

It's Patriotic to Teach

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I AM VERY GLAD to write a few words for *Educational Leadership* because I feel so strongly that, unless teachers are actually called into the armed forces for service, they have a greater obligation and a greater opportunity for service to their country in the teaching profession than in any other work which they could undertake.

Of course, today we need people in the field and in the factory, but in our schools the men and women who are to make not only the future of America, but the future of the world, are being trained, and so I think a teacher is almost the most important person in a community.

Many persons in education are confused and concerned about their patriotic duty in the present world crisis. They are wondering if, to best serve their country, they should quit their jobs as teachers to work in some other capacity. We believe that the answer must be an individual one for each teacher but that no stigma of lack of patriotism should be attached to those who stay at their posts as teachers, serving children and young people and, through them, the nation. It is with this conviction, then, that we publish here the viewpoint of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, wife of the President, in the hope that her firm stand on the importance of teaching will give courage and support to the men and women who have decided that their duty is to continue to teach.

Frequently we haven't given the teachers the honor or the consideration which is due them, and we do not even give them the financial compensation which I think they should receive.

On the other hand, perhaps there are some teachers who do not consider that their calling is a trust, who do not feel the constant need for greater development and preparation to meet a new world, and who do not stimulate young minds to turn to them for leadership. We have teachers who have brought on the profession and on themselves indifference and contempt.

It is true in every walk of life that there are some people who do not grasp at the greatest heights to which they may climb. But those who have a vision of what the teaching profession in our country should be have also a responsibility to try to create a public attitude which will bring out the best in every individual who enters the teaching profession.

Children are the most marvelous material with which to work. There are characters to build, as well as knowledge to impart and minds to train, and there are even hearts to be educated. I wish every teacher the satisfaction which comes from feeling that he is doing a good job.

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