

President Ed Michaelian
V.P. Bernie Hillenbrand

REMARKS OF
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
COUNTY OFFICIALS

SAN DIEGO - JULY 12, 1965

Gov Smiale
Sen Sparkman
Sen Murphy
Sen Moss
Gov Hatfield

Cong
Van Dusen

Today I want to talk to you about the great
opportunities, the great challenges, the great potential
~~today~~ for creative local government.

This Administration is pledged to the goal of a
Great Society. We are moving forward with new, strong
programs to make all people and places in this society
full and productive partners in the American tomorrow.

We strive for a society of opportunity -- where
each man has the education, the equal start, the
open doorway toward a better life for himself and his
children.

~~Today this Administration is~~ We are launching creative new programs toward that opportunity. And this Congress is writing an historic record of legislation — legislation for health, for housing, for education, for human rights, for jobs, for self-respect.

↳ But the future of our nation lies not only with the federal government and the legislative branch. It lies in our heartland -- in individual American communities.

↳ The Great Society will be an America made up of thousands of great communities. It will be an America built where you serve.

↳ It is your communities that will have good schools or bad ones.

↳ It is your communities that will have decent homes or slums.

↳ It is your communities where young men will have jobs ~~this summer~~ or will not.

It is ⁱⁿ your communities that ^{we} will have racial harmony or racial antagonism.

It is ⁱⁿ your counties that ^{we} will ~~either~~ wage intelligent, coordinated drives on the causes of poverty -- or will ignore this social cancer. ~~the~~

My 20 years in political life -- from Mayor to Vice President -- have taught me ~~what I only vaguely understood when I was a political science teacher.~~

that the key to success of great national programs is local implementation and imaginative leadership.

My experience in public life has also taught me that it is political demagoguery to blame your problems on some other level of government. There are too many manufactured antagonisms between the local, state and federal levels -- antagonisms too often manufactured to escape responsibility at home base.

⌈ No greater ~~opportunity~~ ^{challenge} faces ~~all of~~ us today than the opportunity to strengthen the economic and social structures of our communities, ~~of our nation~~.

We are moving ahead in seizing that opportunity. We can be proud of what has been done. But, in the midst of our rich and active society, we must look to missed opportunity —

Ⓚ There is an "other America". ^{yes — and} There are about 35 million Americans in it. They have been shunted aside or lost in the backwaters. These Americans belong to families earning an average 1800 dollars a year from all sources. That is 35 dollars a week -- to feed that family, to clothe that family, to house that family, to provide education and transportation and health care for that family.

But the poverty of these ~~35 million~~ Americans is not to be measured in dollar terms alone. It must be measured in hopelessness and helplessness... in resentment and rejection... in despair and distrust... in ^a loss to our nation of valuable human resources.

~~No one knows better than you~~ ^{you know} the cost of these

lost resources. The costs of welfare are a continuing drain on your counties. The "other Americans" are, to the controller, "taxeaters and not tax payers." ~~What~~ But,

~~what~~ if these people could become productive citizens...

could become, for your counties, pluses and not minuses? - imagine the new wealth!

There are 15 million children among those 35 million ^{underprivileged} And ~~there~~ ^{Here} is the basic challenge. Will these 15 million children -- and their yet unborn sisters and brothers -- become the heads of new poor families ten or twenty

years from now? Will this generation of children
~~get permanently~~ ^{be} locked into the cycle of poverty?

Will they find truth, as others have, in Proverbs:

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city...

The destruction of the poor is their poverty."

The war on poverty is more than a welfare program.

It is not designed to make the conditions of poverty
tolerable. We seek to get the poor out of poverty and
into the mainstream of American life.

Therefore, we must get to the root causes of
poverty. We must understand the economics of poverty...
the psychology of poverty... the sociology of poverty.

We must understand why and how other groups have
escaped from poverty. We must get to the heart of
ignorance, slums, poor health, unemployability,
discrimination -- the links in poverty's vicious chain.

~~I have met recently with officials of the poverty program and reviewed with them some impressive plans for research into poverty and evaluation of existing programs.~~ We must be willing to make the necessary investments into what causes and keeps people in poverty.

↳ We make the investment to put a man on the Moon. We can also make the investment to help a man stand on his own two feet *in your + his community* ?

I could take much time now reciting to you the many statistical portraits of poverty which have been drawn. Instead, I want to tell you something about the poverty in America which the war on poverty has already revealed.

↳ We have a domestic Peace Corps as part of this war. It is called VISTA -- Volunteers in Service to America. In April of this year, a VISTA volunteer wrote to Washington saying that in the county of Eastern Kentucky in which she was working there were four small schools, each with one or two rooms. All four schools, she said, were sharing a single, tattered copy of Mother Goose. Does that sound incredible to you, as it did to me when I first heard about it? Well, it's true.

↳ But something else is true, too. In August of this year, there will be libraries installed in each of 800 schools in the 44 counties of Eastern Kentucky.

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Each library will have at least 300 books.

How is this happening?

It is happening because a group of dedicated and sensitive student volunteers in Appalachian colleges recognized the need, alerted the federal government, and agreed to spend thousands of hours sorting and arranging books.

↳ It is happening because the National Parents and Teachers Association developed and sponsored a national drive for 300 carefully selected book titles from all of its chapters across the nation.

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↳ It is happening because the ^{Railway} REA Express agreed to reduced, uniform shipping rates from any part of the country.

↳ It is happening because the Office of Economic Opportunity brought the various parties together and made some modest grants to cover some of the costs.

↳ And, of course, it is happening because the American people responded with over a million books.

And so, this fall, thousands of children in Eastern Kentucky and in other Appalachian schools will, for the first time, have an opportunity to hold a book, to look at its pictures or read its words -- or have a student volunteer read to them.

↳ A book for a poor ~~child~~ child may not seem important when the parent has been unemployed for years. But that book may well represent the beginning of escape from poverty for that child. It will help the child to read, to learn, to communicate. It will open

up new vistas. Above all, it will show that there are people who do care. Care!

a disabled child -

For too many children in America -- in the Appalachian hollows, in the Harlem slums, in the migrant labor streams, on Indian reservations -- poverty has been their inheritance and their prison. From infancy, they are conditioned to believe that there is no hope, no escape.

There does not seem to be any sense in preparing for a full role in life. And then they cannot meet opportunities that do develop. And so, in this war against poverty, we lay great stress on our children.

Each child is an adventure into a better life -- an opportunity to change the old pattern and make it new.

Head Start!

That is why Project Head Start is so exciting and

so promising. It was conceived in the minds of
those concerned with children. It is the social and
spiritual response of the American people to the task
of giving each child an equal chance in life. !

↙ In February of this year, the concept of Head Start
was developed. A simple concept: Give some special
attention to 4 and 5 year olds entering school for the
first time this fall who might have difficulty adjusting.

↙ Plans for 100,000 enrollees were developed. The
program has had to be increased to accommodate over
half a million children.

And today they are participating in over 13,000 Child
Development Centers across the land -- in more than
1500 counties. }

But even this magnificent achievement will reach only

half the children who need Head Start -- because
there are approximately one million children in poor
families who are entering school this fall for the
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What will Head Start mean? I will note one small,
practical example. The pediatricians tell us that about
75,000 of these half million children will need glasses,
In the normal course of events, perhaps 4 or 5
thousand would have realized the need or been able
to obtain the help. But now, 75,000 children will be
given a simple tool which will help them learn and
which will help them save their eyes.

And how about the hot meals to be served, and
the work with the parents, and the first visits to the
zoo, and the first exposure to books and crayons?

L Almost 3000 separate Head Start grants have been requested and granted. The great majority of all counties represented at this meeting have Head Start this summer.

L But will Head Start turn out to be a false start? *It's in your hands*

~~Above all~~ Head Start can be the beginning of a full-fledged community action program. You can build on what Head Start has begun this summer.

The leadership, the volunteers, the staff, and the community support mobilized for Head Start must now be mobilized to keep the effort going. For, it will do the Head Start child very little good if he ^{is} must return to the same housing, to the same unemployed, illiterate parent, to the same neglected school system.

yes, The war on poverty and its symptoms can be the beginning for an all-out effort to build ^{true} opportunity in America ~~this country~~ *for all.*


This process has already started.

It has started in hundreds of communities that have already been funded under the Community Action Program.

↳ It has started in Washington with the launching of important related programs to provide health, education, housing and human equality. Each of these new programs provides each of you with new tools and new resources.

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↳ In Washington, we are insisting upon co-ordination and co-operation among federal agencies. In your own counties, you can seek the same kind of co-operation.

↳ We cannot afford the luxury of bureaucracy and costly overlapping.



We need the blending, too, of public and private efforts.

Next year, Congress willing, the budget for the Economic Opportunity Act will be doubled. That Act is important.

It has already reached millions of Americans.

Let me give you a quick run-down on what's been happening in the short nine months since Congress passed ~~the Act~~ provided the funds.

Community Action -- About 700 separate grants have been made to nearly 750 cities and counties in all fifty states.

Job Corps -- Over 300,000 young men and women have already applied. The first 13,000 enrollees are now learning and working in 55 centers

across the land. We expect 40,000 by the end of the year.

✓ VISTA -- About 1200 are now on the job or in training. There will be 2,000 by end of the year working in 40 states. Over 20,000 have asked to serve.

✓ NEIGHBORHOOD Youth Corps -- 265,000 youths will be working by the end of the year -- but hundreds of thousands more will still be seeking jobs.

College Work Study -- 40,000 students from 750 colleges are working this summer.

✓ Work-Experience Program -- 88,000 unemployed parents are participating in projects in 42 states. But there are hundreds of thousands more who need this help.

└ Adult Basic Education -- 37,000 persons are receiving literacy training in 45 states.

Aid to Migrants -- 40 grants to 20 states have been made. But the need is tremendous.

└ Rural Loans -- 11,000 loans have been made to rural families and some 50 to rural cooperatives. Much more must and will be done.

└ Small Business Loans -- More than \$1.5 million has been loaned to 150 very small businesses. Small Business Development Centers have been opened in 17 cities.

└ But the Economic Opportunity Act -- important as it is -- is only the beginning of which I spoke.

└ There is no greater task before us. If we really believe in our past -- and our future -- we can dedicate

ourselves to making each man, each woman, each child a full participant in American life. I mean a life not just of prosperity and security -- but a life in which self-expression and self-fulfillment are within the reach of all.

I came to Washington 17 years ago as a freshman Senator. During that first year a scene took place in a Senate hearing room that symbolized just what we mean by the Great Society.

A woman from Tennessee, a garment worker, was testifying before seven United States Senators on behalf of raising the minimum wage to 75 cents an hour. At one point, this is what she said:

"My youngest girl, she's 9 now, goes straight to the piano when we go to a house where they

have one. She does want to play the piano so bad. I've thought that maybe I could save 50 cents or a dollar a week to buy a second-hand piano for her... but I haven't found a way to do it yet. Maybe I've been foolish to talk to you people about music for one of my children when the main question is getting enough to eat and wear, or blankets for the bed, or a chair to sit on. But down in Tennessee we love music, and factory workers don't live by bread alone any more than anyone else does."

Piano lessons for a little Tennessee girl... a book for an Eastern Kentucky child... full, productive lives for our citizens and the places where they live -- these, my friends, are what the war on poverty is all about,

what the Great Society is all about. That is what we work for.

└ For the elderly, sick and disabled -- compassion and concern.

└ For the young -- an equal start in life.

└ For all Americans -- the opportunity to lift themselves not only to wealth and productivity, but to a life of satisfaction and fulfillment.

— And now, in closing, let me speak frankly for a moment about some of the very concrete problems

I know you face in meeting this challenge.

└ Your needs are increasing. Revenue is hard to find -- despite the fact that your income taxes, sales taxes and property taxes have increased rapidly in the past few years, while federal taxes have actually gone down. Your major source of revenue --

the property tax -- has all but reached the saturation point.

It sometimes seems that things are closing in on you.

Let me say this: Contrary to what some people would have you believe, the federal government is not bent on stifling local government. I could, in fact, give you a great number of statistics to show that local government has grown more than any level of government in recent years.

The question today is not whether the federal government is too big, but how it can best aid growing state and local government.

Our federal system is not based on hostility and competition, but upon cooperation and common goals.

If we have learned nothing else in these past years, it is that we are interdependent in this country. We share our problems. We share our successes.

Good fences do not make good neighbors when those fences are built between the levels of government.

Not long ago you submitted a White Paper asking for specific steps of assistance by the federal government. I would like to respond to those requests.

First, you asked that there be a point of contact at the White House to act in liaison with you, just as I work in liaison with the nation's mayors.

As I advised your board of directors and officers in March, it is the President's intention that I work with all local government. So I am your man.

Second, you asked that the Commission on Intergovernmental Relations begin a study into financing the needs of local government.

I favor such a study -- it is needed.

It will be done!

Third, you asked that your voices be heard on governmental advisory boards dealing with grant-in-aid programs.

Your voice is heard. I ~~believe that perhaps in~~

more instances than you realize -- you are already being consulted. But I think here, too, you can look for improvement.

I know that you are concerned that you should be heard when programs and policies are formulated which affect your counties. This is as it should be. For the great national undertakings of today will make

themselves felt in every part of this one nation.

∠ We have the opportunity today, as never before,
to move ahead... to create a better America. There is
a broad national consensus that we should dedicate
ourselves to the work to be done.

∠ Our economy is prosperous and expanding. We look forward
to a trillion-dollar economy in ten years' time.

∠ We have the means, we have the energy, we have the
will, we have the leadership to truly achieve a Great
Society.

∠ I said earlier that the building of a Great Society
will depend on the building of great communities.

And these communities, in turn, must be built
by great people:

---people of tolerance, compassion and understanding.

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---people of education and good health.

---people seeking and using opportunity.

---people of hope and confidence.

---people who have faith in themselves, their country
and the future.

These are the American people. United we join in
the task of fulfilling our dream still unfulfilled.

President Johnson has made his commitment
to this task. I join him in that commitment. We ask
your help.

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REMARKS OF VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
BEFORE COUNTY OFFICIALS, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA,
JULY 12, 1965

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This Administration is pledged to the goal of a Great Society. We are moving forward with new, strong programs to make all people and places in this society full and productive partners in the American tomorrow.

We strive for a society of opportunity -- where each man has the education, the equal start, the open doorway toward a better life for himself and his children.

Today the Administration is launching creative new programs toward that opportunity. And this Congress is writing an historic record of legislation -- legislation for health, for housing, for education, for human rights, for jobs, for self-respect.

But the future of our nation lies not only with the federal government and the legislative branch. It lies in our heartland -- in individual American communities.

The Great Society will be an America made up of thousands of great communities. It will be an America built where you serve.

It is your communities that will have good schools or bad ones.

It is your communities that will have decent homes or slums.

It is your communities where young men will have jobs this summer or will not.

It is your communities that will have racial harmony or racial antagonism.

It is your counties that will either wage intelligent, coordinated drives on the causes of poverty -- or will ignore this social cancer.

My 20 years in political life -- from Mayor to Vice President -- have taught me what I only vaguely understood when I was a political science teacher: that the key to success of great national programs is local implementation and imaginative leadership.

My experience in public life has also taught me that it is political demagoguery to blame your problems on some other level of government. There are too many manufactured antagonisms between the local, state and federal levels -- antagonisms too often manufactured to escape responsibility at home base.

No greater opportunity faces all of us today than the opportunity to strengthen the economic and social structures of our communities, of our nation.

We are moving ahead in seizing that opportunity. We can be proud of what has been done. But, in the midst of our rich and active society, we must look to missed opportunity.

There is an "other America". There are about 35 million Americans in it. They have been shunted aside or lost in the backwaters. These Americans belong to families earning an average of 1,800 dollars a year from all sources. That is 35 dollars a week -- to feed that family, to clothe that family, to house that family, to provide education and transportation and health care for that family.

But the poverty of these 35 million Americans is not to be measured in dollar terms alone. It must be measured in hopelessness and helplessness ... in resentment and rejection ... in despair and distrust... in loss to our nation of valuable human resources.

No one knows better than you the cost of these lost resources. The cost of welfare are a continuing drain on your counties. The "other Americans" are, to the controller, taxeaters and not taxpayers. What if these people could become productive citizens... could become, for your counties, pluses and not minuses?

There are 15 million children among those 35 million. And there is the basic challenge. Will these 15 million children -- and their yet unborn sisters and brothers -- become the heads of new poor families ten or twenty years from now? Will this generation of children get permanently locked into the cycle of poverty? Will they find truth, as others have, in Proverbs:

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city ...

The destruction of the poor is their poverty."

The war on poverty is more than a welfare program. It is not designed to make the conditions of poverty tolerable. We seek to get the poor out of poverty and into the mainstream of American life.

Therefore, we must get to the root causes of poverty. We must understand the economics of poverty ... the psychology of poverty ... the sociology of poverty. We must understand why and how other groups have escaped from poverty. We must get to the heart of ignorance, slums, poor health, unemployability discrimination -- the links in poverty's vicious cycle.

I have met recently with officials of the poverty program and reviewed with them some impressive plans for research into poverty and evaluation of existing programs. We must be willing to make the necessary investments into what causes and keeps people in poverty.

We make the investment to put a man on the Moon. We can also make the investment to help a man stand on his own two feet.

I could take much time now reciting to you the many statistical portraits of poverty which have been drawn. Instead, I want to tell you something about the poverty in America which the war on poverty has already revealed.

We have a domestic Peace Corps as part of this war. It is called VISTA -- Volunteers in Service to America. In April of this year, a VISTA volunteer wrote to Washington saying that in the county of Eastern Kentucky in which she was working there were four small schools, each with one or two rooms. All four schools, she said, were sharing a single, tattered copy of Mother Goose. Does that sound incredible to you, as it did to me when I first heard about it? Well, it's true.

But something else is true, too. In August of this year, there will be libraries installed in each of 800 schools in the 44 counties of Eastern Kentucky. Each library will have at least 300 books.

How is this happening?

It is happening because a group of dedicated and sensitive student volunteers in Appalachian colleges recognized the need, alerted the federal government, and agreed to spend thousands of hours sorting and arranging books.

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A book for a poor Kentucky child may not seem important when the parent has been unemployed for years. But that book may well represent the beginning of escape from poverty for that child. It will help the child to read, to learn, to communicate. It will open up new vistas. Above all, it will show that there are people who do care.

For too many children in America -- in the Appalachian hollows, in the Harlem slums, in the migrant labor streams, on Indian reservations -- poverty has been their inheritance and their prison. From infancy, they are conditioned to believe that there is no hope, no escape. There does not seem to be any sense in preparing for a full role in life. And then they cannot meet opportunities that do develop. And so, in this war against poverty, we lay great stress on our children.

Each child is an adventure into a better life -- an opportunity to change the old pattern and make it new.

That is why Project Head Start is so exciting and so promising. It was conceived in the minds of those concerned with children. It is the social and spiritual response of the American people to the task of giving each child an equal chance in life.

In February of this year, the concept of Head Start was developed. A simple concept: Give some special attention to 4 and 5 year olds entering school for the first time this fall who might have difficulty adjusting.

Plans for 100,000 enrollees were developed. The program has had to be increased to accommodate over half a million children.

And today they are participating in over 13,000 Child Development Centers across the land -- in more than 1,500 counties.

But even this magnificent achievement will reach only half the children who need Head Start -- because there are approximately one million children in poor families who are entering school this fall for the first time.

What will Head Start mean? I will note one small, practical example. The pediatricians tell us that about 75,000 of these half million children will need glasses. In the normal course of events, perhaps 4 or 5 thousand would have realized the need or been able to obtain the help. But now, 75,000 children will be given a simple tool which will help them learn and which will help them save their eyes.

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But will Head Start turn out to be a false start?

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The leadership, the volunteers, the staff, and the community support mobilized for Head Start must now be mobilized to keep the effort going. For, it will do the Head Start child very little good if he must return to the same housing, to the same unemployed, illiterate parent, to the same neglected school system.

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Our economy is prosperous and expanding. We look forward to a trillion-dollar economy in ten years' time.

We have the means, we have the energy, we have the will, we have the leadership to truly achieve a Great Society.

I said earlier that the building of a Great Society will depend on the building of great communities.

And these communities, in turn, must be built by great people:

- people of tolerance, compassion and understanding.
- people of education and good health.
- people seeking and using opportunity.
- people of hope and confidence.
- people who have faith in themselves, their country and the future.

These are the American people. United we join in the task of fulfilling our dream still unfulfilled.

President Johnson has made his commitment to this task. I join him in that commitment. We ask your help.



Minnesota Historical Society

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