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Selection and Reform in West German Education

In most countries of the world, renewed consideration has been given recently to the dilemma of providing educational opportunity to the greatest number of children while maintaining standards of excellence, especially in secondary and higher schools for the more academically able. Although the attention given to one or the other of these goals depends on what educators and the general public believe has been the imbalance in the particular system, neither objective can be dismissed as unimportant, and educators taking an extreme mass or elitist position do so at their own professional peril.

The emphasis on both goals is manifestly clear in the U.S.S.R. for example, where the high calibre of work in the sciences, humanities, and arts leads to productive results at the research level, while mass education and literacy remain fundamental to the system philosophy. In the developing countries, independent national intellectual and technical leadership is needed as urgently as a literate population schooled to requirements of citizenship and work in the twentieth century. In the United States, pride in equality of educational opportunity has given way in many quarters to humility in quality of educational results, and acceleration, advanced placement, special programs and schools for the gifted have been introduced to redress the balance. And in European systems, traditionally solid academically, but weak in social responsiveness, democracy is to permeate education as well as other institutions, but again, without a surrender of the advantages for the talented pupil of some form of educational selection.

These examples of general agreement on a necessary compromise between progressive social democratic aims and essentialist intellectual aims for education are not meant to hide the very real disagreement on the way in which the compromise is to be reached or the form in which it will manifest itself. In fact, the intent of this article is to show the ways through which one national school system, that of Germany, is attempting to restructure theory, practice, and institutions in order to achieve educational democracy and retain educational excellence.

At the outset, it must be said that many German educators do not see an inconsistency between selection at the secondary level and equal edu-

cational opportunity. Like their counterparts in other European countries, they see a system of separate secondary schools as affording education for all youth, but differentiating realistically and individually by providing a school and curriculum best suited to a student's ability group, talents, and vocational direction. Educators holding this view insist that it is more socially realistic to accept the presence of inequalities in intellectual and leadership abilities. It is believed that children will have a better chance to participate fully in the educational program, to realize their capabilities, and to reach intellectual and occupational goals consistent with those capabilities, if their respective academic levels and individual talents are determined early and they are grouped accordingly.

From the Weimar period, between the two world wars, German schools could no longer be defined as schools of social rank or class. However, because of "pauper declarations" for educational assistance, or the family need for the youth's work income at the lower economic levels, or simply because of the incomplete eradication of traditional associations between social classes and school types, the realization of a more equalitarian conception of secondary and higher education did not begin to succeed on any scale until after 1945. The graduate of the German *Gymnasium*¹ still emerges as a member of the upper social classes, but the status is a result of what he has achieved academically and what he is expected to achieve professionally, not what he is or where he has come from socially. Certainly, social class factors are operative indirectly in German education as they are elsewhere. They will influence the educational success of groups of children, as will other indirect and sometimes related factors, such as the aspirations of parents for their children and the geographical distance between home and higher school. Unless education is defined in social rather than, for example, in intellectual or psychological terms,² however, these factors must be considered to some extent external, that is, matters of relationship between the school and other institutions.³ The social class problems in West German education today are such relationship problems; class bias is no longer built into the structure or practice of the educational system.

¹The academic secondary school, emphasizing either classical languages, modern languages, or mathematics and natural science. Students are selected by examination after the first four common school years (after six years in Hamburg, Bremen, and Berlin) for admission to the *Gymnasium*.

²This basic definition of education is a critical matter in comparative education. It is futile, for instance, to compare the systems of East and West Germany on a simple factor or on a superficial practice, because the two systems are working on different presuppositions and are containing educational efforts within different structural and normative contexts, even though personal differences may not be as great as they seem.

³There is an obvious disparity between the proportion of laborers in the population and the proportion of their children in higher schools. This and other particular indicators point to social class inequalities in education, but their cause and exact manifestation are matters for careful research rather than for casual observations or social polemics. Research being done on this includes: Osmund Schreuder, *Bildungsstand und Schule in Europa* (Frankfurt am Main, 1963); Walter Ludwig Buhl, *Schulbau und Verteilung der Bildungschancen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (München, 1965); and Joseph Hitpass, *Einstellungen der Industriearbeiterschaft zu höherer Bildung* (Ratingen, 1965).

The momentous, and for Germany, tragic social and political events of the twentieth century, including the equalizing effect of two wars, national socialism, economic failures, and postwar hardships have resulted in greater socialization of the national community and perforation of the former class fabric. With the increasing proportion of technical, commercial, and administrative workers to laborers,⁴ there has been a correspondingly increasing demand for places in *Realschulen*⁵ and *Gymnasien*. Although there has been little change yet in the proportion of pupils in higher secondary schools,⁶ the public has been made aware of the lag in this respect through continuous publicity regarding Germany's educational "crisis," and has become aroused enough to apply pressure for a more realistic and equitable reorganization of educational patterns. Educators themselves have long been aware of the obsolescence in the organizational structure, and are, together with ministries and other educational agencies, devoting considerable attention to planning new total approaches designed to repair the social, economic, and pedagogical leaks in the system.

Among young people themselves there is little class-consciousness, and this makes possible relationships that could not have succeeded earlier. Experimental programs involving interaction between *Gymnasium* and *Berufsschule*⁷ students, for example, are feasible in the present social atmosphere, where they would have been neither acceptable nor purposeful forty years ago.

While there is general agreement in Germany on the desirability of "streaming" for secondary education, there is also a widespread recognition among educators of the need to extend greater educational opportunity to all German children. This may mean different kinds of opportunity offered to the respective secondary groups, but the effort is directed toward diminishing qualitative differences or premature termination of schooling for able pupils in any track.

⁴Walter Heinrich, "Industriegesellschaft, Wirtschaftswissenschaften und Wirtschaftshochschulen," in *Universität und Moderne Welt*, ed. Richard Schwarz (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1962), p. 278.

⁵The *Realschule*, formerly termed *Mittelschule*, offers full-time general education beyond the elementary school. It is normally entered from the fourth or sixth elementary school year, and provides, on completion of the tenth school year, a certificate of middle maturity.

⁶Relative figures for school attendance in the various West German secondary branches show that, while enrollment in *Realschulen* and *Gymnasien* increased over the decade 1953-1963, most of the increase was in *Realschulen* (for 13 year olds, from 6.4 per cent to 12.0 per cent of the age group in *Realschulen*; from 12.9 to 14.5 per cent in *Gymnasien*). For individual *Länder*, the picture varies considerably; from 1953-1963, *Hauptschule* enrollment dropped in all *Länder*, while *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* enrollment increased. In terms of percentage, however, only five *Länder* showed an increased *Gymnasium* enrollment. Ständige Konferenz de Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *Schulbesuch 1961 bis 1970*, 1965, pp. 61-62.

⁷The *Berufsschule* is a part-time vocational school, attended by working or apprenticed youth between the ages of 14 and 18. Instruction covers both general education and specialized information basic to the vocational course of the student.

This process of "horizontalizing" education began with the establishment of the common four-year *Grundschule*⁸ during the Weimar period. Attempts to extend this to six years of common schooling after the war were largely abortive, but the goal remains among liberal German educators, and the core of school organizational experiments or reorganization plans is the extension of common schooling in one form or another, with improved procedures for determining the direction of each child's further education.⁹

Proposed changes are based on concern for social equality and cooperative attitudes, on the recognition that more thorough observation and orientation procedures are necessary for sensible "streaming," and on the social and economic desirability of advancing children in all ability and interest groups to their maximum educational achievement. Nevertheless, the selective principle and the tripartite organization of schools are still retained.

The fundamental question in reform plans is whether the goal of better social utilization of the nation's human resources can be accomplished more effectively by adhering to traditional structural principles or by unifying the various school types in a comprehensive organization. The first alternative has been challenged by German educators themselves as containing an erroneous conception of definable and predictable academic-talent groups, value graded from intellectual-theoretical down to practical-manual.¹⁰ The latter possibility has not so far been acceptable, however, in the sense of total reorganization. There is little connection among the school forms, and each has a rather specific task of qualifying its pupils for a predetermined role in society. This means that the theoretical possibilities for transfer from one school type to another at the secondary level are rarely feasible in practice.

In spite of these limitations, the attempts to improve selection procedures, to strengthen the program of each school type, to extend the period of common and compulsory schooling, and to open appropriate paths to advanced education for all children are not to be minimized. These attempts seek to gain the benefits of broader opportunity, improved human relations, and the organizational unity and facility associated with the common school, without sacrificing the advantages most Ger-

⁸The *Grundschule* is the common, primary four-year stage of the elementary school, after which students are separated according to ability and career direction. The upper level of the elementary school is now to be the unselective secondary branch, *Hauptschule*. Together, they will be designated in this article by the more general term, *Volksschule*.

⁹Notable examples can be found among private and experimental schools, such as the Odenwaldschule and the Schuldorf Bergstrasse in Hesse, as well as in experimental attempts to realize a transition stage between elementary and secondary schooling in Hesse, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, and Rhineland-Palatinate. W. Schultze and C. Führ, *Das Schulwesen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Weinheim, 1966).

¹⁰Karl Seidelmann, "Bildungsreform und höhere Schule," *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* VI (1960), p. 241.

mans believe accrue to their inherited educational foundations. There is, moreover, an increased concern for that vast majority of German children who follow the path of primary schooling to vocational training to work.

Before the selection procedure takes place, a great deal of effort is made by the elementary school to apprise the parents of the child's progress and to indicate the educational direction toward which his abilities point. The *Land* ministry attempts to provide parents with information which will assist them in making a suitable choice of secondary school type. The School Office of Wiesbaden, for example, has issued a booklet which contains a rather elaborate schema for translating the child's talent and interest strengths to secondary school types and their extensions.¹¹

All this does not diminish the pressure for entrance into the *Gymnasium*, which is still the best avenue to social prestige, university admission, and elevated occupational positions. The lifting of economic qualifications has been a factor in increased *Gymnasium* enrollments, but the increase has also been facilitated by more liberal selection policies. The selection for *Gymnasium* entrance is no longer by means of a single examination, but is now based on evaluations from the elementary school and a test observation period of several days, during which both elementary and secondary teachers cooperate in attempting to predict the child's academic potential. No test period is required for pupils with positive elementary school evaluations in Bremen, Hesse, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, and Rhineland-Palatinate.¹²

The whole idea and procedure of selective examination continues to be challenged, and alterations within the existing structure have not been satisfactory to many educators. The attitude toward longer common schooling has become increasingly favorable, and has militated for the introduction of a middle orientation stage between elementary and secondary schools, such as the two-year step suggested in the comprehensive reform plan of 1959, which would allow the decision on secondary education to be based more on guidance than examination procedures.¹³ As already noted, four states are already experimenting with this middle stage, the city-states have extended their common school to the end of the sixth year, and others have made the various curricula more parallel in the early secondary years for facilitation of transfer from one ability level or school type to another.

¹¹*Die Wahlfreien Weiterführenden Schulen* (Schulamt Wiesbaden, 1956), p. 14. If, for instance, the child is 75 per cent intellectually talented and 25 per cent artistically talented, his abilities correspond to those furthered by the *Gymnasium*. If he is 50 per cent intellectually talented, 15 per cent organizationally talented, 15 per cent technically talented, and 15 per cent artistically talented, he belongs in a *Realschule*.

¹²W. Schultze and C. Führ, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

¹³Deutscher Ausschuss für das Erziehungs- und Bildungswesen, *Rahmenplan zur Umgestaltung und Vereinheitlichung des allgemeinbildenden Schulwesens* (Stuttgart: Ernest Klett Verlag, 1959), p. 47.

The demand for improved selection procedures and extended opportunities for the majority of children who continue to the *Hauptschule* is only part of the attempt to secure a better total education for this group. The program of the school which most children attend remains a decisive factor. There is no doubt that elementary teachers are trying to build a new image for the school, free from the implicit dictates of the higher schools. Strong efforts are being made to synthesize material, through subject and content grouping, with the aim of stimulating in the learner more useful perceptions and better understanding of the material. The *Volksschule* is attempting to meet current social needs by including in its sphere more educational tasks than formerly, and striving to meet new political needs of Germany by inculcating cooperative attitudes and extending citizenship education throughout the school years.¹⁴

While qualifications to positive remarks about progress in the *Volksschule* could be made at many points, it is not difficult to find examples of curricula and methods closely connected to the child's present and future life. The instructional style has changed almost totally during the course of the twentieth century, and has changed greatly even in the postwar years. Teacher-pupil relationships are more natural; project units related to modern, industrial conditions are undertaken; pupils work independently on some tasks and in cooperative groups on others; they participate in learning activities outside the instructional requirements, such as student government and school newspapers; discussions and related active procedures are encouraged.

Innovations in teaching methods and content organization, such as those mentioned above, are considered essential to the purpose of the new ninth-year programs, which have the dual task of extending general education beyond the former eight-year limit and adjusting pupils to their prospective vocational life. Recommended by the Permanent Conference of Cultural Ministers, the influential central advisory body for German education, a ninth year of compulsory full-time schooling has been implemented or is being planned by all German states, with the more progressive ones already initiating plans for a tenth year. The particular form of the ninth class varies, but the organizational shift toward additional school years is causing fresh consideration of the entire program of the *Hauptschule*, and particularly of the relationship between general education and vocational preparation.

Although the ninth year is to provide pupils with somewhat more general learning and development of skills, the core of the year's studies is usually considered to be the social and economic realities of their imminent adult roles and responsibilities.¹⁵

¹⁴Walter Schultze and Helmut Belser, *Aufgelockerte Volksschule* (Worms: Ernst Wunderlich Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1958), pp. xi-xvi.

¹⁵*Der Übergang von der Volksschuloberstufe zur Berufsschule und Berufsfachschule*, Hessisches Lehrerfortbildungswerk, (September 1961), p. 40.

Occupational guidance is an objective of the year's work, although not the single aim nor the specific responsibility of an individual staff member. Psychological testing to determine aptitude and skill strengths may be accepted for use with these pupils, while its applicability to the system as a whole is still regarded skeptically. With this attention to the pupil's vocational future, it is apparent that the year is viewed as a connecting link between the *Hauptschule* and the part-time vocational school, the *Berufsschule*.¹⁶ One of the greatest advantages to this extension may be the resulting increase in cooperation between these two school types and the consequent integration of their programs.

Neither the reorganized *Hauptschule* nor the *Berufsschule* is responsible for, or in control of, the specialized vocational training offered children in this school track through apprenticeship. Apprenticeship arrangements are made by commercial-industrial or trade councils, and the programs are administered by the respective employers. The task of the *Berufsschule* is to impart some additional general education and theoretical background for particular occupations, their procedures and products. The apprenticeship training itself will vary in quality, depending on the sponsoring business. In large industries, it is generally handled systematically, but there is no assurance of equal quality in all placements. Moreover, the success of an apprenticeship program depends on the nation's or the area's general economic and specific employment situation, which may subordinate the training opportunities of the youth involved to market fluctuations.

The lack of effective coordination between the school and the apprenticeship training is symptomatic of the need for unification throughout the school system. Traditionally, the various school types have stood alone, without connection to one another, and therefore were unable to arrange programs related to the total system, which would provide consistent educational development for all children. There are, however, exemplary attempts to overcome this problem, such as combined *Hauptschule-Realschulen* with one school plant, one faculty, and one administrative head; comprehensive organization of all school types in some private and experimental schools; and the necessary integration of two or more branches in consolidated rural schools.

The increased mobility and interdependence of modern society call for a more uniform standard of education for children in all regions of the country. Since the obsolete village educational unit does not provide the same range of opportunities for rural children as are available in those in the cities, there is a strong movement to restructure the extensive system of one-room schools so that large, centrally-located, multi-track schools serve larger rural areas. The effect on educational opportunity of such organizational changes can be seen in the statistics for transfer to the academic

¹⁶Walter Müller, "Ein Vorschlag zum neunten Schuljahr," *Die deutsche Berufs- und Fachschule*, (September 1959), p. 655.

secondary branch of the comprehensively organized Schuldorf Bergstrasse in Hesse. Generally, the percentage of children going on to higher schools varies from perhaps 50 per cent for large cities to less than 20 per cent for rural areas. The *Schuldorf*, located in a rural area which formerly had a low percentage for academic school continuation, has been admitting a "city" proportion of the pupils from the villages of Seeheim, Jungheim, Bickenback, and surrounding areas into its *Gymnasium*.¹⁷

These figures, plus current research in Germany and elsewhere in Europe, indicate that environmental advantages and organizational opportunities have a great deal more to do with educational success than German educators have been willing to admit in the past. The attitude that educational ability can be discovered at a particular age, identified as to degree and kind, and made to correspond with a type of school, is based on a traditional and oversimplified elitist conception. It ignores the evidence of educational research, indicating the complexity of social, psychological, and intellectual factors determining success in school, and is based on unvalidated procedures to cull out the "gifted."

Many educators are agreed that selection procedures presently used "only show that sixty to seventy per cent of the pupils of any school year do not—often not yet—exhibit at a schematically determined point in time a specific amount of school knowledge and ability."¹⁸ Consequently, the attempt to extend opportunities to the capable from all school branches without adopting a ladder system has resulted in a maze of separate schools and classes, both specialized and general, outside the general school system.

These extension possibilities, taken together, constitute the *zweiten Bildungsweg*, or alternate educational path. Two basic conceptions of this alternate path have evolved. It may be a facsimile of the main course, requiring the same intellectual effort on the part of the learner, but at a later age than he would normally begin his academic training; or it may be closely connected, in time and substance, with the vocational training which the student has completed or is undergoing.¹⁹ In institutionalized forms, however, there tends to be an overlapping of the two conceptions.

The function of a second path is threefold: to increase the level of specialization, to promote social justice and responsibility, and to make possible academic study for all capable persons, regardless of the age at which they show this capability.²⁰ The institutions attempting to perform one or more of these functions have until recently been those transmitted

¹⁷From the director's files.

¹⁸Anne Banaschewski, Johannes Guthmann, Heinrich Roth, "Zur Erneuerung der Volksschuloberstufe," *Die deutsche Schule* (February 1957).

¹⁹Brigitte Beer, "Aufstieg auf neuen Wegen," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (May 1 and 2, 1962).

²⁰Hans Scheuerl, "Aufgaben und Probleme eines zweiten Bildungsweges," *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik IV* (1958), Heft 2.

from the Weimar period or earlier, and they have adhered rather rigidly to one or the other of the conceptions mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

The *Abendgymnasium*, or evening high school, provides an opportunity for attainment of the school leaving qualification to enter university, but its admission requirements are so exacting as to disqualify a large number of aspirants. Also, demanding attendance and study requirements make the task very difficult for the working youth or adult, especially when the relationship of his studies to his experience and occupational training is distant at best.

The path over the trade school is a great deal more rewarding for most promising elementary school leavers. Extended "build-up" classes in the vocational education track make possible the attainment of qualification to enter an advanced trade school (*Fachschule*). In a *Fachschule*, the youth can advance to a high level of proficiency in his chosen vocation, and may qualify to enter the applicable division of a higher technical school. The main disadvantage to this path is that possibilities for further study are limited to the student's area of vocational specialization.

Although qualification for a next educational step has traditionally been defined in terms of completion of a specific school program, an attempt is being made today to structure vocational-educational advancement so that each step leads to the next, but is also an end attainment in itself. And as the regular academic course is forced to assume a more specialized character at the upper levels, there is an increasing willingness to equate the phases of vocational-technical progress with stages of academic achievement in the general schools. Nevertheless, the insistence upon opening a path to the university other than the *Gymnasium* proper has led to the establishment of new institutes for attainment of secondary school qualification for entrance to German universities. These *Kollegs* are actually short-form *Gymnasien* which provide an academic program for vocational or general students who discover their intellectual interests and abilities after they have passed the time of transfer to academic schools in the general system.

The number of *Kollegs* in West Germany has grown from two in 1958 to twenty-two in 1964.²¹ Obviously, with a new institutional form, there will be variations in conditions and procedures. However, they belong to the same institutional family, and something of their character may be generalized from the program of the Hessenkolleg in Wiesbaden. Prospective students are admitted to the qualifying examination for the Hessenkolleg if they have completed their vocational training, are between the ages of nineteen and twenty-eight years of age, and have completed ten years of full-time schooling in either the general or vocational tracks, or an equivalent level of self-education after the *Volksschule*.²²

²¹Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, *Allgemeinbildende Schulen, 1950-1964*, (Bonn, 1965), p. 86.

²²Hessenkolleg, pamphlet issued by the Hessenkolleg, Wiesbaden.

Once admitted to the *Kolleg*, students begin their studies with a one-semester introduction to the various academic areas encompassed by the *Gymnasium*. They also begin immediately to participate in extracurricular activities which round out or supplement instruction. These include both voluntary and obligatory study groups, meetings, extra lectures, and student government. The study groups (*Arbeitsgemeinschaften*) have covered such areas as philosophy, politics, society and economics, business English, art appreciation, and drama. The extra lectures are given by prominent persons from the community or school system, and deal with topics of current interest in all spheres of public and intellectual life. The "group hour" which is actually a two-hour meeting every second week, has an important function in this type of instruction because it provides an opportunity for these young people to coordinate their outside experiences with theoretical study, to develop social research projects they select themselves, and to participate with faculty members in the organization of the school program. With the recognition among *Kolleg* teachers that the students are adult citizens, there is an atmosphere of mutual respect and an insistence upon democratic procedures to a degree that is uncommon in the general schools. The student government is given active responsibility, and has, in cooperation with the staff, actually brought about minor organizational changes. The following statement from the Wiesbaden Hessenkolleg's first-year report illustrates the positive attitude of the staff toward student responsibility.

The distrust of this generation toward an "as if" function is just as great as their readiness to work constructively when they are taken seriously and respected.²³

The students are separated for the four semesters after the introductory term into language, mathematics—natural science, and economics-social science divisions. This grouping of students is considered necessary in the *Kolleg* as it is in the school system as a whole. Flexibility in individual programming is provided, however, by organizing the curriculum in course units rather than on the basis of a set body of subject matter for each class-year, and is reinforced by the attitude of the staff that the form and content of instruction must be continually re-examined in light of the social maturity and real experience of the pupils.²⁴

Teachers are presented with some unique pedagogical tasks in the *Kolleg*. They must impart a certain degree of elementary knowledge and skill in academic areas to students who are already established in a practical vocation. They must offer the necessary extra assistance to make up deficits in the student's educational preparation and must attempt to bring some kind of intellectual coherence out of the incomplete and planless knowledge possessed by most of their entering students. Whereas in the normal

²³"Bericht über die Unterrichtsarbeit am Hessenkolleg Wiesbaden im Schuljahr 1959/1960," mimeographed, p. 4.

²⁴Hanna Schlette, "Ein geistiges und menschliches Wagnis," *Wiesbadener Kurier*, (October 5, 1961).

Gymnasium realism is often absent from the students' theoretical understanding, *Kolleg* teachers are faced with the opposite situation. The task of inculcating in the space of two and one-half years the extensive and systematic learning required for qualification to enter a German university, in addition to extra counseling, tutorial, and supervisory duties, has often overtaxed the staff severely. The heavy demands on these teachers must be considered one of the unsolved problems in the *Kolleg* experiment, and their willingness to perform beyond the call of duty an integral factor in its success.

Special provisions in examination regulations recognize the unique character of the *Kolleg*. For example, preliminary regulations for the Hessenkolleg maturity examination specify that the oral examination in economics and social science should focus on "the facts and procedures of the vocational area from which the student comes"; and again, in regard to selection of examination themes, "the distinctiveness of the *zweiten Bildungsweg* is to be recognized."²⁵ There can be no radical departure from established criteria for academic content, however, either in the curriculum of the school or in the final examination. If this is attempted by an individual school or school system, its graduates may find they are denied the nation-wide accreditation the maturity certificate is supposed to guarantee.

While the regular *Gymnasien* are struggling with the advisability of opening their programs to more students and of adapting curriculum and methods to new social requirements, there is little controversy about or objection to the attempted liberalizing of other school branches and the introduction of additional advancement possibilities for pupils in the non-academic tracks. Although the *Kollegs*, adult evening schools, and advanced trade schools lie outside the basic educational system, and often entail greater difficulty, (considering the student's preparatory experience and extra obligations), than would be the case with a systematic progression along the established educational paths, these complementary institutions are offering opportunities for pupils from elementary, middle, or vocational schools to advance either along their vocational path to a higher technical specialization or to complete a general academic education and qualify for university entrance. In spite of the limitations which have been noted here, it cannot be denied that earnest efforts are being made by German educators to reevaluate educational practices with the intent of maximizing the self-realization of every German child and forming a healthy society based on democratic principles.

General changes in postwar German society have taken place for a number of reasons. There is no evidence that the schools have been initiating

²⁵*Vorläufige Ordnung der Reifeprüfung an den Hessenkollegs*, Der Hessische Minister für Erziehung und Volksbildung, (August 7, 1961), mimeographed, pp. 7, 8.

social change. However, they are responding to it, and introducing corresponding educational changes. Where earlier attempts to liberalize the school system were resisted as deviations from the cultural pattern, changes in social thinking and action patterns today support the progressive attempts of the educational vanguard to promote socio-educational reform.