

Mr. SCHEUER. Which, judging from Mrs. Williams, is more than a theoretical question.

Mrs. WILLIAMS. In a classroom, that would have no way of happening, for the one reason, you look upon the teacher as the master teacher. I am in the role of aid or assistant, and I would never try to overstep my bounds as to being the master teacher.

I fulfill my role, but never to overstep the professional.

Mr. CAREY. Are we prepared to see that day when the number of teacher aids becomes such a matter of interest to the United Federation of Teachers that then they would be organized?

Mrs. WILLIAMS. Well, they can be organized, but I don't think the day will come when they will overstep the professional. You see, the professionals have the paper and the degree for that position, and we don't have it.

Mr. NIEMEYER. But we can't look into the future to that extent.

Mrs. WILLIAMS. Not that far.

Mr. CAREY. Well, I am not going to continue with the line of questioning, but I think it is always important to have a premonition, either good or bad, and I am not one of those who believes you should ever encourage things to get off the ground unless they are going to move constructively toward an objective that we can apprehend as realistic for all the children, and this means that if teacher aides are good in one classroom, for one group of children, they are good for all the children of a large city school system.

Therefore, we have to look at this in a dimension of something which is going to be a well-supported, comprehensive program of teacher aides supply and training and provision for all the children.

Now if this is so, then we are talking about a second lead in the teaching profession, subprofessional, it is true, but no more than an internist subprofessional, the aid is subprofessional. Therefore, if we embark upon this encouragement program and training program and support program for this kind of thing, we ought to envision all the possibilities and probabilities, and the clear probability to me is that we are setting up a copilot in the classroom. And I would remind the witnesses that copilots have stature of their own, and these persons would have a stature of their own, and they are rightly entitled to it.

Now, double teaming in the classroom may be a good idea. Probably it is a good idea, especially now that one system I can think of, by this morning's reference in the prints, 76 teachers resigned. Hopefully, the aides would be around, to maintain some sort of order and progression in that situation where the teacher is waiting to be replaced. These are, to me, deep and gripping questions, as to what will tend to support this second line of care and education and instructional service, and all comprehensive services for the children through the teacher aid profession, if I may use that term; so, is Bank Street prepared to carry this to that degree?

Are you prepared to go all the way with setting up programs for teacher aides in every classroom, in all the schools that need it in the city?

Mr. NIEMEYER. Oh, I think the schools of New York City would benefit from this enormously; yes.

Mr. CAREY. That isn't the question. The question is, Are you prepared to undertake it, or to have someone undertake it?