



Address By
Vice President Elect Hubert H. Humphrey

to

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Every time I have been introduced, of late, people have wondered just how to do it. Some people come up and say, "This is Senator Humphrey," and then right away there will be one of this live, active, on-the-payroll senators that will say, "He's not a senator." And then a little later somebody will come up and say, "I would like to have you meet Vice-President Humphrey," and somebody from the Executive branch will say, "Wait a minute, he hasn't taken the oath of office."

But I am here to tell you that the most wonderful, blessed thing happened to me this morning on the way to this meeting. The most unusual thing. I met George Meany in the hall and he said, "Hubert, I have to leave, I am going on over to the Unemployment Compensation office and see if we can't get you on the rolls. I wanted all these good labor leaders to see what it means to be unemployed."

I don't know what people complain about when that situation happens. I have never had more fun in my life than I have had these last few days, but I must say I don't think it would do well for me or anybody else for a steady diet. But this Administration has many concerns about human kind and I believe that President Lyndon Johnson, being a practical man, likes to see living exhibits of the problems of America. So he has me unemployed, he has me looking for a house, he has me as Sarge Shriver's example of what we ought to do in the poverty program, and then he decided that he ought to also find out what it would be like if you just put one member of the team over in the AFL-CIO councils and see what happened to them. So, here I am

Now, let me first of all take this opportunity to thank every one of you and the internationals and locals with which you are affiliated, to thank you on behalf of the President of the United States and on behalf of the Vice President-elect and on behalf of progressive-minded public officials in this government for your help in the recent campaign. It was much appreciated. And, by the way, you did very, very well. We want to thank you. To be quite frank about it, I don't think we could have done anywhere near as well, in fact, we might not have done at all without you.

But now that you have embraced us, don't leave us. We are going to need you every day, every week, every month, in the 89th Congress -- in the first and the second session -- and lest any of you think that I am not looking to the future, may I remind you that there will be an election in 1966, so gear yourself for action. We did have the good fortune, this time, of the election of a large number of new Congressmen. Yesterday Mrs. Humphrey and I entertained them at our home and I want you to know that as a group they are excellent and, individually, they are superb. Many of them come from districts that had been traditionally conservative or Republican and I would hope that in the months ahead that they will be able to maintain their contacts with you and that you will continue to give them the support you gave so generously in the recent election, and that when 1966 rolls around

that you will remember that the strength of this Administration and the acceptance of this Administration's program will, in a large measure, be determined by what happens in the national referendum of the Congressional elections of 1966. (You can see that now I have had a few days' vacation, I am all rarin' to go for the next battle.)

You are here for some very serious business. You are here to discuss a legislative program. The President laid down the broad outlines of his legislative program in the State of the Union message on the night of January 4th. By the way, that was rather a unique occasion. Ordinarily a President makes his State of the Union message somewhat later, particularly on an Inaugural year; ordinarily, under the standard rules of procedure he would make it at noon or about one o'clock. But I am here to tell you that this is no ordinary President and this is no ordinary Administration and this is no ordinary time. And that is why he changed things.

What's more, I think the substance of that message was one of the best kept secrets of recent days. Oh, there were a few little rumors, just enough to intrigue you, to whet your appetite, just enough to keep the newspapers wondering what was in it, but when that message came out, the President of the United States did outline for the American people, not just the Congress (and I want to mention this in some detail), the principles, the guidelines and the standards of what he calls the Great Society. And taking this message to the people in the presence of the representatives of the people was highly significant. This President is not going to rely just upon his knowledge of the Congress; President Johnson did receive a great mandate from the American people and he took his message to the American people over every known form of communication. And I am of the opinion that better than 70 million people, approximately 75 million people, listened to that presentation, the State of the Union message on January 4th. I am of the opinion that those people are going to ask the members of the Congress to follow the lead of the President of the United States in the programs that he announced in the message of January 4th.

You know, we in Washington -- I have told you this before -- have a tendency to be with ourselves so much that we become sort of an inside group. Somebody spreads a rumor in this city and pretty soon it looks and sounds like it is true, because all the folks within this little community of the District of Columbia, the nation's capital, start telling each other the same thing and if you tell it over and over again, it almost sounds like a fact. The only way you can, in any way, decontaminate these rumors is to expose them to the bright sunlight of public opinion out in the country, in the cities, in the villages, in the farms and the hamlets. And I can say this, that the President of the United States is a president of all of the people of the United States and not just of the Congress and the people of the District of Columbia. And he is going to take his message into every trade union, into every farm and village, into every city. He is going to speak for the people, to the people. He is going to be of the people, and by the people. And I will tell you something: you never had a better advocate for the people than you have in President Lyndon Johnson.

Now, every man who is a leader has his own way of doing things. I want to say right now, lest there be any doubt about it, that the present leader, the President of the United States, is a man unto himself. There are no duplicates. He is a personality unto himself; he has a method of political action and political procedure that is unique to himself. He is the most knowledgeable man in the field of government and the arts and sciences of government that I have ever known and I think those of you who have worked with him would agree with me that you have never met anyone that is his equal when it comes to knowing the legislative processes and knowing the powers and the responsibilities of the office of the Presidency of the United States.

This is the kind of a man who is at the helm. We are not going to do all the things that we would like to do overnight, but we are going to get them done. Interestingly enough, the objectives and the stated purposes of the legislative program, as much as I have read of it, of the AFL-CIO are very much the same objectives and stated purposes of the government of the United States.

President Johnson doesn't advocate the class struggle; neither do you, nor do I. He isn't asking that the national economy be turned upside down; he is asking that it be invigorated, revitalized. He is a President who represents a people, who believes that the institutions of production and distribution in this country, as presently established and maintained under our corporate, private ownership, partnership, cooperatives, this mixed economy of ours, that this is the best form of economic development that any civilization or any people has ever perfected. And we seek to do but one thing with that economy. We seek to make that economy one that expands and grows, not merely for a few but for the many. And the program that this President has outlined in the State of the Union message is a program that is good for capital, it is good for labor, it is good for the little man, and it is good for the big man, it is good for the youth and it is good for the elderly, it is good for the well and it is good for the sick, it is good for the city and it is good for the farm. You read that message and you will see that what I have said in general phraseology really adds up to a list of specifics that if we work together as Americans, if we work together as people dedicated to progressive government and to a society with social justice as its guidelines, that we are going to be able to achieve these goals. And these will not only be goals, they will be positive accomplishments in our time, in the very next few years. Now, that is the kind of a program that I like and I think it is the kind that you like, too.

Now, let me give you a little review here. I remember when we got together about 1961. It was a bad time. It was cold outside. Now, I just want to show you what I am willing to do for the man who gave me the privilege of being on the ticket with him and of being vice President. I have asked him to trust me and he does. Yesterday I had the snow storm, the one that would have come ordinarily, had I not been on the ticket, on Inaugural Day. We have cleared that out already. I even ride horseback to please him. There are certain voices down here that say, "Please, no more of that." In fact, that is what Bob Olson, president of the Minnesota State AFL-CIO whispered in my ear when I came in here. He said, "Hubert, we love you. We even like horses, but you two are not made for each other." But I have gone so far as to predict that we are going to have good weather on Inaugural Day and just to accommodate the forces of nature and to take care of that weather-man who obviously is not a Democrat -- he has been hounding us for years. Every time we want to have a good Democratic picnic it rains, when we want to have a Democratic inaugural it snows. We made a deal. I said, "Look, Mrs. Humphrey and I are going to have a big party for Congress, why don't you give us the snow, we sort of like it." So the snow is all over. No need to worry about that, come on down on January 20th; it is going to be a pleasant day, the likes of which you haven't seen since Andy Jackson was inaugurated as President of the United States.

Well, back in 1961 I recall so well your legislative conference, and I recall the concern that many people had at that time, and I am sure that every officer of the AFL-CIO, every member of the executive committee, and I am sure the secretary-treasurer had some concern about it because unemployment was high, members were falling away and the economy of America was staggering. It hadn't fallen but it was in a serious sickened condition. Unemployment was high. That unemployment is being reduced. As a matter of fact, the largest section of the unemployed today are to be found -- I should say the majority of the unemployed today -- are to be found in two groups; those who have been taken out of work because of changes in technology or a shift of industry and need retraining, or a new plant needs to be brought into a different community, and the youth -- the young people. This is the most serious problem of unemployment we have -- those that are coming into the labor market.

But, be that as it may, we have made substantial progress. This is not to say that we have done well enough. It is only to say that we are working at it and the results are encouraging. Furthermore, industry itself has never had a better four-year period in the history of this country than it has just experienced. I don't recall what month this is in terms of the continued up-swing of our economy but it can be said that within the last 100 years there has never been a record that equals the up-swing, the growth in terms of productivity, in terms of distribution, in terms of income and in terms of profit of the American economy. There has never been a period so long of sustained economic growth as that which we have experienced these past four years and the good news in the morning newspaper, the good news of the special economic feature edition of the morning New York Times. That good news is that this prosperity is to continue through 1965 and if we can get it through 1965, my fellow Americans, we can continue it through 1966 and the years ahead. We know now that we can do these things. We know now that depressions and recessions are not God-made or God-given; they are man-made. We know that we can do something about them. We have learned something about fiscal policy, monetary policy. We have learned how to phase-in into the economy -- public works, accelerated public works, tax reductions. We have proven and, by the way, the AFL-CIO was one of the first, may I put on the record here today, that advocated and stood for and fought for a large tax reduction as a way and means of stimulating this economy. The American labor movement was on the line first for that very successful program and you ought to be mighty happy about it.

We have learned that you can take care of the needy in this country without in any way punishing those with plenty. In fact, one of all the accomplishments of President Lyndon Johnson to date, and I am sure there are many more yet to come, but if I were to be asked what was his most singularly important contribution to American life in his one year of the presidency, I would say it was the fact that this President, at the time that America was more prosperous than ever before in its history, at a time when there were more luxury goods, at a time when there was more leisure time for many than ever before, this President had the moral insight and courage to remind us, that in the midst of this unbelievable plenty, there was incredible want and deprivation at least for many and far too many of our fellow citizens. He declared war, he declared the only kind of a war that we hope and pray to God that we will ever have to declare, he declared war upon the poverty of America. He declared war on economic injustice. And, let me tell you, my good fellow Americans, he is going to lead us to victory in that war, if we stand together as his troops and as his battalions and divisions in this war that is just and right -- the war against poverty in the United States of America.

I want to emphasize one point about it: to help those who need help does not deny the good things of life to the people that already have the good things of life. To provide some way for people to help themselves, to lift themselves doesn't mean that you take away from someone else. This is no share-the-wealth program; this is an expand-the-wealth program. This is no program of just taking from some to give to others. This is a program of helping others to help themselves so that they can give to others and give to their country of their ability, of their productivity, of their energy, of their life and of all that's in them.

I want to say that I'm pleased and proud that I can live at a time and be in the public service at a time, when my country and your country has been able to help the needy and the sick and the lame and the blind all over the world. I'm proud that I can be living at a time and be a citizen of this republic and a public official in this country when America can help people, when it can fulfill all those great moral precepts of compassion and charity, and while doing it, never in any way weaken our economy, or cause those who have the good things to have any less of the good things of life. We have learned that you can cast your bread upon the waters and it will come back a thousand fold. We have learned that you can share without losing. We have learned that the only real deficit that injures America is the deficit of the denial of equal opportunity for every American regardless of race, color or creed to fully participate in the benefits and the joys and excitement of the American way of life. We have learned that and we are going to do something about it.

Look what has been going on -- unemployment being reduced, gross national product at an all time high.

I want to get this off my chest. In 1954 or 1952, it was, I made a statement, which was entitled in an editorial, "Economic Lunacy". I said in the statement that I predicted that by 1960 America would have a \$500 billion economy. Well, I tell you one of the folks back home who was writing a few editorials in a small paper out there said "Well, we always knew Humphrey was a little off his rocker. This proves it." And, I was. We had a bigger than a \$500 billion economy. I have always been too conservative. This has been one of my real problems. But anyone who had any faith in this country and knew what our responsibilities were and knew what our responsibilities would continue to be just knew that you had to have an economy that was growing. I once asked my father after our first little child was born. I said, "Dad, how do you provide for children?" Well, he said, "I want to tell you son, if you try to wait until you can afford one, you'll never have one." And he said, "The best thing to do is start having them and then figure out how you're going to support them."

In other words, I guess I was taught that one of the most effective incentives in life is to get yourself so deeply involved in troubles and difficulties at times that there is only one way to get out of them. And that is to work your way out of them. Now the simple truth is that America has no choice in the future. There isn't any freedom of choice on this one; we don't have the choice of just taking it easy and working hard. We don't have the choice between recession and prosperity. We don't have the choice of just quitting our responsibilities of world leadership, or just going on with them. The only choice that we have is to lead and to work and to have prosperity and to continue to grow and expand. Either we do that or we're done. And I don't intend with my voice or my efforts or my work to let America be done. I intend to do everything I can, as one official in this government, to have America in the lead in every area of human endeavor and that's the way you want it, too.

All these academic arguments about whether we can do this or do that. Of course we have to do it. We have to provide jobs for young people. We are blessed in this country with plenty of space, wonderful, healthy people and our young people are having big families and are going to continue to have them. May I say that as a druggist it is very, very good for the baby talcum business and the baby oil business and everything else. People in an economy of social justice, people in an economy that is growing, people are assets not liabilities. This America of ours has no choice, but to provide the means and the wherewithal by constructive work on the part of individuals in cooperation with their government, on the part of capital and labor in cooperation with government, to see to it that jobs are available -- good jobs at good pay. That's the least that we can do. We have no choice. We have no choice but to continue to implement our programs of economic expansion because we are going to have a bigger population and we're going to have continued international responsibilities.

Let me just cite this one word of warning. For the past 25 or 30 years our main concern has been Soviet Russia. That's been the international competition. That's been the international threat. My fellow Americans, a new one is here on the doorstep. It's no longer just something to write about. It is a fact. The new concern is aggressive. The new concern consists of people, who have a culture that is thousands of years old. The new concern is a country that has never over the long period of time known defeat. The new concern is the Communist government of China.

So if you think that our burdens in the years ahead are going to be less, you're living in a fool's paradise. Our responsibilities are going to be more. Our burdens will be heavier. The only thing that is good about it is that we can fulfill those responsibilities and we can shoulder those burdens as no other people or country ever had the chance or the possibility of doing. I'm not afraid. In fact, I think we have been destined, we are destined to lead the peoples of the world who want to live in the areas of freedom, we are destined to face up to these responsibilities and burdens and if we dig in and make up our minds that we can do it, we shall do it. I'm not afraid and I don't think you are either. If we make up our minds we can do it. Isn't that the way you feel?

So we're going to move ahead and that's what we're planning.

By the way, there was a time that if you mentioned the word "planning" at a meeting in Washington they wanted to run you out of town. But we're not afraid to mention planning now. We know we have to plan.

We have to plan for better health in America. The President's health program was handed down just recently. This wasn't a one-year program. You won't find a cure for cancer in one year. You don't meet all the problems of mental retardation and mental health in one year. You don't meet the problems of physical disability in one year. And yet I saw a report only recently that showed that we were able to put back into productive, gainful employment so that they were self-sustaining citizens, paying their taxes, paying their bills, educating their children, over a half a million disabled people last year. A half a million that were on public assistance. A half a million that were feeling the terrible spiritual pain of being able to do nothing to help themselves. In physical rehabilitation the labor movement has been in the forefront, in cooperation with government and medicine and research.

We can do things. But we have to plan. We aren't going to be able to provide education for all of our young people in one year, the kind of education that we want. But I want to repeat here what I've said on every platform. I want my country and your country -- the United States of America -- at home and abroad, as the educator. Let the world know that the United States of America realizes that in education there is not only dignity but there's wealth. There is not only real meaning for equality, but there's also security. And we're going to design in this America, in these next few years, the finest, the most comprehensive program, from pre-school education to graduate education, that any country on the face of the earth ever deared dream of, much less contemplate. And we'll get it done.

How are we going to do it? Planning it, working at it. Who has the greatest stake in this? You have. Colleges, public and private, mean a great deal to you with your young people. The education act, the Higher Education Act, which your Executive Board and you supported, is a wage increase, not a fringe benefit. This is a benefit for your family. Many of you won't be able to have the experience of it, but your daughter will, your son will. If there's any one group in America that has led the fight for education, it's the labor movement. America wouldn't have public education today had it not been for some of the early battlers, including free labor in America, who fought for the elementary schools, who fought for high schools and worked for vocational schools and then for junior colleges and for higher education.

Make this your program. Never let any member of Congress go until we deliver the goods on this one. Don't tell me America can't afford education! You know we can afford it. You know it very well. In fact, I do not want to pick battles with anybody, but I saw a front-page story in the Washington Post this morning. We're selling more cigarettes than ever -- cancer or no cancer, doubts or no doubts, sickness or health -- we're selling more than ever. Now, a nation that can smoke more can also educate more. That's Humphrey's program. I won't go into those other matters which we occasionally spend our money for.

So, we're going to proceed. We're going to proceed in education. We are not going to say that we can do it this year, because that's misleading the people. We'll do some of it this year with your help. We'll do more next year. And we'll not put America in jeopardy by doing it. Because if there is ever one argument that anybody can win it's that the amount of money that you pour into education is actually an asset. It produces revenue. Not only does it produce a happy and a better people, but it produces revenue for the government. The President's going to give us his education message this week. We got the health message last week. I'm not going into the details of it. I'll just say this, that this conference meets in Washington, D.C., in the month of January, 1965, and before the first flower of Spring graces this capital we will have passed hospital and nursing home care under social security as a great achievement of this government.

Don't tell me it doesn't pay to win elections and don't tell me that the peoples' voice can't be heard even without a hearing aid. We have been fortunate that there have been people in and out of government that have not been dogmatic, that haven't said, "Oh, you can't touch it. You can't move one word." What we are seeking is not a victory for those who write the laws. We're seeking a victory for those who will be the beneficiaries of the laws. One of the problems that I noticed as Majority Whip of the United States Senate was to get anybody to give up one word. You would think that this was their beloved son or daughter. They loved those words more than they loved mother.

But when you get right down to it, what's important is the kind of a program you get and how it operates and who does it benefit. And President Lyndon Johnson is a man that gets things done. He isn't concerned whether or not the little mark you put over the T is a little longer or a little shorter. He isn't particularly concerned about whether it's a colon or a semi-colon. What he is concerned about is this: Will this great America provide a program of hospital and nursing home care and diagnostic treatment for people aged 65 and over that is worthy of the people of the United States of America? One that we can pay for, one that will work, one that will preserve dignity, one that you will like.

And I'll tell you what the answer is: We're going to do it and you're going to literally parade in the streets in jubilation, because this victory hasn't been won easily. There are people here in this audience who have been fighting for this for 20 years. The first bill I introduced in Congress was in March 1949. I guess I was a little premature, now that I think about it. And, that bill was simply this, to provide hospital and nursing home care under social security with an increase in the tax upon the employer and the employee. March 1949! Any wonder that they thought that I was a little too far out? I should have waited until '59. But I always was in a hurry. 1965 -- 16 years later -- it will be a law -- good!

I'll tell you something else we're going to do. We haven't modernized our Unemployment Compensation system. We're going to do that too. Now many of my friends here in the automobile industry, as good workers as you are and as fine as the management is and as good a contract as you were able to get, I want to tell you that you have a hard time still selling those old, old 1935 Dodges or those 1935 Fords or Chevys. We're still fooling around with a 1935 or 1936. Unemployment Compensation Act, with a little gadget over here and another one over there, and we've shined it up, took off the chrome and re-chromed it once or twice, but we never really got down to making it a law that meets modern unemployment and employment and economic needs. Your President's going to see with you that that's done.

And then when I came to Congress there was quite a discussion around here about a bill. As a matter of fact, when I came in they were discussing everything and I never missed a bit of it. Well, I don't know whether I contributed much, but I sure did get in a lot of trouble and had a lot of fun. The very first vote we had was on Civil Rights and I want to tell you I was just about as popular as you know what in a garden party when that was going on. I had been up in Philadelphia. I was just about as popular coming from Philadelphia in 1948 as Patrick Henry and some of the other boys were in 1776 with the Tories. And there were some Tories around here. There are fewer now, I am happy to say.

Well, the first vote we had (Andy you were in Congress, you were a member), we were arguing over in the Senate about Civil Rights. We didn't get very far. And then we had Taft-Hartley. And I want to tell you that there wasn't a week that went by that I wasn't on some radio or television show. I'm not saying that that's the way you ought to do it. I'm just going over what happened and when I look back over it I think maybe I needed a manager, but at least I was for you. Maybe I wasn't effective, but I was on your side. Well, we have waited a long time, but a new day has finally arrived. And you possibly noted that in the President's message on the State of the Union we're going to do a little surgery on the Taft-Hartley law...

And the one section in that law that has caused the free American labor movement, the honorable labor movement, more trouble in its organization, that has worked to prevent effective organization, the one section that has been responsible for that is Section 14(b), and the President of the United States in fulfillment of the Democratic Platform stated in the State of the Union message that he will present to the Congress recommendations for the repeal of Section 14(b). He will do it at the time that it needs to be done. He will do it when we have the ways and the means and the votes to get the job done and with your help, don't give up, just keep at it. I'll be doing my part; we'll get that job done.

But let me just say this and then I'm going to close this off. You have been very patient. You know I haven't made a speech for so long; boy, it's great to be here again, Andy. I don't suppose I'll have a chance to make another one for several weeks now. You know, Vice Presidents aren't supposed to be speaking a great deal and I frankly don't want to. But I'm here with friends today and we don't have the time to go over every detail.

We passed our Civil Rights Act. Now the job is to implement it and to implement it fairly and effectively. I imagine that I'm going to have a little something to do about that and I can just see myself catching a few blows from those who want immediate action and those who think that Humphrey is going too fast. But I'm not worried about that. I have kind of gone through about 20 years of public life and I haven't changed my basic commitments. And I don't intend to start changing them now. We're going to do what we think is right about this. What is the purpose of the Civil Rights Act -- to see how many people you can put in jail? Not on your life. To see how many cases you can get against somebody? No. To see if you can wage some kind of a polemic war on a certain section of the country? No. The purpose of the Civil Rights Act is very simple and direct. It is to see to it that to the best of our ability, with the least difficulty for all, that every person in America is guaranteed the same rights and privileges under the Constitution as any other person. There shall be no difference on the basis of race or creed or color or national origin. We intend to see to it that Americans are treated as Americans. And that doesn't mean that we are going to treat some Americans better or some Americans worse.

And we're going to also recognize that a Civil Rights law to be effective also must be a law that works in conjunction with programs to eliminate poverty, programs to train people, programs to educate people. A man that has his civil rights but has never had an education doesn't have very many rights. Or a person who has his civil rights and is doomed to unemployment doesn't have very many rights. All of these programs are tied in together and when the President said recently that he would give me something to do in the anti-poverty program and at the same time assign me to take a look at the whole Civil Rights program to see how we could better implement it, I said, "This man fully understands -- oh, thank goodness! -- not only understands, he leads in the knowledge of and in the understand of the fact that Civil Rights and economic opportunity, that Civil Rights and educational opportunity, that Civil Rights and better health, all of these are tied together".

Our job is not to see whether we can have more cases in the courts. If we need to go to court, we'll go to court. Our job is not to see that we have more people who are punished. Hubert Humphrey has never been one to believe that law enforcement was the ultimate objective of public policy. Hubert Humphrey has been one to believe that you ought to have social and political institutions in America that make it possible for people to have law observance because the law is just, because society is just, because people love their country, because they want to do better.

Surely we need law enforcement for those few who violate the law and refuse to reason with one another. Surely we need law enforcement for those who would in a very, very real sense contaminate the social structure by their obstreperous and their illegal activities.

But what we need more than anything else is to encourage people to want to lift themselves, to work together, and I'm going to do my part as the President's Vice President and as your Vice President if I am permitted, to try to help build a society in which people will observe the law because the law is just, will observe the law because the law does right by them, will observe the law because they are proud of the country in which they live and of their family and of their state and of their union or of their business. And I'm going to need your help in promoting that program of law observance.

Now most of our people live in cities. That's where you live; that's where I live. We live in cities. And at long last this government is beginning to recognize that more attention must be paid to the problems of our cities, because it is in the cities that the majority of the people live. And let me make it quite clear this doesn't mean that you pay less attention to the rural areas. It isn't either or. It just simply means that we need to take a brand new look at the relationships between federal, state and local government for the purposes of making our cities livable and to make America beautiful and to make America a place in which you can live a truly rich and rewarding life.

Now we can do it. Many of you have been in the cities in the Scandinavian countries. It isn't as if we have nothing to follow, no pattern. My dear friends, let me tell you I have been on the docks in Oslo, Norway. They are a big maritime nation, and those docks are like a public park. In fact, the city hall of Oslo, Norway, is right on the docks. They're clean, they are modern, they are up to date. America can do that too.

We do not need slums. As an old mayor, once a mayor of a city of half a million, I found out that it costs seven times as much for public services for one block of slum housing as for good housing. The only city and country that can afford slums is one that has no future or one that is so rich that it can afford to pay for inefficiency, inadequacy, filth and slums. We can eliminate slums. And we can have decent places for children and families to live. And we don't have to live on concrete and asphalt either. Before there was any concrete or asphalt the good Lord gave us grass and ground. And I just happen to be rural enough in my roots to want to take a look at a tree and a bush and a flower and some grass and some good old mother earth. Then you can put a little concrete around, where you need the roads and sidewalks.

We have space in America. Everybody doesn't have to live on the East Coast or the West Coast. There is a center part of the nation, too, you know. We need to make these cities centers of learning, centers of health, centers of art, centers of jobs. We don't need to have factories just piled one on top of another. It isn't only what a man's working conditions are that count, it's his living conditions.

As a matter of fact, you get on a plane here at Washington Airport and you'll be in Pittsburgh sooner than you can leave this hotel right now and get on out to Dulles airport. In fact, it takes you longer to go from the Pentagon to Bethesda than it does from Washington to Pittsburgh. Now, don't tell me that modern science and engineering can't perfect ways and means so that the automobile that is so much a part of our economy can become a blessing instead of just becoming a battering ram. We can fix this. But we are going to have to get to work at it and we are going to have to make it possible for this government, as President Johnson said, to pay more attention to urban affairs. And a Department of Urban Affairs and Housing is the beginning. It is no answer, it is a beginning and we are going to need your help when those votes are called up there in the Congress of the United States.

Well, my friends, I leave you now with this thought for the day: the Great Society isn't something for just a few, the Great Society is for you. The American labor movement has always been in the vanguard of promoting the Great Society. And I want the people of America to know that while the American labor movement wants the injustice of Section 14 (b) repealed, that it also wants health, it also wants education.

I want the people of America to know that the American labor movement is unselfish in terms of the national interest. Oh, sure, you're selfish in terms of a better wage, just exactly as the merchant wants a fair price for what he sells. Just as a school teacher wants a good wage or salary for his or her educational services. That's not wrong. The fact that a person is paid well and wants to be paid well; the fact that a union organizer or business agent or trade union negotiating committee looks at the statement of a company and says, "Look, you can pay a little better." That's not wrong. It is wrong when that is your only interest.

But the AFL-CIO represents citizens of the United States, not just union members. Union members are important to citizenship in the United States; a free labor movement is fundamental, basic to democracy. There isn't any democracy unless people are permitted to associate, voluntarily, to protect their own interests.

But let the word go from this nation's capital and let it be in your press and on your radio and your television programs and let the American people, and indeed, the world, understand that the American labor movement's legislative program isn't just Unemployment Compensation reform, even though that is important; it isn't just 14(b) repeal, even though that is important. Let it be known that the American labor movement stands for the medical, it stands for the hospital, the diagnostic and the nursing home care of people who are not members of the AFL-CIO. Lead the fight. Your labor leaders not only lead for labor, but lead for America. Let the world know, and the American people know, that you have always stood in the vanguard of national security. When others were doubtful, you never were. Let the record be clear that the American labor movement, the men and women of our trade unions, pay their taxes for security, for foreign aid, for Food for Peace. Let it be understood that when you speak of better housing you are not only speaking about yourselves; when you are talking about clearing the slums many of the people that live in the slums don't belong to your organizations, but you want a better America, a better city with less crime and less delinquency.

And let it be understood that when you talk about parkways and national parks and camp sites and when you talk about preserving our great national heritage of these magnificent forests and seashores and other things, you are not talking about just your own members, you are talking about a better America. You are talking about America the beautiful.

I think that this is part of my job to get this message across, because all too often I hear and read: "Oh, labor met in Washington to tell the Congress to do this and to do that." Well, let me tell you, if labor hadn't been meeting in Washington over these many years, many things that the Congress has done, the Peace Corps, the Housing and Urban Development Program, the farm program, the health programs, never would have been done.

You have been here under the right of assembly and peaceful petition. You have been here as Americans and not just trade unionists and you are here that way again. And as long as you appear in that dual role, putting your citizenship first but also proudly holding that union card and that union membership and asking for your government to take notice of your deliberations, your resolutions and of your program. As long as you do that you are making a distinct contribution; yes, indeed, an invaluable contribution to the Great Society, to American democracy. And as long as you do that, you are going to have the friendship of, the encouragement of and the support of the President of the United States, and, if it means anything to you, the man that will be along side of him as Vice President of the United States.

Thank you very much.



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