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## "Liberal Education in the High School"

Paul Woodring

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Paul Woodring  
"Liberal Education in the High School"  
February 2, 1967  
Portland State College

PSU Library Special Collections and University Archives

Oregon Public Speakers Collection

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Transcribed by Carlos Julian Santizo Salazar, July 2, 2021

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[applause]

PAUL WOODRING: Thank you Mr. Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen. I'm glad you mentioned Rocky Ridge. I noticed that people who introduce me usually mention my more recent positions and jobs and assignments, and they never mention Rocky Ridge where I started. Rocky Ridge is a town in Ohio with a population of 118 people—when they're all there—and has an elementary school divided into two sections; one teacher teaches the first four grades and I taught the upper four, which is fortunate because I didn't know anything about elementary education—primary—I didn't know very much about fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade either, but I learned a great deal. After that I taught in a junior high school and then at a senior high school for a number of years, and then I escaped to college.

I would like to go back and teach at an elementary or secondary school occasionally now. There are two difficulties with this: one is I'm not sure I want to work that hard, and the other is I don't think I can be certified, so I'm more or less confined to college teaching. And what I'm talking about today is related, I trust, to the theme of these conferences on improvement of instruction, but dealing primarily with the outcomes of instruction, with the hope that a clearer view of outcomes and goals will lead to the improvement of instruction.

I might say in passing at this stage if you're confused about the nature of the stage setup, this stage is set up for *Hamlet* that is playing here, so I really think that I ought to start with a soliloquy. I think I could remember most of it, but I'll forego that pleasure and launch directly into what I have to say.

The history of education has been one long struggle between those who would educate for immediate, practical ends and those who take a longer view. The first group is prone to ask, "What can the student do with what he has learned right now?" If there is no clear and positive answer, they would change the curriculum to make it more immediately practical. Those who take the longer view see education as preparation for life rather than for a vocation alone, and see the vocation as one segment of life, but only one. They are concerned with the lifetime development of individuals as good and effective human beings, as well as with the continuity and improvement of the culture. Many of them believe that these two goals, individual development and continuity of the culture, are harmonious, and that these can be achieved through the same program of liberal education. They are prone to doubt, however, that training of an immediately practical nature such as learning to repair a radio, drive a car, or balance a set of books, will contribute in any substantial way to the liberal goals of education. And many of them fear that schools that give much attention to such training will neglect the liberal goals.

The curricula of most of our schools and colleges represent an uneasy compromise between these two views, a compromise made necessary by the fact that most educators, as well as most parents, are unwilling to deny the importance of either one. Most parents, I think, want their own children to learn at least as much about history, literature, science, and the fine arts as they, the parents, know. But only a minority of parents are able fully to comprehend the full meaning of the liberal goals, and the great majority, if asked to choose, probably would give preference to more immediate goals for their children. They will approve a curriculum that emphasizes a practical kind of training, even if it neglects or postpones the more remote goals that give stability and continuity to our culture and richness to our lives.

Legislators, both state and national, reacted much the same way. Congress has for many years shown a greater willingness to support vocational training than it has to provide for the teaching of the liberating disciplines. The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 provided substantial assistance to those high schools that were willing to provide instruction in agriculture, home economics, or the mechanical arts. That is 1917. It is another 40 years, however, before the Congress showed any interest at all in the teaching of either such basic subjects such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, or in philosophy, history, and the fine arts. Even today, the major part of the federal assistance to education goes to schools that are prepared to stress

practical and immediate goals. The title of the National Defense Education Act suggests that those who drafted the bill saw education as a means of strengthening the national defense rather than as a means of achieving the goals of liberal education.

If a proper balance between the two educational goals is to be maintained, it'll be necessary for educators to defend and protect liberal education. We can be sure that practical education will be valiantly defended and stressed by parents, legislators, and even the children, but liberal education will need all the support it can get from educators if it is to survive. But my purpose is not to discuss the relative importance of these two kinds of education. Since both are essential, that would be like discussing the relative importance of food to eat and air to breathe. I might point out, however, that just as one needs food only when he is hungry but air all the time, he needs vocational skills only when he is working, but he needs liberal education throughout his life.

The question before us concerns the place of liberal and of immediately practical education in the various kinds of educational institutions available to our boys and girls, and the question of the age level at which each kind of education is most appropriate. It's traditional to classify institutions of learning as elementary, secondary, and higher. But both the lines between these levels and the purposes assigned to each have remained a subject for debate. It is agreed that the first three or four years of school are elementary, but there is some doubt about the next four or five years. In England and in some American schools, these years are included in an institution called a grammar school, which in England at least is considered a secondary school. Originally, in the grammar school in England and New England, the grammar taught was Latin rather than English, but grammar schools also taught many other subjects which could not be considered elementary. You might recall that it was a 16th century grammar school that prepared Shakespeare, who never went to a university, for writing his plays and poems.

In the United States, grades five through eight are often incorporated into an eight-year elementary school, or an eight-year school that's called elementary, but that name is misleading. Obviously the subjects taught in these upper grades are not really elementary, but secondary in nature. They rest upon the assumption that the pupil has already learned to read and write and has been introduced to several additional subjects. When grades seven and eight are included in the junior high, they are always considered secondary, so the secondary school is traditionally considered a part of... the junior high is considered a secondary education. The current trend, however, seems to be to place grades five, six, seven, and eight in a new institution called the middle school or the intermediate school. I'm not sure just how strong that trend is, but Bellingham, Washington, where I live, went in that direction four years ago,

into an intermediate school with a four-year high school, and New York City with a million students has moved in that direction.

At the upper end, the line between secondary and higher education is equally unclear. In the United States, it has become customary to call everything above grade twelve... [tape slows, distorting audio] ...higher education. In this respect the United States is unique. In continental Europe where undergraduate liberal arts colleges are almost unknown, higher education means university education... [distortion clears, normal audio resumes] and the universities of continental Europe—I say continental because England is different—universities of continental Europe are made up of graduate and professional schools and nothing else. They make no effort to offer broadly liberal education, because they assume that the student has had such education in a gymnasium or lycée before entering a University. And the gymnasium and the lycée are secondary institutions; they teach not only the subjects we teach in high school, but most of those we teach in the first two years of college.

I would like to propose and defend the thesis that liberal education is and ought to be the responsibility of secondary institutions, and that such education should begin as soon as the child has learned to read and write, and should continue, ideally, all his life, but institutionally at least until it becomes essential for him to undertake specialized vocational or professional training. And when does that become essential? The answer depends on the affluence of the society in which he lives. In poor nations, it may be necessary for many boys and girls to go to work at the age of fourteen or fifteen. If they are to receive vocational training in school, obviously it must come before that age. But we live in an enormously affluent nation, which is faced with the prospect of large-scale technological unemployment as a result of the automation of industry. In such a nation, how much of the individual's lifespan should be devoted to formal schooling before he enters the labor market?

The answer that we seem to be moving toward is that most of our young people will not need to seek employment on a full-time basis much before the age of twenty. Those who ought to prepare for their professions will not enter the labor market until much later than that. If all our young people enter the labor market no earlier than the age of twenty, and if they continue to work until they are 65, we shall probably have more workers than the nation will be able to employ. This means that the schools of the future will be able to enroll most of the boys and girls for a period of at least fourteen years, and many of them for a longer period. I hope we don't make fourteen years required, because I think that it's much too... leaving it much too flexible in giving the child some choice, but I think that whether it's required or not—and a growing proportion will go for fourteen years, it's nearly 50% now who enter some form of college or junior college.

Our question then becomes, how many of these fourteen years shall be devoted to broadly liberal education and how many to vocational training or other immediately practical goals? The answer clearly depends on which vocations we are talking about. Unskilled labor, by definition, requires no preparation at all, but unskilled jobs are rapidly being eliminated by automation. It's equally true, though not so generally known, that semi-skilled, and even highly skilled jobs are also being eliminated by automation. For example, this is the job with musicians. Forty years ago there were said to be 1200 restaurants and nightclubs in New York City that employed live bands, ranging in size from five to thirty or forty. Today there are about a dozen, there aren't any live bands; what you have are discotheques. Well, a discotheque plays a record, and a record is a form of automation of music, so that the demand for musicians has greatly decreased. This is tragic from the standpoint of the musicians. The jobs of thousands of highly skilled musicians have already been eliminated by radio, phonograph, television, and the popularity of the discotheque.

Ten years ago, every office building and every large apartment house in all of our cities employed a number of elevator operators. Now, most of the elevators are automatic. This change has come quite recently. I went to New York to live for six years, I went about ten years ago, ten years ago last fall. At that time every office building in downtown New York had a whole battery of elevator operators, and these worked in shifts so it took a good many to run it. Every apartment house also had elevator operators. By the time I left New York, four years ago, within those six years, almost every downtown office building had eliminated, had fired all of its elevator operators; the elevators were automatic now. This means that a whole industry, a whole job, a whole vocation was largely wiped out. A few of them are kept in apartment houses, primarily to help old ladies with their passages and keep unwanted people out of the building, but the elevators they operate are automatic. The one I... the apartment house I lived in had an automatic elevator, it had an operator. I would come out of my apartment in the morning and get in and say good morning to him, and he'd punch the button and we'd go down, but sometimes he'd be out for a smoke and I'd punch the button. Now what kind of vocational training can you give to a man who is going to punch buttons? Obviously you can't make a course of this, so this calls for substantial changes in the nature of vocational training.

On the other hand, it seems probably that there will be an increased demand for bartenders, waitresses, cooks, and bakers, even though hotel kitchens will be partially automated. It seems probable that all the service trades will improve, will increase in numbers. I would like to see the time when we have enough waitresses in every restaurant so when you go into a restaurant you don't have to wait half an hour for somebody to come around and give you a glass of water. We're seriously short of waiters and waitresses in restaurants. I hope the time will come to when our waiters and waitresses will be better trained, although I don't know just how much

of this training should go on in schools and how much should be on the job sort of in an apprenticeship. We shall need more airline pilots and stewardesses and mechanics to keep the planes in order. We shall always need farmers, but their job is changing drastically. We shall need fewer of them in proportion to the population. As you know, almost nobody now goes from the city to the farm; there is a movement from the farm to the city, so the people who need agricultural education are almost exclusively those who live in rural communities, and if I can judge by the rather prosperous area in Ohio where I grew up and which I visited recently, the only chance anybody has of becoming a farmer is to inherit a farm. And farms are very expensive, and unless your father was a farmer and leaves you a farm, you can't become a farmer anymore.

If all or most of the young people in schools today are to remain in school until the age of nineteen and twenty, and I think they will within another decade or so—I don't mean *all* but I mean a very large proportion of them—when should their vocational training begin depends partly on definition. In a broad sense, even the most elementary education is preparation for work. The child learning to read and write is taking the first step towards preparation for any of many jobs that require literacy, so in a sense learning to read is vocational. But when we speak of vocational training, we usually mean something more specifically related to a single kind of work: learning to operate a machine or to perform some specific task. Those tasks that require long years of preparation, teaching, engineering or dentistry, are almost never taught below the college level and hence need not concern us here, because we're talking about secondary education.

For some of the skilled trades, carpentry, plumbing, and the work of the electrician, the unions require a long apprenticeship no matter what the boy studies in school. This leaves a wide variety of skilled and semi-skilled vocations. The dictionary of occupational titles, the one printed twenty years ago, listed 32,000 such jobs, and that's what I have on my printed speech, but it should be raised; and now I understand that the number of jobs listed is approaching 50,000. These range from bus driver to striptease artist. Students have a wide choice of vocations today. Obviously no high school can hope to offer courses in preparation for even 1% of all the 50,000 jobs available, and jobs are changing so rapidly, it has been estimated that half the people now in school, will, by the time they are forty, will be employed in jobs that do not yet exist, that no one has ever heard of.

In spite of these facts, it seems clear that the schools, high schools, junior colleges and technical schools, colleges and universities must offer some kinds of vocational training for some people. Because vocational skills are quickly lost if unused, the training should come as close as possible to the time of employment. There's no use preparing a fourteen-year-old for a job that he isn't

going to take until he is twenty, because the job may be wiped out like elevator operator jobs were. For those jobs which include the great majority that can be learned in a year or two, there is no need to begin the vocational preparation until the eighteenth or nineteenth year, if we assume that most students will stay in school beyond that age. This would place most vocational training in a junior college or in a technical school rather than in the present high school.

It is this line of reasoning that has led me to the conclusion that the high school of the future will become an institution devoted in large part to liberal education. Not only for those who plan to go on to college, but especially for those who will *not* go to college, and this second group is very important because if they do not get a liberal education in high school, they will not get a chance to get it anywhere. Plato, you know, defined education, liberal education, as the education of the free man; and in Greece, only some people were free, so only the free man and not the slave or the people of lower social classes needed an education. But in the United States everybody is free, everybody votes, everybody can sit on juries, everybody has a responsibility for what goes on in the community. Consequently, it follows that everybody needs a liberal education.

Let me make it clear that by liberal education, I do not mean the sequence of courses that lead to the AB degree in a conventional college. The assumption that liberal education is something appropriate to a college curriculum only is nonsense, and I think dangerous nonsense. Many of our colleges and even more of our big universities grant the AB degree to students who are not liberally educated at all. But some instruction that is truly liberal may be found not only in such colleges, but in high schools, teacher's colleges, and even technical and vocational schools. Actually, I think today there is a greater emphasis on liberal education in the colleges educating teachers than there is in the colleges that give the AB degree which are often pre-professional, pre-graduate schools.

Whether a sequence of instruction contributes to the liberal goals of education depends not so much on the subject matter as on how it's taught, and here's where you can do something about it as teachers without waiting for the curriculum to change. A course in history may be taught in such a way that it is of interest only to future historians and teachers of history. When so taught, it is a vocational course, not a part of liberal education. A first course in physics can be taught in such a way that it's profoundly liberal, in the sense that it will help the student to understand the nature of the world about him; but all too often physics is taught as though the first course is merely a preparation for the second course, as though every student is destined to become a scientist. Such courses are not really a part of liberal education, even though they



may lead to a liberal arts degree. But a course of history, or literature, or philosophy is liberal if it's taught for people and not for historians and philosophers.

A truly liberal program of education is never merely a preparation for more education. It's an end in itself; it has its own unique goals. Consequently, the high school course designed strictly to be college preparatory or the college course designed to gain admission to graduate school is not really a part of liberal education. It is difficult for the teacher to focus on liberal education when teaching students who have already chosen their vocations and are eager to prepare for them. It is partly for this reason that liberal education does not flourish in a graduate or professional school even when it's available. It is becoming increasingly difficult to keep the focus on liberal education in undergraduate colleges in which a growing number of students are married and faced with the immediate problem of earning a living, so they want to get a job right now. Liberal education is most effective with students who are intellectually curious, eager to understand themselves and the world about them, ready to explore the mysteries of life, but not yet ready to choose one special interest above all others and not yet ready to seek employment. And these characteristics are most often found in boys and girls between the ages of twelve or thirteen and eighteen or nineteen. In other words, they're most often found in the junior high school years, junior and senior high school years. Pupils of this age have begun to ask the big question—I think most of you would agree with me on this—pupils of this age, at least a good many of them, do begin to ask, what is life all about? What's the nature of the universe and of our world? What happened in our past that brought us to where we are today? How can we know what is beautiful and what is true? Who am I and where do I fit into this curious world? Whenever a boy or girl begins to ask this kind of question, he's ready for a liberal education. Such questions are asked long before he reaches college, therefore they ought to be answered before they ought to be answered before he reaches college. At least he ought to explore the possible answers. It's for this reason that I believe that liberal education belongs in the high school. Not exclusively; I hope our colleges continue to offer it, but I think it ought to start long before college.

Many efforts have been made to define liberal education. One of the best, in my judgement, is that of Dr. George Stoddard, a psychologist who later was dean of education at NYU, now retired I believe, or I know he's retired from his administrative post and the professorship, who, when he was speaking at the American Association of Land Grant Colleges and State Universities in 1962, proposed that four tests be applied in deciding whether something is liberal. And, here I'm quoting, "First," he says, "the subject matter must be enduring. It must not be ephemeral, trivial or simply descriptive. There is a search for abstract principles, generative ideas and art forms for all that gives meaning and value to life. 'How to do it' courses cannot meet this test. Second, the subject matter is whole; it cannot be simply a segment, with

no beginning and no end. However brief the course, it will start with questions and bring to bear on those questions the wisdom of the ages and the wisdom of contemporary thinkers. The course may end with more questions and perhaps with few answers, but it will require the student to think for himself. Third, the student at the time approaches the subject matter without much reference to technical application. He may like it just as much for all that, and will work hard at it. It will not take him long to discover that he is achieving a new literacy, as it were, that will brighten his life on many occasions and in all cultures. He would discern, faintly at first and then with appreciation, an interchange between what he learns at the periphery and what he most needs at the center of a specialized career. Fourth, liberal education," says Stoddard, "is a common language. In liberal education we acquire a language that all persons may employ apart from shop talk. Technical fields should contribute richly to this pool of communicable knowledge. Every informed person has an interest in mathematics, physics, chemistry, geology, astronomy, biology, anthropology, psychology, sociology, and the other sciences and behavioral sciences, but there must be some principle of selection for the non-specialist. An advanced subject is not of itself liberal. As we move up in physics, biology, economics, or logic, the subject actually becomes less and less liberal. Less communicable to others. There may be less communication even among the members of the guild."

I've seen this happen in my own discipline, which is psychology; there was a time when all psychologists met together in an annual convention and talked about psychology. Now, when I joined the American Psychological Association it had 2400 members; now it has 24,000. We meet annually but we don't meet together, we divide up into little sections. One discusses conditioning, one discusses perception and one discusses child psychology, one educational psychology and one clinical psychology, there's no place where they get together and talk about psychology, it's always some subsection of it. This is partly just a problem of numbers. This is what Stoddard means, I think, by saying there is less communication even among members of the guild. This is happening in all disciplines. In other words, "Liberal education, while based upon the most advanced thinking and creating, is a form of intellectual currency which can be acquired to some degree by every student." That is the end of the quotation.

A liberal education so defined may be offered in a variety of ways. It may be organized in the traditional academic disciplines: history, literature, philosophy, biology, astronomy, psychology and so forth. Or it may be reorganized into larger patterns: the humanities, the behavioral sciences, and the natural sciences. It may be taught by means of selection of the great books or the great ideas. Any of these ways can be an approach to liberal education. The organization, I think, is probably less important than the attitude of the teacher and the method of instruction.

But liberal education will never be merely a memorization of facts, though in the process the student will learn a great many facts, and I think it's legitimate to ask facts on the test and make sure he has learned them, even though that's not... that's an intermediate goal and not your ultimate goal. But the student will go beyond the facts and explore their meaning and the relationships among them. He will ask questions, including many questions to which no one can give a firm answer. He will discover how much is known and how much remains unknown. He will explore the various empirical, rational, and mystical approaches to knowledge, and will become aware of both the inductive and deductive method. He will give deep thought to questions of value.

And if the teacher is wise and skillful, these things may be done in almost any course in the curriculum, no matter how the curriculum is organized. It can be done in some vocational courses for that matter, I've seen well-taught vocational courses that really contribute substantially to liberal goals. The teacher need not wait for a reorganization of the curriculum before striving to achieve the goals of a liberal education in his own classes. Administrators and curriculum makers can, however, contribute greatly to the liberal goals by reorganizing the curriculum with these goals in mind. Much of the present high school curriculum rests upon tradition and not much else. Tradition says we should teach history, literature, biology, physics, and chemistry in the high school, but that we should postpone philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and economics until the college years. I can see no logic for this. I see no reason to assume that it's more difficult and takes more maturity to study anthropology and philosophy and economics than it does to study physics, chemistry, and mathematics. Students should begin to study philosophy, in my judgement, whenever they begin to ask philosophical questions: what is reality, what is beauty, what is truth, and how do we know? And, most boys and girls do ask these questions long before they enter college. Long before they enter college, most students ask questions about themselves of the kind for which a good course in psychology provides some of the answers, or some of the possible answers. I see no good reason why any subject in which the students are interested should be postponed until the college years. If the teachers are not available, let's start preparing them without further delay. If the jobs become available, I'm sure the teachers will develop to fill the gaps.

Any high school, in designing its program, must make allowance for the vast range of individual differences in learning capacity that's found in a school that must admit all the students in the community. Such allowance must be made whether the curriculum is vocational or liberal. Some intellectual leaders, particularly those who have never taught in high school, are prone to suggest that liberal education be provided for the brighter students while vocational students should take their place... vocational courses should take their place for the slow learners. But vocational courses do not really solve the problem of the slow learners. Most such courses

require at least a fair amount of general education and of academic talent. Most of those who enter the skilled trades are of average or slightly better than average intelligence. Nobody wants to employ an auto mechanic, radio repairman, or carpenter who has an IQ of 80, 85, or 90. I think I recently had a TV repairman who had an IQ below that. [laughter] But I would like to find a bright one. Yet, a third of our students in our high schools do have IQs lower than 85 or 90, and they ought not to go into the skilled trades for which vocational courses prepare them.

If you ask what is to become of those who are the lowest group intellectually and below the level of skilled trades in the future, I don't have a good answer, and I don't know that anybody does. I don't see how we're going to employ them. There will always be some unskilled jobs, but I don't think there are enough. Those who are to enter the skilled trades may properly get a good liberal education in high school, then spend whatever time is necessary after high school graduation in junior college or in technical school in preparation for their trades. This of course isn't going to come right away, we're going to continue to have vocational education in high school for a long time. But I don't think the emphasis should be on more of it; I think that more of this ought to be moved up to the upper years.

Most of the liberal subjects can be taught in different ways to students of vastly different levels of intellectual capacity. The advanced theories of government, for example, can be understood only by the brighter students, but every student in school will, if he becomes an adult citizen, be called upon to vote. He'll vote for men and he'll also vote on referendums and initiatives. He may be asked to serve on a jury. While in school, he can learn a great deal about how our government works, why democratic principles are important, why we have a bill of rights, and what it means. Why we as a nation have decided that restrictions may not be imposed upon our citizens because of race, creed, or color. And all these things can be learned even by those of limited intelligence if you go about it right. And all of these are a part of liberal education. No citizen can vote intelligently without some knowledge of history and its meaning. Unless he knows something of the history of autocratic and totalitarian governments, he will not recognize fascistic or communistic trends when they crop up into our country under other names. Unless he understands the corrupting influence of power on individuals, he may be willing to suspend constitutional guarantees and to give more power to individuals than is consistent with our democratic institutions. Learning about such things is also a part of a liberal education.

Whether the popular culture of the nation will flourish or decline depends upon the awareness of all our citizens of the nature of good music, good art, and good literature. It's not necessary for all students to choose Shakespeare, Bach, and Picasso, but it is necessary for them to be aware that there are higher and lower forms of literature, music, and art. That choices can be

made without regard to what is immediately popular or being stressed by the publishers of popular magazines and television shows. I believe that sound instruction in high school can enable every boy or girl, whatever his level of intelligence, to raise his cultural level by several notches. When his taste has improved, his life will become richer and more meaningful.

Without denying the existence of inherited differences in intellectual capacity, which I still think are substantial, but without denying those, it can be said with assurance that many of the apparent limitations of the boys and girls described as slow learners are the result of impoverished cultural backgrounds and limited opportunities for learning. Sympathetic teachers using new approaches to teaching the cultural subjects can achieve spectacular results. Our job as teachers is to take each child from where he is as far as possible in the direction of what he ought to become. And I believe that a much larger number than has ever done so can be led to enjoy great music, great art and literature. Many can be led to comprehend the great principles in the sciences and the behavioral sciences. Most can be led to think deeply about the things that matter most.

If these goals are to be accomplished for all or even most of our citizens, it must be done in high school. Even today, fewer than half enter college, and though the number will grow; and today a much smaller number completes a college education. So long as liberal education is stressed only at the college level, it will be the privilege of only part of the age group. And it's not available for nearly all of those who go to college; not nearly all of them take anything properly described as liberal. So I'm proposing that liberal education be made available to everyone. This has to be done in the schools that everyone attends. You may reply that this is just what our high schools have been doing all along. I hope it's true; I wish it were true. But I don't really believe it. It has been true for some children of course, and for most of the children in some high schools, but it has been true mostly for those who plan to go to college. And what I am proposing is a truly liberal education in high school for the many students who will not enter a liberal arts college, but who will, in most cases have an opportunity for vocational training after high school.

I prefer the term "liberal education" to the more popular "general education" because the latter is, to put it bluntly, too general. It's also too vague. General education can mean almost anything. Liberal education is a term with 2,000 years of tradition. It is the education that liberates us from the bondage of ignorance, prejudice, and provincialism. It is that which enables us to see the world and to see it whole, and to see ourselves in perspective. It is the education appropriate to free men, who must make wise, independent decisions for themselves. Even though that is not its primary goal, a good liberal education may very well be the best preparation for getting and keep a job in a fast-changing world, in which technical

vocations are changing rapidly. A man who has learned just one specialized vocational skill becomes unemployable as soon as that skill becomes obsolete by social and technical change. The recent fate of coal miners in Pennsylvania is an example of this, as well as that of elevator operators that I've mentioned.

But the liberally educated individual, because he understands the basic principles that underlie many kinds of unemployment, can move with the changing times, he can adapt himself easily to new kinds of employment. Liberal education does make for adaptability. An example I've used sometimes in pointing this out in connection with one type of job I'm familiar is that [...] every year we hire a number of girls as typists, and their first job is just typing manuscripts, although that's being eliminated by Xerox and other methods of reproduction. We don't do nearly as much typing as we used to, but we still have some to do. To get this job, you must be able to type and that's about all. But, what happens to you after that depends almost entirely on your other education. If, in addition to being able to type, the girl is socially gracious and meets people well and answers the telephone well, she may become a receptionist as well as a typist, with a slightly higher salary. If she's able to make good judgement and to handle people well and to answer routine questions and to write some letters, she can become a secretary at a substantially higher salary. If, in addition she has a broad liberal education and knows a great deal about the world of literature and art and music and education and other things, and can make sound judgement, she may very well become a manuscript reader, and has a good chance eventually to become an associate editor or an editor. So that getting the job requires an ability to type, but whether you spend all your life as a typist, or whether you eventually will become an editor at a substantially higher salary depends upon the education beyond the technical. I would, by the way, have almost everybody learn to type in school, although I'm a little biased on this because my handwriting has always been so bad that nobody could read it. If I had not learned to type, I would never have written a word, or if I had nobody could have read it. So for many of us I think learning to type is very important, should come early. I don't consider this vocational education; I consider it a substitute for handwriting and therefore part of elementary education. I also find that I can think better with a typewriter in front of me. I do all my manuscript work typing, and when my fingers start going, my thought processes start going. You could make an interesting psychological theory out of that. I can't seem to think unless my fingers are wiggling.

In conclusion, I would like to quote a statement regarding the nature of the liberally educated person from the famous Harvard report titled "General Education in a Free Society." This came out about fifteen years ago. This has been widely quoted and no doubt many of you are familiar with it, but because of the beauty and clarity of the statement, it does not suffer from repetition. I wish it could be read by every high school and college teacher. In fact, I wish every

high school and college teacher should have a copy of it on his desk. And this is the quote. “The liberally educated man is articulate both in speech and writing. He has a feel for language, a respect for clarity and directness of expression, and a knowledge of some language other than his own. He is at home in the world of quantity, number, and measurement. He thinks rationally, logically, objectively, and knows the difference between fact and opinion. When the occasion demands it, however, his thought is imaginative and creative rather than logical. He is perceptive, sensitive to form, and affected by beauty. His mind is flexible and adaptable, curious and independent. He knows a great deal about the world of nature and the world of man, about the culture of which he is a part, but he is never merely well-informed. He can use what he knows with judgement and discrimination. He thinks of his business or profession, his family life, and his avocation as parts of a larger whole, parts of a purpose that he has made his own. Whether making a professional or a personal decision, he acts with maturity, balance, and perspective, which comes ultimately from his knowledge of other persons, other problems, other times and places. He has convictions which are reasoned, although he cannot always prove them. He is tolerant about the beliefs of others because he respects sincerity and is not afraid of ideas. He has values and he can communicate them to others, not merely by word but by example. His personal standards are high; nothing short of excellence will satisfy him. But service to his society or to his god, not personal satisfaction alone, is the purpose of his excelling. Above all, the liberally educated man is never a type, he is always a unique person, vivid in his distinction from other similarly educated persons, while sharing with them the traits we have mentioned.” End of quote.

If we can develop educational institutions that will produce large numbers of such persons, we need not fear for the future of mankind; but if we fail, the future of our society is not at all bright. Thank you. [applause]

HOST: [audio cuts briefly and resumes] ...Dr. Woodring. As you know, Dr. Woodring met with the senior high principals yesterday and the junior high principals on Thursday from the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area, and they had an opportunity to pick away at his ideas, ask questions, suggestions, and this afternoon, after our luncheon, you will have this same opportunity. So, we hope between now and then you're thinking of some [...] of some real, soul-searching questions that we might present to him, comments, and et cetera. When we adjourn here in a moment or so, we will go to the College Center to the third floor. Now, that's where you were this morning if you had the coffee hour, but on the third floor. Since there is a possibility that it's raining out, and more like a probability, it might be that you find your way through the different buildings, the passageways and so forth, so you won't have to get out on the street and get wet. It's just up the street, the building after next: College Center, third floor. We'll see you there. Thank you. [program ends]