

REPORT FROM THE CAPITAL

BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS



The American Baptist Convention
The Southern Baptist Convention
The National Baptist Convention of America
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The North American Baptist General Conference
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A MAJOR FOR CONGRESS

The news space given to both the "sputniks" and the "sputterniks" has made science education in the United States a major concern of the second session of the 85th Congress. More than a score of bills have already been placed in the hopper and others have been promised.

The welter of viewpoints, objectives, and institutional interests represented by these many legislative proposals is such that our legislators will themselves need to mount a satellite and gain the perspective of distance. Tremendously important values and principles are involved, but there is danger that these may become obscured by the little interests of parties, groups, and established structures.

The progress of these legislative attempts should be of special interest to church leaders and church people. All those whose religious insights make them concerned for the maximum development of the divinely implanted potentials in a given person are naturally interested in all educational plans. Those who are aware of the various directions in which human talents can be channeled by a social order will be sensitive to the military as compared with the peacetime national objectives. Finally, those who are responsible for the advancing of certain institutions with their philosophies are likely to bend every effort to make gains. All of this will shape up into actions which either maintain, reinterpret, or discard our traditional American patterns.

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The broad outlines of a program to strengthen scientific education in America were sketched in a release on December 30, 1957. Following an extended conference with President Eisenhower, Secretary Folsom of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare,

described a seven-point program which was later referred to in the President's message to Congress and which will most certainly be offered as proposed legislation.

Under this plan it is proposed that the Federal Government should grant 10,000 scholarships annually for the next four years. The recipients of the scholarships would be selected by state boards, taking into consideration the student's need and his ability and record in science and mathematics. The scholarships would be available to students of both public and parochial schools and would, presumably, be usable in either private or public institutions.

Second, the Federal Government would go 50-50 with the states toward meeting the cost of expanding and improving the aptitude testing facilities in the schools. The testing program would be available to public and parochial schools alike.

Third, the Federal Government would also go 50-50 with the states in meeting the costs involved in expanding the vocational guidance program in the high schools. These programs would also cover both public and private schools.

Fourth, a total of 5,500 Federal graduate fellowships would be made available in a four year program for the encouragement of able college students to go into college teaching. The program would offer 1000 fellowships the first year and 1500 each of the remaining three years.

Federal funds would also be made available to graduate schools on a 50-50 matching basis for the expansion of those facilities. No

school could draw more than \$125,000 federal money in a given year.

Fifth, federal funds would also be available to state departments of education on a 50-50 basis if they undertake the strengthening of science and mathematics teaching in the public schools of the state. Strengthening could include increased pay for qualified teachers, additional laboratory equipment, and other related methods.

Sixth, a series of language-training centers would be established for the study and teaching of languages which are important today but which have received little attention in this country, for example, the languages of Asia, Africa and the Near East. The training centers would be managed by educational institutions.

Seventh, additional grants would also be provided for the National Science Foundation, for the strengthening and enlargement of its programs for improved science teaching and increased student interest in science careers.

Secretary Folsom estimated that this program would cost the Federal Government about \$1,000,000,000 and that it would cost the states about \$600,000 during the four-year period to which it would be limited.

ASSORTED BILLS

Illustrative of the diversity of bills being offered and referred to the appropriate committees during the early days of the new session of Congress are the following:

S. 2917 is offered by Sen. Edward J. Thye (R.-Minn.) to provide "for a program of scholarships for college undergraduate and graduate level education...." Senator Thye proposes \$25,000,000 for the first fiscal year and \$50,000,000 for the second fiscal year, with amounts to be determined by Congress thereafter. Awards would be by competitive examinations and would not be limited to scientific study. The scholarships would be open to students in "public or nonprofit tax-exempt" institutions.

Among scholarship bills introduced in the House of Representatives, several are limited to scientific fields. Rep. Jack Brooks (D.-Texas) presented H.R. 9635 which would provide for "the establishment of a national program of science scholarships" and for "the establishment of a program of loans to educational institutions to aid in providing adequate

science facilities." Under the provisions of this bill, 20,000 four-year college scholarships would be awarded in each of the next six years, with awards to be made by designated state agencies on the basis of competitive examinations. In addition, \$100,000,000 would be added to the college loan program, administered by the Housing and Home Finance Agency, for low-interest loans to "accredited colleges and universities" to enable them to construct needed buildings, laboratories, and to supply needed equipment.

H.R. 9725, introduced by Rep. Alfred D. Sieminski (D.-N.J.), would establish a national program of scholarships for students in certain fields of science, also to be awarded on the basis of competitive examinations. This does not set a fixed number of scholarships or the amount to be expended, but restricts to 100 the number of scholarships to be awarded annually in any one state.

The bill presented by Rep. Joseph W. Martin, Jr. (R.-Mass.) would provide that five scholarships in certain fields of science or technology be awarded each year in each of the 435 congressional districts.

The program outlined in each of these three bills would be administered through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. H.R. 9918, introduced by Rep. George S. Long (D.-La.), would establish a program of federal scholarships to be administered by the National Science Foundation. H.R. 9905, presented by Rep. John D. Dingell (D.-Mich.), would authorize the Secretary of Defense to grant scholarships in scientific fields.

None of these proposals requires that scholarships be used at public tax-supported institutions only.

A number of other measures propose improving education in the scientific field. S. 2916, introduced by Sen. Edward J. Thye (R.-Minn.), would provide \$25,000,000 per year for grants to states on a 50-50 matching basis to increase salaries of science teachers and to provide equipment in public elementary schools.

Sen. A. S. Mike Monroney (D.-Okla.) in S. 2956 proposes to amend the Vocational Education Act of 1946 to promote scientific education in "schools or classes under public supervision or control."

Several bills propose the establishment of a United States Science Academy, comparable to

the academies that train officers for the various branches of the armed forces. Such bills have been introduced in the opening days of the new session by Sen. Strom Thurmond (D.-S.C.), Rep. Victor L. Anfuso (D.-N.Y.), Rep. Elizabeth Kee (D.-W.Va.), Rep. Hale Boggs, (D.-La.), Rep. Edith Nourse Rogers (R.-Mass.).

Although the major emphasis has shifted to the scientific field, other educational problems have not been forgotten. Rep. Ludwig Teller (D.-N.Y.) has introduced H.R. 9731 that would authorize federal assistance for construction of public elementary and secondary schools. Rep. Carl D. Perkins (D.-Ky.) in H.R. 9830 proposes the appropriation of funds "to assist the States and Territories in financing a minimum foundation education program of public elementary and secondary schools, and in reducing the inequalities of educational opportunities through public elementary and secondary schools...."

During the first session of the 85th Congress, several bills were introduced which would permit certain deductions for income tax purposes of amounts expended in connection with the higher education of a dependent. These proposals were included in hearings on general tax revision held by the House Ways and Means Committee during January. Several additional bills in this category have been introduced during the opening days of the current session.

H.R. 9971, presented by Rep. Frank Ikard (D.-Texas), would amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide that an individual might deduct "amounts paid for tuition, fees, and books to certain public and private institutions of higher education for his education or the education of any of his dependents."

In H.R. 10030, Rep. Ludwig Teller (D.-N.Y.), would allow deduction of such expenses for higher education of a dependent as exceed the normal tax deduction allowed for him. Rep. Robert L. F. Sikes (D.-Fla.) in H.R. 10026 proposes an additional income tax exemption for a dependent who is a student above the high-school level.

Several bills would allow deductions for income tax purposes of certain amounts paid by teachers or school administrators for further education: H.R. 9899, Rep. Howard H. Baker (R.-Tenn.); H.R. 9928, Rep. Paul G. Rogers (D.-Fla.); H.R. 9931, Rep. Robert L. F. Sikes (D.-Fla.); H.R. 9981, Rep. Arthur Winstead, (D.-Miss.). Each bill would permit such deduction

for a teacher in any accredited public or private school.

With the exception of bills pertaining to tax matters, most education bills are referred to the Labor and Public Welfare Committee in the Senate or to the Education and Labor Committee in the House. (Democratic members are listed in the left hand column, Republicans in the right hand one.)

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CURRENT PAROCHIAL IDEAS

Since the administration proposal and many of the other suggestions would leave the distribution of federal funds to special boards appointed in the state Departments of Education and since most state laws prohibit such agencies from distributing funds to parochial schools, leaders of the parochial school movement are in search of devices by which to get around these obstacles.

The presidents of 28 Jesuit colleges meeting in Washington, D.C., recently released a statement saying that where institutions are prevented from benefiting through state board distributions, the Federal Government should make provision for direct distribution of funds.

The same objective is in view in the so-called certificate plan proposed a year ago by Cardinal McIntyre and more recently expanded by Father Virgil C. Blum in the October, 1957, issue of The Homiletic and Pastoral Review. Excerpts from this article were reprinted in the U.S. News & World Report, October 25, 1957. Father Blum's article was also inserted in the Congressional Record by Rep. Clement J. Zablocki (D.-Wis.). This plan proposes that educational certificates be issued to the family in behalf of the child and that these be usable in any educational institutions.

H.R. 7125, "to make technical changes in the Federal excise tax laws," was passed by the House during the first session of the 85th Congress. Among many changes, this bill proposes to eliminate excise taxes on sales of certain items, school buses, for example, to "nonprofit educational organizations" and also to exempt these institutions from excise taxes on communications and transportation. It is estimated that these changes would mean a saving of about \$3,000,000 per year for private schools. Public schools are already exempt from these taxes. The bill is now in the hands of the Senate Finance Committee, of which Sen. Harry Flood Byrd (D.-Va.) is chairman.

THE NEED FOR BALANCE

The Educational Policies Commission, sponsored by the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators, recently issued a report on "The Contemporary Challenge to American Education." They proposed an immediate start on a three-level program to raise the quality of American education.

"For the short run," the report said, "the emphasis should be on higher education, particularly at the graduate level, including opportunities, as appropriate, in the fields of mathematics, science and technology."

It continued, "Intermediate-range programs are needed at both the secondary and the higher level in the area of recruitment, training, and retraining of teachers, in most subject-matter fields, including mathematics, science, and languages."

"The long-term need," the Commission said, "is for improved underpinning of the entire enterprise of American education, beginning at its foundation point in the elementary schools."

Comments from educators and church leaders have consistently emphasized the importance of keeping a full and balanced emphasis in our national educational plans. The remarkable progress in science and engineering which has been accomplished by the government's "crash" program in the U.S.S.R. should not obscure the many other values which have been recognized in our schools.

The Educational Policies Commission, in the report mentioned above, formulated principles for the selection and education of teachers:

"1. Every teacher should comprehend the purposes of public education in a democratic society and the contribution he makes through his teaching to the achievement of these purposes.

"2. Every teacher should have both a liberal education and a knowledge in depth of the field in which he teaches. Specialization is essential, but alone is not enough. In the school of today the competent teacher must recognize and teach the relationships of his field to the whole of education and the whole of life.

"3. Every teacher has the obligation to keep abreast of knowledge in his field and of developments in teaching materials and techniques which will help improve his performance.

"4. Because of the prime importance of citizenship education in a democracy, every teacher should be well prepared to assume his own obligations as a citizen and should understand how the school may serve as an agency for developing civic responsibility.

"5. Every teacher should have sympathetic understanding of boys and girls and should be familiar with scientific knowledge regarding child development and the psychology of learning.

"6. Every teacher should understand the nature and purposes of guidance and should have had experience in individual and group guidance as a part of his training.

"7. Teacher education should include supervised experience in dealing with actual classroom problems."