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Federal Aid to Education

Wallace Loe
Central Washington University

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FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

A Research Paper
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington College of Education

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Wallace Loe
July 1961

THIS PAPER IS APPROVED AS MEETING
THE PLAN 2 REQUIREMENT FOR THE
COMPLETION OF A RESEARCH PAPER.

Del G. Peterson
FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From the earliest days of the American Republic, education has been considered vital to the welfare of the people and the nation. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 stated this concept (4):

Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.

Education under public auspices in the United States is commonly regarded as primarily a state and community matter, control being in the state. The Constitution of the United States makes no direct mention of education, but actually the federal government has developed extensive relations to education (9:435).

Universal opportunity for public education is America's response to a moral principal: That every person should have opportunity to develop his full potential. The interests of the nation--its political effectiveness, prosperity, and security--today lend new urgency to that moral principal (5:242).

There is an intimate relationship between schooling and economic health of the nation. Prosperity demands productivity and productivity demands trained talent.

The effectiveness of the American political system demands that people understand national and international

issues, the relationship between them and the manner in which they rise and are dealt with. In promoting these understandings, the schools have a basic role.

The ability of American society to conduct its essential affairs--political, economic, and military--depends directly upon education. Education has been considered to be a local and state concern. It is a national concern.

Federal aid for schools is primarily a device for achieving certain educational objectives. As such, it must be judged on its educational merits (3:72). Its effect is to transfer from the states and localities to the federal government a part of the financial responsibility for maintaining and improving public schools of the nation. It has been assumed that the prime purpose of federal aid for schools will be to improve the educational opportunities of the children in the United States, and that all such aid will constitute a net addition to the present volume of school expenditure. Relative to this thought, the late Honorable Robert A. Taft, Senator from Ohio, states, "The principle which I believe must underlie any bill for federal aid is that the federal contribution shall be auxiliary support to education" (13:361).

The ability of the states to raise adequate funds in an equitable manner is seriously affected by interstate tax competition, which imposes practical restrictions both on

their choice of taxes and on their rates of levy. This report will not attempt to discuss the possible tax solutions to this problem, such as federal aid to states or federal and state shared taxes, but will deal with federal aid from the historical point of view.

From our historical perspective, Butts concludes that two types of direct public support paved the way for direct support; namely, federal grants for education and permanent common school funds in the various states. It is estimated that nearly 150,000,000 acres of public land were given by the federal government to the states, the income from which was used for educational purposes (1:446).

In the nineteenth century, the great task was to establish the principle and practice that direct taxes should be used for public schools. In the twentieth century the great task is to broaden school support from a state-wide to a nation-wide basis in order to give equal opportunity for all children of the nation, no matter in what state they might happen to live.

Despite opposition, it became evident during the depression of the early 1930's that equality could not be achieved for all American children unless the Federal government supported schools in a substantial way. Many attempts have been made subsequent to this time; however, no federal aid bill has been passed for the support of general education in America. There is a trend toward federal support; however,

it has been on a piecemeal basis up to this time. A bill now before Congress appears to be going down to defeat like many of its predecessors.

Many people feel that federal aid for school construction or any other educational purpose is new and radically experimental. Actually, federal aid in one form or another is older than the Constitution itself (4).

This paper will present the milestones in the progression of federal aid to education legislation. All of the events do not pertain specifically to the public school; however, each influenced the educational scene in this country.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The problem was to study the area of federal aid to education from the historical point of view. The writer wished to answer these questions:

- (1) How long have we had federal aid to education?
- (2) What kinds of federal aid to education do we have?

Importance of the study. Most of the material available is on the pros and cons of federal aid. This study, on the history of federal aid to education, shows that federal aid is not something new. We have a 170-year old tradition of federal grants of land and money for education (4).

Limitations of the study. This study was limited to

the history of federal aid to education. There have been more than 160 different federal aid laws passed by congress since 1785 (4). This study does not contain a description of these 160 different federal aid laws, but rather a sampling of those considered to be important by the writer and of the different types of federal aid.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Federal aid. The term federal aid means support given by the federal government to school systems and educational institutions through grants, appropriations, and allotments to further carrying out of educational programs.

Federal control. The term federal control means any control exercised by the federal government over expenditure of funds, school operation, or instruction in local school districts, ordinarily restricted to supervision of programs financed wholly or in part by the federal government.

Federal grants. The term federal grant means any donation or gift of property or money made by the federal government.

Federal support. The term federal support means financial support by the federal government of educational programs and institutions; by some authorities the term is restricted to programs and institutions distinctly federal

in character and federally operated. Quite commonly the term is loosely used as synonymous with federal aid.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

There have been many milestones in the progression of federal aid to education legislation. Listed below in chronological order are some of the more important federal laws regarding educational support.

- 1785 - Land Ordinance. Specified the manner in which the western lands should be surveyed and stipulated that "there shall be reserved the lot number 16 of every township for the maintenance of public schools within said township" (4).
- 1787 - Northwest Ordinance. Stated that "religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and means of education shall forever be encouraged" (4).
- 1800 - Library of Congress. Facilities are readily available to all students and investigators in Washington, D. C., and other parts of the country. Originally this was designed as a service to congressmen (11:357j).
- 1802 - Ohio Enabling Act. Granted section 16 of each township in the states carved from the public domain to the township inhabitants for the support of schools. With the exception of Texas, Maine, and West Virginia, the same policy applied to all states admitted to the Union until 1848 (4).

- 1802 - United States Military Academy founded at West Point (8:498).
- 1803 - Further Land Grants to New States. Granted a township to Ohio for a seminary of learning and stipulated that all educational land grants were to be "for schools and for no other use, intent or purposes whatever." Similar grants extended to other states carved from the public domain (4).
- 1837 - Surplus Revenue Act. \$28,000,000 provided to states in proportion to Senators and representatives. Money subject to recall. States devoted all or part to support of public schools (7:354).
- 1841 - Internal Improvement Act. To be made available to 26 states, 3 territories, and the District of Columbia. However, only one distribution of \$691,116.45 was made before this act was repealed. Proceeds were to be from sale of public lands and used all or in part for public education (10:439).
- 1845 - United States Naval Academy established at Annapolis (13:564j).
- 1846 - Smithsonian Institute. Created for the increase and diffusion of knowledge; located in Washington, D. C. (12:132).
- 1862 - Morrill Land-Grant Act. Granted to each state an amount of 30,000 acres of public land (or its equivalent in scrip) per Congressman for the support of a

college which would have as its primary purpose the teaching of "such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts. . . ." Provision was also made for military training (4).

- 1867 - Federal Department of Education. First established-- later transformed into office of education within the Department of the Interior. In 1870, it became the Bureau of Education with Henry Bernard as the first United States Commissioner of Education. In 1929, the name was restored to the United States Office of Education. Publications by this office are a benefit to all schools (2:259).
- 1874 - Nautical Education Act. To encourage the establishment of Marine schools. Authorized the Secretary of the Navy to furnish a suitable vessel of the Navy (9:497).
- 1887 - Hatch Act. Appropriations for agricultural experiment stations under the direction of land grant colleges (10:259).
- 1890 - Second Morrill Act. Increased the support of the land-grant colleges and universities (15:141).
- 1908 - Nelson Amendment to Morrill Act. Increased the support of the land-grant colleges and universities. The permanent annual appropriation under this act is now \$2,550,000.00 (4).

- 1911 - The State Marine School Act. Funds were provided for nautical instruction in educational institutions maintaining a marine school or nautical branch (8:497).
- 1914 - The Smith-Lever Act. Funds to be distributed among the states to foster agricultural extension instruction and to disseminate information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics through the coordination of extension work of the land grant colleges. The requirement of matching state money with federal money was introduced in this act (10:275).
- 1916 - The National Defense Act. Authorized the President to establish several civil educational institutions, a Reserve Officer's Training Corps at universities, colleges, and military camps (10:276).
- 1917 - Smith-Hughes Act. Provided grants for promoting vocational training in the public schools and for encouraging special education for teachers of vocational subjects. Contained exacting requirements and stipulations as to the use of the funds. Permanent annual appropriation amounts to \$7,138,000 (4).
- 1920 - Civilian Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Appropriations to the states for the vocational rehabilitation of physically disabled persons and their return to employment, provides physical examination, necessary

medical, surgical, psychiatric, therapeutic, and hospital services (8:497).

- 1925 - Purnell Act. Extends the 1887 Hatch Act and 1906 Adams Act, which is concerned with the Agricultural Experiment Stations (6:241).
- 1928 - The Capper-Ketchum Act. Additional funds were appropriated for cooperative extension work along the lines of the Smith Lever Act. The expanded work in the home economics area (8:426).
- 1929 - George-Reed Act. Increased annual appropriations for vocational training in the public schools under the Smith-Hughes Act (4).
- 1933 - Civilian Conservation Corps Act. Provided for an educational grant to the states. Work and education camps were established for those enrolled in the C.C.C. (10:342).
- 1933 - Wagner-Peyser Act. Provision was made for promoting the development of a national system of employment offices for men, women, and juniors legally qualified to engage in gainful occupations (9:498).
- 1934 - George Ellzey Act. Funds were to be provided equally among vocational education including agricultural, trades and industries, home economics, and was to last for a period of three years (8:497).
- 1935 - Bankhead-Jones Act. Increased annual appropriations

for support of land-grant colleges and universities (4).

- 1935 - National Youth Administration Act. Provided work for youth and financial aid to attend high school or college. This act lasted until 1943 (10:350).
- 1936 - Buenos Aires Convention. Exchange of graduate students and professors with Latin American countries was made possible at this Convention (10:326).
- 1936 - George-Deen Act. Continued policy of federal aid for vocational training in the public schools and extended Smith-Hughes Act to include education in distributive occupations (4).
- 1936 - Randolph-Sheppard Act. A special service to provide employment for blind persons. This service is primarily a welfare rather than an educational activity although it involves training blind persons. This act does not authorize appropriations. It is carried on in cooperation with the Rehabilitation Act (8:497).
- 1937 - Norris-Doxey Act. Authorizes an annual appropriation for cooperative reforestation, which involves land grant colleges and universities and provides for extension work (9:437).
- 1939 - Civil Aeronautics Authority. Sponsored programs for the training of pilots under Federal support (8:498).

- 1940 - Appropriation Act. Money was appropriated for the training of defense workers and war production workers (9:440).
- 1941 - Lanham Act. Provided federal assistance including school building aid, for communities adversely affected by federal activities (4).
- 1943 - Bolton Act. War educational activity of nurse training under federal sponsorship (9:440).
- 1944 - Public Health Service Act. The Surgeon General was to procure the assistance of "The most brilliant and promising research fellows from the United States and abroad." Fellowships of \$2,400 or more a year were granted for post-graduate study in medicine or sciences allied to public health (9:443).
- 1944 - Servicemen's Readjustment Act. Provided for educational and training benefits for veterans on the basis of one year plus one day for each day spent in the service. The GI Bill of Rights (4).
- 1944 - Surplus Property Act. Properties of educational value could be either sold or leased or given to schools (6:279).
- 1946 - Halloway Plan. This plan provided for the NROTC and the Naval Aviation College Program known as the NACP (9:438).
- 1946 - George-Barden Act. Supplementary legislation to the Smith-Hughes and George-Deen vocational education

acts. Authorizes up to \$29 million in federal grants. With additional funds for practical nursing and fishery education (4).

- 1946 - National School Lunch Act. Distributes funds and federally purchased foods to schools, public and non-public, to be used for school lunches (4).
- 1946 - Fulbright Act. Provided for the exchange of students and professors subsidized by the sale of United States properties in foreign lands (9:442).
- 1946 - National Mental Health Act. Provided that the Surgeon General was to provide for training and instruction of persons in the fields pertaining to psychiatric disorders (9:443).
- 1946 - Mead Act. This Act authorized the transfer of war surplus facilities to schools and colleges to relieve a critical shortage of buildings and equipment needed in providing a program of education for veterans (9:443).
- 1946 - Philippine Rehabilitation Act. Directs and authorizes eight agencies of the Federal Government to provide training in the United States for specified numbers of Filipinos, e.g., highway engineers, public health workers, etc. (9:442).
- 1948 - Information and Educational Exchange Act. "To promote the better understanding of the United States among

the peoples of the world and to strengthen cooperative international relations-interchange of persons, knowledge and skills with various countries" (9:442).

- 1950 - Public Laws 815 and 874. Provide financial assistance for those local educational agencies upon which the United States has placed financial burdens by reasons of the fact that: a. The revenues available to such agencies from local sources have been reduced as a result of the acquisition of real property by the United States, or; b. Such agencies provide education for children residing on federal property; c. Such agencies provide education for children whose parents are employed on federal property, or; d. There has been a sudden and substantial increase in school attendance as a result of federal activities (4).
- 1952 - Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act. The Korean GI Bill provides educational and training benefits for persons who served between June 27, 1950, and January 31, 1955 (4).
- 1954 - United States Air Force Academy established near Colorado Springs, Colorado (9:498).
- 1954 - School Milk Program. An important adjunct to the school lunch program. In 1958, Public Law 85-478 extended this program until 1961 and authorized \$75

million per year to make surplus milk available to non-profit elementary and secondary schools, as well as child care centers settlement houses, and summer camps (4).

- 1956 - Public Laws 911 and 1027. Amend the George-Barden Act to include federal aid for practical nurse training of less than college level and training in the fishery trades (4).
- 1956 - War Orphans Educational Assistance Act. Extends benefits of Korean GI Bill to orphans of servicemen killed in World War II or Korean conflict (4).
- 1956 - Public Law 597. Established a five year program of federal grants to the states for extension of library services in rural areas (4).
- 1958 - Fogarty-McGovern Act. Authorizes federal grants to help train teachers for the mentally retarded (4).
- 1958 - Public Law 85-864. Authorizes federal funds to acquire and distribute films with printed captions for use with deaf persons (4).
- 1958 - National Defense Education Act. Authorizes \$887 million in federal funds over a period of four years to strengthen critical areas in education. Includes science, mathematics, foreign languages; counseling, testing, guidance; graduate fellowships; research and experimentation in modern teaching tools (TV,

films, etc); and improvement in statistical and information services (4).

1960 - PL 86-679. Extends the PL 84-597 for 5 years.

In addition to the acts and appropriations listed above the federal government makes annual appropriations to three privately controlled educational institutions:

1. American Printing House for the Blind at Louisville, Kentucky--\$125,000. Annually.
2. Columbia Institution for the Deaf at Washington, D. C.--\$259,500 in 1948. Four units receive this money; Gallandet College, Kendall School for elementary and secondary students, the Normal department for graduates to teach the deaf, and the Research department which develops and studies educational techniques and aids for the deaf.
3. Howard University at Washington D. C., which is devoted to higher education for the Negro (18:502).

Public education for the Indians and Natives of Alaska are provided for by the federal government through the Department of the Interior. Also the federal government provides a system of free elementary and secondary schools and a Junior College (at which tuition is charged) in the Panama Canal Zone (8:502).

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper was to follow the progression of federal aid to education. Federal aid has taken many forms and entered into practically every phase of our educational system.

Many people, including members of Congress, feel that federal aid for education is something new. Actually, we have had federal aid to education in one form or another since before our Constitution was written. It has always been to meet one crisis after another. We have never had a basic floor policy giving overall federal aid to education.

We have a 170-year old tradition of federal grants of land and money for education. These have taken many forms, from outright grants of money to grants of land and funds based on number of children in school. More than 160 different aid laws have been passed by Congress since 1785.

In the last several years the federal government has appropriated millions of dollars for education, and this money has been spent without federal control of education. The National Education Association Research Bulletin (Feb. 1961) stated that nearly 4 per cent of the revenue receipts of public elementary and secondary schools come from the federal government. The National Defense Education Act of

1958 is an example of the continuing federal responsibility for better education based on the authority which traditionally rests with state and local school agencies.

The National Education Association Research Bulletin (Oct. 1958) stated that the general public wants the best education for everyone. Educators are even more concerned with the matter of quality. How do the people of America want to pay for the needed improvements?

In the 1950 Life poll, of those who had heard of the federal support proposal, 65.4 per cent favored it and only 24.0 per cent were opposed to it.

The reactions to this question revealed no sharp divergences based on political, regional, or religious differences as shown in the illustration.

When we look at the over-all picture, we see that practically all our people apparently want and benefit from some type of federal grant-in-aid program.

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