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ABSTRACT

Contents of these hearings include the testimony of the following witnesses, as well as materials appended as pertinent to the hearings: (1) Dr. Francis Keppel, Chairman of the Board, General Learning Corp., New York, N.Y.; (2) Mr. Joel Berke, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., and Dr. Robert J. Goettel, Syracuse University Research Corp., New York, N.Y.; (3) Dr. Christopher S. Jencks, Associate Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education; (4) Dr. Robert Lekachman, Professor of Economics, State University of New York at Stony Brook; (5) Dr. Norman J. Boyan, Dean, Graduate School of Education, University of California at Santa Barbara; and, (6) Dr. George B. Kleindorfer, Lecturer in Education, School of Education, University of California at Berkeley. [Several articles reprinted as part of the hearings' transcript have not been reproduced here.] (SB)

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY—1971

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

OF THE

UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

PART 22—EDUCATION INFORMATION

WASHINGTON, D.C., DECEMBER 1, 2, 3, 1971

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1971

U.S. SENATE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY,
Washington, D.C.

The Select Committee met at 10:10 a.m., pursuant to call, in room 1318 of the New Senate Office Building, the Honorable Walter F. Mondale, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senator Mondale.

Staff members present: William C. Smith, staff director and general counsel; Bert Carp and Donald S. Harris, professional staff; and Leonard Strickman, minority counsel.

Senator MONDALE. The committee will come to order.

This morning we will hear from Dr. Francis Keppel, chairman of the board, General Learning Corp. of New York; Mr. Joel Berke, The Brookings Institution; and Dr. Robert J. Goettel, Syracuse University Research Corp. We are very pleased to have you with us this morning.

Dr. Keppel, will you lead off the testimony.

STATEMENT OF DR. FRANCIS KEPPEL, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, GENERAL LEARNING CORP., NEW YORK, N.Y.

Dr. KEPPEL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I think I can save you time by not attempting to read this because it only makes two points.

Senator MONDALE. We will place your statement in the record,* Dr. Keppel.

Dr. KEPPEL. It is difficult for me, sitting in this chair, not to go back for 5 years and take a look at the difference between 5 years ago, roughly at the time of the passage of that educational legislation in the mid-sixties, compared to today; specifically with regard to the issue before you, sir; namely, information about education.

A number of us spent a good deal of time in chairs like this and provided a whale of a lot of data to the Members of the Senate and the House on the problems of, primarily, the public and private secondary system and also higher education. Most of that data I would have to summarize as socioeconomic data, on buildings, poverty of families, various types perhaps of training and teachers. There was

*See prepared statement, pp. 10951–53.

practically no data that I was able to bring in my former position as Commissioner before the Congress that had to do with what pupils learn.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

It was not that we did not want to provide it. We did not have it. One of the major changes—and it is the thrust of my testimony—in the last 5 years is that with the development, clumsy as it is, of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which is carried out by the Compact of the States, and by other means, we now have accomplished three things.

I do not want to overstate, Mr. Chairman. I spent too much time in this chair overstating things, I am afraid. At any rate, the following has happened: Techniques for sampling and methods of administration of measures of what pupils learn, have been worked out. It is now going on across the country on a national sample basis.

Second, the resistance of the educational fraternity which was very strong in the middle or early part of the last decade, and to a degree exists today, is eroding fast. The key fact on this is that half a dozen States have gone to the Compact of the States in effect seeking help in how to adapt or use perhaps the techniques and the measures of the National Assessment in their own State. I would expect and hope that that would go further.

This is greatly strengthened, of course, by the current enthusiasm for what is called accountability. I am not sure anybody knows what it means, but there is a general feeling that the educators ought to be held responsible for what the children learn and not for the age of the building.

Third, there is an extraordinary hopeful possibility that out of this movement we can develop measures by the school—the program within the school building—which will make it possible—not now, sir, but in due course—to rifle-shoot direct funds to improve the performance within a school building.

I am making a contrast here between the school and the school system as a whole—all the primary, junior high, and high schools, treated as a unit—because the important data on equal educational opportunity gets lost in that aggregate. It would seem to me essential that we disaggregate it; get the unit of measure down to the school itself, the place where the individual in charge can be held more responsible, in my judgment, than the superintendent.

On the other hand, we would not, by these techniques, be overburdening the individual children with a whale of a lot of measures. A pretty good case can be made that too much testing is not good for children. By sampling technique, it is, as far as I can see, possible to reduce the amount of testing and still give the responsible authorities like yourself the data that you need for public policy.

Therefore, I would hope that the committee, in considering equal educational opportunity, give support to the development as rapidly as possible, through R. & D. programs, of the measures, the techniques for using them, and the way of reporting the results, both of the inputs—which I believe my colleagues will speak to—on the financial side and the result on the learning side. That those be reported school by school, publicly.

This seems to me to be the essential ingredient for increased consumer knowledge about the school, the capacity to influence that school, and in effect, the choice of school—to the degree to which the individual family can move to find the schools they want.

Socioeconomic Factors

Without this information, Mr. Chairman, it seems to me we are wasting our time. It has been pointed out rather vigorously in the last few years, largely through the Coleman report interpretations, that the educational system really does not make a lot of difference. It is the setting in which the pupils live, their families, the social environment, that are more important than schools. I suppose, since I have been an educator all my life, I do not quite believe it. I remain with hope that if this information system is actually put in place and studied over the years, we can show that the schools, properly managed, can have a lot more influence than it is now fashionable to say. Certainly, I would hope this is the view of your committee, sir.

We have an immense investment in public education and private education. Despair, which is quite widespread at the present time, may erode that investment. I doubt if we can really turn that around without the information system into which you are inquiring. My colleagues will go into detail about information that is now available, but not adequately interpreted or put to use. I am pleading not against them, but in addition to them, that a special emphasis be put on learning results that could be tied into the economic facts affecting education.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. FRANCIS KEPPEL

Mr. Chairman, better information about education is needed both to define the term "equal educational opportunity," and to approach it in practice as a social goal.

Only a decade ago, many doubted our technical ability to collect, store, and use data about the process and results of schooling. There was resistance on the part of educational authorities against the collection of data that would permit comparisons of educational results. In any case, the Nation seemed above all to lack equal financial support for the pupils, special help for those with physical or social handicaps, and a better way to recruit and train the teaching staff. On these matters facts were available and action could be and was taken.

We have since recognized that equal education opportunity is not alone a matter of equal support, special help or teacher education. Education is not a matter of schooling alone, but of the entire life of the learner, so the three factors mentioned are necessary but not sufficient conditions for reaching the goal. They leave out the essential factors of management, resource allocation and reporting to the consumer and the public. The key to each of these is a system of information.

In the mid-1960's it was not feasible to work out a stricter definition of an educationally deprived child than to measure his need by his family income. We lacked any way of getting the kind of detailed and comparable information that would have made it feasible to isolate particular educational deficits of schools and then target the financial remedy for the particular educational disease. We simply lacked data on what children were learning. The testimony presented to the Congress in support of educational bills was filled with socioeconomic facts about old buildings, ill-prepared teachers, inadequate materials, broken windows, and percentage of dropouts. From these facts it was reasoned that the children in some schools were not getting an even break, and that if these schools were given special financial help, the children would learn more—and would be able to compete on equal terms with their fellows when they reached maturity.

I do not retract from this testimony today. Hope and action still seem better than despair and inaction. But it was, on hindsight, naive primarily because we

overestimated what schools in general (and above all a particular school) could do. We lacked data on what the results were in different schools with comparable student bodies. The facts presented to the Congress dealt with the conditions in which pupils were forced by the attendance laws to learn. They dealt with inputs rather than outputs.

Since then, some progress has been made. Part of that progress has been down the painful path to modesty—at least for the educators. The data from the report now known by its author's name, the Coleman Report, has suggested the limits of what school in general can do to provide equal educational opportunity. It has made clearer the great influence the home and the social setting seem to have. Alas, the report has also created the general impression that it doesn't make much difference what the schools try to do. The lives of the children of disadvantage seemed doomed to play an endless revival of an American tragedy. Later reports on the effect of the several acts of Congress of the mid-1960's have been interpreted as reaching the same conclusion. As one looks back, it seems rather naive that any of us expected dramatic results in a few years from Federal actions that provided only a small percentage of financial help with no precise notion of how to apply that help. It is as though we expected a pin to do the work of a crowbar in moving a rock whose weight and center of gravity were unknown. But it is perhaps just as naive to assume on such a short experience, and with such inadequate financing and administration, that nothing can be done—especially since there is hope of the new factor of far better information to measure operations.

The national assessment of educational progress is slowly winning its way into the confidence of the educational fraternity. The earlier resistance has changed, in a group of States, to requests for cooperation so that comparable measures can be used within the States in such results as what the pupils learn in reading, science, citizenship, mathematics et al. Better measures have been devised, sampling methods worked out and difficult technical problems of administration are being worked out.

Even though political and professional resistance to a better information system is waning, there is a long way to go before local school systems, and above all individual schools, assemble data on educational investments (teachers salaries, materials, and so forth) and procedures on the one hand, and student learning on the other. Good starts have been made, in the city schools of Detroit, for example, but in general data is aggregated in such a way that it is almost impossible to focus on the individual school as a target. The mounting pressures for "accountability in education" of recent years may result in public demand for annual reports of this sort, made available to parents and to the community served by the particular school. But before that happens a great deal of research and development has to be done.

The capacity of the computer to store and analyze this information at a reasonable cost represents a powerful resource. Not much use of this resource has been made by American schools either for creating internal management information systems or for public reporting. The committee could make a major contribution by urging the allocation of energy and resources to such an R. & D. program, including the setting up of demonstrations. When the Congress and the executive branch are satisfied that the technical problems are under control, the Office of Education could then both collect data on such a basis and make public reports. Neither is possible today.

You will have noted that this testimony puts special emphasis on the need of assessing what the institution, the particular school, is accomplishing, rather than on a school system as a whole or on how the individual learner is performing. Presumably, in years to come, this committee and the Congress will want to have aggregate data in order to understand the extent of variation from the goal of equal educational opportunity as expressed in measures of what pupils have learned. A child who cannot read or cipher up to a minimum standard cannot take advantage of educational opportunities. But for the national purpose, if remedial action is to be effective, this information has to be applied to the basic management unit—the individual school—where something can be done and where responsibility can be lodged.

There are a great many tests that are now used to diagram the problems of the individual learner and to predict what he can next handle effectively. These tests can, of course, be improved and will be improved in years to come. But it seems to this witness that higher priority should be assigned to institutional measure-

ment as the key to getting a more accurate notion of how far we have to go in defining equal educational opportunity, in pinpointing places where special attention is required, and in making clear to the public the progress—or loss—in reaching the goal.

It is my personal hope, based on all too little evidence, that in the longrun it will be shown that the school can play a larger part in achieving equality of opportunity than now seems to be the case. Adequate evidence is not in, and adequate management controls are not in place. I hope you will be patient as those of us in education get at the job with the new tools at our disposal and with the new energy that sheer necessity demands.

Thank you very much.

Senator MONDALE. Thank you, Dr. Keppel.

FEDERAL ROLE

What is your opinion of the adequacy of the structure and role of the Federal Government in assisting with the development of usable and relevant educational data?

Dr. KEPPEL. Assistance?

Senator MONDALE. How effective is it in developing the data that you believe to be needed?

Dr. KEPPEL. Perhaps I could best answer that by explaining how I thought it necessary to operate 10 years ago.

The Commissioner of Education at that time, as I have indicated, had no data on learning outcomes. He had a lot of data on buildings and money, but none on learning. It seemed at that time extremely unlikely that the Federal executive branch would be able to create the measures and apply them throughout the Nation on outcomes and we therefore encouraged private sources—the Carnegie Corporation, Ford, and others—to start the National Assessment Program. There were at that time two reasons.

The first one was that there was strong professional resistance to being measured and the chances, frankly, of getting funds to carry out any such enterprise from the public sources were negligible. I think that has changed. Indeed, national assessment is being financed in good part by the Federal Government today.

The second reason was that it did not seem to me that the Office of Education had the staff qualifications to do it. It is my impression—but here I lean on my colleagues who have looked at it much more closely—that the last half-dozen years has shown a good deal of strengthening in the technical sense on the Federal side in being able to carry out such information collection. That is my impression but I could not pretend I am a good witness.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Senator MONDALE. We have before us in the Higher Education Act, the National Institute of Education, or the National Foundation of——

Dr. KEPPEL. It is the National Institute of Education.

Senator MONDALE. I think that is designed to do a better job of research, and a better job in experimentation and demonstration.

Dr. KEPPEL. It is.

Senator MONDALE. If we ever get that bill to conference, I assume it will be adopted. What is your view toward that proposal, or other pro-

posals that you may have in mind, to assure that the Federal Government is doing an effective job in this research and experimentation?

Dr. KEPPEL. With regard to the National Institute of Education, I have testified strongly in favor, as it happens, on the other side of the Hill. I believe that one of its major tasks would be to improve the quality of measuring instruments and the techniques of data collection. I very much hope that bill, if it gets through conference and so forth, will get underway.

The best way I can think of to be sure that we get this information—the information I am speaking to with regard to learning results—is to have the school systems get their money in part on the basis of it. That really gets the show going.

Now, I am not quite confident that we are ready for it yet, because I am not sure our measures are good enough, but that is the way we would like to go. To a degree, it is being done in some of the States today. I think that is really the way to get better use of the data we have.

Senator MONDALE. Are you concerned that if you use that strategy you might get false data?

Dr. KEPPEL. I am, sir. I am in the business world and I have observed with astonishment the enormous creativity of my associates in thinking up data at budget time. Of course, I am concerned.

On the other hand, I do not think that—I know many of my fellow educators disagree—the danger of false data is great enough to carry the argument against trying.

Senator MONDALE. Very good.

Mr. Berke.

STATEMENT OF MR. JOEL BERKE, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.; AND DR. ROBERT J. GOETTEL, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CORP., NEW YORK, N.Y.

Mr. BERKE. Senator, it is an honor to be here again and I would like to begin the testimony that Dr. Goettel and I will present jointly today by endorsing the statements made by the previous witness and say we agree with every statement Dr. Keppel has made, and that we, too, feel the importance of having data on learning outcomes; and the last comments particularly, in gearing financial systems to that data is something that we have proposed and recommended and I think I discussed it last time I was before this committee with Dr. Kelly of Teachers College and Ford Foundation. So we are delighted to follow Dr. Keppel.

DATA ON FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY

Our own emphasis today is going to be on somewhat different kinds of data. This committee is well aware of the relevance of finance to equal educational opportunity and Dr. Goettel and I would like to address ourselves today to the adequacy or inadequacy of the data furnished primarily by the Office of Education but also by other agencies on the state of educational finance and education as it relates to, and equal educational opportunity, as it relates to financial questions.

Our concern with this issue goes back some time. As a matter of fact, in the study which you issued as a committee print, "Federal

Aid to Education—Who Benefits?"* my colleagues and I had a chapter in which we pointed to the importance of this data gap.

Two years ago, Dr. Goettel and I met—as a matter of fact, when I was a member and he was on staff of an advisory committee to the late James E. Allen when he was Commissioner of Education, which concerned itself with this problem which he, too, like every commissioner who preceded him, felt, namely, the inadequacy of data to make decisions on; and more recently we have conducted a study which is within a week or two of completion for the President's commission, looking into the adequacy of information that is available on education.

We have a statement today. I think it is brief enough for us to read through it with you. In it we will spend some time covering the problem as we see it because it is a problem that is not widely appreciated, and so I think it is worth dwelling on the problem itself; but then we would like to move on to things which will summarize the conclusions of our study and more importantly for your purposes I am sure a series of recommendations that we have to make which we would like to discuss with you.

So, with that, let me proceed to our statement and we will answer your questions as you raise them and we will answer them jointly because this is a joint statement.

Senator MONDALE. Very well.

DEFICIENCIES IN EDUCATION DATA

Mr. BERKE. As we see the problem that we are addressing ourselves to, it turns particularly on the fact that participants in educational policymaking—be they public officials, researchers, educators, interested citizens—are handicapped by deficiencies in the available information on the state of American education. The data base that should be drawn upon in evaluating current policies and in designing new programs is woefully inadequate. This inadequacy may be traced to two causes: First, and more important, data are not organized in ways that would facilitate policy formulation; and, second, data are scattered among a variety of agencies. The problem is particularly acute in connection with the development and implementation of national priorities in education.

A few questions that policymakers might reasonably raise will illustrate some of the shortcomings of current educational statistical reports. To give an example or a series of examples of the problem, I would like to illustrate by pointing out some of the questions that policymakers might reasonably raise and indicate that the answers are not easily available.

If one seeks to know the total fiscal impact of all relevant Federal programs on education in particular school districts, data are unavailable in any one place or in any single report. Similarly, if one would like to know how much Federal support is being provided for urban school districts, or impoverished rural districts, as I know you have asked, Senator, in the past, or districts with high proportions of nonwhite students, one cannot find information in accessible form. Sup-

*U.S. Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, committee print, April 1971, U.S. Government Printing Office; reprinted October 1971.

pose one were interested in designing an educational aid formula which would take into account the total services—both educational and for general governmental functions—being supported out of a given community tax base.

Again, such data must currently be pieced together from a variety of sources. I could go on and on. I guess the point I want to make here, Senator, is that these are not really problems for Dr. Goettel and myself, because we are researchers. We can pull that data together from a variety of sources and we can put it together in ways we need. However, it is a problem for policymakers at all levels. There are other important areas of information shortages, the educational impact or the achievement outputs of the schools to which Mr. Keppel was addressing himself is one that we feel also, and, of course, the status of education and finance in the nonpublic schools of the Nation is another area where data is woefully inadequate.

Failure To Organize Data for Policymaking

Let me turn now to the failure to organize the data for policymaking purposes which we consider the major shortcoming of current Federal data on education.

Formulating effective public policy for the support of elementary and secondary education requires a knowledge of:

1. The demand for various kinds of educational services, both at present and in the foreseeable future;
2. Estimates of the costs of those varied demands;
3. A conception of equity in the distribution both of educational services and of the costs of those services;
4. A continuous monitoring and evaluation of the financial, and to the extent feasible, the educational impact, of Federal programs in particular and of American education more generally.

Unfortunately, data about education is currently presented in undigested, unaggregated form, leaving those who are not themselves experienced manipulators of statistics at a loss to understand the significance of all the painstakingly collected and refined information.

In short, there is currently little attempt to present and interpret information in policy-oriented categories like those above. Much of the collection of statistical material on education is dominated by a laudable desire for accuracy and comprehensiveness. Equally needed conceptual values, notably the relation of data to issues of public policy, however, are not served. Overall, the fit between the needs of those who try to think and plan systematically for the future of American education and the statistical tools at their disposal is faulty. The hit or miss quality of many of our Federal programs and the hunchbacked nature of much of our thinking on educational problems is traceable in large part to the inability of policymakers to draw upon relevant information as they pursue their deliberations.

Overview Needed of Entire Educational Process

Now, the second cause for inadequate data is that data is scattered among and between Federal agencies, and these include such agencies as the Office of Education and its subdivisions, the Office of Economic

Opportunity, the Departments of Labor and Commerce, the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, the Census Bureau, and the Office of Management and Budget. All these are Federal agencies currently collecting educational data or processing it in some form.

State educational agencies and regional associations are additional sources of information, as are private organizations like the National Education Association and the National Catholic Education Association. The fact that multiple reporting and analytic centers exist is not itself a problem. Indeed, it is not only an inevitable situation, it is a positively beneficial one. The real problem is that no single agency—and that includes the U.S. Office of Education—has undertaken the task of providing an overview of the entire educational landscape.

In regard to Federal programs in particular, the U.S. Office of Education has largely limited the sweep of its vision to those programs and those data sources administered by the Office of Education. Thus data on early childhood education expenditures is scarce at the National Center for Educational Statistics because that is a Federal agency. Shortages of data on aspects of State and local finance relevant to the need and capacity for educational support has come about because data collected for the Census of Governments and by the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations has seldom been drawn upon by the Office of Education.

In short, the responsibility the Office of Education has carried since its founding in 1867—"to collect such statistics and facts as should show the condition and progress of education"—has been subjected to a restrictive and self-defeating interpretation on the basis of jurisdictional lines that are unrelated to the substance of its mandate.

Now, that is essentially the problem as we see it. In the spring of 1971, the President's Commission on School Finance agreed to fund a 6-month project directed by Dr. Goettel and myself to look into the problems outlined above and to develop recommendations designed to remedy the shortcomings in available information related to the support of American education. That study is now within 2 weeks of completion. In it, we have analyzed the adequacy of information available to those who seek to develop better ways of financing education. We have examined and cataloged both the availability and the usefulness of information on the important questions on the Nation's educational agenda through interviews, questionnaires, and staff analysis. We have met with local, State, and National officials of both executive and legislative branches, and have studied reports of previous panels which have looked into the information gap in education.

I would like to turn to my colleague, Dr. Goettel, to resume our testimony and say something about what we have found, and, finally, the recommendations we would make.

Findings and Recommendations

Dr. Goettel. Well, on the basis of the research activities that Joel Berke has indicated, our major conclusion is that the present system of educational information fails to serve the requirements of those who are most in need of timely, reliable, and relevant information about the Nation's educational problems.

As Joel Berke has said, it is somewhat interesting to note that the category of users that appears to be best served by the efforts of the U.S. Office of Education are researchers in the field, whereas the policymakers, Congressmen and staff, executives in the executive branch are least served.

From the policymaker's viewpoint, this failure has four critical dimensions:

1. Information is not organized and presented within a policy-relevant framework. There is little indication that Federal education data collection begins with the most basic of questions: Data for and about what?

2. Information that is collected and disseminated is rarely analyzed. As a result, U.S. Office of Education information typically is presented according to the alphabetical order of the States or the enrollment of school districts, two characteristics which usually have little relevance to the major issues facing the Nation.

3. The format and presentation of the information about American education as well as long delays in publication discourage use by policymakers.

4. Numerous gaps exist in the availability of data required to answer questions relative to the education agenda of the 1970's.

Such gaps occur for three reasons:

(*a*) Suitable comparisons from district to district or State to State are often not available in any form. Examples include pupil-achievement data, cost-benefit data, and "needs" data in some basic instructional areas.

(*b*) The second kind of gap that exists concerns data which are available for some aggregations of school districts, municipalities, and States are not available for other aggregations or levels. This is one of the principal reasons why it is so difficult to relate fiscal data about education to data about other State and municipal services.

(*c*) To be useful to policymakers an item of information must be presented in relationship to another item to create an index which permits analysis and conclusions. As often as not, publications present raw data which are of little use to policymakers.

In addition to these four basic conclusions, there are a number of other conclusions that we have drawn from our studies over the past few months.

Availability of Federal Funds

State information systems have expanded and improved dramatically in the past decade, largely as a result of the availability of Federal funds—NDEA Title X and ESEA Title V. Grant variations continue to exist among States in both ability and, probably more important, in our view, the willingness to provide the Federal Government with data, and, I might add also, the willingness to collect certain kinds of data about the nature of education in their own States.

A number of States are rebelling against information requests from Washington citing duplications, lack of established need for information, and the high cost of collecting information not routinely collected.

The National Center for Education Statistics has made major efforts to improve data collection procedures in recent years. As you are aware, the NCES was created in 1965. However, the Center is severely limited in that almost 90 percent of elementary and secondary education data are collected by program management bureaus of USOE, Office of Civil Rights, Bureau of the Census, and the Department of Agriculture. Though interagency cooperation is improving, and NCES is making a gallant effort in this regard, greater coordination is in order.

NCES has by far the smallest budget of all major statistical agencies in the Federal Government. Given the pressing need for relevant and timely information and the multiplicity of problems associated with complete dependence upon State and local education agencies, the current budget of $5.7 million is grossly inadequate.

Recommendations

Now, drawing from these conclusions, we have developed three broad recommendations that we believe are addressed to the broad nature of the problem of collecting and providing policymakers with information about the condition and progress of education in our Nation.

We would suggest, first, that information on education which explains spatial trends in:

1. The demand for education,
2. Its costs,
3. The patterns of allocation of educational services and costs—that is the equity dimension, and
4. The impact both fiscal and, to the extent possible, educational of Federal programs should be produced by an analytical staff located in the National Center for Educational Statistics of the U.S. Office of Education.

The function of the analytical staff would parallel the activities of such agencies as the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Office of Business Economics. While the Center has made important progress in upgrading its statistical competence in the last few years, more adequate analysis will require the addition of personnel trained in demography, economics, education, public finance, sociology, and other areas of social science expertise. We would also add that the presence of such analytically inclined personnel within the staff would also contribute to intelligent decisions about which data should be collected to answer the major policy questions.

In addition, and we found that this final part of this first recommendation appears to be exceedingly important to policymakers, we think it would be useful if an editorial staff were attached to NCES which would insure readability and clarity of format in NCES publications.

The second recommendation that we make is that to guide improvement in NCES information gathering, analysis, and dissemination, an advisory committee should be created. Composed of recognized scholars and other policy-oriented users of educational data, the committee should be charged with producing an annual report to the Congress, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and to the Commissioner of Education on:

1. The important trends in the condition and progress of American education, and

2. The state of the Office's information collection, analysis, and dissemination program.

Such a committee, with a staff of its own, would parallel in a general way the functions provided by such committees as the Advisory Commission on the Education of Disadvantaged Children. Specifically, it would provide the immensely useful function in regard to data services of asking the essential question: "Information for what?" Ambitious organizational changes like those envisioned in the "Common Core of Data for the Seventies," will serve a useful function only to the extent that a body of analytically and policy-oriented people influence the selection of items to be collected and the manner in which they are organized and presented to the public.

The third recommendation: Ultimately, however, independent, high-level analysis of the state of American education and educational finance will come only from a body roughly comparable to the National Bureau of Economic Research. Funded perhaps, by the National Institute of Education and the Education Commission of the States, such a body could develop the prestige and competence to attract distinguished senior scholars and the most able junior colleagues. Drawing upon the data of NCES, private interest groups, and university-based research; cutting across jurisdictional levels both horizontally among the agencies of the national government and vertically among State education agencies and local education agencies, such an agency is the primary hope we have for the development of the all important capacity to provide critical analyses and evaluations of the information collected about the condition and progress of American education.

That concludes our formal statement, Senator.

Senator MONDALE. Thank you very much for that statement. It makes me feel better. I thought this committee was unable to comprehend the data given to us, but apparently you have difficulty, too.

I believe the public spends about $42 million a year now on elementary and secondary public education?

Dr. KEPPEL. It is a little more than that now, sir.

Senator MONDALE. How many children attend public schools?

Dr. KEPPEL. I think, 45 million. I am not sure.

Mr. BERKE. 45 million.

STATISTICS DIFFICULT TO USE

Senator MONDALE. And we spend $5.7 million in the National Center for Educational Statistics to find out what is happening. That is all.

Apparently your studies caused you to conclude that these statistics we gather are either collected in a way—or disseminated in a way—that they are largely useless to public policy bodies; whether it is to the executive branch or the political leaders of the Congress. It is material which is very, very difficult to use.

Mr. BERKE. That is the result of our interviews and our questionnaires, Senator.

Senator MONDALE. One of the questions this committee has been struggling with is: What makes a difference in schools? I gather when the Office of Education was created in 1867 they were supposed to keep data on that, were they not? They were supposed to be developing information to help answer that question. We have not been able to find out, after 2 years of hearings, what makes a difference. We have some guesses but that is all.

Is this because no one really knows? Or is the knowledge buried somewhere, but not getting out? If we do not know what works, what good is a data system?

Mr. BERKE. Senator, I would reply to that a number of ways I think. In terms of effective cost-benefit studies in education, I do not know of any that are very convincing, and I think the other two witnesses ought to reply to this as well.

I think part of the problem is that the analytical tools have not been applied or have not been sharpened sufficiently to give us those answers. I think there is a shortage in the research as well as in the available data. However, I would say that what has contributed to this problem has been a lack of attention to it over the years.

I think if U.S. Commissioners of Education had been able to implement within the Office a concern for problems of this kind we could have been and would have been much further ahead. Maybe Dr. Keppel will want to comment on this. I am not sure if the problem has been in the willingness and the desire of the top levels of the Office to develop useful data like that or that somewhere in the filtering mechanism of the bureaucracy it gets lost, but most of the data that we see does not permit you to answer a question like that, which would seem to be the most obvious question that people would ask when it comes to schools.

Dr. KEPPEL. Well, I do not disagree with Mr. Berke, Senator, as to what he said. I will add to it if I may. It is worth recalling that when the Office was established in 1867 the Commissioner was provided with two clerks in the beginning—and the next year one was dropped. Therefore, what he had as the basis for his report—which, by the way, in those days were rather well-written essays and I do not think we have improved on the style since then—was clearly a personal kind of feel for the situation.

In the intervening period, up until I would guess in the mid-1960's or late 1950's, the fact of the matter is that the Federal Government really did not have much of anything to say about what was going to happen in the schools. Even now, it is hard to have a strong influence without more than 7- or 8-percent of the dollars involved.

The problem was: Did the Office of Education have the leverage to get the facts, even the raw facts, in time and in the form out of the States and the answer was "No," to put it bluntly. We just did not have an effective connection with the States and I cannot say that I blame the States, because they were running the show.

As a result of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title V, with Federal funds going in for technical support for the States in this area, I guess there has been an improvement. But I also judge it is very spotty. That is, the quality of data that comes varies from State-to-State, which clearly makes the task of analysis at a national

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level infinitely more difficult because some of the data may be fairly hard and some fairly soft, so we have to be careful about what we say.

Data on Learning Financial Input Relationship

Of course, the key question of what you should ask of the educators, not just the Office of Education but the educational profession, is: Is learning data really related financially to input, and is there an effective relationship between those two?

As Mr. Berke has pointed out, we do not have a way of looking at that question as yet, and the educators are understandably hesitant to get too deep into it when they have a feeling that it would make the headline of the local newspaper. Reports might be made on the basis of some index—or whatever you want to call it—which would probably be unfair to them.

In short, before educators can answer your question, Senator, a lot of hard research and development through the National Institute of Education—or whatever body Congress creates—has got to be done before public policy can rest entirely on the basis of analysis of the input/output of the schools. It should be started through R. & D. and I am optimistic about it, but I do not think we are yet able to write legislation based on formula of that type.

When the Elementary and Secondary Education Bill was going through the Congress, the late Senator Robert Kennedy asked the Commissioner at the time about the definition of an educationally deprived child, and the answer indicated that the only way we could get at a definition that was workable from the point of view of congressional action was family income. That was the way, as you recall, which the formula was written. Senator Kennedy said, and I am quoting now:

> I don't know if it would be possible to work out a stricter definition, but I think it would be of help to the committee.

Lord knows, he was right, but the witness had to say we could not do it. I would have to say the same thing today—except that the reaction of the profession to this kind of analysis is changing fast, and the hope of the National Institute of Education which might be provided, have the means to move toward a "stricter" definition.

Senator Mondale. Dr. Keppel, what do you think of the Berke-Goettel recommendations in terms of trying to do a better job of collecting, analyzing, editing, and evaluating the data?

Coordination Among Government Agencies

Dr. Keppel. I would agree with them, sir. Developing effective relationships between Government bureaucracies is a task at which I did not succeed and I do not think anybody does really. But better coordination is possible and I am a little distressed, to tell you the truth, that it has not happened more.

It is not that I disagree with these gentlemen, Senator; it is rather I would like to add something, if I may, but I do not know if it falls within the terms of reference of your committee. If it does not, I apologize.

Senator MONDALE. Since we do not have any power, they give us free rein; if we had power, we probably would not be able to listen.

Dr. KEPPEL. I feel quite at home, sir. Their set of recommendations understandably is aimed at the Federal Government basically. Every one of these refers to what the Federal Establishment might do.

I think the real job has to be done inside the States. Might it be possible for the committee to revise—and this might be a fairly specific possibility, although I cannot pretend to be competent on the detail of it—Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in such a way as to require—not finance—a different method of State collection of data, including data on individual schools? If that would be possible, I would urge it, because we are now at the stage where we were not 5 or 10 years ago. There is now a basis for the States being able to do it, and I believe a desire to do more of this.

In short, my comment is not that there is anything wrong with these recommendations; but I would not hesitate to say that the Federal interest in education is now sufficiently raised to justify taking the step that I have just recommended.

Senator MONDALE. What would you think of that recommendation?

IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL-BY-SCHOOL DATA

Mr. BERKE. Our work to date suggests that much of the progress in improving State data systems has come about because of Federal programs, and so I would see this as a useful route. I would agree. I would also agree—and I am sorry it did not appear in our statement—it was one of those lapses that we all have—that we did not emphasize school-by-school data, as Dr. Keppel has. I think this is important.

As I have said in other places, and it is in the statement on information gaps that you already have—this is where the incidence of educational programs is, in the schools, and even in the classrooms, and so until we have data on that as opposed to things like school districts which are amorphous, we are not really looking at the state and the condition of education in America.

Senator MONDALE. The data is not broken down by schools, is it?

Mr. BERKE. No, sir.

Dr. KEPPEL. May I interrupt for just a minute?

Senator MONDALE. Yes.

Dr. KEPPEL. You might be interested in some data that I saw in Detroit which the superintendent pulled together with regard to costs, salaries, maintenance costs, equipment and so forth, and learning results of third grade and sixth grade, I believe, done school by school in the city of Detroit. This has actually been done and it might be a useful addition to the committee's facts. I will try to get this.

Senator MONDALE. We have a draft of those with our data.

Mr. BERKE. Mr. Chairman, Dr. Goettel directed a study recently for us in Syracuse in which we went into three rather large school districts—Syracuse, Rochester, and one of the decentralized districts in New York City—and tackled precisely that problem of getting school-by-school data. I think it would be useful to the committee if he were permitted to comment on that study.

Dr. GOETTEL. Senator, I want to start out by disagreeing just a bit with my colleagues, disagreeing but also saying that I think school-by-school data is critical in terms of achievement levels and in terms of whatever we can do on an input/output relationship to try to find out what is happening in schools.

REQUIREMENT FOR SCHOOL-BY-SCHOOL DATA

My concern, though, focuses on who should have that information. There is no doubt in my mind that the school districts—in fact, I might go as far as saying that States should require school districts to publish such data for their citizens. Very, very few States—well, no States require that of districts now and very few districts, at least outside of the large urban areas, do that sort of thing.

The question is: Why do we need school-by-school data at the level of the Federal Government? In other words, what kind of information do we need? What kind of policy question requires us to collect that kind of information? If there is a question to be answered, is it a question that needs to be answered regularly; that is, every year, every other year, every 5 years; or is it a question that should be answered by some researchers in the National Institute of Education on a one-shot basis?

I do not want to suggest answers to those questions right now, but I think we need to begin asking those questions before we require States to start supplying the Federal Government with data about individual schools, because I can assure you that this is one area that the States are very, very reluctant to make a request to local school districts about; and frankly, I think I have some sympathy with the States on that score.

The attitude out in the States is that the higher up we go from school district to State to Federal Government, the greater aggregation of data should occur. Of course, now what we are talking about is a need for some very specific disaggregations of data and before we make that kind of request and particularly build it into something like Title V, I think we have to know exactly why we want to burden the States and all the school districts with that.

Dr. KEPPEL. I did not intend to suggest that information on individual school districts should be sent to Washington. That building down there is not big enough to handle it. My intent in talking about Title V was rather to suggest something like a requirement that if the States are going to get this Title V money, they have to publish within the States—down to the school district level—every 2 or 3 years, data on input and output, but not to send it to Washington.

The aggregate, larger kind of data that you have to deal with could be handled in a different way. In my point of view, the national assessment program is entirely right in using a sample, in no sense broken down by school or school district. This was the purpose to provide the Congress of the United States with a general sweep of results and a sense of direction.

Senator MONDALE. I know Michigan has a system of testing for 4th and 7th grades. We had hearings* on the Michigan school system

*See Parts 19A, hearing of Nov. 1, 1971, and 19A–1, staff charts on Michigan's Educational Assessment Program.

dealing with desegregation—what works and what does not work. We found that the best data was the school-by-school data and that had not been released publicly. I do not think they are afraid of us, but I think they are reluctant to release that information to the public. Could that be right?

Data Should Be Published Publicly

Dr. Keppel. I am sorry, sir, I have made up my mind on this one. I think the school-by-school data must be released publicly—as a matter of public policy. Otherwise, I do not know how we would maintain the active interest in the schools which we need.

Senator Mondale. I think this commentary has been very useful. We had a witness from California who said, "We really ought to go into a school and break it down classroom by classroom, because," he said, "in even some of the worst ghetto schools you will have a tracking system, with some children in a good class, just booming along and doing exceedingly well. But, if you look at the school's overall statistics it is abominable; however, there are some people doing very well in these schools."

The question is: How can we improve that? Should we have quality integration within a school? That is a good question.

Dr. Keppel. The question is right, I believe. I have seen them myself and so have you, when you just see light and life in the classroom which is across the hall from one that is dark and dead, I tend to think the school is just a practical unit of measure. It gets to be a fantastic job, also, but also for a pretty cold-blooded management reason: you have got to put the finger on somebody, Senator. I think it should be the principal, the management. That is the point at which judgments can be made, and if the fellow after 4 or 5 years is not doing very well, out he goes.

Mr. Berke. Senator, I would like to comment on that, if I might. I think people from California might even take it further and take it right down to the individual child if they could.

I think, as researchers, we probably have an obligation to attempt to refine the tools of information to carry it right to the classroom and perhaps the individual student, but I would agree entirely with Dr. Keppel, and I think I speak for my colleague as well because this is something we have discussed many times, that the school is an appropriate level of aggregation. It is an appropriate level analyzing data for a number of reasons, and I agree with both of Dr. Keppel's points.

Accountability Rests with Principal

I would add that research suggests that school principals are highly influential people in what happens in their schools and I think putting the finger on that individual is a very useful way to do it, because principals do make a difference in everything—they inspire their staff or they do not inspire their staff—and this is one way to place public attention on that.

Senator Mondale. How do you fire a principal?

Dr. Keppel. It's a difficult job.

Senator Mondale. You mean it has been done?

Dr. Keppel. Yes, it has been done.

Dr. GOETTEL. What it amounts to, in dynamic school districts where you are getting dynamic leadership at the central office level, there are a number of very creative ways to get rid of principals. There may be problems in terms of tenure laws, but there is nothing at all that prohibits transferring a principal from one location to another in most school districts.

Senator MONDALE. A lot of them get promoted to the central staff where they run a larger section of the schools.

Dr. KEPPEL. That certainly has happened and I am not sure that it has not sometimes been in the interest of the public on relative allocation of resources.

One of the problems here is that the principals do not have the very information that we are talking about inside the big city systems. I have tried to look at that in two cities. This Detroit data is relatively rare, with the result that the man does not really have the management tools in his hands very often.

One clear indication of this is that the tenure for administrators in the public school systems is nonsense. It does not make any sense to me—yet there are situations in which they have tenure.

Senator MONDALE. In our hearings in San Francisco the superintendent testified that when he arrived at what he called the "Pentagon"—the big headquarters of the San Francisco school system—at the first meeting he said: "I am going to send most of you back out to the schools. I cannot imagine what I will do with all of you here, and you are all going to go back and teach." Then, I believe, there was a big protest meeting. In San Francisco there are legal protections of some kind right up to the top, but apparently the voters of San Francisco voted out that tenure protection and some are going to have to start teaching again.

It seems that—in addition to trying to get adequate budgets, data, data collection, processing, and an adequate in-house sort of editorial analysis process—we are going to need some sort of concentration process with the result. That is what I think is unique about the Council of Economic Advisors and Joint Economic Committee and why it has succeeded where everyone else has failed. By mistake they set up an institution with tension in it, an institution that has high credibility, so the top professionals are willing to spend part of their careers there, wth a tremendous public involvement—that is, the annual report, the monthly reports, the Joint Economic Committee—and then the tension between the executive and the Congress with the kind of policy-related questions always being asked and the pressure for data that is usable policy.

COUNCIL OF SOCIAL ADVISORS

For some years now, I have introduced a proposal for a Council of Social Advisors to deal with human problems like the Council of Economic Advisors. It passed the Senate last year and died a predictable death in the House. We will try it again this year. But if such an institution were established, it would seem one of its key questions

every year should demand that there be a report on educational achievement. There should be data required to be gathered and reported on what someone called the "hot facts" of what works and what does not work. Then that data would be in the social report and I think you could expect the Congress would continue to ask the right questions—because, really, the little simple phrase that the Congress asked in 1867 is what we should have been working on. There have been hundreds of millions of dollars worth of data collected on all other matters which do not mean anything. What really counts, when it turns to Congress, is what works and how can we make it work better. I believe we have not been asking the right questions in the public census; and, in a sense, when the public asks the questions they are turned off, or denied, or dissembled. I believe one of the things we could do to restore confidence to public education is to insist that the right questions be asked and answered in a way that is understood by the layman.

I think your proposals here make a lot of sense. Nonetheless, I still think with the ones which Dr. Berke and Dr. Goettel made, you could still have a lot of in-house data and treatment of these questions.

Mr. BERKE. Senator, our third recommendation was intended to get at that. We decided not to use the device of the Council of Social Advisors only because it had been around a while and we wanted to put another element into the discussion, so we talked about some agency that was part private, only tangentially associated with the Office of Education, or HEW or any of the other existing agencies.

We agree wholeheartedly with the need for this sort of activity, that you simply cannot expect it to come out of a body like the Office of Education for many of the reasons that Dr. Keppel talked about; the constituency is very much the chief State school officers. They simply, for budgetary purposes, cannot be expected to make the really controversial statements. They do not have the prestige to attract at the middle levels the kind of people that you are referring to who can ask the questions and use the analytical techniques to get the answers to those questions that another agency could. So I agree with the need for that.

We happened to select a different device but we are not wedded to it by any means. The Council of Social Advisors would be an ideal approach.

APPROACH EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES JOINTLY

Dr. KEPPEL. May I comment on that, Senator? I happen to be an enthusiast for the conception of the Council of Social Advisors and have testified in favor of it. It is not solely the general idea that you are putting forth, but speaking specifically and particularly from the educational point of view, I think it would be wise to have education included as a part of a larger confrontation type of approach that you have in mind included with other and larger social issues.

If anything is clear, it is that the schools do have limited capacity to achieve equal educational opportunity. They have to be thought of in terms of other social policies. Therefore, to include education in

the larger framework would be greatly to the benefit of future educational progress. I presume you have in mind a kind of joint congressional review structure.

Senator MONDALE. We would have a President's Council of Social Advisors with a requirement to develop social data to disseminate in an annual social report, then a joint social committee to react to it.

Dr. KEPPEL. I can say this with a cheerful point of view since I am not in office any more. I do not know whether those in office now would agree, but the fact was, as Commissioner of Education, in going to Congress I was always going up on specifics either with regard to new legislation or with regard to getting existing programs funded. That was the nature of the relationship between the Executive Branch and the Congress—the two committees of the Senate and the House, on getting legislation through, and the appropriations.

The result was with the few exceptions such as the one I quoted from the late Senator Kennedy, that the kinds of questions to which you refer were not asked. It certainly was not the fault of the individual Members of the Congress at all because the witness came before them on a specific issue.

It would have been immensely beneficial, if there had been a joint social committee.

Senator MONDALE. The real problem here is that the Congress has given up on educators. It really does not think they know what they are doing, or know how to do it, or are capable of doing it. It does not expect real answers from educators. It just thinks the thing is a big flop, and does not know what to do about it.

You began your testimony by saying you think money makes a difference. Well, we ought to know something about that, should we not? I remember when Mr. Marland, who was a good man, came up for confirmation and I said, "All these school systems are falling apart and children are not learning." Then I asked, "What do you think works?" And he said, "We have studies on the way."

I am not being critical of him, but he spent his whole life in this business and he has run some of the major school systems. However, this sort of epitomizes this inexcusable mindlessness of the lack of a strategic understanding and approach to the central theme in American life: Give children a decent education.

We must move much more swiftly to have a rational and responsible approach. I believe the suggestions you made make a great deal of sense, and I hope we can have some progress.

Dr. KEPPEL. I suppose this is defensive, Senator, but I am at the age where I can afford that.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

One of the problems, as far as the public attitude is concerned towards the schools, is that there is a general kind of assumption that they are failing. This cuts very deep into public thinking, as the Coleman report shows. Yet little snippets of information point in exactly the opposite direction.

Let me quote from a report* from Princeton, a college in New Jersey—I speak as a Harvard man——

*See also Appendix 1, p. 11047.

Senator MONDALE. A new one.

Dr. KEPPEL. Relatively new. A committee there was studying its program and they recommended a 3-year B.A. with this quotation: "Almost all Princeton freshmen while still in secondary school receive instruction which in the recent past would have been regarded as at least equivalent to one semester of college work." And Princeton is seriously thinking of changing its programs and sharpening them up because the secondary schools from which their students come are doing, evidently, a good deal more academic and scientific work than was the case even 10 years ago.

This is the kind of fact that gets buried in the general discussion. I am appalled at how badly we reported to the Congress, partly because we did not have this kind of data. If we had had trend lines going back 10, 15, 20 years on the extent to which secondary school students were taught physics, and the increased percentage that do the calculus, the improvement in some secondary education would have been made clearer.

I am defensive, I will grant you that: yet I think the American primary and secondary school system, and its university system, are doing a whale of a lot better than the public now thinks, and it is our fault for not having made some of these facts clear.

I hasten to say that they are also doing very badly in the rural areas and in the cities.

HOW CHILDREN LEARN

Dr. GOETTEL. Senator, one of the problems is that it is not just educators but I think there are a good number of—maybe all—psychologists would say we just do not know very much about how children learn, particularly those children who do not come from home environments where learning is a major activity all of the time.

I know this is apologizing for educators, but the question that we have been dwelling on for the past 45 minutes or so is: What works and what does not work—and there are some very critical policy questions that relate to education, educational management, the delivery of educational services, school finance, that we can begin to cope with that will not answer the question of how do children learn, but will work, at least in terms of data.

STATISTICAL EXPLANATIONS FALL SHORT

As I noted before when we talked about the importance of principals, that is one of the problems we have. When you put someone in who can turn his staff on and start things happening in the school, we just do not have any way to quantify that. We can quantify it in terms of whether or not he has a master's degree or 30 points toward that thing we place such a high value on in education, a doctorate. We can quantify it in terms of job experience. But such data do not really help us understand why something is happening that we know is good. We know only that it is not occurring.

But to get back to my other point, I think just as we focused in recent weeks on the concerns of fiscal equity and intrastate fiscal equity, this is one of the areas that we don't have a great deal of information on

today, and there is a reluctance on the part of the Federal Government to do something about it.

The National Education Finance Project has done some initial work in this area, and I think one of the suggestions that we did not want to address in our comments today but one of the suggestions we think the U.S. Office of Education should consider in looking at the equity question is: Are there ways that they can build in the kinds of data that the NEFP has developed simply to look at *Serrano* type concerns in every one of the 50 States because we feel that that is an important concern for the Federal Government.

Senator MONDALE. Does the OE statistical office have a national advisory committee data approach, and so forth? Is it a civil service staff?

Dr. GOETTEL. Well, they work with a committee from the Chief State School Officers. I believe there are six State School Officers or their representatives who are on that committee. In addition they work with the committee for Education Data Systems, which is comprised of representatives from the information collection bureaus in each State department of education. The point is that here they are turning to the States for this kind of advice and not looking to Federal level policymakers.

Senator MONDALE. I must leave to vote. We will adjourn; and thank you very, very much for your help.

The committee is in recess, to reconvene at 10 a.m., on Thursday, in room 1318 of the New Senate Office Building.

(Whereupon, at 11:20 a.m., the Select Committee was recessed, to reconvene at 10 a.m., on December 2, 1971, in room 1318 of the New Senate Office Building.)

EDUCATION INFORMATION

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1971

U.S. SENATE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
Washington, D.C.

The Select Committee met at 9:50 a.m., pursuant to call, in room 1318, of the New Senate Office Building, the Honorable Walter F. Mondale, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senator Mondale.

Staff members present: William C. Smith, staff director and general counsel; Bert Carp and Donald S. Harris, professional staff; William Hennigan, minority staff director; and Leonard Strickman, minority counsel.

Senator MONDALE. This morning we have with us Dr. Christopher Jencks, Harvard Graduate School of Education, to testify on the question of voucher proposals.

Dr. Jencks, we are glad to have you with us this morning.

Dr. JENCKS. Glad to be here. I am sorry for any inconvenience caused by our not communicating yesterday.

Senator MONDALE. I guess we all tried.

Dr. JENCKS. My secretary and staff seemed to have fouled things up badly. I will take that up with them.

Senator MONDALE. Please do.

STATEMENT OF DR. CHRISTOPHER S. JENCKS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Dr. JENCKS. I am Christopher Jencks, Associate Professor of Education and former President of the Center for the Study of Public Policy, a nonprofit educational research corporation located in Cambridge, Mass.

In December of 1969 the Center received a grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity to study the feasibility of using vouchers or grants to parents to finance elementary education. I would like today to summarize briefly for your committee the results of our study.

BASIS OF VOUCHER PLANS

The basic idea behind all so-called voucher plans is that parents should have more choice about the schools their children attend. Advocates of voucher systems propose that instead of appropriating money directly to schools and then assigning students to these schools,

the government should give money directly to parents. Parents would then use the money to pay for the cost of educating their children at the school of their choice.

Beyond this simple idea, however, there is no consensus among voucher advocates. There are dozens of different voucher proposals, and they have very little in common. Anyone who studies the different plans with care will find that they would have drastically different effects. Some, for example would increase racial segregation in the schools, while others would decrease it.

Some would keep parochial schools alive financially, while others would probably kill them. Some would encourage educational innovation, while others would help perpetuate traditional arrangements. This makes it silly either to favor or to oppose vouchers in general. One must favor or oppose a particular voucher plan. The merits of a plan depend on the details, not on the general slogan.

Vouchers To Maintain Segregation

There are three general kinds of voucher plans. The first variety is designed to maintain racial segregation by giving parents money to send their children to segregated private schools. This is the kind of voucher plan that was developed in the South during the 1950's.

Voucher plans of this kind have repeatedly been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court and by lower Federal courts. I can see no reason to anticipate any change in the Court's attitude on this matter even in light of its changing composition. Nor do I know of any serious effort to launch such a voucher program at the present time.

Senator Mondale. Were those State-supported systems, the school systems in the South which would give a per capita grant to a student which could be applied to a private segregated academy?

Mr. Jencks. That is the basic idea. There are five States that adopted proposals of that kind and in all cases they were thrown out by the courts. The most recent Supreme Court decision on this made it clear that they would throw out any other program of this kind which didn't have some kind of safeguards built in to preclude a segregated academy receiving public money.

At the present time, I don't know of any serious effort to launch a voucher effort of this type, the kind that support segregated academies. That isn't to say there aren't a lot of people that would like to; but, as far as I know, that is not a live issue in the South—nor, as far as I know, in the North.

Nonetheless, civil rights groups have repeatedly opposed experimentation with vouchers on the grounds that once the idea of a voucher system becomes respectable, segregationists will find a way to turn it to their own ends.

Vouchers for Parochial Schools

The second variety of voucher system is designed to support parochial schools. These are systems which have been introduced in a number of State legislatures in the South in the last couple of years. Voucher systems of this kind have never been reviewed by the Supreme Court. A good argument can be made for the view that vouchers which

provide a completely free choice between religious and nonreligious schools do not violate the first amendment. Nonetheless, the Supreme Court's recent decision regarding aid to parochial schools suggests that the majority of the Court would probably reject this argument. Those who hope to keep the parochial schools alive by using vouchers are therefore likely to be disappointed.

Vouchers To Promote Innovation

The third variety of voucher system is designed not to maintain segregated schools or parochial schools but to promote educational innovation. The voucher system designed by the Center for the Study of Public Policy is of this type. This is also the system that has been under discussion between the Office of Economic Opportunity and public school systems around the country. It has very little in common with systems whose primary purpose is to maintain segregation or to maintain the parochial schools.

The reasons for the differences which I will outline in a moment have to do with the regulations that are imposed on schools that want the cash vouchers. Those regulations make it essentially impossible to maintain a segregated school and they are in many ways incompatible with the notions that the parochial schools have about how they would like to operate.

The Center has proposed an education voucher system for elementary education. The system would work in the following manner:

1. An Educational Voucher Agency (EVA) would be established to administer the vouchers. Its governing board might be elected or appointed but in either case it should be structured so as to represent the community it served. The EVA might be an existing local board of education, or it might be an agency with a larger or small geographic jurisdiction if the voucher experiment were conducted in a part of a school district or if the voucher experiment were conducted in several school districts. The EVA would receive all Federal, State, and local education funds for which children in its area were eligible. It would pay this money to schools only in return for vouchers. In addition, it would pay parents for children's transportation costs to the school of their choice.

Per Capita Payments

The effect of this is that every school's budget is a function of the number of students that it enrolls in a straightforward way. An eligible school, regardless of its character, gets so much a child. This, incidentally, is one way to bring a State's educational finance scheme into conformity with the kinds of requirements that the *Serrano* decision sets up for financing. Every school gets the same budget both between districts and within districts on a per capita basis.

2. The EVA would issue a voucher to every family in its district with children of elementary school age. The value of the basic voucher would initially equal the per-pupil expenditure of the public schools in the area. Schools which took children from

families with below-average incomes would receive additional incentive payments. These "compensatory payments" might, for example, make the maximum payment for the poorest child worth double the basic voucher. In effect the vouchers of low-income children would be somewhat lower than the average public school expenditure now.

Senator MONDALE. Have you worked out a figure—for example, in Massachusetts—of what the basic voucher need is?

Dr. JENCKS. I haven't done it for Massachusetts, but in California in the districts that we have been working in, it varies quite dramatically from district to district, which, of course, is the basis for the *Serrano* decision. In San Francisco, if I recall, the numbers we came up with were around $1,200 a child; 60 miles away in Allen Rock, where we have been working, it was only $900 a child.

Senator MONDALE. What would you add for compensatory payment?

Dr. JENCKS. That is a matter which OEO has been negotiating with local districts, and therefore what I say is my opinion and not OEO's opinion, but in general they have been talking about a figure which would be half to a third of the basic voucher increment for compensatory funds for those people who are eligible. When we proposed this we had a notion of a sliding scale which could run up to double the value of the basic voucher for a child who was absolutely at rock bottom, but the average compensatory payment would be still something like one-third of the basic voucher. The sliding scale means that instead of being just in or out, you get an amount more or less proportional to your income.

Senator MONDALE. Fine.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Dr. JENCKS. Going on with my prepared statement.

3. Now to become an "approved voucher school," which means in order to cash the vouchers that you receive, a school has to meet a set of requirements, and these requirements are crucial to the voucher system we have developed, and make it quite different from the voucher systems that have been discussed in most State legislatures up to now. The requirements are as follows:

a. A school would have to accept each voucher as full payment for a child's education and charge no additional tuition. That means from the parents' point of view all schools in the system are free, just as public schools are now.

b. A school would have to accept any applicant so long as it had vacant places.

c. If it had more applicants than places, a school would have to fill at least half of its places by picking applicants randomly and fill the other half in such a way as not to discriminate against ethnic minorities. The net effect is that, for instance, a school with 25-percent black applicants will end up with 25-percent black students.

d. The school would have to accept some uniform standards established by the EVA regarding suspension and ex-

pulsion of students. That means you can't get around the requirement that you admit a cross section of the applicants by letting in students who aren't very smart and then throwing them out the morning after the applications procedure is over. Exactly what those procedures would be is a very difficult question. Our general rule has been that procedures for expulsion would have to be the same as those of the public schools, but the question as to just whom the public schools can expel and whom they can't is in itself very troublesome. I don't want to make any commitment on that, except all the schools in the system would have to have the same rules.

e. That participating schools must agree to make a wide variety of information about its facilities, teachers, program, and students available to the EVA and to the public.

f. Participating schools would have to maintain accounts of money received and disbursed in a form that would allow both parents and the EVA to determine where the money was going. Thus a school operated by the local board of education—a "public" school—would have to show how much of the voucher money was actually spent in that school and how much was going to support the central administration or to a school down the street. Similarly if there were a school operated by a profitmaking corporation, it would have to show how much of its income was going to the stockholders and how much was actually being spent on education in the school where the vouchers were being cashed.

g. All schools in the system would have to meet existing State requirements for private schools regarding curriculum, staffing, and the like. Those vary enormously from State to State, so that the meaning of that requirement is quite important in New York State where there are many requirements for private schools, but is much less important in a State like California where there are virtually no requirements for private schools.

The basic assumption is that whatever rules a State has established as the minimum requirements under which a school meets the compulsory attendance laws would apply to the schools of this system.

4. The EVA could also set other requirements for schools wishing to cash vouchers. The aim of the voucher system is, however, to keep these requirements to a minimum. This is usually the case with respect to existing State requirements for private schools. If the EVA begins to establish elaborate rules regarding the structure of governing boards, the subjects taught, the qualifications of the teachers, and so forth, the net result could be to stifle innovation and narrow choice rather than to improve the situation.

5. Just as at present, the local board of education—which might or might not be the EVA—would be responsible for insuring that there were enough places in publicly managed schools to accommodate every elementary school-age child who did not want to attend a privately managed school. No child would have to go to a

privately operated school. If a shortage of places developed for some reason, the board of education would have to open new schools or create more places in existing schools. Alternatively, it might find ways to encourage privately managed schools to expand, presumably by getting the EVA to raise the value of the voucher.

Enrollment Procedures in Voucher Schools

6. Every spring, each family would submit to the EVA the name of the school to which it wanted to send each of its elementary school-age children the following fall. Any child already enrolled in a voucher school would be guaranteed a place, as would any sibling of a child enrolled in a voucher school. So long as it had room, a voucher school would be required to admit all students who listed it as a first choice. If it had more applicants than places, a school could select among applicants for up to one-half of its places. It could not, however, select these applicants in such a way as to discriminate against racial minorities. It would then have to fill its remaining places by a lottery among the remaining applicants. All schools with unfilled places would report these to the EVA. All families whose children had not been admitted to their first-choice school would then choose an alternative school which still had vacancies. Vacancies would then be filled in the same manner as in the first round. This procedure would continue until every child had been admitted to a school.

7. Having enrolled their children in a school, parents would give their vouchers to the school. The school would send the vouchers to the EVA, and if the school met the requirements established by the EVA, it would receive a check for the value of the vouchers.

Fallacy of Public/Private Distinction

If established, a system of this kind would blur the traditional distinction between "public" and "private" schools. In my view, this would probably be a good thing, since the traditional distinction is in some ways misleading.

Indeed, a lot of our thinking about the voucher system is based on an attempt to rethink the question of where the line between public and private should be drawn, and what it makes sense to think about as public schools or private schools.

Since the 19th century, we have classified schools and colleges as "public" if they were owned and operated by a governmental body. We go right on calling colleges "public," even when they charge tuition that many people cannot afford. We also call academically exclusive high schools "public," even if they have admissions requirements that only a handful of students can meet. We call neighborhood elementary schools "public," despite the fact that people from outside the neighborhood cannot attend them, and cannot move into the neighborhood unless they have a white skin and a down payment for a $30,000 home, or both. And we call whole school systems "public," even though they

refuse to give anyone information about what they are doing, how well they are doing it, and whether children are getting the education their parents want. Conversely, we have always called schools "private" if they were owned and operated by private organizations. We have gone on calling these schools "private," even when, as sometimes happens, they are open to every applicant on a nondiscriminatory basis, charge no tuition, and make whatever information they have about themselves available to anyone who asks.

Definitions of this kind conceal as much as they reveal. They classify schools entirely in terms of who runs them, not how they are run. If we want to describe what is really going on in education, there is much to be said for reversing this emphasis. We would then call a school "public" if it were open to everyone on a nondiscriminatory basis, if it charged no tuition, and if it provided full information about itself to anyone interested. Conversely, we would call any school "private" if it excluded applicants in a discriminatory way, charged tuition, or withheld information about itself. Admittedly, the question of who governs a school cannot be ignored entirely when categorizing the school, but it seems considerably less important than the question of how the school is governed.

Regulatory System Principles

Adopting this revised vocabulary, the Center proposed a regulatory system with two underlying principles:

1. No public money should be used to support "private" schools, in our sense of the word private.
2. Any group that operates a "public" school should be eligible for public subsidies.

What benefits might result from such a system of educational finance? I have spent several years sorting through the welter of claims made for vouchers. My main conclusion is most of the claims are silly.

There are two things which I think a voucher system should be expected to do.

1. New kinds of schools could be established, new kinds of people could be drawn into teaching, and new ideas could be tried out, with far less difficulty than under the existing system of educational finance. If a group of public school teachers wanted to do things differently, for example, and if the school administration were unwilling or unable to support their efforts, they could establish their own school—subject only to the requirement that they persuade some parents that their school made sense and that they enroll enough students to balance their books. This possibility has, of course, always existed for teachers who were willing and able to cater entirely to children whose parents could afford to pay tuition. But, under a voucher system, innovators could recruit students from all economic groups instead of just the children of the rich. While we expect that teachers would be the primary instigators of new schools, we also anticipate some schools sponsored by parents, community groups, business corporations, and perhaps even local public school systems.

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2. This last possibility highlights the second potential benefit of a voucher system. A voucher system is not just a device for supporting innovative schools "outside" the public system. It is also a device for supporting new kinds of schools "inside" the public system.

Traditionally, public schools have had a very hard time developing unusual programs, because attendance at the neighborhood public school was virtually compulsory for everyone living in a neighborhood. Here I am talking about elementary schools. This meant that public schools could not do anything that would be really unpopular with large numbers of parents. Almost everything new falls into that category, so public schools have tended to avoid trouble by offering children mostly the same kind of schooling their parents had. This is inevitable in institutions which must serve a very diverse clientele on an involuntary basis. But there is no reason why public school systems should not be able to establish innovative and experimental programs on a voluntary basis for those who want them. If some people want a Montessorri school, and others do not, a public school system should be able to satisfy both groups by establishing both kinds of schools, instead of having to engage in a protracted squabble about whether to have only one or the other. The same thing applies to open classrooms and to many other potentially controversial programs. Once parents have a choice about where they send their children, the public schools can set up all kinds of alternatives on a take-it-or-leave-it basis.

Objections to Voucher System

There are some problems, nonetheless. One common objection to a voucher system of this kind is that many parents are too ignorant to make intelligent choices among schools. Giving parents a choice will, according to this argument, simply set in motion an educational equivalent of Gresham's Law, in which hucksterism and mediocre schooling will drive out high quality institutions. This argument seems especially plausible to those who envisage the entry of large numbers of profit-oriented firms into the educational marketplace. The argument is not, however, supported by much evidence. Existing private schools are sometimes mere diploma mills, but on the average their claims about themselves seem no more misleading, and the quality of the services they offer no lower, than in the public schools. And while some private schools are run by hucksters interested only in profit, this is the exception rather than the rule. There is no obvious reason to suppose that vouchers would change all this.

A second common objection to vouchers is that they would "destroy the public schools." Again, this seems far-fetched. If you look at the educational choices made by wealthy parents who can already afford whatever schooling they want for their children, you find that most still prefer their local public schools if these are at all adequate. Furthermore most of those who now leave the public system do so in order to attend high-cost, exclusive private schools.

While some wealthy parents would doubtless continue to patronize such schools, they would receive no subsidy under the proposed system, because—and this point should be emphasized—most of these private schools either spend far more money than the public schools

or have an admission system which is in no sense nondiscriminatory. In our conversations, these schools show very little interest in participating in a voucher system that would require them to change. So a voucher system really is completely irrelevant as far as this tiny handful of exclusive private schools is concerned.

Nonetheless, if you call every school "public" that is ultimately responsible to a public board of education, then there is little doubt that a voucher system would result in some shrinkage of the "public" sector and some growth of the "private" sector. If, on the other hand, you confine the label "public" to schools which are equally open to everyone within commuting distance, you discover that the so-called public sector includes relatively few genuinely public schools. Instead, racially exclusive suburbs and economically exclusive neighborhoods serve to ration access to good "public" schools in precisely the same way that admissions committees and tuition charges ration access to good "private" schools.

If you begin to look at the distinction between public and private schooling in these terms, emphasizing accessibility rather than control, you are likely to conclude that a voucher system, far from destroying the public sector, would greatly expand it, since it would force large numbers of schools, public and private, to open their doors to outsiders if they wanted to get public funds.

A third objection to vouchers is that they would be available to children attending Catholic schools. This is not, of course, a necessary feature of a voucher system. The courts, a State legislature, or a local EVA could easily restrict participation to nonsectarian schools. Indeed, some State constitutions clearly require that this be done.

OEO in its negotiations with a number of States and school districts has indicated its willingness to go along with whatever arrangements with Catholic schools the State wanted to make. In some States the constitution is quite explicit that no State and local funds may go to Catholic schools. OEO has taken the position that the Federal Government would abide by the State law.

The Federal constitution may also require such a restriction, but neither the language of the first amendment nor the legal precedent is clear on this issue. Until the Supreme Court rules, this issue must be resolved on political grounds.

If I may make a small addendum, it is my personal conviction that Catholic schools should be allowed to participate in this kind of a system, but it is not an integral feature of the kind of program we have been discussing. Neither OEO nor the Center has any firm position on the matter.

Effect of Vouchers on Segregation

A fourth objection to vouchers—and I think this is the one which this committee and other people are probably the most concerned about—is that they would promote, or at least maintain, segregation. This fear may seem surprising in light of the rules described above. The rules insure that any student has the same chance as any other of attending any school in his district that appeals to his parents. No longer would blacks be forced to attend all-black schools simply because they lived in all-black neighborhoods. If blacks apply to good

schools outside their neighborhoods, they must be admitted in exact proportion to the percentage that apply. On the other hand, the regulations do not force students to attend a school simply because some judge, legislator, or school administrator has decided that that is the right kind of school for the child. Blacks would not be required to apply to predominantly white schools. They would simply be guaranteed the right to attend them if they wanted to do so.

If you believe that blacks would not want to attend predominantly white schools, and if you also believe that they should be made to attend such schools whether they want to or not, then you should oppose this experiment. This is not a compulsory busing scheme, and it will not produce those results.

Some opponents of vouchers agree that a system with the regulations described above would not create more segregation and might in fact create less than the present system. But they fear that the regulations would be altered or ignored by State and local authorities. This is a reasonable fear. Certainly all our experience with Federal regulations suggests this is something to worry about. But we can see no more reason to suppose that a regulated voucher system would be perverted to racist ends than that the existing system of neighborhood public schools will be used for racist ends. If a local school board or EVA wants to maintain segregation, and if the Federal Government is not prepared to blow the whistle, segregation can be maintained without vouchers as easily as with them. If either the local school board or the Federal Government is committed to preventing discrimination, they can do so at least as easily in a regulated voucher system as in a traditional public school system.

My conclusion is that the issue with respect to segregation is a matter of political will, and if the will exists you can deal with the segregation problem with a voucher system or without a voucher system. If the will doesn't exist you are out of luck.

Demonstration Projects

Finally, I should say that I am not here to offer an endorsement of the voucher system I have described. I helped develop the proposal, but for that very reason I am acutely conscious of the many uncertainties involved. I would be appalled if Congress or a State legislature were to consider imposing a voucher system across the board. What I would like to see, and what OEO has been considering, is a limited number of demonstration projects in communities that are interested in trying out the idea. If such demonstrations take place, they will allow everyone to judge for themselves whether a voucher system is as good as its advocates claim, as bad as its critics claim, or simply another in the long series of proposals that turned out not to make any difference one way or the other. Without a demonstration, discussions of vouchers will continue to be mostly rhetoric.

Senator Mondale. Thank you very much, Dr. Jencks. What is the state of the OEO effort; how much money is involved; how many communities are experimenting with voucher systems; and, what magnitude of financial or community involvement is hoped for?

Dr. Jencks. Money committed so far has been a series of grants to the Center for the Study of Public Policy which have totaled about $0.5 million, first to develop the plan, then to get a lot of people

involved who were interested in providing technical assistance to communities, advice to interested State legislators, and so on, plus a series of planning grants to specific school districts. There are presently three such planning grants, and there are several more under negotiation.

In addition there was a planning grant made to Gary, Ind., which conducted a preliminary study of the subject and then decided not to participate in a voucher demonstration project at this time. This was largely because the superintendent felt that the political situation in Gary was too delicate, and that there were too many other problems to take on something so controversial at this time.

The three planning grants which have gone a step further are in Allen Rock elementary school district, which is part of San Jose, in San Francisco, and in Seattle. OEO is now considering several other planning grant applications from other districts.

Those planning grants have a two stage process. The initial grant is usually for some sum between about $20,000 and $50,000 for a preliminary feasibility study in the district, and then more substantial sums, on the order of $100,000, to develop a full scale scheme for what the city might do if it wanted a voucher demonstration project.

I don't know the exact amount of money that has been committed overall by OEO but as a rough guess I would say it is between three quarters of a million and a million dollars over the last 2½ years.

If the thing goes forward—and it is not at the moment clear that any school district has met all the requirements for going forward, including the requirement that it wants to go forward—the order of magnitude of money would be a couple of million dollars a year of OEO money, plus anywhere from five to 10 times that amount from State and local funds already available in the district. That is, a couple of million dollars of OEO money would go to education, and probably another million dollars of OEO money would go for evaluation, research and technical assistance that goes with a demonstration project.

The total OEO commitment depends, of course, on the number of sites which are actually involved. If we are talking about, let's say, $2 or $3 million a year a site for two sites you get a number on the order of $5 million a year. If you get many more sites, which would be much more desirable in terms of learning something, the sum of money would be larger.

State Legislation

At the moment, however, there is no school district that is firmly committed to going ahead with the demonstration project. Now that is a long and complicated story. A demonstration project requires that a whole series of things be done. In most States it requires that there be enabling legislation passed by the State legislature. At this point, no State legislature has passed such legislation.

Senator Mondale. Has it been tried?

Dr. Jencks. The only State where there has been a serious effort to pass such legislation is California. The bill in California was defeated by a one-vote margin in the Senate Finance Committee. It was passed by the assembly and passed out by the Education Committee,

and then defeated in the Finance Committee by one vote about 2 weeks ago. Presumably if the two districts that are interested in participating, Allen Rock and San Francisco, decide they do want to go forward, there will be another attempt to pass enabling legislation next year, but that is dead for this year in California.

No other State legislature has given serious consideration to the matter. There have been discussions with the legislative leaders in some States, and some of them have indicated that they thought such a piece of enabling legislation could be passed without great difficulty. Others have indicated they thought it would be difficult to pass.

There are a few States which have either existing legislation under which a voucher demonstration could be done or a provision by which the State Board of Education can waive the provisions of it being done.

So it is not the case that every State requires enabling legislation.

There is also at this point no school board which has firmly committed itself to going forward. All three boards that are actively involved in this, Seattle, San Francisco, and Allen Rock, have decided to take the next step at each point of choice, but they have not gone to the point of saying, "Yes, we want to do it."

Senator MONDALE. Would a city the size of San Francisco have to agree to make it citywide?

Dr. JENCKS. No; I should have clarified. The kind of demonstration we are discussing is a demonstration that would involve something on the order of 10,000 elementary schoolchildren. In a city the size of San Francisco this means that the San Francisco School Board would designate an area of the city as the target area for the voucher project. They could designate whatever area seemed to be appropriate and establish an EVA which was specific for that area of the city. The voucher experiment would just cover that part of the city.

Senator MONDALE. Well, how would you avoid excluding the lower income groups of the area?

Dr. JENCKS. I think OEO would require that, in order to be acceptable, a demonstration area would have to be mixed so that you would get many ethnically and racially mixed schools in it.

In the case of San Francisco I think this is not a problem. I don't think there is a chance in the world that Judge Wygal would approve such an experiment unless it had this characteristic. I am not sure he would approve the experiment no matter what characteristics it has, which is another complication in San Francisco.

Another problem arises in Seattle, which is engaged in rather complicated litigation with respect to racial balance in the public schools. All of our negotiations with Seattle are under the additional constraint that they will have to satisfy whatever court orders finally come down on the integration of the public schools.

OEO FUNDS

Senator MONDALE. Take the existing per capita public contribution and then you add something from the Federal Government into the voucher—how much money would OEO be contributing to sort of sweeten the pot? About how much is sweet enough?

Dr. JENCKS. Well, one of the problems with interesting local districts in this experiment, I would say, is that OEO has been very re-

luctant to engage in what, without prejudice, I would call bribery. The Federal contribution has been designed to meet all the additional costs of the experiment, which means some direct educational costs. That is, for instance, a city in which parochial schools were to participate, there would be public money going to support costs which had previously been borne entirely privately. Similarly they would pick up any other direct costs.

But the only additional money which would flow to the public school system is the extra payments for compensatory vouchers. Therefore, the magnitude of the compensatory payments that are attached to the vouchers of low-income children has become crucial with respect to how much money the local school district is actually going to get out of this.

I think it is fair to say, for better or worse, that OEO has not been very openhanded in its negotiations on this point. They have agreed to the principle and they believe in the principle, but they have not been conducting these negotiations in such a way as to make a school district want to participate simply because of the money they would get out of it. And I think this helps account for the fact that there isn't a long queue of applicants at OEO waiting to get on this gravy train.

My guess is that something on the order of $1 million in compensatory payments might flow to a local district, and if you spread that over 10,000 children, you are talking about something like $100 a child. The compensatory payments, of course, would be more than $100 a child. That is, compensatory payments might be $300 a child for a third of the students. But the net increment to the district prorated over the whole population would be on the order of 10 percent. In some districts it could be less than 10 percent, in some districts it would be more. But it is not enough to make a district go in for this.

Senator MONDALE. OEO just pays for the additional cost—no dividends to the taxpayer?

Dr. JENCKS. Right. And that is one of the things that OEO has always been committed to; they were absolutely committed to the principle this should not be used to substitute Federal money for local tax efforts.

Senator MONDALE. But, it is not big enough for them to say, "Well, we are going to get a lot of new money to really give these poor children a chance." The $100 a head doesn't make enough difference.

Dr. JENCKS. No, OEO has not been at all oriented that way. From the point of view of a demonstration project, you can say that is good because it means you are treating vouchers as an issue independent from extra money, or you can say it is bad because it makes the experiment suffer under the same financial constraints as public schools.

Senator MONDALE. So it would be fair, at this point, to say no school district has committed itself solidly toward the project?

Dr. JENCKS. I think that is correct.

Senator MONDALE. Three of them are actively looking at it?

Dr. JENCKS. Right. In addition, several are looking at it that have not at this point had OEO grants.

Senator MONDALE. We have no experience with the voucher system in being——

Dr. JENCKS. That is correct.

Senator MONDALE. Of the kind that you have designed.

Examples of Voucher-Type Systems

Dr. Jencks. That is correct. We have no real experience with any sort of voucher system if the truth were told. We have brief experience with the systems that were set up in the South, but in every case that I know of they were liquidated by the courts within a year or so of the time they were set up.

Senator Mondale. There might be examples of impacted aid given to the voucher system.

Dr. Jencks. There are examples which I haven't discussed but which might be of some interest. There are a number of school districts in northern New England which do not maintain public high schools but instead provide payments to parents to send their children to either a neighboring high school or private academies, depending on the parents' choice. Those arrangements are essentially very ad hoc. That is, they exist under regulations which are developed by the local school board. They don't have any very elaborate theory behind them. They are simply an example of a poor district saying that children should go to high school, that we can't run a high school, so we pay out money for high school directly to parents.

Senator Mondale. You know, the Federal impact aid has done very significant things in some States with Indian reservations. We were working with the new Indian Education Act in my State which would get rid of that impact aid and set up a new category of independent student assistance. Some of the Indian educators said this is the worst thing you could do because, right now, there's $800 or $900 a head on these Indian students at or near reservations. Now that the impact aid money has risen that high, we find that all those public schools—that used to resent an Indian getting close—are often competing for these children. They go to see their parents, do everything they can to encourage the children—to make the children want to come there—and, for the first time, the Indians are wanted. Of course, it is the money riding on their head that helps a little there. I wonder if there aren't some sort of ad hoc voucher systems, of that kind, that might be looked at.

Dr. Jencks. There are a number, and we have actually been interested in the Indian situation for just that reason. And although I haven't done a detailed study of it, there is some interesting experience from Denmark where they set up a system of this kind. It is interesting particularly in light of the question of how many people will want to pull out of the local public schools. The Danish experience, as I understand it, has been that about 10 percent of the population did not want to attend the regular public school, but instead set up one or another kind of experimental school.

Now, of course, there are drastic differences between Denmark and the United States; there are no big ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities.

Educators' Attitudes About Vouchers

Senator Mondale. It is my impression that most of the professional education groups would like to see this whole idea dropped. If so, how do you evaluate their motivations and reasons?

Dr. JENCKS. Well, there are several factors. First, I would say that I think your impression is accurate.

Next I would say that our experience in dealing with the professional groups has been rather as follows. The conversation tends to go "we are against vouchers, now can you tell us what they are." And the opposition has been linked to a series of ideas about the proposal which made people think they were against it because they thought the proposal was something other than what it was. However, many were against it even after they understood what it was about.

The initial response has been on two bases. First, when somebody says vouchers, some people think of segregated systems; and if they are against segregation they are against vouchers. Second, the NEA and the education groups in general have been opposed to any money going to the private sector. In their mind that basically means Catholic schools, and as you know, there have been resolutions passed at NEA meetings, and so forth, opposing any form of aid to private schools on any terms whatever, and asking for repeal of whatever aid there is. I think that kind of orientation has played a big part in their opposition.

Now beyond that I think there is a very strong feeling on the part of a lot of people in the education establishment that they have built up a set of working relationships with the existing public authorities and local school boards, and so forth, and that they therefore have some voice in how things go at the local level and at the State level.

They don't know what would happen if you were to have a system of this kind, and therefore it involves a big risk. In effect they would rather live with the devil they know than the devil they don't. That seems to me entirely understandable. But it is exactly the state of mind which makes it very difficult to do anything new.

The last thing, I suppose, is that there's a very strong feeling among a lot of people that this is a device for getting business into education and that that is a bad idea. There is a strong feeling among a lot of public school people that the profit motive is a bad motive and that schools run for profit will be bad schools, and that a voucher system will produce a lot of Pappy Parker's Fried Children. I don't think there is much basis for this kind of anxiety, because I don't think it will turn out that you can make very much money running schools. People who have run private schools for the rich have generally found that proprietary schools were not get-rich schemes. Very few of those schools are run on a profitmaking basis.

The private corporations that have gone into performance contracting have found this is not as profitable or easy to do as they had imagined. And frankly, I think the whole argument that business is going to be able to run schools more efficiently than those "socialists" known as public educators is a lot of nonsense. I think it will turn out that the public school system, in terms of simply keeping costs down and operating within a tight budget, is run as efficiently as it would be on almost any basis.

Senator MONDALE. Robert Lekachman—I guess you have read his articles—says:*

*See Appendix 2, p. 11115; Vouchers and Public Education, *The New Leader*, July 12, 1971.

In the present climate of opinion, a generalized voucher plan would not have a ghost of a chance to win politically if it remained faithful to Jencks' criteria: tuition ceilings, rewards for schools that educate difficult children, 50-percent lotteries, plus effective supervision over publicity, admissions, suspension, and compulsion. And if by some major miracle liberal vouchers were inaugurated, middle-class parents would place enormous pressure upon voucher authorities to influence the operation in favor of their own children, EVA's would either cave in or find their tasks radically redefined by legislatures responding to middle-class pressures.

I think you have already responded to that.

Legislative Concern Over Segregation

Dr. Jencks. There is one point I would like to make that is relevant to that, which has to do with our actual experience in negotiating with legislatures. In general the legislatures that we have been dealing with—and, of course, they are not a cross section—have been inclined to place more restrictions on what voucher schools could do than the Center has proposed. They have not tried to eliminate restrictions. They have been extremely concerned about the possibility that this kind of a system could be used to bring about segregation, for instance. And in a general way this is not surprising, because the strongest single group with an interest in vouchers is the public school system, and its strongest interest is to insure if there is going to be a voucher system it should be one in which the public schools can compete on an equal basis with the private schools. So there is a very powerful lobby built in, pushing to maintain a system in which the public schools do not become a dumping ground for the children who can't get into private schools.

Now this may not be true once a voucher system is in operation, but it certainly has been true up to this point. So I don't think the local and State politics are anywhere near as gloomy as Mr. Lekachman does. That is not to say I would like to set up such a system in Georgia. There might be a number of problems.

Neighborhood Schools Under Voucher Plan

Senator Mondale. Your voucher regulations do not require any bias in favor of existing feeder patterns?

Dr. Jencks. No, except insofar as the district is drawn that way. That is, if you do the demonstration in San Francisco they might.

Senator Mondale. Since it is related to elementary schools, if a family lived half a block from their traditional elementary school they would not be preferred over someone who lived 3 miles from there?

Dr. Jencks. That is the case. Under our proposal, if there are surplus applicants, there must be a lottery for at least half the places in the school. But with respect to the remaining places, the school board or the school might accord preference to local children over children from farther away. The only restriction is that the school can't accord preference to local children if, in so doing, it accords preference to white children. It would have to work out its admissions so that it gets the right racial mix.

Senator Mondale. Let me see how this works. Let's say we have 10 elementary schools in a community; one which has a reputation of being absolutely the best one, and one absolutely the worst. Pre-

sumably if all the facts are out and people were choosing wisely, the parents who are now sending their children to the absolutely worst would apply for the absolute best—children that are at the absolute best presumably will apply to stay where they are, also many, many others around the community will spot the one with the good reputation. Now how do you sort that out?

Dr. JENCKS. Okay, the first point is that in order to do this you have to guarantee that any student who is already in the school can stay there. So you start with grade one.

Senator MONDALE. Now what is the second?

Dr. JENCKS. All the children who are already in the best school get a free ride. The question is what happens to the children who want to come who will be going to the first grade. In the extreme case, that is everyone applies to the same school, the school may fill half their places any way they want.

Senator MONDALE. And they might opt for the neighborhood solution?

Dr. JENCKS. They might opt for the neighborhood solution. Presumably they can only take half the people they defined as being in that neighborhood—of course, they can always double the number of places. If everybody wants to go to a school, you make the school bigger. If nobody wants to go to a school, you make the number of places less. In short run you can assume there will be too many people, that there are not enough classrooms, and so forth, and as a result there will be a surplus of applicants. Now if the school with the reputation of being best happens to be, let's say, in an all white area and the whole district is 25-percent black, then it will get 25-percent black applicants. It fills half its places by choice. Now it can't fill this first half with only neighborhood people, because they will be all white, and that will break the rules. So it takes three-quarters of the first half from white applicants who live in the neighborhood and a quarter from black applicants from outside the neighborhood. Now it has half its places filled. Then there is a lottery for the second half among the remaining applicants. The school ends up with about 25 percent of its students black, about 37 percent of its students white children from the neighborhood and another 37 percent white children who were chosen at random from all the people all over the city who applied.

So the system essentially has some bias in favor of its neighborhood, but it could not end up being a neighborhood school in anything like the traditional sense. The majority of the students will come from outside the neighborhood.

Senator MONDALE. Don't you have difficult transportation problems?

ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR BUSING

Dr. JENCKS. You could easily have a difficult transportation problem, and OEO has contemplated financing what is an additional payment for a busing system which would get children to the school of their choice. The cost of busing obviously varies enormously according to the character of the district and the degree of concentration. There are some school districts that we have been dealing with where schools are geographically heavily concentrated so there are four or five schools within walking distance of a child. There are other districts—

Allen Rock, for example—that already have children going to school on a bus, so that nothing would change all that much—just the bus routes essentially.

The question of how this whole thing works really depends on the degree to which people want to attend schools other than the nearest school. You can conjure up real horror stories in which everybody goes to the schools miles and miles away because that is where they want to go. It doesn't seem very likely, but there is no way to find out but to try it.

Senator MONDALE. How legitimate is the desire to attend the neighborhood school? Are you aware of any studies to help us understand?

OPEN ENROLLMENT

Dr. JENCKS. Well, we did a little work on this this summer. Looking at what happened in open enrollment situations of most kinds in the South they had been constructed to avoid integrating the schools, and in the North they had been constructed in the early 1960's when it looked like a good solution—our conclusion was that in the black community almost everything depended on the way the thing was presented and on the politics which lay behind its having been established. In some open enrollment situations you had virtually no black parents who wanted to take advantage of this option. Virtually all of them wanted to attend the neighborhood school whether it was all black or not. In other open enrollment situations, it was the opposite.

The extreme case would be something like Project Concern in Hartford, where the thing is presented as if the student had just won a prize—you get to go to a school in the suburbs, although of course if you don't want to you don't have to. The scheme is presented in a way that leads the parent to expect that the child will attend a better school than the one he is now in, that the whole classroom is going, and that it is all settled, and so on. In that situation you get something between 80 and 90 percent of the parents saying yes.

I think our inference from that was that it just depends very strongly on the way in which the thing is structured rather than on the simple question of whether or not the school is the neighborhood school. And the public opinion surveys suggest the same thing, to me at least: the way you word questions about what people want has a fantastic effect on the way in which people answer them. If people really perceive a qualitative difference between schools, most of them seem to prefer the school which is supposed to be better even if it is not in the neighborhood. If they see this as something that has been imposed on them to meet some arbitrary requirement, that for instance somebody thinks a school should be integrated but that actually it is not a better school, whatever that means, then they resist it. And obviously if they think the school is going to be worse as well as not being in the neighborhood, then they will resist it in a real fashion.

But our assumption has been that in a situation in which parents were choosing schools, they would normally think that the school they chose was better. But a lot depends on the degree to which the schools become different from one another. That is, in a traditional rich neighborhood there isn't much difference among the schools. How-

ever, if you get a system in which there is a Montessorri or a Lesershire school, then there will be a lot of parents who will want that school regardless of whether it is close or far away.

Senator MONDALE. Your voucher system, as you say, is designed to promote education innovation. Now, it would dramatically change the ability of the lower-income parents to select a school of their choice. Why do you see this as a need? What is it about the present system that causes you to believe that this approach is so terribly important?

POLITICS AND INNOVATION

Dr. JENCKS. Well, there are two kinds of problems. One is the constraint on educators which I talked about. If you are running a neighborhood elementary school which everybody must attend, and if you want to do something which has never been done before, you are almost certain to encounter opposition. Even if all you want is to have the new math instead of the old math, there are going to be parents who say: "Why don't you teach it the way you used to; this isn't mathematics, this is something else." And the more unorthodox is the thing you want to do, the more parents are going to be confused and upset and hostile. The safe and easy political course in that kind of situation is always to go on doing what you have always been doing, and generally speaking that has been exactly the course that school administrators have felt they have had to take.

To maintain any course, no matter how traditional, which will be acceptable to the majority of parents, when parents disagree as much as they do about what is good education, usually takes all the energy of the school superintendent and the school principal. If they stay in office and are not lynched, they feel they have done pretty well for that year. To go out on a limb and try some crackpot new scheme thought up by God knows who is a very risky business. Superintendents therefore are willing to innovate only in a community which either has no influence over the schools at all, for example, in a big, bureaucratic school system where in effect they can institute a change and assume that, even if parents are unhappy, there is no real possibility of protest or else in a community where innovation per se is seen as a good thing—for example, in a suburban district where whatever is the latest thing is what people want.

But in the normal course of events, when you are operating essentially on a compulsory basis, innovation is almost impossible. A choice system seems to me to be the only device which will allow innovation within the public sector. Most innovations appeal to a minority at first—you come up with some new idea, somebody wants to do something different, and the first year, perhaps 10 percent of the people think it is a good idea. Twenty years later the majority will agree. But in the present system, you can't get going until the majority think it is a good idea.

The other argument is much more simple minded: If parents feel they have a choice and are exercising a choice, they may take more responsibility for their children's education—be more interested, pay more attention, be more attentive to what the schools are doing, get more involved in school affairs, and so forth. Now, that is chancy, but

it is certainly at least a reasonable theory that when people feel they have some control, they begin to get more involved.

But as far as innovation is concerned, I really think the crucial element is this question of how the local politics work. The only way that I can see to get innovation in the public sector is to allow it to be voluntary.

Senator MONDALE. We will take a recess.

[Short recess.]

Senator MONDALE. I would like to change the subject for a minute. Have you completed your work on the report on education equality?

Dr. JENCKS. I am working on it. I wish I could say I had completed it.

Senator MONDALE. I have read the rough draft. This committee has a very short life, as far as March of next year. We have been given the task of recommending national policies to achieve equal educational opportunity in this country. For nearly 2 years now, we have had day after day of hearings. We have listened to practically everybody we had reason to believe had something to say; and, as an overlapping study, we have had to grapple with the school integration/desegregation problem.

In your study, as I understand it, you attempt to grapple with available research materials to determine what they disclose as to what might work, what hasn't worked. It strikes me as very close to the same problem.

If you were to advise this committee as to what key recommendations ought to be made to encourage national policies toward more equality in educational opportunity, what would the elements of the Jencks' plan be?

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EQUALITY IN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Dr. JENCKS. Well, leaving vouchers aside for the moment, I think that the main conclusion we have drawn from the research that we have looked at is that a policy designed to encourage equal educational opportunity does not guarantee equal results, and what is more, is not a particularly good way of achieving equality among adults. In fact, the main conclusion I draw from the research we have examined is: That if you want to establish equality among adults, you want to make incomes more equal or occupational status more equal or people's political power more equal or whatever, and that school reform is not a particularly promising way to go about that. Even if we make the schools absolutely equal, we will have done relatively little to deal with the problem of inequality among adults in America.

Now, if that is the case, then it is very important to separate the question of equal educational opportunity and the rights of people to a good education from the question of whether or not this is going to produce equal scores on certain kinds of tests or equal incomes among adults, or whatever. And my approach to the problem has, therefore, come to be one in which equal educational opportunity means that people get a chance to get the kind of education that either they or—when they are younger—their parents want for them. That everybody has the same opportunity to get that kind of education. The

emphasis is on what people want rather than on an education which will result in their reading at exactly the same level as somebody else.

This is related to a more general comment about schools, which is that during the 1960's we all tended to look at schools in a very instrumental way. No one tried to make schools good places for children to be in simply because people spend a fifth of their lives going to school and it is therefore reasonable to want schools to be nice places where people are treated with decency and respect. The reason we wanted to fuss with schools was because we believed that the first fifth of life would influence the next four-fifths. It wasn't enough to make the schools good in their own right; we wanted to make them good because they would affect adult life.

I think that emphasis was probably wrong. I have come more and more to think that the school integration question is analogous to the question of desegregating public facilities. You don't say that you want to desegregate men's rooms because the urinals in one place are not as good as the urinals in another. You want to desegregate things because people have a right to that, and because it is not decent to discriminate against people. The seats in the back of the bus do not have to be any harder to make it unreasonable and unjust to put people in the back of the bus.

My approach to both the school desegregation question and the more general question has come to be one in which equal educational opportunity is thought of as the right to attend a school where the student is treated well, where people don't abuse him, where he gets a chance to learn something, where he doesn't feel he is wasting his time, where 7-year-old kids smile instead of going around looking gloomy all day long. That is, of course, very unpopular with people who want to use the schools to save the world.

But I suppose that what follows from this is that our idea of what will do any good is very different from the ideas and standards we have traditionally had.

The report that you have looked at mostly uses the standard of what will affect test scores, and, to some extent, what will affect whether or not students in a given school will go on to college. The reason those were chosen was because it was presumed that people who go to college and people who achieved high test scores would get better jobs and have better opportunities than those who do not.

I think I would say that those criteria may be misplaced. There may not be much the schools can do about better jobs and better opportunities. But you can arrange the schools so the plaster doesn't fall on the children's heads; and you can surely arrange for the students to get a hot lunch so they have enough to eat and feel like going to school, and don't spend all day feeling pain in the pit of their stomachs; and you can surely arrange schools so that the teachers treat the children in a way that you would want children to be treated, instead of treating them as if the teachers were jailers maintaining control over a group of restless inmates. And it is these kinds of qualities that I now feel are much more important than the things that we have been manipulating.

How do you go about doing that? The voucher system we have been talking about is one device which, at least in my mind, is a promising

way both to make the schools more responsive to parents and children and also to equalize the distribution of resources, so that you don't have a situation in which some schools have twice as much money to spend as a place across town and are therefore much better able to create a better atmosphere and a decent place for children.

I am not sure how responsive that is to your question.

Skill Levels

Senator Mondale. Well, I guess I am a little more old-fashioned. I think there is a great deal in what you say about a sense of humanity and respect. Also, a great deal to be said about looking upon childhood and studenthood as a time that ought to be enjoyed in its own right as a part of life, and not just a period when the pressure is on, in order to prepare you for real life later. I agree with all those things. I believe in the importance of enjoyable architectural surroundings and physical facilities, health care, and so on—I agree with all that. But, I also think that it is true that a poor black child that goes to a black ghetto school who doesn't really learn to read or to count or develop skills—achieve a level in skills necessary to go on to higher education, or develop motivation—has a set of life chances that are horribly unfair. While these other things should be dealt with, we still should be able to give a simple answer—if it is possible—what strategy or strategies will permit that child to have the same opportunity as the child out in the quality white suburban school.

Dr. Jencks. Let me say two things in response to that. The first is that I agree with you that people should be taught to read in school. Second, I am quite convinced that until relatively recently the black child who was able to read didn't have a much better chance than one who couldn't. By the evidence we examined, the payoffs for doing well in school were extraordinarily small for black children. And if you look at soldiers and look at their AFQT scores—which are a good example of the standard test achievement that we have been talking about and that most analyses have focused on—and look at the soldiers again when they are 30 years of age, you find that black veterans who scored as high as whites are barely making more money than those with an average score for blacks. This doesn't encourage you to believe that raising black people's test scores is the solution to equalizing their income. Blacks with high scores make a little more money, but it is a difference of a couple hundred dollars, whereas the income gap between blacks and whites is a matter of a couple thousand dollars. Now that may be changing.

Senator Mondale. You wouldn't criticize the black parent saying, "that may be right, but I still want my child to have the tools." I am not going to buy the argument that discrimination in this country is such that there is no point in learning?

Dr. Jencks. I agree with that, and I agree also that everyone should learn to read. It is rather fun to be able to read and understand something, even if it doesn't result in higher income.

Senator Mondale. Would you say one of the reasons for discrimination is that, traditionally, the schools have not delivered into the hands of the poor child the tools he needs to attack the situation?

Dr. JENCKS. Well, I think that is true, and I think you can make a more general argument that even though the individual black who did well in the test wasn't much better off economically or socially than one who didn't, that was in part because the majority of blacks were not up to the white level in performance. In effect what both employers or other people did was to treat all blacks alike. Even if you happened to be a college graduate, or to have a Ph. D, or be very good at something, the white community, which had power over opportunities, did not recognize that fact. The result was that everybody was penalized for things which some black people had had imposed on them by the character of their background and previous treatment, and so forth.

I am not certain in my own mind to what extent schools as opposed to communities and families and neighborhoods, can contribute to solving that problem. But if you think about a strategy for dealing with this, I think that it is probably most crucial to emphasize the development of some kind of minimum educational standards which you can establish and expect people to meet. One of the problems with all of the programs we have dealt with is that the criteria for success are always relative. You set up a compensatory program with the objective of getting children up to something called grade level. Well, this is at best an illusory objective; grade level is defined as where the average child is, so half the school always has to be below grade level.

Senator MONDALE. It is a sloppy standard, but it is a fact. In a rich, white suburban school, practically all of them are up 80, 95, 100 percentile. In a poor black school, they are all down 5, 10 percent. So that there is a tremendous difference.

Dr. JENCKS. There is no question at all about it. I think what I am saying is the following: If the standard is simply whether a school is above or below grade level, then even if the black school is doing a relatively good job it is almost inevitable, given the disadvantages with which those students start, that they will be at least a little bit below a school doing an equally good job in the suburbs. The question of concern is how big the gap is. If the difference is a very small percent you probably wouldn't worry much about it.

Senator MONDALE. We have some problems with what you are saying.

COMPENSATORY PROGRAMS LACK OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Dr. JENCKS. Well, let me finish what I was going to say. I think that one of the problems that has led to discouragement with most of the compensatory programs aimed at boosting the quality of the schools has been that there haven't been a set of objective standards which everybody could hope to get their students to meet. There hasn't been a floor which people have been trying to get every student up to. In that sense it is almost built in that a very large proportion of these programs will fail. This in turn contributes to the stereotype that these programs can't succeed. I think now we are in a situation in which people feel very demoralized. The teachers feel they have to have an excuse for having failed, so they then say the students can't learn, and then you have a vicious circle in which expectations of the students go down.

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Senator MONDALE. Are you saying that these inner schools are on a treadmill, they are doing better and better, but the standards are moving over the horizon?

Dr. JENCKS. No, I am not saying they are actually doing better, although there is some evidence that in historical terms they are doing better. For instance, if you look at the overall level of reading performance in the United States from the 1950's to the 1960's you will find that everybody is reading better. That means that although the ghetto school is reading a year behind grade level in the fifth grade and the suburban school is reading a year ahead of level at the fifth grade, they are all reading better than sixth graders were reading 20 years ago. What I am saying is that if you want to maintain the belief that people can learn and that they are going to succeed, it is useful to have a standard which isn't a competition that some people are bound to lose, but is a competition against an objective criteria which everybody can succeed at.

Senator MONDALE. But it is also true that the consequences of not being able to handle numbers, writing, and the rest, are much more serious than they were 30 years ago. And it is also true, not just on a relative scale, it is an absolute fact, that there are hundreds of thousands of children that don't learn anything. They come out of school not being able to read or count.

CREDENTIALS MANDATORY

Dr. JENCKS. I think the question is more complicated than we thought it was at first. We started off with the assumption that the consequences of not being able to read were greater. The examination we made showed we are not so sure.

We find two things.

First, if you compare people with the same amount of schooling, some of whom do well in tests and some who do very badly, the differences in their adult success is very small.

In other words, it seems to be the credentials rather than the skills that count. An employer won't employ a guy who reads well and doesn't have a high school diploma, but he will employ a person with a high school diploma even if he doesn't read well.

This is one of the reasons why it is important to teach these skills. If the people don't have the skills, they fail in school. They feel discouraged and drop out and don't get the credentials they need in adult life. It is clearly the case that the skills people have are one of the factors that influence how long they stay in school, although that is not the only factor.

A good deal of progress has been made in the last 20 years, for instance, in narrowing the gap in the credentials that black and white students have, even though the test score gap has not been narrowed anywhere near as much. Judging by the experiences of whites, this ought to make quite a difference. If you have the credentials, if you have a college degree, it is not that important to do well in a reading comprehension test unless you are in a very narrow range of occupations.

That is only a partial answer.

Again, I don't want to argue that skills are of no consequence, but at least the evidence we have suggests that the skills are mainly important in getting the credentials and it is the credentials that are important for the next 50 years. The relationship between degrees and income or degrees and occupational status is no different now than it was 50 years ago, or 40 years ago, which is about as far back as the evidence goes.

On the other hand, there are a lot of people who manage to do quite well for themselves in job terms who don't have college degrees or don't have a Ph. D. or don't score high on tests, but who have a lot of the other qualities which are important to success in the world.

Senator MONDALE. Unfortunately, I must leave, however I would like to have the staff continue if you have some time.

Dr. JENCKS. I would be perfectly willing to do that.

Senator MONDALE. We will be holding a seminar next week where we will try to go into the subject of your report. I believe the work that you and your colleagues have done on this effort to evaluate research data, is very important to our committee's report. If you could help us, we would be most grateful.

Thank you very much.

Dr. JENCKS. Thank you.

[At this point the hearing was held as an open forum discussion, between the committee's staff and Dr. Jencks.]

Mr. HARRIS. You were talking earlier about one of the missions of the school system being to create an environment where the child was relatively happy, where the school environments were relatively equal, where the parent and the child had some choices, basically a whole battery of things which I would describe as sort of making the child feel good about his situation.

Dr. JENCKS. Right.

Mr. HARRIS. What you didn't address, very specifically anyway, was the functioning of that school in terms of providing him with specific skills so that when he gets out, at whatever point that is, he has some choices about what he does next.

PROVISIONS FOR BASIC SKILLS

Dr. JENCKS. Right. I have two feelings about that. One is that most of the things schools teach seem to be important to children, not because of the substance of what is taught, but because mastering it gives him the feeling he can do something. If he does well, he gets the idea he can do things well. Actually, knowing the five principal products of Venezuela is not a technically useful piece of information. It is very rare that the substance of the curriculum is important. What is important is that you don't come out of school feeling like you never understood what was going on—that you don't develop a way of responding to the world based on the feeling that you don't know what is going on.

There are certain basic skills I wouldn't say that about, for instance the ability to read and to write. But I am not at all sure how important arithmetic is. There are a lot of people who work in offices who can do only simple arithmetic.

But at least reading and writing have a value outside that of developing some kind of self-confidence, or a sense that you can control the world, or that you can do the things people expect of you. It is directly translatable into certain kinds of adult things.

The argument I was trying to make for minimal standards is that the understanding of what objectives the school was being held to and what objectives the child is being held to is, in most cases, very vague. There is a lot done in bad schools to obscure precisely what they are trying to do, because if they were to make it explicit, you will see that they failed.

In talking about developing some standard which you would expect every child to meet at some point or other--I think of this in terms of elementary schools—there ought to be some notion that every child who finishes elementary school should be able to read at a certain level. I don't know what that level is, but it obviously can't be grade level. You have to pick a level of competence and a set of tasks people will be able to do.

Now, it turns out the area in which we have had a standard to some degree is arithmetic. If a child can't do long division, he can't do it. We are much more vague about what we are testing with reading tests. In a lot of ways they are not quite reading tests. A typical reading test is largely a reasoning test. There is a passage to read followed by a set of inductive jumps. It doesn't quite test whether or not a child can read but rather whether he interprets what he has read in the same way as somebody else does. That is, of course, a much more difficult thing.

Mr. HARRIS. What I am asking is whether or not you are willing to hold the schools accountable in the same way you want to hold them accountable for not letting plaster fall on their heads or not having heat in the winter time, to be able to provide basic skills.

SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE FOR ACHIEVEMENT

Dr. JENCKS. I certainly want to hold them accountable in exactly the same way as they are about the plaster or the heat. That is, I think there is an obligation that everybody involved knows what is happening. Some progress has been made in this area in the past few years in terms of test scores—even though I don't think the test scores are the "be all" and "end all." I think the parents should know what is going on; this is absolutely crucial. The student or parent may decide he doesn't care about reading and I think that is fine. But schools ought not refuse to release scores because people will be angry. The question of the reading scores is something that parents have to decide about.

Mr. HARRIS. Especially those children whose parents know they can't read.

Dr. JENCKS. Right. So long as they think or believe this is the primary purpose of going to school, it seems the schools are under an obligation to respond.

I don't feel it is as important as a lot of people think. I think there are a lot of other things which are more important which are harder to get at. The reason parents jump on the reading scores is that the

other things are much harder to get hold of. The parent doesn't know how the teacher treats his child in class. If she did, she might be a lot more angry about that than about the reading scores. If there were a scale from 1 to 100, on which it could be said your child has been treated 10 or 20, you might produce a riot. Of course, there isn't a way to do that. So the people come back to things they can put numbers on. The only sort of information parents have is what the student says to the parents. This gets into the question of how much parents believe the students' complaints.

I think if my parents believed everything I said when I was in school, they would have gone down and rioted. But they figured children are children.

Mr. HARRIS. You probably could read when you were going through that period?

Dr. JENCKS. That is true.

And in addition, probably because they brought me up to explain a lot I did. Some other child is brought up to take a lot of things for granted. He puts up with a lot in school, because he thinks that that is the way the world has to be. He adapts to the world he experiences in the classroom, and he goes out into the real world and reacts the same way. He tries to protect himself against something that may be done to him.

This is an unpromising situation when you get into a lot of jobs. You are always defending yourself. You are never able to take much responsibility or to exercise much initiative because you are always waiting for someone to hit you.

You may be right, of course, but if that is the way you act on the job, there is a vicious circle of what you expect and how the employer reacts to your behavior, and so on.

I certainly am not arguing against the right of parents and students to know about reading scores or their right to make a fuss about them if they do not meet their expectations. I am arguing two things. One is that reading scores are a lot harder to change than a lot of other things are. The second is that the payoffs from changing them are a lot less than they are chalked up to be, and that that is historically particularly true for blacks.

That is not an argument for not changing them, but rather an argument that nobody should expect that solving the reading score problem will solve any other problem. The payoffs of keeping children in school seem to be better than the payoffs to teaching them anything, which is a grotesque commentary on that. If you raise a child to some educational attainment you do much more for his income than if you raise his test scores.

Mr. HARRIS. That is true, but again, his educational aspirations or attainments are directly related to his perception of how well he is or is not doing.

UPWARD BOUND PROGRAMS SUCCESSFUL

Dr. JENCKS. That is true, but it is not all as true as one might assume. A classic example is the Upward Bound programs, which have been successful. A lot of children go to college as a result of those programs. You can see it by comparing them to their brothers and sisters.

Yet when you look at their test scores, you will see that the scores did not go up. Their SAT scores are low. But they went to college and they stayed there and they graduated and they did so in about the same proportion that you would expect of the general population, despite the fact that they had low test scores.

They had to work harder at it. If they had been better at reading, they would not have had to work so hard.

However if the government had spent that same money trying to raise the test scores of high school students, I think those students would not now have BA's or the same chance of success.

Mr. HARRIS. I am not really getting at test scores as such, but rather that Upward Bound really provides the child who was close to leaving school with some sort of extra stimulus, extra support.

Dr. JENCKS. Right.

Mr. HARRIS. To stay in school, to tolerate, perhaps, the bad scores for another year, to tolerate lousy teaching for another year, to tolerate the whole process.

Dr. JENCKS. Yes.

And another thing is to teach a student how to cope with getting into college, how to cope with dealing with the system, to give some advice and encouragement. All that makes a difference.

Again I am not arguing that the test scores are unimportant. But if you think of points of intervention, points at which you can hope to make a difference for a relatively plausible amount of money, using people doing the things they know how to do, a program like Upward Bound, which focuses on how students can get the most out of the system, seems to have done a lot more than the Title I kinds of programs which intervened earlier and focused on trying to teach children more reading skills.

We spent a lot more money on Title I and I would say got a lot less out of it than we did out of the Upward Bound approach. This is not to say it was not worth trying.

If you have limited resources and limited human skills, it seems to turn out that we know better how to motivate people than we know how to teach them to read.

The experience with teaching people to read suggests that we do not know much about teaching people who do not know how to teach. Basically what most reading teachers do is put a child in a situation in which he can teach himself. If he does not, and most do not, he won't learn. I may be unduly pessimistic about this. It can be you may be able to train teachers to teach people to read, but the experience thus far has been very discouraging.

I am not an expert in curriculum and I am not saying there are no promising developments in the field. But I am making a political judgment that we have spent a lot of money over the past 6 or 7 years without seeming to have derived much out of it.

My tentative conclusion from that is that it is very hard for teachers not to be a certain kind of people. The kinds of people who become teachers are people who, after they have been teaching for a while, have a hard time dealing with children who do not have certain characteristics.

Either we have to change the characteristics that children have when they come to school so that they come with more of the attributes they

need to take advantage of the teachers, or we have to find ways of running schools that are drastically different from the ones we now have so that we get people teaching who are able to deal with these kinds of children.

The second solution, vouchers, is a way of saying, let's try a lot of different things, and have different places called schools and opportunities for different people to become teachers, rather than get into the box where all teachers have to have a Masters degree and have to have met a lot of requirements, all of which tends to insure that the people who teach are a particular type of person.

Mr. SMITH. We have some comments about your Carnegie Study which I guess I should say for the record is in the form of a confidential preliminary draft, so it is not for publication yet.

But I would like to refer to three matters and ask you to expand on them.

PRESCHOOL EFFORTS

First, you don't seem to have much hope for preschool efforts, which is the first negative opinion we have seen on this strategy. Is that a fair——

Dr. JENCKS. There is a different opinion among us on this. We have mentioned Mike Smith, who works on preschool programs and is now involved with Headstart and Followthrough. I think he has considerably more hope than I do that something can, in principle, be done with this.

There is no disagreement among the people we have worked with or, indeed, among any people who have looked hard at the evidence, that the things we have done in preschools up to now have not had a long-term impact on test scores.

That was the conclusion of the Westinghouse report, and although we and other people have picked that apart technically and shown that there are a lot of mistakes in it, it is one of those things in which, despite all the mistakes, the conclusion is probably accurate.

Mr. SMITH. I am told that there are some additional studies ready to be released by HEW and Mr. Zeigler which show some long-term success with Headstart. We have not seen them yet.

Dr. JENCKS. I have not either. But the people I talk to, even the ones who are rather enthusiastic at this point, are inclined to concede that at the very least there is not much evidence that there are long-term effects, although they argue that we have not given the program a fair chance.

I think, in many respects, that is true. My own inference is not that you cannot have a long-term impact. I am convinced that, for instance, any systematic study of a large number of preschool programs will show that some of them do have a long-term effect. But my guess is that you will find that only a few of them do, and my second guess is that you will not be able to identify why some succeed and others fail. This is our experience with elementary schools.

It is not that no elementary school ever takes low-achieving students and raises their scores. Some elementary schools are better than others. At least that seems to be the inference so far. We have no clean study of this, but it looks that way. The trouble is that the difference between a good and a bad elementary school and the results of this

difference in terms of test scores, is not related to anything that a policymaker can get his hands on. It does not seem to be either resources or expenditures. It seems to be rather the social composition of the school.

Socioeconomic Integration

There is a report that suggests that socioeconomic integration, which of course gets to the same things as racial integration, can help on scores. It does not close the gap, but in terms of test scores, there seems to be evidence of some improvement.

I am tentative about this still, but nevertheless it seems that you cannot identify any characteristic of a school which produces high scores or translates students with low scores into students with high scores. Aside from the socioeconomic characteristic, we do not seem to be able to identify any characteristic related to effectiveness.

That is discouraging. It does not do much good to say that Head-start or preschool programs can help. But we have to say that we do not know how to set up a preschool program that works as opposed to one that does not.

Mr. Smith. Do you conclude that the most helpful thing we can do is in the socioeconomic area?

Dr. Jencks. I would say yes, that at the moment it is the only thing that seems to have an effect on test scores. I would say the most helpful thing we could do in terms of political and economic costs versus benefits is at the other end of the spectrum, is something like the Upward Bound program, getting more students into college. There is much less resistance to this than to the things you have to do to get integration at the elementary school level, which, in fact, provides almost no benefit to the students. Any single strategy should start when students are in high school. That is unorthodox, because you usually think that you have to start at the beginning. But you can do the most for the people when choices are directly in front of them. There is nothing you could do today which would prevent a guy from dropping out of school 10 years from now which would be as effective as something you could do to prevent him from dropping out of school 10 weeks from now.

Options of High School Level

Mr. Smith. If you have already lost most of them, you won't be able to help them in that respect.

Dr. Jencks. I am not arguing that you should wait until the college level. But you should start in the ninth grade, which is when people start to drop out. My orientation is toward adolescents and the choices they begin to make about how they go out into the world and in what context, and less toward preschoolers. I am not knocking preschool programs. They have all kinds of advantages.

Mr. Rosenthal. You would start in the ninth grade, would you not?

Dr. Jencks. Two things seem important. The first is giving the students a much more realitistic sense of the options available to them, and some idea that there are things they can do to insure themselves a kind of success. This is the main thing Upward Bound has tended to do. It has convinced students that there are strategies they can pursue which are not failure strategies. Not only that, but that there are

a set of people who are committed to making them succeed, because their own success is defined in terms of how many people they get into college and how many people stay there.

I think that this almost certainly has to be done outside the existing high school system, and that one of the reasons Upward Bound has worked is that they brought students into new institutional arrangements with people who had very different attitudes toward them than the traditional high school teacher had. They were always able to set up arrangements outside the high school and work with the students in the summer, and so forth.

The program is mostly voluntary. And it seems to me that the whole morale of an Upward Bound program or any successful program depends on the idea that people want it.

Again we know relatively little about exactly what works in this field. There are a lot of failures. It is not that every guy who went into this business was a success.

I have been much more encouraged by the overall impact of a whole series of different things that have been done to encourage people to stay in school and go to college and get the credentials they need to compete, than I have been by programs designed to affect their test performance.

Direct Aid to Students

There are some things you can do which are relatively straightforward. One is that if you give anybody a scholarship to go to college, he goes—even if he never considered it before. He may feel that if somebody will give him money to go to college, there must be something in it. That is a rather simpleminded thing to do. It is one of the great arguments for direct aid to students rather than aid to institutions, because it gives the student an investment in himself.

Another thing you can do is to have an open admissions policy. If you tell people from the time they are in seventh grade that they can go to college and that they don't have to have such and such an average or whatever, it has an impact on the possibilities. You have to have a structure which encourages people to believe that college is possible. Scholarships and open admissions is one thing. The other thing is to work with children so their perceptions of how to manipulate the system are more realistic.

If you talk to children now about what is available to them, you find that they have wildly improbable ideas about what colleges they can go to and what they have to do to get there. They have a vast amount of misinformation. I would say the same is true of their counselors. The level of sophistication among these people about the way the world works is very low. And if you compound a counselor who is not very sophisticated about the way the colleges work with a counselor who has no idea at all about the way the mind of the student he is trying to counsel works, you are in a losing situation.

Effect of Integration on Advantaged Children

Mr. Smith. Let me raise a second matter here. You seem to believe that integration with poor, disadvantaged children hurts advantaged children with cognitive learning even though you find that the poorer children probably do better. Is that a fair conclusion?

Dr. JENCKS. It is a fair conclusion from very shaky data.

Mr. SMITH. I have seen a lot of data that says that advantaged children, at least in a classic Coleman type setting, do at least as well.

Dr. JENCKS. Let me describe exactly what my sense of what the evidence shows. The first thing is that as far as high schools are concerned, there is no effect. It is elementary school we are talking about primarily.

There are two different kinds of studies that have been done. One is the busing type, or quasi-experimental. You take children and you move them around. I know of no evidence that busing disadvantaged children to a school lowers the achievement of the children already in that school. I have never seen any such evidence from, for instance, the Berkeley situation, where you really move a lot of people in.

We are talking about studies that are evaluating only a few years, but in the short run I do not know of any evidence that white or advantaged students are hurt by this.

Mr. SMITH. That is clear in Berkeley.

Dr. JENCKS. The reverse situation is that the black students gain much. The typical finding is that not much happens. That is not absolutely true. Project Concern shows gains. They are not big, they are not consistent, but that is a characteristic situation. Looking across at the integration studies, when you bus or massively integrate by whatever device, you get modest inconsistent gains for the disadvantaged students, which generally means black students.

If you look at natural integration, that is, if you compare schools where integration was already existent with schools where whites have not had a lot of black schoolmates, you don't find the same pattern. You find that the blacks in naturally integrated schools are better off and the gains are larger and more consistent than in the busing studies. But the whites in those schools are worse off than whites in schools of a uniformly middle-class composition.

You cannot help feeling that there may be selection involved in this case; that is, that the students in naturally integrated schools are the same on all the outward criteria.

Maybe it is different if you look around Washington and find a school which is really integrated. But it is true that generally the whites lose. But you could argue, and it may well be true, that the whites who keep their children in those schools may be different from suburban parents in some way that accounts for the discrepancies.

Also, the data is very shaky; that is the other thing.

Mr. SMITH. You are talking about cognitive skills?

Dr. JENCKS. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. There are a host of other benefits that may derive from integration.

Dr. JENCKS. Yes, right. All we can say in terms of elementary schools is that, in my view, the fact that you don't usually find big stable differences can be attributed to the fact that those measures are highly unstable and not very sensitive and don't measure what you