

UNITED STATES



OF AMERICA

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 91st CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

VOLUME 115—PART 5

MARCH 7, 1969, TO MARCH 19, 1969

(PAGES 5499 TO 6920)

SENATOR MONDALE PROPOSES A JUNIOR-COMMUNITY COLLEGE "TRANSITION CURRICULUM" AND A "NATIONAL PROFESSOR CORPS" TO IMPROVE HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUNG AMERICANS

Mr. WILLIAMS of New Jersey. Mr. President, the distinguished Senator from Minnesota (Mr. MONDALE) spoke last week to the legislative affairs luncheon of the American Association of Junior Colleges meeting in Atlanta, Ga., for their 49th annual convention. Citing the need to expand higher education opportunities, he said that the location and flexibility of junior and community colleges make them "uniquely equipped to add a new opportunity structure if they are willing to do so." Community colleges around the Nation continue to demonstrate that they are best equipped for the job of extending and expanding much-needed educational opportunities in the country. Their low cost to students, proximity to those they are designed to serve, flexible admissions arrangements, strong counseling and advising services, and varied educational programs, are responding to the lack of relevance in traditional education.

In his remarks to the American Association of Junior Colleges, Senator MONDALE noted the growing awareness of Americans to the problems of the disadvantaged, and he said that a renewed effort by junior and community colleges would come "just when the Nation is beginning to see that this must be done." These remarks underscore the need for the Congress to act this year on S. 1033, the Comprehensive College Act of 1969. Senator MONDALE, as one of those who joined me in sponsoring this legislation, is now proposing a "transition curriculum" and a "national professor corps" as an additional means to improve higher education.

Mr. President, this speech constitutes an important contribution to the continuing discussion of how this Nation must meet society's growing demands on the education process. I therefore ask unanimous consent that Senator MONDALE's speech before American Association of Junior Colleges at their legislative affairs luncheon in Atlanta, Ga., be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the address was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REMARKS OF SENATOR WALTER F. MONDALE, LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS LUNCHEON, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF JUNIOR COLLEGES, ATLANTA, GA., MARCH 5, 1969

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,

"It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, . . .

"It was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, . . .

"It was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,

"We had everything before us, we had nothing before us, . . .

It would be appropriate to offer these words as a judgment on what it is like to plan a program of higher education according to Federal authorizations and then have to operate that program according to Federal appropriations.

It is also tragically just to characterize them as a description of what it is to be young and poor today in America.

Dickens' words were a characterization of France before the Revolution. They were also a comment on 19th Century England and its stark contrasts in life. We know, too, that in the last third of the 20th Century we are the builders and custodians of a society in which life contrasts loom large and sometimes ominous.

We lead a society in which nearly everyone seems to agree that 14 years of education will soon be standard for all.

Still, in that some society, millions of young people have temporarily or permanently lost much of their capacity to redeem the promise of those 14 years—

Because their minds have been irreparably damaged by malnutrition in the first key years of life, perhaps even before they were born;

Because their young lives have been spent in environments of deprivation and despair that have left them uninspiring and hopeless at best, and enraged at worst;

Because their school experiences have too often helped to make it plain that they are unwanted in school as well as out—segregated, failed, selected out of the school system just as they are selected out of good food and decent homes and adequate protection under law.

It is the goal of many of us in this room to place a 13th and 14th year of education within commuting distance of every urban and rural high school graduate.

But for many of their families, there is no way for the breadwinner to commute from the centers of our metropolitan complexes to waiting jobs in the suburbs.

For many of their families, there is no way to commute to government surplus commodities, food stamps, and health care.

Since last fall I have been deeply involved in hearings before two special committees of the Senate—the Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs and the Special Subcommittee on Indian Education. The testimony I have heard there describes conditions almost beyond comprehension:

Infants and children suffering from rare diseases ordinarily found only under conditions of mass malnutrition and starvation in developing countries.

Adolescent Indian children contemplating suicide and committing it, at rates many times the national average.

Insensitivity, ignorance, and clear hostility toward the special needs of young people who have been left out of the heritage that most of us take for granted.

Foolishness in an age of wisdom. Darkness in the season of Light. Cold despair amid the flowering of hope. Expectations of nothing amid the possibility of everything.

The worst of times and the best of times. These young people, too, if they survive intact, will seek a 13th and 14th year.

A United States Senator who is a member of the Senate Subcommittee on Education must speak with that perspective today. I come to you not as a college administrator or board member, but as an elected public official.

We are all committed to an opportunity structure that works for every young American. But we are also conscious that our structure does not presently work for all of our young people.

So it is from a practical political viewpoint that I want to look briefly at junior colleges and community colleges today—assessing some information, making some tentative proposals, and seeking your help in building a workable opportunity structure that our voters will accept.

At least 650,000 able college-age Americans are not in school today. The primary reason is lack of income—they cannot finance the

costs of attending college. The figure is estimated by some sources to be well over a million.

By 1972 this number will more than double—to at least a million and a half—and this is a conservative estimate.

Despite burgeoning enrollments, furthermore, the fact is that the *percentage* of high school graduates who enter college is inching forward at a snail's pace. Over the past ten years that percentage has increased by only four-tenths of one per cent per year. If figures were available to compare percentages of college attendance over a ten-year period among young people whose families had incomes at the poverty level, I wonder what kind of progress they would show.

Furthermore, the figures on able students who fail to attend college for financial reasons do not tell the whole story. Experience indicates that many more who say they are not interested in attending college might change their minds if they could hope for the money to do so.

One way to measure the loss of potential talent is to consider the dropoff in college entry by able young people at the lower end of the socio-economic scale. The figures are impressive.

According to the Project Talent studies of 1968, 92 per cent of young men in the highest achievement quartile and the highest socio-economic quartile enter college in the year following graduation. But for young men of equal ability in the lowest socio-economic quartile, the figure is only 61 per cent—a difference of 31 per cent.

The dropoff is even more dramatic for young women, from 87 per cent to 42 per cent. Put together, these percentages mean that high ability students—as measured by achievement—from families with the lowest incomes are only about half as likely to enter college as "high ability" students from families with the lowest incomes.

When the well-known facts on low achievement by able but deprived young people are taken into consideration as well, the dropoff—or dropout—is even more significant.

The long-range financial loss to these opportunity structure dropouts is astonishing. The Bureau of the Census estimates that there is a \$50,000 difference in average lifetime earnings of a high school graduate compared to that of a person who has attended one to three years of college. Another \$14,000 can be added for those who complete four years. In this country, this country could make no better long-term contribution to economic development than an investment in making higher education more available.

The disadvantaged—the ghetto black, the poor white, the Indian, and the Mexican American, the migrant and the rest—may actually be consigned to the poverty cycle if education cannot be acquired. People with inadequate educations have poor work experiences and become the parents of children who follow in their footsteps. Moving hundreds of thousands of persons through the high school and into the college can help to break this cycle.

It seems to me that the junior or community college is uniquely equipped to take on an important part of this effort, if it is willing to do so. Its greatest advantage is not its low cost, though that is important. Nor is it the tradition of being open to all students, though that is absolutely vital to opportunity.

The real key to the door of opportunity in the junior-community college is its combination of location and program flexibility.

If we have learned anything from our poverty efforts at all, it is that we must be able and willing to go directly to those who need help and adapt to their needs. To the extent that junior and community colleges are willing to do that, they have real power to expand the opportunity structure.

We are discovering that disadvantaged young people need to be identified as early as the seventh grade in order to make sure that they do not turn away from college before they know what they can do. Going to young people where there are means reaching out, diligently and systematically, to identify potential college students and encourage them to stay in school until they graduate.

Going to young people where they are means seeking out those who have already dropped out and helping them return to school or gain high school equivalency certificates that will admit them to college. Perhaps it means special community college programs for dropouts with the cooperation of the local school system—or even without it. It certainly means counselling and selling the advantages of further education to young people who have given up or may give up on that opportunity. It probably means talking about available financial assistance, and it may mean helping young people find ways to earn and save college money—in spite of daily demands to use available money for immediate needs.

Last fall, for example, I learned of Project HELP, sponsored by the General College of the University of Minnesota. This effort serves, among others, some 175 mothers who are receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

The college is helping these mothers join the opportunity structure through ingenious use of counselling and small amounts of assistance from Educational Opportunity Grants and National Defense Loan funds. Project HELP has parlayed available resources into college attendance. Of the 80 who entered college in 1967, only one has withdrawn; 35 have earned "A" or "B" averages.

These women, of course, are not high school freshmen and sophomores. But the principle can be applied. This program has assessed the resources of the community and worked with them to make opportunity possible.

No institution of higher education is in a better position to do this kind of work than the junior-community college, if it wants to do so. It is located where needs and resources are. It is locally visible. It can make promises and then follow them through.

The second great advantage of the junior-community college is its program flexibility once these students are admitted.

Junior and community colleges have traditionally offered a variety of programs.

All or most of these might be suited for the individual disadvantaged students who enroll.

But an additional kind of program, perhaps combining portions of several others, is specially needed for the disadvantaged. I like to think of it as a "transition curriculum."

Bringing substantial numbers of disadvantaged to a campus carries a host of problems for both the student and the school. Some students are not "ready for freshman work." Others may find the campus a foreign and frightening environment, although a visible community college should help in this regard. Still others find it difficult to make long-range plans, or continue to have financial difficulties.

The versatile junior-community college, under these circumstances, can combine effective counselling, experimental and exploratory course assignments, sympathetic tutoring, and "stretching out" of academic requirements—a transition curriculum for those who need it, assigned on an individual basis.

Some students may require a semester or a year of transition work before they are ready to take on a traditional two-year curriculum as ordinary freshmen.

Some may require a two-year transition curriculum which combines special programs with the first year of the regular offerings, before they take on sophomore work.

Some might need as much as three years of special and regular programming to complete a typical two-year course.

This transition may require unusual combinations of courses before the disadvantaged student makes a decision about his program. The college should be able to provide them.

This transition will require directing students into programs that are not locally available. The college should be able to provide it.

No doubt you see program and service needs for those students which I can only hint at. The college should be able to provide them.

That kind of program requires a special kind of institution. Special kinds of institutions require special kinds of faculties—free of bigotry and academic intolerance, committed to the idea that their school is an opportunity structure, sensitive to individuals in a time when the emphasis is on masses.

Some teachers—a few—are born that way. They have to be found. Other teachers—perhaps most of them—must be trained to do this work. Recruiting and training junior and community college staffs is absolutely vital to the opportunity structure.

This effort may require a "National Professor Corps"—finding talent during the late undergraduate years and early graduate years and counselling them into this special kind of work. Many of them will have few or none of the traditional academic trappings.

Teaching in junior and community colleges may be a transitional period for some graduate students, who will find junior college teaching more rewarding than working as teaching assistants in our universities.

Perhaps the junior colleges will be able to train and use the great untapped talents of thousands of men and women, old as well as young, who are seeking new careers away from the ruts of business and homemaking, or are looking for new meaning in their lives. Some of these—perhaps many of them—can be found in the communities the colleges serve, if adequate recruiting and training programs can be developed.

They might be found among the disadvantaged and formerly disadvantaged.

They must be found, wherever they are. They can be found if the community and junior colleges become visible, effective opportunity structures.

For finally, a community-junior college can do that kind of job only if it commits itself to being an opportunity structure. It can do it only if it views itself as a community resource and dedicates itself to opportunity for the people of its community.

This must be an effort to select young people in instead of selecting them out.

It will not measure its success by the size of its dropout rate—except possibly inversely.

Real opportunity for higher education is a difficult assignment. But I think some colleges in this country can succeed at it. Someone in this country *must* succeed at it. That kind of effort will win the support of the Congress and the voters who elect it.

Senator Harrison A. Williams of New Jersey is the author of the Comprehensive Community College Act of 1969, recently introduced in the Senate. That legislation takes a large step toward building an opportunity structure framework. I am happy to be a co-sponsor.

The bill provides a Bureau of Community Colleges in the U.S. Office of Education to help states update, reorganize, or create statewide plans for post-secondary education.

It will encourage the development of comprehensive curriculum programs for the educationally and economically disadvantaged.

It will assist training and development of faculty and staff. It will expand research. It will encourage tuition-free admissions or adequate financial aids programs.

In addition, I'd like to see a well-prepared

proposal to use junior and community colleges to seek out able young people early in high school, tell them about opportunities for further education, and assist them in staying in school until they graduate.

This nation has the ability to provide a college opportunity structure to all who can use it. We have the resources to pay for it.

We frankly have not had the commitment to do it. But I think it is coming.

Within the past eight years more and more Americans have seen a darkness in this country that few thought existed. But television camera has focused its keen eye on the backwaters and slums of this country.

Our people know now that the problems of the poor are their problems. They may not like it, but they know it. They are responding to it partly from sheer self-interest. But basically their values are solid, humanitarian, and sound.

The developing junior college-community college movement comes along at just the right time, I believe. I hope that together we can take advantage of this climate.

SEWARD OPPOSES WHITTIER CONSTRUCTION

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, the city of Seward, Alaska, recently suffered a major blow to its economy. The Alaska Steamship Line announced that it was suspending service to the port. As a result, one of the major sources of revenue to the city was lost. The dock and rail facilities of the town will stand idle. The Alaska Railroad will obtain its freight elsewhere, by way of the ports of Anchorage and Whittier.

The railroad is considering the construction of another slip at Whittier as a standby facility for the use of its roll-on-roll-off rail barge operation. I understand the Railroad now has available the money necessary for such construction. I oppose this construction. I take this opportunity to make clear to the Senate and to the administration that I do not believe the Alaska Railroad should add to its facilities at Whittier. Whittier is a dead end. If a standby roll-on-roll-off dock is needed, let it be built at Seward.

I have urged Mr. John Manley to delay decision on the Whittier slip. Funds have been available for its construction for several years. There is no reason why construction cannot be delayed a bit longer so that reasonable people may sit down, plan and discuss Seward's future. The Alaska Railroad has substantial investments in Seward. Seward's interests are also the Alaska Railroad's.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a resolution recently approved by the city of Seward be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the resolution was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

RESOLUTION 738, CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA

Whereas, the United States Department of Transportation operates the dock and rail facilities at the Port of Seward through the Alaska Railroad and also operates the dock and rail facilities at the Port of Whittier through the same agency which is under its control; and

Whereas, The best information available to us at this time shows planning by the Alaska Railroad to close the facilities at Seward because of the suspension of service by Alaska Steamship Lines, and at the same time spend further public monies to enlarge and increase the facilities at the Port of