

**NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS:**

**THE TRUTH**

**OF**

**THE MATTER**

**A PAPER FOR THE ATHENAEUM SOCIETY**

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NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS: THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

MARK TWAIN, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS A FRANCOPHOBE FOR NO APPARENT GOOD REASON, HAS SAID MANY THINGS WORTHY OF QUOTING; IT SEEMS APPROPRIATE TO QUOTE HIM NOW: "ADAM WAS THE ONLY MAN WHO, WHEN HE SAID A GOOD THING, KNEW THAT NOBODY HAD SAID IT BEFORE HIM". I MUST SAY HIS DICTUM HERE GIVES ME SOME COMFORT; IN FACT, IT SHOULD GIVE ALL OF YOU SOME COMFORT, PARTICULARLY WHEN YOUR TIME TO PRESENT A PAPER AT ATHENAEUM GETS ALL TOO CLOSE AND YOUR IDEAS SEEM LESS THAN THE "GOOD" TWAIN ALLUDES TO IN HIS DICTUM. I AM SURE THAT WHAT I HAVE TO SAY THIS EVENING ISN'T NECESSARILY NEW, BUT I AM ALSO RELATIVELY CONFIDENT THAT IT IS GOOD AND WORTHY OF YOUR ATTENTION. EVERYTHING I HAVE TO COMMUNICATE TONIGHT SHOULD GO WITHOUT SAYING, AND YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IF SOMEONE SAYS, "IT SHOULD GO WITHOUT SAYING . . .", YOU CAN BE SURE HE'S NOT GOING TO LET IT.

YOU'D SCARCE EXPECT ONE OF MY AGE TO SPEAK IN PUBLIC ON THE STAGE; AND IF I CHANCE TO FALL BELOW DEMOSTHENES OR CICERO, DON'T VIEW ME WITH A CRITIC'S EYE, BUT PASS MY IMPERFECTIONS BY, LARGE STREAMS FROM LITTLE FOUNTAINS FLOW, TALL OAKS FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW -- SO SAID DAVID EVERETT. BUD HUSON, PLEASE KEEP THAT IN MIND IF YOU CRITIQUE MY PAPER.

MY TOPIC THIS EVENING IS ESSENTIALLY EDUCATION: NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS: THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER. SPEAKING OF TRUTH, A MAN WAS TALKING TO A GROUP OF 7-YEAR OLDS ABOUT WHAT IT WAS LIKE WHEN HE AND HIS FRIENDS WERE YOUNG. THEY HAD HAD TO WALK TO SCHOOL A DISTANCE OF SEVEN MILES EACH WAY, EVERY DAY. "WE ALL GREW UP TO BE SUCCESSFUL, RESPONSIBLE MEN AND WOMEN. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?" "I

THINK IT'S KIND OF SURPRISING," SAID ONE CHILD, "SINCE YOU WERE ALL SO DUMB YOU KEPT MISSING THE BUS." SO YOU SEE, TRUTH IS RELATIVE TO PERSPECTIVE. I HOPE TONIGHT TO GIVE YOU ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE.

UNLIKE PRIVATE COLLEGES, WHOSE ESTABLISHED PLACE IN AMERICAN EDUCATION IS RECOGNIZED AND ACCEPTED, NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THIS COUNTRY FIND THEMSELVES TOO FREQUENTLY HAVING TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHT TO EXIST. ON THE FACE OF IT, THIS IS A CURIOUS STATE OF AFFAIRS IN A NATION WHOSE DE FACTO EDUCATIONAL PLURALISM IS ROOTED IN A UNIVERSALLY HELD BELIEF IN INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY. NEVERTHELESS, IT REMAINS A FACT THAT THE NATURE OF AND RATIONALE FOR AMERICAN PRIVATE EDUCATION BELOW THE COLLEGE LEVEL ARE WIDELY MISPERCEIVED AND THE EXISTENCE OF NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS IS FREQUENTLY QUESTIONED. IT IS TO THESE MISCONCEPTIONS THAT THIS PAPER IS ADDRESSED.

PERHAPS THE CENTRAL MISCONCEPTION IS THIS: PRIVATE EDUCATION IS THE POLAR OPPOSITE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION. THE LATTER IS VIEWED AS "ONE OF THE FEW INSTITUTIONS WHICH BINDS US INTO A DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY RATHER THAN FRAGMENTING US INTO INTEREST GROUPS" ("SCHOOLHOUSE BLUES", THE NEW REPUBLIC, APRIL 18, 1981). PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE SEEN AS INSTITUTIONAL EMBODIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM ITSELF. THE IMPLICIT SUGGESTION IS THAT NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE AN UN-AMERICAN ABERRATION, HAVENS OF WEALTH AND PRIVILEGE, OVERWHELMINGLY WHITE AND SINGULARLY SEPARATED FROM THE MAINSTREAM OF SOCIETY AND ITS PROBLEMS.

IN FACT, NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE NOTHING OF THE SORT! IT IS TRUE THAT THESE SCHOOLS EMBODY UNIQUE VALUES AND MAKE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN EDUCATION. IN LARGE MEASURE, HOWEVER, THEIR ROLE AND FUNCTION COMPLEMENT THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS. THE 2 SYSTEMS ARE INDISPENSABLE ELEMENTS OF THE TOTALITY OF AMERICAN

## EDUCATION.

NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS, APPROXIMATELY 25,000 IN ALL, COMPRISE 20% OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF U.S. SCHOOLS. THEY ENROLL MORE THAN 5 MILLION STUDENTS. THEIR EXISTENCE IS TESTIMONY TO THE FACT THAT TODAY, AS IN THE PAST, THEY FILL NEEDS AND SERVE SOCIAL PURPOSES WHICH ABOUT 3 MILLION PARENTS BELIEVE ARE NOT BEING MET BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

CERTAINLY, ALL THIS WAS CLEAR ENOUGH IN THE PAST. IN YEARS GONE BY, PRIVATE SCHOOLS WERE THE INSTITUTIONS WHICH MET SPECIAL AND OTHERWISE NEGLECTED EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE TIME, PROVIDING EDUCATION FOR THE HANDICAPPED, PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN, WOMEN AND MINORITIES. ALTHOUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE NOW ACTIVE IN THESE AREAS, MANY NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS CONTINUE TO GIVE THEM HIGH PRIORITY. BUT, AS TIMES HAVE CHANGED AND NEW NEEDS HAVE SURFACED, NONPUBLIC EDUCATION HAS ALSO RESPONDED AND ADAPTED ACCORDINGLY.

TODAY, FOR EXAMPLE, PRIVATE SCHOOLS ARE LABORATORIES FOR EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION AND EXPERIMENTATION WITH NEW CURRICULA. THIS IS AN OLD TRADITION IN PRIVATE EDUCATION. AS OTTO KRAUSHAAR POINTED OUT IN HIS PHI DELTA KAPPAN ARTICLE, "PRIVATE SCHOOLS: FROM THE PURITANS TO THE PRESENT", "MANY OF THE ELEMENTS OF MODERN EDUCATION WERE SPAWNED AND PILOT-TESTED BY PRIVATE SCHOOL PERSONNEL WHO SPEARHEADED THE PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION MOVEMENT. THESE ELEMENTS REFLECTED THE FACT THAT A QUALITY EDUCATION MUST MAINTAIN THAT WHICH IS SOUND AND ESSENTIAL AT THE SAME TIME AS IT PROMOTES CREATIVE ALTERNATIVES WHICH HELP MEET THE CHANGING CONDITIONS." THE FERMENT FOR BETTER EDUCATION CONTINUES TO PRODUCE IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES SUCH AS UNGRADED CLASSROOMS, INTENSIVE STUDY WEEKS, CLASSES WITHOUT WALLS, SCHOOLS FOR THE GIFTED, USING THE ARTS OR ATHLETICS TO STIMULATE ACADEMIC LEARNING, AND MANY MORE.

SUCH IDEAS FREQUENTLY CAN BE MORE EASILY TESTED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND THEN AMENDED OR DISCARDED AS THEY PROVE OR DISPROVE THEMSELVES. THOSE INNOVATIONS THAT PROVE USEFUL CAN BE, AND FREQUENTLY ARE, ADOPTED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

RELATIVE FREEDOM FROM THE WEIGHT OF BUREAUCRACY MAKES IT COMPARATIVELY EASY FOR NONPUBLIC EDUCATION TO EXPERIMENT AND INNOVATE. BECAUSE PRIVATE SCHOOLS DO NOT HAVE A THICK EXTERNAL LAYER OF GOVERNMENTAL REGULATIONS AND POLICIES WHICH ENCUMBER THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, THEY CAN TAKE CHANCES. THEY CAN EMBARK ON UNPOPULAR CAUSES, ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL, WITHOUT HAVING TO ANSWER TO EXCESSIVE EXTERNAL PRESSURES. AND -- THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SAME COIN -- THEY ARE LESS SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE WHIMS OF MASS OPINION AND EDUCATIONAL FADS. MOREOVER, THEY ENJOY, TO AN EXTRAORDINARY EXTENT, THE DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT OF THEIR SCHOOL PARENTS, THEIR FACULTIES AND THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS ADD YET ANOTHER IMPORTANT DIMENSION TO AMERICAN EDUCATION. SCHOOL IS NOT ONLY A PLACE WHERE A CHILD'S FORMAL LEARNING CAN TAKE PLACE, BUT WHERE HIS PERSONALITY, IDEAS, GOALS, HABITS -- IN SHORT, HIS CHARACTER OR MORAL NATURE -- BEGIN TO FORM. A LARGE MAJORITY OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS ARE CHURCH-RELATED, WITH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS COMPRISING ABOUT HALF OF ALL PRIVATE SCHOOLS. TOGETHER WITH THE SCHOOLS OF THE LUTHERANS, THE BAPTISTS, THE EPISCOPALIANS, THE QUAKERS, THE MENNONITES, THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS, AND MANY OTHERS, THEY GIVE EMPHASIS TO STRONGER MORAL AND RELIGIOUS TRAINING AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT.

TO SOME OF THESE RELIGIOUS GROUPS, THE SCHOOL CAN BE THE ESSENCE OF SURVIVAL ITSELF. AS RABBI MENACHEM LUBINSKY OF AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA STATED, "WE ARE AN ANCIENT PEOPLE, COMMITTED WITH A PASSION TO EDUCATION FOR

THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THE VIABILITY OF OUR RELIGIOUS AFFILIATED SCHOOLS MEANS MORE TO US THAN A MEDIUM TO PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE TO OUR CHILDREN; IT IS THE SOLE DETERMINANT OF OUR VERY ABILITY TO SURVIVE AS A FAITH COMMUNITY IN THE PRESSURE COOKER OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETAL STRESSES." THIS SENTIMENT IS ECHOED BY SPOKESMEN FOR LITERALLY MILLIONS OF CHURCH FAMILIES.

AS FAR AS SPECIAL EDUCATION IS CONCERNED, THE CONCEPT THAT THE HANDICAPPED -- OR ANY EXCEPTIONAL CHILD -- IS ENTITLED TO AN EDUCATION HAS DEVELOPED LARGELY AS A RESULT OF THE INITIATIVE AND EXAMPLE OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS. IT IS ONLY IN THE LAST FEW YEARS THAT EDUCATION FOR ALL EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN HAS BECOME MANDATORY AND AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. IT WAS THE ENTERPRISING AND ENERGETIC CONCERN OF THE WASHINGTON MOTHER OF A SEVERELY LEARNING DISABLED SON WHICH LEAD HER TO CREATE WHAT HAS BECOME A MODEL OF PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY.

DR. SALLY SMITH, FOUNDER AND HEAD OF THE LAB SCHOOL IN WASHINGTON, D.C., PIONEERED IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION BY DESIGNING THE FIRST SPECIAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM BASED ON THE ARTS. TODAY, DR. SMITH CONTINUES TO EXPAND ON HER PROGRAMS, CONSTANTLY OBSERVING AND UPDATING HER CURRICULUM AS SHE LEARNS MORE AND MORE ABOUT THE DIFFERING RESPONSES TO VARYING EDUCATIONAL TECHNIQUES. FILMS ABOUT HOW THIS SCHOOL SUCCESSFULLY WORKS WITH SERIOUSLY HANDICAPPED STUDENTS HAVE HAD NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CIRCULATION.

WHAT OF THE STEREOTYPE OF NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS AS RACIALLY SEPARATIST INSTITUTIONS PRICED TO CATER TO THE WEALTHY? HERE, TOO, THE FACTS ARE VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE MYTH.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS HAVE HISTORICALLY BEEN, AND STILL ARE,

INTEGRATED. THROUGH MUCH OF THEIR EARLY HISTORY, BLACKS HAD TO RELY ON PRIVATE EDUCATION BECAUSE THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WERE EITHER CLOSED TO THEM BY LAW, OR WERE SUBSEQUENTLY OPENED TO THEM ON A "SEPARATE BUT EQUAL" BASIS. TODAY, AS THE DISCONTENT OF MINORITIES WITH GHETTO SCHOOLS INCREASES, BLACK PARENTS ARE INCLINED TO LOOK TO PRIVATE OR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AS A MEANS OF PROVIDING THEIR CHILDREN WITH AN EDUCATION THAT CAN GIVE THEM A FAIR CHANCE IN LIFE. INDEED, PRIVATE SCHOOLS HAVE LONG OFFERED THE MEANS FOR MINORITY GROUPS TO PROTECT AND EXTEND THEIR IDENTITY WITHIN THE LARGER STRUCTURE OF AMERICAN SOCIETY. IN THIS MANNER, THE FREEDOM TO BE DIFFERENT AND SO TO ENRICH OUR CULTURAL MILIEU HAS BEEN EXTENDED.

AS A GROUP, THE PARENTS OF PRIVATE SCHOOL CHILDREN BELIEVE THE IMAGE OF AN AFFLUENT ELITE. SIXTY PERCENT EARN LESS THAN \$20,000 A YEAR. SEVENTY-TWO PERCENT OF INNER CITY PRIVATE SCHOOL PARENTS EARN LESS THAN \$15,000. (AND, LEST IT BE IMAGINED THAT THE NUMBER OF SUCH PARENTS IS MINISCULE, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALMOST 20 PERCENT OF PRIVATE SCHOOL CHILDREN ATTEND SCHOOLS IN CENTER-CITY OR GHETTO NEIGHBORHOODS.)

VIRGIL BLUM OF THE CATHOLIC LEAGUE CONDUCTED A STUDY IN 1982 OF INNER-CITY PRIVATE EDUCATION. THIS STUDY PROFILED THE PRIVATE SCHOOL FAMILY IN MORE DETAIL: "15% OF THE FAMILIES OF INNER-CITY PRIVATE SCHOOLS REPORT AN ANNUAL INCOME OF LESS THAN \$5,000. THEY ARE GENUINELY POOR. ANOTHER 35% OF THE FAMILIES HAD INCOMES IN THE \$5,000 TO \$10,000 RANGE, WHICH INDICATES A LIVING STANDARD AT OR JUST ABOVE THE POVERTY LEVEL; 22% OF THE FAMILIES HAD INCOMES IN THE \$10,000 TO \$15,000 RANGE, WHILE 29% REPORTED INCOMES OF \$15,000 OR MORE. . . . WHILE 35% OF ALL AMERICAN FAMILIES HAVE INCOMES OF LESS THAN \$15,000, 72% OF THE INNER-CITY PRIVATE SCHOOL FAMILIES REPORT INCOMES OF UNDER \$15,000."

WHY DO SUCH FAMILIES MAKE FINANCIAL AND OTHER SACRIFICES ENTAILED IN SENDING CHILDREN TO A PRIVATE SCHOOL? THE STORY OF ONE SUCH SCHOOL MAY PROVIDE AN ANSWER. NINE YEARS AGO, WALLIE SIMPSON FOUNDED THE LOWER EAST SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR DISADVANTAGED INNER-CITY RESIDENTS OF NEW YORK CITY. SINCE THAT TIME, THE SCHOOL HAS EXISTED ON THE AMOUNT OF INCOME COLLECTED FROM THE FEW PARENTS WHO ARE ABLE TO PAY THE MODEST TUITION AND ON SEVERAL FOUNDATION GRANTS.

THE LOWER EAST SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL ENROLLS 125 STUDENTS IN GRADES PRE-K - 8. 85% OF ITS STUDENTS ARE BLACK, 12% ARE HISPANIC, AND 3% ARE WHITE. 85% OF THE STUDENTS COME FROM ONE-PARENT FAMILIES WHICH ARE ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, 12% ARE PROFESSIONALS WITH INCOMES IN THE \$14,000 - \$17,000 RANGE AND THE REMAINING 3% ARE PROFESSIONALS WITH INCOMES IN THE \$8,000 TO \$13,000 RANGE.

ALTHOUGH THE LOWER EAST SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CHARGES A \$1,000 PER ANNUM TUITION, ONLY 25% OF THE PARENTS PAY THE TUITION. THE REMAINDER ARE ON SCHOLARSHIPS WITH MONEY FROM FOUNDATIONS AND PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS. THE STUDENTS ARE TAUGHT BY A STAFF OF 7 FULL-TIME TEACHERS, 2 FULL-TIME TEACHER AIDES, AND 2 PART-TIME TEACHERS.

WALLIE SIMPSON ATTRIBUTES HER SCHOOL'S SUCCESS TO ITS EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF INCORPORATING THE FAMILY INTO THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. A PUPIL-PARENT SUPPORT TEAM IS CREATED REQUIRING PARENTS TO BE INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION. "IF THEY DON'T COME TO US (TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS WITH THEIR CHILD), WE GO TO THEIR HOMES. THEY MUST DO IT. ALL PARENTS WANT THEIR CHILDREN TO BE SUCCESSFUL. WE MERELY EMPHASIZE THAT THE ONLY WAY WE CAN ENSURE THAT THEIR CHILDREN HAVE A SHOT AT SUCCESS IS IF THEY HELP US BY CREATING A CARING ENVIRONMENT AT HOME, BY ESTABLISHING WORTHWHILE PRIORITIES FOR THEIR KIDS, AND BY



STRUCTURING THEM SO THAT HOMEWORK FITS INTO THEIR CHILD'S SCHEDULE."

THE LOWER EAST SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS NOW CONSIDERED A MODEL OF ITS KIND IN THE NEW YORK AREA AND FAMILIES OF ALL ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS ARE APPLYING IN SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS.

IN MANY CENTER-CITY COMMUNITIES, THE PRIVATE SCHOOL IS OFTEN SEEN BY FAMILIES BESET BY CRISIS AS THE ONE INSTITUTION IN WHICH THEY CAN INVEST A SIZEABLE MEASURE OF TRUST. SUCH SCHOOLS, WHICH HELP HOLD TOGETHER HOUSEHOLDS IN GHETTO AREAS, ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO PROVIDING A TAX BASE FOR THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY. MANY BLACK AND HISPANIC FAMILIES VIEW THE PRIVATE SCHOOL AS A WAY UP AND OUT OF THE GHETTO ENVIRONMENT. ACCORDING TO BLUM "THERE IS A UNIQUE SPIRIT OF JOY AND HOPE THAT PERMEATES THE ATMOSPHERE OF THESE SCHOOLS -- AN ATMOSPHERE THAT DRAWS PARENTS TO A PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION, THAT BINDS IN A SPIRIT OF FAMILY-LIKE COMMITMENT TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND CHILDREN. IT WOULD BE THAT LOSS OF BELONGING TO AND LIVING IN A COMMUNITY THAT WOULD BE MOST PAINFUL."

"OUR SCHOOL, ST. BENEDICT'S PREP," WRITES THE REVEREND EDWIN D. LEAHY, "IS LOCATED IN THE HEART OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY'S OLDEST CITY. 72% OF OUR STUDENTS ARE BLACK, ABOUT 20% ARE WHITE AND THE REMAINDER ARE SPANISH-SPEAKING. MANY OF OUR KIDS COME FROM ONE-PARENT FAMILIES, WHERE THE PARENTS ARE USUALLY TRYING TO COMBINE WORKING AND GOING TO SCHOOL THEMSELVES. . . . WE DERIVE AN IMPORTANT, ALMOST TANGIBLE BENEFIT FROM OUR STRONG TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS. OUR STUDENTS KNOW WELL THAT ST. BENEDICT'S HAS PRODUCED BERNARD SHANLEY, COUNSEL TO PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, NEW JERSEY ATTORNEY GENERAL JOHN DEGNAN, CONGRESSMAN MATTHEW RINALDO, RENOWNED ATHLETIC COACHES JOE KASBERGER AND ERNEST "PROF" BLOOD, A MEMBER OF

THE BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME. WE TRY TO BUILD IN THEM A SENSE THAT SUCH A RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT DIDN'T HAPPEN MAGICALLY, THAT IT TOOK PRIDE, DETERMINATION, EFFORT, STRUGGLE. WE BELIEVE, AND TEACH OUR STUDENTS TO BELIEVE, THAT WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PASSING THE TRADITION ON TO OTHERS."

IN REALITY, THE SCHOOLS OF THE PRIVILEGED ARE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF AFFLUENT NEIGHBORHOODS. IF ONE WERE TO LOOK FOR THE MOST EXCLUSIVE SCHOOL IN THE COUNTRY, ONE WOULD FIND THEM TO BE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN SUCH PRESTIGIOUS SUBURBAN AREAS AS SCARSDALE, BEVERLY HILLS, PALO ALTO, AND CHEVY CHASE, WHERE A STUDENT'S ATTENDANCE IS DICTATED BY HIS PARENTS' FINANCIAL ABILITY TO LIVE IN SUCH A NEIGHBORHOOD. BY COMPARISON, THOSE PRIVATE SCHOOLS WHICH CHARGE THE HIGHEST TUITION, MAINLY THE INDEPENDENT OR NON-DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS, LAST YEAR SPENT MORE THAN \$250 MILLION ON FINANCIAL AID FOR NEEDY AND DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS, GIVING THEIR ENROLLMENT AN ECONOMIC AND RACIAL MIX NOT AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WHICH SERVE AFFLUENT NEIGHBORHOODS.

JUST AS PRIVATE SCHOOLS HELP HOLD NEIGHBORHOODS TOGETHER, SO TOO DO THEY CONSIDER PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY AS ESSENTIAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR STUDENTS. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT BY PRIVATE SCHOOLS IS TODAY THE RULE, NOT THE EXCEPTION. FOR EXAMPLE, PENNSWOOD IS A PROGRAM RUN BY A PRIVATE RURAL BOARDING SCHOOL WHICH INVOLVES STUDENTS AND INHABITANTS OF A SENIOR CITIZENS' RESIDENCE IN A VARIETY OF PROJECTS. IN SOME CITIES, CHURCH SCHOOLS HAVE ESTABLISHED NON-PROFIT FOOD COOPERATIVES FOR COMMUNITY FAMILIES AND BILINGUAL RESOURCE CENTERS FOR FOREIGN POPULATIONS.

MANY PRIVATE EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS MAINTAIN A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION WHICH RECOGNIZES THE VALUE OF

PHYSICAL LABOR. HISTORICALLY, THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS HAVE INTEGRATED WORK INTO THEIR CURRICULUM AS ESSENTIAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. MANY SCHOOLS TODAY HAVE ADOPTED THAT THEORY AND ROUTINELY EXPECT THEIR STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MAINTENANCE OF THEIR SCHOOL AND GROUNDS. SUCH WORK IS CONSIDERED AS NORMAL A PART OF THE CURRICULUM AS MATH AND ENGLISH, AND AN IMPORTANT LESSON IN THE ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND THE PRACTICE OF THRIFT.

IN SUMMARY, PRIVATE SCHOOLS COMPLEMENT, REINFORCE, AND PROVIDE SERVICES THAT IMPROVE THE AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AS A WHOLE. THEY EXIST "IN ADDITION TO" & NOT "INSTEAD OF" PUBLIC SCHOOLS. BECAUSE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION HAVE GONE SEPARATE WAYS, EACH LARGELY OBLIVIOUS IN PRACTICE TO WHAT THE OTHER IS DOING, THEY HAVE OFTEN IGNORED THE CONTRIBUTION THE OTHER MAKES TO THE INTELLECTUAL, SOCIAL, AND MORAL FORMATION OF TODAY'S YOUTH AND TOMORROW'S SOCIETY.. YET PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION CAN -- AND DO -- COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER. WHAT FINALLY COUNTS IS THE QUALITY OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, NOT WHO OWNS AND OPERATES THE SCHOOL ANY WAY, THE VAST MAJORITY OF NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE 501(C)3 NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS - TECHNICALLY OWNED BY NO ONE; IF ONE COULD SAY THEY WERE OWNED BY ANY ONE, ONE WOULD HAVE TO SAY THEY ARE OWNED BY THE PARENTS AND STUDENTS WHO ATTEND THEM. WHAT FINALLY COUNTS, THEN, IS THE QUALITY OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, NOT WHO OWNS AND OPERATES THE SCHOOL. BECAUSE OF THEIR SPECIAL ETHOS, PRIVATE SCHOOLS ARE INCREASINGLY PERCEIVED AS PROVIDING NOT ONLY ORDER, HIGH STANDARDS AND VALUES, BUT AS HAVING THE ABILITY TO REALLY REACH THE DIFFERENT NEEDS OF EACH CHILD.

AMERICAN PRIVATE SCHOOLS EXIST IN A SOCIETY WHICH DRAWS

MUCH OF ITS STRENGTH FROM DIVERSITY AND BELIEVES EDUCATION TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT GUARANTEE OF THE FUTURE. SOCIETY WOULD BE POORER WITHOUT THE SPECIAL QUALITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS THAT PRIVATE SCHOOLS BRING TO IT.