

OUTLOOK

A report from the Council for American Private Education, Washington, D.C.

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TUITION TAX CREDIT DEBATE
GAINS NATIONAL PROMINENCE;
FOCUS MOVES TO HOUSE FLOOR

The House Ways and Means Committee has a "clean" (i.e., created new out of their deliberations) tuition tax credit bill (H.R. 12050) which does not cover tuitions paid to private elementary and secondary schools.

Present committee plans call for a request that the Rules Committee bring the bill to the floor as a "modified closed bill," permitting debate only on previously approved topics. One of the permitted topics would be coverage for elementary and secondary school tuitions.

H.R. 12050 provides for tax credits of 25 percent for tuitions paid to public and private colleges and universities--to a maximum of a \$100 credit per student beginning in August of 1978, of \$150 per student in 1979, and of \$250 per student in 1980 and thereafter. The "modified closed bill" conditions currently favored by Ways and Means would permit floor debate not only on whether credits should cover elementary and secondary school tuitions, but on whether credits should be set at 25 or 50 percent of tuition expenditures and whether credits or tax deferrals are more desirable.

President Carter holds that such credits are inflationary at all institutional levels and unconstitutional at elementary and secondary levels. The National Coalition to Save Public Education--a newly formed and powerful association of over 30 national organizations--opposes them on grounds that they would "fatally undermine the nation's public education system." Proponents of the legislation see broadly applicable credits of the Packwood/Moy-nihan/Frenzel/Burke/Railsback type as philosophically sound, Constitutionally acceptable, and financially equitable. They see no likelihood that credits will result in destruction of the public schools; some argue forcefully that, particularly in inner cities, public schools will be strengthened as they are pressed to be more responsive to parents' voices.

Representatives on both sides of the debate anticipate strong continuing efforts to develop support in the Administration, Congress and the public. The President's position, both sides grant, is significant--but neither believes it makes the issue moot.

FISHER-CONABLE BILL WOULD
MOVE CHARITABLE DEDUCTIONS
ABOVE LINE ON SHORT FORM

A bill to "protect and enhance" the diversity and strength offered American society by the voluntary sector is now under consideration by the House Ways and Means Committee. Introduced by Congressmen Joseph

L. Fisher (D-Va.) and Barber B. Conable (R-N.Y.) and currently cosponsored by 37 House members, the bill (H.R. 11183) would provide an income tax deduction for charitable giving to taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions.

In 1970, about 50 percent of taxpayers itemized deductions; currently, less than 25 percent do; under the Administration's current tax proposals, it is expected that 17% will. It is estimated that charitable gifts, as a result, are already \$1 billion less annually. Because charitable giving is deductible only to those who itemize, and is in part dependent upon the prospect of a tax deduction, further significant decreases are anticipated unless there is some ameliorating action. The pluralism which the private sector provides is, Conable holds, "a great strength to our society" and must be protected.

SCHOOLS BETTER TERMED AS
"PRIVATE" THAN "NONPUBLIC"
CAPE'S DIRECTORS MAINTAIN

"Private," not "nonpublic," is the term which best describes the character of the nation's private (nonpublic) schools, according to the Directors of the Council for American Private Education (CAPE). At a recent meeting in Washington, D.C., CAPE's Directors decided to encourage use of "private" as the term of choice in writing legislative proposals, drafting legislation and regulations, handling routine communications, and designating appropriate offices and officials.

CAPE's Directors believe the term "nonpublic" suggests to some--"and may readily be employed by some to suggest"--that schools operated under private auspices somehow serve purposes which are dubious, if not unworthy, in a democratic society. In the Directors' judgement, the public service character of these schools will be better understood and fundamental social purposes better served if the term is no longer used.

The term "private" has problems too, but seems clearly preferable to the group. "We believe in the social significance of the nation's historical commitment to diversity, individual initiative, and private enterprise. We believe in the importance and legitimacy of the private sector of our society. And we believe that private schools--as one of many types of contributing private sector institutions--play, and should be recognized as playing, a constructive role in serving public needs," CAPE's Directors maintain.

OE PLANS LINE AND LIAISON
OFFICES TO ASSURE SERVICES
TO PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Key officials of the United States Office of Education (OE) and a CAPE ad hoc committee are collaborating on plans to create a new OE "line" office to fulfill the pledge inherent in President Carter's education message statement that "private school children must receive fair treatment under federal education programs." The new office will be directly responsible for seeing that students attending private schools benefit equitably from legislatively mandated services.

The joint study group, convened by U.S. Commissioner of Education Ernest Boyer, is considering also how best to utilize the liaison capabilities of the existing Office of Nonpublic Educational Services once the new line office is created. The existing office--Dwight Crum serves as its Director--functions within the Office of Education Community Liaison as part of the Commissioner's Immediate Office, serving as Boyer's "eyes and ears" on private school matters. In tandem, the two offices promise to provide considerably more effective liaison and programmatic services than have been available in the past.

JENCKS ARGUES FOR "BACK TO
COMPLEXITY" MOVEMENT TO
COUNTER TEST SCORE DECLINE

"Back to complexity," not "back to basics," is the solution to the problem of declining test scores, according to Christopher Jencks, writing recently in The Washington Post. Students are not doing worse, Jencks claims, in the basic skills of the "3 R's." Their problems, he says, occur in far more complex areas: in their "desire or ability" to reason, in their lack of interest in ideas, and in their shortage of information about the world around them. The problems show up mainly in secondary schools, he holds, where students have greater difficulty making inferences about an author's intent from what they read, have less information and are less familiar with using reference aids to find out things they don't know, and seem not to think as carefully about problems set to them by testers.

Whatever the cause of these problems--and everything from the tests themselves to the increased "permissiveness" of society has been blamed--Jencks believes the solution lies not in an emphasis on "basics" but on teaching a restored respect for the value of reason in the schools. The "drill-work of the back-to-basics movement," he says, "seems to be a prescription for discouraging interest in complex ideas."

NATIONAL PUBLIC-PRIVATE
SCHOOL NETWORK ENCOURAGES
UNIQUE STUDENT EXCHANGE

A public school student from New York City wants to study observational astronomy at a private school in California. She can. A Friends School student from Philadelphia wants to study fisheries, forestry and wildlife management at a public high school in Oregon. He can. Both students attend member high schools of the National Network of Complementary Schools, a unique group of 11 public and 12 private secondary schools whose 70 or more specialized programs are available to any student of any member school at no extra cost for tuition, room or board.

Network programs are offered because they exploit special school resources. A student may study marine science in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, participate in an urban program in Philadelphia, or take a course in television production in Beverly Hills, for example. Students--it is anticipated that between 150 and 200 will participate this year--focus on a single topic, pursuing that topic intensively for several weeks.

The Network, conceived in 1974 by administrators of Phillips Academy, an independent school in Andover, Massachusetts, and of Beverly Hills High School, a public high school in Beverly Hills, California, is now in its third operational year. Its sponsors are the Commission on Educational Issues, an affiliate of the National Association of Independent Schools, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Funds for the establishment and support of the Network have been provided by grants from the Edward John Noble Foundation and The Ford Foundation. Future Network plans include the formation of a network of lower and middle schools which would exchange groups of students and teachers.

CATHOLIC, LUTHERAN, AND
INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS SHOW
MINORITY ENROLLMENT GAINS

Minority enrollments in the schools of CAPE member organizations have increased steadily over the past several years as they have continued to vigorously pursue policies designed to achieve broader racial representation in their student bodies. The trend is evident in statistics published recently by the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS), the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS).

Thirteen percent of LC-MS elementary school students are nonwhite, representing an increase of one percent per year for each of the last three years and an increase of 75% over the last 15 years. Nearly 20% of LC-MS secondary school students are nonwhite, and the number grows annually. The elementary schools of the NCEA enroll about 424,000 nonwhite students, or 17.1% of the elementary total; their secondary schools enroll about 113,000, or 12.8% of the secondary total. These figures represent a significant increase: in 1970-71, 11.4% of Catholic elementary students and 8.2% of secondary students were nonwhite. NAIS member schools also show notable gains in minority enrollment, with a 9.3% increase in total nonwhite enrollment in 1976-77. Nearly 19,000 nonwhite students (or about seven percent of the total enrollment) attended NAIS schools last year. These figures represent an increase of 6,000 minority students (or more than 45 percent) in the last six years. Minority staffing in NAIS schools has also increased, with a gain of 5.9% in 1976-77.

FORDHAM ANNOUNCES NEW
Ph.D. IN ADMINISTRATION

Private school and church leaders can earn a Ph.D. in Administration in a new Fordham University program designed specifically for private school and church leaders. Initiated as a joint effort of Fordham's Graduate Schools of Education and Religion, the program is designed to deal with "the theoretic knowledge and organizational skills which secular institutions provide," and, also, with "the administrator's self-image and identity in his or her personalized service to church communities." Individual study plans may be adjusted to the goals, needs and earlier training of candidates. First candidates will be accepted for the summer session of 1978.

COOPERATIVE STUDY PRODUCES
NEW ILLINOIS PROCEDURES
REGARDING PRIVATE SCHOOLS

"We've worked long and hard" to produce this document, says Alvin Vanden Bosch, referring to the new "Policies and Guidelines for Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools," issued this month by the Illinois State Board of Education. According to Vanden Bosch, Chairman of the Illinois Advisory Committee on Nonpublic Schools, the guidelines for the first time provide a procedure for "recognizing," or accrediting, private schools which takes into account their special distinguishing characteristics.

The need for such regulations was recognized several years ago, when efforts to provide a single, equitable set of guidelines for both public and private schools proved unsuccessful. In the fall of 1975, Illinois State Superintendent Joseph Cronin appointed a committee of 21 private school representatives to discuss and develop a separate private school recognition policy. Adventist, Baptist, Catholic, Christian, Hebrew, Independent, Lutheran and Montessori schools were represented on the committee, which presented its policy recommendations to Superintendent Cronin in the fall of 1977.

Under the new guidelines, all Illinois private schools must be "registered," filing annual reports to show compliance with state attendance and safety laws and with state and federal mandates against discrimination. Application for "recognition," on the other hand, is voluntary. Of Illinois' 1500 private schools, only 185 were officially recognized at the time the new policies were announced, but Vanden Bosch predicts a significant increase in that number now. "As many as 400 schools are already waiting to apply," he reports.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS HOUSES
U.S. FOLKLORE REPOSITORY,
PROVIDES SCHOOL SERVICES

"Folklore and folksong courses are definitely on the rise in curricula throughout the country," says Joseph C. Hickerson, Head of the Archive of Folk Song in the Library of Congress. The Archive's resources and services are available to all who are interested in this "basic and important" area and, he reports, are "in continual demand."

Established at the Library in 1928, the Archive is the nation's folklore repository, housing field recordings, manuscript materials, books and periodicals in the areas of ethnomusicology, folk music, folksong, folk tale, oral history and other types of folklore. Holdings are representative of every region and state, as well as of Black American, American Indian, Jewish, Polish, French, Mexican-American, and others of the nation's ethnic groups. Also included are folk music and lore of many other countries.

To make material in the Archive's recorded collections more widely obtainable, the Library has published more than 80 long-playing recordings selected from the Archive's holdings. Nearly 150 bibliographies and reference aids are available without charge. A reading room, housing over 3,000 books and periodicals, is maintained by the Archive. "We welcome visits and requests from educators," Hickerson says.

OUTLOOK is published monthly (September through June) by the Council for American Private Education. Annual subscription \$6. Council members: The American Lutheran Church • American Montessori Society • Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the U.S. • Friends Council on Education • Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod • National Association of Episcopal Schools • National Association of Independent Schools • National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children • National Catholic Educational Association • National Society for Hebrew Day Schools • National Union of Christian Schools • Seventh-day Adventist Board of Education, K-12 • Solomon Schechter Day School Association • U.S. Catholic Conference. Associated state organizations in Arizona, California, Georgia, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, New Mexico, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, Washington, and Wisconsin.

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