

COMMENTS OF THE PRESIDENT - SOPHE ANNUAL MEETING - 8th November 1969

ANNUAL BANQUET - PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

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Miss Susan King-Hall, Honored guests, officers and members of the Society of Public Health Educators, and friends of health education:-

One of the prices (and it is only one of the prices) that one pays for whatever glory, laud and honor go with being President of an organization is the preparation and presentation of that ancient and honorable event, the Presidential Address.

I dare say that there are some people who rather look forward to this privilege and this duty. Perhaps we have had some SOPHE Presidents who did so. But lest there be any doubt about it, your soon-to-be-retired and relieved President is not one of them.

Duty it is and privilege it should be. For the nominal head of an organization such as ours, after a year of service, should have something of interest and value to say to the constituency which elected him, and should cherish the opportunity to do so. I presume that emotionally stable persons may believe, in all sincerity, that they have something to offer. Indeed a scanning of past presidential addresses indicates that they have had, each in his or her way, contributed to the thinking in our professional field.

Now we come to the emotionally unstable President and only time will tell if the pattern holds.

Last November (can it have been a year ago, Howard?), only hours after I had become your next President (through the eminently democratic process of having been chosen your President-elect, on a single slate, and then moved, by tradition and the By-Laws, to President for a year), your Vice President, Dr. Howard M. Fitts, Jr., came to me in the restaurant in Cobo Hall in Detroit (and how well I remember the event) with this message. I quote verbatim from memory.

"Ted, for the past few years the SOPHE Presidents have been getting away with murder. They have been coping out. They have, to be specific, not been making Presidential Addresses. I have been authorized and instructed by the Program Committee for the 1969 Annual Meeting, of which Committee I am, by virtue of my office, the chairman, to inform you that by popular acclaim and vote of the Program Committee you are now served notice that there will be a Presidential Address in Philadelphia in 1969."

I recall answering in an offhand manner, "I hear you, Howard." I was deep in a discussion of the work of the Central Office with Caesar Branchini and Jack Grimes. It was only that evening that I realized to what I had committed myself. "My God! What have I said?" was all that rushed through my mind and it brought on a spell of muscle weakness and dizziness. I had to go and lie down.

In all seriousness, some message from the head of an organization is entirely fitting and proper. In all humility, I have prepared some hopefully pertinent remarks which I will presently deliver. But first a word about our sponsor. For it seems equally fitting that your President report briefly on the state of the Society at the end of his stewardship.

When I was so warmly kissed into office last year by Dr. Betty Bond (your turn is coming, Bill) who for some reason seemed greatly relieved and eager to hand on the gavel, I had hoped, and later planned, that this year SOPHE's housekeeping might settle down into a routine so that major attention might be given to other more important matters. Alackaday! We have made progress, indeed we have, thanks to the loyal and energetic support of Fellows across the country, but we are still knee-deep in housekeeping, as those of you who attended the afternoon sessions know.

And perhaps here is the best place to say how grateful I am to the Board and to the Chapters and the Fellowship at large who have been so wonderfully supportive and have worked so very hard all this past year. For all of this my very sincere thanks.

As you will recall, at this time last year, our beloved St. Helen had left us, through no fault of her own. We were unsure of whether or not we could remain housed with the Mental Health Materials Center for another year. The Central Office Committee (and I must single out Caesar Branchini and Jack Grimes in particular) took hold. Correspondence got answered somehow, although often much too late. Caesar and his family, believing in the "voluntary way," got out the dues notices when the bank balance got too low for comfort. He stuffed his kids and they stuffed the envelopes. Alex Sareyan, our landlord, in his most understanding way permitted us to remain on a month to month basis until March when, with a modest rent increase, we signed up for the rest of the year, strictly on faith.

Then our former Administrative Secretary came back and was willing to resume work with us on a reduced schedule because we couldn't afford all of the time we really needed of her services. Looking back I tremble to think of the state we might be in at this time had she not returned.

Public praise is always embarrassing. I don't wish to go off the deep end. But in all sincerity SOPHE owes Helen Taylor Gardella a tremendous debt of gratitude. She came back into the office, faced the pile of papers and unfiled things, and in hours it seemed had a firm hold of the reins and had begun doing the many things none of us had had the time to do or indeed knew how to do. You could feel the ship steady, to change the metaphore, and gather speed as her sails filled and she heeled to starboard with a bone in her teeth.

This woman is out of this world and that is why I referred to her a moment ago as "St. Helen." Time and again this past year I have written, or more often telephoned, with some such message as, "Helen, don't you think we should do this or that?" And the reply has nearly always been, "Yes, I have done it, Ted." I say, nearly always because some few times the response was, "Yes, I'm doing it" and just once, "Yes, I plan to do it." It is because SOPHE owes so much to Helen that she is sitting there at the head table, as one of those who have been guiding your Society this past year.

Through the good offices of Ruth F. Richards and the By-Laws Committee with help from Frances Ogasawara, the By-Laws changes were sent to you for action. You voted them in prior to the Spring Board meeting. The Board then took the necessary action to make the new eligibility requirements for membership official for the Society, and another milestone had been passed.

Related to this has been the work of Wilma Dean Henry in the development (with lots of advice) of a new application form which has been made available to you here and to all the chapters. It is on a trial basis and when we are satisfied that it is in the most useful form we will have it printed up in greater quantity with SOPHE's seal. So please let Wilma Dean know what is right or wrong with it. And Nancy Ott and her two sub-committees (Northern and Southern California cooperated) turned out a set of Questions and Answers (which you have also received) to be used as a guide to the interpretation of the new eligibility rules.

Finally, a set of rules for the Eligibility Committee itself was prepared from material submitted by Nancy's committee, but in a little different form. It is of primary concern to the Eligibility Committee that reviews membership applications, and to the Board, should it become involved in a controversial application. And most recently Wilma Dean Henry has produced a "come on" flier which has been duplicated. Thanks to Clarence Pearson and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company we will have 2,000 copies available. A fact sheet is also available for responding to the inquiries which the flier stimulates.

The Standing Committee on Professional Preparation and Practice, under the leadership of Dr. Jeannette J. Simmons, has gone steadily along with the implementation of procedures to assist in the accreditation of graduate programs in community health education beyond Schools of Public Health as well as within. In consequence we can proudly announce that the graduate program in community health education at the University of Tennessee is the first such to receive APHA accreditation. SOPHE Fellows have participated in the development of the standards for graduate training and in the accreditation process.

APHA is making some use of our panel of experts in visitations to the schools although it does not always choose health educators of our selection. I understand that dates have been set for examination of programs at four more schools in 1970. For those of you who were alive in the 1940's this is indeed a particularly satisfying report.

The approval of undergraduate programs in community health education has not been activated as yet. The mechanism is there. Dr. Lenin Glass chaired an ad hoc committee to line up the action needed to be taken to get this entirely new procedure going. His report has been submitted for the guidance of the Board. Dr. Simmons has submitted a detailed protocol for action. The Board accepted this and charged the committee to move forward with all speed. There is active interest on the part of several schools. I hope that Bill Darity can report to you next year at this time a substantial number of approved undergraduate programs. Not only are these needed to augment the pool of trained manpower in health education, but they will create an enlarged potential membership pool for SOPHE.

I have reported to you in HIGHLIGHTS, and in my last open letter to the Fellowship, on the establishment of the Development Committee and of its progress. You have all received at least one communication from that Committee. Under the excellent leadership of Milton W. Dedek, this Committee has made, what seems to me, unusually rapid strides. You have already discussed its most recent important proposals this afternoon. I will not dwell on them here except to say that in setting up this committee the Board took a noteworthy step forward last year. And the Board action taken yesterday, in my opinion, is a milestone of great significance. Let me assure you that it was not taken lightly. I urge all of you to study the issues and the proposals for action. Having done so I would hope that, independently, each of you would arrive at a position in support of the Board's action.

I would like to comment, however, that in Mr. Dedek we have found a "sleeper" who has proved of tremendous value. Milton had not been active in the Society. A few knew him; many did not. He was strongly recommended, by one who knew him well, to be chairman of this committee. I met with Milton and Tom Grogan

in Dayton last winter on one of the season's coldest days. I liked him and I asked him to serve. I have never regretted it for one moment.

The point is, how many other "sleepers" do we have? How can we get them hooked into the system? If any of you know of people who you feel are ripe for a certain job in SOPHE, as Tom felt about Milton, please let your President know. We need desperately to spread the leadership responsibility beyond the old school tie group.

Early in my incumbancy I felt the need to write to the Presidents of the several Chapters about some of the actions of the Board. In that letter I indicated a hope that I might, during the year, meet with each of the Chapters. I thought that this might promote better understanding of SOPHE's program and problems. I indicated in my letter that I would welcome an invitation.

Boastfully I can report that I received an invitation from each of the seven Chapters and have met with six. In all but one case there was a special meeting at which I spoke, sometimes not as briefly as I had planned, and in which I subjected myself to questions. The all-day meeting outside of Chapel Hill with the North Carolina Chapter was, I felt, particularly useful. I was able to sit in with the New England Chapter at one of its meetings but did not use up much of the time as Jeannette and Marjorie were there to report on the Annual Meeting and Board sessions.

My one failure, if it can be called that, was the Tri-State Chapter. In all fairness it was my fault and not theirs. I was just not available on the night of their meeting. However, I have worked with so many of the members of this Chapter during the year, with Jack, Caesar, Frances and others so deeply involved in the Society's affairs, I doubt that I could have brought any news to that group. Nevertheless, I would have liked to have met with them. But time is a limiting factor and most of us do have regular jobs on which we depend for our livelihood.

On the Pacific Coast swing I met for all of one day with the organizing unit for the Northwest which has been growing under the chairmanship of Harry App. They are having a hard time rounding up 15 fellows. The group is scattered with leadership in Olympia and the concentration of potential membership in Seattle. Distances are great out that way.

You know one hears about good old-fashioned Southern hospitality, but I want you to know that you will find it hard to beat West Coast hospitality. In Oakland and in Long Beach I was treated like a king by the Northern and Southern California Chapters.

On the trip from San Francisco to Seattle my plane was delayed for several hours in San Francisco. I tried to get a message to Harry App who had written that he would meet me. He had made a reservation for me in Olympia for the night and, in case you don't know it, it is a "fur piece" from Sea-Tac Airport to the Golden Gavel Motel in Olympia. My plane was due at 7:21 p.m. and I arrived at 12:10 a.m. As I walked from the plane into the waiting area there was a man with a most friendly smile and a slip of paper in his breast pocket on which was written "HARRY APP." He wanted to feed me at that hour but I was more interested in a bed. We got in his V.W. and drove to Olympia and Harry took the occasion to fill me in with his plans and his hopes, his ideas and problems.

What a guy! He had had no news of my plane at all. United could tell him nothing. I might have stood him up or crashed in the sea, for all he knew, but there he was waiting. And while I'm at it, I'd like to tell you that when he first wrote asking if I would come out and talk to the group, he said he thought that they could raise the price of my trip so that it would not have to be at my own or SOPHE's expense. Talk about commitment! Happily I did not have to accept his offer.

My last Chapter meeting was quite recently when I had lunch and met during the afternoon with the OHIO chapter. This too was an interesting and productive meeting in many ways. I was happy to have the opportunity of thanking Ohio for its contribution to SOPHE this year in the form of Frankie Williamson's chairmanship of the Nominating Committee and Mary Wheeler's continued service as our Secretary, as well as the contribution of Milt Dedeck, Marvin Strauss and Tom Grogan on the Development Committee. I also sold a set of Monographs.

My hope had been to bring in at least one new chapter during the year. (You see how self-centered I am). But this is not to be. Bill may bring in three. Missouri has just recently come in with a group of applications, Illinois is stirring and don't sell the Northwest short. Caroline Wishik McColl is out there now putting her shoulder to the wheel.

Another matter and a responsibility of one of your Standing Committees - Membership. The Committee has moved forward this year under the triumvirate (what on earth is the female for triumvirate?) of Scottie Stevenson, Marian Upchurch and Mary Vaccaro. According to latest records we have 530 members.

But the problem is that we gain a substantial number each year and lose almost as many. I wish I knew why. The record shows that we lost 22 Fellows last year and welcomed 47 new Fellows to membership. Our Society has been honored by the election of three new Honorary Fellows whom we have just welcomed. It is especially gratifying to have Ruth and Mabel with us tonight. We wish Vivian were here also.

The SOPHE Monographs are a reality. We have a debt outstanding and until it is down to less than \$3,000 the Yale Press will not roll for us although issue 29 is ready and waiting. So sell monographs, sell the sets of the research issues and get basic subscriptions. It is up to you if you want more Monographs.

The Editorship of Monographs passed from Dr. Lowell S. Levin to Dr. Robert A. Bowman on June 1st this year. Helen went to New Haven to assist in the transfer of the management responsibilities of Monographs from the Editorial Board to the Central Office. She has opened an account in a New York Bank and from now on the business management of Monographs will be a responsibility of the New York Office. Our new editor and his board can now concentrate their attention on the development of manuscript.

There are many other committees the interesting work of which I have not mentioned. One runs the risk of offending but there will be time tomorrow morning to speak of others. Also copies of some of the Committee reports are available. In addition, I have every hope that this year we can have a printed proceedings which will carry synopses of committee work, with lists of membership, as well as Mr. Echols' paper, lists of our officers, a financial statement and other pertinent matters. We have not had a report for some years and need one.

So, at the end of her nineteenth year, SOPHE has strong vital signs. She breaths and grows and like all creatures has her good days and bad. Somehow I feel that she is on the verge of a growth spurt which will bring her to full adulthood. I have tried hard but have not met my own goals. There is so much to be done. My priorities have been off at times, but with the help of everyone we have kept going and possibly have gained. I wish Bill well with the patient as he takes over in the morning.

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In the winter of 1953-54 I was sent by the Regional Office to further develop a program of health education at the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health in Calcutta. Morey Fields and Vivian Drenckhahn followed me and there is now a graduate program in community health education at that institution. We

all had a whack at it and perhaps it is not incorrect to say that SOPHE helped to build it, although none of us was there as a SOPHE Fellow. But why should not SOPHE in the future render such a service?

One of my assignments was to meet with a group of nurses from India and Thailand who were studying public health in a diploma course. Our goal, to raise our sights as health educators.

One day we were talking about how one could work with the poorest of the villagers. How one should act. What one should do. A nurse from India commented that to be effective you had to move into the huts and mud houses where the villagers lived acting as if you really didn't mind the dirt and the insects. You shouldn't pull your sari up to keep it out of the dust, she said.

Before this little presentation was completed, another nurse, a woman from Bombay I remember, was bursting to respond. "You're wrong. You're wrong," she said. "You must never act 'as if' you didn't care. You can't fool the people. They will know in a minute that you do care. You have got to want so much to help these people, care for them, make them well, help them with their babies, and all that, that the dirt and mess and bugs you don't even see. You have to love them if you want to help them."

There was a four letter word I could spell and wasn't ashamed to put on the blackboard, so I did. And for the rest of the some eight sessions we had together I put "LOVE" on the board as a sort of touchstone for all our discussions. I had never thought about it before but it seemed peculiarly fitting for a health educator.

One day Dr. Hugh Leavel came through the Institute with the Director, Dr. Krishnan, on one of those inspection trips. He suddenly appeared at the door and I spoke to him and invited him in but he shook his head and indicated that I should continue with the class, which I did. Then he asked, "Is that LOVE on the board, Ted?" I replied in the affirmative and he continued, "What has love got to do with health education?" I have forgotten what I said. Probably stammered some imbecility and he went on, but it was even more forceably borne in on my mind that love and health education had some common bond and I have thought about it many times since.

Of all the professionals serving in the health field it seems to me that the health educator most truly identifies with the consumer, that is, the resident of the community, the patient

in the clinic, with the people, if you will. I can hear the defense mechanisms beginning to whirr in the minds of all good nurses and physicians and social workers, among others. I do not mean to belittle their work or sense of identification with the patient one iota. And yet, in all sincerity, do they honestly take the patient's side when the chips are down? Health educators have done so from the beginning. In fact, not a few have been condemned by their administrators as being disloyal because they have sided with the people and have even organized the public to bring pressures to bear for more or better services on the very agencies for which they worked. It has been a difficult stance to take. To be a part of the professional health team, to keep the respect of one's teammates, and at the same time, not to sell the Public short. Health education recruitment pamphlets sometimes ask, "Do you like people?" Perhaps they should ask, "Do you love people?"

In this sophisticated audience I need not go into the distinction between the three concepts of love as identified by the three Greek words for love. I am not referring to eros or to philos but to agape. What is sometimes referred to as compassion, but be careful you don't get that mixed up with pity and sympathy. There is a nice distinction.

Charity, it has been translated in the New Testament from the teachings of St. Paul. But here we run into even greater danger. For charity has an entirely different meaning for us today than it did in St. Paul's time. It is indeed what we are trying desperately to get away from today by means of guaranteed wage, medicare and jobs for all. Rights, not doles. The same for all, not baskets at Christmas. No, I am speaking of compassion, empathy, understanding, love.

The world is fragmented. The health profession is fragmented. The populations of our countries are fragmented. The greater our ability to reduce the time of travel the wider seems to be the understanding gap. Although we travel faster and faster, we seem to know fewer and fewer people really well. Our contacts are at a superficial level. Our meetings fleeting and casual. Lack of understanding leads to fears and doubts. Fears and doubts lead to hostility, of which we have a world full.

Dickens, I believe it was, is quoted as saying, "I hate that man across the street." To which his walking companion replied, "Why, for heaven's sake? You don't even know him."

"That's just why I hate him," Dickens answered.

Maybe the job of a health educator is to help people know each other better, whether it be in Hillsboro County, a model city area in Atlanta, on the Indian Reservation, in a city hospital outpatient waiting room or at a PTA meeting on sex education in the fifth grade. Maybe health educators can help people to better health by helping people, consumers, patients, professional associates, to know and trust each other more than they do.

We have geared ourselves to be specialists in the learning, the educative, process. We use these skills to try to help people understand what actions they had best take to maintain and improve their health. We're bears on organizing, although sometimes it is not clear for what. We are beginning to call ourselves planners, although to tell the truth I think we have always been. It seems to me that the health educator has repeatedly been the person who has asked a group to stop a minute and look at the situation, to select some objectives and then to plan their attainment rather than to rush in and do the first thing that comes to mind. However, planning comes in capital letters now and it pays more. It even has a mystique. And planning today is concerned with politics as never before so perhaps health educators will have to learn to be politicians.

This leads me to ask what is really new today? The health educator has always been involved in planning. Consumer participation? That has been one of the cardinal principles of health education. It is a must for anyone who is trying to get other people to act. Representation of minority groups? Health educators have been trying to do this with varying degrees of success for years.

Today the "in" word is comprehensive. Yet, back in 1944-45, as a student at Chapel Hill our class was known as the "T.P.T.ers." In other words, "The Total Program Toters" and what we were talking about was total or comprehensive planning and programming. We talked about the whole man and the whole program but that's what comprehensive programs are all about today.

What am I implying? I am implying that the very concepts and principles and programs which have top priority today are the concepts, principles and programs which have been a part of the health educator's thinking for years. I am saying that these programs of top priority today have need of the skills and knowledges, the understandings and attitudes, that we have been trained to develop and use. We are indispensable and we don't seem to recognize it. Even the way health educators have been called to serve in leadership positions on comprehensive health planning agencies doesn't seem to have awakened us. We are, I believe, about to miss the boat.

If ever, IF EVER, the time was right for us to do our thing it is now. And if we will remember the four letter word on the blackboard in Calcutta and try to make it our goal then all the rest will be added unto our program.

The world needs love (not hippy free love) but compassion, understanding, acceptance, patience, if our health programs, or any other programs of this world, are going to succeed and bring us out of the slough of despair we are now in as a world. This trust and understanding is the ingredient most needed for the implementation of the hopes and schemes of the planners. In all sincerity, is there any reason why the health educator should not bring love and understanding to the field of health? This can be our finest and most effective contribution. Let us love one another. How we all need love!

Some of your Presidents have given you a record of things accomplished. Some have given you philosophical discourses. Some have given you scientific papers on the theory of learning. Each has done his thing as he saw and felt the need.

A person who was at one time my field supervisor and who is my long-time friend and counsellor, once said, "Ted, be yourself."

So I have tried to be myself. I have done my thing. I have brought to your attention what I think is of paramount importance today in the field of health and elsewhere. I speak of love for mankind. Add it to your health education kit. Believe in it. Practice it. And take your rightful place as a leader in the health programs of today.

Now I close with a quotation from William Faulkner.

"I believe that man will not merely endure. He will prevail. He is immortal not because he alone among the creatures has an inexhaustible voice but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance."

God bless you all!

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