

1
2 which our way of life becomes.

3 The question of our time is not whether all
4 man are brothers. That question has been answered by
5 the God who placed us on this earth together. The
6 question is whether we have the strength and the will
7 to make brotherhood of man the guiding principle of
8 our daily lives.

9 Thank you.

10 DR. GOTTLIEB: Thank you.

11 Until recently, I have been privileged to
12 say and I thought with some justice that I had the
13 most difficult educational assignment in the world
14 because of the complexity of my own school but when
15 I contemplated more recently the task of Al Shanker
16 as the leader of a great professional organization,
17 I begin to assume a much smaller role in this whole
18 educational hierarchy and I think we are all fortunate
19 to have as head of our union in New York City a person who
20 by background and experience has given me always a very
21 high expectancy of statesmanship, both in society as
22 well as in education so I am very happy to introduce
23 Al Shanker to you.

24 MR. SHANKER: I hope during the course of the
25 short time that I have to be able to present a picture

2 which is free of some of the slogans which I think
3 many of us, myself included, have been carrying on
4 banners for a period of time and I notice that from
5 season to season the slogans change a little but we
6 are still looking for some type of easy, fast gimmick
7 which will provide a solution to the great problems
8 of massive academic retardation which exists especially
9 within our ghetto schools.

10 Now, many years ago in ancient India a
11 philosopher spent some time with a student and when
12 the student asked the philosopher how was the earth
13 suspended in space, the philosopher answered that the
14 earth rests on the back of an elephant and when the
15 student inquired further where does the elephant stand,
16 the philosopher said, that is simple, the elephant
17 stands on the back of a huge tortoise and that was
18 the end. That was deemed to be an explanation.

19 Now, there used to be a time when we talked
20 about good children and bad children or bright and
21 slow but we have progressed a good deal and now under-
22 stand that these distinctions do not really adhere
23 within the child but are largely that children are
24 victims of many circumstances and that, therefore, the
25 discussion is shallow. And we used to talk about good

1
2 parents and bad parents but now we are so sophisticated
3 enough to know that the parents are victims of cir-
4 cumstances and so we see them that way.

5 But it seems to me that some of the remarks
6 that have been made here that where we understand the
7 children are victims of circumstances and the parents
8 are, we tend to view teachers as absolutely free agents
9 who are not victims of circumstance at all and if only
10 they could free themselves of a few attitudes and a
11 few prejudices and a few something else, then everything
12 would be hunky-dory and all the children would learn.

13 Now, sophistication in this area seems to me
14 demands that we all see the teacher in a social setting
15 and not view the teacher as a free agent and not take
16 the simple view that if a teacher only changes a few
17 attitudes everything would be fine. That is just as
18 simple as saying if only the parents would do something,
19 everything would be fine or if only the children would
20 do something everything would be great.

21 Now, the topic here, teacher training, how
22 to prepare teachers to teach in our urban schools and
23 I think that at the outset if I did not say what I
24 am about to say, then we would be missing what is
25 probably the major problem and that is that within a

1
2 very short period of time, if we can't make the teacher
3 the scapegoat and that is the latest hobby, there will
4 be no teachers to train.

5 Now, I understand why the teacher among
6 others is the scapegoat. There is tremendous bitterness,
7 frustration, hostility within the ghetto, most of it
8 quite justified and a few whites who enter the ghetto,
9 the policeman, the social workers, the shopkeeper and
10 the teacher are the only ones.

11 They are the only white people going into
12 the ghetto and, therefore, they are the ones against
13 whom the hostility can be directly taken against and
14 acted out. So I would say that is one problem and
15 yet we have teacher problems with attitudes but we
16 also are rapidly going to have a problem whether there
17 are going to be any teachers to train.

18 There is a good deal of discussion about P.S.
19 125 and I.S. 201 about selecting and screening teachers.
20 Now, the process of selection implies that there are
21 going to be several hundred people who want the job
22 and then you interview and select from the several
23 hundred the 50 that you need to do the job, whereas I
24 think a realistic picture is that it is going to be
25 very difficult on any basis to draft a sufficient number

1
2 of teachers to merely staff the schools next year as
3 a result of the conflict which is taking place let
4 alone select.

5 Now, understanding an attitude, I maintain
6 is not a substitute for knowhow and I am surprised
7 to attend conference after conference where everyone
8 is working on how to give the teacher and supervisor
9 and anybody else a good attitude and everything will
10 be fine.

11 Ed, let me be personal for a moment. I
12 think Eddy Gottlieb has great attitudes. I think this
13 is true of Elliot Shapiro and a number of other
14 principals in our system but there is absolutely no
15 evidence that the academic achievements of their schools
16 are any better than in any other similar school in the
17 City and I think that if we are spending all this
18 time on attitudes that is good.

19 It is good for people to have good attitudes
20 but it is very important that people with good attitudes
21 have knowhow so that the children come out knowing how
22 to read and write and don't end up on welfare rolls
23 or dropouts or criminals or addicts or something else.

24 Good attitudes are not enough, love is not
25 enough, and it seems to me that we are not spending

enough time on what is it that gets a child to read
and what is it that doesn't and I think that there is
ample proof that it is not merely a matter of attitudes.

I think that in order to discuss the problem
of teacher training, we have to get a picture of just
what it is that confronts the teacher. Most teachers
graduating out of college today and universities get
course after course after course telling them what
their attitudes should be.

Most of those courses, I might say, were
unnecessary because I think most of the people that
go into teaching probably had those attitudes before
they took the courses anyway and I think that in most
cases the attitudes are not vicious and they are not
hostile and they are not prejudiced and so forth.

Of most of our teachers coming to be inter-
viewed, the gal or the fellow who is about to graduate
Teachers College or City College or Brooklyn College
or any of these places, they are asked what they will
do when they come into a school and they will literally
pour forth with wonderful things that they are going
to do and how they are going to lick all the problems
at that interview, and the same teacher after four
weeks in the classroom, see whether that teacher was

1
2 able to do most of the things that she said she was
3 going to do and which she really wanted to do.

4 The chances are that she walks into the
5 classroom the first day after having gone through two
6 or three days of conferences with a principal and as
7 the children poured into the room she tried to have
8 them sit down to get some sort of semblance of order
9 and might very well have taken up three or four hours
10 to do so.

11 Here, she had gone to college for five years
12 and inside of two hours a bunch of little kids made
13 a monkey out of her and after two or three hours the
14 principal who told her at the conference on Friday
15 that this door is always open and to call upon him
16 for help, he sticks his head in the door and called
17 her over and said that is very bad, Mrs. Smith. You
18 really have to get control of the class. I am afraid
19 you are not properly motivating your students. Will
20 you please drop in and show me your lesson plan book.

21 She tries and she plans and she goes into
22 the library and maybe she calls back her old professor
23 who may never have been in a school or taught in one
24 and she gets all this advice and very soon she drops
25 as a substitute for all of the teaching technique which

1
2 she has learned and develops other series of techniques
3 of survival.

4 She finds through experience that recreational
5 activities, taking the kids to the park or singing a
6 few songs or doing something else tends to keep the
7 kids in greater order than trying to give them a reading
8 lesson for that period and since it is impossible to
9 have 30 kids running all over the place, you do the
10 things that make it easier to manage the classroom,
11 and she finds that putting a lot of things on a black-
12 board or asking the children to keep quiet also tends
13 to keep order better than keeping the class and better
14 than working as she had been taught in college.

15 I can go through a series of these different
16 mechanisms of survival techniques which are substitutes
17 for teaching techniques and because very few adults
18 can admit to themselves that they have gone to school
19 for four or five years and they are not succeeding,
20 the teacher develops a view of the student, well, it
21 is not my fault. I went to school for six years and
22 I walked into this school and I did everything they
23 told me to do and it didn't work so it isn't my fault.

24 It is the child's fault, it is the home, it
25 is the economy, the society. It is all sorts of other

1
2 things but it isn't the school and it isn't me.

3 Now, what can we do about this? Well, in
4 the first place, I think that we have to say that
5 practically all of the valuable training of teachers
6 for jobs, teaching positions within our urban schools
7 are going to be the job training. I am not saying
8 that the teachers shouldn't go to college for four or
9 five years.

10 I think teachers ought to be educated people
11 but they are not going to learn to be teachers. They
12 are going to be educated in schools but they are not
13 going to learn to be teachers.

14 Secondly, I think that we ought to have
15 learned after all of these years that a principal who
16 walks in and out with a few observations and who stands
17 in a kind of a boss relationship with a teacher because
18 he is going to evaluate and going to rate her, that
19 figure generally is too threatening to the teacher to
20 be equal besides which the long absence of the principal
21 from the classroom for many years generally leads the
22 teacher to suspect maybe he never taught or maybe he
23 doesn't remember how.

24 The important thing to build up within the
25 school is the relationship among colleagues, that there

1
2 must be a way found to bring this new teacher who
3 comes into the school into frequent constant contact
4 with the more experienced teacher, with the teacher
5 who has developed somehow ways of teaching rather than
6 ways of surviving.

7 I think that we have not paid enough attention
8 to some very, very little things. Take this picture
9 that I presented of the teacher who walked in to take
10 three hours in a really shattering experience to get
11 the class seated and a typical experience. That is an
12 experience that I would say almost a majority of our
13 teachers, new teachers within our City schools had
14 and yet we sit around talking about good attitudes
15 and no one sits down and says wouldn't it help if
16 that teacher knew the names of all the children the
17 first day they came in, wouldn't it be a good thing
18 if perhaps the week before school the children came
19 in four or five at a time and the teachers met them
20 in a different kind of situation so that the first day
21 the children walked in it wouldn't be 30 children
22 running out with a teacher frightened, she doesn't
23 know a single name and she would be able to say John,
24 you sit here and Sally, you sit there.

25 But we sit and talk about attitudes and

1
2 instead of talking about technique which will improve
3 the relationship between the teacher and children.

4 I think also a good deal of the problem or
5 I should say most of the problem comes from our failure
6 in the realm of achievement. If that problem could
7 be met most of the others that we are talking about
8 would fall into place. I say that because if we are
9 to ask teachers in any urban center what the number
10 one problem is, I think that the overwhelming answer
11 that would come back is the problem of discipline.

12 That is the answer that would come back.
13 The children won't listen, they yell, they scream,
14 they run around and they fight, they lose things and
15 so forth.

16 Now, there is a reason and the reason largely
17 is the failure on the part of the children to achieve.
18 Take children in our junior high schools, seventh,
19 eighth and ninth graders who have been to school from
20 kindergarten through the sixth grade and have not learned
21 how to read or how to write, a great many of them, and
22 then they are sent to another school to sit in another
23 classroom in front of another blackboard with another
24 teacher.

25 Now, those children know that another three

1
2 or four or five years of what they have already had
3 for seven years isn't going to help them and what we
4 are doing is we are going through a series of rituals
5 year after year after year, we are putting children
6 through a program through schools, through textbooks,
7 through curriculum and series of things that did not
8 work last year and the year before that and the year
9 before that and we are going to do it again next year.

10 By the way, we have been giving courses on
11 changing attitudes from at least the 1920's.

12 Now, the attitudes are made by this world
13 of frustration and failure. The way to change the
14 teacher's attitude is to come up with an atmosphere
15 and series of techniques which will enable the teacher
16 to teach and be successful.

17 It is that which will give the teacher a
18 positive healthy attitude and you can have all the
19 courses in the world saying be positive and be happy
20 but if teachers can't teach and is frustrated constantly,
21 it is that situation that will create the attitude.

22 Let me finish on the following: talking about
23 the training of teachers. I believe it is simple. It
24 has to be largely on the job. It is largely on the
25 basis with a relationship with colleagues.

1
2 Finally, let me say this: I believe there
3 is no advanced division whereby you can tell who is
4 a good teacher or what is a bad teacher. I don't
5 believe an examination does it whether it is given
6 by the Board of Examiners or the national teachers
7 examination or anything else.

8 I do not believe you can determine it in
9 an interview. I believe that you have to put the
10 teacher on the job, give a teacher all the help that
11 you can possibly give and then if you want a good
12 school system, you must after an adequate training
13 for the teacher have the courage to remove those
14 people who are incapable after all the help that they
15 have received, who are incapable of properly performing
16 the job.

17 Now, there are two reasons why such people
18 are not removed. One is that administrators and
19 supervisors generally lack the courage to do so. It
20 makes them unpopular and they want to be good fellows
21 and so in the City of New York with 54,000 teachers I
22 think something like 17 a year are found to be non-
23 suitable which shows that we have a remarkably fine
24 examination procedure.

25 I think secondly the reason that people are

1
2 not discharged is that principals are reluctant to
3 let anybody go because they know that in exchange for
4 somebody that they now have they will get nobody.

5 There are now over 400 classrooms in the City of New
6 York without a teacher, not a good teacher or a bad
7 teacher or a substitute or regular but without a
8 teacher.

9 And so we come to this whole question of
10 supply and I would like to hear talk about these train-
11 ing programs that we were talking about, internships
12 and training and the attitude and all sorts of things.
13 I say that all this training is a waste.

14 If we know as we do know that the average
15 life expectancy of a teacher is three years, she
16 graduates from college and maybe she gets her Masters
17 Degree and then we give her all this training and
18 three years from the time she starts she is going to
19 be married or pregnant or something else which happens
20 and out she will be. None of these programs make any
21 sense.

22 It doesn't make any sense from a social
23 point of view. From an educational point of view, it
24 means that as soon as a teacher has learned at the
25 expense of the children, she leaves to be replaced by

1
2 another teacher who is going to learn at the expense
3 of the children.

4 So I would advocate that we develop a new
5 strategy in the recruiting of teachers and that is
6 that we not primarily seek new college graduates who
7 are coming out and whose life expectancy in the system
8 we know.

9 I advocate that we try to go into other fields
10 such as publishing, such as various social working
11 areas, such as industry and other areas and try to
12 bring in people who are 30 and over on the basis of
13 attractive competitive salaries and conditions and
14 benefits.

15 When you bring in somebody who has been out
16 of college for ten years and who has gone from one
17 job to another and another, at age 30 now wants a
18 career and wants to make a decision and if you spend
19 two or three years to train that person, you have
20 someone who is going to stay for 30 years whereas when
21 you train somebody who is fresh out of college at 21
22 or so, you have somebody for the period of training
23 and that is all.

24 Now, I would like to conclude by coming to
25 some of the remarks which Ed Gottlieb made at the

1
2 beginning and which I referred to at the beginning of
3 my statement.

4 I think that this whole business of black
5 power in the schools is not a radical philosophy at
6 all. I think it is reactionary. I think there have
7 been black schools throughout the country for more
8 than a century and I still believe in integration and
9 I believe that if we are starting to talk now about
10 having black boards and black principals not because
11 we should have a system which in the normal course
12 does see to it that we have integrated staff but
13 because we are going to select a particular place so
14 that that is it and I say that is building in a system
15 of apartheid and of balkanization which is precisely
16 the opposite of what we have fought against when it
17 happened in the south and just as reactionary when we
18 talk about it here.

19 It is just as wrong to talk about parents
20 making up a curriculum in Harlem as it is to say that
21 the parents of Levittown have a right to decide whether
22 the children will learn about United Nations or not
23 or whether the John Birch Society somewhere will do
24 that.

25 I believe not in professional control in a

1
2 narrow sense but I believe in a professional integrity
3 which will mean that a teacher will have the academic
4 freedom to teach a subject according to that subject
5 and according to the truth and not according to the
6 whimsy of a particular community at a particular time
7 and this whole sloganizing that is going on right now--
8 I understand it.

9 It is a reaction to the failure to be able
10 to integrate but that doesn't mean that we should give
11 up what is a proper goal which is integration and say
12 yes.

13 No, we are going to accept segregation not
14 only in the south, we are going to build it in the
15 north and we are going to build a structure here that
16 will make sure that Rosemary Gunning will have her
17 school districts in Queens and that will be white and
18 another school district in Harlem will remain always
19 black and not this is our kettle because a few frustrated
20 leaders have come up with a particular slogan as a
21 result of their failure to make progress.

22 I think it is dead wrong. I think it leads
23 nowhere. I impathize with it. I think it is bad for
24 education and I think it is bad for the children.

25 I will say one thing, I do believe that the

1
2 community must be brought into the schools not because
3 I think it is good for education and not because I
4 think it is superior and not because I think there
5 are not a lot of problems involved but out of necessity
6 there are now white teachers walking from the subway
7 to the schools in the ghetto being told by people in
8 the community as they pass by to get the hell out,
9 they are not wanted and there are children coming to
10 school being told that their teachers are coming in
11 to destroy them and it is hard enough to teach children
12 normally. It is impossible in that kind of a setting.

13 Now, in order to change this setting, I
14 believe that the community must be brought into the
15 school so they can see first-hand the problems that
16 exist, so that they can share with the teachers this
17 problem of discipline, so that they can, members of
18 the community, go to other parents within the community
19 and talk about the problems that the school faces.

20 I believe that the schools must bring the
21 community in not because this is a most desirable
22 thing. Generally when a community walks into the
23 schools again, whether in Levittown or in Harlem, it
24 interferes with education but education cannot be
25 carried on as a kind of alien colony surrounded by

1
2 hostile people and the only way to eliminate this
3 hostility is to bring people in so that we can share
4 in the responsibility for success and so I will end
5 on the note of approving participation not as a good
6 but as a necessity.

7 DR. GOTTLIEB: Thank you, very much.

8 I would like to introduce the next speaker
9 and I should like to preface my remarks with a state-
10 ment to Al not to be joined but you know, that when
11 we worked on the more effective school programs, some
12 of us envisioned an involvement of schools not now
13 with the community but with the colleges and I was
14 glad to read in the recent issue of the Principal of
15 a project of school involvement with the college which
16 I think sets a new high in that regard.

17 I think, Thelma, you were associated with
18 that project and I hope you have time to give us some
19 insight into it but let us begin to move along in the
20 direction in which those of us who work on the more
21 effective school plan really meant for the college
22 to actually come into the school on a partnership
23 basis, so I give you Thelma Adair.

24 MRS. ADAIR: I feel a bit trapped being the
25 last speaker. I think if I had not been delayed