

America
losing
potential
teachers

The nation is turning the present flood of college-age persons down the spillway, when it should be using it for generators and reservoirs, according to Terry Herndon, executive secretary of the National Education Association (NEA).

Herndon made his remarks in releasing information on teacher education enrollments which accompanied a study done recently by the NEA research services.

The study indicates that, for the first time in recent years, the number of college graduates prepared to teach will probably drop this year, starting a trend expected to continue indefinitely "if trends toward improved school staffing continue."

The situation, according to the study, has resulted from publicity on the difficulty of getting jobs in teaching and what may be the end of the historic trend of annual increase in the proportion of college-age persons enrolled in higher education.

Expressing concern that the nation is already beginning to lose its potential resources through the present wave of college-age persons, Herndon said:

"There is a very little evidence that the nation is taking any actions necessary to utilize this tide of college-educated manpower to increase the nation's annual progress toward desirable goals, or to effectively employ it now so that the pool of qualified manpower will be adequate to the demands in the 1980s when the size of the college-aged population will decrease each year."

Recent enrollment data for teacher-preparation programs indicate that students have responded to the reality of the current shortage of jobs for beginning teachers, the study said.

Evidence from 67 of the 124 largest teacher-preparation institutions suggests that the number of graduates completing preparation to enter teaching in 1973 may be smaller than in 1972 by more than 8,500, according to the study.

It says that teacher education graduates made up nearly 36 per cent of the total graduating classes.

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