

fields. *Excellence*, by John Gardner, former Secretary of HEW, contains an excellent analysis of the mix of vocational, technical, and liberal arts training most conducive to our society's full development.

I would hope that by this time our society has reached the intellectual maturity to realize that differences in human beings do not per se spell out superiorities or inferiorities. Differences provide the variety which renders the total society rich, productive, variable, and capable of continuing understanding and innovation. In a society of nightingales with my crow-like voice, I would be discriminated against and justifiably so, and not as a result of bigotry. However, in a society which recognizes its needs for variety in talents and skills hopefully I could identify some talent I truly have, with hard work develop it, and become a citizen self-satisfied from doing a job well and socially satisfied doing a job that needed doing.

The schools for both urban and rural disadvantaged children should be among the best in the country. Who needs good schools more than the children of the poor? Although the situation is improving today, schools in poverty neighborhoods are very often among the worst the country has to offer.

A clean, attractive, well-equipped and well-staffed school in a deteriorating neighborhood could serve as an example and an inspiration for many of our disadvantaged children. Both public and private educational groups should direct their attention to improving the quality of schools in poverty neighborhoods.

The states should update the school-grant formulas in their equalization laws which take into account the costs involved in educating children in school districts with low tax bases. Many counties in the United States need to develop equalization laws because within counties just as within municipalities or states there are school districts of low wealth and districts of high wealth. The differentials in these tax bases need to be equalized. Let me say along this line, however, I know of no poor state, with the possible exception of Alaska, that needs federal equalization of tax bases. The common misunderstanding on this point arises from the failure to understand that education, as well as community facilities, are financed from tax systems using wealth as a tax base not income. The per capita income of a state is not the test of whether it can support schools but rather the per capita wealth. Absentee ownership or a poorly structured real estate tax permits many of the lower per capita income states which are reasonably wealthy to talk poor-mouth. If the children of the poor are to get a better education, there will need to be recognition and action on the proposition that expenditures per pupil will need to be higher in these districts than in those more fortunately endowed.

Breaking the poverty cycle often requires pre-school training. The accomplishments of the local and private Head Start Program, which the federal program properly emphasized, indicates that the states are correct in developing these remedial pre-school programs on a large scale in poverty areas.

Perhaps the highest priority for the prevention of poverty should be given to providing birth control information to public assistance recipients on a voluntary basis. A broad program to make available birth control information would encourage family planning and reduce the incidence of unsupportable children among the poor. I believe that helping the poor control the size of their families offers our most promising opportunity for halting the growth of poverty.

We should also do something for young people who are of working age but who are neither in school nor in a job, those for whom the educational and welfare reforms will have come too late. I think we should consider a pilot plan which might mean some subsidization to their employment by private business based on a comprehensive study of what is already being done in this area. The Employment Incentive Act that I have proposed would enable business to provide work at less than minimum wages for young people who would not otherwise be employed. The actual wage could be based on an estimate of their productivity and their value to the firm in relation to the other employees. In addition, a direct government subsidy would be paid to such employees in order to bring them up, if necessary, to a minimum wage. Obviously, such a plan would involve administrative problems, but I think it is worth considering. It might well speed the movement of people needed in occupations paying low wages and thus increase the demand for labor in such areas. Perhaps my Human Investment Tax Credit would be sufficient. This is a 10% tax credit comparable to the investment tax credit for capital costs invested in machinery and capital cost invested in training and retraining manpower.