

The original documents are located in Box 40, “10/18/76 - Remarks at the Swearing-in Ceremony of Dr. Edward Aguirre as U.S. Commissioner of Education” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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57
THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT
SWEARING-IN OF
DR. EDWARD AGUIRRE
AS
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION,
OCTOBER 18, 1976

I AM PLEASED TO HAVE DR. EDWARD AGUIRRE (uh-GEAR-ee)

TAKING HIS PLACE AS COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION.

DR. AGUIRRE (uh-GEAR-ee) BRINGS A VARIED AND USEFUL

BACKGROUND TO THIS VERY IMPORTANT JOB.

AS AN EXPERT ON MANPOWER PROGRAMS, HE
UNDERSTANDS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND JOBS
FOR OUR YOUTH. AS A DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE
HISPANIC COMMUNITY, HE IS SENSITIVE TO THE SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AMERICA'S MINORITIES.

AS AN ABLE ADMINISTRATOR -- AND ESPECIALLY

AS A FORMER CLASSROOM TEACHER -- HE IS WELL QUALIFIED

TO ADVISE ME ON FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND POLICIES FOR

EDUCATION.

IN PARTICULAR, HE WILL HELP US IDENTIFY

AND ANSWER THE CONCERNS OF AMERICA'S TEACHERS.

DR. AGUIRRE (uh-GEAR-ee) BELIEVES -- AS I DO --

THAT TEACHERS ARE THE SINGLE MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE
OF OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

DR. AGUIRRE (uh-GEAR-ee) BELIEVES -- AS I DO --

THAT BY HELPING TEACHERS, WE ARE HELPING ENSURE THE

SUCCESS OF AMERICA'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

OUR EFFORTS IN EDUCATION ARE AIMED NOT ONLY AT
PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION -- BUT AT MAKING
THAT EDUCATION EQUALLY AVAILABLE TO ALL OUR NATION'S
STUDENTS.

AS HEAD OF THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION,

DR. AGUIRRE (uh-GEAR-ee) WILL CONTINUE OUR POLICY OF

FOCUSING FEDERAL AID ON THOSE STUDENTS WHO NEED IT THE

MOST - THE HANDICAPPED, THE EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED,

AND CHILDREN WITH LIMITED ENGLISH-SPEAKING ABILITY.

DR. AGUIRRE (uh-GEAR-ee) AND I WILL ALSO

CONTINUE MY ADMINISTRATION'S IMPORTANT EFFORT

TO MAKE FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION MORE EFFECTIVE

THAN IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST.

TOO OFTEN, THE RESULT OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS HAS
BEEN TO REDUCE LOCAL CONTROL OVER EDUCATION, WHILE
CREATING A HEAVY BURDEN OF VARYING REGULATIONS, DIFFERING
STANDARDS AND OVERLAPPING RESPONSIBILITIES.

TOO OFTEN WE ASK WHETHER FEDERAL FORMS HAVE BEEN

PROPERLY FILLED OUT

-

NOT WHETHER CHILDREN HAVE BEEN

PROPERLY EDUCATED.

EARLIER THIS YEAR I PROPOSED A BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

DESIGNED TO CUT RED TAPE, AND TO GIVE STATE AND LOCAL

AUTHORITIES, AND TEACHERS, GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN USING

FEDERAL AID.

I HAVE EMPHASIZED RECENTLY MY HOPE THAT AMERICA'S

THIRD CENTURY WILL BE KNOWN AS THE CENTURY OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

NEXT TO THE FAMILY, THE BEST PLACE TO START CULTIVATING

INDIVIDUALITY IS IN THE CLASSROOM { BY INDIVIDUALIZING

INSTRUCTION. DECLINING ENROLLMENTS, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN BE

VIEWED AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REDUCE CLASS SIZE.

AS OUR FOUNDING FATHERS REALIZED, AN EDUCATED
CITIZENRY IS CRUCIAL TO A FREE SOCIETY. IGNORANCE
AND FREEDOM CANNOT CO-EXIST.

THIS GIVES AMERICA'S TEACHERS A SPECIAL

RESPONSIBILITY - AND IT GIVES AMERICA'S GOVERNMENT A SPECIAL

RESPONSIBILITY TO HEAR THEIR CONCERNS. WE WANT TO KNOW AND

ACT UPON THE NEEDS OF AMERICA'S TEACHERS. WITH DR. AGUIRRE'S

(uh-GEAR-ee) HELP, I WILL CONTINUE THIS EFFORT.

ONLY BY BEING SENSITIVE TO TEACHERS CAN WE ACHIEVE
THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE THAT IS CRUCIAL TO OUR
NATION'S FUTURE.

NOW ASSOCIATE JUSTICE POTTER STEWART WILL

ADMINISTER THE OATH OF OFFICE●

END OF TEXT

OUR GREAT NATION IS WEAKENED BY TOLERATING SUCH CONDITIONS. WE MUST THEREFORE BUILD AN ALLIANCE TO WAGE WAR AGAINST THE IGNORANCE THAT DENIES OUR PEOPLE THEIR RIGHTFUL OPPORTUNITIES AT WORK, AT PLAY AND IN MEETING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO SELF, TO FAMILY, AND TO COUNTRY.

WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS A WILLING PARTNER, SUCH AN ALLIANCE WILL BE BASED ON THE PEOPLE--ON THE TEACHERS, THE STUDENTS, THE PARENTS, AND THE OTHER CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY WHOSE TAX DOLLARS ARE THE MAIN SUPPORT OF THE STRUCTURE OF AMERICAN EDUCATION. AND IT WILL INCLUDE THE TRADITIONAL ESTABLISHMENT, WHICH DEPENDS ON THE PEOPLE FOR THAT SUPPORT: STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL AGENCIES, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, PRIVATE AND CHURCH-RELATED SCHOOLS, AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

I JOIN WITH YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, IN YOUR EFFORT TO CUT RED TAPE AND TO GIVE STATE AND LOCAL PEOPLE GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE USE OF FEDERAL AID.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICE OF EDUCATION CAN BE USED TO CONVENE ALL THOSE WHO MIGHT HELP MAKE EVERY SCHOOL A QUALITY SCHOOL -- ACCESSIBLE TO EVERY YOUNG AMERICAN, NO MATTER HIS OR HER LANGUAGE, HUMAN CONDITION, OR SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVEL, AND NO MATTER HIS OR HER LEVEL OF ASPIRATION.

More

IN SUCH AN ALLIANCE, I VIEW SERVICE AS A PRIORITY OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AND I VIEW MY ROLE AS THAT OF ONE ENTRUSTED WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP PROVIDE SUCH SERVICE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TEACHERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS, INTERESTED CITIZENS, INSTITUTIONS, AND PUBLIC SERVANTS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

THOMAS JEFFERSON WAGED A WAR OF ETERNAL HOSTILITY AGAINST ANY FORM OF TYRANNY OVER THE MIND OF MAN. I CONSIDER EDUCATIONAL DEPRIVATION THE CRUELEST FORM OF TYRANNY. AND I CALL FOR ALL OF US TO UNITE IN A PRACTICAL, ACHIEVABLE EFFORT TO OVERCOME SUCH TYRANNY.

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