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"HIRE EDUCATION"--A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!

ROTARY CLUB--POCATELLO, IDAHO

Thursday, October 28, 1976

INTRODUCTION:

STORY--RELAXATION

EDUCATION FOR WORK

COLLEGES FOR "HIRE" EDUCATION THAT'S SPELLED H-I-R-E, ARE TRULY IN DEMAND! STUDENTS ARE FLOCKING TO VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES IN PURSUIT OF TRAINING WHICH WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH THE SKILL TO GET A JOB.

IT'S MY OPINION THAT A MAJOR THRUST OF THE TOTAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION SHOULD BE TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THEIR LIFE'S WORK. I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE STEERED INTO STUDIES THAT WILL LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT.

OBVIOUSLY, UTAH TECHNICAL COLLEGE DOESN'T THINK THIS SHOULD BE THE ONLY THRUST. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS MORE TO LIFE THAN WORK, BUT WE RECOGNIZE, TOO, THAT THERE IS REALLY NO TRULY GOOD LIFE WITHOUT A GOOD JOB.

THE UNITED STATES IS A JOB ORIENTED SOCIETY. WITHOUT A JOB YOU'RE A NOBODY. THE WORK ETHIC HAS MADE AMERICA GREAT. I FEEL A STRONG COMMITMENT TO PRESERVE AND REVITALIZE IT AMONG THE YOUNGER GENERATION.

JUST THE OTHER DAY I WAS READING AN ARTICLE IN READER'S DIGEST ENTITLED "COLLEGE--WHO NEEDS IT?" THIS IS ONE OF THE INITIAL PARAGRAPHS IN THE ARTICLE. FRED WHITEHEAD, 32, A PH.D. FROM COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, GOT A JOB TEACHING ENGLISH AT SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY. SOON HE WAS

LAI D OFF IN A BUDGET CUTBACK. AFTER MONTHS OF FUTILE JOB SEARCHING, HE WENT TO A VOCATIONAL SCHOOL. DR. WHITEHEAD IS NOW A WELDER. PUBLICATIONS ARE FILLED WITH STORIES LIKE THAT.

APPROXIMATELY 25% OF THE STUDENTS AT OUR SCHOOL HAVE ATTENDED SOME OTHER ACADEMIC TYPE OF INSTITUTION BEFORE REGISTERING AT UTC. STUDENTS MAKE EXCELLENT CHOICES WHEN THEY ENROLL AT VOCATIONAL OR TECHNICAL SCHOOLS. THEY HAVEN'T CLOSED THE DOOR TO A UNIVERSITY SHEEPSKIN. THEY'VE ACTUALLY OPENED THE DOOR WIDER. WITH THE SKILL THEY ACQUIRE, THEY WILL BE ABLE TO EARN A RESPECTABLE LIVING AND, IF THEY DESIRE, THEY CAN WORK THEIR WAY THROUGH ANY COLLEGE IN THE COUNTRY.

SOME OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CONTRACTORS IN SALT LAKE ARE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A PROGRAM IN BUILDING CONSTRUCTION, ELECTRICITY, OR WELDING AT OUR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL AND THEN WORKED THEIR WAY THROUGH A UNIVERSITY AND OBTAINED A DEGREE IN BUSINESS EDUCATION.

MORE AND MORE STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND COUNSELORS ARE REALIZING THAT THE "SHEEPSKIN PSYCHOSIS" THAT HAS BEEN THE GOAL IN OUR COUNTRY FOR YEARS IS NOT NECESSARILY THE PANACEA FOR EARNING A LIVING.

I PERSONALLY BELIEVE THAT EVERY AMERICAN WHO WANTS AN ACADEMIC DEGREE SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE IT. I BELIEVE JUST AS STRONGLY THAT COLLEGE CURRICULUMS SHOULD PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A CAREER OPTION WHICH WILL PREPARE THEM TO EARN A LIVING. IT'S CONSOLING TO KNOW THAT FOUR YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES NOW OFFER VOCATIONAL COURSES. A FEW YEARS AGO THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED UNTHINKABLE AND OUTSIDE THE PURVIEW OF "HIGHER" EDUCATION.

SKILLS CENTER

SKILLS CENTER

YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT OUR SCHOOL OPERATES A SKILLS CENTER IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COLLEGE PROGRAMS. STUDENTS WHO ATTEND THIS PROGRAM ARE DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS, EITHER SOCIALLY OR ECONOMICALLY OR BOTH. MANY OF THEM ARE HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUTS, SOME ARE MEMBERS OF THE ETHNIC COMMUNITY, SOME ARE WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN HARNESSSED WITH THE SUPPORT OF A CHILD OR TWO. MOST OF THEM ARE ON THE WELFARE ROLLS OR UNEMPLOYED. THEY ARE MOST USUALLY ADULTS AND WANT TO IMPROVE THEMSELVES BUT AREN'T WILLING TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL ON A HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS. THEY ARE USUALLY ADMITTED TO SCHOOL THROUGH AN AGENCY AND SUPPORTED BY THE AGENCY WHILE THEY ARE TRAINING. MANY OF THEM ARE NOT AS SMART AS THE REGULAR COLLEGE ENROLLEE. BUT THEY CAN BE TRAINED AND ARE BEING PREPARED TO ACCEPT A JOB. I BELIEVE THAT WE ARE MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY BY ASSISTING THESE INDIVIDUALS TO BECOME SELF-RESPECTING CITIZENS.

Operates almost exclusively on federal funds.

POST SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

IN A REPORT ENTITLED MASTER PLANNING FOR POST SECONDARY EDUCATION IN UTAH DEALING WITH VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION, A SPECIAL TASK FORCE OPERATING UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE STATE BOARD OF REGENTS MADE THIS STATEMENT WHICH I THINK IS IMPORTANT. "TRADITIONALLY, POST SECONDARY EDUCATION HAS BEEN EXPECTED TO PERFORM AT LEAST TWO ROLES:

1. TO PRODUCE A BROADLY EDUCATED PERSON WHO UNDERSTANDS THE WORLD AND ONE'S RELATIONSHIP TO THAT WORLD, AND
2. TO PREPARE A PERSON FOR LIFE'S WORK BY PROVIDING A MARKETABLE SKILL."

I THINK WE WILL ALL AGREE THAT BOTH OF THESE ROLES ARE IMPORTANT BUT CONSIDERABLE CONTROVERSY EXISTS BETWEEN THE ACADEMICIANS AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATORS RELATIVE TO THE DIFFERING PHILOSOPHIES. UNIVERSITIES SEEM TO ADVOCATE THAT THEIR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO TEACH INDIVIDUALS HOW TO THINK AND PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ADVOCATES PROVIDING SKILLED TRAINING WITH LITTLE SUPPORTIVE GENERAL EDUCATION. PERHAPS THERE IS A NEED FOR A COMPROMISE IN BOTH AREAS. THE TASK FORCE QUOTED DR. T. H. BELL, U.S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, WHO STATED THAT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TODAY MUST CONCENTRATE ON OFFERING STUDENTS "SALABLE SKILLS." HE STATED,

"THE COLLEGE THAT DEVOTES ITSELF TOTALLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY TO THE LIBERAL ARTS TODAY IS JUST KIDDING ITSELF. TO SEND YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN INTO TODAY'S WORLD ARMED ONLY WITH ARISTOTLE, FREUD, AND HEMINGWAY IS LIKE SENDING A LAMB INTO A LION'S DEN. IT IS TO DELUDE THEM AS WELL AS OURSELVES."

COMMISSIONER BELL CONTINUED,

EDUCATION IS PREPARATION FOR LIFE, AND LIVING WITHOUT MEANINGFUL WORK IS JUST NOT LIVING LIFE TO ITS FULL MEANING AND PURPOSE. CERTAINLY EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT DOES NOT REPRESENT TOTAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY. THE LIBERAL ARTS WILL ALWAYS HAVE THE PLACE AS THE HEART OF THE CURRICULUM, BUT WE NEED TO LIBERALIZE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONALIZE LIBERAL EDUCATION. IN THE PROCESS, WE WILL ATTAIN THE FULL PURPOSE OF EDUCATION."

ARE WE MEETING OUR OBJECTIVES? ARE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES DOING ENOUGH TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THEIR LIFE'S WORK? CONVERSELY, ARE VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS DOING ENOUGH TO PREPARE THE STUDENT TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO IT. OBVIOUSLY, THERE'S ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IN BOTH CATEGORIES.

ADVISORY COUNCIL SURVEY

LAST YEAR A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION EMPLOYER NEEDS SURVEY WAS PREPARED BY THE UTAH STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION. THE SURVEY LISTS THE MAJOR GOALS OF HIGH SCHOOL AND POST SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AS THE . . .

1. DEVELOPMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL COMPETENCE IN AREAS WHERE A LABOR MARKET DEMAND EXISTS.
2. IMMEDIATE PLACEMENT FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF TRAINING.
3. FOLLOW UP TO ASSURE SUCCESS ON THE JOB.

THIS REPORT SUGGESTS THAT IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM, WHILE QUALITATIVELY DOING A GOOD JOB, IS NOT MEETING THE EMPLOYER NEEDS FOR TRAINED PEOPLE. A TOTAL OF 301 FIRMS RESPONDED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE. THE EMPLOYERS LISTED OVER 800 JOBS IN VOCATIONAL AREAS WHICH WENT UNFILLED DUE TO THE LACK OF QUALIFIED APPLICANTS. IN LISTING JOBS FOR WHICH THEY HAVE THE MOST DIFFICULTY RECRUITING QUALIFIED EMPLOYEES, EMPLOYERS CONSISTENTLY LISTED JOBS WHICH FALL MAINLY IN THE VOCATIONAL CATEGORY. EMPLOYERS SEEM TO WANT MORE VOCATIONALLY PREPARED APPLICANTS THAN ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY STATED THAT OVER 30,000 JOBS WENT UNFILLED IN UTAH LAST YEAR BECAUSE INDIVIDUALS DIDN'T HAVE THE JOB SKILLS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE EMPLOYERS. YET WE HAVE THE HIGHEST UNEMPLOYMENT IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY.

THE HELP WANTED COLUMNS OF OUR NEWSPAPERS ARE FILLED WITH JOBS FOR MACHINISTS, MECHANICAL DRAFTSMEN, STEEL DETAILERS, CHEFS, COOKS, BOOKKEEPERS, TRUCK DRIVERS, LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES, SECRETARIES,

STENOGRAPHERS, TYPISTS, TELEVISION SERVICEMEN, UPHOLSTERERS AND WELDERS. THE JOBS GO UNFILLED BECAUSE THE UNEMPLOYED PERSONS DO NOT HAVE THE NECESSARY SKILLS TO MEET THE JOB REQUIREMENTS OF THE EMPLOYERS.

AS WE DEVELOP JOB SKILLS WE MUST THINK OF THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR EMPLOYMENT BEYOND THE NARROWLY DEFINED SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SKILL. THIS IS CONFIRMED IN SOME OF THE COMMENTS MADE BY THE EMPLOYERS WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY. ONE EMPLOYER SAID THAT VOCATIONALLY TRAINED PEOPLE MUST BE TRAINED NOT ONLY IN THEIR OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS, BUT IN THEIR DRESS STANDARDS, CHARACTER TRAITS AND ATTITUDE. THEY MUST HAVE A REASON FOR WORKING OR A REASON FOR WANTING A JOB. ANOTHER ONE SUGGESTED, "TOO MANY APPLICANTS WANT ONLY TO COME TO WORK TO MAKE THE MONEY THAT IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE JOB. THEY OUGHT TO KNOW AND BE CONCERNED ABOUT ATTITUDE, APPEARANCE, HONESTY AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR FELLOW EMPLOYEES."

ATTITUDE TOWARD VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

- A. 25 YEARS AGO WE WERE COMPARED WITH THE STATE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AND SOME PEOPLE DIDN'T KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.
- B. FACILITIES--AS GOOD AS UNIVERSITIES. WE HAVE A STUDENT CENTER--SAME OPPORTUNITY AS COLLEGES.
- C. CAREER EDUCATION--SIDNEY MORLAND
- D. PLACEMENT--93%--NOT JUST AT OUR SCHOOL.
- E. VICA

CONCLUSION:

VO-ED IS VITAL. IT'S MAKING A GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO THE INDUSTRIAL LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITIES. I TRUST THAT IT WILL BE EVEN BETTER IN THE FUTURE AND THAT IT WILL PROVIDE INDUSTRY WITH A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF ADEQUATELY TRAINED EMPLOYEES TO MEET THEIR JOB REQUIREMENTS.