

STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY
PROPOSING ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION


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revised
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Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation today to create a new Cabinet-level Department of Education. In my judgment, this proposal belongs at the top of the agenda in our consideration of national affairs at the outset of this new Congress.

Education today is our biggest national business, our principal domestic activity. We now recognize its importance at all levels of our government--except, indeed, at the Federal level. Expenditures for education are the biggest item in the budgets of our States and localities, representing 37 percent of all disbursements. These funds for education now total \$25 billion and are decidedly on the increase.

In total funds, education now ranks second to national defense as our largest public expenditure. It accounts for 16 percent of the budget of our Federal, State and local governments. Public and private expenditures for education now total \$33.7 billion and represent 5.8 percent of our gross national product. Education engages the time of three out of ten of all our citizens as their principal activity.

These statistics, impressive as they may be, merely reflect the importance of education in our national progress and survival. As the foundation of our scientific and technical growth, the means of transmitting and improving our culture, education today is the main-spring of our economic and social development. It is basic to all



public functions including our national defense and security. This we have known in the past, perhaps dimly. Today we are seeing education with far more clarity as a national means of meeting the thrust of communism, of adjusting to the dislocations of automation, of reacting to the persisting causes of poverty in a day of growing abundance.

A half century ago, the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead said:

"When one considers...the education of a nation's young, the broken lives, the defeated hopes, the national failures which result from the frivolous inertia with which it is treated, it is difficult to restrain within oneself a savage rage. In the conditions of modern life the rule is absolute, the race which does not value trained intelligence is doomed. Not all your heroism, not all your social charm, not all your wit, not all your victories on land or at sea, can move back the finger of fate. To-day we maintain ourselves. To-morrow science will have moved forward yet one more step, and there will be no appeal from the judgment which will then be pronounced on the uneducated."

Within recent years the Federal Government has made notable strides in supporting this Nation's education. The 88th Congress set a magnificent record in its enactment of laws on education's behalf. Its accomplishments include aid to construct higher education facilities, to broaden and modernize vocational and technical education, to

educate the unemployed and the technologically displaced, to build public libraries, to train teachers of the handicapped, to expand the multipurpose National Defense Education Act; other major legislation was enacted in the areas of economic opportunity and civil rights.

This record moved President Johnson to salute the 88th Congress as the "Education Congress." But our work is far from done. In the 89th Congress we must continue these advances to meet fully the critical needs of education for all our citizens.

Today we devote almost \$5 billion a year of our Federal budget to education including service, training, and research. About one-third of this total is expended by the Office of Education. But the major share of the education budget still lies outside the Office of Education. Educational activities presently are found throughout the Executive Branch under a variety of agencies and departments. The Committee on Education and Labor in 1963 reported that some 42 agencies of the Federal Government were presently continuing programs within the definition of "education." Indeed education functions have become so diffuse at the Federal level that it takes a major effort such as that represented by the committee report of June 1963 simply to catalog the total effort.

Today we have moved only part way to coordinate the various Federal education programs. To meet this growing complexity, the President late last year issued an Executive Order to begin to bring about some consistency through an interagency committee chaired by the United States Commissioner of Education.

But this remains a partial step. A Department of Education would enable us to go the rest of the way toward bringing education programs together under an effective and unified executive administration, to bring into harmony the diffuse programs of such agencies, for example, as the National Science Foundation and the Smithsonian Institution.

My bill, as my colleagues will recognize, will retain all the protections that now exist against unwanted Federal "control" in education. The bill will continue all of the restrictions now legally in effect against Federal supervision of educational programs receiving Federal assistance, insuring continued control of education at the local level.

My bill would also establish a National Advisory Committee on Education to advise the Secretary, the President, and the Congress on Federal policies and programs. This Advisory Committee would be broadly representative of the public and would include appropriate representatives of educational agencies and the academic community. Thus, the Congress, the Executive Branch, and the people at large will have a more effective and direct voice in the framing of national educational policies than they have today.

President Johnson has paid high acclaim to the legislative records of the 88th Congress. The mandate of his election last fall continues to place education at the forefront in the achievement of a Great Society. The President will rightly be known through this program as the "Education President" and his administration through the long delayed and timely creation of a Department of Education as the "Education Administration." Surely this Nation can no longer afford the reckless indulgence of advancing education in law and demeaning it in action. It is now time for us to act to create a Department of Education for the long term advance of our society.