

dedication to the purposes and objectives as stated in the charter authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1907: "To elevate the character and advance the interest of the profession of teaching and to promote the cause of popular education in the United States."

The concern of the NEA for equality of educational opportunity for all has, through the years, been evidenced by the association's continuing interest in the problems of migratory farm labor, school dropouts, disadvantaged rural youth and, more recently, the socially and economically deprived youngsters in the heartland of our large urban population centers. The latest expression of this concern is in Resolution No. 8 as adopted unanimously by the 6,795 delegates to the 1963 representative assembly:

"8. *Disadvantaged Americans.*—The National Education Association calls for wide recognition of the grievous problems in education of disadvantaged Americans. The mobility of the disadvantaged serves to underline the fact that their problems are the problems of the whole society. The forces that prevent their successful adaptation to urban living lead to low achievement, dropout, delinquency, disease, and disorganization.

"It is of the highest importance that the American people take steps to combat these problems at their roots. Public schools of good quality, universally available to all Americans, are the greatest single hope. Such schools are costly, but not nearly so costly as the other programs which must be—and are—provided for dealing with these problems.

"The association urges that action programs be planned and implemented which will lead to the rapid improvement of the educational, economic, and environmental status of disadvantaged Americans.

"It is desirable that State associations, in cooperation with affiliated groups such as the Congress of Parents & Teachers and board of education, initiate the call to action.

"The above groups plus representatives of housing authorities, churches, social agencies, political agencies, political organizations, realtors, businesses, industries, and organized labor should be encouraged to participate in effecting and implementing action programs."

President Lyndon B. Johnson's inspiring White House message on poverty is one of the most far reaching proposals ever directed toward achieving the American ideal of equality of opportunity that has been made in this Nation's history. The recognition of the importance of education and the emphasis on opportunity for youth are, of course, most gratifying to the teaching profession. The President's message, which for the most part has been transferred into the legal terminology of H.R. 10440, gives renewed emphasis to programs which the NEA has supported such as the Youth Employment Act and the proposal for a National Service Corps. We note with approval that the President's message also called for enactment of "new proposals which strike at important areas of need and distress." The President then asked the Congress for immediate action "to extend those which are already in action, and to establish those which have already been proposed." Among those listed by the President are "programs which help the entire country, such as aid to education which, by raising the quality of schooling available to every American child, will give a new chance for knowledge to the children of the poor."

There are pending before various subcommittees of this Committee several of the remaining parts of President John F. Kennedy's National Education Improvement Act (H.R. 3000, S. 580). While appreciative of the constructive action taken on parts of this comprehensive legislation, we remind the committee that the basic problem, that of aid to public elementary and secondary education, has been virtually ignored.

With remarkable insight, the distinguished Secretary of Labor, the Honorable W. Willard Wirtz, said, in a November 6, 1963, address before the National Committee on Youth Employment:

"Think what would happen in this country if we declared war on ignorance—by elevating the standards of teachers to the levels the importance of their job demands, by paying them the salaries which the required skills would warrant, by cutting the students-to-teachers ratio to the point good sense would require, by building the schoolrooms which are needed, and by giving every child in the country the educational opportunity, from first grade through college, which a few have today. Education would become our largest economic enterprise, as it ought to be. This would, in itself, create full employment. It would wipe out ignorance. It would virtually end the intolerance and bigotry of