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**McGovern Makes Public
His Parochial Aid Stand**

By Beth Hayworth

WASHINGTON (BP)--Senator George McGovern, President Richard Nixon's rival for the White House, has announced support for income tax credits to aid parents of children attending parochial and "bona fide" private schools.

In a speech to a Catholic high school audience in Chicago, the Democratic standard bearer said "I fully endorse" the principle of tax credits, stating he believed that such aid would be upheld by the courts. The text of McGovern's speech was released by his headquarters here.

Earlier, Senator McGovern said he was committed to finding ways to aid private school education "within the framework of the constitution." In his Chicago speech McGovern stressed this commitment to "constitutionality" of aid, and talked of the "constittutional right" of parents of parochial school children to receive aid.

"It is essential to good government and justice that tax relief be brought in a constitutional way to both the general treasuries and the parents of children in parochial and other bona fide private schools," declared McGovern.

At the beginning of a long address to the Catholic audience at the Gordon Technical School in Chicago, the South Dakota aspirant to the White House pledged "aggressive leadership" to bring more financial aid to public schools than they have ever received before.

"There's simply no question but that that's where our highest priority lies," McGovern declared, citing the fact that nine out of ten American students are in public schools.

"But neither can we neglect the other one out of ten students who are not in public schools but who are also citizens and children of America. In defending majorities, we cannot neglect minorities...we cannot abandon the children in these schools... (by) depriving parents of a constitutional right," McGovern said.

Thus, with his Chicago speech McGovern has rivaled President Nixon in a direct bid for the Catholic vote in several key election states. As McGovern pointed out, parochial school enrollments are concentrated in eight states: New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, California, Ohio, New Jersey, Michigan and Massachusetts. Most of these states are among the crucial ones to McGovern's hopes for defeating President Nixon in November.

Nixon has pledged repeatedly to give funds to Catholics from the federal treasury to support their schools. However, in hearings before the house ways and means committee in August the administration gave only qualified support to the tax credit proposal currently being considered by the committee.

That bill, H.R. 16141, would allow a tax credit for tuition paid by a parent or guardian to any private nonprofit elementary or secondary school. This tax credit would be allowed to cover actual tuition costs up to a maximum of \$200 per dependent.

A spokesman for the Baptist joint committee on public affairs, John W. Baker, opposed the proposed legislation, charging that such aid to parochial schools would violate both the principles of religious liberty and of sound public policy.

In testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee in August, Baker, the research director of the Baptist joint committee, listed several effects of tax credits. Among them are:

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(1) a weakening of the public school system, (2) promotion of internal strife and tensions among the religious and other groups in the nation, and (3) opening the door to a wide variety of private school systems supported by public funds.

The Nixon administration, while endorsing the principle of income tax credits for parents of parochial school children, testified before the committee that additional revenues must be found for new programs if the bill is to gain the president's support.

Senator McGovern did not discuss specific plans for ways to fund the proposed program which is estimated to cost \$3 billion a year to begin. He did say that the nation "could afford it in the context of a healthy and vital economy, operating at the full employment level...and through a fair and equitable system of taxation."

McGovern stressed his conviction that public and private schools could be strengthened "without weakening one or the other."

The Democratic Presidential nominee said firmly that he would "never support" the use of federal aid to advance segregated schools. He said he would "demand that the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as well as the Internal Revenue Service, use their powers to the full to ensure that no 'segregated academy,' south or north, receives any form of federal assistance."

At this point in his speech McGovern attacked strongly the Nixon administration's record, saying they had been "deficient" in enforcing the "clear laws and precedents and has thereby injured the otherwise solid record of the vast majority of parochial and bona fide nonpublic schools."

At the beginning of his long speech to the audience at the Catholic boys high school McGovern talked at length about the values of diversity in American life, especially in education. He described the desire of many ethnic groups to maintain parochial schools chiefly to keep alive cultural and language heritages, such as the Jewish, Polish, Spanish, Italian and Irish.

"Parochial schools are chiefly cultural agencies," McGovern explained. "They are thoroughly American--but they are especially American in keeping alive America's diversity. They help to supply the 'pluribus' in our nation's motto, 'e pluribus unum,'--'out of many, one.'"

"Only in reflecting on the cultural richness of the full range of such schools do we come to realize what would be lost in losing them" McGovern said. He paid tribute to the contribution of various ethnic groups to the "moral vision" necessary for "good education...character, the imagination, the sensibility" which are not acquired in the classroom merely.

McGovern concluded his speech by saying: "If we can move, as one nation, to meet the educational needs of all our children, in public, parochial and other bona fide private schools, then we will have taken another step in the direction of fulfilling the genuine hopes of the framers of our constitution in their desire to encourage the diversity of intellectual, cultural and religious beliefs which has contributed so much to America's greatness."



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