

✓ Matt Fisher - Ambassador Harmon - Rabbi
✓ Joe Myerhoff - (Rabbi Hurstfeld) Friedman
United Jewish Appeal - Palm Springs 2 yrs Ago -

I am indeed honored and privileged to be with you this evening--the principal leaders of the United Jewish Appeal meeting in your National Inaugural Conference that will launch UJA's 27th annual nationwide campaign.

27th
annual

Your massive accomplishments over the past generation surely stand as a faithful application of the teachings of the great

Hebrew Elder, Hillel:

"If I am not for myself," he asked, "who will be for me?"

"But if I am only for myself, what am I?"

Although these words were spoken before the time of Christ, they lie at the core of our Judeo-Christian heritage: let each man be his brother's keeper.

In this spirit you have extended the hand of friendship and help to your less fortunate brethren in foreign lands. And, in so doing, you have presented to the world one of the most remarkable demonstrations of voluntarism ^{+charity} in history.

Uchata Record - How Proud & Happy you must be!
-2-

↳ You have saved more than 3,000,000 Jews from war and depression.

↳ You have settled more than 1,300,000 Jews in Palestine and, later, in Israel.

↳ You have settled more than 350,000 Jews in other countries of the world.

↳ And you have restored Jewish community life in Western Europe after the horrible years of Nazi terror and destruction. #

your
Contribution
to
Freedom
↓
Eradication
of
Poverty

yes! You have, in short, displayed the same compassion and concern for the outcast and downtrodden which motivated President Johnson and his administration to initiate the campaign to eradicate the blight of poverty from these beloved shores.

Here
in
U.S.

U.S.A. War on Poverty

↳ The work of the United Jewish Appeal--and the labors of this Administration--are both a response to the ancient command of

Deuteronomy: "The poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore

I command thee saying, 'Thou shalt surely open thy hand onto the poor and needy brother in thy land.'"

This is the battle cry in the War on Poverty!

(Encyclopedia - Pacem in Terris / Math at Magister) no Peace
in Poverty

President John F. Kennedy Human Dignity

President Johnson Administration understands, as you understand,
that there is an inseparable connection between human progress
and social justice. Between Freedom + Justice

Given the many blessings of America, we cannot afford to do
without the highest measure of social justice. We cannot afford
to tolerate the existence of poverty. And this situation becomes
more intolerable as it becomes more avoidable.

Poverty
not new
but what
so new -
we can
do something
about it

Not compare measure the poverty of today against that of other
lands, nor even against our own past. We must measure it against
what we can do today and should do tomorrow. And we must measure
it, as you do, against our own conscience. UJA Sets the Example

We cannot, in good conscience, ignore the plight of 5.4 million
American families--containing 8 million children--living on annual
incomes below \$2,000. To do so would be morally wrong--and, I might
add, economically foolish.

But, statistics cannot convey the devastating consequences of
growing up in ghettos, or the long-range effects of deficient

inadequate education,
-4-

medical care, or the psychological barriers erected by sustained deprivation and lack of opportunity.

Poverty - Econ.
Poverty - Health, Educ, Housing

(2) Lyle, "the acid of poverty corrodes the human spirit. It corrodes faith in oneself. It eliminates hope for the future.

And it makes charity to others a rare virtue.

For these reasons President Johnson has made the elimination of poverty a principal objective in the quest for the Great Society.

In his historic State-of-the-Union address delivered last Monday, the President indicated he would ask Congress to double expenditures for the anti-poverty program in the coming fiscal year. ~~now,~~

some may bewail these expenditures, President Johnson understands ~~the~~ costs

"the costs of inaction" as well as the costs of action--the costs

of delinquency and crime, of unemployment due to ignorance and

lack of skills, and of welfare payments and unemployment compensation.

And the President understands this nation can afford to do whatever must be done--if it is right--and if we possess the courage

to act.

- + you understand this -
you have done it - USA

Voluntary Activities also

But,

Increased Federal expenditures alone, however, will not bring us this victory. ~~We must also recognize the importance~~

Then there is the importance

of pursuing those economic policies which will assure maximum growth and employment. We must recognize that only a vibrant

and expanding economy will produce the new jobs so essential in producing new opportunity for the forgotten.

to this we are Pledged

We must move ahead in those areas related so intimately to

expanding economic opportunity and improving the quality of

life in America: education, health care, urban development,

natural resources, transportation and communications. And we

must wage a continuing war upon the ignorance, discrimination

and prejudice which President Johnson so properly called

"poverty of the spirit."

Let no one delude himself into believing that the war against

poverty will be easily won. Indeed, the first tangible results

of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 are only now becoming

visible. But if we resolve to make no small plans, to accept

Israel war for freedom long-costly

no small results, and to regard each partial victory as a stepping
stone, we can reach our stated goal within a decade--a summit
where all Americans can breathe fully the air of freedom and
opportunity because poverty no longer stifles them. !

This is the
Story
of
Freedom

For opportunity, after all, is the foundation of freedom.

In the war against poverty ~~President Johnson is~~ we are seeking to
extend the range of opportunities available to our disadvantaged
citizens: the opportunity to acquire a better education, to get
a better job, to buy a more comfortable house, or to enjoy one's
leisure time more productively.

This is
the Hope
of
America.

Let us always remember, in the words of President Franklin
D. Roosevelt, that, "the true test of our progress is not whether
we add more to the abundance of those who already have much. It
is whether we do enough for those who have too little."

②

I can assure you that the Administration of President Johnson will never be indifferent to the plight of the less fortunate among us.

This Administration will always honor the words of the Prophet
what is the duty of a righteous man -
Isaiah, "Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring
the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked to cover
him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall
your light break forth like the dawn and your righteousness shall
go before you."

1 Mr. Vice President Elect, on behalf of all of us
 2 in the UJA, we wish you to continue in ever-increasing
 3 strength as you take up your duties of office in the next 10
 4 days.

5 Ladies and gentlemen, Vice President Elect Hubert
 6 H. Humphrey.

7 . . . Applause . . .

8 REMARKS OF THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

9 VICE PRESIDENT ELECT OF THE UNITED STATES

10 VICE PRESIDENT ELECT HUMPHREY: Thank you very much,
 11 Mr. Fisher. Thank you for bringing greetings from an old friend
 12 of mine, my favorite barber, Mr. Ephraim Mizrachi, the chief
 13 tonsorial artist of the King David Hotel. I must say that he
 14 did give me a great deal of support. Every one of you who
 15 visited that hotel, he held that razor close to the throat
 16 until he had firm pledges out of you. I appreciate the fact
 17 that you delivered and kept your pledge.

18 Mr. Meyerhoff, it is good to see you again, Joe.

19 Ambassador Harmon, my friend Rabbi Friedman, and
 20 I believe our good friend from the Washington Community, Rabbi
 21 Gerstenfeld had to leave us, and my many, many friends from
 22 all over the United States, these fine great cities of
 23 ours, and states. It seems like I saw some of you a couple of
 24 years ago out at Palm Springs. Many of you I have seen at
 25 Miami. Most of you I have seen in your home cities. I gather

1 my friends from Philadelphia are never going to forgive
2 me for not going back there and having my picture taken tonight.
3 But I had pressure -- from a secular point of view I was willing
4 to do it, but it was the fellow upstairs working on me. Rabbi
5 Friedman said, "No, if you start that, you will be going from
6 table to table." I didn't tell him if this had been just a
7 couple of months ago, I might have done that.

8 I am having some difficulty knowing just how to
9 address you, because I suppose that in light of the introduction
10 Mr. Fisher has given me, that was most flattering and generous,
11 I should speak in the tones and with the dignity of a
12 Vice President. And yet I am not quite Vice President. At least
13 I haven't had the oath of office. Even though I am happy
14 to say the electoral college has met, and in its wisdom
15 has cast its vote. And I am not a United States Senator.
16 My colleagues keep reminding me of that in the Senate. Frankly,
17 I am unemployed at the moment. So I thought I would drop by
18 tonight, and just see how you were all doing.

19 And I gather that you are doing fairly well. I want
20 Mr. Fisher to know it is my hope you will do even better before
21 we get out of here this evening.

22 And I think, Max, you ought to be able to spell that
23 out a little later in some degree of detail.

24 I have two very heavy responsibilities tonight, and
25 challenges, First, I need to inspire UJA. Second, I need to

1 please LBJ. And if I can do both, I will have quite an
2 evening.

3 . . . Applause . . .

4 This reminds me and permits me to bring you the warm
5 personal greetings and indeed the congratulations of the
6 President of the United States to those of you who are the
7 leaders of the United Jewish Appeal. I am very happy that I can
8 do this. I know Mr. Feldman, my good friend, who is the
9 Special Assistant to President Johnson, will be with you, many
10 of you.

11 So you know that you are indeed in friendly territory.

12 I am particularly pleased that you are meeting in
13 Washington. Oh, I know it would have been nice if I could have
14 got on a plane and got out to Palm Springs, had a day or so,
15 tell my wife how I have been working. You men have been doing
16 that for years, you know. I am not telling on you, if you don't
17 tell on me.

18 I might add Mrs. Humphrey wanted very much to be
19 with me tonight. Maybe you ladies appreciate why she is not
20 here. Yesterday noon she had a luncheon, many social respon-
21 sibilities, had to make a speech. Says she doesn't like to. But
22 she gets a lot more done than I do.

23 Last night we had a dinner for all the new Senators
24 at our home. This morning she was sort of modeling her
25 inaugural gown. And then at noon she had another luncheon and

1 reception. And then tonight she is preparing for 170 Congressmen.
2 So she is a busy lady.

3 I am here tonight because we both want to greet many
4 of our friends here, friends that have become as dear to us as
5 any friends could possibly be. I want to talk to you this
6 evening about the work of UJA.

7 I am about as accustomed to being at UJA meetings
8 as you are. In fact, I might be even more so. I used to tell
9 some of my good friends who were members of the B'nai B'rith
10 I had been at more lodge meetings than they had. And I would
11 try to get them to come once in awhile.

12 I know this is your inaugural conference. And it is
13 most appropriate that you should meet in the Nation's Capital.

14 We need you here.

15 I think that every meeting that deals with the welfare
16 of humankind, every meeting that is dedicated to the cause
17 of human freedom, every conference that is dedicated to human
18 dignity, ought to sometime or another in the history of its
19 organization come to the Nation's Capital, because America
20 needs to know that Washington, D. C., the Capital of this Nation,
21 and the Capital indeed of freedom throughout the world, is a
22 home for people who want to do good things and good deeds
23 for a better world.

24 And you have helped us here just by your presence.
25 The things that are being said about your activities, the news

1 reports from these gatherings of yours, your conferences
2 and your meetings -- this all adds to the good of America, to
3 the good name of America, to the image of America, to the
4 real substance of America, because if America is anything it is
5 indeed a deep concern over the welfare of humanity. And the
6 United Jewish Appeal is the living embodiment of the activity
7 of people freely doing it, voluntarily doing it, the
8 activity of people helping one another. And I commend you and
9 congratulate you.

10 And, as a public official, at least once was one,
11 and soon to be one, I thank you very much for what you are
12 doing.

13 . . . Applause . . .

14 You are really not very old. It is only your 27th
15 gathering. Twenty-six meetings before. You are just slightly
16 out of the teenage group. You are in the full bloom and blossom
17 of life, A lot of vitality and a great deal of energy and
18 enthusiasm to get the job done.

19 I have read all of your works. I have been doing
20 this for years. And I know what your accomplishments have been.
21 Those accomplishments, it seems to me, stand as a faithful
22 application of the teachings of that great Hebrew elder Hillel.
23 And I just quote from him:

24 "If I am not for myself" he asked "who will be for
25 me?" But if I am only for myself, what am I?"

1 The rhetorical question -- it is almost the method as
2 we used to say in political philosophy of Socratic teaching --
3 asking the question and you make your own answer.

4 If I am only for myself, what am I?

5 Hillel knew what he was speaking of and gave us an
6 immortal lesson.

7 Although these words were spoken long before the time
8 of Christ, they lie in the core of the Judao Christian heritage.
9 In other words, what we are really talking about here is our
10 brother's keeper -- let each man be his brother's keeper.

11 It is in that spirit that UJA has carried on its
12 work throughout all of these many years, both here at home and
13 abroad. And I think that in doing this work, you have given
14 to the entire world, much of it, by the way, acting very
15 selfishly, and much of it not practicing the precepts of
16 being one's brother's keeper. But at least the United Jewish
17 Appeal has given to the world a living active demonstration
18 of charity, the kindness of the human spirit, and of volunteerism.
19 Not the government demanding it, not the government or the
20 state taking it from you, but you in a very, very real sense
21 giving, giving to your fellow human beings, so that human
22 dignity takes on more than philosophical meaning, it takes on
23 reality.

24 I come here, therefore, to praise you. And I come
25 to challenge you, too.

1 One could almost get up here and say what a record,
2 what an amazing achievement. And you have a right to be
3 very proud -- you have a right to be proud of yourself, and
4 you ought to be happy.

5 I said to Rabbi Friedman on the way coming here
6 this evening -- I have never known anyone that was in worse
7 circumstances for being a generous giver. I have never known
8 a nation, indeed an individual, that put itself in economic
9 difficulty because it was a prudent and generous giver. In
10 fact, the history of our own nation tells us this. The only
11 time that America has been in serious trouble in this century
12 economically, was when America closed her gates to the immigrants,
13 when America closed down her credit to people that wanted
14 to buy, and when America closed her mind to progressive
15 ideas. And those days happened in the late 1920's and the
16 early 1930's. And as a result, America almost closed up shop,
17 closed her banks, lost her homes, lost her people, lost her
18 children -- because America had closed its heart.

19 A generous people and a generous nation generally is
20 a healthy people and a happy people, and a healthy and happy
21 nation.

22 I might add that even as this great Republic of ours
23 today gives generously abroad -- and many people complain
24 of it -- oh, do I know, I have been in Congress 16 years.
25 I know we have given much. I suppose even much of it has been

1 wasted. I suppose that many people do not appreciate it.
2 But I can also say that America today is the richest nation
3 on the face of the earth, the wealth of this country is
4 beyond human comprehension. And we have not become the poorer,
5 we have not become the poorer because we have been generous.
6 In fact, we are richer today, because we have been generous.
7 And so are you.

8 . . . Applause . . .

9 I attend many meetings with my wife. And I would say
10 that members of the Jewish community ought to be so proud
11 of the fact that you are the best givers in America. And you
12 are. And I say this publicly and on the record. You have
13 given so much. And as a result, my, oh my, how you have grown
14 in stature and prestige and prosperity and responsibility,
15 until today America, every one of us as individual Americans
16 should be proud of our great nation, proud of the many great
17 institutions of learning, of health, of care, of social
18 justice, to which you have given so much, and to which some
19 of us have tried to contribute a little.

20 Just think of this -- at a time when lives are being
21 snuffed out in the Congo, at a time when lives are being
22 taken in Vietnam, at a time when people are being slapped into
23 jail because they want to think and be human beings -- think
24 of this. The United Jewish Appeal has been responsible for
25 saving more than 3 million people, 3 million people of your faith

1 since World War II, from war and ~~depression~~ depression.

2 I want you to let that -- let me back up a minute.

3 We take this for granted. You have read about it, you
4 get the circulars and the bulletins and you have heard about
5 it.

6 But do you remember the lives that were taken in the
7 gas chambers? You remember the brutality and the unhumanity
8 of political despots, the Nazi. Those memories are seared
9 into our consciousness, seared into our souls. Why don't we
10 then remember with joy, with pride, and sing praise to the
11 heavens, the fact that this organization, of which you are the
12 leaders, the people here -- you are the leaders -- you have
13 saved 3 million lives.

14 What is there greater that one can do than to save
15 the life of another?

16 I think this is a tremendous record. You have settled
17 more than a million three hundred thousand people of Jewish
18 faith in Palestine and now the state of Israel. They are
19 safe, they are free. I don't say they are as prosperous as
20 we would want them to be. And perhaps they are not as safe
21 as they want to be. But they are a whole lot safer than they
22 were in the ghettos, or under the whiplash of some dictator.
23 And Israel today is a nation, and it is a free nation. It is a
24 democracy. It is a vital society. And it is a living demonstration
25 of what a people can do for human dignity and for human freedom.

1 And you helped make it possible. You ought to
2 feel mighty good when you wake up in the morning and think
3 about that. And when you think in the doing of it you are not
4 worse off; you are better. You just feel better.

5 I have often said that one of the things that makes
6 me enjoy politics is because I get a sense of feeling that
7 I am contributing something to my country. You can't get very
8 rich at this business. But there is a richness of friendship.
9 There is a richness of knowing that you are a part of history.
10 There is a richness of knowing that maybe you made a little
11 contribution to something in your country.

12 Don't you feel that way as a citizen in this great
13 democracy? Don't you feel that way as a co-religionist, when
14 you make a contribution, save a life, or settle someone
15 in a new land, with freedom as their environment, social justice
16 the code of the day?

17 You have settled over 350,000 people of the Jewish
18 faith. You have rehabilitated, so to speak, for all practical
19 purposes Jewish community life and re-established it in Western
20 Europe, after the horrible years of Nazi terror and destruction.
21 And, by the way, those years are not far back.

22 This is 1965. January 1965. January 1945 was less
23 than 30 days after the Battle of the Bulge. And the gas chambers
24 were working overtime.

25 Twenty years later, a new country, a new society, new

1 dignity, new freedom.

2 When I ^hear people tell me this world is worse
3 than it ever was, I don't believe it.

4 Max Fisher and Hubert Humphrey were visiting here
5 a little while ago. I came into a degree of maturity in the
6 30's. And I want to tell you, every day has been a little bit
7 better. And I haven't forgotten it. I don't think the good old
8 days were half as good as the present days. I like it now.

9 . . . Applause . . .

10 What we have been doing in this experiment or
11 this expression of charity and understanding and compassion
12 that UJA represents is in a very real sense what President
13 Johnson is attempting to get America to do as a nation as
14 an organized society in our war on poverty.

15 Everything in the State of Israel isn't rich. They
16 are not all poor. And everybody in America isn't rich, either
17 even though most of us live very well. We do have some that
18 do not live well. And that makes it all the worse, because it
19 need not be that way.

20 I would say that UJA possibly gave us the example
21 for waging this war on poverty. I think that what we are
22 attempting to do here at home and what we are attempting to do
23 abroad, governmentally, what you are doing in the United Jewish
24 Appeal, really is a response to that ancient command in the
25 Book of Deuteronomy. Let me just quote from it.

1 "The poor shall never cease out of the land."

2 I guess that is another way of saying the poor will
3 always be with us.

4 "The poor shall never cease out of the land.

5 Therefore, I command thee saying thou shalt surely open thy
6 hand unto the poor and needy brother in thy land."

7 Now, this is as ancient as the prophets.

8 What is there that is new?

9 The President gives a State of the Union Message,
10 a fallen President asks us to be charitable and considerate,
11 and it comes from the books written hundreds, yea, thousands
12 of years ago. The command, "Thou shalt surely open thy hand
13 unto the poor and needy brother in thy land." That is the
14 battle cry, it is the charge, it is the command of the war on
15 poverty. It was said only recently within the last decade
16 by that great man of the church, the Holy Roman Catholic Church,
17 Pope John, in his two magnificent encyclicals, Pacem In Terris
18 and Mater et. Magestra. You ought to read them. What do these
19 say among other things? One of the great thoughts expressed
20 was there can be no freedom in a world that is in the grips
21 of poverty. There can be no peace in a world that is staggered
22 and staggering under the blows of poverty.

23 You cannot have a world with only a section of the
24 rich and the mass multitude poor and sick, ignorant and
25 illiterate, hopeless and frustrated, without having trouble.

1 So that peace, as we pray for it and work for it,
2 is more than the absence of war. Peace is in a very real
3 sense something that is positive. Peace is harmony,
4 man with his God, peace is health, peace is enlightenment,
5 peace is social justice, peace is food, peace is learning,
6 peace is hope, not hopelessness.

7 Peace is progress and social justice, not reaction
8 and injustice.

9 So the great spiritual leader, regardless of the
10 church or the synagogue that we may belong to, tell us the
11 same lesson -- that progress, human progress and social
12 justice must go hand in hand.

13 There can be no freedom in a world of the poor and
14 the impoverished and the oppressed. The worst form of tyranny
15 is the tyranny over the mind of man, and the second worst
16 form is the tyranny of man's own poverty, the poverty of his
17 spirit, the poverty of his purse, the poverty of his body
18 that is wracked with pain and disease, the poverty of a mind
19 that may be illiterate and ignorant.

20 So as we gather in the sheafs, and as we ask for
21 the help, and as we seek the contributions, and as we say
22 help one another, we wage war on poverty, we wage war on
23 tyranny, and we can wage it without losing a life. In fact,
24 we can wage it to save lives.

25 Some day maybe we will get civilized enough to be

1 able to wage war with the same determination and courage
2 for peace and for life that we wage it for victory on the
3 battlefield as we take life, and as peace is held precariously
4 in uncertain hands.

5 I hope so.

6 This is the process of civilization.

7 But you are making your contribution to it.

8 Well, I happen to believe, as I said a moment ago,
9 that we can't afford to tolerate the existence of poverty
10 in our own midst in America. We have to be something like
11 they said -- Ceasar's wife, above suspicion.

12 We Americans have to set an example for the world.
13 And we are doing pretty well at it. But we can do better.
14 We need to set an example to show that modern technology and
15 modern knowledge of science and medicine and education, that
16 modern productive capacity can obliterate poverty. If you
17 cannot obliterate poverty with what we know today, what makes
18 you think we can ever do away with war? And do you think that
19 we can afford war?

20 I will serve on the National Security Council. I have
21 been in the Congress a long time. I know one thing if I know
22 anything else, that this world cannot endure nuclear war
23 and have anything left. And yet war and animosity and violence
24 are really the product of oppression and ignorance, fear,
25 poverty.

1 So as we wage the struggle against these ancient
2 enemies of mankind, we save the peace, save our own lives.

3 You are not just helping people in Israel. Let's be
4 very frank about it. If that is all you think you are doing
5 here tonight, you have undersold yourselves. Whenever you
6 strike a blow against disease, wherever you strike a blow for
7 education, wherever you lift your hand to strike down bigotry
8 and intolerance, wherever you help a fellow human being any
9 place in the world, you have worked for the peace of America,
10 the health of your own country.

11 . . . Applause . . .

12 As Mr. Fisher said so well tonight, when you are
13 a good Jew you are a good American. And when you are a good
14 American, you are a good Jew. When you are a good Catholic
15 or a good Protestant you are a good American. When you are
16 a good American, you are a good man of any faith. We ought
17 to understand that. There is a brotherhood. And we need
18 to appreciate it. We need to have a kind of enlightened under-
19 standing of our interdependence, one with another.

20 So let me move along now -- I shan't keep you too
21 long.

22 Let me just give you a few figures that will tell you
23 something of the problem we face in this country of ours in terms
24 of poverty, and in terms of the challenge of economic health.

25 I say that in good conscience we cannot ignore the

1 plight of almost 5-1/2 million, 5,400,000 American families,
2 with 8 million children, living on incomes under \$2,000.
3 This isn't good economically, and it is sure bad morally.
4 If that income could be increased by productivework, by
5 opportunity, to \$4,000 per family, look what it would mean.
6 You could double your contributions to UJA, for one thing.
7 But more importantly, it would be good for everybody. It would
8 be good for the Federal Government, the revenues for state and
9 local government, it would be good for business, good for
10 education, good for health.

11 You see, waging the war on poverty isn't just an act
12 of charity. It is really good sensible economics. It is
13 good morals, it is good politics, it is good economics, and
14 it is good sense, and it is the right thing to do.

15 To permit these millions of people to go and to live
16 on as they are, when we know we can do something about it,
17 is morally wrong.

18 But the truth is that statistics never convey
19 the devastating consequences of growing up in miserable conditions
20 in ghettos, or on the long range effects of deficient
21 medical care, inadequate education, or psychological barriers
22 erected by sustained deprivation and lack of opportunity.

23 The statistics never tell the story. How can you
24 know what it is to be unemployed by just reading about how many
25 people are unemployed, when your family may be denied, not only

1 some of the good things of life materially, but more
2 importantly if you really are a person that wants to work, and
3 feel that you have something within you that you can contribute,
4 to be told that there is no place for you, no job for you --
5 this breaks your spirit. That is the damage. It isn't only
6 the damage of the cost to the taxpayer for relief and for
7 food, shelter. It is not only the damage of the loss of
8 income to the worker whose talents go unused. It is the damage
9 to the soul and to the spirit.

10 The acid of poverty -- and that is what it is -- this
11 acid of poverty corrodes the human spirit. It corrodes faith
12 in one's self. It gnaws away at us. And it eliminates hope
13 for the future. And it makes charity to others a rare virtue.

14 Let me say to the good civic leaders that are in this
15 room that until we can do something to strike literally death
16 blows on poverty in all of its forms -- and I speak of it now,
17 poverty of illiteracy, the poverty of hopelessness, of cultural
18 deprivation, the poverty that comes in being told generation
19 after generation that you are not wanted, that there is no room
20 for you, because of your color, of your religion, this kind
21 of poverty that is ingrained in family after family, decade
22 after decade, generation after generation, this kind of poverty
23 can sicken all of America, contaminate us.

24 This is what is wrong on our streets, this is why
25 there is violence, this is why the demagogues today can make

1 a play to some people and lead them into riotous and violent
2 action.

3 It is not good enough just to say you need more police.
4 It is not good enough just to say that all you need to do is
5 enforce the law. Important as that is -- make no mistake
6 about it, law enforcement, law observance are essentials for
7 orderly community life. But the law must be just. Social
8 justice -- like the prophets of old, my favorite Old Testament
9 Prophet -- President Johnson's is Isaiah, mine is Amos. This man
10 that cried out for justice. The Prophet of Social Justice.
11 Because until there is justice and it rolls like a mighty
12 river, there can be no peace and there can be no order in
13 the community, there can be no human dignity.

14 So we need to build a just order.

15 I think it is for these reasons that our President
16 and Presidents before him -- but I commend President Johnson
17 in particular for one act above all others, that he has reminded
18 rich and prosperous America that there are poor in our midst.
19 And he hasn't said that the answer to poverty is just to dish
20 out gifts.

21 Yes, charity, to be sure. But more than that. He has
22 made the elimination of poverty the principal objective of
23 his career, of his public life, of his administration, in
24 the quest for a great society.

25 You know, there is a difference between being big and

1 great. Lots of people are big. A few are great. Bigness
2 is quantity. We want America to be a great society, not just
3 a big one.

4 In that historic State of the Union Message,
5 the President indicated that he was going to ask the Congress
6 to do more in the anti-poverty program. I know some people
7 are going to bewail it. I can hear them coming already, in
8 the same old places. I can hear them in my sleep. They
9 are going to bewail the cost.

10 Frankly, the President and you understand that the
11 costs of inaction are sometimes worse than the costs of action.
12 The costs of delinquency, of crime, of unemployment, the costs
13 of ignorance and the lack of skills, welfare payments, unemploy-
14 ment compensation -- these are the costs that should worry us.

15 The President understands this Nation can afford
16 to do whatever it needs to do.

17 And, by the way, that is a command I want to give
18 you tonight. Anybody can do what we ought to do. Anybody
19 can do just about what people expect you to do. There isn't
20 any need, Mr. Fisher, of holding any meeting any place anywhere
21 just to ask people to do what they expected to do when they
22 came to the meeting. You could have saved the trip.

23 What America needs to do is, No. 1, to have as its
24 standard excellence, because mediocrity won't get you by any
25 more. The competition is too rough.

1 Not only that, mediocrity leaves you at dead
2 center. We need excellence -- just like the astronauts.
3 They don't go around saying, "Okay". They say "A-Okay." Fellows
4 that ride bicycles say okay. But if you are going to be up
5 there in one of those space capsules going around, you have
6 to know it is perfect, A-Okay. And when he says Okay, he is
7 in trouble, that is the last you will hear of him.

8 I might add that America needs to understand that
9 we can do the impossible. Because if we can only do what you
10 and I think for a moment is possible, then anybody can practically
11 do that. We have to do what is impossible. We have to, in our
12 lifetime, be honestly able to say and do -- that we can prevent
13 war. We have to be able to conquer diseases that people said
14 were impossible to conquer. We have to learn how to live
15 in cities, the likes of which man has never known before, and
16 to keep them orderly, and livable.

17 That isn't something that you can just do by
18 saying, "I think we can do it." You have to do the impossible.

19 Anybody that is remembered in music, the arts,
20 literature, or politics or science or technology has done the
21 impossible.

22 Einstein did it. He knew the nature of the atom.
23 He produced the formula for the splitting of the atom. It was
24 impossible. And that is why Einstein did it. If it had been
25 possible, some young teacher in high school would have done it.

1 We have to have people that are capable of doing
2 great things. And may I say there were people for years who
3 knew that it was absolutely essential that the State of Israel
4 be constructed if there were going to be any safety and
5 peace for millions of people. Many people said, "Well, I hope
6 so." But there were a few valiant souls that said, "It has got
7 to be done."

8 And somebody else said, "It is impossible." And the
9 fellow said, "That is exactly what I mean, that is why we are
10 going to do it."

11 It was impossible to conquer this great wilderness
12 that was America. It was once impossible to sail the seven
13 seas. It was once impossible to get into outer space.

14 And you know it -- in your lifetime. If somebody
15 had told you 40 years ago -- some of you ladies won't qualify
16 under this -- but if somebody had told you 40 years ago we were
17 going to by the year 1970 land on the moon and bring him back,
18 you would say that fellow was gone.

19 Ladies and gentlemen, if we can't do that between now
20 and the next five or six years, we will come in second best
21 in a two-man race, and that means a loss.

22 It is not only possible, it is essential that we do it.
23 And we can't do it by halfway measures.

24 . . . Applause . . .

25 Let me give this word of assurance to you.

1 I don't come here tonight as a social worker -- even
2 though we need social workers. I believe the great programs
3 of welfare we have are essential to a good life.

4 But I am not here to tell you we are going to conquer
5 poverty in America for the millions of people afflicted by
6 it by just a generous government, by Federal expenditures,
7 or even by volunteer agencies.

8 I want you to understand tonight, Mr. Businessman,
9 Mr. Professionalman, and your ladies, I want you to understand
10 that the policy of this government of which I am a part is
11 a policy to encourage enterprise, to make it possible for
12 people to earn the opportunities to be generous.

13 We are not engaged in a massive give-away. We are
14 engaged, if you please, in a massive program of trying to help
15 America be a bigger and better and a stronger and a more
16 productive and a more just country. That is the goal of your
17 government. And you as a businessman can plan it that way.
18 And as you look down the road and see what you are going to do
19 in terms of your life, you ought to plan on the basis that each
20 year will be better than the other.

21 And I tell you why. Because we have to have it that
22 way. We can't afford to have a depression. Those days are all
23 over. We can't afford to have a recession. That is for
24 students to talk about in theoretical economics. Practical
25 economics of the world in which we live prohibits -- prohibits

1 and denies a free country the luxury of a depression or
2 a major recession. You must understand that.

3 Now, somebody is going to say how are you going to do
4 that. I don't have all the answers. All I know is we cannot
5 afford to have America bankruptt. We cannot afford massive
6 unemployment. We cannot afford to have our industries
7 operating at 50, 70 percent capacity. We cannot afford to have
8 our communities with little or no revenue. We can't afford
9 it.

10 It is just like getting into debt. You cannot afford
11 to stop work. And America is not going to go through this
12 experience once again, losing itself, and thereby losing
13 its opportunities.

14 So we move ahead.

15 Really what we are talking about is opportunity. We
16 must recognize that only a vibrant and expanding economy will
17 produce the wealth and the jobs so essential for producing
18 opportunity to the forgotten.

19 In the war against poverty we are seeking, therefore,
20 to extend the range of opportunities available to the dis-
21 advantaged citizens, those who have never had a chance. We are
22 seeking to extend the opportunity to acquire a better education,
23 to get a better job, to buy a more comfortable home, or
24 enjoy leisure time.

25 Remember what Franklin Roosevelt once said. Sometimes

1 I think it would be good if we played back a couple of those
2 speeches.

3 These were his words from about 1936, in the City of
4 Philadelphia: He said, "The true test of our progress is not
5 whether we add more to the abundance of those who already have
6 much. It is whether we do enough for those who have too little."

7 What we are seeking, therefore, to do is not to push
8 down those who are on top, but to help those lift themselves
9 who are on the bottom. And the only way you can build a strong
10 cathedral or synagogue is to have a solid foundation. And it is
11 the foundations of American life today that are in trouble, not
12 its penthouses or the top stories.

13 This Administration will always honor the words of
14 the Prophet Isaiah. And that story goes, "What is the duty
15 of a righteous man? Is it not to share your bread with
16 the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house? When
17 you see the naked to cover him, and not to hide yourself
18 from your own flesh. Then shall your light break forth like
19 the dawn and your righteousness shall go before you."

20 My fellow Americans, what is there better to be,
21 when you already have so much, when you already have a home
22 the likes of which you never dreamed was possible, when you
23 already have wealth and prestige and luxury, when you already
24 have more than the cars that you once dreamed were possible.
25 What is there better to know, and what is there better to be than

1 to know that you are doing something for your fellowman?

2 A And like Isaiah said then, "Shall your light break forth
3 like the dawn, and your righteousness shall go before you."

4 So, Max, I hope these leaders you have brought together
5 here tonight will do as you have done. And I am never
6 hesitant to ask people to do a little bit more than they thought
7 they were going to. Because I never won elections by asking
8 people to do just what they thought they were going to do,
9 because that is the way you lose them.

10 I know how you win elections and how you lose them.
11 I have tried both. And I am here to tell you I like winning.

12 And the way that you win is to ask people to do far
13 more than they ever contemplated. And tonight I charge this
14 audience with making this, the 27th Annual Meeting of the
15 United Jewish Appeal, the greatest conference that you have
16 ever had, to make it that way in terms of the substance of
17 your generosity, as well as the substance of your philosophy.

18 Thank you very much.

19 . . . Applause . . .

20 - - -
21
22
23
24
25



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org