

STATEMENT OF SENATOR SAM J. ERVIN, JR. CONCERNING FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

I believe that one of our most important tasks is that of educating our children. This is true for two reasons. In the first place, our youth must be educated if they are to develop their highest potentialities. In the second place, an educated electorate is absolutely necessary to the proper functioning of our government, which derives all its just powers from the consent of the governed.

One of the most serious issues now confronting our nation is whether or not the Federal Government should extend financial aid to the states to assist them in the education of our youth.

Many of our governmental problems are much aggravated today by our systems of taxation. Unfortunately, the Federal Government monopolizes the most productive sources of taxation and thus compels state and local governments to rely upon less productive sources for financing their essential functions.

The Federal Government's monopolization of the most productive sources of taxation seriously handicaps many of our states in the operation of their public school systems. The fact that the North Carolina Legislature has just imposed a 3% sales tax on food to obtain sufficient funds for school purposes indicates that this proposition is true in respect to North Carolina.

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I would much prefer for the Federal Government to release some of its sources of taxation to the states and let the states impose and collect sufficient taxes on such sources and use them to finance the operation of their schools without assistance from the Federal Government. But there is no prospect that the Federal Government will take any such action at any time in the foreseeable future.

For these reasons, I favor federal aid to education provided such aid is restricted to the public schools of the states and provided the Act of Congress extending federal aid to the public schools of the states makes it crystal clear that the Federal Government is not going to exercise any control over the public schools aided.

I am aware that many people oppose federal aid to education because they fear that federal control of education is necessarily inseparable from federal aid to education.

History shows that the argument that federal aid necessarily means federal control has not been true in respect to federal aid to education,

which antedates the inauguration of George Washington as our first President. When the Continental Congress established the so-called Northwest Territory in 1787 in the area now embracing Ohio and adjacent states, it set aside certain public lands for school purposes in that Territory.

The Federal Government has been giving financial aid to the land-grant colleges of the various states under the terms of the Morrill Act since 1862. North Carolina's land-grant institutions, State College at Raleigh and the Agricultural and Technical College at Greensboro, have been receiving such aid under such Act ever since they were created by the North Carolina Legislature. The Federal Government has been giving financial aid to the states for vocational education in their public schools under the Smith-Hughes Act since 1917. The Federal Government has been giving financial aid to the public schools of the various states in federally-impacted areas, such as the Fort Bragg area, since 1950. Moreover, the Federal Government has been giving financial aid to the states for various other educational activities, such as vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons, agricultural research, and the like for some years.

The Federal Government has not undertaken in any of these instances to control the public schools or the educational institutions of the states receiving this aid.

The amount of financial aid given by the Federal Government to the State of North Carolina and its various public schools and other institutions for these educational purposes has been substantial in nature. All in all, the amount of such aid received by North Carolina for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1960, exceeded \$20,500,000.

I am not a recent convert to the cause of federal aid to education under the conditions which I have enumerated. On many occasions in times past, I have stated in speeches that I favor federal aid to education provided the act extending the aid restricted it to the public schools of the states and declared that the Federal Government would not undertake to exercise any control over the public schools aided. I voted for such aid under such conditions when the question was before the Senate during the last session of the Congress and again when the question was before the Senate during the present Congress. The proposal to extend federal aid to the public schools of the states has not been partisan in nature. As a matter of fact, Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy have all urged Congress to enact such proposal into law.