A BASIC EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Canadian Mennonite Bible College

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for

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By

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An Essay in Private Education

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FOREWORD

Ours is a time of rapid changes and innovations. Nowhere is this more evident than in the field of education. A leading educator has remarked that the very foundations of our lives are being shaken and that a center of learning such as our educational institutions is the converging point of the major revolutionary forces of our time.

As never before educational institutions are asking about the reason for their existence. They are asking about the nature of their task and the relevance of their many programs.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College is no exception. Perhaps even more than other schools it is called upon to give to its constituency an account of its endeavors. The following essay is, in the words of the writer, a dialogue in which those involved in the school's ongoing educational task would seek to clarify both its aims and its goals. This necessitates an analysis of both the academic and the extra-curricular program. More specifically it calls forth the discussion of such questions as academic freedom, the adaptation to and/or the use of culture, the role of the liberal arts, the place of theological study, the Christian witness, and the integration of knowledge.

In a very real way this essay is an attempt at self-evaluation. Such an evaluation, properly executed, can have its positive results.

—Henry Poettcker.

A BASIC EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY
FOR
CANADIAN MENNONITE BIBLE COLLEGE
— An Essay In Private Education —

A. INTRODUCTION

Within the Canadian school system there is no niche into which Canadian Mennonite Bible College fits neatly and smoothly; it constitutes an experiment in education that is paralleled by few, if any, other schools. While its name and earlier development, and perhaps even some of its present characteristics, have grown out of the widespread Bible college movement, our faculty feels with increasing conviction that our school is sufficiently different from the prevailing Bible college pattern to make its name somewhat of a misnomer, if interpreted in the light of that movement, though correct and fitting if its constituents are considered at face value: a Canadian, a Mennonite, a Bible-oriented school on college level.

This essay is not publicity material in the ordinary sense; it is not directed toward student recruitment or financial support, although it does constitute a plea for understanding, and in that sense for moral support. It is an attempt to answer in a coherent and systematic way many questions which are put before our faculty, board of directors, graduates, and students by those who have an understanding and concern for educational ventures, but for whom our school is somewhat of a puzzle. The content of the booklet has been hammered out in constant conversation within our faculty and board, and perhaps even more in dialogue between the college and its well-meaning as well as its not too well-meaning critics. While the aim of the essay is to be explanatory, it is natural in view of what has been said that it frequently enters into dialogue with the conversation partners just named. It is an "apology" in the sense of John Henry Newman, though not in the modern sense of the word. As a piece of dialogue it has the openness of dialogue, the readiness to listen to replies and to let these become effective parts of the ongoing conversation that is necessary if a rigid systematization is to be avoided.

B. DEFINITION OF AIM

The aims of a school are determined by its founders. In this they resemble the constitution of a country or organization, and just as such a constitution does not remain static, the aims of a school undergo constant re-interpretation and amendment. This is especially true in the formative stages of the school, and our college must still be considered to be in those stages, for a school of less than twenty years is young, even by Canadian standards. The pliability of aims and policies is increased in our case by the fact that the Conference of

Mennonites in Canada, the founding and supporting body of the college, is itself in the process of rapid change in its relation to higher education. Changes and re-interpretations of aim are partly conscious and planned, but more often they constitute the unconscious response to the needs and demands brought to bear upon the institution.

At the present the aims of the college can be gathered into a brief general statement: *CMBC aims to offer non-professional theological education on a post high-school level, together with sufficient instruction in the liberal arts to form a rich background and setting for such education.*

By the way of "differential diagnosis" this means that the college does not prepare its students for any specific vocation, such as the ministry or other forms of church work, nor does it seek to offer preparatory training for any specific line of further education, although it is realized that education is cumulative, and that any level of study properly forms the foundation for further study.

The description of our aim contains the basis for the appeal which we hold out to prospective students. Not professional advancement, but Christian-Mennonite religious education on a post-high-school level is what we offer. The desire for such training is the legitimate and necessary motivation for a student to attend the college. That higher education of any kind does, in a general sense, bring with it professional advancement is self-evident; our graduates have certainly found this to be true.

The degree of "Bachelor of Christian Education", earned by the majority of our graduates, is descriptive of the nature of our educational program: It certifies that the student has achieved a level of competence in the field of religion comparable to the level of the bachelor's degree in other areas of study. It should not be misconstrued to mean that the college prepares teachers in the field of religion, although it is the nature of the Christian faith to demand communication at various levels and in various contexts, and in this light the degree can also be properly interpreted.

C. BASIC ORIENTATION

Christ And Culture

H. Richard Niebuhr (in *Christ and Culture*) has analyzed clearly one of the chief tasks of the Church in all ages and situations: its definition of its relationship toward culture. Somewhere between the hermit who lives in a cave and renounces all positive contacts with the culture of his society, and the idea of a *Corpus Christianum* where Church and culture become indistinguishably intermingled lies that degree of acceptance or rejection of culture which each particular church group or individual Christian considers the optimum.

The *Corpus Christianum* as an ideal to be realized in this world has largely been abandoned even in the Roman Catholic Church. All churches that have any doctrine of the Church, any convictions that are held with conviction, and any sense of responsibility to society realize the necessity to preserve themselves as distinct entities, rather than to be absorbed completely into the life of their environment. Throughout most of its history the Mennonite Church has been known for a high degree of separation from its environment, not only through life in distinct settlements, but also through a sense of being a "peculiar people" with a mission of its own, including a real call to civil disobedience where matters of faith and conscience were at stake.

The Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the parent body of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, is just now beginning to establish cultural and emotional roots in its new home country Canada, and with this comes a new encounter with culture. As large numbers of Mennonites study at Canadian universities and occupy positions of influence within their Canadian communities, they experience a new and positive relationship to culture. Hand in hand with this development goes the rediscovery of sixteenth century Anabaptism with its fervent, outgoing missionary zeal, a movement which further pushes us to break our cultural shell and leads us to see the culture around us not only as a positive environment for life, but also as a proper setting for Christian witness.

As all new and enthusiastic movements tend to overshoot the mark, we as a church conference and as individuals have also at times become uncritical in our embrace of the new realms that have just entered our horizons. In the field of education this has sometimes meant that we have unquestioningly hailed any form of education and have unduly revered positions of public importance, or academic degrees, forgetting that the forces of evil also use learning to further their own ends, and that salvation, not only in the Christian, but also in the social sense does not only depend on the degree of learning found in a people, but also on the degree of moral responsibility with which this learning is used.

This enthusiasm has been kept in balance by tendencies to return to the old ways, to cultural seclusion and reaction. On the educational scene this has sometimes, though in a minority of situations, meant that private schools were seen as instruments to achieve educational seclusion by paralleling existing public agencies by private agencies. On the whole this has not been the policy of private schools among us, however. Rather, the private school has been viewed as a means to enrich and supplement the offerings of the public school system which, of necessity, cannot embark upon some areas of instruction that, though of importance to a section of the people, cannot be imposed on all.

CMBC is a private school and operates on the principle of supplementation just outlined. It is open to and highly appreciative of

the kind of learning offered by Canadian universities. In so far as its liberal arts subjects duplicate offerings given at public colleges and universities this is not so because of any desire to by-pass or duplicate public institutions. We offer liberal arts subjects out of a deep conviction that a well-balanced and thorough general education is a necessity for anyone who wants to engage in religious study on a profound level. If a student has acquired such an education at a public institution, we gladly accept his credits and shorten his course of study proportionately. Yet we realize that it is impractical for many of our students to attend a different institution for some time, and we also know of the enriching and stimulating effect of inter-disciplinary discussion within the same institution. For these reasons we offer liberal arts courses.

Besides their supplementing and enriching function private schools have another task with respect to public education: They are open to experiment and innovation in a way not possible for the huge public educational system, and they are free to counteract fashions and trends in the public system that are considered undesirable. In other words, they are a bulwark against the monopolizing tendencies of the public educational pattern. They are able to keep that distance and inner freedom with respect to the trends of our culture which is necessary for the preservation of a sense of criticism and evaluation of that culture. In a democratic society this should be, and often is, recognized as something positive and desirable. For the Christian Church it is a necessity.

CMBC has therefore resisted the various pressures towards conformity. While we appreciate and respect the public educational system, we do not want to become an arts college on the traditional Canadian pattern, thus duplicating the many existing institutions and losing our relevance as a school with a distinctive aim and contribution. If this means less recognition in the public eye, less in terms of academic credit and honour, we do not rejoice in this, but are ready to sacrifice these rather than our aims.

Convictions And Narrow-Mindedness

Are students indoctrinated at CMBC? This question is raised or implied from time to time. It grows out of a particular view of the education system generally, the view that there is a "neutral" and fact-oriented public university system with academic freedom as its climate, beside which there are the religious schools with "an axe to grind" and with a climate of indoctrination. Such a view is built on half-truths and requires a sharpening of issues.

The public school and university system is indeed "neutral" in one sense, namely in being eclectic in its philosophies of life or religious positions. It will employ teachers of varying shades of philosophical or religious world view and make none of these officially its own. It is not "neutral" in the sense of being "presuppositionless" or

"objective." Any one of its teachers may have as definite religious or philosophical convictions as any one teaching in a religious private school, and this will not fail to permeate his teaching. And within any academic discipline or department there will be a more or less clearly defined body of assumptions regarding basic positions (*weltanschauliche Voraussetzungen*), assumptions which will change in time and leave text-books and trends outmoded. The "neutrality" of the system, then, consists of the side-by-side of various *Weltanschauungen* rather than of the absence of such. Out of this eclectic sampling the student will again choose, in a more or less one-sided way, his own eclectic version of a *Weltanschauung*.

This side-by-side of a variety of world views has its advantages and demands respect. The "academic freedom," understood as freedom of investigation, which has grown around it, is a treasure that no one engaged in academic study today would want to give up.

There are certain disadvantages in this approach, however. While everyone will admit that it is impossible to be "objective" in an absolute sense, to be presuppositionless with respect to one's relationship to the world in general and one's subject of investigation in particular, it is open to question whether the presuppositions are adequately recognized in our public educational system both as to their existence and as to their specific content.

A *Weltanschauung* is always partly unconscious and only partly verbalized or consciously defined. A religious private school operates on the principle of far-going and conscious definition of the basic *Weltanschauung* upon which its instruction is built. It defines by group consensus what is left to the individual teacher or department in the public system. This represents a conscious narrowing of its philosophical base, but, we hold, a narrowing that in itself is legitimate, yes, of the same kind as that which goes on in a less defined and less corporate process in the public educational system also. We hold this to be just as legitimate as, let us say, the delimitation of one's course offerings to certain fields, or one's level of instruction to the high school, college or graduate program. Such a process of delimitation of one's theoretical starting base becomes illegitimate only where it is forced upon the student or upon society. (An example of the latter would be the forceful imposition of the *Weltanschauung* of Marxism on the whole educational system of Communist countries.) In a society as ours the private school does not rob the student of his choice; it simply places this choice before him in the form of the decision to attend or to continue to attend such a school. In contrast to that the student within the public institution is confronted with the choice in a more diffuse way within the process of attending the institution. In an admittedly inadequate comparison one might look at the private school in the same way as one would at the freedom or limitation of freedom found in vocational choice: One is free to choose a school of pharmacy, music, or home economics, but once enrolled one does not reject current methods in pharmacy within the school of

pharmacy, although one always has the freedom to change to a different field.

What has been said pertains to the basic orientation only, that is, to those choices which finally rest on personal or group conviction rather than on investigation of facts. It does not touch upon the question of "academic freedom," if that term is understood as meaning freedom to investigate facts no matter what they are or where found.

Our students at CMBC are confronted with the Christian Faith in the classroom in the following way: First and most important: It is the *weltanschauliche Voraussetzung,* the basic philosophical-theological orientation, of the instructors. This is true of many instructors in public institutions also, of course, but in the Christian private school there has been a conscious selection of instructors with that basic position. Secondly, the Christian Faith is the subject matter of various religious courses on the curriculum.

The basic Christian orientation of the school does not mean a hampering of "academic freedom" or a restriction of the student with respect to freedom to investigate facts in many areas and in an unrestricted way. Our library has material representative of all shades of religious and philosophical orientation. There is no index of forbidden books and no ideological restriction on book orders placed by the faculty. As much as is financially possible we try to develop a well-rounded library. Our course offerings are not restricted to the religious or Christian field. We offer a variety of general arts subjects, and we endeavour to instruct these according to the best academic methods and the highest standards accessible to us, limited in this only by the limits of our talents and training, not by any restrictive measures imposed on us by school policy.

Our Christian orientation means that we go a step further than academic study can lead; it is not a side-stepping of such study. By the way of a simple example: By the measuring processes of scientific study one can describe how a man pushes a lawnmower to cut a lawn. But one has to transcend the scientific method and enter into the realm of personal will and direction to deal with the question why the person wanted to cut that lawn at that time. One can establish scientifically that certain groups in history have held that one should honour one's parents. But whether it was right for them and whether we should follow them in this attitude transcends scientific investigation. The religious orientation of our college means that we look at the facts and interpret them within the framework of a Christian *Weltanschauung;* it does not mean that we by-pass the facts.

The nature of our faculty may be taken as an indication for the fact that our school aims at academic integrity rather than obscurantism. At the time of writing our faculty members hold degrees from such schools as Princeton Theological Seminary, Hamburg Universi-

ty, Harvard University, the University of Southern California, the University of Chicago, Michigan State University, the Universities of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Western Ontario, and McMaster, besides our own Mennonite Biblical Seminary, other theological seminaries, and our Mennonite liberal arts colleges. This variety of training within a small faculty may illustrate the desire of the board of directors and administration to develop a teaching staff well balanced as to training and viewpoints, though at one in its basic Christian orientation.

Witness And Seclusion

Is study at CMBC a venture in an "ivory tower" situation? Is the college a nice little society of equally-minded cut off from the realities of this world? Geographically the college lies somewhat removed from big city life in suburban Tuxedo, although the city is closing in on us. Whether a location six miles from the heart of Winnipeg can be considered an "ivory tower" one is another question. (The University of Manitoba is no closer.) Our students take part in many aspects of city life.

But then our question did not pertain to geographic location, first of all, but rather to the inner atmosphere of the school. Every school is an "ivory tower" to some extent. Students are engaged in a theoretical venture. They do not meet reality as it manifests itself in life situations on main street, but as it speaks through books. This is not changed significantly through laboratory situations, conversational language classes, artificial in-training work experiences or any other program that schools may develop to offset their "remoteness from life." It is changed as little in other schools as it is in ours by such "practical work" as hospital visitation, children's hour teaching, laboratory practice in Sunday School teaching, occasional preaching in surrounding churches, an evening a week at the rescue mission, etc. Nevertheless, we do carry on such programs and try to engage our students in "life situations" just as other schools do.

It is the assumption of all schools that the major period of gathering practical experience in one's field will follow upon the theoretical training in the classroom. In the school setting a different, yet equally important confrontation with reality, with life and culture, predominates. The student is confronted with the currents of our time in the thought and analyses of thinkers and artists. If he opens himself to their insights he perceives more clearly the penetrating anxiety of our world and its intense search for meaning than he would in most "life situations," even if he sits in the library of a small college in suburban Winnipeg. In this sense our college is definitely no ivory tower or sheltered fort. Our students are confronted with the thinking of our time in an effort to gain an understanding of it. And the small school situation makes possible a higher degree of interdisciplinary discussion and interaction than the departmentalization of larger institutions usually allows.

A word about the theological side of studies. Genuine theological study, a conscious and deliberate thinking through of one's position with regard to the basic questions of existence, is in many ways the most penetrating and most disturbing confrontation with oneself and with reality. It is much easier to "stand in life with both feet" by holding a position in the midst of our society or to reach a high degree of competence in some area of specialization, and to hold at the same time a foggy and obscurantist, though emotionally deep-going and pious world view, with almost no interaction between the former and the latter. In this sense an advanced science student or an active incumbent of some public position may, and in the experience of this writer often does, live in a much more unrealistic "ivory tower" than our CMBC-students. Compartmentalization is a positive as well as a negative factor in all walks of life, but it is no more prominent at CMBC than in most other life settings.

The total effect which study at our college has on the student with respect to his relation to society varies with the individual, but a few generally valid observations are possible. A high percentage of our students comes from rural areas and from families and churches that could almost be termed a culture within a culture. While these students have attended high school and have come in contact in a limited way with the society surrounding them, their horizons in this respect have nevertheless been close. For these the year or years at CMBC represent a broadening and opening process. For them coming to college often means a move from a smaller institution to a larger one, from a rigid social structure to a more open one, from rural or small town life to big city life, from few cultural contacts to a rich cultural setting. They "blossom out" mentally and socially, and we consider this to be something positive.

Many of our students, on the other hand, have had their abundant shares of social and cultural contacts within Canadian society. They have taken nurses' or teachers' training, have lived and worked in cities, have held other jobs or positions, and are in no way restricted in outlook. For them study at CMBC means a retreat into life in a smaller, more homogeneous group. It means "retreat" in the technical religious usage of the term: a temporary withdrawal from the hustle and bustle of life into a situation more conducive for rethinking and re-evaluating their life's activities and goals. This too, we hold, is something positive.

The Christian is called to witness to his faith. Does CMBC offer opportunities for that? As a church institution the college is an "in-group", religiously speaking. We accept students who do not profess to hold the Christian Faith, if they are seriously interested in learning more about it. Thus we can never say that our whole student body is "Christian". Yet the situation brings it with it that most of our students do profess the Christian Faith. Therefore any witness within the school must of necessity be a witness to specific aspects of the

Faith, and not to the Faith as a whole with the aim of winning acceptance of it. Outside of the school the various planned avenues of gaining practical experience in different phases of church work offer opportunities for direct witness to the Faith before those who do not profess it. The school as a whole also carries on certain forms of Christian witness through participation in various public programs, through music, through radio work, through participation in interchurch projects, and through other ways that open up from time to time.

Nevertheless the college sees its real task in this respect as that of laying foundations: of transmitting theological education and of helping the student to think through certain of his own questions as well as a good number of questions affecting the Church as a whole. He is to find his own orientation and to see his talents and responsibilities with greater clarity, so as to be able to live more purposefully and responsibly. This can be achieved more fruitfully in a setting such as that of the college, with ample opportunity for study and exchange of thought, than individually and in the midst of demanding employment and busy life.

Therefore we hold that it is legitimate for the student to direct the major part of his energy upon these things while at college, rather than upon direct forms of witnessing to the Faith. After the short school years many years will follow where the student will "rub shoulders" with many people and where opportunities for personal and corporate witness within and without the Church will not be lacking.

D. PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION AND ACADEMIC RELATIONSHIPS

Necessity And Principles Of Limitation

Conscious self-limitation is a necessity for a small school with limited resources. Such limitation is rooted in its definition of its task. Only as this task directs the school's energies into a circumscribed and well-defined area can a significant impact be expected.

CMBC has focused its program on the undergraduate college level. We believe that the growing number of young people with high school training warrants a school that offers non-professional religious education commensurate with the general education achieved by the group in question. If the value of education in the Christian Faith is granted at all, its place in relation to this so significant age and educational level can hardly be questioned. It vindicates itself and does not require the support of additional arguments, such as the fact that there is a shortage of church workers. The scope of the task offered by the undergraduate college student group, furthermore, is such that a small school can not only afford to resist the temptation to climb the academic ladder — (In the case of CMBC that

would consist of a move into the province of the graduate theological seminary), — but must do so, if it is to retain the force of its impact.

Self-limitation must also be exercised in relation to the field of instruction. CMBC has felt a two-fold pressure towards proliferation: in the direction of introducing more and more liberal arts courses and in the direction of expanding into various avenues of church-vocational interest. The college has resisted both. The place of a certain number of liberal arts subjects in its program has already been discussed above. To tip the balance in favour of a liberal arts program would not only lead to an ineffectual duplication of the offerings of other institutions, which would be hard to justify, but would also blunt the significance and impact of the college and thereby undercut its reason for existence. Far from devaluating a liberal arts education such a limitation recognizes the distinctive tasks of liberal arts colleges and universities. A clear appreciation on the part of the college of its own task and that of other institutions creates greater mutual respect and forms the foundation for effective cooperation in those areas where aims and functions converge. The second pressure, that for proliferation in the direction of church-vocational concerns, is very understandable when one considers the needs of the Church and the justified expectation that a college such as ours should be a source of trained leadership. To be adequate, however, such professional training would have to do justice to the wide range of demands. It would have to extend from curriculum writing to pastoral counseling, from radio communication to anthropology for missionaries. But the impossibility of satisfying all the varied needs and demands is only one reason for abandoning the attempt. The other lies in the student himself. In most cases he would not be ready to choose a specific line of preparation even if he were ready to make the decision to enter a church vocation in principle.

In view of the reasons for limitation just outlined the college has centered its curriculum around basic and general core subjects both in the religious field and in the liberal arts area. Old Testament Introduction, New Testament Introduction, Church History, Systematic Theology, Biblical book studies, Christian Education, languages, history, sociology, psychology, . . . these and similar subjects make up the curriculum. Only in the field of sacred music have "practical" or "applied" subjects been given considerable scope.

Thus the college seeks to equip the student with basic subject matter and sound learning method in its chosen fields. Together with many schools, it also seeks to achieve an integration of the various aspects of learning in the student. As a Christian theological school. it seeks such integration within a much more comprehensive frame of reference than is characteristic of non-theological schools — the framework of those ultimate questions that are the domain of theology.

Integration Of Knowledge

The nature of this integration of knowledge, one of the chief rewards held out by the small college to its prospective students in an educational climate largely determined by giant institutions and high specialization, deserves special attention. Its goal is a certain inter-relatedness of knowledge, a homeostasis or harmonious functioning together of the various realms of the mind, as contrasted with fragmentation and compartmentalization on the one hand, and disruptive encounter on the other.

Historically this search for integration has culminated in elaborate thought systems such as those of Thomas Aquinas or Hegel. Whether rightly or wrongly, these were conceived of as objective and therefore teachable realities having an existence rather detached from their authors and the vantage points from which these wrote. The integrative power of such thought systems and their less ambitious relatives still holds great riches for the empathetic and historically sensitive student, but their objective and comprehensive character tends to recede in favour of a greater appreciation of their experimental and searching value.

In our time the very mass of data weighs heavily against any attempt at objective and comprehensive integration. Whatever comprehensiveness of outlook can be achieved is achieved in a much more personal way: A man aware of his particular vantage point addresses himself to relating in a harmonious way those segments of reality which, for him and due to complex reasons embedded in his life situation, have become oppressive in their unrelatedness.

Such a personal integration, whether written down or held in mind, neither denies the possibility of a more comprehensive and objective integration in principle nor abandons it as an ideal. It merely sees the practical difficulty of laying hold on the expanding mass of data and, we must also say, it is sensitive to the strongly felt need of man in our time for an immediate integration, though personal and limited, of these data for his day-to-day living, a need that has asserted itself strongly over against an attitude of trustful delegation of the task of integration to the select and authoritative.

This intensely sought, personal and selective integration need not be an illegitimate short-cut, as it does not claim comprehensiveness. It is, nevertheless, satisfying within its limits, as it becomes symbolic for that more comprehensive and objective integration towards which it points. In other words: My limited philosophical-theological world view, based on select data that have somehow impressed themselves on me, is a "sign" (in the Biblical sense: a pointer in a direction, a token of something more) to me of a much wider, but to me not available, integration which alone could ultimately be satisfactory.

A personal, selectively based and symbolically meaningful integration of this kind shares a certain amount of difficulty of comunication with modern art. The circle to which it communicates is smaller than that to which the comprehensive systems of the past directed their claims; it presupposes many more shared experiences and problems, and can therefore be taught or handed on in more personal ways only. If it becomes fashionable and thereby assumes a pseudo-universality, it turns into a fad.

These considerations hold basic implications for the small college with respect to the task of leading its students to an integration of knowledge. That integration will not arise out of a philosophical or theological system adopted officially by the school, and that, first and most simply, due to the fact that there is no system that will relate the data of present-day knowledge comprehensively. As has been intimated above, this does not mean the abandoning of the riches of the systematizations of the past or present. It means, rather, that these systems may offer building bricks from which a new building can be erected. But who does the erecting?

To the extent to which a small school like CMBC, with a fair amount of homogeneity of faculty and student body, forms a community, the building of a personal (which can mean: centering in a corporate personality), symbolically meaningful integration of communally experienced data in answer to communally experienced questions can be done by the school community together. The smallness of the group and the ample opportunities, formal and informal, to work at this building are the chief assets in such building.

But even such a college community is a "personality" in a limited sense only. Ultimately its group processes become meaningful only as the individual can make them his own, or again, use them as building bricks from which to build his own. Integration of knowledge is the task of the student himself. It is not offered to him from some authority of the past or present. It is not taught by the teacher. It is not the result of planned encounters between two areas of knowledge, such as the "and"-courses attempt: Christianity and the Social Order, Music and Literature, etc. The ultimate test begins with the question: Has the student himself related a few of the impacts that life and learning have made on him, in such a way that this smallest integration becomes a "sign" for him, a hope and confidence that other aspects still at war with each other, may also be capable of integration, even though that may not now be available to him. If such a sign has been born, he can live and grow.

From here the chain continues: The teacher becomes a further "sign" that an integration of considerably wider scope and greater depth than is available to the student is a possibility; the student receives enough evidence of this to sense its presence in the teacher, though he is far from taking over the teacher's integrational field, something that may not be desirable in any case. (What would

happen to him should he want to take over several teachers' personal harmony?!) This, I believe, is the teacher's place in the search for integration. Beyond him lie further "signs": the thinkers and writers of the ages, and all point to a unified Universe. Whether it is also a meaningful Universe, then, becomes the question of theology; the college's task in this connection has already been discussed. It should be remembered that we have been talking of the interrelation of knowledge only, i.e. of the relation of smaller patterns into larger patterns, and not of the meaning or purpose of those patterns. If theology has entered the discussion, it did so in the sense in which theologies of some kinds have been Christian philosophies, more strictly speaking.

We draw certain practical conclusions for the operation of a small college with a view to integration of knowledge:

(1) As integration is based on selective data, the number of courses taught and fields covered is not directly related to the integrating impact on the student.

(2) As the integrating process is based in the student, rather than in the curriculum, courses planned to be integrative, such as the so-called "and"-courses, have some value in providing a setting for student-teacher encounter, but the integrative impact of the college does not stand in any direct relationship to the presence or absence of such courses.

(3) The crucial question for the college pertains to its teachers: Besides the somewhat different question of their competence in their own fields, the main question is: Have they made a sufficient start toward an inner integration of their knowledge, so that they can be "signs" to the students? And here it is not the amount of knowledge covered, as comprehensiveness of integration escapes even the greatest minds, but the quality of integration achieved in some areas.