

way (by the critical study of written records or of fossil remains, perhaps). Thus the separate disciplines were born, not out of arbitrary invention, but out of evolving experience. Trial and error, prolonged over centuries, has resulted in the perfecting of these tools of investigation. The methods can be systematized and taught, hence the intellectual power that mankind has accumulated throughout its entire history can be passed on to successive generations. Thereby each generation is enabled to master the new environment and the new conditions of life that surround it.

ENSLAVING MEN'S MINDS

IN THAT terrifying novel by George Orwell, *1984*, the Party of Big Brother developed the ultimate in ruthless dictatorship precisely because it devised the means of enslaving men's minds. It began by undermining the discipline of history, setting all men adrift in a world where past experience became meaningless. It continued by undermining the discipline of language, debasing speech until it could no longer be the vehicle of independent thought. And the crowning triumph of its torture chambers was the undermining of the disciplines of logic and mathematics, by which it finally brought its victims not only to assert but actually to believe that two plus two equals five.

As yet, fortunately, it is only through fantasy that we can see what the destruction of the scholarly and scientific disciplines would mean to mankind. From history, we can learn what their existence has meant. The sheer power of disciplined thought is revealed in practically all the great intellectual and technological advances which the human race has made. The ability of the man of disciplined mind to direct this power effectively upon problems for which he was not specifically trained is proved by examples without number. This ability to solve new problems by using the accumulated intellectual power of the race is mankind's most precious possession. To transmit this power of disciplined thinking is the primary and inescapable responsibility of education.

A CONCEPT REPUDIATED

THE CONCEPT of education that I have just stated is *not* guiding the American public schools today. An alarming number of professional educators—school superintendents, professors of education, and members of the state educational bureaucracies—have repudiated it in favor of something which is apt to be called “life-adjustment education.” As an example, let us examine a study sponsored by the superintendent of public instruction in Illinois, looking toward the reorganization of the public-school curric-