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17 August 1988

JUDGE:

RE: Your proposed remarks  
at the Agency Guest Speaker Program  
2 September 1988 2:00 p.m.  
Headquarters Auditorium

You are scheduled to introduce William J. Bennett, U.S. Secretary of Education, for the Agency Guest Speaker Program. The topic of his talk is "The Importance of Educational Reform." Proposed introductory remarks and biographical information on Secretary Bennett, who leaves office on September 12, are attached.

Secretary Bennett will arrive at your office at about 1:45, to give you a few minutes to talk before his presentation. The Office of Training and Education has set up the following schedule.

STAT

- 1:45 Secretary Bennett and his Chief of Staff, John Walters, arrive at Headquarters and are met by the Director of Training and Education, [redacted], who accompanies them to the DCI's office.
- 1:55 The group proceeds to the auditorium via the Director's elevator.
- 2:00 The DCI goes immediately to the podium to introduce Secretary Bennett as the guest speaker.
- 3:30 Accompanied by the DCI, Secretary Bennett and Mr. Walters are escorted from the auditorium to depart CIA.

Bill Baker

Attachments:  
As stated

PROPOSED REMARKS  
BY  
WILLIAM H. WEBSTER  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
AT THE  
AGENCY GUEST SPEAKER PROGRAM  
HEADQUARTERS AUDITORIUM  
SEPTEMBER 2, 1988

IT IS MY PLEASURE THIS AFTERNOON TO INTRODUCE WILLIAM J. BENNETT  
-- UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF EDUCATION AND A CHAMPION OF  
EDUCATIONAL REFORM. DURING HIS TENURE AS OUR NATION'S TOP  
SCHOOLMASTER, SECRETARY BENNETT HAS LED THE NATION IN REEXAMINING  
OUR EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMS. I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING  
HIS VIEWS ON EDUCATIONAL REFORM TODAY.

SECRETARY BENNETT BRINGS TO THIS OCCASION BOTH IMPRESSIVE  
CREDENTIALS AND A PHILOSOPHY OF INVOLVEMENT. HE HAS INSPIRED  
COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN ALL SECTORS OF OUR SOCIETY,  
VISITING SCHOOLS, SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AND STATE LEGISLATURES  
ACROSS THE COUNTRY. HE ONCE DECLARED THAT HIS SUCCESSOR AS  
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION "BETTER LIKE VISITING THIRD GRADE IN TOLEDO."

SECRETARY BENNETT HOLDS A BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE IN PHILOSOPHY  
FROM WILLIAMS COLLEGE, AND HE EARNED A DOCTORATE IN POLITICAL

PHILOSOPHY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AND A LAW DEGREE FROM HARVARD LAW SCHOOL. HE TAUGHT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, HARVARD UNIVERSITY, BOSTON UNIVERSITY, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN BEFORE BECOMING DIRECTOR AND THEN PRESIDENT OF NORTH CAROLINA'S NATIONAL HUMANITIES CENTER. IN 1981, PRESIDENT REAGAN SELECTED HIM TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES, WHERE HE SERVED UNTIL HE WAS APPOINTED SECRETARY OF EDUCATION IN 1985.

THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER, SECRETARY BENNETT HAS EMPHASIZED WHAT HE TERMS THE "BASIC BASICS" -- TEACHING FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS SUCH AS READING, WRITING, AND MATHEMATICS AND, AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL LEVELS, TEACHING THE CLASSICS OF WESTERN LITERATURE AND THOUGHT. HE ALSO STRESSES THE NEED TO DEVELOP A STRONG MORAL SENSE IN AMERICA'S YOUTH, AND HE ENCOURAGES PARENTAL CHOICE AND INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION.

SINCE HE TOOK OFFICE IN 1985, SECRETARY BENNETT HAS VISITED OVER 100 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, WHERE HE HAS TALKED WITH

TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS, TAUGHT CLASS, AND LEARNED ABOUT OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM BY PARTICIPATING IN IT. HIS DEPARTMENT'S "FIRST LESSONS" STUDY WAS THE FIRST NATIONAL REPORT IN THREE DECADES ON ELEMENTARY EDUCATION. SECRETARY BENNETT HAS ALSO LAUNCHED A SERIES OF PUBLICATIONS TITLED "WHAT WORKS" -- PUBLICATIONS THAT DEAL WITH DRUGS IN THE SCHOOLS, EDUCATING DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN, AND PRACTICAL EXPLANATIONS OF HOW WE LEARN.

THE 1988-89 SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS NEXT WEEK, AS WILLIAM J. BENNETT'S TENURE AS U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION DRAWS TO A CLOSE. SECRETARY BENNETT, WE ARE FORTUNATE THAT YOU COULD BE WITH US TODAY. A RECENT PROFILE IN THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR DECLARED THAT YOU WERE "COLORFUL, QUOTABLE, AND GOOD FOR MORE JUICY STORIES THAN SCHEHEREZADE."<sup>1</sup> WE ARE CERTAINLY LOOKING FORWARD TO WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY TO US.

<sup>1</sup> SCHEHEREZADE ((SHA HAIR AH ZOD')), STORYTELLER IN THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE SECRETARY

WILLIAM J. BENNETT

William J. Bennett has served as United States Secretary of Education since February 6, 1985, following unanimous confirmation by the Senate.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Secretary Bennett holds a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from Williams College, a doctorate in political philosophy from the University of Texas, and a law degree from Harvard Law School. He taught at the University of Southern Mississippi, the University of Texas, Harvard University, Boston University, and the University of Wisconsin before becoming Director and later President of the National Humanities Center in North Carolina. In 1981, he was selected by President Reagan to be Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, where he served until assuming his current position.

The Secretary has been an advocate for excellence at all levels of education. His report while at the Endowment, *To Reclaim a Legacy*, focused on the liberal arts and higher education. His proposals for improving elementary and secondary education are set forth in several Department of Education publications, including *First Lessons*, the first national report in three decades on elementary education.

Secretary Bennett has launched the Department's "What Works" series of booklets, a set of publications that provide tested, practical advice for parents, educators, policy makers and students. The series began with a 65-page handbook, *What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning*. The second volume, *Schools Without Drugs*, is the cornerstone of the Department's extensive efforts to prevent drug use by school children. In less than ten months, over 1.5 million copies of *Schools Without Drugs* have been distributed to the American public free of charge. *Schools That Work: Educating Disadvantaged Children*, the most recent addition to the series, presents important new information about the practices of schools that are successfully educating disadvantaged children.

Secretary Bennett's educational philosophy and policies are based in part on what he has called the "3 Cs": Content, Character, and Choice. These principles inform his call for a return to basics -- to teach a strong core curriculum emphasizing fundamentals such as reading, writing, mathematics and mastery of the classics; to develop strong moral character in young Americans; and to promote parental choice and involvement in education. In recommending school reforms, Secretary Bennett consistently urges measures that require assessment, institute accountability, and demand progress.

Among the Secretary's other initiatives are reforms of higher education financing and bilingual education. He has also spoken out on issues such as the importance of the family, the need to protect our children from the threat of AIDS, and the academic and moral responsibilities of college administrators, faculty and students.

July 1987

## Profile

# PREACHER, TEACHER, GADFLY

**WILLIAM BENNETT** is leaving as Secretary of Education, but his tart tongue and ample ego will keep him highly visible—and audible—and could well propel him higher in the G.O.P.

**I**t has been a dazzling bit of footwork, even for a world-class dancing man like William Bennett. Since he took office in February 1985, the brash Secretary of Education has turned himself into the most visible and surely the most audible member of the Reagan team. During the primaries, he flirted with various presidential aspirers who eyed him as a running mate: "I dance with all the girls," he chuckled. So was he hungry for higher office? "I'm not running for anything," he said. Amid a riptide of Administration defections, Bennett held fast.

Then on May 9, Bennett told Reagan he was quitting in September to lecture and write. But no kiss-and-tell stuff. "That's not my style," he growled. Bennett, however, has more than one agenda. He is consulting with the Republican Platform Committee as it prepares for next month's convention, where he will be a prime-time speaker. Top Republicans have approached him about running for the Senate. He adds, "After watching some of the people in the stakes for the presidency, I could do better than that." As a vice-presidential candidate? "I'm not sure I'd make a very good No. 2 man," he retorts. "I like to run things."

No one who knows Bill Bennett, 44, doubts that. Nor has there been much doubt where he has been headed in the cross-country whirl that has taken him to 102 elementary and secondary schools in three years—plus scores of service clubs and state legislatures. Watch him as he visits No. 88, the Amherst Middle School near Nashua, N.H.:

The Amherst faculty beams as Bennett rumbles in, trailed by aides. He smiles, waves, pats shoulders, walking canted forward from the waist as though leaning into a wind. Bennett is a big man—6 ft. 2 in., 216 lbs. A friend once pointed him out as "the one who looks like a buffalo." Bennett is in Nashua to praise Amherst as a "School of Excellence," one that does well without begging for federal money. "Insofar as people look to Washington for solutions, they're wrong," says Bennett. At these whistle stops, Bennett usually teaches a class, something his wife Elayne, an ex-teacher, challenged him to do. "Get out and see if you can do it," she said.

He can. Scrunching into a child's chair in an eighth-grade English class, Bennett speaks softly. "You don't want to scare 'em," he explains later. When the pupils' questions

become too rote, Bennett teases. "Some kids asked me if the Secret Service was here. 'See that big guy back there?'" he says, pointing to a hulking bodyguard. "If you guys make a move for me, you're in trouble."

The kids love him. So does the rest of the school, which roars happily at the award ceremony. Then, running late, he makes a wild, 85-m.p.h. run to Concord to address the New Hampshire legislature. In Governor John Sununu's office, Bennett asks Senate President Bill Bartlett, "How long shall I do?" "Three minutes," says Bartlett, "plenty of time for some guy from Washington."

Bennett guffaws. He revels in this back-room camaraderie, the rough-and-tumble of what he is doing. It seems a grownup version of the heavy-contact touch football that Bennett loves to play on fall weekends—and may symbolize the life he would choose had he been born faster afoot and eternally young. Bennett plays the theme of frugal independence to these flinty lawmakers. "The key to excellence is local control; you cannot spend your way to excellence," he says to approving nods.

Then he is off again for a sprint to Boston's Logan Airport en route to a final flourish in Atlanta. Bennett seems to revel, too, in these dashes, riding the fast lane in cars, in conversation, in politics. "He's got a big ego, and he knows it," says an associate. At Logan, Press Secretary Loye Miller tells him of an invitation from a TV talk show. "Crossfire wants you Saturday," he says. "Not Saturday," replies Bennett, a homebody who scorns the Potomac syndrome of "working the restaurants at night." He snorts, "A big status thing in Washington is 20 pink slips on your desk covered with stuff at 7:30 in the evening. My desk is clear. You work hard and then go to your family."

He is adamant about skipping the capital's heavy-pol bashes: "Nobody ever says anything at those things," he grumbles. By reports, he has turned down invitations from George Bush. Bennett confesses he'd rather be home "watching *Dragonslayer* on the Disney Channel" with Elayne and their son John, 4.

This close family life is precious to Bennett, a Catholic whose parents divorced 40 years ago, when pious folk did not. His mother, who disliked the rich and called the family "us common folk," moved Bill, an older brother Bob and their Hungarian grandmother from Brooklyn to Washington. There, Bennett flourished at Gonzaga High, a Jesuit school. "The only guy in the honors class to be starting on the football team," he brags. But he chafed under the discipline of the fathers. "They regarded me as a smarty-pants, and they were absolutely right," he says.

At the same time, he began to develop a ravenous ambition. At 17 he got into elite Williams College in Massachusetts. Grandma scraped together \$200 for clothes. "She knew there were a lot of guys from St. Paul's and Andover, and that I ought to dress up to speed," he recalls.

At Williams he got daily letters from her; she read all his major texts so she could trade notes on them. To help pay tuition, Bennett waited on tables and worked summers hauling furniture while earning honors, playing football and strumming a rock guitar—the very model of the 1960s liberal student. Civil rights concerns nudged him toward the liberal Students for a Democratic Society, which later turned violently radical. But Brother Bob talked him out of it, advising that some day S.D.S. might not look good on his resumé.

A resentment at privilege began to boil, and still simmers today. "I really dislike snobs," he growls, "pretentious

## Profile

people who mistreat people who have to work for them. I hate them." This anger congealed into a hard-edged populism as Bennett took a Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Texas, then served as a dean of liberal arts at Boston University, all under brilliant, acerbic John Silber, who was then undergoing a conversion from liberal to born-again conservative.

Bennett refined his own convert's faith as director of the National Humanities Center in North Carolina, and then, at age 38, as head of the National Endowment for the Humanities in Washington. At NEH, Bennett accused college faculties of a "collective loss of nerve and faith" for serving up trendy courses at the expense of classic Western studies. He spurned affirmative-action quotas in NEH hiring, arguing that quotas were discriminatory.

Mary Futrell, president of the powerful National Education Association, has called Bennett's record on civil rights "less than exemplary." Bennett retorts, "If you don't think people should be given things or have things taken away on the basis of race or sex, if you believed that in 1965, you were a liberal. If you believe it now, you're a conservative."

Bennett's style caught the approving attention of Attorney General Edwin Meese, who recommended him as Secretary of Education, the bottom-ranked Cabinet slot. Bennett recalls, "The President said, 'I can't get rid of this department. But since we have it, I'd like you to represent the views of the American people and not the education interest groups.' I said, 'Fine, that's what I'd like to do.'" He has done so with gusto, greatly aggrandizing the position while so-called education interest groups—including university people and members of Congress—chafed at the notion that their own agendas were not of the people. (Silber, who wanted the job himself, dismisses his protégé as the "Sorcerer's Apprentice.")

Bennett began by roasting college students as easy riders who beach-bummed on tax-supported loans. He then accused the Supreme Court of a "fastidious disdain for religion" for banning use of public funds for remedial programs in parochial schools. He trampled on congressional toes with public calls for sub-basement education budgets (which Congress rejected), rather than tactfully negotiating compromises in committee.

Reaction was quick and furious. Augustus Hawkins, Democratic chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, awarded the new Secretary a "failing grade." Connecticut's Republican Senator Lowell Weicker fumed that Bennett and his views should not be "allowed out of the Education building, much less outside Washington."

So pervasive were the counterattacks that even the cocky Bennett felt abashed. "I underestimated the size of the microphone I had," he says. Bob, a Washington lawyer, offered some new big-brotherly advice. Says Bennett: "He's got this big fish mounted in his office, and he said, 'You know why that fish is up there? Because he opened his mouth, that's why.'"

Bennett has since attacked the likes of Harvard for jacking costs above \$12,000 with the help of federal stu-

dent-loan support and for "ripping off" undergraduates with suffused curriculums that Bennett derides as "core lite." He has detonated heavy controversy by advocating federal vouchers to finance parental choice among public schools—typically, say opponents, white schools for white kids living in mixed neighborhoods. He has called for AIDS testing of all marriage-license applicants, hospital patients and convicts and has unloaded on Republicans and Democrats alike who opposed the President's Iranian and *contra* policies. All that *after* Brother Bob told him about the fish. "He sees a complex federal agency as a bully pulpit," comments Joseph Duffey, chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Bennett's predecessor at NEH. "It is the temperament of a preacher." Hawkins has another, perhaps more canny, perspective: "Bennett gives the answers of a professional politician rather than a professional educator"—a judgment some observers see as the sum of his many parts.

The contentious Bennett has made no bones about using the office to preach. "This is the appropriate job for the Secretary of Education," says he, "where your

powers to say and be heard are much greater than your powers to make things be." At the same time, he emerged as a formidable doer within the party. When the news came out that Supreme Court Nominee Douglas Ginsburg had smoked pot as a law professor at Harvard, Bennett made a critical call to Ginsburg, urging him to end his candidacy. Nor, in recent months, has he shown signs of easing back on either the frequency or muzzle velocity of his comments on education. Some sample shots:

▶ "Star teachers ought to get salary increases. At the other end, throw out the incompetent people; they're killing the profession."

▶ "Allan Bloom [author of *The Closing of the American Mind*] is a brilliant man, very good for higher education. But much too despairing. He doesn't see the happiness and spontaneity of American life. I hate that prissy crap where he's anti-rock 'n' roll."

▶ "What makes me happy is seeing a good school . . . and knowing more than all my critics."

He has saved his real shockers for Cabinet colleagues. When an old friend, Justice Department Spokesman Terry Eastland, was fired by Meese, Bennett declared bluntly, "Terry Eastland's an excellent man. He can join me at the department any time."

With that stroke, Bennett distanced himself from the wreckage of the expiring regime. He also began to establish himself, for the future, as very much his own man. "Look," he told a reporter, "I put country above party. Always have." Then he added, "I know that I'm popular with audiences out there in the country, and it doesn't seem to make much difference whether they're Democrats or Republicans."

Bill Bennett may be leaving this Administration, but when he says things like that, he does not sound like a man who has given up public service for good. So what might lie ahead for him? "Right now," he says, "if I were going to run for anything in the future, I'd want to run for President."

—By Ezra Bowen

"AFTER WATCHING SOME OF THE PEOPLE IN THE stakes for the presidency, I could do better than that. I'm not sure I'd make a very good No. 2 man. I like to run things."



# Bennett and his legacy for US learning

By Robert Marquand  
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

**A**N avenging angel. An arrogant self-promoter. A white knight. A red dragon.

William J. Bennett, soon to depart as US secretary of education, has been called all these things and more during his 40 months as the nation's top schoolmaster — a time of intense interest in and anxiety about the quality of American learning.

One thing is certain: Since Dr. Bennett replaced Terrel Bell, who refused to go along with the Reagan administration effort to shut down the Education Department, he has put his job on the map — given it new importance.

"If the [next education secretary] isn't an activist it'll be noticed," Bennett says from his office overlooking the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. "It's better for the country if both parties debate ideas."

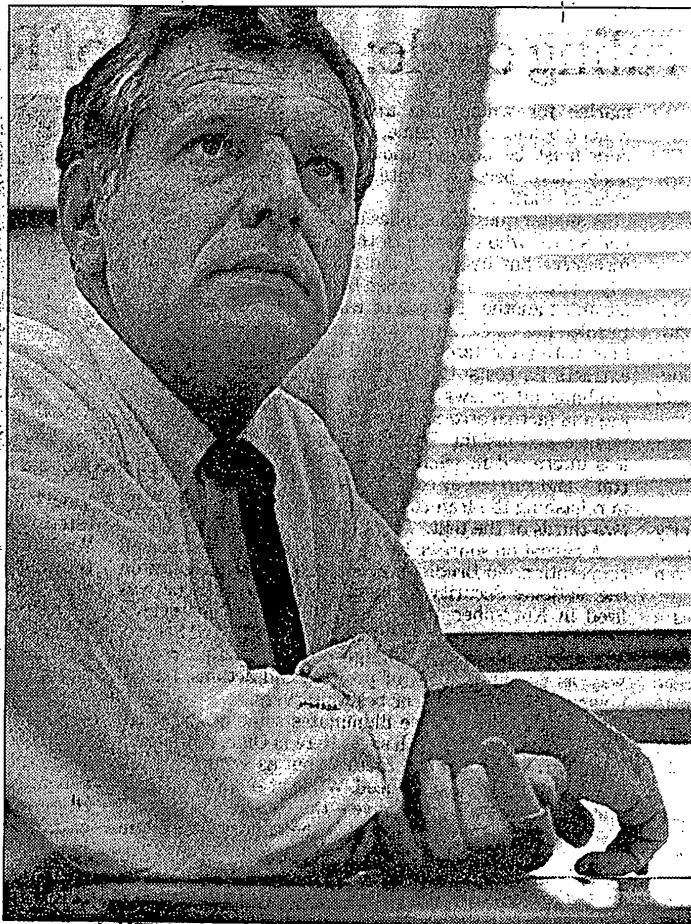
His successor "better not do a lot of shark-fin lunches," he says. "The person better like visiting third grade in Toledo."

Bennett (who leaves office Sept. 12) broke the traditional Republican hands-off approach to federal social involvement. With all the timidity and preciousness of a Sherman tank, he became the most activist of the nation's chief educators to date — from slamming fat-cat Capitol Hill lobbyists, to proposing a national high school curriculum based on a classical academic core that stressed Western civilization and democracy.

He weathered being pegged early on as the new James Watt of the Reagan White House, another foot-swallowing ideologue — to become a darling of the press, lauded by David Broder of the Washington Post; colorful, quotable, and good for more juicy stories than Scheherazade.

Bennett lovers say the secretary shifted the issue of education back to "the American people" — the parents and citizens he constantly invokes — and away from mealy-mouthed bureaucrats and policy specialists. He demanded more accountability and higher standards — forgotten words in the 1970s. He stepped into an arid public square and reaffirmed a common tradition of American virtues — hard work; basic knowledge, family values. He battled moral relativism — a pervasive ethos in schools that refuse to make fine distinctions between differing ideas about government, values, behaviors. He got out of Washington — praising good teachers and principals in more than 100 schools across the country.

Further, as the voice of the common man, Bennett admonished the hand-wringing liberal humanist education establishment for its hyper-intellectualized, overly complex ap-



William J. Bennett: as US education secretary, he put his job on the map.

proach to learning, especially for the disadvantaged. As he says: "Some states are now showing us that maybe some of the problems of schooling aren't as intractable as we thought. Maybe we don't have to reinvent the wheel; re-create the world every five years. Corporations say the problem isn't that kids can't follow complexity, it's that they can't read, can't follow instructions, don't show up on time. I wish we could defangify some of this. There's a need for basic basics."

Detractors of Bennett see a different man and a different record: They see an opportunist who found that bashing the education establishment made for good politics and good press — however destructive it might be to a fragile reform movement. Bennett was busy looking for headlines and never got close enough to the actual sweat and toil of reform to know how or what important work to do under the surface.

Hence, critical opportunities were missed. He bashed teacher unions just as they were showing a readiness to change. He ignored strategic funding for public school choice and preschool Head Start. Although preaching civic virtue, he was silent on volunteer community service. He began playing out a persona. His visits to local schools were media events for a man without a constituency in search of higher office.

Bill Honig, superintendent of California schools, says: "He's made it tough for guys like me. He flies in, makes a controversial speech, and polarizes people. It's a thrill to get

the press, but who stays after to do the 'dirty work'? Why couldn't he build coalitions among those of us who feel he's right on many issues?"

Time magazine, in a July 18 profile of Bennett, intimates that the secretary may become a leading light in the Republican Party. Bennett will make a prime-time speech at the GOP convention next Wednesday. But insiders are skeptical. George Bush has so far kept his distance.

The importance Bennett gave his post is also due to taking on tough issues: AIDS ("kids need to know about it"); college quality and cost; faster mainstreaming of bilingual children.

"I created a lot of room on the left," he states. "People could say some pretty tough, old-fashioned things and still be to my left."

Gerald Grant of Syracuse University says Bennett has ensured that future education secretaries will have to be more than technocrats.

Others see the status Bennett lent his post as an opening for a less contentious secretary — but one still not captive to Congress or the establishment — to form strategic legislation. Preschool, comparative test data, even a federal takeover of a bad school or two, are ideas suggested by Bruce Babbitt in the August Washington Monthly.

As the Reagan era ends, Babbitt asks, "Is there a federal role that extends beyond personal exhortation? Congress has been unable to answer that question; its response is simply to churn out more demonstration grants for the latest fad from the last expert to testify within range of a camera."

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By Jim Benc  
Staff writer of T

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COMMENTARY

# High marks for secretary's role

By Jim Bencivenga  
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Washington

As school begins this September, William J. Bennett's tenure as United States secretary of education ends. The departure of the big, blunt, outspoken populist-cum-philosophical canon is a graduation both for the man, and for American education.

For this reporter, his diploma reads *magna cum laude*.

Every issue of import he championed is now underlined in the lesson books of America's classrooms: greater choice in the school one's child attends; stronger emphasis on teaching values; high academic standards for all students; more rigorous and regular testing; allowance for alternative methods of bilingual instruction; greater accountability for the high cost and sometimes suspect quality of higher education.

Dr. Bennett spoke directly to the American people. He conducted a conversation that was forthright, that addressed real concerns, and that pulled no punches. He was not a lap dog for the education establishment, nor a proponent for the status quo.

And though he was no slouch in addressing pressing social issues - drugs, AIDS, dropouts - Bennett repeatedly honed his polemic to stress that the business of education was - first, middle, and last - academics. Nowhere was he more emphatic on this than on the fifth anniversary of the watershed report "A Nation at Risk."

For five years, teacher salaries increased faster than the rate of inflation. In state after state, governor after governor made heroic efforts to improve schools. Yet Bennett stood before the nation and graded the results no better than a gentleman's C, lamenting that except for a few encouraging signs such as better performance on national tests by minority students, "the news is not what it should be." Reading scores, math scores, writing skills, were at levels where only 1 out of 5 students could be said to be doing well. Improvement was in a "dead stall."

Yet one would be hard pressed to challenge Bennett's role as champion of teachers and principals. No previous US commissioner or secretary of education visited more schools (102) and spent more time in classrooms than he. He sought and then extolled what is noble, what is important, and what works in teaching.

"My successor better like visiting schools - not sitting down to lunch with education associations and establishment types" in Washington is one piece of advice he offers.

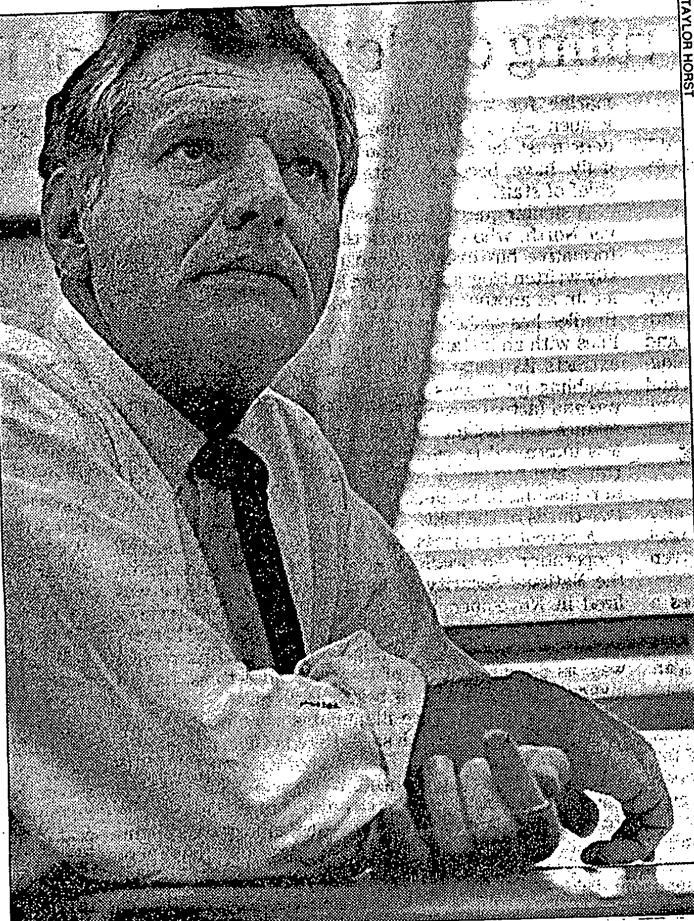
Whether or not one agrees with his vision of education, he has spelled it out clearly, without jargon, for all to critique. Two books in particular outline what he thinks should be taught: "First Lessons" and "James Madison High School." The two set out an optimum curriculum for students in elementary and secondary schools. Bennett reminds his critics, "I have no authority to impose a curriculum other than the powers of persuasion."

Amid a swirling national debate, Bennett's writings - including his statements about higher education in the report "To Reclaim a Legacy," which he wrote when president of the National Endowment for the Humanities in the first Reagan term - leave the American people clear, direct guidelines by which to compare and contrast what is being taught their children.

Bill Bennett will be a tough act to follow.

*Jim Bencivenga is the Monitor's education editor. He held a 22-month appointment to the research and statistical arm of the Department of Education while William J. Bennett was the secretary.*

TAYLOR HOBBS



William J. Bennett: as US education secretary, he put his job on the map

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