

1959 Comm.

## Paul Woodring

Mr. President, I have the honor to present to you one of whom we have all known — even before he shared his thoughts with us today — for his reputation has gone before him. Indeed, it is national.

He is, as you know, an exemplar in the educational arena of sanity and reason. His perceptive insights place him in that select and absolutely essential group who are devoting their energies and their imagination to solving the problems of American education today.

For this most necessary task he is uncommonly blessed both by endowment and by experience. He is gifted with a keenly analytical mind and with a rare ability to expose assumptions and to challenge premises. As a result, his recommendations often carry the shock of startling simplicity. But he knows that there are no panaceas for our ills. He has been too long schooled in the practical wisdom of the workshop — he has been a country school teacher, a high school English teacher, an instructor in a university, a professor in a liberal arts college, and a professor in a teachers' college.

With these gifts and this background, it is inevitable that he should have been called to serve the Fund for the Advancement of Education as a consultant and the Ford Foundation as an advisor in the field of education. We are all well aware how much his *Let's Talk Sense About the Public Schools*, his *A Fourth of a Nation*, his *New Directions in Teacher Training*, and his "Open Letter to U.S. Educators" which appeared in *Life* only a year ago, have changed the thinking of teachers and administrators, encouraged experimentation, and opened up promising avenues toward better teaching.

And we are further aware that his part in the Carleton College study of the preparation of teachers was in large degree responsible for that institution's leading the way toward true integration of liberal arts and the preparation of teachers.

Paul Woodring is, in short, one of a small group of foresighted men upon whose imaginative and yet practical vision the future of American education depends. Therefore, on behalf of the Faculty of Kalamazoo College, I recommend that upon him be conferred the honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters.