

# Educators called 'poor relatives'

UNC News Bureau

"Of all the efforts to effect change in our society we have had the fewest results in education. We have introduced all kinds of curricular changes in all areas of education but, as strong and as necessary as they might be, we haven't been too successful."

The speaker, Dr. Robert B. Binswanger, director of the Experimental Schools Program in Washington, D.C., was addressing a special seminar for local public school In-Service Directors at the University of North Carolina's School of Education here, which continues through August 7.

Professing to be "a totally irrelevant educator, but proud to be one," Binswanger said, "we are the poor second cousins of society—the poor relative of the legislature—the poor relative of the university."

He cited one thing lacking from critics of education—"they have no alternatives or solutions to the problems."

Binswanger likened the In-Service director's role to that of the orchestra conductor who must cause several people with different viewpoints in his social system to interact and operate in harmony.

There is the "I was there" teacher who looks upon In-Service Education like an old hat with a new band. There are the "Peter Principle" (executives elevated to the highest point of inefficiency) educators who previously had successful interaction with students in the teaching ranks and then moved into the upper echelons of administration. There are the "creepers," quiet, but they are there doing nothing.

Included in these various audiences, Binswanger pointed out, are the members of the board of education and the principals who find it hard to understand what In-Service Education is or even the need for it. Surprisingly, he said, some professors and administrators think they themselves don't need it. They are, according to Binswanger's description "competent deviates."

"We need In-Service Education and staff development as part of a comprehensive education program," Binswanger stressed. "How do you integrate what you do is the important thing."

Self-reliance, hard work, innovation and cooperation, he said, are the watchwords for education.

Another seminar speaker, Dr. John Geissinger, president of the American Association of School Administrators, shared his insights to the In-Service Education directors.

In a period of social change, Geissinger noted two compelling factors that react upon all institutions and particularly upon education: the force which seeks to preserve the status quo, to retain the "tried and true" which is supported by the conservatives; the other, a dynamic force which requires change, seeking to try the new and eliminate the old, supported by liberals and progressives.

"These forces in communities are constantly reacting against each other and often a public school policy or practice is their battleground," the authority said. "But the public is not easy to read these days. Individuals and groups are not as ready to reveal their basic philosophy as they are to tell us what we in education are to do."



The construction of several new buildings on campus this summer has provided summer jobs for many UNC students. Bob Cone, a rising sophomore, is one of several students working construction at the social sciences building. (Staff photo by John Gellman)

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