Michot Proposes Brief Equal Education Clause

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CC-73 Panel Members
Question Move
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Baton Rouge — Louisiana Education Supt. Louis Michot proposed Tuesday that the state constitution include a brief statement guaranteeing every child in the state “an equal education opportunity.”

It sounds noncontroversial on its face, but members of the constitutional convention’s CC-73 subcommittee on elementary and secondary education questioned whether such a clause might not encourage lawsuits which could, in effect, prevent or discourage parish school districts from improving their schools.

Asst. State Supt. James R. Oliver said the constitution should insure that a student gets an equal chance at an education “whether he happens to be in the small rural parish or the very large metropolitan area.”

“I CAN SUE”

“If this is in the constitution,” delegate Horace C. Robinson of Baton Rouge said, “it means that I can sue for equal financing for my public school.”

And Mrs. Heloise Corne of Lafayette said if such suits were successful, “we would be destroying community incentive, it seems to me.”

“If a community is just able to lie low, the state would have to make up the difference in finances,” she said.

“If this gives a better opportunity for them to seek redress, then more power to the people, as far as I’m concerned,” Oliver said.