Assembly Studies Tuition Plan for State Schools

By VINCENT THOMAS Assemblyman, 68th District

Whether or not to charge tuition to California residents enrolled in our state's tax supported institutions of higher education has been a topic of considerable promi-nence at our current session. nence at our current session. Years ago, this question was answered in the affirmative for non-residents who seek their education in our University or state colleges. Tuition at the rate of \$600 per year is now charged to most of them at the University, and \$500 at the colleges, in addition to the fees for various academic purposes which must be paid by all students enrolled.

enrolled.

The Master Plan for Higher Education, adopted by the Legislature in 1960, states that there has been a "long established principle that the state colleges and the University of California shall be tuition free to all residents of

the state." Our Legislative Analyst in his report on the budget bill for 1965-66, however, calls attention to the fact that this principle has not always been precisely fol-lowed. The University charged tuition during its first year, and the state col-leges openly charged a small tuition, from 1933 to 1953. "Vestigial" statutory authori-ty still exists for both.

TWO VERY interesting and TWO VERY interesting and significant bills proposing the levying of charges for higher education on residents have been introduced in our current session. One, named the "Learn, Earn, and Reimburse Plan" by its author, would require every legal resident of the state who enrolls in the University or any state college to pay to the state the cost of his instruction. He may pay this cost immediately, or apply to participate in

which case his payments would be deferred until after he graduates or leaves school, No payment would be re-quired until his annual income reached \$4,000, then annual payments would come

annual payments would come due according to scales relating to income which were written into the bill. If the entire debt were not paid in twenty years, it would be cancelled.

The author's argument for the bill was that the burden on payers of state and local taxes for education has become crushing, that a University or college education enables an individual to earn more money from which reimbursement could be made without hardship. Amounts repaid to the state under the bill would be paid to the state school fund and distributed to local districts, thus permitting their taxes to be

lowered. At the committee hearing on his bill, it was op-posed by spokesmen for the University and the colleges, and was sent to interim study.

THE SECOND measure would authorize the University Regents and the Trustees of the Colleges to impose a "modest" tuition on resident students of \$50 per semester, estimated to raise \$19 million a year. Half the proceeds would go for additional state scholarships, trebling the 4.000 now granted, and the remainder would go for projects such as improvement of University and college libraries. would authorize the Univerbraries.
The bill has been amended

The bill has been amended by its author, and as this is written has been set for an early committee hearing. Despite expected opposition, observers give the bill good chance for passage.

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