

Statement by
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
ON CREATING A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Minnesota Education Association
State-Wide Teacher Rally

Minneapolis Auditorium
October 20, 1977

I deeply regret that I cannot be with you today for your statewide rally.

As you are aware, the creation of a separate federal Department of Education has been an issue of utmost importance to me for many years. As a member of the Senate, I have introduced various bills to create a Department of Education, and I am gratified that hearings now have started on Senator Ribicoff's bill, of which I am a co-sponsor.

Education's rise as a national priority is evidenced by the dramatic increase in federal spending on it in recent years. Yet spending has been piecemeal, lacking coherence and consistency on the national level.

Education programs now are scattered among 40 different offices in the federal government. Such multiple bureaucracies drain not only the federal budget, but also state and local budgets which must expend many resources and personnel simply to find a way through the maze of federal education bureaucracies.

HEW was created on the premise that health, education and welfare policies should be strongly related. But little integration actually has occurred. Education is forced to compete for federal assistance dollars with other programs in HEW with which it shares little common basis for competition.

Though the Federal role in education has expanded rapidly it has been obscured by even greater growth in health, welfare and social security programs. We no longer can afford to have our

education programs pared away simply to balance the bigger budget of HEW.

We are the only major nation in the world that lacks a Cabinet-level post in education. Our country needs a full-time Secretary of Education with the standing of other Cabinet members to articulate sound, consistent educational policy to the President and the Office of Management and Budget. We need to define the role of federal government in education as one of facilitating education for all our citizens, not one of complicating and delaying this effort.

It is time to eliminate much of the bureaucratic paperwork required of state and local school authorities by federal educational bureaucracies, and shift the focus of local activity back to the true purpose of education - providing students with skills to lead fulfilling and productive lives. We must reaffirm and strengthen our commitment to the quality education of our young people. Establishing a Department of Education would represent a big step towards these ends.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org