

EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EVERYONE

---all the time---

A Discourse on Democratic Education
Through Learning Alternatives

by

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LEARNING ALTERNATIVES

The history, philosophy, and future of educational alternatives for everyone—all the time—is an exciting and challenging pursuit for each of us at this 2003 National Conference at Valley Forge. However, there is a problem with it for me today. It is too early in the morning. No one should even be up yet--let alone listening to a lecture. **Not all of us are HENS OR ROOSTERS**; some of us are **NIGHTCLUB ENTERTAINERS**.

I asked to have this session scheduled **FOR THE MIDNIGHT SHOW**. I guaranteed a great performance. But the response was that Pennsylvania is conservative. No one would attend at midnight. I said, “Why not, they go to the midnight show when they are in Las Vegas.” Well, as you can see, as usual, the conventional school won—the alternative lost—so here we are at 9 AM.

Ironically, my despair does relate to our **THEME: *Educational Alternatives for Everyone***—all the time. Maybe some of your **students are hens or roosters**, but think of all the **nightclub entertainers in schools all over America** who are forced to read at **9 AM**, even though studies show some of us learn better in the afternoon. And then there are the **SIESTERS**—those who like to start early, take a midday break, and return for late afternoon.

If we are really to understand the VISIONARY PHILOSOPHY of learning alternatives, we need to remember that alternatives is not just a **SCHOOL** or a **PROGRAM**. We must provide options for hens and roosters, for the siesters, and for the nightclub entertainers. In other words, **WE NEED TO PROVIDE OPTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS**—

not just groups like the 7th grade, or at-risk or gifted students. It is easy to do if we **CHANGE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION PARADIGM.**

PENNSYLVANIA MAJORITY

As the majority of you are from Pennsylvania, let me build some **credibility** as a semi-Pennsylvanian, so you will not think **I am just another one of those “crazies” from California.** At the same time, I want to remind us of important **past leadership efforts in Pennsylvania, that now need to rekindled** for the present and future.

Personally, I did 24 weeks of basic training and infantry leadership school preparing for the Korean conflict at good old **Indian Gap Military Reservation**, Pennsylvania, known then as the “hellhole of the East.” My college **roommate** was from Hershey.

Professionally, let us use just one decade—the 70s—as an example of past Pennsylvania leadership. Our national change efforts profited from the **Philadelphia strike** of eight weeks in 1973, when some schools stayed open while others of like achievement and socio-economic factors were closed. The end-of-the-year test results showed no significant difference. Those who missed eight weeks did as well as those who attended regularly. We have always known the conventional systems wasted time for most youth.

We visited the **Parkway School** in Philadelphia --the program that led the school-without-walls movement. We visited **Abington** High School and their modular scheduled team approach that gained national recognition. There was the **I P I Program** at the University of Pittsburgh which helped the national individualization of learning movement.

Leadership came from the Research for Better Schools Office in Philadelphia, and the elementary nongraded school reforms from **Barbara Pavan** at Temple University. The **National Laboratory School Office** has long been headquartered at Indiana University, Pennsylvania. . I almost became dean at **Clarion University** when their Research Learning Center was developing

an innovative Year-Round Education program for Pennsylvania and the nation. In 1970 the Pennsylvania State Department of Education sponsored the **Second National Conference on Year-Round Education** in Harrisburg. We could go on—and on.

CURRENT FLAWS

However, in spite of all these fine past leadership efforts, **most schools today in Pennsylvania are as flawed as in all 50 states—especially now that we have that new federal law called “EVERY CHILD A NUMBER AND THEREFORE MANY LEFT BEHIND.”**

The title of “Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth Programs” is wrong. So too, for most, is the concept of classes of 20 or 30 students with a teacher and aide to prepare students to return to programs they already failed. **That legislation should have a name change and be expanded to include other alternatives as choices for these young adults.**

The nation needs Pennsylvania to assume leadership again—this time for learning alternatives. We must focus **on what COULD/SHOULD BE—NOT WHAT PRESENTLY EXISTS.** **Current legislation** has been developed by lawyers and traditional educators—not by educators with vision who are concerned with individuals rather than numbers called TEST scores.

SERMON

Thus, here begins the morning sermon. I usually like to do a Billy Graham Keynote—to convert everyone—but today I feel more like the old fellow who went to the package store and asked for some Old Squirrel. The clerk said, “Sorry, we’re out of Old Squirrel—how about some Old Crow? He replied, “Heck no, I don’t want to fly; **I just want to jump around a little,**” which is my mission to set the stage for the many wonderful sessions by other presenters.

However, I do have one single most important message—if you remember nothing else—and that is **EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EVERYONE ALL THE TIME**. It is also the title of our IALA book, subtitled *A Handbook for Educators, Families, and Politicians*.

WE SHOULD NOT HEAR at this conference or in your future work the words Alternative Education, Alternative School, Alternative Educator, or the Regular School VS. Non-regular school !!! Note that IALA is the **Association for Learning Alternatives**—with an “S”—not **Alternative Education**.

Every learner is a “**regular student**.” Every program should be a “regular program” designed for the individual. Every program should be one of choice, not conscription. **We are not alternative educators**. We are educators who believe in **ALTERNATIVES FOR EVERYONE—whether traditionally labeled gifted, at-risk, disruptive, average, special education—TERMS NONE OF US SHOULD EVER USE. There is no place for such categories in humane, student-centered learning alternatives.**

UNDEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

Here in the birthplace of our nation, we need to remember that many of the founders pushed for education of the masses **to create and preserve a democracy**. Is it not ironic that today, **SCHOOLING IS THE MOST UNDEMOCRATIC INSTITUTION IN AMERICA EXCEPT FOR THE PRISONS AND THE MILITARY**. You can avoid the prisons by behaving—or the military by not enlisting; even in the services you have a choice of army, navy, marines, air force, coast guard.

BUT THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM SCHOOLING—EVERYONE GETS THE SAME 12-YEAR SENTENCE. They send the police after you if truant. The only hope for

escape is homeschooling in some states—or enrolling in the few **LIMITED ALTERNATIVES** that are available in a number of communities nationwide.

A great book related to this topic is *Free Schools, Free People: Education and Democracy after 1960* by Ron Miller. Combined with our IALA book, *Educational Alternatives for Everyone*—you have “all you ever wanted to know” about alternatives—and even **more** than you wanted from these two publications.

DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

Democratic education indicates that learning institutions **should model religious freedom** (not doctrines but the implementation methods.) Most religions, even if dogmatic in doctrine, are after similar goals—to be a good person. But in America, **you have a choice of being good** as a Catholic, Buddhist, Baptist, Muslim, Unitarian, Hebrew—you can attend a church, temple, mosque, synagogue—you can even be an **agnostic—but not in education.**

We in schools **also** are after similar goals—**to be a good enlightened citizen**—but in our current **UNDEMOCRATIC SCHOOLING**, there is only one way to achieve this goal: **the state and federally mandated** systems with their current biased tests, standards, and accountability practices—**NONE OF WHICH MAKE A DIFFERENCE. THEY ARE ALL POLITICAL EXPEDIENCIES.**

As early as 1777, Thomas Jefferson drafted “*The Statutes of Virginia for Religious Freedom.*” It was finally adopted in 1786. In it he laid the case for religious freedom. In 2003, his original document can apply to alternatives, substituting “education” for “religion” in the text.

“No man shall be compelled to support any religious worship (education style), nor shall suffer on account of his religious (education) opinions or beliefs. All men shall be free to profess their opinions and shall in no wise be diminished in their civil capacities.”

Jefferson was a religious individual, but was a Unitarian and rejected the Trinity and the common “Christian rituals” of his time. He fought against one-size-fits-all religion. His rationale applies equally to one-size-fits-all schooling. In fact, he educated his children and grandchildren at home—not in a “school.” At all costs, he defended liberty.

ONE - SIZE – FITS - ALL

Politicians ignore that our current systems of **mandated—we know best for everyone curriculum—and uniform-one-size-fits-all schools** were the norm in the German schools prior to Hitler. This focus on cognitive scores and 11+ exams led to the effort to exterminate an entire culture. Traditional school people forget that at the January 1942 **Wannsee Conference**, where the final plans were laid for the extermination of the Jewish population, over half the planners in attendance had Ph.Ds. They also designed the gas chambers.

It is not the cognitive domain and tests that will determine the future. IT IS THE AFFECTIVE DOMAIN and the heart. Overlooked is the fact that the greatest problems in the world today—the 64 global dilemmas—have been caused by graduates of our best universities. Think about this...It is true! Ironically, they are the ones who can solve these microproblems which become one macroproblem, but instead the dilemmas continue to deepen,

NO CHILD

The **no child left behind legislation** is **WRONG**, for it focuses only on **cognitive test scores in reading and math**. Instead we need a **confluence of spirit, mind, body**. The **current mandated 3rd grade tests are irrelevant, incompetent, and immoral**. Tests, if used, should be to help diagnose and recommend programs for learning **for individuals**—not for the 7th grade **as**

a group. We would run MDs out of business if they gave all their patients flu shots at 9:00 each morning.

The problem is global. In England the 1988 Tory Education Act—labeled **the Great Leap Backward** by alternatives advocates--returned a national curriculum that had been proved wrong in 1911 when Chief Inspector of Schools **Edmond Holmes** resigned after 30 years and wrote his book *The Tragedy of Education*. Roland Meighan, John Adcock, Chris Shute, and others in England have been fighting this for years. As a result, the best alternatives materials now are from the Educational Heretics Press in Nottingham, England.

CURRENT HISTORY

Most bold leaders of our current alternatives programs are post-1980 advocates of choice. They are so focused on addressing **PRESENT** realities that many have not considered our **HISTORY**, or the potential for the **FUTURE**. **The intent was always to be alternatives (S)** for everyone—choices of **learning styles, curriculums, environments, facilitators, locations**—complete choice in a community----like picking a church. **We had some excellent starts** in the 60s and 70s based upon lessons from the 1930s and the earlier 1900s decade.

One example was the Minneapolis Southeast Alternatives Project (1969) where students were in clusters of four entirely different programs: the **Contemporary** School, the **Continuous Progress** School, the **Open** School, and the **Free** School. Families and teachers could choose their preferred styles, environments, philosophies—at no additional cost and without breaking state laws.

CHOICE

Choice is easy and possible for everyone if the concept of learning alternatives represents a **PHILOSOPHY**—not a **STRUCTURE!**

For the **FUTURE**, as early as 1970 we had planned the M X C—Minnesota Experimental City—a city for 250,000 people with **no schools or universities**. We came within a year of building this experiment in Northern Minnesota. In the not too distant future, there will be no schools as we know them today.

BACKLASH

But now addressing the present 2003-2004 realities of uniform schools, it is essential to review the early 1980s backlash against innovation and change. **Politics** wanted everyone to focus on American values such as **apple pie, motherhood, Chevrolets, and UNIFORM SCHOOLS**—instead of choices for everyone—whether students were then labeled **gifted, talented, average, not interested, low achiever, disruptive, special education**—not to mention various cultures and ethnic groups.

Thus, the tables were turned. In 1973, a Carnegie Foundation Report supported choice in schools. But ten years later, their political change led to supporting the awful 1983 *Nation at Risk* report indicating that **Everyone should attend the “Regular School.”** Those who could not conform to tradition were to attend the “non-regular” school for **the non-regular students**.

The concept of the **alternative school for the few—the at-risk, the non-regular student**—emerged. Everyone else was sentenced to the **UNIFORM ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL** school structure. Even **gifted programs** became more rigid, with **uniform one-size-fits-all** for those students.

DURING THE 80S, THE CONCEPT OF A DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL SYSTEM SUFFERED A SERIOUS ILLNESS. During the 90s, the concept was dying. Today, the concept is near death. Groups like IALA are now struggling to keep democracy in education alive.

EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Therefore, we here today need to start a true REVOLUTION in Education. What better place to begin than Valley Forge where 225 years ago Washington had to “fight” the **Pennsylvania Legislature** which did not want him to camp here, and to confront his opponents **in Congress** who called him **INCOMPETENT** and left him short of supplies.

In 1776, a handful of risk-takers freed us from the British. In 2004, a handful of **VISIONARY, RISK-TAKING ALTERNATIVES LEADERS** can free us from the **TYRANNY OF SCHOOLING** as it exists—if we work together!

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WAS NOT WRONG. TWO CENTURIES LATER, A NATIONAL EDUCATION REVOLUTION WOULD NOT BE WRONG.

It is acceptable to talk about revolutions in electronics, transportation, communications, as well as government ousters, both peaceful and violent. It is not only acceptable, but essential that we plan a **revolution in education against the tyranny of one-size mandated sentences.**

Orville and Wilbur Wright, two bicycle shop proprietors, both without high school diplomas or college degrees, **REVOLUTIONIZED** transportation. **THEY CHANGED THE WORLD.** It took them twelve years and many defeats before their first April 12, 1903 successful twelve-second air flight of 120 feet, but their determination impacted the global society. Just sixty-six years later, we had developed a spacecraft to take us to the moon.

Astronauts tell us we could be on Mars in 20 years, with priority support. If we have the technology and intelligence to be on Mars in 20 years, and if in 66 years we could go from Kitty Hawk to the moon, **could not our revolution eliminate the 7th grade within a decade?**

STATE LEADERSHIP

To begin the revolution, leaders of each state represented here must return home and forcefully address the **legislatures, school boards, and the media**, including national television appearances. I wore a tie today to symbolize wearing your power blue suit/red tie when you talk with them. Most traditionalists still equate alternatives people with **beards, granny dresses, dungarees**. They are no longer “superior” when you wear your power clothes too!

We must take **action steps; we must not let these wrong state-federal education laws be passed without VIGOROUS OPPOSITION.**

Thus the need for IALA and our State Associations to act together. **Leaders from each state** must join in legislative campaigns which begin as small brush fires but erupt into a revolutionary national bonfire. We must help the public understand that **the existing political responses for improving education are akin to the pony express trying to beat the telegraph by breeding faster horses.**

VICE-PRESIDENT

In my prime, the *Kappan* magazine labeled me the first ever national “**Vice-President for Educational Heresy.**” In Minnesota, I appeared before the Legislature and challenged their actions. When they tried to defend their requirements, I called them a “**bunch of rinky-dinks.**” (True Story!) I made the front page of the major state newspapers.

Ironically, after I was properly chastised, **they approved my gooney-bird, everything-wrong program, waived most every state law for us—including testing—and eventually changed four Minnesota State laws—because we had the PHILOSOPHY and the RESEARCH and the INTESTINAL FORTITUDE to NOT take no for an answer.**

We are the educators. We need to educate the politicians and communities. We can no longer sit idly by. **This year at Valley Forge, we need to REMEMBER THE COMMITMENT OF THOSE HERE IN THE WINTER OF 1777.** They eventually crossed the Delaware. **We can and must now challenge uniform schooling.** We are already suffering our existing **Winter of Despair.**

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

Most of our current alternatives programs are too small; they are **not comprehensive**, and cannot offer a **total package**. Small storefront schools are fine for some students, but ...**what is there for all the “good kids”** who want to be in a **gooney-bird alternatives program**, but who also want to play football, be in the band, be a cheerleader, have gardening and nature study as basic studies in the primary years ????

What choices do we have for the “C” student? How excited are they? **Why is it that in Minnesota, the *Area Learning Centers* are the best programs in the state, but ironically, the only way to enroll in one of them is to be bad in one or more of eleven ways spelled out in the Legislation. To attend the “good,” you must be “bad.”**

CHARTERS

Charter Schools are only a drop in the bucket. These small programs help some students, but the movement is **not significant nationally**. It is almost impossible to get creative charters approved under most **poorly-conceived state laws**. Even if available, most students cannot

attend because of transportation or other factors. **The few good ones** have waiting lists and lotteries to enter. **HOW DO WE JUSTIFY WAITING LISTS AND LOTTERIES FOR LEARNING?**

No wonder HOMESCHOOLING is growing. It is one of the desirable alternatives—(as outlined in the new book by Patrick Farenga, *Teach Your Own*)----- but it also is insignificant nationally because of the few who have access to it. The same holds true for some of the fine **private alternatives. WE AS EDUCATORS ARE “BAD PERSONS” TO TOLERATE SUCH CONDITIONS.**

EIGHT-YEAR-STUDY

Do you need **PROOF** of the need for a revolution—to convince your legislatures, districts, communities, schools? Let me outline three reminders.

FIRST, look at the Eight-Year Study, which involved 300 of the best colleges, and 30 of the best high schools. It was planned for two years—(1930-1932), implemented from 1932 – 1940, evaluated in five volumes in 1942—12 years of study. Schools were allowed to do most anything; the staff were encouraged to **innovate and change**. Students were guaranteed admission to one of the 300 universities, even if their high school program failed.

The results showed that students in these 30 gooneybird schools had better outcomes in all traditional areas of evaluation, when compared with similar enrollment conventional school students. Even more, further analysis indicated the 6 most gooney schools did better than the other 24. **Then it was realized that the 2 most goony had the best results of all 30. ONE FACTOR THAT WAS PROVEN BEYOND A SHADOW OF A DOUBT WAS THAT IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHATSOEVER AS TO WHAT COURSES ARE TAKEN IN HIGH SCHOOL RELATED TO SUCCESS IN LIFE, SUCCESS IN COLLEGE, SUCCESS ON THE JOB, SUCCESS IN MARRIAGE.**

THIRTY YEARS LATE,R AT my gooney Mankato Wilson School in Minnesota, we repeated and went beyond the eight-year landmark, but this time included ELEMENTARY and COLLEGE students too! We proved again the Eight-Year Study was correct. Yet in 2003, traditional K-12 schools still pretend there are MAGIC CLASSES that must be required for everyone.

GRADE LEVELS

Do you need a second proof? **The worst way to organize for learning is the graded school—1st grade, 3rd grade, 7th grade, 10th grade. There is no such thing as a grade level.** For example, by the 7th grade, achievement scores are spread from grades 3 – 13—only 15% score at 7th grade level—the others are way ahead, way behind, or interested in something else.

Physiologically, the kids are spread a minimum of six years—some are 9th graders—ready for the Steelers or Eagles—even **Buccaneers for they are better.** Some are only 5th graders—they have not heard of puberty—yet we put them all in 7th grade flag football. The 9th grader clobbers the 5th grader—he gets hurt—and chastised for not blocking; he gets laughed at again in the shower. But we have the audacity to tell the community we have a good physical education program. **SUCH CURRICULUM IS INSANE!**

ELIMINATE 7TH GRADE

There is no such thing as a 7th grader. No one should ever attend a 7th grade. **It is the worst practice ever invented in education.** If you are humane, flunk all the 6th graders—keep them out of the 7th! **We in alternatives must save the 7th graders!** Now they are all stuck in the goofed up, **misnamed non-middle schools** all over the U.S. I still have hope that over my grave you can read **“Here lies the man who eliminated the 7th Grade.”**

I helped Bill Alexander of the University of Florida, Conrad Toepfler of SUNY, Buffalo, Gordon Vars of Kent State, John Lounsbury of Georgia, and other such leaders conceive the original middle school concept. In 1965 I keynoted a national middle school gathering of 3000 junior high principals; my topic was **The Future of the Middle School**. Sadly, 38 years later, there is **still no real middle school in the U.S.**

Earlier in 1960, pioneering J. Lloyd Trump created the film “*And No Bells Ring*,” produced by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Forty-three years later, schools still ring bells. If Bill and Lloyd could return, **they would not believe the uniformity in education that now has strangled the education community.**

KINDERGARTEN DILEMMA

The insane kindergarten entrance laws start the problem of gradedness. We determine the future of the child based upon **one minute on the clock**. If little Sally is born at 11:59 ½ PM, she is eligible for school at age five, but poor little Mary, she is not born until 12:01 AM—something happens in that magic minute—the genes get mixed up, for she is not eligible when she turns five.

Thus the kindergarten teacher has a 15-month chronological spread, counting transfers from states with different dates, plus **child growth and development, motivation, maturation, and home factors**. These conditions create a minimum **24-month** growth and development **differential**; in one-half day one teacher is supposed to have them all ready **for the same 1st grade**.

WE DO NEED A NEW AMERICAN REVOLUTION. Some of us do need to effect another **BOSTON TEA PARTY**. We cannot wait for more speeches.

REPORT CARDS

The THIRD “proof” is in the arena of **Report Cards**. In spite of all the illogical accountability rhetoric—claims that test scores have gone up a few points—on “report cards” **30% still receive A/Bs** or the equivalent primary marking, **40% get C’s**, and **30% receive D/Fs**. **70% of our present students in the regular schools are at best average, mediocre, unsatisfactory, or failure.** Dropout rates range from 30 – 70%, depending upon the cultural climate.

Of the 30% deemed “successful,” **half are bored**. The future MIT student can learn Algebra in 6 weeks, but must sit there for 36 weeks to get an A—while the struggling sociology major needs 50 weeks, but only gets 36, and thus gets a D. **Even worse, no one needs the stupid algebra course**—not even engineers—yet it is being required. We might as well reinstate **Latin for everyone**. It makes as much sense. **WE KNOW THIS IS TRUE,-----BUT-----WE ALLOW SUCH FALLACIES TO CONTINUE.**

SCHOOLING SYSTEM

THE ENTIRE SYSTEM OF SCHOOLING IS OUT OF WHACK. How many really excited “C” students can you name? Though some alternatives now have A / B students, the majority enroll low-achieving D/F dropout labeled or “non-conforming” youth from “regular schools.” The same is true for the majority of charters. **Unfortunately, many of these alternatives—though different in structure—still follow rigid one-size-fits-all uniform programs** for those enrolled. **They are effective for only a few. We tend to forget that ALTERNATIVES ARE NEEDED FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL-----in curriculum-----as well as in organizational structure.**

IMAGINEERING

If all these points are valid, we need to IMAGINEER—**imagine** what should be, what could be, **invent** how to achieve it, and **implement** the program. We need to **create new learning systems** and go to the state legislatures with the plans and rationales.

We need **RISK-TAKERS and VISIONARIES** in all our State Associations to join as a **CRITICAL MASS** in each state and then nationally. Unfortunately, in the political world of today, **individuals are usually ineffectual** in fighting the WINDMILLS OF BUREAUCRACY. We need to reach the newspaper editors, the school boards, the Kiwanis Clubs, the professional education associations. These leaders need to publish our articles where they have journals and newsletters, and invite us for presentations at meetings.

ACTION

WE NEED TO ACT. What if all the Pennsylvania alternatives **refused to give the politically motivated state-federal tests** and went **on strike for KIDS**—rather than money??? Would not that be a novelty, but it would be a concrete beginning in the revolution we need. We would create national front-page news. It could require people to address the issues. Even if we backed down the first year, we could make it clear we are a voice and **will not tolerate FOREVER uniform one-size-fits-all mandates.** What if we organized and coordinated one day or one week strikes for alternatives students at the same time throughout the nation. Why not? We should do it; **WE CANNOT REMAIN PASSIVE FOREVER.**

Further, we need to expand programs to create K-12 football teams in some of our alternatives—**here football is used symbolically to stand for** creating choices of **comprehensive alternatives for all ages**, not just pint-sized, limited-offering secondary programs. **WE NEED TO OFFER IN SOME MANNER EVERYTHING FOR**

EVERYBODY YEAR ROUND—REGARDLESS OF AGE LEVEL—BIRTH TO DEATH.

We do need to carry on the revolution advanced at Valley Forge in 1777.

REALITY

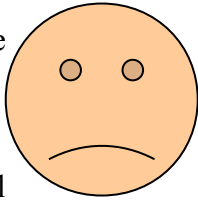
It can be done. The **Gary Indiana schools** from 1907 to 1937 were open 50 weeks a year, 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, at no extra cost, with better attendance, better achievement, and better facilities than comparable districts—for all **adults** as well as for all children. My **Wilson School** was open for learning 365 days a year, including pre-birth to death programs under one roof—where everyone could learn—even on **Christmas Day**.

WE IN ALTERNATIVES MUST BE ABLE TO SEE WHAT TRADITIONAL EDUCATORS AND POLITICIANS HAVE NOT SEEN. We, like Gulliver, know we can do it, for we have been there. BUT THEN WE MUST HELP THEM SEE THE REALITIES OF OUR VISIONS.

VOICE OF ONE

It is essential that we, as a voice of one, **SAY NO TO THE CONTINUATION OF ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL UNIFORM SCHOOLING. We can refuse to implement** programs that are wrong when **mandated for ALL students**. We can **challenge** the legislators and school boards in COURT. The current testing program is wrong. In public schools, we do not separate the Catholics from the Lutherans, the African-Americans from the Caucasian-Americans, or the rich from the poor. Therefore, the courts will side with us in a segregation case that separates “smarties” from “dummies” (in old traditional verbage) and that is all tests, GPAs, class ranks do—label one student as a “smarty” and a classmate as a “dummy.” **It is the worst form of discrimination.**

WE KNOW HOW TO DO IT. I DID IT IN MY PRIME—AS DID OTHERS—BUT NOW WE ARE OVER THE HILL. Thus, we need **present visionary leaders** to reverse the trends of our current **UNIFORM INSANITY.**



We need each state to organize a strike—now—if the traditionalists and politicians will not listen to reason. We must do it, if we truly believe we could help larger numbers of students. Remember, among the thousands of “notables” who “home-schooled” were Alexander Graham Bell, Pearl Buck, Pierre Curie, Agatha Christie, the Wright Brothers, Thomas Edison, Margaret Meade, Florence Nightingale, George Patton, Franklin Roosevelt, (and six other earlier Presidents), Bertrand Russell, Ansel Adams, Albert Einstein, and Noel Coward. Our friend **Mark Twain** was correct when he stated we should never let school interfere with our education.

NEW LEADERSHIP

WE MUST TURN THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS FROM UNDEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS to DEMOCRACY IN ACTION. LEARNING ALTERNATIVES MUST MODEL THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY. We do need to start a Revolution—and I am serious! Our precious Willie Wonka stated our task well. “We must make realities out of dreams, and dreams out of realities. We here today must be the dreamers of the dreams”—for the future of LEARNING ALTERNATIVES.