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Chamber of Commerce

of the United States of America

Washington



Offices of
The Nation's Business

May 22, 1920.

Mr. H. P. Judson,
University of Chicago,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir:

I am enclosing a statement by Homer L. Ferguson,
retiring president of the Chamber of Commerce of the
United States on teachers pay.

This has been sent to the leading educational
journals of the country, and I thought it might be
of sufficient interest for you to see it.

Yours very truly,

Ben H. Lamb
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Associate Editor.

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PRESS BULLETIN

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES
Washington, D. C.

FOR RELEASE

WASHINGTON, ----- In an address delivered recently before the eighth annual meeting of the United States Chamber of Commerce, Homer L. Ferguson, retiring president of that organization, called upon the business men of the United States to give their active and earnest support to the movement to secure a wage consistent with present costs of living for America's school teachers.

Mr. Ferguson pointed out that the standard of education in our public schools is being hit hard by reason of the fact that thousands of men and women are deserting the teaching profession for lines that offer more attractive compensation.

"Teachers and preachers--and both come within the same category--are so far under-paid at this time that they are only able to make as much in a month as the ordinary laborer makes in two weeks, or even less," declared Mr. Ferguson.

"Years of study are necessary to prepare teachers for their vocation, and a high certificate of character is required. And, yet we wonder about the spread of socialistic ideas when those who teach our children know that under the beneficent plan of education in our great country they are paid one-half of what they ought to make under present conditions.

"Now, we cannot expect them to grow wildly excited about the great benefit of a capitalistic form of property owning and operation of industry, unless we as business men perform the duty which we owe the teachers of the United States to see that they receive a reasonable compensation for their services. And if our taxes must be increased, for heaven's sake, let them be

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increased for the noble men and women teaching our children; for the people who are giving their lives to an honorable service.

"Our function, as a great business organization, is primarily a function of education. We attempt to exert no force; we make no threat as to vote or ballot; we represent no political party; but we do stand for education. We believe that on the education of our people as to the truth of economics, as to the truth of production, as to the truth of what is the matter with them, depends the future prosperity of this Republic. To impart such truth is one of the functions of the National Chamber. But there are other educators who are as important, if not more important, than we, and they are those who educate the young and impart learning and knowledge to the future citizenry. As a business man it does seem to me that we should give the greatest consideration, each in our own community, to this most vital question."

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June 2, 1920

Dear Sir:

Your favor of the 22nd of May was received during my absence from the city. I am interested in the enclosure and approve of the principles contained. I am not in sympathy, however, with the Smith-Tewner bill now pending in Congress.

Very truly yours,

Mr. Ben H. Lambe,
Chamber of Commerce,
Washington, D. C.

HPJ:JN

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