

Office of the Secretary. Viewers on C-SPAN will not observe Wendy in the Senate chamber or at committee hearings. She fulfills her professional responsibilities away from public view in the offices of the Senate Historian. Yet, it would be accurate to conclude that she has significantly left her mark on Senate history; she has even shaped Senate history.

I first met Wendy as she began to prepare the lengthy and complex index to Volume One of my four-volume history, *The Senate, 1789–1989*. Anyone who has consulted that first volume's index is likely to agree that it is most user-friendly. In 1989, Wendy assumed editorial responsibilities—as well as the indexing chores—for the remaining three volumes in that series. Over the next five years, she handled the countless tasks—many of them deeply challenging—that fall to editors and publishers of encyclopedia-length reference volumes.

Ten years ago, in the preface to *Volume Two*, I offered the following assessment of Wendy's contributions to that project.

Her strong editorial hand has skillfully shaped this work from a disparate collection of speeches to what I believe is a carefully balanced and finely coordinated reference book. Tirelessly dedicated to this project from its inception, Wendy Wolff has maintained herein the editorial standards of *Volume One* and has convincingly guided the author away from tempting side roads. Her indexes to both volumes display a rich and impressively detailed knowledge of the Senate's historical structure.

Wendy's editorial hand and critical judgment have also shaped other Senate historical volumes. Among them are Senator Bob Dole's *Historical Almanac of the United States Senate* (1989); *United States Senate Election, Expulsion and Censure Cases, 1793–1990* (1995); Senator Mark Hatfield's *Vice Presidents of the United States, 1789–1993* (1997); *Minutes of the U.S. Senate Republican Conference, 1911–1964* (1999); and *Capitol Builder: The Shorthand Journals of Captain Montgomery C. Meigs, 1853–1861* (2001).

I know that I speak for Wendy Wolff's colleagues and other admirers in wishing Wendy Wolff a most enjoyable retirement. We won't ever forget her.

(Mr. BAYH assumed the chair.)

STATE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, not long ago, I came across a letter from Thomas Jefferson to his nephew, Peter Carr, which discussed the elements of a good education. In his letter dated August 19, 1789, Jefferson advised his nephew to divide his studies into three main areas: Give the principal to History, the other two, which should be shorter, to Philosophy and Poetry.

"Begin [with] a course of ancient history," Jefferson wrote, "First read Goldsmith's history of Greece. . . . Then take up ancient history in the detail, reading the following books, in

the following order: Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophontis *Anabasis*, Arrian, Quintus Curtius, Diodorus Siculus, Justin." This, Jefferson wrote, would form his "first stage of historical reading." Next, Jefferson wrote, he should read Roman history.

I remind Senators, this is Thomas Jefferson speaking. He then recommended reading "Greek and Latin poetry." He advised reading Virgil, Terence, Horace, Anacreon, Theocritus, Homer, Euripides, Sophocles, Milton's "Paradise Lost," Shakespeare, Pope and Swift.

Regarding the subject of morality, Jefferson advised, "read Epictetus, Xenophontis *Memorabilia*, Plato's Socratic dialogues, Cicero's philosophies, Antoninus—I don't know whether he meant Pius Antoninus or Marcus Aurelius Antoninus; it could well have been both—and "Seneca."

I was pleased to see what Jefferson found to constitute a quality education. Those of my colleagues who have heard me speak to any degree over the years are probably a bit amused by at least some of the readings suggested by Jefferson. I suppose, to some extent, it sounds like a list of books that might be in my own personal collection. But, lest anyone get the wrong impression, I do not consider myself to be on par with that master thinker, Thomas Jefferson. But I have these, and more.

Although Jefferson did not have a degree as an educator, given his vast accomplishments, it seems foolhardy to argue with the merit of his advice to his nephew. As a contemporary wrote of the young Thomas Jefferson, he was "a gentleman of 32 who could calculate an eclipse, survey an estate, tie an artery, plan an edifice, try a cause, break a horse, dance a minuet, and play the violin." May I also add, that he was the author of the Declaration of Independence and "Notes on Virginia," the founder of the University of Virginia, an ambassador to France, a Secretary of State, a Vice President, and President of the United States.

In his closing lines to his nephew, Jefferson said, "I have nothing further to add for the present, but husband well your time, cherish your instructors, strive to make everybody your friend; and be assured that nothing will be so pleasing as your success."

Do you hear what he said? "Cherish your instructors, strive to make everybody your friend." These simple but fundamental guidelines are as appropriate today as they were when Jefferson wrote them.

There is great wisdom in that letter. Wise council that I think we would do well to follow today. Jefferson obviously knew that a good education can make the difference in the life course of any individual. He knew the value of good teachers.

I have spoken on this floor, many times before, about my early years as a student in a two-room schoolhouse. I imagine that to those much younger

than I, the pictures I paint with my remarks about my school, my teachers, and what I think makes for a good, sound education must seem distant and archaic. Sadly my experiences are a world away from the usual classroom climate of today.

Yet, I caution the skeptics to consider that there may be some advantages to accumulated years. I believe, for example, that our nation's experiences and experiments with education have taught at least one essential truth: the basic underpinnings of a solid education have been essentially the same throughout the history of civilized men and women.

I readily concede that the environment in my old two-room schoolhouse was a good deal different from the environment of the overcrowded schools of today. But I believe that those things which made for a good education then, those things which contributed most to learning, are the same today as they were when I spent my weekdays in a tin-roofed wooden building, overheated by the pot-bellied stove, reading Muzzy's history, in the 1920's.

In the school of my youth, we did not have computers, but we were plugged into our own imaginations. I had no television set.

Parentetically, I doubt that I am better off. I probably would have been much worse off by having a television set.

But I had no television set with which to watch videos about distant, faraway lands, but I had the vision of my own mind's eye to see life beyond my own little corner of the world. Air conditioning? We opened the windows. Water fountains? We had waters from a nearby spring.

I used to go out in the summertime and lie down in the old springhouse—lie down on my belly, let the damp, cool ground touch my breasts, put my face, as it were, into that spring, and drink that cool water that bubbled from the white sands of the spring. And in school, I was always hoping I would be one of the two boys who would be sent by the schoolteacher over the hill to the spring to bring back water in a bucket for all of the children in the room. We drank out of one dipper—all of us. We didn't think anything about sanitation so much in those days, although we did read "Hygiene." That was one of the books we read in school.

But I can remember in later years when my mom kept boarders in the coal camp, and we got our drinking water from a pump, one pump for every half dozen houses in a row of coal miners' homes. We would go out to the pump and bring up the water, pumping it up and down, and bring the water to the house. And the boarders, those coal miners who boarded at my mom's house, and I all drank from the same dipper.

We didn't have hard drives, but we were driven hard, to work, to learn, to succeed.

We had only two rooms in the little schoolhouses that I first attended, beginning in 1923, but those rooms were filled with students respectfully seeking to learn. We had dedicated teachers who expected the best from their students and they did not tolerate mediocrity nor did they tolerate bad behavior.

There was a category on that report card that had a designation spelled D-E-P-O-R-T-M-E-N-T: Department. I always knew that in taking that grade card home to my coal miner dad, he would look it over carefully, and he would look at that designation: Department. It had better be good.

In those modest two rooms, we were close to one another and we were close to our dear, dear teachers who loved us, who inspired us to learn, who inspired us to seek excellence. We sometimes had to share desks and rub elbows and actually touch—which meant that, whether we liked our classmates or not, we were forced to be civil to one another and to recognize our human bonds.

Teachers got to know their students. And, my, how I swelled with pride when my teacher would pat me on the top of the head and say: ROBERT, you did a good job. You did well on your test.

Teachers got to know their students, got to recognize their moods and individual needs. Teachers could see in the twinkle of their charges' eyes what motivated their charges, and they could hear in the collective groans of frustration what bewildered their charges. I had teachers who inspired me to learn.

I wanted that pat on the head. I wanted that pat on the back.

I wanted the other students to hear the teacher compliment me on having passed a hard test in spelling, doing a good job: 100 percent. ROBERT, you got 100 percent on your spelling test, and so on. And other boys and girls were likewise inspired.

I had teachers who seemed to be truly fulfilling a calling. Teachers in my youth could give hugs, and did. Teachers in my youth could enforce the rules, and they did.

Today, though crowded, distance seems to be the norm. Don't touch. Don't get too close. Don't get too involved. Don't spend too much time with one student.

After school, students walk out of the schoolhouse door and into an apathetic culture where passers-by don't bother to say hello, where neighbors often don't bother to learn other neighbors' names. Young people are growing up in our society lacking respect for their elders, lacking respect for their peers, and lacking respect, all too often, even for themselves. And, in our world of two-parent working families and single mothers, it is harder than ever for parents to provide the discipline, the guidance, and the moral compass that our children so desperately need.

Teachers are being led to feel that their place in a student's life ends at the last bell of the day. A well-meaning

teacher, in our society today, can rarely take a real interest in a student's life beyond the schoolyard, without fear of being reprimanded by the school, without fear of being accused of some transgression, without fear even of being the subject of some lawsuit. There are plenty of well-meaning, talented, inspiring teachers in our schools today. But, they are up against a lot. Too often today, parents resent a teacher who disciplines their child. They put pressure on teachers to pass children who should fail, and they put pressure on principals to bestow honors on students who do not earn them. As a result, achievement is downgraded. Excellence is not encouraged. Expectations are lowered.

In my youth, we were less sheltered from the responsibilities and the realities of life than are the children of today. I know that may seem hard to believe. But I think it is true. Particularly in the coal camps where I grew up, we saw, up close, the consequences of our actions. Chores left undone, meant hardships for the entire family. Death was always lingering around the entrance to the coal mines. Hunger was a regular visitor. Money was scarce and it had real value. We saw what it was to work hard for a day's wages, only to have those wages eaten up paying for the most basic of life's necessities.

May I say to the youth of the country, and to the youth who sit in these Chambers on each side of the Presiding Officer's chair, my first job was in a gas station. They were not service stations in those days, they were gas stations. I remember the cold mornings of January and February 1935—my first job in a gas station. My pay? Fifty dollars a month. That is \$600 a year. I walked 4 miles to work and 4 miles home, if I wasn't fortunate enough to be able to catch a ride on a milk truck or a bread truck.

My parents demanded a lot of me. They did not accept excuses. I knew that if I got a whipping at school, another was waiting for me when I got home or as soon as my parents heard about the whipping at school. As much as my mom and dad may have wanted me to have a better life than they had known, they seemed to know that the path to a better life was also a rocky one. They didn't try to pave my way. They told me the truth. They taught me to cut through the brush, to work hard to push barriers out of my way, and to climb over the hurdles that circumstances erected.

This is where I think we have failed, in many instances, our young people today. We shower them with material goods. We buy them a car to drive just around the corner to the schoolyard. We protect their egos like fine china. We encourage them to take the easy route. Books are dumbed down to make studies easier. Tests are abandoned or graded on a curve because too many students can't pass them. Our history books, so-called history books, are bland and inaccurate because we have

changed the story, left out the heroes, and glossed over the ugly realities of our past.

Make no mistake about it, this country has made its fair share of mistakes. We have had more than a helping or two of ugliness. But to pick up a history book today and read of the politically correct Shangri-La portrayed within, you would hardly know it. How can we possibly expect our children to learn from our mistakes if we hide the realities of our mistakes from them? Sugar-coated history cannot teach.

My experiences have led me to conclude that for the sake of our children and for the future of our Nation we must insist upon a return to excellence. We need to teach the value of hard work. We ought not be afraid of it. I never knew anyone who died from hard work, except John Henry, the steel-driving man.

We need to honor and reward real achievement. We need to temper reward with reality. We need to insist on civility. We could do a lot of that right here in this Chamber. We need to encourage understanding, not deny differences. We need less high tech and more high standards. Above all—we have heard it so many times, I will say it again because it is true—we need to get back to basics.

We need to ensure that our children are provided a firm foundation in reading, in writing, in arithmetic, in science, in history. We need to ensure that our schools are places in which our students can learn. That is much of what we have been talking about for the last 8 weeks in this Chamber. That is much of what this legislation we passed today is about.

We need to ensure that the schoolhouse is a place of study, of hard work, not revelry. We need more, not less, discipline. It is time for a return to the days when traditional values like respect, loyalty, honor, and integrity meant something. A lot of us could also learn these things anew.

I truly believe that in our desire to find the cure to our educational problems, we have gone far afield. We have neglected perhaps the most important ingredient. High-tech gadgets, glossy textbooks filled with pictures but little narrative, costly frills, and bigger buildings are not the answer. The innate desire to learn that resides in the human spirit is the commodity that we are wasting. It is a precious commodity, indeed, and it will flow abundantly if given the attention, the direction, the encouragement that it needs to take firm root.

Challenge is the component which we seem to fear: Let's don't have challenge; Let's don't have too much competition.

Challenge a child to learn something difficult. Challenge a child to be the best in his class. I say that almost to every young person with whom I stop to talk: Be the best in your class; be the best. Make that child know that hard work pays off. Ask him for more,

not less. Encourage him to find his unique talents. Then work with those youngsters who have a tougher time; don't lower the standards, lift the sights. Encourage our children to reach as high as they can. Don't tolerate less. Reward them, then, for achievement.

Yet instead of challenging our children to do their best, I believe that all too often the focus of today's education system has become quite different. We have all been told that new theories and creative methods would bring new life to our failing public schools. We have put billions into almost every trendy remedy offered. We have tried everything from audio language labs to personal computers to team teaching to new math to teacher empowerment, and still we flounder.

According to the testing, we still suffer from a pervasive inability to pass on the accumulated knowledge of civilization from one generation to the next.

What is the problem? Well, the problems are legion. But the major problem, I suspect, is the systematic discarding of traditional scholarship as an agreed-upon goal. Instead many in the education establishment have opted for a strange form of psychological and social experiments in our schools and often with disastrous results that shortchange and even denigrate true academic achievement and excellence.

The goals, the ideals, the practices, and curricula have been altered over the past three decades, usually without the clear awareness of parents. The result is inferior standards both for the teaching of students and for the training of teachers.

The usual answer to such complaints is "we need more money." Surely if we pour enough money into our education coffers, something of value will be produced. I used to firmly believe this golden rule of educational cause and effect. I am a little skeptical of it now.

In 1959-60, we were spending, on average, \$375 per student in our public elementary and secondary schools. That amounts to \$2,065 per student adjusted for inflation. In 1997-98, we were spending \$6,662 for every child, roughly three times the amount we spent in 1959-60.

In inflation adjusted dollars, we are now spending three times more per child than in 1960, when in 1960 performance was generally higher than it is today.

According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, in the fall of 1959, there were a total of 35 million students enrolled in America's public elementary and secondary schools.

In the fall of 1999, 40 years later, there were 46,800,000 students, an increase of 11 million students in 40 years. The pupil-to-teacher ratio in 1959-1960 was roughly 26 students for every teacher. In 1999, again, 40 years later, the student-to-teacher ratio had improved to roughly 16 students for every teacher. I am talking about full-time teachers. In other words, the data

shows that there were fewer students for each teacher in 1999 than there were in 1959-1960.

I remember in my high school graduation class, there were 28 students who ended up with diplomas. That was in 1934. We had 28 students in my class, not 90 or 100. But there was discipline. We paid attention. We had teachers who demanded that of us, teachers who could teach, teachers who loved us, teachers who were dedicated, and we learned from them.

The growth of support personnel in the education area has mushroomed. Such things as reading specialists, guidance counselors, special ed teachers, clerical assistants, teacher's aides, have grown from 700,000 in 1960 to 2.5 million in 1999—almost a fourfold increase. And although America has one of the highest costs of education per student, it is not first in teacher salaries.

What do our dollars buy? We had 2,826,146 teachers in our elementary and secondary schools in 1998, as opposed to 1,353,372 teachers in 1959-1960. So we have roughly doubled the number of teachers we had 40 years ago. But we had 93,058 guidance counselors in 1998 compared to 14,643 in 1959-1960, or more than 5 times the number of guidance counselors.

We have poured money—and I have voted for it—we have poured money into title I funding. Yet we skimp on funding for the gifted and the talented. I got in on the ground floor when it comes to Federal education programs and funding for education. I was in the House of Representatives when there was a great debate as to whether or not we should spend Federal moneys on Federal programs for education. I have no problem with helping truly disadvantaged children gain good skills, but I fear that the definition of "disadvantaged" has been broadened to cover a variety of learning problems, and a good solid education is becoming less of a priority than identifying children for counseling or special help so that more title I funds will flow.

Our children's failure to learn is not, I suspect, the fault of poverty always. In some of the most poverty-stricken families I have seen in my lifetime, many of the best students were nurtured. So our children's failure to learn is not, I suspect, the fault of poverty always, or of being emotionally damaged by their environment, as much as it is due, in many instances, to faddism, political correctness, and a general failure to teach with tried and true methods.

I may be a bit vain—we are all vain—but I believe I could teach students. I don't know anything about the modern methods of teaching. I don't care about that. As far as I am concerned, I could teach those children. I am not a teacher, nor is every Senator in this body. A few Senators here have been school-teachers. But I think most, if not all, of the Senators on both sides of the aisle could be good teachers—certainly

in some subjects. I am not saying I would be a good teacher in chemistry or physics. But put me in a classroom with children, give me a good text book, and I could teach history, reading, spelling, and so on. So perhaps we spend too much time on methodology. I speak as a layman today, but I have some perception of what is going on in this country and some opinion as to what ought to be done.

One of my perceptions is that many teachers would have to spend a great deal of time on methodology, the newest method of teaching this or that subject. Just give me Muzzy's American History, and I am vain enough to think that I could teach. What I am saying is we probably expect too much of our teachers in many ways—teaching this new method and that new method—but not enough of substance, which has been here from the beginning. H₂O was H₂O when Adam and Eve were in the garden, you see. CO₂ was CO₂ way back yonder. So H₂O hasn't changed since Adam and Eve were driven from the garden. It is still plain old water, drinking water; it tastes the same. It has not changed, much like human nature. That hasn't changed from the beginning, since Cane slew Abel. Men and women are still slaying one another.

So, in my view, we need to take an entirely new look at the way we fund education, at the way we train teachers, and at the curricula and the methods used on our children.

Our public school system has become top heavy with a whole host of people who are not directly involved with getting our kids to learn. We have more teachers, but fewer of them have degrees in the subjects they teach, and fewer of them see teaching as a lifelong career. We are turning our kids loose on the job market with too few tools and little or no appreciation for what a good education means for their futures.

Children who fail to achieve a college education will lose some \$20,000 a year in income as adults. The former CEO of Xerox, David Kearns, estimates that poor schooling costs businesses some \$50 billion a year in remedial work.

We are failing our kids and we are failing our kids in the most fundamental responsibility that we have to them—the responsibility to provide them with a good education.

Children need to know what is expected of them. Then they need to be given the tools with which to achieve their goals. They need to be told that it is a tough old world out there—a tough old world—and that the competition is global—not just in Sophia, my hometown of 1,160 souls. The competition is global. There will be no dumbing down of standards out there in that world. There will be no grade inflation out there in the real world. There will be no social promotion out there in the real world of global competition. It is going to be rough.

The consequences for a poor education will be lifelong, and the consequences will be harsh. And that is another thing that we should be teaching our children, namely, that there are consequences for one's actions and inactions. I do not view this bill through rose colored glasses as the definitive cure to what ails our educational system, but I think that bill that passed a little earlier today is at least a departure from the status quo. That legislation looks at education from new angles, and offers the chance—the chance—to get a better handle on the challenge before us.

The public school choice provisions offer some degree of hope, though limited, to parents who are fighting failing schools and trying desperately to give their children a solid education.

These are the most important people in the world: their children. These are the parents' most priceless possession: their children. No wonder people are searching for some other way. No wonder. They want their children to have the best. They want their children to have good teachers.

Furthermore, this legislation we passed today puts our public schools on notice that they must improve. So we are saying to the public school system, we are saying to the administrators in that system, we are saying to the principals and the teachers in that system, we are saying to the teachers union they must improve.

The bill also creates consequences if schools do not improve. So the time of reckoning is at hand. The legislation requires annual testing to track our children's progress in the areas of mathematics, science, reading, and history.

Moreover, the legislation insists upon a national gauge to more accurately measure public schools and to help compare what works and what does not work.

This bill also places an emphasis on teacher quality. When will we come to know in this country that no pricetag can be placed upon teacher quality? No pricetag. An emphasis is put on recruiting qualified teachers. When are we going to learn that a qualified, dedicated, conscientious teacher is worth far more than the finest athlete in this country, far more than the most clever, sharpest, most attractive network anchor man or woman? The teacher is worth far more—the teacher.

The teacher holds in his or her hands that most priceless resource possessed by this Nation. That teacher molds that child, its outlook, its attitude.

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day,

And as my fingers pressed it still
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were past,
The bit of clay was hard at last.

The form I gave it, it still bore,
And I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day,
And molded with my power and art

A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone,
He was a man I looked upon.

He still that early impress wore,
And I could change him nevermore.

That is the teacher. The responsibilities placed on a good teacher are heavy in today's world certainly.

How can we expect as a nation to continue to be a world leader with a population that is ignorant of the worth of a good teacher, a population that is ignorant of the basics in math, science, and history?

I understand that in some States history is not a required course in the curricula of public schools. What a shame. What a mistake. Cicero said: To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child.

I am not talking about social studies. Social studies are all right in their place. I am talking about history. It has been considerably garbled these days. We try to change the facts of history, but the facts are there, and they ought to be taught. We ought to be plain about it, upfront about it, and try to profit by our mistakes.

Provisions that I supported in this bill are aimed at addressing the lack of qualified math and science teachers in this Nation.

At this point, I should also say that whatever dollar figure emerges from the House-Senate conference on this bill will place a burden on the appropriators to fund, given the tight budget constraints under which we will be laboring and the behemoth tax cuts which siphoned off many of the dollars which could have been used to pay for this bill, but if the President signs the bill that emanates from the conference, then I will assume—and I think I will have a right to assume—that the Appropriations Committee will have the help of the White House and the help on both sides of the aisle to provide the money to fund the bill.

I hope some of the new approaches contained in the bill will foster increased excellence among our Nation's schools, but I believe we are going to need further reform. While I can agree with the "leave no child behind" slogan which has characterized the President's education initiative and much of the debate on this legislation, I hope we also will endeavor to slow no child down if that child has extraordinary abilities. And the child does not have to come out of an affluent home to have extraordinary abilities.

I fear that sometimes in our approach to education we concentrate so much on bringing the slower students up to speed that we fail the child who can and should race ahead. And while testing for achievement is a good idea, it will mean little if the focus is on manipulating scores in order to make parents feel good or in order to capture more education dollars from the Federal Government for the school.

I don't believe in bumper sticker politics. I don't believe in bumper sticker education policy. It is time to look

afresh at why we are failing our kids, regardless of whose flaws that fresh look may reveal. More money won't help if it is not properly used. More teachers won't help much if they are not properly trained. Our society has changed. There are more single-parent families and more families where both parents work today. Simple changes such as a 9-to-5 schoolday might do more to address some of the problems in our schools than all the counselors and afterschool programs we can fund.

Look at the other industrial countries of this world. They don't make life quite so easy as we like to do here in this country, apparently. We spend gobs of money, train loads of money—and I have voted for it for more than 50 years, 49 years to be exact—yet today we are not turning out the quality of students with quality education that many of our industrial competitors are turning out. They go to school longer in those countries and so the work is harder.

School uniforms might make students focus more on their heads and less on their bodies. The longer schoolday might do more to address some of the problems in our schools than all of the counselor and afterschool programs we can find. Better textbooks that utilize the tried and true methods of teaching could certainly go a long way toward shoring up basic skills. It might not be a bad idea to bring back the old McGuffey readers. An emphasis on classic literature and poetry could provide our youngsters with a glimpse of beauty and a sense of the spiritual side of human nature so absent in our empty, vulgar, popular culture. Clearly, there is much more to do in education than can be done in one single piece of legislation.

We cannot afford to lose another generation of children to fads. James A. Garfield, a President of the United States, who was assassinated, said: Give me my old teacher, Mark Hopkins, on one end of the log and me, myself, on the other end, and there will be a university.

So, it is the teacher, the child, and the attitude that count.

We cannot afford to deafen our ears to all views except those in the education establishment. We must strive again for excellence in learning and to return to proven methods, no matter whose toes it may step on. The public is outraged. The survival of the public school system is at stake, not to mention the future of our children and our Nation. I think the education establishment—meaning the administrators, the principals, the teachers, the teachers unions, and all—had better read the handwriting on the wall. A good public school system is what this Nation needs. It is what we want. That is what we have been spending millions of dollars for. But it is time to wake up, time for an accounting, time to understand that all things are not well in this public school system. And if we don't shape up—you talk about vouchers,

talk about private schools—you better be watching the handwriting on the wall.

Some years ago I traveled down to the old Biblical city of Babylon by the side of the Euphrates River and I visited a place where it was said that Belshazzar feasted with 1,000 of his lords. And as he feasted, blind and dying, there appeared on the wall near the candlestick, a hand. That hand wrote on the wall. And Belshazzar summoned all of his magicians and his wise men and asked them to interpret the handwriting that appeared on the wall. It seems to me the handwriting said: mene, mene, tekel, upharsin. I hope that is right. It has been a while since I read it: Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin. And the queen said, this young man who can interpret that writing, his name is Daniel. And so the king who was trembling, his knees were shaking, summoned Daniel.

Daniel was asked to interpret the writing. And he interpreted the writing to mean: God, thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it.

That night, Belshazzar was slain and his kingdom was taken over by the Medes and Persians. So we should see the handwriting on the wall. We better learn that the public school system needs to shape up. We spend billions on it. Parents need to back up their teachers and participate in the PTAs, and we should pay teachers, good teachers, salaries that are commensurate with their worth.

No football player was ever equal to the worth of a good teacher. No television anchorperson was ever worth more than a good teacher. That may sound like an extremist talking, but there is something to what I am saying. You better believe it. And I might say this, too. There is no politician who is ever worth more than a good teacher.

When American students do so poorly in international mathematics assessments that they score 19th out of 21 nations, the handwriting should be on the wall. It is clear that it is not vouchers that threaten our public schools. It is the inadequate education that our public schools offer and parental frustration that threaten to undermine confidence in public education. And it is high time that we realize that.

There are many public schools that are great schools. There are a lot of good schools in this country, and a lot of good teachers. But we need to lift the level of all the boats.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, nearly 1 million children have been pulled out of public schools and are being educated at home by their parents. That number is sure to grow.

Yes, parents are concerned by the violence that is occurring in the schools, concerned by the falling grades of their children, concerned by the lack of discipline in the public schools, concerned

that for the money spent we are turning out worse students, generally speaking, than it used to be when we were spending far less money.

It is up to us who do believe in public schooling to see what is happening and to do whatever it takes to restore confidence in public education. We owe that to our kids. We owe that to their parents. And we owe it to the country we all claim to love.

FLAG DAY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President:

Hats off!
 Along the street there comes
 A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums,
 A flash of color beneath the sky:
 Hats off!
 The flag is passing by!
 Blue and crimson and white it shines,
 Over the steel-tipped, ordered lines.
 Hats off!
 The colors before us fly;
 But more than the flag is passing by.
 Sea-fights and land-fights, grim and great,
 Fought to make and save the State:
 Weary marches and sinking ships;
 Cheers of victory on dying lips;
 Days of plenty and years of peace;
 March of a strong land's swift increase;
 Equal justice, right and law,
 Stately honor and reverend awe;
 Sign of a nation, great and strong
 To ward her people from foreign wrong;
 Pride and glory and honor, all
 Live in the colors to stand or fall.
 Hats off!
 Along the street there comes
 A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums;
 And loyal hearts are beating high:
 Hats off!
 The flag is passing by!

Mr. President, today is Flag Day. It is the birthday of our Stars and Stripes. It was on June 14, 1777, that the Second Continental Congress passed the resolution authorizing the creation of a flag to symbolize the new Nation, the United States of America.

This is not a federal holiday, but to me it is one of the most important days of the year. Flag day is our nation's way of honoring, celebrating, and paying our respects to the very symbol of our nation. As the poem says: "more than the flag is passing by."

Henry Ward Beecher explained that "a thoughtful mind when it sees our nation's flag, sees not the flag, but the nation itself."

More than this, Old Glory represents the values and principles of our nation. It commemorates our nation's glorious past, and it offers hope for an even more glorious future.

Born at the beginning of the American Revolution, the Stars and Stripes is a celebration of our independence and our freedom as well as our strength and our security. It was there, being raised and saluted during some of the proudest moments in our nation's history as in Iwo Jima in 1945 and on the Moon in 1969. And it has been there in every major conflict in American history as millions of young Americans

have marched off to battle under the flag. It was at Fort McHenry during the War of 1812. It was there at Gettysburg, at San Juan Hill, and at Normandy.

But more than soldiers have been inspired and guided by our Nation's colors.

I can't begin to explain what a thrill it is for me to visit a school and see young children putting their chubby hands on their hearts and pledging allegiance to "the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands." When I see such a sight, I feel confident for the future of our great land. Whatever our current troubles might be, I somehow know that everything will be all right. Our flag, as it has throughout our history, continues to transcend our differences, and affirm our common bond as a people and our solemn unity as a great Nation.

The United States Senate now begins each morning by pledging allegiance to the flag. Speaking those few, but stirring, words, while looking at Old Glory, still inspires me and reminds me of how fortunate I am to be an American, to be a West Virginian, and to be a United States Senator.

On Flag Day, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson noted: "though silent it [our flag] speaks to us" and indeed it does.

It speaks to us of great events—of our liberty; of our history; of our future. It speaks to us of the freedom that is the basis, and the enduring promise, of our Republic.

"Hats off," Mr. President, "the colors before us fly; But more than the flag is passing by."

I close by citing those memorable, moving lines from the second stanza of our national anthem:

Tis the Star-Spangled Banner. O long may it
 wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the
 brave.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further proceedings under the quorum call be dispensed with, and that I be allowed to proceed in morning business for 4 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Michigan.

IN MEMORY OF VERNA "SUZY"
 JOYCE, DEDICATED PUBLIC
 SERVANT, WIFE AND MOTHER

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise tonight to pay tribute to Suzy Joyce who passed away today Thursday, June 14, 2001. Her sudden and untimely death leaves a void that for those who knew and loved Suzy will never be filled.

Born Verna Joyce, but called Suzy by those who knew her, in North Carolina on