Congress: Decision To Break Up Comprehensive Education Bill, Act on Parts, Taken in House

While the "omnibus" approach to education legislation was being coddled on the Senate slope of Capitol Hill last week, it was being cudgeled, probably fatally, on the House of Representatives' side.

The object of congressional attention was the National Education Improvement Act, which combines two dozen proposals affecting various types of education in what amounts to an inventory of what the administration considers the most urgent needs for education legislation.

This eclectic education bill departs from the usual Hill practice of writing separate legislation dealing with the separate sectors of education—higher education, for example, or elementary and secondary schools, or vocational education, or education for the handicapped. The customary piecemeal approach, however, has not been working, for all of the administration's education proposals in the first 2 years have fallen victim to the controversies over federal control, race, and, particularly, religion.

Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Anthony J. Celebrezze and Education Commissioner Francis Keppel have both urged that the new omnibus bill be kept intact, in part to confront the Congress and the public with the full range of educational needs. In terms of tactics, the omnibus bill is regarded as the administration's formula for giving the influential education interest groups a common stake in a combination bill to prevent the kind of falling out among the friends of federal aid for education which made enemies unnecessary in the last session of Congress.

A successful precedent for the omnibus bill, though a unique one, was the National Defense Education Act which was enacted in 1958. The N.D.E.A., too, combined a varied assortment of education proposals and claimed the support of an alliance of education interest groups, which hung together until the bill was passed. With its concentration on science, mathematics, and foreign language education, however, the N.D.E.A. had a potent national security justification and was passed in the shadow of the first Sputnik.

Until last week, at least, the new truce was still being observed, if somewhat uneasily, within the education lobby, notably by three major elements: the American Council on Education, which more than any other organization speaks for higher education; the National Education Association, the biggest national organization of public school teachers and administrators; and the National Catholic Welfare Conference, which represents the views of the Catholic schools and the church hierarchy in Washington.

The new Commissioner of Education, Francis Keppel, is credited with effective work as an informal, one-man armistice commission this year. Tension between the NEA and the ACE, for example, ran rather high last year when the NEA came out in full-dress opposition on constitutional grounds to a bill providing assistance to both public and private colleges and universities. The NEA action helped to immobilize the bill, which the ACE strongly supported. The two influential groups so far this year have avoided policy clashes, and Keppel appears to have helped keep the peace.

Pressure Exerted

Pressure to break up the omnibus bill has been exerted all along by proponents of sections of the bill that are regarded as having good prospects for independent passage. These sections include vocational education programs, aid to handicapped children, funds for library services, parts of the N.D.E.A., and the so-called affected areas legislation, which provides for payments to school districts where substantial numbers of the children of government employees are enrolled.

This "impacted areas" legislation is popular among many Congressmen who are unenthusiastic about other forms of federal aid to education, and the advocates of the omnibus bill regard it as an important sweetener in the big bill.

Because the impacted areas legislation now in effect expires this year, there is particularly heavy insistence that the law be extended promptly, whatever happens to the omnibus bill, so that superintendents and principals can make their plans.

It was in an atmosphere of mild suspense, therefore, that hearings opened this week before the Senate subcommittee on education. The subcommittee chairman, Wayne Morse (D.–Ore.), immediately answered speculation by saying that he intended to keep the omnibus bill in one piece at least through Senate hearings, "to convince the American people this program ought to be adopted now."

One of the problems for the administration in championing the omnibus bill has been a skepticism in Congress, strongest apparently in the House, that the omnibus bill could actually be enacted. It was perhaps the inevitable happening last week, then, when House Education and Labor Committee chairman Adam Clayton Powell (D.–New York) and his subcommittee chairmen met and decided to dismember the omnibus bill and to push separate measures: a higher education bill and a "little omnibus bill" composed of the least controversial, most popular of the other proposals in the omnibus bill.

Chief victim of such a partition would appear to be the proposal for aid to elementary and secondary schools, always a controversial subject and now sorely beset by the church-state issue.

The effect of the carving up of the omnibus bill on the alliance which was formed to support it is, as this is written, not clear, but the NEA, which is mainly interested in elementary and secondary education, cannot be expected to be happy over the expressions of opinion by Powell and others that school aid is dead for the session.

Certainly there will be an attempt to make the new, smaller education package acceptable to all, but it seems that in creating the omnibus bill the administration may have built a better mousetrap from which it must now contrive to escape.—JOHN WALSH

Everest: The American Expedition Is Studying Itself under Stress as Part of Its Scientific Mission

The American Everest Expedition, which will return with laurels earned as the first American party to climb the highest mountain, should also be bringing back data from the most ambitious scientific program ever conducted in the Himalayas.

Projects in the physical, life, and behavioral sciences were included in the expedition's plans, and in the established pattern of American research, a substantial part of the backing for the scientific effort came from federal agencies—primarily the National Science Foundation, the Office of Naval Re-

search, and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research.

The total cost of the expedition has been estimated at $325,000—much food and equipment was donated by manufacturers and interested groups—and the cost of financing the scientific program and the scientists makes up, very roughly, a third of this total.

For a mountaineering expedition the group has unusual credentials. Of the 17 original American members of the party, five are Ph.D.'s, and three M.D.'s. The scientists, furthermore, are not supernumeraries. All are experienced climbers and some of them were expected to be on the final assault teams. Leader of the expedition is Norman G. Dyhrenfurth, a Santa Monica, California, motion picture producer who had had previous experience in the Himalayas.

The National Geographic Society, which has had long experience in financing the combined pursuit of adventure and science, is the principal patron, with a contribution of some $100,000. The Society sponsored glaciophysical investigations on the Khumbu Glacier on the approach route to Everest. The emphasis is on morphometric, movement, and subsurface studies of the glacier in an attempt to define a behavior pattern for ice in the eastern Himalayas.

A member of the *National Geographic* magazine staff is with the expedition and is assigned to measure solar radiation above 20,000 feet. The Weather Bureau also expects to get meteorological data from the group.

Not surprisingly, the projects sponsored by the federal agencies deal with the effects on humans of the strenuous life of climbers in the Himalayas—the effects, as one proposal put it, of "hypoxia, fatigue, cold, dehydration, and psychogenic factors."

With a $35,000 contract, the Office of Naval Research is supporting a psychological study of individual and group behavior under the conditions of prolonged and severe stress imposed by the expedition.

Members of the group submitted to extensive tests and interviews to provide background on personality before they left the United States, and the investigators hope to relate changes in the members' judgment, imagination, and problem-solving ability to activity and altitude.

The investigators will be particularly interested in finding how attractions and repulsions developed among members of the group as the going got tough, and how status altered within the group. The investigators planned to rely on the members of the group to rate themselves and each other, as well as on their own observations.

Focus on Reactions

Both NSF and the Air Force are supporting projects to provide information on the "adaptation syndrome" at high altitudes. An $11,600 NSF contract was awarded for the study of red blood cell production and of adrenocortical activity in regulating the body's functions at high altitudes. The aim is to trace the inevitable deterioration in human efficiency and endurance at high altitude in part by taking blood and urine samples for later analysis and by periodically testing pulse and breathing rates and blood pressure.

The Air Force has contributed $10,000 for studies of blood chemistry at altitudes from sea level to 23,000 feet and also for information on cardiac output. The Air Force also expects to gain some psychological data.

NSF is also sponsoring a $24,700 study in communications "feedback" (contracts cover salaries of investigators and costs of equipment and transportation). Under test is a theory that sustained group action toward a difficult goal is decisively influenced by communications within the group, and that feedback which may encourage group effort under normal conditions may, under stress, have an opposite effect.

Members of the group will be asked for self appraisals, and the "participant observers" will draw up daily balance sheets based on observation and will ask leading questions and record the answers. In addition, each member of the group will be equipped with a small recorder, and the radios used for communication between camps will also be equipped with recorders. As the group moved higher on the mountains, observers were to rely largely on "observation routines," to prevent intrusion of research into the main business of getting to the top.

The studies are being conducted separately, but the scientists are expected to coordinate their activities so that it may be possible, for example, to relate changes in individual behavior to biochemical changes.

The military services are naturally interested in the results for their relevance to the problems of small groups carrying out missions during prolonged periods under stress—submarine crews, astronauts, or groups isolated in arctic posts, for example. The results of the scientific projects all will be published and made freely available.

The expedition has been timed to take advantage of the best climbing weather of the year, which in the Himalayas is usually the last 2 weeks of May. Such scheduling involves a gamble, however, since the situation for climbers on the mountains deteriorates rapidly and dangerously when the warm winds of the monsoon begin, as they can any time after the middle of May.

The expedition's original plans called for an attempt at a triple assault, with ascents not only of 29,028-foot Everest but of two lesser, neighboring peaks, Lhotse (27,890 feet) and Nupte (25,850). Recent reports have indicated that their designs on Lhotse and Nupte have been deferred, or perhaps abandoned, in order to concentrate on Everest.

When the party leaves the area it will require about 2 weeks to return to its jumping-off place at Katmandu, the capital of Nepal. Most of the analysis of scientific data will be made on return to the States.

One thing the scientists should be learning is how successfully a study of human behavior under stress can be conducted in the field when the investigators are subjected to the same conditions as the subjects.—J.W.

United Nations: Space Committee Makes Little Headway Developing International Law for Space

United Nations, New York. "Life itself," the Russians repeated frequently at the U.N. last week, "places certain problems before states in the space age." Not the least of these, it often seems, is the fact that Russians and Americans can so rarely agree on anything, and that even when there is some agreement, both countries are more skeptical than confident in accepting it. In 3 weeks of meetings that ended 3 May, the legal subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space did little more than illustrate the point.

The United States and the Soviet Union have both recognized that expanding national space programs will create delicate legal questions, and, prodded by the U.N., have made efforts to produce an international law

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