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SIGNED BY ANNE V. HIGGINS

Folder Title: YA-62 – Complaint Mail
re: RR's Speech at Seton Hall University and the
Commission's Report to Lengthen Hours of Study

Box: 29

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RE: Complaint mail re RR's speech at Seton Hall Univ. and the
Commission's Report to Lengthen House of Study

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 18, 1984 (XXXY62)

1/19/85

Dear Mr. Ortega:

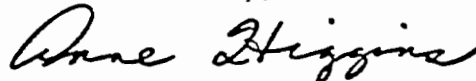
President Reagan has asked me to thank you for sharing with him your thoughts on education in America. We can all take heart from the increased attention and debate this subject has received as a result of the Report of the President's Commission on Excellence in Education. By continuing this discussion and exchange of positive ideas, we can solve the educational challenges we face.

Since release of the Commission's Report last year, the President has received hundreds of messages from students and teachers outlining their suggestions to improve education. The President and his advisers are reviewing these suggestions carefully as they consider ways to make necessary improvements in Federal policy in this area. The President strongly believes that the most important changes are those which can take place without an infusion of more Federal support -- changes that parents, administrators, teachers and students can achieve at the local level.

Our policies are designed to foster local decision-making and to encourage higher standards of achievement for both students and teachers. The President has taken numerous occasions to discuss our system of education and outline the steps he has proposed to make the entire system work better. I am enclosing a copy of a "White House Report to Students" so that you will be aware of his ideas on this subject. He has visited a number of our nation's schools in the past, and he will continue to focus his personal attention on this vital issue. Letters like yours are particularly helpful to him in this process.

With the President's best wishes,

Sincerely,



Anne Higgins
Special Assistant to the President
and Director of Correspondence

(1/13/84)

Mr. Michael Ortega
Night Supervisor
Correspondence Analysis Section
Room 60
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20500

Enclosure

AVH/CAD/RDC/AVH

YZ-62 (Rev.)

RE: Complaint mail re RR's speech at Seton Hall Univ.
and the Commission's Report to Lengthen Hours of Study

1/13/84

L

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 14, 1983

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Anne Higgins
Special Assistant to the President
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• a "White House
Reply to Students"

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Vinside_addressV

(6/6/83)

Enclosure

RE: Complaint mail re RR's speech at Seton Hall Univ.
and the Commission's Report to Length Hours of Study

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WASHINGTON

June 14, 1983

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Sincerely,

Anne Higgins
Special Assistant to the President
and Director of Correspondence

(6/6/83)

Vinside_addressV

Enclosure

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

6/6/83

YATaa (Draft)

YA-62

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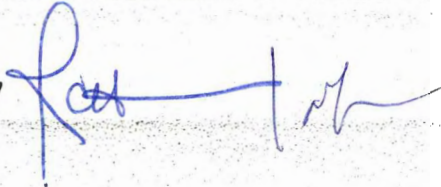
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With the President's best wishes,

Encl. The President's radio address of April 30, 1983

AVH/CSO/



DRAFT/Date

6/4/83

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosures:

RR / _____ / _____ / _____
(Drafter) (Rev. I) (Rev. II)AVH / CON / _____Other: John (Jim) Seton Hall
address

ROBO TO ANSWER COMPLAINT MAIL RE RR'S SPEECH AT SETON HALL U. AND THE COMMISSION'S
REPORT TO LENGTH HOURS OF STUDY

Dear _____

On behalf of President Reagan, I would like to thank you (and your students) for taking the time to share your thoughts with him about your particular school. Since receiving recommendations from the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the President has heard from hundreds of teachers and their students, many of whom invite the President to visit their schools. While the President would like to meet each and everyone of you, he has had to settle for visiting schools on a select basis according to his schedule. Those visits, ^{however,} have confirmed the President's ~~firm~~ belief that ~~while~~ there are thousands of outstanding schools and thousands of dedicated teachers, students, and school administrators, ^{but,} we must not look at ourselves ~~and say~~ as a nation and see no room for improvement.

Unfortunately, the facts show that indeed there is a lot of room for improvement and the President believes that those same dedicated teachers and administrators recognize this. Since 1963, Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have demonstrated a virtually unbroken decline. Thirty-five of our states require only one year of math for a high school diploma, and 36 require only one year of science. When compared to students in other industrialized nations, we've begun to realize that many of ours place badly. Sadly, it's been estimated that half of our country's gifted young people are not performing up to their full potential.

There are those who attribute the problems we face nationally regarding education to lack of money. In spite of all the stories you may have been hearing about spending cutbacks, total expenditures in the nation's public schools this year, according to the National Education Association, are expected to reach \$116.9 billion. That is up seven percent from last year and more than double what it was just ten years ago. It would appear that if money was the answer, the problem would have been shrinking rather than growing for the last ten years. We spend more money per child for education than any other country in the world. The answer is not more money, but good leadership, dedication from well-trained teachers, discipline, homework, testing and efficient use of time. The best way to encourage these attributes is by rewarding excellence to those same principals, administrators and teachers. Teachers should be paid and promoted on the basis of their merit and competence.

We can also encourage excellence by encouraging parental choice. That is exactly what we're trying to do through our programs of tuition tax credits and vouchers. We are allowing individual parents to choose the kinds of schools they know through the free and vigorous competition of ideas. President Reagan believes that the principles of intellectual freedom and innovation, for individual families, through the vouchers and tuition tax credits as well as for individual public school systems through block grants that come without the red tape of government regulations from Washington attached can help to restore the overall picture of education in America.

President Reagan ^{has} ~~must~~ look at the facts and the overall state of education in our country. He is proud of the individual teachers, parents and students who are working daily to ^{prepare good citizens} ~~provide the leaders~~ for tomorrow. But ^{he believes strongly that we must all} ~~we must~~ recognize problems when we see them, and those problems must be addressed ^{with new and innovative ideas.}

With the best wishes of the President,

Sincerely,

DRAFT/Date _____

RR / _____ / _____ / _____
(Drafter) (Rev. I) (Rev. II)

AVH / _____ / _____
2

Dear _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosures:

Other:

SOC8

The question of tax exemptions for private, religiously affiliated schools is immensely complex. It was for this reason that President Reagan presented the issue to Congress, the only branch of the Federal government with full power under the Constitution to resolve both the important tax and civil rights questions involved. Since it now appears that the Supreme Court will address the issue of tax exemptions in two pending cases, it would be inappropriate to comment except to state in the strongest terms that this Administration will do everything in its power to assure that the civil rights of all are respected.

SOC9

The President does not believe that gun control will solve our nation's crime problem. He believes that the way to solve that problem is to increase penalties for hard-core, career criminals who misuse guns, rather than to limit the constitutional rights of honest citizens through gun control.

As the President said in his address to the 112th annual members' banquet of the National Rifle Association on May 6, 1983, he and his Administration "have declared war on organized crime and the career criminal element in America...We want mandatory sentences. We want firm and speedy application of penalties. And we want to abolish parole for Federal offenses. But there's one thing we do not want: We will never disarm any American who seeks to protect his or her family from fear and harm."

You may be interested to know that the President has signed into law two amendments to the Gun Control Act of 1968. These amendments remove the burdensome recordkeeping requirements on sales of the most popular sporting ammunition. A tremendous amount of time and paperwork was imposed on dealers to record these sales, yet there was little evidence that these requirements helped to reduce crime. The President's action has eliminated the paperwork on over a billion rounds of ammunition annually. I can assure you that the Administration will continue to seek the removal of restrictions which operate only to burden law-abiding Americans. It will instead concentrate law enforcement resources on apprehending and imprisoning criminals.

SOC10

I can assure you that the President has the highest regard for the role played by our nation's public schools, and he recognizes the inestimable contributions made by the parents, teachers and administrators who serve in nearly 14,000 school districts nationwide. The policies of this Administration reflect the President's basic commitment to education, while ensuring that Federal resources are targeted on students with greatest need and that parental, State and local education decision making are enhanced.

President Reagan will continue to speak for the strong and diverse educational programs America needs, including the systems utilized by the vast majority of America's children: our nation's public schools.

SOC11

The recovery of the fundamental moral and legal principles upon which this nation was founded is an essential element of President Reagan's agenda for national renewal. It was good of you to let him know that you share his convictions about these important issues. The President counts on your support in achieving our common goals.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(South Orange, New Jersey)

For Immediate Release

May 21, 1983

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT

Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey

10:40 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: I have been sitting here -- I've been sitting here as the protocol was recognized of acknowledging all those distinguished people who are here and then, before I could think of anything proper to maybe avoid that, Pearl Bailey, as she has done to so many for so many years, topped anything that I could think of. Ditto. (Laughter.) (Applause.)

I thank you all, though, very much for inviting me here today, and I'm deeply honored by the degree that you've chosen to confer on me -- and especially so because I'm sharing it with two people I greatly admire. Gary Nardino is a man of true achievement in an industry that has played a big part in my life. And Pearl Bailey is a great lady and a long-time dear friend who combines the wonderful gift of entertaining with an even more precious one, the ability to lift the human spirit and inspire it. And I'm honored to be in such company. (Applause.)

At the same time, as has been acknowledged today, that you are here with -- filled with mixed emotions, so am I. This honorary degree -- you see I've nursed a feeling of guilt for a half a century that the first one I got was honorary. (Laughter.) Besides, if there's one place where I always feel at home, it's an athletic field -- (laughter) -- even if you don't play football on it anymore. (Laughter.) Come to think of it, I don't play football anymore. (Laughter.) Anyway, I understand that the baseball team has a good season. (Applause.)

And, Dr. D'Alessio, speaking as one President to another, I was very impressed to learn that when you joined Seton Hall the University was operating in the red. And in two short years, you've turned things around. What's your secret? (Laughter.) (Applause.) And, please, don't just tell me. Tell the Congress. (Laughter.) It's already too late for me to break your two-year record, but we need all the help we can get in Washington to work toward a balanced budget. (Applause.)

MORE

Something I've noticed in attending graduations over the years is the way time has a habit of catching up with you. First, you start to notice that you're older than the students. And next, you begin to realize that you're older than most of the faculty. (Laughter.) But today marks a new first for me. I'm even senior to the Jubilarians who are gathered here today. (Laughter. Applause.) They graduated in 1933; I'm class of '32, -- (laughter) -- Eureka College. And you immediately say to yourself, "Where is that?" And if I tell you, you won't know any more than you know now. (Laughter.) It's in Eureka, Illinois. (Laughter.)

That was 51 years ago or, to put it another way, just 76 years after the founding of Seton Hall. To you members of the Class of '83, I'm sure that seems like a long, long time ago and you're right. The world has seen things happen -- great miracles and great tragedies that no one could have dreamt of 51 years ago. Back then, the big breakthroughs were propeller aircraft that could fly as far as Paris, movies that could talk and a thing called radio that had a voice but no picture. I heard a little boy one day come in the house to his mother and say that he had just been next door with his friend. And he said, "You know, they've got a box over there that you can listen to and you don't have to look at anything." (Laughter.)

Yet, if today's technology is more sophisticated than anything we had around in 1932, some things -- and some very important things remain the same. Just to give you one example, I can remember thinking, on my graduation day, that it was a time for me, and my friends, and my teachers, and my family. And the commencement speaker seemed to be an intruder at a private party -- an outsider at an intimate celebration of moments shared all leading up to this very special day.

Now, I can't believe that it feels very much different for you today, even though the Spirit of St. Louis has been outpaced by rockets to the moon, and today's high technology makes the radios, and the films, and industrial efforts of that earlier day seem as remote as the Stone Age. I know there's some of you probably think that my first degree was engraved in a stone tablet. (Laughter.)

I know that surface appearances have changed a lot. Looking back, for example, to Seton Hall's freshman rules for 1927, I notice that red caps and black socks were "to be worn at all times" by freshmen and that knickers, bow ties, and mustaches were banned. (Laughter.) About the only place left today where you encounter regulations that silly is in the federal bureaucracy and we're trying our best to get rid of them there. (Laughter. Applause.)

What I do sense here today -- and whenever I visit with young Americans,

and that is the same unquenchable spirit that I remember among my own classmates at Eureka College so long ago. Ours, too, was a time of great change and uncertainty. Many of the things that our parents had taught us to take for granted suddenly seemed very fragile or even lost. Economic excess, lack of vision among world leaders and the forces of change had brought on a Great Depression and unleashed evil and extremism in many parts of the globe.

I know that on this day, you look forward with some trepidation, wondering if there's a place for you in a world that is sunk in a deep recession. Well, the classes of 1932 faced a world in the very bottom of the Great Depression, when unemployment was greater than 25 percent. The situation was the same for the class of '33. It hadn't changed any. The federal government used radio with regular announcements every day urging people not to leave home seeking work because there were no jobs. But here we are a half a century later and it's been a half a century of ever-increasing opportunity for us and adventure. And we've found that life has been good.

We had our share of suffering in America, greater suffering than this country has ever known since. But something held true, something that still lives in the American spirit, your spirit. More than half a century and countless other trials later, some of that spirit is captured, appropriate enough, in the words that the late Cardinal Spellman used to describe Mother Seton herself. "She was not," he wrote, "a mystical person in an unattainable niche. She battled against odds in the trials of life with American stamina and cheerfulness; she worked and succeeded with American efficiency."

Well, these qualities of faith and common sense and dedication, if you can cultivate and keep them, will see you through lifetimes that will not only be rich in meaning for you as individuals, but which will also leave behind a better country and a better world and that will make all the effort that you've put into your school years and all the sacrifice of parents and other loved ones who have helped to see you through worth many times their cost.

You who are graduating have taken virtually your entire lives to reach this moment. To you it seems like a very long time. But there are others here today, parents and grandparents who share this day with you. And as they look back, it seems as if the journey only started yesterday. As a matter of fact, they can remember when if you took their hand, your hands were so tiny they only could encompass one finger. But you left an imprint on that one finger that they can still feel today.

So for everyone, it's a day of nostalgia, of looking back on a montage of memories and, for you, looking ahead, perhaps a little fearfully, seeking a clue to what the future holds. And possibly that explains the paradox of calling the day "graduation" at the same time that we call it "commencement."

For even as you graduate today and commence life's journey in the outside world, you draw closer to the day when you, in your turn, will be the parents of another generation of young Americans. And, not long after that, your children will begin their own schooldays. What kind of a world is it that you face now, on the brink of a new chapter in your lives; and what kind of a world will your children, in their time, face?

Someone once said of our country that "We soared into the 20th century on the wings of invention and the winds of change." Well, in a few years' time, we Americans will soar into the 21st century, and again it will be on the wings of invention and the winds of change. And you will have been responsible for much of that change. In large measure, the quality of your individual lives, and your children's lives, will be determined by the quality of the education that you've received -- at home and at school -- to prepare you for this new world of challenge, innovation, and opportunity.

Abraham Lincoln is supposed to have said that the best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time. In this modern age, it often seems to come a little more quickly than that. Our nation is speeding toward the future at this very moment. We can see it coming, if not in sharp detail at least in broad outline. In your history books you've read about the Industrial Revolution. Well, today, we're living the beginnings of another revolution -- a revolution ranging from tiny microchips to voyages into the infinity of space; from information retrieval systems that can bring all of the great literature and films and music within reach of a family video unit, to new methods of health care and healing that will add years of full active existence to your life spans.

The other day I was shown a little tiny piece of fiber. It looked almost like something of a decoration. I was told that this was part of a satellite system that can transmit the entire Encyclopaedia Britannica in three seconds.

But for you to take advantage of all these awesome new advances -- and for your children to -- we must forge an education system capable of meeting the demands of change.

And the sad fact is that, today, such a system does not exist in its entirety. Oh, there are plenty of outstanding schools -- present company included -- and thousands of dedicated teachers and school administrators. But, taken as a whole, we have to feel that many of our high schools are not doing the job they should. Since 1963, Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have demonstrated a virtually unbroken decline. Thirty-five of our states require only one year of math for a high-school diploma, and 36 require only one year of science. When compared to students in other industrialized nations, we've begun to realize that many of ours place badly. And it's been estimated that half of our country's gifted young people are not performing up to their full potential.

That's a criminal waste of our most precious natural resource, you, our sons and daughters.

Now, there was a time, not too long ago, when the solution to this problem would have been summed up by most politicians in one big five-letter word: money. Just pour more money on the problem, the conventional wisdom went, and it would go away.

They tried that approach and it failed. In spite of all those stories you may have been hearing about spending cutbacks, total expenditures in the nation's public schools this year, according to the National Education Association, are expected to reach \$116.9 billion. Now, that's up seven percent from last year and more than double what it was just 10 years ago. So, if money was the answer, the problem would have been shrinking rather than growing for the last 10 years.

Right about now, I expect some of you are saying to yourselves, "That's what I would expect to hear from a fellow like that. He's a conservative." But don't take my word for it. Listen to what a former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare -- a card-carrying liberal, Joseph Califano, who served under my immediate predecessor, had to say on the subject. He said, "I came to H.E.W. enthusiastic about the opportunity to improve education in America, and determined to step up federal funding sharply." And then he wrote, "I left alarmed over the deterioration of public education in America and troubled by the threat to academic freedom that the federal role, enlarged and shaped by special interests, poses."

I couldn't agree more, and I know that former Secretary Califano also spoke for thousands of parents, teachers, students, and school administrators who have found themselves caught in a tangle of conflicting, time-consuming federal regulations. The road to better education for all our people simply cannot be paved with more and more recycled tax dollars collected, redistributed, and over-regulated by Washington bureaucrats.

But there is much that the federal government can do to help set a national agenda for excellence in education, a commitment to quality that can open up new opportunities and new horizons to our young people.

I'll have a little more to say about that in the weeks ahead. But on this special day, let me just cite a few common sense goals and guiding principles. Some of them may be familiar to you. They should be, because they've helped to make the teaching that many of you have received here at Seton Hall and in your primary and secondary schools outstanding. And they can make the teaching your younger brothers and sisters and your children receive even better.

To begin with, the time has come for a grassroots campaign for educational renewal that unites parents, teachers, and concerned citizens. We spend more money per child for education than any other country in the world -- we just haven't been getting our money's worth. And we won't until we reverse some of the dangerous trends of recent years. And that means restoring parents and local government to their rightful role in the educational process. (Applause.)

Perhaps the biggest irony about the problems facing American education today is the fact that we already know what makes for good schools, leadership from principals and superintendents, dedication from well-trained teachers, discipline, homework, testing and efficient use of time. (Applause.) I noted where that applause started from. (Laughter.) All of these things can be improved without increasing federal funding and interference. And with only modest increases in local and state support.

One of the best ways to do this, and unfortunately it's opposed by some of the heaviest hitters in the national education lobby, is by rewarding excellence. (Applause.) Teachers should be paid and promoted on the basis of their merit and competence. (Applause.) Hard-earned tax dollars should encourage the best. They have no business rewarding incompetence and mediocrity. (Applause.)

And we can also encourage excellence by encouraging parental choice. And that's exactly what we're trying to do through our programs of tuition tax credits and vouchers -- (applause) -- allowing individual parents to choose the kinds of schools they know will be best for their children's needs. America rose to greatness through the free and vigorous competition of ideas. We can make American education great again by applying these same principles of intellectual freedom and innovation, for individual families, through the vouchers I mentioned and tuition tax credits. And for individual public school systems, through block grants that come without the red tape of government regulations from Washington attached.

And although I know that this idea is not popular in some supposedly sophisticated circles, I can't help but believe that voluntary prayer and the spiritual values that have shaped our civilization and made us the good and caring society we are deserve a place again in our nation's classrooms. (Applause.)

Well, I could go on and on; but don't worry, I won't. (Laughter.) This is your graduation not my state of the schools address. (Laughter.) So I'll save the details for more appropriate forums in the weeks and months ahead.

Today is your day, graduates, teachers, friends and family. And it's a day for you to remember not for anything that I've had to say, but for what it will mean to you for the rest of your lives. And I, and speaking for those people over there in that particular section, tell you, you'll be amazed a half a century down the road at how clearly and how warmly the memories of these last few years will stay with you and how much they'll mean to you.

MORE

With an economy that's growing healthier every day, with a country that's still strong in freedom and growing stronger in opportunity, your lives can be as good and productive and as meaningful as you are willing to make them.

Pope John wrote of Mother Seton that "She flourished in holiness precisely at the time when the young United States was beginning to take its important place among the peoples of the world."

Well, so, too, can each of you, for we are still a young nation. And we have a place to take in the world. I know of no nation in a better position than to lead the world out of the morass of hatred and rivalry and to freedom for all mankind than the United States. (Applause.)

You've been given special blessings, special gifts, families that care, that have given you the values of honesty, hard work, and faith that has seen you through the formative years of your lives; teachers who have taught you to think and to learn in preparation for productive careers; and a country that, for all its faults, is still what Lincoln called it more than a century ago: the last, best hope of earth.

Now, I know there are certain cliches and things that go with commencements such as a graduation speaker is supposed to tell you you know more today than you've ever known before or that you'll ever know again. I won't say that. (Laughter.) But if I could do something else that probably is all too often done, would you listen for a moment to a little advice and based on personal experience. Because this graduation year is so similar to that one of 50 and 51 years ago, in the depths of that Great Depression, I remember, diploma in hand, going back to my summer job that I had had for seven years, life-guarding on a river beach out there in Illinois -- (laughter) -- and I remember all -- you didn't think of career. Listening to those announcements I mentioned a little while ago on the radio, all you thought about was how -- how when the beach closes this fall, where do I go? What job is there? And I was fortunate. A man who had survived the Great Depression until then, and was doing well out in the business world, gave me some advice. He said, "Look, I could tell you that maybe I could speak to someone and they might give you a job. But," he said, "they'd only do it because of me." And then he said, "They wouldn't have a particular interest in you." He said, "May I tell you that even in the depths of this depression," and so I will say to you even in the depths of this recession, there are people out there who know that the future is going to depend on taking young people into whatever their undertaking is and starting them out so that -- whether it's business, industry, or whatever it might be, it will continue on.

MORE

"Now," he said, "a salesman has to knock on a lot of doors before he makes a sale. So," he said, "if you will make up your mind what line of work you want to be in, what industry, what business, whatever it is, profession or other," he said, "and then start knocking on doors, eventually you'll come to one of those men or women who feels that way. And all you have to do, don't ask for the particular job you want, tell them you'll take any job in that industry or that business, whatever it may be, because you believe in it and its future and you'll take your chances on progressing from there."

Well, my means of travel in that early era was hitchhiking and I hitchhiked from one radio station to another. Radio was the most new industry of that time. And he was absolutely right. I came to one one day when I was just about out of shoe leather and didn't know how much further I could go. And I started on a career that led to another career and that led to some things that are more visible today. (Laughter.)

But he was right. And so I say it to you, I pass on his advice to you. Don't get discouraged with the situation of the world. Things are getting better. And believe it, we need you. We need your youth. We need your idealism. We need your strength out there in what we're trying to accomplish today. So, welcome to the world.

The world you inherit today may not always be an easy one, for nothing worth winning is easily gained. But it's a good world, and it's a world that each of you can help to make a better one. What greater gift than that -- what nobler heritage -- could anyone be blessed with?

So, may I add my congratulations to all of you, good fortune to all of you. And above all, God bless you. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

11:05 A.M. EDT

Connie:

The President's remarks were essential in support of the conclusions reached by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (copy attached).

The more complete discussion which the report allows may help them to gain a greater understanding of the large body of evidence which support the President's position.

P.J.

Date

6/3/83

TO:

P. J. Maloney

May I have
the May 17

press conference

attached. Thanks

FROM: **CONNIE MACKEY**

Presidential Correspondence -
Children's Unit

Room 20, Extension 7734 or 7735

SJM

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 17, 1983

NEWS CONFERENCE
BY
THE PRESIDENT

The East Room

8:01 P.M. EDT

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 17, 1983

NEWS CONFERENCE
BY
THE PRESIDENT

The East Room

8:01 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good evening. I have a statement. I'm gratified that a bipartisan consensus on arms control is emerging from the recommendations of the Scowcroft Commission. Their report combined into one package three of our top priority goals -- modernization, deterrence, and arms control. And I'm integrating their arms control recommendations into our START proposals. I will also support their proposal to develop a small single warhead missile for more stable deterrence in the future.

Many in the Congress have shared their thinking on arms control with us. Close cooperation can show the Soviets that we Americans stand united, ready to negotiate in good faith until we succeed in reducing the level of nuclear weapons on both sides.

Working together and exploring initiatives such as a proposed mutual build-down of strategic nuclear forces, we can keep America strong and achieve arms reductions that strengthen the peace and benefit all mankind. I congratulate both appropriations committees for their bipartisan approval of the MX Peacekeeper Missile recommended by the Scowcroft Commission. I look forward to prompt approval of this vital program by the full House and Senate. It will be one of the most important arms control votes of the 98th Congress.

The Scowcroft Commission demonstrated it could take on a complex issue and achieve bipartisan agreement. The question now is whether the Congress can also reach a consensus with a resolution and unity to strengthen our national security, reduce the risk of war, and, ultimately, achieve reductions of nuclear weapons.

Another subject. The Senate will soon reconsider or consider -- no, reconsider is the proper word -- a budget resolution. Some say the congressional budget process is at stake. I say the stakes for the American people are greater. The real question is, do we keep our hard won economic recovery moving forward or do we stop recovery by reversing course? The answer for most Americans is clear.

In January, I proposed a common sense budget to reduce deficits through defense cuts and a domestic spending freeze but with virtually no new taxes in 1984 or '85. The House and the Senate Budget Committee said no. They have voted to increase domestic spending and to raise the people's taxes by over a quarter of a trillion dollars. That's a \$3,550 tax hike for a typical family over the next five years -- enough to pay for nearly nine months of grocery bills.

I tried again supporting the so-called "Domenici Compromise" with less defense and more domestic spending than I really wanted and to no avail. It is time to draw the line and stand up

MORE

for the people. I will not support a budget resolution that raises taxes while we are coming out of a recession. I will veto any tax bill that would do this.

And I will veto spending bills that would rekindle the fires of inflation and high interest rates. The American people didn't send us to Washington to continue raising their taxes, spending more on wasteful programs or weakening our defense. They sent us here to stop that, and that's what we're going to try to do.

Now, Helen?

Q Mr. President, in February 1981 you projected a balanced budget for 1984. And now you are -- according to your arithmetic, we will be \$190 billion in debt, deficit for 1984. How will this affect your economic recovery program? And I would like to follow up.

THE PRESIDENT: Helen, I think the fact is in February of '81 we were speaking the tone of all of the economic advisors there are, and no one foresaw the falling off the cliff that took place in July. We had been in a recession since 1979 in this country, and no one knew or believed that it was going to take that big dip that it took then and which many people referred to as a "separate recession." We altered, naturally, our estimates on that. We know that we are going to have to have a sizable deficit in '83 and in '84. But what we're trying to do in our budget planning, and running into some objections, is set us on a path of decreasing deficits to where we can look down the road a few years and see ourselves approaching a balanced budget.

This was what -- the '84 budget that I have mentioned here, my remarks, and that I submitted to the Congress earlier this year for '84 -- was designed to do, to set us on that kind of a path. And I don't see -- of course, about 50 percent of the budget deficits we have to say are made up or are based on the recession. And as we have recovery and begin to come out of this, that will have an effect also on the size of the deficits.

Q Since you've drawn a line on tax increases and further defense cuts, where would you cut domestic spending, I mean to reduce the deficit further?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, in the budget that I submitted, we called it sort of a freeze at the time. And what it was based on was the 1983 budget, the present budget, plus four percent across the board for domestic spending. And this was on an estimate that we could bring inflation down to a four percent figure. So it was going to be for '84, the '83 budget adjusted for inflation. Well, we have inflation down to less than four percent. And so if we adopted that budget, we would be giving a real increase, over and above inflation, of the '83 spending.

And I don't think we've done badly in '83, and that's why I still think that it is

MORE

a budget that should be considered because that budget would have set us and started us on the line of declining deficits.

Jim?

Q Mr. President, with the Syrians balking at joining the Middle East negotiations, how will you and Ambassador Habib manage to encourage them to take part in the withdrawal, and, really, what reason do you have to be optimistic that this will take place?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, for one thing, the Syrians are on record. They were invited by Lebanon to come in and help them in the troubles that were going on in Lebanon, and now Lebanon has said they're no longer needed and has invited them out. But, at the same time, the Syrians have repeatedly said that, when the other forces leave, when the Israelis leave and so forth, they, too, will leave Lebanon. Now, I grant you they're saying some different things today, but I also know that a number of their Arab allies are urging them to stick with their word and to leave when all forces are prepared to leave. And I can't believe that the Syrians want to find themselves alone, separated from all of their Arab allies.

Q Mr. President, to follow up on Jim's question, what specifically is the United States willing to do to encourage Syria to leave? For instance, is the United States willing to offer a negotiating role to the Soviets, if that would help, or willing to offer U.S. military and economic aid to the Syrians to encourage them to withdraw their troops from Lebanon?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that we'd make the kind of -- I think they should be able to see that they would have the same kind of relationship with us that other countries there in the Middle East have. I don't think that the negotiations should include inviting the Soviet Union into the Middle East. I don't see what reason they have to be there, and possibly there is pressure on the Syrians coming from the Soviets who now have several thousand of their military forces in there in addition to the missiles and so forth.

George?

Q Mr. President, several recent episodes suggest --

THE PRESIDENT: I misnamed you. I'm sorry.

Q Thank you, sir. Several recent episodes suggest that some administration officials are putting self-interest ahead of the public interest. I refer specifically to an Assistant Defense Secretary's promotion of a weapons system after receiving a \$50,000 consultancy fee from that manufacturer of that weapons system, to an Assistant Commerce Secretary's recommending that government weather satellites be sold at the same time he was negotiating for a job with the company likely to acquire those satellites, and to the U.S. Information Agency's practice of giving high-paying jobs and choice assignments to children and friends of top administration officials. How do you feel about all this, sir? Is this acceptable practice in your administration?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think since every one of these things that you've mentioned as being corrected or the people themselves involved, simply because there might be a perception of wrongdoing, have offered their resignations -- I think it goes back to what has been

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an attempt on the part of some to portray our administration as always being involved in this sort of thing; but I would like to cite that in almost all of the cases back over these two years and several months, none of the allegations were ever proven and everything turned out all right. But then as time goes on, there's a tendency to refer back and it reminds me of a producer in Hollywood once who refused to hire a director. And the picture that he refused to hire the director for turned out to be a failure. And the next time the director's name came up, the producer said, "No, he was associated with one of the worst failures I ever had." I think there's something of that tone that goes on with what has been -- what we've been doing.

Now, the people that were hired by USIA, I think it is being well managed and I think there's been a vast improvement in that agency under its present direction. And the young people that were hired were hired because they were imminently well qualified for the jobs. And I think in many cases, like most of the people that we've appointed to government, they took those supposed high-paying jobs at something of a sacrifice in relation to what they could get out in the -- in civilian life.

Q But, sir, didn't they have an entre that someone coming in off the street would not have in a similar situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, isn't almost anyone that you appoint to a position in government someone that you either know or you know through someone? Because how else do you find the kind of people that you want for the jobs?

Nepotism, in my line, would be if the person in charge was handling -- or was hiring his own relatives. And there's been nothing of that kind going on.

Yes, Jerry.

Q Mr. President, your Big Four advisors have been at odds for some time on policy and tactical matters, the pragmatists versus the true believers. And this, at times, has been something of a bitter feud.

If the in-fighting is over in the White House staff, how did you end it? And if it's still going on, what are you going to do to bring peace into this house?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it isn't going on. And I think it was much more exaggerated, by way of leaks and so forth from others, than it really was.

Now, I think any time when you have an administration and you have a number of people and you've got issues in which there are varieties of options and so forth, you're going to find times when some will be on one side of one option, some on the other. And I make the decisions and so sometimes some are losers and some are winners. But I don't think there's anything that can't be worked out and hasn't been worked out there among our top staff.

Sam, I -- Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you subscribe to the theory that large budget deficits in the range of \$200 billion and such, as your '83 budget itself would project, will keep interest rates high, particularly long-term interest rates? And, if so, do you not feel that this is as great a threat to recovery as more taxes?

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THE PRESIDENT: If interest rates were to go up, of course. But I do not see any sign of that. And they have come down considerably, as I have repeatedly said, to half of what they were just a short time ago -- and when we started. And I know that perceptions in the market-place can sometimes influence the people in the market-place. And we have to watch out for things of that kind.

But all of the economic indicators are such that I see know reason why they should be going up. As a matter of fact, I think in the very near future, we are going to see a further drop in interest rates.

Q Well, sir, may I follow up --

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q -- because you mentioned the word "perceptions?" Many people believe that, if you reappoint Paul Volcker as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, this will steady the market and this will give confidence to Wall Street. Will you reappoint Paul Volcker?

THE PRESIDENT: Sam, as I have said before, we do not discuss the possible appointees that face us until the time comes. And when the time is right -- why -- we will get together on that subject and decide what our course is going to be.

Andrea?

Q Mr. President, the situation in Poland seems to be getting worse, not better. Can you explain, then, why you have decided to welcome the Soviets into long-term negotiations on grain, and why this should not be viewed as simply trying to attempt to curry favor with the farmers for 1984?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I do not think it is that. And, as you know, I had always disagreed with using grain as a single economic weapon back when it was imposed as an embargo -- and lifted that embargo. All that we have done is agreed to sit down with the Soviet Union to explore the idea of a long-term agreement. And I think that there are a couple reasons for this.

One of them -- it will, I think, restore something of what we lost with the embargo in the eyes of the world, restore us as being viewed as a dependable provider. That is one thing. Another thing is that I think the benefit will accrue to us, certainly, as much as to them. And, if you want to look at it another way, this is a case in which the Soviet Union which has extended itself so far in building up its military buildup -- we are not offering any credit deals or anything of that kind. They are going to have to buy cash-on-the-barrelhead. And that is hard cash that they will have to come up with.

Q Sir, can -- if I may follow up -- since it will result in more grain being exported to the Soviets, how do you justify that with our position, our pressure on the European Allies to restrict our trade, Western trade with the Eastern Bloc?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The only conversations we have had -- and I think we have resolved them very well. There is peace among us with regard to East-West trade. And the only problems we had were subsidized credit and trade that was going on in which the Soviet Union was being allowed to purchase at below market value. And so this and -- just as this is different than the gas deal -- in that instance, our allies were making themselves dependent

MORE

on the Soviet Union and were providing cash badly needed by the Soviet Union. So, there's a little difference between buying and selling.

Yes? Joe?

Q Mr. President, over the weekend we learned that you had pardoned one of the Cuban-Americans who was convicted of participating in the Watergate burglary and then we learned you had turned down two other Watergate pardons. I would like to know why you took those actions.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't turn anyone down. I have received no recommendation from the Justice Department for other pardons. I did receive the recommendation for the one gentleman. He had never committed a crime of any kind before. He was not, in any way, a ringleader or a great activist in the deed performed. He served his sentence and since then has lived up to the letter of the law and been a very fine productive citizen and those are the terms for pardoning someone. So, we pardoned him.

Bill?

Q Mr. President, not long ago you expressed in no uncertain terms your anger at the nation's bankers, or some of them, for what you termed "misinformation" on the business of withholding. Now, it appears that the withholding will go through the Senate as it went through the House today by a margin that's large enough to override a veto. You threatened to veto it before. Will you still?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm not going to comment on that, Bill, because I understand that there is some talk of a something or other of a compromise in it and I'm going to wait and see what they come up with there on the Hill.

Now, wait a minute. Deborah.

Q Mr. President, six weeks ago you said that there were serious grounds for questioning Soviet compliance with arms control agreements and that you might have more to say about that. And since then, the United States has confirmed that the Soviets have again tested the missile that has been raising U.S. concerns. With the talks resuming today with the Soviets on a new arms control agreement, don't the American people have a right to know if you believe the Soviets have violated past ones?

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't so much as to whether we believe, it's a case of whether you have the evidence to actually pin down an infraction. And you said they tested the weapon again. We even aren't sure that this is the same weapon or that they're not testing two weapons. But with the information that we have, from our own trying to verify what is going on, yes, we have reason to believe that very possibly they were in violation of the SALT agreement. And we have appealed to them for more facts, more information on the weapon they tested. So far, they have not provided that information to us. So, all we can tell you is that we have very great suspicion, but again you can't go to court without a case and without the solid evidence. And it's just too difficult and we don't have that.

Yes, Candy?

Q Mr. President, you recently received a report on education which stated that if an unfriendly foreign power had imposed on America the mediocre educational performance which exists today, we might have viewed it as an act of war. In your '84 budget request, you ask for about \$13.5 billion in federal funds for the Department of Education and over \$235 billion for the Department of Defense. Isn't it time, in light of the report to reassess

your priorities?

THE PRESIDENT: Not really, because, you see, education is not the prime responsibility of the federal government, and the total budget for education in the United States is far greater than the defense budget. As a matter of fact, the federal government actually provides less than ten percent of the cost of education through the Department of Education.

And for that ten percent, one of the things that's wrong with the school system, and if you want to talk to some local school board members many of them will confirm this, is that for the ten percent or less of funding, the federal government has wanted about 50 percent of a voice in dictating to the schools and running the schools.

Now we've gone through a period -- a number of years, about ten years -- in which we went from \$760 million federal aid to education to about \$14.9 billion, and that's a 2000 percent increase. And it was during that period that the testing scores, the college testing, entrance tests and so forth began to decline so severely. Now, I appointed a Commission to study and bring back a report on what we felt was a decline in education in our schools.

They brought back a masterful report. And in that report there is very little suggestion for more money. What they're talking about can be corrected without money. It takes some leadership. It takes some return to basics. It takes having students that now have to learn what they're supposed to learn in a class before they're moved on to the next class, just because they've come to the end of the year. And there's an awful lot of that goes on.

It also takes required courses, in English, in the basics, in mathematics, in science, particularly in high school. And yet we've seen a time in which you can get credits toward graduation for cheerleading, in some of our schools. Or how would you like to graduate by getting straight A's in bachelor life? (Laughter)

We think there is some common sense that is needed. And so we've proven that money -- throwing money at it isn't the answer. And the federal government can never match the funding of schools at the local and state level, where we've created the greatest public school system the world has ever seen, and then have let it deteriorate. And I think you can make a case that it began to deteriorate when the federal government started interfering in education.

Q If I could follow up, I realize that many of the things in the report could be done without further increases in funds, but that also recommended more school days, longer school hours, better qualified teachers. I think many public school systems would tell you they don't have the money to do that. Where are they going to get it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know that so many of those things -- there would be some increase in money there, I'm quite sure. But again, how much is being wasted on some things that aren't contributing to their education that could be transferred to that. And I think that -- well, right now there are three -- Time Magazine, just a few days ago had an article in there about three inner-city high schools: one in the Bronx,

New York, one in Los Angeles, one in Austin, Texas. And just by changes from the principal's office down in leadership these schools have become what schools are supposed to be to the extent that students are leaving private schools to transfer to these public schools. And I want to implement as completely as possible that plan that was submitted to us by this commission that was investigating education. And it won't cost \$11 billion, which a nameless gentleman has suggested he would advocate that we spend. (Laughter.)

Lou.

Q Mr. President, you've described the Sandinista regime as being oppressive and inimical to our interest in the Western Hemisphere. Why don't we openly support those 7,000 guerrillas that are in rebellion against it rather than giving aid through covert activity?

THE PRESIDENT: Why, because we want to keep on obeying the laws of our country, which we are obeying. (Laughter.)

Q Do you think that if the Sandinista government remains in power in Nicaragua that democracy and freedom can survive in Central America?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Lou, let me answer it this way: We have tried to negotiate. We have tried to talk and to relate on a bilateral basis with the Nicaraguan government, the Sandinista government.

The only thing that -- objection that we have to them is they're not minding their own business. They are attempting to overthrow a duly-elected government in a neighboring country. They are supplying direction. They are supplying training. They're supplying arms and everything else that is needed to guerrillas that are trying to overthrow that government.

All we've said to Nicaragua, and from the beginning, is, "Become a legitimate American state. Quit trying to subvert your neighbors. And we'll talk all kinds of relationship with you."

But here is a country, a government, that was not elected, that then threw out part of its own revolutionary forces because they wanted legitimate democracy. And yet at the same time that it's complaining because those same forces -- those are not remnants of the Somoza government that they threw out of office. Those are some of their former allies. And all they want from them is for that government to keep the promises it made to the Organization of American States, which were to have elections, to restore human rights, to observe all the democratic principles.

The Miskito Indians are also fighting because they were chased out of their villages, their villages burned, their crops were destroyed or confiscated by this revolutionary government and the Miskito Indians are fighting for their lives. But what we've said to them is, and will say again, if they'll just start minding their own business, they can get along with all the rest of us.

Now, let me -- I get stuck over on that side here and seeing everyone --

Ralph.

Q Mr. President, back to the Middle East. Now that Israel has signed its troop withdrawal agreement with Lebanon,

do you intend to lift the embargo against the supply to Israel of F-16 aircraft?

THE PRESIDENT: This is a matter now that must go to consultation between the State Department -- they handle that -- and the Congress, and that consultation is about to begin.

Yes, Bob Rowley.

Q Mr. President, given the uncertainties about whether the withdrawal agreement in Lebanon will succeed, what are the prospects for getting our own U.S. Marines out of Lebanon, and is it likely that the number of American troops may, in fact, increase in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you have to remember what the multinational forces went in there for. The multinational forces are there to help the new government of Lebanon maintain order until it can organize its military and its police and assume control over its own borders and its own internal security. So it could be that the multinational forces will be there for quite a period. And we have to remember eight years of Lebanon being totally divided with literally warlords and their own independent militias and so forth and that's the function and the purpose for them being, for our multinational forces being there.

Q I'd just like to follow up. Do you see their number increasing in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen any sign of that. This would depend a lot on Lebanon and their needs and whether they could demonstrate needs for this.

Q Mr. President, Louis Harris recently announced a survey he conducted for Atlantic Richfield found that almost 90 percent of those who responded said that government should approve such things, for instance, as new toys for safety before they could be sold, and almost 70 percent said that government should bar T.V. ads that are misleading. And, overall, the poll showed that people want government to interpose itself in the marketplace, especially in the area of consumer product safety. And, in light of your oft said assertion that Americans think themselves over-regulated, what do you make of Mr. Harris' poll?

THE PRESIDENT: It's a case, also, of which government level is the best one to do this and whether this requires a gigantic federal bureaucracy. When I was Governor of California we had, we did that at the state level and very effectively. And there are also private sector things -- Better Business Bureaus that do much the same thing. But I have to -- as you know, I'm a Johnny one-note on this. A lot of things that are suggested by the federal government I want to make sure that they aren't the legitimate function of another level of government and that they can't be better done by another level of government.

Jerry?

Q There have been some recent reports, Mr. President, raising the possibility that you might abandon black voters in the event that you seek reelection. Of course, that's been denied by some officials in the White House. Even so, considering the backlash to your administration policies in such areas as the budget and civil rights, how do you see your chances with black voters in the event you seek to run again?

THE PRESIDENT: Jerry, I'd have perfect confidence in our chances with black voters in America if we could get the truth to them. I know

that, again, that word "perception" has been carried on, and what the perception is. First of all, you are hearing another official from the White House telling you that, no, we are not casting any voters aside. And, yes, I do think we have a lot to offer.

Now, among the perceptions that somehow our budget cuts have affected the black community more than any other -- in our social -- or changes in social programs, all we have done is remove from the rolls people that we believe are at an income level that is above what is required for them to be getting some benefits at the cost -- or at the expense of their fellow taxpayers. We have increased our ability to help those truly at the lower earning end. And the very fact of what we have been able to do with inflation -- a family that had \$10,000 in 1979 and 1980, if we had left the inflation rate where it was then, that \$10,000-a-year family would only have \$7,900 in purchasing power. And that is like cutting their income by \$2,100.

I think that -- and as to -- you mentioned about civil rights -- we are enforcing civil rights at a record level with regard to the charges made for criminal violation of civil rights. The same is true of our ability -- the money that we have regained in wage disputes for people that have been denied their fair wages. We are setting a record in that. We are out ahead of what has been done in the past in any number of those items. We have conducted some 21,000 inquiries into voting -- what we think are suspected voting violations. And as you know, we have extended the Voting Rights Act for a longer period than has ever been done in history.

What I think is that a pretty good hatchet job has been done on us. And a great many people sincerely and honestly believe something that just is not true. And my belief has always been, and long before I ever got here, that wherever in this land any individual's Constitutional rights are being unjustly denied, it is the obligation of the federal government a point of bayonet if necessary to restore that individual's Constitutional rights.

Q If I can follow up, Mr. President -- that statement and some others you have made recently have the markings of a candidate who, indeed, will run for re-election. (Laughter.)

Q (Laughter.) That's right.

Q Are you trying to tell us something? Or are we misreading you?

THE PRESIDENT: Jerry, you are misreading to this extent; that is a decision that is not going to be made yet. But I think it would stand to reason that, if the answer were no for me, that Republicans would still be under the cloud that I have just described. And I think that I would be very vocal in a campaign on behalf -- well, I intend right now to support Congressional candidates, senatorial candidates to the best of my ability and gubernatorial candidates.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: All right, Helen.

END

8:35 P.M. EDT

DRAFT/Date

6/4/83

RR /

(Drafter)

(Rev. I)

(Rev. II)

AVH /

CON

[Signature]

[Blue scribble]

Submitted 6/04/83
to CAD

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosures:

Other: *Helen from Seton Hall address*

ROBO TO ANSWER COMPLAINT MAIL RE RR'S SPEECH AT SETON HALL U. AND THE COMMISSION'S
REPORT TO LENGTH HOURS OF STUDY

Dear

Background for Y962

On behalf of President Reagan, I would like to thank you (and your students) for taking the time to share your thoughts with him about your particular school. Since receiving recommendations from the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the President has heard from hundreds of teachers and their students, many of whom invite the President to visit their schools. While the President would like to meet each and everyone of you, he has had to settle for visiting schools on a select basis according to his schedule. Those visits, ^{however,} have confirmed the President's ~~firm~~ belief that ~~while~~ there are thousands of outstanding schools and thousands of dedicated teachers, students, and school administrators, ^{but,} we must not look at ourselves ~~and say~~ as a nation and see no room for improvement.

Unfortunately, the facts show that indeed there is alot of room for improvement and the President believes that those same dedicated teachers and administrators recognize this. Since 1963, Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have demonstrated a virtually unbroken decline. Thirty-five of our states require only one year of math for a high school diploma, and 36 require only one year of science. When compared to students in oth ~~r~~ industrialized nations, we've begun to realize that many of ours place badly. Sadly, it's been estimated that half of our country's gifted young people are not performing up to their full potential.

6/13/83

There are those who attribute the problems we face nationally regarding education to lack of money. In spite of all the stories you may have been hearing about spending cutbacks, total expenditures in the nation's public schools this year, according to the National Education Association, are expected to reach \$116.9 billion. That is up seven percent from last year and more than double what it was just ten years ago. It would appear that if money was the answer, the problem would have been shrinking rather than growing for the last ten years. We spend more money per child for education than any other country in the world. The answer is not more money, but good leadership, dedication from well-trained teachers, discipline, homework, testing and efficient use of time. The best way to encourage these attributes is by rewarding excellence to those same principals, administrators and teachers. Teachers should be paid and promoted on the basis of their merit and competence.

We can also encourage excellence by encouraging parental choice. That is exactly what we're trying to do through our programs of tuition tax credits and vouchers. We are allowing individual parents to choose the kinds of schools they know through the free and vigorous competition of ideas. President Reagan believes that the principles of intellectual freedom and innovation, for individual families, through the vouchers and tuition tax credits as well as for individual public school systems through block grants that come without the red tape of government regulations from Washington attached can help to restore the overall picture of education in America.

President Reagan ^{has} ~~must~~ look at the facts and the overall state of education in our country. He is proud of the individual teachers, parents and students who are working daily to ^{prepare good citizens} ~~provide the leaders~~ for tomorrow. But ^{he believes strongly that we must all} ~~we must~~ recognize problems when we see them, and those problems must be addressed ^{with new and innovative ideas.}

With the best wishes of the President,

Sincerely,

DRAFT/Date

6/4/83

RR /

(Drafter)

(Rev. I)

(Rev. II)

AVH /

CON

[Signature]

[Blue scribble]

Submitted 6/04/83
JOEAD

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosures:

Other: *Helen from Seton Hall address*

ROBO TO ANSWER COMPLAINT MAIL RE RR'S SPEECH AT SETON HALL U. AND THE COMMISSION'S
REPORT TO LENGTH HOURS OF STUDY

Dear

On behalf of President Reagan, I would like to thank you (and your students) for taking the time to share your thoughts with him about your particular school. Since receiving recommendations from the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the President has heard from hundreds of teachers and their students, many of whom invite the President to visit their schools. While the President would like to meet each and everyone of you, he has had to settle for visiting schools on a select basis according to his schedule. Those visits, ^{however,} have confirmed the President's ~~firm~~ belief that ~~while~~ there are thousands of outstanding schools and thousands of dedicated teachers, students, and school administrators, ^{but,} we must not look at ourselves ~~and~~ as a nation and see no room for improvement.

Unfortunately, the facts show that indeed there is a lot of room for improvement and the President believes that those same dedicated teachers and administrators recognize this. Since 1963, Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have demonstrated a virtually unbroken decline. Thirty-five of our states require only one year of math for a high school diploma, and 36 require only one year of science. When compared to students in other industrialized nations, we've begun to realize that many of ours place badly. Sadly, it's been estimated that half of our country's gifted young people are not performing up to their full potential.

6/13/83

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