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Presidential Leadership in Education: 1961-1963

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PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION:
1961 - 1963

by
Cheryl M. Nuzbach

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

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1976
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VITA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The foremost role of the President of the United States is the leadership of the American people. In a democracy, more than in any other form of government, there is a vital need for strong moral leadership at the top. During the administration of President John F. Kennedy, leadership in education was one of the strongest personal commitments of the President to the American people. Kennedy was deeply concerned about the educational needs of the nation and advocated deeper government involvement in the educational goals of the country. The President believed that education would improve the quality of American life.

President Kennedy was a memorable figure in educational history for several important reasons. First of all, he frequently acted as a catalyst for change. Moving the nation from the educational inactivity of the Eisenhower Administration, he laid the foundation for the many accomplishments of the Johnson years. In his own era, he was able to renew the nation's interest in education. During the Kennedy Administration alone, more education legislation had been enacted than in the previous one hundred years.¹

Kennedy believed that education was a wise investment in the nation's future. He had a deep concern for young people and succeeding generations. He felt that only educated people would be able to solve the complicated problems which faced the nation. He believed that education was necessary to the nation's security and domestic well-being. Regarding education's contribution to the economy, he said:

A free nation can rise no higher than the standard of excellence set in its schools and colleges. Ignorance and illiteracy, unskilled workers and school dropouts--these and other failures of our educational system breed failures in our social and economic system: delinquency, unemployment, chronic dependence, a waste of human resources, a loss of productive power and purchasing power and an increase in tax-supported benefits. Failure to improve educational performance is thus not only poor social policy, it is poor economics.²

Secondly, President Kennedy took a bold position on behalf of education. He did not just bend with public opinion. He used the power of his office and the persuasive tools of television, radio, and the press to communicate with the American people, and educate them regarding the issues. Examples of President Kennedy's attempt to reach the people directly were found in his public appeals for desegregation of the schools and on the issue of

civil rights. The President's Press Secretary, Pierre Salinger, said that Kennedy used the press to shape public attitudes through positive leadership. The President found that the media was an effective means to inspire the American people, to arouse public sentiment, and to gain general acceptance of his position on a number of issues. Kennedy was probably the first modern American President to reach effectively large numbers of Americans through the media.

Next, President Kennedy did much to raise the status of education in the United States. He enjoyed a unique rapport with the academic community. Students responded to his challenges. He personally supported the arts and brought cultural events to the White House. His advisors generally possessed impressive academic credentials. He attempted to persuade Congress to adopt his programs which would upgrade the quality of American education.

Finally, President Kennedy should be studied from the viewpoint of educational history not only because of his effective leadership in education, but also because of the educational ideas he fostered. World leaders and the people governed by them could easily have followed the example of President Kennedy's deep concern for the intellectual welfare of his fellow human beings. He believed that the full

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development of the potential of each American was the greatest asset to the nation's progress. He kept developing and expanding his own wealth of knowledge even while performing the demanding and complicated task of heading the government. The President had a critical mind and an inexhaustible curiosity. He wanted to know every detail. He read biographies, newspapers, and magazines almost entirely for information, rarely for pleasure. He had a mind for quotations and those which he did not remember verbatim, he wrote in his personal notebook. Some examples of these quotations were:

Dante: The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who, in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality.

Burke: Our patience will achieve more than our force.

Jefferson: Widespread poverty and concentrated wealth cannot long endure side by side in a democracy.

Hindu Proverbs: I had no shoes—-I murmured until I met a man who had no feet.

Joseph P. Kennedy: More men die of jealousy than cancer.

John F. Kennedy: To be a positive force for the public good in politics, one must have three things: a solid moral code governing his public actions, a broad knowledge of our institutions and traditions, and a specific background in the technical problems of government, and lastly he must have political appeal—the gift of winning public confidence and support.4

The above quotations were representative of the President's

views on leadership, democracy, and politics.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who was the official White House historian and a close personal associate of the late President, described John F. Kennedy in the following manner:

He was a man of action who could pass easily over the realm of ideas and confront intellectuals with perfect confidence in his capacity to hold his own. His mind was not prophetic, impassioned, mystical, ontological, utopian, or ideological. It was less exuberant than Theodore Roosevelt's, less scholarly than Wilson's, less adventurous than Franklin Roosevelt's. But it had its own salient qualities--it was objective, practical, ironic, skeptical, unfettered and insatiable.\(^5\)

Schlesinger defined an intellectual as a person whose primary concern was the realm of ideas. Although Kennedy could not be considered a pure intellectual, he found "exhilaration in ideas and in the company of those whose trade was to deal with them."\(^6\) The President's critical mind, his self-education, and his formal education played important roles in his decision-making process on behalf of the American people. The President understood America, its history, problems, and needs. He understood the need for change and progress. He realized what was the position of America in relation to foreign powers. And he realized that the integrity of American law and traditions needed to

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 106.

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 104.
be upheld. All of these ideas were extensions of the President's whole being. As the leader of the American people, these ideas were imposed upon the nation.

Fortunately for the American people, the President believed that progress in education was related to progress of the nation as a whole. Kennedy was well aware of the arguments advocating and against deeper federal involvement in education. Kennedy realized that if the government were unwilling to support the cause of education with federal funds, it would be virtually impossible to make sweeping strides in that area. Kennedy took the initiative to support the cause of education on the national level. He felt that historically the federal government had been involved in supporting educational programs, and its role should be increased. The arguments in favor of more federal aid to education were (1) the equalization of educational opportunity; (2) the need for assistance because of increased enrollments; (3) the direct relationship of education and the nation's welfare; (4) the inability of local revenues to support the increased cost of education; (5) the mobility of the population from one state to another; (6) the acceptance of the idea of federal aid to education according to public opinion polls; (7) the historical precedent of the passage of laws providing federal assistance to education without evidence of federal control; and (8) the
efficiency of collecting federal taxes through a central agency rather than on the state or local level. Regarding this last point, at the time of President Kennedy's administration, over sixty-five percent of the taxes were being collected by the federal government, yet the federal government paid only four percent of educational costs. State governments collected fifteen percent of the taxes while paying forty percent of the costs of education. And local governments collected only sixteen percent while paying fifty-six percent of educational expenses.

President Kennedy thought that the federal government could do more to support education. He introduced comprehensive legislative proposals which covered all aspects of education, including aid to elementary and secondary schools, higher education, vocational and adult education, special education, the arts, and other special programs.

The development of President Kennedy's educational ideas and his leadership in implementing those ideas will be the subject of the next three chapters. Since the evolution of President Kennedy's thought was an important factor in his later endeavors on behalf of education, chapters have been provided on Kennedy's educational career and


8Ibid., p. 36.
the development of his ideas and leadership ability throughout his political career. A separate chapter covering the presidential years will provide details of his legislative efforts and his struggle for equal rights in education.

The thesis has been based primarily on President Kennedy's own words. His books, speeches, messages, and proposals were read and analyzed for their educational impact. Other sources which provided background information included biographical works, magazine and journal articles, personal documents, and memoirs of family, friends, and associates. At the end of the thesis, an Appendix has been included for the reader's convenience to provide a chronological listing of significant events in the life of President Kennedy, the Educational Plank of the 1960 Democratic National Convention, and special messages on education and civil rights.

The thesis was designed to present an overall view of the role of the head of government in education. The study of President John F. Kennedy was particularly rewarding because of his many valuable contributions to American education.
CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

John F. Kennedy's own educational background was a relevant factor in the formulation of his educational views. During his Presidency he many times referred to his own past experiences. His close association with Harvard University served as a basis of his rapport with the academic community. He frequently called upon professors to serve as special advisors to the President and to provide him with a continual flow of facts and statistics. His own command of history and theories of government which he acquired through formal education, travels, independent reading, and scholarly research, supplied him with perspective and understanding of numerous problems he faced. His scholarly accomplishments included books that treated such diverse topics as the events which led England into World War II, the heroic deeds of notable United States Senators, and the place of immigration in the make-up of American life. His travels abroad were also a valuable part of his educational background, as they provided him with the impetus to study harder and with empathy for the problems faced by people of other nations. President Kennedy's educational background was important for perhaps many more reasons, but one of
these was certainly the lasting friendships he established, and the acquisition of knowledge of the habits and attitudes of people who were quite unlike himself.

John Kennedy's education began at a very early age. Even before his formal schooling began, he had been introduced to books by his mother, who fostered in him a love for reading. Among his favorite reading materials were biographies of famous leaders and historical novels. His reading habits developed to a greater extent as a youth during sieges of illness that confined him to bed for long periods of time. In her book, *Times to Remember*, Mrs. Rose Kennedy recalled that Jack was a "natural reader." She added, "He had a strong romantic and idealistic streak. In fact, he was inclined to be somewhat of a dreamer."¹ He liked stories of adventure and chivalry, biographies of famous or interesting people, and general subjects having to do with history as long as they had flair, action, and color.

Although his family was Roman Catholic, John F. Kennedy's formal education was basically secular. There were several reasons why a devout Catholic family like the Kennedys insisted upon a private, but non-Catholic, education for their sons. Probably the most influential factor was

Joseph P. Kennedy's old political maxim: "If you can't lick 'em, join 'em." He deliberately studied the habits of Boston financiers, for example, to be able to predict how they would react in certain situations, thus giving him an advantage should he need one. He believed that in order to take over from the opposition, it was first necessary to know their ways. Mr. Kennedy left the education of his daughters to the discretion of his wife, who proceeded to send all of them to Catholic schools. The father preferred to send the boys to Protestant schools to broaden their experiences. He also felt that it would be a good idea for Protestant boys to attend Catholic schools.3

Jack went to first grade at the private Dexter School, which his brother Joe Jr. was attending. Jack and Joe were probably the only two Catholic students in the school. The Kennedy family was then living in a middle-class home in Brookline, Massachusetts, where Jack was born on May 29, 1917. The boys did not stay at the Dexter School very long because the family had to move to New York to be closer to the father's business. In 1926 the Kennedys settled in Riverdale, New York. Jack completed the fourth, fifth, and


sixth grades at the private Riverdale Country Day School. John F. Kennedy's biographer James MacGregor Burns wrote in his book, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, that Jack's teachers at Riverdale remember him as "a rather slight boy, polite, industrious, and likable, with a special interest in English and history." This interest developed later in life and eventually became the subject area in which he wrote a senior honors paper at Harvard University.

At the age of thirteen, Jack left home to attend the Canterbury School, a Catholic boarding school, in New Milford, Connecticut. A required course in the curriculum was Latin, which was one of Jack's weakest subjects. Languages always seemed to cause him difficulty. Many years later a friend and close associate, Benjamin C. Bradlee, wrote that "Kennedy found it intolerable that he did not have the facility for languages that others had, and his pride in his wife's linguistic talents was tinged with jealousy and bewilderment." Bradlee went on to report that others described Kennedy's French as spoken "with a bad Cuban accent." Before the President's successful West Berlin trip, he spent several hours with a foreign service officer attempting to

4 p. 23.

master the now famous words "Ich bin ein Berliner."  

In his other subjects at the Canterbury School, Jack maintained average grades. During the spring semester his studies were interrupted with an appendicitis attack, which resulted in his leaving the school. While he was convalescing at home, he had a tutor who helped him brush up on his work. He did not return to Canterbury in the fall. 

In the fall of 1931 Jack joined his older brother at the Choate School, Wallingsford, Connecticut, a select private school, predominantly Episcopalian. Like other private preparatory schools, the traditional role of the Choate School was the preparation of upper-class young men for college. In his message to the alumni of the Choate School in May of 1963, President Kennedy said that private preparatory schools merited that role only as they continued to increase their contributions to American life. He felt that the task of the private preparatory school in the future was twofold. First, these schools needed to be increasingly representative of the diversity of American life. He felt that schools that were exclusive to only one class,

6Ibid., p. 96.


creed, or color would not survive. Secondly, he said that these schools should prepare young men and women for service to the community and the nation. Reflecting on his education at the Choate School, President Kennedy felt that he was taught high ideals of public service. He called attention to the number of public officials who were graduates of Choate, and encouraged the school's student body to follow in their tradition of public service.9

During the summer prior to his enrollment at Choate, Jack had caught up on his studies with the assistance of his tutor. In a letter of July 3, 1931, to the headmaster of the Choate School, Mrs. Rose Kennedy said:

Jack and I were delighted to hear that he passed English and mathematics. His tutor and he were extremely doubtful about the Latin—so he was not too disappointed. I am arranging for him to work down here every day with an experienced teacher, and I will make sure that by the end of September he will know his first year Latin. As a matter of fact, he hates routine work but loves history and English—subjects which fire his imagination.10

At first Jack's grades at Choate were not as good as Joe's, nor could he match his brother's athletic accomplishments. The poor showing on Jack's part was a cause for concern for his father, who wrote to him to do the best he could as "it was very difficult to make up fundamentals that


you have neglected when you are young."\textsuperscript{11}

Jack was in a very difficult position of constantly following in his older brother's footsteps. Joe was very dynamic, bright, athletic, handsome, outgoing, and sociable. He had hopes of some day becoming the President of the United States. Many people thought that he would probably be the President some day and described him as a "born politician." Jack was entirely different. He was rather shy, withdrawn, and quiet as a youth. He was more bookish. His parents could not picture him as a politician. They were sure that he would be a teacher or a writer.\textsuperscript{12}

While at Choate Jack went through a phase of typical schoolboy behavior. He liked to play practical jokes and frolic with his friends, and often times broke school conduct codes. One of his lifelong friends whom he met at Choate was K. LeMoyne Billings. Lem and Jack were frequently involved in schoolboy pranks. Fortunately, they soon outgrew this stage, and Jack's grades improved as a result. Jack wrote to his father about his poor showing: "LeMoyne and I have been talking about how poorly we have done this quarter, and we have definitely decided to stop any fooling around."\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 65.
\textsuperscript{13}J.F.K.'s letter of December 4, 1934, in Meyers, John Fitzgerald Kennedy...As We Remember Him, p. 18.
When Jack did get good grades, his father substantially rewarded him. On different occasions he was given a trip to England, a pony, and a sailboat which he named Victura, which was Latin meaning "something about winning."\(^{14}\)

In June of 1935 John F. Kennedy graduated from Choate sixty-fourth in a class of 112.\(^{15}\) He had not yet decided on any definite career goals. Although his academic achievement was not outstanding, his classmates must have detected his potential ability for they voted him "most likely to succeed."\(^{16}\) The honor might also have been attributed to his popularity among his fellow students.

The significance of John F. Kennedy's elementary and preparatory school experiences was that those were the years when intellectual interests, character, social life, and attitudes towards education were forming. These attitudes can generally be stated as being positive. Jack benefited from his education in a number of important ways. He became adaptable to new environments. It appeared that although Jack's family had moved while he was in school, and that he had been sent to a boarding school at an early age, the changes did not cause him serious emotional or academic setbacks. The periods of illness during which he was unable


\(^{15}\)Ibid.

\(^{16}\)Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 25.
to attend class also did not seem to have lasting harmful effects on his studies, and certainly not on his attitude towards school. Because he enjoyed independent reading, he could keep up with his classmates while convalescing. In addition, the fact that his family could afford a private tutor was of great benefit to Jack. Without going into a detailed history of the upward climb of the Kennedy family, it can briefly be stated that at the time of Jack's birth, the Kennedys' social and economic status was that of a middle-class family. By the 1930's the Joseph P. Kennedy's seemed to have everything, including money, looks, education, and high standing in society, as well as in the Roman Catholic Church. This remarkable achievement was primarily due to the resourcefulness and ambition of both parents. Although the Kennedys were descendants of immigrants, they were able to find a place in American society that had previously been dominated only by "blue bloods."

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was obviously proud of his Irish ancestry. His visit to Ireland during his Presidency was of deep sentimental value. His journey to his ancestral land was described in the media as an ethnic event which delighted the President. The Irish seemed to consider Kennedy their "personal property." In his home county of

17 Ibid., p. 17.
Wexford, he was called Seán by the local residents, and was honored by schoolchildren who sang a rousing Irish song about the boys of Wexford who fought to free their native land.\textsuperscript{18} Moved by the event, Kennedy made the following remarks:

I am proud to come here...because it makes me even prouder of my own country....I think it is important that those of us who happen to be of Irish descent who come to Ireland recognize an even stronger bond which exists between Ireland and the United States...between all people who wish to be free. That is the most important kinship.\textsuperscript{19}

John F. Kennedy wrote a book of his own on the subject of immigration, which was published posthumously. He was genuinely concerned about the problems of adjustment and assimilation that faced ethnic groups. He realized that education was a means by which immigrant groups actually became "Americanized." "Thus," he wrote, "the public school became a powerful means of preparing the newcomers for American life."\textsuperscript{20} He felt that it was possible for new groups to learn American ways without totally losing their ethnic traditions. In fact, he noted in his book the contributions made by various immigrant groups. He included the following observations about the Germans:

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Time}, 5 July 1963, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{19}\textit{Public Papers}, 1963, pp. 532-534.

The ideas of German immigrants helped to shape our educational system. They introduced the kindergarten, or "children's play school." They also promoted the concept of the state-endowed university, patterned after the German university. The University of Michigan, founded in 1837, was the first such school to add to the philosophy of general liberal arts education an emphasis upon vocational training. The colonial concept of a university as a place to prepare gentlemen for a life of leisure culture was modified to include training in specialized skills.21

A final significant comment about John F. Kennedy's early education was that he recalled no evidence of bitter feelings against him because of his religion.22 He certainly appeared to be well liked and popular among his fellow students, especially at the Choate School. The development of friendly attitudes among students of different religions was in indication that Joseph P. Kennedy's plans for his son's education were working well.

In the summer of 1935, Jack Kennedy was sent to the London School of Economics by his father to study under Professor Harold Laski.23 Laski, a social democrat, was closely associated with Franklin D. Roosevelt and influenced

21Ibid., p. 53.

22Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 25.

many New Dealers. The school was described as a "mecca for domestic Socialists and revolutionaries from all parts of the Empire." Again, Joseph P. Kennedy's strategy must have been to prepare his son for the unexpected. Unfortunately, Jack did not benefit from his short stay at the school. Because he fell ill and had to return home, he really did not have an opportunity to receive a good foundation in the principles of economics.

The next major step in John F. Kennedy's academic career was his enrollment at Princeton University in the fall of 1935. This decision met with disapproval on the part of his father, who preferred that Jack follow the family's Harvard tradition. There were two reasons why Jack chose Princeton. First of all, he wanted to break away from Joe Jr.'s shadow. Secondly, he wanted to be with Lem Billings and other friends who were going there. His stay at Princeton was short lived, however. He became sick with hepatitis and had to leave. The next fall he returned to Boston after a ten-year absence to attend Harvard University.

Jack was far from being an outstanding student during his freshman and sophomore years at Harvard. His freshman grades were "C" in English, French, and history, and "B"

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in economics. He was in the second lowest group of the passing students. His sophomore grades were similarly low: four "C's," one "D," and one "B." Aside from academics, Jack was not very successful at campus politics. He lost by wide margins elections for freshman class president and sophomore Student Council representative. Those must have been agonizing defeats for the student voted "most likely to succeed."

Because his brother had already been at Harvard for two years, Jack was bound to play second fiddle once again. Joe Jr. had become remarkably well known for his scholastic and athletic achievements and for his participation in campus political and social life. Joe Jr., like his father who tended towards isolationism, had gained recognition for his devotion to the cause of keeping America out of foreign wars. Jack was only moderately active in extra-curricular activities. He did not join any radical group, any protest movement, nor was he part of any political power group. Jack was the inconspicuous brother and gained the reputation for being inordinately reserved. As an example of Jack's refusal to join a bandwagon, even though the rest of the

25Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 31.
27Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 31.
campus, the nation, and the world were overly conscious of the events which were shaping history, one of Jack's professors recalled that John F. Kennedy wrote a special paper on a conservative Republican from upper New York State, who spent much of his life fighting public power, rather than writing about one of the more commonly chosen New Deal Democrats. Another of his professors commented that Jack Kennedy was basically a wealthy, charming, conservative democrat with no flair for campus politics and no plans for national politics.

During the summer of 1937, Jack joined his friend Lem Billings on a trip to France, Spain, and Italy. Travelling through the politically uncertain countries, he became intensely interested in the situation there. The following year his father, by then the United States Ambassador in London, suggested that Jack tour Europe to help him decide whether he wanted a career in the diplomatic service. Kennedy received permission from Harvard to spend a term of his junior year in Europe. He visited England where his father was Ambassador. Observing government in action and conversing with foreign diplomats, he began to understand the operation of diverse political systems. After visiting other countries, he sent political reports to

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28Ibid.

his father. He wrote to his father that he had "found a new incentive for studying harder." His interest in and enthusiasm for politics finally began to take hold.

He returned to Harvard in the fall of 1939. His grades improved dramatically. He became more involved in his studies because they were more directly related to what he had seen. He pursued a major in government with an emphasis on international relations. He read extensively about political ideologies—nationalism, fascism, colonialism. Because of his desire to keep up with current events, he read newspapers extensively.

Kennedy remained an avid reader while in the White House. The President's Press Secretary, Pierre Salinger, recalled that Kennedy read the New York Times, which became his second bible, from cover to cover every day. In addition to the Times, he scanned regularly the New York Herald Tribune, Post, and Daily News; the Washington Post, Star, and Daily News; the Baltimore Sun; the Atlanta Constitution; the Chicago Tribune and Sun-Times; the St. Louis Post Dispatch; and the Wall Street Journal. He also read Time, Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, Look, Life, Harpers, New Republic, The Economist, the Saturday Review,

30Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 33.
31Ibid.
During his senior year at Harvard, Kennedy undertook a thesis which was required for an honors degree in political science. He chose to write on "Appeasement at Munich," which he later revised, extended, and published under the title, *Why England Slept*. The book sold over eighty thousand copies in the United States and England. Although the book was quite successful, the original thesis was criticized as being a typical undergraduate effort with many footnotes and statistics. The published copy, however, contained no footnotes, but a lengthy bibliography. An arresting quality of the work appeared to be Kennedy's emotional detachment from the subject matter. Others felt that his study of England from 1931 to the events of the year 1938 was scholarly, comprehensive, and judicious. In addition, the thesis gave evidence that the young Kennedy was developing a strength in the area of international relations. His evaluation of the way in which England, a democracy, handled the threat of the totalitarian German nation proved to be an example for his own


34Burns, *John Kennedy: A Political Profile*, p. 36.

country. An important factor, noted by Kennedy, contributing to the lack of preparation on England's part for the impending war with Germany was the lack of national leadership during that period. He wrote: "England needed a man who was able to look beyond the immediate situation and form some just estimate of changing conditions and eventualities in the future."36 As the main thesis of the book, Kennedy held that the wise and effective leadership of a democracy was, of all human tasks, the most difficult. This was true of England in the 1930's as it was for America of the 1960's. Kennedy graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Science, cum laude, in political science. Apparently Harvard evaluated the thesis as being far superior to his previously average scholastic achievements.

After graduation from Harvard in 1940, Kennedy entered Stanford University's Graduate School of Business for the fall term. After six months, he decided a business career was not for him and left. Although Kennedy did not realize it at the time, this event marked the end of his formal education.

Reviewing Kennedy's college education, it was unfortunate that he did not receive more formal preparation in economics. As President, Kennedy had ambitious plans for the economy. One of the major objectives of his

administration was to "get the economy moving again." In very simple terms, his plan was to alleviate burdensome taxes, and let fresh money flow into industry and into the consumers' hands for spending on new products. The President was greatly disappointed that by the end of his third year the economy was still lagging.37

The President was sharply criticized for his lack of knowledge in the area of economics. Kennedy himself admitted that making money and a career in business did not interest him. Reacting to the news of the steel price rise, Kennedy further aggravated the business community. Wallace Carroll reported in the New York Times of April 23, 1962, that the President had said to his advisors, "My father always told me that all businessmen were sons of bitches, but I never believed it till now."38 Unfortunately, Kennedy was misquoted. He denied that he had said all businessmen. He said that his father disliked bankers and steelmen, not all businessmen. But the damage had already been done. The business community thought that he had referred to all of them.

As far as Kennedy's own direct experience in managing money was concerned, he had about ten million dollars in


38Bradlee, Conversations With Kennedy, p. 81.
personal holdings. His salary was $100,000 a year plus
$50,000 in expense money and $40,000 for traveling expenses.
Because his accounts were handled by professionals, he was
isolated from the everyday drudgery of balancing the budget.
He had no credit cards, and often times he had no money in
his wallet. Joseph P. Kennedy was probably the only mem-
ber of the President's family interested in managing the
family budget.

After Kennedy entered the Senate, an economist used
to come to the Senator's house in Georgetown to teach him
and a friend, Charles Bartlett, the details of the economic
system, about which neither claimed to know much. Years
later Bartlett asked Kennedy what ever happened to the
economist who used to teach them. Kennedy replied, "I
don't know; he probably committed suicide."40

As President, Kennedy did realize the importance of
economics. Not being an expert in this area, however, he
carefully selected his economic advisors. He also increased
their budget and strengthened the system of economic
information gathering.

If Kennedy's weakness were in economics, then his
strength was in the area of foreign affairs. His under-

39 Sidey, John F. Kennedy, President, p. 337.
40 Meyers, John Fitzgerald Kennedy...As We Remember
Him, p. 75.
graduate major and honors thesis indicated that foreign relations and diplomacy held a special interest for him. As a student, he was deeply interested in the operation of foreign political systems. This interest was reinforced by his trips abroad and through the influence of his father who was the United States Ambassador to England. Unlike his older brother and father, however, John F. Kennedy did not adopt their isolationistic attitude. The President's strong reaction during the Cuban Missile Crisis, his willingness to support the government of South Viet Nam, and his successful negotiations for a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty could not have been accomplished without Kennedy's skill in foreign relations.

Reacting to John F. Kennedy's education in general, it was perhaps one of his greatest strongpoints in his bid for the Presidency. The fact that he was raised a Roman Catholic and educated in a WASP tradition made him unique. He was not just another Irish Catholic politician from Boston, nor was he just another WASP. He was able to use both characteristics to their fullest advantage. Being Catholic he was able to appeal not only to that religious sect but also to what may be called the middle American, the common man. Belonging to a faith that was often discriminated against, he was sympathetic towards the needs of the downtrodden. Having attended Protestant institutions and
having graduated from Harvard University, he appealed to intellectuals, affluent individuals, and the establishment. The dimensions of his character seemed to be able to encompass an endless variety of situations.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of young Kennedy's development had to be the foresight of Joseph P. Kennedy in preparing his son from earliest childhood for his later accomplishments. Before the death of his older brother, Joe Jr., the general consensus of opinion was that some day Joe would be the President of the United States. This goal had been anticipated long before others began to notice Joe Jr.'s potential. When Jack was suddenly thrust into the awkward position of assuming his brother's place, he was able to do so, not because he wanted to placate his father's wishes, but because he wanted to face the challenge himself. And because of his educational background, he was eminently qualified.
CHAPTER III

EARLY POLITICAL CAREER

John F. Kennedy's decision to enter politics was probably an accidental one. In August of 1944, his older brother, Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr., was killed in an airplane explosion while flying a dangerous volunteer mission against a German rocket base in Europe. Joe Jr. was the one who had planned a political career with ambitions to become President of the United States. Joe's sudden death came as a crushing blow on the entire family, but especially on Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr., who had great expectations for his son, and on John, who was expected to take his brother's place. Professor Arthur Halcombe of Harvard University, who had taught the father and both sons commented:

When Jack was in college, politics wasn't a primary interest of his. His older brother, Joe Jr., was to be the politician of the family, and he would have been; with a reasonable amount of good fortune, he would have been a great success in politics....And evidently at that time the family thought there could be only one real politician at a time or in a generation, and Jack, I think, was more interested in history, from an academic point of view. What he thought he might be, I'm not certain. Sometimes he gave the impression that he'd like to teach history in college. Sometimes he gave the impression he'd like to run a newspaper; which it would have been, I don't know.1

1Meyers, John Fitzgerald Kennedy...As We Remember Him, p. 47.
In the spring of 1941, Kennedy tried to enlist in the Army, but was rejected because of a back condition caused by an old football injury. He went through five months of strengthening exercises and managed to pass a Navy fitness test in September. He was assigned to several desk jobs. Late in 1942, he was given an assignment which he had been eager to receive. He was assigned to a Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron. Lieutenant Kennedy became commander of his own PT boat in the Solomon Islands in 1943. The boat was totally wrecked by a Japanese destroyer. Kennedy, who was responsible for the lives of his crew, suffered a spinal injury, for which he was later awarded the Purple Heart. While he was recovering from his injury for several months at Chelsea Naval Hospital in Boston, he was notified of the death of his brother. He decided to put together a collection of memoirs entitled, As We Remember Joe, which he planned to give to his parents as a Christmas gift. Many years later, Ambassador Kennedy told Dave Powers and Kenneth O'Donnell, co-authors of a book about John F. Kennedy, that he was never able to read As We Remember Joe. "I have to put it down after the first couple of pages," he said. "I never got over that boy's death."

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2John F. Kennedy, As We Remember Joe (Boston: By the Author, [c1945]).

Although John F. Kennedy later denied that he entered politics to please his father, the elder Kennedy boasted about how he insisted that Jack take over:

I got Jack into politics; I was the one. I told him Joe was dead and that it was therefore his responsibility to run for Congress. He didn't want to go. He felt he didn't have the ability....But I told him he had to.  

In 1946 the young ex-serviceman was in Massachusetts campaigning for the office of Congressman from the Eleventh Congressional District. At first "politicking" was difficult for Jack, but once into the race, he quickly picked up confidence and poise. He worked very hard for the nomination. Once he was through the primary, his victory was assured, since the district was a Democratic stronghold.

John Kennedy regarded himself as a "fighting conservative" in his 1946 campaign. Once in Congress, however, he began to take a more liberal view on most domestic issues. Regarding domestic issues, Kennedy favored organized labor, improved unemployment benefits, more public housing, and supported efforts to liberalize immigration quotas. He opposed the tax reform bill of 1947 on the

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4 Interview with Eleanor Harris, "The Senator is in a Hurry," McCall's (August 1957):123. This quotation may also be found in David E. Koskoff, Joseph P. Kennedy: A Life and Times (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 405.


6 Meyers, John Fitzgerald Kennedy...As We Remember Him, p. 49.
grounds that the legislation would favor the rich.  

By the year 1947, federal aid to education had become a very pressing issue before Congress. The problem became more complicated by the question of whether federal aid should be extended to Catholic and other private schools. With the growing numbers of students attending both school systems, extended facilities and services were sorely needed. The Catholic population had greatly increased in urban areas, where Catholics were involved not only in the operation of parochial schools, but also were influential in the public school systems of major cities. They pushed for Bible reading in public schools, graduation exercises in churches, asked the school system to sell property to the Church at reduced prices, and urged that children be released on school time for instruction at religious centers.

During his first year in Congress, Kennedy strongly supported federal aid to education. As a member of the House Education and Labor subcommittee, which considered federal aid bills, Kennedy took the stand that federal aid should include funds to parochial schools for such services as school-bus transportation and health examinations. He felt that aid for fringe benefits such as buses, lunches,

7Koskoff, Joseph P. Kennedy: A Life and Times, p. 409.

and other services were primarily social and economic. He felt that extending support to sustain any church or its schools violated the First Amendment to the Constitution and, therefore, was unconstitutional.  

During a Congressional hearing on federal aid to parochial schools, a witness Elmer E. Rogers, made a long statement declaring that the Roman Catholic Church was out "to destroy our liberties and further expand their theocracy as a world government." He also stated that Catholics had a dual allegiance, to their country and to the Vatican. Kennedy asked the witness if he felt that any Catholic parent who did not send his child to a parochial school would be excommunicated. Kennedy added, "I never went to a parochial school. I am a Catholic and yet my parents were never debarred from the sacraments, so the statement is wrong." The witness continued to assert that Catholics compromised their Americanism through their dual allegiance. Kennedy again challenged him by saying:

Now you don't mean the Catholics in America are the legal subjects of the Pope? I am not a legal subject of the Pope. There is an old saying in Boston that we get our religion from Rome and our politics at home, and that is the way most Catholics feel about it.

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9Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 85.
10Canterbury School was run by Catholic laymen.
11For exchange between Rogers and Kennedy, see Hearings before Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, First Session, Vol. 1, pp. 332-357.
As far as actual aid to education legislation was concerned, the House of Representatives failed to take a stand on the issue during 1948. By 1949 enrollments were increasing at such a rapid rate that the whole question flared up once again. A bitter debate arose over the issue between Francis Cardinal Spellman and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. The Cardinal criticized Mrs. Roosevelt for her newspaper articles opposing any federal aid to parochial schools and supporting complete separation of church and state. The controversy, needless to say, aroused strong public sentiment and caused people to divide into opposing factions.

Late in 1949 the Senate passed an education bill permitting states to allocate part of federal funds to parochial and other private schools. When the bill went to the House Labor and Education subcommittee, Chairman Graham A. Barden of North Carolina changed the bill restricting the use of federal funds for only tax-supported schools. Because of the controversial atmosphere and the inability to achieve agreement in the House committee, the bill was defeated, Kennedy voting against the Barden bill.

In 1950 Kennedy proposed a new, somewhat milder amendment, which provided that states be permitted to use

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12 Cardinal Spellman's statement was reported in the New York Times, 23 July 1949, and Mrs. Roosevelt's reply on 28 July 1949. The passage may also be found in Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, P. 86.

federal funds to augment expenditures for school-bus rides for students in all kinds of schools. In states where such use of federal money was prohibited, the federal government would pay directly to the school up to half the cost of a pupil's transportation.\textsuperscript{14} The atmosphere was still too tempestuous for agreement. The bill was defeated in committee by a vote of thirteen to twelve. Kennedy voted against the bill because he felt it did not go far enough to aid parochial school children. Other members of the committee felt the bill went too far. Those who opposed any federal aid to education were pleased that proponents were split over the parochial school issue.\textsuperscript{15}

In the March 18, 1950, issue of the \textit{Pilot}, the Boston Archdiocesan newspaper, Kennedy was called "a white Knight" for his fight for school bus aid. "This gentleman of youthful appearance but extremely mature intelligence fought valiantly in the interests of large groups of citizens who are merely asking for their just share...."\textsuperscript{16} Years later in a New York \textit{Post} article, Kennedy commented about his amendment:

The issue of separation of church and state was never really present here. It was purely a question of

\begin{enumerate}
\item Burns, \textit{John Kennedy: A Political Profile}, p. 87.
\item Ibid.
\end{enumerate}
providing funds to aid all children—no matter what school they went to. Direct aid to the parochial schools themselves would, of course, have been unconstitutional.17

During the early 1950's Kennedy spoke out in favor of religious education, even though he was himself a product of a secular education. On a television panel show, "Youth Wants to Know," Kennedy disagreed with Harvard University President James B. Conant that religion should be separated from education. Kennedy felt that religious education was very important and he felt that a trend against religious education in this country was growing. Kennedy did not want to see a uniform system of education and felt that religious education was a "strengthening influence."18

In 1952 Kennedy ran against incumbent Henry Cabot Lodge for United States Senator. The campaign was not fought on any great issues, but mostly on personalities. Kennedy won the election by a narrow margin of 70,000 votes.19

In January of 1953, Kennedy took a seat in the United States Senate, and was appointed to two committees. The first was the Committee on Government Operations, which was chaired

17Interview with Irwin Ross, "Senator Kennedy," New York Post 1 August 1956. This quotation may also be found in Lasky, J.F.K.: The Man and The Myth, p. 133.


19Burns, John Kennedy, A Political Profile, p. 115.
by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin. It was a subcommittee of this committee which was involved in the famous McCarthy hearings on Communism during the early 1950's. The second committee was the Labor and Public Welfare Committee, which was responsible for education legislation. This committee was similar to the House Education and Labor Committee. However, the Senate committee had been more sympathetic to federal aid to education legislation. At the time Kennedy joined the Senate committee, the entire Congress was in a state of inactivity regarding education legislation because of the impasse caused by the church-state issue, the Korean War, and the passage of impacted areas legislation.

Kennedy's health was extremely poor at that time. After his marriage in 1953, he had a recurrence of malarial attacks. His back injury was causing him excessive discomfort, and on October 21, 1954, he underwent surgery. He remained in the hospital for several months, but recovery was so slow that a second operation was recommended. In January he sustained another operation and this time recovery was more rapid. He left the hospital on February 25, 1955, and spent the next several months in Florida convalescing.20

20Ibid., p. 157.
During his period of convalescence, Kennedy spent a great deal of his time on a project which had fascinated him for many years. He began writing a book about the experiences of courageous United States Senators who sacrificed their careers, their public images, and in some instances, their personal happiness and security to do what they thought was right. He called the book Profiles in Courage\(^2\) since courage provided the theme and politics provided the situations. Kennedy believed that it was important for a Senator to use his own judgement, and to not be pressured by party or constituents. Years later Kennedy's secretary of twelve years, Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln, recalled that Kennedy himself was a good example. She said, for instance, that he would not hesitate to vote with Republicans on certain issues if he felt that was the right step to take.\(^2\)

Profiles in Courage was originally published in 1956 and was an immediate success. In 1957 the book was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for biography. This distinction meant more to Kennedy than any other honor he had received.\(^3\) He was extremely proud of this recognition for his literary and


\(^3\)Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 68.
intellectual accomplishment. The fact that Kennedy was himself a Senator at that time was an additional reason to be proud. Writing about the experiences of other Senators indicated that he must have had a deep understanding of their contributions to American history.

On May 23, 1955, seven months after his first spinal operation, Kennedy arrived back in Washington, D.C. Up until that time there had been very little action taken on any federal aid to education legislation. Some of the factors which made progress difficult were the long-debated question of aid to parochial schools, a Republican administration and a Democratic majority in Congress, and conflict over the more recent issue of segregation in the public schools.

In 1954 the Supreme Court decided in Brown v. Board of Education that separate educational facilities for Negro students were inherently unequal. In 1956 an amendment was attached to federal aid to education bills by Adam Clayton Powell which withheld aid from segregated schools. Because of the implications of the Powell Amendment and the problems involving aid to private schools, virtually nothing was done to pass federal aid to education legislation until the late 1950's.

In 1956 John Kennedy was awarded an honorary degree by Harvard University. With the degree came the following
citation: "Brave officer, able Senator, son of Harvard; loyal to party, he remains steadfast to principle."
Theodore Sorensen wrote that the citation was "an admirable summary of the Senator's politics." This statement could also have been the central theme of Profiles in Courage.

The year 1956 was also the year when John F. Kennedy made his debut as a national political figure. At the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Kennedy made the nominating speech for Adlai E. Stevenson for President. Kennedy then made a bid for the Vice Presidential slot, but was defeated. Kennedy later contended that he was fortunate not to have been the Vice Presidential candidate that year. With the landslide Republican victory which occurred, he speculated that his later chance for the Presidency would have been very difficult.

One of the landmark events in education, which received Senator Kennedy's full support, was the passage of the National Defense Education Act in August of 1958. With the launching of Sputnik in 1957 by the Soviet Union, the American people realized that they were falling far behind in science and technology. Reacting to the challenge,

24 Ibid., p. 71

25 Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 190.
Congress passed the Act which provided loans to college students and financial aid for improving science, mathematics, and modern language instruction. Although President Eisenhower regarded this legislation as only an emergency measure, the precedent had been established for future extension of federal aid to education.

In January of 1958 Senator Kennedy introduced legislation for school construction loans and grants to alleviate the classroom shortage. The Labor and Public Welfare Committee never acted on this measure, however, and the bill met a legislative death when the Congress adjourned. Another one of Senator Kennedy’s educational proposals was the creation of a National Library of Medicine. For many years the Armed Forces Medical Library had been the central source of medical information. With the assistance of the American Medical Association and other health groups, Kennedy secured passage of a bill which gave the new library independent power and a civilian as well as a defense role.

Another educational issue which Senator Kennedy was able to resolve at this time focused on the implementation of the NDEA. Before students were granted a loan, they

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27 Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile, p. 208.
had to sign a note attesting to their faith and allegiance to the United States and disclaiming to be a part of any group that might overthrow the government of the United States. Some colleges and universities refused to participate in the program as long as the disclaimer affidavit remained compulsory. Other colleges which did participate in the program, protested against the affidavit.28 In the second session of the Eighty-sixth Congress, Senator Kennedy introduced a bill which would abolish the non-subversive affidavit, but would retain the loyalty oath. The bill was favorably reported out of the Senate Committee and was passed by the Senate with amendments. No action was taken in the House of Representatives, however, and the bill died when the session came to an end.29

John Kennedy continued to work towards the elimination of the disclaimer affidavit. On October 16, 1962, he signed P.L. 87-835 repealing the disclaimer affidavit of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 and the National Defense Education Act of 1958.30 As President he saw that the oath would read as follows:

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I bear true faith


29For Kennedy's defense of this education bill, see Congressional Record--Senate, 28 January 1960, pp. 1378-79.

and allegiance to the United States of America and will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States against all its enemies, foreign and domestic.

After John F. Kennedy's re-election to the Senate in 1958 by the widest margin in Massachusetts history, he soon began concentrating his efforts on the Presidential election of 1960. The idea of being the President of the United States did not develop over night. Theodore Sorensen wrote that Kennedy had said as early as 1956, "I suppose anybody in politics would like to be the President because that is the center of action, the mainspring, the wellspring of the American system." Commenting about the Presidency at a later date, Kennedy said:

At least you have an opportunity to do something about all the problems which...I would be concerned about [anyway] as a father or as a citizen...and if what you do is useful and successful, then...that is great satisfaction.31

Sorensen provided other reasons why Kennedy pursued the Presidency. First of all, he thought four more years of Republican rule would be disastrous. Secondly, as a citizen he was concerned about the course of the nation in the sixties. Next, as a public servant he aspired the top position in his profession. As a Senator and Congressman, he realized the limitations of their power to improve the nation. And finally, in Kennedy's own words, he "wanted to

31Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 95.
When Kennedy began his campaign for the Presidency, his religion was a major handicap. He was at first surprised to learn that many Protestants and Jews feared that his church might tell him how to act and excommunicate him if he refused. Therefore, Kennedy felt that he had to answer all questions on the church-state question in order to bring the religion issue into the open. In an article in Look magazine in 1958, Kennedy was quoted as saying:

Whatever one's religion in private life may be, for the office-holder nothing takes precedence over his oath to uphold the Constitution and all its parts--including the First Amendment and the strict separation of church and state. Without reference to the presidency, I believe as a Senator that the separation of church and state is fundamental to our American concept and heritage and should remain so.

Although Kennedy received considerable critical mail from Catholics about his statement, he refused to qualify his remarks. Kennedy denied that he was badly interpreting the Constitution, or violating Catholic views on church and state. Other critics of his stand on this issue included the editors of the Jesuit weekly, America, who were "taken aback...by the unvarnished statement that whatever one's religion in his private life...nothing takes precedence

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32 Ibid., p. 96.
33 Sorensen, The Kennedy Legacy, p. 28.
34 Fuchs, John F. Kennedy and American Catholicism, p. 165.
over his oath." The Paulist Catholic World complained that "Kennedy's views were out of line with the majority of Catholics," and that the "most regrettable statement made by Kennedy was his opposition to federal aid to parochial schools."35

Senator Kennedy's secretary recalled that he frequently received letters asking about the religious issue. In January of 1959, he dictated to her a typical reply to a letter asking if he had ever attended a parochial school:

There was no edict in our parish which made it mandatory for us to attend parochial schools and, therefore, neither my brother Joe nor I attended a parochial school. My brothers Bob and Ted did, however, and so did my four sisters. I am not sure of the importance of all of this information, although I am glad to provide it. What is important in this particular regard is whether you hold to the tenets of your faith. I do and so do the other members of my family. In any case I appreciate your interest.36

Senator Kennedy tried very hard during his campaign to resolve the issue of his religious affiliation. Not until September of 1960 did he experience a major breakthrough. In Houston, Texas, he addressed a congregation of Protestant ministers on the topic:

I believe in an America where the separation of Church and State is absolute...I believe in an America that is officially neither Catholic, Protestant nor Jewish... where no public official either requests or accepts instruction on public policy from the Pope, the National Council of Churches or any other ecclesiastical

35Ibid., p. 166.

36Lincoln, My Twelve Years With John F. Kennedy, p. 122.
source...And where religious liberty is so indivisible that an act against one church is treated as an act against all.37

According to Senator Kennedy's brother Robert, the speech in Houston was an extremely important one. He said that "it did not destroy the problem we were having, but it did dilute a good deal of the opposition."38 Up until that time Senator Kennedy was unable to satisfy either Catholics or Protestants. Many Catholics were offended because Kennedy opposed federal aid to parochial schools, while many Protestants believed that he would be influenced by his Church in secular matters.

The year of the Presidential election of 1960 was characterized educationally by a rise in elementary and secondary school attendance for the sixteenth consecutive year.39 As a result, there was a continuing lack of classroom space and qualified teachers. The children of the post-World War II baby boom were beginning to press upon the colleges, which were also lacking in educational facilities. As far as the climate in Congress regarding aid-to-education


38Meyers, John Fitzgerald Kennedy...As We Remember Him, p. 96.

legislation was concerned, tension still existed regarding public support of private education and the issue of school desegregation.⁴⁰

Following his nomination by the Democratic Party in July of 1960, Presidential candidate Kennedy introduced the theme of the "New Frontier" in his acceptance speech. The New Frontier, it should be noted, was announced as a set of challenges to the American people, not a set of political promises. One of the most important challenges Kennedy stressed was the new frontier of education. Kennedy stood firmly on the strong education plank⁴¹ adopted by the Democratic Party. He referred in his acceptance speech to the old saying that "civilization was a constant race between education and catastrophe, and that in a democracy such as ours, we must make sure that education wins the race."⁴² As Kennedy launched his campaign for the Presidency, he continued to strongly emphasize educational issues, especially more federal aid to education. He made some of the following remarks in numerous campaign speeches across the country:


⁴¹For the text of the education plank adopted at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, California, July 12, 1960, see the Appendix, p. 109.

Unless we have a good and increasing educational system, we are not going to have a strong democratic society. I, therefore, suggest these proposals: First, that we launch a program of federal aid to education for school construction and teachers' salaries to help the United States make up for the present classroom shortage.... Second, in the next decade, we are going to have to build more college buildings than have been built since the beginning of this country in 1775.... Third, I think we should continue the [National] Defense Education Act, which provides scholarships and loans, which have not been used nearly as generally as I think they could be used to help bright young people go to college.43

In a special statement, prepared by Kennedy for the NEA Journal of October, 1960, the Presidential candidate indicated that the issue of education was one of national survival.44 He felt that not only did more schools need to be built, but also that teacher training had to be improved and that the curriculum needed to be revised. Textbooks and learning devices needed to be up-dated. He felt that education was essential to the fulfillment of the ideals of young Americans. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., quoted him as saying, "the most direct, rewarding, and important investment in our children and youth is education."45

43 Ibid., p. 147.


One of the highpoints of Senator Kennedy's campaign for President was the televised debates with Republican candidate Richard Nixon. These debates presented the candidates to an unprecedented number of American people. Perhaps one of Kennedy's greatest strengths in debating was his educational background and his bookishness. His ability to quote authors and facts, his use of allusions in making points clear, and his quick and logical mind were valuable assets to his debating skill.46

On November 8, 1960, the American people elected John F. Kennedy the thirty-fifth President of the United States. Shortly after the election, Kennedy began to decide who would serve as presidential aides and as cabinet members. Kennedy chose Abraham Ribicoff as the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. The President's assistants were very much like the President himself—youthful, educated, and ambitious. Among them was Theodore Sorensen, a young lawyer who was Kennedy's head speech writer. The new administration set the tone for the years that followed. These men brought with them not only their experiences and knowledge, but also zest and enthusiasm for new ideas. They were understanding of the problems which were facing the youth of America, and young people were able to easily

identify with the new young President and his staff. In the few remaining weeks of 1960, they prepared to face the challenges of the decade ahead.

In summarizing the educational significance of John F. Kennedy's early political career, it should be noted that Kennedy experienced tremendous growth from the time of his Navy command to his campaign for the Presidency in 1960. Each phase of his career brought with it several important developments. Beginning with his assignment to the PT boat command during World War II, Kennedy longed for a leadership role in the service of his country. The responsibility he assumed for the lives of his crew members was an indication of his later potential for leadership of the American people.

When John F. Kennedy entered Congress in 1946, he could easily have been categorized as catering to the provincial needs of his own district. Although Kennedy had always been in favor of federal aid to education, he was applauded at home for his efforts to gain federal funds for school bus rides and lunches for children in all schools. Some interpreted his actions as favorable towards aid to private schools. Kennedy clearly indicated on the record, however, that he felt funds for school bus rides and lunches were social and economic in nature and did not violate the First Amendment. Direct aid to church-affiliated schools,
however, would have been unconstitutional. As a Congress­
man, Kennedy supported the idea of diverse educational
institutions, as he did while President. He favored
private schools as alternatives to public education, but
felt that support for private schools should come from
private sources.

Senator Kennedy was enthusiastic about the passage
of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, and did not
regard the enactment of this legislation as merely an
"emergency" measure. At this point in Kennedy's career, he
had been exposed to issues that were of concern to the
entire nation, not just a small section of Massachusetts.
He experienced concern for all segments of society and
generally became more attuned to the needs of the American
people. When he launched his campaign for the Presidency,
he was able to meet with Americans on the grassroots level
in almost every state throughout the nation. This type of
contact was beneficial for the development of his image
as leader of the American people.

John F. Kennedy's personal motivation to achieve
excellence also attained dramatic new proportions during
his pre-presidential years. The authorship of Profiles
in Courage could only be noted as an outstanding accomplish­
ment. The quest for the highest office in the land could
also be considered a desire for the attainment of excellence
in his profession. And finally, the fact that he was himself a father made him sympathetic towards the desire of parents all across the nation to have only the best possible education for their children. All of these factors taken together constituted the educational significance of Kennedy's early political life and solidified the foundation for his educational ideas in the years ahead.
Inauguration Day, January 20, 1961, marked the beginning of an era of renewed interest in education. The new President openly displayed his respect and admiration for scholarly and literary achievement. The Inauguration ceremony was highlighted by the reading of a poem by Robert Frost. Guests to the Inauguration included artists, writers, scientists, and educators. Unlike the Eisenhower Administration, in which academicians were treated as outcasts, President Kennedy brought a dramatic change in the official status of literary men and women. If anything, he made scholarly achievement a prerequisite for appointments in his administration. In a Mauldin cartoon the new key to the Capital was depicted as the Phi Beta Kappa key. Among Kennedy's advisors were four professional historians and fifteen Rhodes scholars, including the Secretary of State. Former college professors served in such positions as Secretary of Defense, Commissioner of Internal Revenue, and Chairman of the Civil Service Commission. Among Kennedy's academic advisors were professors who specialized

1Manchester, Portrait of a President: J.F.K. in Profile, p. 94.

2Ibid., p. 95.
in economics, science, government, military affairs, housing, and specific areas of foreign affairs. These advisors provided him with the statistics, reports, and counsel he needed to make important decisions in each of these areas.

Given the academic credentials of Kennedy's inner circle of advisors and cabinet members, the appointment of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare was one which received special attention. Abraham Ribicoff, the former governor of Connecticut, was in many respects a self-educated man. The son of poor Jewish immigrants, he had to work very hard as a youth to save money for a college education. After graduation from high school, he still lacked sufficient funds to immediately enter college. He took a factory job and later entered New York University. After one year of college, he accepted an offer to manage the Chicago sales office of the Prentice Company for seventy dollars a week. He spent much of his free time reading. He later assumed that that was why the University of Chicago permitted him to enter its law school even though he did not have a college degree. In 1933 he graduated cum laude from the University of Chicago Law School. Since he did not have a college degree, he was given a Bachelor of Laws degree instead of a Doctor of Jurisprudence. The

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3Sorensen, The Kennedy Legacy, p. 67.
type of degree really did not matter to Ribicoff, however. 4

The selection of advisors with high academic qualifications was one of the ways in which President Kennedy elevated the goal of education in America. The President enjoyed a special rapport with young people and had a deep concern for their future. Abounding with youthful vigor, Kennedy was the youngest man to be elected President of the United States. He surrounded himself with youthful advisors. He offered young people many opportunities to serve their country whether it was helping to work on a presidential campaign, working as a Peace Corps volunteer, or serving an internship in Washington, D.C., or in the ghetto. Kennedy hoped to get young people involved in improving the country while benefiting themselves as well.

President Kennedy's secretary, Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln, said that of all the things she recalled about the late President, she remembered most of all his love for the finer things in life, not only for himself, but for all mankind. 5 One of the most celebrated social events of the Kennedy Administration was the dinner the Kennedys gave to honor forty-nine Nobel Prize winners. The dinner was


5Lincoln, My Twelve Years With John F. Kennedy, p. 6.
attended by many of America's greatest intellectuals. Mrs. Lincoln recalled, "Being a scholar himself, the President sincerely appreciated the companionship and challenge of such great minds." Of course, the President himself was a Nobel Prize winner for his book, Profiles in Courage. Among the guests at the dinner were scientists, writers, editors, and educators. The highlight of the evening was the reading of an unpublished work of the late Ernest Hemingway. In his remarks to the guests that evening, the President described the dinner as "probably the greatest concentration of talent and genius in this house, except for those times when Jefferson ate alone."

Other accomplishments of the Kennedys included the introduction of theatre to the White House with the performance of the Shakespearian play, Macbeth. The Kennedys were also responsible for bringing the great Spanish cellist, Pablo Casals, to the White House to perform before a distinguished audience of musicians, diplomats, and art patrons. Casals had not given a concert in the United States since 1928. He refused to perform in a country that recognized the Spain of Generalissimo Francisco Franco. Casals was sympathetic with the ideals of the Kennedy Administration, however, and wanted to show his

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6 Ibid., p. 300.

7 Ibid.
admiration for the President the best way he could, in music. 8

Education Programs of 1961

Following his inauguration, President Kennedy quickly took action to initiate the education programs of the New Frontier. On January 30, 1961, he addressed a joint session of Congress and delivered his first State of the Union Message. In his speech he emphasized the educational needs of the country. He said that "federal grants for both higher and public school education can no longer be delayed." He pointed out the necessity for "basic research that lies at the root of all progress," and for the introduction of measures to expand opportunities for training medical personnel. 9

As President, Kennedy offered solutions to educational problems that were imbued with a new spirit of dedication. He felt that the strengthening of the educational system would improve America as a whole. Realizing the need for more federal aid to education, Kennedy submitted a Special Message to Congress on Education 10 on February 20, 1961.


9Public Papers, 1961, p. 22.

10For complete text of the President's 1961 Special Message to Congress on Education, see the Appendix, p. 110.
His message began:

Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. Our requirements for world leadership, our hopes for economic growth, and the demands of citizenship itself in an era such as this all require the maximum development of every young American's capacity. The human mind is our fundamental resource. A balanced Federal program must go well beyond incentives for investment in plant and equipment. It must include equally determined measures to invest in human beings—both in their basic education and training and in their more advanced preparation for professional work.11

President Kennedy was concerned about meeting the needs of succeeding generations. As his goal for education, he wanted to achieve a "new standard of excellence, and the availability of such excellence to all who are willing and able to pursue it."12

The President made the following legislative proposals: (1) a three-year program of federal assistance for elementary and secondary school construction and teachers' salaries, to the amount of more than $700 million per annum; (2) a five-year program of housing loans for state colleges, on the basis of $250 million per annum; (3) a five-year program of state scholarships for talented and needy students with 25,000 scholarships awarded in the first year, rising to 50,000 per annum; and (4) the formation of an advisory board to evaluate and improve vocational

11Public Papers, 1961, pp. 107-111.

12Ibid.
education programs.\textsuperscript{13}

In regard to his first proposal, the states were to have control of spending the grants. The $700 million was to be distributed on a sliding scale formula with each state receiving a minimum of fifteen dollars per child in daily school attendance. Low income states were to be given an equalization grant. One of the problems that this proposal caused was that the large states would provide the bulk of the funds, while poor states like Mississippi, which was openly defiant toward the federal government on matters regarding school desegregation, were scheduled to receive a greater proportionate share of the money.\textsuperscript{14} Kennedy's additional proposals for aid to higher education, college scholarships, and vocational education did not foster as much opposition as his program of aid to elementary and secondary schools.

The comprehensive education bill passed the Senate as the School Assistance Act of 1961, but was defeated in the House of Representatives. In the House, the General Education Subcommittee had conducted hearings on the general school aid bill, and the Education and Labor Committee voted the bill out for floor action at the end of May. The bill was sent to the House Rules Committee on June 20, where the

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}

Committee decided to withhold action temporarily. On July 18, the Rules Committee voted to withhold all action on education legislation for the first session, thus killing the public school aid bill.\textsuperscript{15} Under the powers of the House Rules Committee, this group could make it impossible for the Representatives to pass any legislation of which the Committee did not approve. Similarly, no bill passed by both Houses in differing forms could pass to a Senate-House conference unless the House Rules Committee granted a rule.\textsuperscript{16}

Much of the continuing objection in 1961 as well as in 1962 to the general school aid bill was raised by Catholics because non-public schools were excluded from the benefits. The omission of private schools was intentional, however. During his campaign, Kennedy had openly stated his belief in the separation of church and state. He left no doubt whatsoever that federal aid to parochial schools was unconstitutional.\textsuperscript{17} As President, Kennedy maintained his position that strict separation of church and state in a pluralistic, democratic society was the best possible

\textsuperscript{15}O'Hara, John F. Kennedy on Education, p. 20.


\textsuperscript{17}E. Fuller, "Where is the President Leading Us in Education?" Nation's Schools 70 (July 1962):72.
arrangement. The President hoped that the general school aid bill could be quickly passed, but his hopes were smashed when Cardinal Spellman denounced Kennedy's task force report on education as "unthinkable" for not giving equal consideration to parochial schools.18 Kennedy realized that many Catholics had the burden of double taxation for education, but he had no other alternative than to exclude non-public schools. He felt that if parents of any religious denomination wanted to send their children to private schools, they would have to pay the costs on their own.19 The National Catholic Welfare Conference, speaking on behalf of the Catholic hierarchy in the United States, then demanded defeat of Kennedy's school aid bill unless it included long-term, low-interest loans to private schools. The Catholic position was a reversal of an earlier stand: that federal assistance was the first step towards government control. Protestant and Jewish clergymen typically opposed the Catholic stand, supporting Kennedy and in essence asking for a greater separation of Church and State, even though they had denominational schools of their own.20

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18 Time, 27 January 1962, p. 28.
19 Fuchs, John F. Kennedy and American Catholicism, p. 208.
Referring to Cardinal Spellman's views, President Kennedy complained privately that the Cardinal never objected to Eisenhower's bills. Later, the President commented at a press conference that he wondered if some clergymen had changed their views "merely because of the religion of the occupant of the White House." 21

According to President Kennedy's chief speech writer, Theodore Sorensen, the President devoted more time and speeches to the topic of education than to any other domestic issue. Sorensen wrote:

Without notes he [Kennedy] would cite all the discouraging statistics: only six out of every ten students in the fifth grade would finish high school; only nine out of every sixteen high school graduates would go on to college; one million young Americans were already out of school and out of work; dropouts had a far higher rate of unemployment and a far lower rate of income; seventy-one per cent of the people, according to Gallup, expected their children to go to college but only fifty-one per cent had saved for it. 22

Kennedy strongly felt the need for more federal aid to education. After giving a speech in Ohio, Kennedy remarked to Sorensen, "That's the fifth governor I've talked to who doesn't see how he can squeeze any more from property taxes to build enough schools." 23 He continued through his first legislative year to urge support of his educational programs.

22 Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 358.
23 Ibid.
Upon receiving an honorary degree from George Washington University on May 3, 1961, John F. Kennedy reminded his audience of the responsibility of the educated person in a free society. He emphasized the idea that it was the job of schools and colleges to develop young people who would develop their own potentials and contribute to the maintenance of democracy. He went on to make similar remarks at commencement ceremonies that year at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis and at the University of North Carolina.

In August of 1961 another attempt to pass a comprehensive school aid bill failed in the House of Representatives. Since there was opposition to providing federal funds to raise teachers' salaries, a version of the bill for school construction only was brought to the floor of the House. The House tried to avoid the Rules Committee, which had earlier rejected the bill, but the strategy was again unsuccessful, and the measure was overwhelmingly defeated.²⁴

Other education programs of the Kennedy Administration fortunately did not meet the same fate as the comprehensive school aid bill. Among the major successes of that year were the passage of the Peace Corps Act and the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961.

The Peace Corps was designed to consist of carefully selected and rigorously trained men and women who would voluntarily take their skills to developing nations to assist them in whatever way they could. Shortly after his inauguration as President, John F. Kennedy moved ahead quickly with the Peace Corps program, an idea which he had fostered while still a Senator. The President envisioned the Corps as not only a service to developing countries, but also an educational opportunity for American youth. He had hoped that after serving in the Peace Corps, these young men and women would possibly consider careers in government or foreign service.25

President Kennedy's brother-in-law R. Sargent Shriver, Jr., was asked to head the Peace Corps. Shriver, a realist, was by no means swept up in the idealism of the Peace Corps idea. In a *Time* magazine article, Shriver said: "There's a great difference between a noble idea, no matter how well conceived, and the execution of that idea in practical, realistic, down-to-earth terms."26 Even though Shriver, as well as many others, had misgivings about the idea, and the Corps did experience its share of problems, the overall effect of the program in the host country was usually very positive.

25 Ibid., p. 204.

According to the Congressional Quarterly Almanac, the guidelines for the Peace Corps were established as follows: (1) a request must be received from the potential host country for Peace Corps assistance; (2) there should be a balanced geographical distribution of Peace Corps personnel throughout the world; (3) there should be a clear need for help; (4) the recipient countries must indicate a desire to undertake measures of economic and social reform; (5) there must be a necessity to provide skills not already sufficiently available in the recipient country; (6) the host country should have the ability to carry on with a project once the volunteers have left; and (7) there should be a reasonable assurance of a significant psychological and educational impact on the host country which would stimulate related activities.27

Volunteers were selected on the basis of a formal application, a questionnaire, and a non-competitive, aptitude interest examination. Those who were selected received two to three months of intensive training, which included instruction in the language, geography, culture and government of the host country. The Peace Corps volunteer was expected to live at the social and economic level of the people in the host country with no special privileges and

no diplomatic immunity. The volunteer would receive living, travel and subsistence allowance and a readjustment allowance at the end of service. In addressing potential volunteers, Shriver tried to discourage delusions of glamour by warning: "This won't be a moonlight cruise on the Amazon. The military life may not only be more glamorous, but it could be safer."²⁸

After President Kennedy first announced the inception of the Peace Corps, the White House received over 20,000 inquiries about the program.²⁹ By May of 1961, over 3,000 applicants took the qualifying examinations. By the end of 1961, over seven hundred volunteers were placed in thirteen countries with thousands more on their way. The Corps attracted not only youthful college graduates but older Americans as well.³⁰

The concept of the Peace Corps was an adventurous undertaking on the part of President Kennedy. He attempted to channel the idealism of the American youth into a realistic effort to better mankind. Combating poverty, ignorance, and disease, the Peace Corps volunteers assisted the people of developing nations while they themselves benefited from the enriching educational experiences of

²⁸Time, 5 July 1963, p. 20.
living and working in a foreign land.

The enactment of the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961 was an outstanding accomplishment of the first session of the Eighty-seventh Congress. President Kennedy had earlier established a Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime. The Administration's proposal which emerged from this committee was a five-year program of federal grants to state and local governments or public and non-profit private agencies to control juvenile delinquency and to provide internships for workers involved in juvenile delinquency work. The bill was discussed in the House Subcommittee on Education where the internships were deleted and the program was shortened from five years to three years. The measure passed the House and a similar measure passed the Senate. President Kennedy signed the act into law on September 22, 1961.31

Smaller bills which were also passed and enacted into law during 1961 were the proposals to extend the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and "impacted areas" legislation. The President had hoped that these measures would have gone farther than they did, and was disappointed that they failed to encompass his earlier recommendations. Reluctantly, he signed the bill on October 3, 1961.32

31 O'Hara, John F. Kennedy on Education, p. 22.
32 Ibid., p. 21.
In evaluating President Kennedy's educational programs of 1961, only a few of the President's ideas became realities. The greatest controversy arose over the passage of the School Assistance Act of 1961, which was to provide comprehensive aid to elementary and secondary public schools for classroom construction and increases in teachers' salaries. The bill was passed in the Senate, approved by the House Education and Labor Committee, but tabled by the House Rules Committee by a vote of eight to seven. The House attempted to pass a compromise bill in August, which was overwhelmingly defeated. The bill failed for several reasons. First of all, Roman Catholics objected because aid was not provided for church schools. Many Republicans opposed the idea of federal aid to education, and voted against the bill. Democratic leadership in the House and Senate was not strong. And finally, economy-minded Democrats opposed increased spending.33 It was unfortunate that Kennedy's education proposals faced such strong opposition. The year was not totally lost educationally, however. The Peace Corps, the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act, and the extension of the NDEA all became realities during 1961.

Despite the setbacks Kennedy faced during his first legislative year regarding the passage of comprehensive assistance. 33 Tiedt, The Role of the Federal Government in Education, p. 146.
federal aid to education legislation, Kennedy planned to come back even more forcefully on this issue. As the year 1962 approached, he prepared once again to address Congress on the need for educational programs such as the ones he felt were urgently needed in 1961.

**Educational Strategy--1962**

In his State of the Union Message of January, 1962, President Kennedy urged Congress to enact his 1961 education proposals. A few weeks later, he followed his remarks with a second Special Message to Congress on Education. The main thrust of his remarks emphasized education as a national investment. In his opening paragraphs he stated that the educational system needed federal assistance to keep pace with the demands of a complex technological society. He said that too many Americans were still illiterate or untrained and thus unemployed or underemployed. He pointed out the role of the federal government as providing leadership and financial assistance to state and local governments and private institutions who control the educational system. He urged Congress to not delay any longer on the passage of the following proposals: (1) the comprehensive school-aid program for classroom construction

34 For complete text of the President's 1962 Special Message to Congress on Education, see the Appendix, p. 116.
and improving teachers' salaries; (2) assistance to higher education; (3) special education and training programs, which included medical and dental education, science and engineering programs, adult education, education of migrant workers, educational television, aid to handicapped children, and federal aid to the arts. 35

Congress did not follow President Kennedy's recommendations, however. The general school aid bill was continually blocked because of controversy over religious and political issues. Determined to overcome this setback, the President attempted to achieve passage of smaller measures. The Kennedy Administration decided to press for action on the higher education bill, but after many compromises in the House and Senate, the bill finally was voted on and defeated. 36

When the President was unable to obtain general federal aid for education, he invented or expanded new means of obtaining specialized aid. For example, he authorized literacy training under the Manpower Development and Training Act to help alleviate unemployment, increased funds for school lunches and libraries, increased vocational education, and provided funds for the teaching of the deaf, 35

35 Public Papers, 1962, pp. 110-117.
36 Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 359.
the handicapped, the retarded and the exceptional child. Other enactments assisted community libraries, college dormitories and educational television.\textsuperscript{37} The Educational Television Act amended the Communications Act of 1934 and established a program of federal matching grants for the construction of television broadcasting facilities to be used for educational purposes. Another small victory for the Kennedy Administration was an increase in the annual appropriation for the National Science Foundation. One final accomplishment of the second session of the Eighty-seventh Congress, which met with President Kennedy's hearty approval, was the elimination of the non-Communist disclaim- er affidavit from the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 and the National Defense Education Act of 1958.\textsuperscript{38}

These smaller measures taken together could not compare to the much more comprehensive programs the President desired. They were successful, however, in combating some of the serious educational problems facing the nation. According to the Office of Education, the preceding legislative period was the most significant in the Office's one hundred year history.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38}O'Hara, \textit{John F. Kennedy on Education}, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{39}Sorensen, \textit{Kennedy}, p. 359.
National Education Improvement Act of 1963

On January 29, 1963, President Kennedy presented his most ambitious education program to Congress. In the introductory remarks of his Special Message to Congress on Education, Kennedy said:

For the nation, increasing the quality and availability of education is vital to both our national security and our domestic well-being. A free nation can rise no higher than the standard of excellence set in its schools and colleges.

The goals of his program were stated as follows:

First, we must improve the quality of instruction provided in all of our schools and colleges. We must stimulate interest in learning in order to reduce the alarming number of students who now drop out of school or who do not continue into higher levels of education.

Second, our educational system faces a problem of quantity--of coping with the needs of our expanding population and of the rising educational expectations for our children which all of us share as parents.

Third, we must give special attention to increasing the opportunities and incentives for all Americans to develop their talents to the utmost--to complete their education and to continue their self-development throughout life.

The President submitted his program as an Omnibus Education Bill, combining all the various aspects of federal aid to education. The President's strategy was to present a unified front to Congress and to avoid diverse education

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40 For complete text of the President's 1963 Special Message to Congress on Education, see the Appendix, p. 127.


42 Ibid.
lobbies which had previously pursued only their own interests with little visible results. The President's program, formally titled the National Education Improvement Act of 1963, called for the following general areas of concern: (1) the expansion of opportunities for individuals in higher education; (2) expansion and improvement of higher education; (3) improvement of educational quality; (4) strengthening public elementary and secondary education; (5) vocational and special education; and (6) continuing education.43

As could be expected, Congress did not react favorably to Kennedy's omnibus approach. The House Education and Labor Committee decided to divide the bill into four categories: (1) elementary and secondary school education; (2) college education; (3) vocational and adult education and extension of NDEA programs; and (4) "impacted" aid legislation. The Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee also decided to report separate education bills after months of deliberation.44

The first of the education bills to be ready for floor action was the college bill, which was passed on August 14th in the House. The House bill on higher

43Ibid.
education included grants as well as loans to colleges for construction of academic facilities. The bill covered graduate schools as well as public junior colleges and college-level technical institutes. The Senate version of the bill was passed on October 21st and included a judicial review provision and made grants available only for construction of science, engineering, and library facilities. The House and Senate conferees met in early November to resolve their differences regarding the higher education bill, but the bill was caught up in endless debates.

In addition to the omnibus education bill, Kennedy presented proposals for improving medical education and for establishing a National Service Corps, equivalent to a domestic Peace Corps. The National Service Corps was designed to assist the states in the areas of education, poverty, and other domestic needs. The President also proposed a Youth Conservation Corps to provide training and work for young men between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one.45 Although the President had the best of intentions, the presentation of numerous education proposals at one time only served to complicate matters, and perhaps delayed the passage of simpler measures by the Congress. Among the various education proposals, the President was hopeful that

45 Ibid., p. 27.
his vocational education bills would be passed. In his Education Message of 1963, as well as in his Civil Rights Message of June, 1963, he stressed the need for better vocational education. Both the Senate and the House passed the vocational education bills in slightly differing forms. Like the college aid proposal, however, the bill was held up in conference.

President Kennedy appointed a new Commissioner of Education late in 1962 to provide leadership on behalf of the Administration's education programs. At the swearing in ceremony of Francis Keppel, former Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, President Kennedy reinforced his belief that the federal government played an important role in providing the best possible education for the most people. In his remarks, he said:

We are very glad to have present with us today representatives of some of the distinguished American organizations who have made their life's work the advancement of education in the United States. This is a matter which has been of concern to the National Government since our inception. The Northwest Ordinance, the Land Grant College Act, and all the rest indicate the strong belief of our Founding Fathers and this present administration that no free society can possibly survive unless it has an educated citizenry.

According to historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Francis Keppel not only brought a new sense of authority to the position of Commissioner of Education, but he also played a

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46Public Papers, 1962, pp. 857-858.
vital role in the legislative successes of 1963. In addition to the work he had done under the Kennedy Administration, he was responsible for laying the foundation for comprehensive aid to education legislation in the years to come.47

The question of the involvement of church and state gained national attention once again in 1963. Many Catholic and Protestant churchmen, supported by powerful members of Congress, wanted a constitutional amendment to permit religious activity in the public schools. The decision of the Supreme Court was to ban the recitation of formal prayers and Bible reading in the public schools. Although public opinion polls were unsympathetic to the Supreme Court's decision, President Kennedy believed that religion was a personal matter and supported the decision. Some of his advisors felt that his stand would hurt his campaign for re-election in 1964. The President, however, quickly deflated their arguments with the following statement:

We have in this case a very easy remedy and that is to pray ourselves. And I would think that it would be a welcome reminder to every American family that we can pray a good deal more at home, we can attend our churches with a good deal more fidelity, and we can make the true meaning of prayer much more important in the lives of all our children.48

48Fuchs, John F. Kennedy and American Catholicism, p. 209.
It was not until after the assassination of President Kennedy that his education bills gained final approval. In the aftermath of Dallas, President Lyndon Johnson was extremely effective in bringing the House-Senate conferees to an agreeable compromise. The final approval of the higher education and vocational education bills was forthcoming. On December 16, 1963, President Johnson signed the Higher Education Facilities Act into law. On December 18, 1963, the Vocational Education Act became law.

The education programs passed during 1963 were the first major education programs enacted by Congress since the National Defense Education Act of 1958. The enactment of this education legislation was truly a tribute to John F. Kennedy. Even though his entire omnibus bill was not totally enacted, the bill set the stage for later enactments in 1963 and 1964. The legislation which was extracted from President Kennedy's omnibus bill included the Vocational Education Act of 1963, the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963, and the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act. Had the bill been not as vast and overwhelming as it was, parts of the proposal would probably have been passed more easily. In the years that followed, President Johnson achieved passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which was similar to Kennedy's comprehensive school aid bill in its attempt to strengthen
and improve educational quality and educational opportunities in the nation's schools. Like his predecessor, Johnson was concerned about the welfare of the nation, its children, and the quality of their education.

President Kennedy never forgot the importance of education in a free society. As the end of 1963 rapidly drew to a close, the President intended to make the following remarks in his speech in Dallas on November 22, 1963:

Finally, it should be clear by now that a nation can be no stronger abroad than she is at home. Only an America which practices what it preaches about equal rights and social justice will be respected by those whose choice affects our future. Only an America which has fully educated its citizens is fully capable of tackling the complex problems and perceiving the hidden dangers of the world in which we live.49

President Kennedy would have never accepted the idea that a nation could become overeducated. He believed that education was the only vehicle by which man could understand complicated problems involving society, technology, or government. He was concerned about the destiny of succeeding generations, and fought during his lifetime so that future Americans would have the full benefit of a quality educational system.

49*Public Papers, 1963, pp. 890-894.*
Civil Rights and Education

The issue of civil rights and education was gaining momentum during the Kennedy Administration. In the eight year period since the decision of the Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education [1954], equal opportunity in education was moving at much too slowly a pace not only for the Negro community, but also for the welfare of the entire nation. Many factors, including the lack of moral leadership on the part of President Eisenhower, contributed to the slowness of school districts to desegregate. It was Eisenhower's belief that the law could not change the hearts of men, and as a result, the President did not attempt to convince the nation that integration was inevitable.50 The philosophy of the Kennedy Administration was just the opposite. Kennedy believed that the law must lead the people, and that changed laws would change the way people thought. In the words of Kennedy's Assistant Attorney General in charge of civil rights: "Acceptance of the law is the beginning of change, and knowledge that the law is going to be enforced is vital."51

In the struggle for civil rights, President Kennedy exercised strong moral leadership. Being in the unique

51Ibid., p. 85.
position of President of the United States, he was able to call the nation's attention to the problem, and educate them regarding the central issues through the media. His public statements were effective in arousing the conscience of the American people. He reacted strongly to incidents of discrimination and took the lead in urging the enforcement of the law. His personal concern for the equal rights of all Americans was evidenced by the many public statements he made, the forceful action he did not hesitate to take, and the thoughtful proposals he urged Congress to adopt to help solve the problem.

As President, Kennedy's first act on behalf of civil rights came on the morning after his Inauguration. Noticing that there were no Negroes among the Coast Guard men marching in the Inaugural parade, he telephoned the head of that branch of the Armed Forces for an explanation. The President requested that immediate action be taken to recruit eligible Negro men for the Coast Guard.52

The President relied heavily upon the recommendations of the Civil Rights Commission early in his administration. The Commission, which had been established in 1957, was upgraded in prestige and authority by President Kennedy. In 1961 the President appointed Berl Bernhard as director

of the Commission. Like the man who appointed him, Berndhard recognized his responsibility as not merely a job, but a moral commitment. The Commission inquired into all areas of civil rights, including housing, politics, employment, law enforcement, and education. Bernard felt that inequalities in all of these areas reinforced each other. Also on the Civil Rights Commission were two college presidents, Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh of Notre Dame University and John Hannah of Michigan State University. In studying the many problems of racial discrimination in the United States, these men became convinced of the need for strong federal action to remedy the situation. In the closing statement of his report of 1961, Father Hesburgh summed up the nation's attitude regarding civil rights:

Americans might well wonder how we can legitimately combat Communism when we practice so widely its central folly: utter disregard for the God-given spiritual rights, freedom and dignity of every human being.

It was not until November of 1962 that the President signed an executive order barring discrimination in federally supported housing. The President had been criticized severely by the Negro community prior to that time for not


54Ibid.
doing enough on their behalf. Kennedy had several reasons for the delay. First of all, he felt that he had to wait to introduce his civil rights program until it was in the best interest of the entire nation. He wanted to gain public acceptance of his ideas and hoped to gain passage of his proposals in the legislative branch. Although he realized that the slowness of the Eisenhower Administration caused frustration, he did not want to press for legislation which would cause bitterness and resentment and ultimately doom his whole program. Secondly, other racial issues had diverted his attention from the housing order. Specifically, in September of 1962 a young Negro man, James Meredith, attempted to enroll at the all white, tax-supported University of Mississippi at Oxford. The enrollment of this qualified applicant brought bitter conflict between the federal government and the state of Mississippi.

When Meredith attempted to enroll at the University, violence erupted on the campus. Governor Ross Barnett and Lieutenant Governor Paul Johnson had been found guilty of contempt by the United States Court of Appeals for blocking the admission of Meredith who had applied to the University a year earlier. The Judges then directed the Federal

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55 Smith, Kennedy's Thirteen Great Mistakes in the White House, p. 90.

56 Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 472.
Government to enforce the court order to admit Meredith.\footnote{Ibid., p. 483.}

President Kennedy did not wish to create more violence on the campus by sending federal troops. He attempted to persuade Governor Barnett and university officials to accept Meredith and avoid further rioting. Not receiving their cooperation, the President asserted his authority to suppress domestic violence stemming from unlawful assembly and the State of Mississippi's unwillingness to protect Meredith's constitutional right. President Kennedy ordered federal troops to the campus to disperse the mob and to assure Meredith's enrollment at the University. At ten o'clock that night, Sunday, September 30, 1962, the President made a television address to the nation. In his speech, he informed the American people that the orders of the court were being carried out in the Meredith case. He followed with a statement of the integrity of American law:

Our nation is founded on the principle that observance of the law is the eternal safeguard of liberty and defiance of the law is the surest road to tyranny.... Even among law-abiding men few laws are universally loved, but they are uniformly respected and not resisted.\footnote{Public Papers, 1962, pp. 726-728.}

The President continued by citing examples of other Southern universities which had successfully admitted Negro
students, and pointed to Mississippi's failure to follow the ruling of the Supreme Court. In his concluding remarks, he appealed to the students of the University of Mississippi, who would be most directly affected by the incident, to uphold Mississippi's tradition of courage and honor. The students and a mob of about 2,500 others failed to heed the President's advice. More federal troops were sent to the campus to disperse the crowd. By the next morning, Meredith, accompanied by United States marshalls, proceeded to enroll at the University. Although the President suffered much criticism from Southern leaders in the Meredith case, he felt that strong actions were necessary to pave the way for other Negro students.  

During the winter of 1962-1963, civil rights leaders were more determined than ever to achieve civil rights legislation. Kennedy, realizing their discontent and perceiving a need for new action, decided to seek legislation himself to maintain control. On February 28, 1963, the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation, the President sent a message to Congress setting forth the problems of discrimination in the country. He said that racial discrimination not only in voting and education, but also in employment and housing, hampered the nation's economic growth.

59 Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 486.
growth and world leadership. In addition, it increased the cost of public welfare, crime, delinquency, and disorder, and marred the atmosphere of a united and classless society. "Above all," he said, "it is wrong."60 The message, although eloquent, did not provide strong legislative recommendations, and disappointed civil rights leaders. Some of the improvements Kennedy called for included technical assistance to school districts voluntarily seeking to desegregate, the formation of the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity headed by the Vice President Lyndon Johnson, and extension and expansion of the Civil Rights Commission. The Commission itself was disappointed with the President's message. They thought it was time to attack the problem directly.61

By June of 1963 the civil rights issue was reaching crisis proportions and the entire nation was concerned about the problem. On June 11, a serious situation arose in the state of Alabama when Governor George C. Wallace prevented two Negro students, Vivian Malone and James Hood, from entering the University of Alabama. The Governor dramatically stood in the doorway of a university building to block their entrance. The Governor was in direct violation of a court order assuring the registration of the

60 Public Papers, 1963, p. 222.

students. The National Guard was sent to the campus. Wallace backed down, and the students registered.62

President Kennedy decided to move ahead with a sweeping civil rights proposal. He addressed the nation in a televised speech on the night of June 11, 1963. He opened his remarks by referring to the Alabama situation. He said that racial discrimination was not a sectional issue. The rising tide of Negro discontent was "a moral crisis," which "faced all Americans in every city of the Nation as well as in the South."63 He continued by announcing that new civil rights legislation would be proposed. According to presidential advisor, Theodore Sorensen, Negro leaders praised the President's speech as a second Emancipation Proclamation, while others including Southern Senators were violently opposed to the President's remarks and vowed to block any civil rights legislation. Kennedy felt that he had the best interests of the nation in mind, however, and moved quickly to present his civil rights bill to the Congress.64

On June 19, 1963, President Kennedy sent his comprehensive civil rights bill to the Congress. One of the references:


63Public Papers, 1963, p. 469.

64Sorensen, Kennedy, p. 496.
principal features of the bill was the authority given to
the Attorney General to seek desegregation of public
education. 65 The President felt that discrimination in
education was the root of other Negro problems. According
to Thurgood Marshall, former General Counsel to the
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
who was appointed to the United States Circuit Court by
President Kennedy, the President made an important move for
civil rights when he stepped up integration of the public
schools. Judge Marshall, who successfully represented the
Negro plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education*, said: "We
are a school-oriented society. If we desegregate the public
schools of America, the whole pattern of racial segregation
will inevitably collapse."66 Marshall felt that integrated
schools would change the composition of society and more
importantly, changed laws would eventually change the
hearts of men.

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy also played an
important role in the desegregation of the public schools
and in the overall struggle for civil rights. The Attorney
General recognized that the laws alone would not be effective
in the civil rights area unless rigidly enforced. He felt

65 For complete text of the President's message on
school desegregation, see the Appendix, p. 145.

66 Golden, *Mr. Kennedy and the Negroes*, p. 82.
that there had to be strong moral leadership from the
White House to make the difference.\textsuperscript{67} President Kennedy's
moral leadership in the area of civil rights was motivated
by a deep sense of justice and fair play. Sorensen quoted
the President as saying:

\begin{quote}
I do not say that all men are equal in their ability,
their character or their motivation, but I say they
should be equal in their chance to develop their
character, their motivation and their ability. They
should be given a fair chance to develop all the
talents that they have.\textsuperscript{68}
\end{quote}

Another great leader whose ideas paralleled those of
President Kennedy in the area of civil rights was Pope
John XXIII. Pope John was recognized around the world for
his work for peace and Christian unity. In his encyclical,
Pacem In Terris \textsuperscript{[1963]}, Pope John explored the whole subject
of human rights. It was his belief that civil government
should give special attention to the rights of minorities,
emphasizing that racial discrimination could in no way be
justified. Pope John called attention to the Declaration of
Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the
Fourteenth Amendment, as guarantees of the civil rights of
each human being. He reminded the American people that the
whole American dream of freedom was based on these self-

\begin{footnotes}
\item[67] Fuller, \textit{Years of Trial: Kennedy's Crucial Decisions},
p. 125.
\item[68] Sorensen, \textit{Kennedy}, p. 472.
\end{footnotes}
evident truths.\(^{69}\) The President was firmly committed to the truths contained in these documents, and led the American people in supporting them.

After a long summer of racial strife in many cities throughout the nation, civil rights leaders were ready to march on the nation's capital. Realizing that the demonstration was the Negro's chief weapon, President Kennedy was careful not to diminish the value of peaceful demonstration in conferring with Negro leaders. In August of 1963 the President met with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other Negro leaders to discuss the march on Washington, D.C. The President encouraged the demonstration, but warned that no lives be endangered or property damaged. On August 28, the demonstration was peacefully held with more than 200,000 people of all colors and creeds participating.\(^{70}\) The President did not expect the demonstration to change overnight the minds of the Congressmen who opposed his civil rights bill. He realized that such a revolution in thinking would require the support of the entire nation, including the government, private citizens, business, labor, and civic organizations. The President conducted his own persuasive campaign movement on behalf of civil


\(^{70}\) *Time*, 30 August 1963, p. 11.
rights by inviting representatives of these groups to come to the White House to discuss the issue. One of the suggestions given to President Kennedy by a visitor to the White House, Dr. King, was to revive "fireside chats" to explain civil rights to the nation.\footnote{Donald, John F. Kennedy and The New Frontier, p. 172.} President Kennedy did attempt to educate the American people regarding the issues through his competent use of the media.

Regarding the fate of the civil rights bill, President Kennedy had urged that the Congress give highest priority to the bill. By November of 1963 the bill had passed the House Judiciary Committee, its most difficult hurdle. After the President's death, some Southerners thought that the bill would be killed by President Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson. Johnson, however, endorsed the prompt enactment of the entire civil rights bill in his "Let Us Continue" address to Congress. The Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1964 just as President Kennedy had hoped. Leaders of both political parties in the Senate and House of Representatives agreed that the program would have passed as well if President Kennedy had lived.\footnote{Sorensen, The Kennedy Legacy, p. 112.}

In evaluating President Kennedy's ideas and moral leadership in the area of civil rights and education, his
contributions may be summarized in the following manner. First of all, his fundamental ideas regarding civil rights were that all human beings were entitled to equal opportunity in all phases of American life, and the civil rights of each person should be protected by the law. Secondly, he led the American people in the struggle for civil rights through strong executive action, persuasive public statements, and a comprehensive proposal for civil rights legislation. The action taken by President Kennedy included the enforcement of the Supreme Court's ruling in the cases of James Meredith, Vivian Malone, and James Hood; the authorization of the Attorney General to take legal action in instances of racial discrimination in the schools or where the right to vote was threatened; the increasing of the number of Negro lawyers in the Justice Department; the upgrading of the prestige and authority of the Civil Rights Commission; the encouragement of the march on Washington, D.C.; and the personal crusade of the President himself to educate the nation regarding the civil rights issue, to name but a few.

At the risk of losing traditional sources of Democratic votes in the South without gaining offsetting votes elsewhere, President Kennedy labored to obtain passage of his civil rights bill and to build strong public opinion behind it. His hope was to actually achieve a change in
the beliefs, attitudes and actions of the American people in the treatment of their fellow human beings.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

President John F. Kennedy's role in educational history has been studied for several important reasons. First of all, education in America is inseparable from politics. America's system of public education is supported by tax dollars collected at the local, state, and federal levels. The future of educational programs depend upon the appropriations provided by the government. All three branches of the government--the executive, the legislative, and the judicial--have made important contributions to American education. This thesis has concentrated primarily upon the executive branch, using John F. Kennedy as an example. Specifically, the thesis has attempted to demonstrate the importance of a strong leader who was sympathetic towards educational ideas. In a democracy, where educated citizens are essential for the preservation of freedom, the choice of the President is one which requires much thought on the part of the American voter. The election of a person who openly professed his belief in the equality of educational opportunities for all Americans and worked to improve the quality of the nation's educational system was a decision in favor of preserving
freedom for future generations. President Kennedy regarded education as a national investment. Other presidents have been reluctant to encourage government involvement in education or have tried to economize by cutting back on educational programs. The difference in the type of leadership in the White House made the difference in the extent to which the government was willing to attend to educational ideas.

Secondly, President John F. Kennedy made many valuable contributions to American education during his public life. The major efforts of his presidential years included the introduction of comprehensive federal aid-to-education legislation, the upgrading of the status of education in America, and the attempt to resolve the crisis over civil rights and education. Regarding deeper involvement of the federal government in education, President Kennedy felt that the federal government should do more to assist state and local governments in the improvement of the quality and quantity of education. Education of the nation's citizens was a task that often exceeded the support that state and local governments could provide. President Kennedy proposed legislation which would benefit all educational levels and included special programs such as adult education, vocational and special education, and aid to the arts, to name a few.
The President elevated the status of education in many ways. He was proud of his educational background and his Irish ancestry. He wrote books on several topics including immigration, which covered the role of the public school system in "Americanizing" ethnic groups. He emphasized the academic qualifications of his advisors and invited professors and scholars to join his administration. The President enjoyed literature and the arts and brought cultural events to the nation's capital.

Finally, perhaps the President's greatest contribution to education was the strong moral leadership he provided on behalf of the civil rights movement. His actions to ensure the registration of Negro students in Southern universities, his enforcement of the Supreme Court's ruling regarding public school desegregation, his endorsement of the civil rights march on Washington, D.C., his presentation of sweeping civil rights legislation to the Congress, and his appeals to the nation regarding the civil rights issues contributed to the equalization of opportunity for all Americans in all aspects of American life.

Theodore Sorensen wrote:

At the root of the Kennedy legacy is education—its concern for succeeding generations, its reliance on the qualities of the mind, its preparation for continual change and renewal.¹

The reason why education was such an important issue to President John F. Kennedy was that he believed there could be no progress without it. Education was essential to master the technology of the times and to find solutions to complicated problems. The President believed that without education there could be no escape from the ghetto, no end to unemployment, and no reversal of crime rates. During his administration, Kennedy devoted a greater proportionate share of his time to the issue of education than he did for perhaps any other domestic issue. And many times other domestic issues such as the economy, unemployment, crime, and civil rights were invariably related to education.

The President was deeply concerned about the nation's youth. He believed that an investment by the federal government in education would bring a return in tax savings, tax income and economic growth that no other investment could match. He strongly advocated deeper government involvement in education.

The President proposed many programs to assist all aspects of education. Although many of these programs were not enacted into law until after his death, he was able to renew the nation's interest in education during his lifetime. Kennedy provided the momentum for change, for experimenting with new ideas, and for reaching new standards of excellence. Unlike his predecessor, who
believed that the federal government had no place in education, Kennedy realized that the precedent of government involvement had been established and was anything but temporary. He advocated wider application of federal aid to education.

Spirited by President Kennedy's leadership, the year 1960 marked the beginning of a decade of educational innovations. The challenges of the New Frontier of education were implemented in various ways throughout the nation's schools. Teachers, students, their schools and communities were affected. Some of these innovations included experimentation in new math, programmed learning, team teaching, universities without walls, multi-media education, programs in adult, special and vocational education. Without the President's ideas and leadership, would these developments have taken place? The President's support of educational innovation encouraged educators to try new ideas. The President provided, more than anything else, the incentive to pursue excellence.

The educational ideas and leadership of John F. Kennedy did not originate in the White House. As was discussed earlier, President Kennedy was deeply concerned about the educational goals of the nation as a Congressman and Senator. Kennedy was willing to sacrifice the support of a great proportion of the electorate to do what he thought
was right regarding educational issues. On the question of federal aid to private education, Kennedy supported the First Amendment and strict separation of church and state. His stand resulted in the loss of the support of many Catholics, but gained for him the respect of many others. The question of the enforcement of school desegregation also ended in the loss of traditional Southern votes. President Kennedy believed in the integrity of American law and in the equal rights of every human being. His actions to uphold the law and each person's civil rights were worth the sacrifices he made in popularity. These actions were indicative of a forceful leader who was committed to noble ideals. President John F. Kennedy worked diligently on behalf of American education. A final tribute to his efforts was the enactment of his legislative proposals and the progress of education and civil rights in the 1960's.
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APPENDIX
CHRONOLOGY

May 29, 1917  
John Fitzgerald Kennedy born in Brookline, Massachusetts.

1917-1926  
Kennedy family lived in Brookline, Massachusetts. Jack attended the Dexter School with his older brother, Joe, Jr.

1926  
The Kennedy's moved to New York City to be closer to the Father's business. Jack attended the Riverdale Country Day School.

1929  
Family moved to Bronxville, New York.

1930  
At age thirteen, Jack spent one year at the Canterbury School, a Catholic run preparatory school, in New Milford, Conn.

1931  
Jack transferred to the Choate School, Wallingford, Conn., to be with his brother, Joe, Jr.

June, 1935  
Jack graduated from the Choate School. He spent the summer at the London School of Economics.

Fall, 1935  
Jack entered Princeton University, but withdrew from school completely after a recurrence of illness.

Fall, 1936  
Entered Harvard University.

Summer, 1937  
Toured Europe with friend, K. LeMoyne Billings.

1937  

June, 1940  
JFK graduated from Harvard with B.S. degree, cum laude, in political science. His thesis was later published under the title, Why England Slept.

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Fall, 1940

Entered Stanford University's Graduate School of Business.

1941

Left Stanford to travel in South America.

September, 1941

JFK enlisted in the Navy.

March, 1943

Given command of the PT 109 which was later destroyed. Awarded Purple Heart.

Spring, 1944

Entered Chelsea Naval Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts.

August 12, 1944

Brother Joe, Jr., killed in airplane crash. JFK privately published a volume, As We Remember Joe, in memory of his brother.

1946

Elected Congressman from the Eleventh District in Massachusetts.

January, 1947


1952

Defeated Henry Cabot Lodge by narrow margin in race for U. S. Senator from Massachusetts. Member of Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee, which was responsible for education legislation.

September, 1953

Married Jacqueline Bouvier.

October 21, 1954

Underwent spinal surgery in Manhattan Hospital, New York.

February, 1955

Underwent second spinal operation. Wrote Profiles in Courage during convalescence.

1956

Nominated Adlai Stevenson for President at Democratic National Convention. Defeated in his own bid for Vice President.

1957

Profiles in Courage won Pulitzer Prize for biography.

November 27, 1957

Daughter Caroline Bouvier Kennedy born.
November, 1958  Re-elected to second term as U.S. Senator by widest margin in Massachusetts history.

January, 1960  Announced candidacy for President.

July 13, 1960  Received nomination for Presidency at Democratic National Convention.

November 8, 1960  Elected thirty-fifth President of the United States.

November 25, 1960  John F. Kennedy, Jr., born.

January 20, 1961  Inauguration Day.

January 29, 1961  The President's Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union.

February 20, 1961  Special Message to the Congress on Education.

March 1, 1961  Establishment of the Peace Corps.

May 1, 1961  Educational Television Act.

September 22, 1961  Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act.

November 13, 1961  Pablo Casals performed at the White House.

February 6, 1962  Special Message to the Congress on Education.


September 30, 1962  James Meredith enrolled at the University of Mississippi.

January 29, 1963  Special Message to the Congress on Education


June 11, 1963  Two Negro students admitted to the University of Alabama.
June 11, 1963  President Kennedy made a televised speech to the Nation on Civil Rights.

June 19, 1963  JFK proposed sweeping civil rights legislation to Congress.

June 26-29, 1963  President Kennedy's trip to Ireland.

August 7-9, 1963  Patrick Bouvier Kennedy.

August 28, 1963  Civil Rights March on Washington, D.C.

September 24, 1963  President signed Medical School Education legislation.

October 26, 1963  Dedication of the Robert Frost Library, Amherst, Massachusetts.

November 22, 1963  President Kennedy assassinated.


America's young people are our greatest resources for the future. Each of them deserves the education which will best develop his potentialities.

We shall act at once to help in building the classrooms and employing the teachers that are essential if the right to a good education is to have genuine meaning for all the youth of America in the decade ahead.

As a national investment in our future we propose a program of loans and scholarship grants to assure that qualified young Americans will have full opportunity for higher education, at the institutions of their choice, regardless of the income of their parents.

The new Democratic administration will end eight years of official neglect of our educational system.

America's education faces a financial crisis. The tremendous increase in the number of children of school and college age has far outrun the available supply of educational facilities and qualified teachers. The classroom shortage alone is interfering with the education of ten million students.

America's teachers, parents, and school administrators have striven courageously to keep up with the increased challenge of education.

So have the states and local communities. Education absorbs two-fifths of all their revenue. With limited resources, private educational institutions have shouldered their share of the burden.

Only the federal government is not doing its part. For eight years, measures for the relief of the educational crisis have been held up by the cynical maneuvers of the Republican Party in Congress and the White House.

We believe that America can meet its educational obligations only with generous federal financial support,
within the traditional framework of local control. The assistance will take the form of federal grants to states for educational purposes they deem most pressing, including classroom construction and teachers' salaries. It will include aid for the construction of academic facilities as well as dormitories at colleges and universities.

We pledge further federal support for all phases of vocational education for youth and adults; for libraries and adult education; for realizing the potentials of educational television; and for exchange of students and teachers with other nations.

As part of a broader concern for young people we recommend establishment of a Youth Conservation Corps to give underprivileged young people a rewarding experience in a healthful environment.

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS ON EDUCATION
FEBRUARY 20, 1961

To the Congress of the United States:

Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. Our requirements for world leadership, our hopes for economic growth, and the demands of citizenship itself in an era such as this all require the maximum development of every young American's capacity.

The human mind is our fundamental resource. A balanced Federal program must go well beyond incentives for investment in plant and equipment. It must include equally determined measures to invest in human beings--both in their basic education and training and in their more advanced preparation for professional work. Without such measures, the Federal Government will not be carrying out its responsibilities for expanding the base of our economic and military strength.

Our progress in education over the last generation has been substantial. We are educating a greater proportion of our youth to a higher degree of competency than any other country on earth. One-fourth of our total population is enrolled in our schools and colleges. This year twenty-six billion dollars will be spent on education alone.

But the needs of the next generation--the needs of the next decade and the next school year--will not be met at this level of effort. More effort will be required--on the part of students, teachers, schools, colleges and all fifty states--
and on the part of the Federal Government.

Education must remain a matter of state and local control, and higher education a matter of individual choice. But education is increasingly expensive. Too many state and local governments lack the resources to assure an adequate education for every child. Too many classrooms are overcrowded. Too many teachers are underpaid. Too many talented individuals cannot afford the benefits of higher education. Too many academic institutions cannot afford the cost of, or find room for, the growing numbers of students seeking admission in the sixties.

Our twin goals must be: a new standard of excellence in education--and the availability of such excellence to all who are willing and able to pursue it.

I. ASSISTANCE TO PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

A successful educational system requires the proper balance, in terms of both quality and quantity, of three elements: students, teachers and facilities. The quality of the students depends in large measure on both the quality and the relative quantity of teachers and facilities.

Throughout the 1960's there will be no lack in the quantity of student. An average net gain of nearly one million pupils a year during the next ten years will overburden a school system already strained by well over a half-million pupils in curtailed or half-day sessions, a school system financed largely by a property tax incapable of bearing such an increased load in most communities.

But providing the quality and quantity of teachers and facilities to meet this demand will be major problems. Even today, there are some 90,000 teachers who fall short of full certification standards. Tens of thousands of others must attempt to cope with classes of unwieldy size because there are insufficient teachers available.

We cannot obtain more and better teachers--and our children should have the best--unless steps are taken to increase teachers' salaries. At present salary levels, the classroom cannot compete in financial rewards with other professional work that requires similar academic background.

It is equally clear that we do not have enough classrooms. In order to meet current needs and accommodate increasing enrollments, if every child is to have the opportunity of a full-day education in an adequate classroom, a
These problems are common to all states. They are particularly severe in those states which lack the financial resources to provide a better education, regardless of their own efforts. Additional difficulties, too often overlooked, are encountered in areas of special educational need, where economic or social circumstances impose special burdens and opportunities on the public school. These areas of special educational need include our depressed areas of chronic unemployment and the slum neighborhoods of our larger cities, where underprivileged children are overcrowded into sub-standard housing. A recent survey of a very large elementary school in one of our major cities, for example, found 91% of the children coming to class with poor diets, 87% in need of dental care, 21% in need of visual correction and 19% with speech disorders. In some depressed areas roughly one-third of the children must rely on surplus foods for their basic sustenance. Older pupils in these schools lack proper recreational and job guidance. The proportion of drop-outs, delinquency and classroom disorders in such areas is alarmingly high.

I recommend to the Congress a three-year program of general Federal assistance for public elementary and secondary classroom construction and teachers' salaries.

Based essentially on the bill which passed the Senate last year (S. 8), although beginning at a more modest level of expenditures, this program would assure every state of no less than fifteen dollars for every public school student in average daily attendance, with the total amount appropriated (666 million dollars being authorized in the first year, rising to $866 million over a three-year period) distributed according to the equalization formula contained in the last year's Senate bill, and already familiar to the Congress by virtue of its similarity to the formulas contained in the Hill-Burton Hospital Construction and other acts. Ten percent of the funds allocated to each state in the first year, and an equal amount thereafter, is to be used to help meet the unique problems of each state's "areas of special educational need"--depressed areas, slum neighborhoods and others.

This is a modest program with ambitious goals. The sums involved are relatively small when we think in terms of more than thirty-six million public school children, and the billions of dollars necessary to educate them properly. Nevertheless, a limited beginning now--consistent with our
obligations in other areas of responsibility—will encourage all states to expand their facilities to meet the increasing demand and enrich the quality of education offered, and gradually assist our relatively low-income states in the elevation of their educational standards to a national level.

The bill which will follow this message has been carefully drawn to eliminate disproportionately large or small inequities, and to make the maximum use of a limited number of dollars. In accordance with the clear prohibition of the Constitution, no elementary or secondary school funds are allocated for constructing church schools or paying church school teachers' salaries; and thus non-public school children are rightfully not counted in determining the funds each state will receive for its public schools. Each state will be expected to maintain its own effort or contribution; and every state whose effort is below the national average will be expected to increase that proportion of its income which is devoted to public elementary and secondary education.

This investment will pay rich dividends in the years ahead—in increased economic growth, in enlightened citizens, in national excellence. For some forty years, the Congress has wrestled with this problem and searched for a workable solution. I believe that we now have such a solution; and that this Congress in this year will make a landmark contribution to American education.

II. CONSTRUCTION OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

Our colleges and universities represent our ultimate educational resource. In these institutions are produced the leaders and other trained persons whom we need to carry forward our highly developed civilization. If the colleges and universities fail to do their job, there is no substitute to fulfill their responsibility. The threat of opposing military and ideological forces in the world lends urgency to their task. But that task would exist in any case.

The burden of increased enrollments—imposed upon our elementary and secondary schools already in the fifties—will fall heavily upon our colleges and universities during the sixties. By the autumn of 1966, an estimated one million more students will be in attendance at institutions of higher learning than enrolled last fall—for a total enrollment more than twice as high as the total college enrollment of 1950. Our colleges, already hard-pressed to meet rising enrollments since 1950 during a period of rising costs, will be in critical straits merely to provide the necessary
facilities, much less the cost of quality education.

The country as a whole is already spending nearly one billion dollars a year on academic and residential facilities for higher education--some twenty percent of the total spent for higher education. Even with increased contributions from state, local and private sources, a gap of $2.9 billion between aggregate needs and expenditures is anticipated by 1965, and a gap of $5.2 billion by 1970.

The national interest requires an educational system on the college level sufficiently financed and equipped to provide every student with adequate physical facilities to meet his instructional, research, and residential needs.

I therefore recommend legislation which will:

(1) Extend the current College Housing Loan Program with a five year $250 million a year program designed to meet the Federal Government's appropriate share of residential housing for students and faculty. As a start, additional lending authority is necessary to speed action during fiscal 1961 on approvable loan applications already at hand.

(2) Establish a new, though similar, long-term, low-interest rate loan program for academic facilities, authorizing $300 million in loans each year for five years to assist in the construction of classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and related structures--sufficient to enable public and private higher institutions to accommodate the expanding enrollments they anticipate over the next five years; and also to assist in the renovation, rehabilitation and modernization of such facilities.

III. ASSISTANCE TO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

This nation a century or so ago established as a basic objective the provision of a good elementary and secondary school education to every child, regardless of means. In 1961, patterns of occupation, citizenship and world affairs have so changed that we must set a higher goal. We must assure ourselves that every talented young person who has the ability to pursue a program of higher education will be able to do so if he chooses, regardless of his financial means.

Today private and public scholarship and loan programs established by numerous states, private sources, and the Student Loan Program under the National Defense Education Act are making substantial contributions to the financial
needs of many who attend our colleges. But they still fall short of doing the job that must be done. An estimated one-third of our brightest high school graduates are unable to go on to college principally for financial reasons.

While I shall subsequently ask the congress to amend and expand the Student Loan and other provisions of the National Defense Education Act, it is clear that even with this program many talented but needy students are unable to assume further indebtedness in order to continue their education.

I therefore recommend the establishment of a five-year program with an initial authorization of $26,250,000 of state-administered scholarships for talented and needy young people which will supplement but not supplant those programs of financial assistance to students which are now in operation.

Funds would be allocated to the states during the first year for a total of twenty-five thousand scholarships averaging $700 each, 37,500 scholarships the second year, and 50,000 for each succeeding year thereafter. These scholarships, which would range according to need up to a maximum stipend of one thousand dollars, would be open to all young persons, without regard to sex, race, creed, or color, solely on the basis of their ability—as determined on a competitive basis—and their financial need. They would be permitted to attend the college of their choice, and free to select their own program of study. Inasmuch as tuition and fees do not normally cover the institution's actual expenses in educating the student, additional allowances to the college or university attended should accompany each scholarship to enable these institutions to accept the additional students without charging an undue increase in fees or suffering an undue financial loss.

IV. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The National Vocational Education Acts, first enacted by the Congress in 1917 and subsequently amended, have provided a program of training for industry, agriculture, and other occupational areas. The basic purpose of our vocational education effort is sound and sufficiently broad to provide a basis for meeting future needs. However, the technological changes which have occurred in all occupations call for a review and re-evaluation of these Acts, with a view toward their modernization.

To that end, I am requesting the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to convene an advisory body drawn from
the educational profession, labor-industry, and agriculture as well as the lay public, together with representation from the Departments of Agriculture and Labor, to be charged with the responsibility of reviewing and evaluating the current National Vocational Education Acts, and making recommendations for improving and redirecting the program.

CONCLUSION

These stimulatory measures represent an essential though modest contribution which the Federal Government must make to American education at every level. One-sided aid is not enough. We must give attention to both teachers' salaries and classrooms, both college academic facilities and dormitories, both scholarships and loans, both vocational and general education.

We do not undertake to meet our growing educational problems merely to compare our achievements with those of our adversaries. These measures are justified on their own merits—in times of peace as well as peril, to educate better citizens as well as better scientists and soldiers. The Federal Government's responsibility in this area has been established since the earliest days of the Republic—it is time now to act decisively to fulfill that responsibility for the sixties.

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS ON EDUCATION
FEBRUARY 6, 1962

To the Congress of the United States:

No task before our Nation is more important than expanding and improving the educational opportunities of all our people. The concept that every American deserves the opportunity to attain the highest level of education of which he is capable is not new to this Administration—it is a traditional ideal of democracy. But it is time that we moved toward the fulfillment of this ideal with more vigor and less delay.

For education is both the foundation and the unifying force of our democratic way of life—it is the mainspring of our economic and social progress—it is the highest expression of achievement in our society, ennobling and enriching human life. In short, it is at the same time the most profitable investment society can make and the richest reward it can confer.
Today, more than at any other time in our history, we need to develop our intellectual resources to the fullest. But the facts of the matter are that many thousands of our young people are not educated to their maximum capacity--and they are not, therefore, making the maximum contribution of which they are capable to themselves, their families, their communities and the Nation. Their talents lie wasted--their lives are frequently pale and blighted--and their contribution to our economy and culture are lamentably below the levels of their potential skills, knowledge and creative ability. Educational failures breed delinquency, despair and dependence. They increase the costs of unemployment and public welfare. They cut our potential national economic output by billions. They deny the benefits of our society to large segments of our people. They undermine our capability as a Nation to discharge world obligations. All this we cannot afford--better schools we can afford.

To be sure, Americans are still the best-educated and best-trained people in the world. But our educational system has failed to keep pace with the problems and needs of our complex technological society. Too many are illiterate or untrained, and thus either unemployed or underemployed. Too many receive an education diminished in quality in thousands of districts which cannot or do not support modern and adequate facilities, well-paid and well-trained teachers, or even a sufficiently long school year.

Too many--an estimated one million a year--leave school before completing high school--the bare minimum for a fair start in modern-day life. Too many high school graduates with talent--numbering in the hundreds of thousands--fail to go on to college; and forty percent of those who enter college drop out before graduation. And too few, finally, are going on to the graduate studies that modern society requires in increasing number. The total number of graduates receiving doctorate degrees has increased only about one-third in ten years; in 1960 they numbered less than ten thousand, including only three thousand in mathematics, physical sciences and engineering.

An educational system which is inadequate today will be worse tomorrow, unless we act now to improve it. We must provide facilities for fourteen million more elementary, secondary school and college students by 1970, an increase of thirty percent. College enrollments alone will nearly double, requiring approximately twice as many facilities to serve nearly seven million students by 1970. We must find the means of financing a seventy-five percent increase in the total
cost of education—another twenty billion dollars a year for expansion and improvement—particularly in facilities and instruction which must be of the highest quality if our nation is to achieve its highest goals.

THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The control and operation of education in America must remain the responsibility of State and local governments and private institutions. This tradition assures our educational system of the freedom, the diversity and the vitality necessary to serve our free society fully. But the Congress has long recognized the responsibility of the nation as a whole—that additional resources, meaningful encouragement and vigorous leadership must be added to the total effort by the Federal Government if we are to meet the task before us. For education in this country is the right—the necessity—and the responsibility—of all. Its advancement is essential to national objectives and dependent on the greater financial resources available at the national level.

Let us put to rest the unfounded fears that "Federal money means Federal control." From The Northwest Ordinance of 1787, originally conceived by Thomas Jefferson, through the Morrill Act of 1862, establishing the still-important and still-independent Land-Grant College system, to the National Defense Education Act of 1958, the Congress has repeatedly recognized its responsibility to strengthen our educational system without weakening local responsibility. Since the end of the Korean War, Federal funds for constructing and operating schools in districts affected by Federal installations have gone directly to over 5,500 districts without any sign or complaint of interference or dictation from Washington. In the last decade, over five billion dollars of Federal funds have been channeled to aid higher education without in any way undermining local administration.

While the coordination of existing Federal programs must be improved, we cannot meanwhile defer action on meeting our current pressing needs. Every year of further delay means a further loss of the opportunity for quality instruction to students who will never get that opportunity back. I therefore renew my urgent request of last year to the Congress for early action on those measures necessary to help this nation achieve the twin goals of education: a new standard of educational excellence—and the availability of such excellence to all who are willing and able to pursue it.
I. ASSISTANCE TO ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Elementary and secondary schools are the foundation of our educational system. There is little value in our efforts to broaden and improve our higher education, or increase our supply of such skills as science and engineering, without a greater effort for excellence at this basic level of education. With our mobile population and demanding needs, this is not a matter of local or State action alone--this is a national concern.

Since my Message on Education of last year, our crucial needs at this level have intensified and our deficiencies have grown more critical. We cannot afford to lose another year in mounting a national effort to eliminate the shortage of classrooms, to make teachers' salaries competitive, and to lift the quality of instruction.

Classrooms

To meet current needs and accommodate increasing enrollments--increasing by nearly one million elementary and secondary pupils a year in the 1960's--and to provide every child with the opportunity to receive a full-day education in an adequate classroom, a total of six hundred thousand classrooms must be constructed during this decade. The States report an immediate shortage today of more than 127,000 classrooms and a rate of construction which, combined with heavily increasing enrollments, is not likely to fill their needs for ten years. Already over half a million pupils are in curtailed or half-day sessions. Unless the present rate of construction is accelerated and Federal resources made available to supplement state and local resources that are already strained in many areas few families and communities in the Nation will be free from the ill effects of overcrowded or inadequate facilities in our public schools.

Teachers' Salaries

Teachers' salaries, though improving, are still not high enough to attract and retain in this demanding profession all the capable teachers we need. We entrust to our teachers our most valuable possession--our children--for a very large share of their waking hours during the most formative years of their life. We make certain that those to whom we entrust our financial assets are individuals of the highest competence and character--we dare not do less for the trustees of our children's minds.

Yet in no other sector of our national economy do we
find such a glaring discrepancy between the importance of one's work to society and the financial reward society offers. Can any able and industrious student, unless unusually motivated, be expected to elect a career that pays more poorly than almost any other craft, trade, or profession? Until this situation can be dramatically improved—unless the States and localities can be assisted and stimulated in bringing about salary levels which will make the teaching profession competitive with other professions which require the same length of training and ability—we cannot hope to succeed in our efforts to improve the quality of our children's instruction and to meet the need for more teachers.

These are problems of national proportion. Last year I sent to the Congress a proposal to meet the urgent needs of the Nation's elementary and secondary schools. A bill (S. 1021) embodying this proposal passed the Senate last year; and similar legislation (H.R. 7300) was favorably reported to the House by its Committee on Education and Labor. It offered the minimum amount required by our needs and—in terms of across-the-board aid—the maximum scope permitted by our Constitution. It is imperative that such a proposal carrying out these objectives be enacted this session. I again urge the Congress to enact legislation providing Federal aid for public elementary and secondary classroom construction and teachers' salaries.

As noted earlier, Federal aid for construction and operation of many public schools has been provided since 1950 to those local school districts in which enrollments are affected by Federal installations. Such burdens which may remain from the impact of Federal activities on local school districts will be eased by my proposal for assistance to all school districts for construction and teachers' salaries, thus permitting modification and continuation of this special assistance program as proposed in last year's bill.

A fundamental overhauling and modernization of our traditional vocational education programs is also increasingly needed. Pursuant to my Message on Education last February, a panel of consultants to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare is studying national needs in this area. They have been asked to develop recommendations by the close of this year for improving and redirecting the Federal Government's role in this program.
Improvement of Educational Quality

Strengthening financial support for education by general Federal aid will not, however, be sufficient. Specific measures directed at selected problems are also needed to improve the quality of education. And the key to educational quality is the teaching profession. About one out of every five of the nearly 1,600,000 teachers in our elementary and secondary schools fails to meet full certification standards for teaching or has not completed four years of college work. Our immediate concern should be to afford them every possible opportunity to improve their professional skills and their command of the subjects they teach.

In all of the principal areas of academic instruction—English, mathematics, physical and biological sciences, foreign languages, history, geography, and the social sciences—significant advances are being made, both in pushing back the frontiers of knowledge and in the methods of transmitting that knowledge. To keep our teachers up-to-date on such advances, special institutes are offered in some of these areas by many colleges and universities, financed in part by the National Science Foundation and the Office of Education. Many elementary and secondary school teachers would profit from a full year of full-time study in their subject-matter fields. Very few can afford to do so. Yet the benefits of such a year could be shared by outstanding teachers with others in their schools and school systems as well as with countless students. We should begin to make such opportunities available to the elementary and secondary school teachers of this country and thereby accord to this profession the support, prestige and recognition it deserves.

Another need is for higher standards of teacher education, course content and instructional methods. The colleges and universities that train our teachers need financial help to examine and further strengthen their programs. Increased research and demonstration efforts must be directed toward improving the learning and teaching of subject-matter and developing new and improved learning aids. Excellent but limited work in educational research and development has been undertaken by projects supported by the National Science Foundation, the Office of Education, and private groups. This must be increased—introducing and demonstrating to far more schools than at present up-to-date educational methods using the newest instructional materials and equipment, and providing the most effective in-service training and staff utilization.
Finally, in many urban as well as rural areas of the country, our school systems are confronted with unusually severe educational problems which require the development of new approaches—the problems of gifted children, deprived children, children with language problems, and children with problems that contribute to the high drop-out rate, to name but a few.

To help meet all of these needs for better educational quality and developments, and to provide a proper Federal role of assistance and leadership, I recommend that the Congress enact a program designed to help improve the excellence of American education by authorizing:

(1) The award each year of up to 2,500 scholarships to outstanding elementary and secondary school teachers for a year of full-time study;
(2) The establishment of institutes at colleges and universities for elementary and secondary school teachers of those subjects in which improved instruction is needed;
(3) Grants to institutions of higher education to pay part of the cost of special projects designed to strengthen teacher preparation programs through better curricula and teaching methods;
(4) Amendment of the Cooperative Research Act to permit support of extensive, multi-purpose educational research, development, demonstration, and evaluation projects; and
(5) Grants for local public school systems to conduct demonstration or experimental projects of limited duration to improve the quality of instruction or meet special educational problems in elementary and secondary schools.

II. ASSISTANCE TO HIGHER EDUCATION

In the last ten days, both Houses of Congress have recognized the importance of higher education to the fulfillment of our national and international responsibilities. Increasing student enrollments in this decade will place a still greater burden on our institutions of higher education than that imposed on our elementary and secondary schools where the cost of education per student is only a fraction as much. Between 1960 and 1970 it is expected that college enrollments will double, and that our total annual operating expenditures for expanding and improving higher education must increase two and one-half times or by nearly ten billion dollars.

In order to accommodate this increase in enrollments, the Office of Education estimates that nearly $22 billion of college
facilities will have to be built during the 1960's--three times the construction achieved in the last ten years. The extension of the college housing loan program--with a $1.5 billion loan authorization for five years, enacted as part of the Housing Act of 1961--assures Federal support for our colleges' urgent residential needs. I am hopeful that the Congress will this month complete its action on legislation to assist in the building of the even more important and urgently needed academic facilities.

But I want to take this opportunity to stress that buildings alone are not enough. In our democracy every young person should have an equal opportunity to obtain a higher education, regardless of his station in life or financial means. Yet more than 400,000 high school seniors who graduated in the upper half of their classes last June failed to enter college this fall. In this group were 200,000 who ranked in the upper thirty percent of their class, of whom one-third to one-half failed to go on to college principally because of a lack of finances. Others lack the necessary guidance, incentive or the opportunity to attend the college of their choice. But whatever the reason, each of these 400,000 students represents an irreplaceable loss to the nation.

Student loans have been helpful to many. But they offer neither incentive nor assistance to those students who, by reason of family or other obligations, are unable or unwilling to go deeper into debt. The average cost of higher education today--up nearly ninety percent since 1950 and still rising--is in excess of $1,750 per year per student, or $7,000 for a four year course. Industrious students can earn a part of this--they or their families can borrow a part of it--but one-half of all American families had incomes below $5,600 in 1960--and they cannot be expected to borrow for example, $4,000 for each talented son or daughter that deserves to go to college. Federal scholarships providing up to $1,000 a year can fill part of this gap. It is, moreover, only prudent economic and social policy for the public to share part of the costs of the long period of higher education for those whose development is essential to our national economic and social well-being. All of us share in the benefits--all should share in the costs.

I recommend that the full five year Assistance to Higher Education proposal before the Congress, including scholarships for more than 200,000 talented and needy students and cost of education payments to their colleges, be enacted without delay.
III. SPECIAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

1. Medical and Dental Education

The health needs of our Nation require a sharp expansion of medical and dental education in the United States. We do not have an adequate supply of physicians and dentists today—we are in fact importing many from abroad where they are urgently needed—and the shortage is growing more acute, as the demand for medical services mounts and our population grows. Even to maintain the present ratio of physicians and dentists to population we must graduate fifty percent more physicians and ninety percent more dentists per year by 1970, requiring not only the expansion of existing schools but the construction of at least twenty new medical schools and twenty new dental schools.

But here again more buildings are not enough. It is an unfortunate and disturbing fact that the high costs of the prolonged education necessary to enter these professions deprives many highly competent young people of an opportunity to serve in these capacities. Over forty percent of all medical students now come from the twelve percent of our families with incomes of $10,000 or more a year, while only fourteen percent of the students come from the fifty percent of the Nation's families with incomes under $5,000. This is unfair and unreasonable. A student's ability—not his parents' income—should determine whether he has the opportunity to enter medicine or dentistry.

I recommend that Congress enact the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act which I proposed last year to (a) authorize a ten-year program of matching grants for the construction of new medical and dental schools and (b) provide four-year scholarships and cost-of-education grants for one-fourth of the entering students in each medical and dental school in the United States.

2. Scientists and Engineers

Our economic, scientific and military strength increasingly requires that we have sufficient numbers of scientists and engineers to cope with the fast-changing needs of our time—and the agency with general responsibility for increasing this supply today is the National Science Foundation. At the elementary and secondary school level, I have recommended in the 1963 Budget an expansion of the Science Foundation program to develop new instructional materials and laboratory apparatus for use in a larger number of secondary schools and to include additional subjects and age groups; an expansion
of the experimental summer program permitting gifted high school students to work with university research scientists; and an expansion in the number of National Science Foundation supported institutes offering special training in science and mathematics for high school teachers throughout the country. The budget increase requested for this latter program would permit approximately 36,000 high school teachers, representing about thirty percent of the secondary school teachers of science and mathematics in this country, to participate in the program.

At the higher education level, I am recommending similar budget increases for institute programs for college teachers; improvement in the content of college science, mathematics and engineering courses; funds for laboratory demonstration apparatus; student research programs; additional top level graduate fellowships in science, mathematics and engineering; and $61.5 million in grants to our colleges and universities for basic research facilities.

3. Reduction of Adult Illiteracy

Adult education must be pursued aggressively. Over eight million American citizens aged twenty-five or above have attended school for less than five years, and more than a third of these completely lack the ability to read and write. The economic result of this lack of schooling is often chronic unemployment, dependency or delinquency, with all the consequences this entails for these individuals, their families, their communities and the Nation. The twin tragedies of illiteracy and dependency are often passed on from generation to generation.

There is no need for this. Many nations—including our own—have shown that this problem can be attacked and virtually wiped out. Unfortunately, our State school systems—overburdened in recent years by the increasing demands of growing populations and the increasing handicaps of insufficient revenues—have been unable to give adequate attention to this problem. I recommend the authorization of a five-year program of grants to institutions of higher learning and to the States, to be coordinated in the development of programs which will offer every adult who is willing and able the opportunity to become literate.

4. Education of Migrant Workers

The neglected educational needs of America's one million migrant agricultural workers and their families constitute one of the gravest reproaches to our Nation. The interstate
and seasonal movement of migrants imposes severe burdens on those school districts which have the responsibility for providing education to those who live there temporarily. I recommend authorization of a five-year Federal-State program to aid States and school districts in improving the educational opportunities of migrant workers and their children.

5. Educational Television

The use of television for educational purposes—particularly for adult education—offers great potentialities. The Federal Government has sought to further this through the reservation of 270 television channels for education by the Federal Communications Commission and through the provision of research and advisory services by the Office of Education. Unfortunately, the rate of construction of new broadcasting facilities has been discouraging. Only eighty educational TV channels have been assigned in the last decade. It is apparent that further Federal stimulus and leadership are essential if the vast educational potential of this medium is to be realized. Last year an educational television bill passed the Senate, and a similar proposal was favorably reported to the House. I urge the Congress to take prompt and final action to provide matching financial grants to the states to aid in the construction of state or other non-profit educational television stations.

6. Aid to Handicapped Children

Another long-standing national concern has been the provision of specially trained teachers to meet the educational needs of children afflicted with physical and mental disabilities. The existing program providing Federal assistance to higher education institutions and to State education agencies for training teachers and supervisory personnel for mentally retarded children was supplemented last year to provide temporarily for training teachers of the deaf. I recommend broadening the basic program to include assistance for the special training needed to help all our children afflicted with the entire range of physical and mental handicaps.

7. Federal Aid to the Arts

Our Nation has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. We are justly proud of the vitality, the creativity and the variety of the contemporary contributions our citizens can offer to the world of the arts. If we are to be among the
leaders of the world in every sense of the word this sector of our national life cannot be neglected or treated with indifference. Yet, almost alone among the governments of the world, our government has displayed little interest in fostering cultural development. Just as the Federal Government has not, should not, and will not undertake to control the subject matter taught in local schools, so its efforts should be confined to broad encouragement of the arts. While this area is too new for hasty action, the proper contributions that should and can be made to the advancement of the arts by the Federal Government—many of them outlined by the Secretary of Labor in his decision settling the Metropolitan Opera labor dispute—deserve thorough and sympathetic consideration. A bill (H.R. 4172) already reported out to the House would make this possible and I urge approval of such a measure establishing a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts to undertake these studies.

IV. CONCLUSION

The problems to which these proposals are addressed would require solution whether or not we were confronted with a massive threat to freedom. The existence of that threat lends urgency to their solution—to the accomplishment of those objectives which, in any case, would be necessary for the realization of our highest hopes and those of our children. "if a nation," wrote Thomas Jefferson in 1816, "expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." That statement is even truer today than it was 146 years ago.

The education of our people is a national investment. It yields tangible returns in economic growth, an improved citizenry and higher standards of living. But even more importantly, free men and women value education as a personal experience and opportunity—as a basic benefit of a free and democratic civilization. It is our responsibility to do whatever needs to be done to make this opportunity available to all and to make it of the highest possible quality.

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS ON EDUCATION
JANUARY 29, 1963

To the Congress of the United States:

Education is the keystone in the arch of freedom and progress. Nothing has contributed more to the enlargement of this nation's strength and opportunities than our traditional system of free, universal elementary and secondary
education, coupled with widespread availability of college education.

For the individual, the doors to the schoolhouse, to the library and to the college lead to the richest treasures of our open society: to the power of knowledge—to the training and skills necessary for productive employment—to the wisdom, the ideals, and the culture which enrich life—and to the creative, self-disciplined understanding of society needed for good citizenship in today's changing and challenging world.

For the nation, increasing the quality and availability of education is vital to both our national security and our domestic well-being. A free Nation can rise no higher than the standard of excellence set in its schools and colleges. Ignorance and illiteracy, unskilled workers and school dropouts—these and other failures of our educational system breed failures in our social and economic system: delinquency, unemployment, chronic dependence, a waste of human resources, a loss of productive power and purchasing power and an increase in tax-supported benefits. The loss of only one year's income due to unemployment is more than the total cost of twelve years of education through high school. Failure to improve educational performance is thus not only poor social policy, it is poor economics.

At the turn of the century, only ten percent of our adults had a high school or college education. Today such an education has become a requirement for an increasing number of jobs. Yet nearly forty percent of our youths are dropping out before graduating from high school; only forty-three percent of our adults have completed high school; only eight percent of our adults have completed college; and only sixteen percent of our young people are presently completing college. As my Science Advisory Committee has reported, one of our most serious manpower shortages is the lack of Ph.D.'s in engineering, science and mathematics; only about one half of one percent of our school age generation is achieving Ph.D. degrees in all fields.

This nation is committed to greater investment in economic growth; and recent research has shown that one of the most beneficial of all such investments is education, accounting for some forty percent of the nation's growth and productivity in recent years. It is an investment which yields a substantial return in the higher wages and purchasing power of trained workers, in the new products and techniques which come from skilled minds and in the constant expansion
of this nation's storehouse of useful knowledge.

In the new age of science and space, improved education is essential to give new meaning to our national purpose and power. In the last twenty years, mankind has acquired more scientific information than in all of previous history. Ninety percent of all the scientists that ever lived are alive and working today. Vast stretches of the unknown are being explored every day for military, medical, commercial and other reasons. And finally, the twisting course of the cold war requires a citizenry that understands our principles and problems. It requires skilled manpower and brainpower to match the power of totalitarian discipline. It requires a scientific effort which demonstrates the superiority of freedom. And it requires an electorate in every state with sufficiently broad horizons and sufficient maturity of judgment to guide this nation safely through whatever lies ahead.

In short, from every point of view, education is of paramount concern to the national interest as well as to each individual. Today we need a new standard of excellence in education, matched by the fullest possible access to educational opportunities, enabling each citizen to develop his talents to the maximum possible extent.

Our concern as a nation for the future of our children—and the growing demands of modern education which Federal financing is better able to assist—make it necessary to expand Federal aid to education beyond the existing limited number of special programs. We can no longer afford the luxury of endless debate over all the complicated and sensitive questions raised by each new proposal on Federal participation in education. To be sure, these are all hard problems—but this Nation has not come to its present position of leadership by avoiding hard problems. We are at a point in history when we must face and resolve these problems.

State and local governments and private institutions, responsive to individual and local circumstances, have admirably served larger national purposes as well. They have written a remarkable record of freedom of thought and independence of judgment; and they have, in recent years, devoted sharply increased resources to education. Total national outlays for education nearly trebled during the 1940's and more than doubled during the 1950's, reaching a level of nearly $25 billion in 1960. As a proportion of national income, this represented a rise from little more than four percent in 1940 to nearly six percent in 1960,
an increase of over forty percent in total effort.

But all this has not been enough. And the Federal Government—despite increasing recognition of education as a nationwide challenge, and despite the increased financial difficulties encountered by states, communities and private institutions in carrying this burden—has clearly not met its responsibilities in education. It has not offered sufficient help to our present educational system to meet its inadequacies and overcome its obstacles.

I do not say that the Federal Government should take over responsibility for education. This is neither desirable nor feasible. Instead its participation should be selective, stimulative and, where possible, transitional.

A century of experience with land-grant colleges has demonstrated that Federal financial participation can assist educational progress and growth without Federal control. In the last decade, experience with the National Science Foundation, with the National Defense Education Act, and with programs for assisting Federally affected school districts has demonstrated that Federal support can benefit education without leading to Federal control. The proper Federal role is to identify national education goals and to help local, state and private authorities build the necessary roads to reach those goals. Federal aid will enable our schools, colleges and universities to be more stable financially and therefore more independent.

These goals include the following:

--First, we must improve the quality of instruction provided in all of our schools and colleges. We must stimulate interest in learning in order to reduce the alarming number of students who now drop out of school or who do not continue into higher levels of education. This requires more and better teachers—teachers who can be attracted to and retained in schools and colleges only if pay levels reflect more adequately the value of the services they render. It also requires that our teachers and instructors be equipped with the best possible teaching materials and curricula. They must have at their command methods of instruction proven by thorough scientific research into the learning process and by careful experimentation.

--Second, our educational system faces a major problem of quantity—of coping with the needs of our expanding population and of the rising educational expectations for
our children which all of us share as parents. Nearly fifty million people were enrolled in our schools and colleges in 1962—an increase of more than fifty percent since 1950. By 1970, college enrollment will nearly double, and secondary schools will increase enrollment by fifty percent—categories in which the cost of education, including facilities, is several times higher than in elementary schools.

--Third, we must give special attention to increasing the opportunities and incentives for all Americans to develop their talents to the utmost—to complete their education and to continue their self-development throughout life. This means preventing school dropouts, improving and expanding special educational services, and providing better education in slum, distressed and rural areas where the educational attainment of students is far below par. It means increased opportunities for those students both willing and intellectually able to advance their education at the college and graduate levels. It means increased attention to vocational and technical education, which have long been underdeveloped in both effectiveness and scope, to the detriment of our workers and our technological progress.

In support of these three basic goals, I am proposing today a comprehensive, balanced program to enlarge the Federal Government's investment in the education of its citizens—a program aimed at increasing the educational opportunities of potentially every American citizen, regardless of age, race, religion, income and educational achievement.

This program has been shaped to meet our goals on the basis of three fundamental guidelines:

A. An appraisal of the entire range of educational problems, viewing educational opportunity as a continuous life-long process, starting with pre-school training and extending through elementary and secondary schools, college graduate education, vocational education, job training and retraining adult education, and such general community educational resources as the public library;

B. A selective application of Federal aid—aimed at strengthening, not weakening, the independence of existing school systems and aimed at meeting our most urgent education problems and objectives, including quality improvement; teacher training; special problems of slum, depressed, and rural areas; needy students; manpower shortage areas such as science and engineering; and shortages of educational facilities; and
C. More effective implementation of existing laws, as reflected in my recent Budget recommendations.

To enable the full range of educational needs to be considered as a whole, I am transmitting to the Congress with this Message a single, comprehensive education bill—the National Education Improvement Act of 1963. For education cannot easily or wisely be divided into separate parts. Each part is linked to the other. The colleges depend on the work of the schools; the schools depend on the colleges for teachers; vocational and technical education is not separate from general education. This bill recalls the posture of Jefferson: "Nobody can doubt my zeal for the general instruction of the people. I never have proposed a sacrifice of the primary to the ultimate grade of instruction. Let us keep our eye steadily on the whole system."

In order that its full relation to economic growth, to the new age of science, to the national security, and to human and institutional freedom may be analyzed in proper perspective, this bill should be considered as a whole, as a combination of elements designed to solve problems that have no single solution.

This is not a partisan measure—and it neither includes nor rejects all of the features which have long been sought by the various educational groups and organizations. It is instead an attempt to launch a prudent and balanced program drawing upon the efforts of many past Congresses and the proposals of many members of both Houses and both political parties. It is solely an educational program, without trying to solve all other difficult domestic problems. It is clearly realistic in terms of its cost—and it is clearly essential to the growth and security of this country.

I. THE EXPANSION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Our present American educational system was founded on the principle that opportunity for education in this country should be available to all—not merely to those who have the ability to pay. In the past, this has meant free public elementary and secondary schools in every community—thereafter, Land Grant, State and municipal Colleges, and vocational education—and more recently, job re-training and specialized teachers for students with special educational problems.

Now a veritable tidal wave of students is advancing
inexorably on our institutions of higher education, where the annual costs per student are several times as high as the cost of a high school education, and where these costs must be borne in large part by the student or his parents. Five years ago the graduating class of the secondary schools was 1.5 million; five years from now it will be 2.5 million. The future of these young people and the Nation rests in large part on their access to college and graduate education. For this country reserves its highest honors for only one kind of aristocracy—that which the Founding Fathers called "an aristocracy of achievement arising out of a democracy of opportunity."

Well over half of all parents with school-age children expect them to attend college. But only one-third do so. Some forty percent of those who enter college do not graduate, and only a small number continue into graduate and professional study. The lack of adequate aid to students plays a large part in this disturbing record.

Federal aid to college students is not new. More than three million World War II and Korean conflict veterans have received $6 billion in Federal funds since 1944 to assist them to attend college.

Additionally, the National Defense Education Act college student loan program has aided more than 300,000 students in more than 1,500 institutions who have borrowed nearly $220 million. In four years of operations, defaults have totaled only $700 while repayment rates are more than twice that required by law.

But as effective as this program has been, it has not fulfilled its original objective of assuring that "no student of ability will be denied an opportunity for higher education because of financial need." The institutional ceiling of $250,000 per year on the Federal contribution limits loan funds in at least 98 of the presently participating institutions. The annual statutory ceiling of $90 million on Federal appropriations restricts the size of the program. As a result, only about five percent of the students enrolled in participating colleges are assisted. Additionally, the forgiveness feature for teachers is rendered less attractive as well as less meaningful by excluding those who go on to teach in colleges, private schools or on overseas military posts. This proven program must be enlarged and strengthened.

Other types of assistance are needed. For students
who cannot meet the financial criteria under the NDEA loan program, a loan insurance program—drawing on techniques well established by the FHA and other Federal programs—would encourage banks and other institutions to loan more money for educational purposes.

Moreover, many students from families with limited incomes cannot and should not carry a heavy burden of debt. They must rely largely on income from employment while in college. For these students, the Federal Government should—as it did in the days of the National Youth Administration—help colleges provide additional student work opportunities of an educational nature.

A serious barrier to increased graduate study is the lack of adequate financial aid for graduate students. Only 1,500 fellowships are permitted annually under the National Defense Education Act program, upon which we are dependent for urgently needed increases in the number of college teachers and the number of graduate students pursuing other courses essential to the Nation's advancement and security. The National Science Foundation has broad authority for fellowships and training grants, but its program, too, has been restricted by limited appropriations. The President's Science Advisory Committee has predicted that the dramatically increasing demand for engineers, mathematicians, and physical scientists, will require that the output of Ph.D.'s in these fields alone be increased two and one-half times, to a total of 7,500 annually by 1970, and that the number of Masters degrees awarded annually be substantially increased. In all fields the need exceeds the supply of doctoral recipients. The shortage is particularly acute in college teaching, where at present rates the Nation will lack 90,000 doctoral degree holders by 1970. It is clearly contrary to the national interest to have the number of graduate students limited by the financial ability of those able and interested in pursuing advanced degrees. Fellowship programs can ease much of the financial burden and, most importantly, encourage and stimulate a fuller realization and utilization of our human resources.

The welfare and security of the Nation require that we increase our investment in financial assistance for college students both at undergraduate and graduate levels. In keeping with present needs and our traditions of maximum self-help, I recommend that the Congress enact legislation to:

1. Extend the National Defense Education Act student loan program, liberalize the repayment forgiveness for
teachers, raise the ceiling on total appropriations and eliminate the limitation on amounts available to individual institutions.

2. Authorize a supplementary new program of Federal insurance for commercial loans made by banks and other institutions to college students for educational purposes.

3. Establish a new work-study program for needy college students unable to carry too heavy a loan burden, providing up to half the pay for students employed by the colleges in work of an educational character—as, for example, laboratory, library, or research assistants.

4. Increase the number of National Defense Education Act fellowships to be awarded by the Office of Education from 1,500 to 12,000, including summer session awards.

5. Authorize a thorough survey and evaluation of the need for scholarships or additional financial assistance to undergraduate students so that any further action needed in this area can be considered by the next Congress.

6. In addition, as part of this program to increase financial assistance to students, the 1964 budget recommendations for the National Science Foundation, which are already before the Congress, include a proposed increase of $35 million to expand the number of fellowships and new teaching grants for graduate study from 2,800 in 1963 to 8,700 in fiscal 1964.

II. EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Aid to college students will be to no avail if there are insufficient college classrooms. The long-predicted crisis in higher education facilities is now at hand. For the next fifteen years, even without additional student aid, enrollment increases in colleges will average 340,000 each year. If we are to accommodate the projected enrollment of more than seven million college students by 1970—a doubling during the decade—$23 billion of new facilities will be needed, more than three times the quantity built during the preceding decade. This means that, unless we are to deny higher education opportunities to our youth, American colleges and universities must expand their academic facilities at a rate much faster than their present resources will permit.

In many colleges, students with adequate modern dormitories and living quarters—thanks to the College Housing Act—are crammed in outmoded, overcrowded classrooms,
laboratories, and libraries. Even now it is too late to provide these facilities to meet the sharp increases in college enrollment expected during the next two years. Further delay will aggravate an already critical situation.

I recommend, therefore, the prompt enactment of a program to provide loans to public and non-profit private institutions of higher education for construction of urgently needed academic facilities.

The opportunity for a college education is severely limited for hundreds of thousands of young people because there is no college in their own community. Studies indicate that the likelihood of going to college on the part of a high school graduate who lives within 20-25 miles of a college is fifty percent greater than it is for the student who lives beyond commuting distance. This absence of college facilities in many communities causes an unfortunate waste of some of our most promising youthful talent. A demonstrated method of meeting this particular problem effectively is the creation of two-year community colleges—a program that should be undertaken without delay and which will require Federal assistance for the construction of adequate facilities.

I recommend, therefore, a program of grants to States for construction of public community junior colleges.

There is an especially urgent need for college level training of technicians to assist scientists, engineers, and doctors. Although ideally one scientist or engineer should have the backing of two or three technicians, our institutions today are not producing even one technician for each three science and engineering graduates. This shortage results in an inefficient use of professional manpower—the occupation of critically needed time and talent to perform tasks which could be performed by others—an extravagance which cannot be tolerated when the nation's demand for scientists, engineers, and doctors continues to grow. Failure to give attention to this matter will impede the objectives of the graduate and post-graduate training programs mentioned below.

I recommend, therefore, a program of grants to aid public and private non-profit institutions in the training of scientific, engineering and medical technicians in a two-year college-level program, covering up to fifty percent of the cost of constructing and equipping as well as operating the necessary academic facilities.
Special urgency exists for expanding the capacity for the graduate training of engineers, scientists and mathematicians. The President's Science Advisory Committee has recently reported that an unprecedented acceleration in the production of advanced degrees is immediately necessary to increase our national capability in these fields. Added facilities, larger faculties, and new institutions are needed. I have recommended, therefore, in the proposed 1964 budget already before the Congress, a strengthening of the National Science Foundation matching grant program for graduate and undergraduate science facilities.

Because today's trend in colleges and universities is toward less lecturing and more independent study, the college and university library becomes even more essential in the life of our students. Today, as reported by the American Library Association, nearly all college libraries are urgently in need of additional books, periodicals, scientific reports and similar materials to accommodate the growing number of students and faculty. Additionally, they need buildings, equipment and publications to serve their academic communities, whether public or private.

I recommend the authorization of Federal grants to institutions of higher education for library materials and construction, on a broad geographic basis, with priority to those most urgently requiring expansion and improvement.

Expansion of high quality graduate education and research in all fields is essential to national security and economic growth. Means of increasing our supply of highly trained professional personnel to match the rapidly growing demands of teaching, industry, government, and research warrants our interest and support.

We need many more graduate centers, and they should be better distributed geographically. Three quarters of all doctoral degrees are granted by a handful of universities located in twelve states. The remaining states with half our population produce only one fourth of the Ph.D.'s.

New industries increasingly gravitate to or are innovated by strong centers of learning and research. The distressed area of the future may well be one which lacks centers of advanced learning, especially in parts of the nation now lacking them.
I recommend the enactment of a Federal grant program administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for the development and expansion of new graduate centers. I also urge appropriation of the increased funds requested in my 1964 budget for expansion of the National Science Foundation program of science development grants, which will also continue to strengthen graduate education.

Our experience under the National Defense Education Act with respect to modern language and area centers has demonstrated that Federal aid can spur development of intellectual talent. They deserve our continuing support, with assurance that resources will be available for orderly expansion in keeping with availability of teaching talent.

I recommend that the current Modern Foreign Language program aiding public and private institutions of higher learning be extended and expanded.

III. IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

A basic source of knowledge is research. Industry has long realized this truth. Health and agriculture have established the worth of systematic research and development. But research in education has been astonishingly meager and frequently ignored. A fraction of one percent of this Nation's total expenditures for education is now devoted to such research. It is appalling that so little is known about the level of performance, comparative value of alternative investments and specialized problems of our educational system--and that it lags behind, sometimes by as much as twenty or even fifty years, in utilizing the results of research and keeping abreast of man's knowledge in all fields, including education itself.

Highest priority must be given to strengthening our educational research efforts, including a substantial expansion of the course content improvement programs which the Government has supported, particularly through the National Science Foundation. Two interrelated actions are necessary:

1. I have recommended appropriations in the 1964 budget for substantially expanding the National Science Foundation science and mathematics course materials program and the Office of Education educational research program.

2. I recommend legislation to broaden the Cooperative
Research Act to authorize support of centers for multipurpose educational research, and for development and demonstration programs; and to broaden the types of educational agencies eligible to conduct research.

The second step to improvement of educational quality is teacher training. The quality of education is determined primarily by the quality of the teacher. Yet one out of every five teachers in the United States has either not been certified by his State as qualified to teach or failed to complete four years of college study. In the field of English, between forty and sixty percent of the secondary school teachers lack even the minimum requirement of a college major in that subject. Thus it is not surprising that, largely because of unsatisfactory elementary and secondary school instruction, our colleges and universities are now required to spend over $10 million annually on remedial English courses.

The lack of teacher quality and preparation in other fields is equally disturbing. More than two-thirds of our 1.6 million teachers completed their degree work more than five years ago. Yet, within the past five years, major advances have been made—not only in the physical, biological, engineering and mathematical sciences, but also in specialized branches of the social sciences, the arts and humanities, and in the art of teaching itself.

In addition, we lack sufficient trained teachers for six million handicapped children and youth, including 1.5 million mentally retarded and another 1.5 million with very serious social and emotional problems. Only through special classes, taught by specially trained teachers, can these children prepare for rehabilitation, employment and community participation. Yet less than one-fourth of these children now have access to the special education they require, primarily because of the lack of qualified special teachers, college instructors, research personnel, and supervisors. It is estimated that 75,000 special teachers—55,000 more than presently available—are needed for the mentally retarded alone.

The teacher training support programs of the National Science Foundation and the Office of Education have demonstrated their value.

I recommend, therefore:
--That the National Science Foundation program for training institutes for teachers in the natural sciences, mathematics, engineering and social sciences be expanded to provide for upgrading the knowledge and skills of 46,000 teachers, as provided in my 1964 budget recommendations; --that new legislation be enacted to (a) broaden authority for teacher institutes financed by the Office of Education, now restricted to school guidance counselors and language teachers, to other academic fields; (b) authorize a program of project grants to help colleges and universities improve their teacher preparation programs by upgrading academic courses and staff, by encouraging the selection and retention of their most talented prospective teachers, and by attracting and training teachers from new sources such as retired military personnel or women whose family responsibilities permit them to teach; and (c) authorize training grants through colleges and universities for teachers and other education personnel requiring specialized training, with particular emphasis on the training of teachers of the mentally retarded and other handicapped children, teachers of gifted or culturally deprived children, teachers of adult literacy, librarians, and educational researchers.

IV. STRENGTHENING PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Improved research and teacher training are not enough, if good teachers do not choose to teach. Yet present salary schedules in some cases are too low at the start to compete against other positions available to college graduates. In almost all cases, they are too low at the top to retain our ablest young teachers. Without sufficient incentive to make teaching a lifetime career, teachers with valuable training and experience but heavy family responsibilities too often become frustrated and drop out of the profession. Their children may never try to enter. Although teachers' salaries have generally improved in the nation in recent years, there are still districts which have starting salaries below $3,000.

Good teachers, moreover, need good schools. Last year, over 1,500,000 children were in overcrowded classrooms and an estimated two million others were studying amid grossly substandard health and safety conditions. In many areas school dropouts, or the education of the economically disadvantaged, the culturally deprived, the physically or mentally handicapped, and the gifted require specially designed programs which simply are not available.

I am not the first, but I hope to be the last, President to be compelled to call these needless shortcomings to the
nation's attention. These are national problems crossing State boundaries, and deserving of national attention. In our mobile population—where every year one out of five families moves, sometimes across the street, but often across State lines—every family has reason to make teaching in every State a more rewarding and productive profession, and to help every state strengthen its public elementary and secondary education, particularly in those school districts that are financially unable to keep up.

Yet let us face the fact that the Federal Government cannot provide all the financial assistance needed to solve all of the problems mentioned. Instead of a general aid approach that could at best create a small wave in a huge ocean, our efforts should be selective and stimulative, encouraging the States to redouble their efforts under a plan that would phase out Federal aid over a four year period.

I recommend, therefore, a four-year program to provide $1.5 billion to assist States in undertaking under their own State plans selective and urgent improvements in public elementary and secondary education including: (1) increasing starting and maximum teacher salaries, and increasing average teacher salaries in economically disadvantaged areas; (2) constructing classrooms in areas of critical and dangerous shortage; and (3) initiating pilot, experimental, or demonstration projects to meet special educational problems, particularly in slums and depressed rural and urban areas.

I also recommend extension of the National Defense Education Act programs which contribute to improving the quality of elementary and secondary education. Grants for testing, guidance, and counseling programs should be expanded and continued beyond the 1964 expiration date. This program has great relevance for the detection of incipient problems which inhibit learning and for development of the talents of our youth. NDEA assistance for science, mathematics and foreign language laboratory equipment—which is essential for adequate educational programs using newly developed teaching methods—should also be continued beyond 1964.

Finally, in regard to elementary and secondary schools, I recommend a four-year continuation of those portions of the federally affected area laws which expire June 30, 1963. These statutes now assist some 4,000 school districts located in every State, which together enroll one-third of all public elementary and secondary school pupils in the Nation. Almost
60,000 critically needed classrooms have been constructed at a cost of $1.15 billion to house more than 1,700,000 pupils; and school operating budgets have been supplemented by more than $1.7 billion. For fiscal 1964 the present provisions would be extended. Limited modifications of the existing provisions, which would take effect beginning in 1965, would overcome certain inequities demonstrated by past experience. Also, the District of Columbia should be added to the jurisdictions eligible to participate.

V. VOCATIONAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Since the war-time Administration of President Woodrow Wilson, Congress has recognized the national necessity of widespread vocational education. Although revised and extended frequently since 1917, the national vocational education acts are no longer adequate. Many once-familiar occupations have declined or disappeared and wholly new industries and jobs have emerged from economic growth and change. The complexities of modern science and technology require training at a higher level than ever before.

For this reason, two years ago I requested the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to convene an expert and representative committee to review and evaluate the present vocational education laws and to make recommendations for their modernization. The report of that Committee, shows the need for providing new training opportunities—in occupations which have relevance to contemporary America—to twenty-one million youth now in grade school who will enter the labor market without a college degree during the 1960's. These youth—representing more than eighty percent of the population between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one—will be entering the labor market at a time when the need for unskilled labor is sharply diminishing. It is equally necessary to provide training or retraining for the millions of workers who need to learn new skills or whose skills and technical knowledge must be updated.

Both budgetary action and enactment of new legislation is called for. In my 1964 budget I have recommended funds which would permit doubling the number of workers to be trained by the Manpower Development and Training Act programs. These programs have, in their brief existence, already enrolled more than 18,000 men, women, and out-of-school youth who are being trained in occupations where jobs are available.
In addition, I recommend legislation to:

(a) Expand the scope and level of vocational education programs supported through the Office of Education by replacing the Vocational Education Act of 1946 with new grant-in-aid legislation aimed at meeting the needs of individuals in all age groups for vocational training in occupations where they can find employment in today's diverse labor markets, and

(b) Provide employment and training opportunities for unemployed youth in conservation and local public service projects. The details of this latter proposal are contained in a separate bill--The Youth Employment Opportunities Act--and will be discussed in a later message to be sent to the Congress.

VI. CONTINUING EDUCATION

Education need not and should not end upon graduation at any level. An increasing number of Americans recognize the need and the value of continuing education. The accountant, the salesman, the merchant, the skilled and semi-skilled worker, all interested in self-improvement, should all be afforded the opportunity of securing up-to-date knowledge and skills. Only one American in eight has even taken as much as one college course. Yet the State universities and land-grant colleges which offer the majority of extension or part-time courses enroll less than a half million people. Due to inadequate finances and facilities, these colleges can offer only a very limited adult education program.

I recommend legislation authorizing Federal grants to States for expanding university extension courses in land-grant colleges and State universities. Despite our high level of educational opportunity and attainment, nearly twenty-three million adult Americans lack an eighth grade education. They represent a staggering economic and cultural loss to their families and the Nation. I recommend again, as part of this comprehensive bill, a program to assist all States in offering literacy and basic education courses to adults.

The public library is also an important resource for continuing education. But eighteen million more have only inadequate service.

Advanced age, lack of space, and lack of modern equipment characterize American public library buildings in 1963.
Their rate of replacement is barely noticeable: two percent in a decade. There are now no Carnegie funds available for libraries—nor have there been for forty years.

The public library building is usually one of the oldest governmental structures in use in any community. In one prosperous midwestern State, for example, thirty percent of all public library buildings were built before the year 1910, and eighty-five percent were erected before 1920. Many other States are in a similar situation.

I recommend enactment of legislation to amend the Library Services Act by authorizing a three-year program of grants for urban as well as rural libraries and for construction as well as operation.

VII. CONCLUSION

In all the years of our national life, the American people—in partnership with their governments—have continued to insist that "the means of education shall forever be encouraged," as the Continental Congress affirmed in the Northwest Ordinance. Fundamentally, education is and must always be a local responsibility, for it thrives best when nurtured at the grassroots of our democracy. But in our present era of economic expansion, population growth and technological advance, State, local, and private efforts are insufficient. These efforts must be reinforced by national support, if American education is to yield a maximum of individual development and national well-being.

The necessity of this program does not rest on the course of the cold war. Improvement in education is essential to our nation's development without respect to what others are doing. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile noting that the Soviet Union recognizes that educational effort in the 1960's will have a major effect on a nation's power, progress and status in the 1970's and 1980's. According to a recent report prepared for the National Science Foundation, Soviet institutions of higher education are graduating three times as many engineers and four times as many physicians as the United States. While trailing behind this country in aggregate annual numbers of higher education graduates, the Soviets are maintaining an annual flow of scientific and technical professional manpower more than twice as large as our own. At the same time, they have virtually eliminated illiteracy, with a twenty-three-fold increase since the turn of the century in the proportion of persons with an education
beyond the seventh grade. This nation's devotion to education is surely sufficient to excel the achievements of any other nation or system.

The program here proposed is reasonable and yet far-reaching. It offers Federal assistance without Federal control. It provides for economic growth, manpower development and progress toward our educational and humanitarian objectives. It encourages the increase of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and critical intelligence necessary for the preservation of our society. It will help keep America strong and safe and free. I strongly recommend it to the Congress for high priority action.

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS ON CIVIL RIGHTS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES
JUNE 19, 1963

(Only the section of the President's message pertaining to education will follow.)

II. DESEGREGATION OF SCHOOLS

In my message of February 28 [1963], while commending the progress already made in achieving desegregation of education at all levels as required by the Constitution, I was compelled to point out the slowness of progress toward primary and secondary school desegregation. The Supreme Court has recently voiced the same opinion. Many Negro children entering segregated grade schools at the time of the Supreme Court decision in 1954 will enter segregated high schools this year, having suffered a loss which can never be regained. Indeed, discrimination in education is one basic cause of the other inequities and hardships inflicted upon our Negro citizens. The lack of equal educational opportunity deprives the individual of equal economic opportunity, restricts his contribution as a citizen and community leader, encourages him to drop out of school and imposes a heavy burden on the effort to eliminate discrimination practices and prejudices from our national life.

The Federal courts, pursuant to the 1954 decision of the United States Supreme Court and earlier decisions on institutions of higher learning, have shown both competence and courage in directing the desegregation of schools on the local level. It is appropriate to keep this responsibility largely within the judicial arena. But it is unfair and
unrealistic to expect that the burden of initiating such cases can be wholly borne by private litigants. Too often those entitled to bring suit on behalf of their children lack the economic means for instituting and maintaining such cases or the ability to withstand the personal, physical and economic harassment which sometimes descends upon those who do institute them. The same is true of students wishing to attend the college of their choice but are unable to assume the burden of litigation.

These difficulties are among the principal reasons for the delay in carrying out the 1954 decision; and this delay cannot be justified to those who have been hurt as a result. Rights such as these, as the Supreme Court recently said, are "present rights. They are not merely hopes to some future enjoyment of some formalistic constitutional promise. The basic guarantees of our Constitution are warrants for the here and now...."

In order to achieve a more orderly and consistent compliance with the Supreme Court's school and college desegregation decisions, therefore, I recommend that the Congress assert its specific Constitutional authority to implement the 14th Amendment by including in the Civil Rights Act of 1963 a new title providing the following:

(A) Authority would be given the Attorney General to initiate in the Federal District Courts appropriate legal proceedings against local public school boards or public institutions of higher learning—or to intervene in existing cases—whenever

(1) he has received a written complaint from students or from the parents of students who are being denied equal protection of the laws by a segregated public school or college; and

(2) he certifies that such persons are unable to undertake or otherwise arrange for the initiation and maintenance of such legal proceedings for lack of financial means or effective legal representation or for fear of economic or other injury; and

(3) he determines that his initiation of or intervention in such suit will materially further the orderly progress of desegregation in public education. For this purpose, the Attorney General would establish criteria to determine the priority and relative need for Federal action in those districts from which complaints have been filed.
(B) As previously recommended, technical and financial assistance would be given to those school districts in all parts of the country which, voluntarily or as the result of litigation, are engaged in the process of meeting the educational problems flowing from desegregation or racial imbalance but which are in need of guidance, experienced help or financial assistance in order to train their personnel for this changeover, cope with new difficulties and complete the job satisfactorily (including in such assistance loans to a district where State or local funds have been withdrawn or withheld because of desegregation.)

Public institutions already operating without racial discrimination, of course, will not be affected by this statute. Local action can always make Federal action unnecessary. Many school boards have peacefully and voluntarily in recent years. And while this act does not include private colleges and schools, I strongly urge them to live up to their responsibilities and to recognize no arbitrary bar of race or color--for such bars have no place in any institution, least of all one devoted to the truth and to the improvement of all mankind.
The thesis submitted by Cheryl M. Nuzbach has been read and approved by the following Committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Date 5/14/76
Director's Signature