

16 September 92

Fax for Rochelle Stanfield

Rochelle :

I thought the piece came out real well There's the omission about California, of course. But at least you didn't get caught saying it specifically didn't pass. Maybe there's a way to pick up a reference at the time of the bill-signing. Or, what the hell, just to say that "Just after we went to press on our last issue the legislature in California passed Sen. Hart's bill for charter schools."

Day Daly, with the Mounds View group, says they had offered to buy back into the district for administrative services; which would replace the \$100,000 which the superintendent claims would be "lost" to the district.

And Vanderpoel says that nobody who felt the MFT's lobbying against the charter bill here, in '91 and since, is going to believe Sandra Peterson's comment that they're not obstructionist; that they'll accept the charter schools and then just go out and organize 'em. But as Pete says, it's not up to you to say she's lying.

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I see a NYTimes piece in our paper this morning about the voucher ballot-initiative in Colorado. It's a good example of what you were writing about: If you don't do something reasonable within public education you get these proposals (as also in CA) to go around it; outside it.

I had a talk with the secretary of the MN superintendents' association yesterday about just this. He's very conscious of the need -- as Ken Nelson put it to you -- to "bend, so we don't break". Lots of internal resistance, though.

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A reporter at Education Week called yesterday. They're struggling to know how to distinguish public from private in everything that's going on. (He's doing a piece about the Educational Alternatives contract in Baltimore.) I tried to explain that the test is not in the character of the organization on the producer side: In a sense all producers, including employees

represented by their unions, are private and for-profit. The test is on the buyer side: Is it a market of individual families using private dollars? Or is it a responsible governmental body, using public dollars? In this sense families paying tuition to another public school district is private; a private and for-profit firm contracting to work for a district board of education is public.

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I got in the mail yesterday from England a little booklet you might find extremely useful, in terms of your current project.

It was written by Howard Davies, out of his experience the past eight years or so as controller of the Audit Commission. That was set up 12 or 15 years ago by the government, to operate outside the government, to try to get major improvement in local government in England and Wales. It was been effective, with its value-for-money studies

The booklet is published by the Social Market Foundation. It is titled Fighting leviathan: Building Social Markets that Work.

The charter schools idea is a "social market" idea; as distinguished both from a public-ownership idea and from the 'privatization' idea.

You can get a copy from Daniel Finkelstein at the Social Market Foundation in London. Their phone is 44-71-222-7060. The fax number is 222-0310. They charge £6 (\$12 basically).

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- Ted Koldene
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