

Chief State School Officers. He served as Nevada's superintendent of public instruction and before coming to the Department of Education in 1989, as State superintendent of education in Illinois.

Dr. Sanders graduated from Wayland

Baptist University (B.S., 1964); Washington State University (M.A.T., 1970); and from the University of Nevada, Reno, (Ed.D., 1987). He is married, has four children, two grandchildren, and resides in Springfield, IL.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Lamar Alexander as Secretary of Education

March 22, 1991

The President. Thank you all. Thank you, Bill Carl. It's a pleasure to be here to witness the swearing-in of our new Secretary of Education, Governor Lamar Alexander. To the members of the Cabinet—and I see so many here; distinguished Members of the United States Congress—and I see many here; to former Secretaries—I'm told—don't spot them right now—that Bill Brock and Mel Laird were here.

Let me just welcome all of you—those from the White House. I'd like to, at the outset of this, pay my respects to the man who is going to do the honors, Judge John Minor Wisdom, one of the most distinguished jurists in the United States, who is with us here today.

For a challenge of this magnitude, it is my very good fortune to be able to call on a man with Lamar Alexander's considerable experience. He comes to this task the son of teachers. He's served as a very valued member of our Education Policy Advisory Committee, and most recently he's served the students of his home State as president of the University of Tennessee. Five years ago, as chairman of the National Governors' Association, he piloted the 50-State education survey, "Time for Results," a report that put us on the path to the six national education goals that guide our efforts from now to the year 2000.

As a public servant, educator, and author, Lamar Alexander is a true renaissance man—a man with great common sense, who knows what works. And he's also one of Tennessee's leading philosophers. He's got a saying you've probably already heard: "Today a rooster. Tomorrow a feather duster." [*Laughter*]

Our setting today in this great Air and Space Museum is a fitting site for this ceremony. It reminds us of another time when this nation set for itself a national goal, that of landing a man on the moon. And we did it.

Lamar Alexander understands that real reform, real restructuring of American education can only take place at the State and local level. And that's one of the key reasons that I've asked him to become Secretary Alexander. He knows the key to success is to make certain education reform is national, not Federal. Nationally, we have established goals. We're setting standards, establishing priorities, and in the process, we're raising expectations. We must bring all levels of government and all Americans together—parents, teachers, students, civic and business leaders, and all interested citizens—to achieve our goals.

On the Federal level, we can serve as a catalyst for change. We can point the way forward, contribute ideas, and help States and schools meet higher, better standards.

The Department of Education, through research and development, can help identify practical ways to improve teaching and learning for all students. We also can create incentives for change, and we can start with freedom of choice.

I know this idea has generated its share of controversy. But it isn't radical; it's common sense. It rests on a principle central to democratic society: the idea that individuals are capable of making wise decisions for themselves. In education, the concept of choice recognizes that parents are the real

experts on what's best for their kids.

Often, parents with means—families in the mid-to-upper income brackets—already have choice. They can send their children to private schools or move to districts with the strongest public schools. Poor parents don't have these choices. So, let's be clear about who can benefit the most from greater freedom of choice. It's poor families who will benefit most from a healthy competition in our schools.

With Lamar as the sparkplug, we're going to move forward towards our national goals on many fronts and reiterate our commitment to educational excellence. We're going to make our schools better and more accountable, and we're going to reward excellence in our teachers. And we're going to challenge our children to learn. And we're going to encourage all American adults to recognize that learning is a lifelong process.

After all, learning doesn't happen only in school. Lamar likes to talk about something he calls the 91-percent factor: the fact that by the time the average American youth reaches the age of 18, he's spent 9 percent of his time in the classroom and 91 percent outside of it. We must work as a society to support the kind of values, culture—the vital sense of community and, yes, citizenship—that gives real meaning to all that our children learn.

I know some people question whether we can meet the ambitious goals we've set for ourselves, whether we can lower the drop-out rate or rise to first rank worldwide in math and science. Well, I'm convinced that we can. Think about this: the graduating class of the year 2000 is a third-grader today. Think about what it means to be an 8-year-old, about the world of learning that lies ahead. Let's help those kids learn all they can on the journey from 8 to 18, and then let's see where they take us in the next century.

Mr. Secretary, first let me say that this, as far as I'm concerned, is going to be a team effort for all of our Cabinet Departments. I think every Cabinet Secretary has some role to play in helping you meet these educational goals. And with that in mind, I would like to ask the members of our Cabinet that are here to stand up—and the former members I do see now, Mel and

Bill Brock and Bill Coleman over here—but please stand up, we're going to make you committed to this goal we're undertaking right now. [*Laughter*]

Let me also say to you and to all the dedicated people at this Department, Mr. Secretary: There is no single issue that determines more about America, about our dreams and our destiny, than education. America's future walks through the doors of our schools every single day. For the sake of that future, America can settle for nothing short of excellence in our schools. Because of our commitment to education, we're creating a great team at the Education Department. Just this morning I announced my intention to nominate David Kearns, chairman of Xerox, to become the Deputy Secretary of Education. David, would you please stand up?

He may be coming out of the loftiest echelons of the business world, but no American business leader has more outstanding credentials or a deeper commitment to improve education for all our children. And then, I've asked Ted Sanders, the former president of the country's chief State school officers and who has served so ably as Acting Secretary, a man to whom I will always be grateful, to take on the new dual responsibility of Chief Financial Officer, Deputy Under Secretary for Planning, Budget and Evaluation, a key post. Ted, we're delighted. Would you please stand for us?

And with the help and support of the dedicated professionals at the Department, and there are so many—many with us here today. And I want to thank each and every one of you. I am confident now that this is a team equal to the task before us.

Lamar and David were over yesterday and they presented me a fantastic proposal—how we can go about meeting these national education goals. I'm excited about it. And I told them that which I want to say once again but this time to all the employees, those who are working at the Department of Education: This is priority. And I am committed as President to working with you and to supporting you in achieving these national goals.

I thank you all for being here for this wonderful ceremony. And now it is with great pleasure that I witness the swearing-in of Secretary Lamar Alexander. Thank you all very much.

[At this point, Secretary Alexander was sworn in.]

Secretary Alexander. Mr. President and Barbara, distinguished Members of the Congress, it's very difficult to put anyone else ahead of Judge Wisdom, as you can tell. I want to thank President Bush for giving me one of the most exciting opportunities in America: helping him be the Education President.

And I want to thank Barbara Bush for keeping up front the importance of literacy for every American. And I want to thank Judge Wisdom who, for the last 40 years or so, has been one of the most vigorous members of the Federal judiciary and one of the most adventuresome. On one evening, he brought the entire Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals down to Your Father's Mustache to hear our washboard band play when I was his law clerk.

I want to thank the President's own Marine Band. I've never heard the Marine Band play "Rocky Top" before, and I'm glad—[laughter]—to hear that. And the children from Amidon and the young men and women from Cardozo, thank you for being here today.

And Honey and Drew and Leslee and Kathryn and Will, thank you for putting up with a notorious father and one who has required you to move three times in the last 9 months. For our friends, who have come on short notice from a lot of different places, thank you. To members of the Cabinet, I'm the junior member of the team and looking forward to being a part of it. To Members of the United States Senate for taking such an interest in me and then after a while—[laughter]—confirming me unanimously, I thank you for that. And for the members of the Tennessee delegation and other Members of the Congress who are here.

And, Mr. President, you're a terrific recruiter. To have a chance to work with David Kearns and Ted Sanders as a part of the President's education team is some-

thing I'm very much looking forward to.

I also want to thank my sister Jane and her husband, Bill Carl, for coming from Dallas. Their sons, Jeremy and David, our nephews, sent me this message: "Tell Uncle Lamar congratulations, and we hope this doesn't mean more homework." [Laughter] That made me think of how Jane and I grew up in Maryville, Tennessee, with our sister Ann. We were ready to learn because our mother took care of herself when she was pregnant. She read to us—she and our father read "Winnie the Pooh" and "The Little Engine that Could" and "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" even before we went to school.

We had more preschool education than anybody in this room because our mother had the town's only preschool education program in a converted garage in her backyard, and she had nowhere else to put us, and so we went there. We knew what we were expected to learn in school and we learned it because our teachers expected us to. And they helped us, as did our parents.

The most dangerous thing going in Maryville when we were growing up was football, and drugs were something you took when you were sick. There was always some adult hovering around to make sure we got a pat on the back when we did something right, and that we didn't get away with much. When we got in trouble at school, we got in trouble at home. That was the way we grew up.

Jeremy and David, my nephews, and our children are coming along in a very different world. All over America people are trying to adjust to that world. That adjustment is what we call our education. And because it is not easy, it is at the top of our concerns.

On March 6th, President Bush talked to Congress and the American people about reaching our potential, that we should make this country all that it should be. I like to look at things that way, too—not as one big problem but as one big opportunity. I want to help President Bush be the Education President, to help America do as well at home as it has done overseas. Almost everything we do at home has education at the bottom of it.

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My nephews, David and Jeremy, may not think this is such good news because it may mean for them higher standards, tougher tests, and probably more homework. They may find themselves and certainly their children going to schools that are radically different learning systems than what we see today, as different from what they know today as this lunar module is from the propeller airplane.

This is the most visited museum in the world. And it is that because it stands as a symbol of what can happen when we unleash America's creative genius. We need to unleash that creative genius to create the best schools in the world.

Jeremy and David's parents, Jane and Bill, will be doing what the President just said. They'll be going back to school, too, because whatever they learned growing up isn't enough to live and work in the world the way it is today. And in downtown Dallas and in Maryville and everywhere, communities will be finding that the school can't do it all, or even most—help a child grow up the way we had the chance to grow up.

Doing well at home is as important as doing well overseas and will be infinitely more complex because the army the President has to mobilize is every American.

An enterprising reporter found our moth-

er right after I was nominated. And she told him, "When Lamar grew up, I was teaching and Andy was on the school board. And at the dinner table we talked about better schools." We need that kind of talk going on at every dinner table in America.

Our Education President can mobilize that army, can get that kind of talk going and I hope I can be a sparkplug for change to help him do that.

Thank you.

Note: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. at the National Air and Space Museum. In the ceremony, the following persons were referred to: William J. Carl III, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Dallas, TX, who gave the invocation and introduced the President; Mr. Carl's wife, Jane, sister of Secretary Alexander, and their sons, Jeremy and David; former Secretary of Labor William E. Brock III; former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird; John Minor Wisdom, senior circuit judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit; former Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr.; David T. Kearns, nominee for Deputy Secretary of Education; Ted Sanders, Under Secretary of Education; Secretary Alexander's wife, Honey, and children, Andrew, Leslee, Kathryn, and William; and the Secretary's parents, Flo and Andrew Alexander.

Statement on the Strategic Defense Initiative

March 22, 1991

Eight years ago, the Strategic Defense Initiative spurred research and development of technologies necessary to defend the United States and our allies from the threat posed by ballistic missiles. Since 1983, SDI has accomplished much. Technological and engineering breakthroughs have brought us closer to smart or even brilliant defenses. We have proved that it is possible to intercept a ballistic missile warhead in space. But much work remains to be done before we have the defenses we need.

Even as we are hopeful that we can achieve a more stable strategic balance with

the Soviet Union, the threat from ballistic missile proliferation is growing. Today, U.S. forces abroad and U.S. allies live under a growing threat from ballistic missile attack. While the Patriot air defense system performed remarkably well, we can do far better in protecting our troops and our friends and allies. We will have to, because we will face much more dangerous threats than the Scud. Moreover, the decisions we make on SDI today will affect our capabilities into the next century. By then, the