

Some thoughts on the issues in global education for Dr. Boyer's participation in the National Foreign Policy Conference for Leaders in Higher Education, Washington, D.C.

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Waves of man-provoked changes have succeeded each other so rapidly in recent decades that mankind has been stunned. In a global community expanding by 200,000 new mouths each day, our planet may soon be asked to support 6 billion men and women.

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We are at a point where we must become more aware of our relationships with other human beings all around the world. Our gas pumps mysteriously connect us to the Middle East. Up to 95 percent of the metals used in our economy--chromium, cobalt, bauxite, magnesium, tin--are imported. One out of 6 American factory workers is making something for export; 2 million Americans are employed in foreign trade.

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We urgently need a curriculum that provides students in elementary and secondary schools a basic understanding of the essential unity of the world--physically, socially, politically, economically, environmentally.

- 2 -

The curriculum should confront such questions as:

... Where will we get our food and energy supplies?

How can they be appropriately distributed and equitably shared?

... How can we have a proper balance between ballooning populations wanting higher standards of living and the life support system of our planet?

... How can we reduce poisons in the atmosphere?

... How can we live together civilly?

In short, we must find better ways for young people to discover the internationalization of our world, the increasing interdependence of mankind, and the tragedy of misguided isolation.

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There is an urgent need for vision, leadership, and imagination by academe. Colleges and universities have a special obligation to educate our students, train our teachers, build bridges in the field of scholarship and in the arts, and to stamp out provincialism, narrowness, and self-indulgence. Ties of international scholarship must be strengthened; the spirit of the Fulbright program must be enhanced.

Education must include global perspective, and should focus on the idea that a brotherhood of nations is a prelude

- 3 -

to the long-cherished dream of the brotherhood of mankind. Education must underscore what hopes and aspirations all men and women have in common.

Higher education needs to institutionalize international education. Future graduates must be able to cope with the dynamics of world interdependence.

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Teachers must teach not only the past or the present. They must teach the future. Past, present and future, in combination, constitute the common core.

Teachers must have consensus with educators in other nations as to what the issues are. There must be common definitions and perceptions of problems so that proposed solutions are not irrelevant.

In-service teacher education programs--including conferences, and summer seminars--are needed to support the teaching of a global perspective at every level.

There needs to be an expansion and a strengthening of the international network among educators and educational institutions.

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An interdependent world places great premium on language and communication. Foreign language education is essential. We must help each student understand that language is the

- 4 -

process by which a nation's culture is sustained, continuity is assured, and civilization encouraged to make progress. (In the last 7 years, enrollment in foreign language classes has fallen 40 percent.) Understanding of the central role of language and a respect for the language of other peoples must be strengthened.

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As seen by historians and poets:

Toynbee: we have conquered nature; now we must finish the task of conquering self. The great irony of our time is that humanity may be destroyed not by its madness, but by its carelessness--by its wanton disregard for its special relationship to the planet earth.

MacLeish (after man first traveled into space): To see the earth as it truly is, small and blue--beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats--is to see ourselves as riders on the earth together--brothers.

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