

THE BULLETIN OF
SOUTHWESTERN
AT MEMPHIS



THE CITY: A RESPONSIBILITY OF THE
LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE

A report on recent activities of the
Adult Education Center

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JANUARY, 1968

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

THE CITY: A RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE

A liberal arts college located in a large urban area has unique educational opportunities and responsibilities. The city provides the college with a great laboratory in which to study the complex forces of urbanization; the college, as it makes use of those laboratory facilities, must seek solutions to the problems that the urban process brings. Southwestern At Memphis through its Adult Education Center seeks to take advantage of its opportunity and at the same time to measure up to its responsibility.

As early as 1951, Southwestern sponsored a series of lectures and panel discussions on "The Design for a City," using architects, public officials, and professors as speakers. The following year this program was expanded to include visits to Memphis by nationally known urbanists. In 1953, the Adult Center cooperated with the Civic Research Committee of Memphis in offering discussions on urban planning; out of these seminars grew a television series, "This City Is You," produced with the aid of a grant from the Twentieth Century Fund. Another television series was presented in cooperation with the American Institute of Architects under the title, "Architecture and Modern Man."

Activities in subsequent years have included a study-discussion program on "The Shape of Our Cities," prepared by José Luis Sert in cooperation with the Fund for Adult Education of the Ford Foundation. Southwestern's Adult Center also cooperated with Goucher College in offering "Human Values in the Emerging American City." Southwestern was represented on the committee of the University Council on Education for Public Responsibility that developed "Metropolis: Preserver or Destroyer," a nationally televised program, and "Metropolis: Values in Conflict," a widely distributed study-discussion program. The Adult Center also prepared a program of its own, "The City: A Search for Meaning," which examined the city from the perspective of readings that ranged from Aristotle to Jane Jacobs.

As the college pursued these general interests, the realization grew that two problems demanded special emphasis: first, the development of executive talent that can be utilized in business management and, second, the presentation of the information of urban research to public officials who have the responsibility of governing the city. Consequently the Institute for Executive Leadership was established in 1955 and the Urban Policy Institute was organized in 1962 as adjuncts of the Adult Education Center. Granville D. Davis, Dean of Continuing Education,

THE BULLETIN OF SOUTHWESTERN AT MEMPHIS

The BULLETIN is published quarterly by SOUTHWESTERN AT MEMPHIS, Memphis, Tennessee. Second Class Postage Paid At Memphis, Tennessee.

VOL. 55

JANUARY, 1968

No. 1

and Frank E. Faux, Associate in Continuing Education, serve as directors of the Institute for Executive Leadership; Dean Davis is the director of the Urban Policy Institute, Mr. Faux is its associate director, and Miss May Maury Harding, Director of Programs, is its secretary.

The Institute for Executive Leadership

In recent years, distinguished corporation spokesmen have given voice to the fear that American business is running out of top management material. They point to the one-sided concentration within the business household on mechanical proficiency and to the concomitant danger of developing one-sided men. Training in techniques alone having failed to produce the sort of leadership business feels it needs, now more than ever before, the blueprint for executive talent specifies men who can temper technology with philosophy, who can get ahead in the world of ideas as well as in the world, who can shape the future instead of being shaped by the past.

Frederic E. Pamp, Jr., has summed up the problem: "The first question a company must now begin to ask its candidates for executive responsibility is 'What can you do that a computer can't?'" Southwestern's Institute for Executive Leadership was established for the purpose of improving the quality of the answers to Frederic Pamp's question. It is designed to prepare oncoming business leaders for long-range decision making. Technical training is essential, but wider horizons are needed to determine policies in a rapidly changing world.

In most business enterprises, young executives are absorbed with specialized tasks. Occupational competence and know-how are needed to get the immediate jobs done. But dealing with immediate problems on a day-to-day basis tends to produce a static mind. This is hardly adequate in a world where many products in use today were unknown fifteen years ago. The pace in the future is not likely to slow and will doubtless increase.

How can business executives for the years just emerging acquire the imaginative capacities and mature judgment required for major decision making and "statesmanship" in business? How can they learn to do the creative thinking which not only anticipates social and economic change, but actually helps to bring in the improvements of tomorrow?

Diagnostic minds, geared both to enduring principles and to change, develop in the twentieth century in the same way they have always developed. Minds become elastic and alert and root themselves

in the sub-soil of human resources when they grapple vigorously with the basic human issues. Men who have seriously faced themselves, their society, and their universe, develop a toughness of mental fibre, a warmth and depth of human feeling, and an awe and appreciation for the universe and its realities. They learn to resolve the problems which yield to persistent effort, and not to exhaust themselves in recriminations and regrets. They criticize only by creating something better, and they distinguish clearly between persons and commodities.

In the Institute for Executive Leadership the liberal arts and sciences open the world of human thought and achievement. Men in a few thousand years have taken the stuff of human experience, and with this raw material have created structures that dot the landscape, span the rivers, ply the oceans, and conquer the skies; have written great poetry, history, drama, philosophy, and fiction which have illuminated the meaning of life; have composed music which has set men singing, or helped them live in a thousand moods; have pictured in visual forms the artistic images which reflect the vision of their inner world. To find one's way into these human treasures and to gain the depth of their perspective for the moving scenes of our day is to have the experience of the educated man.

During the academic year the Institute studies are grouped into three divisions, each designed to help the executive develop analytical skills and perspective.

1. *Reflective Thinking*

How can twentieth century man cope with centuries of technological progress and human wisdom, develop intellectual curiosity, and achieve insights and capacity for expression? Models from Plato to masters of modern scientific methods are studied. The processes by which great discoveries have been made are traced both to reach understanding of the discoveries and to gain acquaintance with methods of creative thinking.

2. *Man and His Achievements*

Mere experience has not led man to achievements. The creative uses of experience have developed the arts and sciences which have enriched human life. And men today enter into these experiences of others only by developed imagination and understanding. Once contemporary men learn to appreciate these human achievements, their own experiences are informed by the depth of their insights. It is in meeting these first-rate minds and interpreters of life that twentieth century executives learn the art of living and the liberation of thought for making independent judgments.

3. *American Civilization*

The purpose of these studies is to provide maximal learning carry-over into business and community life. During the whole period of study the young executive shuttles from work to study and back again. The day-to-day relevance of far-reaching insights is felt throughout the program. But in this last unit a direct study of American Civilization aids in relating the sweep of human endeavor, and in particular of American endeavor, to contemporary business and community life.

Among the distinguished visiting lecturers have been Mortimer Adler, Stringfellow Barr, John Ciardi, R. G. Gustavson, Harlow Shapley, Peter Taylor and Sir Richard Livingstone. After Sir Richard's appearance before the Institute, he wrote: "There I saw something in operation which I have always dreamed of. . . . Do you remember Matthew Arnold's saying that he thought his business was to try to bring a little more spirit into the too, too solid flesh of English life? I don't say the life of Memphis needs 'spirit' so much as England did in Mr. Arnold's time, but all communities need it and there is no better way of introducing it than through adult study by their leaders."

Sir Richard Livingstone's words are as applicable to the Urban Policy Institute as to the Institute for Executive Leadership.

The Urban Policy Institute

In 1962 the Adult Center established a working relationship with the Brookings Institution, a national research institution in Washington, D. C., concerned with relating research to public policy. Since that time programs for civic and business leaders in Memphis and the Mid-South as well as programs offered to the general public in the field of urbanism have been brought to a focus in the Urban Policy Institute.

The Urban Policy Institute has sought the cooperation of Brookings and other national urban research centers to make available to Memphis and Mid-South policy makers, both public and private, new knowledge and recent research in the social and technical sciences in order to inform policy decisions in an urban age. Urbanization can be a resource rather than a threat if it is understood and the proper policies formulated to guide its development. Consequently, in an urban society the study of urban policy must be the important concern of the responsible policy maker. The Institute seeks to provide for a thorough examination of the principles of urbanism to help policy makers understand the causes and consequences of policy within a

larger framework and establish a theory of urbanism in which to operate.

Policy is concerned with principles, with premises, and with purposes; consequently, policy can be considered the concern of the liberal arts college. The making of policy is at one and the same time an art and a science.

As a division of Southwestern the Urban Policy Institute is a projection of advanced liberal education into practical affairs. While the Institute uses the knowledge and research that is produced by any institution of higher learning, its essential emphasis is upon the method of liberal education. In policy analysis and in policy planning the Institute uses the dialectic of discussion and draws upon the substance of the social sciences.

Policy making is inevitably interdisciplinary involving the range of the sciences of society. The Institute utilizes all the disciplines of the urban and regional sciences by assembling a team of urban specialists from all the centers of urban research of the nation to assist in the analyzing and planning of urban policy. Thus, the liberal arts college can contribute to the preparation of new paradigms of policy for the unfolding urban age.

The faculty of the Memphis Urban Policy Institute, which is drawn from institutions throughout the country, includes men who are engaged in significant urban research and who are the most capable in translating this new knowledge into urban policy. Among the specialists who have participated in the work of the Institute in recent years are the following: Lynton K. Caldwell, University of Indiana; John W. Dyckman, University of California, Berkeley; Jean Gottmann, University of Paris; Robert L. Geddes, Princeton University; Scott Greer, Northwestern University; Edward Higbee, University of Rhode Island; Kevin Lynch, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Melvin M. Webber, University of California, Berkeley.

A recent significant activity of the Urban Policy Institute bespeaks the confidence of the community in Southwestern's endeavors in urban affairs. During the past year, the people of Memphis adopted a revised city charter and in November elected the public officials who will direct the new government. At the request of the City Council, the Urban Policy Institute, December 14-16, 1967, conducted a council seminar on fiscal policy, with John Osman, of the Brookings Institution, Darwin Daicoff, of the University of Kansas, Wilbur R. Thompson, of Wayne State University, and Alan K. Campbell, of Syracuse University, serving as resource leaders for the conference. All of the Coun-

cil members were present for the fiscal policy sessions. One member, speaking for all of the Council, stated that the conference would "pay immeasurable dividends in better government for the City of Memphis."

Conclusion

Southwestern likes to think that it is engaged in a task in Memphis similar to that of Matthew Arnold in England. In the belief that the spirit of which Sir Richard Livingstone and Matthew Arnold wrote can make better cities, Southwestern is utilizing its Adult Education Center to impart a measure of that spirit to Memphis and the Mid-South.