

## MR. MCNARY'S ONE-HOUR TEACHING CAREER

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### **Body**

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In the words of Illinois Sen. Paul Simon, who has been less than enthusiastic about Gene McNary's nomination to head the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the St. Louis County executive "survived" Tuesday's Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. But Mr. McNary's attempts to establish credentials for the immigration post fell far short of the standard that the Senate should demand. The most glaring example of Mr. McNary's shortcomings came when Sen. Simon pressed him to give any possible reassurance that he has shown concern for the less fortunate. Mr. McNary's answer: He has coached Little League baseball and taught a class of 5-year-old disabled children. "You've answered my question," Sen. Simon said, "particularly when you talk of the disabled." But as a spokeswoman for the Special School District acknowledged Wednesday, Mr. McNary's entire teaching career consisted of spending an hour with a class in 1984 as part of a celebrity teach-in program. He led students ages 3 to 5 in lessons prepared by their regular teacher. The same type of cameo appearance was made by a number of other prominent St. Louisans as well. Such one-shot experiences don't qualify those other celebrities to head the INS, and they don't establish very good qualifications for Mr. McNary, either. Anyone who has followed his career in St. Louis County government has seen much stronger strains of stubbornness and vindictiveness than of compassion for the underprivileged. That attitude is precisely the opposite of what is needed in the person to handle the touchy issues that will confront the INS in the coming years.

Immigration experts are urging that if Mr. McNary wins Senate confirmation, he should name someone experienced in the field as his top assistant, to compensate for his meager background. But wouldn't it be far better to name a veteran in immigration affairs to the top job in the first place? Mr. McNary may be a seasoned government executive, but this is no time for on-the-job training at the head of the INS. He has shown nothing to dispel the notion that he is the wrong man for the INS job.

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