

THE SMITH-TOWNER BILL EMBODIES TWO FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES DIFFERING FROM OTHER FEDERAL-AID BILLS

First—It makes provision for the reduction of federal administrative expenses and the promotion of efficiency by the consolidation of duplicating and overlapping educational agencies into one department under a responsible head equal in rank to the heads of the other executive departments.

Second—It recognizes the vital importance of public education from the national standpoint and provides federal aid to encourage the states in the promotion of education, but leaves the control of all educational affairs entirely to the states to be administered exclusively by state and local educational authorities established by state laws.

Smith-Towner Bill Differs From Other Federal-Aid Bills

The Smith-Towner Bill differs fundamentally from all other Federal-aid educational bills that have been passed, or that are now pending in Congress. It is the only bill which makes provision for the reduction of the overhead expenses of the Federal government in dealing with educational matters. It is also the only bill which provides that the states shall take the initiative in all educational affairs and which leaves the organization, administration and supervision of education exclusively to the states.

Provides For Consolidation of Overlapping Departments

The bill provides for the establishment of a Department of Education with a secretary in the President's Cabinet, to which department may be transferred by Congress, or by the President, such offices, bureaus, divisions, boards or branches of the government connected with or attached to any of the executive departments or organized independently of any department as should be controlled by or the functions of which would be exercised by the Department of Education. The consolidation of the numerous boards, bureaus and commissions of the government into one department, and the elimination of duplicating and overlapping agencies, would save the government millions of dollars annually, and place the administration of educational affairs, so far as the national government is concerned, under one responsible head equal in rank to the heads of the other executive departments.

Education Deserves Recognition of Highest Rank

A prominent officer in the War Department recently called attention to the fact that both the War Department and the Navy Department are advertising for young men to enter the army and navy, where they will be given a liberal education. This officer remarked that these departments are particularly featuring the education of soldiers and sailors along the broadest possible lines, and that unfortunately there is no educational department in the government equal in rank to the army and navy departments to advise them in the preparation of courses of study and the adoption of approved methods for the education of the enlisted men.

Other Federal-Aid Bills Create Additional Offices

All the other Federal-aid educational bills that have been passed or that are now pending provide for the creation of additional offices, bureaus, boards or commissions, thereby increasing the overhead expense instead of reducing it by consolidation. That nearly every department of the government is now dening with the subject of education, and that there is a tremendous waste because of the overlapping of governmental agencies and the continued creation of additional administrative machinery, was brought out clearly by the debate in the Senate on the Americanization Bill, which passed the Senate on January 26 and is now pending in the House.

Senate Discusses Provisions of Americanization Bill

The Americanization Bill, as introduced in the Senate, provided that courses of study should be approved by the Secretary of the Interior, and that the Secretary of the Interior should make rules and regulations for carrying out the provisions of the Act. These features of the bill were vigorously attacked by Senators who objected to any Federal officer giving directions to the states on the subject of education, pointing out that while the Federal Government might aid the states in the promotion of education, it was not within its province to dictate to the states regarding the administration and control of education. While the provisions with respect to the power of the Secretary of the Interior were struck out by amendments, nevertheless the bill as passed by the Senate provides specifically for twenty-two

administrative officers, specialists and field officers; twenty-five clerks, stenographers and messengers; twelve regional officers; eight clerks and stenographers in regional offices; \$5000 for rent for regional offices; \$75,000 for printing, stationery and illustrated material; \$30,000 for traveling and subsistence; \$50,000 for part-time expert help in preparing material for teaching; \$20,000 for short-course training schools for supervisors and directors, and \$7000 for incidentals and contingencies.

Americanization Bill Impies Federal Supervision

All this machinery is created in order that the Federal Government may co-operate with the states in the education of illiterates and the Americanization of foreign-born residents, and that it may distribute among the states for these purposes a little more than six million dollars annually. The purposes of the bill are most worthy and the motives of those who promoted its passage are highly commendable. That Congress should take a deep interest in these subjects and appropriate money to aid in bringing about better conditions should be conceded by every patriotic citizen. But is it wise public policy to create so many Federal offices to direct the work instead of leaving the initiative to the states, where the control of all education belongs, and offering Federal aid to encourage them to do the work more effectively? These provisions of the Americanization bill are quite similar to the provisions of the other Federal-aid educational bills, which differ fundamentally from the Smith-Towner Bill.

Smith-Towner Bill Preserves State Control of Education

Not only does the Smith-Towner Bill provide for the consolidation and reduction of Federal administrative offices and expenses, but it specifically provides that the entire one hundred million dollars authorized to be appropriated—\$7,500,000 for the removal of illiteracy, \$7,500,000 for Americanization, \$30,000,000 for physical education, \$15,000,000 for the preparation of teachers, and \$50,000,000 for the equalization of educational opportunities and the partial payment of teachers' salaries—shall be distributed to the states and used solely for the purpose of encouraging and aiding the states in the promotion of education, and that the funds appropriated by the Federal Government, as well as of the equal amounts provided by each state shall be administered entirely by the states. This is on the theory that it is the duty of the state to take the initiative in all educational matters and to have entire control of the administration of education within its boundaries. It is also assumed that since each state must appropriate an amount equal to that contributed by the National Government for each of the specific purposes mentioned in the bill, the state can be depended upon to administer wisely and efficiently the money received from the Federal Government as well as its own funds.

Specific Provisions For State and Local Management

The Smith-Towner Bill provides that all money allotted to a state by the Federal Government shall be paid to the State Treasurer, who shall disburse the same in accordance with the legal provisions of said state. It also provides that each state shall make provision for the distribution and administration of such funds as may be apportioned to said state. And finally it provides that the act shall not be construed to require uniformity of plans, means or methods in the several states in order to secure the benefits herein provided, except as specifically stated herein. And provided further that all the educational facilities encouraged by the provisions of this Act and accepted by a state shall be organized, supervised and administered exclusively by the legally constituted state and local educational authorities of said state, and the Secretary of Education shall exercise no authority in relation thereto except as herein provided to insure that all funds apportioned to said state shall be used for the purposes for which they are appropriated, and in accordance with the provisions of this act accepted by said state.

Smith-Towner Bill Economically and Constitutionally Sound

The enactment of the Smith-Towner Bill will establish a new policy on the part of the Federal Government with respect to education. It will create a department which will give proper recognition to the importance of education from the national standpoint, equal in rank to the other executive departments, into which may be consolidated the various governmental agencies dealing with education. It will enable the Federal Government, through this department, to conduct studies and investigations in the field of education and give

the states the benefits of such investigations, leaving the states free to use the information thus furnished as they may think best. It will recognize the fact that the Federal Government is vitally interested in public education because the life and prosperity of the nation depends upon the enlightenment of all its citizens, and that it is its duty, therefore, as a matter of wise public policy, to appropriate its share to encourage and aid the states in the promotion of education. And it will definitely establish the principle, in harmony with the provisions of the Federal constitution, that the management of public education in all its phases shall be left exclusively to the states, under the immediate supervision of state and local educational authorities established by state laws.

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