

SPEECH OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, M. C., 2ND DISTRICT, RHODE ISLAND AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RHODE ISLAND INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION ON OCTOBER 31, 1958 AT VETERANS MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM.

I am not only honored to have been invited to speak before the Rhode Island Institute of Instruction; I am genuinely very pleased to have this opportunity to talk to you about some of the things that have been accomplished to make it possible for the Federal government to lend both leadership and help to our schools, without interfering with our established American tradition of State and local control. I feel very much at home with you who are members of the great teaching profession, and, I must admit, a little more at ease than I used to be when I occupied a pupil's desk more than a few years ago. My experience during the eight years that I have been chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee that deals with funds for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has brought me very close to many of the problems and needs of teachers and educators all over America. And I can truthfully say to you that I count every minute which I have spent in the causes of both education and health as time that could not have been better employed. What, in the long run, could be more important to the people of this country and this State than their good health and the education of their children?

With 45 million persons now attending public or private schools and colleges, with the Russians engaged in an intensive race for knowledge and with America as their chosen rival, it is perfectly clear that our schools now affect the welfare of the United States and of the whole free world far more than ever before in history. No one can say that education ought not to be a primary concern of the American people and those who represent them in government. The world we live in today presents a fundamental challenge to our capacity to meet the enormous educational demands of an age in which ignorance cannot but lead to the destruction of freedom. Now, as never before in the history of the world, is it true to say that knowledge is power. And it is of the utmost importance that we in America should stake our future on our variety of education.

It is my firm conviction that we cannot afford to overlook or to tolerate a single weakness in our educational system, which is in many ways the very foundation and bulwark of our whole way of life. Where America's future is concerned we cannot allow secondary considerations or mere political expediency to obscure our vision of what

matters most. With this in mind, I introduced a bill (HR 12023) during April of this year, many of the provisions of which were later embodied in the National Defense Education Act, which was passed on August 23 and is now Public Law 85-864. Having been in the chair during the debate on this National Defense Education bill and thereby being able to insure its receiving a full and fair hearing, I was highly gratified, as were other friends of education, that this bill at last cleared all the obstacles in its path.

~~This Act is designed to serve a much broader purpose than its well-advertised aid to science or loans for college students. A primary objective is to prevent the loss of 200,000 able students who drop out of school each year. In halting this loss, the National Defense Education Act is expected to provide an all-around strengthening of the schools. Some education officials think the measure's greatest contribution may be the spreading of testing and guidance-counseling programs through every State.~~

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In enacting this measure, the Congress recognized that the crisis and the challenge confronting the United States in our time is

essentially one which requires the development and utilization of trained intelligence of the highest order. American education must accept primary responsibility for meeting and surmounting this crisis and challenge.

The primary responsibility of education must, in accordance with the deepest American tradition, remain with the States and local communities and with our colleges and universities. We must, therefore, look particularly to citizens and parents acting in their own communities, to school boards and councils, to teachers, principals, superintendents, State boards of education and State legislatures, and trustees and faculties of institutions of higher education to develop and support an efficiency which our educational system demands. However, the needs of our educational system, both in quality and scope, require, in the opinion of the Congress, that the Federal government undertake to assist the States and institutions to develop to the highest level those programs and areas in which deficiencies tend to handicap our national security.

It was found that these deficiencies are denoted principally by,

first, the appalling waste of potential talent; second, the inadequacy of instruction in science, mathematics, and modern foreign languages; third, the shortage of college teachers, and inadequacy of essential information concerning the status and development of American education.

The provisions embodied in the National Defense Education Act of 1958 aim to establish a program over a term of years which will aid the States and institutions of higher education in overcoming these deficiencies.

Although our national security is handicapped by shortages of highly trained persons in all fields of endeavor, many thousands of young people with high potential ability drop out of high school before graduation or fail to attend college after graduation. This is a loss not only to those young people, but to the Nation as a whole. The State programs of counseling, guidance and testing established in this National Defense Education Act will aid in identifying potentially able students, ~~and provide them with the basic information upon which to make wise choices of fields of study, stimulating them~~

~~to achieve their optimum of performance based upon their intelligence and aptitude. The program provided for in this Act makes available grants of funds to the States to improve their counseling and guidance programs, and through the establishment of institutes in colleges and universities, to improve the preparation and the skills of persons engaged in the profession of educational counseling and guidance.~~

In addition to this important program, a provision to help buy equipment for instruction in mathematics, science and languages was included because it is exceedingly important to maintain a balanced program of instruction. It is not desired that one field of training be developed at the expense of another. ~~It was evident, however, that many of our elementary and secondary schools today are not providing instruction in science, mathematics, and modern foreign languages of sufficient quality or quantity. Serious shortages of equipment in all three fields exist. The Act provides for~~

~~financial assistance to the States for us by local systems in improving equipment and materials in the fields of science, mathematics, and modern foreign languages both in quality and quantity. In addition, grants are provided to assist State departments of education in extending their professional leadership and supervision in these areas.~~

~~Grants for basic research in improved instruction and newer methods and materials in the teaching of languages are also provided. Such materials do not exist for some languages spoken by millions of peoples. Serious shortages of faculty members already exist in American colleges and universities; yet enrollments are expected to double by the year 1970. Competent authorities estimate that the number of faculty members must also be doubled.~~

The National Defense Education Act will assist universities in expansion of their graduate schools by awarding fellowships coupled with cost-of- education payments to the universities in order to enable them to accept increased numbers of students who intend to complete their advanced graduate training and enter college teaching as a profession.

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The student loan program of the National Defense Education Act enables a college undergraduate to borrow up to one thousand dollars a year at 3 percent interest (interest to start one year after graduation) up to a total of \$5,000. The Act further provides that half of the loan will be cancelled if the student teaches school full time for five years after graduation. At present about half of those who leave the teaching profession do so in their first five years. Therefore, this provision is expected not only to reduce the number who give up teaching but also to encourage many college students to enter it.

The fact that the student loan program will give some preference to students with special ability in science, mathematics and engineering should also stimulate study in these fields. Also the expanded testing, guidance and counseling services should result in more qualified students taking scientific courses. The \$5 million allocation to

increase supervisory work in the State school systems in science and mathematics will mean higher standards in these subjects.

All of these benefits and advances became a reality in a series of dramatic events, in which I was privileged to play a part, during the closing hours of the 85th Congress. Pleased as the friends of the National Defense Act were at the passage of the bill, they faced still another obstacle in attempting to obtain the necessary appropriation to carry out the provisions of the Act. Without the appropriation, all the victory that had been won for American education would have been empty and meaningless, since there would have been no money available to make the law operative. At that critical juncture, with but a few hours left in which to legislate, I found myself, as chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee having jurisdiction over all funds for education, in a position to take effective action. I am glad to be able to tell you that I was successful in securing \$40 million to get the

wheels turning until full appropriations can be made early in the next Congress.

Spectacular and important as this fight was, I do not believe that it should be allowed to overshadow other aspects of the progress in aid to education which have their own special value and importance. I might, for example, mention the effort made in the last Congress to get extensive Federal aid for school construction. This program was, for the time being, largely frustrated, but I am pleased to be able to report to you that I was able to gain additional funds for school construction in federally impacted areas, with direct benefit to our own State.

And I most certainly would not feel that I had been doing an adequate job of representing my fellow citizens of Rhode Island and their well-demonstrated humanitarian concern for the handicapped, if I had not interested myself in securing legislation to improve the preparation of teachers in this field. Accordingly, I re-introduced a proposal, H.R. 13840,

which subsequently became Public Law 85-923. This Act provides for fellowships for training those engaged in teaching the mentally handicapped, or those preparing to do such teaching

In the light of such progressive steps as these, I believe that we can say that the people of our country and their representatives in Washington are growing more aware of the fact that the school room is the front line not only for the defense but also for the advance of America's future. The teacher stands together with the research scientist on the frontiers of our freedom. It is well for the general public to recognize this truth, but it is equally important that the teacher's true role should be acknowledged with more than honors. All the respect and esteem in the world cannot provide a family with the necessities of life or the comforts and conveniences which should be the reward of ability and hard work.

With this fact in mind, my colleague, Representative Lee Metcalf, and Senator James E. Murray introduced into the 85th Congress a proposal to aid the several States in improving teachers' salaries. This legislation contemplates the allocation of certain sums of money to each State which would then be distributed on approximately the same basis as the \$600 per teacher increment provided for each Rhode Island teacher a few years ago. Under the Murray-Metcalf plan, \$500 additional salary would be paid to each classroom teacher during the first year of the operation of the proposed enactment. This would increase by annual steps of \$500 each until the end of the fourth year when teachers would be receiving an additional \$2,000 per year in salary.

~~It would seem that this measure, or one like it, would be the solution to some of our own problems with regard to the necessary improvement of teachers' salaries here in Rhode Island.~~

In this, as in all else that pertains to Federal educational legislation, I believe that our guiding principle should be that of a shared responsibility between the Federal government and the

States, and of creative cooperation between public and private agencies. America's reserves of trained minds are homegrown and educated, for the most part, in our hometowns. But the whole nation, and indeed the whole world, has need of the kind of leadership for tomorrow which is being created by you teachers in the hometown schools of today. ~~The problems of our schools are not, therefore, simply local problems. They involve the national interest, and in the solving of them your representatives in the Federal government have an obligation to do their part.~~ It is you teachers who are the most potent force for the improvement of education today. No legislation can take the place of the competent teacher in the classroom. But legislation can help to put the necessary tools in the teacher's hands. Legislation can open highways of deserved opportunity to the youngsters who go out from the classroom into the life of our times. For that kind of legislation I assure you I will always have time to work. For that kind of legislation, I am sure the people of my State want me to work. You, as teachers,

will, I am sure, agree with me that no hours spent on education today are wasted for tomorrow. Investment in our schools is, and always has been, a major factor in the survival and growth of that constitutional liberty which is our most priceless political heritage.