

OFFICE OF EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS, 1971

M E S S A G E

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

RETURNING

WITHOUT APPROVAL AN ACT (H.R. 16916), MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1971, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, TOGETHER WITH A STATEMENT THEREON

AUGUST 11, 1970.—Message, together with accompanying bill ordered to be printed as a House document

To the House of Representatives:

I return herewith, without my approval, H. R. 16916, an Act making appropriations for the Office of Education for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971, and for other purposes.

I am determined to hold the line against a dangerous budget deficit.

I am determined to hold the line against the kind of big spending that would drive up prices or demand higher taxes.

For that reason, I am today returning, without my approval, two bills the Congress has passed that would increase the Federal budget deficit by nearly one billion dollars.

1. *The Independent Offices Appropriations* bill, which includes funds for urban development, exceeds my budget request by \$541 million. I am mindful of the urgent needs of our cities, which is why my original request for urban renewal, water and sewer grants and housing subsidies was *double* the outlays in the last fiscal year of the previous Administration.

I am vetoing this bill because it would help drive up the cost of living, harming the people it is most designed to help. This kind of excessive spending would also help cause the kind of huge deficits that drive up interest rates, which would make it impossible to speed the recovery of the housing industry.

2. *The appropriation for the Office of Education* is \$453 million over my budget request.

My request would have produced 28% more spending than in the last fiscal year of the previous Administration.

My budget asked \$3.97 billion for the educational purposes covered by this bill—an increase of \$972 million in spending over fiscal 1969. In addition, I have committed myself to ask the Congress for an extra \$350 million to fully fund the school desegregation program as soon as the Congress provides authorizing legislation.

This is only part of what the Federal government provides for education programs generally. *Total* spending on Federally supported education programs will reach nearly \$12 billion in 1971, the highest figure in history and substantially more than was provided for 1969. Thus the question is not one of cutting the present level of school funds. It is not even one of whether to increase school funds. It simply is a question of how *much* they are to be increased—and for what purposes.

Last March I stressed the urgent need for wide-ranging reforms in Federal aid to education. This bill raises the spending on old approaches that experience has proved inadequate, rather than moving boldly on the new approaches that we need—and it cuts requested funds for such forward-looking programs as dropout prevention, educational opportunity grants and research.

My veto of both these bills is painful, but necessary to hold down the rising cost of living.

We cannot have something for nothing. When we spend more than our tax system can produce, the average American either has to pay for it in higher prices or in higher taxes.

At election time it is tempting for people in politics to say “yes” to every spending bill.

If I were to sign these bills that spend more than we can now afford, I would be saying yes to a higher cost of living, yes to higher interest rates, yes to higher taxes.

I flatly refuse to go along with the kind of big spending that is wrong for all the American people. That is why I must veto these bills which add an extra billion dollars of pressure on prices.

Taken individually, there is much that can be said in favor of every spending bill, including the ones I have vetoed.

But a President is not elected to see any one bill in isolation. He must see them as part of a whole, because his constituency is 200 million Americans.

Acting in the best interest of the nation as a whole, and concerned with the average family struggling to make their incomes meet rising prices, I have drawn the line against increased spending.

I urge the Congress to reconsider the spending course it has taken, and to place first priority on achieving our goal: a healthy economy, expanding through peacetime activities, with reasonable price stability.

RICHARD NIXON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, August 11, 1970.