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## Note

1. The sales agent for FAO publications in the United States is the International Documents Service, Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, N.Y.

# Science in the News

## Nixon on Education: His Policy Paper Endorses a Broad, Expensive Program of Federal Support

The new policy paper issued this week by the Vice President was entitled "A National Program of Support of Education," and the broad and expensive program it espoused carried Nixon well beyond anything the President or the Republican Congressional delegations have been willing to support in the past. Indeed, Nixon's public position becomes very close to Kennedy's, the principal difference being that Kennedy is more explicit about the size of the programs he has in mind and about how much he would like to spend.

Nixon proposed increased federal financial support to virtually every phase of the nation's educational system, from elementary schools to adult education. The paper specifically advocates a loan program for colleges that Eisenhower vetoed, asks for a federal scholarship program, a much expanded student loan program, and a program of grants to private and state universities to help finance expansion of facilities. It is a significant document, whether Nixon wins the election or not, for it places the leading Republican in the camp of the dominant wing of the

Democratic Party in accepting a basic role for the federal government in support of the nation's educational system.

With few important exceptions, it has been customary to justify federal money for education on the grounds that an emergency program was needed to meet a specific critical situation. Federal aid to school construction, to the extent that it has been accepted at all by conservative Republicans and Southern Democrats, has been justified as an emergency measure to meet the critical classroom shortage; the federal student loan and graduate fellowship programs were justified as emergency programs to meet a threatening critical shortage of scientists (hence the title: National Defense Education Act); aid to federally impacted school districts was justified as a measure to aid districts in which a great deal of untaxable property (an air base, for instance) placed an unsupportable burden on the community.

To a great extent the "emergency" justification of many programs has been merely a convenient fiction to enable legislators to vote for federal action without too obviously compromising their adherence to the principle that education is a state and local, rather than a national problem. But the Nixon

paper makes a complete break with this approach. Nixon's recommendations for aid to public school construction are justified only secondarily as a means of alleviating the temporary classroom shortage. The primary objective, Nixon says, is to indirectly make money available to raise teachers' salaries. Under a section headed "Loans, scholarships and fellowships" Nixon says: "A start, and a good one, has been made under the National Defense Education Act. . . . But this was in a sense 'emergency' legislation. We should now extend and expand this program." "All that we are and all that we hope to be," says the paper, "depend not only on the wisdom but also the sense of urgency with which we develop and mobilize and apply our total brainpower. . . . The target of American education must be that every individual has the opportunity and the facilities to develop to the highest power the full range of his inherent ability. There must be no arbitrary barriers—neither racial nor economic." The federal government, the paper makes clear, has a major share of the responsibility for seeing that this target is approached.

## Public Schools

Under the program Nixon endorses, the essential line between the Republican and Democratic approaches to federal aid to public schools is reduced from a basic difference in attitude to a fine point in legislative technique. Kennedy and the Democrats have been advocating a program of about a billion dollars a year of federal assistance to public schools, with the states and localities free to use the money not only for classroom con-

struction but for textbooks, equipment, and teachers' salaries. Eisenhower made it clear that he would veto any such bill if it ever reached him. The Administration reluctantly endorsed a \$350 million program limited strictly to construction funds to meet the classroom shortage. Taking the same view, the Republican platform specifically rules out federal aid to teacher salaries.

Nixon pays lip service to this approach by limiting aid to grants to pay for construction but in effect joins the Democrats in support of federal aid to salaries. The Nixon paper, for example, advocates federal grants to pay for servicing debts incurred by past construction. This is in addition to grants to pay for future construction, and its stated purpose is to allow the school districts to spend money on teacher salaries that would otherwise have to be earmarked for debt-servicing.

The justification for this roundabout approach, according to a spokesman for Nixon, is that by limiting direct federal aid to construction funds the temptation of Congressional committees to attach riders to the appropriation bills will be less than if the money were granted directly to the schools' operating budgets. The spokesman gave as an example the rider attached to the National Defense Education Act providing that none of the money could be used to buy scientific equipment from Iron Curtain countries. The rider was opposed by the State Department on foreign policy grounds, by the Commerce Department on international trade grounds, and by the Health, Education, and Welfare Department on the grounds that it was unwarranted interference in the affairs of the schools receiving the money. The rider nevertheless was attached to the bill and almost certainly will remain there as long as the bill is in effect.

But whether limiting federal aid to construction rather than operating budgets would actually lessen the temptation to attach such riders is not only somewhat debatable but a comparatively fine point. If this indirect system of aid to teacher salaries proved unworkable after a trial (if, for example, it were found that some school districts were using the federal grants simply to reduce local taxes rather than to increase teachers' salaries) it would be only a small step to move to a direct program of aid to teacher salaries. In effect Nixon has moved as close to the Democratic position on this issue as it

is politically possible for him to do without plainly offending a great many of his supporters, including Dwight Eisenhower.

#### Colleges and Universities

At the college level Nixon advocates "as a top priority target" federal scholarships of up to \$1000 a year "based on need and competitive examinations . . . for our ablest secondary school graduates." He calls for an expansion of the student loan program. He says Congress should consider making college tuition tax-deductible, although he avoids flatly advocating this.

Kennedy opposes this step on the grounds that the government is going to need all the revenue it can get in the years ahead. The Democrats have been advocating cutting tax concessions generally as a means of minimizing the need for outright tax increases. It is a politically touchy target and would be just so much more difficult to achieve if the Administration were to advocate new concessions to some taxpayers at the same time it was advocating the elimination of well-established concessions to others. These considerations presumably account for Nixon's only lukewarm endorsement of this popular idea.

In the area of federal aid to colleges Nixon not only endorses a loan program which has been opposed by Eisenhower but goes on to advocate a program of grants as well. At the beginning of the year the President recommended that the current program of loans to colleges for building dormitories be dropped. Congress nevertheless passed a bill making an additional \$500 million available for these low-interest loans. The President signed the bill rather than give the Democrats a campaign issue. Nixon not only endorses the dormitory loans but asks that the program be extended to cover loans for classrooms and other buildings. A year ago Eisenhower cited as one reason for vetoing a Democratic housing bill the fact that it included just such a program for loans for college classrooms.

In other areas Nixon proposed a variety of grants and loan programs for strengthening the teaching process, for offering financial assistance to teachers and to students preparing for teaching careers, for expanding medical educational facilities, and an expansion of existing programs for vocational training, education of the handicapped, libraries, and adult education.

Summing up, Nixon said that the program outlined showed "the elements of a broad program of federal encouragement to American education. I do not claim that it is exhaustive or that each element in it must be adopted in one precise form—that nothing more or less will do. Clearly, it will be the job for the executive and the Congress to work out the details, to estimate costs, and to make precise outlays for the period of testing ahead." Nixon said that the federal government could not be expected to solve all the problems, that its funds are not limitless. But the federal government, said Nixon, "must fulfill its traditional role of calling the nation's total resources, in all their local and private centers of authority, to effective action. We have no time to lose."

#### Republican Platform

In contrast to Nixon's position, the Republican platform, even after being strengthened at Nixon's insistence, is very cautious on the role of the federal government in education. It says: "the federal government should assist selectively in strengthening education." It endorses federal aid to school construction and pledges the continued support and in some cases extension of a number of programs already in effect. But later on the platform takes note again of the "temporary" and "declining" shortage of construction funds. "We believe," the platform says, "that any large plan of federal aid to education, such as direct contributions to or grants for teachers' salaries can only lead ultimately to federal domination and control of our schools, to which we are unalterably opposed." The Nixon program is a large program. Speaking for the Vice-President, Arthur Flemming, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, who was principally responsible for putting the program together, told the press that it was about as big a program as anyone could realistically expect to push through Congress.

Meanwhile the issue of teachers' salaries received delicate handling by Nixon during the debate Monday night. He opposed putting teachers on the federal payroll because of the danger of federal control. But no one is advocating putting teachers on the federal payroll. The Democrats say they want to make money available to the states, which the states can then use for teachers' salaries if they choose to do so. Nixon, as both the paper and other re-

marks during the debate made clear, would like to do the same thing, except in a more roundabout way. But Nixon's somewhat evasive handling of this issue was unavoidable. Just as Kennedy was evasive when it was suggested that his program would require tax increases, since no one runs for office on a pledge to raise taxes, so Nixon, as the Republican candidate, could hardly run for office on a commitment to move the federal government into an area where the conventional wisdom, to use Galbraith's phrase, insists that the federal government must not intrude. In fact, the proposals of either candidate, if carried out, would involve a certain amount of federal guidance, if not federal control, of education. But this is something the public is not yet ready to hear and that candidates for office are therefore not yet ready to talk about.—H.M.

## News Notes

### Committees Named for

#### AAAS-Westinghouse Awards

Nine representatives from the fields of journalism, science, and education have been named to select the winners of the 1960 AAAS-Westinghouse Science Writing Awards. The nine, who will compose the screening and judging committees, will select the best science writing, exclusive of that in medicine, to appear in the nation's newspapers and general magazines during the current contest year. The writer of the best science story in each of the two types of publications will be awarded \$1000. The awards will be presented at the annual meeting of the AAAS in New York in December.

The judges are Earl English, dean of the school of journalism at the University of Missouri; Alfred Friendly, managing editor of the *Washington Post and Times Herald*; George Gallup, director of the American Institute of Public Opinion; Morris Meister, president of Bronx Community College; Gerard Piel, publisher of *Scientific American*; and Alan T. Waterman, director of the National Science Foundation.

The screening committee has the following members: Hillier Kriegbaum, department of journalism, New York University; Sidney Negus, department of biochemistry, Medical College of Virginia; and James Stokley, school of

journalism, Michigan State University.

The AAAS-Westinghouse Science Writing Awards were established to give recognition and encouragement to outstanding science writing, to stimulate public interest in science, and to foster a deeper understanding of the significance of science by the general public. The AAAS, the National Association of Science Writers, and Westinghouse cooperated in setting up the awards, which are supported by a grant from the Westinghouse Educational Foundation.

Entries in the newspaper competition must have been published between 1 October 1959 and 30 September 1960; in the magazine competition, entries must have appeared in editions dated between October 1959 and September 1960, inclusive. To be eligible, all entries must be posted before midnight 10 October 1960 and must have been published in a newspaper or magazine within the United States.

Inquiries about the competition and requests for entry blanks by entrants or their editors should be addressed to: Graham DuShane, Administrator, AAAS-Westinghouse Science Writing Awards, 1515 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington 5, D.C.

### Nuclear Blasting Plan for Alaska Protested by Wilderness Society

The Atomic Energy Commission's plans to use nuclear explosions to blast a harbor in Alaska led the council of the Wilderness Society, at its recent annual meeting at Pine Creek Camp near Salmon, Idaho, to adopt the following protest resolution:

"*Project Chariot* is an attempt by the Atomic Energy Commission experimentally to blast a harbor at Cape Thompson in Alaska by nuclear detonations of one 200-kiloton bomb and four 20-kiloton bombs. The bomb which destroyed Hiroshima was one of these smaller bombs. Although studies are being made of wildlife in the region, including the neighboring sea, there is inadequate evidence of the effect of such detonations on wildlife. It is unquestionable that such detonations would unalterably destroy the wilderness area of the westerly end of the Brooks Range, our last great wilderness area in the world not in a tropical region. It would destroy the habitat of a large number of land and marine species and the nesting areas of numerous species of birds.

"Not only might the Eskimos in the region be affected by the damage to the land and the living things on which they depend for their sustenance, but the danger of radiation, small as it seems to be by comparison to above-ground detonations, might affect people over far greater areas. Furthermore, the blasting of a harbor on the Bering Sea is a threat to marine life at all ocean depths and over a great expanse. There is no limitation to the mobility of oceans."

### Government's Environmental Health Programs Reorganized

Four new divisions have been established in the Public Health Service's Bureau of State Services in a reorganization move designed to strengthen environmental health programs and to improve the administration of various other programs.

Air pollution work, formerly divided into medical and engineering units, will be handled by a Division of Air Pollution. Vernon G. MacKenzie, a career engineer officer of the Service who has been engaged in air pollution control for the past 10 years, is chief of the new division. Richard A. Prindle, a physician who has specialized in the health aspects of air pollution and has been chief of the Service's air pollution medical program for the last 2 years, is the deputy chief.

Occupational health activities are being concentrated in a new Division of Occupational Health, headed by Harold J. Magnuson, who has been directing the PHS's occupational health program for the past 4 years. By raising the program to division status, it will be possible to increase the funds and manpower devoted to research on new chemicals and other industrial products and to develop better safeguards for the workers who process them. Since many health problems in the work environment are similar to those in the general environment, this division will also contribute to the effort to protect the public from new types of environmental health hazards.

A Division of Nursing, with Margaret Arnstein, a career nurse officer as chief, merges two former divisions: the Division of Public Health Nursing, which operated as a part of the Bureau of State Services, and the Division of Nursing Resources, which operated as a part of the Bureau of Medical Resources.