

■ BOOK REVIEWS ■

Maddox, Linda C. STEP TOWARD FREEDOM. Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1989. Hardbound, 94 pages, \$5.95.

Educators and parents who have attended more than one or two academy graduations know the traditional phrases used in tributes to parents. They have also heard most of the stereotypical comments made by valedictorians in their speeches. These messages often indicate a minimal awareness of the pivotal importance of high school graduation to seventeen- or eighteen-year-olds. The simplistic tone of the messages underlines the graduates' limited inquiry into what the future holds for them and what they owe to their future.

The author of *Step Toward Freedom*, Linda C. Maddox, is a Christian mother whose family is active in church programs. She spent 25 years as a high school teacher and guidance counselor. Through involvement with her grown children, she has viewed firsthand the thinking processes older teenagers follow as they approach their high school graduation. Commenting on this, she says, "I would like to slide some advice, guidelines, a few 'don't's,' and lots of 'do's' in on you. As you leave the warm nest of home and high school, I would like to do my part to send you off with both a blessing and a celebration."

Mrs. Maddox makes frequent references to biblical ideals and standards. Freedom is the theme that runs throughout this book. Her references to freedom are always couched in the concept of freedom in Christ and do not encourage anarchism or a do-as-you-please freedom.

Up front, the author says to graduates-to-be, "[Y]ou probably feel: Now that I am here, no one can tell me what to do. I can take my first step into the newfound freedom! I can do and be whatever I choose."

She reminds seniors that one of their new freedoms is the freedom to be "different from or to be like your parents." She then points out that graduation does not automatically guarantee that parents and graduates are friends. She notes, "Both you and your parents may have to change. Friendship's road must run in both directions. They must become your friends as you become theirs."

In addition to the chapter where she discusses "Free to Be," Mrs. Maddox writes about the following freedoms: "Freedom From Ignorance," "Freedom to Continue Your Education," "Freedom to Make a Living and a Life," "Freedom to Contribute," "Freedom to Perpetuate," and "Freedom to Begin Again." The topics contained in each chapter provide a self-contained unit for juniors and seniors to discuss in youth prob-

lems Bible classes or in specialized seminars. The chapters in *Step Toward Freedom* are brief enough to form the foundation for a two-week unit, or perhaps a once-a-week discussion seminar.

The chapter, "Freedom to Contribute," touches a theme Adventist schools should especially nurture. It is in reality a chapter dealing with outreach. Mrs. Maddox says, "Closely tied to making a life and a living is the freedom to contribute to friends, family, church, and our land." She adds, "When I think of your freedom to contribute to the world around you, two of those sayings [of my mother] come to mind: 'If you want your song to endure, write it on the hearts of men,' and 'You only keep what you give away.'"

Step Toward Freedom is a philosophical statement from an adult who loves children and youth. Mrs. Maddox desires that youth will read it, think about it, and discuss its concepts with others. Her messages are significant and provide an organized format for students to read and discuss important ideas in a nonjudgmental forum.

Academy students should each have their own copy of *Step Toward Freedom*. If they read it, perhaps their tributes to parents will be filled with greater substance, and valedictory addresses will offer ideas and concepts parents can think about. Parents might learn from their graduating child about freedoms they and their children possess in common, and young people would be better prepared to face the world outside the schoolhouse doors.—Peter Albert.

Peter Albert is a pseudonym of an associate superintendent of education in the North American Division.

Perry M. Smith. TAKING CHARGE. A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR LEADERS. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986). Paper, 270 pages, \$7.00.

Perry Smith wrote *Taking Charge* for chief executive officers of organizations or those who aspire to become the "big boss." College/university presidents and superintendents of education will especially profit from a careful study of *Taking Charge*. Young education leaders who read and follow Smith's suggestions will make a greater impact upon their world.

Perry Smith earned a Ph.D. from Columbia University, and has held a number of leadership roles in the military. He lectures throughout the U.S., Europe, and the Far East on effective leadership. While most of his experience has been with the military, Smith's suggestions can easily be adapted

to leadership in public and private organizations. His suggestions for enhancing leadership skills in potential principals, superintendents, and college or university administrators should be of particular interest to current educational leaders.

Taking Charge has two major divisions. Its 24 chapters comprise the first division. The second is a five-part appendix that is a collection of checklists, case studies, and a selected bibliography. Each sub-appendix offers valuable insights into leadership skills or provides ideas for enhancing skills the reader already possesses.

Chapter 19, "Organizing Priorities," may be the most valuable chapter in the book. Smith's lead-off paragraph cites a common saying in real estate that one should consider three essential factors in buying property: "location, location, and location." He ties the importance of an organization's mission to the importance of location in buying real estate. "If the leader is diverted into spending too much time on peripheral issues, the mission will suffer," says Smith. "The mission will also suffer if the leader does not encourage key subordinates to focus on the accomplishments of the organization's goals," he adds.

The best of the big leaders "place *mission* first," says Smith. Next, they "establish their *own* schedules and their *own* set of priorities."

Other valuable chapters furnish helpful suggestions for performing the following leadership functions: "Counseling Subordinates," the value of one-on-ones; "Leading in Crises," cool-headedness and flexibility; "Complimenting Creatively," saying Thank you in many ways; "Creating a Strategic Vision," the role of planning; and "Establishing Standards," personal and institutional integrity.

Smith wraps up his book with this comment:

People who are only as smart as their in-boxes, their immediate staff, their personal experiences, and their television sets, are not smart enough or wise enough to lead large organizations well. Great leaders have become great by hard work, by cultivating an inquiring and open mind, by reaching out widely to people for ideas and insights, and by reading broadly and critically.

Educational administrators can benefit from Smith's numerous ideas in enhancing and broadening their view of leadership. This should make them more effective leaders and better mentors of future administrators.—Clarence Dunbebin.

Dr. Clarence Dunbebin is Associate Superintendent of Education for the Potomac Conference of SDA, in Staunton, Virginia, a position he assumed in 1988, after 20 years as principal of Sligo Adventist School, Takoma Park, Maryland.