

A PROCLAMATION

Education for the children of all the people, extending from the primary grades through the university, constitutes America's noblest contribution to civilization. No child or youth in the United States need be deprived of the benefits of education suited to his age and degree of advancement.

Nevertheless, either through negligence or because of unfortunate circumstances which might be controlled with sufficient effort, large numbers of children do not receive the full preparation for their life's work to which they are justly entitled. Many have reached maturity without even the rudiments of education.

This condition demands the solicitude of all patriotic citizens. It involves not only the persons immediately concerned and the communities in which they live, but the Nation itself, for the welfare of the country depends upon the character and the intelligence of those who cast the ballots.

Education has come to be nearer to the hearts of the American people than any other single public interest. The plan of maintaining educational institutions from public funds did not originally prevail in most of the States, and even where it was in use it was but feebly developed in the early days of the Republic. That plan did not arise spontaneously in the minds of all citizens. It was only when the suggestion came forcefully, convincingly, and repeatedly from a few pioneers that popular interest was fully aroused. Vigorous campaigns were required not only to establish the idea of public education, but also for its maintenance, and for its important extensions.

Campaigns of national scope in behalf of education have been conducted annually since 1920, and they have been increasingly effective with each succeeding year. They have concentrated attention upon the needs of education, and the cumulative impetus of mass action has been peculiarly beneficial. It is clearly in the interest of popular education, and consequently of the country, that these campaigns be continued with vigor.

In the last few years we have placed much emphasis on vocational training. It is necessary for men to know the practical side of life and be able to earn a living. We want to have masters of our material resources. But it is also necessary to have a broad and liberal culture that will enable men to think and know how to live after they have earned a living. An educated fool is a sorry spectacle, but he is not nearly so dangerous to society as a rich fool. We want neither in this country. We want the educated to know how to work and the rich to know how to think.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States of America, do designate November 17th to 23rd, inclusive, as American Education Week. I urge that the citizens do all they can to advance the interests of education. It is especially recommended that the Governors of the States issue proclamations emphasizing the services rendered by their educational institutions, and calling upon their people to observe the occasion by appropriate action. Further, I urge that all civil officers whose duties relate to education, and all persons connected with the profession of teaching, exert themselves to diffuse information concerning the condition and needs of the schools and to enhance appreciation of the value of education. Patriotic, civic, religious, social, and other organizations could contribute by conducting meetings and demonstrations to promote the desire for knowledge. Ministers of religion and members of the press are asked to exercise the means within their power to increase enthusiasm for educational advancement and to stimulate zeal for enlightened citizenship.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done in the City of Washington on this 14th day of November in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and [SEAL] Twenty-four and of the Independence of the United States, the One Hundred and Forty-ninth.

CALVIN COOLIDGE