

REPORT

THE INSTITUTE OF POLITICS PROVIDES A SETTING FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO ACCESS UNIVERSITY RESOURCES OF RESEARCH AND EXPERTISE AND EXAMINE ISSUES IN A COLLEGIATE ENVIRONMENT.

How to Get to the Midfield Terminal *A Seminar on Transportation*

The Institute of Politics in conjunction with the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and the Department of Political Science sponsored "The Midfield Terminal, How to Get There, Now and Into the 21st Century," on January 17. The seminar included presentations by a technical panel and responses from a panel of elected officials, followed by open discussion.

Jack Wagner, president of Pittsburgh City Council and chair of the Institute of Politics advisory committee on transportation, welcomed the participants and stated the central theme of the seminar: "The concern is that the central city is not adequately connected to the new airport."

Malcolm Prine, vice chair of the transportation advisory committee of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission, served as moderator. "The airport," he stated, "is an economic anchor for the region. The missing piece is transportation availability, and in that we are way behind. Denver, with whom we are in competition for the same kind of economic development, is a year behind us in building a new airport, but they are ahead of us in the infrastructure development which supports it."

Donald Carter, principal at UDA Architects, said that the building of an airport is a 50-year project. "We've been talking about a new airport since the 1940s," he said, "but the quality of development around the airport gets less attention."

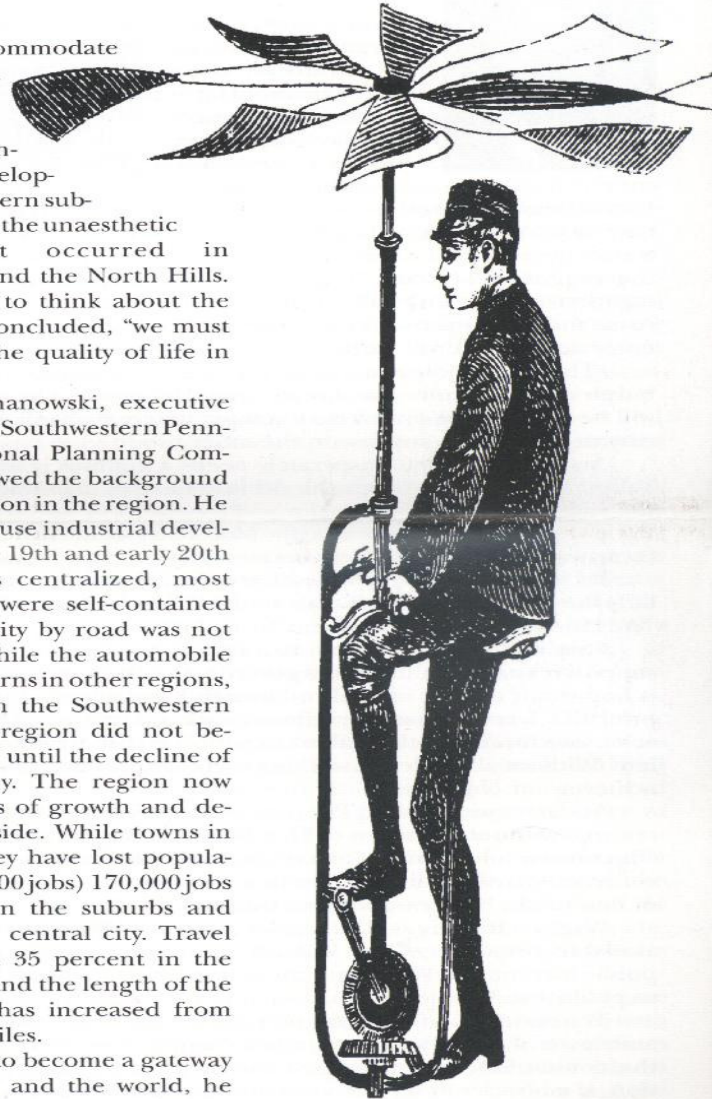
Carter recommended the creation of a master plan to coordinate development for all four townships that surround the airport. Development that is clustered, that concentrates on "pedestrian pock-

ets," can accommodate growth and protect the environment. By concentrating development, the western suburbs can avoid the unaesthetic sprawl that occurred in Monroeville and the North Hills. "As we begin to think about the airport," he concluded, "we must think about the quality of life in the region."

Bob Kochanowski, executive director of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission, reviewed the background of transportation in the region. He said that, because industrial development in the 19th and early 20th centuries was centralized, most communities were self-contained and accessibility by road was not important. While the automobile changed patterns in other regions, accessibility in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region did not become an issue until the decline of heavy industry. The region now contains areas of growth and decline side by side. While towns in the Mon Valley have lost population (and 50,000 jobs) 170,000 jobs were added in the suburbs and 51,000 in the central city. Travel has increased 35 percent in the past 20 years and the length of the average trip has increased from seven to 10 miles.

We need to become a gateway to the nation and the world, he said, listing three imperatives to change:

- 1) the globalization of transactions
- 2) fundamental changes in the manufacturing process from large, standardized orders to smaller, customized ones
- 3) the necessity to ship by air



To do this we need both highway and transit improvements. "It will take more than business as usual. It will take new initiatives."

Kochanowski summarized the provisions of the Surface Transportation Act of 1991, passed by

continued on page 7

Institute of Politics

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INSIDE

Transportation 1
Interviews — 2-3
Commissioner Tom Foerster
Commissioner Frank Mascara
Councilman Jack Wagner
John P. Robin

Education 4
Interviews — 4-5
Representative Ron Cowell
Lauren Resnick
John Witte

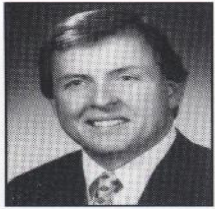
Communications 6
Interview — 6
Councilman Jake Milliones
Internships 6

Interview — 7
J. Dennis O'Connor
Calendar 8

THE CITY

Without Good Transportation, There Is No Economic Growth

AN INTERVIEW WITH JACK WAGNER



"Transportation," says Pittsburgh City Council President Jack Wagner, "is an important issue, because without good transportation there is no economic growth.

"Transportation systems must constantly be evolving as part of ongoing economic development." Wagner cites the Parkway North as an example of how growth follows a new transportation system.

"The important issue that faces the City of Pittsburgh now is connecting with the world through the new airport. We are behind in improving the road and mass transit network that will connect the new airport to the heart of the region—downtown Pittsburgh. We'd better get our act together or we won't benefit from this fantastic opportunity. Areas such as eastern Ohio and northern West Virginia will have faster access than will eastern Allegheny County.

"The major job centers in the region—downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland—are already well-connected. The airport will be the third. We need to develop a system that will make it easy to get to from any one to the other two."

Another area that desperately needs a highway is the Mon Valley, Wagner says. "With the decline in steel manufacturing the valley is left with two major assets—the river and a skilled workforce. If we want to develop the Mon Valley we need access. No company wants to locate there because they can't get in and out."

Projects like these, he stresses, require cooperation, particularly the cooperation of officials at higher levels of government. "We have to get people to focus."

Funding is a big problem that can't be solved without the support of the state and federal governments, Wagner asserts. "It is important that all officials understand and agree—focus on priorities. It requires an intricate network and balance of people at various levels of government to solve a transportation problem. Without all the levels working together properly you won't achieve your objective."

And it requires vision. The new airport would not have been realized without the vision of Tom Foerster, Wagner continues. "But now we must connect mass transit and build roads to it. And construction of the airport may be easier than the construction of new roads, bridges, and mass transit."

Wagner stresses realistic vision, and a willingness to use available resources. "The Wabash tunnel, for example, is a public investment. We rebuilt the tunnel. It should now be put to public use."

Transportation fuels economic growth but it also adds to the ambiance of the city, he continues. Wagner envisions a system that could add scenic and tourist interest while relieving congestion. If a hovercraft service were developed between points on the Mon, Allegheny, and Ohio close to the Golden Triangle and a tram constructed to travel from Mt. Washington to the stadium area, passengers could travel from downtown Pittsburgh to Station Square via the subway, take the Incline to Mt. Washington, continue on the tram to the stadium area, and return to Station Square by hovercraft.

The busway system (South Busway, East Busway, and new Airport Busway) must be interconnected and extended to Oakland, Wagner asserts. This would provide a direct mass transit link from Wilkinsburg to the airport, Overbrook to Oakland, or Oakland to the new airport. The result would be greater use of the mass transit system, less pollution, and less vehicular congestion.

But, according to Wagner, the highest priority has to be better access to the new Pittsburgh International Airport. To achieve transportation goals requires vision, he says—realistic vision that utilizes the available resources. ☐

THE COUNTY

Cut the Red Tape

AN INTERVIEW WITH TOM FOERSTER



"Transportation is as important a public service as police and fire, and should be regarded in the same way," says Allegheny County Commissioner Tom Foerster.

"Without an adequate public transportation system, we won't be able to reach the potential of the community. You have to look at money spent on transportation as an investment in new jobs and in the environment that will be repaid many times over."

He asserts that both the public and elected officials have to be convinced of the importance of the transportation issue. "The problems on the federal level are just awful," he reflects. "At one time we were moving in the right direction; for public transit, the federal government paid 80 percent, the state 16 percent, and local government the rest of the cost of construction. Now the federal government is impounding monies in the Highway Trust Fund in order to reduce the deficit, balancing the budget in a phony way. Two months ago the Surface Transportation Act provided increased funding, but in the president's budget it's gone again. We wonder if we'll ever get it."

Foerster advocates a system that would shorten the timeline of construction projects by involving the private sector to a greater degree. "We have to learn to cut the red tape," he comments. A turnkey project (one in which a private contractor designs and builds a highway) could produce a busway to the new airport in six months, to be ready by the time it opens instead of the 2 1/2 years it would take with preliminary engineering studies, consultation with the federal government, final engineering studies, and so on."

He cites the Southern Expressway—which was constructed in four sections on a modified turnkey basis with a taskforce of local, state, and federal participants to monitor it—in about a year. "If you can cut the red tape," he says, "you can perform miracles."

To this end he is meeting with federal and state officials.

The county's commitment to transportation is significant, says Foerster, but so is the unwillingness of state and federal government to fund transportation. Some 4 mills of local taxes go to PAT each year for operating and capital costs. But construction projects can not be financed by property taxes. Although the federal government collects a 13 percent tax on airline tickets, it does not contribute to the upkeep of airports, he continues. In order to pay for maintenance and improvements the county recently had to seek authorization for user fees for the new airport.

Some years ago a bill was entered in the legislature by House Majority Leader K. Leroy Irvis that would have created a regional transit authority. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Transit Authority would have been financed by the state with some contributions from counties. "Unfortunately," Foerster comments ruefully, "surrounding counties were not supportive."

A way must be found, he says, to build the components of the transit system that will be needed in the future. Projects such as the Spine Line and the Airport Alternative remain as feasibility studies because of the lack of financial commitment.

"The public has to understand," Foerster stresses, "that without investment in transportation we will not be able to create new jobs and maintain the jobs we have." ☐

THE REGION

If We Don't Hang Together, We Will Most Assuredly Hang Separately

AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANK MASCARA



On Commissioner Frank Mascara's agenda, transportation is "at the top of the heap."

Chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners since 1980, Mascara also serves as chair of the transportation policy committee of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission and as a member of the Institute of Politics advisory committee on transportation.

Major studies, he relates, have shown that there is a direct relationship between transportation and mobility and economic development. As evidence he points to the development of Peters, Cecil, and North Strabane Townships along the Route 79/Route 19 corridor in western Washington County, citing \$40 - \$50 million in construction in the past year.

The construction of the Mon-Fayette Expressway would bring the same kind of economic stimulus to the Mon Valley, he contends. Mascara reasons that if you're a business person, the ability and cost of moving goods is of paramount importance. If land is available where there are good roads and infrastructure, businesses are more likely to locate there.

Mascara says the Mon Valley Expressway must be built because "there are a lot of people along that 78-mile stretch that are hurting. The expressway is the only thing that will bring them out of the economic doldrums."

The primary access to the Mon Valley is Route 51. "Every planner should have to travel Route 51—I call it the Burma Road—three times a week," says Mascara.

We need to build for the future, he emphasizes, because "our forefathers didn't do a very good job. Most of the raw materials and products came and went by rail and water. Route 51 was sufficient for the needs of the Mon Valley, even during the 1950s and '60s. People only used it to go to Pittsburgh. Most of the towns were pretty self-contained. So when we went to a service industry we didn't have access."

The Mon Valley, Mascara says, "could easily have been included in the Interstate Highway system. If the Mon Valley Expressway had been built before the bureaucratic maze, it would have cost one-fourth what it will today."

But transportation is an issue in which local government is dependent on the state and federal governments. It requires commitments from various levels of government—and close cooperation. "Funding follows the path of least resistance. If we don't agree in the region, the money will go East to an area where there is consensus. The region needs to be cooperative, not parochial," he says.

Mascara cites what he calls ambiguity on the part of some individuals who are responsible for planning in the region. "When you talk about the Mon-Fayette Expressway they say it will bring too many people in to the Pittsburgh area. When you talk about a Beltway they say it will take too many people out of the area," he says, referring to this as a "transportation oxymoron."

Mascara feels that the lack of a beltway has constrained development around the central city. He refers to Washington, DC, and Columbus as cities with a second tier of development around a beltway.

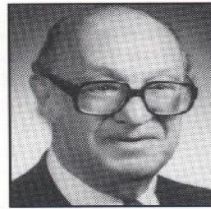
Although he sees some hope with the recent enactment of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), he notes with an air of frustration that more than \$30 billion of the Highway Trust Fund was used to reduce the federal deficit.

Mascara emphasizes the importance of regional cooperation. Quoting Benjamin Franklin, he says: "If we don't hang together, we will most assuredly hang separately." ☐

THE PLANNERS

Transportation Makes Everything Possible

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN P. ROBIN



"Without transportation," says Jack Robin, chair of the Urban Redevelopment Authority, "civilization would disappear. We would go back to hunting and gathering roots."

He notes that Pittsburgh originally developed as a city because of the transportation opportunities afforded by the rivers. The 19th century was marked by canal and rail travel. The theme of the 20th century

has been the development of newer modes of transportation—the rise of the automobile and highway—almost matched by the development of airplanes and airports.

Historical and demographic trends affect the way transportation is planned for and provided, Robin continues. While a subway was authorized in 1906 by City Council and bonds were issued, it was never built. Now an underground Light Rail System (LRS) from downtown to Oakland is under discussion. Discussion of an improved Mon-Fayette road system is not new either. Robin recalls that the business community in McKeesport and Charleroi once opposed road improvements, wanting people to stay home to shop.

The organization of the Port Authority of Allegheny County was a rescue mission in response to demographic trends, Robin says. The Pittsburgh railway was collapsing because the public was abandoning it for automobiles. By merging 31 small transit systems, the county preserved mass transit. "We almost killed it off," Robin observes. "Now we need to bring it back to life."

Robin, a former chair of the Port Authority of Allegheny County, says there is a theory that GM led a conspiracy to eliminate mass transit. "But these days," he adds wryly, "everybody has a conspiracy theory."

Mass transit is really a function of mass, he says. The lower the population density the more difficult it is to provide. Mass transit flourished when people had to be close to work and lived in the city. It really died with the advent of the auto and suburbanization, Robin says, noting that there were twice as many people in Pittsburgh in 1930 as there are now.

"Transportation," he explains, "is a function of large-scale government—regional to national to international. It can't be done parochially. It necessitates cooperation. We've put \$1 billion into mass transit in Allegheny County in the last decade. We could never fund that locally. And we can't issue revenue bonds because the system doesn't pay for itself."

Robin recites a list of mass transit projects he wants to see completed by the turn of the century. The Light Rail System (LRS) from downtown to Oakland is one of his favorites. He sees it progressing underground along the Forbes Avenue-Fifth Avenue corridor, with stops at Mercy, Duquesne, Carlow, and the Pitt medical center as it reaches Oakland. That project alone would cost in excess of \$300 million. Other projects include the extension of the East Busway into the Turtle Creek Valley and completion of the LRS in the South Hills. ("Right now it's held together with baling wire.")

How do we provide for the next generation? Robin laughs and says, "We just keep at it." He points out that a number of entities—the state with its 12-year plan, which is revised annually, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission, the city, the county, the port authority—all are continuously planning, trying to anticipate what the needs will be.

With so much planning, how are decisions on priorities made? Again he laughs. "Idiosyncratically," he replies, "depending on the people in power, what their interests are, what the needs are." ☐

Educational Assessment: Tools for a Changing World

"Significant changes to current curriculum and assessment are being considered by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education," Representative Ron Cowell, chair of the House education committee, told his audience at a Pittsburgh seminar, "Educational Assessment."

The seminar was cosponsored by the Institute of Politics and the University of Pittsburgh School of Education. A cross section of elected state and local officials, including school board members from 12 Western Pennsylvania districts, attended the February 14 event.

"The current education system is heavy on prescribing inputs," Cowell said. "Students spend a certain number of hours in a certain building, take a certain number of courses, complete a certain number of credits."

The new system will "move away from those kinds of measures and instead will define 'outcome expectations' to ensure that students are attaining skill levels," Cowell said. It will have more and different kinds of assessments, which will require school districts to operate in new ways. It is new territory for state legislators and people in the Pennsylvania Education Department, as well, he commented.

William Cooley of Pitt's Learning Research and Development Center (LRDC) and School of Education and director of Pennsylvania Education Policy Studies, a project to inform state policy makers about curriculum and accountability, moderated.

Panel participants included Lauren Resnick, director of LRDC and co-director of the New Standards Project, a national effort to redesign current assessment systems.

She said there are three reasons for radical change:

1. equity—making good on the promise of educating all children
2. the need to raise standards for all children
3. the need to design more effective management systems for schools

In the late 20th century American schools are operating on a social compact designed in the period 1917-20 to meet the needs of the workplace of that era. At that time, Resnick said, a decision was made that education would aim a high level ("thinking curriculum") at only a small proportion of the population. The rest of the population needed only a low level of literacy. Schools should run, it was thought, in the same manner as efficient factories.

The theory was that knowledge should be organized into small, repetitive pieces of information, just as factory work was broken down into limited, repetitive tasks. The main virtues—in the classroom as in the factory—were punctuality and the

ability to follow directions. Teachers were to deliver lessons designed outside the school and students would be assessed by instruments that were also designed outside the classroom.

"In 1992 to be educated means to be able to go into a workplace, figure out what's going on and suggest a better way to do it; to be able when new equipment comes in to read the manual and figure it out," she said. The United States has been competing in the world market by dropping wages; we need to be able to compete on the basis of an educated workforce. The schools of tomorrow must develop thinking skills.

Resnick said current tests still are dependent on the acquisition of little bits of knowledge, not on the ability to organize information into a system. This is not compatible with current technology. Instead of having tests that measure children with each other we need to have tests that will measure the child's progress according to certain standards for everyone.

Lack of standards also produces great inequity. In one classroom a teacher may be having students interpret stories while in another classroom the teacher is still working on word drills. "We need," Resnick emphasized, "high standards—and standards that are the same for all groups of students."

The New Standards project, of which she is co-director, is an effort to develop the standards that will measure developmental skills. Currently, 17 states and some school districts are involved in developing a new system. While she emphasized that "there is no system that won't be subject to manipulation," she said that the goal, "instead of getting a tighter and tighter central system, must be to get a system that educators can buy into."

Joseph Bard, commissioner for elementary and secondary education for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, said that Pennsylvania is "engaged in a revision of regulations second to none in what we are trying to do." In moving from a time-based approach to an outcomes based approach, we will "have to design exit outcomes that will reflect the complex requirements of modern life," Bard said.

Paul LeMahieu, director of research, evaluation, and test development for the Pittsburgh Board of Education, said assessments are used to evaluate a system and to enhance instruction. LeMahieu said that we need tests that are more "resonant" with experiences in the classroom and with what we want to see happen in the classroom. He discussed his concern that decisions on systems will proceed without staff and professional development and without a vision of the quality of instruction. The result, he said, would be that inequity would persist. ■

Education in 2001: Responsive to Children and Families

AN INTERVIEW WITH REPRESENTATIVE
RON COWELL



Representative Ron Cowell doesn't like to spend a lot of time debating "why schools aren't like they used to be." Instead, he emphasizes, we need to make the educational system

responsive to the needs of children, families, and communities in the 1990s and the 21st century.

"We need to focus on what kinds of changes are necessary to make the system more responsive now, while recognizing that it is always evolving. If you approach the problem that way," Cowell says, "it draws people into the discussion in a productive way."

Cowell, who is co-chair of the Institute of Politics Board of Fellows, was a panelist at an October seminar on educational choice and a February seminar on educational assessment. Both seminars were cosponsored by the Institute of Politics and the School of Education.

According to Cowell, schools and educators are challenged by students and needs unlike those of any preceding generation. He points out that both society and the school population are more diverse than ever before. Students bring with them to school problems and experiences other generations never encountered. At the same time there continues to be an explosion of information, most of which we expect students to learn.

Cowell, a ninth-term legislator, sees the state's 501 school districts developing more creative approaches to school management and teaching. Changes in curriculum requirements that are now being considered by the state board of education are intended to "give all educators more flexibility in curriculum planning and approaches to teaching," he comments. Cowell says that the changes would have the state be less involved with school schedules and credit requirements for students, and, instead, focus on "learning outcomes" that address what students are expected to learn as a result of their school program.

"In the past," Cowell continues, "state education policies were designed to ensure that students sat in class for a prescribed number of hours taking courses with prescribed labels. But state policy said nothing about what students should learn."

In the future, state and local assessment systems will monitor the progress of districts and students, Cowell says. The statewide tests, often involving sampling

rather than tests for every student, will help the state, parents, and taxpayers know how individual districts are accomplishing the "learning outcomes" objectives. Assessment systems at the school district level will be designed to monitor the academic progress of individual students and to identify those who need assistance. "In return for more flexibility, school districts and educators must expect that there will be a larger measure of accountability built into the system than we have had in the past."

Another important education issue currently under consideration in Pennsylvania, Cowell points out, is equitable funding. This debate addresses the need for adequate resources to be available for each child's education program, regardless of where the child goes to school. According to Cowell, more than 20 states have equity suits in the courts. "I'm not sure that our current school funding is unconstitutional, but it is clearly unfair because of the huge disparity between the poorest and richest districts," he comments.

Cowell says the problem is most apparent not in the inner city school districts, but in smaller, rural districts that have a limited tax base. These school districts often have poor libraries, few computers, insufficient math and science courses, inadequate science equipment, and limited foreign language courses.

He says that in the most recent budget, the legislature was able to put a modest \$20 million in the budget directed specifically to the poorest, low-spending school districts. "That's a signal to the courts that the Pennsylvania legislature realized there is an equity problem and wants to address the issue. But it will require much more funding and the legislature's ability to tackle the issue is affected by current state budget constraints. If the legislature does not address the problem, the courts eventually will step in. We shouldn't wait until then. I believe it is the legislature's responsibility to ensure all children a more equal educational opportunity."

Public school choice is another issue the legislature will address, Cowell says. A bill currently in draft would provide a range of activities to create more academic program choices for students, inter-district choices, intra-district choices, post-secondary options for high school juniors and seniors, and cooperative partnerships among school districts to expand the academic options available to students through efforts such as magnet programs, shared teachers, and distance-learning technology.

Why is educational change important? "We live in a much more complex and ever changing society," says Cowell. "The demands of the workplace are different. Blue collar jobs require more skills. And the average person will have several different careers during a lifetime. We therefore have to develop a readiness for life-long learning among those who graduate from our secondary schools." ¶

A Continuously Thinking and Learning Society

AN INTERVIEW WITH LAUREN RESNICK



Current national initiatives to reform the American educational system represent a "broad rallying point" to develop a shared commitment to education in the country, according to Lauren Resnick, director of Pitt's Learning Research and Development Center.

Resnick was a panelist at a February seminar on educational assessment given for Western Pennsylvania elected public officials and sponsored by Pitt's Institute of Politics and School of Education.

Both the *Goals of the National Governors' Conference* and *America 2000* focus attention on educational concerns and develop a broadly shared commitment to education reform or renewal, Resnick says.

The national movement for "renewal" that has developed in the past three to seven years is a national effort that takes the efforts of states seriously. It is a "vision of communities recommitted to education, which respects states and localities," she continues. "These things make it possibly a landmark in US educational policy."

Resnick takes issue with statements that casually devalue other systems, such as Germany's and Japan's. These are very different societies, she emphasizes. In Germany there are higher standards in basic skills and a comprehensive system for initiating students into the workplace, which derives from a tradition of apprenticeship that goes back to the Middle Ages. A high percentage of upper high school students are in the workplace three or four days per week and spend only one or two days in school. The Japanese system is based on a philosophy of the child as part of a larger unit—the family, the school, the community—and an ethic of achievement on behalf of the collective whole. Japanese elementary schools, however, are enriched, child-oriented places with high expectations for teachers.

How will the "renewal" of the American education system take place? "You can't get there by saying you can't do it," Resnick comments, "or by announcing that it will be easy. You have to address all the levels at once. Establishing standards and assessment systems alone won't get it done. Staff development is critical."

Many of the higher level skills that schools hope to help students develop, such as problem-solving skills, are learned by socialization. Future schools will be able

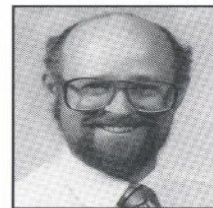
to teach children how to think, Resnick says.

How will expectations for success in such schools be measured? It needs to be a "very public process," she says. Groups of people, including educators and business people, need to get together to construct "content standards," which should be stated in everyday language. Such standards would consist of tasks that signal mastery of a content area or skill. After classroom trials they would be returned to the committees for further definition.

How long will it take to renew the educational system? How fast can people change? "A little at a time," says Resnick. Often the first year is a kind of surface change. The real change will not come until the fall of the second year, after they've had the summer to integrate the concepts. It takes a while until people are "thinking instead of behaving." But overall, the goal has to be "to immerse students in an environment in which thinking is demanded and rewarded, to develop a continuously thinking and learning society." ¶

Choice is Driven by Fears of Global Competitiveness

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN WITTE



Choice is going to be with us for awhile, says John Witte, a panelist at the seminar, "Educational Choice," held October 18, 1991. The Institute of Politics and the School of Education at the University Pittsburgh cosponsored the seminar.

Witte is a professor in the Department of Political Science and the Robert M. La Follette Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin/Madison. In 1984-85 he served as executive director of a Governor's Task Force evaluating the quality and equity of the Milwaukee metropolitan public schools and in 1990 he was named state evaluator of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program.

A legislative process similar to the one Pennsylvania experienced in 1991 is currently taking place in Arizona and Florida. Witte feels that some state eventually will pass a voucher program and a court challenge will follow. Milwaukee's program is being challenged in the Wisconsin Supreme Court, with a ruling due in the near future.

continued on page 8

The Media Deal with Events: Elected Officials Deal with Conditions

COMMUNICATIONS, THE MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, PART II

Ted Windt, moderator of the seminar "Communications, Public Officials, and the Media," summed up the differences between elected officials and the media by quoting Lyndon Johnson. "Elected officials deal with conditions," he said, "while the press deals with events." Windt, a professor of communication at Pitt, is a nationally recognized expert on political rhetoric.

The seminar, cosponsored by the Institute of Politics and the Department of Communication, was held November 7, 1991.

Panelists representing the media were Madelyn Ross, managing editor of the *Pittsburgh Press*; Joe Rovitto, news

director, WTAE-TV; and Stacy Smith, news anchor and reporter, KDKA-TV. State Representative Ron Cowell and Pittsburgh Councilman Jake Millions represented elected officials.

The panelists outlined three wishes—for how the media should treat elected officials or how the media wishes the elected officials would act. The second part of the program consisted of round-table discussions chaired by media representatives. In addition to the panelists, Clarke Thomas, senior editor (retired), *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, and KQV radio reporter P.J. Maloney joined the spirited discussion. The session ended with lunch. ¶

Matters of Substance Are Not Always Pleasant

JAKE MILLIONES ON THE MEDIA



City of Pittsburgh Councilman Jake Millions recently reflected on the relationship between the press and elected officials.

The role of the media, as he sees it, should be to keep the public informed on matters relating to public policy and public officials. Sometimes, he acknowledges, "getting at the substance of matters is not always easily accomplished. Getting the facts out and getting at the truth of a situation takes a great deal of time. Thorough investigations and accurate and succinct reporting do not lend themselves to sound bites."

What sells, comments Millions, is what gets the public eye. And that's not always newsworthy. A good example is the report on the reorganization of the City of Pittsburgh fire department. "That was a solid report, but the issue became not one of efficiency, but one of public safety. No one on City Council would jeopardize the safety of the public. But the issues of consolidation and efficiency fell into the background because of the politics. It was simply not true that public safety would be compromised. But that became the issue," he says. "Very often the press defines the issues in terms of fears and concerns of the public."

Millions cites another recent controversy in City Council, on handgun redemption. With the exception of the economy, "crime is the most salient is-

sue in the city." But are the media, by focusing on gun redemption, really doing much to solve the causes of crime? Or does such attention simply focus on the fears of the public, Millions asks. "It's much easier to define the issue than to design a solution."

If the press informs the public, it can have a very constructive role. "Public officials do pay more attention to an issue when the media is focused on it," Millions says. Sometimes, with the print media in particular, a series of articles will focus attention on a needed area such as homelessness and public housing. "But often the media is more concerned with drama and scandal. Sometimes coverage of a story takes on an aura of a soap opera, with the press emphasizing the dramatic content and the public waiting for the next installment."

Does the press determine the agenda of public officials? "Public officials, of course, want to be viewed by the public in a complimentary manner," reflects Millions. "Matters of substance are not always pleasant nor will they always cast the public official in a positive light." Public officials can aid the press by being more straightforward and informed on issues, he suggests.

"Of course public officials can be the beneficiary of something that the media reports, but they can also be severely damaged," Millions says. "I have found that it's best not to get inflated when they say something positive and not to get depressed when they say something negative—it's not an especially controllable process." ¶

Presentations Conclude Internships

The Institute of Politics Internship program for the fall 1991 term concluded on December 12, 1991 with an evening of student presentations.

Each student chose some aspect of his or her experience to highlight in a formal presentation given in the Babcock Room, 40th Floor, Cathedral of Learning. The audience consisted of the students' sponsoring elected officials and other participants in the program. Those attending included Congressman William J. Coyne; State Representative Chris McNally; City Councilman Gene Ricciardi; State Representative Greg Fajt; State Senator Mike Dawida; City Councilman Dan Cohen; Mary Lou Daniel of Mayor Masloff's office; Chuck Kolling, legislative consultant, Allegheny County; Professor Edward Muller, history department, University of Pittsburgh.

Presentation topics included constituent work and other functions in district offices, by **JENNIFER CROOK** and **KRISTEN WESOLOWSKI**, placed in State Senator Melissa Hart and Congressman William Coyne's offices, respectively. **JONATHAN DEROUIN**, placed in State Representative Chris McNally's office, contrasted growth in government with the declining interest of young people in public service. Derouin speculated that this phenomenon could be partly due to negative events that young people have been exposed to, commenting that his earliest political memory was of Gerald Ford taking office. **JONATHAN PICKER**, who had served an internship in the campaign office of Senator Harris Wofford, analyzed the factors contributing to his successful campaign. **CHRISTINE BORMAN** described her experience on a planning committee that analyzed and developed recommendations about maintenance in the city's parks. **LYNN STAPLER**, an intern in State Representative Greg Fajt's office, described the "10 Commandments of Public Relations" essential to elected officials. **KATHY MAYER**, an intern in State Senator Mike Dawida's office described the diversity within the senatorial district in a presentation that described two communities, Homestead and Squirrel Hill, and the diverse constituent problems that each generates. **MARNIE LEVINE**, an intern in Councilman Dan Cohen's office, described the decision-making process to reconcile concerns of the neighborhood during consideration of a zoning variance for the new Shadyside parking garage.

The question/answer period after each presentation sparked lively debates among students and elected officials on such topics as voter apathy and term limitations.

The internship is under the direction of Ann Dykstra, assistant director, Commonwealth Relations, and Robin Jones, director, Urban Studies Program. ¶

The University: Part of the Real World

AN INTERVIEW WITH J. DENNIS O'CONNOR, CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

"I hope that the community of elected officials views the University as a resource to be utilized. We may not have the answers to all the questions. But we do have talented people who daily think about a variety of issues in their particular field of study," J. Dennis O'Connor said in a recent interview on the public service role of the University. "I think we have interesting and meaningful contributions to make."

O'Connor was installed as the 16th president of the University of Pittsburgh on February 28. He came to the University of Pittsburgh from the University of North Carolina (UNC), where he served as provost.

To illustrate the relationship of the University of North Carolina to that state, he quoted Edward Kitter Graham, president of UNC during the First World War: "The boundaries of the University of North Carolina campus are coterminous with the state." According to O'Connor, UNC "has been closely connected with the state, both philosophically and financially, from its inception."

Founded as a private academy in 1787, the University of Pittsburgh has a formal relationship with Pennsylvania that is of relatively recent origin. The University became state related in 1966 to solve the institution's financial problems and provide the Commonwealth with a critical higher education resource. Pitt, therefore, has had less of a history of state involvement than UNC. Yet, the University is "as

important to this economic area as the UNC is to that state.

"Pitt is not only a regional resource," O'Connor said. "Its educational programs, research endeavors, and health-care delivery system are relevant across the United States and worldwide."

O'Connor maintains that the public service role of the University complements its mission as a research institution. It is in the University that people "have the resources to think through problems." And it is through the research process that the University contributes to the development of public policy.

"Whether research is in superconductors or in infant mortality, putting the results in a notebook and then on a shelf is a waste of valuable information," O'Connor said. It is in publishing and attending conferences that relevant information is conveyed to decision makers and the public. "Academics don't publish to become famous but to advance knowledge."

To analysts who comment on the decline of "pure" research in the University, O'Connor noted that "although research may be funded through a series of grants, [it] does not mean *de facto* that research is applied." He cited federal support to the

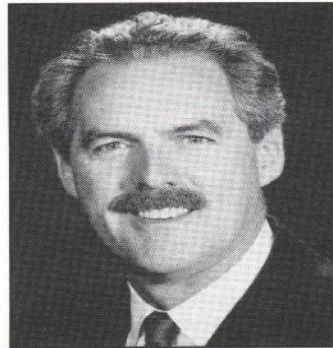
astronomy department to explore the death of stars and the origins of the universe, and asked: "Is that applied? Is the development of new health-care technologies in the 1990s any different than research on the use of chloroform in the

19th century?" In the past 40 years, O'Connor continued, the explosion of information and its transfer has permitted "almost instant application."

"It's incumbent on the University as it views its mission of education, research, and public service to direct knowledge to societal problems. At Pitt we've already, for example, formed a task force on health-care policy at the request of US Senator Har-

ris Wofford and ongoing study related to policy issues continues within the Schools of Education, Social Work, and Public Health to name just a few."

When people think of the University as an ivory tower, O'Connor said, "they need to remember that polio vaccine, the transistor, and laser technology all originated from university research. The perception that within the University we are somehow protected from the realities of the world is a persistent but erroneous notion." ❑



(Transportation, continued from cover)

Congress in late December. He said that—through metropolitan planning bodies—it places funding and flexibility in the hands of elected officials. Implied in the mandate for planning is the necessity for thinking regionally, he commented.

William Millar, executive director of the Port Authority of Allegheny County, outlined recent mass transit projects of the Port Authority—South Busway, the Martin Luther King Busway, the South Hills rail system, and the subway—and the successes each has enjoyed in facilitating transport to the central city. He commented on the success of the HOV lane of I-279 for mass transit, stating that the ridership on buses using the HOV lane has increased 40 percent. He reflected that the capacity of mass transit, however, is affected by patterns of development. "Public transit can't provide relief if development sprawls all over

the landscape." Millar cited a complex, recently built in Greentree, that provides 6,000 jobs. If the companies providing the jobs had been downtown, PAT would have transported 4,000 of them. In Greentree only 100 come by public transportation.

Millar also summarized four projects under development or consideration in the region.

"Maglev has exciting possibilities," he stated, but it's not a short-term solution for travel to the airport."

The airport alternative highway, a proposed toll road, could act as a reliever to the Parkway West and take advantage of the West End bridge development.

The Airport Busway, in Phase I, begins downtown, then crosses the Monongehela and continues via the Conrail right of way above Carson Street to Corliss, Sheraden, Ingram, and Crafton to the Parkway West. Eventually the second and third phases

will extend the busway to the Greater Pittsburgh Airport.

The fourth project, an HOV roadway that could be used by buses, vans, and carpools, would utilize the Wheeling and Lake Erie Right-of-Way from Bridgeville to Saw Mill Run Boulevard and from there into downtown Pittsburgh via the Wabash tunnel, which the Port Authority owns.

Of these only the Airport Busway is in sight. "We are way behind," commented Millar.

The technical presentations were followed by responses from a panel of elected officials—William J. Coyne, MC, US House of Representatives; D. Michael Fisher, majority whip, Pennsylvania Senate; Tom Foerster, chairman, Board of Commissioners, Allegheny County; and Jack Wagner, president, Pittsburgh City Council. An hour of open discussion followed the presentations. The seminar concluded with lunch. ❑



CALENDAR

MAY: DEFICITS AND MANDATES: CRISES IN FISCAL POLICY

A two part seminar on budget problems, May 21-22, will examine budget deficits in the north-eastern states, and the problems posed to local governments by mandates instituted by higher level governments. The Thursday session, 4 - 7:30 p.m., on deficits will feature Steven Gold, Center for the Study of the States,

and a panel of budget officers. The mandate session, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Friday, May 22, will examine a range of mandates and their impacts.

JUNE: HEALTH

A seminar cosponsored with the Health Policy Institute to be held in June will examine criteria for effective health systems as defined by health-care providers, consumers, and the insurance industry.

WOMEN IN POLITICS

Tentatively scheduled for June 12-13, this Friday evening-Saturday morning session, to be held at the Johnstown campus of the University of Pittsburgh, will examine the impact of women elected officials on policy making and the "glass ceiling" of effectiveness. The target audience includes women elected officials, staff, and party activists.

JULY: ISSUES

The second in a series of occasional papers by Clarke Thomas will examine the components of job creation and development.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Seminars will examine the impact of the regulatory environment on investment in Western Pennsylvania and issues of education for the

development of a quality work force.

FALL 1992:

Sessions in development for fall 1992 include Equity in Education Finance, Trends in Welfare Policy, Transportation, and sessions on Environmental Policy and Communications/Media.

The Institute welcomes suggestions, questions, or reactions on proposed programs. Please call Lauren Cull-Norford, 624-1837.

(Witte, continued from page 5)

The Milwaukee program uses vouchers but is more specifically targeted than the program that was proposed in Pennsylvania. Only families with incomes 1.75 times the national poverty level or less are eligible and the total number of Choice students in one year is limited to one percent of the enrollment of the Milwaukee Public School system.

Choice is an issue that is being driven by concerns over America's global competitiveness, Witte says. Both educators and employers who look at studies comparing American students with students in Japan, China, and Europe express concern about the low scores of American students. Witte, however, finds flaws in the studies that could call into question the comparisons. The studies, he comments, "are on a narrow band."

Many of the studies cited have been conducted on subjects such as geography and math, which rely on skills of memorization and

amount of time spent in practice, rather than on more abstract subjects such as science or poetry. Many of the studies focus on issues such as length of the school year and intensity of instruction. But the image is important, Witte concedes. "And the image is that Japan is kicking the hell out of us."

Such studies often don't control for cultural or other differences in the population. In a study that compared math scores in Beijing and Chicago, 99 percent of the Beijing children had both parents and grandparents living in the household. In Chicago, 40 percent of the families had single parents. Because of the presumed importance of parental input, it would be interesting, says Witte, "to compare the sample of Beijing children with intact families with a sample of Beijing families with single parents."

Educational systems, he cautions, have cultural characteristics of the societies in which they exist, and such characteristics may not be readily transferrable to other

societies. For example, there is a strong authoritarian strain in Japanese society that many Americans may be reluctant to adopt.

Studies rarely address higher education, Witte continues. "There is still a general feeling that the United States has the best post-graduate system in the world."


Is there a crisis in education? Witte says that "American education today is doing as well as it has in the last couple of decades." It has areas of difficulty in the inner cities and in some rural areas. But in the inner cities, using test scores as a measure, there have been some improvements. While the gaps remain wide, they are closing somewhat. "If there is a crisis in education, we've known about it for a long time," he comments.

International comparisons are new and are generally made with countries that have become global competitors—Taiwan, Japan, Europe, China—Witte says. "You never see comparisons made with Latin American countries." ¶

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