

Majority back 'choice of schools'

AP poll shows 63 percent of Americans support Bush's plan to offer scholarships for any institution

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Americans broadly favor government "scholarships" for poor and middle-income parents to send their children to the public or private school of their choice, an Associated Press poll found.

President Bush has proposed a \$500 million experimental program to give \$1,000 scholarships that could be used at any school, including religious institutions. The poll found 63 percent in favor of the idea, 32 percent op-

posed and 5 percent unsure.

Supporters of Bush's "G.I. Bill for Children" say public schools will be forced to improve if they have to compete with private schools for government money. Opponents, including teachers' unions and Democratic presidential nominee Bill Clinton, say the plan is an election-year gimmick and tax money should not subsidize parochial schools.

However, many Democrats including Clinton support increased parental choice among

public schools. In the poll, 68 percent said parents should be able to choose which public school their child attends. Just 28 percent agreed with the opposing argument that such choice would take resources away from schools that need the most improvement.

The poll was taken Aug. 28-Sept. 1 by ICR Survey Research Group, part of AUS Consultant Cos. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Previous polls have found consistent support for parents choosing their children's public school. But support for using public money to pay for private-school education seems to depend on how the question is worded.

Labor Day crowds shrink in Florida

Hurricane Andrew still hurting economy

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — Some of Hurricane Andrew's victims fled to the beaches Sunday to forget what they endured, while other Floridians went to church to give thanks for what they were spared and to help the less fortunate.

At this ocean resort, rock music blared from the Cleveland Hotel and the pink neon bar was doing brisk business. But the beach crowd was about half the size of last year's Labor Day weekend turnout.

"People are so caught up in re-securing their homes that they don't have the time or the effort to be out here," said lifeguard Kip Hayslip.

Only a few signs of the hurricane, which generally spared this area, were seen on the beach. The lifeguard towers were blown away. Roller skaters zoomed by

mangled and brown sea-grape trees.

Those who did come for sun and sand said they simply needed an emotional break from the tumultuous days since Hurricane Andrew tore through south Florida on Aug. 24.

"You've got to do something to end the depression," said Pete Akins, 25, who was living in a travel trailer with a friend, Troy Ryan, in Homestead before the storm hit.

Homestead Church of God members held a brief prayer service in a room off the damaged main sanctuary. The service focused on the importance of placing one's faith in God even in the face of adversity.

Then they got back to work. The main sanctuary, its roof torn off, has become a warehouse stacked with food and other goods donated by Church of God congregations nationwide.

President of Lima pledges abolition of Shining Path

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LIMA, Peru — President Alberto Fujimori has vowed to crush the Shining Path by 1995,



Fujimori

Soldiers whitewash over graffiti extolling the Maoist rebels' armed struggle, but the hammer and sickle soon reappear in bold red brush strokes on walls of shantytowns that ring the capital.

Rebel political work is on the rise in the poor Villa El Salvador district. Community leader Miguel Azcueta blames the Shining Path's progress on

government failure to fight hunger and unemployment.

"All of this generates frustration, and frustration generates violence," he said.

More than 25,000 people have been killed in political violence since the Shining Path began its armed revolt in 1980 after a decade of clandestine political organizing.

"The Shining Path is always experimenting with new ideas and methods to test society and the government," said David Montoya of Desco, a Lima think tank. He said the state's response "doesn't exist."

At best, Fujimori's strategy is piecemeal, emphasizing the military and police. Analysts say the government has made little effort to counter the Shining Path's main weapon, political indoctrination.

Guerrillas have infiltrated unions, schools and support organizations in the shantytowns, where the desperation of poverty helps them win converts.

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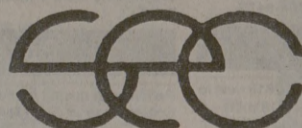
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