

1368 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

the AFL-CIO played a major part, building support for the legislation and seeking solution to the various issues which had deadlocked the bills in Congress.

The laws which have by now been enacted have contributed significantly to improving educational opportunity and toward achieving the goal of providing quality education for every child, wherever he may live and whatever his family background. From pre-kindergarten programs through graduate schools and adult education programs, the federal government has assumed responsibility for sharing in the costs of education.

Both in terms of the amount of money that it involves and the widespread effect that it has had throughout American education, the most important of the new educational bills has been the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This legislation provides federal funds to school districts in proportion to the number of low income children living in each district. These funds must be used to improve the educational opportunity for children from low income families. Beyond that, the school district has wide latitude in its use of the federal funds.

Apart from the fact that it represents the largest financial commitment to education ever undertaken by the federal government, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is noteworthy for having broken the long standing deadlock over the question of aid to non-public schools. Significant benefits under the act are available to students in non-public schools. The AFL-CIO played a key part in developing a formula by which, without doing violence to the traditional separation between church and state, children in non-public schools could derive maximum benefits from federal aid.

Among other pieces of legislation of particular significance to organized labor has been the Vocational Education Act of 1963, a law which has provided additional funds and new flexibility for vocational education. The law requires vocational educators to relate their programs closely to the realistic needs of the labor market. Trade unionists have played an important part in making this goal a reality at the local, state and national levels.

A third area of major concern in recently enacted education legislation has been higher education. The Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963 provided federal funds for the construction of college classrooms badly needed to accommodate constantly swelling enrollments. As it has been urged to do by the AFL-CIO, Congress earmarked a certain portion of the money for construction of new facilities for two-year community colleges. The result has been to stimulate the development of new community colleges throughout the nation and this in turn has made it more possible for young people from low and moderate income families to afford to go to college.

In 1965 the Higher Education Facilities Act was incorporated into a new bill, the Higher Education Act of 1965, and the authorized expenditure was considerably increased. In addition to the features of the original bill, the Higher Education Act provided a number of financial aids for students, among them increased federal loans under the National Defense Education Act, federal guarantee and subsidies for student loans from approved lending agencies, opportunity scholarship grants for promising low income students, and work-study programs. Altogether, these student aid programs have enabled thousands of young people to enter college who would not otherwise have been able to do so.

There have been many other significant steps taken. Amendments to the National Defense Education Act have added new subjects to those eligible for federal assistance, among them reading, economics, civics and history. The Impacted Aid program has been amended to increase the funds available to schools in some of the major urban centers. Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides funds to assist school districts with problems related to desegregation. The Economic Opportunity Act made possible federal funding of many new programs including the first Headstart program and adult basic education programs. The Library Services and Construction Act has brought new and improved library service to millions of Americans. A provision in the Federal Communications Act has made federal funds available for the stimulation and growth of educational television. And finally, the "Cold War G.I. Bill," long championed by the AFL-CIO, brings to the veterans of today's armed forces educational benefits similar to those available to veterans of World War II and Korea.

Taken all together, these many federal programs add up to a significant federal commitment to share in the financial responsibility for education at all levels. There nevertheless remain important unfulfilled needs. The two larg-