

March 31, 1965

Questions And Answers
On New Education Bill

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The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 has passed the House of Representatives by an overwhelming majority. The Senate will not waste any time to bring it to a vote. President Johnson has his pen poised ready to sign it. It could be law by Easter.

Much confusion is abroad about the bill. This brief question and answer article will attempt to clarify some of the misunderstandings about it.

Question: What are the provisions of the bill?

Answer: It extends the federally impacted area aid program for another two years. In addition it does the following:

1. It authorizes \$1.06 billion for public school agencies for the education of children of low-income families.
2. It authorizes \$100 million to state public education agencies for school library resources, textbooks, and other instructional materials for children and teachers in public and private elementary and secondary schools.
3. It authorizes \$100 million to public school agencies for the creation of supplementary educational centers and services available to all the school children in a community.
4. It authorizes \$100 million to be allocated by the U. S. Commissioner of Education to universities, colleges and other public and private research agencies to develop educational research and training.
5. It authorizes \$25 million for grants to states to strengthen state departments of education.

The total of these authorized appropriations is \$1.385 billion.

Question: Does the bill give aid to parochial schools?

Answer: The bill does not authorize any grant of funds or provide for services to private schools. All of the appropriations for elementary and secondary education are to public agencies.

Question: Does the bill give aid to parochial school pupils?

Answer: Yes. If the private school has children from poor families (\$2000 or less annual income) the public school that receives aid from this bill must provide them "special educational services and arrangements (such as dual enrolment, educational radio and television, and mobile educational services and equipment)" in which private school pupils can participate.

Other aids to private school pupils are school library resources, textbooks and other instructional materials. The supplementary educational centers and services are also available to all school children in a community.

Question: Through what channels or agencies will these aids be available to private school pupils?

Answer: Only through public agencies. The bill requires that the local educational agency will maintain administration and control of the programs available to private school children. It also assures that the title to any property constructed or purchased shall be in a public agency and that a public agency will administer the funds and property for public educational purposes.

According to the report of the Committee on Education and Labor, under the provision for library resources, textbooks and other aids available to all school children, the bill assures that the funds "will not enure to the enrichment or benefit of any private institution" by the following:

1. Library resources, textbooks and other instructional materials are to be made available to children and teachers and not to institutions.
2. Such materials are made available on a loan basis only.
3. Public authority must retain title and administrative control over such materials.
4. Such material must be that approved for use by public school authority in the state.
5. Books and material must not supplant those being provided children but must supplement library resources, textbooks, and other instructional materials to assure that the legislation will furnish increased opportunities for learning.

For the supplementary educational centers and services the grants are made to a public education agency, the property is in a public agency and the program is administered by the public agency.

Question: Why is there such widespread belief that the new education bill gives aid to parochial schools as well as to public schools?

Answer: There are at least four clear reasons for this confusion. First, the bill approaches education aid on a new basis. It is a poverty bill as well as an education bill, and it is aimed at children rather than institutions. This shift from the traditional thought patterns of education is not quickly made by those who have thought only of aid to schools.

Second, the news media are not always precise in the language used in reporting. In efforts to simplify complicated matters and to shorten lengthy explanations it is easy to use misleading terminology. Such efforts have resulted in a misrepresentation of the bill in some instances.

Third, some of those who are opposed to federal aid to education have sought to use the religious issue to defeat the bill. When it was evident that all other tactics were failing, the opponents attempted to sidetrack it by the charge it provided aid to parochial schools. They did not succeed in convincing the religious leaders, the education leaders or the political leaders of the nation.

Fourth, the administration of the act will require private schools to cooperate with public schools to some extent if their pupils are to receive their aids. In some instances they may create community tensions and abuses if either the school board or the private school interests press for undue advantage.

Question: What has been the position of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs on the new education bill?

Answer: The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs neither endorses nor opposes federal aid to education. Neither can nor does the Committee attempt to speak for all Baptists on such issues.

However, the Baptist agency played an important role in this legislation. From the first it was evident that Congress would pass an education bill this year. The problem was to get the best bill possible from a church-state viewpoint. The executive director of the committee, C. Emanuel Carlson, testified at hearings before both the Senate and House subcommittees on education. He made many constructive suggestions for the improvement of the proposed bill to safeguard the principles of religious liberty and separation of church and state.

Other organizations also testified and made suggestions for improvement of the church-state principles of the bill. The House subcommittee on education received these suggestions with an open mind and cooperated to the fullest in producing a bill that would be in harmony with the first amendment to the Constitution and in keeping with sound public policy.

Question: Will there be church-state problems arising in the administration of this bill?

Answer: No doubt there will be. These will be problems, however, that arise largely on the local and state levels. This will shift much of the debate on church-state relations in education from Washington out to the communities where the decisions will be made and the policies worked out. In cases where obvious abuses arise it may be necessary for complaints to be taken to the courts, if community dialogue and efforts toward acceptable practices fail.

Many of the possible abuses, however, may be eliminated by the administrative regulations that will be worked out by the Office of Education of the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Legislation cannot foresee or provide for every possible situation that might arise. Sound public policy, sensible public administration, and devotion to constitutional principles can solve many of these problems even before they arise.

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Tennessee Legislature
Exempts One Parsonage

3-31-65

NASHVILLE (BP)--The 1965 Tennessee legislature here passed a law exempting from taxation one parsonage owned by each church or synagogue in the state.

The law, according to one of its sponsors, was the outgrowth of a legal opinion in Nashville that parsonages were taxable because they were not used for church purposes.

The opinion, given by the attorney's office for Nashville Metropolitan government, affected only property in the Nashville-Davidson County area. Parsonages had been put on the tax rolls after this opinion.

Sen. Stanly T. Snodgrass of Nashville, a sponsor, said no other counties in Tennessee were taxing church-owned parsonages. However, the law is effective statewide.

Restrictions of the new law are that only one church-owned parsonage per church is exempt. Churches owning more than one parsonage can not claim exemption on the others. Too, the parsonage must be situated on a lot containing not more than three acres.

The new law says the church's parsonage must be "used as the individual or family residence of its principal minister, priest or rabbi."

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Commissioner Dies

3-31-65

NASHVILLE (BP)--Ralph D. Alexander, a Nashville layman and member of the Southern Baptist Convention Historical Commission, died here March 27 after a heart attack. The 57-year-old Alexander was an official of a local printing firm and had been a commissioner for two years.

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Furman Fills Openings

GREENVILLE, S. C. (BP)--Two new administrative positions have been created at Furman University here. Both will be filled by current members of the administration and faculty. John H. Crabtree Jr., associate professor of English, will be assistant dean. Miss Marguerite Chiles, director of student personnel for women, has been named dean of women. They will assume their new duties at the beginning of the 1965-66 academic year at the South Carolina Baptist school.

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McLarry Takes Church

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Newman R. McLarry, former associate director of the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board division of evangelism, Dallas, has accepted the call as pastor of Northwest Baptist Church here, effective Easter Sunday. A native of Sulphur Springs, Tex., McLarry has served with the evangelism division since 1962. He previously served three years as pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Smith, Ark.

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Kentucky To Stage
Communications Meeting

3-31-65

MIDDLETOWN, Ky. (BP)--The Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist weekly newspaper, and the stewardship promotion department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention here will sponsor a three-day regional communications conference.

The conference, scheduled Aug. 23-25 at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly, Bagdad, Ky., is to help church leaders improve their skills in communications, according to R. J. Hastings, Middletown, secretary of the stewardship promotion department.

Helps will also be available for writers wanting to know how to prepare material for denominational publications.

Conference leaders include Mrs. Mildred Dunn, Memphis, magazine editor for the Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood Commission; Floyd H. North, Richmond, editor of the Commission, SBC Foreign Mission Board monthly publication; Clarence E. Duncan, Fort Worth, director of promotion, SBC Radio and Television Commission; Erwin L. McDonald, Little Rock, editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, and Theo Sommerkamp, Nashville, assistant director, Baptist Press, news service of the SBC.

The conference is open to persons living in Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky and Illinois.

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Church Making Plans
For Air Cars, Heliport

3-31-65

JACKSON, Tenn. (BP)--If the West Jackson Baptist Church here fulfills its dream for the future, you can land your air car or jet helicopter on the roof of the church's own double-deck parking lot to help the congregation celebrate its 100th birthday in the year 2006.

The heliport and air car landing facilities are part of a long-range goal connected with the 100th anniversary, according to David Q. Byrd, pastor, and former president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. So is the proposed double-deck garage for automobiles.

A shorter time away for the 2119-member church includes a goal for 1200 in Sunday school and 600 in Training Union each Sunday by 1970. Other goals include those for new converts and for giving to the church budget.

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