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# THE RIGHT TO EDUCATE

DEMOCRACY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## A SYMPOSIUM

25¢

EDITED BY ROBERT C. HARTNETT, S.J.

*Editor-in-chief of AMERICA*

AN AMERICA PRESS PUBLICATION

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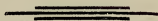
# THE RIGHT TO EDUCATE

Democracy and Religious Education

*A Symposium*

Edited by Robert C. Hartnett, S.J.

*Editor-in-chief of America*



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## FOREWORD

THE RIGHT of parents to have their children educated under auspices of their own choosing is being gradually undermined in the United States by hostile legislation and judicial decisions.

Every State in the Union prohibits the use of public funds for "sectarian" schools. The Supreme Court in the *Everson* (1947) and *McCullum* (1948) decisions went so far as to declare that no "aid," great or small, could be given religion by any government in this country. The assumption on which these legal prohibitions rest is that public aid to religion somehow interferes with religious freedom by putting the State on the side of religion.

The first four chapters in this booklet show how other great democracies have faced this problem. In all but one (Australia), public support of religious education is regarded as necessary in order to *protect* religious freedom and avoid discriminating against parents who want to give their children a religious education. Our system really penalizes religion.

In the last chapter Rev. Robert C. Hartnett, S.J., examines the slogan that religious education is "divisive" and jeopardizes civic unity. He shows that by imposing uniformity in the name of unity, Americans are moving towards Statism in education, at the price of freedom.

## 1. The Dutch show the way

A LONG STRUGGLE for the rights of private education in Holland has led to very satisfactory conditions. In fact, the results obtained in this country of a mixed population will probably seem almost incredible to Americans.

The school system in Holland differs somewhat from the familiar American picture. In the United States there are eight years of compulsory elementary education. After the sixth grade, however, a child may enter one of many types of extension school in order to get an education more adapted to his future occupation. At that time he may also apply for admission to a secondary school, but the majority succeed in passing the entrance requirements only after finishing the seventh grade.

In the Dutch system there are two basic types of secondary school: the high school, a five-year course without Latin or Greek, and the so-called Gymnasium, a six-year course offering the full curriculum in humanities, including poetry and rhetoric. A combination of both types, called the Lyceum, is gradually becoming more common.

A diploma from any of these secondary schools automatically opens the doors of the university. The high school or the Gymnasium diploma qualifies the student for the study of medicine, science and economics; that of the Gymnasium also qualifies him for the study of law and languages.

An idea of the prominent part private education plays in the Dutch school system may be gleaned from

the following tabulation. (Italicized figures represent totals for 1948; Roman figures cover 1947 statistics.)

	<i>Public</i>	<i>Catholic</i>	<i>Others</i>
Elementary schools ..	2,414	2,579	2,049
Number of teachers	12,000	16,600	9,000
Number of students	328,000	525,000	349,000
Secondary schools ..	152	71	94
Number of teachers	...	1,434	...
Number of students	40,000	22,000	24,000
Graduate schools ...	6	2	2
Number of students	22,605	1,482	2,100

To get the full meaning of these figures one should bear in mind that the population of Holland amounts to about 9.5 million people, of whom 40 per cent are Catholic and another 40 per cent Protestant (three-fourths of them orthodox Calvinists).

#### THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Every juridical person (association, foundation, ecclesiastical body, etc.) intending to establish a school is entitled to cooperation by town authorities. If certain conditions specified by law are fulfilled, the town must aid in the erection and maintenance of the school. These conditions are: 1) A written statement signed by a number of parents declaring that they will send their children to this school. The required number of signatures depends on the total number of residents of the town. 2) The association must file a declaration of its intention to deposit in the town treasury 15 per cent of the estimated cost of founding and furnishing the school. (Both State and city contribute toward the rest of the cost.) A school board is then formed, which selects its own books and other teaching materials. It draws up a building plan, which must be submitted to the town



officials. It scouts for a capable head and qualified teachers.

Once the building is completed, the State enters into the picture: it pays the salaries of as many teachers as are permitted by law for a school of that particular size. The town in turn is then asked to contribute towards the cost of maintenance and other operational costs; it must pay exactly the same amount per student to such a school as it pays to its own public schools.

The arrangement outlined above is an ideal one for the private schools, though the application of the principle at times leaves something to be desired. Most towns charge the administrative costs of public schools directly to the town treasury and not to the school. Hence the average cost of a public school student is in reality higher than the amount which appears on the school budget. It is this lower figure, however—the average cost per pupil when the administrative expenses are deducted—that is used for calculating the contribution to the private school.

There was a time, of course, when public-school advocates used to fight this legal "equalization." Against private schools they leveled such criticisms as duplication of buildings, teachers, teaching materials, and consequent waste of money. Objections were always founded basically on the religious nature of private schools. School education, according to these secularists, was a means to develop the intellect, not to form character. They overlooked the fact that a child will be a better citizen if he is educated to become more religious, and that he will be more tolerant towards his fellow citizens if better educated in his own religion than if he is indifferent towards religion.

The financial arguments of opponents of private schools are easily refuted. There is no real duplication of cost. If the children now attending private schools should be transferred to public schools, approximately the same number of buildings would have to be built, the same number of classrooms furnished, the same number of teachers appointed, the same amount of material bought as had been required to set up the private-school system. Further, there is abundant proof that the running expenses are lower in private than in public education.

The Catholic school system has no central board of directors. There is an advisory board to the bishops, and a Central Bureau of Education which supplies information and documentation, and which publishes a monthly review and an annual survey. It employs thirty-three persons, including three lawyers.

In Holland, teachers of the public schools are town officials; those of private schools are not. The latter are appointed by the school board; but, beyond that, they are in the same position as public-school teachers with regard to salaries, appointments and dismissals. A board of appeals exists to protect them against any arbitrary measures. As a rule, the teachers in Catholic schools must have graduated from Catholic teachers' colleges.

With regard to educational standards in both types of schools, although the Government is entitled to ensure compliance with legal requirements, it does not interfere with instruction. There is an automatic method which compels the schools to keep their standards high. Since they must fit their pupils to pass the entrance examinations to the secondary school after the seventh grade, all schools must provide good teaching. Their existence depends on it.

## THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

In the financing of private secondary schools there is no "equalization," as there is in the lower schools; there is, instead, a system of subsidies. The State contributes 90 per cent towards the cost of erecting, furnishing and enlarging the building (75 per cent, if it is rented), and 80 per cent towards salaries of teachers and other costs of maintenance and administration. Tuition is paid according to the income of the parents. Any surplus will lower the subsidy to that extent.

There has recently been a notable increase in the number of students in this group of schools, most of them coming from families with moderate and small incomes. Accordingly, costs have increased enormously while the revenue from tuition has increased very little. Most of the private secondary schools are therefore in financial straits at the present time. To relieve their distress, a bill is expected to be introduced in Parliament to increase the 80 per cent subsidy for salaries and other such expenses to 95 per cent.

## FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Another factor that causes financial worries among our private secondary schools is the fact that the expenses have to be paid during the scholastic year, while the subsidy from the Government is not paid until the end of the year. The interest charge runs into the thousands for a school of average size.

No private secondary school, under Dutch law, has a strict right to be subsidized. Once the Department of Education has granted the subsidy, however, it has always been continued during the following years. Par-

liament decides on this point when it approves the budget for the Department. In 1924 a law was enacted which stopped the subsidies for new schools because of lack of funds—a measure which has prevented many private schools from being founded, Catholic as well as non-Catholic. However, a loophole was left, since the law made an exception for “special cases.” This exception has recently received a very broad interpretation and many new schools have been founded and are being subsidized. It is a pleasure to report that in the exercise of these discretionary powers there is no sign whatever of discrimination for or against Catholics.

Of course, several conditions have to be fulfilled before an institution is considered a candidate for the subsidy. The school must be of such quality that it can be and is designated as one whose final diploma equals in rating the public-school diplomas. The requirements for the final examinations are specified by law, and the questions are drawn up by a central body. The subjects taught and approximately the number of hours to be devoted to each of them are prescribed. Little variation from this program is allowed. Religion, we must note, may be added to the curriculum. Even in public schools religious instruction is allowed, but only during free periods.

The school board governing these institutions is entirely independent of the teaching staff. Teachers must be qualified either by having taken a university degree (the minimum requirement is to have passed the comprehensive examinations for the doctorate; writing of a thesis is not required), or by passing a special examination. At the moment, about half of the teachers have fulfilled the academic requirements; the rest have passed the special examination.

The School Board also has a free hand in appointing the teachers. The Government can never force it to take or dismiss any qualified person. Likewise, the Government has no jurisdiction over the selection of textbooks. In these respects the pattern followed in secondary schools differs from that in primary schools.

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Since AMERICA readers will be especially interested in Catholic schools, I can report that there do not seem to be any real problems which would apply to Catholic schools as such. The law of 1924 has caused a shortage of Catholic schools, but this gap is now being filled. Catholic institutions enjoy great freedom, enough to make the public schools envy them. In case of any projected change in the laws, they are liberally consulted. Of the nine members of the official Advisory Board to the Department of Education three are Catholics, one of them now being the President of the Board.

In general, we can say that there is great interest in the private schools and that they are drawing an ever increasing number of students. The public school is necessary and stays in the lead, but it has lost much of the false glamour enjoyed in the past when it was portrayed as the *only* satisfactory type of school to meet our national educational needs.

With regard to the teaching of religion in public schools, it is never compulsory in Holland. The director may offer students an opportunity to study the religion of their preference in the public school, and as a rule he does. Ordinary classrooms are used for this purpose. Most of the directors realize the value of what they call "a transcendental view of life." One sign of this favorable

attitude towards religion, among others, is the fact that in many public schools religious and even Catholic plays are given on school days and around Christmas time.

Dutch law itself entirely ignores the teaching of religion. In cities where a Catholic school exists, the bishops do not permit priests to teach religion in the public schools, lest they create the impression that they approve of Catholic children attending them. For those who must attend them (*e.g.*, because of the lack of space in the Catholic school) a special place and hour is assigned for religious instruction. In both Catholic and Protestant schools, classes are opened each day with prayer and one or two hours of religious instruction are added to the curriculum each week.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION

Of the six universities in Holland, one is Catholic (at Nijmegen) and one Protestant. Each is supposed to have five departments: theology, law, letters and philosophy, science, medicine. Of these, the Catholic university still lacks departments of science and medicine, but will get them in the near future. Four institutes for specialized studies complete the picture: the institute of Technology and the Agricultural College are both public institutions; the Institute of Economics at Rotterdam is private, but non-denominational; the one at Tilburg is Catholic. Since 1948 the State subsidizes the private institutes of this type by paying 65 per cent of the deficit if in any given year there should be a financial loss due to maintenance and operational costs. The degrees given by all of these institutions are of equal value. There is fine cooperation between them, so that students may transfer to another institute and have all their credits acknowledged.

As evidence of good feeling in the religious field, at each of the public institutions a chair has been granted to the Catholic hierarchy, and the bishops appoint a lecturer of their own free choice to teach Catholic philosophy and theology. The Catholic students also have their own groups, and a priest is assigned as their moderator in each of these places.

From this over-all sketch of Holland's educational system one can see immediately that our country has achieved a system of democratic religious liberty without creating the impediments to religious education which many groups in the United States today seem to think absolutely necessary to protect such liberty. From the vantage point of The Netherlands, where people naturally keep informed about developments in all the larger democracies with which we are allied, the American "fear" lest religious liberty be destroyed by State aid to religious schools seems entirely unfounded and is difficult to understand.

## 2. Canada lets parents choose

**I**N CANADA EDUCATION is controlled partly by the State and partly by the Church. This does not mean that there is a Canadian State Church. On the contrary, there is complete separation of Church and State, though the two cooperate in certain spheres, such as those of marriage and education.

The reason for the cooperation of Church and State in Canada in the field of education is the desire of the Canadians to preserve religious liberty. Freedom of religion was proclaimed about a century ago when the region designated by the term "Canada" included, roughly, only the area now contained in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. At that time there existed strong religious minorities in both Upper Canada (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec). In the former the minority was Catholic; in the latter, Protestant. It was a time when public instruction for the masses was in its infancy, but growing rapidly. People who were desirous of preserving their religious liberty were concerned about the character of the instruction that would be given in the schools attended by their children or those under their spiritual care.

To allay this concern there was passed by the Government of Canada, between the years 1841 and 1863, a succession of acts providing for the establishment, by the Catholics of Upper Canada and the Protestants of Lower Canada, of "sectarian" or "separate" schools to be sup-



ported out of taxes collected by the State. When in 1867 the Province of Canada was united with the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to form the Dominion of Canada, the existing legal rights of religious minorities to separate schools were guaranteed by the terms of the act which brought about the union. These rights have been maintained, to a limited degree in the Province of Ontario, and completely in the Province of Quebec, to the present day. They form the basis of cooperation between State and the Church throughout Canada in the field of education.

The Act which created the Dominion of Canada and laid the legal foundation for the present Canadian system of education was the British North America Act, passed by the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland at the request of the leaders of the Provinces that were being united. The Act is looked upon by Canadians somewhat as the Constitution of the United States is regarded by Americans. It can be legally changed only by the British Parliament; and though it has been amended on several occasions at the request of the Dominion, this was possible only with the tacit consent of the Provinces. Serious provincial opposition would be sufficient to block any proposed amendment. Politically, Canada is now an independent country, but it keeps its Constitution in the safety-deposit box of the Parliament of Britain—an arrangement the Provinces regard as a safeguard of their rights. One of these rights is the right to control education.

By section 93 of the British North America Act of 1867, education in Canada was made the exclusive concern of the Provinces, subject to the proviso that minority rights enjoyed at that time were not to be infringed. In

accordance with this arrangement, an autonomous school system has grown up in each Province. Thus there are now in Canada nine systems of education corresponding to the nine Provinces (not counting Newfoundland, recently added). There is also a tenth, controlled by the Dominion Parliament, on the Indian Reserves and in those parts of the Northwest that have not yet been organized as provinces.

### EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE

The ten systems of education differ from each other in many respects, yet they have much in common. On the whole, they are not far removed in their general structure from the educational system or systems in vogue in the United States; and this similarity tends to increase rather than to lessen with time. In each of the Provinces the predominant type of education is divided into the four traditional layers known as primary (or elementary), secondary, collegiate and university. Here and there, junior high schools have been introduced, but they are not yet characteristic. Everywhere elementary education is free and compulsory. Almost everywhere secondary education is free and, subject to the age of the pupil, in part compulsory. As a rule, the period of compulsion ends at the age of sixteen.

Colleges and universities in the Dominion are not free; they are supported by the fees of the students, by income from endowments and, in some instances, by State grants. As a rule, universities—but not colleges—receive State aid. In most of the Provinces, but especially in the newer ones of the West, there is a tendency for the Provincial Government to concentrate its financial support in one university, which thereby takes on features

similar to those of the State University in the United States. As governments enlarge their support it is naturally to be expected that they correspondingly increase their control.

The pattern of the system by which public schools are financed and controlled is fairly constant throughout the nine Provinces. Typically, there is a Provincial department of education, headed by a member of the Cabinet known as the Minister of Education. He is advised and assisted by a group of hired experts led by a Superintendent or Deputy Minister of Education. Most of the cost of building and maintaining schools is met by local taxation, based, as a rule, upon the assessed value of real property. The remainder is made up of Provincial grants. The latter are varied in amount, partly for the purpose of equalizing educational opportunities. A rather high degree of control is exercised by departments of education over curricula, textbooks and the qualifications of teachers. Supervision is maintained through a staff of government inspectors. Teachers are hired and dismissed mostly by the local boards which build and maintain the schools.

Religious minorities exercising the right to maintain separate schools control the appointment of teachers and, in varying degrees, the choice of textbooks, curricula and government inspectors. In Quebec alone does such a minority (in this instance, Protestant) enjoy the right to exercise practically complete control of its own schools. There, both elementary and secondary education are administered through a Superintendent and a Council of Education. The latter consists of two committees, one Roman Catholic, one Protestant. Each is autonomous in deciding school questions.

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

At every level of instruction there exist private—*i. e.*, non-State supported—schools. Such institutions, though important, handle less than 10 per cent of the students of Canada. These schools have come into existence to fulfill a variety of social, educational and religious purposes; and are supported by gifts or endowments and by the fees of their pupils. As a rule, the private schools are independent of State control, but tend to conform to the standards of the public schools for utilitarian reasons. Occasionally they are formally linked to State-supported institutions, as when denominational and non-sectarian colleges are affiliated for the purpose of sharing certain advantages, such as particular courses, the use of libraries and other facilities and the granting of university degrees. Sometimes, also, private schools submit to government inspection to secure the right to grant the diplomas that are required for admission to the more advanced institutions.

In certain Provinces religious minorities, especially Roman Catholics, maintain numerous primary and even secondary schools without State aid or supervision. This occurs in places where the provincial authorities have not legalized State-supported separate schools. According to the terms of the British North America Act, the powers of the provinces include the right to legalize such schools; but of the five Provinces which have been added to the Dominion since Confederation, only two, Saskatchewan and Alberta, have utilized this right. One, Manitoba, which gave State support to Roman Catholic schools when it entered the Dominion, later withdrew this support. New Brunswick, one of the four original provinces, did

likewise. Ontario has continued to allow a separate school system, but has limited it to the primary level and has otherwise prevented its full development in a variety of ways. Outside of Quebec, no Province of Canada grants a religious minority complete educational freedom. The Dominion, however, supports sectarian schools throughout those parts of the country which have not yet attained provincial status.

#### CHANGING TRENDS

At present the main trends evident in Canada's educational system seem to point towards greater centralization and more complete secularization. Centralizing tendencies reveal themselves in the increase in the Provincial Governments' support of, and control over, local schools; in the consolidation of rural districts into larger units; in the intrusion of the Dominion Government into various areas of education within the Provinces, such as the agricultural, the vocational and the military. Secularizing effects are apparent both in these special Dominion enterprises and in corresponding institutions, like normal schools, domestic-science schools and trade schools, which are being developed increasingly by the Provinces. Reason for the growth of centralization is partly the fact that the projects conceived are to serve wide areas of territory and population, and partly the nature of their financial support, which is almost entirely provided by the Provincial and the Dominion Governments. The prevailing secularism of such institutions can, in a way, be traced to the same causes: the schools are designed to accommodate people of all creeds; and, being supported directly by governments which are theoretically non-sectarian, they are treated as being entirely outside the sphere of religion.

While the main trends in Canada's school system seem at present to be away from local and sectarian control, the question whether religious liberty in education will be lost is by no means settled. On the one hand, intellectual and even national fashion subscribes to a mild and hesitant variety of modern statism which would subject the whole population, finally, to a process of "education" framed mainly by a Dominion bureau of culture. Yet a strong desire for provincial autonomy operates in the opposite direction. The Provinces of Canada have retained and developed a vigorous awareness of political sovereignty. In this they have usually enjoyed the support of the British Parliament. Moreover, the very basis of the educational tax structure in the two largest and wealthiest Provinces, Ontario and Quebec, has worked powerfully to establish and preserve in the minds of the people a fundamental principle of religious liberty. For when separate schools were first established it was found that the most convenient and the fairest way to finance them was to allow the heads of families to decide which school system they wished to support out of the taxes they paid on local real property, with this difference, that in Quebec it is the owner who decides and in Ontario it is the tenant—a fairer system, as the tenant really pays the taxes.

Apportionment of taxes by heads of families has been applied fully only in the Province of Quebec. In that Province it has been used, indirectly, even as a basis for dividing corporation school taxes, and for financing separate secondary, as well as primary schools. Yet even in Ontario it has operated to a degree sufficient to impress upon the population at large the truth that the head of a family has a natural right to choose the type of education the children of that family shall receive.

Today in Canada there are people who are attempting to undermine and destroy these systems of sectarian education, who present against them a variety of arguments, many of which are obviously ridiculous. But the underlying principle on which most of these attacks are based is the assumption that the majority—or the State, or a bureaucracy acting in the name of the State—has the right not only to see that every child receives an education, but also to decide what the character of that education shall be. Canadian sectarian schools are never attacked as dangerous to freedom of religion, since it is obvious to all that any threat to religious liberty in Canada comes, not from the system of State-supported sectarian schools, but from those who attack this system. The true enemies of Canadian freedom of religion are not those who uphold the natural right of parents to control the education of their offspring, but those who, in the name of some more or less questionable ideology, would allow the character of the nation's culture to be determined solely by a centralized, secularized State.

#### MINOR PROBLEMS

Aside from the dangers of centralization, which are more immediate and menacing than most Canadians suspect, education in Canada suffers from a variety of minor ills. One of these is the difficulty of providing adequate facilities for sparsely populated areas. Religious minorities with legal rights to separate schools face the same problem when their adherents are scattered. Those without such rights, or those who do not enjoy them fully, are continually suffering from financial disabilities. Roman Catholics living in Provinces which have no legalized separate schools often attempt to build and support

their own schools by private subscriptions and church collections. In Ontario, schools above the primary level must be maintained privately, if at all. In Ontario, too, the separate schools suffer from a lack of funds since they do not share to any appreciable extent in corporation taxes. The tax rate on the property of separate-school supporters must hence be higher than the general level. To keep their taxes down, some Catholics here and there do not apportion their taxes to the separate schools.

The chief problem of the Catholic Church in Canada in the field of education is to enlighten the public, including many Catholics, on the subject of religious liberty. If the average Canadian can be taught that the family is the fundamental unit of society, and has a natural right to determine the character of the education of the child, the way will be opened to extend to the Catholic minorities outside Quebec the educational rights which the Protestant minority in Quebec enjoys, and which the British North America Act had in view. Whether this will be done, only the future can tell. Its doing depends on the course Canadian Catholics themselves pursue.



### 3. Australia: a study in courage

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA is a federation of six States. In educational affairs each State is independent of the Federal authority. Even the small group of schools in the territory reserved as Federal Capital Territory has been handed over by the Commonwealth to the care of the State of New South Wales.

Though each State has its own system, the variations are of little importance and, for our purposes, may be neglected. Education, as far as it is given by the State, is undenominational—or, to use the favorite word, non-sectarian. Representatives of different denominations are allowed to give religious instruction in State schools during school hours. If any denomination wishes to establish its own schools it may do so. Such schools are subject to reasonable inspection by the State authority but, apart from exemption from sales taxes allowed in some States, no contribution whatever is made from the public purse towards the capital cost, maintenance or salaries of staffs of such schools. Those who establish denominational schools have to finance them and, at the same time, contribute equally with other citizens to support the State schools, of which, in conscience, they disapprove.

This was not the original school system established in Australia. As early as 1793, six years after the settlement began and many years before the Catholic Church was permitted to function in the land, a Church of England chaplain opened a school for the unfortunate children of

convicts who had been assigned as laborers on the lands of free settlers. The Government soon came to its support. Father Therry, the first Catholic priest with a recognized status, arrived in Australia in 1820. He asked permission to give religious instruction to the Catholic children in the existing State schools. Permission was refused. Accordingly, within a year of his arrival, he established a school for Catholic children, maintaining it, no one knows how, out of his own salary of £100 a year. Later, the authorities allowed him twopence a week per child, but forbade him to make any charge in his Sydney school or in any other school he opened.

#### DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS

After many vicissitudes and the emergence of much sectarian feeling—the result of Protestant irritation at the Emancipation Act of 1829—a denominational system of education was introduced. The Government contributed to the schools on the basis of £1 for every £1 subscribed by the parents—a system which had about it an air of justice, but which, in view of the poverty of the Catholics, was a travesty of justice. Each denomination was granted the right to appoint its own teachers, subject to State approval. With the arrival of the Irish Sisters of Charity in 1838 and of the Irish Christian Brothers in 1843, the number of Catholic schools was increased and the standard of teaching was raised.

Meanwhile a growing proportion of the colonists advocated the separation of religious and secular teaching, and the agitation ended in the setting up of a dual system in 1848. State-controlled secular schools were placed under a National Board; a Denominational Board was put in charge of all church schools. Both types of schools were

supported from public funds. In practice, the Denominational Board left to each church the care of its own schools. Disunity and jealousy, however, were fostered by the National Board. From the beginning it regarded itself as an opponent of the Denominational Board, with which it was meant to cooperate.

As a result, the system was altered in 1866, greatly to the disadvantage of church schools. A new Educational Council used its power in a way that warned Catholics of what lay ahead. Certain books which Catholics wished to use were disallowed because of their Catholic tone. Expecting that before long all State aid would be withdrawn, Catholics exerted themselves to prepare for new conditions. It was not till 1880 that Sir Henry Parkes put through the Education Act which has ever since guided the policy of all the States. Since that time, denominational schools have had to support themselves. One thing Catholics will never forget: Parkes sponsored the Act in language that has rarely been excelled in bigotry. Even the Church of England did not escape the violence of his denunciation.

#### CATHOLICS MAINTAIN THEIR SCHOOLS

The result of the withdrawal of financial aid from the church schools has resulted in an almost complete disappearance of primary schools under church auspices, outside of the Catholic schools. I shall pass by the sad results, now so plain, of this amoral system, and confine myself to showing the general plan by which Catholics triumphantly met this attack on religion.

The fight to maintain and extend the Catholic school system, the years of self-sacrifice of laity and religious, have given to Australian Catholics a sense of unity and

a spirit of courage. Throughout Australia the schools have had first place in the policy of the hierarchy. The building of a school takes precedence over all else in the development of a parish—a policy insisted on by Dr. John Gould, the first Bishop of Melbourne. With about one-and-a-half million Catholics scattered through a sparsely inhabited area almost equal to that of the United States, the multiplication of small schools, made possible by the devoted labor of the religious sisterhoods, brings to those in the most remote centers the benefit of religious education. Unfortunately, to maintain this policy of establishing small Catholic schools over wide, sparsely populated areas demands a heavy overhead of "woman power." Wherever there is a cluster of Catholic families with a couple of dozen children of school age, there will generally be a school, often far from a church. In the Diocese of Lismore in New South Wales, for example, 39 sisters teach only about 730 pupils in elementary schools. Allowing for secondary schools, we can see that each sister teaches only about 20 pupils, not much more than half the ordinary number. This is the price we must pay to put Catholic schooling within the reach of Catholic children in Australia.

#### CATHOLICS IN STATE SCHOOLS

In spite of this multiplication of schools, there are many Catholic children who live far from a Catholic school and must therefore attend a State school. There are others, though the proportion is small, who, through the neglect of their parents, especially where one is a non-Catholic, attend State schools. For these, as provided by the Education Acts of the different States, there is the system of instruction given during school hours by the

clergy or volunteer lay helpers. For this instruction the children of different denominations meet in separate groups in different rooms, in the State school buildings. Is not this the system of "released-time" religious instruction which the United States Supreme Court declared unconstitutional last year? For those who cannot be reached in this way, there is a system of religious education by mail, like your American "correspondence" schools. This system, established by Msgr. McMahon of Perth, has been adapted to various parts of the "out-back." It is now crowned by the establishment of school-camps in which the "bush" children are gathered at holiday time for religious training and preparation for the sacraments. The Catholic body also maintains, with some public aid, fifty-two orphanages. It has made some progress in the work of technical education and in the kindergarten sphere. It has commercial schools, domestic-science schools, schools for the deaf and dumb, the blind, and for subnormal and delinquent children.

### SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Of education above the primary level not much need be said. All denominations have established secondary schools in the main centers. These function side by side with the State high schools. Many primary schools add a secondary department. In the number of secondary schools, the Catholic body is far ahead of any other denomination. It should be noted that non-Catholic denominational schools are not penetrated with religion as are the Catholic schools. Indeed, social reasons probably have much to do with their success, and in the event of a depression, while Catholic schools would survive, non-Catholic parents might find it hard to withstand the at-

traction offered by the cheaper or free State high schools.

It is a strange fact that the State attitude towards denominational secondary schools is quite friendly. Many scholarships, provided at public expense, are available at these schools. Furthermore, students from these schools are eligible for many scholarships and bursaries which carry students through the universities. Catholics have established six resident colleges in connection with the State universities, and another is to be opened at Adelaide next year. These are residential colleges with tutorial, but not professorial, staffs.

#### IMPRESSIVE RESULTS ACHIEVED

What is the result of this huge effort? To make an estimate based on statistics is difficult, especially since no census was taken between 1933 and 1947; and analysis of available figures is still incomplete. However, when a general picture is looked for rather than an exact analysis, it seems safe to say that the proportion of Catholic children receiving education in Catholic schools is increasing. In 1933, out of 238,562 Catholic children of school age, 84,763 were in State schools. This left a maximum of 153,799 in Catholic schools, a much higher proportion, it seems, than is the case in the United States. The 1948 figures give a total of 222,260 children in Catholic schools, about 160,000 of them in primary schools. The Catholic school population is clearly on the rise.

Only a general conclusion may be stated from these crude figures: 1) the Catholic system is approaching an optimum in the provision of facilities for primary education; and 2) Catholic parents avail themselves fully of these facilities.

One interesting phenomenon is shown by available

figures. Catholics form 25.52 per cent of the population of New South Wales. Catholic children there form 26.41 per cent of the children of school age—in spite of a temporary rise in the all-round birth rate since the war. This means that even at a time of unusual general population growth Catholics are more than holding their own. It is likely that Catholics will maintain a more favorable rate than others when the general rate of growth declines, and that Catholic schools will be expected to handle the educational needs of increasingly large numbers of children in the future.

If we attempt to analyze to what extent Catholics use the opportunities for secondary education, we find that roughly 20 per cent of our children are in Catholic schools rated above primary standard. However, we have not maintained a balanced secondary system, as there are 270 Catholic secondary schools for girls and only 139 for boys. In general, the proportion of Catholics receiving secondary education of one kind or another, in Catholic or State schools, corresponds pretty closely to the Catholic proportion of the population.

#### UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

The same is not true of the universities. Whereas Catholics represent between a quarter and a fifth of the population, the latest reliable figures show that only about a sixth of the university population is Catholic. Yet Catholics seem, on the whole, to do better than others at the qualifying examinations. For this disparity two reasons, both financial, can be suggested. The first is that Catholics, constituting the poorer section of the community, cannot so well afford the university fees as they can afford the tuition fees in secondary schools, which, in

the case of Catholic secondary schools, are lower than in the schools of other denominations. Second, the university entrance examinations are often used as competitive examinations for the public service. Since the successful Catholic students are frequently anxious to begin earning at once, many of them prefer to enter such service immediately, rather than go on to the universities. This fact explains why there are so many Catholics in the public service in Australia.

### A HEAVY BURDEN BRAVELY BORNE

The mention of the comparative poverty of Catholics brings us to the important question; how is this elaborate system of education, especially primary education, kept going? The treatment of Catholics by the State in the matter of educational finance is the chief blot on Australian social and political life. What the capital cost has been to Catholics, what the annual expense for maintenance has been and still is, there is no means of estimating accurately. It is possible to calculate the amount spent on buildings, on training colleges, etc.; but the great invisible and incalculable charge is the life-long labor of the teachers, especially of the 11,000 nuns and 1,400 brothers whose sacrifices make possible the Catholic system.

At different times serious efforts have been made to estimate the amount which the State has filched from the Catholic community. As far back as 1936 a careful study arrived at £60 million as the compensation justly due to Catholics. A rough estimate puts the Catholic expenditure on sub-university education at about £4 million yearly—an amount that, one must feel, should in all fairness be paid by the State.



Where does this money come from? The main contribution is from the "contributed services," evaluated in terms of salaries of teachers belonging to various religious institutes. The balance, in hard cash, is raised by a variety of methods—weekly contributions from parents, Sunday collections, the weary round of concerts, bazaars, etc. The money has always been found. That the money will always be found is the firm determination of the Catholic people of Australia.

At the present time the Catholic people are able to bear their burden. What of the future? The State is spending increasing sums on education and, in particular, is pouring out money on technical education in a degree beyond the capacity of the Catholic body. Furthermore, though at present State schools are crowded—due to passing conditions arising from wartime marriages—the relatively greater Catholic birth rate will, after a few years, mean a relatively greater cost to Catholics. Recent lengthening of the time during which education is legally compulsory will hit Catholics harder than others. A greater anxiety arises from the difficulty of providing the staff to meet fresh calls. It is no wonder that the conference of Australian Catholic school inspectors puts as the most urgent need of the time an increase in the number of vocations to the teaching congregations, which happily, by the Providence of God, is taking place.

#### COURAGE AND HOPE

At the same time, however, Catholics feel there is little prospect of getting relief from the robbery-under-law to which they have long submitted. Though many members of the Labor Party are practising Catholics, they are unwilling to jeopardize their position by suggesting relief

for the Catholic population, while the opposite party traces its descent from the politicians whose bigotry introduced the present system.

Catholic leaders, clerical and lay, never cease urging on the attention of Protestants the injustice suffered for conscience sake. It may be that at some time in the future there will be an awakening of the public conscience. That time is not yet. Meanwhile the Catholics must continue to put their sole trust in Providence, which alone has made the present burdensome system a success.

## 4. Britain revamps her system

UNDER THE EDUCATION ACT of 1944 (as amended in 1946 and 1948) a parent must cause his children to receive full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude between the ages of 5 and 15 years, at school or otherwise.

The public system of education is organized in three stages: primary (5 to 11 years), secondary (11 to 16 years) and Further education. The Minister of Education, a member of the Government, must promote the education of the people and secure effective execution of the Education Acts by Local Education Authorities under his control and direction. There are 146 LEA's throughout the country.

The LEA for each area (Local Education Authority, corresponding roughly to local school boards in the U.S.A.) must

contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient education (primary, secondary and further) shall be available to meet the needs of the population of their area.

Schools providing primary or secondary education, if in the public system, are called Maintained Schools. Maintained Schools are those at which *the pupils pay no fees* and the day-to-day costs, including provision of furniture, apparatus, etc., teachers' salaries, repairs (only partly, in Voluntary Schools) are paid by the LEA from public

funds, local and national. About 55 per cent of local expenditure on education is met by grants from the national Government.

These Maintained Schools fall into two categories—either county schools or voluntary schools, for both primary and secondary education. The county school, like the American public school, is built and maintained entirely from public funds, local and national. The LEA appoints all the teachers in county schools. Such schools were introduced under the Education Act of 1870 to fill in the gaps left by the voluntary schools, which had provided education for the people before the state schools were introduced.

#### VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS

The voluntary school, maintained by the LEA and free to the pupil, is one built, not from public funds but by the voluntary body concerned, e.g., Church of England, Wesleyan, Catholic. In 1947, county schools or departments numbered 16,520, with 3,643,000 pupils and 135,000 teachers; voluntary schools and departments numbered 11,625, with 1,139,000 pupils and 51,787 teachers. Most of these voluntary schools or departments—9,204, with 895,555 pupils and 33,547 teachers—were Church of England. Catholic-maintained voluntary schools or departments numbered 1,826, with 350,494 pupils and 11,355 teachers.

The voluntary schools themselves (primary or secondary) fall into different categories, according to whether they are Controlled, Aided or Special Agreement (secondary only) Schools.

A Voluntary Controlled School is one in which the voluntary body has surrendered to the LEA its right to

give denominational religious instruction (except for two periods weekly); and also its right to appoint denominational teachers (except for one-fifth of the staff, "reserved" for denominational religious instruction). It is entirely financed for improvement, modernization and upkeep by the LEA from public funds. Many Church of England schools will become Controlled, and teachers appointed thereto by the LEA will give Agreed Syllabus Religious Instruction instead of Anglican doctrine, and the customary secular instruction. Catholics could not in conscience accept this status, and have insisted on Catholic teachers in Catholic schools to teach all branches so as to keep control over the moral and religious phases of all subjects. Consequently they have had to carry a heavy financial burden as a penalty for their religious and educational beliefs.

In a Voluntary Aided School, teachers are appointed, and the religious education is controlled by the managers or governors of the school, who pay half the cost of structural improvements and exterior repairs as the price of greater private control. Catholic schools—primary and many secondary—fall into this category. In Aided Schools, rules of management or articles of government provide for the appointment of teachers of the denomination in charge by managers or governors of the school. The LEA, however, retains the right to decide the number and qualifications of the teachers. The LEA may dismiss, or prohibit the dismissal of, teachers, except where the managers or governors may themselves dismiss a teacher who fails to give the required religious instruction efficiently and suitably. The LEA's consent to the appointment of teachers of secular subjects is required.

A Voluntary Special Agreement School is one for which, under the Education Act of 1936, the LEA, by agreement with the managers or governors, can give from 50 to 75 per cent financial aid for alterations and improvements and for provision of new buildings. These special agreements, covering senior pupils mainly, are renewable under the 1944 Act. Some Church of England schools and many Catholic schools will be Special Agreement Secondary Schools. It is on the building of these schools that Catholics are relying for the secondary education of pupils who do not qualify for what we in England call Grammar School education—that is, for 70-75 per cent of the senior pupils who are over eleven years of age.

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION ACTS

1) *Daily Worship*: A daily act of religious worship and religious instruction must form part of the curriculum of all Maintained Schools, county or voluntary. In the county schools it must be in accordance with a so-called Agreed Syllabus, which must not be distinctive of any religious denomination. In voluntary schools, religious instruction is to be denominational, except in Controlled Voluntary schools, where it must follow Agreed Syllabus Instruction, plus two weekly periods for denominational instruction. In all schools, pupils may be excused from attendance at religious worship or religious instruction or both, and may take any alternative religious instruction they want, given elsewhere during school hours.

Religious worship may, on special occasions (e.g., on holy-days of obligation), take place outside school premises, normally at a church. The denominational religious

instruction must be given in school hours by denominational teachers. LEA directions as to secular instruction must not prevent the giving of due time every day to religious instruction.

2) *Financial Aid*: With the concurrence of the LEA and the Minister of Education, the voluntary bodies may build new schools to be maintained as voluntary schools, *provided they themselves pay the entire building costs*. Existing voluntary schools may be modernized so as to reach prescribed standards with the aid of the 50-per-cent Ministerial Grant. When they cannot be modernized they may be *transferred* to new sites and rebuilt by the managers or governors, aided by a 50-per-cent Ministerial Grant. The Local Education Authority pays for the site of the building.

A new (to be Maintained) voluntary school may be deemed to be a school in substitution for one or more discontinued schools and given a 50-per-cent grant. Similar provisions allow a new school to be built for the accommodation of a substantial number of Displaced Pupils.

The LEA must maintain voluntary schools, *i.e.*, must pay all the costs of the day-to-day running of the school—stock, apparatus, furniture, inside repairs, teachers' salaries, and half the cost of exterior repairs. Rooms used only for medical and meal purposes, the extension and upkeep of school playgrounds, the provision of necessary playing fields, must be paid for entirely by the LEA.

3) *Parents' Rights*: Section 76 of the Education Act of 1944 enunciates a principle of the utmost importance to voluntary school supporters. This section, under the heading "General Principles to be observed by the Ministers and by L. E. Authorities," states:

In the exercise and performance of all powers and duties conferred and imposed on them by this Act, the Minister and the L.E. Authorities shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.

Hence Ministry of Education Pamphlet No. 2 on "The Educational System of England and Wales" states:

The results of these provisions of the Act are not only to make available the financial assistance needed by the voluntary schools to enable their premises to be brought up to modern standards and enable these schools to play a full and effective part in the primary and secondary school system, but also to ensure that they retain liberty for the teaching of the tenets of the Church with which they are associated by teachers of their own faith.

4) *Control of Voluntary Schools*: The control of voluntary schools exercised by the LEA is considerable. The LEA must see that they are up to building standards, must control secular education in voluntary schools, except in Aided Secondary Schools, decide the numbers and qualifications of teachers to be appointed in Aided Schools and appoint the teachers in Special Agreement Schools, subject to the provisions as to religious education and to Rules of Management and Articles of Government. The LEA can also provide free boarding education when they deem it necessary and expedient. Through their own inspectors they can see to it that the voluntary schools are providing efficient instruction and training. In addition, the LEA have at their disposal the public funds. These they can disburse as they determine, and



that is not always as justice or the law demands. Some LEA's who do not like the voluntary schools oppose the opening of new voluntary schools, refuse free transport of pupils to school and refuse other permissible aids.

#### THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

5) *The Minister's Powers*: The Minister of Education has vast powers conferred on him by the Education Acts. He may accept or reject proposals for new voluntary schools; he decides whether schools are to be financially aided as Transferred, Substituted or Displaced Pupils schools. The Minister makes Articles of Government for voluntary secondary schools (the LEA makes Rules of Management for voluntary primary schools). He determines disputes between the LEA and the managers or governors. He may make loans to the voluntary bodies for capital expenditure. He may also recognize as "efficient" and place in the Register independent schools which, after inspection by His Majesty's Inspectors, are deemed to be up to required standards.

The Minister rules mainly by the issue of Regulations, Circulars and Memoranda to the L.E. Authorities. These documents are formally laid before Parliament, but they are not often discussed sufficiently. Between the LEA and the Minister a great and sufficient amount of control is exercised over the voluntary schools and the attempt to balance control and necessary freedom is made, but it is a delicate balance, easily disturbed.

6) *Independent Schools*: The Non-Maintained Schools, those outside the Public System of Education, include schools which do not receive aid from public funds, and some which, though not maintained by the LEA's, do receive grants directly from the Minister. The independent

schools include the large and deservedly famous boarding schools and other smaller schools, all of which depend for sustenance upon the fees of pupils and the self-sacrifice of their teachers, who are often members of teaching orders. From these schools, pupils in large numbers enter the universities and the learned professions. Without them the Catholic body and indeed the country would be the poorer. The Government's attitude towards those schools is thus stated in a White Paper:

While the State does not claim a monopoly in the conduct of education, it cannot divest itself of all responsibility for children whose parents prefer to have them educated at schools outside the public system. Such parents are entitled to assurance that independent schools of their choice are well-founded and staffed to fulfill their educational purposes. (*White Paper Cmd. 6458 of 1943.*)

Hence such schools now have to be inspected and registered, and must reach required standards of efficiency or be discontinued. Most of these schools have no trouble in being admitted to the Register. Others may have to be improved. Thereafter these registered independent schools are not subject to state or LEA control, but must send in required information and returns to the authorities.

7) *Direct Grant Schools*: The Direct Grant Schools are not Maintained Schools within the Public System. Yet they receive direct grants from the Ministry of Education because of their immensely valuable contribution to the country. There are 166 Direct Grant Schools of Grammar School (academic secondary) type for about 78,000 pupils, including 77 schools which have 7,300 boarders. Of these schools, Catholics have 54 Direct Grant Schools, with 25,000 pupils, including boarders, and about 1,300

teachers. They are staffed by the teaching orders and lay teachers, and depend for their sustenance upon direct grants from the Ministry, the fees of pupils and the contributions of the teaching orders who conduct them.

At these schools the LEA of the area may annually require up to 50 per cent of places in the entering class for Free Place Pupils who have passed a qualifying examination for education of the Grammar School (secondary) type. Free Place Pupils' fees are paid by the LEA. Day pupils paying their own fees at such schools may obtain whole or part remission of fees, according to their parents' income. The Ministry of Education reimburses the school for the fees so remitted. These schools are eminently successful institutions, with high scholastic standards.

An important principle of the Education Act of 1944 and of Ministry of Education Regulations on "Scholarships and other Benefits" is that "every LEA *may*, for enabling pupils to take advantage, without hardship to themselves or their parents, of educational facilities available to them," defray expenses of pupils at Maintained Schools for school activities; and pay fees and expenses, wholly or in part, of pupils at Non-Maintained Schools.

#### PROBLEMS FOR CATHOLICS

Even if all the financial aids available to Catholic Maintained Voluntary Schools and to pupils in "non-maintained" schools are placed at our disposal, if neither the action of some unsympathetic L.E. Authorities nor a Regulation made under the Acts places unnecessary obstacles in our way, Catholics will have to bear unprecedented and impossible burdens to modernize existing schools and to make much-needed new provisions. At

best we shall have to meet half the costs of exterior repairs of schools, of the rebuilding of Transferred and Substituted Schools, of accommodation for Displaced Pupils and of the improvement and modernization of existing schools. We shall pay from half to a quarter of the building of many new Special Agreement Schools, and *the entire cost of the building of a great number of new schools* to meet the needs of our growing population.

Nor is that all. The compromise of 1944 was thrust upon us on the assumption that building costs would be 35 per cent above pre-war costs. This estimate is now shown to be ridiculous. A primary school which cost £40 per pupil-place in 1939 now costs £200 a place. A secondary school costing £80-£100 a place before 1939 now costs over £300 a place. As the Very Rev. Canon W. J. Wood, V.F., writes (*Clergy Review*, March, 1949) :

This state of affairs will have to be put before the Government without delay and we must ask for a very considerable increase in the financial aid given to us. There is no purpose in waiting in silence until the next election is near, for at any election some great world issue may sweep aside national questions such as the educational policy of the country. Our case is so strong, the burden so colossal, and the task of keeping pace with the necessities of school building so important, that we ought to be able to look for a considerable rearrangement of the financial provisions of the 1944 Act.

A just and logical solution of these problems was achieved in Scotland in 1918. It is founded on the principle that the State should erect and fully maintain all schools, denominational and undenominational, entirely from public funds. In England and Wales the Scottish solution could easily be adopted.

## 5. Is religious education divisive?

IN THE current debate over the role of religion in American education, the assumption is often made that religious education is "divisive." Presumably other subjects are not. "It does seem unwise for a separate school system to be established," wrote William J. Sanders in *The Public Schools and Spiritual Values* (1944), "because that would lead to divisiveness in the community and mutual bigotry" (p. 101). In a similar vein William Clayton Bower in *Church and State in Education* (1944) assumed: ". . . parochial education . . . cannot be said to meet the requirements of a democracy that rests upon a community of shared educational experience" (pp. 25, 6). V. T. Thayer, Alexander Meiklejohn and scores of writers take this view. In September, 1948 the New York Board of Rabbis opposed released-time religious instruction, even outside of public school buildings, because it "tends to promote divisive tendencies among the children."

Slogans like "divisive tendencies," when exploited to attack so essential an element in education as religious instruction, call for careful analysis of terms. Behind such assertions lurk attitudes for which the late Justice Holmes coined the illuminating phrase "inarticulate major premises." Let us unwrap them.

"Divisive tendencies" are presumably those which undermine a desirable and necessary degree of civic unity. No one can deny that the well-being of a community

requires such unity. But when any group puts an embargo on religious instruction as disruptive of civic unity, we are compelled by the alarming demands of their secular ideal to inquire what they mean by "unity." We cannot be blamed if our suspicions are aroused by an ideal of community cooperation which, it seems, only reluctantly allows room for religious differences and allows no room at all for State programs giving official countenance to them.

### WHAT IS "NATIONAL UNITY"?

The principle of national unity has been carefully studied by the most eminent political scientists in democratic countries. To cite one authority among many, Robert M. MacIver has treated it at some length in a number of writings, notably in the *Modern State*. He distinguishes between "the general will" and "the will of the people." The former consists of universal agreement among citizens on the *fundamental law of the State*. Whether anyone likes our Constitution or not, he has to accept it and be willing to operate within its framework because it has been freely adopted by our citizens. He may, of course, bend his energies to amend it, but so long as he carries on his campaign within the procedures therein laid down he cannot be charged with disrupting the foundations of our national unity. And since we may assume that the Constitution we now have, supported as it is by common agreement, proves satisfactory to our people, we may also assume that suggestions to change it will not prove very inviting to large numbers of them. Our history silences any doubts we might feel on this score. Like St. Paul, we are impatient of those who would always be laying and relaying foundations. We

have built ourselves a house and we are content to live in it.

But what kind of life are we going to live in it? Here is where differences of opinion are not only tolerable but inevitable; not only inevitable, but desirable. Our whole democratic way of life is predicated on the principles 1) that where freedom is guaranteed, differences of opinion will multiply, and 2) that, within limits, such differences generate the interest, reflection, argument and study from which public opinion, under competent leadership, can select the best measures to meet current problems and to keep up the progressive improvement of social life. So long as we agree to abide by majority decision (not very accurately termed "the will of the people") freely and competently arrived at, how can a professed believer in democracy experience alarm over these differences? They in no way threaten our fundamental unity. On the contrary, they form the nervous system of the democratic process. To paraphrase Burke, we love our country precisely because, being solicitous of our self-chosen differences, it is so lovable.

#### CULTURAL DIVERSITY

But let us go even further. Some freedoms we prize so highly in a true democracy that they are exempted even from the unifying power of majority decision. Such is the freedom to worship God according to one's conscience and to have one's children instructed in the faith of their parents. MacIver is perhaps the most eloquent champion of such "cultural diversity." He would limit the regulatory functions of the State to the apparatus of "civilization"—to economic, social and political rules governing the purely temporal order. One of the chief

purposes of that order is to provide a fertile setting for the free growth of culture. Surely no one understands the distinction between the "State" and "society" better than he. This distinction refuses to identify the political with the social, the economic, and least of all with the cultural. The further the coercive arm of political power reaches out into society, the more totalitarian a State becomes. The moment it lays its heavy hand on cultural—including religious—freedom, it has violated the inner sanctum of all liberty, its nursery in the human mind.

#### UNITY VS. UNIFORMITY

Those who would straitjacket men's minds for the sake of a secular unity have fallen into a trap as old as Plato. They have missed the meaning of Aristotle's devastating charge that his master had mistaken *uniformity* for unity. They have identified cultural differences, the very boast of free government, with civic disunion. They have assumed, without proof and in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that religious diversity erodes the democratic framework of fundamental law whose historic achievement has been to solve the old dilemma of "the one of the many" by unifying men in political essentials without destroying diversity in social and cultural opportunities, preferences and allegiances—*e pluribus unum*. We have learned that we do not have to destroy plurality for the sake of union. And most of all, they are stigmatizing as a blemish on American life the very feature of it by which, at this critical hour, it is distinguished from the atheistic communism which now imperils the freedom of mankind.

Imagining a more inopportune season at which to impede the thriving of religion in our country as "divisive"



more than taxes our ingenuity. The threat facing our democracy does not wear the label "disunity." It wears those of an enforced uniformity. It is freedom that is at stake wherever it still survives. And where it succumbs to the police state, not only is religion harnessed to the dictator's chariot, but so also are economics, education, biology, and even the most unideological science of statistics.

If anything warrants a feeling of uneasiness it is this misappraisal of what values are in jeopardy and the misguided espousal of social attitudes which derive from anti-democratic premises. Religionists are led into these traps by fear: fear born of ignorance of Catholicism and fear born of the feeling that, given a fair field, Catholicism will grow. Public school educators are motivated partly by these same religious feelings and partly (as was openly admitted in a teachers' union last year) by the ignoble fear that the progress of Catholic education would hit them where it hurts most—in their pocketbooks.

Whatever may be the mainspring of these radically undemocratic attitudes, they amount to a movement to impose upon Americans an ideological unity based on secular ideals. Their exponents would saddle us with their own value system. They would, in effect and under the banner of patriotism, rob us of cultural freedom. We have heard this cry before: "We have no king but Caesar."

It is our turn to ask a pair of direct questions:

1. Where is the evidence that religious education has actually produced "divisive tendencies" resulting in real damage to our civic unity? The implication—never stated because it cannot be proved—must be that the graduates of parochial schools are not as good American

citizens as the graduates of public schools. If there is any evidence of this, we want to be the first to learn about it in order to correct our own shortcomings. It is no help to us or to our country to have "scientific" educators hurl unsubstantiated charges at over twenty million fellow citizens. They are simply begging the question. If they have any facts to disclose, let us have them.

2. But if we are training loyal Americans, on what grounds are pressure groups trying to curtail our cultural freedom? To be perfectly plain, we charge *them* with being un-American. *They* are disrupting national unity; *their* tactics are "divisive." Why? Are they afraid of democracy?

In his annual message to Congress on January 4, 1939, the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke of the urgent necessity of national unity. "Differences of occupation, geography, race and religion," he declared, "no longer obscure the nation's fundamental unity in thought and action." Has anything happened since then to obscure that unity? Or have the victims of the divisiveness complex repudiated President Roosevelt's concept of democracy?

To a political scientist these complaints seem to come from people so completely unacquainted with our great political writings that "they know not what they do." One wonders at the reflection such unacquaintance casts upon their own education. Apparently it has left them, in this critical hour, without an understanding of what democracy means. Considering the prominent posts such persons hold in religion and education, are we not justified in sensing alarm over the future of free government here in our own United States?

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