



term of office and, like New Year's resolutions, to outline your hopes for the next four years. The Board's priorities are alive and well. I remain committed to them and to the funding it will take to continue to make them a reality. In order to bring them closer to fruition, I must indicate the challenges I see before us and the opportunity for growth that those challenges offer.

"Over the past 12 years the school system has swung wildly to the right and to the left, driven by the ideologies represented by Board members. Individual members had their own agendas, and at times voting blocs formed to promote the various personal agendas. These may have offered the Board members their own ego-satisfactions, but they were destructive to the fabric of the school system. Our principals and teachers went about their business trying to educate children with factious Boards confusing the direction education would take. I believe those days are past. I do not see on this Board a tolerance for personal agendas. We have built a collegial atmosphere founded upon open communication and consensus. This will be the hallmark of the next four years.

"The challenge the Board faces is a different one now. The school system has a deserved reputation for excellence, but it cannot rest upon its laurels. The future is changing rapidly, and the task for the Board is to grasp the opportunities for change and to choose wisely the paths to take. We cannot afford to be driven by personal agendas because no one of us alone is wise enough to read the future, to direct its pace, and to structure the educational program to meet it all by ourselves. As well we cannot become the pawns of interest groups and upset the countywide focus of a school system to meet temporary ends. The future is too important to become captive to the present. We know that equal opportunity is an educational right for all our children. We have had three years of dramatic change, especially for our minority children. We face now the harder task of change which addresses fundamental ways in which we teach our children. Growth will not come as easily, and the success measures may not rise as dramatically. Yet we must press for progress. To this end, in order to insure that racial justice is a hallmark of our school system, I pledge myself to work with Dr. Scott and the superintendent, and I look forward to Dr. Scott's report in January. For equal educational justice to be a reality it must extend to all our children.

"I pledge my support to those children who have special needs. They are the most vulnerable of our children and need firm direction from the Board itself. In particular, I pledge myself to the full funding of the needs of our handicapped children. It is one thing to say we must balance our budgetary needs realistically with county revenue sources. It is quite another to do that balancing at the expense of children who already face life with some advantages denied to them because of physical or mental handicaps. We have for too long made well-intentioned but underfunded efforts on their behalf. It is time to address their full needs.

"I have awaited the task force report on K-12 policy for it includes

a special interest of mine, the education of the child in early adolescence. I believe that the years spent in seventh and eighth grades are critical to future success, and that we do not have a program adequately suited to meet the needs of a youngster coping with so many changes in his or her life. I know the interests of the other Board members will be directed to other elements of our K-12 program so I will feel free to focus myself on the J/I/M level and work with our teachers and administrators to improve MCPS in this area.

"Of course, all of these objectives along with fundamental improvements for our employees require funding from the county executive and the County Council. We have heard the rhetoric of the campaign trail. The time will come shortly to test the resolve of those who today have pledged themselves to work for our county. The future is now. The funds spent in the next four years will affect children who enter kindergarten next fall and who will graduate high school in June of the year 2000. We stand at the threshold of the future. We can challenge to excellence or slide slowly to mediocrity.

"With deference to T. S. Eliot, I would prefer to see the year 2000 end with a bang and not with a whimper. Thank you, and I look forward to the next four years."

Re: STATEMENT BY MR. GOLDENSOHN

Mr. Goldensohn made the following statement:

"I see quite a few familiar faces in the audience. I think during the past six months I have either worked with each and every one of you, either on my own campaign or found you at the various events I went to when you were working for someone else's campaign. For those in that category, I forgive you. We will now all work together, and that is what is going to happen with the Board that is sitting at the table at this moment. I am the only new member on the Board, and it is my job, my role, to fit myself into that grouping so that we continue to work as a team. As Dr. Cronin mentioned earlier, there are no Board members with private agendas, or hidden agendas. We will work as seven for the entire county.

"My entire campaign was based on one slogan, and that was 'equal access to quality education for all children.' That will occur in the future. The current Board has started us on the road, and to quote from their own campaign literature in the past few months they did 'build the foundations.' They did put the blueprints together, and I am going to work with them in the future, in the next four years, to build that system.

"I have a very tall order on that system. It is a challenge, and I am very briefly going to outline some very concise words which sum up all of my feelings about what this Board has to do in the next few years and how it has to behave. Together this is what we will do. "This county school system will be more efficient than it has been.

It will be more effective than it has been. I hope it will be more innovative than it has been. It will continue to be responsive to a greater degree than ever before, and it will be open and accessible to all the citizens of this county, to the staff that works here, the teachers that teach in our schools, the parents, and the children. The bureaucracy that operates in this building is the front line to the people who have a problem and would need answers. This bureaucracy must be productive, helpful, and at times plain compassionate. We operate and administer this system for our children, for the parents that care for them, and all the taxpayers of the county, even those who don't have children in the school system.

"My allegiance is to the entire county, to the entire school system, not to any one area or one group. I accepted support in the campaign from a variety of opposing groups, left, right, liberal, conservative, anyone who was reasonable, I was willing to talk with and listen to. They are part of our society, and I expect to serve them in the coming four years.

"My extreme and sincere thanks to the thousands of voters in this county who had faith in me and in my record to allow me to assume this position. In particular, I would like to thank the 411 people who made the margin of difference, and if the powers would be would allow me I would like to get a list of their names so that I could thank them personally. It would be impossible to list and mention the names of everyone who helped in the campaign. I started to put together that list, and it was reaching the 200 mark and growing. So I will not read them out. I will mention four names, two of which I am not supposed to mention, but I will mention my wife Ann, and my daughter Suzanne, and my campaign treasurer Robin Savitz and her husband, who wound up being my campaign finance chairman although he didn't bargain for it in the beginning, Jim Savitz. I would also like to thank the press who was extremely kind to me in this election. I won't go through the campaign rhetoric about who endorsed me or how, but the press was very nice to me and I appreciate that. My entire political career has been one of openness, and that has always included the press, and I hope that they will be fair with me as they have been in the past. I know that this Board, and particularly, I will be very fair with them in the future.

"I thank all of you for coming. I could get very philosophical right now, but I think I had better stop while I am ahead. I had you laughing a moment ago, so I will end it here. For those of you going on to the inaugural ball, I will meet you there. Some of you may have wondered why the people were here in tuxedos, actually they are the band and they will be coming out a little bit later. Thank you again all for coming."

Re: STATEMENT BY MRS. PRAISNER

Mrs. Praisner made the following statement:

"My fellow Board members, Dr. Cody, members of the staff, and friends. If four years ago was an exciting and dramatic beginning then this evening is an opportunity to pause and reflect before we continue on. It provides an opportunity to look back briefly on the last four years, to look ahead in general, and most of all to thank those of you who have given me the opportunity to do both.

"I hesitate to recite the accomplishments of the last four years lest it sound like a campaign speech. But it certainly has been a busy four years as we have addressed issues of concern to almost every constituent group in this county. In tone and in substance, we have already left our mark. Moreover the initiatives and priorities we have set in place will continue to represent the major focus for the future, and they continue to have my support.

"If there is one thing I have learned in the last four years as I have visited other school districts and compared notes with other Board members, it is that there is nothing out there that compares to Montgomery County. Our staff and our programs are superior to most of what I saw, and the community's intense interest in and commitment to education and community involvement cannot be found elsewhere on this earth, or probably even in this galaxy. Which makes even greater the challenges and demands we face as public officials in this county. Our responsibility as educational leaders of this community is to build on these strengths and to set a course for the future that reflects the needs of this county.

"We are a changing county and a changing school system, growing both in size and diversity while maturing both in staff and in facilities. Our greatest challenges the next four years will be to help the community understand that diversity and those changes and working with community and staff to plan in an orderly fashion for those changes. It means lots of hard work and more dull meetings by press standards. It will not make for sexy headlines. Furthermore, this campaign year it was fashionable to support education, but when the tough issues need to be faced, we will probably find ourselves alone in the trenches.

"To the staff who will be there with us, I thank you for your support and your patience the last four years. I have learned a great deal from you, and I look forward to working with you in the future. I appreciate your significant dedication to this school system, your expertise, and also your sense of humor. None of us can afford to take ourselves too seriously.

"To the citizens of Montgomery County, I thank you for your vote of confidence and your support. Four years ago I pledged every ounce of energy in me to the task. I offer no less this time. Have we always reached the same conclusions the last four years? -- no. Will we in the future? -- hardly. But whatever the major issue, I intend to continue to do my homework, ask the tough questions, review all the citizen and staff input no matter how long it takes me, and make up my own mind, and then share with you my reasons.

"For their efforts in providing me this opportunity I would like to thank some very special people for whom 'thank you' seems very inadequate. Thanks to some people who were with me a very long time ago back in 1980 and in 1982, Ruth, John, and many of you who are here this evening. Thanks, too, to Candy and Charles whose lives can now return to normal, but who will always hold a special place in my heart. To the many others who gave so freely of their time these last few months -- Ann, Alice, Wil, Dave, Ellen, and Keith, I hesitate to name you for fear of forgetting someone. It has truly been a group effort, and you are one terrific group!

"To my family, my mother who each day gives new meaning to community service and the golden rule. To my daughter Karen, whose campaigning this year was, of necessity, in spirit rather than in person. To my son Michael, whose unflinching support required that now he take annual leave to help at the polls. To my daughter Alison, who as an MCPS student and her mother's look alike I am told, probably bears the hardest burden being a Praisner. To my AFS daughter Nussy, who got more than she bargained for when she came to live with the Praisners for a year. And last, but certainly not least, to my husband Don, whose wisdom, patience, support and love are always there in abundance. By now you and Dan DiFonzo should probably be ready for the Betty Crocker Bake-off!

"All of you are very, very special to me. Those I mentioned and those of you who are here as well and I haven't mentioned. I could never have even considered doing the things that I have done without your support and encouragement. You keep me going every day.

"A few special words for a very special friend, Jerry Floyd. In the past two years you have proven to be a dedicated and caring Board member. Whether in executive or public sessions, chairing meetings or commenting at meetings, preparing memos or reacting to others, you have demonstrated over and over again your knowledge, your style, and your class. We on the Board and the students and the staff of this school system are grateful for your efforts. I personally will miss you a great deal, but I hope I and the system will continue to have the benefit of your counsel and that you will maintain your active involvement in education in this county. We need you.

"To my super running mates and the other members of the Board, as we face four more years of long hours, miles of paper, and more meetings than most Boards of Education have combined, I pledge to match your energy and your effort. We know the challenges. We know the issues. And, as soon as I visit the ophthalmologist next week, I will be ready for the meetings and the paper. I know you know those issues. Let's go. We are ready. When is the next meeting? Thank you."

Re: STATEMENT BY DR. SHOENBERG

Dr. Shoenberg made the following statement:

"Marilyn's going to the ophthalmologist next week. I went today. And I still can't see which may spare you a long speech because I can't

read, but it may make it a little longer because I will have to in part ad-lib it. Know that dilated pupils don't mean I am on something.

"Tonight is, as you have heard from the other Board members, an opportunity for taking stock and looking ahead. But I decided I would not do that. I spent too many months reciting the many and genuine accomplishments of the Board to have the stomach for doing it again tonight. I'd bore myself to death.

"As far as looking ahead is concerned, that's the question I've been getting from the press all week, and if you want to know what I think about the future, you can read it in the newspaper. I won't bother you about it tonight.

"I decided that I would talk a little bit about how I feel rather than what I think. When I first became a member of the Board, I was surprised at one of the things that was starting to happen to me and that was the development of an extremely strong fellow feeling with other members of the Board, even with those people with whom I habitually disagreed. There is something about being a Board member that is different from being anything else and which binds people together. That is a feeling that I experienced and continue to experience very strongly.

"I had some hesitancy about running for the Board again until somebody asked me a question, and I have even forgotten who it was, but the question was "if you were to leave the Board, would you miss it?" And I didn't have to hesitate for half a second before answering that question in the affirmative. Yes, indeed, I would miss it. And I would miss it for two very strong and very prominent reasons. One is that if you are going to be involved with your community, this is a wonderful way to be involved. It is an opportunity to make a real difference, to do something that is personally fulfilling, and if you spend your day dealing with educational issues as I do, and care as much about education as I do, it is a very logical extension of the rest of my life. The second had to do with people, with the people I worked with as a Board member and especially over these last two years with Peggy, Blair, Jim, Jerry, Marilyn, Sharon, and for this last year with Eric. I can say their names in order without looking to see if they are there because we always sit this way. We will change order a week from tomorrow. And it will be a pleasure to go on serving with them.

"We are going to miss Jerry very much. He has been a wonderful person with whom to work as a running mate just as he has been a wonderful person with whom to serve on the Board. And I am going to miss his presence a great deal as will the others who have spoken, and I believe will speak. We nonetheless welcome Bruce to the Board because he seems to be the kind of person who can operate in the spirit in which we have operated, who can become part of that shared experience, and for all the difficulties we have and for the troubles and tribulations that we go through, it is a significant experience for a person to have.

"It is a pleasure to work with the kind of staff we do. Serving as a member of the Montgomery County Board of Education would not begin to be as not only bearable but exhilarating an experience were it not for Tom Fess, who has got to be the best person at what he does of anybody, anywhere. He is a real all-American, and he has put together a staff which equally shares in that expertise, goodwill, and just plain cheerfulness. David Fischer, Mary Lou Wood, Midge Larmore, Lillian Gallupe, and Ann Shebovsky. And with a superintendent and deputy superintendent who preside over one of the outstanding school systems in the United States, a marvelous thing for them to know, and all the staff that works with them and works with us so closely. They are people of outstanding intelligence, quality of character, humanity, and real care for children and for the education of children which they reveal every day.

"A lot of people to be thanked for my having the opportunity to go on working with these others for the next four years. Candy and Charles, others have mentioned, wonderful people. Ann, Ellen, Alice, Wil, and Keith and others whom if I tried to remember I could not remember them all, but we thank you all very much. And particularly for the indulgence, support, goodwill of my family. For Dana, who is away at college but who was there on the telephone cheering every week. For Halley, who is going to pay a heck of a price for having her father hand her her diploma when she graduates but who was the first one to say, 'go for it.' And particularly for Sue. We've had a houseful of campaigns, too. And if we ever get our dining room back again, it will be a miracle. It will take all the trash trucks in Montgomery County. For Sue, who was there, who answers the telephone and with the right answers every time. And who will open a sleepy eye when I come toddling in at 12 or 12:30 and who has always been supportive and there when I needed her, and I hope I have, and will, do the same.

"For all of you and for the public that you represent, if one is going to get pleasure out of serving on a Board of Education it is only because you think of the people you serve as good people and worth all the effort that you can put into it, and I do believe that of the people of Montgomery County. It is a very special group of people in this world in ways that perhaps they don't ordinarily think of. I will give you my all for the next four years. Serving on a Board of this sort, if you have any pride, you can't help but give your all or you get left hanging. And my indulgence for this bleary-eyed rambling for all of you. Thank you very much. I look forward to seeing and hearing from you over the next four years.

Re: REMARKS BY CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS

Mrs. DiFonzo, Mr. Ewing, Mrs. Slye and Mr. Steinberg welcomed Mr. Goldensohn to the Board, congratulated Dr. Cronin, Mrs. Praisner and Dr. Shoenberg as continuing members, and wished Dr. Floyd well.

RESOLUTION NO. 650-86 Re: COMMENDATION OF DR. JEREMIAH FLOYD

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Praisner seconded by Mrs. DiFonzo, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

WHEREAS, Jeremiah Floyd is retiring from the Montgomery County Board of Education after serving for over two years; and

WHEREAS, During his term of office he provided leadership and creative solutions to problems faced by public education in Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, He has constantly sought to advance educational opportunities for all students; and

WHEREAS, Through his prior experience as a Board member and as a teacher, he brought a valuable perspective to the Board as a member and as vice president; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this Board, on behalf of the superintendent, staff, parents, and students, express its deep gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Jeremiah Floyd for his outstanding leadership and devoted service to the Montgomery County Public Schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution be included in the minutes of this meeting and that a copy be presented to Jeremiah Floyd.

Re: PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE TO DR. FLOYD

On behalf of the students, staff, and Board of Education of Montgomery County, Dr. Cody presented Dr. Floyd with a certificate of appreciation.

Re: STATEMENT BY DR. FLOYD

Dr. Floyd made the following statement:

"Mr. President, my friends, two years and two months ago on the affirmative votes of Jim Cronin, Blair Ewing, Marilyn Praisner, Bob Shoenberg, and Jacquie Duby, our esteemed student Board member at that time, I joined this Board of Education as a full participating member. Tonight as I end that service and prepare to move on to other civic endeavors, I want to thank each of those good people for their trust, for their confidence, and for their friendship. I also want to thank my wife Clara, my daughter Camille, and my son Edgar for their steadfast support.

"Marilyn, your words of two years ago which said 'say goodbye to your family' were seared into my consciousness at that time. So I followed your lofty advice, and I said goodbye. Now I must admit hindsight is better than foresight, but two years and two months later, I have to say that I did get a raised eyebrow on two or three occasions particularly when I was concerned about how hard Clara was working to get me reelected. I wondered whether she was enjoying my being away from home. I do want to say though that since the events

of the election, I have been fully accepted back into the fold, the household, and all is well. I think. So we are still successful regardless of that outcome.

"Also regardless of how hard one tries to be successful, one must be ever mindful that success comes in many forms. I am especially thankful for the upbringing and the tutelage I received early in my life from my mother, who is now deceased, and my father, who is 76 and going strong. They taught me how to accept winning with homage and reverence and to face defeat courageously and with grace. They also taught me that joy and appreciation come most assuredly from having the opportunity to serve. It has been a stimulating and challenging period in my life, one which I will long remember.

"Upon assuming this office, I stated that I expected to be judged by my deeds, by the performance that I exhibit. I thank the citizens of this county at that time who lobbied the Board for their votes on my behalf. Tonight I reaffirm my sincere thanks to all of those people and also express my deep appreciation for their continuing confidence that they showed by working for my reelection and voting for me. As you know, a lot of people concurred in the judgment which they made at that time because nearly 64,000 people, fine and upright citizens of this county, voted for me. To paraphrase that immortal Frenchman whose name I have forgotten, 'that many people simply can't be all wrong.'

"Yet in portraying life's opportunity, one writer has stated, 'each person is given a bag of tools, a shapeless mass, and a book of rules, and each must make before life has flown, a stumbling block or a stepping stone.' I chose to spend my time here trying to remove stumbling blocks and creating stepping stones so that all of our children could have a successful experience in school. Some of those efforts took various forms. They took the form of meeting with a group of parents of gifted elementary students in Damascus, trying to assuage their fears for the junior high school years and their children's program. Meeting with a multiracial, multiethnic group of parents from the New Hampshire Estates area in my home to address the concerns that they had about the future of their school and its program. Meeting with Ritchie Park and Horizon Hills parents to hear their concerns and to assuage their fears about school boundary matters. Meeting with a group of black parents from Rosemary Hills to look at desegregation and equity issues. And many other examples which I as well as my colleagues on the Board could cite, but these are just a few.

"I rejoice at having had the opportunity to serve in this way. A school Board member's job is to serve a two-way ambassadorship. He must listen to people and explain Board policy and plans. He must explain to the Board those concerns heard from the people. I know that all of you who will continue on this Board will do this as you face the future and engage in the great task that lie ahead.

"Much has been said tonight about our campaign staff, and certainly to Candy and Charles, Ann, David, and Keith and a host of others who labored so fiercely and so hard on our behalf during this campaign, I

express my personal and profound thanks.

"Let me say a word or two to Jim, to Marilyn and Bob. I learned a heck of a lot by campaigning with you, the warmth, the friendship, the love and respect that manifested itself among us is demonstrable confirmation to me that it is possible for human beings of different races, religions, genders and backgrounds to compete harmoniously toward the attainment of one objective and to do it unselfishly and respectfully. Each of us wishes that the outcome of our efforts was four out of four; however, we all know there are many times in our lives when we must live with what is while at the same time forever keeping the challenge before us of what might be. During the last four years this Board has worked mightily to chart a course of excellence and equity for all of our students. Indeed, one could rightly say that it has been a genuine struggle, but apropos to the words of Frederick Douglass we know that if there is no struggle, there is no progress. And while I certainly had hoped to be here with you tonight in a different capacity, I rejoice at knowing that through the democratic process the citizenry of this county overwhelmingly reaffirmed its commitment to the lofty principles we espoused. I need only to cite as evidence the reelection of you, Marilyn, Bob and Jim. This action shows clearly that our citizenry is not comprised mainly of those who wish for progress and yet deprecate agitation.

"Again, to use a Frederick Douglass metaphor, 'they are not those who want crops without plowing up the field or those who want rain without the mighty thunder and lightening, nor are they those who want the ocean without the mighty roar of its many rivers.' Members of this Board of Education, I say to you, the citizens have stated clearly that they expect you to stay the course that you know is just. It is a course that everyone of the children attending our schools today will need to traverse successfully if they are to be able to function effectively as future adult citizens. So I implore each of you tonight to reach deep into the crevasses of your very soul and take those future actions that to paraphrase Thomas Wolfe will ensure to every child his chance, every child regardless of his or her birthright, a shining golden opportunity to be himself or herself, to become everything that their abilities and visions can combine to make them. For, again, as Thomas Wolfe said, 'this, seeker, is the promise of America.' I believe it is the promise of this county which has entrusted to your care the governance of its public schools. Peace."

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting to a reception at 8:05 p.m.

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY

WSC:mlw