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Libraries Highlight President's Education Message

Every librarian has undoubtedly read President Johnson's special message on education sent to the Congress on January 12, and been impressed by his many significant references to libraries. For your convenience, however, we are highlighting the parts of the message in which libraries are specifically involved and are also giving you information available to date on the legislative measures introduced to carry out his proposals "to put the American dream to work in meeting the new demands for a new day".

Urging that it is time to "push ahead with the number one business of the American people - the education of our youth", the President outlined the three major elements in his \$1.5 billion proposal, including provisions for library materials, for schools and colleges and training for librarians.

I. Preschool Program

II. Elementary and Secondary Schools

A. Aid to low-income school districts

B. School library resources and Instructional Materials

"I recommend legislation to authorize Federal grants to States to assist in the purchase of books for school libraries and for student use, to be made available to children in public and private non-profit elementary and secondary schools."

"Thomas Carlyle once said, 'All that mankind has done, thought, gained or been: it is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books'.

"Yet our school libraries are limping along.

- . "Almost 70 percent of the public elementary schools have no libraries. Eighty-four percent lack librarians to teach children the value of learning through good books.
- . "Many schools have an average of less than 1/2 book per child.

- . To meet the accepted standards for library materials would require a four-fold increase in current expenditures in our major cities.

The explosion of knowledge and the rapid revision of curricula in the schools has created new demands for school textbooks. The obsolete text can suffocate the learning process. Yet the cost of purchasing textbooks at increasing prices puts a major obstacle in the path of education -- an obstacle that can and must be eliminated."

C. Supplementary Educational Centers and Services

For example, "Common facilities that can be maintained more efficiently for a group of schools than for a single school - laboratories, libraries, auditoriums, and theaters."

D. Regional Education Laboratories

E. Strengthening State Educational Agencies

III. Higher Education

The President stated that his 1966 budget includes: "...An additional \$179 million to assist construction of college classrooms, libraries, and laboratories..."...But more is needed..."To enrich the library resources of colleges and universities."

A. Assistance to Students

1. Scholarships
2. Expansion of Work-Study Opportunity and Guaranteed Low-Interest Loans

B. Aid to Smaller Colleges

C. Support for College Library Resources

"I recommend enactment of legislation for purchase of books and library materials to strengthen college teaching and research."

- . "50 percent of our four-year institutions and 82 percent of our two-year institutions fall below accepted professional standards in the number of volumes possessed.

"As student enrollment mounts, we must look not only to the physical growth of our colleges and universities. They must be developed as true centers of intellectual activity. To construct a library building is meaningless unless there are books to bring life to the library."

D. University-Community Extension Program

E. Special Manpower Needs

"We must also ask the colleges and universities to help overcome certain deficiencies in trained manpower. At least 100,000 more professional librarians are needed for service in public libraries and in schools and colleges..."

"I Recommend:

Grants to institutions of higher education for training of school, college, and community librarians and related services..."

Acknowledging the magnitude of the tasks to be confronted, the President stated that his education budget request for fiscal 1966 (July 1, 1965 - June 30, 1966) will contain a total of \$4.1 billion. This includes \$1.1 billion to finance programs established by the 88th Congress. In addition, he will submit a request for \$1.5 billion in new obligational authority to finance the foregoing new programs.

It is significant that both the National Education Association and the National Catholic Education Association have voiced approval of the aspects of the message and the bills which call for cooperation between public and private schools and other agencies.

Rep. Adam Clayton Powell (D.-N.Y.), Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, introduced the Administration's bill Jan. 12, H.R. 2361, and predicts the measure will be ready to go to the House floor for debate by March 1.

A similar bill, H.R. 2362, has been introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins (D.-Ky.), the General Education Subcommittee Chairman, who is expected to conduct early hearings on the measure.

The companion Senate bill, (S.370), presented immediately following the Education Message, was introduced by Senator Wayne Morse (D.-Ore.), Chairman of the Senate Education Subcommittee.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

S.370, H.R. 2361 and H.R. 2362 - the bills which are the legislative vehicles designed to carry out Part II of the Administration's educational program - offer substantial assistance for school library resources and a corresponding challenge to act with dispatch and responsibility.

Senator Morse completed his introduction of the measure by announcing a schedule of six hearings, running from January 26 to February 11, and by issuing an invitation to interested organizations to make known their wishes to present testimony. The American Library Association will, of course, request time to present testimony in support of the bill, especially the library provisions. The major provisions of this legislative proposal include:

Part I - Improvement of the Education of Children of Low Income Families

This feature would add a three-year program to PL 874 (financial assistance to areas affected by federal installations) designed to meet the special needs of educationally deprived needy children. School districts in about 95 percent of the 3,100 counties in the United States would be eligible for these poverty-related funds. The authorization for fiscal 1966 would be approximately \$1 billion.

Part II - School Library Resources and Instructional Materials

This Part provides for a five-year program of grants to acquire school library resources and printed and published instructional materials for the use of children and teachers in public and nonprofit private elementary and secondary schools in the state.

Library resources are defined as "books, periodicals, documents, magnetic tapes, phonograph records, and other related library materials."

The first-year authorization would be \$100 million and for the four remaining such sums as may be necessary.

Up to five percent of the state allotment may be used for administration of the state plan in fiscal 1966 and up to three percent thereafter. Funds to be matched by the state would be allocated on the basis of the number of children enrolled in public and nonprofit private elementary and secondary schools in each state or territory.

Further information on the various details of the bill will be provided as soon as printed copies are available.

Part III - Supplementary Educational Centers and Services

This section proposes a five-year program to provide grants for urgently needed educational services not available in sufficient quantity or quality in elementary and secondary schools and to develop and establish exemplary elementary and secondary school educational programs to serve as models for regular school programs.

Among the allowable uses of federal funds under this Part which aims to provide special personnel, equipment and other costly educational services not normally available in most schools to encourage the greatest possible participation of the entire community would be programs to: develop, produce and transmit radio and television programs for classroom and other educational use. The term equipment includes ..."printed and published instructional materials, and books, periodicals, documents, magnetic tapes, phonograph records and other related materials."

The authorization for fiscal 1966 is \$100 million and such sums as may be necessary for the remaining four years.

Part IV - Educational Research and Training

This Part would amend the cooperative Research Act of 1954 (PL 83-531) to enable the Office of Education to accomplish the purposes and perform the duties for which it was originally established.

Authority would be granted to utilize the research capabilities of research organizations not now eligible to contribute to the program, such as private non-collegiate research organizations and professional organizations. In addition the program would provide for construction and operation of centers to improve the quality of teaching in our schools and for the purchase of research equipment.

The authorization to implement this Part would be \$100 million over a period of five years beginning with fiscal 1966. First-year cost of these amendments would be \$45 million in addition to the regular cooperative research budget of \$25 million in fiscal year 1966.

Part V - Strengthening State Departments of Education

This section provides a five-year program to assist in strengthening the leadership resources of state educational agencies. Among the possible programs would be training to develop school library supervisors. Such programs would help overcome the present deplorable situation in the one third of our state departments of education which are without professionals to oversee school library services and also strengthen existing supervisory services.

To implement this program \$10 million would be authorized for fiscal 1966 and for the remaining four years such sums as may be necessary.

The tremendous implications for library service in this comprehensive legislation to assist elementary and secondary education deals with just one major portion of the President's overall program for education. It deserves careful study and full support to ensure the greatest possible development of school library services. Request copies of the bill from your Congressman.

Higher Education Next on Agenda

Senator Morse announced on January 12, that hearings on the pending higher education legislation, carrying out the third major portion of the President's program, would begin immediately after the completion of hearings on the elementary and secondary education bill. It is expected that the higher education proposal will be introduced within a few days. Judging from the President's education message, this too will carry wide-ranging programs for library service. The proposals for training for librarianship may be incorporated in the higher education bill or may be in a separate bill to be introduced later.

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