

material about Canada. These requests have usually been filled by mailing out teachers' and students' kits that are collated within each consulate. The kits contain a number of publications, most of which may be considered to be of acceptable quality in the absence of more exciting material. In this regard, it was somewhat surprising to see the degree to which even French-Canadian consulate personnel seem to be unfamiliar with the available French-Canadian publications and the uses to which they may be put in school programs.

2. U.S. Schools

The idea of freedom has long been a part of the American ethic. Indeed, any suggestion that they are not completely free can often trigger a conditioned defensive reflex on the part of many Americans. Nonetheless, as must always be the case in any organized society, complete freedom has to be tempered with a certain degree of conformity, and this is as true in U.S. schools as it is elsewhere. Real problems can flow from the carefully nurtured, almost unthinking, support for the idea of complete freedom, and from the resultant need which many otherwise-reasonable Americans appear to feel to interrupt a conversation with fervent protestations of allegiance to this ideal -- especially when these tendencies encounter the kinds of "restrictions" that are implicit in any system. In brief, Americans want to be told that they are completely free, even in a day when their national purpose requires more and more coordination and conformity.

Many of the characteristics of schools and school systems in the United States seem to arise out of the juxtaposition of the two characteristics described above. Some of the state curriculum authorities lament the fact that more and more teachers seem to want guidelines rather than freedom to develop their own ideas. Closer examination, however, reveals that most American school systems are set up in such a way as to discourage individual initiative along any but rather narrow approved lines. In many states (some more than others) state-wide curriculum guidelines are laid down.