

# DiStefano Views U. S. Education

by Sara DiStefano

The historian, Charles Beard, once wrote: "Anyone that makes a realistic comment of the educational system in the United States cannot help but keep in mind the doctrine and praxis of democracy." It is under this aspect that I came to consider the American educational system, as an institution whose purpose is to evaluate the characteristics of the individuals and to develop their creativity in an atmosphere of complete freedom. Basically, the two systems are alike: primary school, high school, and college. I think the main difference is in our opposite conceptions of the school: fixed, traditional, and academic in Europe; social, active, and reflection of the surrounding life and culture in the United States.

In Italy there is no continuity between the first two steps; the break is due to a change of method. In the United States, however, the twelve grades form a rather homogeneous unity. Here the classical scheme is broken and gives place to a number of elective courses in which the pupils are distributed in the various classrooms and mix after each class, according to the subjects they have chosen.

In Italy we have two types of high schools: a "literary" and a "scientific" one; in the United States the differentiation is in the choice of the subjects. Since Church and State are linked together in Italy, classes of religion are compulsory, while the United States school emphasizes a United States school ethical formation. College in Italy is similar to what Americans call graduate work; except for the first year, it is a special study of one particular field and all the subjects connected with it. It is not possible for the Italian student to change his mind unless he wants to start all over again. Although Italian schools give a better intellectual preparation, they are less dynamic, less open to large masses and social reality—in a word, less democratic. There is one big thing that always surprises me in the American schools—the tendency to associate Organizations, clubs and all sorts of extra-curricular group activities show the strength of the communitarian spirit. This is something we Italians should learn; it might be an incentive to overcome certain extremes of our individualistic temperments.



Jan Norman has her final costume fitting by Anita Hatcher and Joan Thrower who are in charge of costumes for the May Day pageant.

## Girls Complete Costume Work

by Dottie Girling

Anita Hatcher and Joan Thrower agree: their biggest problem as co-chairmen of the May Day costume committee is time. The two girls are doing all the work on the 23 pageant costumes. In addition to basic sketching and designing, their work includes choosing materials, cutting, and assembling.

As experienced as Joan and Anita are, having worked on previous May Day costume committees, they find that their work still requires much patience and hard work. This year's costumes will be, according to Joan, "the most elaborate we've ever had — elegant, extravagant, made of silks and satins. It will be quite a feat to complete them all by the 4:00 p.m. deadline, May 4."

Following graduation, Joan and Anita have planned a busy year. Joan, who comes from Greensboro, will leave for Europe in July. She plans to stay until at least mid-September, but her plans are indefinite after that time.

From Fayetteville, Anita will start work this summer as a home economics teacher. She is most enthusiastic about her job at the Deaf School in Morganton. Her fiance, Robert Helms of Morganton, is a former KA at Wake Forest. He will enter the Coast Guard in June; their wedding will be next December.

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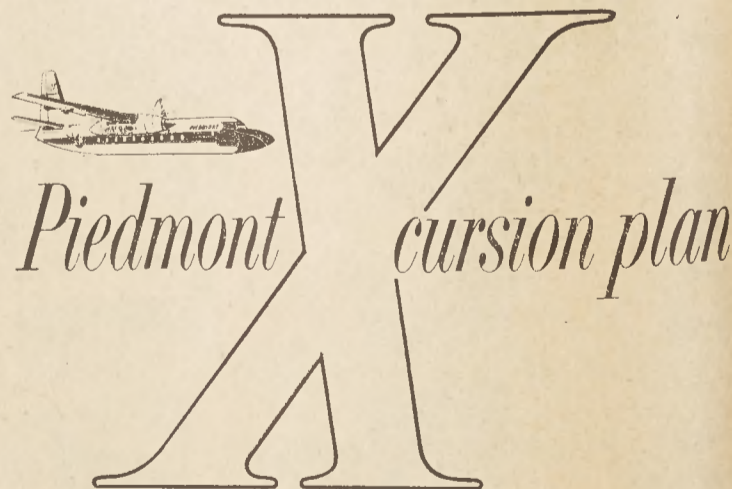
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