

# EDUCATION IN AMERICA

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## "The Most Profitable Investment"

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THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM of 1964 contained a ringing statement of policy on education: "Our task is to make the national purpose serve the human purpose: that every person shall have the opportunity to become all that he or she is capable of becoming. We believe that knowledge is essential to individual freedom and to the conduct of a free society. We believe that education is the surest and most profitable investment a nation can make." In support of this policy the Democrats—in sharp contrast to the Republican Party, which took the position that education is the responsibility of state and local governments—pledged increased federal support for education at all levels.

Since his election, President Johnson has made it clear that he does not intend to allow the Democratic Eighty-Ninth Congress to forget the party's commitment to education. His program calls for \$1 billion to school districts serving children from low-income families, \$260,000,000 for higher education, part of which will be used to provide scholarships for 140,000 college students, \$100,000,000 for the creation of educational centers to provide instruction in various subjects as well as special assistance for both deprived and gifted children, another \$100,000,000 for books and other instructional aids, \$45,000,000 for educational laboratories for the education of teachers, and \$10,000,000 to state departments of education. All this is in addition to the educational assistance in the previously announced anti-poverty program and the various other programs already receiving federal aid.

Though it will very substantially increase the federal investment in education, this is not the across-the-board program of "federal aid without federal control" that public school forces have hoped for. Most of the programs will be administered locally but, because the funds must be used for specific purposes, it will be necessary to establish controls. The clarification and interpretation of policy will require many directives from the U. S. Office of Education.

The program clearly is designed to circumvent the church-state issue on which previous federal aid bills have foundered. It includes provision to win the support of parochial school forces as well as the NEA. Books and other instruction facilities will be provided for children in all kinds of schools. The facilities of the proposed educational centers will be available to children from parochial schools as well as to those from public schools. College scholarships will be available to students in both public and private colleges.

It does not seem likely that many of the items in this program can be challenged on constitutional grounds. The precedent for the use of federal funds for the support of students in private colleges was established by the G.I. Bill. The major item—\$1 billion dollars for schools enrolling children from low-income families—will be available only to public schools. The use by parochial school pupils of educational centers on a part-time basis follows a precedent of "shared time" programs which are now in operation in many communities. Such programs, in which children from parochial schools study "religiously neutral" subjects in public schools for

a part of the day, have been criticized on the grounds that the division of responsibility fragments the child's educational experience, adds to transportation costs, and blurs the line between public and parochial education. It is admittedly difficult to decide which subjects are neutral from a religious point of view. Many subjects, including astronomy, biology, history, literature, hygiene, and even art and music have at some time been challenged on religious grounds by one church or another. But shared time programs undoubtedly improve the education of parochial school pupils and they do not appear to violate the Constitution of the United States. The item most likely to be challenged is that which provides books and other instructional materials for children in parochial schools. If a challenge is made it is to be hoped that the courts will reach an early decision.

The President's program gives evidence of the willingness of the federal government to take bold action when state and local governments are unable or unwilling to meet their obligations. Though it cannot please everyone, it is clearly a long step forward. It is based upon a careful identification of the major soft spots in American education. It will serve the human purpose. Because it now seems clear that many local communities cannot or will not provide education of the quality for which there is imperative need today, the President's program should be enacted into law.

—P.W.

### The Goal

"Every child must be encouraged to get as much education as he has the ability to take.

"Nothing matters more to the future of our country: not our military preparedness—for armed might is worthless if we lack the brain power to build a world of peace; not our productive economy—for we cannot sustain growth without trained manpower; not our democratic system of government—for freedom is fragile if citizens are ignorant.

"We must demand that our schools increase not only the quantity but the quality of America's education. For we recognize that nuclear-age problems cannot be solved with horse-and-buggy learning. The three R's of our school system must be supported by the three T's—teachers who are superior, techniques of instruction that are modern, and thinking about education which places it first in all our plans and hopes."

—From President Johnson's Special Message to Congress on Education, January 12, 1965.

## Letters to the Editor

### What Happened at Berkeley

"WHAT HAPPENED at Berkeley" [SR, Jan. 16] is a beautiful piece of reporting and analysis, the best of its kind I have seen. I wish there had been room for a companion piece (or perhaps part of the main article) giving more personal sketches of the cast of participants—such as the one you provided on Clark Kerr. As it is, the personality and atmosphere of the situation comes through with remarkable clarity.

There ought to be more education reporting like this in the world.

HUMPHREY DOERMANN.

Belmont, Mass.

MY DAUGHTER was one of the eight students "indefinitely suspended" by the University of California on September 30.

Mr. Cass's article, "What Happened at Berkeley," seems to me to be a remarkably fair presentation of the chronology of events and, more important, displays a keen insight into the deeper issues involved in the dispute.

ELIZABETH GARDNER.

Watsonville, Calif.

CONGRATULATIONS to James Cass for having written far and away the best article to appear in a national magazine on the Berkeley controversy. His discussion was notable for its care in assembling the facts and thoughtfulness in analyzing them, neither of which has been conspicuous in most accounts of the controversy.

Particularly welcome was Mr. Cass's stress on the issue that for many of us was crucial in generating our dissatisfaction with the position of the administration. That is, if the university "has left the cloister and entered the market place," as President Kerr has demonstrated in his excellent book, and if it is to remain an institution where truth is sought and not to become only a service-station for government and industry, then those minority groups protesting against established interests and values must also be given access to the campus.

JOHN C. STALNAKER,  
Graduate Student and  
Teaching Assistant in History,  
University of California.

Berkeley, Calif.

CONGRATULATIONS on your incisive and most interesting story on Berkeley.

THEODORE B. DOLMATCH, President,  
Pitman Publishing Corporation.  
New York, N.Y.

I'D LIKE to offer a brief supplement to Mr. Cass's excellent analysis of what happened at Berkeley. It appears that as external pressures on the university have increased in number and intensity, university administrators have subtly, perhaps unconsciously,

redefined their roles *vis-à-vis* the academic community to the point at which their relationship with it has become routinized, mechanical, almost perfunctory.

A number of years ago Berkeley's sociologist, Philip Selznick, described this phenomenon as a "retreat to technology"; he associated it with a default of leadership. And he said, in what has turned out to be something of a prophecy, "A university led by administrators without a clear sense of values to be achieved may fail dismally while steadily growing larger and more secure."

THOMAS W. FRYER, JR.,  
Assistant Supervisor,  
Junior College Education,  
University of California.

Berkeley, Calif.

THE ARTICLE by Mr. Cass on Berkeley was of particular interest to me for the two reasons that 1) I am a college professor and 2) I spent the summer of 1960 on the campus at Berkeley. During my nine-week visit I never ceased to marvel at the extra-curricular activities of the students. Never have I seen such a ferment on a campus about politics and human relations—and I have been employed in several institutions during the past twenty-five years.

If the university officials at Berkeley want peace on the campus they would do well to consider drawing their student body from a wider percentage range of the high school classes. If similar institutions would do likewise we would all benefit from the change. Many American colleges have unbalanced student bodies in the other direction, too many average students and too few top students. Both kinds of institutions might profit from a better distribution.

C. A. MACKENZIE,  
Head, Chemistry Department,  
University of Southwestern Louisiana,  
Lafayette, La.

JAMES CASS's excellent report on the Berkeley situation further reinforces my belief that the sole *raison d'être* of any college administration is to keep the buildings clean.

PAUL A. MARSH,  
Graduate Asian Studies,  
University of Southern California.  
Pasadena, Calif.

AS A GRADUATE STUDENT at the University of California at Berkeley, I read with great interest James Cass's article, "What Happened at Berkeley." Mr. Cass has portrayed the situation in Berkeley accurately and honestly. However, he failed to discuss one of the most interesting aspects of the entire situation: Why after so many years did Dean of Students Katherine A. Towle call a halt to the solicitation of funds and the recruitment of workers for off-campus social

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