

FOR RELEASE  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 1965  
One o'clock

Office of the Press Secretary  
to Mrs. Johnson

THE WHITE HOUSE

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REMARKS OF MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON  
"HEAD START DAY" CEREMONY

Thank you, Mr. Shriver:

What a beautiful flag! I like the design of the arrow pointing upward which symbolizes the lifting of spirits, not only of 40 million families whose children live in poverty -- but of those of us more fortunate who have this specific way to do something lasting about them.

Today -- National Head Start Day -- is a wonderfully happy day. Not only for me personally, but for more than 2300 cities and towns where Head Start flags will be flying.

It is, I know, a long-awaited day for the thousands of volunteers -- men and women across this country -- who have been giving time and talent to get the program underway.

You volunteers are living examples of the philosophy that "we are here to give to and not to get what we can from life."

Half a million children in the next few days will have their first chance to meet crayons and books -- to plant a seed -- to visit the school where they will begin the first grade next year -- to learn about their community -- perhaps see the zoo, or the fire station or a park. They will learn to communicate with the world about them.

Through medical check-ups, we will know whether they are also handicapped by poor health, poor sight, and poor teeth. And there will be time to do something about it.

What greater reward is there than to give a five-year-old child who lives in the gray world of poverty a better chance of emerging into useful citizenship?

I have great hopes that this program will be the big breakthrough we have been seeking in education -- the insurance against school drop-outs -- the insurance for a smaller welfare roll.

I do not need tell you that such an ambitious program is filled with pitfalls and disappointments. And there will be doubters who are quick to point them out. But we are not working with people who live neat and tidy and secure lives.

We are trying to rescue the next generation, to throw a lifeline to families who are lost in a sea of too little of everything -- jobs, education, and most of all perhaps -- hope.

Thank you, Mr. Shriver, for all that you and your staff and volunteers have done to get Project Head Start underway.

And now I want to present a Head Start flag to one of the directors of a Head Start project -- Mrs. Lou Maginn of East Fairfield Community School Club.

A project need not be large to be important. This project has only ten pupils -- some will have 50 or more than 100.

But we felt, Mrs. Maginn that you symbolized the Project Head Start director. Mrs. Maginn is the mother of four, the grandmother of 10 and the great-grandmother of two. Who can top that record of first-hand experience? Now -- she will direct the youngsters of East Fairfield, Vermont. Mrs. Maginn, here is your Head Start flag. I hope it will wave proudly over your classroom.

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