

when they were learning about another culture, country, or geographical region of the world; or when they were studying foreign policy, international relations, or world problems.

The trouble with this conception is not that it is wrong. It is simply too narrow and incomplete a notion of global education. A student need not be studying things foreign or international, as we have conventionally thought of these terms, in order to be involved in global education. There are ways in which a student can study his or her own community and be as much involved in global education as when he or she is studying a community in another part of the world.

EXAMPLES OF GLOBAL EDUCATION

If global education is incapable of being defined by reference to a particular body of content or subject matter, then how can the term be defined? We can usefully begin a search for an alternative way of thinking about global education by glancing at a few examples of global education in action.

The three examples to the right suggest the diversity of approaches Dr. Anderson highlighted. Ed.

[Dr. Anderson concluded,] these people are in differing ways and degrees conscious of the global character of the contemporary world. They realize that students now in the nation's schools are becoming citizens in an era of history in which individuals are progressively involved and implicated in organizations, in social processes, and in human problems that cut across or transcend the boundaries of particular communities, nations, and cultures. They sense that citizenship in such an era demands new competencies, and developing such competencies will require change in how children and young people are educated about the world.

EXAMPLES OF GLOBAL EDUCATION

■ *In a Detroit school, a third grade teacher introduces into her social studies curriculum a new unit in which the children explore what all human beings have in common by comparing human beings with other living things. Asked by a parent why she has done this, the teacher responded, "Every day my children experience racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in the school and in this neighborhood. Throughout their lives these children will be meeting and working with many different kinds of people. They need to learn how to relate constructively to people who are different. I believe a terribly important part of their education is to learn to see what all people have in common; what makes us all members of a common humanity."*

■ *In a high school in Portland, Oregon, the teacher of a world affairs course is arranging for her students' after-school internships in Portland's several voluntary associations involved in world affairs. The Rotary Club is one of these. The teacher explains to the President of the club why*

she thinks this is important. "In today's world active citizenship can't stop at the water's edge. My students need to learn that citizens can do more than read about and talk about international affairs. They need to learn that they can be personally active. They can best learn this by working with local people and organizations that are doing things on the world scene."

■ *In Paris, educators from several nations meet to work on a set of world history lessons that will be commonly used in schools of each of the nations represented at the conference. After his return home, the representative from the United States was asked to write an article about the project for a professional journal. The article begins: "Ours is an age in which all of humankind is caught up in a universal history. There is no history of Europe that is independent of the world. Similarly, there are ways of studying the American Revolution in a US history class that involve students in global education as much as they are when they study the Arab-Israeli conflict in a world problems or international relations course."*

A DEFINITION OF GLOBAL EDUCATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLING

These commonalities in the events outlined above point to a definition of global education.

- Global education consists of efforts to bring about changes in the content, in the methods, and in the social context of education in order to better prepare students for citizenship in a global age.

This is a very simple definition, but inherent in it are three major propositions that have far-reaching implications for education. The first of these propositions concerns the character of the historical era in which today's children and youth have been born. This proposition can be summarized as follows:

- The students now in the nation's schools are becoming citizens within the

context of a global era in human history.

The second proposition concerns the significance of the emergence of a global age for citizenship and the education of citizens. It can be stated this way:

- The demands of citizenship in a global age call for the development of competencies that have not been traditionally emphasized by schools.

The third proposition concerns the types of changes in education that seemingly must occur if schools are to become more effective agents in developing citizen competence in a global age. It can be stated as follows:

- Certain changes must take place in the content, in the methods, and in the social context of education if schools are to become more effective agents of citizen education in a global age.