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REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY

JUNE 29, 1972

WHEN I ADDRESSED THE NEA IN MINNEAPOLIS IN 1967, I TIMIDLY
HINTED THAT POLITICS WAS A PROPER ACTIVITY FOR TEACHERS. THE
RESPONSE WAS ALMOST AS TIMID AS MY CHALLENGE.

TIMES HAVE CHANGED -- AND YOU HAVE CHANGED.

I BELIEVE TODAY THAT THE TEACHERS OF AMERICA ARE ON THE
THRESHOLD OF BECOMING A POWERFUL AND PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL FORCE
IN THIS COUNTRY.

AND I KNOW THAT THE COUNTRY WILL BE BETTER FOR IT.

YOU'VE ALREADY BECOME ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL LOBBIES AS
FAR AS CONGRESS IS CONCERNED.

BUT YOUR RECORD WITH THE WHITE HOUSE ISN'T AS GOOD. I'M
HERE TO HELP YOU CHANGE THAT.

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I REMEMBER IN 1968, AN AD BY EDUCATORS FOR HUMPHREY IN THE
NEA JOURNAL WHICH LISTED AS SUPPORTERS THE TOP NAMES IN THE
NEA LEADERSHIP -- ACTING AS INDIVIDUALS -- BUT THEY WERE THERE:

-- IRVAMAE APPLGATE

-- JOE REED

-- MILDRED FENNER

-- BRAULIO ALONSO

-- THELMA DAVIS AND DOZENS MORE

I WAS TOUCHED AND PROUD OF THOSE PEOPLE AND I STILL AM.

BUT I ALSO SAW ANOTHER AD IN THE SAME ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL
SIGNED BY THE PRESENT OCCUPANT OF THE WHITE HOUSE WHICH SAID:

"WHEN WE TALK ABOUT CUTTING THE EXPENSE OF GOVERNMENT --
EITHER FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL -- THE ONE AREA WE CANNOT SHORT-
CHANGE IS EDUCATION."

I'M SURE SOME OF YOU BELIEVED THAT PLEDGE, JUST AS SOME
BELIEVED HIS PLEDGE TO END THE VIETNAM WAR IN 1969.

THE NIXON-AGNEW ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN NOT ONLY ANTI-
EDUCATION, ANTI-TEACHER, ANTI-CHILDREN, BUT IT HAS BEEN ANTI-
TRUTH AS IT BLATANTLY BREAKS ITS PROMISES TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

LET'S LOOK AT THE RECORD:

-- TWO VETOES OF EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS TOTALLING \$5.5
BILLION

-- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION VETOED

-- A CUTBACK OF \$50 MILLION IN THE 1972 BUDGET FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION FOLLOWED BY A DECISION TO HOLD THE LINE IN FUNDS FOR THE EDUCATIONALLY DEPRIVED

-- REDUCTION IN AID TO IMPACTED AREAS

-- A NEW BUDGET THAT CAN'T DISGUISE THAT IT CONTAINS \$138 MILLION LESS FOR THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

-- THE FIRING OF THE LATE COMMISSIONER JAMES E. ALLEN, A FIGHTER FOR INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDING OF EDUCATION

-- LOTS OF TALK AND PROMISES ABOUT ERADICATING HUNGER FOLLOWED BY CRUEL AND HEARTLESS CUTBACKS IN SCHOOL LUNCH FUNDS FOR NEEDY CHILDREN

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HAD ENOUGH? THERE'S LOTS MORE OF THE SAME AND WE ALL KNOW THAT.

WHAT SHOULD A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES BE DOING IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION? LET ME OUTLINE MY GOALS AND IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES.

I HAVE ALWAYS PRIDED MYSELF ON BEING A TEACHER -- EVEN IN POLITICS. I'VE SEEN MY MANY YEARS IN PUBLIC SERVICE AS ONES WHERE I HELPED EDUCATE THIS NATION TO LEARN WHAT WE MUST DO TO MAKE AMERICA A MORE HUMANE AND PROGRESSIVE FORCE IN THE WORLD.

IN THE CREATION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FOR A GREAT NATION WE MUST BE GUIDED BY JEFFERSON'S PHILOSOPHY THAT IGNORANCE IS AN ALIEN FORCE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. "WE CAN'T BE BOTH FREE AND IGNORANT," HE SAID.

THE GREAT DESIRE FOR THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF HUMAN LIFE IN THIS NATION CANNOT BE REALIZED WITHOUT A FIRM AND TOTAL COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING BETTER EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN.

UNTIL ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE RECOGNIZE THE ROLE WHICH EDUCATION PLAYS AS A FORCE FOR CHANGE IN ATTAINING THAT QUALITY, WE WILL HAVE FAILED THE GOAL WHICH SAYS: "LET EACH BECOME ALL HE WAS CREATED CAPABLE OF BEING."

THIS IS WHAT I WANT FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION -- NOT ONLY FOR CHILDREN, BUT FOR TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS AND ALL WHO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

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I BELIEVE THAT AMERICA NEEDS A DRAMATIC, AND CREATIVE EDUCATIONAL POLICY. THE TIME HAS COME TO END THE PATCHWORK AND STOPGAP PROVISIONS OF THE PAST. WE MUST THINK BOLDLY AND BE WILLING TO BEAR THE COST OF COMMITMENT TO OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE: THE YOUTH OF AMERICA.

I WOULD LIKE TO OUTLINE SOME OF THE MAJOR POINTS WHICH I BELIEVE MUST GUIDE AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN THE 1970'S.

IF I WERE PRESIDENT, I WOULD CALL ON THE CONGRESS TO ESTABLISH A TRUST FUND FOR EDUCATION THAT WOULD GUARANTEE AT LEAST ONE THIRD OF THE COST OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

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WITH THIS METHOD, THE SCHOOLS WOULD KNOW IN ADVANCE WHAT FUNDS WOULD BE AVAILABLE AND THESE RESOURCES WOULD BE FREE FROM ZEALOUS BUDGET CUTTERS.

I WOULD GUARANTEE MAXIMUM LOCAL AND STATE CONTROL, BUT I WOULD ALSO REQUIRE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES TO BE MET TO INSURE EVERY CHILD A QUALITY EDUCATION.

AND I WOULD ASK ALL OF YOU TO TAKE THE LEAD IN DEFINING WHAT QUALITY EDUCATION IS. RIGHT NOW, IT'S A TERM EVERYONE TOSSES AROUND BUT NO ONE SEEMS TO DEFINE IN TERMS OF THE DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES WHICH WILL INSURE THAT EACH CHILD IS GIVEN THE MAXIMUM OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP HIS OR HER POTENTIAL TO THE FULLEST.

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AS PRESIDENT, I WOULD ESTABLISH A CABINET LEVEL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WITH A SECRETARY WHO WOULD HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

AND I WOULD SEEK A MAN OR WOMAN OF THE CALIBER AND COURAGE OF THE LATE GREAT COMMISSIONER JAMES ALLEN -- AND I WOULDN'T FIRE HIM FOR TELLING THE TRUTH.

I WOULD ENFORCE THE LAW OF THE LAND AND NOT SUBVERT THE RULINGS OF THE SUPREME COURT IN THE AREA OF CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS. WE CAN'T MOVE BACKWARDS AS WE HAVE BEEN LED TO DO BY THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.

I WOULD NOT LEAVE THE TASK OF ACHIEVING INTER-RACIAL JUSTICE SOLELY TO THE SCHOOLS. WE MUST HAVE HOUSING PROGRAMS THAT PERMIT PEOPLE TO ENJOY HOME OWNERSHIP IN COMMUNITIES OF THEIR CHOICE.

AND PART OF GUARANTEEING OPEN NEIGHBORHOODS THROUGHOUT AMERICA IS THE GOAL OF PROVIDING ADEQUATE INCOMES TO ALL PEOPLE SO THAT HOME OWNERSHIP AND HOME IMPROVEMENT ARE ATTAINABLE GOALS.

TO DO THIS, WE NEED JOBS. WE NEED A SOUND ECONOMY WITH ECONOMIC POLICIES WHICH ARE FAIR. THE NEA IS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF MINIMUM WAGE LEGISLATION NOW BEFORE CONGRESS. YOU ARE TO BE COMMENDED FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN THIS STRUGGLE. YOU REALIZE THAT UNLESS THE PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN YOU TEACH HAVE DECENT INCOMES, THEIR EDUCATION IS BOUND TO SUFFER. AND THEIR PARENTS NEED JOBS.

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I AM COMMITTED TO GUARANTEEING THE RIGHT TO A JOB FOR EVERY AMERICAN CAPABLE OF WORKING.

AND WHILE I AM ON THE SUBJECT OF JOBS, I WANT TO POINT OUT THE TRAGEDY WHICH IS NOW OCCURRING BECAUSE IN THE MIDST OF A SERIOUS CRISIS IN THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION THERE ARE NEARLY 20,000 EXPERIENCED TEACHERS WITHOUT WORK AND NEARLY 320,000 NEW TEACHERS WITHOUT JOBS. IF THIS TREND CONTINUES, BY 1976 THERE WILL BE A SURPLUS OF 600,000 TEACHERS. IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THIS NATION WITH HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF SKILLED AND TALENTED TEACHERS IDLE BECAUSE WE LACK THE FUNDS TO HIRE THEM. THIS IS WHERE I HOPE THE ONE-THIRD FEDERAL FUNDING OF PUBLIC EDUCATION WILL CLOSE THE ALARMING GAP BETWEEN SKILLED TEACHERS AND CHILDREN IN NEED OF BETTER EDUCATIONS.

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AND IN ORDER THAT TEACHERS BE FREE TO TEACH AS CREATIVELY AS THEY CAN, I WOULD ASK CONGRESS TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LAW FOR THE TEACHERS OF AMERICA WITH ALL OF THE PREROGATIVES THAT OTHER ORGANIZED EMPLOYEES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR ENJOY.

I DEPLORE THE SITUATION THAT LEADS TO STRIKES. BUT TEACHERS MUST BE GUARANTEED THE RIGHT TO SEEK A REDRESS OF THEIR GRIEVANCES.

WE ALL REMEMBER SEEING TEACHERS IN THIS STATE OF NEW JERSEY BEING LED OFF TO JAIL LAST YEAR DURING CHRISTMAS AFTER THEY HAD STOOD UP FOR THEIR RIGHTS. WHY CHRISTMAS? THE TEACHERS HAD CHOSEN THIS VACATION PERIOD SO THAT THEIR JAIL SENTENCES WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THEIR CLASSROOM WORK.

I'M NOT ONE BIT AFRAID THAT THE ORGANIZED TEACHING PROFESSION WILL RUIN THE COUNTRY. I THINK IT WILL SAVE THE COUNTRY -- JUST AS YOU HAVE IN THE PAST.

YOU ARE THE SHOCK TROOPS IN THE WAR ON IGNORANCE. YOU MUST BE ALLOWED TO ORGANIZE AND PROTECT YOURSELVES FROM THOSE FORCES WHO SEEK TO BEND THE EDUCATION ENTERPRISE TO THEIR OWN NEFARIOUS PURPOSES.

THE RIGHT TO BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY MUST COME FROM FEDERAL LAW -- UNFORTUNATELY, TOO MANY STATE LAWS ARE INADEQUATE. AND SOME STATES HAVE NO SUCH LAWS AND LITTLE PROSPECT THAT THEY WILL BE ENACTED.

ANOTHER RIGHT BELONGING TO TEACHERS TO WHICH I AM COMMITTED AND WOULD FIGHT FOR AS YOUR PRESIDENT WOULD BE FEDERAL STANDARDS AND GUARANTEES IN THE PROVISION OF PORTABLE PENSION AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

IT IS WRONG AND UNFAIR FOR A TEACHER WHO HAS DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO THE EDUCATION PROFESSION TO BE SHORTCHANGED IN HIS PENSION AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS SIMPLY BECAUSE HE HAS MOVED FROM ONE STATE TO ANOTHER DURING THE COURSE OF A CAREER. PORTABLE PENSIONS ARE A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT THAT IS LATE IN COMING BUT BADLY NEEDED NOW.

IN MY MINNEAPOLIS SPEECH IN 1967, I SAID SOMETHING ABOUT NON-PARTISAN POLITICS. I TAKE THAT BACK.

THE TIME HAS COME TO BE PARTISAN FOR EDUCATION, FOR
CHILDREN, FOR TEACHERS, FOR PEOPLE.

IT IS TIME TO LOOK BEYOND EMPTY WORDS AND LOOK AT THE
RECORD.

IT IS TIME TO SUPPORT YOUR FRIENDS AND SMITE YOUR ENEMIES.

IT IS TIME TO MAN THE PRECINCTS, THE VOTING BOOTHS, THE
REGISTRATION DRIVES.

I CALL ON YOU TO MAN THE BARRICADES OF THE WAR ON IGNORANCE.

YOU MUST LIFT YOUR SIGHTS BEYOND THE LEVEL OF THE SCHOOL
BOARD AND THE LEGISLATURE. THE ONLY HOPE YOU HAVE FOR THE KIND
OF NEW EDUCATIONAL POLICIES I HAVE DISCUSSED TODAY AND WHICH
OUR CHILDREN AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION MUST HAVE, LIES WITH THE
CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENCY.

THE MONEY FOR QUALITY EDUCATION, A FAIR ECONOMY, THE
GUARANTEE OF EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, THE FOOD TO THWART
THE HUNGER OF AMERICAN CHILDREN AND THE COMMITMENT TO CHANGE
THE WAYS OF THE PAST AND TURN TOWARD NEW DIRECTIONS IN EDUCATION
AND TEACHERS' RIGHTS DEPENDS UPON THE PERSON WHO SITS IN THE
WHITE HOUSE AND THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE IN THE CONGRESS.

I ASK YOU TO REMEMBER THIS AS WE EMBARK ON THE SERIOUS
BUSINESS OF AN ELECTION YEAR AT A TIME WHEN THE POLICIES FOR
THE COMING DECADE WILL BE DETERMINED.

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