Federal Help To Schools May Soon Become Reality

By PETER EDSON
NEA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON—Legislation to provide $300,000,000 a year for federal aid to public schools at lsat seems to have a chance, after being kicked around for 20 years.

A bipartisan bill, backed by four Republicans and four Democrats, will probably come up for vote in the Senate soon. A companion bill in the House may be delayed until April or May. Speaker Joe Martin and Republican Floor Leader Charlie Halleck haven't decided to give the bill priority.

The National Education Association, which is pushing the proposal, believes it has enough votes to ensure passage. Opposition has been narrowed down to two principal groups: The parochial schools, which would get no help from the present draft, and the people who believe that elementary and high school education is the responsibility of the states—not the federal gevernment.

The National Education Association has just announced the results of a new national survey, intended to show the need for federal aid to public school systems, and the inability of many of the poorer states to meet what are considered adequate educational standards. In general it shows that the great postwar crisis in the schools—hottest story in the papers in 1945-46—has now been greatly relieved, but is still far from solved.

Teachers' Pay Increased

The teacher shortage isn't so bad. Out of nearly 900,000 teachers, the number unlicensed is still 107,000—a drop of only 13,000 from the 120,000 in 1945. Pay scales have been raised from an average of $1846 a year, at the end of the war, to $2550 in the current school year. That's an average increase of $700 a year, or 37 per cent.

Total expenditures by the states for grade and high schools have been greatly increased since the war years. In 1939-40, about $1,500,000,000 was spent on the U. S. public school system. In 1944-45 it was $2,600,000,000. This year it will be $3,000,000,000. But education has not been doubled: the school dollar just buys less education.

To bring the American public schools up to the standards they should have, says the National Education Association, total expenditures should be raise to $6,000,000,000 a year.

Getting this issue down to the amount of money spent on each pupil is the only basis on which it can be understood. In 1939, this average expenditure per pupil was $60 for the whole U. S. The range was from $15 in Mississippi to $150 in New York. Last year the average was $99 per pupil for the U. S. The range was from $25 in Mississippi to $234 in New York.

21 States Lagging

In spite of these increases, however, there are still 21 states which are now spending less than the national average of $99 per pupil. They are Maine, West Virginia, Texas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Florida, Vermont, Idaho Louisana, Missouri, North Carolina, South Dakota, Georgia, Virgina, Tennessee, South Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, Arkansas and Mississippi.

At first glanc, it might appear that this was making the people in the richer states pay for the poorer states' schooling. To overcome this objection, the bill now before Congress provide that some federal aid would be given to every state. The Senate bill says $5 per pupil. The House bill puts it at $3 per pupil.

In addition to this minimum aid to all states, the federal government would be required to give additional help to poorer states, provided they met certain minumim conditions.

Even if these poorer states had model tax plans and devoted all their tax revenues to their school systems—eliminating expenditure on roads, health an dpublic works—they still wouldn't have enough money to provide what is now considered an adequate level of education.

Jews, Arabs in Another Battle Near Jerusalem

JERUSALEM, Feb. 26—(AP)—A fierce mortar battle between the Jews and Arabs raged today near the garden of Gethsemane outside Jerusalem, with Arabs reportedly firing behind tombstones in a Jewish cemetery.

British police said two Arabs were killed and four wounded severly. Arabs reported one Arab woman died and one child and seven men were hurt. The police said two houses were demolished.

Police also told of a battle in the border area between Arab Jaffa and Jewish Tel Aviv.

They said a Jewish mortar and grenade attack on an Arab bastion near Ramle killed three Arabs and wounded four others.

Palestine violence has taken the lives of 1,421 persons since the United Nations voted Nov. 29 to partition the Holy Land.

Out Our Way — By J. R. Williams

Pope Names Him

Pope Pius XII named Archbishop J. Francis A. McIntyre, above, to be archbishop of Los Angeles. Archbishop McIntyre is now coadjutor of New York. He succeeds the late Archbishop John J. Cantwell.

Senate Debate On Marshall Plan To Start Monday

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27—(AP)—The senate will begin debate Monday on the $5,300,000,000 European recovery plan, with Senator Vandenburg as the leadoff man.

Vandenburg, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, announced the arrangements after the Committee turned over the aid measure to the senate.

Drafted by the Committee, the bill authorizes spending the $5,300,000,000 in the 12 months starting April 1 to help 16 western European nations.

Chairman Eaton of the House Foreign Affairs Committee said, meantime, that he thought that figure was "fair and sound." This is the first time that Eaton has expressed views on the amount of aid.

He told a reporter his Committee probably will agree that the Marshall Plan handled by an independent organization headed by a man of cabinet rank. Such a set up also would parallel the Senate bill.

Taylor's 3rd Party Move Great Mistake, Morse Says

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27.—(AP)—Senator Morse (R.-Ore.) said this week that Senator Taylor (D.-Idaho) had made a "great mistake" in joining a third party movement headed by former Vice President Henry Wallace.

Taylor has announced as the vice presidential candidate of the new party.

Morse told a reporter he thought the Idaho Senator's decision was wrong not only from the standpoint of Taylor's own political future but from the standpoint of the nation's welfare.

"All true progressives," said the Oregon liberal, "must work as hard as they can to defeat the Wallace-Taylor party, which has betrayed sound progressivism by adopting a program of leftism which, apparently unknown to Wallace and Taylor, has its roots in police state methods."

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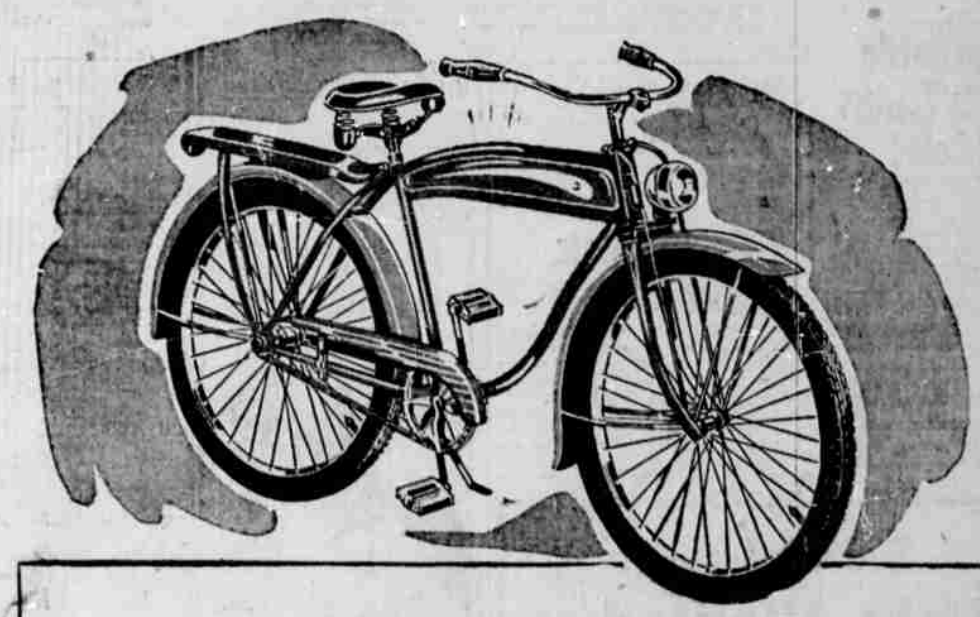

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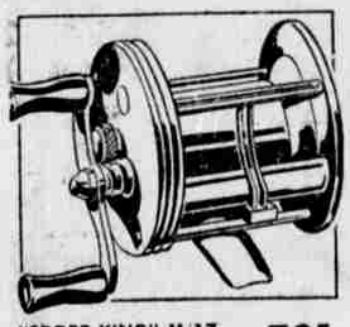

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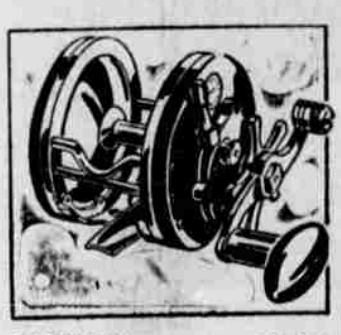

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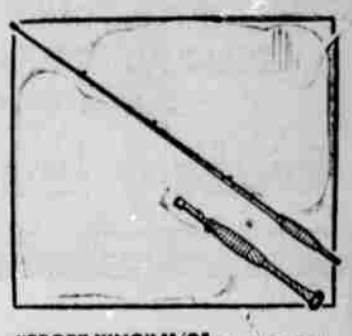

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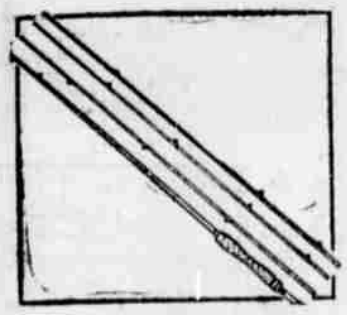

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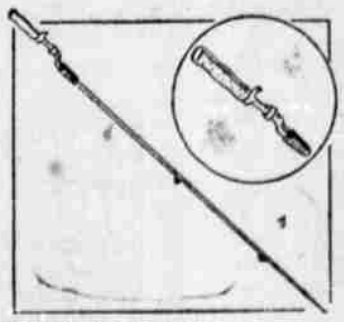

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