teacher. As mastery of a substantial amount of academic subject matter is thought indispensable for the future teacher of the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*, he studies at the university where the very highest level of academic standards are maintained. German universities generally enjoy a world-wide reputation for academic excellence that is probably matched in the United States only by the most prestigious universities such as Harvard, Chicago, and Stanford.

Within higher education the Germans are very precise about the hierarchical position of the various institutions, and the university stands at the pinnacle. Not even in common parlance would the teachers college and university be equated, as Americans might, and Germans would be completely befuddled by the reasoning that recently transformed the nineteen California state colleges into California state universities. In Germany the differences are broad, clear, and, above all, hierarchical.

This high level of scholarship is maintained by German professors, who in addition to the doctorate have completed a

long and rigorous habilitation period of post-doctoral studies including a second dissertation that usually takes from four to seven years to write. While teaching at the university, they would, of course, be conducting their own research for "it has further maintained the principle that true academic teaching can be given only by the professor engaged in research."¹¹ Very often the professor considers his students as incipient scholars, leading to this observation: "The upper secondary school teachers are trained at the universities as if they will all become university scholars themselves."¹²

Lest Americans misinterpret this quest for academic excellence, it should be stressed that the concept is not broad enough to include the practical varieties of excellence described by John Gardner in *Excellence: Can We Be Equal and Excellent Too?* The orientation is not only scholarly but also singularly theoretical and narrowly focused.

The German university is dominated—critics would say exploited—by the full professors. In the name of academic freedom it is he who decides the content of any given course according to the dictates of his scholarship and, one might add, probably corresponding to his own typically narrow research interests. There is no assurance, indeed no necessity, that course information relate to that which the student needs to pass the first state examination. An OECD report describes this traditional professional academic freedom and its considerable impact on student programs.

The principle of "*Lehrfreiheit*" (the right of the individual professor to decide in full liberty on the subject and timetable of his lectures and seminars each semester) has also contributed to uncertainty in the study programme. It has happened that a student was not able within the regular number of semesters foreseen to take all the courses and seminars required for the examination because they were not all offered

11. E. Boning and K. Roeloffs, *Three German Universities: Aachen, Bochum, Konstanz* (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1970), p. 86.

12. *Reviews of National Policies on Education: Germany* (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1972), p. 83.

within that time, or because they would not be arranged together in his time-table.¹³

It continues that "a considerable number of improvements have been made" during the sixties but concludes that a program organized in a manner comparable to the one in the teachers college is still far away.

It is obvious that the recent plans to establish regular study programmes for all disciplines, limit study duration, divide the study programme into a basic programme for all and an additional research programme only for the best, not to mention the occasional suggestion that some excellent researcher might not be a good teacher, *have been and to some extent still are considered heresy* (italics ours).¹⁴

Thus a sort of discontinuity exists in the training of teachers at the university that one does not find at the teachers college where the institution and the student are in agreement as to the task at hand. For example, the future teacher for the *Grundschule* and *Hauptschule* are spared this incongruity.

The state examination requirements are based on what the student should know to be a teacher, or a judge, both of the method of scientific work in his field and in the subject matter; the university programme is, in principle, based on introducing the student to the methods and problems of research; the student is thus likely to spend much time and energy on a small detail of exemplary research interest, only to find shortly before the examination that he has yet to go through a great deal of general background reading.¹⁵

And later in the same report a similar statement:

The university has never denied the fact that the majority of its students were studying to become judges, doctors or pastors and not professors or research scholars, and it has made concessions to that fact in course programmes and examinations. But the university has upheld the belief that its essential function is to introduce the students to the

13. Boning and Roeloffs, *Three German Universities*, p. 92.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

methods and ethos of scientific research, and not to drill him in professional knowledge and skills.¹⁶

The report continues to describe how law students during the last two or three semesters no longer attend classes but rather drill for the state examination under the tutelage of a *Repetitor*, an experienced and influential lawyer of which there are always several in any university town.

The future teacher has no *Repetitor* so after completing the minimum number of semesters he postpones his examinations for a semester, and another, and still another to the point where the inordinate length of studies that has been long criticized as being intolerable is actually increasing. The latest figures released in 1975 reveal that the average length of university studies between 1970 and 1972 increased from 5.7 to 6.3 years, an average of 13 semesters.¹⁷

As many more students are eligible for the university, and when once enrolled they study longer and longer, the universities have become hopelessly overcrowded. An *Abitur* is no longer an automatic passport to any field of study as some of the more desirable fields have a *numerus clausus*, limited enrollments. (Sometimes this maneuver backfires and in a curious manner aggravates the problem. Medicine has had a *numerus clausus* for some time, so students biding their time and accumulating seniority points for future openings have enrolled in biology in such numbers that this seldom-chosen major now has its own *numerus clausus*.)¹⁸

Even with the added semesters of study the student has no reason to approach the first examination with confidence.

He has no reliable way of judging his own standing at the time he signs up for the state examination; nor is it possible to estimate reliably the scope and level of what will be required in that examination, conducted by professors under the chairmanship of the Education Ministry representative.¹⁹

16. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

17. "Students Stay Too Long at University." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 15 (1975):219.

18. "Trials and Tribulations of Students of Pedagogies." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 1 (1975):12.

19. Boning and Roeloffs, *Three German Universities*, p. 52.

An understandable apprehension is compounded by the incredible significance of the first examination itself, much more important than just another comprehensive examination over thirteen semesters of study. Most of the students do not earn a degree while studying for their teaching credential for, with the exception of the doctorate, the German universities do not grant degrees. If a student fails the examination he has, as one student told us, "Nothing"; no course credits are available for transfer to another institution, not even the solace of junior or senior standing. So the typical response to this uncertainty and anxiety is added frustration and still another semester of study.

Even assuming success in the examination, the student's experiences in the classroom are so meager that he has no way of knowing if he has any aptitude for teaching, let alone whether he would receive any personal satisfaction from it. Unlike his counterpart at the teachers college who from the first semester has a continuing and coordinated program of practical training paralleling his theoretical studies, he has only the observation and general teaching requirement. During his university studies he has two periods of four weeks each, one day per week, during which he would be assigned to a classroom teacher though he would rarely prepare or teach a complete lesson.

Even in the educational sciences the theoretical orientation of the university prevails. There are no accompanying field work requirements in classrooms to observe concrete examples of abstract principles and where incidentally the student might discover his suitability—or lack of it—for teaching.

With these defects so obvious and with the example of the teachers college close at hand, it is no wonder that university reform is high on the educational agenda of students, professors, ministry officials, and governmental planners. Yet the problems are not new. Too few professors, lack of professorial contact and guidance, and the interminable length of studies were pointed out in Walter Hahn's scholarly article published in 1965; the 1970 and 1972 OECD reports refer to the same problems and we found them also in our investigations, including the very latest developments just before publication.

So the prospects for any appreciable change in the immediate future appear dim, and the following assessment made in 1972 by the OECD commission is probably still applicable.

As we have noted above, higher education has presented the authorities with a concentration of problems not found elsewhere in education in Germany. Indeed, a high official of the Federal Ministry of Education and Science referred to higher education, and the universities in particular, as "*unser grosstes Sorgenkind*" (our biggest problem-child).²⁰

Studienseminar

Once the first state examination has been successfully completed, the student from the teachers college or the university requests from the state Ministry of Education a position as *Referendar*, a probationary teacher, with temporary civil-servant status. Until recently this request was automatically accorded, but this is now no longer true. Only those students with the better grades are placed. According to a recent document issued by the federal government and the Federal States Commission for Educational Planning, in 1975 2 percent of the applicants for primary school, *Hauptschule*, and *Realschule* would be refused, while for the *Gymnasium* the figure would reach 10 percent. The future outlook is even bleaker.

The situation will most likely deteriorate. The number of applicants who cannot be accepted as teacher-trainees will, in the case of primary, main and special schools as well as secondary modern schools, rocket sevenfold to a figure of 3,000 plus. For grammar schools the number of unsuccessful applicants will rise by about 800 to 1,800. This would then represent as much as 15 and 16 percent of those completing the relative preparatory period.²¹

This probationary period lasts from eighteen months to two years and culminates in the second state examination. Ideally the *Referendar* also is involved in a concurrent program of Advanced Professional Preparation (*Vorbereitungsdienst*) that

²⁰ 20. *Reviews of National Policies*, p. 85.

²¹ 21. "Chances of Employment for Teachers." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 15 (1975):216-17.

provides a transition from the training received at the college or university to full-time teaching. A *Referendar* would teach eight to twelve hours a week, and two days a week would attend general education and methods seminars.

While desirable for all *Referendar* this *Vorbereitungsdienst* is practically indispensable for those who have studied in the university. According to a recent statement made in a report of the rectors of all German universities, the universities still "conduct their courses with little reference to school practice."²²

Policies do differ among the eleven German states, but at the present time this *Vorbereitungsdienst* is available for the *Gymnasium* in all states, in nine for the *Realschule*, and in only five for the *Grundschule* and *Hauptschule*. Those not participating would, after about one month of observation, assume a near full-time teaching schedule.

Responsibility for conducting this *Vorbereitungsdienst* is given to the *Studienseminar*, a special institution independent of the schools, universities, and colleges, but like them, responsible to the state Ministry of Education and staffed by civil servants. These institutions are located in a number of towns throughout the states and not necessarily near universities or colleges. It is difficult for Americans to conceptualize this institution because in the United States its functions would be divided between the local school district and a college or university. We, too, had difficulty in this respect, partially because the *Studienseminar* did not always have exclusive facilities but would often meet in public schools or universities. During this *Vorbereitungsdienst*, the *Referendar* attends two kinds of seminars each week. The first, general education and methods seminar, as the name implies, concerns general educational and pedagogical issues without regard to subject matter specialty. At the secondary level these have been traditionally divided into separate groups for the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, and *Gymnasium* but increasingly teachers for grades five to ten in all three schools are trained together. In the SPD states this integration of teacher training according to the age

22. "Rector's Conference Presents Thesis on Teacher Training." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 11 (1975):163-64.

of the student has long been seen as a necessary step to the integration of students in the *Gesamtschule*. However, age or stage level teachers are also trained in some CDU states to make the present tripartite system more effective and to facilitate cooperation among the different types of schools, without the intention of abandoning the traditional separations. For example, after heated debate an overwhelming majority of the Bavarian legislature approved stage level teacher training to begin in 1977. (Stage 1 involves grades one through four; Stage 2 affects grades five to ten; and Stage 3, grades eleven through thirteen.) This is a very informative illustration of how educational reform can take place only if the major political parties feel that their interests are not threatened. It also shows how one can agree to the same reform but for conflicting purposes.

The second weekly seminar is in one or the other of the two teaching majors. Typical of these and of particular interest to social-studies teachers is the one in *Sozialkunde* for the *Gymnasium* in Rhineland-Palatinate. A first phase recognizes that the *Referendar* has had no exposure as to how to teach *Sozialkunde* so he is introduced to a number of themes and topics before he begins actual teaching. These include information about the state curriculum, basic literature concerning teaching methodology, and instruction as to how to develop lesson plans, including establishing criteria and selecting activities. Once he begins teaching, there will be a more detailed examination of *Sozialkunde* course content. The *Referendar* also learns about various types of evaluation, and how to construct different kinds of tests, and about alternative curriculum theories. A variety of specific methodological approaches are explained through literature and lecture, projects, discussions, debates, role playing, group work, and the use of audiovisual materials. As this broad range of methodology presented in most seminars runs counter to our observations in the classrooms, we frequently asked for clarification from *politische Bildung* authorities. Their collective responses reinforced our conclusion of the overwhelming predominance of lecture-recitation, but it is precisely because of this predominance that a

concerted effort is now made through the *Studienseminar* to provide the newly trained teachers with a wider variety of possibilities.

An immediate problem in the *Studienseminar* is the discrepancy in academic content between the demands of the schools and what is learned in the university. In CDU states *Referendare* are being asked to teach concepts applicable to several disciplines, and in SPD states concepts without reference to academic discipline; at the university, however, they are studying for the single disciplines of *Sozialkunde*, history, or geography. Furthermore, their actual instruction in these disciplines is as narrow as the research interests of the professors with whom they chose to do seminars. The problem will not be easily resolved for German professors seem even less willing to depart from tradition than do partisan education ministries of the conservative CDU states.

The ideal role of the *Fachleiter*, the subject-matter specialist of the *Studienseminar*, is that of advisor and exemplar. He visits each *Referendar* from ten to fifteen times, critiques the lessons, and offers advice but does not actually grade the lessons. In addition he teaches eight to twelve hours weekly and in his classes may demonstrate different lessons and various methodologies. However, as the competition for permanent teaching posts becomes more intense, the counseling role of the *Fachleiter* will probably be diminished. A *Referendar* from another state confided that she and her colleagues were becoming increasingly wary of their *Fachleiter*, not because of any personal conflicts but because he is on the examining committee for the all-important *Lehrprobe* (teaching demonstration) component of the second examination.

The probationary period concludes with the second state examination. Part of the requirement is a completion of a project that may be either an academic discipline, educational sciences, or a combination of the two such as a unit of study consisting of six to eight lessons. The *Referendar* must also teach the *Lehrprobe* in each of his majors before a committee of four or five composed of *Fachleiter*, the director of the

Studienseminar, and a representative of the ministry of education. After the *Lehrprobe* he would face an oral examination before the same committee.

The *Lehrprobe* can be especially menacing, and the account of one teacher's harrowing experience is described in *Education in Rebhausen*. On the appointed day the members of the committee appeared and as reported by Warren:

1. Held loud private conversations in one corner of the room causing an already nervous teacher to postpone the lesson
2. Wandered around the room often between the teacher and the class
3. Exhorted the teacher to speak louder
4. Corrected behavior and posture of students
5. Interrupted the lesson by loud conversation
6. Advised the teacher which words he could abbreviate while writing on the board
7. Corrected student recitations
8. Opened the windows
9. Took over the class from the teacher
10. Finally excused the teacher and dismissed the class.²³

Such a *Lehrprobe* is hardly typical and led one *Fachleiter* with whom we discussed the incident to remark that in his fourteen years of experience he has never witnessed one resembling it. Still for the apprehensive *Referendar* this possibility, however remote, does exist and adds to his already considerable apprehension. The second examination, an important part of which is the *Lehrprobe*, is the culmination of his academic and professional preparation and the results will become part of his permanent dossier influencing and even controlling his future professional career. With a low mark, for example, he would have little choice of location or school, and it would probably rule out any administrative ambitions. Today the stakes are even higher. He may pass the examination and not receive a position:

23. Richard L. Warren, *Education in Rebhausen* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967), p. 98.

Unemployed teachers is a thing unheard of for decades in Germany. The teaching profession seemed to be a very safe profession. Would-be teachers will now need to do some rethinking. In the Federal States of Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Bremen, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate and Schleswig-Holstein, not all those aspirants to a teaching post can be sure that they will in fact be taken into the education service. There seems little likelihood of an improvement in the situation next year either. *Those left out in the cold will be the ones with the poorest examination marks.* There are still more favourable opportunities of employment in Berlin (West), Hamburg, Lower Saxony, Northrhine-Westphalia and the Saarland.²⁴

As harsh as this examination may seem to the individual *Referendar*, from the point of view of the Ministry of Education, it is necessary to insure a high-quality teacher, for once he achieves civil-servant status it is almost impossible to remove him. While comparisons are inexact his security would at least be equal to a tenured American teacher. His autonomy and the power that he has over the lives of youngsters is again summarized in the expression "*König im Klassenzimmer*" (King in the Classroom). To Warren, however, this *Lehrprobe* represented an authoritarianism that permeates the entire school system.

Of all the activities, problems, and interpersonal relations I observed in the school the events of that morning incorporated most dramatically the forces and cultural directives that create the pressures and constraints characteristic of school life. . . . The *Oberschulrat* subjected Herr Konecke to the raw, almost merciless use of power; it was Herr Konecke's climatic experience with closure on his chosen profession. If one distills from these events the *Oberschulrat's* personality and mode of operation, there still remains a concentration of power, the dynamics of which, I am led to conclude, infuse the whole life of the school. It might be said that teachers really earn the job security they acquire with a successful

24. "No Guarantee of Engagement for New Young Teachers." *Bildung und Wissenschaft* 5 (1975):70.

completion of probation. But the psychological and cultural cost accounting required to protect an individual and an institution from the debilitating effects of such power must be measured in something other than mere financial units. The thrust of the power is never really blunted; it flows through the educational system and comes to rest in the classroom, where the student stands vulnerable, obligated to adjust to it, faced with no alternative.²⁵

We wish to conclude with an additional comment on a topic referred to several times throughout this chapter, which is the oversupply of teachers. The problem is familiar to Americans whose own shortage of teachers was resolved about 1971 and who since that time have continued to train and certificate teachers for nonexistent positions. As a result today, there is in the United States an enormous surplus of teachers. We anticipate that the Germans will respond differently and in a manner consistent with the priorities that they assign to the fundamental functions of schools, namely, by rigorously limiting access to training of history teachers, *Sozialkunde* instructors, geography teachers, and other overcrowded specialties.

25. Warren, *Education in Rebhausen*, p. 99.

Questions for Social-Studies Educators

We stated in the Preface to this book that one of our primary objectives was to provide a different outlook regarding the virtues and blunders of American social-studies education. As we have presented our observations of the German system, we have suggested such reflections to the reader. In concluding this project, we wish to briefly summarize some of these questions that we think American social-studies teachers and teacher-education specialists might well ask themselves. There are certainly as many questions that our German counterparts could profit from asking themselves after a comparison of systems, but we feel that is a prerogative and a responsibility better left to German authors.

Should national (American) history continue to dominate the social-studies curriculum?

American history is unquestionably the social-studies subject most frequently taught and the course most often required. Too, in many American states it continues to be taught repetitively in elementary, junior, and senior high schools. World history courses, European history, and non-Western histories are more typically elective courses, taken by relatively few students.¹

In an age when international cooperation and understanding has become vital to our survival, perhaps we need to question a bit the wisdom of providing for many youth only a history that could be called ethnocentric and that must leave many Americans in ignorance of the traditions of others. In a century when we have witnessed imperialistic aggression, geno-

1. Richard E. Gross, "The Status of the Social Studies in the Public Schools of the United States: Facts and Impressions of a National Survey." *Social Education* 41 (March 1977):194-200.

cide, and national and racial hatreds directly promoted and justified by intense nationalism, we might well question whether the unity for collective action a nation may achieve by promotion through its history of an emotionally intense nationalistic consciousness may be outweighed in importance by its proven potential for promoting moral blindness—"Our country right or wrong."

German practices in this regard are certainly influenced by the obvious fact that they have suffered much greater penalties from their excessive nationalism and their abuse of history than have Americans. Excessive nationalism has been disastrous for them. Too, Germany is considerably less geographically isolated from potential international irritations due to too much dedication to national interests than is the United States. It is, after all, surrounded by nine other nations within a one-day drive, most of whom have suffered much from past experiences with the German nation. Our relative geographic isolation, however, explains a little but does not clearly justify current American emphasis upon national history relative to world history in a world of high-speed travel and instant communication. Finally, as we pointed out earlier, the dismemberment of the former German nation into three parts, including Berlin, effectively promoted confusion around the concept of a German nation. Furthermore, promotion of intense nationalistic feelings by means of national history or by any other device would lead with certainty toward an eventual advocacy of forceful reunion, with all of the possibilities that would hold for a world nuclear holocaust.

The foregoing are explanations for the differences between the United States and West Germany with respect to history instruction. Whether the difference is justified by such explanations is unclear. Even in the wake of the national historical revelry in which we have recently indulged ourselves during the Bicentennial, we would suggest that some clear-headed reassessment of our position regarding the relative importance of national history and studies of world history and cultures is long overdue.

Is conventional geographic knowledge really as unimportant as its current status in American curricula would suggest?

Is it important for a responsible American citizen to have knowledge of peoples living on all parts of our globe, their cultures, politics, economics, and their relationships to the land? Or is this knowledge a frill to be chosen by the student who has somehow developed some curiosity about it? Or perhaps the knowledge one should get in school ought to reflect the analytical procedures and basic organizing concepts of the science of geography rather than knowledge of lands and cultures themselves?

Recent trends in the United States would seem to clearly indicate that Americans, theorists at any rate, would be more likely to respond affirmatively to one of the two latter questions, or both.

As with history we should recognize that the lack of geographic isolation and a stronger sense of interdependence has much to do with the higher priority given to the study of geography by German educators, but again as with history, this may be accepted as an explanation without justification. We live in a world that has been effectively reduced in size by communication, travel, and world politics. Geographic isolation is of small significance. Our nation must daily make decisions that influence or are influenced by other nations and peoples on opposite sides of the globe. A good case could be made from a civic education point of view that ignorance of Europe, Southeast Asia, or West Africa in a nation where the people make the ultimate decisions can be disastrous. Beyond that, the classical humanist would argue that ethnocentric ignorance of cultures other than one's own is in itself belittling and denigrating. It restricts our options and our potential for growth as individuals. Are these arguments, if valid, indeed, less important than more national history or the freedom of a child to choose for himself what his curriculum will be?

Is "equal educational opportunity" truly more probable in a system wherein common experience is minimized or eliminated

and wherein each student is enabled to elect from a smorgasbord curriculum those subjects or activities that interest him?

We have mentioned on several occasions the current American trend toward elimination of common studies and experiences (excepting usually American history) and the substitution of a variety of courses from which students may choose according to their individual interests. And, of course, we have commented upon the absence of electives in German *politische Bildung*. Furthermore, we have noted that many liberal German educators today are promoting elimination of the minimal curriculum differences that exist in *politische Bildung* among the three types of secondary schools. They have generally done so to reduce inequity of opportunity for political and social participation, which they have felt the tripartite (differentiated) curriculum reinforced.

The German feeling that a common curriculum is the answer, contrasting with the American feeling that it was the problem, is largely born of German frustration with an elitist school system wherein the curriculum of the *Gymnasium* produced the leaders and the curriculum of the *Hauptschule* produced the workers. Nevertheless, are we certain that we are entirely right and the Germans entirely wrong? Are there no fundamental political and social skills and concepts without which any person is to some degree incapacitated? If we do assume the existence of such fundamentals, when students' natural interests do not incline them to elect the studies where these would be mastered, as they frequently must not, are we being democratic and promoting individual freedom and equality of opportunity, or are we merely being foolish, promoting mediocrity and the ultimate bondage of ignorance? We frankly do not like the German answer, but we are inclined to wonder if the best solution does not lie somewhere between the two extremes of the German system and current American trends.

Is integration (unity) of knowledge about society, past and present, an important objective, and if so, can we expect to achieve such integration in a fragmented, non-sequential curriculum?

Curriculum unification has occasionally been given high priority in American social education, a memorable case in point being the progressive core curriculum. It is today a prime consideration for Germans, as we were compelled to point out several times in the previous chapters.

The fragmented, non-sequenced, elective American social-studies curriculum of this decade seems to reject knowledge integration as a high priority. On the other hand, it may be viewed as reflecting a more humanistic focus for integration. Unity would thereby be achieved in the mind of any individual when he knows what is necessary, in all of its necessary relationships, to satisfy his immediate needs and curiosity and to provide a satisfying sense of self. In cruder terms, if the child feels happy and content with his knowledge, what right has society to tell him it isn't comprehensive nor adequately interconnected. We are faced with an old philosophical problem. Where is unity to be found, within the nature of organized knowledge or within the individual human personality? If the former, we would seem to be erring badly in our curriculum practices. If the latter, our German counterparts have serious cause for concern.

Assuming the worse, it is not inconceivable that American students are, in effect, receiving only a few pieces of a large jigsaw puzzle, none of which may interlock. The resulting fragmented picture of their society, institutions, and traditions comprise the global view they must rely on when making the decisions that a responsible citizen or a social being has to make.

Does it matter how children are motivated to learn in school? What does methodological diversity teach, apart from its motivating effects?

Our curiosity was aroused on this question by our observations that German students seemed generally to be as effectively motivated as American students while depending upon a single method—the class recitation—a method that the authors anticipated should have been dull.

American social-studies theorists, of course, often recom-

mend diversity in methods as uniquely necessary to accomplish a particular type of objective, that is, mastery of a mode of inquiry or mastery of processes of productive discussion. Our impression is, however, that most American teachers depend upon methodological variety primarily to stimulate and inspire students to participate and to learn.

All sorts of questions present themselves. For example, is it possible that alternative teaching methods may constitute a relatively unimportant variable in motivation and learning, as we believe many Germans would say? Is it possible that the key to effective motivation is the challenge of the question with which students must come to grips, whether the question is encountered in a recitation or a value clarification exercise? In other words, is methodology really reducible to good questions versus poor questions? Apart from the value of innovative methods used in teaching the fundamentals, is it possible we are actually teaching children to depend on the motivational devices of their teachers for their inspiration to learn? Could excessive dependence upon methodological diversity weaken one's capacity for intrinsic motivation as we often assume to be the case with other external reinforcement devices? Again, we frankly haven't a good clue at this point to the answers to these questions, but several years before this writing we wouldn't have asked the questions.

Is mastery of intellectual processes such as inquiry and reflective thought predominantly the result of frequent practice in using those processes, or is it more likely to be a result of one's having accumulated a greater quantity of knowledge?

During the past decade the legitimacy of inquiry processes as major objectives for instruction in social studies has been rarely questioned, though American educators have differed sharply in the priority they would give to those objectives. Most of the millions of dollars spent by the U.S. Office of Education and numerous foundations in producing a new social-studies curriculum was spent with the apparent assumption that inquiry should become a high priority objective for social-

studies instruction and that its mastery required constant repetitive use of the process in classrooms.

German educators, on the other hand, while approving some of the objectives relating to rational or critical thinking, do not view these as skills in the same sense as shooting a basketball or working an addition problem. For the typical German educator these objectives seem more likely to be accomplished if students have a wider knowledge of the alternatives from which they must choose and a greater quantity of information about those alternatives.

We have reviewed much of the research done during the past decade to test the effectiveness of the new social-studies programs, but we are unfamiliar with any compelling evidence to refute the German position.

Do we really believe that no social institution, no human quality, and no moral principle is inherently of greater value than its alternatives?

We suspect that no single characteristic of American social education is more curious to our German counterparts than the belief that teachers should avoid the deliberate transmission of particular values to their students so often advocated (if less frequently practiced) by American educators. Most educated Americans have grown up with the democratic principle that we should be tolerant of the beliefs and values of others—that the resulting diversity may, in fact, be one of the strengths of a democracy. Likewise, most Americans, whether liberal or conservative, tend to be humanists of some degree or type, valuing individual freedom and initiative and the right of each individual to think and decide for himself. Most of us, as teachers, were taught from the earliest stages of our professional education about Dewey and his pragmatic philosophy with its implications for openness, individualization, and social value relativity in the classroom. Finally, the American experience in this century with German totalitarianism, with its reputation for propagandizing and indoctrinating in schools, did much to further American sensitivity to the potential evils of class-

room indoctrination. We as teachers, like all other humans, often react reflexively rather than thoughtfully to combinations of circumstances like these. The effect in this case, it appears to us, is rampant confusion among social-studies educators as to what social, political, or moral values, if any, can be or must be the legitimate ends of instruction in a democratic classroom.

Unlike our German counterparts, many American social-studies teachers have seemingly concluded that an ethical teacher in a democracy must be neutral, that the teacher should help children clarify what they already value or the moral principles that they already accept. Or maybe one should facilitate moral stage development according to Kohlberg's principles. Or, perhaps again, one should teach children a rational process by which they will become competent at analyzing value-conflict situations as they encounter them in life.

While acknowledging the useful, in fact, vital contributions to value education of value clarification, Kohlberg's theory on moral development, and value-conflict analysis, we are inclined to believe that many social-studies teachers have undergone an unsound and, we suspect, a largely unintended indoctrination in classroom nihilism. Though they may seem so at times, none of these popular approaches to value education is in any real sense value free. Likewise, none of the principles of democracy, as we interpret them, seem to require us to infer that nothing is inherently of any greater value than its alternatives. Are free speech, free press, and freedom of religion questionable ideas? Does racial intolerance or inequality hold equal potential for righteousness with its alternative? Is lynch law potentially as desirable as due process of law?

We strongly suspect that the popular belief that moral neutrality is necessary in classrooms has evolved from the clear potential that irresponsible teaching of values has for unethical indoctrination. If one teacher accepts responsibility for teaching carefully discriminated moral ideas, how can we be sure that this will not cause the much less discriminating teacher down the hallway to teach the righteousness of a favored political party, Marxism, racial superiority, premarital sex, or

a narrowly conceived religious doctrine. American social-studies teachers obviously face a serious dilemma as a profession. Do we take the risk of indoctrinating our children in the narrow prejudices of some unwise or unprofessional teachers, or do we take the risk of having a generation of children view teachers themselves as morally neutral, and questions of right and wrong, whether in relation to public or private issues, as whatever any individual in his private nondirected wisdom conceives it to be? We are convinced that the risks of the former are formidable and frightening, but we also question whether the dangers of the latter may not be disastrous.

Certainly we are not questioning, on the basis of our German experience, whether or not American social-studies teachers should launch a massive program of indoctrination in basic cultural or universal virtues. Rather we suggest that it is time to seriously question whether or not there are a limited number of values that are fundamental to individual happiness and social order in an open, just, and democratic society; values that must be shared by most members of that society; values that assuredly will not be shared if left by everyone to chance; and values that can be effectively transmitted to children and youth by good teachers if the difficult task of distinguishing between unethical indoctrination and responsible value teaching will only be undertaken.

Glossary of German Terms

German terms are used sparingly in this book and only when the English near-equivalents might be misleading. The following are provided here for easy reference.

Abitur. The examination taken at the completion of thirteen years of schooling, a requirement for admission to university studies.

Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung. A federal agency charged with improvement of social and political education in schools.

CDU. The Christian Democratic Union, the more conservative of the parties in the predominantly two-party system.

Fachleiter. The subject matter (history or geography) specialist of the *Studienseminar*.

FDP. Federal Democratic Party, a small but influential liberal party.

Gemeinschaftskunde. A unified social-science course usually offered during the last two years of the *Gymnasium*.

Gesamtschule. A comprehensive secondary school.

Gesellschaftslehre. An interdisciplinary approach to the study of social and political problems and institutions.

Grundschule. The primary school consisting of grades one through four.

Gymnasium. The grammar school or academic secondary school that prepares students in grades five through thirteen for university studies.

Hauptschule. The main school, the least academic of the three secondary schools, usually consisting of grades five through nine.

Heimatkunde. The study of local history and community life in the primary school.

Land: Länder. A German state of which there are eleven in the German federal system.

Lehrprobe. A sample or model lesson taught by the probationary teacher and judged by an official jury; an important

part of the state examination leading to permanent certification to teach.

politische Bildung. Literally political education, but an umbrella term that approximates the American social studies.

Rahmen Richtlinien. Curriculum framework or guidelines for the state of Hesse.

Realschule. The secondary modern or middle school, the secondary school that runs a middle course between the highly academic *Gymnasium* and the less academic *Hauptschule*.

Referendar. A probationary teacher with temporary civil service (certification) status.

Sachkunde. An introduction to social studies and the sciences in the primary school, usually focusing upon the local community.

Sozialkunde. Literally social studies, but much narrower in scope than American social studies; typically includes political and economic systems and selected contemporary social problems.

SPD. Social Democratic Party, the more liberal party in the predominantly two-party system.

Studienseminar. The institution responsible for advanced professional training of teachers; independent of schools, colleges, and universities, but like them, it is responsible to the state Ministry of Education and staffed by civil servants.

Weltkunde. World studies, offered in some states instead of *Sozialkunde*, but with essentially the same political, economic, and contemporary social-problems orientation.

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