

State Official Unruffled By Criticism Of Schools

By PAUL W. HARVEY JR.
SALEM (AP)—Dr. Rex Putnam, Oregon's superintendent of public instruction for the past 20 years, isn't bothered by the current wave of criticism of the public schools.

He has just completed a research project which, he says, proves that ever since 1843, there have been waves of criticism of how the schools are run. These waves occur about once each generation.

And, he adds, the same things are being said now that were said 100 years ago.

Dr. Putnam feels that definite improvements can be made. He specifically cites a need for better cooperation between the parents and teachers, and better guidance for high school pupils.

Hundreds of teachers have been working for two years on a project whereby everything that is being taught in the schools is being reevaluated. This project will be completed in about a year.

But, Dr. Putnam says, some people in every adult generation believe their children are receiving an education which is inferior to that given to the adults. Dr. Putnam disagrees sharply.

Since the start of the Sputnik era, the schools have been blamed for America's apparent failure to keep up with the Russians.

While most high schools offer science and mathematics courses, the problem is getting the pupils to take them.

Dr. Putnam says high schools have pretty good guidance programs under which teachers try to influence the brighter pupils to take these courses. But, he adds, such guidance is almost worthless unless the parents support the teachers.

Dr. Putnam's department does not have much real authority over the schools. The real bosses are

the school boards of each district. His department can guide and suggest, but that's all. And he doesn't favor having more authority for his department.

"We must keep local autonomy," he says, "in order to maintain the sanctity of the individual. If we lose it, we'll be like Russia, and will be sunk."

"We get many letters from people asking us to come in and straighten out their school districts. We can't do that, and even the governor or the President of the United States couldn't. And it's a good thing."

"Some people say our schools aren't as good as those in Europe. If that's true, why is there a constant stream of European educators, as well as from other continents, coming here to study Oregon's school system? Right now, eight of them are here."

Without reflecting upon those teachers who have emergency certificates because they don't have the educational requirements, Dr. Putnam thinks teachers could be improved.

"We can get better teachers if we pay them better," he says. "They should be paid enough so that promising college graduates will choose teaching as a career. Teachers don't have enough prestige. The public attitude toward them often is not good. Yet the job they do is extremely important."

He admires the school principals and administrators, saying "I'll match them against executives in any field as to downright ability and efficiency."

He thinks the program to speed up the education of gifted children should be expanded greatly. It's just getting started.

"Education," he says, "is a cooperative situation between the parents and teachers. If the parents aren't much interested in what their child takes or does in school, chances are that the child won't care, either. Almost all teachers encourage parents to visit school. But not many parents do."

British, German Showdown Looms Over Support Funds

By K. C. THALER
LONDON (UP)—Britain appears headed for a showdown with West Germany over her demand that the Bonn government underwrite part of the maintenance costs for the Army of the Rhine.

A German compromise offer to deposit 100 million sterling (230 million dollars) in London for future arms purchases, instead of outright support 'cost payment' was termed unacceptable by authoritative government quarters.

The government summoned its ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Steel, for urgent consultations.

The quarrel threatened seriously to disturb the harmony in the North Atlantic Alliance which has been called upon to deal with the emergency.

The British government remained insistent that West Germany pay part of the support costs of the British forces stationed on the latter's territory.

The amount sought by Britain from Germans is in the neighborhood of 50 million sterling (140 million dollars) this year.

Failing this Britain intends to withdraw more forces from Germany, at least another 5,000, in addition to 8,500 whose withdrawal this year was sanctioned by the seven-member West European Union Council last week.

NATO planners were seriously worried about this prospect, because of the adverse effect it would have on other members of the alliance with forces in Europe and because it would further weaken NATO's thinned-out defense shield along the trip-wire on the Iron Curtain borders.

Latest Bonn reports stated that Germany was determined not to pay outright support costs. The latest compromise offer was instead for an interest-free 100 million sterling deposit in Britain as an advance payment for future arms purchases.

While withholding formal official comment government quarters let it be clearly understood the offer is not acceptable.

The British line of argument is that the maintenance of forces in Germany throws a burden on the budget as well as on the balance of payments and the foreign currency position. Neither would be lessened by the German compromise offer, the sources said.

They said a German deposit would temporarily ease the foreign currency strain, but the money would in effect be earmarked for normal commercial transactions with the firms who make the arms.

Moreover, Britain fears that Germany will not make large scale arms purchases in the end, basing her fears on recent rejections by Bonn of various British arms offers.

The British government is at

the same time under pressure at home for economies and for cutting down defense commitments; there have been strong demands for cuts in Britain's overseas forces.

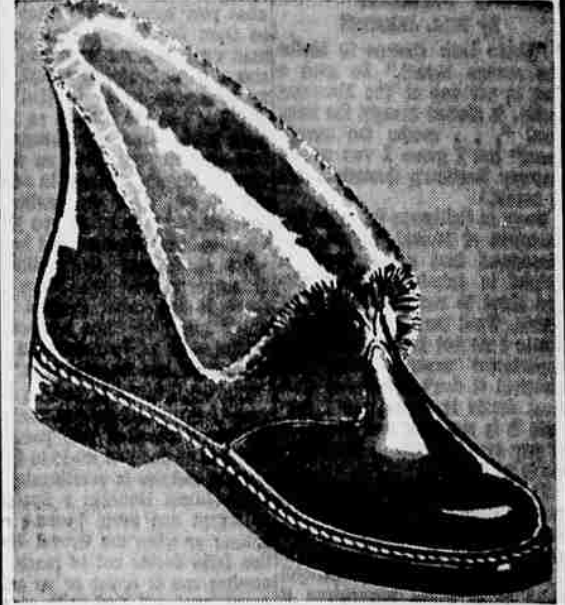
The important Times of London warned editorially that the interests of the alliance as a whole are affected by the dispute and called on NATO to find urgently a way of meeting Britain's claim for financial help.

The situation is now becoming serious, for there are limits to the amount of financial bargain-

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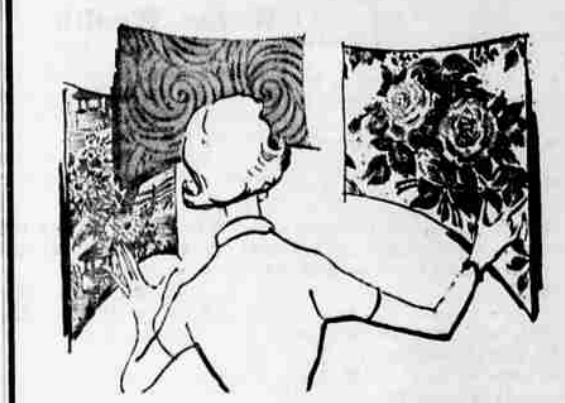
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Gunman Hits Bronx Bank

NEW YORK (AP)—A goateed gunman, using a lame girl as a hostage, held up a Bronx bank branch yesterday and escaped with two shopping bags full of \$12,440 in bills.

The bandit, a Negro, strode into the crowded Manufacturers Trust Co. branch, seized the lame girl—about 12 years old—and ordered bank employees and customers to obey his orders or "I'll shoot the kid if you don't."

He shoved a shopping bag into the hands of a woman customer and forced her to collect banknotes at the windows of four tellers. The bank manager himself was compelled to put money into another bag.

Then, taking the child, another youngster and a woman believed to be their mother with him, the man left the bank and disappeared. The mother and children were not identified.

But the woman who had been pressed into service as a collector was quoted as saying: "I thought this only happened in the movies. The man said, 'Hey, miss, take this bag and get all the money.' I saw his gun and I listened to him." She was not identified.

Police said they learned the woman and the two children forced to accompany the bandit were released outside the bank and that they boarded a bus.



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