

During the past several years I have had the privilege of appearing before you on many occasions. On each of these occasions you have courteously listened to me tell you about the unique problems confronting the Los Angeles City Schools, especially concerning the problems of finance, of school construction to meet the growth needs of large metropolitan areas, and of federally funded programs. We are fortunate that several members of this committee represent important constituencies of Los Angeles and are extremely well versed in the needs of this great urban population, including its educational needs. At the same time I am sure all of us are keenly aware that the topic of consideration today has tremendous significance for school districts throughout the nation. While there are many unique applications of federal legislation to the Los Angeles area, most of what has concerned us in Los Angeles has concerned school officials and educators in other parts of the nation as well.

For the written record I should like to fit the Los Angeles City Schools into the national educational setting. The school district is unique in that there are two districts being served by same Board of Education and the same Superintendent. The Unified District serves grades kindergarten through twelve; and the Junior College District, grades thirteen and fourteen. I am limiting my discussion today to the Unified School District which serves the elementary and secondary grades and adults enrolled in high schools. This school system, second largest in the United States, has a total enrollment in kindergarten through grade twelve of close to 700,000 pupils, which includes 62,000 adults (enrollment in junior college day and evening classes is close to 67,000). It serves a total population of almost three and one-half million people. It accounts for approximately 15% of all of the elementary and secondary enrollment in the State of California. Our school system's enrollment is constantly increasing. This is perhaps a unique characteristic of Los Angeles, compared to most of the very large school systems of the nation.

Our district is characterized not only by enrollment growth, but by great geographic size, covering an area of some 710 square miles (Junior College district is 882 square miles). The school district boundaries extend considerably beyond the municipal boundaries of the City of Los Angeles and include large sections of unincorporated territory, as well as many smaller municipalities. Nearly 45% of the elementary and secondary pupils in all of Los Angeles County are served by the Los Angeles City Unified School District. Our school system serves large numbers of racial minorities. According to our most recent racial census the composition of our district is 18.5% Spanish surname, 57.1% other white, 20.2% Negro, 3.6% oriental, 0.1% American Indian, and 0.5% other nonwhite.

Los Angeles has a Spanish speaking population larger than any city on the North American continent with the exception of Mexico City. Los Angeles is the center of the largest foreign population in the western United States, and is one of the fastest growing cities in foreign population in the entire nation. Much of the growth in Los Angeles population consists of non-English speaking peoples. I am convinced that the special needs evidenced in large metropolitan school districts which are experiencing the impacts of urbanization, cannot be met without additional federal or state assistance.

I believe the educational needs which have been the targets of the Vocational Education Act, Manpower Development Training Act, and other very meaningful pieces of legislation have in many instances had their effectiveness blunted because school districts have not had sufficient time to plan and implement the programs. In other words, helpful as they have been, our federally aided programs to date have not been as effective as we know they can be. The day of the instant program and instant implementation of programs has passed. Education is a process and we cannot expect instant results, we must be willing to commit funds over a period of several years if programs are to be effective.

For many years the Los Angeles School District has been meeting many of the special educational needs of the citizens of our district utilizing local tax funds to provide occupational training centers, adult job training programs, apprenticeship training, exploratory work experience programs, and one of the most advanced high school industrial arts programs in the nation. Under the junior college district's jurisdiction Los Angeles Trade and Technical College is perhaps unique in the nation. In addition to these locally funded programs, the Los Angeles School District, under MDTA, has several skills centers located in the most disadvantaged areas of the district. The programs of these centers