

Groups: Curse Of Schooling And Minorities

By CHARLOTTE MAJZNER
Special Writer

"I don't like groups, any groups," said educator Max Rafferty to an audience of about 75 at Schoolcraft Community College in a lecture delivered Apr. 6 as part of the college Cultural Series.

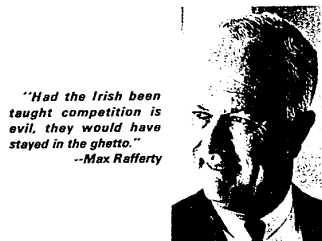
Rafferty's topic was "what's going to happen to us individuals." The great dogma of group education, according to Rafferty, is life-adjustment education.

"This is what the life-adjustment boys really believe. The only thing they're teaching is how to adjust," said Rafferty.

Dr. Rafferty, conservative educator, was the superintendent of public instruction in California until 1970. In 1968, he ran for the U.S. Senate as a Republican but was defeated. Currently he is dean of the school of education at Troy State University in Troy, Ala.

HIS GREATEST grievance is the loss of identity and erosion of self-respect. Look at college students: "Student feeling may be described as a type of creeping facelessness," he said.

Rafferty described a letter from a college girl who complained about being "photographed, taped, inoculated and filed." She said she came to



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--Max Rafferty

college to become a person but instead she had become a number.

"What do we expect," said Rafferty, "when people are taught day after day that acceptance of a group is far more important than their own God-given abilities?"

Rafferty said he was not surprised that students were protesting all these years.

"What we have been seeing on our campus is the bubbling of yeast. It is harmful, destructive, but it is there and has to be recognized," he said.

RAFFERTY DESCRIBED the Irish as an ethnic group which broke out of the ghetto because they were finally recognized as individuals instead of belonging to a group.

"Groupism is not what the group minorities need. Had the Irish been taught competition is evil, they would have stayed in the ghetto."

Rafferty said that if he were a member of an ethnic group, he would insist on three things.

As a parent he would insist on an educational philosophy which would emphasize the idea of individuality instead of groupism. Second, as a breadwinner, he would take full advantage of night classes and adult education. Thirdly, as a voter, he would join a political party that would treat him as an individual.

"I would resist any ballot discriminating against me because of nationality or race. I would press for individuality and fight groupism," he said.

"Above all," continued Rafferty, "resolve in your own minds and hearts not to surrender to your worst enemy."

To Rafferty the worst enemy is "Mr. Stork." He cited the crucial problem in the breeding of mankind to be the survival of the individual.

"It is going to be up to us and particularly the college students that mankind is going to hear the voice of free men," he said.

ASKED IF HE felt that real individualism was exercised in Summerhill, an experimental school which stressed lack of format and discipline, Rafferty replied:

"Essentially, Summerhill treated people as individuals, not as students but as people doing their own thing."

He said that some from Summerhill succeeded later in college but they had three things going for them. They had one instructor for every seven students; practically all the children were of wealthy families; and all were in the upper quarter of their class.

"Therefore, I don't think that the lessons it taught could be applied," stated Rafferty.

TO OTHER QUESTIONS, Rafferty expressed opinions on several current issues:

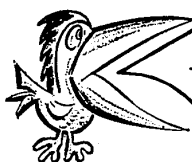
- "Forced bussing is poison as far as education is concerned." It was important for parents to get into a school easily and discuss "junior" with the teacher.

- Universities exist to make a truly educated person and truth is of the utmost relevancy. He described truth as a multi-faceted diamond: Each person takes a facet and pursues it.

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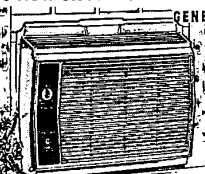
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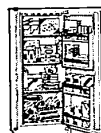
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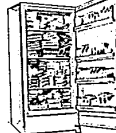
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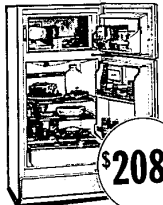
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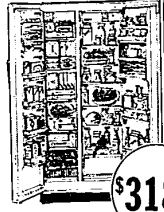
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