ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE WHITE HOUSE

OCTOBER 4, 1944

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There are many things which we have learned in this war. Among the most important are those which we have learned through our Selective Service System about the health and education of the youth of our nation. We have found that among those examined for selective service 4½% can be classed as illiterate; and that 40% of all registrants for selective service have not gone beyond an elementary school education.

That is why this Conference on Rural Education assumes such great importance in our planning for the future. For while we plan for the welfare of our returning veterans first, and for the continued prosperity of our war workers, we must also lay plans for the peacetime establishment of our educational system on a better basis than we have ever known before.

Those should be the goals of this Conference on Rural Education.

Rural teaching, country teaching, the teaching given in the small schools at the farm cross-roads and in the little villages and towns has played a greater part in American history than any other kind of education.

The American form of government was conceived and created by men most of whom had been taught in country schools.

Country schools prepared Americans for the task of mastering this continent.

Country schools trained a great proportion of the boys who fought the early American wars.

Country schools trained millions of those who are fighting this greatest of American wars today. They will play their tremendous part in the creation of the American future to which the citizens of this country are committed in their hearts and souls.

It is for all of us Americans to see that the building of that future does not lag because the country schools are without the means to carry on their essential work.

The full attendance at this Conference and the agenda which it has before it indicate the special attention which must be given to the problems of the education of that half of our children and youth who live on the farms and in the villages. So far as school opportunities are concerned, these children have always been, and still are, the least privileged in the nation. We are justifiably proud of the splendid, modern schools in our cities and towns. We cannot be proud of the fact that many of our rural schools, particularly during these years of war, have been sadly neglected.

Within one school year after Pearl Harbor, several thousand rural schools had been closed because teachers could not be found for them. One of the leading farm papers recently reported that in one agricultural state of the midwest, nearly a third of the teachers in one-room schools are now persons holding only emergency licenses to teach, and nearly 300 schools face this coming school year without a teacher.

The basic reason for this situation is simple. We all know what it is. It is not patriotism alone that has taken teachers out of the classrooms. Most of them simply cannot afford to teach in rural schools.

The present average salary is less than $1000 a year and some salaries go as low as $300. That is just too small by any decent standard. Only the self-sacrificing devotion of teachers who put their duty to their schools before their consideration of themselves permits the children of many American school districts to get the education to which all Americans are entitled.

Frankly, the chief problem of rural education is the problem of dollars and cents. You and I know that. We know also that in very many cases the problem cannot be solved by increasing the local taxes because the taxable values are just not there.

I have pointed out before that the gap between educational standards in the richer communities and those in the poorer communities is far greater today than it was 100 years ago.

We must find the means of closing that gap -- by raising the standards in the poorer communities.

I believe that the federal government should render financial aid where it is needed, and only where it is needed -- in communities where farming does not pay, where land values have depreciated through erosion or through flood or drought, where industries have moved away, where transport facilities are inadequate or where electricity is unavailable for power and light.

Such government financial aid should never involve government interference with state and local administration and control. It must purely and simply provide the guarantee that this country is great enough to give to all of its children the right to a free education.

Closely related to this whole problem is the question of the health of our young people.

Here again we cannot boast of our part in this war without a feeling of guilt -- for about 40% of all men who were examined had to be rejected for military service for physical or mental reasons.

We cannot be satisfied with the state of this nation if a large percentage of our children are not being given the opportunity to achieve good education and good health.

I believe that our educators -- those who are close to our children -- should consider these two problems together. I believe that from such conferences as this one we may produce constructive plans looking toward substantial improvement in our American standard of living. And that means better production, better clothes, better food, better housing, more recreation, more enjoyment of life. These things do not come from wishful thinking -- they come from hard work and realistic thinking by those who are sincerely devoted to the solution of these problems.

We do not pretend that we can reach our goals overnight but if we seek them day in and day out, we may in our own lives take our rural educational system out of what was called, once upon a time, the horse and buggy age.

Your Conference this year has met at a time when the forces of evil have their backs to the wall -- at a time when all the civilized world is more than ever determined that such wars cannot, will not, happen again.

Nothing can provide a stronger bulwark in this determination in the years to come than an educated, enlightened and tolerant citizenry, equipped with the armed force necessary to stop aggression and warfare.

To you of this Conference, and to all similar groups devoted to the cause of a better America, the nation will look for advice and guidance as, in democratic fashion, it works out its design for the future.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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Big reading copy

10/30/44
DIST. 4:50 P.M.
MISS ALLISON, SECY
TO MISS CHARL WILLIAMS

STATEMENTS FILE

HOLD FOR RELEASE HOLD FOR RELEASE HOLD FOR RELEASE

October 4, 1944

CAUTION: The following remarks of the President, to be delivered at the White House before the Conference of Rural Education, MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE until released.

NOTE: Release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 4:30 P.M., E.W.T., October 4, 1944. The same release applies to radio announcers and news commentators.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

Ladies and gentlemen, I feel like a fish out of water. I haven't thought of education for three years, that is to say, education in the country. I have thought about education in some other countries. And yet all the while, I am talking to you I have been thinking about the things that have happened, for instance, because of the war, because of the things that we have learned in this war. Among the most important are those which we have learned through our Selective Service System about the health and education of the youth of our nation. ~~We have found that among those examined for selective service 4½% can be classed as illiterate, and that 40% of all registrants for selective service have not gone beyond an elementary school education.~~

For example, planning for that fact

That is why this Conference on Rural Education, ~~assumes~~ has such great importance in our planning for the future. For while we plan for the welfare of our returning veterans first, and for the continued prosperity of our war workers, we must also lay plans for the peacetime establishment of our educational system on a better basis than we have ever known before.

as shown

and I think rightly, I—it seems to me I should say

Those should be the goals of this Conference on Rural Education.

For Rural teaching, country teaching, the teaching given in the small schools at the farm cross-roads and in the little villages and towns has played a greater part in American history than any other kind of education. From what I have said, you will see that I am a country boy—to.

The American form of government was conceived and created by men most of whom had been taught in country schools.

Country schools prepared Americans as a whole for the task of mastering this continent.

Country schools trained a great proportion of the boys who fought the early American wars.

The Country schools trained millions of those who are fighting this greatest of American wars today. And they will play their part—a tremendous part in the creation of the American future to which the citizens of this country are committed in their hearts and souls. Much more unanimously, I might add, than the newspapers of these weeks in the war would lead us to believe.

It is for all of us, I think, to see that the building of that future does not lag because the country schools are without the means to carry on their essential work even more greatly than they have in the past.

But the longer I live, I think that there is another part of education called health; and it hasn't been a very nice story. It has been far worse than people in this country as a whole realize. And that is why whenever I know that some day—and we have passed the peak—someday we are going to come back to the ways of peace. Therefore it is an excellent thing that those days of long ago that we used to call peacetime days, because we are going to have peace, some day, which means a majority of the human beings in this country,

supported the war effort wholeheartedly, but that was rather a manual problem than an intellectual one. And I have seen a lot of young people -- boys and girls -- coming into the service of their Government during the war and some of them have been educated, and some of them are not. And that is what I want to talk to you a little bit about today.

The full attendance at this Conference, and the agenda which it has before it indicate the special attention which must be given to the problems of the education of that half of our children and youth who live on the farms and in the villages. So far as school opportunities are concerned, these children have always been, and still are, the least privileged in the nation. We are justifiably proud of the splendid, modern schools in our cities and towns. We cannot be proud of the fact that many of our rural schools, particularly during these years of war, have been sadly neglected.

Within one school year after Pearl Harbor, several thousand rural schools had been closed because teachers could not be found for them. One of the leading farm papers recently reported that in one agricultural state of the midwest, nearly a third of the teachers in one-room schools are now persons holding only emergency licenses to teach, and nearly 800 schools face this coming school year without a teacher. That fact ought to be brought home to the American people.

The basic reason for this situation is simple. We all know what it is. It is not patriotism alone that has taken teachers out of the classrooms. Most of them simply cannot afford to teach in rural schools.

INSERT A

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Closely related to this whole problem is the question of the health of our young people. Here again we cannot boast of our part in this war without a feeling of guilt -- for about 40% of all men who were examined had to be rejected for military service for physical or mental reasons. And we ought to hang our heads in shame at that statement.

And we who are interested in education can bring the problem, I think, much more closely and with perhaps a greater sympathy, to all the homes of the country, if we can tie in health with education.

this

I think.

in this country -- less than

in any part of the country.

Something that we must accomplish soon enough.

But I think we have not done nearly enough in this connection.

just the

the

that ought to be stressed morning, noon and night.

I think I have said this since you and I have got to turn the course of that trend.

federal government of course

that said when I started goes hand in hand with it --

big enough and as a whole rich enough and

under the Selective Service -- about 40% of them

I don't mean federal aid in the town of Hyde Park in Dutchess County. We have got taxable values and we can handle our own schools. I live there part of the time. But we do need federal aid down in Georgia, where I live also a part of the time. I am sure there they have not got the taxable values. Only where it is needed.

of the land — health — right to — as well as

We cannot be satisfied with the state of this nation if a large percentage of our children are not being given the opportunity to achieve good education and good health, education.

I believe that our educators -- those who are close to our children -- should consider these two problems together. I believe that from such conferences as this one, we may produce constructive plans looking toward substantial improvement in our American standard of living. And that means better production, better clothes, better food, better housing, more recreation, more enjoyment of life. These things do not come from wishful thinking -- they come from hard work, and realistic thinking by those who are sincerely devoted to the solution of these problems.

We do not pretend that we can reach our goals overnight but if we seek them day in and day out, we may in our own lives -- while we are still alive -- take our rural educational system out of what was called, once upon a time, the horse and buggy age. (laughter)

Your Conference this year has met at a time when the forces of evil have their backs to the wall -- at a time when all the civilized world is more than ever determined that such wars cannot, will not, happen again.

Nothing can provide a stronger bulwark in this determination in the years to come than an educated, enlightened and tolerant citizenry, equipped with the armed force necessary to stop aggression and warfare in this world.

PS, To you of this Conference, and to all similar groups devoted to the cause of a better America, the nation will look for advice and guidance as, in democratic fashion, it works out the designs of for the future.

Thank you. (applause)

P We can put it this way, if we want -- if you care about education, what's the use of giving them an education without their having the good health to use it when they grow up?

in education as a part of our standard of living, as well as school-lunch and supper.

in the big places and the small places

P I am sorry I can't stay and listen and learn, but you have got me right in the middle of what they call a staff conference with the Army and Navy of the United States; and I have got to get back to it, because all sorts of people with four stars on their shoulders are waiting for me. (laughter & applause)

INSERT A

And I always remember, a great many years ago, when I was down in Georgia, the first year I was there, sitting on the porch, and a young man came up twiddling his cap, and he said, "Mr. Roosevelt, [redacted] may I speak to you?" And I said, "Yes, come up." And he said, "Mr. Roosevelt, we are having commencement in our school -- mentioning a little village a few miles away -- and I would like to have you come over and present the diplomas next Wednesday." And I said, "I would be very glad to do it. What are you? Are you the -- the president of the graduating class?" And he said, "No, sir. I am -- I am the principal of the school." (laughter) And I said, "How old are you?" He said "I am nineteen, sir." I said, "Have you been to college?" "Oh, Yes, sir. I have had one year at the University of Georgia. I am taking this year out for enough money to go back for a second year at the University." And I said, "How much are you getting as principal?" "Oh," he said, "I am getting four hundred dollars a year." And that boy had 250 pupils under him.

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HOLD FOR RELEASE HOLD FOR RELEASE HOLD FOR RELEASE

Oct 4
~~MAY 19~~, 1944

CAUTION: The following remarks of the President, to be delivered ~~in his Office~~ at the White House before the Conference of ~~the International Labor Organization~~ MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE until released.

Rural Education,

NOTE: Release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN ~~12:15 noon~~, E.W.T., ~~May 19~~, 1944. 4:30 P.M. Oct 4
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STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

MISS PERKINS, MR. GOODRICH, MR. PHELAN, DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE:

It is a great pleasure to have you with us here in the White House again. As I pointed out to you when we last met — two and a half years ago — taking part in a conference of the International Labor Organization is not a new experience for me. I take pride in the fact that I was permitted to play a part in the first conference of the Organization that was held here in Washington in 1919.

Those were indeed trying days when last we met in 1941. The fate of the free peoples of the entire world hung in the balance. Yet with the courage and foresight that have always characterized the International Labor Organization, you as representatives of governments, workers and employers had the boldness to come together from all parts of the world to formulate plans for reconstruction.

You have been meeting in Philadelphia where, one hundred sixty-eight years ago, the Fathers of this Republic affirmed certain truths to be self-evident. They declared that among other things all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among them Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. In these words are expressed the abiding purpose of all peoples imbued with the ideals of freedom and democracy.

The Declaration which you have formulated in Philadelphia may well acquire a similar significance. In it you have reaffirmed principles which are the essential bulwarks of any permanent peace. With the expanding use of machinery and the revolution in transportation, it is well that the world should recognize the fundamental principle of your Declaration: "Poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere". This principle is a guide to all of our international economic deliberations.

You have affirmed the right of all human beings to material well-being and spiritual development under conditions of freedom and dignity and under conditions of economic security and opportunity. The attainment of those conditions must constitute a central aim of national and international policy. Indeed, the worthiness and success of international policies will be measured in the future by the extent to which they promote the achievement of this end.

Your Declaration sums up the aspirations of an epoch which has known two world wars. I confidently believe that future generations will look back upon it as a landmark in world thinking. I am glad to have this opportunity of indorsing its specific terms on behalf of the United States. I trust, also, that within a short time its specific terms will be whole-heartedly indorsed by all of the United Nations.

As I look over the report of your work, I see that you have, for the first time in history, set out in a form which could be adopted as a treaty by the nations, a particular series of social objectives. I note that among other things they include full employment, wages and working conditions calculated to insure a just share of the fruits of progress to all, the extension of social security, the recognition of the right of collective bargaining, provision for child welfare and the assurance of adequate educational and vocational opportunities. It will be your responsibility to promote these objectives through your own organization and through such international agencies as may be created.

With great wisdom you have realized that these social objectives cannot be attained and supported without a high level of useful economic activity. You have recommended a series of economic policies and undertakings designed to bring about a material economy which will make it possible to maintain them.

You have also wisely provided for the further development and reorganization of the International Labor Organization itself so that it may be broadened and strengthened for carrying out these social objectives, and at the same time integrated on a cooperative basis with whatever new international agency or agencies are created by the United Nations. This forms an admirable pattern for formulating certain aspects of the peace. I want to assure you that this Government will do everything in its power to see that the provisions for the attainment of these social and labor objectives shall be included.

The people of the occupied countries are in deep suffering. Their representatives have agreed upon the social objectives and economic policies you have set forth. I trust that this marks the beginning of a new and better day, a period of hope for material comfort, for security and for spiritual and personal development, for all those groups now suffering so sorely under the heel of the oppressor. The United Nations will be determined that all the oppressed of the earth shall be included in these social objectives.

I want to offer my congratulations to those of you who have participated in this Conference. You have my gratitude for the program of mutual helpfulness which you have laid out — a program which, I am sure, will inspire all of those in our generation who want to build and maintain a just peace.

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ADDRESS Of The President
Delivered At The White House, East Room
Before the Conference Of Rural Education
October 4, 1944, at 4.30 p.m., e.w.t.
Radio Broadcast

Ladies and gentlemen: I feel like a fish out of water. I haven't thought of education for three years, that is to say, education in this country. I have thought about education in some other countries, changing the type of education in certain other countries. And yet, all the while, I am told by words that American education has supported the war effort wholeheartedly, but that was rather a manual problem than an intellectual one. And I have seen a lot of young people -- boys and girls -- coming into the service of their Government during the war, and some of them have been educated, and some of them are not. And that is what I want to talk to you a little bit about today.

There are a lot of (many) things (which) we have learned in this war. Among the most important are those that (which) we have learned because of the war, because of the things that have happened, for instance, through our Selective Service System about the health and education of the youth of our nation.

But the longer I live, I think that there is another part of education called health; and it hasn't been a very nice story. It has been far worse than people in this country as a whole realize. And that is why, when we know that some day -- and we have passed the peak -- some day we are going to come back to the ways of peace. (We have found that among those

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

examined for selective service 4½% can be classed as illiterate; and that 40% of all registrants for selective service have not gone beyond an elementary school education.)

Therefore, it is an excellent thing that (That is why) this Conference on Rural Education has shown (assumes) such great importance in our planning for the future, because we are going to have peace, some day. (For) While we plan for the welfare of our returning veterans, for example, planning for that, first -- and I think rightly -- and for the continued prosperity of our war workers, which means, first and last, the majority of the human beings in this country, we must also lay plans for the peacetime establishment of our educational system on a better basis than in -- it seems to me I should say those days of long ago that we used to call peacetime days (we have ever known before).

Those should be the goals of this Conference on Rural Education.

For rural teaching, country teaching, the teaching given in the small schools at the farm cross-roads and in the little villages and towns has played a greater part in American history than any other kind of education. From what I have said, you will see that I am a country boy too.

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boys who fought the early American wars.

The country schools trained millions of those who are fighting this greatest of American wars today. And they will play their part - a tremendous part -- in the creation of the American future to which the citizens of this country are committed in their hearts and souls. Much more unanimously, I might add, than the newspapers of these weeks in this war would lead us to believe.

It is for all of us, I think (Americans), to see that the building of that future does not lag because the country schools are without the means to carry on their essential work even more greatly than they have in the past.

The full attendance at this Conference, and the agenda which it has before it indicate the special attention that (which) must be given to the problems of the education of that half of our children and youth who live on the farms and in the villages. So far as school opportunities are concerned, these children have always been, and still are, the least privileged in the nation. We are justifiably proud of the splendid, modern schools in our cities and towns. We cannot be proud of this (the) fact: that many of our rural schools, particularly during these years of war, have been sadly neglected.

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holding only emergency licenses to teach, and nearly 800 schools face this coming school year without a teacher. That fact ought to be brought home to the American people.

The basic reason for this situation is simple, I think. We all know what it is. It is not patriotism alone that has taken teachers out of the classrooms. Most of them simply cannot afford to teach in rural schools.

And I always remember, a great many years ago, when I was down in Georgia, the first year I was there, sitting on the porch, and a young man came up twidding his cap, and he said, "Mr. Roosevelt, may I speak to you?"

And I said, "Yes. Come up."

And he said, "Mr. Roosevelt, we are having commencement in our school -- mentioning a little village a few miles away -- and I would like to have you come over and present the diplomas next Wednesday."

And I said, "I would be very glad to do it. What are you? Are you the -- the president of the graduating class?"

And he said, "No, sir. I am -- I am the principal of the school." (laughter)

And I said,"How old are you?"

He said, "I am nineteen, sir."

I said, "Have you been to college?"

"Oh Yes, sir. I have had one year at the University of Georgia. I am taking this year out for enough money to go back for a second year at the University."

And I said, "How much are you getting as principal?"

"Oh," he said, "I am getting four hundred dollars a year."

And that boy had 250 pupils under him.

The present average salary is less than -- in this country -- less than $1000 a year, and I think that some salaries go as low -- in my State, for instance -- say (as) $300. But I know schools where it is less than that. That is just too small by any decent standard in any part of the country. Only the self-sacrificing devotion of teachers who put their duty to their schools before their consideration for (of) themselves permits the children of many American school districts to get the education to which all Americans are entitled.

Frankly, the chief problem of rural education is something that we don't simplify enough. It is the problem of dollars and cents. You and I know that. We also know (also) that in very many cases the problem cannot be solved by just increasing the local taxes because the taxable values are just not there.

I have pointed out before that the gap between the educational standards in the richer communities and those in the poorer communities is far greater today than it was 100 years ago. I think I have said this six years ago. And we have got to turn the course of that trend.

We must find the means of closing the (that) gap -- by raising the standards in the poorer communities. And that ought to be stressed morning, noon and night.

I believe that the Federal government should

render financial aid where it is needed, but (and) only where it is needed. I don't mean Federal aid in the town of Hyde Park in Dutchess County. We have got taxable values, and we can handle our own schools. I live there part of the time. But we do need Federal aid down in Georgia, where I live also a part of the time. Down there they haven't got the taxable values. Only where it is needed in communities where farming does not pay much, where land values have depreciated through erosion or through flood or drought, where industries have moved away, where transport facilities are inadequate or where electricity is unavailable for power and light.

Such government -- Federal government financial aid should, of course, never involve government interference with State and local administration and control. It must purely and simply provide the guarantee that this country is big enough, and as a whole rich enough and great enough to give to all of its children the right to a free education.

Closely related to this whole problem is the question of -- that I said when I started goes hand in hand with it -- the health of our young people. And we who are interested in education can bring the problem, I think, much more closely and with perhaps a greater sympathy, to all the homes of the country, if we can tie in health with education.

Here again we cannot boast of the problem of health. We cannot boast of our part in this war without a feeling of guilt -- for about 40% of all the men who were examined under the Selective Service -- about 40% of them had to be rejected

for military service for physical or mental reasons. And we ought to hang our heads in shame at that statement.

We cannot be satisfied with the state of this nation if a large percentage of our children are not being given the opportunity to achieve good health (education) as well as (and) good education (health).

We can put it this way, if we want -- if you care about education: what's the use of giving them an education without their having the good health to use it when they grow up?

I believe that our educators -- those who are close to the (our) children of the land -- ought to (should) consider these two problems together. I believe that from such conferences such as this one, we may produce constructive plans looking toward substantial improvement in the (our) American standard of living in education as a part of our standard of living, as well as breakfast, school-lunch and supper. And that means better production, better clothes, better food, better housing, more recreation, more enjoyment of life. These things don't (do not) come about from wishful thinking -- they come from hard work, from (and) realistic thinking by those who are sincerely devoted to the solution of these problems.

We do not pretend that we can reach our goals overnight but if we seek them day in and day out, we may in our own lives -- while we are still alive -- take our rural educational system out of what was called, once upon a time, by a certain gentleman, the horse and buggy age. (laughter)

Your Conference this year has met at a time when

the forces of evil have their backs to the wall -- at a time when all the civilized world is more than ever determined that such wars cannot, will not, happen again.

Nothing can provide a stronger bulwark and (in this) determination in the years to come than an educated and enlightened and tolerant citizenry, equipped with the armed force necessary to stop aggression and warfare in this world.

So, to you of this Conference, and to all similar groups devoted to the cause of a better America, in the big places and the small places, the nation will look for advice and guidance as, in democratic fashion, it works out the (its) designs of (for) the future.

Thank you. (applause)

I am sorry I can't stay and listen and learn, but you have got me right in the middle of what they call a staff conference with the Army and Navy of the United States; and I have got to go back to it, because all sorts of people with four stars on their shoulders are waiting for me. (laughter and applause.)

Draft(1)

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE WHITE HOUSE

OCTOBER 4, 1944

In the matter of education, I have long applied the same broad rule as I have advocated in the field of another necessity -- electricity.

Frankly, the chief problem of rural education is the problem of dollars and cents. You and I know that. We know also that in most cases we cannot solve the problem by increasing the taxes because the taxable values are just not there.

A good many years ago in up-state New York I found a community that had no electricity -- for lighting and power and everything else. When I say they had no electricity I am not strictly accurate. They did have an electric power line from a good-sized city about thirty miles away and the company was charging the actual cost - 18¢ - a kilowatt hour to those in this rural village who had enough money to wire their houses.

The result was that about 5% of the people in the community had electric light -- the others did not.

I went to the Mayor of the nearby city which had good electric light service in practically every home, at a rate of 3¢ a kilowatt hour, and explained the situation to him and asked him whether he and I could appeal to the people of this city in behalf of their fellow citizens in this out-of-the-way hamlet thirty miles away. We asked them to allow the electric light company to add to their bills one-sixteenth of a cent each month in order to bring down the rate which was a way off in that village.

When the situation was explained to the people of that city, they gladly agreed. It meant that the rate instead of being 3¢ per kilowatt hour would be 3 and one-sixteenth of a cent per kilowatt hour.

That additional one-sixteenth of one cent in this city created a fund which enabled the electric light company, without profit and without loss, to reduce the rates in that country village from 18¢ down to 4¢.

And there are hundreds of examples in this country of the use of principle of zoning so that people are not too greatly penalized just because they do not happen to live in a great municipal center.

Education in the distant communities, which have low taxable values, ought to have the same principle applied in the several states. This is not a Federal problem. It could be done perfectly well by state laws. My thought is that the richer communities could afford a small equalizing tax and from the proceeds of which the distant country schools could be helped out in their effort to supply decent teaching and a full school year.

I have said in this case that this is not a Federal job. That happens to be true because there was nearby a very large and rich community which could well afford a tiny increase in the cost of their electricity or in our case, the cost of their schools.

There are, however, certain areas in the United States -- scatterer, of course -- which have no large and rich community within reasonable distance. I think that it is fair to admit that there are cases where the Federal Government ought to help -- not with any idea of telling the state or locality just what form of education should be carried out -- but with the main objective of raising the pay of teachers, improving the physical set-up, and lengthening the school year.

I spoke in the beginning of things which we have learned in this war. The fact of the breakdown of our educational system as shown by the figures of our Selective Service System. We have an appalling number of young people who are essentially illiterate, in the broad sense of the term.

The other lesson we have learned goes hand in hand with it. It relates to the health of our young people and here again we cannot boast of our part in this war without a feeling of guilt -- nearly 50% of all young men who were drafted had to be rejected for military service because their bodies were not up to the requirements. If bodies keep us from adequate self-defense, or adequate carrying on of a war which affects the whole of our civilization -- and on top of that we find that an enormous percentage of our boys are so badly educated that even if they did have good bodies we could not take them into our armies, then something was drastically wrong.

We can approach it from two angles. The first is that we really do believe in the defense of our nation and the defense of our civilization. The lessons of this war prove that both our own safety and our own type of civilization have been and may again be in jeopardy.

The other point of view is that of the future. If better education and better health will improve the material side of our lives, so also better education and better health will help us to greatly improve that old but somewhat important chestnut called "the American standard of living". Better production, more inventions, more enjoyment of life, more recreation, better clothes, better food, better housing. These things do not come from wishful thinking -- they come from the two objects I am talking about -- better health and better education. Those should be the goals of this Conference and of many conferences to come. We cannot reach our goals overnight but if we seek them day in and day out, we may in our own lives see progress that will make the past take its place definitely in what was called, once upon a time, the horse and buddy age.

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FIRST DRAFT

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE WHITE HOUSE

OCTOBER 4, 1944

There are many things which we have learned in this war. Among the most important are those which we have learned through our Selective Service System about the health and education of the youth of our nation. We have found that among ~~the registrants~~ men examined for selective service 4 1/2 % can be classed as illiterate, and that 46 % of all ~~[% have not finished elementary school and % have~~ registrants for selective service have not gone beyond an elementary school education.

That is why this Conference on Rural Education assumes such great importance in our planning for the future. For while we plan for the welfare of our returning veterans first, and for the continued prosperity of our war workers, we must also lay plans for the peacetime establishment of our educational system on a better basis than we have ever known before.

Those should be the goals of this Conference on Rural Education.

Rural teaching, country teaching, the teaching given in the small schools at the farm cross-roads and in the little villages and towns has played a greater part in American history than any other kind of education.

The American form of government was conceived and created by men most of whom had been taught in country schools.

Country schools prepared Americans for the task of mastering this continent.

Country schools trained a great proportion of the boys who fought the early American wars.

Country schools trained millions of those who are fighting this greatest of American wars today. They will play their tremendous part in the creation of the American future to which the citizens of this country are committed in their hearts and souls.

It is for all of us Americans to see that the building of that future does not lag because the country schools are without the means to carry on their essential work.

The full attendance at this Conference and the agenda which it has before it indicate the special attention which must be given to the problems of the education of that half of our children and youth who live on the farms and in the villages. So far as school opportunities are concerned, these children have always been, and still are, the least privileged in the nation. We are justifiably proud of the

splendid, modern schools in our cities and towns. We can not be proud of the fact that many of our rural schools, particularly during these years of war, have been sadly neglected.

Within one school year after Pearl Harbor, several thousand rural schools had been closed because teachers could not be found for them. One of the leading farm papers recently reported that in one agricultural state of the midwest, nearly a third of the teachers in one-room schools are now persons holding only emergency licenses to teach, and nearly 800 schools face this coming school year without a teacher.

The basic reason for this situation is simple. We all know what it is. It is not patriotism alone that has taken teachers out of the classrooms. Most of them simply cannot afford to teach in rural schools.

The present average salary is less than $1000 a year and some salaries go as low as $300. That is just too small by any decent standard. Only the self-sacrificing devotion of teachers who put their duty to their schools before their consideration of themselves permits the children of many American school districts to get the education to which all Americans are entitled.

Frankly, the chief problem of rural education is the problem

of dollars and cents. You and I know that. We know also that in very many cases the problem cannot be solved by increasing the local taxes because the taxable values are just not there.

I have pointed out before that the gap between educational standards in the richer communities and those in the poorer communities is far greater today than it was 100 years ago.

We must find the means of closing that gap - by raising the standards in the poorer communities.

I believe that the federal government should render financial aid where it is needed, and only where it is needed - in communities where farming does not pay, where land values have depreciated through erosion or through flood or drought, where industries have moved away, where transport facilities are inadequate or where electricity is unavailable for power and light.

Such government financial aid should never involve government interference with state and local administration and control. It must purely and simply provide the guarantee that this country is great enough to give to all of its children the right to a free education.

We all know of many communities where the local authorities have not sufficient funds to guarantee this right. In such communities, I believe it is both proper and essential for the federal government to render aid.

Closely related to this whole problem is the question of the health of our young people.

Here again we cannot boast of our part in this war without a feeling of guilt -- for about 40% of all young men who were examined had to be rejected for military service because their bodies were not up to the requirements for physical or mental reasons.

We cannot be satisfied with the state of this nation if a large percentage of our children are not being given the opportunity to achieve good education and good health.

I believe that our educators -- those who are close to our children -- should consider these two problems together. I believe that from such conferences as this one we may produce constructive plans looking toward substantial improvement in our American standard of living. And that means better production, better clothes, better food, better housing, more recreation, more enjoyment of life. These things do not come from wishful thinking -- they come from hard work and realistic thinking by those who are sincerely devoted to the solution of these problems.

We do not pretend that we can reach our goals overnight but if we seek them day in and day out, we may in our own lives take our rural educational system out of what was called, once upon a time, the horse and buggy age.

Your Conference this year has met at a time when [redacted] the forces of evil from their backs to the wall — at a time when all the civilized world is determined that such wars can not, will not, happen again.

Nothing can provide a stronger bulwark in this determination in the years to come than an educated, enlightened and tolerant citizenry, equipped with the armed force necessary to stop aggression and warfare.

To you of this Conference, and to all similar groups devoted to the cause of a better America, the nation will look for advice and guidance as it works out, in democratic fashion, its design for the future.

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE WHITE HOUSE

OCTOBER 4, 1944

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There are many things which we have learned in this war. Among the most important are those which we have learned through our Selective Service System about the health and education of the youth of our nation. We have found that among the registrants for selective service_____% can be classed as illiterate,____% have not finished elementary school and_____% have not gone beyond an elementary school education.

That is why this Conference on Rural Education assumes such great importance in our planning for the future. For while we plan for the welfare of our returning veterans first, and for the continued prosperity of our war workers, we must also lay plans for the return of our educational system to the ways and days of a better peace than we have ever had before.

The full attendance at this Conference and the agenda which it has before it indicate the special attention which must be given to the problems of the education of that half of our children and youth who live on the farms and in the villages. For, so far as school opportunities are concerned, they have

always been, and still are, the least privileged young people in the nation. In this interdependent nation, we have learned that what happens in the education of rural young people is of concern to all of us -- whether we live in the city or the country.

The schools of our nation -- and particularly the rural schools -- have been no exception to the disruption of civil life which has come with the war.

Within one school year after Pearl Harbor, over a hundred thousand new teachers were placed in the rural schools, and several thousand rural schools had been closed because teachers could not be found for them. One of the leading farm papers recently reported that in one agricultural state of the midwest, nearly a third of the teachers in one-room schools are now persons holding only emergency licenses to teach, and nearly 800 schools face this coming school year without a teacher.

The basic reason for this situation is simple. We all know what it is. It is not patriotism alone that has taken teachers out of the classrooms. Most of them simply cannot afford to teach in rural schools. The present average salary is less than $1000 per year. That is just too small under any decent standard. And salaries go as low as $_____ per year.

In the matter of education, I have long applied the same broad rule as I have advocated in the field of another necessity -- electricity.

Frankly, the chief problem of rural education is the problem of dollars and cents. You and I know that. We know also that in most cases we cannot solve the problem by increasing the taxes because the taxable values are just not there.

A good many years ago in up-state New York I found a community that had no electricity -- for lighting and power and everything else. When I say they had no electricity I am not strictly accurate. They did have an electric power line from a good-sized city about thirty miles away and the company was charging the actual cost - 18¢ - a kilowatt hour to those in this rural village who had enough money to wire their houses.

The result was that about 5% of the people in the community had electric light -- the others did not.

I went to the Mayor of the nearby city which had good electric light service in practically every home, at a rate of 3¢ a kilowatt hour, and explained the situation to him and asked him whether he and I could appeal to the people of this city in behalf of their fellow-citizens in this out-of-the-way hamlet thirty miles away. We asked them to allow the electric

light company to add to their bills one-sixteenth of a cent each month in order to bring down the rate which was a way off in that village.

When the situation was explained to the people of that city, they gladly agreed. It meant that the rate instead of being 3¢ per kilowatt hour would be 3 and one-sixteenth of a cent per kilowatt hour.

That additional one-sixteenth of one cent in this city created a fund which enabled the electric light company, without profit and without loss, to reduce the rates in that country village from 18¢ down to 4¢.

And there are hundreds of examples in this country of the use of principle of zoning so that people are not too greatly penalized just because they do not happen to live in a great municipal center.

Education in the distant communities, which have low taxable values, ought to have the same principle applied in the several states. This is not a Federal problem. It could be done perfectly well by state laws. My thought is that the richer communities could afford a small equalizing tax and from the proceeds (of which) the distant country schools could be helped out in their effort to supply decent teaching and a

full school year.

I have said in this case that this is not a Federal job. That happens to be true because there was nearby a very large and rich community which could well afford a tiny increase in the cost of their electricity or in our case, the cost of their schools.

There are, however, certain areas in the United States -- scattered, of course -- which have no large and rich community within reasonable distance. I think that it is fair to admit that there are cases where the Federal Government ought to help -- not with any idea of telling the state or locality just what form of education should be carried out -- but with the main objective of raising the pay of teachers, improving the physical set-up, and lengthening the school year.

I spoke in the beginning of things which we have learned in this war. The fact of the breakdown of our educational system as shown by the figures of our Selective Service System. We have an appalling number of young people who are essentially illiterate, in the broad sense of the term.

The other lesson we have learned goes hand in hand with it. It relates to the health of our young people and here again we cannot boast of our part in this war without a feeling of guilt -- nearly 50% of all young men who were drafted had to be rejected for military service because their bodies were not up to the requirements. If bodies keep us from adequate self-defense, or adequate carrying on of a war which affects the whole of our civilization -- and on top of that we find that an enormous percentage of our boys are so badly educated that even if they did have good bodies we could not take them into our armies, then something was drastically wrong.

We can approach it from two angles. The first is that we really do believe in the defense of our nation and the defense of our civilization. The lessons of this war prove that both our own safety and our own type of civilization have been and may again be in jeopardy.

The other point of view is that of the future. If better education and better health will improve the material side of our lives, so also better education and better health will help us to greatly improve that old but somewhat important

chestnut called "the American standard of living". Better production, more inventions, more enjoyment of life, more recreation, better clothes, better food, better housing. These things do not come from wishful thinking — they come from the two objects I am talking about -- better health and better education. Those should be the goals of this Conference and of many conferences to come. We cannot reach our goals overnight but if we seek them day in and day out, we may in our own lives see progress that will make the (past) present (?) take its place definitely in what was called, once upon a time, the horse and buggy age.

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ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

THE WHITE HOUSE

OCTOBER 4, 1944

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There are many things which we have learned in this war. Among the most important are those which we have learned through our Selective Service System about the health and education of the youth of our nation. We have found that among those examined for selective service 4½% can be classed as illiterate; and that 40% of all registrants for selective service have not gone beyond an elementary school education.

That is why this Conference on Rural Education assumes such great importance in our planning for the future. For while we plan for the welfare of our returning veterans first, and for the continued prosperity of our war workers, we must also lay plans for the peacetime establishment of our educational system on a better basis than we have ever known before.

Those should be the goals of this Conference on Rural Education.

Rural teaching, country teaching, the teaching given in the small schools at the farm cross-roads and in the little villages and towns has played a greater part in American history than any other kind of education.

The American form of government was conceived and created by men most of whom had been taught in country schools.

Country schools prepared Americans for the task of mastering this continent.

Country schools trained a great proportion of the boys who fought the early American wars.

Country schools trained millions of those who are fighting this greatest of American wars today. They will play their tremendous part in the creation of the American future to which the citizens of this country are committed in their hearts and souls.

It is for all of us Americans to see that the building of that future does not lag because the country schools are without the means to carry on their essential work.

The full attendance at this Conference and the agenda which it has before it indicate the special attention which must be given to the problems of the education of that half of our children and youth who live on the farms and in the villages. So far as school opportunities are concerned, these children have always been, and still are, the least privileged in the nation. We are justifiably proud of the splendid, modern schools in our cities and towns. We cannot be proud of the fact that many of our rural schools, particularly during these years of war, have been sadly neglected.

Within one school year after Pearl Harbor, several thousand rural schools had been closed because teachers could not be found for them. One of the leading farm papers recently reported that in one agricultural state of the midwest, nearly a third of the teachers in one-room schools are now persons holding only emergency licenses to teach, and nearly 800 schools face this coming school year without a teacher.

The basic reason for this situation is simple. We all know what it is. It is not patriotism alone that has taken teachers out of the classrooms. Most of them simply cannot afford to teach in rural schools.

The present average salary is less than $1000 a year and some salaries go as low as $300. That is just too small by any decent standard. Only the self-sacrificing devotion of teachers who put their duty to their schools before their consideration of themselves permits the children of many American school districts to get the education to which all Americans are entitled.

Frankly, the chief problem of rural education is the problem of dollars and cents. You and I know that. We know also that in very many cases the problem cannot be solved by increasing the local taxes because the taxable values are just not there.

I have pointed out before that the gap between educational standards in the richer communities and those in the poorer communitie is far greater today than it was 100 years ago.

We must find the means of closing that gap -- by raising the standards in the poorer communities.

I believe that the federal government should render financial aid where it is needed, and only where it is needed -- in communities where farming does not pay, where land values have depreciated through erosion or through flood or drought, where industries have moved away, where transport facilities are inadequate or where electricity is unavailable for power and light.

Such government financial aid should never involve government interference with state and local administration and control. It must purely and simply provide the guarantee that this country is great enough to give to all or its children the right to a free education.

Closely related to this whole problem is the question of the health of our young people.

Here again we cannot boast of our part in this war without a feeling of guilt -- for about 40% of all men who were examined had to be rejected for military service for physical or mental reasons.

We cannot be satisfied with the state of this nation if a large percentage of our children are not being given the opportunity to achieve good education and good health.

I believe that our educators -- those who are close to our children -- should consider these two problems together. I believe that from such conferences as this one we may produce constructive plans looking toward substantial improvement in our American standard of living. And that means better production, better clothes, better food, better housing, more recreation, more enjoyment of life. These things do not come from wishful thinking -- they come from hard work and realistic thinking by those who are sincerely devoted to the solution of these problems.

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