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To reiterate, while technology will undoubtedly play a significant role in the future of American public education, the greatest impact on change in the school in the decade ahead will more likely derive from what's happening to the American family.

In any attempt to consider the future, one must always be mindful of the context out of which the future is rising. This is true whether one wishes to examine the present future or to speculate about alternative futures of the far term. Historians have suggested that next to the Declaration of Independence, the next single most important contribution of the brave new world called America to the history and development of western civilization is not 20th century technology but the founding of the public school.

stand here?

In 1832, when Abraham Lincoln announced his candidacy for the Illinois State Assembly, he declared that:

"Upon the subject of education...
I can only say that I view it as
the most important subject which
we as a people can be engaged in."

o o o

To the immigrants ~~who came to this land of promise~~
o It was education -- rather than Ellis Island --
that was the real gateway to America.
o ~~To them~~ ^{and} learning was synonymous with progress.
e ~~And getting an education was as essential as getting~~
jobs.

o o o

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~~III~~

Because of public education

- ~~each new generation has moved~~
~~dramatically ahead~~
- ~~and we have made spectacular~~
~~progress on almost every front.~~

~~Of~~ illiteracy has dropped from 11
to 1.2 percent, since 1900.

~~Because of education our industries have flourished.~~

Because of education --

- o We have cracked the genetic code.
- o We've played golf on the moon.
- o We've given the world abstract expressionism.
- o We've virtually conquered polio, tuberculosis, whooping cough, and rheumatic fever.
- o We've built a network of free public libraries all across the Nation.
- o We've led the world in biomedical research.
- o Over the past four years, the United States won 10 of the 11 Nobel Prizes in medicine and physiology.

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These dramatic leaps are rooted -- not in ignorance --
but in education.

Henry Steele Commager declared that "no other people
ever demanded so much of education -- none was ever served
so well by its schools and educators."

o o o

The point is this:

America must have a network of public schools to serve
all children, not just the selected few. ~~This vision of
universal education -- which dates to Thomas Jefferson -- is
the most audacious and enlightened dream in human history.~~

And any talk about

- o deschooling our society,
- o or closing down our schools,
- o or deciding that some children should be arbitrarily
cut off from further education --

Such talk --

-- not only shockingly denies our heritage --
it also darkens hopelessly our prospects for
the future.

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Here I'd like to strike an optimistic note:

As I go about the country, I sense, in spite of the disturbing headlines, a changing mood toward the public schools -- expectancy.

There is a determination not only to support our schools but to push for excellence as well.

o o o

Twenty years ago, America faced ^{a jolting} ~~another kind of~~ crisis. in public education.

- o Sputnik had just been lifted into space,
- o and ~~near panic, many thought our schools had failed.~~

~~During this dramatic moment in his history~~

James Bryant Conant

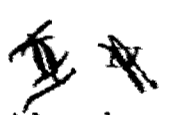
- o focused on both ~~school~~ ^{the} content and ~~school~~ ^{the} structure. ^{of our schools}
- o and the now-famous Conant report ^{helped} shaped ~~our~~ ^{the nation} schools for decades. ^{and reminded} ~~of~~ ^{confidence.}

o o o

~~Twenty years have passed~~ ^{Today} and we are now in -- what ^{some have} might be called -- the Post-Conant Era.

During the past 20 years -- which seems more like a thousand --

- o ^{Americans} We have become more mobile and less stable.
- o Television and travel now compete on equal footing with the classroom and the book.
- o Today Archie Bunker is better known than Silas Marner, Fellini is more influential than Faulkner, and the six o'clock news is more compelling than the history text.
- o Today students are more restless and less respectful of the school.
- o And today the old elementary, junior high and high school structure -- with the 6-2-4 lock step -- has largely lost its meaning.



clarify
~~ask again the~~

I'm convinced the time has come to ~~ask again the~~ fundamental questions.

- ~~-- What are the purposes of public education?~~
- ~~-- How should our schools be structured?~~
- ~~-- How does education relate to our other social institutions?~~

build school
and toward a structure for the future into the past.

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I believe it's time to sort out just what the public schools can and cannot do. And focus once again on 3 fundamental purposes:

The Basic School

First -- we need a basic school -- a time to teach each child the fundamental skills and focus especially on the effective use of language.

The mastery of language is absolutely crucial.
o ~~After all, language is the connecting tissue which binds us all together.~~

o ~~Language -- gives us our identities and our meaning.~~

o ~~Language is essential to all future education.~~

o All we know

all we fear

all we hope

are created and conveyed -- through symbols.

And ~~the effective use of language must be a central academic goal.~~ *there is no education if symbols cannot be used*
of using the written & the spoken word.

o o o

Unhappily there are today --

o so many ways in which language is diminished

~~so many occasions which distract us from the printed page~~

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~~And in our video culture~~

~~with its emphasis on speed and ease--language increasingly has become more fleeting and less valued.~~

Print *video culture*

o o o

It is a startling fact that today young children watch television

4-5000 hours

before they ever go to school.

o They soak up messages and stare at pictures without formulating messages of their own--

--without extending their own

vocabulary

~~or~~ *without* developing the capacity for

coherent thought.

For many of our student this has become the age of

the flash and the zap

the hour-long epic

the 30-minute encyclopedia

the 5-minute explanation

the one minute sell

the 2 second fix.

o o o

In this context teaching children how to read--and ~~also~~ ~~how to~~ write and speak with clarity--becomes at once more difficult and more crucial.

- o Every child must be taught not only how to receive messages -- but how to send them too.
- o And each child should also understand that we communicate--not just with words--but with
 - the visual arts
 - and mathematics
 - and music
 - and computers
 - and with dance as well.

Do not say "and"
Language is essential ^{o o o} to all future learning and I propose that --as a National goal--every child in school should be taught to read and write effectively ^{in what we call the basic school.} by grade four.

Schooling cannot be endlessly postponed. High schools and colleges should not be teaching students how to read.

and
I'm convinced this goal is ^{readily} within our reach.

After all, every child--before he or she ever goes to kindergarten--has learned to speak, a process through which the sending and receiving of messages is established.

The Middle School

In addition to money
~~Following this focus on the fundamentals -- which is~~
~~the means, not the end, of education -- I propose that we~~
~~focus the Middle School on a common core of study and intro-~~
~~duce the knowledge and the understandings which all students~~
~~should possess.~~

The basic truth is that Today the so-called junior high school is spliced in
to help but its money. It
awkwardly between two other schools and ~~seems~~^{with} to have no
clear-cut purpose of its own. *In my view we must fix the middle school*
of our present secondary school called
I'll call the common core.

But let's not confuse the issue here.

- o To propose a core of study for all students
to common core without need
is not to push for a single set of courses.
- o Nor is it to suggest a national curriculum --
to suggest
a notion which is, of course, unthinkable.
to suggest
Education is the responsibility of the States
and local school districts.

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January
schools must make it clear to students
o ~~a core curriculum does suggest however that--~~

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as human beings--we do share some things in
common and that students very early must begin *learn about*
~~to understand~~ our heritage, ⁹ gain perspective
~~and begin to~~ understand just how their own
origins and wants and needs are inextricably
linked to the origins and wants and needs of
others.

T. S. Eliot reminds us of the hazards of a fragmented,
shapeless education.

In the Waste Land he asks:

"What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images...."

Here's the point: While we rejoice in our individual
differences we still must find

o those themes and issues that unite us
...as a people.

o We must discuss the core experiences which
our schools have the responsibility to
pass on. Of course we can only begin this
process in the middle school.

These key ideas and issues will be pursued
through all the years of formal education.

But there must be a beginning.

Here I have three suggestions to propose.

First, we share a common heritage.

- o And if our schools do not help keep the past alive
- o and if they fail to introduce students to the people, to the ideas, to the literature, and to the events which have contributed consequentially to human gains and losses
- o if we do not confront our common heritage-- we not only will have lost our past, we will have lost our future, too.

Second, we not only share a heritage, we also share the challenges of a common present.

- o It has always seemed quite curious to me that so many of our educational experiments have focused exclusively--almost compulsively--on the past, ignoring very frequently the experiences we share in our contemporary world.
- o Clearly during their years of formal education students should also look at their existence here and now, focus on those circumstances which daily shape their lives.

Again, let me suggest several examples to illustrate the point.

First, all of us are caught up in a world of social institutions: towns and villages and governments and schools and banks and clubs--and on and on it goes.

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- o No education is complete unless it clarifies just how these structures came to be, how they work and how they should be changed in light of changing social needs.

~~On a more practical level,~~ ^{And ds,} students should be taught how to cope with our complex culture.

- o A recent Office of Education study reports that more than 20 percent of American adults are not able to fill out forms and function effectively on their own.

I happen to believe that young people before they leave the middle school should have mastered such essential skills.

Let me suggest a third component to the middle school curriculum. Not only must we focus on our heritage and on contemporary social issues and institutions. We must focus on the future, too.

I understand that to propose a study of the future may be startling at first. But the truth is that there is no sharp distinction between the future, past, and present, and educators--all too often--have failed to grasp this essential fact.

Again it was T. S. Eliot who reminded us that

Time present and time past
 Are both perhaps present in time future
 And time future is contained in time past.

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The harsh truth is that

- o the human race continues to expand at a rate of 200,000 people every day. That's 73 million more people every year.
- o And every day more than 800 million people face gnawing hunger, living literally from hand to mouth.
- o Tensions over resources grow more acute,
- o and the quality of our environment is threatened.

Students should begin to confront the interdependence of all life and look at the relationships among science, technology, and the quality of our life.

- o Where will we get our food, and how can it be appropriately distributed?
- o What about our energy supply, and how can it be equitably shared?
- o How can we reduce the poisons in the atmosphere?
- o Can we have a proper balance between population and the life support system of this planet Earth?
- o And how can we live together, with civility, in a climate of constraint?

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I happen to believe that today's young people are ready to think about these serious academic issues. ~~Teaching a~~ ^{and in} ~~common core of knowledge which includes our heritage, con-~~ ^{temporary issues we must emphasize global education} ~~temporary issues,~~ and alternatives for the future should be the central mission of the middle school.

Without the first level of learning--the fundamental skills--the work of the middle school is meaningless.

But without a middle school to follow it, the work of the basic school is chronically incomplete--a subject urgently in search of a predicate with meaning.

The Transition School

Finally -- as a capstone to formal education -- I propose a ^{3 year} "Transition School" ~~--a three year period, perhaps,~~ in which students are offered many options and begin to move into the world beyond the classroom.

By their middle teens, most young people are restless. They are eager to break out of the academic lock step which seems a time of endless incubation -- and they mature much earlier than they did 50 years ago.

For too long we've asked all students to leap together over the same academic hurdles.

For too long we've assumed that there is something sacred about the walls of the school building.

For too long we've assumed that a student who stepped outside of the conventional academic program was irretrievably lost.

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Rigid academic patterns must be broken down. Students should begin to flex their muscles, to test their talents, and move into the learning places which can be found beyond the academic walls.

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Specifically, I propose we break up the high school into a network of smaller units.

o o o

The pattern which I have called the "Transition School"

confronts the fact
~~--recognizes~~ that students ~~do~~ in fact,

differ from each other

--and that in the upper years of school

they should be free to specialize

~~somewhat and~~ test their unique talents

o not only in the school,

o but also in the communities outside.

I also propose that each "school-within-the-school" not only have a special focus, but also have its own off-campus connection to the outside world.

Let me illustrate the point. *I propose*

o A high school/art center connection ~~must~~ *h*

~~be made~~, offering apprenticeships at

community theatre groups, and intern-

ships in galleries and museums and

orchestras;

- o A "school-business" partnership, in which ^{would like} local business and industry ^{to} adopt a school, and provide on-the-job training for students who are eager to be out working and honing their skills;
- o A social/service school with ^{build school} ties to community institutions so ~~that~~ young people could work with retirees and in hospitals and old age homes and parks.
- o A "university in the schools" concept in which a local college would offer ^{colleges} advanced academic work to high school students -- both on the grounds of the high school, and on the campus as well.

Here I must stress one important point. (High school students will continue to spend most of their time in school pursuing academic subjects. But if the basics are learned well in the early grades, there would be time in the upper grades for students to ~~spend a half day or two per week~~ ^{beginning to} relate education to experience beyond the campus.

And this leads me to my final - most essential point.
~~What this adds up to is making all of our schools--~~
~~In the future we must not only change the content & the structure but~~
~~Community Schools-- places where students are in touch with~~
~~The content of our schools as well. Our schools must become community~~
~~learning sites in the neighborhood beyond the school and~~
~~where outside groups come to the school to use the facilities~~
~~and to offer their support. The school would be an~~
~~open, not an isolated institution.~~

*with
 in the community
 with other
 learning institutions*

Parents for example must once again become partners in the education process.

The harsh fact is that children will not learn at school if no one reads at home

[Insert a form p 8]

But here I must raise a flag of caution. Schools cannot do it all alone.

~~Parents are the first and most important teachers, and they must be partners in the process.~~

The harsh fact is that children will not become good readers

- o if no one reads at home,
- o if our so-called "bookshelves" are filled only with knickknacks and plastic flowers,

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- o and if TV watching is the preoccupation of parents every night.

~~To reaffirm this partnership between the home and school~~

- o I'd like to see parents ~~turn off the TV and~~ read aloud to children, and rediscover the beauty of the written and the spoken word.

Good homes make good schools, and I'm convinced this partnership must be aggressively affirmed.

more
H.P.
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in the future more

in the future

I also believe there
must be more connection
between the formal school
& television teaching.

I began my speech by
warning about TV as an
~~intellectual~~ opiate.

I must conclude by paraphrasing
quite another point.

Television is not a substitute
for formal education

but it can extend it
which is why in the future
we must build bridges between
The classroom & TV.

~~Just three weeks ago~~
More than we give up

President Sadat of Egypt said in an interview--almost casually it seemed--that he would like to address the Israeli Parliament.

- o Hours later, satellites beamed to every inch of the inhabited earth the news of his remark.
- o Television multiplied his comment, played and replayed it, and held him to it -- almost as a dare.
- o Only days later, Barbara Walters, Walter Cronkite, and John Chancellor arrived in Cairo to accompany Sadat on his historic trip -- almost as a way of certifying it.
- o Then, at Ben Gurion Airport, millions of viewers around the world simultaneously experienced the electric moment as an Egyptian plane touched down on Israeli soil.

o o o

It is not to diminish what happened in the Middle East to say that

- none of the words exchanged during that visit,
- none of the speeches,
- none of the documents,
- none of the private meetings,
- none of the toasts -- was as significant

as the riveting of the whole world's attention on one single, simultaneous, breathtaking, symbolic image -- two former enemies shaking hands. Instantly, 500 million people

- o felt their connectedness,
- o their perspective was expanded and momentarily -- the world was brought together
- o in a grand human gesture on behalf of peace.

The next day, according to a leader of the Labor Party, "Israel woke up like a 'new bride' She knows that something great has happened," he observed, "but she's not yet sure she's pregnant."

The power of new communication to extend one industry is enormous and this great reach in itself must be strongly suggest the room interpretation of peace & forward education.

o A "university in the schools" concept in which a local college would offer advanced academic work to high school students -- both on the grounds of the high school, and on the campus as well.

Here I must stress one important point. High school students will continue to spend most of their time in school pursuing academic subjects. But if the basics are learned well in the early grades, there would be time in the upper grades for students to spend a half day or two per week perhaps beginning to relate education to experience beyond the campus.

What this adds up to is making all of our schools--Community Schools--places where students are in touch with learning sites in the neighborhood beyond the school and where outside groups come to the school to use the facilities and to offer their support. The school would be an open, not an isolated, institution.

Finally, we should need more volunteer support.

Several months ago I visited Martin Luther King School in Schenectady, New York. Walking down the hall, I glanced into the library and saw an older man and a young boy sitting at a table with a book.

On investigation I found the man had retired from G.E. and had volunteered to come to school each day to tutor children. More than that, he had engaged a team of retired volunteers to support teachers in the school and help children with their reading.

The older man explained to me that it made no sense for him to sit at home and gripe about the school while he had a good mind, knew how to read, and might be helpful to the schools.

o o o

That, it seems to me, is precisely the spirit of ~~this conference.~~ *The future*

~~We have come together because we believe so deeply in the schools and we know they must be strengthened, not diminished.~~

most important the fact that
We know that excellence in education is everybody's business.

Today, 90 percent of all children in America-- that's 45 million students--are enrolled in public schools. That's the generation that will guide the destiny of this Nation well beyond the year 2000.

- o And we must be as concerned about the quality of our schools
- o as we are about the quality of our streams and rivers,
- o and the quality of the air we breathe.

o o o

This I am convinced continues to be the highest priority of this Nation. And because of the commitments by organizations such as these assembled here, I'm confident that public education will continue to achieve our twin goals of access and excellence for all.