

The Pharos-Tribune Editorial Comment

Curing Ills In Education

How effective a primary or secondary school may be in educating its students depends almost entirely on its expectations of them. More than one study reaches this conclusion. Chicago sociologist James Coleman is the author of at least two, which have made headlines.

In 1966 his findings were "misunderstood" when they were used to justify forced busing. He is concerned that his 1981 study will also be misused. He did not find that all public schools are better than all private ones, he says but that there are more private than public schools which are effective. With community support, a public school can produce well educated students if it meets certain requirements.

Albert Shanker, president of New York's United Federation of Teachers, endorses the 1981 Coleman report, thus interpreted. He quotes an analysis of the report by historian Diane Ravitch: "Public schools have lowered their requirements, decreased their expectations, made basic courses optional and learned to tolerate intolerable behavior."

Therefore, to be "high achieving" public schools must be disciplined and orderly. They must enforce attendance, devote school hours to learning and teaching and demand homework of their students. They must limit easy courses and required that their students study a "tough, quality curriculum." Mr. Shanker writes: "Let's face it, all learning is not fun. There's plenty of hard work, drudgery, some of it involving pure memorization or the development of habits and routines, some of it plain boring."

Failure of adults to put pressure on students, he calls "failure of nerve." He says that both tests and grades are necessary in putting pressure on students. And if students are to be tested for accomplishment, teachers should not resist being tested to prove that they are competent to instruct in the subjects they are hired to teach.

This is a sound prescription, a good set of assumptions for any school system which wants to build or restructure itself to assure that it meets its educational duties.

Space War

There's more than the desire to "upstage America's recent space triumphs" behind Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev's charge that our space shuttle is primarily military vehicles. American officials seem to think that the Soviet reaction to the flight of the Space Shuttle Columbia and our earlier triumph in unmanned planetary exploration, the return of pictures of Jupiter and Saturn by Voyagers I and II, is "just sour grapes."

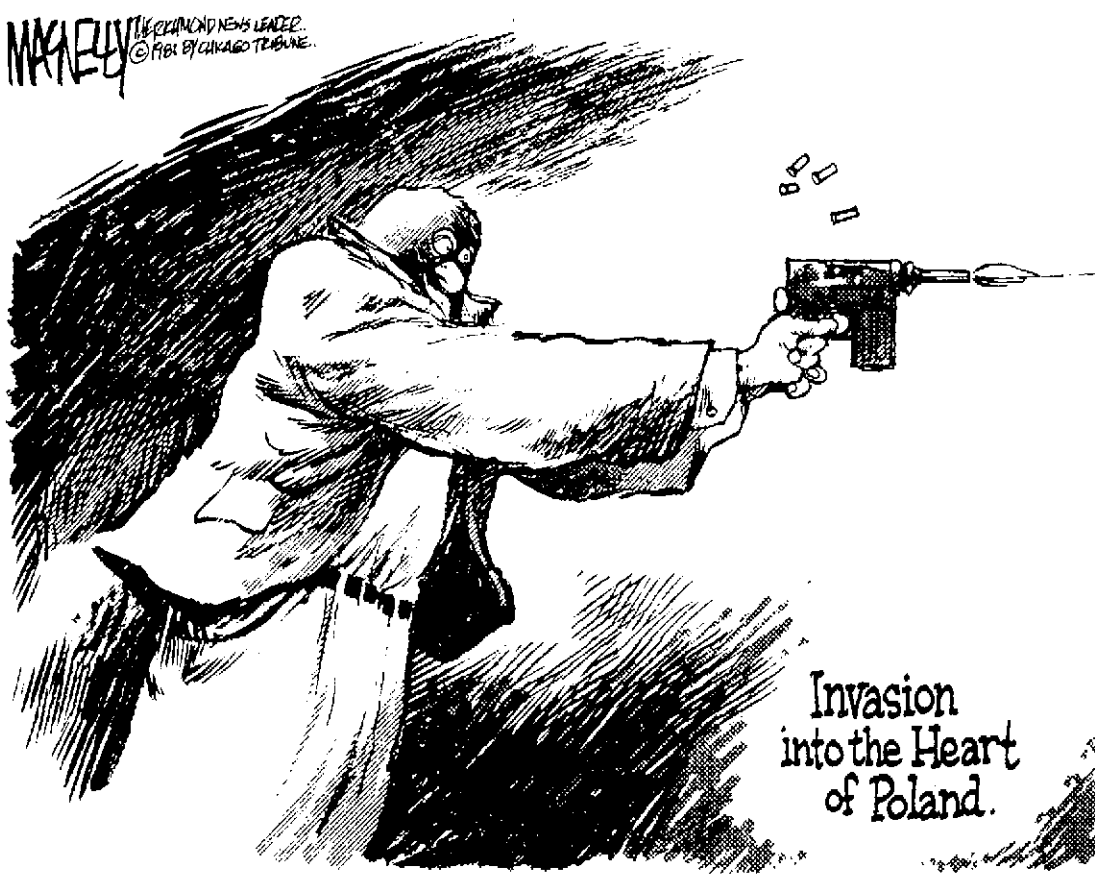
"The guy that has a space weapons system and the guy who runs a secret space system is the one who is complaining," one of those "high administration sources", otherwise unidentified, is quoted in recent news dispatches. "We haven't changed our ways ... and neither have the Russians. To create the impression that they have a peaceful space program and that we are changing ours is wrong."

Since the beginning of the "space age" more than 20 years ago, three-fourths of the Soviet Space program has been concerned with military applications, the unnamed source declared. By contrast only one-third

of all U.S. space launches have been military applications. In our shuttle program, the United States will maintain this same proportion; two-thirds of the launches will be for civilian purposes, one-third for military.

The success of the shuttle program gives us the opportunity to reestablish our unchallengeable scientific, military and industrial leadership in space. By his attack, Mr. Brezhnev is trying to rally social activists to resist further U.S. expansion in space because it denies funds to programs to help the aged, the needy, the unfortunate and the young. If our space effort can be characterized in the public mind as military, activists can oppose it under their long-time slogan, "Welfare, not guns."

To Soviet technocrats, U.S. leadership in space threatens Communism. It proves the unacceptable, capitalism's superiority in matters of technology. Mr. Brezhnev's charge is a counterattack to this threat, a screen of words to hide Communist defeat and failure



Bob Wagman

Kennedy Prepares For '84

WASHINGTON (NEA) - Most political observers expect a match race for the 1984 Democratic presidential nomination between former Vice President Walter Mondale and Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass.

Mondale has decided to maintain a low profile during the coming months while he concentrates on building a strong campaign organization. He is adhering to the traditional political wisdom of not getting out in front too early.

Kennedy, however, has opted for a very high profile. He is attempting to position himself as the keeper of the Democratic faith in a party short of leaders and as the most outspoken opponent of the Reagan administration in the Republican-dominated Senate.

Kennedy is using to great advantage his position as ranking Democrat on the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. He has defined a whole range of issues on which he thinks his party should oppose President Reagan and has won agreement from committee Democrats to vote against the administration on many of them.

This may not do much to bring about the defeat of the president's proposals in the Senate. But Kennedy is gathering valuable 100s from Democrats across the country by leading the defense of the programs and positions that they hold dear.

Kennedy and his staff have carefully chosen the issues on which he will oppose the administration and the Senate's conservatives. They include military aid to Saudi Arabia and El Salvador, re-establishment of close ties with right-wing regimes such as Argentina's that have less-than-glowing human-rights records, reduced federal support for health-care facilities and hospital cost containment, abolition of the Legal Services Corporation and cuts in spending on school lunches, education and fuel-cost assistance to the poor and the elderly.

The contrast in the approaches of Mondale and Kennedy could not have been more clearly shown than when they recently addressed a gathering of Democrats in Mondale's home state of Minnesota. The former vice president gave a

safe speech in which he talked about the need to reunite the party before 1984 and to formulate new programs in light of the conservative shift in national opinion.

Kennedy gave a rip-roaring speech that was much more liberal in tone than Mondale's. "We will be ready with new ideas," said Kennedy, "but they will not be retreats of the reactionary nostrums of this day. They will be rooted in the time-tested values of the Democratic Party.... Let us resolve that we will not run from great political convictions for the convenience of the hour."

Kennedy's speech was well received by party activists in Minnesota, as it has been at other Democratic gatherings around the country. Its refusal to back away from traditional party values is clearly becoming Kennedy's theme for the future.

But Kennedy has a major obstacle to overcome before can begin his 1984 presidential campaign winning re-election to a fifth Senate term next year. Conservatives, especially the National Conservative Political Action Committee, have targeted Kennedy for defeat in 1982 and will spend millions of dollars trying to do so.

Most political observers in Massachusetts say that Kennedy should have little trouble defeating any candidate that the Republicans put up despite his losses in the 1980 presidential primaries, the recent break-up of his marriage and the continuing burden of Chappaquiddick.

But the senator and his staff are working not for a mere victory but for a landslide. They realize that Kennedy's biggest problem is the opinion among many Democrats he cannot win the general presidential election, especially at a time when the nation is becoming more conservative.

Kennedy's political advisers know that this notion will be one of the strongest factors working for Mondale and against Kennedy in 1984. They hope that a massive re-election victory will go a long way toward dispelling it.

(NEWSPAPER ENTERPRISE ASSN.)

the small society

by Brickman



Evans And Novak

Diluting Reaganomics

WASHINGTON — Bolstered by the Treasury as well as budget director David Stockman, President Reagan is inclined against diluting his tax package to round up enough conservative Democratic congressmen for a winning coalition in the House.

The decision must be made quickly because backroom decisions are beginning on the pivotal tax question. One option presented to the president would satisfy the "boll weevils" or "Redneck Caucus" — the conservative southern Democrats — and appease the bond market by delaying individual tax rate cuts until Jan. 1, 1982. But the odds are against Reagan taking that way out, in the opinion of well-placed administration officials.

There is plenty of room for compromise between what the boll weevils want and Reagan's Kemp-Roth bill. That ushers in intriguing negotiations that will determine not only the thrust of economic policy the next two years but also redefine power relationships inside the House.

Actually, Reagan's tax proposal for annual, across-the-board 10 percent rate cuts for three years starting July 1, 1981, never had a chance. It is so nearly the replica of the partisan Republican Kemp-Roth bill that not even the boll weevils will vote for it. Indeed, House Democratic leaders drool at the prospect of bringing it to a vote for the psychic and political joy of beating Reagan.

Reagan can escape this predicament in the Democratic-controlled House by making a deal with the Conservative Democratic Forum (CDF) — the Redneck Caucus. But Rep. Kent Hance of Texas, a CDF member on the House Ways and Means Committee who has been talking secretly to the Treasury, is insisting on no tax rate cuts at all in 1981 and only a 5 percent cut in 1982 (to be allowed by 10 percent each in 1983 and 1984). Thanks to inflationary bracket creep, that means significantly higher tax rates through the 1982 election.

This would reduce Reagan's estimated budget deficit for the next fiscal year by

some \$30 billion. The immediate tax cuts would slash "unearned" (dividends and interest) income that show little revenue loss.

Some boll weevils also eye long-range ideological goals. Rep. Phil Gramm of Texas, perhaps the CDF's most conservative member, sees vast political-economic rewards in "back-loaded" tax cuts — cuts that go deeper in future years. Like back-loaded spending programs enacted in the Lyndon B. Johnson era, they constitute a Fabian strategy of social revolution.

The CDF alternative entices senior Reaganites — but, contrary to fears of edgy Treasury officials, not Stockman. As budget director, Stockman naturally is interested in any deficit-reducing scheme. But as a supply-sider and Republican politician, he sees dangers in what Hance and Gramm propose.

The CDF alternative would permit only 5 percent before the 1982 election. That 5 percent compares with Reagan's campaign pledge of 20 percent and his actual proposal of 15 percent. While the CDF alternative would please the bond traders, it would do nothing for the blue-collar working man. That is not what Jack Kemp, David Stockman or Ronald Reagan intends.

Politics aside, the CDF alternative flunks the test for supply-side tax cuts as set by founders of the supply-side movement. The heart of their ideology is reduction of marginal tax rates as an incentive to productivity. The supply-siders want a "front-loaded" tax cut — as much rate reduction as quickly as possible — for economic as well as political reasons.

Any number of compromises is possible — say, a 7.5 percent rate cut a year beginning Oct. 1, 1981. But the danger for the White House, if Reagan and the boll weevils cannot agree, is an all-Democratic coalition. Hance is under intense pressure from the Democratic leadership not to deal with the White House, and will confer this week with the ways and means chairman, Rep. Dan Rostenkowski.

It is not Rostenkowski, however, but one of his committee members — Rep. James R. Jones — who looms as the principal Democratic actor. Jones, regarded as a moderate conservative until this year, is licking his wounds from the budget fight and ready to challenge Reagan again. He is working closely with ways and means liberals on a bill that would be tilted toward investors and that would not cut individual taxes until Jan. 1, 1983 — a beautiful bill in the eyes of the bond boys, the boll weevils and maybe a good many Republican congressmen as well.

The easy way for Reagan to avert a Jones-led Democratic triumph is to buy the CDF alternative. But in so doing, he would be following the same path of pain travelled by Herbert Hoover and Jimmy Carter — seeking vainly to cut budget deficits by increasing taxes. The odds today are that Reagan will resist this, and as the great communicator, take on the bond traders, the boll weevils and some of his own Republicans to convince them that it is the road to ruin.

Barbs

Sure sign that you've become a success is when they begin to call you "temperamental" instead of just plain lazy.

Pioneering, '80s style: Having to raise the garage door by hand because the remote-control gizmo has a dead battery.

An optimist is a fellow who expects his wife to laugh once again after hearing his favorite yuk for the 35th time.

Hidden-employee department: The unseen person who puts our books out of balance just before the auditors arrive.

Charley Reese

Black America's Leadership

I have always contended that black Americans are in fact like white Americans, including the fact that they suffer often from lousy political leadership more interested in exploitation and pocket padding — and, these days, ideology — than in improving economic and social conditions of blacks.

Years ago, especially in the South, every black community had its big cheese who would sell the black vote for cash at election time. To some extent this is still true, although there is more competition among the would-be big cheeses.

The "cash election" practice was a disservice to blacks for two reasons. One, the big cheese kept most of the money himself. Two, when a politician can buy a vote for cash, he figures he doesn't owe his "constituents" anything.

A second disservice has been marrying the black vote to the Democrats. When a group of voters can be taken for granted two things happen: The party that can take them for granted no longer feels it must do much to keep their support, and the party that can count on not getting their vote tends to write them off.

The strongest possible position for black voters to be in is to be a swing vote, for which both parties would have to compete and which neither party could afford to take for granted or to write off. But so far no black leadership has emerged with enough smarts to sell that proposition.

Black Americans are still being-ill-served by some of their self-styled leadership. Every time someone warns — and it's usually a person who claims to be sympathetic to blacks — that there will be riots if this or that is not done, he is maligning black Americans. He is asserting a racist proposition: that blacks, unlike whites, turn criminal when they don't get what they want from the political process.

This is patently false. In Liberty City, in Watts, or anywhere else there has been a riot, the vast majority of black people in those areas did not riot. They were, in truth, victims of the rioters. Furthermore, whites also riot. The anti-Vietnam War era provides the most recent example. Patriots with an inclination toward bigotry should ponder who was the most patriotic, the black Americans fighting in Vietnam or the white Americans back home calling it a racist war?

I noticed that the federal lawyer who succeeded in getting a federal court to block Florida's functional-literacy test claims the test is unfair to black students who began their schooling in Florida's segregated system. What an insult that is to the thousands of dedicated black educators and in the thousands of black students who emerge from that system to become scholars, scientists, educators, business executives and military leaders.

There again the white liberal is asserting a racist proposition; that blacks must be taught by whites and in the company of white students in order to get a decent education.

This kind of button-down-collar racism is just as bad as the open-shirt variety. The last thing in the world that black youngsters need is paternalism from the white establishment. The last thing they need is to be encouraged to use racism as an excuse for laziness and lack of discipline. For there again, black youngsters are no different from white youngsters, who are equally ingenious in thinking up excuses for their laziness and their lack of discipline.

Racism will be licked when we finally start treating each other as just people, not as members of groups.

In The Past

One Year Ago

Renovation plans for the Logansport schools are not new as the possibility of elementary school closing was mentioned as far back as 1955, it was pointed out today.

Logansport High School Seniors Erick Storkman and Michelle Samuels are the 1979-80 best actor and actress academy award winners. They were also presented the Civic Players outstanding senior awards during the 10th annual LHS Academy Awards.

Ten Years Ago

A partial mail embargo has been put in effect as a result of the rail strike. It was announced by W. F. Meyer, assistant postmaster at the local post office.

Care and treatment of emotionally disturbed children at the Logansport state hospital is far superior to facilities provided for children at other mental hospitals in Indiana, said Mrs. Vernon B. Smith.

Twenty Years Ago

The local Salvation Army will conduct an open house next Friday as part of the celebration of National Salvation Army Week.

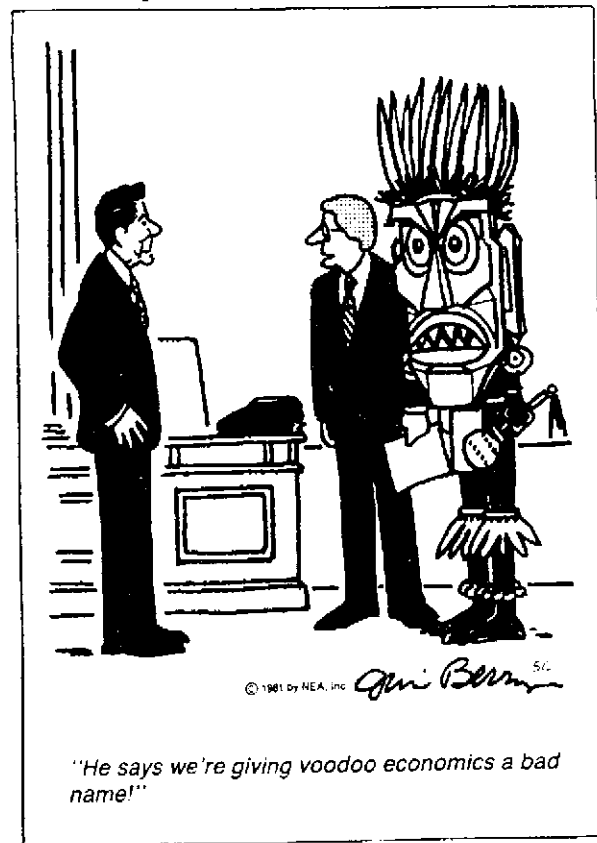
Robert L. Justice has been chosen from several hundred applicants for the speech division of the National High School Institute at Northwestern University as a non-scholarship member.

Fifty Years Ago

Logansport will be host to 600 delegates at a three-day state meeting of Christian church congregations, beginning today.

The senior class play, "Skidding," presented at the high school auditorium before a capacity audience, was one of the best acted plays ever produced by local talent.

Berry's World



THE PHAROS-TRIBUNE

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