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MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
HARRIS	1981-15	HARRIS SURVEY	1981-02-19

-----QUESTION-----

A MAJOR FIRST EFFORT OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION WILL BE TO CUT BACK ON FEDERAL SPENDING. ONE WAY THEY PLAN TO DO THIS IS BY RESTRICTING ELICIBILITY FOR CERTAIN BENEFITS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NOW SUPPORTS AND BY REDUCING THE AMOUNTS OF FUTURE INCREASES IN THESE BENEFITS.
NOW LET ME ASK YOU ABOUT MAJOR FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS. DO YOU FAVOR CUTTING FEDERAL SPENDING ON... SCHOOL LUNCH AND OTHER CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

-----ANSWER-----

FAVOR	35%
OPPOSE	53
NOT SURE	2

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-01-22 1981-01-25	NATIONAL ADULTS	1250	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
HARRIS	1981-14	HARRIS SURVEY	1981-02-16

-----QUESTION-----

"NOW LET ME ASK YOU ABOUT MAJOR FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS. DO YOU FAVOR CUTTING FEDERAL SPENDING ON BY 50 PERCENT, 25 PERCENT, 10 PERCENT, OR HARDLY AT ALL?"
SCHOOL LUNCH AND OTHER CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

-----ANSWER-----

50 %	9%
25 %	13
10 %	12
HARDLY AT ALL	63
CUT MORE THAN 50%	1
INCREASE	*
NOT SURE	2

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE---
1981-01-22 1981-01-25	NATIONAL ADULTS	1250	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
YANKELOVICH	NA	TIME MAGAZINE	1982-06-28

-----QUESTION-----
 A NUMBER OF CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSALS ARE BEING DISCUSSED THESE DAYS. I'D LIKE YOU TO TELL ME FOR EACH ONE WHETHER YOU STRONGLY AGREE WITH IT, PARTIALLY AGREE WITH IT, OR DISAGREE WITH IT. TAX PAYERS IN THIS STATE WOULD SAVE MONEY IF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TURNED OVER TO THE STATES THE HANDLING OF EDUCATION, MEDICAL CARE AND PROGRAMS FOR THE POOR

-----ANSWER-----

	TOTAL	DEM	REP	IND	MEN	WOMEN
STRONGLY AGREE	43%	43%	52%	32%	41%	45%
PARTIALLY AGREE	31%	30%	29%	37%	31%	32%
DISAGREE	23%	25%	16%	29%	27%	20%
NOT SURE	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1982-06-12 1982-06-14	ADULTS NATIONAL	1010	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLL STEP-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
R0000	NA	PUBLIC OPINION MAGAZ	1982-02

-----QUESTION-----
 I'M GOING TO READ YOU A LIST OF ACTIVITIES THAT
 PEOPLE HAVE SUGGESTED THE GOVERNMENT COULD BE
 INVOLVED WITH. FOR EACH, PLEASE TELL ME IF YOU
 THINK IT IS BEST PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL
 GOVERNMENT, STATE GOVERNMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OR
 SHOULD MOSTLY BE PROVIDED OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT.

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

-----ANSWER-----					
FEDERAL	STATE	LOCAL	OUTSIDE	MIXED	DON'T
GOVT.	GOVT.	GOVT.	GOVT.	(VOL.)	KNOW
22	49	9	10	8	3

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-11-14 1981-11-21	ADULTS NATIONAL	1500	NA

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
ROPER	NA	PUBLIC OPINION MAGAZ	1982-02

-----QUESTION-----

I'M GOING TO READ YOU A LIST OF ACTIVITIES THAT PEOPLE HAVE SUGGESTED THE GOVERNMENT COULD BE

INVOLVED WITH. FOR EACH, PLEASE TELL ME IF YOU THINK IT IS BEST PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, STATE GOVERNMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OR SHOULD MOSTLY BE PROVIDED OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT.

ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

-----ANSWER-----

FEDERAL GOVT.	STATE GOVT.	LOCAL GOVT.	OUTSIDE GOVT.	MIXED (VOL.)	DON'T KNOW
17	40	32	3	6	2

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-11-14 1981-11-21	ADULTS NATIONAL	1500	NA

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	180	GALLUP OPINION INDEX	1980-00

-----QUESTION-----

AS YOU MAY KNOW, A NEW FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH CABINET STATUS. WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK THIS NEW DEPARTMENT SHOULD GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. WILL YOU CHOOSE FIVE OF THE AREAS LISTED ON THIS CARD WHICH YOU THINK ARE MOST IMPORTANT.

-----ANSWER-----

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 1 | BASIC EDUCATION(READING, WRITING, ARITHMIC) | 69% |
| 2 | VOCATIONAL TRAINING(TRAINING FOR JOBS) | 56 |
| 3 | IMPROVE TEACHER TRAINING & EDUCATION | 46 |
| 4 | HELPING STUDENTS CHOOSE CAREERS | 46 |
| 5 | PARENT TRAINING TO HELP PARENTS BECOME MORE FULLY INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION | 45 |
| 6 | HELPING MORE STUDENTS OBTAIN A COLLEGE EDUCATION | 35 |
| 7 | DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLANS FOR EVERY CHILD | 33 |
| 8 | PROVIDING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIFTED STUDENTS | 25 |
| 9 | PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION | 24 |
| 10 | LIFE -LONG LEARNING(CONTINUING EDUCATION THROUGH ADULT LIFE) | 23 |
| 11 | BETTER EDUCATIONAL USE OF TELEVISION | 20 |
| 12 | INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION - FOREIGN LANGUAGE | 19 |
| 13 | IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MINORITIES | 18 |

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1980-05-01 1980-05-08	NATIONAL ADULTS	1547	IN HOUSE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	180	GALLUP OPINION INDEX	1980-08

-----QUESTION-----
IN YOUR OPINION, WHO SHOULD HAVE THE GREATEST
INFLUENCE IN DECIDING WHAT IS TAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC
SCHOOLS HERE - THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THE STATE
GOVERNMENT, OR THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD?

-----ANSWER-----

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	9%
STATE GOVERNMENT	15
LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD	68
DON'T KNOW	8

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1980-05-01 1980-05-08	NATIONAL ADULTS	1547	IN HOUSE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
DECISION/MAKING/INFORMATION	06-99-0009	NA	NA

-----QUESTION-----

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RECENTLY CREATED A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, BY PUTTING THE EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OF SEVERAL AGENCIES, INCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, INTO A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT. DO YOU APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE OF THE CREATION OF THIS DEPARTMENT? (IF APPROVE, ASK:) IF YOU LEARNED THAT CREATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WOULD LEAD TO GREATER FEDERAL CONTROL OVER LOCAL SCHOOLS, WOULD YOU THEN APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE OF THE CREATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION?

-----ANSWER-----

APPROVE /APPROVE	22%
APPROVE /DISAPPROVE	32
DISAPPROVE	37
NO OPINION	09

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-01-06 1981-01-09	NATIONAL ADULTS	1300	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
DECISION/MAKING/INFORMATION	06-99-0009	NA	NA

-----QUESTION-----

MR. SMITH BELIEVES THAT SINCE EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENT, THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS A STEP FORWARD. HE FEELS THAT AN AGENCY DEVOTED JUST TO EDUCATION WILL BE ABLE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION OUR CHILDREN RECEIVE.

MR. JONES BELIEVES THAT THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS AN UNNECESSARY STEP THAT JUST MEANS MORE BUREAUCRACY AND MORE WASTED MONEY. HE DOESN'T THINK THAT THE NEW DEPARTMENT WILL ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING THAT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN DONE UNDER THE PREVIOUS SET-UP

-----ANSWER-----

EXACTLY LIKE MR. SMITH	15%
MORE LIKE MR. SMITH THAN MR. JONES	24%
MORE LIKE MR. JONES THAN MR. SMITH	25
EXACTLY LIKE MR. JONES	33
NO OPINION	04

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-01-06 1981-01-09	NATIONAL ADULTS	1300	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
DECISION/MAKING/INFORMATION	06-99-0009 NA		NA

-----QUESTION-----

MR. SMITH BELIEVES IT IS A GOOD IDEA FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED WITH LOCAL EDUCATION. HE FEELS THAT ONLY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS THE POWER AND THE MONEY TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL SCHOOLS HAVE EQUALLY HIGH STANDARDS AND THAT ALL STUDENTS HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN. MR. JONES BELIEVES THAT EDUCATION SHOULD BE CONTROLLED PRIMARILY ON THE LOCAL LEVEL. HE FEELS THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TENDS TO IMPOSE THINGS ON THE SCHOOLS THAT PEOPLE ON THE LOCAL LEVEL DON'T REALLY WANT.

-----ANSWER-----

EXACTLY LIKE MR. SMITH	11%
MORE LIKE MR. SMITH THAN MR. JONES	20
MORE LIKE MR. JONES THAN MR. SMITH	33%
EXACTLY LIKE MR. JONES	35%
NO OPINION	01%

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-01-06 1981-01-09	NATIONAL ADULTS	1300	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS

Between October 29th and November 1st, the Harris Survey asked a cross section of 1,250 adults nationwide by telephone: "As far as people in charge of running (READ EACH ITEM) are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?"

	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1966
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Medicine	32	37	34	30	42	43	42	43	49	57	48	61	73
The military	31	28	28	29	29	27	23	24	29	40	35	27	61
Major educational institutions such as colleges and universities	30	34	36	33	41	37	31	36	40	44	33	37	61
The U.S. Supreme Court	25	29	27	28	29	29	22	28	34	33	28	23	50
Television news	24	24	29	37	35	28	28	35	32	41	X	X	X
The White House	20	28	18	15	14	31	11	X	18	18	X	X	X
Organized religion	20	22	22	20	34	29	24	32	32	36	30	27	41
Major companies	18	16	16	18	22	20	16	19	15	29	27	27	55
The press	14	16	19	28	23	18	20	26	25	30	18	18	29
Congress	13	16	18	18	10	17	9	13	16	X	21	19	42

Harris - November 1, 1982.

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION -- SURVEY DATES 1982 - 1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
AUDITS AND SURVEYS, INC.	NA	THE MERIT REPORT	NA

-----QUESTION-----
IN YOUR OPINION, SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BE REQUIRED TO PASS A BASIC COMPETENCY EXAM ON READING, WRITING, AND MATH BEFORE GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL?

-----ANSWER-----
YES, THEY SHOULD 93%
NO, THEY SHOULD NOT 5%
NO OPINION 2%

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1982-09-07 1982-09-10	NATIONAL ADULTS	1200	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
NBC / ASSOCIATED PRESS	80	NBC NEWS POLL	1982-07-06

-----QUESTION-----
DO YOU THINK THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN PUBLIC
EDUCATION HAS GOTTEN BETTER, GOTTEN WORSE, OR
STAYED ABOUT THE SAME OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS?

-----ANSWER-----

GOTTEN BETTER	24%
STAYED ABOUT THE SAME	16%
GOTTEN WORSE	56%
NOT SURE	4%

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1982-06-14 1982-06-15	ADULTS NATIONAL	1597	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	NA	NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE	1981-04-27

-----QUESTION-----
 SHOULD TEACHERS BE REQUIRED TO PASS A COMPETENCY
 TEST BEFORE THEY ARE HIRED?

-----ANSWER-----

YES	89%
NO	7
DON'T KNOW	4

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-03-11 1981-03-17	NATIONAL ADULTS	1103	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTEP-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	NA	NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE	1981-04-27

-----QUESTION-----
HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR
CHILDREN'S TEACHERS?

-----ANSWER-----
EXCELLENT 29%
GOOD 45
FAIR 19
POOR 5
DON'T KNOW 2

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE--
1981-03-11 1981-03-17	NATIONAL ADULTS	1103	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	NA	NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE	1981-04-27

-----QUESTION-----
WHAT ARE YOUR REASONS FOR MAKING THAT (TEACHERS
RATED GOOD OR EXCELLENT) RATING?

-----ANSWER-----

CHILD IS DOING WELL IN SCHOOL	37%
TEACHERS REALLY CARE ABOUT STUDENTS	35
TEACHERS ARE A GOOD AND WELL QUALIFIED	24
OTHER	9

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-03-11 1981-03-17	NATIONAL ADULTS	1103	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	NA	NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE	1981-04-27

-----QUESTION-----
 WHAT ARE YOUR REASONS FOR MAKING THAT (TEACHERS
 RATED FAIR OR POOR) RATING?

-----ANSWER-----

TEACHERS DON'T CARE ABOUT STUDENTS AND DON'T SPEND ENOUGH TIME WITH THEM	38%
TEACHERS ARE INCOMPETENT	24
GENERALLY NOT SATISFIED	20
TEACHERS CAN'T CONTROL CLASSES	10
CLASSES OVERCROWDED	9
TEACHERS DON'T TEACH FUNDAMENTALS	6

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1981-03-11 1981-03-17	NATIONAL ADULTS	1103	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER----- -POLL NO-- -----PUBLISHED IN----- DATE PUBL
DECISION/MAKING/INFORMATION 06-99-0016 NA NA

-----QUESTION-----
STUDENTS ARE OFTEN GIVEN THE GRADES A,B,C,D, AND FAIL TO DENOTE THE QUALITY OF THEIR WORK. SUPPOSE THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN YOUR COMMUNITY WERE GRADED IN THE SAME WAY -- WHAT GRADE WOULD YOU GIVE THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS HERE -- A,B,C,D, OR FAIL?

-----ANSWER-----
A 16%
B 34
C 28
D 10
FAIL 8
NO OPINION 4

-----SURVEY DATES----- -SAMPLE POPULATION-- SAMPLE SIZE --INTERVIEW MODE-----
1979-03-24 1979-04-07 NATIONAL 2000 TELEPHONE
REGISTERED / INTEND

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLL STEP-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
CONSENSUS	NA	NA	NA

-----QUESTION-----

I WOULD LIKE TO READ YOU A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS
FACING OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS THESE DAYS AND ASK
WHETHER YOU THINK THAT EACH OF THEM IS OF MAJOR
IMPORTANCE, SOME IMPORTANCE, OR HAS LITTLE
EFFECT ON THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION.
"EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ARE TOO LOW"

-----ANSWER-----

MAJOR IMPORTANCE	70%
SOME IMPORTANCE	18
LITTLE EFFECT	7
DON'T KNOW	5

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1979-04-06 1979-04-10	NATIONAL	2000	TELEPHONE
1979-06-25 1979-07-07	ADULTS		

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	180	GALLUP OPINION INDEX	1980-08

-----QUESTION-----
 IS IT YOUR IMPRESSION THAT THE LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM GIVES ENOUGH ATTENTION, OR NOT ENOUGH ATTENTION, TO READING, WRITING, AND ARITHMETIC?

-----ANSWER-----	PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS	PAROCHIAL SCHOOL PARENTS
ENOUGH ATTENTION	34%	17%
NOT ENOUGH ATTN.	61	72
DON'T KNOW	5	11

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1980-05-01 1980-05-08	NATIONAL ADULTS	1547	IN HOUSE

-----NOTES-----
 ASKED OF PARENTS ONLY

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	180	GALLUP OPINION INDEX	1980-08

-----QUESTION-----
 HERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS WHICH MAY HAVE A GOOD EFFECT ON THE EDUCATION STUDENTS RECIEVE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THIS COMMUNITY. WILL YOU CHOOSE FOUR (FROM A LIST OF 14 SUGGESTIONS) WHICH YOU THINK ARE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT.

-----ANSWER-----

1. WELL EDUCATED TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS	50%
2. EMPHASIS ON BASICS SUCH AS READING, WRITING, COMPUTATION L	49
3. TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN PROGRESS OF STUDENTS	44
4. GOOD PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS	40
5. CAREFUL CHECK ON STUDENT PROGRESS AND EFFORT	32
6. AN ORDERLY BUT NOT RIGID ATMOSPHERE	27
7. USEFUL MATERIALS AND ADEQUATE SUPPLIES	25
8. SMALL CLASSES	25
9. SPECIAL CLASSES FOR HANDICAPPED STUDENTS	24
10. HIGH GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS ON PART OF STUDENTS	19
11. WIDE VARIETY OF VOCATIONAL COURSES	18
12. ADVANCED CLASSES FOR THE GIFTED	12
13. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	6
14. SUCCESSFUL ATHLETIC TEAMS	4
DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	6

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1980-05-01 1980-05-08	NATIONAL ADULTS	1547	IN HOUSE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	180	GALLUP OPINION INDEX	1980-08

-----QUESTION-----
 WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS WITH
 WHICH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THIS COMMUNITY MUST
 DEAL?

-----ANSWER-----

LACK OF DISCIPLINE	26%
USE OF DOPE/DRUGS	14
POOR CURRICULUM/POOR STANDARDS	11
LACK OF PROPER FINANCIAL SUPPORT	10
INTEGRATION/BUSING (COMBINED)	10
LARGE SCHOOL/TOO MANY CLASSES/ OVERCROWDING	7
DIFFICULTY IN GETTING GOOD TEACHERS	6
PARENTS' LACK OF INTEREST	6
TEACHERS' LACK OF INTEREST	6
PUPILS' LACK OF INTEREST/TRUANCY	5
CRIME/VANDALISM	4
MISMANAGEMENT OF FUNDS/PROGRAMS	3

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1980-05-01 1908-05-08	NATIONAL ADULTS	1547	IN HOUSE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
GALLUP	180	GALLUP OPINION INDEX	1980-08

-----QUESTION-----
MANY FAMILIES WHO COME FROM OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE CHILDREN WHO CANNOT SPEAK ENGLISH. SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT THESE CHILDREN BE REQUIRED TO LEARN ENGLISH IN SPECIAL CLASSES BEFORE THEY ARE ENROLLED IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

-----ANSWER-----

YES, THEY SHOULD	82%
NO, THEY SHOULD NOT	13
DON'T KNOW	5

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE--
1980-05-01 1980-05-08	NATIONAL ADULTS	1547	IN HOUSE

-----NOTES-----

PARTISAN

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN----	DATE PUBL
YANKELOVICH	NA	TIME MAGAZINE	1982-06-28

-----QUESTION-----
 DO YOU FEEL THAT THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OR THE
 REPUBLICAN PARTY CAN DO A BETTER JOB IN HANDLING
 MAKING SURE OUR CHILDREN GET A BETTER EDUCATION
 OR DON'T YOU THINK THERE'S ANY REAL DIFFERENCE
 BETWEEN THEM?

-----ANSWER-----

	TOTAL	DEM	REP	IND	MEN	WOMEN
DEMOCRATIC PARTY	35%	50%	14%	34%	37%	32%
REPUBLICAN PARTY	11%	5%	24%	6%	13%	9%
NO DIFFERENCE	50%	41%	58%	55%	47%	52%
NOT SURE	4%	4%	4%	5%	2%	7%

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1982-06-12 1982-06-14	ADULTS NATIONAL	1010	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----

MAY 12, 1983

SURVEY DATABANK SYSTEM

EDUCATION - SURVEY DATES - 1982-1983

-----POLLSTER-----	-POLL NO--	-----PUBLISHED IN-----	DATE PUBL
DECISION/MAKING/INFORMATION	06-99-0002 NA		NA

-----QUESTION-----

I WOULD LIKE TO READ YOU A LIST OF ISSUES AND WOULD LIKE YOU TO CONCENTRATE ON THE TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES, THE DEMOCRATS AND THE REPUBLICANS. AS I READ EACH ISSUE, PLEASE TELL ME WHETHER YOU THINK THE REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRATIC PARTY CAN BEST HANDLE THAT PROBLEM.
ENSURING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION.

-----ANSWER-----

REPUBLICAN PARTY	33%
DEMOCRATIC PARTY	37
BOTH	15
NEITHER	6
DON'T KNOW	9

-----SURVEY DATES-----	-SAMPLE POPULATION--	SAMPLE SIZE	--INTERVIEW MODE----
1980-11-06 1980-11-12	NATIONAL REGISTERED / INTEND	3000	TELEPHONE

-----NOTES-----
3 VERSIONS CONTAINED;

THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 1983 • USA TODAY

OPINION

The Issue:

TEACHERS' SALARIES

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The best teachers deserve merit pay

The tide of mediocrity, as described by The National Commission on Excellence in Education, doesn't stop with students. It washes over teachers, too.

College students who plan to become teachers now score 80 points below the national average on the Scholastic Aptitude Test. A college diploma doesn't always correct the problem: In California last December, 30 percent of the prospective teachers failed the state's new competency test.

Yet it is hard to attract bright students to a profession with an average starting salary of \$12,800 and hard to give dedicated and creative teachers an incentive to stay on when they are paid an average of \$17,644.

That's why you're hearing more about merit pay for outstanding teachers — it's an idea for excellence that's catching on. Tennessee's pioneering plan has been endorsed by President Reagan; proposals for merit pay are being considered in Maryland, Virginia, Texas and North Carolina.

But the National Education Association, which represents 1.7 million teachers, says no. Its members argue that evaluating teachers fairly is impossible — that administrators will reward the crony, the toady and the high test-scorer, but not necessarily the teacher who inspires children to learn. They say merit pay is a political smokescreen, a way to ignore the miserably low salaries of most teachers.

Their concerns are legitimate. Fairness is essential in any merit pay plan, and fairness is never easy. But it is possible — if the criteria for excellence are properly set and if the judges of excellence are properly chosen.

True, merit pay is not a cure-all. It can't make up for demoralizing base salaries and demoralizing working conditions. But it is a step forward, and it can be married to other reforms. The Tennessee plan involves 11- and 12-month teacher contracts and a longer school year; the Maryland proposal includes a certification exam and tougher college requirements for a teaching diploma.

Instead of resisting merit pay plans, teachers and their unions would be wise to help formulate them. Teachers need all the respect they can get. Taxpayers who don't respect teachers, who are fed up with loose grading standards, weak courses and poor discipline, aren't likely to keep voting more money for education.

Too many Americans now consider teaching an undesirable profession and wonder why anyone would want to put up with so much aggravation for so little reward.

But Americans do value excellence in education and are willing to pay for it. That means paying teachers what they deserve, not pretending that all teachers are equal. As citizens, we must turn back the tide of mediocrity in our schools; as parents, we cannot let our children drown.

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QUOTELINES

"In my job, I serve this country well. Tell me, those of you who attack me, what do you do?"

John T. Driscoll, Fairfax County, Va., teacher

"We don't want anyone in the classroom who can't handle the things they're trying to train children to do."

— Ralph Turington, Florida commissioner of education

"We simply must realize that our youth deserve to be taught by the very best minds we can attract."

— Terrel H. Bell, Secretary of Education

"Looking down the way 20 years, I wouldn't want to support my family on a teacher's salary."

— Patricia Nipper, Little Rock, Ark., Latin teacher

"Teachers should be paid and promoted on the basis of their merit . . . Hard-earned tax dollars should encourage the best. They have no business rewarding incompetence and mediocrity."

— President Reagan

ONE LINE ON THE NEWS

■ The People's Republic of China has signed an agreement with CBS Inc. to begin broadcasting U.S. television, complete with commercials, in October.

The wasteland goes to the mainland.

CHARLES OVERBY

USA TODAY columnist

Our teachers' awful fear — grades

JACKSON, Miss. — Charlie Brooks and I used to sweat together. We sweated on the ballfields of our youth and we loved it. We also sweated in the classroom and hated it.

Mississippi heat did not affect our classroom sweat. Our teachers made us sweat. They did terrible things to us. They gave us tests and grades.

It's not that we were bad students. We just weren't great.

Sadly, our teachers insisted on pointing out our academic inadequacies. They spent their days drawing distinctions among students. They used heavy-handed techniques; tests, personal observations, subjective evaluations and, ultimately, grades.

That is why Charlie and I are amused at teachers who oppose this merit pay idea.

Having lived by the sword all these years, many teachers are reluctant to accept the dou-

ble-edged blade of merit distinctions. Charlie and I were reluctant to accept it, too, but we had no choice. Miss Hurley saw to that.

Merit pay means teachers become the gradees as well as the graders. Teachers, of all people, should be comfortable with that — they understand the difference between a C-plus and an A.

Through their Draconian methods of pop tests and report cards, teachers taught Charlie and me that being average was not enough, that excellence was rewarded over mediocrity. The students who complained the loudest about tests and grades were the ones who did the worst.

Are teachers any different?

This practical outlook on education is common in the South and may be why the real movement in education reform is coming from the South.

Charles Overby is executive editor of the Jackson Clarion-Ledger and Daily News, which recently won the Pulitzer Prize for coverage that led to education reforms.

Mississippi, led by Gov. William Winter, adopted historic education reforms last year and passed a record \$100 million tax increase to pay for it. The Mississippi experience is creating discomfort in many states. If Mississippi can fund sweeping reforms, then no state has an excuse.

The Charlotte, N.C., school system is moving toward merit pay. Teachers in Houston are eligible for bonuses.

If the prospect of being graded causes a few teachers to sweat, then it will serve the useful purpose of pushing them closer to the people who pay their salaries, old sweatogs like Charlie Brooks and me.

WILLARD McGUIRE

Guest columnist

**Merit pay schemes
have never worked**

WASHINGTON — The nation must attract and hold quality teachers if it is to get quality performance from students and meet the challenge of international competition.

Highly controversial salary proposals being touted by President Reagan and a few state governors would reward only a small segment of America's teachers, while the majority of highly skilled and competent teachers will continue to work for disgracefully low salaries.

NEA does not object to the concept of paying some teachers more than others. Teachers do object, however, to historically inappropriate and subjective decisions about who is considered a "superior" teacher. Experience indicates that personal relationships or subservient behavior is too often equated with "merit."

Merit pay schemes too often are subject to personalized whims of administrators, exhibit questionable criteria for judging excellence, and cause morale problems.

In order to elevate the status of the profession, we should provide teachers with the respect they justly deserve. The salaries of all teachers should be raised. A starting salary of \$12,000 is shamefully low.

Merit pay plans, master teacher proposals, and differential pay for science and math teachers are not new. They've been around for a long

Willard McGuire is president of the National Education Association.

time. And they haven't worked. In fact, Citicorp of New York just abandoned a merit pay scheme for its employees after 28 years because it was divisive and non-contributory.

What are the criteria for judging excellence? Who shall be the judge? Will the evaluator be thoroughly familiar with fair evaluation techniques? Will personal bias be kept out of the evaluation process? Experience says otherwise.

And how about the variables? Proponents of merit pay often claim that teachers should be judged solely on the basis of student achievement — how well students learn.

Measuring student achievement is not that simple. There are countless complex variables involved, and researchers have never been able to agree on how they should be evaluated.

NEA will consider any fair and equitable salary proposal. For example, we can support the concept of a master teacher plan. Our quarrel is generally with a clear definition and how it is implemented.

We may need new, fair and equitable salary systems. Meanwhile, let's not use the debate as another excuse to deny pay raises to qualified, competent teachers.

a merit pay program for public school teachers?



WILLIAM CONOVER, 26
Investment strategist
New York, N.Y.

Merit pay, based on a teacher's outstanding performance in the classroom, would be a just reward. Any teacher who can capture a child's interest in learning needs to be rewarded. Teachers are such an important part of this country's structure. They prepare a child to face the working world later on in life. They are a vital link.



JOAN RAMSEY, 49
Textile worker
Anderson, S.C.

I think it's wonderful that there are people who can put up with children all day every day, and still be able to teach them something. Sure, the best teachers deserve compensation and encouragement! I wouldn't put up with a bunch of kids all day to save my life. Good teachers are jewels. They should be treated right.



JOHN LARKINS, 68
Retired
San Diego, Calif.

I'm in favor of the old-fashioned way teachers used to teach and the old-fashioned way students used to learn. They wanted to learn, and they stuck close to the basics. There wasn't any talk of extra money or bonus deals for doing a good job. I'd have to warm to the idea of merit pay. So much has changed since I was young.



MARLENE SATTERELLI, 40
College instructor
Okemos, Mich.

What standard would you use? Most students would like a lousy teacher with a terrific personality. They'd share their impressions with their parents, and the parents would think the teachers are great, too. But how can you tell? I love teaching. The biggest reward is teaching someone a skill they can use for a lifetime.



R.L. PORCH, 66
Retired
London Mills, Ill.

Why not reward the better teachers? The children I raised received far better an education than I did, yet I still knew how to read and write when I graduated from high school. Kids today can't even write a simple sentence. If teachers had some incentive to do better, they might take more pride in their work.



TERRY LAMBERTH, 36
Electrician
Hendersonville, Tenn.

Teachers should receive merit pay, but it would take someone with more education than me to decide the criteria. Some just sit back and wait for the checks to roll in. Then again, there are good teachers. My son's teachers are fantastic. But those that aren't pulling their own load shouldn't be rewarded.



MURIEL DYE, 17
Student
New Albany, Miss.

It's unfair to give one teacher more money than another. I don't like merit pay. I'm in high school, and my teachers take time to explain new subjects. They're very patient. The only time I was disappointed was when my friend and I were flunking a subject, and the teacher gave the other girl a 'C' because she was the favorite.

LAMAR ALEXANDER

Guest columnist

Performance pay has political clout

NASHVILLE — Here's the heart of the problem: Not one state public school system pays one teacher one penny more for doing a good job teaching.

If you want the best results, you hire the best people. Yet to keep and attract the teachers who will lead our crusade for excellence, we offer low wages, few career incentives, lifetime employment contracts and little real evaluation.

How did we get in this fix? First, superior women teachers are no longer available at bargain-basement prices. They make more money elsewhere. And schools are increasingly dominated by teachers unions determined to keep things the way they are.

Don't blame teachers for all this. Blame school managers who have tolerated a mediocre product and a pay scale out of touch with reality. Teachers don't hire teachers, establish curricula or set pay scales. Governors, legislators and school boards do. Blame us.

Tennessee is trying to change. Our Master Teacher program would evaluate teachers and administrators every five years and pay a lot more to 18,000 of the best.

The evaluators would be three master teachers or principals from outside the evaluated teacher's district. That helps eliminate "local politics." A panel of distinguished educators and lay persons will estab-

Lamar Alexander is governor of Tennessee.

lish the criteria. The plan is optional for today's teachers, but mandatory for new teachers.

Most of the 18,000 Senior or Master teachers will have 11- or 12-month contracts, so schools can have summer classes for slow third graders or for gifted children.

Every teacher would get a 20 percent pay raise by 1987. Every tenured teacher who joins the program would get \$1,000 more. Each Senior or Master teacher would receive another \$1,000 to \$6,000.

The cost: \$110 million in new taxes for the Master Teacher program, another \$100 million for the rest of our Better Schools program.

The NEA is hysterical at the thought that one of its members might get a \$7,000 raise instead of a gold star for outstanding performance. At least AFT President Albert Shanker is keeping an open mind.

But the idea will succeed because it is right and because it is political dynamite.

An April poll in Tennessee asked: Would you be more inclined to vote for a state legislative candidate who favors evaluating teachers every five years and paying teachers more for doing a good job? And 73 percent said yes, just 19 percent said no.

That's political dynamite.

Teacher pay, education

	1961	1971	1981
Mean annual pay	\$5,264	\$9,261	\$17,209
Master's degree	23.1%	27.1%	49.3%

Source: National Education Association

ALBERT SHANKER

Guest columnist

Education is living in dangerous times

NEW YORK CITY — Should outstanding teachers be paid more than ordinary teachers? Most Americans would answer "yes." Most teachers would disagree.

When teachers oppose merit rating and master teacher plans, it's easy to charge them with wanting to protect mediocrity or failing to reward excellence as President Reagan recently did. But teachers have pretty good reasons for their historic stands:

■ Selection of master teachers by principals and school superintendents might not result in rewarding the best teachers.

■ Very few teachers will be selected. As a result, large-scale resentment will occur. Rewards that only a few can get aren't likely to create an incentive to strive for them.

■ Experience shows that unless reward systems are accepted as fair by employees,

they can be destructive.

These and other reasons should not be taken lightly, but it's also true that public education is living in a dangerous period. It is under attack.

What can we do to keep education from following in the tragic footsteps of America's heavy industry? We need new friends and new alliances. We should meet with those governors who are making education a top priority. We should work closely with those in business and the defense establishment who see the neglect of public education leading to disasters in the economic field and in national security.

Many of the merit pay proposals that they have put forth — like that of Gov. Lamar Alexander in Tennessee — are quite different from the classic merit pay proposals we have rejected in the past. The Alexander plan has flaws, but it

Albert Shanker is president of the American Federation of Teachers.

does answer many of our traditional objections.

There are problems that have to be worked out. But in this new educational era, we must keep in mind the differences between the Alexanders, who are trying to improve education, and the Reagans, who are trying to dismantle it.

Above all, it's time for the National Education Association to join the AFT in asserting that we want schools with higher standards, schools where teachers have been tested for competency, schools with tough curriculums where teachers who fail tests are not promoted. The jury is out on merit pay, but not on the question of whether we need to make major changes in the pursuit of educational excellence.

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OTHER VIEWS ON TEACHERS

Comment from newspapers across the USA

Bangor (Maine) Daily News

By giving seniority undue importance, schoolboards have avoided making difficult decisions. Methods to evaluate teaching talent . . . require strong, talented administrators who are able to judge teaching performance, unafraid to tell teachers when they are doing a bad job, and capable of helping weak teachers.

The Courier-News (Bridgewater, N.J.)

To combat what it calls the "rising tide of mediocrity," the (National Commission on Excellence in Education) calls for more homework, longer school days and higher pay and better incentives for teachers. . . . The main ingredient to turning the tide is a public change in attitude toward education.

Cincinnati Enquirer

Many supporters see competency testing as the teaching profession's answer to licensing exams required of doctors, lawyers, accountants and others. The chances of any teacher test's accomplishing its purpose, however, depend wholly on the worth of the tests.

The Clarion-Ledger (Jackson, Miss.)

Teaching is as much of a vocation as, say, missionary work, but the enthusiasm for teaching can only go so far if working conditions are backward, or if pay is frozen while utility rates double. . . . Vocational spirit can take a beating if all the neighbors have newer cars or are grilling steaks. Teachers will never make the same as bank presidents, but it is obvious that more will have to be done to keep them.

The Courier-Journal (Louisville, Ky.)

Kentucky and every other state must face up to a grave shortage of competent math and science teachers, and declining interest among college students in the teaching profession. . . . One thing that isn't helping is the footdragging attitude of the state teachers' union.

Baltimore Sun

If a mediocre halfback in the National Football League is worth \$80,000 a year, it is fair to suggest that a good teacher is, too. Unless and until taxpayers are willing to accept that argument, there is little reason to hope that science education in this country will improve.

The Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City)

In predictable fashion, teachers union spokesmen interpreted the (National Commission for Excellence in Education) report as bolstering their argument for increased federal aid. Money is not the pressing need to revitalize American education, but rather a rededication to the primary mission of the public schools — thorough grounding in the basics.

Los Angeles Herald

While bad teachers are by no means the sole cause of California's school problems, they have done their share of damage. Yet the teachers' unions too often place solidarity ahead of educational considerations. What they do not understand is that voters are clamoring for renewed emphasis on quality education in return for higher wages.

Reno Gazette-Journal

Maurice Hickey/ Publisher
Robert W. Ritter/ Executive editor
Everett S. Landers/ Managing editor
Bruce L. Bledsoe/ Editorial page editor

LETTERS

Beware, atheist

So Jon Murray, in his campaign to promote atheism, feels that "anyone who believes in religion is functionally insane and unable to relate to reality." In so declaring Murray is exercising a right to freedom of speech guaranteed him by the First Amendment of our Constitution.

However, this and all other rights guaranteed our citizens, all of which safeguard our very liberties, are rooted in the philosophy expressed in our Declaration of Independence which opens with "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . ."

Let Murray talk, write, argue, and pamphleteer as he will, but let him remember also that if he succeeds in destroying belief in an eternal, changeless Creator, above and beyond the power of human beings to change, he may wake one day to find he is no longer guaranteed freedom of speech.

George J. Burger, Reno

Shooting teachers no game

I was shocked to see the picture of a 6-year-old child being taught to paint a gun. The picture was part of the "fun" at Brown Elementary School Fun Fair. Teachers' names were the target in this little game.

To teach a child to see a teacher as an enemy and not as a friend shows ignorance on the part of the people who devised the game.

A fine teacher was shot and killed in Las Vegas by a student last year.

I am the mother of a teacher and would not want her to be a target, but rather seen as a friend of the students.

Mrs. Herman Estrin, Las Vegas

Photo shocking

I was shocked to see a picture of a lovely girl and her grandmother having fun at Brown Elementary School's Fun Fair. The little girl is pointing a toy gun and trying to hit paper teachers! What exactly are we teaching the kids? There are a number of answers, all of them horrifying.

Sukey Sobel, Reno

America gets what it pays for

EDITORIAL

Anyone who doubts American education is in a perilous state need only turn to Boston University, where junior and senior journalism students identified Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau as a hockey player and U.N. ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick as a Boston Marathon runner. . . .

Where 44 percent of the students could not give either the first or last name of Vice President George Bush. . . .

And where some students could not even name the mayor of their own city.

But Boston is no exception. Everywhere you look, today's students know less about current events, history, science, literature and the entire cultural heritage so vital to the survival of civilization. Instead, they are knowledgeable mainly in the "relevancies" so overemphasized in our schools for the past 20, to 30 years — cheap books, popular music, professional sports and that quintessential excuse for ignorance, "doing my own thing."

It is no surprise to anyone that the president's National Commission on Excellence in Education concluded that nearly 40 percent of all 17-year-olds "cannot draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth can write a persuasive essay; and only one-third can solve a mathematics problem requiring several steps."

Seeing these results, is it also no surprise to learn that since 1964, students have "migrated" in enormous numbers from basic education and vocational preparation courses to general "fun" courses. The National Commission found that in 1962 only 12 percent of high school students were enrolled in general courses, but in 1979 the figure was 42 percent.

The United States is rediscovering some old truths: that education is not "fun," it is hard work; and that learning should be controlled not by the passing interests of immature youngsters but by the hard-won experience of adults and the needs of society.

The public is also becoming dimly aware — at last — that if it wants quality education, it must pay for it.

All these elements are included in the excellent April recommendations of the National Commission. These recommendations include: more homework; a 200 to 220-day school year instead of 180; seven-hour school days; four

years of English, three of math, science and social studies and a half-year of computer science; two years of a foreign language for the college-bound; and higher entrance standards in college.

The commission also suggests that universities indulge in fewer frilly "how-to-teach" courses so dear to the heart of professors, and teach instead more courses in the subject matter to be taught; and that teachers be paid more, but with pay raises based on performance, not longevity.

Of these recommendations, only the seven-hour school day seems marginally questionable, especially for younger students who have very short attention spans. In high school, however, a seven-hour day seems feasible — but only if the extra time is used for *real* education and not for social gatherings and pap.

The Washoe County School Board is taking steps to give more emphasis to core courses, the University of Nevada-Reno is revamping its College of Education, and the University of Nevada regents have grudgingly agreed to consider higher entrance standards. But much remains to be done, here as elsewhere — because if Washoe students have remained at or above the national average on test scores, still these scores have declined along with scores elsewhere in the nation.

Two things seem essential, all across the nation: emphasis on education rather than entertainment; and more money.

The money question is especially crucial. If the school year is to be lengthened, if good teachers are to be paid more, if teachers are to be given classes small enough to assign and correct homework (and that means hiring more teachers), then the public will have to dig into its pockets.

The federal government, too, must provide more funds. The Reagan administration, instead of cutting back on federal aid, must boost that aid — because the local school districts cannot afford all that is needed. The National Commission makes specific mention of this, and the truth cannot be questioned.

The real question is this: will Americans, even now, do what is necessary to revive education? The answer is by no means certain. But there can be absolutely no doubt about what will happen if they don't. We will be engulfed by what the commission so aptly terms "the rising tide of mediocrity."

JOSEPH KRAFT

No hidden hand

WASHINGTON — The "hidden-hand presidency" is a term developed to describe the leadership of Dwight Eisenhower. But it also proves useful as a measure of the Reagan administration.

For Ronald Reagan, far from keeping a hand hidden, is a position-taking president. He often argues for the sake of argument. So, as the experience of his speech on Central America shows, he cannot easily evoke bipartisan support simply by a sudden switch in tone.

Prof. Fred Greenstein of Princeton is the chief exponent of the "hidden-hand" theory of the Eisenhower presidency. As he sees it, the Eisenhower approach encompasses several distinct features.

On sharply divisive national issues, Eisenhower held himself above the battle in a position of deliberate ambiguity. Friends and foes alike were maddened by his refusal to declare himself on such matters as school desegregation, McCarthyism and the application of deterrent strategy in Europe or Asia. But when the showdowns came, Eisenhower had overwhelming majorities for sending troops to Little Rock, for the censure of Joe McCarthy and for the defense of West Berlin and the Taiwan Strait.

In dealing with the Congress, Eisenhower worked behind the scenes with strategically placed leaders. He was in almost daily touch with Sam Rayburn of the House Democrats and Lyndon Johnson on the Senate side. But he never advertised it. He let the congressional leaders look like great patriots for backing his foreign policy.

In managing his own associates, Eisenhower let the blame for unpopular measures fall on officials who were kept at arms' length. Associates who took the heat — like Secretary of State John Foster Dulles or Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson — were perceived as autonomous figures working on their own agendas. Certainly they were never wired into particular White House aides. Indeed, after Sherman Adams came a cropper, the main aides — Bobby Cutler in foreign policy and Wilton Persons in domestic affairs — were largely unknown.

On each one of these items, the Reagan administration presents an opposite case. The president positions himself openly, and sometimes gratuitously, on the most divisive issues. He is out front on abortion, gun control, school prayer, and harsh stands against

Russia, China and countries that traffic with them.

In dealing with the Congress, he specializes in the TV spectacular timed to the eve of crucial votes. When he talks to individual leaders, it is in well-publicized phone calls, or photo opportunities. Far from standing above the battle, Reagan is one of the boys.

Lightning rods, to be sure, exist in his administration. There is Secretary of Interior James Watt, and there is Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger. But they are seen as the true Reaganites, the figures in closest harmony with the president. Any doubts are settled by related infighting among the White House staff. Indeed, Edwin Meese, James Baker and Judge William Clark are practically party to every public argument in town.

What worked for Eisenhower, to be sure, doesn't necessarily work for Reagan. The 1980s are a far cry from the 1950s. By challenging conventional notions on such matters as public spending and redistribution of wealth, Reagan has done an undoubted service. It is nice, particularly after Jimmy Carter, to have a president who knows what he thinks and says it. There is even something touching about the naive faith that those who disagree don't understand.

Still, far from building support, Reagan tends to dissipate it. His approval rating in the Gallup Poll — now 41 percent — stands below that of the last five presidents at comparable times in their terms of office.

So it was in the speech on Central America to the joint session of the Congress Wednesday night. The president deliberately staked his prestige on a highly contentious issue. Instead of concentrating behind the scenes on a few prestigious leaders, he went public to the full Congress to the maximum extent. The advanced background briefing was done not by independent figures of weight — like Secretary of State George Shultz — but by controversial persons plucked from obscurity by Reagan himself.

Whatever the merits of the case, the plea for bipartisan support fell on ears disposed to be deaf. The Democrats felt obliged to ask for equal time. To make their response, they picked not an elder statesman full of respect, but an eager youngster, well schooled in adversary politics — Sen. Chris Dodd of Connecticut.

Joseph Kraft has been writing his nationally syndicated column since 1963.

America's own renewable resource will not regenerate spontaneously

GEORGE WILL

WASHINGTON — The title of the commission that has just issued its findings is itself heartening: The National Commission on Excellence in Education. Its subject was excellence, not equality or some other facet of social-justice peripheral to the purposes of education. One measure of recent confusions is that it seems almost bold to extol the pursuit of excellence, and to do so without worrying about "elitism" or the imposition of "repressive" standards that will inhibit the free flow of self-expression from students.

The commission rightly notes the link between a nation's educational excellence and commercial vigor. But the commission stresses that its concern "also includes the intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our people which knit together the very fabric of our society . . . A high level of shared education is essential to the fostering of a common culture, especially in a country that prides itself on pluralism and individual freedom." A continental nation steeped in capitalist individualism must make provision for nurturing some collective consciousness.

The four words on the seal of one of the first land-grant colleges (Michigan State) express the practicality of much of America's educational efforts: "Agriculture and Applied Science." Such education accords with a premise of modern politics: A good society is one in which citizens' passions are absorbed in commerce. But the fact that American education has always aimed to serve commercial vigor has imposed on education a special duty: to strengthen the social bonds that are weakened by the dynamism of a restless society of atomized individuals preoccupied with getting and gaining.

In their wonderful book "Shakespeare's Politics," Allan Bloom and Harry Jaffa say that today no books play the role that the Bible, Shakespeare and Bunyan once played in the education of English-speaking peoples. No generally read works supply civilizing and unifying models of virtue. "M-A-S-H" and "Star Wars" will not suffice. The thinness of the stream of

shaping culture is, in part, a result of the contemporary assumption that school curricula should be academic cafeterias catering to students' whims.

The central symbol of American life is the little red schoolhouse, representing faith in education. There were public schools in Boston in 1635. In 1880, England had a population of 23 million and four degree-granting institutions; Ohio had a population of three million and 37 such institutions.

John Adams, the most dour of the founders, expressed typical American optimism about one thing: "The virtues and powers to which men may be trained by early education and constant discipline, are truly sublime and astounding." But Adams also said something that reveals why education and equality are American values in tension: "Education makes a greater difference between man and man, than nature has between man and brute." If so, the more resources that are invested in education, the more stratified society may become.

If education is going to create and widen disparities between citizens, it must take care to inculcate some

commonality. Otherwise, links of shared values and understandings become dangerously attenuated.

American education has rarely been accused of being insufficiently utilitarian. Indeed, it sometimes has seemed to reflect the belief that in order to produce good citizens, education must merely produce persons competent to participate in the economy.

Certainly we want lots of American engineers who can run rings around the competition. But even more we need a citizenry acquainted with the ancient patrimony of our civilization. That patrimony is a renewable resource, but it will not regenerate spontaneously. It needs urgent attention when a California college student asks a professor of English if Julius Caesar resented Shakespeare's portrayal of him.

It has been said that the trouble with the younger generation is that it has not read the minutes of the last meeting. One of the commission's implied recommendations is that schools should make that reading mandatory.

George Will is a syndicated columnist based in Washington.

LETTERS

Health volunteers praised

Northern Nevada Health Fair is a fantastic community project and its survival depends on volunteers. These are people who give their time to stand behind scales weighing countless participants, sit behind Titmus machines screening for vision problems, draw blood from many an arm and staff all the other stations that compose a Health Fair. Their payment for hours of energy expended is not tangible. It is the pleasure that comes with knowing you have contributed to a worthwhile cause and the knowledge that just possibly you have saved a person from a chronic illness or worse, death, by detecting abnormalities and referring them to the appropriate health care providers for follow-up.

When one considers the hours these dedicated individuals have donated, not only this year but in past years, words of gratitude seem inadequate to express not only my sincere appreciation, but that of the entire community.

I would also like to thank the four major sponsors of Northern Nevada Health Fair: Harrah's, Blue Shield, KTVN-Channel 2 and the Washoe County Medical Society, as well as the Northern Nevada Health Fair Office, for it is through their support that Health Fair has become a reality for northern Nevada.

My thanks to the more than 200 people who made the Saint Mary's/Park Lane Mall site such a huge success by screening over 1,200 participants.

Judi Monday, site coordinator
Saint Mary's Hospital/Park Lane Mall

Why so morbid?

Do you get great pleasure from seeing (and reading about) corpses burned and planes crashed?"

This was the response given a group of journalism students by a Soviet journalist who was asked why the Soviet press didn't report on disasters, etc.

I was among the group and when I heard this turn-around question my immediate assumption was that this was just another example of Soviet rhetoric.

But when I read the front page story Saturday, April 23, on the electrocution of John Louis Evans III, the Soviet journalist seemed to have a valid point. Is it necessary to describe in detail the accounts of this brutal extermination?

Is there a taste for the morbid in America being satisfied by the press?

Joanne Lisosky, Reno

No tears for Young

So Harvey Young's mother don't want her precious son to die. Well, neither did Alan Carlson want his wife and unborn baby to die.

If her daughter or daughter-in-law had been murdered by a savage man, what would she want done to that person? She would probably be the first one to yell, "Kill him!"

Carlson loved his wife and would love to just touch her now.

But where is she? In the grave.

As a taxpayer, I do not want to pay for Harvey Young's room and board.

Gwen Vawter, Yerington

Peace coverage appreciated

Our Lady of Snows Liturgy Committee thanks you for acknowledging our parish community's effort in the promotion of peace. We appreciate the media coverage and we hope more people will join us in the coming months.

Frequently, violence is justified in the name of peace, and so often the results are negative. Our effort is positive and non-violent. We believe that being a witness for peace in our own lives is the first step toward world peace, justice and understanding.

Mary Conklin, Reno

U.S. Senate goofs up withholding compromise

EDITORIAL

The following individuals and organizations deserve mention this week as winners and sinners:

□ **SINNER:** The U.S. Senate, for turning a withholding tax insanity into an absolute logistical nightmare. Besieged with complaints about the 10 percent withholding on interest and dividends, the Senate passed a bill to delay withholding for four years. But in its place, the senators propose this gem: If the IRS discovers unreported income, or the slightest of mathematical errors in a tax return, notices must be sent to every financial institution where the individual has an account. If the matter isn't resolved in 60 days, the financial institutions must withhold 20 percent from every single account. The IRS would then send a list of every single delinquent taxpayer to every financial institution in the country, which would then have to check every one of their records.

This is so incredibly complex, so burdensome on both the IRS and the banks, that only a Rube Goldberg could love it. And even Goldberg

might blanch. After all, his machines were supposed to be senseless.

□ **WINNER:** The Chinese Six Company, for donating \$35,000 to the Rancho San Rafael park. Specific thanks should go to Lai King Chew, Henry Yup, T.F. Gee and Wallace Tun, all descendants of the pioneer families who established the Chinese Six Company more than 100 years ago. The money will be used to build another much-needed picnic pavilion in a cottonwood grove near the main ranchhouse.

□ **WINNER:** The Human Resources Committee of the Nevada Senate, for resurrecting a state library bond issue. A similar bond issue was defeated by voters in the last election, but mistakenly so. It would have provided \$10 million for library construction, subject to local governments putting up matching funds. The state's libraries need that money badly, and it

must be hoped that voters will be better informed and more generous next time. Some library spokesmen had tried to revise the bond issue to include only Washoe and Clark counties, thinking it might have a better chance there. But libraries all across the state could use the help, and the committee was wise to keep them all eligible.

□ **SINNER:** That out-of-sync South Pacific current, El Nino; or the Mexican volcano; or the Mount St. Helens volcano; or the Hawaiian volcano; or the Russians; or the Cubans; or sunspots; or spacemen; or godless America — or whoever or whatever is responsible for this eternal winter. Of rain and snow and clouds and wind and cold, we have had quite enough. Let the sun shine through — please.

□ **WINNER:** The Reno City Council for considering a law to forbid developments from returning before the council for a year after they have been rejected — unless there are truly major revisions. The council is extremely busy, and one rejection should be enough. Besides, as Councilman Dick Scott says, if developers knew they would have to wait a year they might be more willing to compromise instead of hounding the council with the same plans over and over.

□ **WINNERS:** Reno Realtors, for donating their time and skills to renovating homes for deserving needy homeowners. This is the third year that the Reno Board has chosen a home to renovate. The 1983 house belongs to Dorothy Mosey, who is confined to a wheelchair. When the remodeling is done with the aid of \$2,500 in federal funds, Mrs. Mosey hopes to house several other handicapped persons. That makes her a winner, too.

□ **WINNER:** Dr. Noah Smernoff, who despite being 78 years old and "retired" continues to tend to the elderly in local nursing homes. Not only is his work highly valuable in itself, it proves again how valuable the knowledge and skills of older people can be.

War on the poor revisited

PATRICK BUCHANAN

WASHINGTON — That Ronald Reagan and his spare and bespectacled budget director have sought to "balance the budget on the backs of the poor" is now an axiom of American politics.

No newsman will more than perfunctorily challenge a national Democrat who charges Mr. Reagan with having "declared war on the poor." Even Republicans who feel the budget cuts have been exaggerated concede that the Great Society social programs have been savaged enough. Now, we must look to national defense.

More than the Democrats, however, the networks have driven home the message that at the end of these budget cuts lie gripping tales of human suffering.

On the nightly news we have seen the bread lines forming up in the big cities, the soup kitchens started in church basements; we have heard, uncontradicted, the welfare mother's wail that, now, with Mr. Reagan's cuts, she knows not where to turn. Sad, sad.

Well comes now a cold piece of factual reporting by Baltimore Sun writer Fred Barnes, "The Shock Horror Welfare Cut Show" — in Heritage Foundation's Policy Review — which suggests that the networks have perpetrated a monstrous hoax on the American people. A national soap opera.

"Hunger is back in America," Bill Moyers solemnly declared a year ago. "You'll find senior citizens out in the street," an interviewee told a sympathetic reporter from NBC. Food stamps cuts are "putting people into a 1981 version of the bread line," said Charles Kuralt on CBS Morning News, November 11, 1981.

And what are the facts on food stamp cuts?

Between 1981 and 1982, the year of Mr. Reagan's butchery of the social programs, food stamp spending fell from \$11.4 billion to \$11.3 billion. In July of 1981, an estimated 20.4 million got food stamps; in July of 1982, it was 20.2 million. Here is how food stamp

spending has gone over the decade:

Year	Billions
1971	1.5
1977	5.4
1981	11.4
1982	11.3

How can an honest, intelligent journalist look at these figures and start talking — as one CBS correspondent did — about how Mr. Reagan & Co. conspired to "tear the roof off" the food stamp program? In point of fact, the poor were almost totally unaffected by the Reagan cuts, which reduced the eligibility of those families whose income was above 130 percent of the poverty level, or above \$11,000 in 1982.

Using "cold statistical facts," Professor Melville Ulmer of Maryland found that when all social spending for welfare, health and income maintenance, including Social Security, is considered, "federal outlays . . . have continued steadily upward . . . from \$248 billion in fiscal year 1980 to \$291 billion in 1982." That's a \$43 billion increase, or 17 percent in two years. If defense had posted such gains, would the networks have said Mr. Reagan savaged the defense budget?

School lunches? Here the budget did fall from \$3.3 billion in 1981 to \$2.9 billion in 1982, and participation fell from 26.8 million children to 23.6, but, again, the reduction resulted from tightening eligibility on children in families earning 185 percent of poverty level and above. Free lunches are still provided for kids from families earning 130 percent of poverty level — or less.

As for the welfare program itself, hearken: "In the face of ballyhooed cuts, the AFDC case load dropped from 1981 to 1982 only from 3.8 million households to a projected 3.5 million, and overall AFDC spending from \$14.6 billion to \$14 billion. And in the teeth of supposed retrenchment, the number of Medicaid recipients rose, from 22.5

million in 1981 to an estimated 23 million in 1982."

Barnes continues: "These numbers are not secret; they are widely available. But you have to be looking for them, instead of simply cranking out semi-hysterical figures that purport detail, say, the number of widows and orphans tossed mercilessly out in the snow."

A media conspiracy? No. But the sameness to the soap opera reportage does reflect a media mindset at the networks, a media conformity of view, uninterested in or indifferent to facts, laziness, a sloppiness, and an ideological proclivity to paint Mr. Reagan as an oppressor of the poor, insensitive and heartless so the network heavies can posture as their tribunes and champions.

Using the liberals' own Great Society definition of poverty for a family of four, no "poor" women were dumped off the welfare rolls, no "poor" kids were denied school lunches, no "poor" families lost their food stamp allowances. How, then, is Mr. Reagan "waging war on the poor"?

By its emphasis upon the exotic, the unrepresentative, the emotional, the networks have, it seems, not only done an injustice to the president; they have grossly misinformed and mis-served the American people.

Patrick Buchanan is a syndicated columnist based in Washington.

RR
AN EDUCATIONAL RENAISSANCE SPARKED BY PRESIDENT REAGAN
AIN Times 4-16-83

To the Editor:

Your March 22 "About Education" column ("State Governors Prepare to Pitch In") is encouraging in that the effort is bipartisan and the emphasis is local, not Federal control. However, those who attribute the burst of local leadership to "passivity" on the part of the President are completely off the mark and could undermine the success of the endeavor.

Over the years, President Reagan has consistently warned that we cannot maintain quality in our classrooms through more bureaucracy, Federal spending and increasing usurpation of state, local and parental responsibility.

In fact, the quality of education has steadily eroded as Federal control increased and parental and community influence were barred from the classroom. Since 1963, Federal spending for education soared from \$700 million to more than \$13 billion, but the anticipated results have not materialized.

Today's graduates score 30 points below their 1963 counterparts on standard mathematics and verbal tests. Last year's three-point gain on S.A.T. scores will have to continue for another decade before real progress is realized.

Money is no longer the critical factor in improving education.

The National Education Association recently forecast that per-pupil spending for education will rise almost 10 percent this year — with inflation rising only half as much. The United States will invest \$215 billion in education this school year, almost as much as for defense. Responsible officials at all levels of government must help communities get their money's worth for this massive investment in the future.

President Reagan has led the way by block-granting elementary and secondary education programs to allow state and local officials greater flexibility, with regulatory reform to relieve educators from the deluge of red tape and with his emphasis on the importance of local control over a local matter.

The President's proposal to dismantle the Department of Education meets with support from the general public but faces severe hurdles erected by educational association lobbyists on Capitol Hill.

So the President has taken his message to the people, advocating in the State of the Union Message and other addresses that parents, educators, government, business and labor work together to renew the quality of education. He has also sent the Congress a federalism proposal which would allow states even greater control through more educational block grants.

Two years ago, critics were saying that it could not be done, that the states were unable or unwilling to be leaders in promoting quality educa-

tion for all. As your column points out, leaders from Mississippi to Arizona have scuttled that argument with action. The states are ready for responsibilities which are rightly theirs, and have undertaken the task of rebuilding an educational system sapped of vitality and initiative by bureaucratic growth.

As the results are realized, we should remember that the President did not passively step aside — he consciously, carefully and in the face of political opposition took steps to restore the role governors can now play in renewing our commitment to quality education.

The President did so precisely because state and local control can accomplish what Federal growth and spending did not: improvement in the quality of education.

For \$215 billion a year, taxpayers should expect nothing less from their elected officials.

ANNE M. GRAHAM
Assistant Secretary
Department of Education
Washington, March 24, 1983

Schooling and Education

The report card is beginning to be written on one of the great generational experiments of the past 40 years: the national binge on education. And the results are disheartening.

As a form of national uplift, Americans believe in few things as in education. But recent experience reveals a puzzling and disturbing development. The more education spending has risen, the more students' test results have declined.

We are perhaps beginning to appreciate that education as an abstract ideal isn't a cure for every national problem. Schooling by itself doesn't solve anything. Without an underlying sense of seriousness and purpose, it has little to do with either genuine education or employability.

The forthcoming report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education may help explain the riddle of rising spending and declining performance. According to commission data, schools lowered their standards over the past two decades. Schools expected less of students—and got less.

All this has a broader relevance to the nation's economic problems. For now, as before, education is advanced as an answer to the ailments of the day. In the 1960s, more education would reduce poverty and realize the promise of equal opportunity. Today, it's supposed to restore technological competitiveness and, in the guise of "retraining," ease unemployment.

If there is a moral in recent experience, it is that more schooling cannot simply be applied as a salve to social and economic ills. What matters more than money in realizing education's potential are underlying motivations and expectations—of students, teachers, parents and schools.

Even in retrospect, increases in educational spending have been staggering. Between 1950 and 1975, total spending on schools rose from 3.4 to 8 per cent of gross national product. Although this partly reflected the effect of the giant "baby boom" generation, much of it stemmed from a general increase in the level of schooling.

College attendance exploded, from 2.7 million in 1950 to about 12 million today. For every 100 students who enter fifth grade, about three-fourths now graduate from high school and nearly half attend college. In the early 1950s, those proportions were half and less than a third.

Federal and state assistance have increased dramatically at all levels. In the 1970s alone, real spending (adjusted for inflation) on public elementary and secondary schools rose 29 per cent. Since the late 1950s, student-teacher ratios at the same schools have dropped roughly 40 per cent.

These improvements make test score declines as surprising as they are disappointing. Results on the College Board scholastic aptitude tests (down 9 per cent in mathematics and 6 per cent in verbal skills since 1964) accurately reflect other tests. At the college level, graduate school entrance exams have shown even larger drops. Only some of the decline stems from the larger pool of students, which dilutes the impact of the best students.

In retrospect, the country paid a price for its social ideals. Believing that everyone should have access to a college education, governments expanded higher education enormously. And

they subsidized it: even today, two-thirds of the costs of public colleges are paid from government funds; at community colleges, the proportion is three-fourths.

Schooling is like anything else. When the price is lowered, people buy more. Also, its value shrinks. To keep classrooms filled—and to qualify for government payments based on enrollments—public colleges and universities reduced entrance standards. And these changes inevitably influenced high schools.

Once students discovered they didn't need academic courses to meet entrance requirements, they didn't take them, said Scott Thomson, superintendent of the Evanston (Ill.) high school district in the early 1970s. And, according to Thomson, the commitment to "equality of opportunity" had other unintended effects.

"All the pressures on me were to lower the dropout rate, to make sure courses were 'relevant,' to loosen pressures on students—whether it was course requirements or dress requirements," he said. "Nobody asked at school board meetings 'What are your reading scores, what are your SAT scores?'"

Electives proliferated, and students drifted toward less demanding courses. Roughly 59 per cent of graduating seniors in the late 1970s took drivers' education, compared with less than 1 per cent in the 1960s, according to Clifford Adelman of the National Institute of Education. Sociology's popularity jumped from 7 to 19 per cent among graduating seniors, and psychology's, from 2 to 24 per cent.

Likewise, the proportion of students on an "academic" track declined, from 48 to 36 per cent, while those on a "general" track rose from 12 to 42 per cent. (Remaining students were on a vocational track.) Adelman said of the "general" track:

"It's the wasteland of the American high school. It's a confused conglomeration of courses. They're watered down—a lot of personal service and remedial stuff."

To recite these figures is not to describe the American school system as a universal mediocrity. Averages being what they are, the statistics disguise enormous diversity. And increased spending has had some beneficial effects. Test scores of poor and minority students have shown improvement.

But given the magnitude, the return on the nation's recent massive investment in education has been meager. Quality has suffered and waste has resulted. About half of the students who attend college don't graduate. Either they don't want or can't handle higher education.

There are signs of a reversal of the 1970s' deterioration. Chester E. Finn Jr. of Vanderbilt University argues in the April issue of *Change* magazine that local pressures—from parents, legislatures, school boards—are tightening standards for students and teachers. A number of major state universities, facing spending cuts, are raising their entrance requirements.

If more schooling is not a panacea for America's economic problems, more education is at least an element in alleviating those problems. But therein lies the distinction: between schooling and education. No education is complete without understanding that true learning is always a struggle. □

Mark Shields

Teaching vs. the Teachers' Union

Education is both a national crisis and a political issue of momentous significance. Tragically, on the education issue, our two major parties are intellectually bankrupt. The Democrats have subtlet their intelligence and their independence on the issue to the major schoolteachers' union—the National Education Association. In 1980, the NEA put 311 of its members on the Democratic convention floor as delegates and six full pages of its jargon into the party's platform, including the promise of "federally funded teacher centers in every state [which] should address such issues as bilingual, multi-cultural, non-racist and non-sexist curricula." Honest. Page 39.

While the Democrats are hostage to the political clout of the union, the Republicans are prisoners of the cant of their president. In response to the national commission's "tide of mediocrity" indictment of our schools, President Reagan courageously reaffirmed his support for organized worship in the classroom and the abolition of the Department of Education. On matters educational, Reagan is simply not relevant.

A man who is very relevant in the current debate over the fate and future of our public schools is the second-term Republican governor of Tennessee, Lamar

Alexander. In a state where just over half the adults are high school graduates, Alexander is devoting himself and his administration almost totally to the passage of his Master Teacher program, which would pay better teachers more than not-better teachers, and evaluate teachers' performances every five years.

A Peter Hart poll, not conducted for the Republican governor, showed 67 percent of Tennessee voters willing to spend more to improve public education even if it included tax increases. So much for timidity. By a margin of better than 2 to 1, the state's voters support the governor's efforts to reward outstanding teachers and monitor all teachers. Apparently, Tennesseans believe that public education primarily involves the student business and only secondarily the teacher business.

Opposing the governor and his publicly expressed willingness to fight for higher taxes to pay for his plan are the NEA and its Tennessee affiliates, who have gone to the mattresses over the issue. The teachers' union argues that there is no adequate method of evaluating teachers and that all teachers deserve to be paid more. The fact that states regularly evaluate, with minimum complaints, cosmetologists, morticians and physicians counts for little with the union.

Alexander, who defeated the education association-endorsed candidate last November, sees public school teaching now as a profession of "low wages, lifetime contracts, little evaluation and not one penny of reward for outstanding performance."

The real public debate over education right now is going on in places like Lamar Alexander's Tennessee, not in Washington, where, on education, the lines are hardened and the thinking is soft.

NEA Buck-Passing

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As president of the National Education Association (NEA), Willard McGuire has several responsibilities, not the least of which is to protect his union's flank. And that's what the labor leader has been doing of late by placing the blame for the failure of public education everywhere but where it belongs.

The other day, Mr. McGuire told a TV interviewer that while the nation's largest teachers' union was "certainly willing to take any share of criticism that is justly ours," the real problem was with society at large which "determines what our public schools are."

And though we didn't see him say it, we assume he did so with a straight face, omitting several salient details such as the NEA's resistance to virtually every positive educational reform that has surfaced during the past 10 years. This resistance has led one wag to suggest that the union's initials should stand for "no educational accountability."

For no other education lobby has been so committed to opposing minimum competency standards for students and teachers, standardized tests, merit pay for master teachers, and any measure that would permit parents a wider choice for their children's education. Moreover, the 1.7 million-member union has spent a fortune fighting anyone who supports these improvements.

The NEA's imposing political action committee threatens legislators who question the educational status quo, while rewarding those who play ball with the union.

In fact, the continued existence of the U.S. Department of Education is a monument to that political clout. For even though President Reagan repeatedly promises to abolish this bureaucratic abomination, Congress has thwarted his

several attempts to relegate the department to subcabinet status.

But then, the NEA's crusade for a great society extends far beyond mundane matters like teaching and learning. Consider the union's mighty labors for the nuclear freeze, disarmament, gun control, abortion-on-demand, and a plethora of similar New Left causes that have blossomed during the past few years.

When Mr. McGuire laments that public schools don't receive much in the way of parental support, we are reminded that the parents probably aren't home very often. A situation which, by the way, isn't surprising given the unprecedented number of mothers who work outside the home. And that phenomenon is a byproduct of the feminist agenda, which is eagerly endorsed by the NEA.

We also see a fundamental contradiction in the NEA's professed concern for the safety of classroom teachers, particularly when the union has supported virtually every piece of legislation and court decision that has eroded school authority.

The NEA also promotes classroom incompetence by throwing all sorts of contractual obstacles in the way of administrators who try to discipline — let alone dismiss — teachers who aren't doing their jobs. Add the union's advocacy of *seniority* rather than *training* when it comes to staff reductions and layoffs, and it's little wonder that fewer than half of Michigan's middle-school math teachers are qualified to teach their subject.

Given the NEA's truculent track record, we would suggest that Mr. McGuire and his minions stop passing the buck for the public schools' problems and ponder the appropriateness of Pogo's admonition: "We have seen the enemy, and it is us."