



THE SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20410

April 8, 1971

Mrs. Marguerite A. Hart
Young People's Librarian
Troy Public Library
5044 Rochester Road
Troy, Michigan 48084

Dear Mrs. Hart:

I welcome your invitation to give my viewpoint on the importance of libraries.

The story of human civilization is a record of the experiences of many people, in many centuries, and in many lands. Down through the centuries some of these outstanding people have recorded their mistakes and their successes. With the invention of printing it became increasingly possible for later generations to learn from their experience the secrets of their successes and the causes of their failures. In this way it was not necessary for thoughtful people to continue to repeat the earlier mistakes, and often through the stories of others success they found shortcuts to their own achievements. Thus, in a real sense every generation stands on the shoulders of generations that have gone on before them.

Libraries are the storage points for the accumulated knowledge and experiences of previous generations and of men and women living all over the world today.

Through books we learn from the lives of thousands of other people and thus multiply the experiences of our own lifetime a thousand-fold. People who read books are wise because they use the tools of other men's experiences. It is as though they chose to ride an elevator to the top story of a large skyscraper instead of walking step-by-step up the thousandfold staircase. The school is one of the doors by which we enter the world of books, but it is just a doorway. Those who continue to use libraries, continue to learn and grow their entire lifetime.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "George Romney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "R".

George Romney