

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Education report cites progress, hope for national teacher crisis

WASHINGTON — The nation is making "slow, but steady progress" recruiting more and better teachers as salary increases are outstripping inflation, the Carnegie Foundation reported Sunday.

Ernest Boyer, the president of the foundation, said its new review of school statistics from each state provides "grounds for cautious hope."

But he added, "the challenge confronting teaching in this country is far greater than its achievements." He urged immediate action to tighten professional standards, boost teachers' pay further and recruit stand-out students for the profession.

Boyer released an update of a report called, "The Condition of Teaching: A State by State Analysis," first issued in August 1983.

Its author, C. Emily Feistritzer, director of the National Center for Education Information, said the latest data on teacher salaries, test scores and other topics "dramatically demonstrates that all the brouhaha over teaching is paying off in slow, but steady, progress."

Teachers lost 12 percent of their purchasing power in the previous 10 years, but their salaries rose 6.2 percent in 1984-85 and 6.9 percent last year, when inflation was only 3 to 4 percent each year, the report said.

Citing National Education Association figures, the report said the average classroom teacher made \$23,546 in 1984-85. The median household income for teachers was about \$30,000 in 1983, or roughly "the same as that for all college graduates," it said.

Four percent of teachers — 85,000 — had a household income of \$15,000 or less, compared with 16 percent of the working public, it said. At the opposite end of the income scale, 13 percent of teachers — 275,000 — were in households with incomes of \$50,000 or more, compared with 20 percent of the working public.

"Teacher salaries are higher than those of state and local government employees, and both are outstripping the inflation rate," it said. "Yet a smaller portion of ever-increasing school spending goes for teacher's

salaries."

Last year, 36.6 percent of public school budgets went for teachers' pay, compared to almost 42 percent in 1972-73.

"The SAT scores of prospective teachers are edging up faster than the national averages," it said. "The gap between the SAT scores of high school students who say they are going to major in education...and the national average SAT score narrowed from 80 points in 1982 to 70 points in 1985.

"More people seem to be going into teaching than was predicted," the report said. "The number of teacher graduates in 1983 was smaller than the estimated number of additional teachers needed in 1984-85.

Center for Education Statistics, a federal agency, has projected the nation needs 1.65 million additional public and private school teachers between now and 1993, or two-thirds of today's teacher workforce of 2.4 million.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is based in Princeton, N.J. Ms. Feistritzer's center is headquartered here.

Arafat vows PLO won't give up

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — PLO chief Yasser Arafat, responding to criticism that he favored peace with Israel, said in an interview broadcast Sunday that the Palestinian people will "never let the gun fall from their hands."

And in Jordan, King Hussein told a military graduating class that "the Arab flag" will soon fly over Jerusalem.

Arafat's statement on Abu Dhabi television followed a declaration he made only last week in which he denounced violence against unarmed civilians anywhere and pledged to punish violators of a PLO commitment against terrorism outside Israeli-occupied territory. The interview with Abu Dhabi television was conducted Friday in Cairo, Egypt.

Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, said in the interview that his earlier Cairo declaration was "a diplomatic riposte to the fierce U.S. and Zionist campaign against the PLO."

The declaration was criticized by some Arabs who contended he had dropped the Palestinian armed struggle in favor of peaceful accommodation with Israel.

Arafat said the contents of the declaration represented "truthful respect for international legitimacy, which distinguished between resistance against an enemy and terrorist operations against innocent civilians outside the occupied land."

But, he said, Palestinian resistance remained committed to "escalating armed struggle inside the occupied territories."

In Amman, Jordan, Hussein said in a speech that Arabs will soon rule Jerusalem, a city with a population of 400,000. Israel captured the Old City of eastern Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and later annexed it.

"It will not be long before the day

that the Arab flag will fly over Jerusalem and the voices (from the mosques) will cry 'God is great' and the bells will ring from the churches there," Hussein said Sunday at the Royal Military Academy in the Jordanian capital.

The king, in alliance with the PLO, has proposed peace with Israel in exchange for Israel's withdrawal from all lands occupied since the 1967 war.

Peace, the king said, should be based on "right and justice" and should restore "the occupied territories to their legitimate owners."

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has expressed willingness to negotiate with Hussein and with Palestinians who renounce violence. But Israel says it will never give up Jerusalem, which is a holy city for Jews, Christians and Moslems.

Israel also opposes Hussein's call for a U.N.-sponsored peace conference, although Peres has indicated he would accept some sort of U.N. support for direct talks with Israel.

Harvest increases elevator blasts

OMAHA — Nebraska State Fire Marshal Wally Barnett warns that the large volume of harvested grain being poured into elevators increases the chance of grain-elevator explosions at this time of year.

Robert Frye, vice president of a Kansas City company that manufactures elevator-safety equipment, agrees, saying last weekend's elevator explosion that killed three people in Marion, S.D., is not likely to be the last explosion of this fall.

A member of the National Academy of Science study group on elevator explosions, Frye said none of the study group's 1982 recommendations for elevator safety has been implemented at the federal level.

Proposed Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations have not been approved for nearly three

years, he said.

"It will take another major tragedy to get us off dead center," Frye said.

The danger of explosions is high now, said Frye, Barnett and Donald Richards, regional vice president for the Grain Dealers Insurance Co. The more grain there is and the more it is moved, the more likely an explosion, they said.

At an elevator, grain dust serves as explosive fuel. It is created every time grain, especially corn, is moved between bins, trucks, grain cars or wagons.

With constant use of machinery at harvest, a hot bearing, worn conveyor belt or hot metal can cause the spark needed to ignite a blast.

"It's a nervous time for us," said Richards. "In spite of all the precautions, you can't entirely eliminate the risks."

In 1980, there were 45 elevator explosions nationally, causing 10 deaths and 57 injuries. In 1981, there were 50 percent fewer blasts but 12 deaths. In 1983 and 1984, there were 14 elevator explosions each year.

Since 1980, there have been 15 elevator explosions in Nebraska, killing 10 people and injuring 18. Four people were killed in a Nov. 16, 1982, blast at the Raymond elevator.

Many grain companies are willing to install new safety equipment but are waiting for the proposed OSHA rules to be approved, said Frye.

Rep. Doug Bereuter, R-Nebr., said it is time to move on the safety rules. It should not have taken this long to settle on regulations to make elevator explosions less likely without being so tough they put small feed and grain dealers out of business, he said.

Budget trimming continues this week

LINCOLN — Trimming at least \$17 million from the \$828 million state budget appears certain, although state senators are cautious in predicting what new revenue bills may be passed during the special session of the Nebraska Legislature this week.

Sen. Jerome Warner of Waverly, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, said the failure of both a proposed income tax increase and an increase in the state cigarette tax would require lawmakers to look to massive program cuts and tax increases when they return for their regular session in

January.

Even if both are enacted, senators will need to consider \$12 million to \$13 million in program eliminations or revenue steps during the next budget go-round, he said. Without the two bills, the figure climbs to \$44 million.

If all goes as Speaker William Nichol of Scottsbluff plans, the Legislature will finish Friday with its second 1985 special session, which began Oct. 17.

Senators are to return from a three-day weekend Tuesday to take up the income and cigarette tax bills on

second round, then consider motions to bring the budget bill back from final reading for amendments.

LB10 would increase the state income tax rate from 19 percent to 20 percent of federal liability for 1985 only. It would generate an extra \$17 million in revenue during the rest of the fiscal year.

LB3, which would increase the state cigarette tax from 18 cents a pack to 23, failed to advance to final reading last week in part because a number of senators were absent. It will have a second chance Tuesday.

In Brief

Farm groups form national coalition

ST. PAUL, Minn. — In what they called a move to strengthen their legislative clout, leaders of 15 farmer organizations representing 11 states Sunday announced the formation of a single national group.

"There are many farmers and ranchers in the U.S. who see an enormous and immediate credit crisis in rural America, and as we see it there are no solutions that really address the problems from a farmer's perspective," Toni Kelley, co-chair of the newly formed Farmers' Fair Credit Campaign, told reporters at a news conference.

The announcement of the new group followed a weekend meeting attended by 40 farm activists from such groups as Groundswell, COACT, the Dakota Resource Council, and the Nebraska Center for Rural Affairs.

Farmers' Fair Credit Campaign has been established on four principles: Farmers should retain the title of their land and lenders should remain solvent; the program should be tied to increasing commodity prices; the program should address a need for a debt readjustment, and the program should be developed immediately and should be targeted to the family farm.

The group's main objectives are to reform the farm credit system and to pass comprehensive debt-relief legislation written by farmers, Kelley said.

Half approve of unproven cancer clinics

NEW YORK — Half of all Americans believe cancer clinics should be allowed to operate in the United States, even if the treatments they offer are opposed by established medicine, according to a Media General-Associated Press poll.

The nationwide telephone poll of 1,412 respondents also indicated that slightly more than half would seek treatments rejected by the medical community if they were stricken by serious diseases.

Four in 10 of the respondents said they feared one deadly disease more than any other; for the vast majority, that disease was cancer.

The second most commonly feared disease was AIDS, acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

Each year, hundreds of Americans receive unproven cancer treatments, from drug therapy to massive doses of vitamins. If the unproven treatments involve drugs, the patients generally have to leave the United States to receive them.

Many of the patients of these clinics contend the treatments saved their lives. But others die, and some doctors fear that patients who abandon traditional treatments may be shortening their lives.

If stricken by a serious disease, 52 percent of the respondents said they would seek "a medical treatment that promised a cure" even when the treatment was rejected by the established medical community.

Girls to rejoin boys on playground

WARWICK, R.I. — Segregation by sex on a school playground to protect boys from the kicks and punches of girls may be ending, now that a treaty has been worked out.

Principal Richard Sousa agreed Friday to allow the boys and girls of Oakland Beach Elementary School to play together again on a trial basis beginning Tuesday, students said.

The agreement followed a meeting between a Sousa-appointed committee of fifth- and sixth-grade boys and girls.

"He left us alone for 15 minutes or so to work on solutions on how we thought we could solve the problem," said sixth-grader Leslie Fudge.

Under the agreement, the schoolyard will be united as of Tuesday, but will be segregated again if fighting resumes. If that happens, Sousa told the students he would set aside a portion of the playground for peaceful mixing of boys and girls.

The segregation was imposed when boys at the 430-pupil school complained they were being "kicked where it counts" and beaten up by girls when they went outside during recess periods. Sousa said the boy-girl fights were going on almost daily since the school year began.

Royal couple 'touched' by U.S. welcome

WASHINGTON — Prince Charles said Sunday that he and Princess Diana are "enormously touched" by their welcome in America and hinted that they may head for the wide open spaces of the West on a future visit.

"There are lots of places I'd like to get to," the future king of England told reporters in his first news conference in years. "I'd love to go to Wyoming — the Queen has told me about it." Queen Elizabeth II visited Wyoming in 1984.

The prince and princess of Wales worshipped earlier Sunday with thousands of Americans, toured a museum full of British art treasures, then visited the Virginia hunt country estate of Paul Mellon, the philanthropist whose father once served as ambassador to the court of St. James's.

Both Charles and Diana appeared somewhat tired midway in her first visit to the United States, coming on the heels of a two-week tour of Australia.

Charles said he hoped the couple's visit would serve "to show the strong bond between the British and the Americans." And "We're very much overwhelmed by the reaction" so far, he said.

Spanish demonstrate against NATO

MADRID, Spain — Thousands of people marched and danced down the streets of four Spanish cities on Sunday in festive protests against Spain's membership in NATO and the presence of U.S. troops in leased bases.

The demonstrations began Saturday night and were organized by a committee representing communist, pacifist and ecologist groups.

Bands played and youths danced as protesters moved down streets in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Gijon. No incidents were reported, and few police were visible along march routes.

Crowd estimates varied widely. Madrid authorities put the crowd there at 15,000. Organizers said nearly 50,000 took part.

Spain became the 16th member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in May 1982, under a centrist government. The Socialist Party staged a successful election campaign in October 1982 which called for withdrawal from NATO and a referendum on the issue.

Since taking office, however, Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez has said Spain should remain in NATO although outside its military command structure. The government promised to hold the referendum by early next year.