

School Financing (cont.)

other states will probably reach the United States Supreme Court for a final verdict, the New Jersey case can be settled by the New Jersey Supreme Court. This is because the New Jersey State Constitution contains an equal protection clause similar to that of the 14th Amendment.

Deadline Set

Due to these special circumstances, the New Jersey judge determined that the present system shall continue to operate until the state legislature has time to create a constitutional method of financing education. The deadline he set for writing a new system is January 1, 1973—and if it is not approved, some \$30 million in state aid cannot be distributed to local schools. Another deadline, January 1, 1974, is the last date which the present system can operate before the court will “enjoin” it from doing so.

New York Case Differs

Only one day before the New Jersey decision, however, a New York judge in Westchester County dismissed the complaint of unconstitutionality of the fi-

nancing system. This complaint was brought by a man who complained that he had to pay more than others for education because of the wealthier district in which he lived.

The judge said the existing system may well be “vestigial, inadequate, and unfair,” but that a “more supreme authority” would have to decide in “reverence for the rule of law.” The judge declared that the California Supreme Court had engaged in “judicial augury” when it determined the Serrano case on the basis of what it thought the United States Supreme Court would do. One matter which complicated this case was the issue of the marketability of school bonds were the system to be struck down.

What's at Stake

The school bond issue reminds us that it is not only equality of education at stake here, but also the financial privileges of the wealthy relative to the less wealthy. While local control of schools and other issues will be brought in to complicate the matter, now is the time for a thorough reform of the property tax—if the states can grasp the opportunity.

Arthur Roebuck

Arthur Wentworth Roebuck, who founded the School of Economic Science in Ontario in 1938 and was its first president, died November 17, 1971. He had spent 61 years in Canadian politics, first in the Ontario Legislature, the House of Commons, and finally, the Senate.

Senator Roebuck began his career as a journalist on the Toronto Daily Star, and later became editor of the Temiskaming Herald and the Cobalt Citizen. After attending law school, he entered politics as a liberal. In the 1930's when he was Canada's Attorney-General, Senator Roebuck defended the right of workers to unionize and strike. He also served as Minister of Labor and Commissioner of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario. In each of these positions he made it a point to cut government expenses.

Senator Roebuck was noted as a conciliator in labor disputes and often represented unions in court. He also represented the Ontario Government in a famous monopoly case. Senator Roebuck was a lifelong friend of the School of Economic Science, using his influence in many ways to increase understanding of Georgist principles.

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