

THE LISTENING POST

You Can Help Win Federal Aid

AT ITS MEETING in Washington, D. C., September 26-29, 1945, the NEA Legislative Commission voted to continue its policy of concentrating major effort back of the federal aid program. This policy calls upon all NEA affiliates to do everything they can to promote the Thomas-Hill-Ramspeck bills—S. 181—H. R. 1296.

These bills propose that federal government shall appropriate \$300,000,000 per annum to assist the states and localities in financing public education. Back of this request is a set of conditions which, until federal aid is provided, will prevent many states and communities from operating the kind of schools the country needs today for purposes of national security. It is a fact that ought to be known and appreciated by all American citizens that the states having the most children to be educated have, not only the least money to spend for educational purposes, but at the same time are spending a higher percentage of their total income for schools than are the states with relatively fewer children and higher income.

These areas, where the educational load is greatest and fiscal ability to afford good schools is substandard, are the areas in which rejection rates under Selective Service were highest, where retail sales are relatively low, per capita income below average, rental values of property less desirable, and so forth. Retardation in the social-economic aspects of American life is largely a product of unsatisfactory schools, of substandard opportunities for American youth to get an education.

Hearings Concluded

Hearings on both S. 181 and H. R. 1296 were concluded earlier in the year by the Senate Education and Labor Committee and the House Committee on Education. The hearings have not as yet appeared in printed form, although it is indicated at the time of preparation of this statement that the Senate hearing on S. 181 can be expected from the press at an early date.

It is also expected that the Senate Com-

mittee on Education and Labor may take S. 181 under early consideration with a view to reporting a bill for debate and a vote. Whether the House Committee on Education will be in position to move as rapidly on a bill as the Senate Committee on Education and Labor is doubtful.

Working for Enactment

The fact that federal aid legislation has not been enacted by Congress is to be accounted for largely on the ground that the interest in such legislation on the part of the rank-and-file member of the teaching profession is not as deep and compelling as it should be. The cause itself is one of the most worthy on the legislative front today. It calls for vigorous support on the part of teachers and other citizens everywhere.

A self-developed, self-administered test which every teacher might well consider on this question would place emphasis upon such questions as the following:

1. Have I talked with my Congressman on this subject; with my Senators? Otherwise, have I written them my views on federal aid to education?
2. Have I persuaded not less than three of my school patrons to take this matter up with their Congressman and Senators?
3. Have I presented the subject, either myself or through a fellow-worker, to one or more civic groups in my community?
4. Have I arranged for its study in the parent-teacher group in my school?
5. Have I insisted upon its thorough study and discussion in our local education association?
6. Do I have in my possession the essential facts underlying the issue of federal aid to education?
7. Have I the courage to defend the principle of federal aid to education in the presence of those who argue to the contrary?

One of the most critical losses in the development of great, fundamental issues on

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each pupil for one period a day to an elementary teacher who has a wholesome attitude toward her profession. Participation for each pupil is planned by the classroom teacher with the counsel of the coordinator. The student is given as wide a range of work in assisting the teacher as she is capable of doing without detriment to the best interests of the children. Her work begins with observation and is followed by such assignments as caring for the room, arranging materials, and keeping records. Later actual teaching may be done with small or larger groups of children following plans made by the teacher. The pupil is given work experience which may be helpful to her in the choice of a profession and, at the same time, an excellent opportunity is provided for the recruitment of well-qualified young women for the teaching profession.—A. C. Senour, *Superintendent of Schools*.

Continuous Faculty Planning. The daily schedules in the junior high schools of Pasadena, Calif., include a thirty-minute faculty planning and in-service education period preceding each day's school work. The activities range from discussions on general policy by the entire staff to various committee meetings, department meetings, and grade level meetings, each involving only a relatively few persons having particular problems and interests. Through discussion and the free exchange of information and ideas teachers are able to improve the quality of their instruction. Those dealing with different phases of instructional units are able to better coordinate their efforts.—Roland W. Grinstead, *Coordinator of Secondary Curriculum*.

In Brief J. Cecil Parker has been employed to fill the newly created position of curriculum coordinator for the San Francisco Public Schools.

Edgar L. Grim, formerly superintendent of Vassar schools, has been appointed head of the recently established community school service program of the Michigan Department of Public Instruction. The program is an experimental educational project aimed at discovering the best ways of improving community living through the services of the schools. Funds to support the program have been given to the Michigan group by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

Under the direction of Byron England, director of instruction, the El Paso (Tex.) Public Schools have undertaken a long range project in the preparation of teaching guides for non-English-speaking pupils on the elementary level with particular emphasis upon the upper grades which are commonly neglected.

A group of graduate students working under the direction of Harold Alberty of Ohio State University has prepared a fully annotated bibliography of magazine articles on high school supervision for the period 1940-1945. The emphasis in the short reviews is upon democratic supervision.

From the Kansas City Schools comes a report that plans have been made for a reorganized program of secondary education with provision for a basic core curriculum, opportunities for the development of individual interests, vocational preparation, and health and physical education.

In the announcement of plans for its peacetime educational program, the San Francisco Public Schools include the initiation of a long-term program of curriculum development involving the participation of the teachers and designed to meet the present and future needs of the children.

A committee of Ann Arbor (Mich.) Public School teachers has developed a statement of policies with regard to awards and competition in the junior high schools. The three school faculties which participated in the development of the statement have agreed to test the principles in practice.

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the legislative front results from the individual teacher's belief that "I do not count, that no one will pay any attention to what I say." This is not true. Congressmen and Senators are sensitive to letters addressed to them, particularly if such letters sincerely and thoughtfully present worthwhile ideas. This procedure is democratic and sound and right. In addition to being thoughtful and sincere, such letters should be simple, brief, courteous, personal. Your voice counts. You can help. It is important that you move to action.—R. B. MARSTON, *Director NEA Legislative-Federal Relations Division*, for DSCD Legislative Committee.

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