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BOYD H. BODE AND THE THEORY OF DEMOCRACY:
THE SOCIAL IDEAS OF A DEWEYAN EDUCATOR.

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, PH.D., 1979

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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
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BOYD H. BODE AND THE THEORY OF DEMOCRACY:
THE SOCIAL IDEAS OF A DEWEYAN EDUCATOR

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
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degree of
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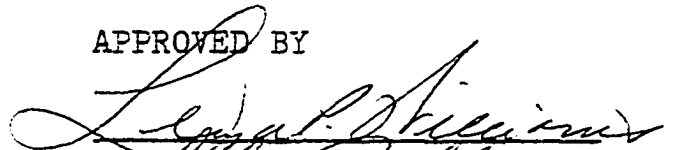
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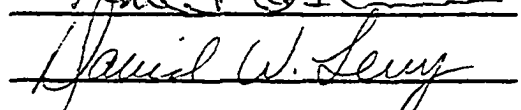
Norman, Oklahoma

1979

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BOYD H. BODE AND THE THEORY OF DEMOCRACY:
THE SOCIAL IDEAS OF A DEWEYAN EDUCATOR

BY: DALTON BOULDIN CURTIS, JR.

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There have been many instances in the history of ideas where a theory has generated great interest and attracted many adherents. That fact raises the question of what becomes of a theory as younger disciples adopt it. This dissertation deals with one example of that problem by attempting to answer the question: What happened to John Dewey's theory of democracy at the hands of Boyd H. Bode?

The study opens with a brief introduction intended to show how Boyd Bode, like John Dewey, began his academic career as an idealist philosopher, gradually reconstructed his beliefs amid the changing American scene of the Progressive Era, and eventually became a pragmatist. The first chapter is a summary of John Dewey's theory of democracy based on his published works, and designed to provide a foundation for examining Bode's theory. The next three chapters, constituting the bulk of the dissertation, investigate Boyd Bode's thoughts concerning intelligence and democracy, the social order, and education in an effort to explain his theory of democracy. These chapters are based on an analysis of his publications from 1917 to 1952. The conclusion is a comparison of Dewey's and Bode's ideas about democracy drawn from the evidence adduced in the four main chapters.

It appears that Boyd Bode kept John Dewey's theory of democracy virtually intact. Where he differed with Dewey was in his emphasis on the ends of the means-end relationship of democracy. He too saw democracy as more than a political system; it was an ethical system that he called a way of life. Accepting the pragmatic philosophy, he agreed with Dewey that life was continuously changing; therefore, democracy had to become dynamic, and grow with the changing circumstances. Dewey believed that intelligence was the means for effecting needed changes in the life of the individual and of the society. Bode in effect said that unless the ideal of democracy were kept in mind, changes would be made for change's sake. He endeavored to balance Dewey's stress on method by accenting the need for ideals. Thus as Bode analyzed American society and, particularly, the Progressive Education Movement in the years following the First World War, he developed a theory of democracy that differed from Dewey's theory in degree not in kind.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are a number of persons I want to recognize for helping me develop this study, although I accept full responsibility for its content. I am thankful to the staff of the William Bennet Bizzell Memorial Library at the University of Oklahoma for kindly providing me with a study carrel and for helping to locate and obtain source materials. I am particularly indebted to Professors Robert F. Bibens, David W. Levy, and John D. Pulliam for their untiring assistance and, especially, for their constructive criticisms of this essay. To Professor Lloyd P. Williams, chairman of the dissertation committee, I am deeply grateful not only for his willingness to answer my seemingly unending questions and his helpful suggestions for improving this project, but also for his thoughtful guidance and unceasing encouragement from the outset of my doctoral studies. The greatest debt of gratitude, however, goes to my wife, Marilyn K. Curtis, and my daughter, Shannon K. Curtis. Marilyn cheerfully accepted the task of typing every draft of this study. Both Marilyn and Shannon provided me with loving kindness, patience, and support which, ultimately, made this dissertation possible.

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BOYD H. BODE AND THE THEORY OF DEMOCRACY:

THE SOCIAL IDEAS OF A DEWEYAN EDUCATOR

INTRODUCTION

THE MAKING OF A PRAGMATIST

As we experience life, an uncontrolled stream of ideas seems to fill our heads. When we sleep, the flow continues as dreams, and during our waking hours, we sometimes daydream. On occasion, however, something disturbs the random coursing of ideas, and causes us to pause and survey our situation. This is the initial condition of what John Dewey called reflective thinking. We encounter, as it were, a forked-road, an ambiguous situation that presents a dilemma and offers alternatives. We momentarily cease our activity and gather facts in order to develop ideas for resolving the perplexity. Then we test those ideas until we have an answer which permits us to resume our lives. The demand for the solution to some problem, said Dewey, guides the process of reflection. The nature of the problem fixes the result of thought, which in turn, controls the thinking process.¹

¹John Dewey, How We Think, A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process, rev. ed. (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and

A clear illustration of that sort of thinking appeared in the intellectual development of Boyd Henry Bode, a contemporary of Dewey and, eventually, a proponent of experimentalism. Like Dewey, Bode thought his way out of the philosophy of idealism and into the philosophy of pragmatism. The story of his intellectual awakening actually began with the random coursing of ideas growing out of his early life.

Both Bode and Dewey were products of the Progressive Era.¹ Bode grew up in the heartland of progressivism, while Dewey arrived a newcomer to the midwest. But both men experienced the heightened concern for democracy that characterized that era. This heritage and his return to the midwest after graduate school played an important role in the formation of Bode's pragmatic beliefs. He ultimately became a Deweyan pragmatist. And, like Dewey, he became a leader in the Progressive Education Movement and an outspoken proponent of democracy as a way of life. But the story does not end there. The fact that Bode initially accepted Dewey's interpretation of pragmatism hardly indicates whether or not he remained an orthodox Deweyan, particularly in developing his

Company, 1933), pp. 14-15.

¹Historians date the Progressive Era from the 1890s to 1919, although it grew out of the changes in American life that began in the 1870s. The reformist ideas of progressivism lasted in varying degrees through the 1930s. The educational phase of American progressivism was the Progressive Education Movement which began at the same time as the Progressive Era writ large, but lasted into the 1950s. Both American progressivism and its educational phase developed first in the midwest.

theory of democracy. The solution to this problem lies in a summary of Dewey's theory of democracy and a thorough examination of Bode's theory. From the evidence adduced we can compare their social ideas and answer the question: What happened to John Dewey's theory of democracy at the hands of Boyd H. Bode? In order to set the stage for this inquiry, we should take a closer look at how Bode became a Deweyan educator.

Born in Ridott, Illinois in 1873 the son of a Dutch Reformed minister, Bode spent his early years in rural communities of South Dakota. He grew up in a period characterized by nationalization, industrialization, mechanization, and urbanization. Yet these potentially valuable changes also brought dislocation and bewilderment. "America in the late nineteenth century," wrote the historian Robert Wiebe, "was a society without a core. It lacked those national centers of authority and information which might have given order to such swift changes."¹ Life had been centered on the small, rural community. As life in America moved farther away from those communities, individuals attempted to comprehend the larger world in terms of their familiar environment. In most instances, reported Wiebe, they failed to understand the new society that they had

¹These changes led to an examination of American life. Robert Wiebe, The Search for Order, 1877-1920 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), pp. 11-12.

created.¹ Having lived through this turmoil, Bode's intellectual awakening, his personal adventure in reflective thought, probably began as an effort to make sense out of this rapidly changing environment.

Bode's formal education beyond the elementary level began in 1889 at the academy of Yankton College. In December of that year, his sister Anna died unexpectedly. This tragedy helps to explain why he did not return to Yankton after Christmas, although what he did from 1890 until the spring of 1892 remains a mystery. From April to June 1892, he taught in a rural elementary school at Wellsburg, Iowa. Years later Bode recalled that in that community a great deal of education actually occurred outside of the classroom. Children learned a vocation and the basics of economics and government at home. Their fathers taught them all they could about religious beliefs; the rest was up to the church. It was the community that inculcated and rigidly enforced manners and customs. "In brief," he commented, "all the heavy work in education was done outside the school. My task was simply to take care of certain skills and information which could not be handled very conveniently at home." Bode went on to note that this was a "beautiful, albeit unconscious," example of progressive educational doctrine.² One must

¹Ibid.

²Letter from Robert V. Bullough, 27 March 1979. Bullough is the author of the forthcoming book The Democratic Movement in Education: Boyd H. Bode; Joseph James

always be skeptical about a recollection forty years after the fact. But, it seems that the division between education in the classroom and that which was a part of the daily lives of those children left a distinct impression in Bode's mind.

In 1893, Bode returned to the academy and the college at Yankton. A year later, he enrolled as a junior in the classical course at William Penn College, Oskaloosa, Iowa, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1896. Bode obtained a second bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan in 1897, where he studied philosophy and German. At Michigan, he took work with Alfred Lloyd whose "dynamic idealism" was closer to Bode's later pragmatism than his earlier Calvinism.¹

Apparently undecided about a vocation, Bode thought about following his father into the ministry. He chose instead to pursue a doctorate in philosophy, a decision which afforded him a structured setting for wrestling with his own philosophical beliefs and the time for deciding whether or not to become a clergyman. In 1897, he entered the Susan Linn Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell University. There he studied the history of religion and

Chambliss, "The Development of Bode's Pragmatism and Its Influence on His Philosophy of Education," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1959, pp. 3-4; Boyd H. Bode, Progressive Education at the Crossroads (New York: Newson & Company, 1938; reprint ed., New York: Arno Press, 1971), p. 49.

¹Chambliss, "The Development of Bode's Pragmatism," pp. 3-6.

philosophy, and took minors in moral philosophy and psychology. Bode received training in a form of idealism that anticipated pragmatism. James E. Creighton introduced him to "speculative idealism" which was based on his view that philosophical inquiry must begin with experience, and obtain within the context of the history of ideas. Bode's other philosophy teacher, Evander B. McGilvary, trained with George Holmes Howison at California. Howison opposed the belief in absolute truth, and developed a personal idealism that anticipated William James.¹ McGilvary himself identified with the realists, despite having written a defense of Hegelian idealism in his dissertation. He also became very interested in the new developments in theoretical physics, a subject that later attracted Bode.² The anti-absolutism that McGilvary probably retained from his training and his interest in science likely found their way into Bode's thinking.

Bode's third teacher was Edward B. Titchner, the leading American proponent of structural psychology who had taken work with Wilhelm Wundt at Leipzig. Under Titchner, Bode came in contact with the rapidly growing experimental

¹The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 1, "Creighton, James Edwin," by Warren E. Steinkraus; Merle Curti and Vernon Carstensen, The University of Wisconsin 1848-1925, A History, vol. 1 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1949), p. 651.

²Walter G. Muellder, et. al., The Development of American Philosophy, A Book of Readings, 2nd. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960), p. 524.

approach to psychology, and the effort to separate psychology from philosophy. Bode later adopted an experimental view of psychology, although it differed from Titchner's structuralism; but he was never willing to separate psychology from philosophy, as he later demonstrated in such works as Modern Theories of Education in 1927 and Conflicting Psychologies of Learning in 1929. It is interesting to note that Dewey also encountered the "new psychology" as a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University. His teacher was G. Stanley Hall, a founder of the "new psychology" and the child study movement, who had studied in Berlin with Johannes von Kries and Hugo Kronecker and for a short time in Leipzig with Wundt.¹

Bode's doctoral thesis, "The Principle of Gratia Gratum Faciens in the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas," contained further evidence of the seeds of pragmatism. The themes he developed revealed an interest in an organic conception of experience, and skepticism about the inherent superiority of one kind of experience over another. He also shared in the revolt against formalism, characteristic of the Progressive Era, by challenging the faculty psychology in Thomas' explanation of Aristotle's psychology and the formalism of good works and submission to authority required by the

¹Edwin G. Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), pp. 412-13, 517-21; see also Dorothy Ross, G. Stanley Hall: The Psychologist as Prophet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

medieval church.¹

In spite of the many precursors of pragmatism in Bode's early development, he clung to the philosophy of idealism throughout his graduate study and during the first years of teaching. His Calvinistic rearing and the fundamentally idealist character of his philosophical training no doubt weighed heavily in his thinking. Moreover, he continued to entertain thoughts of becoming a cleric during these years.² On the other hand, the influence of the seeds of pragmatism cannot be ignored.

When he graduated from Cornell in 1900, Bode, once again, dismissed the idea of a theological career in favor of one in academic philosophy. This time the calling of philosophy brought him back to the midwest to a position as an instructor at the University of Wisconsin. He arrived in Madison thinking like an idealist, but departed, nine years later, with a significantly different viewpoint. Unlike Dewey who was a thoroughgoing Hegelian when he began teaching at the University of Michigan, Bode's early writings showed little evidence of any well-defined idealist position. Idealism provided the general basis of his thinking, but it, apparently, was not wholly satisfactory. He opposed both

¹See Morton G. White, Social Thought in America, The Revolt Against Formalism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957); Chambliss, "The Development of Bode's Pragmatism," pp. 7-9.

²Chambliss, "The Development of Bode's Pragmatism," pp. 3-6.

realism and pragmatism. Realism separated the knower and the known instead of seeing them in terms of purposive behavior. Pragmatism, argued Bode, attempted to account for them purposively, but failed to do so, ending in either realism or solipsism. Nevertheless, Bode exhibited certain pragmatic sympathies in his early works, such as his belief that pragmatism could aid in criticizing sensationalistic theories and his attempt to make sense of the purposive character of life.¹

By 1908, this search for a satisfactory philosophical position had left Bode in an intellectual wilderness. As Joseph J. Chambliss described it:

To say that by 1908 Bode was more nearly a man without a position than he had been in 1905 is to suggest that while he held less firmly to certain of his former idealistic tendencies, he had not yet taken firm hold on any other doctrine which he could call his own.²

This comment only indicates that Bode was uncertain about his philosophical beliefs, but does not tell us why. It appears that there were some influences on his thinking that seemed to be drawing him toward pragmatism, or, at least, away from traditional idealism. Could there have been anything else disturbing Bode's thinking?

Bode arrived at the University of Wisconsin at an

¹Ibid., pp. 10, 23-24; Joseph J. Chambliss, Boyd H. Bode's Philosophy of Education (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1963), pp. 4-5.

²Chambliss, "The Development of Bode's Pragmatism," pp. 23-24.

important time in the life of that institution. Since the early 1890s, men like President Thomas Chrowder Chamberlin, his successor Charles Kendall Adams, and Professors Frederick Jackson Turner and Richard T. Ely had struggled to make the University responsive to the needs of the state and a leading center for the study of the social sciences. While Bode was there, two other prominent progressives arrived, sociologist Edward A. Ross and President Charles R. Van Hise.¹

All of these men were involved in promoting a liberal brand of Social Darwinism that was a foundation stone in pragmatic philosophy. Herbert Spencer, William Graham Sumner and others who took the traditional view of Social Darwinism believed that society evolved through survival of the fittest. Existing social institutions and their successful leaders were the fittest to enjoy wealth and exercise power. No amount of social legislation would change the way things were. Only slow and painful evolution could cure social evils. Those like Ely, Ross, Van Hise and others who took the Reform Darwinist view agreed that society had evolved, but they believed the process had not stopped with the current stage. They held that society and its institutions could and should change rapidly, that the success of the so-called Robber Barons had been due to environment, and

¹Curti and Carstensen, The University of Wisconsin, vol. 1 pp. 630-32.

not to any special "fitness," and that conditions were not inevitable or static but continually in a state of flux. Therefore, they could justify experiment and change.¹ Dewey and other pragmatic philosophers adopted these assumptions and suggested that philosophical inquiry should serve to solve problems and clarify meanings for society.

Bode no doubt agreed with the Reform Darwinist notions of his colleagues. During the nine years that he worked at Wisconsin, he participated in the effort by the philosophy department to bring philosophical thought from the speculative to the practical realm. Since 1894, Frank Chapman Sharp had aided Ely by teaching courses in social philosophy. When Bode arrived, he supplemented Sharp's work through his knowledge of science and his ability to apply the theory of evolution to logic and to social action.² By 1909, pragmatism loomed larger on the horizon of Bode's thinking.

In that year, he accepted a position in the philosophy department at the University of Illinois and began the final leg of his journey to pragmatism. Here he also developed an interest in the application of philosophy to the practice of education that later caused him to reject technical

¹Eric F. Goldman, Rendezvous With Destiny (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), pp. 85-94. The terms Reform and Conservative Darwinists are Goldman's device for distinguishing what he sees as the branches of Social Darwinism.

²Curti and Carstensen, The University of Wisconsin, vol. 1, p. 652.

philosophy as being moribund. At this point, Bode's thinking was closer to naive realism than anything else. He had begun to move away from idealism when he came to doubt the existence of the transcendental element in experience and to view the task of philosophy as the search for meanings in experience. Now he accepted the notion that things existed and were real prior to thought. But he could not adopt the corollary that objects of knowledge existed prior to thought. Instead, he conceived of thought as purposive. From 1909 to 1914, he struggled with these ideas, eventually concluding that what existed was used for the purpose of finding objects of knowledge.¹ In other words, he was beginning to accept pragmatism.

The end was in sight. During the next three years, Bode became a committed pragmatist. Part of this time he devoted to arguing that behavioristic psychology was limited because it rejected the notion of consciousness, and to opposing transcendentalism by rejecting "transcendental consciousness." He argued that stimulus and response were not static entities, but developed as meanings that were sought in particular instances. In 1917, he defined consciousness as

. . . a name for a certain change that takes place in the stimulus; or, more specifically, it is a name for the control of conduct by future results or

¹Chambliss, "The Development of Bode's Pragmatism, pp. 32-61 and Bode's Philosophy of Education, pp. 4-5.

consequences.¹

Bode wrote this statement in an article entitled "Consciousness and Psychology" that appeared in Creative Intelligence, Essays in the Pragmatic Attitude. This book contained articles by such leading pragmatists as John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, Horace M. Kallen, and others. Bode clearly stood within the pragmatic school.

A second change occurred in Bode's professional life at Illinois that eventually gave a totally new direction to his scholarly activities. In 1915, a friend and former classmate at Cornell, William Chandler Bagley, invited him to share the teaching duties in a seminar in the philosophy of education. For the next two years Bagley and Bode worked together. From 1917 until 1921, Bode taught the course alone after Bagley left for Teachers College, Columbia University. The significance of these events lies in their effect on Bode's thinking. He began to grow weary of a philosophy that seemed to have no influence on human activity. This was no mere excursion tangent to the larger realm of his thinking. He began to view philosophy in a Deweyan sense, as having an intimate connection with education. In 1921, he accepted a position as professor of education at Ohio State University. "I am tired," he said, "of philosophy

¹Chambliss, Bode's Philosophy of Education, pp. 5-6; Boyd H. Bode, "Consciousness and Psychology," in Creative Intelligence, Essays in the Pragmatic Attitude by John Dewey, et. al. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1917), p. 243.

that makes no difference and I believe education is a field where it may do significant work."¹

The move to Ohio State marked a watershed in Bode's life and the real beginning of our story. Upon arriving in Columbus, he immediately undertook the application of philosophical thought to educational practice. He was convinced that both education and philosophy would benefit, recalled H. Gordon Hullfish, a colleague and friend, ". . . the one, by gaining a better sense of direction; the other, by grounding its generalizations in the ongoing experience of those who learn."² Like Dewey, Bode wanted to do more than merely devise a set of educational principles based on the philosophy of pragmatism. As a pragmatist, he endeavored to put philosophy to work for society by devising a theory of democracy for a dynamic social order, and by explaining the implications of that theory for the aims and practices of education.

For nearly a quarter of a century, between 1921 and 1944, Bode studied American society and education with the

¹Chambliss, "The Development of Bode's Pragmatism," pp. 74-76; John Dewey, Democracy and Education, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916; Free Press, 1966), p. 328; Quoted in H. C. Sun, Boyd H. Bode (1873-1953) and the Reform of American Education: Recollections and Correspondence (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Malloy Lithographing, Inc., 1977), pp. 1-2.

²H. Gordon Hullfish, "Philosophy and Education in Interaction," a paper presented at the Conference on Democracy and Education, May 26, 1944, at the Ohio State University. Quoted in Chambliss, Boyd H. Bode's Philosophy of Education, p. 7.

insight of a mature philosopher. In several books and numerous articles, he probed and examined the meaning of democracy, and analyzed the theories and practices of education. He became a leading critic of progressive education, and his opinions were given considerable recognition. He also developed a reputation as a great teacher. After Bode's death in 1953, Hullfish wrote: "Among his many gifts none surpassed his ability to probe to the depths of another's mind in a manner that brought joy, not resentment, to those whose ideas were under challenge."¹ As a teacher and scholar, he made Ohio State University a leading center for graduate study in the philosophy of education rivaling Teachers College, Columbia University in quality and importance.² We are primarily interested, however, in Bode's work as a scholar and in the development of his theory of democracy.

The origins of Boyd Bode's pragmatic philosophy and his theory of democracy lay in his early years amid the devastating social changes of the late nineteenth century, in his work as a teacher in a rural school, and in his decision to pursue advanced work in philosophy. These experiences apparently disturbed his thinking, and caused him to reflect upon their meaning, although he did not provide any

¹H. Gordon Hullfish, "Boyd H. Bode, 1873-1953," Progressive Education 30 (May 1953): 207.

²Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1961; Vintage Books, 1964), pp. 220-21.

concrete evidence of that fact. One thing is clear, however, Bode was consciously searching for a philosophical position from the time he began to study philosophy seriously. He related his thoughts about the transition in a letter to John L. Childs:

I got myself straightened out pretty well--I think so anyway--because I had extraordinary advantages. One was light teaching schedules in high-grade universities. Another was that I could take years and years to "reconstruct" myself, which is an unbelievably slow process when a person does it on his own. I'll never forgive my teachers for letting me flounder without the help to which I was entitled.¹

The result of Bode's reflective thinking was a brand of pragmatism that was fundamentally Deweyan in character. From his acceptance of education as the workbench of philosophy to his assertion that he "reconstructed" himself to his pragmatic educational theory Bode demonstrated his debt to Dewey. Moreover, he followed Dewey's lead by examining philosophical and educational issues in the larger context of a theory of democracy.

This brings us back to the question whose stage is now set. What happened to John Dewey's theory of democracy at the hands of Boyd H. Bode? Perhaps we can obtain a clue for solving this problem in the comments that John Dewey made in 1947 concerning Bode's interpretation of his ideas:

Bode has often been over-generous in what he said about

¹Letter to John L. Childs, July 9, 1951. Quoted in John L. Childs, American Pragmatism and Education, An Interpretation and Criticism (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1956), p. 249.

the influence of some of my philosophic writings in aiding him to unite philosophy and education. However, it makes me proud and happy to feel that I have had even an indirect part in the work he has done. Nevertheless, strong as is my "will to believe," I have also to tell you that whatever came to him from any source somehow came out different after it had passed through his mind with its unfailing instinct for clarity, his sense of humor, and his constant vision of where and how the ideas in question should and could enter the lifestream of human beings.¹

Although Dewey overstated his point, he was apparently tolerant of the fact that Bode modified his theory of democracy in light of the changing circumstances following the First World War.

The question of whether or not Boyd Bode altered John Dewey's theory of democracy is an example of one of the most interesting questions in the history of thought: What becomes of an orthodox theory once it descends into hands of younger theoreticians? Inquiries into this issue help to explain how and why theories evolved as conditions changed. They help to clarify the meanings of the theory's principles, or explain how and why those meanings came to be altered. Finally, investigations into the evolution of an orthodox theory provide some insight into what became of that theory as its disciples attempted to put it into practice. This would, in turn, give future followers of the theory some information about its strengths and weaknesses. In order to gain all of this knowledge, however, we must

¹John Dewey, "Boyd H. Bode: An Appreciation," Teachers College Record 49 (January 1948): 266-67.

first understand the orthodox theory itself. Thus we should begin this particular inquiry with an explanation of John Dewey's theory of democracy.

CHAPTER I

DEWEY ON DEMOCRACY

Four years after he completed his doctorate at Johns Hopkins University, in 1888, John Dewey asserted that:

Democracy, like any other polity, has been finely termed the memory of an historic past, the consciousness of a living present, the ideal of the coming future. Democracy, in a word, is a social, that is to say, an ethical conception, and upon its ethical significance is based its significance as governmental. Democracy is a form of government only because it is a form of moral and spiritual association.¹

He went on to suggest that democracy differed from aristocracy as to its means; it began with man himself rather than being externally imposed. Although these early statements obviously were written by John Dewey the idealist, they contained the basic theme of the theory of democracy that he developed as a pragmatist. In this theory, he regarded the individual as the fundamental element, the society as the crucible of the ethical relationship, and the process of education as the means for maintaining the democratic society. Issues arising out of concern for each of these elements occupied the minds of many social thinkers, and

¹John Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," in John Dewey, The Early Works, 1882-1898, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, et. al., vol. 1: 1882-1888, Early Essays and Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), p. 240.

manifested the changes in American society during the Progressive Era. Yet Dewey was not merely riding the train. In the minds of some, he was the engineer. "We were all Deweyites before we read Dewey," J. Allen Smith observed, "and we were all the more effective reformers after we had read him."¹ Dewey's influence stretched far beyond the Progressive Era writ large, attracting a host of disciples in the first half of the twentieth century, among them Boyd H. Bode.

The origin of Dewey's strong democratic spirit has been the subject of some debate.² Tradition has had it that his interest in democracy grew out of his early years in the ostensibly democratic environment of New England. According to the story, Dewey became ". . . infected by some leveller miasma creeping on chilly nights up the streets of Burlington

¹Ibid., p. 243; Goldman, Rendezvous With Destiny, p. 159. Quoted by the late Edward A. Ross, in an interview with Goldman.

²Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935; Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1971), pp. 500-07; Jane M. Dewey, ed., "Biography of John Dewey," in The Philosophy of John Dewey ed. by Paul Arthur Schilpp (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1951), pp. 3-21; George Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, with an Introduction by Harold Taylor (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), 1-54; Neil Coughlan, Young John Dewey, An Essay in American Intellectual History (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 90-93. For a discussion of Dewey's intellectual development based principally on his writings, see Morton G. White, The Origin of Dewey's Instrumentalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943).

from Lake Champlain."¹ But the clearly marked social divisions in Burlington could hardly have been called democratic.²

Dewey's democratic attitudes likely originated in his experiences in graduate school and beyond. At Johns Hopkins his early interest in social problems found an outlet in the study of history and political science, which he had chosen as minor subjects.³ Participation in discussions of current political, economic, and social topics, which likely included the theories of Richard T. Ely, and encounters with fellow graduate students like Woodrow Wilson certainly affected his thinking. At the University of Michigan, his exposure to political and social ideas continued. There he met Henry Carter Adams whose thoughts about private property, free trade, and labor were seen as "radical." Dewey also gained from the influence of his first wife, Alice Chipman Dewey, who was well read and conversant with contemporary life, and from frequent visits with her grandfather,

¹Coughlan, Young John Dewey, pp. 90-93.

²Ibid.

³John Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," in Contemporary American Philosophy, Personal Statements, vol. 2, ed. by George P. Adams and William Pepperell Montague (New York: The Macmillan Company 1930), p. 20. Dewey recalled that his interest in social problems originated in his undergraduate days with a reading of Harriet Martineau's translation of Philosophie Positive by Auguste Comte; Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, p. 30. Dewey chose these minor fields of study in part because of a dearth of courses in social, political, and economic philosophy at Johns Hopkins.

Fred Riggs, who championed Indian rights.¹

In the end, it was the social changes which Dewey experienced that profoundly affected his thinking. The development of his pragmatic philosophy and his theory of democracy was an effort to make sense out of a society bustling with new scientific knowledge, industrial growth, political ferment, and urban expansion. At first, like many of his contemporaries, Dewey attempted to reconcile science with religion. This became a struggle to rid himself of the philosophical dualisms of the New England culture which had left ". . . an inward laceration."² At Johns Hopkins, he found in Hegelianism a respite in his intellectual journey. As he recalled:

Hegel's synthesis of subject and object, matter and spirit, the divine and the human, was, however, no mere intellectual formula; it operated as an immense release, a liberation. Hegel's treatment of human culture, of institutions and the arts, involved the same dissolution of hard-and-fast dividing walls, and had a special attraction for me.³

Dewey adopted Hegelianism for several reasons. The organic unity between subject and object in Hegel's philosophy did away with traditional dualism. It aided Dewey's struggle with science in that it paralleled the biological

¹Ely taught economics at Johns Hopkins from 1881 to 1892. Webster's Biographical Dictionary, 1974; Coughlan, Young John Dewey, pp. 90-93.

²Coughlan, Young John Dewey, p. 49; Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," p. 19.

³Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," p. 19.

unity explained by Darwinian theory. Hegelianism also provided a system for Dewey that the eclecticism of his first teacher, Henry A. P. Torrey, failed to furnish.¹

Pragmatists have held that ends are only tentative. So it was with Dewey's belief in Hegel's universe. Over the next fifteen years, he "drifted" away from Hegelian idealism, while becoming increasingly concerned with social problems. "Social interests and problems," he remarked, "from an early period had to me the intellectual appeal and provided the intellectual sustenance that many seem to have found primarily in religious questions."² Although Hegelianism helped him understand social problems, Dewey came to view Hegel's dialectical analyses as mechanical.³ Nevertheless, he retained the notion of organic unity in his own pragmatic theories.

By the time Dewey arrived at the University of Chicago in 1894, his interests in psychology, society, education, and in the role of the scientific method in each of the subjects were leading him toward his own philosophical system. During the next three years, he completed the formulation of a brand of pragmatism which he called instrumentalism. This doctrine held that ideas developed in

¹Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, p. 16.

²Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," pp. 20-21.

³Ibid., p. 21.

experience were plans of action; that all dualisms were deadly; that human beings were biological organisms tied with nature through experience; that life was a process that derived its meanings from human associations; that nothing was absolute; that the method of intelligence was the best means for solving problems; and that philosophy ought to extricate itself from the speculative realm and devote itself to social action.

In company with George Herbert Mead, James Hayden Tufts, and James Rowland Angell, Dewey formed what came to be known as the Chicago School of Philosophy. From 1894 to 1904, the year Dewey left Chicago for Columbia University, they interpreted and applied pragmatism to psychology, ethics, and education. They democratized philosophy contending that the individual should judge his own experience based on personal standards. Dewey had anticipated this thesis in 1888 when he suggested that: "In a word, democracy means that personality is the first and final reality."¹ He admitted that the individual could learn the full significance of personality from society. But the choice to develop a personality had to come from the individual.²

Although G. Stanley Hall had introduced Dewey to

¹Darnell Rucker, The Chicago Pragmatists (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), p. 46; Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," pp. 243-44.

²Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy," pp. 243-44.

evolutionary psychology and its implications for the individual, it was William James who profoundly influenced his psychological theory. Like James, Dewey held that the human mind and body were not separate but constituted an organic whole. James saw the individual struggling to find a mode of conduct which would disclose the meaning of truth.

Dewey, in contrast, thought that the individual operated within a system of associations endeavoring with his fellows to find some truth that had meaning for the community.¹ He envisioned an organic tie between the individual and the society. This symbiotic relationship resembled that which existed between the individual and nature.

Life, according to Dewey, was a mixture of the precarious and the stable. Existence was a gamble because the world was unstable and fraught with uncertainty. There was, nevertheless, an element of regularity. When combined with the indefinite, Dewey supposed that it produced an ideal condition. It made life experimental. As he explained:

The conjunction of problematic and determinate characters in nature renders every existence, as well as every idea and human act, an experiment in fact, even though not in design. To be intelligently experimental is but to be conscious of this intersection of natural conditions so as to profit by it instead of being at its mercy.²

¹Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," pp. 23-25. Dewey acknowledged his debt to William James; Henry Steele Commager, The American Mind, An Interpretation of American Thought and Character Since the 1880's (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), pp. 98-99.

²John Dewey, Experience and Nature (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1929), pp. 41, 63, 70.

We had to act, as it were, upon the environment, not allow it to control us.

Knowledge of the environment came from experience, which Dewey thought was our link to the environment. Modern man's method of directing these experiences was science. But science was a tool for solving particular problems, not some newly discovered omnipotent force that could change the environment. Early man, he remarked, recognized the precarious condition of existence, and devised religions with their magic and rites to ward off the unseen forces. Modern man faced the same kind of world, and developed the method of science to deal with it. Both methods came from experience. If modern man's tool was superior, said Dewey, it was only because it was based on verifiable elements in nature and not on figments of his imagination. "But," he admitted, "when all is said and done the fundamentally hazardous character of the world is not seriously modified, much less eliminated."¹

Dewey applied his beliefs about existence to the theater of human association. He contended that human beings could not exist alone. They had to be a part of society, which gave meaning to experience through association

¹White, The Revolt Against Formalism, p. 12. White suggests that a common approach taken by John Dewey, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Charles Beard, and James Harvey Robinson was to explain facts by referring to the past and by employing social sciences other than the one under discussion; Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 44.

with others. Babies, for instance, were dependent beings. Their activities, remarked Dewey, would be limited to a few hours if it were not for the presence of adults with formed habits. The young learned to express their native activities in ways that had meaning by interacting with a matured social medium.¹

This did not mean that habits were to be imposed upon the young. Dewey strongly disagreed with the traditional belief that habits were to be inculcated in the human mind. He postulated, instead, that human beings were biological organisms born with certain native instincts, impulses, and the tendency to form habits. The latter two formed the important variables for directing experience. Impulses he thought formed the bases for reorganizing activities and for giving new direction to old habits. Habits were the tentative structure of organized activities, which when balanced with impulses yielded consciousness. Dewey viewed this phenomenon as the vehicle of knowledge.²

In this conception, Dewey reiterated his belief in the basic unity of existence. He also used it as a basis for criticizing those who wanted to maintain the mind-body dualism by explaining knowledge as something separate from original power. "The isolation of intellectual disposition

¹John Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, An Introduction to Social Psychology (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922; Modern Library, Inc., 1930), pp. 89-90.

²Ibid., pp. 93, 176-83.

from concrete empirical facts of biological impulse and habit-formation," he protested, "entails a denial of the continuity of mind with nature."¹

What happened to knowledge if the equilibrium of impulse and habit were upset? Dewey's answer was reflective thinking, the method of intelligence, which he thought was critical to efficacious human action. If each person were to become an active and useful participant in a democratic society, he could not go blithely along buffeted by the forces of the environment. He had to act upon the conditions he faced. Nor could the individual live at the mercy of blind impulse or be constrained by rigid habit. Intelligent action meant reflective thinking.

As the opening paragraphs of this essay suggest, Dewey believed that thinking began with a state of disequilibrium and proceeded to the formation of a tentative plan, to the imagining of a theory that accounted for the peculiarities of the question, and to the consideration of a solution. In this process, he noted, the data at hand did not give us a solution; they merely indicated it. The best sources of suggestions were past experience with a similar situation and one's fund of relevant knowledge. If neither of these sources were available, warned Dewey, confusion would remain. It was futile to expect an individual to deal with a problem for which he had no prior experience. On the

¹Ibid., p. 186.

other hand, an unwillingness to be sufficiently critical about our ideas or a desire to jump to conclusions would hinder reflective thinking. He thought that we should be patient and willing to tolerate the condition of doubt ". . . so as not to accept an idea or make positive assertion of a belief until justifying reasons have been found."¹

Reflective thinking enabled the individual to act with foresight. It allowed one to plan according to purposes or projected ends. Dewey preferred the term ends-in-view, implying the tentative nature of these ends. Commenting on the influence of these ends, he suggested that projecting the consequences of our actions enabled us to know what we were about. He frequently reiterated, however, that these were not ". . . ends of action. In being ends of deliberation they are redirecting pivots in action."² In other words, an achieved end became a means. Reflective thinking, for instance, was an end for human development and a means for human action.

When the individual learned to think reflectively, his interdependence did not suddenly end. Neither did it end with parental nurturing. Dewey continually stressed that the individual obtained from others the material of intellectual and physical sustenance throughout life.

¹Dewey, How We Think, pp. 15-16.

²Ibid., p. 18; Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, p. 225.

Although as one grew he became physically and economically independent, he could not carry on his calling or satisfy his needs without others. Social ties, he remarked, were natural and inevitable, as were physical ties. Even when one was alone he thought with language derived from association with others. In the case of independent judgment and character, Dewey held that it was independence in relation to others.¹

Dewey was well aware of the social, economic, and political changes that occurred as the United States became an industrial giant and a world power during the first thirty years of the twentieth century. He remarked that new inventions, increasing wants, population shifts, cultural mixing, changing domestic life, increasing leisure time, and the effects of great combinations of capital on individual employment opportunities forced people into closer relations. Hence, the need for people to understand the ethical nature of democracy became more acute. Individuals, commented Dewey, had to avoid drifting and reflect upon those social tendencies and social institutions they would favor and those they would oppose. He held that in a democracy social issues took on a moral dimension.²

¹John Dewey and James H. Tufts, Ethics rev. ed. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1932), pp. 247-48. Dewey began to develop this idea in his essay "The Ethics of Democracy" in 1888. He later expanded his explanation in the first edition of the Ethics in 1908.

²Ibid., p. 352.

The charge that this was subordinating the individual to the social order, Dewey dismissed as absurd. He asserted that the change from personal to social morality made personal reflection more important. People had to develop more personal knowledge and insight, more substantial convictions, and stronger attitudes in their actions. He concluded that social morals meant that the social conditions and consequences of personal action were made explicit, and required more thoughtful judgment than ever before.¹

The central moral issue for the individual in a democracy is freedom. The traditional view expressed by John Locke and others has been that freedom is a natural right, a condition of human individuality. Dewey thought that taken at face value this conception was naive. Without action this type of freedom was mere form. Freedom has also been interpreted as freedom from restraint. This notion, commented Dewey, was both negative and formal.² He argued, instead, that freedom was a function primarily of individual capacity and secondarily of social conditions.

Dewey held that freedom developed as we became aware of our own uniqueness, and as we attempted to satisfy personal needs and desires. He went so far as to suggest that

¹Ibid., p. 353.

²John Dewey, Freedom and Culture (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons 1939; Capricorn Books, 1963), pp. 54-55; John Dewey and James H. Tufts, Ethics (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1908), p. 437.

the potentiality for freedom was a part of our innate capacity for growth. The more we became aware of this potentiality and the avenues of growth, the more we resisted fixity, and thereby realized the possibilities of recreating ourselves, the more we were actually free.¹

This understanding apparently was a prerequisite to achieving the two conditions of what he termed effective freedom. First, there had to be positive control of the resources of action in order to satisfy needs. Second, the individual had to have the intellectual powers of initiative and reflection which were the requisites of foresight. Merely having freedom to act was an empty condition without the intelligence to use it. Our actions, observed Dewey, likely would be fruitful to the degree that we had consulted conditions and planned accordingly. At the same time, recalling the precarious nature of existence, he noted that we could encounter good or bad luck. He even suggested that luck seemed to favor the intelligent over the stupid. "In neutral and adverse circumstances," he concluded, "study and foresight are the only roads to unimpeded action."² Obviously, he believed that freedom depended first on the development of human intelligence.

Dewey saw freedom of action as a gift of nature that

¹Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, rev. ed., p. 340.

²Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, p. 438; Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, pp. 304-05.

was at the mercy of accident. Consequently, it had to be supplemented by agreements among men. These agreements, Dewey admonished, demanded concessions from individuals. Some liberties had to be curtailed in order for any liberties to be secure and enduring. As he put it:

They [individuals] must, in short enter into an organization with other human beings so that the activities of others may be permanently counted upon to assure regularity of action and far-reaching scope of plans and courses of action.¹

He likened this process to buying an insurance policy as a hedge against future contingencies, and thus securing the future course of life. He admitted these sacrifices were necessary, but reasonable, and were justified by the results.²

This relationship between individual freedom and organization Dewey characteristically saw as experimental. He said that it could not be governed by abstract theory. Rather, the experiment had to be judged by its consequences. "The question," he argued, "is to the balance of freedom and security achieved, as compared with practicable alternatives."³ A democratic society was one such experimental organization.

Most of Dewey's works dealing with the social order appeared after he left the University of Chicago in 1904.⁴

¹Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, p. 307.

²Ibid. ³Ibid., pp. 307-08.

⁴Ethics, with James H. Tufts (1908), Democracy and

In May of that year, he accepted a position on the faculty of Columbia University, where he remained until his retirement in 1930.¹ He arrived in New York City as the muckrakers were exposing corruption in government and industry. Although muckraking died by 1909, the progressive star remained bright. Progressive standard bearer Theodore Roosevelt, for example, remained in the public view and later led the ill-fated attempt to win the White House for progressivism in 1912. Herbert Croly published The Promise of American Life in 1909, considered by his contemporaries to be an important statement on progressivism.² Progressivism remained popular through the Wilson administration, although the failure of Wilsonian idealism became the death knell of the movement. Dewey, nonetheless, maintained his faith in the possibilities of a democratic social order.

In 1908, Dewey explained what he had adumbrated twenty years before, that democracy was an ethical relationship that gave significance to a form of government. The

Education (1916), Reconstruction in Philosophy (1920), The Public and Its Problems (1926), Individualism Old and New (1930), Ethics, rev. ed. (1932), Liberalism and Social Action (1935), and Freedom and Culture (1939).

¹Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, pp. 110-17. Dewey and Chicago's President William Rainey Harper had disagreed over arrangements for the Laboratory School created by Dewey in 1897 as an educational experiment. Dewey resigned on April 5, 1904 without another position. Within a few weeks, he received an invitation from President Nicholas Murray Butler to take a position at Columbia University.

²Goldman, Rendezvous With Destiny, pp. 171-76, 192.

evolution of democratic states, he said, was the social complement of the growth of a comprehensive good. The external structure of democracy was a piece of machinery to be used or discarded based on its economy and efficiency. "Morally," he explained, "it is the effective embodiment of the moral ideal of a good which consists in the development of all the social capacities of every individual member of society."¹ This was the environment he had alluded to in his description of the individual. It was the ideal social order that would enable the individual to act intelligently and grow to the limit of his capacity.

Achieving this ideal was not simple. Like most progressives, Dewey saw many barriers to reaching the ideal of democracy. The first roadblock, he thought, was distrust of government. This attitude stemmed from the struggle for individual freedom against despotism, and resulted in the persistent demand for laissez faire government. Dewey admitted the value of limited government under the original circumstances. But, he said, the situation was different in the twentieth century. Technological achievements enabled the public to be well informed. Thus the principal moral problem of the day was to make government an organ for expressing common interests and purposes.²

Dewey was concerned about the effects of an

¹Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, p. 474.

²Ibid., pp. 474-76.

increasingly complex society on the individual and the social order. He thought that growing private interests were a measure of social progress in that they multiplied the sources of happiness. But, he warned, they also tended to overwhelm the individual such that he became too concerned about his own affairs at the expense of public needs. Politics thus became the bailiwick of experts, which he thought inevitably led to corruption. Control of governmental machinery by a few bred secrecy because of indifference to the public at large, and encouraged perversion of public functions for private advantage. He cited the problems with control of public utilities as an example. The growth of transportation and communication had led to the creation of large and powerful industries controlling these public services. It also resulted in attempts by these organizations to control legislation through political power brokers who held the reigns of the party machinery. Dewey believed that a true democracy where politics was a public endeavor would deter such corruption. But he was not naive enough to think that the task was an easy one. "That a 'public office is a public trust,'" he emphatically stated, "is at once an axiom of political ethics and a principle most difficult to realize."¹

Implicit in this comment was his concern about the solutions to political problems. He acknowledged the recent

¹Ibid., pp. 477-78.

efforts to improve the party structure and make it more democratic. He was pleased with such advances as the Australian ballot, the referendum, the recall, the efforts to promote women's suffrage, and the attempts to equalize individual opportunities. But he warned that the efficacy of these solutions had to be measured by an ethical ideal.

As he explained:

The moral criterion by which to try social institutions and political measures may be summed up as follows: The test is whether a given custom or law sets free individual capacities in such a way as to make them available for the development of the general happiness or the common good. This formula states the test with the emphasis falling upon the side of the individual. It may be stated from the side of associated life as follows: The test is whether the general, the public, organization and order are promoted in such a way as to equalize opportunity for all.¹

In the true pragmatic sense, this ethical ideal of democracy as an end was also a means in that it suggested a process of growth for the individual and the society. The success of democracy as an end, moreover, depended on the democratic means, the method of intelligence. It seems that Dewey's constant effort to explain the meaning of democracy most often appeared as an emphasis on the means to achieving democracy. This is not to suggest that he had proposed an ideal that was mere form; its dynamic quality negated any such accusation. Dewey's way of placing philosophy at the service of society was to promote intelligent action that implied the ethical ideal of democracy.

¹Ibid., pp. 478-83.

As the Progressive Era drew to a close at the end of the First World War, democracy faced its severest tests. The war and the failure of American idealism at Versailles left Americans in no mood to promote world order. They simply wanted to turn inward, to return to "normalcy," and to make money. Conformity became the watchword. Americans also became somewhat paranoid about ghosts that seemed to threaten their way of life as the Red Scare and the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti demonstrated. Reform democracy came under increasing criticism. H. L. Menken, for instance, lambasted the democracy of progressivism as ". . . the worship of jackals by jackasses."¹ Others, now calling themselves liberals, attacked conformity, and avoided criticizing politics and economics. Most reformers took the latter position because they wanted to divorce themselves from Wilsonian idealism; they wanted to avoid stirring up a witch hunt; and, most important, they thought equality of opportunity was not a problem, rather, the restriction of individual liberty was the real threat.²

With the coming of the Great Depression some reformers began to speak out against the causes of insecurity: mechanization and urbanization. Others seemed to follow the attitude of the public in believing that America was still the land of opportunity; that security was not a threat; and

¹Goldman, Rendezvous With Destiny, pp. 315-16.

²Ibid., pp. 317-18.

that equality came from individual effort. The New Deal, ironically, was more aggressively egalitarian than progressivism.¹

During the 1920s and 1930s, Dewey maintained the position on democracy that he had established at the height of the Progressive Era. In spite of the mood of the 1920s, he forged ahead in his effort to promote a democratic social order. He was concerned about a type of conformity much more serious than that of George Babbitt. He thought that reverence for liberty, equality, and fraternity as mere abstractions was a kind of mindless conformity inimical to democracy. These shibboleths obtained true meaning, he remarked, when they were construed as characteristics of associations that defined a community.²

Dewey regretted the loss of the community with its closeness, cooperation, and common interests which he thought were fundamental to democracy. The brotherhood of the community gave meaning to liberty, equality, and fraternity. Those who identified democracy with individualism either ignored this fact or made these symbols sentimental tags. Within the communal experience, he explained, fraternity was another term for goods that grew out of a shared association and gave direction to the conduct of each good.

¹Ibid., pp. 368-71.

²John Dewey, The Public and Its Problems (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1927; The Swallow Press Inc., 1954), p. 149.

Liberty was the freeing and fulfillment of individual capacities that could only occur in association with others. Equality was the unencumbered share by each member of the community in the consequences of that association. Sounding somewhat like Karl Marx, Dewey held that this was equitable because it was based on need and ability to use, not on conditions that deprive one so as to provide for another. A baby, for example, was equal in that his needs were fulfilled without being sacrificed to the superior abilities of other family members. As he asserted:

Equality does not signify that kind of mathematical or physical equivalence in virtue of which any one element may be substituted for another. It denotes effective regard for whatever is distinctive and unique in each, irrespective of physical and psychological inequalities. It is not a natural possession but is a fruit of the community when its action is directed by its character as a community.¹

Another revered principle of democracy is individualism. Celebrated by the founding fathers as the basic premise of American democracy, it has pervaded American life since that time. Politically and economically it came to mean a laissez faire approach by the government. As the society became increasingly complex this type of individualism became meaningless. Yet it retained its status as a fundamental principle of democracy.

Dewey saw the widening gulf between individualism in theory and practice as a threat to true democracy. To his way of thinking it was a question of economic arrangements.

¹Ibid., pp. 149-54, 211-17.

In "The Ethics of Democracy" he had contended that political democracy was meaningless without economic democracy. Even in the time of Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward and Henry George's Progress and Poverty this was considered a radical position. As corporate capitalism grew and business became the business of Americans, Dewey looked increasingly to the economic side of the coin as the basis of individualism. It was ironic, he commented, that as individualism received great support it was being submerged by industrial growth and its concomitant social alignments. So pervasive was the effect of the increasingly complex industrial order, thought Dewey, that it affected all human associations. "The forms of associated action characteristic of the present economic order are so massive and extensive," he warned, "that they determine the most significant constituents of the public and the residence of power."¹

Early in the depression, Dewey became so disturbed by the effects of this impersonal economy on the individual that he issued a clarion call for a change in the social order in Individualism Old and New. He suggested that a corporate state had grown up around the individual, had restricted personal choice and initiative, and had left the individual confused and bewildered. The individual seemed

¹Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy" in The Early Works, 1882-1888, pp. 246-49; Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators, p. 503; Dewey, The Public and Its Problems, pp. 96-97, 107.

to lack any sense of social fulfillment. Even the "pecuniary oligarchy" showed little evidence of satisfaction. "As for the many," he said, "they are impelled hither and yon by forces beyond their control."¹ He suggested that a stable recovery required the elimination of the old economic and political individualism, and the establishment of a new economic order. This was the only way to make equality of opportunity a reality.²

Dewey proposed a radical solution for the plight of the individual, in the sense that it departed sharply from laissez faire capitalism in the direction of socialism. He spoke as a tough-minded pragmatic theoretician. Like Thorstein Veblen, he assumed that the economy was evolving and that the solution had to grow out of the current circumstances, not out of old assumptions. He thought that the new individualism would emphasize the social dimension of thought. It required the controlled use of scientific and technological resources for the benefit of the individual. It also meant taking account of social realities in the public interest. In this case Dewey thought that the circumstances pointed to some form of socialism. By socialism he meant an economy that was planned by the public, not by the

¹John Dewey, Individualism Old and New (New York: Minton, Balch and Co., 1930; Capricorn Books, 1962), pp. 36. 52-54. This material originally appeared in a series of essays published in The New Republic from January to April 1930.

²Ibid., p. 72.

captains of industry.¹

Once again, Dewey returned to the method of science. The new economic order was not to be a fixed end. As conditions changed and brought forward fresh problems, new solutions had to be found. This evolving order required the scientific attitude which, he said, was ". . . experimental as well as intrinsically communicative."² Thus Dewey's new order would be scientific and would have the primary element of community--communication.

In any discussion of democracy, the issue of the state inevitably arises. Dewey's theory of democracy was no exception. He saw the state as an evolving organism. "By its very nature," he commented, "a state is ever something to be scrutinized, investigated, searched for. Almost as soon as its form is stabilized, it needs to be re-made."³ He thought that discovering the state was not a theoretical problem, but a practical one. Yet his own suggestions belied the practical nature of the problem.

The state began as the natural consequence of associated living, which he said, resulted in the formation of a public. At first unstructured, a public became a state when it was articulated and operated by official representatives. In this regard, Dewey acknowledged the basic principle of

¹Ibid., pp. 87-88, 93-98, 119-20.

²Ibid., p. 156.

³Dewey, The Public and Its Problems, pp. 31-32.

political democracy that government existed to serve the community, a purpose achieved by the community sharing in the selection of governors and in the determination of their policies. He was not interested, however, in proposing new governmental machinery. He thought, instead, that a more important problem for democracy was establishing the conditions that would enable a scattered, mobile, and multifarious public to determine and express its common interests. This was to be a search for the conditions under which the "Great Society" might become the "Great Community."¹

A democratically organized public, said Dewey, had to have a kind of knowledge and insight that could not yet be defined since it did not exist. But the conditions for obtaining that knowledge could be delineated. We could borrow, he suggested, from the spirit and method of science. Two important requirements were freedom of social inquiry and the dissemination of its conclusions. Social inquiry for Dewey meant the application of the scientific method to the problems of society. Dissemination of the information garnered from inquiry required the use of every possible means of communication in the interest of the public. Meeting these two requirements Dewey thought would provide the means for creating the "Great Community." He concluded that:

Democracy will come into its own, for democracy is a name for a life of free and enriching communion. It had its seer in Walt Whitman. It will have its consummation when free social inquiry is indissolubly wedded to the

¹Ibid., pp. 67, 146-47.

art of full and moving communication.¹

Achieving the conditions of a democratic community did not, however, mean that every member of the society would engage in social inquiry. On the contrary, Dewey foresaw experts conducting such investigations. The many, he asserted, had to be able to judge the knowledge supplied by the experts as to its relevance to common concerns. Such judgments depended on what Dewey called effective intelligence, the product of education.²

Dewey meant by this statement much more than the traditional notion that political democracy required an educated citizenry. It was a process that went far beyond traditional schooling. He associated education with the process of life. But life in America had undergone a significant transformation since the middle of the nineteenth century. These changes provided the impetus for the educational element of his theory of democracy.

The evolution of American life from an agrarian to an industrial society generated much concern about education. In the 1890s calls for educational reform came from many corners of the society. Business and labor leaders demanded that the schools assume the responsibility for apprenticeship training. Settlement workers and municipal reformers called upon the schools to teach hygiene, domestic science, child care, and manual arts. With the influx of immigrants,

¹Ibid., pp. 166-83. ²Ibid., pp. 208-09.

patriots were calling for "Americanization." Farmers wanted the schools to instruct their young in the joys and benefits of farming. Their aim, in part, was to keep their children on the farm and out of the cities. The common thread in these demands for educational reform was the realization that in the new industrial society the family and community were no longer educating the young as they had in the past. Somehow, thought the public, these functions had to be performed. So they turned to the school as the common social institution.¹

Dewey responded to these calls for reform in 1899 in The School and Society. Like Plato, he believed that society educated the citizen. He also recognized that the new industrial society made it impossible for the family and the local community to perform its educational function as it once had. Thus the school had to become the primary educational institution. This did not, however, alter the seat of educational responsibility. "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child," he said, "that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon it destroys our democracy."² Education was not to become the exclusive

¹Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1961; Vintage Books, 1964), pp. 116-17.

²John Dewey, The School and Society rev. ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1915; combined with The Child and the Curriculum, 1971), p. 7.

domain of educators, but had to remain an affair of the entire community.

Dewey reminded his audience that a society was a group of people held together by common needs and aims growing out of an interchange of thought and sympathy. This sense of community was rapidly disappearing. And the traditional school, he thought, was too far removed from society to teach effectively a sense of community. In order to compensate for the social transformation, the school had to become a community. By introducing the occupations of the home and community of the industrial era into the school life such values as cooperation, free communication of ideas, order, and discipline would result. Life would become the child's environment in school and out. The lessons would no longer be abstract, but associated with living. The school would become ". . . an embryonic society." Dewey thought that this type of education would produce individuals who could function in society and participate as active associates in the improvement of life for all. As he described it:

When the school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service, and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guaranty of a larger society which is worthy, lovely, and harmonious.¹

In other words, the school was to have an active role in

¹Ibid., pp. 14-18, 29.

changing society. This aim clearly indicated the role of education in his theory of democracy.

In 1916, Dewey published his most comprehensive statement on education and society in Democracy and Education. By this time he had come to be recognized as a leading voice of progressivism, which guaranteed a large audience for almost anything he produced. Thus it is not surprising that Democracy and Education was hailed by some as the most important statement on education since Rousseau's Emile.¹

Dewey saw a direct relationship between democracy and education. In his clearest statement about this relationship, he reiterated his contention that democracy was more than a form of government, that it was a mode of associated living and common experience. The extension of human interaction to the point where an individual had to consider the effects of his action on others, he thought, was analogous to the breakdown of class, race, and national barriers which had kept men from perceiving the impact of their activity. This change widened the environment for the individual, increasing the stimuli to which he could respond, and thereby liberating personal capacities. But, he said, the widening of the area of common concerns which characterized a democracy was not the result of deliberate effort. It grew out of the new modes of industry, transportation, and

¹Cremin, The Transformation of the School, pp. 119-20.

communication. The liberation of the individual and the widening area of common interests, moreover, were not self-sustaining. An increasingly complex society, said Dewey, had to see that its members developed personal initiative and adaptability. Otherwise, he warned, they would be overcome by the changes whose significance they could not perceive and whose direction they could not control.¹

Once again, Dewey was expressing his fundamental ideas about democracy. He meshed educational theory with political theory in an effort at social reform that paralleled the work of Plato. In a more deeply philosophical sense, he was expressing the Aristotlean conception of the relationship between politics and education. Aristotle believed that politics and education should be bound by ethics. By defining democracy as fundamentally an ethical relationship, Dewey linked politics and education through the ethics of democracy.

In order to combine effectively education and democracy, the educational system had to meet certain requirements not already being met. Dewey criticized the traditional school for its formalistic orientation and its separation from society. The traditional school focused its activity on the teacher or the textbook, anywhere but on the life of the child. If education and life were to come into contact, the child would have to become the center of

¹John Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 101-02.

gravity for education.¹ This was a radical departure from the dominant view of the time that the teacher was the authority and the student was the passive receptacle of knowledge.

This reorientation required a new conception of education. Dewey believed that if the school were related to life the educational ideals of culture, discipline, information, and utility would cease to be at variance with one another. The growth of the child would then become the unifying aim whose phases were discipline, information, and utility. Growth, he explained later, was a process that began with certain conditions present in the individual: immaturity, the capacity to grow, and plasticity, the ability to learn from experiences. The expressions of this process were habits.² But what did this have to do with the aim of education?

If we defined education as development and life as development, he postulated, then education was life. This meant that education had no end beyond itself and that it was a process of continual reorganizing, restructuring, and transforming. Like many others, Dewey believed that education should not cease with schooling. The finest product of schooling should be the predeliction ". . . to learn from life itself and to make the conditions such that all will

¹Dewey, The School and Society, p. 34.

²Ibid., pp. 91-92; Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 49-59.

learn in the process of living. . . ." ¹ He later made the social aspect of this statement more explicit by suggesting that all social institutions in a democracy had an educational function. And the test of their value was the extent to which they promoted individual growth. ²

In 1910, Dewey had clearly indicated the importance of thinking to the growth process in How We Think. In Democracy and Education he reaffirmed its significance when he said that thinking yielded knowledge and the use of thinking was superior to the value of knowledge. He lamented the dearth of theoretical support for the principle that the most important outcome for the minds of the children was development of their ability to think. "Thinking is," he stressed, "the method of intelligent learning, of learning that employs and rewards mind." ³

In each aspect of his theory of democracy, Dewey focused on experiences whose meanings were to be derived through the method of intelligence. This method was an end to be developed. It was also a means to be used in dealing with an ever-expanding, increasingly complex technological society. It was, for Dewey, the linchpin of democratic action. The democratic ideal always appeared in his

¹Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 59-60.

²John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1920; Boston: Beacon Press, 1948), p. 186.

³Ibid., pp. 177-80.

discussions, sometimes subtly, sometimes explicitly, but the means aspect of that means-end ideal dominated the explanations. This fact was the cause of much of Dewey's consternation about progressive education.

The Progressive Education Movement was the educational aspect of American progressivism. It began in 1876 with the early vocational education movement and ended with the collapse of the Progressive Education Association in 1955 and the disappearance of its journal Progressive Education, two years later. To those involved in the movement progressive education meant a broadening of school programs to include health, vocation, and family and community life. It meant applying in the classroom the pedagogical principles derived from the new psychology and the social sciences. It meant designing instruction to the variety of children coming into the schools. Lastly, progressive education was an expression of faith in the idea that a democratic culture could be created without being vulgarized, and of the belief that all could share in the benefits of science and the arts.¹ The movement became, in part, a multifarious group of educators who in their honest attempts to understand and practice Dewey's educational and social theories oftentimes distorted the meaning of the conception of experience.

This misinterpretation was the target of Dewey's

¹Cremin, The Transformation of the School, pp. vii-ix.

criticism of progressive education in Experience and Education published in 1938. The progressives' efforts to condemn traditional education led to making a fetish of experience. He reminded them that it was not experience itself, but the quality of experience that was important. This distortion, thought Dewey, had resulted in school activities lacking any inherent social control, freedom of movement without freedom of intelligence, activities becoming an end based on impulse and immediate needs, subject-matter being too present oriented, and reverence for the form of the scientific method.¹ In other words, the progressives had adopted Dewey's notion of experience without fully understanding the meaning of intelligence.

The misinterpretation of Deweyan theory is not surprising considering his explanations of these ideas. His writing style was complex, ponderous, often vague, and always verbose. Yet this explanation is too simplistic. Dewey was onto something when he accused the progressive educators of making a fetish of experience. Pragmatic theory acknowledged that truth was relative to conditions, and came from experience. This premise easily became: "One classroom experience is as good as another." The burden for this perversion lay with the progressive educators themselves. Like disciples of most orthodox theories they

¹John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938; Collier Books, 1963), pp. 27, 57, 61, 69, 79, 86.

emphasized those aspects of the "truth" that best suited their needs. This helps to explain why there were three principal groups of progressive educators, the scientists, the child-centered advocates, and the social reconstructionists, each focusing on one aspect of Deweyan educational theory. It also provides some insight into the strong anti-progressive education movement of the 1950s. In spite of his criticism of progressive education, however, Dewey was optimistic about the potential of education if educators would develop a sound philosophy of experience.¹ With this caveat he returned to the epistemological and metaphysical foundation of his philosophy.

However popular the idea of the connection between the individual and nature through experience, it also became a point of contention for Dewey's opponents. One critic suggested that without ontology, cosmology, and religion this philosophy was reduced to theoretical sociology and politics. George Santayana was not so kind. He viewed Dewey's naturalism as "half-hearted and short-winded." It was too particularistic, and only concerned with the foreground of existence.²

Evaluating Dewey's theory of democracy, another

¹Ibid., pp. 89-91.

²Herman Harrell Horne, The Democratic Philosophy of Education, Companion to Dewey's Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), p. 2; George Santayana, "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics," in The Philosophy of John Dewey, ed. by Schilpp, pp. 251-53.

conservative critic questioned the emphasis on the dynamic aspect of science, contending that it ignored the daily procedure in which the scientist dealt with the constants of nature. Referring to evolutionary theory, he noted that in the memory of man, fixity overshadowed change. As to the democratic ideal, this critic suggested that equal development of all men was something we did not want, since it would eliminate the division of labor, individuality, and unique achievement.¹

Dewey did not escape criticism from the liberals. Probably the most famous instance was Randolph Bourne's bitter reaction to Dewey's support of American entry into the First World War. This position, he thought, demonstrated the poverty of Dewey's philosophy. The idea that intelligence could make war a socially useful instrument was naive at best. He deplored the use of the philosophy of intelligence to support the war.²

A more radical critic noted the importance and the relevance of Dewey's pragmatism in its cultural setting. He praised its criticism of past cultures, and its important contribution to the improvement of American culture, especially in the nineteenth century. But as a philosophy for

¹W. H. Sheldon, "Professor Dewey, The Protagonist of Democracy," Journal of Philosophy 18 (June 9, 1921): 312-13, 318-19.

²Randolph Bourne, "Twilight of Idols," Seven Arts Magazine 2 (October 1917), pp. 688-702.

a mature, designed culture, he thought pragmatism was wanting, and saw it as transitional to that type of culture.¹

Dewey was hard pressed to dispute the conservative criticism that his philosophy, its metaphysics, and his theory of democracy were limited. He dismissed such criticism as representative of unrepentant dualism. In his constant struggle with philosophic dualisms, he never fully explained why they were bad. They were products of pre-scientific culture, he complained, and were thus obstructive in a scientific age.² On this issue he always begged the question.

Without formally responding to Bourne's criticism, Dewey admitted after seeing the results of the Versailles peace conference that there was some justification in a consistently pacifistic position. Nevertheless, he held to his prewar position that war would remain an alternative in human action as long as international and social mechanisms remained inadequate.³

This typically Deweyan response is a reminder of his view of social action. In order for individuals to direct

¹Theodore Brameld, Philosophies of Education in Cultural Perspective (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1955), p. 160.

²John Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder," in The Philosophy of John Dewey, ed. by Schilpp, pp. 524-25.

³Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, pp. 165-66.

their activities they had to intelligently survey the situation, develop ideas, and test those plans of action until they found a solution. The pragmatic test of any solution was the extent to which it promoted human growth. As a means and an end, this process was the basis of the ethical ideal Dewey called democracy. As a means to an end, it appealed to American practicality. Unfortunately, many of those who adopted this method distorted it in such a way that it became: "If it works use it." This is not to suggest that all of Dewey's disciples abused his theory of democracy. In spite of his opinion that many progressive educators had distorted his theories, there were some progressive theorists who remained faithful to the orthodox theory. This was clearly the case with Boyd H. Bode, whose theory of democracy closely resembled that of John Dewey.

CHAPTER II

BODE ON INTELLIGENCE AND DEMOCRACY

Boyd Bode began his tenure at Ohio State in an era fraught with contradictions. The disillusionment over the failure of idealism in the First World War appeared, among some, in words of disgust and despair, and erupted, among others, in a wild gaiety that viewed life as meaningless. Ezra Pound and F. Scott Fitzgerald vividly depicted this mood, Pound in Hugh Selwyn Mauberly who railed

.
[some] walked eye-deep in hell
believing in old men's lies, then unbelieving
came home, home to a lie,
home to many deceptions
home to old lies and new infamy;¹
.

and Fitzgerald in Jay Gatsby whose only purpose in life was self-indulgence. The disillusionment also was manifest in the rejection of international responsibilities, in the restriction of immigration, and in the demand for conformity to the American way of life. The anti-internationalism conflicted, said the critics, with the interdependence of a

¹Ezra Pound, "Hugh Selwyn Mauberly" in American Literature, Tradition and Innovation (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company, 1969); stanza 18, lines 3-7.

technological world.¹ The demand for full support of America made a mockery of freedom of thought. Nevertheless, the temper of the period did not weaken Bode's faith in the individual or democracy. Indeed he remained optimistic about the possibility of building a truly democratic social order.

Like Dewey, Bode saw democracy as an ethical relationship whose purpose was the growth of human capacity. Achieving that association required the effective use of intelligence in individual and collective action. Both Dewey and Bode thought that if man could control natural forces through intelligence, he ought to be able to use the same means for directing social forces. In this connection, Bode examined the relationship between intelligence and democracy in light of the circumstances of the 1920s. He focused his attention on intelligence in human behavior, on the process of thought, and on the role of intelligence in making individuals free. His aim, like that of Dewey and others, was to continue the effort at reform begun in the Progressive Era.

Reform, however, lost much of its appeal in the 1920s. The loosely connected popular effort to improve American society called the Progressive Movement disintegrated in 1920. The end came with the collapse of what historian

¹Merle Curti, The Growth of American Thought, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1951), pp. 686-91.

Arthur Link called the "progressive coalition," southern and western farmers, organized labor groups, social justice elements, and independent radicals who had supported Wilson in 1916. Yet the components of the coalition remained as a potential movement. Although some progressive elements were active during the 1920s, they failed to unite in a concerted effort at reform. According to Link, there were at least four reasons why these groups could not work together: first, they did not have a suitable national political vehicle; second, they were divided internally over such issues as the Eighteenth Amendment, immigration, and the distribution of national income; third, since most of the objectives of the prewar years had been achieved, they could not agree on a direction for reform; fourth, they did not have a national leadership to unite the movement.¹

In addition to its internal difficulties, there were certain external reasons for the decline of progressivism. For some segments of the population, such as industrial workers, the 1920s was a time of economic growth, materialism, and general contentment. But while these workers prospered, the farmers, the largest single economic group, faced depression. A far more important reason for progressivism's loss of support was the almost wholesale defection of the middle classes from the movement. They seemed to be buoyed

¹Arthur S. Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?" The American Historical Review 64 (July 1959): 839-42.

by the idea that they were building a new America through mass production and consumption, full employment with short hours and high wages, and welfare capitalism. Moreover, there was widespread belief that the nation's future was safe in the care of businessmen. With the improved economic conditions and the possibility of further growth, neither the middle classes nor the industrial workers were interested in even mild reform measures. They had become a part of what Merle Curti later called the "cult of prosperity."¹

Another reason for the collapse of progressivism in the 1920s was the departure of much of its intellectual leadership. Many intellectuals repudiated the ideals of progressivism which they had once supported. Some idealists, for instance, reacted against the Versailles settlement. Others opposed the extension of governmental authority to defend the Eighteenth Amendment or to inhibit free speech. Still others became disgusted with the masses who opposed so-called radicals, campaigned against evolution, or joined the Ku Klux Klan. Progressivism lost the strong personal commitment to the cause of democracy that many novelists, journalists, political and social thinkers, and historians had made in the prewar years.²

Although the defection of the intellectuals and the

¹Ibid., 842-44; Curti, The Growth of American Thought, pp. 697-704.

²Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?," 844.

popularity of the "cult of prosperity" undermined progressivism in the 1920s, it did not die. It survived with the help of: the farmers who were better organized than at the height of the Progressive Era; the politically conscious labor organizations like the railroad brotherhoods who wielded a great deal of power; the Democratic organizations in the large cities who remained concerned about the condition of the lower classes; the remnants of independent radicals, social workers, and social gospel preachers and writers who continued to work for reform; and the champions of public power and regional developments who emerged as a vocal element during the decade. Despite their failure to unite and gain control of a major party and the national government prior to 1932, these groups dominated Congress from 1921 to 1927 and continued to influence legislation from 1927 to 1930. Thus the progressive elements defied the promoters of prosperity by attempting, for example, to obtain farm parity through such measures as the McNary-Haugen bill of 1924 and by promoting federal support of hydroelectric projects, including retaining ownership of the Muscle Shoals facility.¹

In addition to these political efforts, there were intellectuals who helped to keep progressivism alive. Some writers openly challenged the "cult of prosperity." Ellen Glasgow, Eugene O'Neill, John Dos Passos, and Theodore

¹Ibid., pp. 845-47.

Dreiser depicted the materialism of the period as a blight on the nation. The most famous example of these protests was that archetype of materialistic conformity, George Babbitt, created by Sinclair Lewis. These critics were exposing the symptoms of an unstable economy of easy credit and get-rich-quick schemes. Other intellectuals including John Dewey, Charles and Mary Beard, Vernon L. Parrington, James Harvey Robinson, and William Allen White aided progressivism by continuing to promote democracy as a workable system.¹

Boyd Bode was one of those who saw through the facade of prosperity, and worked to improve American democracy. He recognized that the bulk of the population was not receiving a fair share of the much touted benefits of capitalism. The fundamental principle of American democracy, he said, was faith in the common man. Our political system was based on the notion that all men are free and equal. Yet we seemed to have developed some of the characteristics of a society with internal barriers. He thought that a type of caste system had developed in the society. The growth of industry and commerce had unified certain interest groups; but these groups had grown narrow and selfish, and an attitude of cynical disregard and hostility had arisen. He believed that American values in the 1920s were shoddy and

¹Curti, The Growth of American Thought, pp. 696, 703-04.

opportunistic:

This state of things has resulted in exploitation, grafting, and profiteering; it has bequeathed to us an ominous problem of capital and labor; and it has even developed a sort of creed, which justifies the practice of "charging all that the traffic will bear," of "getting while the getting is good," and in general of conducting oneself in accordance with the maxim that "Business is business."¹

These were characteristics, he concluded, of a society conspicuously devoid of the spirit of democracy. He implied that the limited efforts to develop common interests evinced patent disregard for the true aim of democracy, the development of human capacity.

In order to achieve the ideal of democracy, Bode, like Dewey, thought that human intelligence had to be developed. Intelligence was man's means of using experience to direct the environment. Through his intelligence, man had devised science as a tool for controlling the natural environment. Dewey and Bode believed that intelligence could also be used by individuals to improve themselves, and that the collective use of intelligence would, in turn, produce a democratic society. These goals, however, could not be attained unless education promoted human growth by developing the intelligence of the young. Thus Bode largely directed his efforts in the 1920s toward insuring that teachers understood the role of intelligence both in human learning and behavior, and in the growth of democracy.

¹Boyd H. Bode, Fundamentals of Education (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1921), pp. 51-52.

Bode agreed with Dewey that the relationship between intelligence and democracy made questions about human behavior epistemological issues, not simply psychological problems. Their view contrasted with those of men like Edward L. Thorndike and John B. Watson who thought that explaining human behavior was the task of experimental psychology. As a pragmatist, Bode recognized the importance of science and the scientific method in human life. But he apparently thought that the effort to make psychology scientific was an abuse of science since it removed psychology from its philosophical moorings. Consequently, he always examined questions about human behavior in the context of social and educational philosophy. And he criticized the experimental psychologists for not recognizing that explanations of human behavior always began with a theory of mind, an epistemological enterprise not a scientific one.¹

The growth of experimental psychology in the last quarter of the nineteenth century had brought an end to the dominance of faculty psychology as the explanation of human activity. The collapse of faculty psychology actually began in the 1820s with the work of Johann Herbart who theorized that the mind was not made up of separate faculties but functioned as a unit through ideas. But his psychology was not experimental, and, thus, was undermined by the new

¹Boyd H. Bode, Conflicting Psychologies of Learning (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1929), p. iii.

psychology. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the functionalism of James, Dewey, and Angell was gaining some influence in the field. At the same time, Edward L. Thorndike, a student of James at Harvard and James McKeen Cattell at Columbia, began to develop his theory of stimulus and response, based on his studies of animal behavior. His theories influenced educational psychology for nearly fifty years. In 1913, John B. Watson wrote his famous paper "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It," which marked the beginning of behaviorism as a separate school of thought. During and after the First World War, the work of Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka, and Wolfgang Köhler, known as Gestalt psychology, also made some inroads in the United States. Each of these theories manifested the impact of science on the study of human activity. But Bode thought that something had been lost in the process. Instead of each successive theory displacing its predecessors, it merely competed with them. The proliferation of psychological theories created confusion about human behavior and learning instead of paving the way to better understanding.¹

Like others who had revolted against formalism, Bode relied on both history and culture to help explain his

¹Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology, pp. 21-23; S. Alexander Rippa, Education in a Free Society: An American History, 2nd ed. (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1971), ch. 8; Boyd Henry Bode, How We Learn (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1940), p. 6. Bode began this book as a new edition of Conflicting Psychologies of Learning. Since well over half of his material was new, the result was a new book.

theories. The development of the various psychological theories showed the impact of science and the changing theories of mind. Faculty psychology, he said, originated with the disappearance of animistic beliefs and the separation of mind or soul and matter. But the idea that the mind could be trained like the muscles collapsed under the weight of scientific evidence indicating that the acts of perceiving, remembering, and reasoning were responses involving the nervous system. Herbart's theory that the mind consisted of a permanent substance and various states, noted Bode, failed to do away with the dualism that reality consists of matter and psychic or mental stuff. It leaned too heavily on the idea that all experience consists of consciousness, thus suggesting that matter can be known only by inference. He concluded that this theory did not go far enough in suggesting that knowledge resulted from sense perception and the association of new and old experiences.¹ It was left to physiological psychology to shift the explanation in the direction of physical reaction. But it was the behaviorists who suggested that we should ignore the enigma of mind and confine ourselves to observable behavior.

Behaviorism grew out of the effort to make psychology a real science. As far as Watson and his colleagues were concerned, introspection, the method of traditional psychology,

¹Bode, Conflicting Psychologies of Learning, pp. 53-54, 70-71, 86, 90-96.

had proven inadequate. They argued that observations of behavior would provide objective data. They also held that sensations, perceptions, and images were physiological processes that constitute what we call experience. Thus there is no need for "consciousness" or "mind." Thorndike, whom Bode classified as a behaviorist, reduced behavior and learning to a neural process of stimulus and response leading to conditioned habits.¹

The problem with behaviorism, said Bode, was that it relied too exclusively on the nervous system for its explanations. The environment seemed to do nothing more than throw the switch. Furthermore, the results of Köhler's tests with apes indicated that behavior was more than simply stimulus and response. Behavior, according to Gestalt theory, included a change in the individual and in the environment in a total process. What was important about this interpretation, said Bode, was that it avoided both mental states and mechanism.²

¹Ibid., ch. 9-10. Bode admitted that Thorndike never called himself a behaviorist. Nevertheless, he said, ". . . he [Thorndike] is at one with the behaviorist in his insistence that all conduct, whether animal or human, is fundamentally a matter of acquiring conditioned reflexes." p. 162. Historians usually classify Thorndike as either a functionalist (Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology, pp. 561-64) or a connectionist (Rippa, Education in a Free Society, pp. 218-24 and John D. Pulliam, A History of Education in America, 2nd ed. (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishing Co., 1976), p. 126).

²Ibid., pp. 190, 212-31. Gestalt psychology was popular among many progressive educators. Pulliam, A History of Education in America, p. 129.

Bode's comment about Gestalt psychology indicated he was anxious to maintain a position somewhere between the dualism of introspective psychology and the mechanical view of behaviorism. As a pragmatist, he had long since rejected the dualism of traditional philosophy and psychology. His dismissal of the psychology of mental states, then, was to be expected. But what about behaviorism? This psychological theory had all the accouterments of an objective, scientific explanation of how humans behaved. There are two clues in Bode's criticism of behaviorism that indicate why he failed to find that psychological theory completely satisfying.

The fact that behaviorism relied on the nervous system and external stimuli alone made human behavior and experience too mechanical. More important, behaviorists rejected the central element in pragmatic or functional psychology--consciousness. This was not, however, the consciousness of traditional psychology with its changing mental states. Bode believed that consciousness was the setting for intelligent human action, a notion that will be clarified momentarily. There is one other point about Bode's rejection of behaviorism that should be understood. His stand was evidence of his effort to temper science with philosophy in a world gone mad on science.

Although some of his arguments in 1929 were based on recent information, Bode's fundamental beliefs about human

behavior had taken shape as early as 1917. In that year, he had explained that experience was a total process that included stimulus and response as functions or phases, not successive stages. Stressing the unity of experience he said that:

The significant circumstance here is that stimulus and response resist the temporal separation that we find in a purely reflex act; stimulus and response are bound together as correlated functions in a unitary, self-directing process so that these twain are one flesh.¹

The word self-directing had a very important meaning for Bode, as it had for Dewey. It meant that the individual acted upon the environment with purpose. "All experience is a kind of intelligence," he remarked, "a control of present behavior with reference to future adjustment. To be in experience at all is to have the future operate in the present."² This relationship between the present and future responses was the distinctive trait of conscious behavior. The relatively unorganized present responses revealed new meanings for the experienced object before they became overt actions, thereby providing the conditions for intelligent action. The book on the table, said Bode, became the book-to-be-reached-for, -picked-up, and -opened, otherwise the process was a mere reflex. This was a total process that began and ended with the individual in which future consequences became stimuli for further action. It was also an

¹Bode, "Consciousness and Psychology," p. 248.

²Ibid., p. 249.

experimental, forward-looking process.¹ This is a clear example of Bode's acceptance of Deweyan metaphysics and epistemology. The individual who is bound to nature through experience directs the environment with intelligent action that includes a dynamic means-end relationship and produces new meanings.

There was, however, one feature of Bode's view of the individual that distinguished it from Dewey's. It was his emphasis on ideals which developed as he emerged himself in pragmatic philosophy. Although his lectures during his last two years at Illinois indicated this change, more concrete evidence of it appeared in his book Fundamentals of Education in 1921. There he devoted an entire chapter to the topic of ideals. He believed that humans, in contrast to animals, were peculiarly helpless and dependent upon learning. Unless the meanings of things were discovered so he could act with reference to ends and aims, the infant could not adjust properly for survival. Humans were born with many and varied impulses that did not have antecedently established lines of discharge. The lack of fixed outlets for reflexes and instincts enabled the individual to express himself in a variety of ways. Our native capacities, said Bode, had no ascertainable limit. The more we learned about the environment, the more we were able to realize our ends.

¹Ibid., pp. 250-51, Bode, Fundamentals of Education, p. 216.

Experience, then, became the source of new aims. As he put it: "Experience . . . has a marvelous flexibility and capacity for growth. The whole mass of human achievement has its origin in the fact that experience constantly suggests new possibilities, new ventures."¹

The process of growth involved struggle and conflict as the individual self emerged. When moral choices became necessary, said Bode, selfhood began and progressed as life opened new vistas and generated new aims. Ideals were indispensable guides for determining the significance of new situations. He believed that ideals directed our attention so that our conduct might be guided by the discernment of new meanings, not by impulse or habit. Rational or intelligent conduct meant using ideals to discover the values that were at stake in a given situation so that they might be conserved.²

This was not blind obedience to ideals, which Bode rejected as unintelligent. He took Dewey at his word that ends-in-view guided behavior. Unlike Dewey, however, he placed greater emphasis on the end of the means-end relationship. He acknowledged the importance of the scientific method, as we shall see. He also indicated that humans had the capacity to form habits which were the means for

¹Chambliss, Boyd H. Bode's Philosophy of Education, pp. 15-18; Bode, Fundamentals of Education, pp. 5-6.

²Bode, Fundamentals of Education, pp. 68-75.

dealing with the environment and for expressing impulses. But, meanings were the guiding elements. "In proportion as conduct is directed by the meanings of things," he remarked, "we say that it is intelligent. As our store of meanings increases, our habitual reactions are changed."¹

From the end of the First World War through 1930, the popularity of the educational and psychological principles of pragmatism increased dramatically. The Progressive Education Association, for instance, had eighty-six members at its first meeting in April 1919. By 1930, the membership had risen to 7400. Nevertheless, pragmatism's popularity did not inhibit its detractors. One critic chided the pragmatists for leaving the impression that they had suddenly discovered the explanation of the world and reality. They had not even gotten themselves into the movement of philosophy, she commented, but knew only from "conflicts," "strains," and "immediate experiences." By defining mind as mere "impulses" and "desires" pragmatism lacked the larger feeling of the "universal whole." Then taking aim directly at Dewey and Bode, she said that pragmatic psychology was abstract since it held that man was merely a psycho-physical organism. Dewey's reference to "biological adjustment" and Bode's phrase "connections of neurons" indicated that their psychology did not transcend mere mechanism.² She had

¹Boyd H. Bode, Modern Theories of Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), pp. 198-200.

²Patricia Albjerg Graham, Progressive Education:

obviously ignored Bode's argument about the role of intelligence in conscious behavior.

Another conservative critic, however, did not miss Bode's emphasis on intelligence. He included it as the final blow in a series of comments about Conflicting Psychologies of Learning in 1929. He noted that Bode failed to explain sensations by only saying that they were neither movement nor mental states. Finding Bode's Achilles heel, his optimism about the individual, this critic asked: "What is misbehavior?" He also wanted to know how purposive behavior was any less mechanical than reflex. It might be less rigid. But, he said, it was ". . . no less determined by the total situation and not at all teleological. Purposive behavior is not purposed; and, if not purposed, is mechanical however adaptive."¹ As an idealist, he was clearly rejecting Bode's explanation of the influence of ends on behavior since those ends were not a priori. Finally, he acknowledged that purposive behavior released intelligence to work for social adjustment. But it was not clear to him how the individual used intelligence to think

From Arcady to Academe, A History of the Progressive Education Association 1919-1955 (New York: Teachers College Press, 1967), p. 23; Katherine E. Gilbert, review of Creative Intelligence, Essays in the Pragmatic Attitude, by John Dewey, et. al., in The Philosophical Review, 28 (March 1919): 206-07.

¹Herman H. Horne, review of Conflicting Psychologies of Learning, by Boyd H. Bode, in School and Society, 30 (28 December 1929): 892-93.

about the nature of the universe.¹ This last comment typified the conservative criticism of pragmatism.

Bode's preoccupation with psychological theory stemmed from his belief that the rush to make psychology scientific had gone too far, and had only contributed to the existing confusion about human growth. As long as this continued to be a problem, education could not release human capacity sufficiently to produce individuals capable of creating a true democracy. A further implication was that without individuals whose capacity had been released and who endeavored to do the same for others, the selfishness and greed of the "cult of prosperity" would continue to be a weakness in American democracy. However naive this explanation, Bode apparently believed that human beings could control social forces in an effort to create a democratic society.

He also held that the environment significantly influenced human growth. He demonstrated this in his psychological theory. He also made this clear in 1931 in a book entitled Ourselves and the World, The Making of an American Citizen. From the start, he left no doubt as to his belief about democracy and the individual. Almost as if John Dewey had been standing behind him, he wrote that the book presented

. . . the idea of democracy as a guiding principle for

¹Ibid.

intelligent living. The conception of democracy which it presents reaches far beyond the notion of democracy as a political structure and makes it a living process, a way of human growth. The test of democracy is to be sought not in any specific political machinery, but in the attainment of a rich and abundant life. It is a test, therefore, which may be applied to all our institutions and practices.¹

The individual in this society did not grow or stand alone at the point of physical maturity. Human nature, Bode admitted, was a product of both heredity and environment. But it was the environment that played the more significant role. Human growth, he suggested, was analogous to the case of the modern intelligent farmer who understood that in order to have a good crop he had to have good seed and good soil. He realized that neither one could entirely compensate for the deficiencies of the other. So it was with humans. We had plenty of good seed. But what about the soil? The society provided countless supplemental influences, and the individual was surrounded by and permeated with culture. Bode went so far as to suggest that, in spite of heredity, the society transformed the individual into a "genuine human being."²

By a "genuine human being," he meant that humans tended to develop certain characteristics that made them totally human. Man had ascendancy over animals, made and

¹Fredrick E. Lumley and Boyd H. Bode, Ourselves and the World, The Making of an American Citizen, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1931), p. v.

²Ibid., pp. 35-36.

used tools, used imagination, expressed sympathy, thought, and participated in the culture. The individual who did not possess one or more of these characteristics was less than genuine, since he had to depend on others who had those abilities. In this hyperbole, Bode was attempting to make a biological distinction between man and animal and a philosophical distinction between two types of human beings. In the first instance, he said:

To be genuinely human is to feel, think, and behave in ways unknown to animals. Man alone is a toolmaker and tool user; man alone is a consecutive investigator and thinker; man alone is a promoter of fellowship; in brief, man alone is an indefatigable cooperator in the work of constructing and transmitting culture.

The last phrase points to the second instance. As he put it:

A genuine human being is one who is partial to the human race, the whole species, rather than to some little section of it; and what marvellous resources are to be found all over the world for our enjoyment and enlightenment!¹

These definitions must be explained as a reaction to the social situation. Throughout the 1920s Bode argued for the creation of a society that would promote human growth. The principal vehicle for accomplishing this purpose was to be the school. But the success of this effort depended on teachers having an understanding of human behavior. He tried to show the organic relationship between the individual and the society, and to demonstrate the experimental nature of that relationship. He also indicated that the

¹Ibid., pp. 54-69.

existing social structure was anti-democratic. By 1931 the self-serving conditions of the previous decade had done their damage, bringing economic chaos and human suffering. Under the circumstances, Bode could not have been blamed for giving up in despair. But that was unlikely; his faith in the individual, or as he preferred the common man, was too strong. He simply reemphasized the thesis that humans were more than animals, behaviorism notwithstanding; and that the nature of existence and the success of democracy required cooperation, which had been conspicuously absent in the previous decade.

The organic tie between the individual and the society did not mean total subordination of the individual. Bode believed that in the final analysis each individual was an island of thoughts and emotions. An island that no other person could fully penetrate. On the other hand, the growth of thought depended on the acquisition of new meanings whose principal sources were other individuals and the society at large. Conscious behavior, moreover, involved the use of the meanings from past experience for making new adjustments. On occasion, an element of doubt or hesitation interrupted these adjustments. When this occurred, said Bode, we made inferences rather than clearly recognizing meanings.¹

Inference or thinking varied both in complexity and

¹Ibid., p. 50; Bode, Fundamentals of Education, pp. 105-07.

procedure. He noted that thinking ranged from a momentary hesitation to an investigation that lasted a lifetime. For instance, a few moments of listening might explain a noise heard moments earlier was thunder that indicated an impending storm. On the other hand, Bode remarked, it took Darwin years of study and consideration to develop the theory of natural selection. The more complex the process became, the more it took on the characteristics of what Dewey called a "Complete Act of Thought." Then, surprisingly, Bode explained his own interpretation of this process through an illustration that incorporated William Chandler Bagley's terminology.¹

A person entered a room and found a windowpane broken. He proceeded to explain how the damage had occurred by hypothesizing that the glass was broken by children playing ball. He observed next that the glass was on the inside of the room which indicated that the window had been broken from the outside. The center of the pane had a hole that might have been caused by the impact of a ball. The facts, Bode suggested, were explained by reference to the hypothesis. To explain was to reconstruct the situation by means of conceptions. Bode indicated that Bagley called this "explanatory deduction." We did not actually reproduce the event, but substituted the implications of conceptions to discover a further meaning. In this case, Bode remarked, we

¹Bode, Fundamentals of Education, pp. 105-08.

scrutinized and explained.¹

Another way of solving this problem was also open to us. To some extent, we might interpret the situation before discovering all of the facts. By looking at the hole in the windowpane we conceptualized the event and deduced that not only the glass, but the ball as well would be in the room. Bagley, he noted, used the phrase "anticipatory deduction." Without observing that the ball was in the room, we inferred that it ought to be. So we searched for and found the ball, or at least a ball, in the room. Then to strengthen our case we inferred that if this were the suspected ball it ought to have had bits of glass imbedded in it. If this were true, we would have had further evidence to prove the original hypothesis. Here, Bode said, we predicted and verified.²

Bode was determined that individuals should avoid the tendency to make quick judgments or to ossify the thinking process. The acceptance of a suggestion or hypothesis because there were no rival suggestions, he thought was the mark of an uncritical mind. With regard to fixity in thinking, he warned that the process of problem, suggestion, scrutiny and evaluation, and prediction and verification was not rigid or without complexities. The first two phases might occur almost simultaneously or be separated by years. In some instances, one procedure might be all that was

¹Ibid., pp. 108-10. ²Ibid., pp. 110-12.

necessary for solving the problem.¹ As far as Bode was concerned, the complexity of thinking hinged on the complexity of the problem. To say that thinking always proceeded through the specific phases would be a return to the formalism that he despised.

Bode's analysis of thinking contains a paradox that requires explanation. At first glance, he apparently combined the ideas of Dewey and Bagley, an opponent of progressive education, in his own explanation. But a careful reading of the discussion and Bagley's own definitions indicates that Bode was neither rejecting Deweyan theory nor being eclectic. Bode's emphasis on meanings led him to choose Bagley's terms probably because they helped to explain his thoughts more clearly than Dewey's words. He believed that thinking was a process of developing new meanings. He defined deduction as ". . . the process of drawing out the implications of meanings." Thinking was deductive in that the suggestion or hypothesis arising out of the problem guided the inquiry and served to bind the facts together in a common meaning. As he explained it:

We may undertake to find facts that can be explained by means of the suggestion, or we may predict, on the basis of the suggestion, what facts we shall find. In either case, to be sure, we employ deduction, since we combine or relate meanings in such a way as to show that certain facts are "just what you would expect."²

The procedure employed varied, depending on whether the

¹Ibid., pp. 111-14. ²Ibid., pp. 121-22, 125.

evidence could be predicted or had to be found first in order to solve the problem. In the latter case, induction was employed before the reconstruction, or deductive process could take place. Bode held, moreover, that this instance demonstrated the true meaning of going from the particular to the general.¹

Despite his use of Bagley's terminology, Bode adhered to Deweyan theory. He began and ended with a fundamentally Deweyan interpretation. He admittedly used Dewey's language when he labeled the experience that began with a condition of doubt a "Complete Act of Thought." He indicated that deduction and induction had meaning with regard to the hypothesis developed, not as independent methods. Nevertheless, he laid greater stress on the importance of the new meanings derived, rather than on the process itself. Without new meanings individuals would not have new instruments for achieving their purposes. Ultimately, Bode defined thinking in clearly Deweyan terms. "Thinking," he remarked, "requires finding and the elaborating and the testing of hypotheses."²

Bode demonstrated his confidence in the common man by his emphasis on conscious behavior and the individual's ability to control his own environment by thinking of new meanings. Since the environment was continually changing, the individual had to be able to adapt to the needs of the

¹Ibid. ²Ibid., p. 114.

moment. This was what he meant when he said that experience involved intelligence. A high degree of flexibility or indeterminateness of response characterized a high order of intelligence. The development of this ability, he emphasized, was particularly important for the individual as a means for resolving conflicts of personal ideals. Intelligence entered the conflict as a means of devising a more comprehensive good that incorporated the lesser ideals.¹

This same device, thought Bode, could be applied to the society. The multiplicity of desires could be directed by intelligence. He also postulated that the highest ideal for man was the progressive construction of a moral order. Achieving these ends entailed meeting two conditions. First, there had to be a standard for evaluating the control of desires. Typifying the pragmatic struggle with philosophic dualisms, he argued that morality had to be taken out of its traditional setting in a supersensuous world and be brought into the world of experience. This meant a different emphasis on moral values. Bode believed that the conception of growth, which applied to both the individual and the society, would be the natural choice for the needed criterion. "It is an interpretation," he explained, "which gives a different outlook upon life and an increased significance to the meaning of what in religious phraseology is called the brotherhood of man and the coming of the Kingdom

¹Ibid., p. 235.

of Heaven upon earth."¹

The second condition that he proposed reflected his acceptance of Reform Darwinism. He noted that man had extricated himself from the fetters of evolution. No longer at the mercy of his environment, he directed and controlled it. "The development of science," he said, "has made us less inclined to ask whether nature is favorable to man and much more interested to discover how nature may be used to serve the purposes of man." This attitude had not been developed in the realm of moral conduct. The individual, he thought, had to realize that the fundamental moral problem was attaining control over social forces in order to fashion human motives and create a truly democratic social order. The existence of injustice became a challenge to the mind of man. Once again emphasizing ideals Bode concluded that: "A world in which there were no new ends to be created, no new adjustments to be made, would leave no room for intelligence and could impose no moral obligation."²

In order to pursue the creation of new ends, whether they be personal or social goals, Bode contended that the individual had to be free. He indicated, however, that there was some confusion concerning this moral principle. Freedom was not the absence of restraint, a condition he thought was nonexistent. It was not inactivity, a condition synonymous with disintegration and decline. It was not high

¹Ibid., pp. 236-38. ²Ibid., pp. 239-40.

position. On the other hand, freedom was doing what we liked to do. "Freedom," said Bode, "is doing the things that we do well artistically, skillfully." Furthermore, ". . . we have the fullest sense of freedom when wh [sic] can devote our energies to the things that we really like to do and can do well."¹ But, he continued, we were not free from compulsion. We were subject to the rigors of self-compulsion. This was why, he said, there was no such thing as the total absence of restraint. Freedom also had a social meaning. A sense of freedom came with doing something worthwhile for ourselves and for others.²

Freedom had a larger purpose beyond a sense held by the individual. It consisted of forming goals or objectives. Once the goals were formed, one had to persevere in their realization. As he put it, ". . . true freedom requires steadiness of purpose."³ These were not fixed ends, but ends based on existing conditions. Thus, freedom was bound up with intelligence. The intelligent person, he argued, shaped his purposes with respect to his environment, adjusting them as circumstances changed.⁴

Even the shaping of purposes required a standard for judging their value. Using William James' idea that a baby was not free but controlled by his environment, Bode

¹Lumley and Bode, Ourselves and the World, pp. 124-32.

²Ibid. ³Ibid. ⁴Ibid.

suggested that the individual became free in proportion to his ability to hold immediate reactions in abeyance and alter them with regard to pertinent considerations. To the extent that an individual's final action was the product of reflection, Bode thought that it was an obvious expression of that person's values or "way of life." This made it a free act. He said that ". . . freedom is made possible by the fact that there is a 'frame of reference' or 'way of life' in terms of which the matter in hand can be judged. Otherwise there is nothing to go by and our reactions become random and blind."¹

In this instance, Bode's argument had virtually all of the trappings of the orthodox theory. Freedom, as Dewey had suggested, began with intelligence. As the individual learned to control the environment he became free. This resulted from conscious or purposive behavior by the individual. In a social setting it involved the application of science to control natural forces and intelligence, or social morality, to control social forces. These were the devices for liberating human beings so that they could grow to their capacity. In this sense, individuals and society modified restraints, thus achieving the second condition of freedom. Bode's explanation of freedom differed from Dewey's only in the stress that the former placed on

¹Boyd H. Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 44.

purposes.

Instead of merely accepting Dewey's theory, Bode applied the principles of pragmatism to his own beliefs, and modified them in light of the changing environment. The self-serving attitudes among some groups in the 1920s, the lack of broad common interests, and the obvious disparity between the rich and the rest of the population left American society in a condition that he believed was the antithesis of democracy. There seemed to be little or no effort to promote the growth of the individual coming from the beneficiaries of prosperity. Thus Bode joined other progressives who were working alone or in organizations to keep reform alive in the 1920s by opposing the "cult of prosperity."

Bode's reform effort was, in large part, an attempt to define the relationship between intelligence and democracy. This task required an explanation of the role of intelligence in human behavior. He began by criticizing the existing theories of human behavior, which had resulted from the growth of experimental psychology. He rejected the theory of mental states since it retained the mind-body dualism. More important, it supported the notion that the individual acted alone, or, at best, with some form of transcendental guidance. The theory of stimulus and response was science run amok. Despite the behaviorists' claims of scientific objectivity, he concluded that this theory described

humans as little more than animals who lived at the mercy of the environment, responding to a multiplicity of stimuli. Neither of these theories explained how the common man could direct the environment toward the creation of a democratic social order. Finally, Bode thought that humans had the ability to act upon their environment through experience, a conscious process guided by intelligence. By using intelligence individuals would become free, and thus be able to direct their lives toward continually developing purposes. The highest purpose, as far as he was concerned, was the total development of each human being, the ideal of democracy. In order to achieve this end, the society needed "genuine human beings" who acted intelligently as individuals, and who cooperated in the use of intelligence to make democracy a way of life.

The changing environment affected Bode's thinking in another and more fundamental way. There seemed to be something missing in some segments of American society in the 1920s. He implied that the materialism and the rush to succeed among certain groups in the society had left the ideals of equality of opportunity and freedom empty shibboleths. The worship of science and its methods blinded many to an essential philosophical question: Toward what purpose or end were these efforts being directed? Bode was saying that some Americans had lost sight of the ideal of democracy. Too much emphasis was being placed on means or on selfish

ends. He was trying to balance the means-end relationship. In order for individuals to create a true democracy, they not only had to act intelligently, they also had to act with regard to the ideal of democracy. Bode thought that this was a necessary step in creating a democratic way of life. As a pragmatist, however, he knew that this step had to be taken in a social setting. An analysis of Bode's thoughts concerning the social order will clarify this point.

CHAPTER III

BODE ON THE SOCIAL ORDER

As the crisis triggered by the debacle of 1929 deepened, the seemingly indomitable American optimism languished into bewilderment and fear. Efforts to bolster public morale failed in the face of declining wages, rising unemployment, and lengthening bread lines. Even Boyd Bode, who steadfastly believed in the common man, exhibited unusual concern in his writings throughout the depression. In 1931, for instance, he used a revealing metaphor about the effects of the depression. The relationship between society and the individuals who composed it, he said, was analogous to the relationship between a ship and its scow in tow. Cut the scow loose and it would drift helplessly subject to winds, currents, and waves. Humans "cut loose" from society, he warned, ". . . are the sports or playthings of all of the natural forces in the world about them--winds, storms, diseases, starvation, attacks by wild animals, devastating habits, wild fancies, and yet more."¹ In a sense the depression had "cut individuals loose" from society. In order to alleviate their suffering and to prevent such a catastrophe

¹Lumley and Bode, Ourselves and the World, pp. 121-23.

from happening again, Bode thought that Americans had to cooperate in the rebuilding of the social order. He promoted this idea and the creation of a democratic society by demonstrating how democracy had come to mean more than political equality; by analyzing the meanings of liberty and equality particularly with regard to the economic system; and by delineating the characteristics of a democratic social order. He developed his ideas in response to the depression and, later, to the threat of fascism. But it was the effects of the former that concerned him most. He apparently assumed that things could get worse if Americans did not cooperate for the betterment of the social order.

In fact conditions did deteriorate as never before. The middle class had suffered inconveniences in previous depressions. This time, however, the appalling material losses jarred their confidence to its foundation. With collapsing incomes and decreasing land values many professional people and individuals living on incomes from investments found themselves seeking public relief along with millions of others. The worsening conditions brought a change in values. The successful businessmen and the conservative politicians who were the heroes of the 1920s fell from grace. Intellectuals expressed their concern in a variety of literary and scholarly publications. Those who had condemned business the decade before now could point out that the economic system could not even provide people with

food and clothing. Even more startling were the criticisms of economic and legal experts. Thurman Arnold of Yale Law School argued that the capitalism previously praised as the good was fraught with slogans, myths, and rationalizations. Dean Wallace Donham of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration held that the current trial of capitalism might determine the future of western civilization. Finally, even the doctrine of inevitable progress, a cardinal tenet of American thought, came into question as the crisis worsened.¹

In their quest for a plan of reconstruction some people looked to science. At the turn of the century science could have provided, at least, psychological security for intellectuals in the middle of growing national turmoil. By the 1930s, however, all was not blissful in the American love affair with science. People were aware that science could provide enough food, clothing, and shelter for everyone to live decently. But the facts belied the possibilities. Malnourishment and starvation abounded in some quarters, while fruit rotted on the vine and crops were plowed under.²

Even science itself had lost its air of certainty. Studies of relativity in physics and functionalism in biology had undermined scientific determinism. The universe

¹Curti, The Growth of American Thought, pp. 717-20.

²Ibid., p. 722.

appeared to be in a constant state of flux. Biologists theorized about the possibility of "macroevolution," transformation from one species to the next in a quantum leap. The evidence adduced by American functional and physiological psychology and German Gestalt psychology stressed the bearing of psycho-physical processes, of the totality of experience, and of individual characteristics in human activity. Like Bode, the psychologists, in part, were reacting against the oversimplifications of the popular theories developed by Watson and other behaviorists. Although many eminent scientists continued their investigations into these new theories undisturbed and the masses lived on unaffected by the uncertainties, the descriptions of these ideas given to the thoughtful lay public in the popular periodicals added to their sense of bewilderment.¹

The conditions of the 1930s also brought a resurgence of reform ideas. Students of American society joined the quest for security amid disruption and the decay of values. They wrote about insecurity, women working, the decline of independent farming, employee ownership of corporations, and the loss of youthful confidence as the average age moved upward. Some intellectuals, including Max Lerner, Sidney Hook, Louis Hacker, and George Counts, seriously contemplated Marxism and Marxist proposals for reconstruction. Literary critics Vernon Calverton, Edmund Wilson, and

¹Ibid., pp. 722-25.

Malcolm Cowley, and such writers as John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, and Genevieve Taggard were to some extent stirred by Marxism. Despite its apparent popularity, however, Marxism never had the widespread impact hoped for by its adherents and feared by conservatives. The New Deal, even with its setbacks, helped people to cope with fear.¹

From the other end of the political spectrum, came calls for change that had a fascist tone. Some American visitors to Germany came home extolling the virtues of Hitler's efficient methods. The ability of Huey Long to move the masses in his home state of Louisiana and in the surrounding region worried the opponents of fascism. The demagogery of Father Coughlin and the activities of fascist-like societies, including the Khaki Shirts, the Silver Shirts, and the Crusaders, aroused alarm. In general, however, the clamoring of fascists and their organizations like that of the Marxists was met by popular indifference.²

Amid the chaos, the men and women of the arts and letters threw off the subjective concerns of the 1920s and exhibited a renewed concern with social issues. Plays like Waiting for Lefty, Of Mice and Men, and One Third of a Nation; novels such as The Big Money, The Grapes of Wrath, and Union Square; and documentary photography and art

¹Ibid., pp. 730-32; Goldman, Rendezvous With Destiny, pp. 368-71.

²Curti, The Growth of American Thought, pp. 734-35.

including You Have Seen Their Faces, Is this the U.S.A.?, and An American Exodus all were expressions of a new social consciousness and a growing interest in the social situation of the common man. In 1936, for example, Carl Sandburg showed his faith when he wrote:

In the darkness with a great bundle of grief
the people march.
In the night, and overhead a shovel of stars for
keeps, the people march:
"Where to? what next?"¹

Boyd Bode too believed in the common man. But he knew that mere faith in the individual was not enough to build a democratic social order. People had to work together, developing common interests, ideals, and purposes. They also had to realize that social and political ideals changed as circumstances changed. A clear illustration of this phenomenon, thought Bode, was the changing meaning of the conception of democracy itself.

At the time of the Revolution, he noted, democracy roughly meant political equality for all white men. After the Civil War political democracy included all free men regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. During the period of economic growth, he continued, the meaning came to include fair and just economic opportunity. By the time of the First World War, in an attempt to make the world safe for democracy, the conception became the

¹Ibid., pp. 740-41; Carl Sandburg, "The People, Yes," in American Literature, Tradition and Innovation (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company, 1969), stanza 10.

application of the Golden Rule to all collective efforts of life. Although in 1921 Bode, ironically, did not mention how democracy had recently come to include women with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, he indicated in 1927 that democracy included all human beings.¹

During the latter stages of the evolution of democracy, Americans became enthusiastic about scientific and technological developments. The ability to harness the forces of nature, said Bode, became a source of pride and embodied the ideal of America. This ideal, however, became somewhat clouded by the realization after the First World War that science and machinery could not solve all problems and by distress resulting from European criticism of American materialism. Despite these concerns, said Bode, America had a great national tradition in democracy. As a doctrine and an experiment, it was more radical than Bolshevism. America, he noted, was a symbol of hope for the down-trodden around the world. More important, the meaning of democracy had expanded over the years, thereby increasing the potential benefit to the individual. Bode explained that:

The whole drift of things has been toward the interpretation of the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in the sense that we are members one of another, with a common interest in the cultivation of a common life. No one, not even the humblest citizen, is to serve simply as a hewer of wood and a drawer of

¹Bode, Fundamentals of Education, p. 7 and Modern Theories of Education, p. 9.

water; but everyone is to be recognized as a member of a great brotherhood, and to share in the opportunities, the achievements, and the aspirations which are our common possession. There are to be no peasants, no serfs, as there are no hereditary privileges and titles, because each citizen is to rise to the full stature of his spiritual manhood even as a son in his father's house.¹

This was the American creed, he concluded, based on a faith in the common man.

The common man, however, did not always have a clear understanding of democracy. Bode noted that the average American saw democracy as an eternal verity, but only had a vague notion as to its meaning. When asked to explain the meaning of democracy, individuals tended to suggest such things as majority rule and the right to vote, or repeat legends of great democratic leaders such as Thomas Jefferson, or express a vague identification with personal liberty and equality of opportunity. Bode saw nothing wrong with these definitions. He indicated that each one was based on the idea that democracy was ". . . a state of mind, that a democratically organized society seeks to protect the interest of all its members through joint responsibility and joint control."²

But great ideals, warned Bode, were subject to the danger of being destroyed by the very institutions and practices they created. Over time, these institutions could begin to impose themselves as ends instead of means. A society, he

¹Bode, Modern Theories of Education, pp. 3-9.

²Ibid., pp. 9-11.

contended, remained democratic as long as its institutions and practices were evaluated as to their effects on individuals. It became aristocratic when the well-being of the individual was subordinated to some other end. One lesson that we could learn from history, he said, was that the issue of aristocracy versus democracy had been a phase of the larger struggle between fixed habits and vested interests on one side and the requirements of an expanding life on the other. "When democracy is identified with established forms," he argued, "it ceases to be democracy."¹

During the 1930s, Bode continued to worry about the fact that democracy in America was characterized by fixed beliefs and habits. The increasing threat of fascism in Europe after 1933 exacerbated Bode's fears, and led him to write a scathing indictment of American democracy. In 1937, he criticized the fact that democracy continued to be seen as a political conception associated with majority rule. Americans, he said, still assumed that belief in democracy carried ". . . no necessary implications with respect to . . . economic, ethical or religious beliefs." On the other hand, fascism in Germany and communism in the Soviet Union had furnished comprehensive schemes for the organization of life. In other words, they had become distinctive ways of life. Bode used this paradoxical argument to demonstrate the weakness in American democracy. "As compared with these points

¹Ibid., pp. 11-13.

of view," he complained, "democracy is lacking in definiteness of purpose." The tendency to be sentimental about the principles of democracy had become a substitute for a definite plan of action. Even worse, he said, American democracy had become a facade for the tyranny of vested interests who ". . . are generally able to emasculate legislation which is unfriendly to them."¹

Bode did not favor fascism or communism; and he did not advocate that the American government should impose democracy on the public. His point was that fascism and communism had pervaded life in Germany and the Soviet Union, respectively, in a manner analogous to the way he thought democracy ought to permeate American life. He went on to argue that if democracy were to survive the threat of totalitarianism, particularly fascism, it could not ". . . be limited to majority rule, but must furnish a guiding principle for the formulation of national policy. In our present terminology, it must signify a way of life."²

In his discussions about the changing meaning of democracy during the inter-war period, Bode endeavored to make the point that democracy meant more than a political system; it was a way of life. He knew that the achievements in science gave man greater control over his environment. These developments also increased the complexity of society,

¹Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life, pp. 3-9.

²Ibid., p. 15.

thus making individuals more dependent on each other. If democracy were ever to become a way of life in an interdependent world, individuals would have to cooperate with each other in order to control social forces. Could this goal be reached under the existing social organization? Bode apparently did not think it was possible. By arguing that institutions and practices could not become fixed if the society were to remain democratic, Bode was reacting against the established habits of the 1920s, such as the reverence for laissez faire capitalism when in fact it no longer existed. He was also responding to the increasing threat of fascism in the 1930s. Finally, he was alluding to his belief that the greatest barrier to building a democratic social order was the fundamental division in our culture between established patterns of the past and the needs of a dynamic society. From the late 1920s until 1952 he continually raised the issue of the "cleavage in our culture."

The dire economic conditions of the depression and the danger of fascism stirred Bode to study this cultural dualism closely. By 1935 he had arrived at some tentative conclusions as to the origins and effects of the cleavage. This phenomenon, he argued, seemed to manifest itself most clearly in our inability to achieve the American dream, equality of opportunity. Originating on the frontier, this ideal continued to be frustrated by our ill-conceived practices.

The frontier, remarked Bode, set its own standards based largely on the survival of the fittest. Social distinctions were of little value; self-reliance, resourcefulness, and persistence were more important. With the growth of the frontier, he said, the common man became very important. There was glory in commonness. As long as the frontier was open and men could grow, there was little danger of social stratification. Sounding like Frederick Jackson Turner, he asserted that the frontier spirit became imbedded in the American tradition. "It became a tradition of faith in the common man, a tradition of faith in the supreme and ultimate value of personality, a tradition which required every man, as a solemn right and duty, to stand on his own two feet and to exercise independence in thought and action."¹ He reasoned that this dream of the good life was preserved by the frontier, not by the social order.

In addition to the belief in the common man, Bode thought that the romantic attitude toward government also appeared on the frontier. The frontiersmen sympathized with the idea that freedom required limited government. They believed that this freedom and the opportunities of the frontier were sufficient for democracy.²

¹Boyd H. Bode, "The Great American Dream," in American Philosophy Today and Tomorrow, ed. by Horace M. Kallen and Sidney Hook (New York: Lee Furman, Inc., 1935), pp. 65-67.

²Ibid., pp. 67-70.

Bode criticized this conception as an oversimplified view of democracy. It underestimated, he commented, the significance of social organization in the development of the individual. Although the frontier developed admirable qualities, they were sharply limited. It failed to encourage esthetic appreciation, social cooperation, intellectual stimulation beyond daily problems, education beyond the rudiments, and individual development of abilities beyond obtaining property. To make matters worse, complained Bode, the frontier ideal received powerful support from Wild West stories that labored to create a Golden Age that had been the immediate past. The roughhewn men raised in the bosom of nature became the ideal. "Thus the American dream," he lamented, "was transformed into a daydream, a bedtime story. It became a lingering recollection of something that never happened, of a fulfillment that never took place, of a West that never was on land or sea."¹

Despite this fantasy, the frontier ideals contributed to the growth of a tradition that Bode believed was fundamentally Jeffersonian. We greatly expanded the functions of government while holding to the idea that the government was merely extending the room for the individual, as it had during the frontier era. We talked of maintaining our way of life, while we in fact subordinated the interests of the many to the interests of the few. Consequently, he noted,

¹Ibid.

we had a chasm between theory and practice. In theory we held to equality of opportunity; in practice we surrendered political and economic control to the great corporations. In theory we held to the inalienable right to develop our powers; in practice we measured success by income and possessions. In theory we protected independent thought; in practice we demanded conformity in the name of Americanism. "In theory we endorse liberty of conscience; in practice," he complained bitterly, "our requirements for citizenship . . . make it doubtful whether Christ himself, if he were to return to this earth, could meet these requirements."¹ Our Jeffersonian words, he added, clashed with our Hamiltonian actions.

Bode concluded that American democracy had become an orthodoxy not unlike those of the past. It was ironic, he protested, that this development had tended to afford privileges to the same vested interests as those that had dominated the older undemocratic societies. Amid the transformation of American society from a rural to an industrial society, he commented, many people continued to live under the illusion that the principles of democracy had been fixed by the Constitution. But the events in the autumn of 1929 exposed us in all our nakedness.² Bode obviously was reacting to the existing economic and social conditions in America. He may also have been alluding to the fact that

¹Ibid., p. 71. ²Ibid., pp. 73-74.

Germany, which had manifested a "cleavage" in its democracy in the 1920s, had fallen prey to fascism.

In 1952, at the age of seventy-nine, Bode was still wrestling with the problem of the "cleavage in our culture." This time the question of what moral standards to apply to scientific achievements, which he had first raised in 1921, became the impetus for developing his clearest statement on the issue. Bode suggested that the real origin of the cleavage was to be found in Plato's dualistic universe. Instead of building a moral system of this world, Plato developed a transcendental morality that he imposed upon the world of appearances. Christian theology adopted the two worlds. Moreover, it became imbedded in western culture, but not without conflict. In politics the clash occurred between government by divine right and government by the consent of the governed. In economics it was the sanctity of free enterprise versus the desirability of government control. In theology it became purity of doctrine versus freedom of conscience. In education the struggle occurred between cultural subjects and practical subjects. As these battles progressed, he said, concessions were made, but without giving up the dualism.¹

Man's inability to give up the dualism, he contended,

¹Boyd H. Bode, "The Cleavage in Our Culture," in The Cleavage in Our Culture, Studies in Scientific Humanism in Honor of Max Otto, ed. by Frederick Burkhardt (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1952), pp. 3-7.

indicated his fear of losing his sense of direction. This was a mistake. By using science to the fullest extent, man could build "the Kingdom of Heaven on earth." He meant, of course, the scientific machinery and the scientific method. However utopian these possibilities seem, Bode realized that these changes had to obtain gradually. The success of this effort, he believed, ultimately depended on whether or not man could eliminate the "cleavage in the culture." The protracted struggle between the two worlds had left man confused.

This confusion is the greatest threat to our national ideal of democracy. We cannot have it both ways. Either democracy is a way of life which can generate its own standards and ideals from purely social relationships and thus maintain its own distinctive system of ethics, or else democracy must be trimmed down so as to make it fit into a transcendental or metaphysical framework and thus be deprived of the claim that it represents a distinctive way of life.¹

In his distress over the philosophical dualism in American culture, Bode remained squarely within the Deweyan tradition. His explanations in "The Cleavage in Our Culture" are reminiscent of Dewey's thoughts in Reconstruction in Philosophy. Bode's long struggle with dualisms paralleled the Master's in another way. He too failed to provide convincing reasons why the dualisms were bad. He indicated that they had caused confusion in men's thinking. He was correct in attributing the perplexity to the contradictions between theory and practice. But he ignored the possibility

¹Ibid., pp. 12-13.

that the confusion also might have resulted from a lack of understanding of the meaning and application of the antecedent standards.

As might be expected, Bode's pragmatic anti-dualism appeared in his discussions of the primary tenets of democracy, liberty and equality, during and after the depression. Like John Locke, Bode noted that people seeking liberty often formed organizations or institutions to secure that liberty. They established rules of conduct and authorities. But then the rules changed more slowly than the cravings of people. As a result of these desires, some individuals wanted to change the rules, but were prevented from doing so by those in authority. "What helped human growth at first," he said, "now turns out to be in its way."¹ Institutions lost their vitality when they became contented and self-centered, and when they deterred the development of new interests and new truths.

The conception of liberty began as the idea that individuals were ends not means or tools of the state, and evolved into the notion of equality of opportunity without restriction imposed by the government, except for the rules of fair play. "It meant," observed Bode, "that government provided the equality and nature provided the opportunity." But conditions had changed drastically since the halcyon days of frontier America. Liberty could no longer be

¹Lumley and Bode, Ourselves and the World, pp. 143-44.

secured by limiting governmental interference. "A man is not free," he asserted, "if he is illiterate or if he cannot find a job or if he has to choose between starvation and working for a subsistence wage under conditions that are a menace to life and health."¹ He thought that the state had to intercede in such circumstances or there could be no such thing as liberty.

Gradually governmental regulation and centralization increased through such measures as compulsory education, collective bargaining, and social security. As a consequence, said Bode, some people were uncomfortable because we seemed to be following the path of the totalitarian states. But this apparent dilemma dissolved if we looked again at the moral standards of liberty. Totalitarian states, he indicated, established a central dogma such as racial superiority, national superiority, a religious doctrine, or a philosophy of economics. Then they demanded that each individual conform to that standard. Jefferson's ideal, in contrast, was not conformity, but liberty. The difference between totalitarianism and democracy, he indicated, was not in the amount of governmental regulation, but in the purpose that guided the application of those rules.²

But the matter of liberty was not completely settled.

¹Boyd H. Bode, "Conceived in Liberty," Childhood Education, 24 (September 1947): 5-7.

²Ibid.

Bode pointed to the fact that the competing methods of applying liberty manifested the "cleavage in the culture." The founding fathers believed that liberty was an inalienable right, an eternal verity. Bode rejected this moral standard as a throwback to supernaturalism. The other method, born in the New England town meeting and in the Revolution, was the idea of the consent of the governed. This ideal, he said, assumed that morality was a matter of social relations, not theology. This gave liberty a positive connotation because the problem of freedom became a problem of continuously readjusting the conditions of a common life. It also meant discussion and agreement. Liberty then became a guiding principle for reconstructing social relations using the democratic process and the scientific method. Bode summarized his argument when he declared that the bases for fulfilling the American dream were moral standards that were relevant

. . . to the problem of making men free through changes in social relationships. The solution of the moral problem lies in the future and not in the past. It lies in the painstaking study of maladjustments and not in the contemplation of the cosmic order sub specie aeternitatis. Its reliance is not on conformity but on method, so as to secure the liberation of intelligence for the continuous improvement of human life through the medium of social relationships.¹

In this instance, Bode used a Deweyan argument to explain the meaning of the ideal of liberty.

¹Ibid.; Boyd H. Bode, "Education for Freedom," Teachers College Record, 49(January 1948): 280-82.

Taken as a whole, Bode predicated his discussion about liberty on two problems. First, he was responding to the growing fear of the spread of communism manifested in the belief that the growth of government signaled a loss of liberty and a move toward totalitarianism. Second, like Dewey, he believed that the public did not understand that securing liberty in an interdependent society required cooperation and the employment of the method of intelligence. This was also true, they thought, with regard to equality of opportunity.

The economic chaos of the 1930s had a similar effect on Dewey's and Bode's thinking about equality. Both men believed that achieving equality of opportunity meant altering the economic structure of the nation. They knew that accomplishing that task would not be easy. But Bode was not as specific as Dewey about the means of obtaining equality.

Bode began by noting our professed loyalty to the doctrine of equality of opportunity. He warned though that if someone undertook to suggest that our economic order must be restructured in order to achieve genuine equality of opportunity, he would encounter outrage and would be suspected of being on Moscow's payroll. Admitting that this was an overstatement, Bode pointed out that Americans seemed unsure of themselves, and lacked their former youthful zeal. The spirit of the frontier did not appear as glorious. "The present economic collapse," he said, "is driving home the

truth that the era of individualism is coming to an end; that character and average intelligence do not guarantee a competency; that the social organization must enlarge its responsibilities and widen its purposes."¹

He added that the individualism of the frontier was not a finished product, but still a dream. We had to, therefore, go beyond the belief that the individual would come to full expression if left alone. There were no inner standards of conduct. As with liberty, the standards had to be sought in dynamic social relations. Unless we revised the standards, he warned, equality of opportunity would become an empty phrase. "It becomes our task to build a social order in which the great but inchoate dream of the frontier will find meaning and fulfillment."²

The attainment of this goal required a new economic order. Bode's prescription for the economy can best be described as economic democracy. In 1931, he hinted that the nation ought to adopt a system that sought the just distribution of wealth. By seeking justice instead of individual gain, people might or might not share equally; but they would at least deal with the problem as human beings and not as animals fighting over food. This would require the elimination of the selfish individualism among employers, the

¹Boyd H. Bode, "Equality of Opportunity; the Great American Dream," Nation's Schools 11 (June 1933): 11.

²Ibid., pp. 11-12.

exploitation of laborers, and the conditions of poverty. Bode thought that some effort had been made in this direction. He spoke favorably of such devices as collective bargaining, arbitration, joint (employer-employee) conferences and ownership, and public ownership. He never indicated which method or methods were most acceptable. Nevertheless, he clearly suggested that a plan should be devised to make industrial practices serve human needs more fully, so that millions need not be on the brink of poverty. Even though the task was very large, admonished Bode, the nation should have the determination to accomplish it.¹

On another occasion, he suggested that the trend toward an increasingly complex life through scientific development provided a clue for determining the course of social progress: moral and social conduct should consist of the promotion of changes in our industrial civilization so as to create an ". . . agency for liberating the minds and refining the emotions of all who take part in it."² This meant, said Bode, that private enterprise would be abolished in favor of some form of cooperative control. The program would not only revise present beliefs and practices, but would establish a distinctive standard for citizenship

¹Lumley and Bode, Ourselves and the World, pp. 254-74.

²Boyd H. Bode, "Education at the Crossroads: What Principles Should Determine the Curriculum?" Progressive Education 8 (November 1931): 547.

and for judging right and wrong conduct.¹

As the depression lengthened, Bode continued to argue for an economy aimed at human development. In 1935, partly in response to the radical pronouncements of George Counts and his colleagues at Columbia University, he noted that to a conservative the economic and industrial life was a means for the individual to express initiative and capacity; for a reformer it was a means for self-expression outside of economics and industry. In both cases, he said, it was a means to an end. He thought the economic and industrial life ought to become an end in itself. By bringing together all elements of industry for planning, as in the NRA, there would be a shift away from obsessive concern for profits. Such things as buyer protection, abundance instead of scarcity, and worker security would become the principal concerns. This would result, he remarked, in a new psychological attitude. A concern for moral and aesthetic purposes would develop. Liberty and equality of opportunity would take on a new meaning. The focus of the spiritual life would become the construction and reconstruction of new aims and ideals as the social life changed.²

Prior to 1937, Bode's recommendations for altering the aim of the economy paralleled Dewey's, although he never

¹Ibid.

²Boyd H. Bode, "Education and Social Reconstruction," The Social Frontier 1 (January 1935): 19.

unequivocally indicated what type of economic system seemed best for accomplishing the desired end. This position was characteristic of him, considering his view of the means-end relationship in solving problems. Late in the depression years, however, he moved, ever so cautiously, toward a specific statement about the economy. The pattern for transforming industry, he said, was not to be predetermined, but should develop from the practice of shared effort among employers, employees, and the public in the shaping of business policy. This program would not aim at a more equitable distribution of economic returns, although that result would naturally follow. Nevertheless, it would attempt to remake the aim of business. Instead of profits, the aim would be widened to make business ". . . an instrumentality for securing an educational outcome or result."¹ He meant, of course, the development of common interests and individual growth. A short time later, he argued that in the case of the economy we had to determine the desired result before we could decide on a remedy. For Bode the desired end was the extension of genuine democracy. He asserted that ". . . as long as democracy is advanced there is no reason why we should worry about how things are going to shape up."² He

¹Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life, pp. 57-58.

²Boyd H. Bode, "Ends and Means in Education or, the Conflicts in Our Cultural Heritage," in What is Democracy? Its Conflicts, Ends and Means, ed. by Winifred Johnston (Norman, Oklahoma: Comparative Books, 1939), pp. 18-19.

went so far as to say that this meant we had to be open to the possibility of a "workers society." This alternative, among others, should be considered. But, he warned, it could not be made an integral part of democracy. No one could know ahead of time what would work. Hence, the spiritual and experimental qualities of democracy had to be preserved at all cost.¹

Bode seemed to be drifting toward the position Dewey had taken in Individualism Old and New. But he stopped short of clearly indicating that a form of socialism was the answer to the nation's economic woes. Perhaps he saw no need to repeat or expound further upon Dewey's statements. His own ideas, though they were vague, resembled Dewey's. It appears, however, that the explanations for Bode's thoughts about the economy lie elsewhere. Both men obviously were concerned about the national calamity. Dewey's willingness to be forthright about an economic solution may have stemmed from his experiences in his father's store and from his formal training in economics. Bode was the son of a minister, and had no formal training in economics. Although a half century had past since Dewey had formally studied economics, he probably had a better grasp of that subject than Bode. Dewey clearly was more disposed to be tough-minded about the economic situation.

Nevertheless, the most important reasons for Bode's

¹Ibid.

position are to be found in his emphasis on the means-end relationship and in the focus of his writings during the depression. Since he was concerned about the ends of action and the ideal of democracy, Bode naturally would have stressed the reorientation of economic aims while only giving terse attention to the means to those ends. Furthermore, Dewey had already delineated the method for developing the new economic order which Bode acknowledged by indicating that the spiritual and experimental qualities of democracy must never be lost. As for the focus of Bode's work, his first concern still was the application of philosophical thought to educational practice. In order to accomplish that task thoroughly, Bode worked diligently at analyzing the social situation and at explaining its meanings for education. He apparently wanted to maintain a balance between the two elements, a sort of means-end relationship. He did not, however, soften the accent on the democratic ideal. Two of the three books that he wrote during the depression dealt principally with the society. In each, however, education was an important element. In fact Democracy as a Way of Life was a prescription for creating a democratic society whose primary vehicle for continuous growth was the school. Most of Bode's articles also showed the balance between social and educational ideas. Bode's writings during the 1930s closely paralleled Dewey's works of the period 1897 to 1916 in their balanced emphasis on society and education.

After 1916, Dewey devoted most of his writing to technical philosophy and to broad social concerns that emphasized means, and included discussions about education. In a sense then, Bode was more Deweyan than Dewey in his work during the depression.

One final comment must be made about the work of both men. As pragmatists, they believed in a dynamic social order. Consequently, whether they emphasized means or ends in social action, their statements always were tentative. Neither Dewey nor Bode would allow himself to be trapped into providing the method or the answer to a problem. Both of them steadfastly refused to say, for instance, that democracy was the ultimate form of social organization. Rather, it appeared to them to be the best proposal yet devised by humans.

With this thought in mind, Bode presented his ideas about a democratic social order. He argued that democracy began with the individual who had the ". . . ability to share imaginatively in all sorts of experiences, to regard nothing human as foreign to oneself" ¹ This was the moral ideal for the individual and the society. Communities also had to adhere to this ideal in their relations with other groups or societies. Bode held that a negative attitude toward others constituted the absence of democracy, which had been a problem in the class systems of the past,

¹Bode, Fundamentals of Education, pp. 46-47.

and still existed in the exclusive interest groups in the United States. Individuals and communities had to believe in the idea of a society that provided for the full expression of native capacity through cooperation based on the recognition of mutual interests and through the progressive modification of institutions and practices.¹ Democracy, therefore, began as a state of mind.

Achieving the ideal of democracy meant that the scientific method had to be applied to the problems of the social order, and that individuals had to be willing to change. Concerning the use of scientific techniques Bode remarked that:

Scientific integrity requires that the formation of new beliefs shall be determined solely by evidence, and not by bias or tradition. Similarly the concept of democracy means that no item of doctrine or creed may be fenced off for the purpose of exempting it from changes in the way of rejection or revision. Democracy requires the same open-mindedness toward values or interests as science requires toward evidence. In this respect the spirit of science is the same as the spirit of democracy.²

That individuals must be willing to change meant they must learn to use the culture as a means for growth. Thus science, literature, art, and vocation were to become a means to this end.³

By suggesting that a democratic social order must use

¹Ibid., pp. 49-50; Bode, Modern Theories of Education, pp. 13-14.

²Bode, Modern Theories of Education, p. 257.

³Ibid., pp. 262-63.

the scientific method and the culture as means for growth and change, Bode was not demanding change for change's sake. Social flexibility, he thought, was indispensable for the fullest possible growth of all individuals. But social stability was just as indispensable. "The line has to be drawn," he said, "somewhere between utter flexibility and utter rigidity--in the family life, in the church, in the school, in the factory, in the government, and therefore in society as a whole."¹ Even though he called for both flexibility and stability, Bode continued to emphasize the former. He expressed the concern that social patterns tended to assume special sanctions, and thereby become fixed, absolute, and a haven for special interests. "The fact that these patterns have ceased to be the happy way of doing things," he warned, "is disregarded and so we became oblivious to the cleavages in our social life which would otherwise be intolerable."²

Bode's fear of stagnation was evident in the social conditions he wanted to eliminate because they were inimical to maximum individual growth. The first of these barriers to democracy was fixity, a condition that hindered growth. Therefore, he would allow only enough fixity to achieve structural stability. Next, there should be no social strata by birth. "Now, this does not mean," he observed, "as many

¹Lumley and Bode, Ourselves and the World, p. 101.

²Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life, p. 60.

suppose, exactly equal opportunity at scratch; it simply means being born amid all of the opportunity that one can and will use."¹ Tyranny also was an unwanted social condition that had to be eradicated from politics, religion, education, business, and the home. Bode thought that mutual assistance would remove fear from the society. Finally, ignorance had to be wiped out. Ignorance, he commented, was related to folly and supported tyranny of all sorts.²

As one might expect, Bode thought there were certain characteristics of society necessary for promoting growth. There had to be a minimum material base for adequate living. One could not live a valuable life, he commented, when he did not have enough to eat or wear, or did not have enough shelter or walking space. Acknowledging the disparity between the many who were starving and the few who were living in luxury, he noted that probably there were enough resources to feed, clothe, and house all Americans adequately. Another indispensable feature was goodwill. He meant by this a lack of jealousy, envy, hatred, selfishness, ill-wishing, and cruelty. On the other hand, goodwill meant the presence of aggressive and continuous well-wishing and the strong desire that others be well, happy, and prosperous. In order to achieve this goal, Bode indicated that

¹Lumley and Bode, Ourselves and the World, pp. 198-200.

²Ibid.

effort, toleration, and generosity were necessary.¹

The next two characteristics were closely related to each other and to goodwill. Whatever the source, inherited or developed, said Bode, intelligence was necessary for the betterment of society. It had to direct goodwill. "Intelligence," he declared, "is the supreme reconstructor of the world." Its main use was directing social change so as to build a better society. We could not, he noted, prevent social changes, but we certainly could direct them through intelligence. This could not be done, however, by individuals working alone. Like Dewey, Bode believed that discussion, shared communication, was essential to the successful direction of social change. In effect, the act of sharing intelligence was democracy in action. As he said it:

When human beings come together and consider their problems from every angle in a dispassionate and illuminating way they are practicing democracy. They are practicing democracy when they learn from those who differ from them, even those of other creeds and races. The closed mind is the worst enemy of democracy because it is the antithesis of growth. Sane discussion is democracy; but it also enlarges the ideal of democracy: it keeps people growing.²

Despite his desire to promote goodwill through intelligence and discussion, Bode realized that all would not be sweetness and light. Human living involved various wants and needs for the individual and the group. Frequently, he noted, these wants came into conflict with each other, thus requiring some agency for maintaining order. Unless humans

¹Ibid., pp. 200-09. ²Ibid.

wanted to live in anarchy, they had to have an organization whose responsibilities were the settlement of conflicting claims, the protection of life and property, and the establishment of certain forms of cooperation for the common good. Bode thought that human life would be intolerable without an "all-powerful organization," a government, to prevent growing personalities from crowding and overpowering others. He defined the government as ". . . a number of specialists organized and functioning authoritatively to keep the people of a given area living together in an orderly manner."¹ But, like Dewey, he went no further in describing the structure of government.

Nevertheless, Bode was willing to allow for extreme forms of governmental methods under certain conditions. He noted that even democracy had had to resort to "dictatorship." Lincoln's extraordinary powers during the Civil War were in a sense "dictatorial." Yet, he reminded, we still revered him as one of the finest democratic leaders. In order to explain this paradox, Bode indicated that the ordinary dictatorship endeavored to control the minds of individuals by establishing patterns of belief and conduct, and by tolerating no deviation from them. Democratic governments, on the other hand, with or without legislative authority attempted to free individuals from the chains of authority where authority inhibited spiritual growth. He thought that

¹Ibid., pp. 348-54.

the difference was significant. Both forms of government fed the hungry and provided work for the unemployed. Nonetheless, he remarked,

. . . the further obligation that [an] occupation must contribute to the mental and moral development of those who are engaged in it and that the institution of private property must be modified to whatever degree may be necessary to realize this end--this is peculiarly a democratic conception of industrial organization. It is no less democratic if this type of organization happens to be enforced by "dictatorial" powers wielded by a single individual.¹

In allowing for the possible use of dictatorial powers in a democracy, Bode was carrying pragmatic philosophy to its logical conclusion. Like Dewey who supported the use of war to achieve democracy, Bode thought that dictatorship could be used to promote human growth. But, these means were clearly temporary. Bode's example of Lincoln's extraordinary powers indicated that he viewed the use of dictatorial powers as an aberrant means. On the other hand, such powers in the hands of less intelligent mortals could have been disastrous. And such philosophical apologetics by Dewey and Bode, implied or otherwise issued, came dangerously close to "the end justifies the means."

Bode would have dismissed such criticism as indicative of a lack of faith in the common man. He believed that individuals working together could build a democratic social order. He also assented to the use of revolt, as a last

¹Boyd H. Bode, "Blueprints of Tomorrow," Independent Woman 13 (May 1934): 155.

resort, to achieve such an end. If we found ourselves unbearably constrained by customs, laws, or beliefs, he asked, what could we do? First, we would have to assure ourselves that our motives were not fundamentally base and antisocial. Then study the situation in all its aspects to see that others would not suffer more if released. If the action seemed feasible, we could spread the information and discuss it with others in order to learn. But if constant intelligent agitation failed to obtain our release, he asserted, ". . . then, as a last resort, we may have to revolt, as in the case of the American Revolution. In the last analysis the right of revolt can never be taken away from man."¹

The use of dictatorial powers and revolt were extreme measures that Dewey and Bode, nonetheless, thought were legitimate means for achieving or preserving democracy. Yet both men believed that intelligent individuals would be able to create a democracy without such actions. Since democracy had evolved from a political system into a social organization, both men thought that the entire society would have to be reorganized. "It calls for a reconstruction of beliefs and standards in every major field of human interest," commented Bode, "and thus takes on the universality of philosophy and of religion, which is to say that it becomes a

¹Lumley and Bode, Ourselves and the World, pp. 209-10.

generalized or inclusive way of life."¹ Each man noted the barriers to this end that stemmed from the dualisms in philosophy and in the culture. Bode, in particular, thought that before any attempt to reorganize the society could be made, individuals had to recognize the "cleavage in our culture." Ultimately, the building of a democratic social order required intelligent action on the part of all members of the society. Individuals learned through experience. But Dewey and Bode held that if left to their own devices individuals would become intelligent only through a laborious, wasteful, and inefficient process. Thus they believed that the school was the best vehicle for creating intelligent individuals who could in turn develop a democratic social order. Understanding this faith requires an examination of Bode's ideas about education.

¹Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life, p. 51.

CHAPTER IV

BODE ON EDUCATION

After more than a decade of struggling with the social and educational issues of the inter-war period, Boyd Bode wrote that:

The school is, par excellence, the institution to which a democratic society is entitled to look for clarification of the meaning of democracy. In other words, the school is peculiarly the institution in which democracy becomes conscious of itself.¹

In this statement, he not only indicated the place of the school in his theory of democracy, but adumbrated his view of the means-end relationship between education and the democratic ideal. The school should do more than reflect and perpetuate the existing order; it should be the vehicle for making the young aware of the democratic ideal, thereby creating informed citizens who could work for a society dedicated to continuous human growth. Although he maintained an optimistic outlook about the potential of education, Bode knew that it would be difficult to make the school something other than a mirror of society. He devoted considerable effort toward making the school an instrument of democracy by attempting to clarify the aims of education; by analyzing the

¹Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life, p. 95.

theoretical issues growing out of those aims; and by offering constructive criticisms of the theories and practices of progressive education. Bode became, as it were, a gadfly who frequently stung the Progressive Education Movement in an attempt to realign it with Dewey's educational theory.

At the end of the First World War, the Progressive Education Movement, like progressivism itself, became fragmented. During the 1920s a growing interest in the arts and in Freudian psychology virtually eclipsed thoughts of social reform and led to the development of a child-centered pedagogy. In an attempt to make education "scientific," some educators became obsessed with educational testing and measurement, or with the use of science to promote educational efficiency. With the coming of the depression, still other progressive educators attempted to revive social reformism, and found themselves in the middle of a controversy that nearly destroyed the movement. Underlying each of these segments of progressive education was the growth of professionalism in the movement. These educators increasingly demanded technical knowledge that would distinguish them from the layman.¹

The child-centered pedagogy of the 1920s developed from the confluence of two streams of thought. Following the war, the intelligensia in the Greenwich Villages of New York,

¹Cremin, The Transformation of the School, pp. 179-85.

Chicago, and San Francisco became more interested in the arts than in social reform. They developed an eclectic viewpoint that mixed doctrines of self-expression, liberty, and psychological adjustment into an individualism that resisted the limitations of conformity as well as the discipline of social reform. This outlook helped give rise to a pedagogical argument that each individual had a unique potential to be creative and that schools which promoted the free development of this potentiality were the best insurance for creating a society devoted to human growth.¹

Educators such as Caroline Pratt, Hughes Mearns, Satis Coleman, and Florence Cane applied this obviously Rousseauan doctrine in their private schools in New York City. Where Dewey had included Rousseau's ideas in his promotion of social reform, these and other educators extricated the idea of self-expression from the larger theory, and made it the fundamental doctrine of progressive education. In 1928, Harold Rugg and Ann Shumaker surveyed the pedagogical innovations across the nation. Unlike John and Evelyn Dewey, who, in a similar survey in 1915 entitled Schools for To-Morrow, had seen the essence of progressive education as social reformism, Rugg and Shumaker interpreted the current educational activity as a part of the constant struggle of the artist against the shallowness of industrial society. They thought that the solution to this historic battle lay in the

¹Ibid., pp. 201-02.

triumph of creative self-expression.¹

The application of this doctrine on a broad scale produced both beneficial and disastrous results. On the positive side, creative self-expression employed in art classes brought forth a plethora of excellent student poems, music, paintings, sculpture, and theater sets. Throughout the decade, for example, superb student art filled the pages of Progressive Education. On the other hand, child-centeredness became a fad that resulted in the worst forms of freedom. In too many classrooms, liberty, spontaneity, and individuality became license, purposelessness, and defiance. Thus, chaos replaced education in the name of expressionism.²

The second intellectual current that led to the child-centered movement of the 1920s was Freudianism. After Freud had lectured at Clark University in 1909 and Abraham A. Brill, a psychiatrist, had subsequently translated Freud's works, the Greenwich Village intelligentsia became so interested in these ideas that by the time of the war psychoanalysis was a popular topic of discussion. Following the war, specific applications of Freudian doctrine to pedagogy began to appear. The year 1919 saw the publication of Hygiene and Childhood by William A. White, superintendent of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, and The Child's Unconscious by Wilfrid Lay, a secondary school teacher who held a doctorate

¹Ibid., pp. 183, 206-07. ²Ibid., pp. 206-07.

from Columbia. In addition, Brill gave lectures at New York University for individuals concerned with the problems of pedagogy and education. Over the next few years other books, articles, reviews, and commentaries appeared, while teachers and laymen alike were exposed to the ideas of Freudian pedagogy.¹

As might be expected, educators were selective in their analysis and practice of psychoanalytic conceptions. Teachers were encouraged to view the "unconscious" as the true source of motivation and behavior in both themselves and their students. Education was supposed to "sublimate" the child's "'repressed' emotions" into socially beneficial activities. Some Freudians went so far as to suggest that ultimately the classroom was a situation full of emotion that only teachers trained in psychoanalysis could understand. Others, like Isador H. Coriat, an early president of the American Psycho-Analytic Association, tried to use these notions to build a foundation for rational behavior. Margaret Naumburg, a leading progressive educator, used psychoanalytic principles to design a school program that was supposed to transform individuals, not the society. A few educators used Freudianism to justify anti-intellectual concerns. Their preoccupation with repression and emotion led them to reject authority and rationality, and thereby allow liberty to become license. This tragic outcome and

¹Ibid., pp. 207-09.

the chaos produced by self-expression made progressive education a rich subject for humorists' cartoons for nearly a generation.¹

The scientific movement in progressive education began as Edward Thorndike's dream of a science of pedagogy, and received a tremendous boost from the rapid development of intelligence and aptitude tests prior to the First World War. With the creation of the Binet scale and its Stanford Revision, Americans quickly recognized the value of the scale notion, and devised instruments for measuring intelligence and achievement. Harold Rugg described the excited activity surrounding these events as the "orgy of tabulation."² With the American declaration of war in 1917, tests were used to determine the intelligence of army recruits. Robert Yerkes, president of the American Psychological Association, and his colleagues unfortunately compared the data with a Stanford-Binet scale designed for children. The results were calamitous. "Scientific" evidence "proved" that the average mental age of Americans was fourteen years. Growing out of this debacle was the so-called testing controversy that raged off and on for the next twenty years. On one side were educators, particularly some college administrators, who supported their arguments for limiting college enrollments with these test results. Others, like John Dewey and Boyd Bode saw the tests as helpful devices for

¹Ibid., pp. 207-15. ²Quoted in Ibid., p. 187.

classification, but hardly useful as justification for restricting educational opportunities.¹

The growth of science also lent support to the drive for efficiency in public education. In 1911, the National Education Association tasked its Committee on Economy of Time in Education with developing systematic measures for making schooling efficient. From 1915 to 1919 the Committee submitted four reports in which it suggested that economy could be achieved by eliminating nonessential knowledge, by improving teaching methods, and by structuring courses to conform with child development. The committee members believed they were using science to guide pedagogy. Ultimately, the Committee's work gave rise to two curricular reform movements. The first was an effort to use the findings of science to improve the teaching of traditional subjects. The most important educator in this group was Eugene Randolph Smith whose Education Moves Ahead was a superb example of an attempt at reform while preserving traditional values. The second movement led by Franklin Bobbitt of the University of Chicago and Werrett W. Charters of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, followed directly in the path of the Committee on Economy of Time. These anti-formalists endeavored to "scientifically" analyze society in order to determine the criteria for building a curriculum.²

The third group to develop within the Progressive

¹Ibid., pp. 185-92. ²Ibid., pp. 192-200.

Education Movement began in the 1920s with the effort to keep social reform alive. While John Dewey, Boyd Bode, and George S. Counts criticized Babbitttry and the "cult of prosperity," William H. Kilpatrick searched for a method that would teach the young how to deal with rapid social change. When disaster struck in 1929, all of these men as well as John Childs, Jesse Newlon, R. Bruce Raup, Harold Rugg, and others joined with liberals in an effort to find a solution to the chaos. But it was George Counts who became the driving force behind the formulation of a radical position that racked the already fragmented Progressive Education Movement.¹

In 1932 Counts argued in Dare the School Build a New Social Order? that the school should become an agent of social change and assist in building a collective economic order. Dewey had proposed the first notion in 1897 and the second one in 1930. What then made Counts argument so radical? In order to accomplish the proposed ends, Counts thought that teachers had to formulate a comprehensive social theory ". . . and become less frightened . . . at the bogies of imposition and indoctrination."² He had clearly rejected the philosophy of experimentalism.

Fearing the taint of radicalism, the Progressive Education Association attempted to divorce itself from

¹Ibid., pp. 215-28.

²George S. Counts, Dare the School Build a New Social Order? (New York: The John Day Company, 1932), pp. 9-10.

Counts and those who supported him. Thus Counts, Kilpatrick, Childs, and others began to search for an outlet for their ideas since Progressive Education was no longer open to them. They decided to found their own journal which they called The Social Frontier. The first issue appeared in October 1934. At first, the editorial position of the journal was radical, although not outside of the mainstream of liberalism in the 1930s. It remained radical, until the journal experienced a significant loss of subscriptions after 1935. The editors spoke favorably of a collective economy, accepted the inevitability of the class struggle, and held to an economic interpretation of history. Although they flirted with Marxism, these radicals, who called themselves social reconstructionists, recommended the use of democratic methods to achieve their goals.¹ Their radicalism was too much for the Progressive Education Movement. By the end of the decade, the movement was paralyzed by its internal fragmentation. Thus as the critics of progressive

¹Charles A. Bowers, The Progressive Educator and the Depression: The Radical Years (New York: Random House, 1969). Bowers argued that the social reconstructionists were unduly alarmist. He said that their proposed solutions to the economic chaos, at least in the early years, were more radical than those of the communists. But the evidence does not support his contention. Despite attempts to enlist socialist support against the growing threat of fascism in 1935, the American Communist Party continued to call for violent revolution, a notion abhorrent to the social reconstructionists. See Dalton B. Curtis, Jr. "The Progressive Educator and The Social Frontier," Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting Southwestern Philosophy of Education Society (Norman, Oklahoma: The College of Education, The University of Oklahoma, 1976), pp. 25-40.

education grew in number after 1935, the movement did not have enough strength to meet these challenges.¹

Despite progressive education's internal problems, Bode was optimistic about the potential benefit of its basic theory for education and the society. While Dewey focused his attention on general social philosophy during the inter-war period, Bode devoted himself to social and educational issues. As time passed, it became increasingly obvious that progressive educators were deviating from Dewey's teachings. Thus Bode's attempt to interpret Dewey's theories in light of the changing conditions and to criticize constructively the notions of progressive educators grew in significance.

In a discussion reminiscent of The School and Society, Bode began his first full-length study of educational theory, Fundamentals of Education, in 1921, by explaining the aims of education. As society became increasingly complex, he noted, education became detached from immediately practical ends. The life of the adult and that of the child grew apart. Thus, he argued, a conception of general education became necessary to close this gap in a way that would benefit the child. Here he made a subtle distinction between replicating adult life and creating a worthwhile environment in the school. Some things adults did were good, other things were not. Consequently, educators had to keep the bad out of the school environment,

¹Cremin, The Transformation of the School, p. 181.

and to promote the good. The school endeavored to prepare children for an adult life, not as it actually existed, but as it was idealized and refined. Education, said Bode, became ". . . an agency both for conserving the past and for 'progress and reform.'"¹

The success of this process required the creation of a theoretical foundation derived from reflection upon the aims and values of life. Like Dewey, Bode asserted that life was a process of growth. "Human beings," he remarked, "constantly utilize previous experiences for the creation of new aims, new ideals, new opportunities; and in so doing they give more fulness, more richness, to life, they make life more worth living."² In a sense, a similar process occurred in the classroom. Almost as if he were observing the activities in Dewey's Laboratory School at the turn of the century, he noted that the children created a new environment, gained new opportunities and new incentives, and thereby enhanced the value of life. Although the civilization developed slowly and painfully, the children reached maturity by traversing the same ground in an environment where the materials were skillfully designed to promote growth. Thus, he asserted, ". . . education is growth, it is a process in which appreciations, aims, and ideals develop and expand. . . . It means a liberation of capacity."³

¹Bode, Fundamentals of Education, pp. 3-4.

²Ibid., pp. 7-8. ³Ibid., p. 8.

Having reiterated Dewey's notion that both life and education were growth, Bode then carried the theory one step farther. Whereas Dewey believed that growth had no end beyond itself, Bode suggested that when growth was postulated as an ideal it had to refer to a specific type of development. When it was first suggested, the conception of growth represented a departure from the limiting inclinations of other ideals. But educators had a tendency to make growth one-sided by emphasizing, for instance, discipline or utility. This thrust would either impair or totally block the child's capacity for understanding and appreciation. Instead Bode believed that "the ideal of growth means training of such a sort as to facilitate understanding and appreciation of all human interests."¹ He later criticized Dewey's conception, that growth had no end beyond itself, for not adequately dealing with the possible need for a total reconstruction of experience.²

Bode's ideal of growth could be achieved only in a social setting. He meant that teachers had to demonstrate the relevance of subject matter to life. This would not only conserve the spiritual heritage, it would open the door to the future. But, he warned, educators could not solve life's problems ahead of time; nor could they make choices

¹Ibid., pp. 11-13.

²Boyd H. Bode, "Education as Growth; Some Confusions," Progressive Education, 14 (March 1937): 155-57.

for others. As he put it:

What we can do, however, is to acquaint them [children] with the main things that should be taken into account, as based on the experience of the race, so that they may have a proper sense of values when they are called upon to make their own decisions; and it is in this sense that we can provide a general education.¹

In other words, the fundamental aim of education was the development of intelligence through an understanding of experience, the child's and that of all humanity.

Achievement of this aim depended on the use of a social criterion as a standard. Education, said Bode, involved gaining an understanding of the meanings which things in the environment had for members of the community. This was necessary for full participation in the life of the community. Bode cited Dewey's suggestion that the essentials for education were those things that were connected with the experiences shared by the widest groups. But, he said, this social criterion was vague. It could easily be interpreted quantitatively without regard to the child's environment. "The reference to the social environment," he admonished, "does not consist in counting noses, but in giving a broad outlook to the life that is lived by the pupil." Education was to begin in the local vicinity, but was not to be limited to it. Bode argued that an education which failed to bring in the widest possible social context but remained concerned only with particular interests had two

¹Ibid., pp. 13-15.

results: It intensified the class spirit inimical to democratic institutions; and it did not foster, except by chance, he said, ". . . the catholicity of spirit and tolerance of attitude which is so vital to the life of a democracy."¹

With regard to the condition of democracy and education in the 1920s, Bode expressed the same concern as he had about the social order. He thought that the growing gap between democracy as it was being practiced and the democratic ideal was evident, for instance, in the efforts to "Americanize" the immigrants. Too often "Americanization" became a jingoistic demand that only English be spoken. Instead of doing this, educators should have taken a clue from democracy itself. "Americanism" meant an understanding of community life. This had to include training in the ideals by which the community life ~~might~~ be understood and evaluated. The outstanding features that appeared in the lives of great men, in our literature and art, in the momentous public movements, and in the ways of expressing the spirit of the nation provided, said Bode, a vision of the larger ". . . life that contains beauty and a wider fellowship."²

But education had to do more for society than provide examples of the democratic ideal. Bode noted that the character of society determined that of its educational system;

¹Ibid., pp. 30-32, 38. ²Ibid., pp. 53-56.

and the educational system in turn determined the character of society. This would be a hopeless circle, he said, if it were not for the changes occurring in society. These new conditions called for corresponding changes in education. Thus education was obligated not only to preserve the traditions, but to prepare the way for the future:

. . . education must cultivate the knowledge and the temper of mind by means of which progress can be made to depend less upon conflict and haphazard adjustment and more upon intelligent coöperation on the basis of mutual understanding or sympathetic insight. This does not mean that the schools are to be used as a means of propaganda, but as a means of cultivating an interest in things that pertain to our common life and an appreciation of the fact that we are "members one of another."¹

He thought this could be accomplished by making the social criterion our measure of educational values. Thus education was to assist the individual to look to the future in personal and community affairs.

In 1927, Bode published a more detailed study of educational theory, Modern Theories of Education. It is interesting to note that the thrust of this book, once again, paralleled one of Dewey's--Democracy and Education. Here Bode defined democracy as ". . . a social organization that aims to promote coöperation among its members and with other groups on the basis of mutual interests." The idea of the "mutual recognition of interests" indicated that democracy meant humanizing the social order. Under the current circumstances, he said, society consisted of many groups.

¹Ibid., pp. 60-61.

It was a welter of conflicting special interests and it was easy for individuals to see the viewpoint of their particular interest group. But if they were not educated to see beyond those limited concerns, they could not help to resolve the society's conflicts. "Our national safety," he asserted emphatically, "lies in the general intelligence of our citizens, which means the ability and the disposition to understand both sides of such questions and to adjust them in the light of the common good."¹

Humanizing the social order meant humanizing education. Bode was distressed that education was failing in this task. Instead of promoting democracy in the schools, as might be expected, educators had developed an educational system that reflected an Aristotlean conception of culture. They maintained an aristocratic tradition by separating cultural subjects from practical subjects. Somehow, for example, pure science was better than applied science. Bode thought that those who had studied the cultural subjects were inadequately prepared for leadership in a democracy, pointing to the absence of an educated political leadership as proof. On the other hand, those who had studied the practical subjects were equally mal-educated. They did not have the humanizing influence of a broad outlook. To have perpetuated this cleavage, clearly would not have been democratic. How then could we, as Bode asked, ". . . make

¹Bode, Modern Theories of Education, pp. 14-15.

education safe for democracy?"¹

In the first place, he argued, we had to realize that we could not succeed by increasing the quantity of education; it was the quality that was important. We could no longer tolerate the existing clash of the old and the new, the traditional and the progressive. Second, we were to remember that education could not be separated from social theory, from a conception of social structure. That social organization, of course, was democracy. Third, education was to look to the future. Bode thought that a concern about future changes was a distinguishing characteristic of democracy. An educational system, therefore, was not to be regarded as fixed. Separation between cultural and vocational programs was intolerable. The issue came down to whether we believed that our "Golden Age" was in the past or in the future. There was no doubt what Bode thought:

A truly democratic society regards its institutions and practices as instrumentalities that are to be modified or discarded with the growth of experience. It is consciously in process of becoming; at every point in its history it is imbued with the sense that it is still in a formative stage. The purpose of education is not to fit the individual for a place in society, but to enable him to make his own place. Our business is not to train for three classes in society, as Plato thought, or for any other fixed number, but for as many classes as there are individuals to be educated. In other words, a democracy must expect to outgrow its organization as a child outgrows his clothes. The organization of the moment may serve a valuable and necessary purpose, but it must not be regarded as final. We put shoes on a child to protect his health not to bind his feet.²

¹Ibid., pp. 15-16, 233. ²Ibid., pp. 233-37.

It was evident that Bode had accepted the thrust of Dewey's educational theory.

Making "education safe for democracy" required developing in the individual the ability to educate himself. This meant providing for the creation of new standards in relation to new conditions and needs. It also meant, said Bode, creating in the mind of the student ". . . a sense of living on the ragged edge of things, a sense that life is an experiment, a constant venture into the unknown."¹

The final requirement for creating a democratic educational system was the introduction of the conception of the democratic social order. This meant understanding the thinking process by which individuals were humanized and educated for membership in the democratic social organization. Needless to say, he was referring to the "Complete Act of Thought." Introducing the democratic ideal also required teachers to have a social vision. The implication was that they had to understand that democracy was a way of life.² This emphasis on the introduction of a social ideal or criterion was clear evidence of Bode's constant emphasis on ideals. Education aimed at developing intelligence through a program based on the democratic ideal, both of which served as a means and an end.

Bode, like Dewey, obviously believed that the school was a powerful, if not the most powerful, institution in the

¹Ibid., pp. 238-40. ²Ibid., pp. 240-41.

social order. It could be used to stultify or to change the society. The fact that social conditions in America in the 1920s were not conducive to democracy, Bode held, was principally the fault of education. But he was convinced that all was not lost. Man had learned to control the physical environment through science and technology. He no longer had to accept what the fates would allow. As a consequence, he could alter the material surroundings to suit his needs. Bode believed that social environment could also be directed to suit human needs. "When our educational systems become imbued with a humane social ideal," he asserted, "our social development will rival our material development and man will no longer be the creature but the master of his environment."¹

Throughout the 1930s Bode maintained the position he had established in the previous decade concerning the aims of education, although the chaos wrought by the depression caused him to place greater emphasis on the need for a social ideal. He noted, for instance, that the chief defect in education was the lack of an ". . . adequate mission or social gospel," despite the availability of the method of intelligence. Education was supposed to assist the young in developing a personal philosophy of life. By contrasting the conflicting tendencies of life, a new insight would illuminate old beliefs and habits. The reorganization of experience thus established, he argued, would bring a wider

¹Ibid., pp. 242-43. (Italics not in original).

perspective and would result in a unified social outlook or philosophy of life. Education also was supposed to create a sense that democracy's "Golden Age" was in the future; that the spiritual heritage was an unfinished dream; and that equality of opportunity was a product of the social order. All of this was based on the faith that as the meaning equality of opportunity changed, the American people would continue to grow with it. Finally, Bode's effort to promote the theme of a social ideal culminated in 1937 in Democracy as a Way of Life. As the title suggested, he believed that democracy was to become a philosophy of life. And the school was the best institution available to achieve this end. Bode observed that:

Democracy must enter the lists, not as a symbol of a vague humanitarianism, or of a cumbersome parliamentary procedure, but as a distinctive way of life. It must espouse a conception of values for which absolutism provides no room and which it cannot hope to understand. Educationally it must insist that no man, even though he be a teacher, has the right to appoint himself the keeper of his neighbor's soul.

Once again, this goal rested on a belief in the power of individual intelligence. Democracy, he concluded, ". . . stands or falls by its faith in the common man."¹

Throughout his professional career, Bode stressed the importance of meanings in human activity. Whatever the

¹Boyd H. Bode, "The New Education Ten Years After: Apprenticeship or Freedom," The New Republic, 4 June 1930, p. 64; Bode, "Education at the Crossroads," 546; Bode, "The Great American Dream," p. 79; Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life, pp. 112-14.

activity, meanings influenced the conduct of behavior. This was particularly true in the interpretation of educational theories. Bode constantly strove to insure that educational conceptions were clearly understood before they were put into practice. In this regard, he raised questions about such issues as growth, indoctrination, freedom, and liberal education during the depression and the Second World War. Although these were not the only educational issues debated at the time, they were the ones that were easily misinterpreted, and in some cases posed a threat to the ideal of democracy. There were, of course, other issues raised by the activities of the three branches of the Progressive Education Movement which will be discussed later.

As previously noted, Dewey equated growth with education, whereas Bode added that growth had to result in an "understanding and appreciation of all human interests." At the hands of progressive educators, growth had assumed a Rousseauian interpretation, development from within the individual. In this sense, argued Bode, it had become an obstacle to clear thinking on the part of the teacher. Too often they defined the goal of guidance as "inner growth" or "self-directing from within." Bode attributed this explanation to the fear of imposing ideas on the young, a common problem among progressive educators. Yet even if these educators pointed to "self-direction" promoted by "wise influencing," they would still have had an empty conception since

they had no goal toward which to direct that guidance. Growth had to be based on a social criterion.¹

On another occasion, he recommended that educators should make growth a social conception. Democracy, he said, had no creed but a common concern for providing the maximum opportunity for development of individual capacity. This would lift growth to the position of a moral principle, a principle of social conduct. Having said this, he quickly parried the accusation that this was merely imposing a new standard on society. On the contrary, he argued, a democracy takes the idea of individual development as a guiding ideal. As he put it:

It is a recognition of the fact that an individual can rise to his full intellectual and moral and esthetic stature only as a member of a social order. The ancient opposition between the individual and society is overcome by making growth or the development of capacity a common purpose and a common concern.²

Thus Bode believed that growth was a means and an end.

Another issue that troubled Bode was the question of indoctrination. Although a perennial problem in the classroom, George Counts had made it a public issue in 1932 when he suggested that teachers should rid themselves of the fear of imposition and indoctrination. Two years later the American Historical Association's Commission on the Social Studies called for the development of reasoned skepticism in

¹Boyd H. Bode, "Education as Growth; Some Confusions," 153-55.

²Boyd H. Bode, "Education as Growth," Educational Forum, 8 (November 1943): 6-9.

students, and followed that with the recommendation that the form of American society should be shaped in accordance with the fundamental tenets of popular democracy and individual liberty and dignity. Bode viewed the juxtaposition of reasoned skepticism with the ideals of America as a form of indoctrination. "In plain English," he remarked sarcastically, "this means that a student can think as he likes, provided that he does not disagree with the professor."¹ He argued further that if we were to predetermine the direction of social change, we could not, at the same time, focus on maximum intellectual development of the common man.²

Bode would not allow the subject of indoctrination to be laid to rest, because he thought it was anti-democratic. In 1935, he used a paradox to make his point about this issue. He suggested that the only form of this method permissible was indoctrination in the notion that indoctrination of beliefs was wrong. Although this play on words was criticized as an indecisive position, the critic obviously ignored Bode's constant struggle against indoctrination. On another occasion, he declared that a school which established beliefs became an instrument for preventing progress. Instead, education was to provide an understanding of the

¹Report of the Commission on the Social Studies, Conclusions and Recommendations, by A. C. Krey, chairman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), p. 39; Boyd H. Bode, "Which Way Democracy?" The Social Studies, 25 (November 1934): 343-44.

²Ibid., 346.

changing social circumstances in order to allow for thoughtful reconstruction. Finally, in 1938 Bode criticized the social reconstructionists' method of teaching students about social problems by having them accept the teacher's analysis of society. He asserted that such ". . . conditioning in education is the negation of democracy." Rather, the student should be assisted in an independent reconstruction of experience with reference to the ideal of democracy.¹

Closely related to the problem of indoctrination was the issue of freedom in education. By the late years of the depression, the chaos in progressive classrooms and the calls for "indoctrination" clearly indicated that some progressive educators did not understand the meaning of freedom either in the traditional or Deweyan sense. In 1938, Bode took the time to repeat what he and Dewey believed was the true meaning of freedom, that which begins with intelligence. "In a democratic social order," he commented, "the schools have a distinctive obligation, to provide for the continuous examination of traditional beliefs and practices, on the ground

¹Bode, "Education and Social Reconstruction," 22; Bowers, The Progressive Educator and the Depression, p. 149; Boyd H. Bode, "The Next Step in Education," Journal of Home Economics, 27 (October 1935): 488-89; Boyd H. Bode, "Dr. Childs and Education for Democracy," The Social Frontier, 5 (November 1938): 39. For a more thorough treatment of this topic see Dalton B. Curtis, Jr. "Boyd Bode and Social Reconstructionism," Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting Southwestern Philosophy of Education Society (Norman, Oklahoma: The College of Education, The University of Oklahoma, 1977), pp. 179-91.

that 'time makes ancient good uncouth.'"¹ With the current conflict between the rural, individualistic and the industrial, centralized order, he continued, the schools were to illuminate this cleavage so as to provide students with the tools for making intelligent and independent judgments. This could not be accomplished either if the teachers attempted to interpret the social order for the students, or an outside authority tried to prescribe a set of beliefs. Rather, there was a third alternative.²

Bode held that a democratic approach would promote true freedom in the schools and, by implication, in the society. From the democratic viewpoint, the patterns of society were derived from a reciprocal relationship. They were justified by the fact that they promoted and maintained common interests among men. Democracy meant, he said, that all existing forms of organization were subject to modification whenever changes would further common interests and purposes. As for the schools, they were not to accept the responsibility for inculcating specific beliefs, since such notions might lead to fanaticism. Democratic education meant examining our cultural heritage, in order to illuminate conflicting interests, and to show that democracy had a higher

¹Boyd H. Bode, "What is the Meaning of Freedom in Education?" in Educational Freedom and Democracy; Second Yearbook of the John Dewey Society, ed. by Boyd H. Bode and Harold B. Alberty (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1938), pp. 4-5.

²Ibid., pp. 5-9.

obligation than protection of a specific pattern of belief and action. Bode concluded that schools had the obligation to make students intelligent about the ideal of democracy by promoting understanding of its meaning. Ten years later, he described this as intellectualizing the democratic process.¹

When the progressive educators revolted against formalism in education, they rejected the traditional conception of a liberal education. But as Bode pointed out they discarded the old view of a liberal education without any understanding of what it ought to have been. Toward the end of the depression, others joined the discussion in the name of democracy and liberal education. In 1936, Robert Maynard Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago, called for a liberal education that would develop the rational intellect. This was to be accomplished through the study of the classics of western civilization. Two years later, a group of conservative educators, led by William Chandler Bagley, suggested that education should aim at strengthening the ideals of American democracy through subjects that contained the essential knowledge of the human tradition. Finally, in 1945 the Harvard Committee on "The Objectives of a General Education in a Free Society" published its now famous report that called for an education designed to continue "the liberal and humane tradition" of

¹Ibid., pp. 9-13; Boyd H. Bode, "Education for Freedom," 283-84.

America.¹ Thus, Bode and the progressive educators found themselves in the middle of a growing controversy over the meaning and content of a liberal education.

As might be expected, Bode argued that a liberal education was not contained in specific subject matter. Therefore, we had only one choice, to develop human capacity through social living in order to enrich life. This would lead to the identification of morality with the protection of diverse interests by continuously widening the foundation of common concerns and purposes without reference to supernatural principles. Education, he believed, was liberal to the degree that subject matter fostered an underlying philosophy of life. Democratic education required an emphasis on scientific inquiry; an historical examination of present problems and future possibilities; and an appreciation of art and literature as expressions of experience. Finally, if education were to liberate human intelligence, Bode thought that we could not compromise between the "closed system" of the past and what William James called the "wide-open universe." As he put it:

It is mere verbiage to say that we must educate for

¹Bode, Modern Theories of Education, p. 232; Robert Maynard Hutchins, The Higher Learning in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936); William C. Bagley, "An Essentialist's Platform for the Advancement of American Education," Educational Administration and Supervision, 24 (April 1938): 241-56; General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Committee, with an Introduction by James Bryant Conant (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1945).

freedom. Every system of education can claim to be education for freedom, since it claims to be truth, and since truth is what makes us free. Freedom in the abstract is an empty concept; its meaning derives from the philosophy or world-view that lies back of it. The issue confronting us is basically a moral issue; it has to do with the meaning of liberty and democracy. The present situation, therefore, seems to point to a minimum requirement for a liberal education. To be liberally educated a person must have an adequate appreciation of the challenge to our traditional beliefs which grows out of science and which meets us in all the important areas of life.¹

Once again, Bode had returned to his thesis of the "cleavage in the culture" and to the idea of the social criterion for education.

Bode saw similar difficulties in the Harvard Report on general education. He noted that the committee had identified three basic constituents that were vital to the character of our heritage: the ideal of the "free man" inherited from ancient Greece; walking with God in the light of faith from the teachings of Christianity; and reliance on the scientific method promoted by the growth of modern science. Bode suggested that the committee's acceptance of these tenets was tantamount to adoption of the two-world view. But this was not the only problem with the Harvard Report in Bode's opinion. Its greatest weakness lay in the assumption that the heritage could be predetermined. "The possibility is ignored," he remarked, "that the heritage may be a process of growth which must be dealt with as we go

¹Boyd H. Bode, "The Problem of Liberal Education," School and Society, 59 (24 June 1944): 435-36.

along, without any stultifying preconception as to the limits within which our reinterpretations must be confined-- a preconception which in its practical consequences amounts to a conspiracy to restrict [the] scientific method."¹ Bode obviously thought that graduates of such a program would not be adequately prepared to function in the type of democratic social order that he envisioned.

Nevertheless, at least one member of the committee did not agree with Bode's assessment. Raphael Demos, a professor of philosophy at Harvard, satirized Bode's argument as the story of the courtship between the virile youth of America and the vivacious "Miss Innovation" that was ruined by the interference of the old hag "Miss Tradition." He noted that tradition was not viewed as static, and that Bode's call for a critical reexamination of the elements of tradition was exactly what the committee had in mind. He also denied the "two-worldism," and indicated that the report was Whiteheadian, not Platonic. Assenting to the need for faith in science, Demos then blasted Bode for making the scientific method an absolute. In his reply, Bode reiterated his contention that the report implied the "two-worldism." He also added that try as they might to claim that their premises were not final, the committee could not

¹Boyd H. Bode, "The Harvard Report," Journal of Higher Education, 17 (January 1946): 2-8.

remove the implication of finality.¹

More than any other individual, Bode undertook to strengthen progressive education by acting as its critic. From the 1920s to the early 1950s, he endeavored to show the members of the movement where they had deviated from the ideal of democratic education. Commenting on the child-centered movement he noted that the belief in the power of human desires and impulses had resulted in the ". . . sanctification of childish whim as educational gospel." The focus on individual differences, freedom, and self-expression had produced a "soft pedagogy" that pandered to whims and selfishness or to one-sided vocational training. As previously noted, his comments concerning the use of mental tests paralleled Dewey's. He condemned their use as a device for limiting education, contending that the results indicated just the opposite, that education had to account for a broader range of interests and abilities. In connection with the other segment of the scientific wing, he argued that the doctrine of specific objectives derived from scientific studies confused the gathering of scientific facts with the scientific method. What was needed, he thought, was a social theory that provided a foundation for developing educational objectives. Finally, Bode criticized the

¹Raphael Demos, "Mr. Bode and the Harvard Report on Education," Journal of Higher Education, 17 (February 1946): 57-62; Boyd H. Bode, "The Harvard Report Once More," Journal of Higher Education, 17 (April 1946): 201-04.

social reconstructionists for their myopic suggestion that education should focus on economic reorganization. This notion ignored the fundamental division in the culture which had to be understood before the young could develop a philosophy of life. He also contended that their proposals for indoctrination were patently anti-democratic.¹

In 1938, the year Dewey published Experience and Education, Bode devoted an entire book to evaluating progressive education which he entitled Progressive Education at the Crossroads. He began by suggesting that the confusion in progressive education stemmed from the confusion in the society growing out of the demand for recognition of the individual. Ultimately, recognition of the common man would mean making democracy a complete way of life. "Progressive education," he asserted, "is confronted with the choice of becoming the avowed exponent of democracy or else of becoming a set of ingenious devices for tempering the wind to the shorn lamb."² There was no doubt where Bode stood on this issue.

Progressive education, he said, manifested the "cleavage in the culture." It was confused as to its

¹Bode, Fundamentals of Education, pp. 231-32; Bode, Modern Theories of Education, pp. 18-19, 90-93, 310-311, 327; Bode, "Education and Social Reconstruction," 20-21. For an examination of Bode's criticisms of the social reconstructionist wing see Curtis, "Boyd Bode and Social Reconstructionism."

²Bode, Progressive Education at the Crossroads, pp. 9-26.

foundation. On the one hand, it expressed the democratic spirit in its faith in the individual and in the power to create new standards based on human values and in accordance with changing conditions. On the other hand, its emphasis on the child was little more than Rousseauan absolutism. Too often it focused on the individual instead of the ideal of democracy. Progressive education had built pathetic hopes on the notion that the sources of education lay in interests, needs, growth, and freedom. Bode warned that progressive education had to renew itself in the spirit of democracy or be left behind.¹

In order to clarify what he meant concerning the sources of education Bode examined the doctrines of interest, needs, growth, and freedom. He criticized progressive education for focusing on immediate individual interests. The doctrine of interest, instead, meant that education should focus on reconstruction of experience toward a total pattern derived from the use of intelligence, a critical element for democratic action. Concerning needs, Bode asserted that if we took democracy seriously, we had to realize that our basic need was to understand the conflict between tradition and democracy; all other needs were to be determined in terms of this issue. Summarizing his earlier comments about growth, he commented that education was a process of growth, but growth did not provide its own

¹Ibid., pp. 28-44.

direction. Growth should be developed, he argued, toward ". . . a plan for living intelligently in a topsy-turvy world; and as such must have reference to the issue of democracy, . . ." ¹ Finally, Bode repeated the thesis that democracy required freedom derived from intelligence. ²

The final criticism that Bode leveled at progressive education concerned its lack of a social philosophy. Adopting democracy as a way of life and becoming the vehicle to that goal was the linchpin of progressive education's future. Without this unifying element all else would be meaningless. In the end, Bode, like Dewey, believed that progressive education had the potential to make democracy a way of life. ³

It was unfortunate that the Progressive Education Movement ignored Dewey's and Bode's criticisms. Had the members of the movement heeded the early admonitions of these two leaders, it would not have been necessary for them to write Experience and Education and Progressive Education at the Crossroads. As it turned out, these books were a last gasp attempt to save progressive education from itself. But the effort was to no avail, the educators went blithely along until circumstances and the verbal attacks of Arthur Bestor, Robert Hutchins, Hyman Rickover, and others made a spectacle of the Progressive Education Movement.

¹Ibid., pp. 45-85. ²Ibid., pp. 85-99.

³Ibid., pp. 99-122.

Yet this tragedy could not overshadow the work of Boyd Bode. As an educational theoretician he clarified and restated Dewey's educational theory. But he also developed his own interpretation of pragmatic educational theory in an effort to balance the means-end aspect of that philosophy. Bode recognized that Dewey's greatest contribution to educational theory was more on the side of method than on that of ideals. He said the two could not be divorced, but then admitted that to date the emphasis had been on method. Alluding to his own stress on ideals, he suggested that the disparity would be corrected as the total philosophy was realized.¹ Thus Bode devoted nearly a quarter of a century to the application of the theory of democracy to the practice of education. He believed that if democracy were ever to become a way of life, education would have to clarify the meaning of this ideal and promote the total development of human capacity.

¹Boyd H. Bode, "John Dewey," Educational Research Bulletin, 8 (October 1929): 343.

CONCLUSION

DEMOCRACY AS A WAY OF LIFE

In 1937, John Dewey suggested that democracy was more than a political form or a method of conducting government; it was a way of life, both social and individual. The central fact of this way of life was the requirement of participation by all individuals in the fashioning of values that govern community living. This was necessary for both social welfare and individual development. In the same year, Boyd Bode asserted that democracy was no longer the term for a set of political beliefs, but a viewpoint based on the principle of common interests and purposes. The most important element of community living in a democracy was the sharing of interests. And the primary function of government was furnishing the conditions for broadening the extent of common purposes among individuals. By making the principle of shared concerns the basis of human living, democracy assumed the characteristic of universality, and thus became a way of life.¹ The fact that Dewey and Bode defined democracy in virtually the same fashion suggests one answer to the question with which we have been concerned:

¹John Dewey, "Democracy and Educational Administration," School and Society 45 (3 April 1937): 457; Bode, Democracy as a Way of Life, pp. 48-51.

What happened to John Dewey's theory of democracy at the hands of Boyd Bode? A comparison of their theories will make the answer more complete.

Beginning with their intellectual development, there were some distinct similarities in the lives and thinking of these two men. They were products of the Progressive Era, a period characterized by significant social, political, and scientific developments. It was a time in which the place of the individual in a democracy and the structure of democracy itself became important issues. The changes in the American scene growing out of this time profoundly affected the thinking of both men. And their formal academic training in the philosophy of idealism gave them a similar vantage point from which to analyze life in the United States. But for Dewey and Bode alike, idealism proved to be inadequate as a philosophy of democracy, each having come to this conclusion in the heartland of progressivism, the midwest.

It must be recognized, of course, that Dewey changed his thinking in the process of developing a philosophy that would both explain social change and serve as a tool for directing the improvement of society. By the turn of the twentieth century, he had built his ideas into a systematic philosophy, later called pragmatism, that incorporated an experimental outlook, and from which he derived his theory of democracy. He believed that democracy was a social and ethical theory whose fundamental principle was the

development of human capacity. The idea expressed in this definition of democracy, moreover, permeated his writings for more than half a century.

Bode began his academic career as a critic of the new experimentalist philosophy. But his lack of commitment to any one school of idealism, his association with leading progressive thinkers and their Reform Darwinist views, and his reading of Dewey and James led him to conclude that a pragmatic, experimentalist position better enabled one to grasp reality and to deal with the neverending problems of existence. By 1917, Bode had gained recognition as a pragmatist. And his thinking clearly reflected the influence of Dewey, a fact that he acknowledged in 1921. The focus of his work, furthermore, was in the Deweyan tradition. Dewey had asserted that philosophy in the broadest sense was a general theory of education. Bode put this idea into practice as a professor of philosophy of education at Ohio State University.

As for his theory of democracy, Bode accepted Dewey's definition. He also agreed that a theory of democracy had to consider the individual, society, and education. This is not to suggest, however, that he adopted Dewey's theory entirely. There were definite similarities in their explanations. But Bode faced different circumstances than had Dewey while attempting to devise his theory of democracy. Consequently, he departed from Dewey's theory at certain

important points, a development which Dewey must have viewed with tolerant understanding; after all, Bode was modifying his thoughts in light of changing conditions.

Like Dewey, Bode saw life as a process in which the individual and nature were organically bound by experience. Life, moreover, was fundamentally a social process since individual experiences became meaningful in relation to the experiences of others. Knowledge gained from experience was man's means of directing the environment. But controlling the environment, said Dewey and Bode, required the use of intelligence, which enabled individuals, and in turn society, to grow to the limit of their capacity. Thus they saw intelligence as the method of democracy.

Dewey held that the basis of intelligent action was reflective thinking. This type of thinking was essentially the use of experimentation in making decisions. Bode agreed that reflective thinking was critical to intelligent action, but emphasized the importance of meanings in that process. The creation of new meanings from the interaction of old ones was the real substance of intelligent action, or purposive behavior as he sometimes called it.

Intelligent action on the part of individuals or society also meant that choices had to be made as to the best course of action. Thus Dewey and Bode believed that democracy was a moral process. And of all the moral issues raised in a democracy, freedom was the most important. Both

men argued that true freedom began with intelligence. Perhaps the best example of Bode's acceptance of Dewey's conception of freedom and his effort to clarify its meaning for some progressive educators appeared when he made the following statement in 1938:

According to Dewey, freedom is achieved through the exercise of intelligence, whereas the less discriminating of his disciples understand him to mean that intelligence is achieved through the exercise of freedom.¹

But while Dewey focused on the means to freedom, Bode stressed that freedom also meant the intelligent formation of purposes. Finally, they agreed that freedom in a social setting meant the application of intelligence to control social forces in order to promote human growth.

With regard to the social order itself, Dewey and Bode believed that a democracy was a society that embodied the moral ideal of the full development of human capacity. Neither one, however, was willing to delineate a specific governmental structure for the society. The particular form of government was not important as long as it enabled all individuals to participate equally in the political process. In order to share in political activities, individuals had to be liberated intellectually and physically so as to have equality of opportunity. Nevertheless, they thought this end could not be achieved under the existing economic

¹Bode, Progressive Education at the Crossroads, p. 98.

system. Both men argued for an economic structure that would involve public planning and implementation. Dewey wanted a form of socialism that would employ the method of intelligence. Bode gave tacit assent to a planned economic system, but never clearly outlined its structure. He was more concerned with making equality of opportunity the true aim of the new economic order.

Dewey and Bode also believed that building and maintaining a truly democratic social order depended on the use of intelligence. In this connection, Dewey called for a social order created and developed through the spirit and method of science. Such a society required freedom of social inquiry and the dissemination of its conclusions. He believed that democracy would come into its own through shared communication. Bode concurred with Dewey, but also saw other needs that had to be met. He held that the social order had to be humanized by meeting basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter, and by promoting goodwill. Goodwill, in particular, demanded the use of intelligence and shared communication. In the end, Bode argued that the growth of intelligence and the creation of a true democracy could not be achieved until Americans overcame the contradiction between the fixed meaning of democracy and the new dynamic way of life which he called the "cleavage in our culture." Acceptance of the new meaning of democracy, Bode thought was the best solution to the social conundrum.

Dewey and Bode alike held that education was the vehicle for creating and maintaining a democratic way of life. Struggling against the separation of schooling and daily living, they proposed that the school become a means for making the young aware of the meaning of democracy, thereby creating informed citizens who could build a society dedicated to continuous human growth. They based their argument on the premise that both education and life were processes of growth. Dewey stopped with this idea, postulating that growth had no end beyond itself. Bode, on the other hand, suggested that growth had to refer to a specific type of development, the appreciation and understanding of all that was human.

Bode also emphasized the need for using the ideal of democracy as the social criterion for educational practice. Like Dewey, he thought education had to develop in the individual the ability to reconstruct experience through reflective thought. At the same time, he reiterated the need for education to have an adequate social gospel so as to enable the young to devise a personal philosophy of life. Ultimately, Dewey and Bode were confident that education would promote the total development of human capacity and make democracy a way of life.

Thus in answer to the question at hand, it is clear that Boyd Bode kept John Dewey's theory of democracy virtually intact. He differed with Dewey in his emphasis on the

ends of the means-end relationship of democracy. He too saw democracy as more than a political system; it was an ethical system that he called a way of life. Accepting the pragmatic philosophy, he agreed with Dewey that life was continuously changing; therefore, democracy had to become dynamic, and grow with the changing circumstances. Dewey believed that intelligence was the means for effecting needed changes in the life of the individual and of the society. Bode in effect said that unless the ideal of democracy were kept in mind, changes would be made for change's sake. Thus he endeavored to balance Dewey's stress on method by accenting the need for ideals. The difference in their theories of democracy was in degree not in kind.

The explanation for this difference lies in the circumstances that each man faced. Dewey developed his theory of democracy in response to the conditions of the late nineteenth century. With the new scientific developments and the demand that the individual have a greater voice in political, economic, and social events, Dewey devised a theory of democracy that employed the method of science and placed great faith in the individual. Bode, on the other hand, started with Dewey's theory and modified it under the circumstances of inter-war period. Where social reform and promotion of the individual had dominated the Progressive Era, in the 1920s this viewpoint engaged in a struggle with the so-called "cult of prosperity." Thus the ideal of

democracy seemed, to Bode, to be fighting for its life. In the 1930s, social reform gained the upper hand in the face of economic chaos and, later, the threat of fascism. But the circumstances also brought extremists out of hiding. Here Bode argued for the most part against extraordinary measures, and called for the building of a way of life based on the democratic ideal. Finally, Bode developed his theory of democracy in response to the distortions of Dewey's theory perpetrated by the Progressive Education Movement. Through all of this he too kept his faith in the individual.

This optimistic faith in the individual seems to be the principal weakness in Dewey's and Bode's theories. They naively believed that the individual could direct the environment and control social forces. Nevertheless, they had little evidence to support that argument. They pointed to the achievements in science as proof of the conviction that man could control the environment. It does not follow, however, that if man can direct nature he can direct society equally as well. Man's understanding of human behavior at the time Dewey and Bode were writing was elementary at best. If philosophers and psychologists could not agree on what caused one individual to act, how could anyone possibly predict, let alone intelligently control, the actions of an entire society?

In their simplistic hopefulness about human capabilities, Dewey and Bode believed that individuals could easily

give up the ancient philosophical dualisms and make democracy a way of life. They were in a sense calling for intellectual and social changes on the scale of the Reformation or the Scientific Revolution. Yet in both instances there was tremendous resistance to change among those with vested interests in the status quo. And at times that resistance took the form of violence, the antithesis of intelligent action. This does not mean that Dewey's and Bode's dream can never be realized. It does mean, however, that attempts to change centuries of human tradition have been slow and painful, and have nearly always carried with them the specter of violence.

Even accepting the method of intelligence did not always produce the expected results. Dewey himself used the method of intelligence to justify American involvement in the First World War. And Bode, who steadfastly argued against indoctrination, all but demanded acceptance of democracy as a way of life when he argued that individuals must give up traditional dualisms or weaken democracy. Bode tended to be dogmatic about the notion that individuals could not simultaneously believe in the old dualisms and democracy. Finally, the confusion about Dewey's theories and the resulting failures in the Progressive Education Movement demonstrated that even highly educated individuals had difficulty employing the method of intelligence to cooperate among themselves or to educate children.

The stress on means in Dewey's theory exemplified a significant problem in the philosophy of pragmatism. In their rush to dissolve absolutes and make ends relative, commented the historian Eric Goldman, the pragmatists and their disciples created the conditions that could produce the politics of self-aggrandizement, weakness in ideological commitments, and the doctrine of expedience.¹ There is no way of knowing whether Bode foresaw the dangers of pragmatism that Goldman later alluded to, since he never expressed such fears. Nevertheless, he too recognized a weakness in the pragmatic explanation of ends. As an idealist, he had criticized pragmatism for its feeble attempts to define the relationship between the knower and the known in terms of purposive behavior. He apparently was never satisfied that this weakness had been eliminated from pragmatism, even though he accepted that philosophy. As a pragmatist, he worked unrelentingly against what he saw as an emphasis on means at the expense of ends in Dewey's philosophy and in progressive educational theory.

Thus the strength of Bode's theory lay in his emphasis on ends or ideals. His interpretation of the theory of democracy provided a countervailing force to Dewey's position. He was also pointing to the dangers of failing to maintain the means-end relationship manifested in the attempt to make ends out of means and in the failure to look

¹Goldman, Rendezvous With Destiny, pp. 199-200.

beyond immediate, limited ends. In the first instance, Americans, then as now, made science an end in itself. As he indicated, this problem was evident in the rush to make psychology scientific and divorce it from philosophy, and in the endeavor to convert education into a science. Bode ultimately believed that as long as Americans failed to recognize the cultural conflict between a way of life based on absolute principles and one founded on a dynamic philosophy, democracy would remain a meaningless ideal instead of becoming an ethical system in which the development of human capacity was both a means and an end. In the second instance, he noted that the concern for immediate ends among progressive educators led to an emphasis on the child's evanescent interests and immediate needs instead of an attempt to cultivate long-term interests and a personal philosophy of life based on the ideal of democracy. He also thought that the social reconstructionists' worry about the economic system was another example of placing too much stress on immediate ends. They were ignoring the more serious problem of the "cleavage in the culture" that blocked the path to a democratic way of life.

Bode's constant concern with ideals was an attempt to build a truly pragmatic theory of democracy that made the development of human capacity a means and an end. This effort seems to have been predicated on the belief that if Americans did not attempt to make democracy a way of life,

American society would remain a divided culture and thus a weak democracy; or it would languish into a social order whose only aim was the satisfaction of selfish purposes. In education, his emphasis on a social ideal and growth with a purpose was an attempt to help progressive educators keep Dewey's theory on an even keel in order to provide a better education for the young and to make the school a vehicle of a truly democratic society.

The examination of Boyd Bode's theory of democracy has provided further insight into the philosophical and educational thought of the Progressive Era and the Progressive Education Movement. It has also provided evidence as to what happened to Dewey's theory of democracy at the hands of one of his disciples. But what about the other disciples? What happened to Dewey's theory of democracy at the hands of William H. Kilpatrick, George S. Counts, John L. Childs, and Harold Rugg? Historical inquiries into the social and educational theories of each of these men would make our knowledge of early twentieth century ideas and pragmatic theory more complete. Such studies would also provide modern day educators with a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of pragmatic educational theory and practice.

In closing, we should remember that the theories of democracy of John Dewey and Boyd Bode were fundamentally forward-looking. A sense of the future was implicit in

their belief that society was dynamic and thus required that human beings had to adjust to changing circumstances. This theme, moreover, continues to influence many current educational and social theorists amid the impact of the rapid increase in knowledge growing out of the scientific developments in the nuclear age. Dewey and Bode, however, were not unique in their thinking about social conditions. But there was an element in their social ideas that seems to be missing today. Although Dewey and Bode participated in the revolt against the formalism of the past, they were ever mindful of the need to be aware of the past to explain the present and to suggest directions for the future.

We have been living in a time in which social and educational thought has been patently ahistorical. Jacques Maritain, the eminent French philosopher, put it succinctly when he said that one of the characteristics of our "cock-eyed times" is that we suffer from "epistemological time-worship;" by which he meant that unless knowledge is new we tend to reject it.¹ The leading educators of the late 1960s and early 1970s, for instance, went blythely along developing and using the "latest ideas" without being aware of the successes and failures of those progressive educators who had tried similar techniques thirty or forty years earlier.

¹Jacques Maritain, The Peasant of Garonne: An Old Layman Questions Himself about the Present Time, trans. Michael Cuddihy and Elizabeth Hughes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), pp. 12-13.

Their attempts to focus on the child and be egalitarian also tended to vulgarize education. Educators in the current "back-to-basics" movement seem equally to be unaware of the past. Yet both of these educational movements are predicated on the goal of preparing children for a modern, technological, democratic society.

Equally as unfortunate is the fact that some of our present social theorists, commonly known as futurists, also seem to lack a sense of history. A common theme in their works is that our current circumstances are unique and, therefore, we can no longer afford to take a "rear-view mirror" approach to social problems. Nevertheless, their solutions for the survival of our way of life resemble the suggestions of Dewey and Bode. Such an idea as "anticipatory democracy" is little more than Bode's notion of the application of intelligence to democratic purposes. The concern for obtaining unbiased information to be used in dialogues designed to solve current problems and plan for the future is reminiscent of Dewey's discussion about shared communication in The Public and Its Problems.

Modern day educators and social thinkers pay lip service to democracy and human development. But they are being neither democratic nor sensible when they ignore the theories of democracy that others have suggested in the past. Thus a significant conclusion that can be drawn from the social ideas of John Dewey and Boyd Bode is that

democracy has a past, a present, and a future. This means that those educators and social theorists who are working to improve society and democracy in America should be aware of the theory and practice of democracy in the past in order to deal with it in the present and plan for its future.

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