

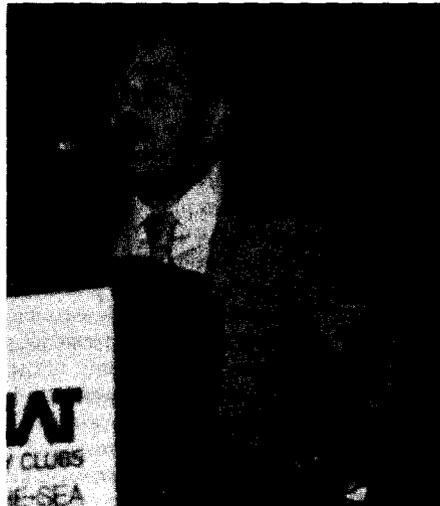
No matter what the journals say, and no matter how things appear at the convention palace when all the gimmicks and gadgets are laid out by the hucksters who represent America's big and small businesses, there haven't been all that many new discoveries in education to keep up with. Consequently the primary purpose of what we call inservice education should not be to deliver the latest bulletin on how to teach reading better, or how to teach the mentally retarded better, or how to teach teachers better.

To promote the education of teachers, a school of education should be honest with itself and with its customers. For one thing, we should take a less self-serving look at the "Economy of Scale Principle," the widespread belief that bigger is better, that a certain critical mass is necessary in order to provide adequate education. We should also re-examine the idea that teaching is so specialized and professional that ordinary citizens should be barred from engaging in its practice, that they cannot possibly understand what we do or why. If there is any profession which an ordinary citizen should be able to understand, and in some fashion practice, it's teaching. Professors of education and school teachers might serve education better if we believed that education differs from all other professions by requiring everyone's participation virtually throughout our lives. Some of the children who go to school eventually become teachers and stay in school forever. Other adults become parents, doctors, lawyers, managers, and next-door-neighbors; and to some de-

gree all of those people teach. Not everyone goes to school forever. But everyone goes to school and teaches at some time and, therefore, should understand the process of learning and teaching.

Schools of education can also educate teachers remembering that they, too, are people. Professional aloofness unnecessarily separates teachers from their students, their students' families and the communities where they work.

Honesty must be one of the important differences between the business of educating teachers and the business of selling cars or houses. Schools of education have customers and we should run our affairs like a



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business; but our purpose is to educate, and to reveal the unknown, and to pay for the work of scholars whose products will pay for the work of a succession of scholars. We court donors, write proposals and market our services, but only to reinvest in scholarship.

Our catalogues and bulletins from the field must necessarily be honest, must accurately represent our product. Schools should spend more time learning than knowing, and our bulletins should reflect that occupation. We're much too quick to claim that we understand, and we're very reluctant to admit that we don't understand. We fear to risk appearing not fully competent. One should learn something by looking through our bulletins. They should exemplify our process of education.

In our catalogues and other announcements, the uncertainties, puzzles, doubts, paradoxes should challenge the reader. It should be made evident that there are unsolved problems present, and facing and grappling with them is where the excitement begins. Presently each program holds out the promise of mastery and comfortable competence to the student; the student will find the answers and skills for the job he wants to hold. Our promise seems to guarantee competency. Most of our programs even include the term "competency based." We ought to let the cat out of the bag. We ought to advise our customers that there are few answers and fewer skills, that what a student can hope to acquire is the ability to cope with muddles and novelty, to be responsible for decisions where no general laws are clear, to have a sense of goals separate from the means of obtaining goals. We ought to advise our customers that, if all goes well, they will be able to achieve for awhile the balancing act that constitutes intelligent behavior in a field. This should be learned from our bulletins because this characterizes the successful graduate.

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## **WHAT A SCHOOL** (Continued from Page 4)

A friend of mine has felt for a long time that biology could be taught much more effectively by presenting what is not known, if for no other reason than because those are the things which are so interesting. Perhaps something of that kind could be worked into program descriptions. Perhaps we should remember how much more eager we are to read today's headline than the review of the week. Perhaps our bulletin should be invitations. And more importantly inservice programs should invite teachers to search for what is not yet known rather than to be satisfied with simple answers to complex questions.