

Dwight R. Lee

The Uncertain Prospects for Educational Vouchers

THE MOST EFFECTIVE thing we could do to improve the quality of education in America is to make educators compete for the consumer's dollar. As long as educational consumers have to pay taxes to support public schools, whether they send their children to these schools or not, and have little choice in the public schools their children do attend, our public school professionals will continue to view their students as captive clients. Our public educators have taken advantage of this situation by paying less attention to the concerns of their customers and more attention to perquisites of their profession.

There is a simple and effective way of reforming public education so that the tonic of competition would invigorate educational policy: the institution of an educational voucher system.¹ Although educational vouchers would significantly improve the quality and efficiency of education, in an important respect the voucher proposal is a rather modest one. Government would still be the primary source of financial support for education, but with this support taking the form of vouchers or tax credits given to consumers rather than to the schools.² Under a voucher plan schools would be provided by private individuals responding to the publicly financed, but consumer controlled, demand for education.

The key to understanding the advantages of the voucher approach is the additional control this approach would give to the consumers of education. Under the current arrangement consumers of public education have some control, but not much. This con-

trol has to be exercised indirectly through political influence rather than directly through market decisions on whether or not to patronize a particular supplier. It is well known that the diverse interests of consumers are difficult to aggregate and transmit through the political process. Even strongly-felt consumer demands often fail to translate into effective political demands since wielding political influence requires a level of organization consumers seldom achieve. In contrast, suppliers of a publicly provided service, such as education, are well organized through professional associations with a dominant interest in decisions affecting their professional prosperity. This makes it relatively easy to transmit supplier-oriented concerns through the political process. Not surprisingly, it is public school professionals who, under current arrangements, have the greatest control over educational programs and policies.

This situation would change quickly under a voucher system. Consumers would find it easy to transmit their educational demands effectively through the exercise of market choices. Educational professionals would find that they had to either provide a service of the type and quality desired by the consumer, at a competitive price, or experience a loss of patronage. Educational quality would improve, educational costs would

Dwight R. Lee is Professor of Economics and holder of the Ramsey Chair of Private Enterprise at the University of Georgia. He has also contributed to *Modern Age*.

decline, and educational consumers would be better off.

It does not require clairvoyance to predict the response of public school professionals to such a shift in control. Educators whose interests are attached to existing public school arrangements quite accurately see proposals for educational vouchers as a major threat to be opposed at all cost. There is little hope of convincing the public school educators that vouchers are the best way of realizing the goals of educational quality which they so vociferously support. Few responses are more natural than the sincere belief that those things which threaten our private interests also threaten the public interest. In the effort to achieve genuine educational reform it simply has to be accepted that the public education lobby will oppose the voucher system.

In order to lay the foundation for a more detailed discussion of the current problems with the public schools, and to explain how the source of these problems creates obstacles to genuine reform, it will be helpful to consider an analogous, but hypothetical situation.

The Tale of Tax Mart

Imagine a successful movement to have all local governments establish grocery stores for the purpose of providing, at no charge, a proper diet for everyone. The cost of this service would, of course, be paid for through higher taxes. The stated rationale for this movement would be that nutrition is too important to be left to the whimsy of an uninformed public, and the new arrangement would enhance the well-being of all by giving nutritional experts more control over our diets. People could continue shopping at private food stores if they chose to do so, but they would still have to pay the same amount of taxes to support the provision of public food. Almost everyone, having to pay anyway, would assume initially that it was to their advantage to get their food at the local Tax Mart.

This arrangement would immediately reduce the competitive pressures operating

in the retailing of food. If costs went up because salaries were increased, more administrators and specialized nutritional consultants were employed, and more professional conferences and workshops were attended, there would be little concern that consumers would shift their patronage to private stores. The additional costs would not be reflected in prices observed on the grocery shelves. Instead they would show up in higher tax payments that would have to be paid regardless of where one did his shopping. Tax Mart professionals would also face little pressure to stock a large variety of food in order to appeal to the diverse taste of consumers, to offer convenient hours, or to provide fast and courteous checkout. Service could decline significantly before it would pay the consumer to purchase food at private stores and in effect pay twice. In short, those working for Tax Mart would, under the new arrangement, be able to devote more attention to doing the things they thought were important and less attention to doing the things their consumers thought were important.

As long as public grocery stores are locally financed and controlled, however, there would still be some noticeable influence exerted by the consumer. The cost of the public grocery stores would have a significant impact on the local government's budget, and attempts to pass inefficiencies along to the taxpayer in the form of higher taxes would be noticed, at least by some. Also, it is easier for a group of concerned taxpayers to have an impact on local politicians, who can be voted out of office by relatively few voters, than is the case with politicians elected by larger constituencies. Moreover, it is easier to vote with your feet at the local level than at the state or national level. If local taxes become too great a burden, or local service too much a disappointment, it is easier to move from one local jurisdiction to another than from one state, or country, to another. But it is really not necessary for people to move out of a locality due to high tax rates in order for taxpayer mobility to exert some control over local politicians. People are constantly

moving from one region of the country to another for reasons that have nothing to do with local tax rates. In deciding exactly where to settle, however, there will typically be several local political jurisdictions from which to choose. In such cases the local tax rates and the quality of the local governmental services will often be decisive considerations in the location decision. Local governments that want to maintain their tax base will have to keep their activities at least somewhat responsive to the citizen consumer.

Those who administer and work for Tax Mart would not be unaware of the restrictions imposed upon their professional discretion by total reliance on local financing. Clear advantages would be seen in obtaining state and federal financing. One advantage, from the Tax Mart perspective, is that state and federal funding would greatly diffuse the tax burden imposed by Tax Mart operations. This would serve to further weaken the incentive and the ability of those who are paying the bill to exert control over the type and quality of the service being provided. Also, by allowing local taxpayers to shift part of the burden of paying for their food to others, state and federal financing would make it easier to obtain local support for expanding local Tax Mart operations. Of course, taxpayers in each locality would end up paying for part of the public food services received by those in other localities. But this fact will do little to dampen demand for local service since each taxpayer would recognize that the amount he has to pay for the Tax Marts serving others will be unaffected by the size of the Tax Mart serving him.

State and federal financing of local services also reduces the control citizens can exercise over the taxing and spending proclivities of local politicians by voting with their feet. More state and federal funding inevitably means more state and federal taxes, taxes that are unaffected by the choice among political jurisdictions within a particular state. The larger the overlay of state and federal taxes, the less the relative difference in tax burdens between jurisdictions with high local taxes and those with low

local taxes. So higher state and federal taxes to finance the local Tax Mart would likely mean greater support from local taxes as well. The private interests of those employed by Tax Mart, as well as the other special interests that benefit from Tax Mart activities, would be well served by moves to centralize the financing of the local public grocery stores.

The arguments for more centralization, however, would not be made in private interest terms. Rather, proposals for more state and federal financing would be presented as desperately needed measures for advancing the public interest. For example, it would be argued that more centralized financing is needed to provide those who live in poorer political jurisdictions the same quality of public food service as that received by those living in wealthier jurisdictions. Public interest statements of this type are always used to camouflage special interest proposals in such a way as to make them more acceptable politically. The success of this type of camouflage both helps explain, and is explained by, the advantage narrowly focused interests have over widely diffused interests in the political process. Because the rather concentrated interests of the Tax Mart professionals, and of their special interest allies, would be advanced by more state and federal financing, one could expect movement in this direction to take place despite the fact that it would work against the general interests of taxpayers and consumers.

As the financing of local Tax Marts became more centralized, the tendency toward higher costs and a lower quality of service would become more pronounced. Additional layers of bureaucracy would provide employment opportunities for more public food professionals. And additional professional certification would be required of these professionals as they looked for highly visible barometers attesting to their expertise. Entry level positions would require undergraduate degrees which feature such courses as Meat Management, Deli Display, Psychology of the Food Consumer, and the History of Eating. Salary increases

and promotion would be based on graduate credits obtained from in-service courses, or on the successful completion of a masters degree or Ph.D. in Public Food Administration. Before long a significant percentage of those who work as public food professionals would have advanced academic degrees.

College professors who teach these courses, and who lobbied for making them a requirement, would recognize that public funding for grocery stores is the primary source of the demand for their services. These educators would join their students as special-interest advocates who believe strongly that the public food establishment is essential to the nutritional well-being of the country.

Other special interests would also find it tempting to use public food policy for realizing advantages, or promoting causes, that would be difficult to do in the absence of politically concentrated power. The more centralized the political control, the more impact single issue groups will have if they are successful politically. And the more centralized the control, the fewer levers these single issue groups will need to control in order to be a success.

One group, for example, may feel strongly that public grocery stores should not carry foods that have religious significance, as this would violate the constitutional separation of church and state. This group may be successful in getting Kosher foods, Christmas cookies, and Easter candy banned from all Tax Marts. Another group would feel that allowing people to shop in the neighborhood Tax Mart promotes racial segregation. This group may be successful at pushing legislation which results in many shoppers having to use a public grocery store on the other side of town. One can be sure that the egg lobby, the pork lobby, and the beef lobby will be trying to use their political muscle to influence Tax Mart policy in ways that favor their products. Political opposition can be expected, however, from a coalition of the health food lobby and the animal rights activists who, if they got their way, would restrict the selection at Tax Mart to such things as stone-ground granola bread, prune

juice, bean sprouts, unflavored yogurt, lima beans, and brown rice. Product selection and store policies would soon have little to do with the exercise of consumer choice in the market place. Increasingly people would find that the only effective way to exert influence would be to engage in political combat. The provision of food would become a socially divisive issue as emotional conflict dominated Tax Mart policy. The voice of the placid fellow who just wanted a better selection of pork and beans and his favorite six-pack of beer would be ignored.

Indeed, the service would decline to the point where some consumers would begin shopping at private grocery stores. The ability of private stores, charging full price for their products, to compete successfully against the fully subsidized Tax Mart would be undeniable evidence that the consumers' interests were being given scant attention in the tax-supported stores.

As the evidence became unmistakable that Tax Mart was failing to provide acceptable service, many reforms would be considered. Most of the suggested reforms would involve more federal government funding, more control over professional qualifications by the National Public Food Workers Association, or stricter educational requirements for public food professionals, as the best way to improve service and restore the public's confidence in Tax Mart. There would be a few, however, who would recognize these suggestions as more of the same policies that caused the problems in the first place. These reformers would see the advantage in shifting control over food decisions away from government and back to the consumer. They would see the answer to many of the problems facing the public grocery stores in a bold new program called Universal Food Stamps (UFS). While accepting the prevailing view that food is of such national importance that the government should finance a minimum acceptable level of food consumption for everyone, UFS advocates would see no reason why the food actually had to be provided by the government. Rather, once people received their governmentally supplied food stamps they could spend them

anywhere they chose. As private grocery stores competed against the Tax Marts (which no longer received direct public financing) for these food stamps, it would be argued that the quality of food would improve, as would the selection and the service.

In comparison to the other suggested reforms, however, the UFS suggestion would receive little serious attention. And most of what it did receive would be negative. Those whose careers were tied to existing public food arrangements, along with those who had been successful at promoting their causes through public food policy, would, quite correctly, see UFS as a threat to their wealth and political influence. Of course, the arguments made against the UFS proposal would mask the private interests being protected behind a rhetoric of public interest concerns. We would be told that the implementation of UFS would destroy the public food system as private stores would spring up only in the rich suburbs where rich patrons could supplement their food stamps, leaving financially starved remnants of the public stores to serve those in the poor neighborhoods. Shopping segregation would once more rear its ugly head as people would put the convenience of their neighborhood stores ahead of higher social goals such as racial integration and harmony. Also, if left to the capriciousness of individual choice, the public would soon be taken in by slick advertising and would begin polluting their bodies with junk foods. The public food lobby would see no end to the social havoc which would be caused by the UFS approach to food financing.

With the exception of a few academics there would be little vocal support for the UFS proposal. Most consumers of food would be ignorant of, and apathetic toward, public food policy, and few of them would have any real understanding of how a UFS policy would actually work. It would be difficult to find a special interest group which would find it worthwhile to expend its political influence in support of the Universal Food Stamp program. The Association of Private Grocery Stores would be the most

likely lobbying group to lend political support to the UFS reform, but more likely its members would be fearful that government money coming their way in the form of food stamps would soon be followed with government controls that would leave them worse off.

The best the UFS advocates could hope initially to maneuver through the political process would be a local experiment for the purpose of gauging the feasibility and effectiveness of the food stamp approach. Unfortunately, the design and implementation of this experiment would necessarily be carried out by government, and be subject to the influence of those special interest groups which oppose UFS. The result would be so many special interest restrictions on the experimental food stamps that little would be learned except that they do not work anything at all like the UFS advocates had argued they would. For example, criteria would be imposed that would restrict the use of food stamps in existing Tax Marts. There would be no mechanism for rewarding personal achievement in those stores that attracted food stamp customers or for penalizing those in stores which lost customers. Food stores which did find favor with the consumer would not be able to expand to satisfy the demand, with excess demand being rationed over all stores by the authorities. Furthermore, restrictions would be imposed on the use of food stamps for the purpose of promoting an ethnic mix in the grocery stores which the authorities considered appropriate.

Predictably, the food stamp experiment would be judged a failure by those who saw consumer choice as a threat. The dominance of these interests in the political arena would remain a major obstacle to the hope that food stamps would be implemented on a wide scale. Even if food stamps were implemented widely, this would likely indicate nothing more than that the dominant special interests had decided that they could better secure their positions and promote their crusades through food stamps than through existing arrangements. Since the special interests could never accomplish their objec-

tives with a "clean" food stamp system, the danger would be that any politically viable UFS would impose just as many restrictions on consumer choices as the Tax Mart System it would replace.

The Moral of the Story

The tale of Tax Mart is in fact directly analogous to the situation as it actually exists in the field of education. Education, apparently being too important to be left to the private decisions of the consumer, has been entrusted to professional educators. These professional educators, who are chosen by government agencies and paid with tax revenues, provide education at no cost to all children from kindergarden through twelfth grade.³ Consumers of education can, of course, attend private schools, but this requires that they pay twice for education since tax obligations are not reduced if the private option is chosen.

The observable implications of stymied competitive pressures in education are the same as those in the hypothetical case of food retailing. For example, the student-teacher ratio is lower in public schools than private schools, and is currently dropping.⁴ It is the rare private school that requires teaching certificates, but it is easy for private schools to dismiss those who prove to be incompetent, something that is almost impossible to do in the public schools once a teacher has tenure. Public schools are becoming increasingly top-heavy with administrators and special-help professionals. For example, the number of classroom teachers in the public schools as a percentage of the instructional staff has declined from 96 percent in the early 1930s to 86 percent in 1983.⁵ Even after allowing for inflation, the cost per student in the public schools has increased more than fivefold.⁶

Furthermore, and as one would expect, protection against competition has also had adverse effects on educational quality. The dramatic drop in the average SAT score, declining from almost 1000 in 1963 to slightly under 900 today, is well known. And this decline has been most pronounced among

students who attend public schools. It has been argued by public school supporters that this difference reflects nothing more than the fact that the public schools are required to take everyone while the private schools are at liberty to admit only the better students. But the facts suggest strongly that, if this provides an explanation at all, it is a very incomplete explanation. According to one recent study, 60 percent of the parochial private schools do not expel a single student during a given academic year, and in the inner city of many major metropolitan areas, the majority of the students of these parochial schools are black. The important difference between the public and private schools are explained by such considerations as the following: private school students are 50 percent more likely to put in an hour's worth of homework each night than are public school students; 70 percent of all private school students are enrolled in an academic program compared to 34 percent of public school students; a third year of language is taken by 14 percent of the private school students compared to 6 percent of the public school students; chemistry is taken by 53 percent of the public school students but by only 37 percent of the public school students; geometry is taken by 84 percent of the private school students and by only 53 percent of the public school students.⁷ It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, on average, private schools provide better education than do public schools, and they do so at lower cost.⁸

Just as in the Tax Mart example, a highly decentralized system of public schools does allow for some competition; the public education lobby, however, sees its interests served by greater centralization. This can be accomplished by increasing the size of school districts or increasing the amount of financing these districts receive from state and federal governments. Public educators have favored both of these centralizing moves, and with noticeable success. Since the early 1930s, the number of school districts has declined from 130,000 to 16,000.⁹ Before the 1930s, local government provided over 80 percent of school financing, with state

governments providing the remainder. The local share has declined steadily ever since, with the state share taking up most of the slack. Although the proportion of public school financing provided by the federal government is still small, this proportion has also been increasing in recent years. In 1983, only 42 percent of the public school bill was financed by local governments, with the states financing approximately 50 percent and the federal government supplying the remaining 8 percent.¹⁰ And the pressure from the public school lobby continues for yet more funding from the state and federal governments. For example, the National Education Association (NEA) has drafted and lobbied for what it calls the "American Defense Education Act" which, if passed, would authorize \$10 billion in federally financed block grants to local school districts.¹¹

Lacking the competition needed to forge a meaningful connection between the performance of public school teachers and the economic reward they receive, other measures of merit have to be relied upon. From the perspective of those in the education industry, an ideal measure is one which is easily quantifiable and lends apparent credibility to the claim of professionalism. Academic success, as measured by the degrees acquired or number of post-graduate credits earned, serves nicely in this regard. Not surprisingly, academic credentialism is the most important consideration, after seniority, in determining pay raises for public school teachers. Over 50 percent of all public school teachers today hold master's degrees.¹² Unfortunately, there is little incentive for anyone to effectively monitor this degree-granting process in order to ensure that educational quality is being maintained. If anything, the incentives all go in the other direction. Graduate courses in education requiring little or no intellectual effort on the part of the student provide an easy way for school administrators to evaluate personnel, a painless path to more "prestige" and pay for public school teachers, and a rationale for the existence of departments of education which are lowering the average academic

quality of colleges around the country.¹³

The interest administrators and professors in departments of education have in maintaining public education as it is now structured is obvious. If the survival of individual elementary and secondary schools was made to depend on their ability to satisfy the consumers' demand for quality education, then the survival of college departments of education would depend on their ability to turn out graduates with solid intellectual skills. Few departments of education, as they are now staffed and structured, would survive with this requirement.

Neither have the opportunities offered by political, rather than consumer, control of the public schools gone unnoticed by other special interest and single issue groups—groups that possess power disproportionate to their membership size when operating through the political process. The public schools have provided a tempting target for a whole host of groups which appreciate the advantages government compulsion has over persuasion in the effort to advance particular goals and points of view. And once one group begins pushing its agenda through the public schools, hostile reactions from those with equally strong opposing views are inevitable. It should surprise no one that the public schools have been turned into battlegrounds over such socially divisive issues as prayer, sex education, creation versus evolution, racial balance, and the censorship of "dirty" books. With education policy being buffeted with such emotional issues, there can be little wonder at the strong evidence indicating that education has been neglected in the public schools.

Neither can there be any wonder, given the decline in the quality of education provided in the public schools, that many parents are sending their children to private schools even though this means paying for education twice. In recent years over 5 million elementary and secondary students have been attending private schools. This represents almost 11 percent of the student population.¹⁴ This is clear and compelling evidence that the educational demands of a large segment of the public are being ignored

or poorly served by the public schools. Also revealing are the results of the Gallup surveys of the public's opinion of education. Since 1974 respondents have been asked to rate public schools by the standard school grading scale of A through F in the annual poll. The top two categories, A and B, were chosen by 48 percent of the respondents in 1974. By 1977 this percentage had declined to 37 percent, where it has held fairly constant. At the other end of the scale, the percentage assigning the public schools grades of D or F rose consistently through the late 1970s.¹⁵

Clearly there is widespread sympathy for reform of public education. For the most part, however, this desire for reform has not focused on proposals that call for fundamental changes in current arrangements and practices. Coming as it does from the rather diffused interests of the education consumer, the desire for reform may well be satisfied for the time being with platitudes such as a "national commitment to excellence in education." And certainly any move that goes beyond platitudes and toward genuine educational reform is sure to be opposed vigorously by the organized, and politically influential, public school lobby.

Consider the response to the one suggestion for real reform in education that has been put forth—the voucher proposal. Despite the fact that educational vouchers have the potential for transferring control over educational decisions back to the consumers, only a small percentage of the population is even familiar with the voucher concept. Although almost all parents are concerned about the education of their children, with educational policy being determined through the political process most parents quite rationally feel that they can have little influence on the type of education their children receive in the public schools. Rational ignorance and apathy best explain the impact, or lack of impact, the general public has had on public school policy. Advocates of the voucher approach had assumed that Catholic schools, which now face the heavily subsidized competition of the public schools, would provide

organized support for vouchers. This has turned out to be incorrect. The view of the Catholic schools seems to be that the opportunity to compete for governmentally financed vouchers would come at an unacceptably high price—extensive government regulations and controls.¹⁶ It would be hard to argue that the Catholic schools are wrong in this judgement. The public school lobby has resisted strongly, and effectively, any move toward the voucher approach, including localized experiments with vouchers. In those very few cases in which a voucher experiment has been permitted, so many regulations and restrictions were applied that private schools were either disqualified from participating, or chose not to participate.

Of the federally funded voucher experiments, the one that ran the longest and which has been deemed most successful was conducted in Alum Rock, California. But, as one might expect, restrictions were placed on these vouchers which minimized the competitive pressures they imposed on public school professionals, and which attempted to promote social objectives that had little to do with education. Teachers, for example, did not have to worry about loss of income if their enrollments declined. They were given priority in teaching jobs at other schools and given makeshift work at full pay until such jobs were available. On the other hand, teachers who succeeded in attracting additional students were not rewarded with higher salaries. Those schools which parents preferred were not able to expand to meet the extra demand. Those students who did not get their first choice were simply assigned to other schools. A local employee certification council required that any private school had to satisfy a host of standards on such things as teacher education requirements, pay and fringe benefits, and faculty-student ratios. This made it effectively impossible for a private school to enter into competition for the vouchers. In addition, the vouchers were addressed to the issue of income distribution, with financial incentives for schools to enroll poor children and restrictions on parents' ability to supple-

ment their voucher. The concern over racial balance in the schools resulted in further restrictions on the Alum Rock vouchers.¹⁷ Experimental educational vouchers have been anything but the "clean" vouchers the advocates of the voucher approach have in mind.

Whether we are considering the hypothetical case of Tax Mart or the reality of our public school system, the logic of special interest politics remains the same. Once decisions are transferred from the market place to the political arena the interests of suppliers soon dominate the interests of consumers.

What are the prospects for the enactment and implementation of a voucher system which actually transfers control from the professional educator to the consumer? From the discussion so far it would be easy to conclude that the prospects are bleak. The same political influence that has allowed the public education lobby to manipulate educational policy to its own advantage will be used to oppose meaningful reform, since reform would threaten those advantages. The special interest political power of the public education lobby is extremely strong and can easily cause one to despair of any hope for genuine educational reform. But the special interest influence of the public school establishment is a dark cloud which has a silver lining.

The political success of special interests almost always depends upon a facade of public interest. If that facade is penetrated the ability of politically organized groups to capture private benefits at public expense is severely limited. This suggests that advancing the goal of educational reform through vouchers requires more than sound economic arguments on the educational benefits

vouchers would provide. Such arguments, while valuable at one level, will do little at the political level to overcome counter-arguments by the public school establishment if the public perceives only noble motives behind those arguments. The public school lobby is well aware of the advantage image can have over substance in politics, and it has been very good at presenting an image of the existing system of public education as essential to the wellbeing of our country and resting on the shoulders of dedicated public servants making heroic personal sacrifices for the sake of our children.¹⁸ The political effectiveness of the public school lobby would begin to weaken with the recognition that behind the public interest rhetoric are the special interest pressures of power politics.

It is this view of the vulnerability of the public school lobby that has motivated the current essay. The emphasis has been on the private interest motivations that lie behind the political opposition to educational vouchers rather than on the advantages of educational vouchers themselves. These advantages are real and significant, and deserve the extensive discussion they have received elsewhere. But mounting a strong offense will be futile if the defense is even stronger. The enormous strength of the public school lobby's defense against educational vouchers has had nothing to do with the logic of their arguments and everything to do with their ability to hide their special interest politics behind a facade of public interest rhetoric. Weakening that defense requires piercing that facade and exposing the public education lobby for what it is—an organized special interest using political influence to realize private gain at public expense.

1. See Milton Friedman, "The Role of Government in Education," in Robert Solow, ed., *Education and the Public Interest* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1955).

2. For the purpose of this paper there is no advantage in distinguishing between the voucher approach and the tax credit approach to the financing of education, and henceforth we will simply refer to vouchers.

3. Not to mention the fact that, for those who qualify, education continues to be provided at little or no charge at both the undergraduate and graduate levels of college.

4. See Phil Keisling, "How to Save the Public Schools," *The New Republic*, November 1, 1982, 27-32.

5. See Milton Friedman's *Newsweek* column, December 5, 1983.

6. Ibid.
7. These figures are found in Keisling, 27.
8. This is roughly the conclusion reached by James S. Coleman, Thomas Hoffer, and Sally Kilgore in their book, *High School Achievement: Public, Catholic, and Private Schools Compared* (New York: Basic Books, 1982). This book is the subject of the article by Keisling.
9. See Friedman, *Newsweek*, December 5, 1983.
10. See Denis Doyle and Chester Finn Jr., "American Schools and the Future of Local Control," *The Public Interest*, Fall 1984, 77-95.
11. The official designation of the bill is H.R. 5609, 98th Congress, 2nd session. For the NEA's perspective on the bill see "NEA Creates ADEA Momentum," *NEA Today*, December 1983, 8.
12. See Thomas Toch, "How To Attract Better Teachers," *Journal of Contemporary Studies*, Summer 1984, 59-67.
13. As one would expect, there is tremendous special interest resistance to any move that would weaken or circumvent this teacher education process. See, for example, Virginia Inman, "Certification of Teachers Lacking Courses in Education Stirs Battles in Several States," *Wall Street Journal*, 6 January 1984, 23.
14. See Donald E. Frey, *Tuition Tax Credits for Private Education: An Economic Analysis* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1983), 8.
15. Ibid., 105.
16. See Denis P. Doyle, "The Politics of Choice: A View From the Bridge," 227-55, in *Parents, Teachers, and Children: Prospects for Choice in American Education* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1977).
17. See E. G. West, "The Prospects for Educational Vouchers: An Economic Analysis," in Robert B. Everhart, ed., *The Public School Monopoly: A Critical Analysis of Education and the State in American Society* (San Francisco: Pacific Institute for Public Policy Research, 1982), 369-91.
18. There are, of course, many dedicated and competent individuals working in our public school system, and so the above characterization of public school employees is not a complete distortion. Successful political propaganda always has to have some connection with fact. But this characterization of the existing public school system ignores the private interest motivations which underlie the politics of public school policy.

It should be noted in passing that dedicated and competent teachers and administrators have nothing to fear from educational vouchers. Indeed they would do better under a voucher approach since the ensuing market competition for their skills would create a system of genuine merit pay.

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