

# Washington Digest

## German Education Must Be Recast in Democratic Mold

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WASHINGTON.—Whether we are going to have two worlds or one, one of the battle grounds on which the issue will be decided is Germany. Lines for that battle are forming now between the most powerful forces for democracy, the American public school, and one of the most anti-democratic forces of old Germany, the Prussian educational system.



Baukhage

When congress meets it must consider the report of the mission of educators who were sent to the American zone by the state and war departments to study education in Germany. They came back with a careful and detailed study, including a description of conditions and a set of recommendations which, if they can be carried out, will have a vital effect in building democracy in Germany.

Perhaps an educational system based on the American model may not be sufficient to democratize Germany but I think it is no exaggeration to state that without such a system, democracy never will be achieved in the Reich.

I had the privilege of attending a conference presided over by William Benton, assistant secretary of state in charge of public affairs, at which Chairman Zook and members of the educational mission were present. I came away deeply impressed, not only with the factual data presented—I was familiar with some of the data—but also with the importance of the program as a means of determining whether democracy or totalitarianism will dominate western Europe and perhaps the world.

### System Mixture of Master, Servant

We know how Germany's history, her political and social institutions, have all tended to create a peculiar type of thinking which has resulted in a caste system with a strange mixture of super-ordination and sub-ordination on the part of the individual German. The superficial and erroneous explanation is that the German is half dominating and half servile. There isn't space here to go into German psychology but there was one point in the educational mission's report which was emphasized by their chairman and echoed by Assistant Secretary of State Benton, which partially explains this phenomenon. It reveals perhaps the greatest single factor that can block democratic evolution in Germany. This factor, the mission says, "has cultivated attitudes of superiority in one small group and of inferiority in the majority of the members of German society, making possible the submission and lack of self determination upon which authoritarian leadership has thrived."

The bars go down on the path of democracy for the German child in the fourth grade of elementary school. It is here that the fortunate 10 per cent who are to be the "superiors" leave the unfortunate 90 per cent, for at this point—when the children are about 10—those who expect to attend the universities and prepare for a professional career are set aside in secondary schools.

It is largely the financial or social position of the parents which forms the basis of selection for these secondary schools. The overwhelming majority of pupils, a large proportion of whom deserve university education because of their ability, finish elementary school and then go on to vocational education. This makes a fundamentally "undemocratic division of the educational stream."

Until they are 10 years old little Fritz and Johann have studied and played together in something approximating the comradeship of two American boys, though one's father owns the bank and the other's runs a tailoring shop. But when they leave the fourth grade, their ways part and each year from then on, the wall between them grows higher.

Dr. Zook's voice was filled with real emotion when he described one of the many experiences he had when the mission visited the Ger-

man elementary schools. It was his practice to ask the fourth grade children: "What are you going to be?" And without the slightest hesitation they would answer: "Butcher, baker, clock-maker, cobbler" or whatever it may have been, never dreaming that it could be anything else, because their way already had been chosen for them. This revelation, Dr. Zook said, was as heart-breaking to him as when again and again, four out of five of the children answered "no" to the question: "Did you have any breakfast today?"

Contrast the life of these children with the American children who spend eight years together in the grade schools, many of them four more in high school, where all compete on equal terms, where ability can be assayed, where ambition can be estimated.

### School Plant Hit Hard by War

This is only one facet of the problem with which the educators who must guide German education will have to deal. There are a great many physical difficulties, too. In the first place, there is a dearth of buildings, of teachers, of equipment.

Many of the school buildings are rubble. Many have been requisitioned for various uses by the military government. In the winter there is the question of heat—this winter probably will be one of the worst—and this is one of the most difficult problems to overcome because of the shortage of coal in the American zone.

As to teachers, more than one-half of the Germans were dismissed because of their participation in the Nazi setup.

There are few books. There is a paper shortage because there is no machinery to make paper. There is no machinery because there is no steel. There is no steel because there is no coal. And so the vicious circle continues, affecting the whole question of supply and equipment.

There are, on the other hand, some things on the credit side. For instance, the fact that the Germans have an inborn respect for learning and after a generation behind the "iron curtain" they are literally starving for information concerning the rest of the world. I can testify to this from my own conversations with a number of the young people, as well as the older ones, who had had at least a glimmering of the world before Goebbels.

It is generally admitted that the first two objectives of the occupation forces have been realized more fully in the American zone than anywhere else. I refer to denazification and demilitarization. These are important but negative. On the positive side, democratization lags. We know very little about what is happening in the Russian zone but a nation that has progressed as far in moulding the minds of its own people, undoubtedly is not neglecting its efforts in Germany.

The recommendations outlined in the mission's report include similar projects for the future, as well as various other steps extending beyond the schools themselves and operating through the parents and teachers organizations and other groups. There is no intention to superimpose upon the Germans any system against their will. So far there has been excellent co-operation and educational circles in Germany are enthusiastic about the steps already taken. They hope that trained educators will come to Germany; they would be only too glad to send their people to this country for instruction. They may not know what democracy is but there is plenty of evidence that they want to find out.

Presumably the report as forwarded to the secretary of state will receive his approval, and congress will have the opportunity to pass upon the whole program but, as the report concludes: "The development of this program is not the responsibility of the government alone. Equally, if not more, important is the intelligent backing of the American people in the reorientation of the German people. We have committed ourselves to a program in which education plays a critical role. There must therefore be no turning back in our support of that program so vital to the enduring peace of the world."



**MORE NAZIS FACING TRIAL . . .** Here are some of the topflight members of the Nazi regime who still face trial for the part they played in the Nazi gamble for world power. Top left, Field Marshal General Albert Kesselring; top right, Field Marshal General Erhard Milch, who was Goering's air deputy; bottom left, Col. Gen. Von Dem Bach Zelewski, chief of the "Super-Gestapo," and, lower right, S. S. Obergruppen-Fuehrer Otto Ohlendorf, chief, Nazi secret police.



**UNIT CITATIONS AWARDED 5 CARRIERS . . .** Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal awarded unit citations to five aircraft carriers for inflicting "terrific losses" on the Jap navy during the war. The ships commended were: *Covpens, Enterprise, Hancock, Langley* and the *Wasp*. Forrestal is shown at left. The five other men shown are officers of the aircraft carrier, *Wasp*.



**STAG AT BAY IN WOMEN'S COLLEGE . . .** Men appear for the first time in 46 years on the campus of the Florida State College for Women, Tallahassee, Fla. Jerome Allen, is the target for vulpine whistles emanating from coeds.



**FANCY PANTS! . . .** Six-months-old Nancy Sue Fohn, daughter of Mrs. L. J. Fohn, San Antonio, Tex., wears an expression that says "Yup, it has come to this," as she scoots around the house in her new, gaily-decorated three-cornered pants. Material shortage brought about the startling change. Mothers in San Antonio took advantage of sale of hand towels, hence the labels, "Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc.," and in the case of twins there is always the "his" and her.



**BLIND EAGLE SCOUT . . .** First Boy Scout in history to become an Eagle Scout, although totally blind, is Ronnie Sanders, 16, of Culver City, Calif. In addition to fire-making the youth had to learn to save a drowning person and earn 21 merit badges.



**HITLER BELIEVED ALIVE . . .** Lt. Col. W. F. Helmlich, Columbus, Ohio, army intelligence officer, who directed search for Adolf Hitler. He believes that the former Fuehrer and his mistress are still alive and in hiding.



**MAY BE AMBASSADOR . . .** Monica Milne, 28, daughter of a London surgeon, has been named Britain's first woman diplomat with an appointment to the permanent staff of the foreign office. She may become England's first woman ambassador.



**FOR WORLD PEACE . . .** Study of President Harry S. Truman as he opened the United Nations general assembly in New York, welcoming the diplomats of 51 nations.



**GOLFING AT ONE HUNDRED . . .** Nathaniel Vickers, 100, of Forest Hills, N. Y., water colorist, architect and golfer, celebrated his 100th birthday anniversary with nine holes of golf. Moderation in all things is his code.



**LIKE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS**  
WASHINGTON.—The American people are now beginning to realize that the road to peace after-war is never easy. Beating our swords back into plowshares sometimes is more difficult than forging the swords of battle.

But one encouraging milestone on the road to peace now is under way in New York where the smaller nations of the allied world, who for months have had to sit and take it from the Big Four, now debate on an almost equal footing.

Many may have forgotten it, but this issue of free debate caused a bitter battle at the San Francisco conference. Molotov then wanted to stifle free debate. He proposed that the general assembly of the United Nations not even be permitted to discuss or to criticize decisions of the big powers sitting on the security council.

Australian Foreign Minister Evatt, spokesman for the little powers, opposed. He went further and demanded that the general assembly under the recognized principles of democracy have the power to overrule the security council. He was rebuffed, not only by his own "mother diplomats" from London, but also by the isolationist-grounded senators of the U. S. delegation.

In the end, the general assembly was given the power to debate, discuss, criticize, and recommend—but not to carry out. That is what it is doing at the present sessions.

Behind the iron curtain, public opinion still is tightly controlled. When it is decontrolled, then we need no longer worry about war between the USA and the USSR. Meanwhile, the sessions in New York are like the first struggling but healthy debates of the Continental congress and of the United States congress which grew therefrom. They won't achieve much at the moment, but they should pave the way to great and hopeful things.

### HARRY TRUMAN'S PRESS

If Harry Truman could place an ad in the papers, probably it would read something like this:

"Wanted—Good press secretary; willing to work long hours; must be practicing newspaper man, not afraid to say 'no.' Low salary, but private car and plenty of prestige. Call National 1414 or write H. S. T., 1600 Pennsylvania avenue, Washington, D. C."

There are few weaker spots in the White House staff than Truman's press aides. Venerable Charlie Ross, the President's secretary, simply isn't filling the bill. Personally one of the finest gentlemen in Washington, Ross is by nature an introvert; doesn't get around much, is a poor spot-news reporter and a complete failure as a press agent.

Newsmen who cover the White House sometimes are genuinely alarmed at Ross' ineptitude. They claim he doesn't read the newspapers regularly, doesn't even keep up with the White House directives. Frequently, White House newsmen have asked about stories which were on the front page of the morning paper, but Ross shows he simply has not read the papers.

### EXIT '52-20 CLUB'

The "52-20 club" is folding up for many veterans and Gen. Omar Bradley, the Veterans' administrator, is deeply concerned over their ability to readjust themselves.

The "club" is composed of unemployed vets who receive relief allowances of \$20 a week for 52 weeks. The year is now up for many ex-servicemen who have been riding this gravy train, the worthy as well as the idlers. Many more who climbed aboard in the first few months following V-J Day also will be cut off soon.

Of 1,800,000 claimants on the rolls last April, only 40,122 had exhausted all their claims up until August. However, between now and the end of the year from 150,000 to 200,000 will join them. Veterans' administration is fearful many will be unable to find jobs.

General Bradley has never liked the "52-20 club," believing it subsidized idleness. Many veterans found it more comfortable to live on the \$20-a-week dole than to work for a living, although some, including the disabled, made an earnest effort to find jobs.

Now that the relief train is reaching the end of the line, Bradley fears that they will have a tough time readjusting themselves to a life of industry.

### MERRY-GO-ROUND

Some people relish reports that they're in the big money, but not Henry Wallace. A report that he was to get \$75,000 from the New Republic drew a quick denial. He's getting a little less than his cabinet salary, which was \$15,000. . . . Wallace will remain in Washington this winter, then move to New York. He has bought a farm up along the Hudson. . . . Wallace aides didn't want him to become an editor, thought it would put him on the spot once a week.

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WNU-4 45-46

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**DOAN'S PILLS**

## BARBS . . . by Baukhage

It's time to quit making children study maps that they have to recolor with their own blood.

Someone says it's a fine commentary on radio that its most successful comedians are the ones who kid the silly commercials. Well, remember the Ford jokes—they did streamline Lizzie eventually.

"The Iceman Cometh" has made a great hit on Broadway. Now if you could get a plumber like that when you want one.

The Monsanto Chemical company has invented a doodle-proof tablecloth. It has a plastic protection like the inside of unbreakable windshields.