

Parochiaid Is A Threat To Public Schools

EDITOR:
Really a letter to the supporters of parochiaid.

Is it possible that the supporters of parochiaid are not aware of the benefits of an ever-improving public school system to our nation?

Is it possible that the supporters of parochiaid are not aware of the proliferation of private school systems which have accompanied dual educational systems supported by the state?

Is it possible that the supporters of parochiaid are not aware of the sectarian bitterness which will result if we do not keep church and state separate . . . especially in a nation such as ours which has different and diverse religious groups?

Is it possible that the parochiaid supporters are insensitive to the basic profanity of the American tradition of separation of church and state? It might be interesting to reflect on the origin of this insensitivity.

It seems incredible to me that anyone involved in the tradition of our American history and politics can conceive of leading others to support their particular religious philosophy. And please do tell me about the poor parochial students not getting their fair share. The public school system is also their school system.

If you feel exclusive about your faith, this is your privilege, and it is your privilege to use your parochial system. But it is not your privilege to ask others to support this exclusivism.

The American public school system is the greatest unifying institution in our country. There are very few other countries with a public school system which offers the masses so much. In addition, it is that place where young people of various backgrounds and beliefs work, study, and play together. Remember, this is one of the reasons we have tried to eliminate racial segregation in the schools.

At its best the public school system in the United States could be the most positive contributing factor our nation has. You should be working to make "it's best" instead of threatening its existence.

Is it possible that the parochialists of the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed

churches has so isolated the membership of these congregations that they are not aware of the success other religions have had in instructing their members on the tenets of their various faiths. Certainly, the purpose of religious schools must be the indoctrination of a particular faith. There is only one thing similar to the parochial student which is available to the public school student and that is a specific religious indoctrination.

Proponents of parochiaid have suggested that the public school system is godless and without moral instruction. The origin of this "holier than thou" attitude is obvious. Sympathies of the exclusive religious philosophies of the faiths proposing parochiaid.

I certainly do not deny anyone the right to possess exclusive religious philosophies, but I do object to being asked to have state funds used to support such institutions. Could parochial supporters have any objection to the John Birch Society establishing their own schools to teach anticommunism and anticatholicism? This is a definite violation of the principle of separation of church and state. Have the parochial supporters

stopped to reflect over the Pandora's box which they are helping to open?

Not only do the proponents of parochiaid propose to ignore this basic American principle, but in the zeal they have to further the public school system, they have compounded dual educational systems supported by the state?

Is it possible that the supporters of parochiaid are not aware of the sectarian bitterness which will result if we do not keep church and state separate . . . especially in a nation such as ours which has different and diverse religious groups?

The origin of racial segregation is racial prejudice, many dollars, hours, effort, and even lives have been spent during the last 10 years to bring about the decline of racial segregation in housing, business, and schooling. It has been a difficult fight, but experience has shown us the injustice of and the need of action in racial segregation, and the possibility of bringing understanding between people whose place of residence and education is determined by their race.

Yet in the face of this, parochial supporters propose that the state finance parochial aid which is in fact religious segregation, the origin of which rests with religious prejudice, the most hypocritical of all our human prejudices.

Is it possible that the critics of religion are correct when they claim that religion divides more than it unites?

ROSEMARY E. OLSON
LIVONIA

Hunt Auditorium Is Suggested Tribute

EDITOR:

The very sad news of the death of James Hunt of the music department at North Farmington High School has just reached me.

It is doubtful to me that Mr. Hunt will never put out of his excellent musicians in the new auditorium now in the process of being built at the school. He

has done remarkable things with the students in the past under the most impossible circumstances from a theatrical point of view, and I'm sure that he was keenly anticipating what could be done when the odds would be on his side for a change.

The musicals at North have been quite popular for the quality of their production. The school, as well as the community, will sadly miss Mr. Hunt.

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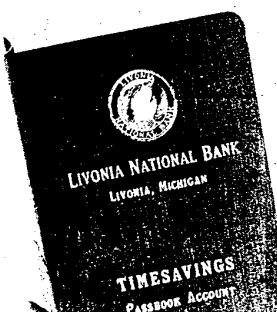
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