

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE  
"A NEW COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION"  
CAL COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL -- LATIMER, IOWA  
FEBRUARY 3, 1988

I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE AND SEE FIRST HAND  
ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE  
NATION -- THE RECIPIENT OF THE NATIONAL SECONDARY  
RECOGNITION AWARD BY THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

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-- AND A SCHOOL CITED BY EDUCATION SECRETARY BILL BENNETT AS HAVING A MODEL CURRICULUM OF AMERICA'S HIGH SCHOOLS. THIS IS A SCHOOL THAT CLEARLY IS DOING SOME GOOD THINGS FOR ITS STUDENTS.

I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH YOU TODAY ABOUT AN ISSUE THAT IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL TO THE HEALTH OF OUR DEMOCRACY AND THE WEALTH OF OUR NATION -- THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG AMERICANS.

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WE'RE RUNNING A DEFICIT IN THIS COUNTRY, AND  
IT'S GETTING WORSE. I'M TALKING ABOUT OUR  
EDUCATION DEFICIT, AND IT IS NO LESS SEVERE -- AND  
IN THE LONG RUN --- NO LESS DAMAGING THAN OUR  
HUGE FEDERAL BUDGET DEFICIT.

WE'RE A CAPITALIST COUNTRY, AND CAPITALISM  
REQUIRES HUMAN CAPITAL. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO  
SQUANDER THE TALENTS AND POTENTIAL OF OUR

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NATION'S YOUNG PEOPLE -- PEOPLE LIKE YOU IN  
SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY -- BY FAILING TO  
OFFER THEM A PROPER EDUCATION.

THE FACT IS, THERE'S A BIG GAP BETWEEN WHAT  
OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE LEARNING TODAY COMPARED  
WITH PREVIOUS GENERATIONS -- AND WITH THE REST OF  
THE WORLD. IN MANY AREAS, WE'VE FALLEN BEHIND.  
THE NEXT PRESIDENT MUST MAKE A NEW COMMITMENT  
TO



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CUTTING THE EDUCATION DEFICIT BEFORE TODAY'S  
GENERATION OF STUDENTS GOES OUT INTO THE  
WORKPLACE.

IT WOULD TAKE A LONG TIME TO SUMMARIZE BOB  
DOLE'S RECORD ON EDUCATION, BUT I WANT TO HIT A  
FEW HIGHLIGHTS, THEN DESCRIBE THE EDUCATION  
POLICIES I WOULD FOLLOW AS PRESIDENT.

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### IRA'S EDUCATION

THIS NATION PRODUCES ONE COMMODITY THAT IS  
PRIZED THE WORLD OVER: A DEGREE FROM AN  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY. JUST ONE SCHOOL FROM THE  
BIG EIGHT, THE BIG TEN OR THE IVY LEAGUE WOULD BE  
THE PRIDE OF MOST FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

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BUT THROUGHOUT THE 1980'S, THIS COMMODITY --  
THE COLLEGE DIPLOMA -- HAS BEEN RISING IN PRICE AT  
TWICE THE RATE OF INFLATION. TODAY, THE COST OF  
FOUR YEARS AT SOME SCHOOLS RIVALS THE PRICE OF A  
SMALL HOUSE.

MY CONCERN IS THAT THE NEEDIEST STUDENTS --  
MANY FROM MIDDLE AND WORKING CLASS FAMILIES --  
MAY FIND THE RISING COSTS TOO HIGH, AND DECIDE TO  
FORGO COLLEGE ALTOGETHER. THAT'S SOMETHING WE

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CAN'T AFFORD. WE MUST NOT CREATE A SITUATION IN WHICH ONLY THE RICH CAN SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO COLLEGE.

THAT'S WHY LAST YEAR I PROPOSED CREATION OF EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS. UNDER THIS PLAN, PARENTS COULD CONTRIBUTE UP TO \$1,000 A YEAR TO A SPECIAL TAX-DEFERRED ACCOUNT. FUNDS IN THE ACCOUNT COULD BE USED ONLY FOR COLLEGE OR OTHER POST-SECONDARY SCHOOLS. IT WOULD BE, IN EFFECT, AN IRA FOR EDUCATION.



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IF THIS SOUNDS FAMILIAR, IT SHOULD. I HAVE  
INTRODUCED SIMILAR PROPOSALS SEVERAL TIMES OVER  
THE LAST FEW YEARS, BEGINNING AS FAR BACK AS  
1980. AND I'LL KEEP ON PUSHING THE IDEA AS  
PRESIDENT UNTIL CONGRESS PASSES IT.

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## TARGETING COLLEGE GRANTS

GIVEN THE LIMITED FEDERAL RESOURCES  
AVAILABLE FOR STUDENT AID SUCH AS PELL GRANTS  
AND GUARANTEED STUDENT LOANS, WE MUST BE  
CERTAIN THAT THESE FUNDS ARE TARGETED ON THOSE  
WHO NEED THEM MOST.

THAT IS WHY I ENDORSED A GRADUATED RISE IN  
PELL GRANTS FROM \$2,100 IN 1986 TO \$3,200 A YEAR IN  
1991. THE GRANTS WOULD BE LIMITED TO FAMILIES  
WITH INCOMES OF LESS THAN \$30,000 AFTER TAXES.

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NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL A GOOD INVESTMENT,  
BECAUSE THOSE FEDERAL FUNDS WILL BE  
"RECAPTURED" MANY TIMES OVER BY THE TREASURY  
WHEN THOSE STUDENTS ENTER THE WORK FORCE --  
AND IN BETTER JOBS THAN THEY OTHERWISE WOULD  
HAVE HAD.

THAT'S BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE, AND THAT'S THE  
KIND OF NEW COMMITMENT THE NEXT PRESIDENT WILL  
HAVE TO MAKE.

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SOME DISTURBING FIGURES

THREE MONTHS AGO, WHEN I ANNOUNCED THAT I  
WOULD BE A CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT IN 1988, I  
DECLARED THAT THIS NATION MUST REAFFIRM ITS  
COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION AS THE GREAT EQUALIZER  
-- AS THE DOOR TO OPPORTUNITY FOR MILLIONS OF  
CHILDREN WHO MAY START A STEP BEHIND OTHERS.

CLEARLY, WE ARE NOT MAKING THAT COMMITMENT  
TODAY.



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ALREADY, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
ESTIMATES THERE ARE OVER 20 MILLION FUNCTIONALLY  
ILLITERATE AMERICANS -- PEOPLE WHO CAN'T READ OR  
WRITE WELL ENOUGH TO FILL DEMANDING JOBS. WE  
OUGHT TO CUT THAT FIGURE BY 2 MILLION A YEAR --  
AND IN MY ADMINISTRATION, THAT WILL BE A PRIMARY  
GOAL.

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TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH  
DROP OUT OF SCHOOL. WE SHOULD CUT THAT  
DROPOUT RATE BY 10 PERCENT A YEAR. IN MY  
ADMINISTRATION, WE'LL PLEDGE TO DO JUST THAT.

THERE ARE STILL THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN  
STUDENTS LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL WITHOUT BEING ABLE  
TO READ THEIR DIPLOMAS ON GRADUATION DAY.  
THAT'S A SHAMEFUL RECORD. I DON'T HAVE TO TELL  
YOU WHAT THAT SHORTFALL IS COSTING US THROUGH  
THE CRIME AND WELFARE DEPENDENCY IT FOSTERS.

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MAKING SCHOOL ACCOUNTABLE

AND WHEN THE COST OF TRAINING WORKERS IN  
BASIC TASKS COMES OUT OF THE REVENUES OF  
BUSINESSES, THOSE EMPLOYERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO  
ASK -- WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK: "ARE WE  
GETTING EVERYTHING WE'RE PAYING FOR?"

NOW LET ME BE CLEAR. WE SPEND A LOT ON  
EDUCATION. AND THE REPUBLICAN RECORD ON  
EDUCATION IS A SOLID ONE.

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TOTAL SPENDING FOR EDUCATION HAS INCREASED  
15 PERCENT IN REAL TERMS DURING THE REAGAN  
YEARS -- WITH THE HELP OF CONGRESS.

BUT SPENDING ISN'T EVERYTHING. AS A NATION, WE  
SPENT 310 BILLION DOLLARS ON EDUCATION AT ALL  
LEVELS LAST YEAR. THAT'S MORE THAN WE SPENT ON  
DEFENSE.



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OVERALL, WE SPEND 6.8 PERCENT OF OUR GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT ON EDUCATION WHILE JAPAN SPENDS ONLY 5.7 PERCENT. YET THE JAPANESE ARE OUT-PERFORMING US.

IT'S TIME TO START LOOKING BEYOND SPENDING -- AND TOWARD NEW WAYS TO MAKE SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE. A NEW COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION MUST LEAD TO BETTER VALUE FOR THE DOLLARS WE DO SPEND.

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THIRTY YEARS AGO -- AND TODAY

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE  
ARE BEGINNING TO GIVE OUR SCHOOLS THE ATTENTION  
THEY NEED. EDUCATION REFORM IS SWEEPING THE  
COUNTRY WITH THE SAME KIND OF COMMITMENT THAT  
AMERICANS MADE IN THE SHADOW OF THE SOVIET  
SPUTNIK SATELLITE 30 YEARS AGO.

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SINCE 1980, HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION  
REQUIREMENTS HAVE INCREASED IN 39 STATES AND ALL  
BUT THREE STATES HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT  
EDUCATION REFORMS.

THE FEDERAL ROLE

ALL THIS IS BEING DONE LARGELY IN THE  
NEIGHBORHOODS AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND  
THAT IS APPROPRIATE. I HAVE LONG BELIEVED THAT  
EDUCATION IS A NATIONAL CONCERN, A STATE  
RESPONSIBILITY, AND A LOCAL FUNCTION.

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TO BE BLUNT, IT'S NOT FOR WASHINGTON TO COME  
STEAL THE SHOW FROM PARENTS AND EDUCATORS  
WHO CARE THE MOST, WHO ARE TRYING TO ADDRESS  
THE PROBLEMS, AND WHO ARE IN THE BEST PLACE TO  
JUDGE WHAT WORKS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE SHOULD BE TO  
INSPIRE SCHOOLS TO IMPROVE WHAT GOES ON IN THE  
CLASSROOM.

IT SHOULD IDENTIFY NEW PROGRAMS THAT  
PRODUCE POSITIVE RESULTS.



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BUT IT SHOULD HOLD THESE PROGRAMS UP AS  
MODELS, NOT IMPOSE THEM AS MOLDS.

AND ALWAYS, THE AIM SHOULD BE TO ADOPT  
PROGRAMS OF PROVEN SUCCESS -- WITH POSITIVE  
EFFECTS ON THE FUTURE LIVES OF STUDENTS -- AND  
NOT JUST ABSTRACT IMPROVEMENTS IN EDUCATION  
STATISTICS.

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IN THE SENATE, I HAVE ADDRESSED THESE NEEDS  
WITH SPECIFIC LEGISLATION -- "THE EDUCATION  
COMPETITIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT ACT." THIS BILL  
TARGETS FEDERAL RESOURCES TOWARD POORER  
STUDENTS, ENCOURAGES PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT,  
AND PROVIDES INCENTIVES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES TO  
DEVELOP TRAINING PROGRAMS THAT WOULD LEAD TO  
JOBS.

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## IMPROVING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

OUR GREATEST PROBLEMS ARE AT THE LEVEL OF  
SECONDARY AND PRIMARY EDUCATION -- AND THESE  
REQUIRE OUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.

IT IS A NATIONAL EMBARRASSMENT THAT ALMOST  
40 PERCENT OF 17-YEAR-OLDS WHO HAVE TAKEN  
AMERICAN HISTORY COURSES DON'T HAVE THE  
FOGGIEST IDEA OF WHEN COLUMBUS DISCOVERED THE  
NEW WORLD. THEY CAN'T PLACE THE FIRST WORLD WAR  
WITHIN THE CORRECT HALF CENTURY.

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LIKE MOST AMERICANS, I BELIEVE THAT WE MUST  
RE-EMPHASIZE INSTRUCTION IN THE BASICS: IN  
ENGLISH, IN MATHEMATICS, IN SCIENCE, IN HISTORY AND  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES. AND I WOULD ADD COMPUTER  
TRAINING TO THAT LIST.

WE MUST ALSO FOSTER COMPETITION AND EXPAND  
EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, BUT WE MUST DO SO IN A WAY  
THAT WILL PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN -- AND NOT  
UNDERMINE -- OUR PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.



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LET ME SUGGEST SEVERAL IDEAS THAT THE  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD SUPPORT.

MANY AMERICANS HAVE WATCHED THE SUCCESS  
OF MAGNET SCHOOLS -- SPECIAL INSTITUTIONS THAT  
EMPHASIZE PARTICULAR AREAS OF LEARNING, AND  
WHICH HAVE INJECTED MORE COMPETITION IN SCHOOL  
SYSTEMS IN BOTH BIG CITIES AND RURAL COMMUNITIES.

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BUT AN EVEN MORE PROMISING INNOVATION IS THE  
SO-CALLED OPEN ENROLLMENT PROGRAM THAT  
ALLOWS PARENTS TO CHOOSE AMONG LOCAL PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS BASED ON THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATION  
SERVICES PROVIDED. SUCH "OPPORTUNITY  
CERTIFICATES" HAVE BEEN TRIED WITH SIGNIFICANT  
SUCCESS IN A NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS. I  
SUPPORT FEDERAL ENCOURAGEMENT AND EXPANSION  
OF THE CONCEPT.

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I MENTIONED EARLIER THAT WE MUST DEVELOP IN  
OUR YOUNG PEOPLE THE SELF-DISCIPLINE TO STICK TO  
THEIR STUDIES AND FINISH HIGH SCHOOL.

THE CLEVELAND SCHOOL SYSTEM IS  
EXPERIMENTING WITH ONE NOVEL WAY TO DEVELOP  
SUCH SELF-DISCIPLINE IN STUDENTS.

WITH THE HELP OF PRIVATE BUSINESS, THE CITY  
HAS SET UP SCHOLARSHIPS IN ESCROW ACCOUNTS FOR  
INNER-CITY YOUTH. A CONTRIBUTION IS MADE EACH

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YEAR THE STUDENTS STAYS IN SCHOOL, BASED ON THE GRADES THEY HAVE EARNED. IT'S AN IDEA THAT SHOULD BE TRIED IN OTHER CITIES WITH HIGH DROPOUT PROBLEMS.

WE MUST ALSO RESTORE THE PRESTIGE AND MEANING OF THE HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA. LOWERING THE DROP-OUT RATE WILL BE MEANINGLESS IF WE DO IT BY FURTHER DEVALUING WHAT A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA MEANS. WE CAN'T COVER UP THE PROBLEM WITH A LITTLE PIECE OF PAPER.



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OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, THE HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA HAS LOST MUCH OF ITS LUSTER -- OFTEN GIVEN OUT SIMPLY BECAUSE A STUDENT MANAGED TO SPEND TWELVE YEARS IN SCHOOL. IF STUDENTS HAVEN'T MET BASIC EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS FOR THEIR GRADE, THEY SHOULD BE HELD BACK. AT THE SAME TIME, EDUCATION SHOULD BE A TWO-WAY STREET. TEACHERS AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS MUST BE HELD TO ACCOUNT ALSO, IF THEY ARE FAILING TO TEACH THEIR STUDENTS BASIC EDUCATION SKILLS.

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I ALSO PROPOSE THE ESTABLISHMENT, PERHAPS BY  
A PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION, OF NEW STANDARDS FOR  
AN ADVANCED HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FOR STUDENTS  
CAPABLE OF COMPLETING RIGOROUS ACADEMIC  
PROGRAMS. MANY DISTRICTS NOW OFFER ADVANCED  
PLACEMENT COURSES, BUT THESE SHOULD BE BACKED  
UP BY A SPECIAL DIPLOMA THAT RECOGNIZES THE  
SUPERIOR EDUCATION THEIR RECIPIENTS HAVE  
RECEIVED.

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JUST AS WE RECOGNIZE ADVANCED STUDENTS, WE  
SHOULD RECOGNIZE MASTER TEACHERS TOO OFTEN  
WE REWARD OUR MOST CAPABLE TEACHERS BY  
PULLING THEM OUT OF THE CLASSROOM.

ONE IDEA THAT IS CATCHING ON IS MERIT PAY. IT'S  
A SIMPLE IDEA: IF A TEACHER IS DOING A BETTER JOB,  
THAT TEACHER GETS REWARDED FOR IT ON PAYDAY.

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ONE PROGRAM IS PROVING ITSELF IN ROCHESTER,  
NEW YORK. THERE, OUTSTANDING TEACHERS ARE  
ATTRACTED BY HIGH SALARIES TO REMAIN IN THEIR  
JOBS AND AT THE SAME TIME TRAIN NEW TEACHERS IN  
EFFECTIVE METHODS. IT'S ONE MORE WAY OF MAKING  
SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE TO THOSE WHO PAY THE BILL.



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EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

I'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT EDUCATION AS A MEANS  
TO SECURE OUR ECONOMIC POSITION, TO MAKE US  
MORE COMPETITIVE IN WORLD MARKETS. BUT,  
EDUCATION IS FAR MORE THAN THAT.

TAKE THOSE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WHO  
CANNOT READ. NOT ONLY CAN THEY NOT READ THEIR  
OWN DIPLOMAS, THEY CAN'T READ ROBERT FROST OR

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SHAKESPEARE. THEY CAN NEVER ENJOY HEMINGWAY  
OR FAULKNER. THEY CAN'T READ THE BIBLE OR THE  
BILL OF RIGHTS.

THE NEW KNOWLEDGE WE ACQUIRE IN OUR  
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IS NOT JUST FOR PROFESSORS  
AND SCHOLARS. IT IS FOR ALL OF US, BECAUSE THERE  
IS A DEEP AND LASTING REWARD IN EDUCATION, IN  
LEARNING, IN UNDERSTANDING HOW THE WORLD  
WORKS.

FOR THE INDIVIDUAL, EDUCATION CAN BE A  
SOURCE OF JOY AND PERSONAL FULFILLMENT.

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FOR OUR SOCIETY, EDUCATION IS NOT JUST THE  
ROOT OF ECONOMIC WEALTH, IT IS THE FOUNDATION  
FOR OUR LIBERTIES AND OUR DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

YOU DON'T NEED AN EXPENSIVE FEDERAL STUDY TO  
TELL YOU THAT FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS ONLY  
MEANINGFUL IF THE PEOPLE CAN READ THE  
NEWSPAPERS AND BOOKS THAT COME OFF THE  
PRINTING PRESSES.

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OUR CAUCUSES AND PRIMARIES AND ELECTIONS  
ARE NOT JUST BEAUTY CONTESTS -- BECAUSE  
CAUCUSES AND PRIMARIES AND ELECTIONS ARE PEOPLE  
COMING TOGETHER TO MAKE INTELLIGENT, EDUCATED  
CHOICES.

THOMAS JEFFERSON KNEW THIS. HE CONSIDERED  
HIS FOUNDING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA TO BE  
MORE IMPORTANT THAN MANY OF HIS ACHIEVEMENTS  
AS PRESIDENT.



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TWO HUNDRED YEARS HAVE SHOWN WHAT  
FORESIGHT JEFFERSON HAD. LOOK AROUND THE  
WORLD TODAY. DICTATORSHIPS SURVIVE AS LONG AS  
THE PEOPLE ARE KEPT IGNORANT. DEMOCRACIES  
THRIVE BEST IF THE PEOPLE ARE EDUCATED.

IN A DOLE ADMINISTRATION, WE WILL NEVER  
IGNORE THE LINK BETWEEN AN EDUCATED CITIZENRY  
AND DEMOCRACY. THE CITIZENS OF A REPUBLIC MUST  
BE EDUCATED -- OR THE REPUBLIC WILL NOT SURVIVE.

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THAT IS THE REAL CORE OF MY POSITION ON  
EDUCATION. AND IT IS THE REASON I HAVE BROUGHT  
MY CASE BEFORE YOU, THE FUTURE LEADERS OF OUR  
GREAT NATION, HERE TODAY.

IN A WORLD WHERE ONLY THE EDUCATED ARE  
FREE, I WILL NEVER FORGET THAT WEALTH, HAPPINESS,  
AND FREEDOM OF OUR NATION DEPENDS ON THE WISE  
COUNCIL OF AN EDUCATED CITIZENRY TO GUIDE OUR  
FUTURE AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY FOR  
OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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