

OUTLOOK

**PACKWOOD-MOYNIHAN TAX ACT
HAS STRONG SENATE SUPPORT;
HOUSE GETS COMPANION BILL**

It proposes a "revolutionary concept in self-help education," say Senators Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) and Patrick Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.), referring to the Tuition Tax Credit Act of 1977 (S. 2142), a bill they sponsor jointly.

Introduced in the Senate September 26 and backed by more than 45 senators, the Packwood-Moynihan bill would allow taxpayers to subtract directly from their income taxes one-half the tuition they pay for themselves or for members of their families, up to a \$500 maximum credit per student. Those eligible for the credit: part- or full-time students in elementary schools, high schools, vocational or technical colleges, or accredited business or trade schools, as well as colleges and universities. Low income families whose taxes amount to less than the credit would also benefit since the difference between the tax credit and their tax liability would be refunded to them.

Private schools primarily educate lower and middle income students, points out Senator Packwood. Fifty-one percent of private school students come from families with incomes below \$15,000. Our bill, states Senator Moynihan, would help not only the least advantaged but also those in the "financially beleaguered middle class," who are seldom eligible for grant and scholarship programs, yet find it increasingly difficult to meet the high cost of education. The contributions of private educational institutions in American past and present have been well documented, Packwood says. At every educational level they offer an alternative to our public system, but if more and more Americans feel the "excruciating cost squeeze of inflation" and are unable to support our pluralistic approach, the danger increases of our moving toward a "public education monopoly."

Writing in support of the bill, columnist George Will says in the October 3 Newsweek, "If you are looking for a 'concentrated industry,' education is it." In most communities it is a "near-monopoly." There is ample evidence, he writes, for the widespread belief that public schools would be improved by more competition from private schools. The central importance of the Packwood-Moynihan bill is that it would use the government to nurture the diversity that the normal tendency of a large state is to suppress. "No legislation introduced in this Congress has more potential for improving the nation," as Will sees it.

Addressing questions posed by the First Amendment's establishment clause, Will writes that James Madison shaped the First Amendment, and the record of Congressional debate in 1789 says: "Mr. Madison said, he apprehended the meaning of the words to be, that Congress should not establish a religion, and enforce the legal observation of it." When the First Amendment was written, nine of thirteen states had "established" churches, Will points out. Echoing Justice Powell's brief in the Ohio state aid case, Wolman v. Walter, Will maintains that in 1977 the dangers that prompted the "establishment" clause (denominational control of government; political conflict between denominations) are "negligible," while dangers of government's near-monopoly of education are "clear and present."

A companion bill (H.R. 9332) has been introduced in the House by Representatives Bill Frenzel (R-Minn.) and James A. Burke (D-Mass.), who are members of the Ways and Means Committee, and Representative Tom Railsback (R-Ill.). If anything, says Moynihan, there is even more support in the House than in the Senate. "We will pass this bill with endorsement by the President," he predicts. The bill would go into effect January 1, 1980.

ESEA TESTIMONY OUTLINES
PRIVATE SCHOOL POSITIONS
ON REAUTHORIZATION ISSUES

Catholic schools can be found in "countless rural hamlets, small towns, and in our great urban centers," Father Patrick J. Farrell told a House subcommittee recently.

Nowhere, he said, speaking for the U.S. Catholic Conference (USCC), is this presence as palpable as in our cities. In the ten major urban centers in this country, there are over 3,200 Catholic schools. We have, Farrell stated, an important role to play in helping break "the cycle of poverty." Our responsibility to remain in the urban centers is serious and involves a strong collaboration with public education. "A poor person's opportunity to choose is the first step toward enhanced human dignity," he said.

Farrell, whose comments about Catholic schools underscored the public service role of private schools, is USCC Representative for Elementary and Secondary Schools and was testifying at the September 21 hearings of the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education on the revision and extension of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and related education statutes. He urged that all Federal elementary and secondary education statutes provide for the equitable participation of private (nonpublic) school students according to "the best ESEA standards." There is a "definite need," he maintained, to improve the administration of Federal programs as they affect children in private schools--and he proposed a set of specific actions to achieve this end. Farrell warned that in some states program "consolidation" could precipitate major problems in providing comparable services to private school students, but indicated that consolidation procedures established by the Education Amendments of 1974 had worked reasonably well.

Testifying for the Council for American Private Education (CAPE), a coalition of national private school organizations of which USCC is one, Dr. Robert Lamborn, CAPE Executive Director, supported "the social service position, the administrative concerns, and the legislative recommendations" of the USCC testimony. "On the basis of past experience," he said, "it is vital that provisions designed to assure the equitable participation of children enrolled in private schools be mandated." Private school representatives, he urged, should be "full partners" in establishing policy, developing legislation, drafting regulations, and in monitoring and evaluating programs in all areas which relate to private schools and their students. He recommended, further, that specialist offices responsible for private school matters be created, or maintained in adequate strength, on the Immediate Office staff of the U.S. Commissioner of Education, as well as on appropriate deputy and program-level staffs in the U.S. Office of Education. Preferably, he said, these positions should be filled by experienced private school people.

FEDERAL AGENCIES, PRIVATE
SCHOOL LEADERS, SCHOLARS
JOIN IN DATA COLLECTION

Three Federal agencies, CAPE and its 14 member organizations, and a special interest group of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) are collaborating in the development of a current information base with

regard to private schools. In a summer meeting, representatives of the Bureau of Census, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the National Institute of Education (NIE), CAPE, and the AERA Special Interest Group on Nonpublic Schools agreed that the collection, storage, and "display" of information should be planned to meet the needs of practitioners, researchers, and public officials.

Questions for the 1980 census are being designed with this goal in mind. CAPE and the National Catholic Educational Association, under contract with NCES, are conducting a second annual survey of the nation's over 18,000 private schools to obtain basic descriptive data. CAPE and the National Association of Secondary School Principals, under parallel contracts with NIE, are surveying 2,000 public and 600 private secondary schools in a study of the nature of American secondary education. "There's no way around it," says CAPE President Dr. Al Senske of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. "The creation of sound public policy requires reliable current information. We're working to produce it."

COGNITIVE SOPHISTICATION
KEY TO LESSENING PREJUDICE
B'NAI B'RITH STUDY FINDS

Racial and religious prejudice are rampant among today's adolescents, according to four University of California (Berkeley) social scientists who studied questionnaire responses from almost 5,000 students in three high schools located in varying socioeconomic areas. The schools requested anonymity; all are within 200 miles of New York City. Because the study was funded by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith, initial interest lay in measuring and characterizing adolescent anti-Semitism, but questions concerning black/white relations were included in the survey.

Charles Glock and his Berkeley associates, whose study is reported in their book, Adolescent Prejudice, were "jolted and shocked" by the depth and magnitude of the prejudice they found. ADL's Western Director of Education, Dr. Eleanor Blumenberg, was "distressed." It confirmed a lot of impressionistic data we get from the field, she said.

The variable most closely linked to the extent of prejudice was sophisticated thinking, the capacity to think things through. It was more significant than the degree of economic or social deprivation, or of psychological frustration, more important than peer pressure, or social and moral values. The most intellectually alive students were the least prejudiced, the study showed.

Schools would help reduce prejudice, the researchers believe, if children received instruction in the logic of inference, in group differences and how they come about, and in the matters of degree involved in group differences. When children gain greater "cognitive sophistication," they will find prejudice "indefensible intellectually" even when they're surrounded by prejudiced peers.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS, BIASES
LIMIT GIRLS' SUCCESSES IN
MATH DEVELOPMENT, CAREERS

Studies are proving that males are not inherently superior to females in spatial visualization and mathematical ability. Formal and informal educational practices accepted by society have denied girls experiences which contribute to the development of skills needed in dealing with mathematics, spatial visualization, and related scientific subjects. Also, social attitudes and sex-role stereotyping influence girls to persevere less and to achieve less in these fields than boys of equal native talent. As a result, many women who have the inherent capability to succeed in mathematically oriented careers are barred, by lack of preparation and self-abnegation, from them, whereas boys of equal inherent talent are not.

Elizabeth Fennema and Julia Sherman, in a study reported in the American Educational Research Journal (Winter 1977), studied the mathematics achievement of over 1,200 ninth-through twelfth-grade students in four Wisconsin schools, controlling for math background and general ability. They found no sex-related difference in mathematical potential but "important relationships" between sociocultural factors and sex-related cognitive differences. Spatial skill, important to math success, is affected by experience, and girls are slowed in their mathematical development because they are less exposed than boys to certain physical activities and to such subjects as drafting and design, which develop skills in spatial visualization.

Because folklore holds "girls can't do math" and "girls don't need math," girls are more subject than boys to "math anxiety" and more likely than boys to drop the subject early in their schooling. The study of mathematics becomes, according to sociologist Lucy Sells, the "critical filter" in female career development. Sells, studying the 1973 entering class at the University of California (Berkeley), found that about 57 percent of the men had taken four years of high school math. Only 8 percent of the women had done so. Thus 92 percent of the women in this class were ineligible to take calculus or intermediate level statistics courses and were subsequently relegated to five fields: the humanities, music, social work, elementary education, guidance and counseling.

40 STATES HAVE FEWER
PEOPLE THAN PRIVATE
SCHOOLS HAVE STUDENTS

If every man, woman, and child in the eight least populous states were seated in the nation's private schools, over 125,000 desks now occupied by students would be left empty. Put another way, according to 1970 census figures on state populations and current HEW figures on private school enrollments, there are 5 million students in private schools and only ten states have total populations that large.

PROFESSORS ADVISE TEACHERS
TO ESCHEW "SAFE HARBORS,"
LEARN "FROM INSIDE OUT"

What does rock climbing have to do with teaching math? Plenty, say Sid Eder and Jed Williamson, members of the education faculty at the University of New Hampshire, writing in Independent School (May, 1977), the journal of the National Association of Independent Schools. The accepted theory that the more teachers know about their subject area and about teaching, the better they will teach, is challenged by the two men. They believe teachers should not always return to the "safe harbors" of summer courses and workshops on college campuses. They should face new demands, learn more about themselves, and come to understand others better--they should improve their professional understanding "from the inside out." Ships are built to "sail the seas, not rest in safe harbors," Eder and Williamson theorize.

Live Learn & Teach is a seven-week summer program for teachers sponsored by the University of New Hampshire. Designed by Eder, Williamson, and two others as part of a master of arts in teaching program at the University, the course includes a wilderness trip in the White Mountains, curriculum design sessions, and a practicum in which teachers work with students aged five to eighteen in designing and carrying out activity-centered, community-based summer learning programs.

"Hanging on that rockface I had no confidence in my ability. I was like the kid who can't understand a sentence or do a math problem. I'll never forget those feelings," said program participant Liz Bogan, a fifth-grade teacher.

RILES VALUES "OPTIONS" AND
"INNOVATIONS" OFFERED BY
CALIFORNIA PRIVATE SCHOOLS

"Education in California is a partnership. It takes the resources, ideas, and energies of thousands, but the benefits it reaps ensue to us all," says Wilson Riles, California's Superintendent of Public Instruction, addressing students and parents in the foreword of the recently published California Private School Directory. Riles continued, "Among those in this partnership are the private schools. Their contribution--their strong and vibrant role--is well known. The private schools, for instance, give the California parent viable options. They enroll approximately 10 percent of the student population in California, kindergarten through grade twelve. And they are the sources of much creative and independent thinking."

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