

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS 1455

information required for appropriate private industry planning in order that the most effective implementation of Federal education programs may be assured."

We have had some subsequent discussions on this matter with officials at the U.S. Office and we hope to be able to work out with them a statistical program which will be beneficial to both the educational institutions which are consumers of our product and to the producers and suppliers of these materials in the private sector of the economy.

DELAYED PAYMENTS UNDER FEDERAL PROGRAMS

We should like to mention a problem which has arisen, not so much for publishers but for specialized book wholesalers who supply schools and libraries, of the great delay in many cases in payment for materials, particularly school library books, purchased under Federal programs. This situation is putting a considerable financial strain on the smaller book wholesalers and if it continues would impair their ability to perform efficiently their important function in the distribution chain of getting books from the publishers to these institutional consumers. Part of the problem is the lack of administrative personnel available in local school districts to handle the details of the numerous new federally funded programs and some relief can be expected as additional administrative funds are made available either from Federal or local sources. The problem arises in other cases because of the inexperience of some school districts in ordering books for school libraries where no such libraries have heretofore existed. We have been working with the professional association of school business officials to suggest ways in which ordering and payment procedures can be simplified and streamlined. We mention the problem here because it may be of interest to the Committee and also because through the printed record of these hearings, or some mention in the Committee report on the bill, the nature and seriousness of the problem can be brought to the attention of the educational community.

AUTHORIZATION OF CONTRACTS WITH PRIVATE PROFIT-MAKING ORGANIZATIONS

There are several provisions in the bill which would authorize contracts with private profit-making agencies as opposed to the present general limitation on the Office of Education to letting these contracts only to nonprofit agencies. One of these provisions is on page 30 of the bill, lines 15 and 16, which would permit the Commissioner to make contracts with "public and private agencies, institutions or organizations" for special projects in the field of comprehensive educational planning, especially on an interstate basis. Another is on page 34 of the bill, lines 22 and 23, which would permit the Commissioner to contract with "public or private agencies or institutions" for projects in the fields of recruiting personnel for service to the handicapped and to improve the dissemination of information on educational opportunities for the handicapped. We believe that these are important steps in the right direction and should be extended to all the grant and contract programs of the U.S. Office. This would improve the quality of educational research and dissemination by making available the skill and experience of private enterprise, including the publishing industry, as well as nonprofit institutions.

AUTHORIZATION FOR THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA

I come now to a provision of the bill which frankly disturbs us—this is the language on page 38, lines 15 through 19, which reads as follows: "(2) producing and distributing educational media for the use of handicapped persons, their parents, their actual or potential employers, and other persons directly involved in work for the advancement of the handicapped". Commissioner Howe, in his prepared statement of March 2 on the bill, explained and justified this provision in the following way:

"The U.S. Office of Education may now support research regarding educational media. This is generally restricted to research concerning the effectiveness of existing media. With the exception of the specific authority under the Captioned Films for the Deaf program there is no authorization to enter into contracts for the development of new media. There is no authorization which would permit specialized training programs to train specialists in the use of such media nor is there any authorization which would permit involvement in the production of