

The Open School Door

A Series of Articles on Clinton County
Schools and Their Problems

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What is a national convention like? What all is included in putting on a national event? their reward in making visitors aware of all of the most modern gimmicks.

It was a real interesting experience not only to attend a large convention like the National Association of Secondary School Principals but also be in on the behind the scenes organization of the operations of putting on the affair.

Probably everyone at a national convention looks at the proceedings in a different way. The speeches are usually important and related to the professional topics. There is always the reviewing of old friendships. The most impressive part to me seemed to be all of the detailed planning that goes into the operation of the meetings.

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THE DETROIT convention really started five years ago when it was decided where the affair was to be held. Last year the 11 main convention chairmen were chosen. Also last year and this fall at the Michigan Secondary School Principals' meeting in Grand Rapids further and somewhat final assignment arrangements were made. Of course, for the past two years there were many committee meetings.

It may appear strange to have such impressions but the speakers' ideas usually are not new or startling. It's true that there were many outstanding men who gave outstanding speeches but to talk with people in private conversations and gain their personal opinions seemed of greater benefit in gaining ideas.

We couldn't overlook the fact that there were many well-known personalities present. Mayor Miriani of Detroit opened the meetings and Detroit School superintendent S. M. Brownell set the pace with his talk.

Other well-known speakers were: David D. Henry, President of the University of Illinois and former president of Wayne State; Paul Henri Spaak, secretary General of NATO in Paris; George Romney, president of American Motors Corp; James C. Worthy, Sears-Roebuck executive; Clyde Vroman, University of Michigan; Edward Bennett, famous lawyer; and many more.

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There were over 7,000 principals from all over the nation and probably close to a total of 10,000 people were involved one way or another with the meetings. One problem was to house all of these people. Certainly all of the hotels and motels were tied up.

Another tremendous problem was the transportation of everyone to the right places. First of all, a special bus line was set up that took a kind of loop through the downtown area to all of the hotel and motel rooms. The start and end of the line was at fabulous Cobo hall where all of the main meetings were held.

Sometimes when the meetings were breaking up well over 100 buses were employed. The DSR also provided fleets of buses for the many tours conducted for educational or entertainment of the meeting attenders. We became involved into this as chairman of the industrial tours. There work in determining the needs certainly was much detailed work in determining the needs the five days of the meetings last week.

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ANOTHER sometimes overlooked but important aspect of the convention was the book and school supply displays. Most of the latest educational materials produced by America's business were on display. The colorful booths covered a small city block which included all kinds of products to assist the schools in performing their duties.

The many hours it takes to visit most of the booths have

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