



## Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson,  
Ph.D.

The importance of play in a child's life cannot be overestimated. It is important not only for its social value, but also for its therapeutic value.

Play is a child's work. A child frequently uses play to deal with his thoughts, fantasies, and feelings. Comer and Poussaint state that often the anger the child would like to express toward his parents of siblings is taken out on his doggy, teddy bear, or doll.

Play is also used to develop body control, language, thought, and other social skills. In play, the child can repeat an experience he enjoyed such as a trip to the store, a ride in the car. He can pretend his way through a dangerous event to take the danger out of it. He may be seen giving a short to a doll or teddy bear before or after he goes to the doctor. A child often practices being a competent, independent person in play to make up for the times he is dependent and unable to do things in the big, adult world.

What kinds of play are best for children of pre-school age? Art - drawing, painting, clay work - is particularly helpful in play activity. At two a child loves the feel of clay or paint. By age three, a child is beginning to pay attention to the results of his artwork. At four years old the child makes snakes and cakes, people and cars, animals and everything in his world with his clay.

It is interesting to note that drawings by pre-school children from various income, ethnic and racial backgrounds are very similar. Only later do clothing, jewelry, and other items characteristic of a particular culture show up.

Children gain body control through play. The early pre-schooler who climbs on every box, chair, or bench he can find, is developing good muscle tone and muscle control. Climbing in and out and over old boxes, under the stairs, and wherever else he can get is good for him. Wheel toys with pedals, such as cars and fire engines and rockers are good exercise toys for leg muscles.

Building with blocks, small boxes and other items all serve to aid small muscle development and seem to appeal to the three and four year olds. Working with pegboards and puzzles and stringing beads seems to improve the three and four year old's coordination between his eyes and hands.

Language development is also encouraged through play. Before two years of age children find it difficult or almost impossible to express in words much of what he wants. Talking to the child even when he cannot understand helps to prepare him to become a talker himself later on. Once he gains a few words, he discovers that he can use them to make things happen for him. It is understandable then that language becomes important. But his desire to express himself can be turned off if nobody listens to him.

If all goes well, by age three, the child's vocabulary and ability to use language will have greatly increased. By four he is not only a talker but a discussor. He will want to talk about the books you read together. He will want to talk about the stores he has visited.

Certain toys promote language development and provide a lot of amusement as well. Three and four year olds love puppets. Using one's voice to speak for puppets is great fun. The child can be encouraged to use his voice to speak for another puppet and carry on a conversation or put on a play. Toy telephones are also great favorites. All of this aids in language development as well as social development.

For further discussion of the importance of play, the writer recommends a book by James P. Comer, M.D., and Alvin F. Poussaint, M.D., entitled "Black Child Care," which may be purchased in paperback at most bookstores or checked out at the public library.

## COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

By Kenyon C. Burke

### The Census: Friend Or Foe

While attending the conventions of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, I was impressed with highly visible participation of personnel representing the U.S. Census Bureau.

Questions growing out of curiosity and perhaps flavored with some suspicion, began to emerge, over why this increased interest on the part of another government agency in asking personal questions about our lives in our neighborhoods.

What's the census all about? How will the information they collect be used? Why should we reveal any more of our personal business to another source? What is the hidden agenda? Or as we have heard on other issues, what do they really want? This historical fear and suspicion about anyone circulating through minority communities asking questions is well known.

Considering some of the abuses of information gathered by some governmental officials in the distant and recent past, such suspicion is most understandable. This feeling is also rooted in our slavery experience where one feared that shortly after being counted, another trip to the

slave auction block might be in the offing along with a major disruption in one's existence and family ties.

An articulate team fielded by the U.S. Census Bureau and headed by Vivien Lipscomb explained in detail just how important obtaining an accurate count of how many people live in a given area.

Most of us are unaware that allocation for federal funds for day care and health centers, hospitals, schools, freeways, locations of business along with manpower planning and providing jobs for people is based upon census data. The Bureau's reports indicate the black miscount or undercount in the 1970 census was at least 1,800,000. In other words, more funds would have been made available for sorely needed services if those missed were counted.

The revenue sharing formula used to decide how much money cities receive is based upon per capita income, value of owner occupied housing unit, contract rent for rental units, persons per occupied unit and other similar census data.

By obtaining a more accurate count in the 1970 census Triana, Alabama was able to benefit by a 50 percent increase in revenue sharing funds that came to their community. Setting our fears aside and at the same time being watchful of abuses of the confidentiality of census data we have a tool, if properly harnessed that could greatly improve the quality of life in our communities. This is one instance where it pays to stand up and be counted.

## BAYARD RUSTIN The Terrorist Plague

International terrorism is a new, growing, and ugly phenomenon. In the past six years there have been 500 major acts of international terrorism, including over sixty-five kidnappings. That technological advances have made it possible for acts of violence to take part across national borders is only one of the significant developments of international terrorism. The nature as well as the scope of terrorism has also changed. The intellectual revolutionaries and anarchists of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not take political hostages. They did not randomly kill innocent bystanders. If they resorted to political violence it was against an individual tyrant. Today's terrorism on the other hand, is actually a modern version of the non-political kidnappings for money ransom by sea pirates, medieval highway robbers, and twentieth century gangsters.

Although terrorists claim to represent the "people," they are in fact a self-proclaimed elite which has set itself above politics and above responsibility to anyone. Most terrorists are not motivated by political programs. Rather their slogans of revolution and retribution are covers for disturbances of mind and soul.

White it is true that successful democratic revolutions has been ushered in by violence, they are the exceptions. Political violence more often results in the imposition of a new despotism. Moreover, the attitude of democratic revolutionaries toward violence is entirely different from that of terrorists. It is not true, as is sometimes contended, that "one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist." There is much more than political disagreement which defines political terrorism.

The modern terrorist is not a revolutionary, but a gangster. For terrorists violence is not simply an instrument of change, it assumes a value in and of itself. It displaces whatever political grievances might have originally motivated the terrorist. Terrorists reject the possibility that their political goals might be achieved by means other than violence. They will turn on any of their own gang who reject terrorism and seek peaceful change. Consequently, it is almost always true that terrorists do not become responsible and respectable rules if they gain power.

Terrorism, by striking randomly at the citizen who is not responsible, threatens the whole of society, the entire body of mores and morals. Intellectuals have sometime defended terrorism as a short-cut to political change. In reality,

terrorism more often paralyzes the political process and weakens democracy and the forces which might make for a peaceful reconciliation. If terrorists are moderately successful, fear and suspicion become the dominant characteristics of society. Even the most dramatic system must in the face of violence by a handful of terrorists adopt some repressive measures.

Terrorism is an even greater threat to the developing countries than to the industrialized West. Developing countries are "soft states." They have fragile margin of resources which can be devoted to the political and economic modernization of the country. Terrorist violence forces the governments of developing countries to take repressive measures, thereby alienating the citizens and decreasing the government's ability to make needed reforms. As the government loses popular support it is forced to adopt ever more repressive measures.

Eight years after the death of Martin Luther King and thirty years after the death of Mahatma Gandhi, we can see even more clearly the reasons they advocated non-violence. Martin Luther King preached non-violence not only for moral reasons, but for the pragmatic reason that the use of violence would be counter productive and would increase the forces of the extreme right. The bloodshed and mindless violence that flows naturally from terrorism is best seen in Lebanon and Northern Ireland.

It is not always easy to draw a line between domestic and international terrorism. Both are reprehensible and destructive, but international terrorism is especially so. The targets of international terrorists - principally airlines with overseas routes - are symbols of international interdependence. International terrorism would not be possible without the collaboration of some states. Significantly, the collaborating states are ones in which terrorists have gained power and which terrorize their own citizens and the world. A recent example is Idi Amin's complicity in the hijacking of the French airliner.

The Israeli rescue mission was a heroic and humane operation. Israel acted in self-defense under thoroughly established doctrines of international law. International law does not prohibit states from protecting their nationals whose lives are imperiled by political conditions in another state, provided the degree of physical presence employed in their protection is proportional to the situation. Israel's action certainly met those standards.