

BUILDING SUPPORT FOR BETTER SCHOOLS

PRESENTED TO THE  
UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS  
SPRING CONFERENCE

REMARKS BY  
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UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

I DEEPLY APPRECIATE YOUR INVITATION TO ADDRESS  
THIS SPRING CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED FEDERATION  
OF TEACHERS. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE  
ATTENDED A UNION MEETING, *ON SUCH FRIENDLY TERMS.*

OF COURSE, I THINK THIS UNION AND THE PEOPLE  
YOU REPRESENT ARE SOMETHING SPECIAL, I HAVE A  
PROFOUND REGARD FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO TEACH  
IN THE CITY'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS. I HAVE NEVER MET  
A MORE DEDICATED, CONSCIENTIOUS AND PUBLIC-SPIRITED  
GROUP OF PEOPLE. YOU SET AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL OF US,  
I ONLY HOPE MORE OF US WILL SOON REALIZE -- AND  
REWARD -- THE CONTRIBUTIONS YOU MAKE TO OUR CITY  
AND OUR SOCIETY.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

ALMOST 20 YEARS AGO, WHEN RICHARD NIXON WAS  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, HIS ATTORNEY  
GENERAL, JOHN MITCHELL, ADVISED THE PRESS AND  
THE PUBLIC TO "WATCH WHAT WE DO, NOT WHAT WE  
SAY".

THE PHRASE MADE ME UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN I FIRST  
HEARD IT. IT MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE TODAY.  
WHAT MAKES ME MORE UNCOMFORTABLE, THOUGH, IS  
MY CONCERN THAT THIS OLD PHRASE OF JOHN  
MITCHELL'S MAY BE AN ACCURATE REFLECTION  
OF WHAT IS HAPPENING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION AT  
THE PRESENT TIME.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

WE ARE SAYING ALL THE RIGHT THINGS, BUT OUR  
PERFORMANCE SEEMS TO BE COMING UP SHORT,

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN A  
GREAT OUTPOURING OF WORDS AND CONCERN AT THE  
NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL ABOUT THE  
STATUS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THIS COUNTRY.  
THE CONCERN HAS BEEN GENUINE, AND IT REFLECTS  
A GENERAL SENSE THAT OUR SYSTEM OF PUBLIC  
EDUCATION EITHER IS NOT WHAT IT ONCE WAS, OR  
IS NOT WHAT WE WOULD LIKE IT TO BE.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PHYSICAL CONDITION  
OF OUR SCHOOLS: AGING ON THE OUTSIDE, SOMEWHAT  
BARE ON THE INSIDE. WE SEE BUILDINGS THAT ARE  
IN A STATE OF DISREPAIR OR DECAY, WE SEE  
LIBRARIES THAT ARE INADEQUATE, SCIENCE LABS  
THAT ARE OUT OF DATE, SUPPLY ROOMS THAT ARE  
POORLY STOCKED *AND TEACHER ROOMS THAT  
ARE ABYSMAL.*

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ARE MANAGED. ARE THEY TOP HEAVY WITH  
ADMINISTRATORS? ARE THERE TOO MANY LAYERS OF  
BUREAUCRACY TO CUT THROUGH? IS THE RELATIONSHIP  
BETWEEN OUR SCHOOL BOARDS AND OUR SCHOOL  
SUPERINTENDENTS AS EFFECTIVE AS IT SHOULD BE?  
DO OUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND MANAGEMENT  
SYSTEMS HELP OR HINDER THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS  
OR HAVE NO IMPACT WHATSOEVER?

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

WE HAVE EXPRESSED FREQUENT AND SOMETIMES  
CONFLICTING CONCERNS ABOUT SCHOOL CURRICULA.  
SCHOOLS AND FACULTY HAVE BEEN CRITICIZED ON  
THE GROUNDS THAT TODAY'S EDUCATION IS NOT  
PRACTICAL ENOUGH, AND ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT  
IS TOO PRACTICAL AND DOES NOT PAY ENOUGH  
ATTENTION TO THE HUMANITIES.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

AND WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT OUR TEACHERS.  
THEY ARE OVERWORKED, UNDERPAID AND VASTLY  
UNDERAPPRECIATED. OBVIOUSLY, YOU CANNOT HAVE  
GOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHOUT GOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL  
TEACHERS. YOU KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE.  
AND WE ARE NOT GOING TO KEEP GOOD TEACHERS  
UNLESS WE ALSO HAVE BETTER SALARIES, BETTER  
WORKING CONDITIONS, AND BETTER OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION AND ADVANCEMENT.



UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

WE FACE A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE OVER THE NEXT  
SEVEN TO TEN YEARS IN MAINTAINING A HIGH  
QUALITY PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STAFF FOR OUR  
CHILDREN. MANY TEACHERS ARE NEARING RETIREMENT,  
AND MANY OF THE BEST NEW YOUNG TEACHERS ARE  
THOSE MOST LIKELY TO LEAVE THE PROFESSION  
~~EARLIEST~~ <sup>EARLY</sup> BECAUSE OF BETTER CAREER OPPORTUNITIES  
ELSEWHERE.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

EACH OF THESE TOPICS HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF  
A SPECIAL REPORT OR STUDY. SO IT'S CLEAR WE  
ARE LOOKING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND SAYING  
THE RIGHT THINGS.

BUT IN TERMS OF PUBLIC POLICY CHOICES, IT  
OFTEN SEEMS THAT OUR WORDS TAKE US IN ONE  
DIRECTION WHILE OUR ACTIONS TAKE US IN ANOTHER.

AND THAT IS ONE OF TWO POINTS I WANT TO  
DISCUSS WITH YOU TODAY.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

WE ARE CONSTANTLY TOLD, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT  
EDUCATION IS THE GATEWAY TO OPPORTUNITY IN  
THIS COUNTRY, THAT OUR CHILDREN ARE OUR  
GREATEST NATURAL RESOURCE OR TREASURE, AND  
THAT EVERY YOUNG PERSON DESERVES AN OPPORTUNITY.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

BUT IS THAT THE MESSAGE WE FIND IN THE  
GRAMM-RUDMAN-HOLLINGS BALANCED BUDGET  
LEGISLATION OR IN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S  
PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1987? IF  
FEDERAL BUDGET CUTS CURRENTLY PROPOSED ARE  
ENACTED, NEW YORK CITY STANDS TO LOSE ABOUT  
\$100 MILLION IN THE 1987-1988 SCHOOL YEAR --  
ONE-THIRD OF WHAT OUR SCHOOLS CUSTOMARILY  
RECEIVE FROM WASHINGTON DURING EACH BUDGET  
CYCLE. NEARLY ALL OF THIS MONEY COMES FROM  
THE OLD TITLE I PROGRAM, NOW CALLED CHAPTER  
I, THAT PROVIDES FUNDS FOR THE DISADVANTAGED  
STUDENT.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

THE BUDGET CUTS ON THE HORIZON MIGHT BE  
PALATABLE IF WE HAD ACHIEVED MOST OF WHAT WE  
SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION. BUT  
THESE CUTS ARE OCCURRING AT A TIME WHEN THE  
JOB IS FAR FROM COMPLETE -- AND ALSO AT A TIME  
WHEN, BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS  
IN THIS COUNTRY, THESE PROGRAMS MAY BE MORE  
NECESSARY THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE PAST 20  
YEARS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

TITLE I WAS THE FIRST PROGRAM TO PAY FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS. IT PROVIDED AN ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM. IT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. IT EMPHASIZED THE VALUES OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY, VALUES THAT ARE SUPPOSED TO BE IMPORTANT IN OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM. THE ONLY SERIOUS PROBLEM WITH TITLE I IS THAT 40 TO 50 PERCENT OF THE CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR THE PROGRAM NEVER PARTICIPATED. THE REASON? INADEQUATE FUNDING.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

NEVERTHELESS, BECAUSE OF TITLE I, THERE ARE  
NOTICEABLE IMPROVEMENTS IN NEW YORK CITY AND  
IN INNER CITY SCHOOLS GENERALLY. READING AND  
MATH SCORES ARE HIGHER; DROPOUT RATES ARE  
LOWER. THE SCORES ARE NOT AS HIGH AND THE  
DROPOUT RATES NOT AS LOW AS WE WOULD LIKE.  
BUT IT IS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR JUST HOW IMPORTANT  
THE TITLE I PROGRAM IS TO OUR SCHOOLS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

PROJECTED CUTBACKS IN TITLE I WILL BE FELT  
EVEN MORE IF THE GENERAL REVENUE SHARING  
PROGRAM IS ELIMINATED. THAT, TOO, IS A  
DISTINCT POSSIBILITY.

NEW YORK CITY RECEIVES \$270 MILLION A YEAR  
FROM THIS PROGRAM. THAT MONEY CAN BE USED ANY  
WAY THE CITY DECIDES. IT CAN GO TO THE POLICE  
DEPARTMENT, THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, THE PARKS  
DEPARTMENT, THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT. IN  
NEW YORK CITY, HOWEVER, THE MONEY HAS BEEN  
USED TO HELP PAY THE SALARIES OF TEACHERS.



UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

THE BAD NEWS IS THAT THE GENERAL REVENUE  
SHARING PROGRAM IS ABOUT TO EXPIRE AND THE  
REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS NO PLANS TO SAVE IT.

OUR PROBLEMS DON'T STOP THERE, TAX REFORM IS  
YET ANOTHER ISSUE THAT COULD HAVE A MAJOR  
IMPACT ON THE FINANCIAL ABILITY OF OUR CITY  
AND OUR STATE TO SUPPORT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

EVERYONE HERE KNOWS THERE IS A PROPOSAL TO  
ELIMINATE THE DEDUCTION CURRENTLY ALLOWED  
FOR STATE AND LOCAL TAXES.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A FINANCIAL ANALYST TO UNDERSTAND THE HAVOC THIS CHANGE COULD PRODUCE IN A HIGH TAX STATE LIKE NEW YORK. IF CONGRESS ELIMINATES THE DEDUCTION FOR STATE AND LOCAL TAXES PEOPLE, WILL BE LESS WILLING TO PAY EXISTING TAXES AND CERTAINLY LESS WILLING TO SUPPORT ANY INCREASES. IF THAT HAPPENS, THE ABILITY OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO RAISE REVENUES FOR OUR SCHOOLS WILL BE SERIOUSLY UNDERMINED.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

IT IS TOO SOON TO SAY WHAT KIND OF TAX REFORM  
PACKAGE WILL EMERGE, BUT WE DO KNOW WHAT WILL  
HAPPEN IF THE PROPOSED GRAMM-RUDMAN CUTS OCCUR  
AND THE GENERAL REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM IS  
ALLOWED TO EXPIRE. NEW YORK CITY WILL LOSE  
ABOUT HALF A BILLION DOLLARS IN FEDERAL MONEY,  
AND MANY TEACHERS COULD BE OUT OF A JOB.

THE COMBINATION OF ALL THREE WOULD BE CHILLING.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

SOME PROGRAMS MAY BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND LOSSES  
OF THIS MAGNITUDE. PUBLIC EDUCATION IS NOT  
ONE OF THEM. PUBLIC EDUCATION NEEDS EVERY  
DOLLAR IT CAN GET, EVERY FEDERAL DOLLAR, EVERY  
STATE DOLLAR, EVERY LOCAL DOLLAR. AND WE  
CERTAINLY CANNOT WITHSTAND THE LOSS OF SEVERAL  
THOUSAND TEACHERS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

I AGREE WITH THOSE WHO SAY A FIRST-RATE SYSTEM  
OF PUBLIC EDUCATION REQUIRES MORE THAN MONEY,  
BUT LET'S REMEMBER THAT MONEY IS THE INDISPENSABLE  
FUEL WITHOUT WHICH PUBLIC EDUCATION CANNOT  
SURVIVE. YOU SIMPLY CANNOT HAVE A FIRST-RATE  
SYSTEM OF PUBLIC EDUCATION WITHOUT PROVIDING  
ADEQUATE FUNDS,

THE ADEQUACY OF EDUCATIONAL FUNDS IS NOT JUST  
A FEDERAL ISSUE, EITHER. IT IS AN ISSUE WE  
NEED TO ADDRESS AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL  
AS WELL,

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

SOME STATES, SUCH AS CALIFORNIA AND WASHINGTON  
PAY 80 TO 90 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL PUBLIC EDUCATION  
COSTS IN THEIR STATE, STATE GOVERNMENTS AS A  
WHOLE CONTRIBUTE 49 PERCENT, NEW YORK STATE,  
HOWEVER, CONTRIBUTES ONLY 43 PERCENT.

THERE ARE SOME LEGITIMATE REASONS WHICH HELP TO  
EXPLAIN THE 43 PERCENT LEVEL. NEVERTHELESS, IF  
OUR STATE WOULD COMMIT ITSELF TO A 1.5 PERCENT  
INCREASE OF ITS SHARE OF THE <sup>EDUCATION STATEWIDE</sup> FUNDING, EACH YEAR  
FOR FOUR YEARS, WE COULD BE ON A PAR WITH THE  
REST OF THE COUNTRY --- AND AT THE SAME TIME  
TAKE GREAT STRIDES IN PROMOTING QUALITY  
EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

THAT IS NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK, IT IS WHAT WE SHOULD ASK IF WE ARE GOING TO BE EFFECTIVE ADVOCATES FOR OUR CHILDREN AND OUR SCHOOLS,

NOR IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK THAT NEW YORK CITY'S SHARE OF THE STATE EDUCATION FUNDS BE INCREASED BY ONE PERCENT A YEAR OVER THE NEXT SIX YEARS, THAT WOULD ALLOW NEW YORK CITY TO RECEIVE THE 37.5 PERCENT OF STATE EDUCATIONAL FUNDS TO WHICH IT IS ENTITLED ON THE BASIS OF ENROLLMENT AND EDUCATIONAL NEED, AT THE PRESENT TIME, NEW YORK CITY RECEIVES 31.5 PERCENT OF THESE FUNDS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

ACTIONS LIKE THESE WOULD PRODUCE MORE THAN A  
BILLION DOLLARS IN STATE EDUCATION AID TO NEW  
YORK CITY OVER FOUR YEARS AND MORE THAN TWICE  
THAT STATE WIDE.

THESE ARE NOT INSIGNIFICANT SUMS, BUT SUMS  
THAT I BELIEVE ARE CLEARLY NOT BEYOND OUR  
MEANS ESPECIALLY GIVEN THEIR IMPORTANCE.



UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

FINALLY, LET'S REMEMBER THAT THE CITY ITSELF PROVIDES HALF OF OUR SCHOOL BUDGET. AS CITY RESOURCES HAVE INCREASED AND SOME FLEXIBILITY HAS BEEN RESTORED TO THE CITY'S FISCAL DECISION MAKING, THERE HAS BEEN SOME GROWTH IN CITY SUPPORT FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEM. BUT THERE IS ROOM FOR MORE GROWTH.

THAT BRINGS ME TO MY SECOND POINT: WHAT DO WE DO WITH THIS INFORMATION?

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

RECENTLY, I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE  
SAME ISSUE WITH A GROUP OF BUSINESS LEADERS.  
MOST OF THEM WERE INVOLVED WITH PUBLIC EDUCATION  
IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, AND THEY HAD ASKED ME  
TO REVIEW THE RECORD OF THE SCHOOL-BUSINESS  
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BECOME SO  
WIDESPREAD DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS.

I TOLD THEM THEY SHOULD TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN  
WHAT HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

THEIR PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS HAD PROVIDED THEIR COMPANIES WITH A WINDOW ON THE WORLD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION. THEY MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR MANY CORPORATIONS TO LEARN, ON A FIRSTHAND BASIS, THE PROBLEMS THAT SCHOOLS FACE DAY IN AND DAY OUT. AND THE SCHOOLS, THOUGH SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL AT THE START, CAME TO RECOGNIZE THAT CORPORATIONS HAD SOME IMPORTANT RESOURCES AND SKILLS THAT COULD BENEFIT THEM. AS ONE TEACHER TOLD ME: "THE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM IN OUR SCHOOL ALLOWS US TO DREAM A LITTLE".

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

BUT I ALSO TOLD THESE BUSINESS LEADERS THAT  
THE TIME HAD COME FOR US TO LOOK BEYOND  
OUR OWN INDIVIDUAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS AND  
BEGIN TO FOCUS ON ISSUES THAT AFFECT THE  
EDUCATION SYSTEM AS A WHOLE.

I WANT TO SEE THESE PARTNERSHIPS CONTINUE TO  
GROW AND FLOURISH. BUT I ALSO KNOW THAT OUR  
PARTNERSHIPS WILL HAVE LITTLE MEANING IN THE  
LONG RUN IF WE ARE UNABLE TO AFFECT THE  
OVERALL CONTEXT IN WHICH PUBLIC EDUCATION  
OCCURS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

FOR BUSINESS, THIS MEANS WE CANNOT GET BY ANYMORE WITH SUPERFLUOUS ACTIONS LIKE TELLING OUR CORPORATE LOBBYISTS TO PUT IN A GOOD WORD FOR EDUCATION EVERY NOW AND THEN, IT MEANS WE CAN'T JUST SEND AN EXECUTIVE ON A SYMBOLIC GOODWILL VISIT TO WASHINGTON OR ALBANY TO ATTEND A HEARING OR A RECEPTION.

IT MEANS THAT WE HAVE TO ORGANIZE OURSELVES INTO A VIGOROUS, ACTIVE POLITICAL FORCE SO THAT WE CAN HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE DECISIONS ABOUT EDUCATION THAT ARE BEING MADE IN WASHINGTON, ALBANY AND CITY HALL.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

IT MEANS SUPPORTING CANDIDATES FOR ELECTIVE  
OFFICE WHO SHARE OUR VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE  
OF PROVIDING PUBLIC FUNDS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION,  
IT MEANS FORMING BROAD-BASED COALITIONS SO  
THAT ALL OF US WHO ARE COMMITTED TO THE FUTURE  
OF PUBLIC EDUCATION CAN WORK TOGETHER TO  
ACHIEVE OUR COMMON GOALS.

I ALSO HOPE IT MEANS THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY  
CAN WORK WITH THE TEACHING PROFESSION ON SOME  
SPECIFIC PROJECTS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

A RECENT PROPOSAL BY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WILLIAM BENNETT IS A GOOD PLACE TO START,

SECRETARY BENNETT WANTS TO PROVIDE \$600 WORTH  
OF VOUCHERS SO LOW-INCOME CHILDREN WHO ARE  
NOT DOING WELL IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CAN ATTEND  
PRIVATE SCHOOL. ON THE SURFACE, THE BENNETT  
PROPOSALS SOUNDS REASONABLE ENOUGH, ALTHOUGH I  
AM HARD PRESSED TO THINK OF A PRIVATE SCHOOL  
EDUCATION THAT COSTS ONLY \$600.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

SECRETARY BENNETT, HOWEVER, IS NOT PROPOSING  
THE VOUCHERS AS AN ADDITIONAL ENTICEMENT TO  
HELP LOW-INCOME CHILDREN. HE PROPOSES TO  
FINANCE THE VOUCHERS THROUGH EXISTING PROGRAMS.  
IN OTHERS WORDS, THE VOUCHERS REALLY ARE A  
STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF DISMANTLING OR  
REDUCING FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION.

IN MY JUDGEMENT, THE VOUCHER PROPOSAL IS A  
MISGUIDED AND WHOLLY INAPPROPRIATE ATTEMPT TO  
APPLY THE FREE MARKET MODEL TO PUBLIC EDUCATION.



UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

IF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION IS SERIOUS ABOUT  
A COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING EDUCATION FOR OUR  
CHILDREN, IT MIGHT BE BETTER ADVISED TO  
EVALUATE ONGOING REMEDIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
AND THEN PROVIDE A \$600 PER CHILD INCENTIVE  
FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS BASED  
ON THE MORE SUCCESSFUL MODELS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

IF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO GIVE  
POOR CHILDREN A BETTER CHANCE TO MAKE IT IN  
OUR SOCIETY, IT COULD BEGIN BY PROVIDING  
ENOUGH FUNDS FOR THE HEAD START PROGRAM SO  
THAT EVERY CHILD WHO <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ ELIGIBLE COULD  
PARTICIPATE.

ANOTHER ISSUE WHERE AN ALLIANCE COULD BE  
DEVELOPED HAS TO DO WITH THE SALARIES AND  
WORKING CONDITIONS OF TEACHERS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

ALL OF US GIVE LIP SERVICE TO AMERICA'S  
TEACHERS, BUT TEACHING STILL RANKS NEAR THE  
BOTTOM OF THE LIST AMONG POTENTIAL CAREER  
PATHS FOR OUR MOST ABLE COLLEGE GRADUATES.  
SMALL WONDER, THERE ARE FEW MATERIAL REWARDS  
FOR GOOD TEACHERS AND NOT MUCH PUBLIC RECOGNITION,  
EITHER. LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND OF THE RAND  
CORPORATION HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD WHEN SHE  
OPENED A 1984 ANALYSIS OF TEACHING WITH THE  
FOLLOWING WANT AD:

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

"WANTED,

COLLEGE GRADUATE WITH ACADEMIC MAJOR (MASTER'S  
DEGREE PREFERRED), EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION  
AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS REQUIRED, CHALLENGING  
OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE 150 CLIENTS DAILY,  
DEVELOPING UP TO FIVE DIFFERENT PRODUCTS EACH  
DAY TO MEET THEIR NEEDS, THIS DIVERSIFIED JOB  
ALSO ALLOWS EMPLOYEES TO EXERCISE TYPING,  
CLERICAL, LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND SOCIAL WORK  
SKILLS BETWEEN ASSIGNMENTS AND AFTER HOURS.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

ADAPTABILITY HELPFUL, SINCE SUPPLIERS CANNOT  
ALWAYS DELIVER GOODS AND SUPPORT SERVICES ON  
TIME, TYPICAL WORK WEEK 47 HOURS, SPECIAL  
NATURE OF WORK PRECLUDES FRINGE BENEFITS  
SUCH AS LUNCH AND COFFEE BREAKS, BUT WORK  
HAS MANY INTRINSIC REWARDS, STARTING SALARY  
\$12,769, WITH A GUARANTEE OF \$24,000 AFTER  
ONLY 14 YEARS."

SOUND FAMILIAR?

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

IF WE WANT TO CHANGE THIS JOB DESCRIPTION IN  
THE FUTURE ALL OF US MUST CONTRIBUTE TO THE  
EFFORT.

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE TEACHING  
PROFESSION BOTH CAN LOBBY FOR MORE EQUITABLE  
FUNDING AND MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR SYSTEM  
OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, BUT OUR PLEAS MAY FALL ON  
DEAF EARS IF OUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS DO NOT HAVE  
A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF EXACTLY WHAT IT IS  
THAT YOU AS TEACHERS DO EVERYDAY - WHAT IT IS  
THAT THEY ARE BEING ASKED TO SUPPORT WITH EVER  
INCREASING AMOUNTS OF TAXPAYERS' MONEY.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

IN THAT SENSE, THEY MAY BE IN THE SAME POSITION  
THAT MANY BUSINESS LEADERS WERE IN SEVERAL  
YEARS AGO. WE KNEW EDUCATION WAS IMPORTANT,  
BUT IT WAS STILL AN ABSTRACT IDEA. WE KNEW  
THERE WAS A PROGRAM CALLED TITLE I, BUT WE  
DIDN'T KNOW HOW IT FUNCTIONED, OR WHAT IT  
COULD ACCOMPLISH. WE HEARD EVERYTHING THAT  
WAS SAID ABOUT IMPROVING OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS,  
BUT WE LACKED THE SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE THAT  
WOULD HAVE PROMPTED US TO ACT MORE FORCEFULLY  
ON THE INFORMATION WE WERE RECEIVING.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

THAT BEGAN TO CHANGE ONCE WE STARTED COMING  
INTO THE SCHOOLS THROUGH THE VARIOUS PARTNERSHIP  
PROGRAMS, ONCE WE CAME INTO CONTACT WITH  
STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ON A ONE-TO-ONE BASIS,  
WE FOUND DEDICATED AND INVOLVED TEACHERS, WE  
FOUND STUDENTS WHO WERE ABLE, INTERESTED AND  
AMBITIOUS. WE STOPPED THINKING IN TERMS OF  
ABSTRACT IDEAS AND BEGAN THINKING IN TERMS OF  
PEOPLE AND IN TERMS OF INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITY,  
ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH.

MANY LEGISLATORS WOULD BENEFIT FROM A SIMILAR  
EXPERIENCE. SO WOULD OTHERS IN OUR COMMUNITIES.



UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

INVITE SOME LEGISLATORS AND CONGRESSMEN INTO  
YOUR SCHOOLS. ASK THEM TO COME MORE THAN ONCE,  
ASK THEM TO SPEND SOME QUALITY TIME WITH  
YOU. LET THEM SEE WHAT YOU DO, LET THEM SEE  
HOW SUCCESSFUL YOU HAVE BEEN, HELP THEM TO  
DEVELOP SOME RAPPORT WITH THE CHILDREN IN YOUR  
CLASSROOMS. LET THEM SEE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT  
WE WILL LOSE IF THE TITLE I PROGRAM IS CUT  
BACK. LET THEM SEE THE PROGRAMS THAT ARE  
WORKING, THE SUCCESS STORIES. CONVEY TO THEM  
WHAT YOU CONVEYED TO ME AND MY COLLEAGUES --  
THAT EVERYONE HAS A STAKE IN SUPPORTING PUBLIC  
EDUCATION IN THIS CITY.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

I KNOW THIS IS A SLOW AND LABORIOUS PROCESS,  
BUT IT ALSO IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS  
THAT I KNOW TO DEVELOP LASTING SUPPORT FOR OUR  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

YOU HAVE A GOOD STORY TO TELL, GO AHEAD AND  
TELL IT.

UFT SPRING CONFERENCE

WE AMERICANS ARE FOND OF SAYING THAT OUR  
NATIONAL SECURITY DEPENDS UPON MAINTAINING A  
STRONG DEFENSE POSTURE.

WHAT WE DO NOT YET FULLY GRASP, AND WHAT YOU  
CAN HELP US TO UNDERSTAND BETTER, IS THAT OUR  
NATION'S STRENGTH DEPENDS ON THE QUALITY OF  
THE INVESTMENT WE MAKE IN OUR SYSTEM OF PUBLIC  
EDUCATION.

THANK YOU.