Sept. 12, 1967
46th Street Theatre
New York City

Those of us, who, as students attended Lincoln High School at some time during the many years that Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus was principal, have a vivid memory of her leadership and her devotion to living and practical ideals, and her extreme interest in bringing out the best in each and every one of us.

Even before I enrolled in Lincoln High, I used to pass the gate at the entrance of the school on the hill and wondered about the word OPPORTUNITY in huge letters on the arch. By graduation time we all knew the full meaning of the word. What better word could Dr. Andrus have used to greet the entering students of all races and creeds? Then, too, how thrilling it must have been for the parents living in the Lincoln Heights district to know that their boys and girls were privileged to learn of the opportunity promised them as they climbed up the 102 steps to the auditorium and to learn from their principal the full meaning of the promise!

We remember Dr. Andrus standing before the student body so so calmly, so serenely, on the stage explaining the Lincoln ideals, and our opportunities, but also our responsibilities. It should be added, however, that occasionally we were reminded of our failings, but always in a reasoning and dignified manner. Upon those occasions we filed out changed and inspired but not directly aware of how the change in thought came about, so skillful was our principal.

Just as our Lincoln Heights community was multi-racial, so was the Lincoln student body. Remember that this long before the turmoil of the present in trying for all races to live together in peace. But to Dr. Andrus this was no problem at all. In student government, age encouraged all students of all races to take part, to prepare themselves for leadership, not only for important general student government, but in the many clubs...always reminding school officers that only decisions affecting school policy remained with the principal. The method worked.

For those in dramatics, Dr. Andrus, showed complete devotion. She not only personally attended most of the formal dress rehearsals or previews, but brought along her mother who obviously enjoyed the experience immensely. These are precious memories for me. Fortunately for us interested in acting, she continuously encouraged the production of Shakespearean plays. Producing Shakespeare, as we all know, is a monumental effort for any high school group, but with the support and encouragement of the kind and understanding that Dr. Andrus gave, the task for all of us seemed easy and delightful.
Of course as always Dr. Andrus wrote a message to graduates in every yearbook. In my yearbook she wrote: "Four years ago Lincoln High School opened her gates and offered her hospitality to you. We hope that you found in her grounds and her halls not only a gracious happy home, and a group of congenial friends, kindly interested teachers, but also a challenge to know and to extend yourself....it has been our purpose to give to young people a knowledge of what has been and of what is, so that they may on this foundation build a better life and a freer state."

Yes, Dr. Andrus, we hope that we have not failed in the trust you and Lincoln High set for us!

Robert Preston Meservey   Winter '35