LOOK TO THE FUTURE

by

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LOOK TO THE FUTURE

I have entitled my presentation this evening, LOOK TO THE
FUTURE. The reason is very simple. What else is there? The
past is gone. The present is fleeting. In twelve hours--in one
hour--this event will be the past.

We cannot ignore the past or the present because they deter-
mine the future. Institutionally, we cannot live in the past
or the present. We must learn by the lessons they--the past and
present--give to develop strategies to positively cope with the
challenges and demands that the next day, the next year or the
next decade bring. That time--tomorrow or next year or the next
decade--which will then be the present will be better or maybe
even only tolerable if we anticipate and plan for it.

We really have only the present and must capitalize upon it.
We should savor the present and take pride in where we are.
Hopefully, the present is not an accident, that is, it would have
been the way it is regardless of what we've done. I believe that
the reputation of the School of Education is the result of con-
tinuous planning in the departments to develop new and improved
programs, to employ faculty with diversified competencies, the
willingness of faculty to extend themselves--to explore new ways
to meet the needs of our service area, to be as responsive as
possible to the needs of some of the people we serve.

I would now like to turn to what I consider some of the

challenges of the future.

As a School of Education we are ten years old--one decade of organizational unity. This has been a plus. With your concurrence it has been possible to have cross-overs of staff and other resources to meet needs. In the past year, the cooperation between some of the departments in scheduling classes back-to-back and teaming between departments in the teaching of basics has been most beneficial to the students. Unfortunately, we don't yet have adequate means by which to assess what we're doing. In general, student response has been positive.

So now, what of the future and what about the present. What needs doing now in preparation for the future and its uncertainties.

First, many of us have not caught up with the present--its social problems, its scientific developments, its human needs--human needs which are both the cause of and result of what is going on in every other dimension.

I am one who has not caught up with the present. Two examples: First, it is still hard for me to accept that there are five communications satellites "anchored" in space and that we aren't particularly impressed when a news broadcast is identified as being live via satellite from the other side of the world. At least I've never heard anyone say, "Gee, did you see that broadcast last night via satellite!" The most recent vehicle to take its place in orbit over the earth is capable of transmitting 6000 telephone calls or 12 color telecasts simultaneously, or combin-

ations of the two. The May 1972 "Readers Digest" reports that:

> "Sometime in 1973 or 1974, NASA will launch
> its advanced ATS-F communications satellite,
> whose power will be so great that its rebroad-
> casts of programs from earth may be picked up
> by antennas made of glorified chicken wire
> costing $200, and fed into specifically modified
> home TV sets. During the first year of its
> existence, it will be used to conduct edu-
> cational and medical-assistance programs in iso-
> lated Rocky Mountain hamlets of the United
> States. A year later, it will be nudged along
> the equator to the longitude of India where,
> through television receivers set up in 2000
> villages, it will teach millions of illiterate
> Indians to read and write, improve their farm-
> ing methods and combat disease. In no other
> way could the economically pressed Indian gov-
> ernment afford such a vast undertaking, in a land
> that only has one television station and speaks
> 15 major languages and hundreds of dialects.
> Brazil has appealed to be next in line for the
> unique service."

The only comment I've heard about the current moon trip, Appolo 16,
is that favorite TV programs were delayed 20 minutes because of
coverage of the blast-off from the moon--Sunday night. A second
example: I have trouble living with what I consider the increas-
ing paradoxes in our society. With our technological sophistication,
travel by individuals to all parts of their own country and the
world, increased levels of education and all the other "advantages"
we have, it seems that I see more impersonality, more dehumanizing
actions--person to person and institutional-- and more self-des-
truction under the guise of what is called "the search for meaning."
We have more knowledge and information and more devices for its
storage and retrieval than ever before but we neglect to use what

we know in seeking solutions to human problems--our own and those
of others--as though the solutions to human problems were not subject
to some kind of order.

Any one of us can recite lengthy lists of changes going on in
our world of St. Cloud State College or Minnesota or the BIG world
that affect us, that we may use or that use us, that we like or
cannot accept. To say that these changes are occurring at an ever
accelerating pace is true but trite. Just one example to bring it
closer home: When the planning for the building we are dedicating
was begun, those communication satellites I referred to earlier
weren't up there.

So one of the first things we must do for the future is to
catch up with the present. I mean an "active" catching up as
opposed to the passive acceptance of the good and the bad. By
active catching up I mean that we as educators must raise ques-
tions about the implications of what is happening around us.
How do we help the young people we teach learn to question con-
structively. I have an uneasy feeling that many young people are
ahead of us in this area. So much of our questioning is of each
other--maybe doubting is a better word. This year we have been
attempting to do a self-study to examine what we are doing in the
light of the present and to anticipate future challenges and needs.
I cannot say I am totally satisfied with the results. We have
shared ideas and in general are better informed about what's going
on. Many many of you have said this is a wonderful experience.
This is a big plus.

At our last meeting involving colleagues from other departments across the campus, I was most impressed by the enthusiasm and willingness to be involved in the total process of teacher education. This is another plus. Communication--whatever that is--was improved.

But in both overt and covert ways there has been resistance. I know you're all busy and time is precious and nowhere is there ever enough staff to do all we'd like. Industry has an advantage-- a freedom in being able to deploy resources which we don't think we have. But what if Ford were still concentrating on Edsels! My most devastating experience has been to hear the reaction, "What's wrong with what we're doing. For thirty years St. Cloud has been a leader." And what hurt me most, I guess, is that individuals are hurt because they interpret the questioning personally.

Forgive me for this negativism during the last couple of minutes. I had to share my feelings with you.

I was talking about the future and from now on my comments will be positive all the way. I'll be talking about problems but problems anticipated are "mountains to climb." Each level conquered is cause for celebration.

As I see it, with no order of priority, these are some of the problems of the next 1-3, 3-5 years. Three to five years isn't long you might say. Time is relative. Social changes and accompanying needs come quickly. I say no order of priority in this listing because some will set their own priority, others may be priorities in our minds.

They are:

1. Supply-demand picture for teachers

2. Humanizing education. Human Relations

3. Performance based teacher education and certification

4. Control of Education, especially teacher education

5. Technology in education (performance contracting)

6. Accountability and evaluation of teaching

7. Demands of continuing education (credits)

8. Teaching of values

9. Integration of learning--general education--vocational and/or theory--field experiences--developing a balance

10. Changing roles of almost everybody

11. The team approach or where has good old rugged indi-vidualism gone or how to provide/accomodate it

1. The supply-demand picture for teachers

There is no doubt about the elementary-secondary school population--they're here, they're statistics. The numbers are stabilizing. The variables are: How desirable are St. Cloud graduates. Will school system "X" seek a St. Cloud graduate over others. The name of the game is placement. Our record at this point is particularly good. What experiences can we provide, additional options, to make our graduates more flexible and hence more employable. We have to reach out and make contact with employers. We need to provide contact with the College in an

integral way so that the schools in our service
area recognize that their and our welfare is
mutual. Welfare may be an ill chosen word. The
objective should be to pool our resources to pro-
vide the best for students--3 years old to whatever.

There is another issue, too. Should we es-
tablish quotas--100 a year--300 a year or what
magic number. And what criteria do you propose--
first come, first served, gpa, previous attendance
at selected institutions? Does the student, knowing
the situation have a right to take his chances.
Do we follow the pattern in some countries of telling
individuals what they must be. Does this square
with our philosophical base. How many here are
willing to go for a regulated society--more than
we have? I cannot accept the philosophy of quotas.

2. Humanizing Education--Human Relations

If ever a term was overworked, it's "humanizing edu-
cation." Whatever it is, I'm for it! Seriously, we
put each other down and in so doing it becomes a part
of us and our students sense it. They drop out in
their way: It may be drugs, or "loafing around," or
promiscuity--another word of varied meaning. Prom-
iscuity can be physical or ideological--a rootlessness,
a lack of identity. I've got to give a big A--See my

indoctrination--A means "good"--to the students we
see. They're terribly aware, positively critical
and they put up with us.

All of you here are aware of the new state regu-
lation regarding the teaching of HUMAN RELATIONS to
teacher education candidates. Some of you are par-
ticularly aware because you have given of your time
beyond reasonable expectation and have volunteered to
do so in the immediate future. Our efforts to pre-
pare to implement the regulation have been "checkered."
I won't go into the history of our efforts, but 18 months
ago we set up a committee to begin work as we antici-
pated the regulation. Enthusiasm was high in the be-
ginning. It dwindled as meetings got longer and more
frequent and the drop-out rate was pretty high. I
do want to express my respect for and appreciation of
the School of Education faculty for the way they have
rallied to the need.

3. Performance Based Teacher Education and Certification
   This is one of the things that is here. Minnesota
   picked the toughest one of all: Human relations, but
   just one piece. Our compliance proposal is performance
   based. Looking around the nation, states are moving to
   a total performance based teacher education. Florida
   is using the carrot approach--colleges that go to per-

formance based programs will be eligible for
"additional funds." Additional funds appear to
mean they can stay in business. Texas has taken
the big stick approach--by 1976 all teacher educa-
tion will be performance based or no more certifi-
cation--statutory--legislative enactment. Washing-
ton has a carrot on a stick approach: More compli-
cated than time here allows but they require com-
munity--college--school consortiums to come up with
plans without a definite deadline but five years
keeps cropping up. I predict Minnesota will take
this route--cooperate or else.

4. Control of Teacher Education

There is a national push for what is called Profes-
sional Standards Boards made up of 13-15 members
with 2-3 from higher education. The push in Minnesota
by the M.E.A.--number one priority--is for a profes-
sional standards board to be created by the legislature
to determine preparation and certification standards
to replace the State Department of Education in certi-
fication.

5. Technology in Education

We've all read about performance contracting. Technology
in education encompasses many other things but in the
context of these remarks, despite the pros and cons on

performance contracting, higher education is next--
maybe it will be better. Remember those satellites out
there--"They" have something to offer. Why couldn't
a college curriculum... Those of us who have been inti-
mately involved in trying to develop a program to meet
the human relations requirement have been beseiged with
agents with package deals to do the job. What's wrong
with contracting with Control Data or a multitude of
other commercial agencies. Why can't a self-contained,
independent study unit at "X" dollars per student be
used. What can we in higher education do that they can't.

6. Accountability and Evaluation of Teaching

This point is closely related to the one preceding. We
have just gone through the fun and games procedure called
APT. I've begun to hate April. Anyway so much of
what we do appears to be done in a vacuum. But soon
we are going to have to be accountable and face the
real issue. What is teaching. The number passed, the
number failed, numbers? Later achievement, we haven't
come up with answers yet but it isn't what we're doing.

7. Demands of Continuing Education

For some time the School of Education has been faced with
the demands for continuing education. We started out by
offering a course, for example, in the improvement of
instruction, and teachers from 6-8 schools came. They

liked the professor—a few would write notes saying professor so and so was great. We all felt uneasy, including professor so and so because not too much happened afterward except the apparent mellow feeling everyone had. Then we organized "workshops" for teachers in a single school to tackle their problems. This was great, too, but the real decision makers weren't included. Next we organized our programs to include the people who wanted to change and the ones who could make it happen. Last year we made some strides. Now we're wondering how to capitalize on the experience. We shall overcome, but gosh it's tough because we don't have the staff.

A new dimension to wrestle with is the desire for credit for various activities—especially related to the new regulation regarding continuing education. While the School of Education appears to be hit first, the movement will spread.

8. Teaching of Values

I'm not going to elaborate about teaching values— really teaching valuing—how to establish ones values, because I don't feel up to tackling the problem in a paragraph. I had to mention it because it is a priority in our world, I think.

9. <u>Integration of Learning-Field Experiences</u>

   Right now we're experiencing a press for more and
   more "field experiences" which can take a great
   variety of forms: Internships, community service
   work experience and many more. The need is to insure
   that these experiences contribute to educational
   objectives and are integrated with the total learn-
   ing experience. A field experience isn't good just
   because it's a field experience. They're expensive
   if properly organized and supervised. We must take
   a careful look at this movement. We need to plan and
   evaluate. I believe field experiences are necessary,
   they can be terribly relevant and give meaning to the
   wonderful ideas still to be found in books.

10. <u>Changing Roles of Almost Everybody</u>

    I should be expected to take off on the changing role
    of women, but I won't. So there. But everyone's role
    <u>is</u> changing and this has been going on for a long time.
    Another fact of the present we have to catch up with.
    Some of the very subtle changes haven't had much publicity
    and changing roles of the sexes is one, despite recent
    publicity. We're still teaching kids that daddy's job
    is such and such and mommy's job is such and such, when the
    kids know darn well their daddy does the shopping and
    goes to the laundromat and mommy mows the lawn! The

painfully slow integration of minorities into the

American mainstream is changing roles of everyone

touched. Young people have established new roles for

themselves and the implications of the 18 year vote

hasn't hit us yet--other ramifications.

11. The Team Approach or Where has Good Old Rugged Indi-
    vidualism Gone or How Can One Provide for it or
    Accommodate it.

    The manned space project is probably the ultimate

    example of teamwork. The committee system on college

    campuses is another example of the moves toward

    groupness, however, with less spectacular results

    than the moon probe. The problem is, is individ-

    ualism a quality to be nurtured. I believe it is.

We are dedicating a new building. We are dedicating the structure

to the people who use and occupy it now and in the future. It should

provide islands of retreat for those who want a moment to think,

that bunches of individuals can congregate to hear good or great

thinkers, or even poor thinkers, that it provide a climate to develop

good and great thinkers, that it inspire individuals, students and

staff to be more than they would have been without the atmosphere pro-

vided. As a building it is an efficient and pleasant arrangement

of concrete and other stuff. But it bears the mark of human beings

who said this is what concrete and other stuff can do to serve people

and their purposes.