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INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE
ARMED FORCES

EDUCATION AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Honorable Arthur S. Flemming

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Reviewed by: Colonel J. H. M. Smith, USAF

Date: 10 January 1961

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

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16 November 1960

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Reviewed By: Col J. H. M. Smith, USAF Date 10 Jan 1961

Reporter: Grace R. O'Toole

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GENERAL MUNDY: Centuries ago, the great philosopher, Diogenes, observed that the foundation of every state was the education of the youth.

During the founding period of our Nation, our own Thomas Jefferson observed that it was impossible for any civilzed nation to be both ignorant and free.

Certainly today the most thoughtful and knowledgeable people have come to realize that these were no idle observations. True to them, the strength of our Nation, or of any nation, for that matter, depends upon the nature and scope and philosophy of our educational system.

Our speaker today is well known to all of us. He is a scholar who has had extensive experience as a professional educator and as a devoted public servant. We have heard him here in the Industrial College many times when he was the Director of OCDM, speaking on manpower and economic mobilization. He has spoken previously as the Secretary of HEW and today we are hearing him on the subject of Education and National Security.

Mr. Secretary, it is a pleasure to welcome you back to the Industrial College. Gentlemen, Secretary Flemming.

SECRETARY FLEMMING: Thank you very much. I can assure you that I am very happy to have the opportunity of coming back to the Industrial College. As the result of the contacts that I have had with this institution of education over a period of quite a number of years, now, I have come to have the highest regard for the standards that are maintained, and I have come to have the highest regard for the contribution that this institution makes. I always look forward to the privilege of coming here and not only speaking but then having the opportunity of participating in a more informal discussion.

As all of you recognize, it has been my privilege to serve as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare during the period when we have been subjecting our system of education to closer scrutiny than possibly at any other time in our history as a nation. This scrutiny has taken place during a period when there has been an increasing recognition of the seriousness of the manpower problem that confronts our Nation.

Soon after I took office as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, working through the operating departments that are a part of our agency, I invited the presidents, or their representatives, of national organizations that have an interest in one or more of the programs of our department to come to Washington and to spend a day talking to me about their hopes as far as the work of our department is concerned.

As a result of these invitations being extended, I participated in 13 one-day conferences. By the time the conferences were over I had listened to the representatives of more than 800 national organizations.

There was one theme that ran through all of these conferences, and that theme was the shortage today and the prospective shortage of qualified personnel in all of the areas in which those organizations had an interest.

Just a few months ago my colleague in the Cabinet, Secretary of Labor Mitchell, presented to the Cabinet the results of a study designed to project our manpower needs over a period of the next 10 years. One could not listen to that presentation without recognizing again that we are as a nation up against a serious problem as far as manpower resources are concerned.

In fact, increasingly I have the conviction that shortage of qualified manpower could be our Nation's most serious limiting factor as we seek to adjust to a rapidly changing and complex world.

The close scrutiny of education that has taken place in the light of this serious current and prospective shortage of qualified manpower has brought to light both strengths and weaknesses in our system of education. I for one believe that our system of education in many respects is second to none, and I believe that one of the reasons why it is second to none is the increasing emphasis that we have placed on the necessity of universal education, at least through the high school.

Of course, as all of us recognize, as a nation we have made marked progress in the direction of achieving such an objective. Whereas 50 years ago maybe 8 to 10 percent of those who finished elementary school went on to the high school, today, of course, we know that between 80 and 90 percent move on to secondary schools.

We also know that there is an increasing percentage of those who finish secondary school, who are going on for at least two years in the field of higher education, many of them for four years in the field of higher education.

It seems to me that this is one of the outstanding characteristics of our system of education and of the objective that we as a nation keep in mind. We believe that it is important to do everything possible to enable each citizen to achieve his highest potential. We recognize, of course that the potential of persons differ but that nevertheless it is important for us as a nation to do everything possible to bring each citizen to the place where he can achieve his or her highest potential.

We do not believe in concentrating all of our resources on an elite group. We do recognize the existence of an elite group. We recognize the importance of doing everything possible to enable them to achieve their highest potential. But at the same time we recognize that others should likewise be given a comparable opportunity.

As one thinks in terms of our system of education generally, it seems

to me that he cannot help but recognize the indebtedness of all of us to those who have been willing over a period of years to make the kind of sacrifices that have been made in order to enable us to have the kind of a system that we have today.

At the same time, however, the scrutiny to which we have subjected our system of education has brought to light weaknesses which we certainly must recognize and which we must do something about. I believe personally that there is one overriding reason for the weaknesses that have been identified in our system of education, namely, our willingness at times to settle for mediocrity instead of insisting on the pursuit of excellence. I believe that, as we look to the future as a nation, we must make up our minds to the fact that education must be characterized by an uncompromising dedication to the pursuit of excellence.

The history of education in this country provides us with many illustrations of men and institutions that have been dedicated to the attainment of this objective. This is one of the reasons we have made the progress that we have as a nation. Likewise, many illustrations could be given of men and institutions that are today dedicated to the attainment of this objective embodied in the expression, the pursuit of excellence.

But I believe, as we take a look at our Nation as a whole, that we must recognize that many illustrations can also be given of men and institutions that have been willing to settle for mediocrity. This I believe our Nation cannot afford if we are to adjust to a rapidly changing and

complex world.

As I think in terms of the absolute necessity of our placing emphasis on the pursuit of excellence, I feel that first of all, of course, we must insist on the pursuit of excellence in the class room to a greater degree than we are doing today.

Let me give you just a few illustrations of what I have in mind. The illustrations that I am going to give obviously do not constitute an all-inclusive list, but they are certain areas to which I think we should give attention. For example, I believe that there are too many in our generation who do not have the ability to communicate effectively with one another or with the peoples of other nations. This inability to communicate effectively is, I believe, on the basis of my own observations in the field of educational administration and public administration, one of the most serious obstacles standing in the way of effective administration. Everyone in my audience this morning has had contact with the field of administration and, as a result of your contacts, I am sure that you can identify situations where the administrative processes broke down completely because of our inability to communicate effectively with one another. I believe that this obstacle to effective administration exists because we have been too willing in our educational institutions to permit our students to settle for mediocrity in the field of English.

I recall very distinctly, just before I left as President of Ohio

Wesleyan, in order to assume my present duties, a meeting of the faculty where a special committee brought in a report dealing with this problem. This special committee said that in effect they were shocked at the inability of our seniors to communicate effectively. They felt that as an institution we ought to do something about it. They recommended that, beginning the following fall, all students should be given two grades, one grade dealing with the student's competence in the subject-matter area of the course, the other grade related to his ability to communicate effectively. They recommended that, whenever a student failed to get a passing grade in terms of his ability to communicate effectively in two courses, he be assigned to a remedial course. They recommended further that he stay in that remedial course until he achieved an acceptable standard of performance in terms of ability to communicate.

When I listened to that report I said to myself, "We are in for a long evening," because I thought I could imagine members of the faculty standing up and saying, "Well, now, wait a minute. When we became members of this faculty we became members of the faculty with the understanding that we were going to work with students in chemistry, physics, economics, or other subject-matter areas, and we certainly didn't understand that we were to assume any responsibility for evaluating a student's ability to communicate." Much to my surprise not a single member of the faculty spoke along those lines. Rather, one

after another stood up and expressed agreement with the report and urged its adoption. It was adopted. I think that that faculty was simply reflecting a feeling on the part of citizens generally, namely, that we have fallen down when it comes to bringing people to the place where they can communicate effectively with one another, and that the time has come to do something about it.

I was delighted to note, for example, just within the past few weeks that the College Entrance Examination Board has decided to raise their standards of performance as far as their examinations in this particular area are concerned. This in turn means that many secondary schools will have to raise their standards of performance also. We must pursue excellence to a greater degree than we have in this area if we are to adjust to a rapidly changing and complex world.

Also, I believe that the inability of many of our generation to communicate effectively with the peoples of other nations is one of the most serious obstacles standing in the way of promoting international understanding and good will. I am sure that some of you read last spring about a congressional resolution, a joint resolution that was passed by the Congress, stating that it was the sense of the Congress that in the future no one should be accredited by our Government as a representative of our Government to another nation unless he had competence in the language or languages of that nation.

When we saw that the Congress had passed such a resolution we

applauded their action. At the same time I am sure that most of us recognize that a President of the United States and a Secretary of State will find it difficult at times to comply with this resolution. We have not pursued excellence in this particular area. For example, in the field of higher education, 20 years ago it was quite common for a college or a university to require competence in at least one foreign language as a requirement for graduation. Over the years we have pulled away from requirements of this nature. I think the trend is back in the direction of such requirement. It certainly should be.

But then to take another illustration, I also believe that there are many persons in our generation who have not rediscovered the concept of freedom and who have not identified the responsibilities which must be discharged if freedom is to be preserved and strengthened. As you and I recognize, it is not difficult to identify those who have rediscovered freedom and who have identified the duties and responsibilities that must be discharged by all of us if freedom is to be preserved and strengthened.

Those who have rediscovered freedom are the citizens who vote, the citizens who participate actively in the political party of their choice, the citizens who respond affirmatively to opportunities that are presented to them to serve in public office at all levels of government. The citizens who have rediscovered freedom are the citizens who recognize that no sacrifice is too great to prevent the enslavement of our own

Nation and the peoples of other nations by those who believe that man exists for the state rather than the state existing for man. Those who have rediscovered freedom are the citizens who are willing to make sacrificial contributions that the children and young people of our Nation may have the opportunity of freeing themselves from the slavery of ignorance. Those who have rediscovered freedom are the citizens who recognize that discriminatory practices in any walk of life on the basis of race, color, or creed constitute a denial of freedom.

Too few of our generation have rediscovered the concept of freedom, and as a result too few of our generation are willing to devote their lives to the discharge of duties and responsibilities that must be accepted if freedom is to be preserved and strengthened.

I believe that this situation exists because we have not insisted on the pursuit of excellence in the social sciences. We have been too willing at the elementary, secondary, and higher education levels to settle for mediocrity in this particular area.

Also, to take one other illustration, I believe that there are too many persons in our generation who do not possess the creative power that must exist in a rapidly changing and complex world if we are to measure up to the opportunities that confront us to make and to keep America strong.

I personally believe that, in part at least, this weaknesses, this failure to show creative power when we need it is attributable to our

willingness to settle for mediocrity in the humanities and the arts. So often, as we talk about our educational programs in these areas, we talk about them as being important in order to prepare persons for the wise use of their leisure time. Surely they have a role to play along this line, but, in addition, I believe that there is a direct correlation between the development of creative power and the insistence on the pursuit of excellence in the field of the humanities and the arts. And I believe that we must pursue excellence to a greater degree than we have up to now in the humanities and the arts if our Nation and the free world are to have the creative power we so desperately need.

As I indicated to you at the beginning, this is not by any means a comprehensive list of areas where we need to place more emphasis on the pursuit of excellence. I would agree with many of you that we certainly need to do it in the fields of science and mathematics. But I have simply taken three areas in which I believe that our Nation is suffering because of our failure to insist on the pursuit of excellence. There are other areas that certainly belong in this classification.

But not only must we as a nation insist on the pursuit of excellence to a greater degree than we have in the class room; we must also as a nation support the faculties of our institutions of learning in their dedication to the pursuit of excellence. On the basis of my own experience in the field of education, I believe that by and large the faculties of our institutions of learning are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence.

But, if they are going to achieve the objective that they want to achieve, I believe that each one of us must help them resist the pressures that lead too often to a decision on the part of an academic community to settle for mediocrity. Sometimes these pressures come, of course, from the student body itself. Sometimes these pressures come from parents of students. Sometimes these pressures come from alumni of institutions of learning, and in other instances they come from members of governing boards. But I believe that whenever any of us lends support to those who bring such pressures to bear we are rendering a great disservice to our Nation and to the free world. We cannot afford to settle for mediocrity in any of our institutions of learning.

Not only must we pursue excellence to a greater agree than we have in the class room, not only must we support the faculties of our institutions of learning in their dedication to the pursuit of excellence, but we must also as a nation provide the resources that will enable our educational institutions to obtain and retain the services of outstanding teachers and to have the necessary facilities and equipment.

It seems to me that, if as a nation we follow any other course of action, we are making it clear that we do not believe in the pursuit of excellence. There is a price that must be paid for excellence in education both by those who contribute to private institutions of learning and by those who contribute as taxpayers to public institutions of learning.

In fact, I believe that there is a price that the Federal Government

must pay, and I believe that it must pay a higher price than it is paying today. In the field of elementary and secondary education, I believe that the time has come for the Federal Government to make substantial matching grants available to our States, with the understanding that these Federal and State funds will be available to our local school districts with the understanding that they can use these funds to pay principal and interest on debts already incurred for the construction of class rooms, to pay principal and interest on debts that may be incurred for the construction of class rooms, and to pay or to help pay for class rooms that are being constructed on a pay-as-you-go basis.

I believe that, if the Federal Government makes substantial grants available for this purpose, it will do two things: It will release local funds that would otherwise have to be used for construction so that those funds can be used to increase the salaries of teachers. In the second place it will help to reduce rather sharply our present class room shortages, which run around 130,000 class rooms.

I also believe that the provision of the National Defense Education Act that has made Federal funds available in order to help secondary schools to purchase modern, up-to-date equipment for the teaching of science, mathematics, and languages has worked out well and should be extended. I also feel that the provision that has made it possible for the Federal Government to make funds available to strengthen counseling

and guidance services has worked out well and should be extended. I likewise feel that the provision that has made it possible for the Federal Government to make grants available to institutions of higher education so that they can operate institutes designed to upgrade teaching in the field of science, mathematics, and languages has worked out well and should be extended, not only in these three areas but also in two other subject-matter areas, such as English, the social sciences and humanities.

In the field of higher education we are faced with the real crisis that by the fall of 1964 there will be a million more persons on our college and university campuses than were there last fall. If we are going to deal with these people or provide them with an adequate education, it is going to be necessary for us to accelerate the construction of facilities. I believe, therefore, that the Federal Government should make loans available to our institutions of higher education at low rates of interest, not only to construct dormitories, as we have been doing for a period of the last 10 years, but also to construct laboratories, libraries, and class rooms.

I also believe that the Federal Government should make matching funds available to our colleges and universities for the construction of libraries, laboratories, and class rooms.

In the area of student aid, our student loan program under the National Defense Education Act has worked out very well. It should be

extended and expanded. In addition, the Federal Government should make matching funds available to the States so that they can inaugurate a system of Federal scholarships based on merit and on need. In addition, our income tax laws should be changed so that persons can receive income tax deductions for tuition payments and other expenses incurred in connection with programs in the field of higher education.

This it seems to me is the minimum price that the Federal Government must be willing to pay in order to enable us at the elementary and secondary levels as well as at the level of higher education to pursue excellence.

I believe, as we look to the future, that education in our Nation will not be characterized by an uncompromising dedication to the pursuit of excellence because of the fear of any nation. I am sure that it is clear to you from what I have said that I believe that there is a very direct relationship between the pursuit of excellence and our national security. Of course, I believe that there are many thoughtful citizens who have the same conviction. There isn't any doubt in my mind at all that, because they have this conviction, they are willing to see us make sacrifices in order to strengthen our system of education. Also there isn't any question in my mind at all that we were able to secure the passage of the National Defense Education Act because of the fears that developed as the result of Sputnik. But you know far better than I do that fear by itself never results in a sustained effort to achieve

a constructive goal. Human beings adjust too easily to their fears.

I believe that education will be characterized in our Nation by an uncompromising dedication to the pursuit of excellence only as an increasing number of our citizens recognize and accept a spiritual obligation to help our neighbor achieve his highest potential. There isn't any question in my mind at all that one of the spiritual laws of life is this obligation to never pass up an opportunity to help one of our fellow human beings achieve his highest potential.

I think that it has been our recognition as a nation of this spiritual law of life that has made it possible for us to set as a goal universal education in our country and to make tremendous strides in the direction of achieving this goal. I think that it is this kind of a conviction on the part of the citizens of our Nation that will lead to our making the sacrifices that must be made if we are to be successful in our pursuit of excellence in the field of education. In other words, what I am saying is that, if we are to strengthen the foundations on which our educational system rests, we must at the same time strengthen our spiritual foundations as a nation.

I don't know whether you have been impressed as I have with the fact that so often these days when we end a conversation with one another we end it by using the expression, "Well, take it easy." I don't know whether you have stopped to think that this particular expression has taken the place in many instances of "Good bye," which is a contraction

of "God be with you." As we think in terms of education in this country, I hope that none of us who engage in any conversation relative to it will end that conversation with the expression, "Well, take it easy." That's the last thing that we can afford to do in the field of education in this country. Rather, we need the spiritual strength that can come from the presence of God in the lives of our fellow human beings, the spiritual strength that will lead to a recognition of a spiritual obligation to help our fellow human beings achieve their highest potential and that will lead to the sacrifices that must be made if this obligation is to be discharged in the most effective possible manner.

If as a nation we dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in the field of education, there is no question in my mind at all that education will make the contribution which education alone can make--the making and the keeping of America strong. In my judgment this is in the realm of national security certainly ~~ifxmk~~ one of our most important problems if not our No. 1 problem.

I have endeavored to present to you some of my own observations growing out of the experience that it has been my privilege to have in the field of education and then particularly during the last 2-1/2 years in my present office. I look forward to the opportunity of listening to your comments and attempting to address myself to your questions.

Thank you very much.

CAPTAIN SMITH: Gentlemen, Secretary Flemming is ready for your questions.

QUESTION: Sir, many engineering colleges have found it necessary to go to a five-year program to include all their necessary and desirable courses. With the increase in knowledge in general and in science, humanity, and the arts, do you see us eventually going to a five-year course in the colleges in their straight arts and science courses?

SECRETARY FLEMMING: Well, it's conceivable. First of all let me say this: I personally heartily endorse what the engineering schools are doing along that line, because it reflects a determination on their part to provide us with graduates of engineering schools who not only understand engineering but do have a better understanding of the humanities and the social sciences, and who have more ability to communicate than would otherwise be the case.

I think that that's all to the good. I think we will probably see similar developments in other areas. Whether you will actually see what we now think of as the liberal arts course by itself being extended to five years I rather doubt. I don't think that's necessary. May I say that along with this tendency in the direction of extending the period of time I also heartily favor the trend in the direction of utilizing the summer months for our educational programs, whether by a four-quarter system or a tri-semester system, or what not. I think those

two things must go hand in hand. Otherwise we keep postponing the time when a person can begin to earn to such an extent that we may set up some resistance to people pursuing some of these programs who really should pursue them. I think the two things have got to go hand in hand. I see no reason at all why we should just quit in the summer months as far as our educational programs are concerned. Oh, I favor a month off, or something of that kind, but certainly we don't need to take the whole summer off.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, I was interested in your remarks on the inability to communicate. I wonder if you think that our quitting in recent years to the objective type test and examination versus the essay type even in the humanities has contributed to this, and is there any trend in the other direction?

SECRETARY FLEMMING: First of all let me say that I do think that it has contributed to it. I also think that there is a slight trend in the other direction, but not as sharp a trend as there should be. I think to a certain extent that this use of the objective as contrasted with the essay type is kind of a lazy man's device on the part of instructors at times. It is a lot easier to grade an objective test than it is to grade an essay type, as we all know. I think that we've got to get down underneath that desire on the part of instructors maybe to spend less time grading than would otherwise be the case.

Here again, this seems to contradict what I said a little earlier

when I said that I believe that most of our faculties are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence. I don't think there is a necessary contradiction there. I think here again, if the faculties are given the opportunity (I mean the faculty as an institution, now) of setting their own standards in this particular area they will pull away from this undue emphasis on the objective type. In other words, they will talk to one another to such an extent as to persuade people to pull away from it. Just as in the case of the illustration I gave you of Ohio Wesleyan, they deliberately took an extra workload in order to make a contribution to stepping up ability to communicate. In other words, if they can be shown--as I think they can be--that their overemphasis on objective as contrasted with essay type question is contributing to weakness in terms of our ability to communicate, I think they will change.

QUESTION: With respect to the earlier question about the five-year college curriculum, do you think this reflects a shallowness in the curriculum in the secondary schools so that the colleges are now having to make up somewhat what the high schools should have taught?

SECRETARY FLEMMING: Certainly there is some of that in the picture. There isn't any doubt about that. In other words, wherever a secondary school has failed to pursue excellence in some of these areas that throws an additional load on the institution of higher education. Take the areas that I was talking about, I mean those that I used for the purpose of illustration--ability to communicate in social studies, the

arts and humanities. Certainly we can raise our standards of performance in those three areas in the secondary field, and if we do, then our institutions of higher education will have a chance to do a better job. I think as most of you appreciate, any college, as it deals with a freshman class, is confronted with some very serious problems in terms of this ability to communicate. Some come in who have made marked progress in that particular direction. Others come to a college who have made very little progress. Of course, this is what the College Entrance Examination Board has got in mind in deciding to jack up their standards of performance in the field of English. They feel that in turn will have an impact on the secondary school and that in turn will make it possible for the college to do a better job.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, last year I was told by the Dean of a prominent engineering school that for several years his class rooms had been filled with opportunists who had no business in engineering. It appears from this that there might be a conflict between the universality of education and the standards. If this is so, what is your proposed approach to the problem?

SECRETARY FLEMMING: This is a very good question. I am glad you asked it, because possibly what I said earlier might have made a little confusion there. I personally don't believe that there is any conflict. Let me say this: I believe that each educational institution has

an obligation to establish and maintain high standards of admission. If it does it will help to correct the kind of problem that this dean was talking about. It isn't a cureall, because we haven't yet developed tests that are perfect in determining who should be admitted. But nevertheless there is such a thing as high standards for admission and low standards for admission. It seems to me that each educational institution has got an obligation to maintain high standards of admission.

All right--here's John Jones. He wants to enter a particular institution to pursue a particular course of study. This institution says to him, "You are not qualified. We will not admit you." That doesn't mean that that particular student should be denied the opportunity of pursuing some advance work in the field of education. Assume that the institution's decision was a proper one. Assume that they evaluated the capabilities of this person in the right way. There is an area where that student can pursue additional educational work which will help him to realize his highest potential.

Here it seems to me our all counseling and guidance work comes into the picture. I think that we've got an obligation to sit down with that particular student who is denied admission and work with him and help him find the spot where he can pursue additional work and, as a result of pursuing it, achieve his highest potential. In other words, my philosophy is that there is a highest potential for every individual. Of course

that differs from one individual to another and, as we carry forward our educational system, we've got an obligation to give each person an opportunity to achieve his highest potential.

The fellow who is determined that he should go to a school of engineering and who is turned down, and properly turned down, is being told only that this is not the area where he can achieve his highest potential. All right--then I think he's got a right to turn to us and say, "Well, can you help me? Identify the area. I've got the desire. I want to make the maximum contribution that I can to the life of my day. Can you help me identify the areas where I should get additional training so that I can make that contribution?" I think we should try to help him. Then, having identified that area, we should try to give him that opportunity.

I do not think that there is any conflict between the concept of universality of educational opportunity and the maintenance of high standards of admission and high standards once a person has been admitted to a school. In other words, we may admit a fellow and say that he can do a good job in the school of engineering, and in the course of a year or two years we determine that he can't do a good job. It seems to me that we've got an obligation to dismiss him in the interest of maintaining these high standards. We've got a further obligation to try to channel him into an area where he can achieve his highest potential.

There is a university in the East here, one of the large universities,

that's got a college that they informally refer to as the college of the second chance. In other words, it takes the persons who have flunked out of other colleges and tries to work with them in order to identify their areas of competence and tries to get them started following an educational program that will enable them to achieve their highest potential. I think we need colleges of that kind.

So often we are inclined to say to a fellow, "You haven't made the grade. You're out." Then society forgets about him. I think at that particular point society should say to itself, "Look, we need that fellow's highest potential. It obviously isn't going to be realized by his pursuing work in the field of engineering, but it may be realized by his pursuing work along some other line." Maybe it's a technical institute that he should be placed in in order to achieve his highest potential. There's some place where he can be placed where he can be helped to achieve his highest potential.

With the manpower shortages that we have today and prospectively, I just don't think we can afford the luxury of just saying to a person, "You didn't make the grade here, therefore we're not going to worry about you at all. You are on your own." I think we've got some obligation to help that fellow, just as we help the person who continues to pursue his work effectively in the college of engineering.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, Federal aid to teachers' salaries has been the subject of some political debate. My question is:

Assuming such Federal aid were administered through State and local school boards, would you find objection to it in principle?

SECRETARY FLEMMING: Let me put it this way: I personally think that we can accomplish everything that we want to accomplish in strengthening our elementary and secondary education without taking whatever risks may be involved in making a Federal grant for current operating budgets in local school districts. This is really what we are talking about. It has been labeled as aid for teachers' salaries, but really the bills that have been considered in Congress are bills that would provide Federal grants for current operating budgets.

I outlined in my talk the approach that I personally think is a sounder approach, an approach which in my judgment would make just as much money available for teachers' salaries as the other approach. But I don't think that it involves quite the same risk.

Why do I say that? Growing out of 20 years of experience in the Federal Government I have some appreciation of how easy it is to put a rider on an appropriation bill and how difficult it is to get that rider off once it has been put on. I think that, if the Federal Government got in a position where it was making grants for current operating budgets of local school districts, it would be very easy for some indignant Congressman to say, "By golly; if we are going to put up this money, then they ought not to be teaching this particular course; at least they ought not to be teaching it by using our money." So he would propose

a rider to our appropriation bill saying, "Provided, that none of the funds here appropriated shall be used for the purpose of teaching Course A or Course B."

If the matching grants to the States are earmarked for construction purposes, of course he may still try to offer a rider. I mean, some people might. But the rider in that case would be more apt to be something along the line, "Provided, none of the funds herein appropriated shall be used for the purpose of constructing a building of this type or that type of architecture, or constructing a building that has a swimming pool in it, or a building with bowling alleys in it," or something of that nature. I think we ought to resist riders of that kind, just as we should resist the other type of rider. But, if we don't succeed in resisting it, it's not as fatal in terms of Federal interference with the educational program as would be the situation under the other type of rider.

I don't have too dogmatic feelings about it, but I am convinced in my own mind, as well as the result of working with the problem, that we can give all the assistance that we should give and we need to give to elementary and secondary education by the other route, I mean the route of making funds available to help on construction costs, when we can do it without running the risk that I have identified. If we can, why not do it that way?

Then, being very pragmatic about it, I frankly think that the type of

program that I outlined is the only type of program that we've got a good chance of getting through Congress. There is resistance to the other approach. Some of the people who resist the other approach are perfectly willing to go along with the approach on construction.

This being the case, at least let's get started in putting the Federal Government in a position where it is a more active participant in the field of education by taking the course that has a broader base of support than does the other.

QUESTION: My question goes back to your answer to another question and your comments about potential and students' aptitudes. I think there are few people in the aggregate who are satisfied with the profession they are in, because they may not be in the area of their highest potential. Students who drop out of college are misguided in their choice of college. I wonder how effective aptitude testing is and what can be done about it in the secondary level so that students would be channeled to the right college and to the right pursuit or profession.

SECRETARY FLEMMING: Thank you very much. Let me say this: I am not one who feels that aptitude testing is the cure-all for the problem you have identified. I do think, however, that it can be tremendously helpful, and I also feel that we are not utilizing it as an asset to the extent that we should. As you probably know, one of the titles of the National Defense Education Act makes it possible for the Federal Government to make funds available to the States in order to help them to

strengthen their counseling and guidance activities in the secondary schools. This has proved to be a very popular part of the total National Defense Education Act, and I think that it has produced some results. I think that that title, the "National Defense Education Act," expires in 1962. The next session of Congress is going to have to consider what it is going to do with it. I think that when it does it should definitely provide for the extension and expansion of this counseling and guidance work.

I know that those who are kind of cynical as they think in terms of the time that is spent on counseling and guidance work. They say that really tests don't reveal everything, and of course they don't. We all recognize that. But they do help, and it seems to me that it is kind of a crime for us not to use them to the extent that they will help.

Your observation is certainly correct. Our attrition rate in colleges and universities during the freshman and sophomore years is very very high, and this to me is a waste of our manpower resource. If we did a better job of identifying aptitudes back at the secondary level I am sure that that rate would go down in our freshman and sophomore years. To the extent that it did, it would mean that we were utilizing our human resources in a more intelligent manner.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, all of our armed services are experiencing an ever increasing need for people with technical capability above the secondary school level, preferably with mathematics up to

calculus. There is also a great need for these people in industry. Labor statistics indicate that the need in industry for these people is going to grow 40 percent in the next 10 years. Could we have your views on the potential contribution of the junior college movement to meet this great need?

SECRETARY FLEMMING: I am very very happy to comment on that, because I believe that this is going to be our salvation, frankly, in terms of dealing with the increasing number of persons who want to pursue and who should pursue education beyond the high school, a number that is increasing both because of our increase in population and because of the fact that an increasing percent of people are finishing and recognize the necessity of going beyond the high school.

Frankly, I like the term community college better than the term junior college. That's just a question of semantics. Somehow or other when you use the term junior college some people get the idea this is kind of a second-class college, whereas many of us know that some of our junior community colleges are colleges that are maintaining the highest kind of standards and that are rendering a very outstanding service.

I think that we are going to have to have more and more of the community colleges. I think that they should carry forward two types of programs--a terminal program for those who can be brought to the place where they can go out into society and make a contribution at the

end of two years, and then also preparatory programs for the additional two years in a four-year college. Frankly, my own feeling is that increasingly these community colleges are going to become four-year colleges. In other words, they are going to become an integral part of our total system of education. As you probably know, there is that tendency always. You establish a community college which covers just the first two years in a community, and, if it does a good job and people get increasingly enthusiastic about the job it is doing, then they develop a feeling that they would like to make it possible for their people to stay there for the third and fourth years.

Sometimes that should be resisted, because the resources are not such as to enable a community to really support an outstanding four-year college. In other instances I think that that should be encouraged. I believe that a college which is tied in with the life of a community does render a very unique type of service.

I happen to come from a State that's got a number of institutions that are essentially municipal institutions. The University of Cincinnati, for instance, is a very good illustration. As many of you know that's an outstanding university. It is essentially a community college. Akron University and Toledo University are in the same classification.

In the State of California, of course, they have placed a great deal of emphasis on the junior or community college, and that movement is extending to other parts of the country. Taken in connection with Federal

aid to higher education, I think that whatever type of aid we give we should always earmark a percentage of that for the junior or community college in order to accelerate this movement.

QUESTION: In the United States we find a great difference in the educational standards between States and sometimes even between counties within a State. Often we will see a young man from one of the country areas really penalized because the standards of education in his area weren't up to what they were in the big city, such as New York. What would you recommend specifically to standardize the educational levels in our public school system so that one high school graduate is pretty much the same as any other high school graduate?

SECRETARY FLEMMING: You put your finger on what is certainly a major issue as far as our country is concerned. As you know, at the present time we rely for the establishment of standards on what we call regional accrediting bodies. That is, the country is divided into four regions. In each region there is an accrediting body which accredits work both at the secondary and the higher education levels. For example, here in this part of the country it's the Middle States Association that does that accrediting.

Personally, I rather think that this is what we should rely on. In the first place, I like the idea of it being a private body, as contrasted with it being a governmental body. I don't think that this is a good area

for example for the Federal Government to try to move into. I think it is much better to place reliance on a private accrediting association such as we are doing at the present time.

In the second place I think by and large the idea of doing it by regions makes sense for this reason that, within each region, they have some appreciation of how rapidly they can move toward a new and higher standard of performance, and they have some understanding of the resources of the region and the progress that the region has made to date.

But, having said that, I also think that possibly we are ready or should be ready to take the next step, and that is that representatives of these four regional accrediting bodies should come together for the purpose of setting some national goals toward which all of them would work. Those national goals would not be binding on the regional accrediting bodies, but they would have the effect of raising the sights of the regional accrediting bodies, and, if in any particular region they are not moving as rapidly as they should move, calling their attention constantly to the fact that here in the national standard, the national goal. This is something that I am sure would have a very real effect and impact on the work within that particular region.

I personally would like to see representatives of the four regional accrediting bodies come together and set some national goals toward which the regional groups would work. I like the idea of keeping this in

CAPTAIN SMITH: Mr. Secretary, you have given us a very excellent presentation. On behalf of the Commandant, the faculty, and the students, thank you very much.