

THE NEW ALCHEMISTS

JOHN J. SYNOR

A government that has even the thread of the democratic processes is based in degree on trust, on the honesty-of-purpose of its leaders. It must be.

The United States, so we say, has that thread and is so based. Yet, its hierarchical scientists are flouting this essence of democracy.

See how it goes:

The National Academy of Sciences is an 850-man body chartered by the U. S. government to be its collective counselor on problems that fall within the academy's competence.

One such problem is this matter of race.

Admittedly, there is a great discrepancy between the achievements of American white people and American black people. None argues that. The argument turns on why these differences exist: Do they exist because one race unfairly receives a disproportionate share of those things that develop cultural and economic well being; or do the differences exist because there are inherent, genetic race differences that preclude the two from functioning competitively?

In today's bristling atmosphere, that question(s) is directed at the National Academy of Sciences as pointedly as any question could be aimed. It is a scientific question that can be resolved only by scientists. Moreover, it must be settled if there ever is to be a just relationship between the races.

Nobel Laureate William Shockley, on three distinct occasions, has risen to challenge the National Academy to formally undertake the study. And three times he has been rebuffed.

Why?

Hear Dr. Frederick Seitz, the Academy president: "(It is essentially impossible to do good research in this field so long as there are such great social inequities". In short, Dr. Seitz tells us, the NAS cannot attempt to resolve the problem because the problem exists.

There is no need to belabor the essentially false logic in the Academy's position. It is as obviously false to the scientists as it is to the layman. Their had-in-the-sand attitude is a betrayal of both the academy's trust and its charter. It is a betrayal not only of the democratic process but of science, itself. All of which, as I say, is obvious.

Why, then, do you suppose the academy dithely allows itself to assume so ridiculous a posture, refuses to make the study, arrive at the truth — since the truth, so science tells us, will set us free?

The answer to that, too, is obvious if we go but one step farther.

The academy is not an organization that either functions as a unit or it doesn't function at all. These men, practically speaking, are all researchers, each one doing his own thing. Many of them, as individuals, have already investigated this continuing nature-vs-nurture controversy. Moreover, many who have not (genetic not being their field of inquiry) are conversant with

the literature published by those who have.

The truth is this: The research Dr. Shockley demands — and as he well knows — has been done already. It is available, now, today, for collating and for publicizing. It is there to be put together by any responsible agency.

But this is what sticks the NAS: Without exception, every evidence points to the conclusion that race differences are genetic in origin; that what people are is determined to 80 per cent by their inheritance. And since such evidence is unacceptable to the policy makers of our government, the evidence is glossed over smothered. Copernicus faced the same sort of thing when he argued that the earth was round and rotated daily on its axis. That too, was political heresy. The difference was this: Copernicus damned the torpedoes and spoke out anyway.

Not the National Academy of Science. Without protest, it allows the government it is charged with advising to pursue a policy based upon the opposite

of the scientific evidence. Scientists? It is to laugh. Alchemists is the better word. Charlatans is better yet.

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

by Henry E. Garrett, Ph.D.

PROFESSOR EMERITUS,
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
PAST PRESIDENT,
AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Q: Dr. Garrett, what can be done to save our schools from domination by the federal government?

A: Many things. One of the best ideas has been proposed by California Assemblyman William Campbell. It consists of a plan to issue vouchers to every elementary and secondary student. These vouchers would defray the cost of school, whether it be public or private. They would in fact provide freedom of choice. Parents could send their children to any school that seemed best to fit their needs. Private and parochial schools would come under the act. So also would religious schools, remedial schools, black-is-beautiful schools and plain, old-fashioned first-class schools. The plan is egalitarian in the best sense. Under it the weaker schools would gradually be squeezed out, or remain to care for those who cannot or will not learn.

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APPLY TO:

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IT'S A FACT! by THOMPSON

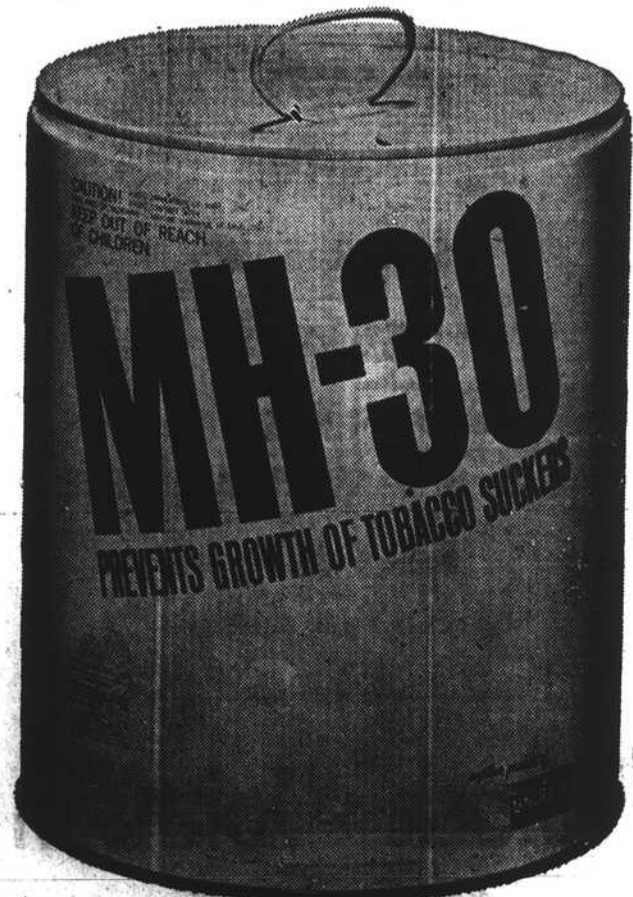
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