

From what we have said about title V, it is clear that we support the provisions in the bill that would phase out the various institutes supported under the National Defense Education Act. We have long urged that these institutions be opened to teachers in higher education. We have advocated that the latitude provided to the National Science Foundation to support teacher education programs at all levels be accorded to the Office of Education. As we see it, title V would provide this latitude and enable the Office of Education to identify areas most in need of support and to provide that support without seeking specific categorical legislation to fund it.

There are other parts of the bill on which we should be happy to comment but which we have not touched on in this formal statement. In general, for example, we approve the proposal that would abolish certain advisory committees. Because of the number of acts that have been passed in the last several years, almost every one of which has provided for some kind of advisory panel, the Commissioner would scarcely have time to do his job if he had to meet with each of them. Obviously we want the Commissioner to have the benefit of advice from the educational community and from the public. But equally obviously, it is not necessary that the Commissioner convene a special panel for each category to which Federal legislation is directed.

I should like to make one comment on an administration proposal which is not, as I understand it, before the committee at this time. It is a proposal that was originally contained in the elementary and secondary education bill, H.R. 6230. We judge that responsibility for oversight of the training aspects of the Teachers Corps has been returned to the jurisdiction of this subcommittee.

In H.R. 6230 new language has been added to that section which provides for arrangements between institutions of higher education and the Commissioner of Education. The new language would require that any such arrangements have "the approval of the appropriate State educational agency." We have not had an opportunity to study this in detail, but our initial reaction is that it is a most unfortunate provision.

No one knows at the moment how best to train teachers to work in deprived areas. We are not going to know unless there is active encouragement of innovation and experimentation and a willingness, quite frankly, to experience failure as well as to believe in success. A direct line of communication and negotiation between the university and the Office of Education is, we know from experience, an arrangement that works. To introduce the possibility of a veto by a third party, which may not be sympathetic to this experimentation, seems to us to have no merit.

If the "approval" of the appropriate States authority, to put it in its best light, is pro forma then the only problem will be one of delay. But if it is more than pro forma, we fear that our strongest institutions which perhaps have most to contribute to this new program, will simply withdraw rather than subject themselves to the judgment of those who may not be sympathetic to or conversant with what is going on in higher education. We would urge that the Commissioner continue to have authority to contract or make other arrangements directly with institutions of higher education for the training of the Teachers Corps.