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June 6, 1984 / AED
NYC

PRESIDENT FORD
DR. EUCICH
MEMBERS OF THE DISTINGUISHED
ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
AND FRIENDS

THIS IS FOR ME - A VERY SPECIAL MOMENT

MANY OF YOU ASSEMBLED IN THIS ROOM
HAVE BEEN - TO ME -
BOTH FRIEND & MENTOR - FOR MANY YEARS

YOU HAVE - IN A THOUSAND VERY SPECIAL WAYS -
~~BASICALLY~~ SHAPED AND ENRICHED MY LIFE

AND I AM DEEPLY TOUCHED
BY ~~YOUR~~ THE WARMTH
AND BY THE RECOGNITION YOU HAVE
EXTENDED HERE TONIGHT

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AND I MUST SAY A SPECIAL WORD TO AL & EVRICH & TO NELL EVRICH, TOO

WE LOVE YOU FOR BEING WHO YOU ARE

AND WE LOVE YOU ~~ALSO~~ FOR THE JOY & FOR THE INSPIRATION YOU HAVE BROUGHT INTO OUR LIVES

AND AL WHILE I ~~WE~~ FOLLOWED YOU TO THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NY.

~~BUT~~ I MUST CONFESS THAT I NEVER FILLED YOUR SHOES & MY ONLY CONSOLATION IS THAT NO ONE EVER WILL

WITH SOFT HUMILITY & PRESS HER MESSAGE

(INTRODUCTION)

well AS EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM CERTAINLY MUST KNOW BY NOW (1)

ITS BEEN ONE YEAR
SINCE THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION
SAID - THAT NATION WAS AT RISK

AND NOW 12 MONTHS LATER

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
HAS REASSURED US - THAT SUDDENLY -
THE NATION'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ARE BEING FIXED

THE TRUTH IS FOR COURSE -
OUR SCHOOLS WERE NEVER
'QUITE AS BAD'
AS THE HYPERBOLE WOULD SUGGEST

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INDEED - AFTER COMPLETING OUR STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOLS FROM COAST TO COAST

I'M CONVINCED THE NATION'S SCHOOLS DESERVE - NOT JUST F'S - BUT A'S AS WELL

AND - FURTHER - I'M CONVINCED THAT MOST SCHOOL CRITICS COULD NOT SURVIVE ONE WEEK IN THE CLASSROOMS THEY SO ELEQUENTLY CONDEMN.

I ALSO AM CONVINCED THAT - IN SOME COMMUNITIES AT LEAST THE PUBLIC SCHOOL IS THE MOST STABLE - NOT THE LEAST STABLE - INSTITUTION TO BE FOUND

WE'RE CONSTANTLY BEING TOLD THAT

STARTING IN THE 1960'S

THE SAT SCORE CATAPULTED DOWNWARD

AND THAT'S TRUE OF COURSE

BUT WHAT WE'RE NOT TOLD IS THAT

DURING THIS SAME PERIOD

EVERY INSTITUTION IN THE NATION

WAS BEING BATTERED & ABUSED

DURING THE 1960's
I HAPPENED TO HAVE BEEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- I WAS LOCKED IN AND OUT OF OFFICE
- I WAS SHOUTED DOWN BY STUDENTS
- I WAS TRYING TO CONTROL RIOTS ON THE CAMPUS

AND I MUST CONFESS TO YOU TONIGHT ~~THAT~~
IN THE DARK HOURS BEFORE DAWN
IT DID NOT OCCUR TO ME
TO CHECK THE SAT'S

INDEED LOOKING BACK
I WISH I HAD AN SAT SCORE ON HIGHER ED
DURING THE DECADE OF THE 1960's

I ALSO WISH I HAD AN SAT ~~SCORE~~
1. ON CONGRESS
2. OR ON ~~THE~~ OVER ~~HOMES~~ FAMILIES
3. OR ON THE CHURCHES
4. OR ON THE NATION'S COURTS

THE SIMPLE TRUTH IS THAT

A REPORT CARD ON THE SCHOOLS
IS A REPORT CARD ON THE NATION

AND I CONCLUDE THAT OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CAN BE NO STRONGER

THAN THE HOMES

AND THE PARENTS

AND THE COMMUNITIES
OF WHICH THEY ARE A PART.

STILL - PUBLIC EDUCATION CANNOT BE TAKEN OFF THE HOOK

SOME SCHOOLS ARE DEEPLY TROUBLED INSTITUTIONS

AND ON THIS ELEGANT OCCASION

I SHOULD LIKE TO COMMENT - VERY BRIEFLY

ON 5 PRIORITIES FOR EXCELLENCE

THAT I BELIEVE ARE ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL

FIRST, I'm CONVINCED THAT TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION EVERY SCHOOL SHOULD GIVE TOP PRIORITY TO THE MASTERY OF LANGUAGE

IN THE CARNEGIE REPORT WE SAY THAT

- LANGUAGE IS "THE BASIC OF THE BASICS"
- ITS NOT JUST ANOTHER SUBJECT
- ITS THE SKILL BY WHICH ALL OTHER SUBJECTS ARE NURSED

ITS CLEAR - OF COURSE - THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE BEGINS LONG BEFORE THE YEARS OF FORMAL EDUCATION

AND

- KAY - MY WIFE - WHO IS A CERTIFIED NURSE MIDWIFE ~~WHO~~ AND DELIVERS BABIES

~~AND SHE~~ INSISTS THAT LANGUAGE BEGINS IN UTERO AS THE UNBORN INFANT MONITORS ~~THE~~ MOTHERS VOICE.

I HAPPEN TO BELIEVE THAT KAY IS RIGHT
— AS SHE ALWAYS IS —

BUT FOR THE SKEPTICS HERE TONIGHT

I MUST INSIST THAT LANGUAGE
CERTAINLY DOES
~~DOES~~ BEGIN WITH THE FIRST BREATH OF BIRTH

FIRST WITH GURGLES
AND THEN PHONEMES THAT ARE
CRUDELY FORMED

AND THEN ~~THE~~ WITH
UTTERANCES WE CALL WORDS

AND THEN SENTENCES
TO CONVEY SHADES
OF SUBTLE ~~MEANING~~
~~FEELINGS~~ & IDEAS

INDEED
I'M CONVINCED THAT ANY CHILD
WHO CAN SPEAK & LISTEN
CAN ALSO READ & WRITE

I'M ALSO ~~CONVINCED~~ CONFIDENT THAT SCHOOLS
SHOULD BUILD ON THE MARVELOUS
SYMBOL SYSTEM —
ALREADY WELL IN PLACE

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AND HERE I SHOULD LIKE TO PAY A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO MISS RICE my FIRST GRADE TEACHER WHO

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL SAID

GOOD MORNING CLASS

TODAY WE LEARN TO READ

DURING THAT FIRST DAY WE SPENT ALL DAY ON JUST 4 WORDS

I GO TO SCHOOL

I RAN HOME ~~THAT NIGHT~~

TEN FEET TALL

AND I ANNOUNCED PROUDLY TO my MOTHER TODAY I LEARNED TO READ

ACTUALLY I HAD LEARNED TO MEMORIZE

BUT MISS RICE HAD ~~ALSO~~ TAUGHT ME SOMETHING MUCH MORE ESSENTIAL

SHE TAUGHT ME THAT IN OUR SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE SPEARMINT IS THE KEY

IN THE CARNEGIE REPORT WE ALSO GIVE TOP PRIORITY TO WRITING

WRITING – WE SAY – IS "FROZEN THOUGHT"

AND ITS THROUGH CLEAR WRITING THAT CLEAR THINKING CAN BE TAUGHT.

I HAPPEN TO BELIEVE THAT EVERY STUDENT BEFORE HE OR SHE GRADUATES FROM HIGH SCHOOL

SHOULD BE ASKED TO WRITE A THOUGHTFUL COHERENT STATEMENT ON A CONSEQUENTIAL TOPIC

AND IF AFTER 12 YEARS OF FORMAL EDUCATION STUDENTS CANNOT WRITE ENGLISH PROSE – WITH CLARITY AND CONVICTION

THEN I SUGGEST WE

- LOCK THE DOORS
- START AGAIN

HERE THEN is my CONCLUSION.

EXCELLENCE in EDUCATION is MEASURED

→ NOT BY THE SAT /

→ BUT BY THE MASTERY OF LANGUAGE

→ BY THE ABILITY OF EACH STUDENT TO COMMUNICATE WITH CLARITY

AND IF I HAD ONE WISH IN OUR SEARCH FOR SCHOOL REFORM

IT WOULD BE THAT EVERY CHILD

DURING HIS OR HER 1st DAY OF SCHOOL

WOULD HEAR SOME TEACHER SAY:

GOOD MORNING CLASS

TODAY WE LEARN TO READ

IN THE CARNEGIE REPORT
WE ALSO CALL FOR
A CORE OF COMMON LEARNING

WE SAY THAT 2/3 of The High School Program
SHOULD BE REQUIRED

NOT TO PRESERVE THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES
BUT TO PROMOTE A COMMON DISCOURSE
IN OUR CULTURE

WE AGREE WITH JEFFERSON WHO SAID THAT
EDUCATION is FOR CIVIC UNDERSTANDING

AND WE SUGGEST THAT ALL STUDENTS
STUDY
1. THE HUMAN HERITAGE
2. OUR SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS
3. LITERATURE & THE ARTS

AND WE INSIST THAT ALL STUDENTS ALSO STUDY
A NON WESTERN CULTURE
SO THEIR VISION WILL BE
NOT JUST NATIONAL - BUT INTERNATIONAL AS WELL

INDEED I WORRY THAT OUR EDUCATION MAY BECOME
· INCREASINGLY PAROCHIAL
· AT THE VERY MOMENT THE AGENDA IS MORE GLOBAL

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IN A RECENT ARTICLE IN
THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

E.D. HIRSH of the University of Virginia
WRITES PROVOCATIVELY ABOUT THE
NEED TO DEVELOP WHAT HE CALLS
A CULTURAL LITERACY
AMONG OUR STUDENTS -

THE NEED TO HELP ALL STUDENTS
DISCOVER THOSE CONNECTIONS
THAT HOLD US ALL TOGETHER

NOT JUST IN A NATURAL SENSE
BUT IN A SOCIAL & CIVIC SENSE
AS WELL

THIS - I AM CONVINCED - SHOULD BE
A CENTRAL VISION OF OUR SCHOOLS

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IN THE CARNEGIE REPORT
WE SAY THAT EXCELLENCE MEANS
GIVING RECOGNITION TO OUTSTANDING TEACHERS

NEAR THE END OF MY TENURE AS
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

I SPENT THE DAY WITH A GROUP
OF OUTSTANDING STUDENTS
FROM ALL ACROSS THE LAND

GREAT TEACHER?

THANKED A TEACHER?

WE MUST FIND WAYS TO GIVE
OUTSTANDING TEACHERS RECOGNITION & REWARD

AND TO THOSE WHO SAY
WE CAN'T TELL WHO THE "GOOD TEACHERS" ARE
I SAY

JUST ASK THE STUDENTS

WE DISCOVERED -
DURING OUR SCHOOL STUDY

THAT THE [redacted] BIGGEST PROBLEM OF TEACHING

IS NOT SALARY

ITS NOT MERIT PAY

ITS THE GRUELING FRUSTRATING CONDITIONS
TEACHERS ENCOUNTER EVERY SINGLE DAY

- TOO MANY STUDENTS
- TOO LITTLE TIME FOR PREPARATION
- TOO MUCH PAPERWORK
- TOO MANY MINDLESS INTERRUPTIONS

PA SYSTEM BECOME
A SYMBOL OF ALL THINGS GONE WRONG
IN PUBLIC ED

I URGE TEACHER RECOGNITION
- NOT OUT OF MERE SENTIMENT
- BUT BECAUSE A GREAT TEACHER
CAN CHANGE A LIFE FOREVER

→ LA CONFERENCE

MR. RUDY JOHNSON

AND NOW I'D LIKE TO SAY A WORD ABOUT THESE STUDENTS

IN THE CARNEGIE REPORT WE CONCLUDE THAT WE HAVE NOT JUST A SCHOOL PROBLEM BUT A YOUTH PROBLEM IN THIS NATION.

TIME & TIME AGAIN WE HEARD STUDENTS SAY THEY FELT UNNEEDED, UNCONNECTED TO THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE

TIME & TIME AGAIN THEY SUGGESTED THAT THEY WERE SOCIALLY ADRIFT

THE SAD FACT IS THAT HIGH SCHOOL IS ABOUT THE ONLY PLACE WHERE IT'S STILL OK TO BE A TEENAGER IN OUR CULTURE EXCEPT PERHAPS IN THE SHOPPING MALL WHERE KIDS CAN WANDER AROUND FOR HOURS - WITHOUT BEING NOTICED

JOHN GARDNER WROTE ON ONE OCCASION ABOUT THE SADNESS OF HAVING NO VISION LARGER THAN ONES SELF.

AND IN OUR REPORT WE PROPOSE A NEW CARNEGIE UNIT

A TERM OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR EVERY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

A SERVICE TERM THAT WOULD OCCUR EVENINGS WEEKENDS AND IN THE SUMMER

SERVICE AT HOSPITALS

AT NURSING HOMES

AT ART GALLERIES

OR SERVICE TUTORING OTHER KIDS AT SCHOOL

METRO HIGH HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A LITTLE DIE

I'm SUGGESTING THAT

WE CANNOT HAVE HEALTHY SCHOOLS WITH PATHOLOGY AMONG THE YOUNG

AND ITS MY CONVICTION THAT OUR STUDENTS URGENTLY NEED A SENSE OF MISSION

VACHEL LINDSAY WROTE ON ONE OCCASION

IT IS THE WORLD'S ONE CRIME
ITS BABES GROW DULL

NOT THAT THEY SOW
BUT THAT THEY SELDOM REAP

NOT THAT THEY SERVE
BUT HAVE NO GOD TO SERVE

NOT THAT THEY DIE
BUT THAT THEY DIE LIKE SEED

I'm Asking-
CAN WE BUILD ~~A CONNECTION BETWEEN~~
A CONNECTION BETWEEN
THE ENERGY & ALTRUISM of The Young
AND THOSE WHO URGENTLY NEEDS HELP

- MAD NOW

AND NOW I'D LIKE TO FOCUS ON THE FINAL ISSUE

ONE FINAL POINT

IN STUDY AFTER STUDY
ITS MADE CLEAR THAT
AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL HAS AN EFFCTIVE LEADER

~~AND THIS BRINGS ME TO THE CRUX OF MY COMMENTS TONIGHT~~

I'm convinced

AND I'M ~~[illegible]~~ THE NATION'S ~~SCHOOLS~~
SCHOOLS WILL NOT BE SAVED
BY THE REPORTS OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS

SCHOOLS WONT BE RENEWED
BY AN ARMY OF EXPERTS
ON LEAVE FROM MT. OLYMPUS

EXCELLENCE CANNOT BE MANDATED
BY LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

IN THE END
SCHOOLS ARE RUN BY PEOPLE

AND THE KEY TO EXCELLENCE
IS IN THE TEACHERS IN CLASSROOM
AND IN THE VITALITY & THE VISION OF THE ~~LEADERS~~ ~~SCHOOL LEADERS~~ PRINCIPALS WHO LEAD

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THIS BRINGS ME
TO THE CRUX OF MY REMARKS TONIGHT

I BELIEVE THAT THOSE WHO SEEK TO LEAD
THE NATION'S SCHOOLS

MUST BE SUPPORTED IN THEIR WORK

AND THEY - IN TURN -
MUST KEEP THEIR OWN LIVES
IN PERSPECTIVE

SEVEN YEARS AGO OUR FAMILY MOVED FROM ALBANY NEW YORK - TO WASHINGTON D.C.

PACKING LATE AT NIGHT
I UNCOVERED PRESS CLIPPINGS
FROM MY DAYS AS CHANCELLOR IN NEW YORK

THE PAPERS WERE YELLOW & QUITE FADED
THE KIND OF STUFF AN AGING ZIEGFELD GIRL
MAY HAVE "TUCKED AWAY" NOSTALGICALLY
IN HER TOP DRESSER DRAWER

WHAT REALLY STRUCK ME WERE THE HEADLINES

I SAW FRONT PAGE STORIES
THAT AT THE TIME - CAUSED ANGUISH
BUT NOW - JUST A FEW YEARS LATER
I BARELY COULD RECALL
WHAT ALL THE HUBBUB WAS ABOUT

AS I SAW THOSE FADED STORIES
IT STRUCK ME JUST HOW MUCH EMOTION
HAD BEEN WASTED

I DO NOT SUGGEST THAT WE GO THROUGH life LIKE UNFEELING ROBOTS

RATHER I SUGGEST THAT WE WORK VERY HARD TO KEEP LIFES EVENTS IN FULL PERSPECTIVE

AND THAT IN OUR WORK WE TRY TO AVOID THE ENDLESS PEAKS & VALLEYS

One of the illustration came to mind as I thought of these remarks tonight

(22)

IN 1974 NEW YORK STATE CONFRONTED A RECESSION.

- AND THE UNIVERSITY BUDGET TOOK A TERRIBLE BEATING

IT JUST SO HAPPENED WE GOT OUR BUDGET MARK AT THE VERY TIME THE 64 PRESIDENTS WERE MEETING AT SARATOGA SPRINGS

- IT WAS MY JOB TO TELL THEM THE BAD NEWS

- AND FRANKLY, I DREADED THE ENCOUNTER

I WAS IN MY ROOM AT THE GIDEON PUT-NAM HOTEL

- AND I BECAME MORE & MORE DISTRESSED

- THERE WAS NOTHING GOOD TO SAY!

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AND THEN KAY - WHO HAS ALWAY UNDERSTOOD HOW TO KEEP PRIORITIES WELL ORDERED SAID

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "YOU HAVE NOTHING GOOD TO SAY" -

SHE SAID

WE HAVE OUR HEALTH

WE HAVE A PLACE TO LIVE

WE HAVE FOOD TO EAT

AND MORE THAN THAT

YOU HAVE A JOB

- A BIGGER WATCH TO WORRY

AND ITS NOT THAT YOU'RE GETTING NO MONEY FOR THE UNIVERSITY

ITS JUST THAT YOU'RE NOT GETTING THE INCREASE YOU WOULD LIKE

WELL, I WAS JOLTED TO MY SENSES

KAY HAD INSPIRED ME TO GIVE A VERY DIFFERENT KIND OF SPEECH

WHEN I MET THE PRESIDENTS
I GAVE THE STRANGEST BUDGET PRESENTATION
THEY HAD EVER HEARD

I TITLED IT PERSPECTIVE

WHAT I DIDN'T TELL THEM WAS THAT
IT WAS ALL MY WIFES IDEA

KAY OF COURSE WAS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT

WE ~~[illegible]~~

ONLY ~~[illegible]~~

WE CAN BE GOOD & EVOLVES ONLY AS WE

AND WHILE WE WORK VERY HARD
TO BUILD OUR INSTITUTIONS

keep our values well ordered

WE ALSO HAVE A MORAL OBLIGATION
TO REMIND OURSELVES THAT

COMPARED TO MOST CREATURES
ON GOD'S EARTH

WE LIVE VERY PRIVILEGED LIVES

AND OCCASIONALLY WE SHOULD BE FILLED

~~NOT JUST WITH ANXIETY~~

BUT WITH GRATITUDE AS WELL

I Conclude, now that in our Search for EXCELLENCE in EDUCATION

WE MUST

1. GIVE PRIORITY TO LANGUAGE
2. REAFFIRM THE CORE OF COMMON LEARNING
3. REWARD EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING
4. REAWAKEN A SENSE OF SERVICE WITHIN STUDENTS
5. we must AND HAVE LEADERS WITH ~~BOTH~~ BOTH VISION & PERSPECTIVE

~~ABOVE~~

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IN OUR SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE

ABOVE ALL WE MUST REAFFIRM
OUR COMMITMENT TO ALL STUDENTS

- NOT JUST THE PRIVILEGED FEW

FIRING LINE
BILL BUCKLEY → MORTIMER ADLER

MY HOPE
YOUR DOUBT

JAMES AGEE A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

- WITH EVERY CHILD WHO IS BORN
- UNDER NO MATTER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCE
- THE POTENTIALITY OF THE HUMAN RACE IS BORN AGAIN

~~THERE IS THE VISION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION~~
~~AND THE CHANGES WE CONTEMPLATE~~
~~I BELIEVE IN~~
~~I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT THIS NATION~~

THAT'S THE OPTIMISM ON WHICH
OUR SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED
~~THIS ENTERPRISE WAS~~

AND IF WE RETAIN THAT LARGER VISION
I'M CONFIDENT ~~OUR FUTURE~~ ~~IS SECURE~~
THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION
AND OUR GLOBE WILL BE SECURE

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AGAIN

I ~~DO WISH~~ ~~TO~~ may I EXTEND MY DEEP THANKS

TO DR EURICH

AND THE ACADEMY

AND TO ALL OF THE ASSIMILE FRIENDS

FOR THE HONOR

YOU'VE BESTOWED

ON ME TONIGHT