

FILMED REMARKS  
FOR PAN-PACIFIC CONFERENCE  
ON URBAN GROWTH

HUBERT H. HUMPHREY  
Vice President of the United States

Honolulu, Hawaii

May 1967





Ladies and gentlemen, first let me pay tribute to my good friend, Governor Burns, for his foresight and deep sense of public service exemplified by his calling and working on this very significant conference. From the beginning, I have followed the development of your program with great interest, and was so impressed with the preparations made by Governor Burns, HUD Secretary Weaver, and AID Administrator Gaud, that on my recent European trip I recommended a similar conference for those nations with the United States. I regret most sincerely that I cannot be with you today. It is always a special joy to come to the state of Hawaii, and particularly to Honolulu, but this pleasure will be denied me because of official duties in Washington.

I am particularly interested in the conference since I traveled in many of the countries represented just a little over a year ago. These travels left me deeply impressed. The Asian sense of beauty is so unique that I became one of a long line of Westerners who left the Orient filled with wonder and awe. Of course, architecture in the United States has already been influenced by the East. One of our greatest architects, Frank Lloyd Wright, visited the Orient early in his career, and in later life admitted that much of his work was influenced by ideas and knowledge gained in the Far East.

For centuries we have known greatness and beauty in many of our cities the world over. Why is it, then, as we move into the last third of the 20th Century, we hear the cry to solve what is called "the urban problem"? We hear much about urban ugliness. Is it because we are faced with problems that are significantly different from those of the past? Indeed, the rate of population increase in the world does present a new problem, but really only in magnitude. We know that the world population will double between now and the first decade of the 21st Century.

One student of urban growth has said that "The world needs the equivalent of one new city every seven hours, and of a kind which brings new dignity." But even a challenge such as this

presents us with the same problems that we already face today, only once again in greater magnitude. For example:

- how to rid the cities of slums;
- how to eliminate unpaved streets, and to provide adequate drainage and sanitation facilities;
- how to plan for and achieve orderly growth.

However, one difference from the past is that we are becoming increasingly aware of the scope of our urban problems, and we have taken the first positive steps to find solutions. We have begun to untangle the traffic that clogs our city streets--and that, by the way, is a problem the world over; to push back the smog that blocks out the sun; to clean up our lakes and streams; to provide better educational opportunities for our children; to improve health facilities; to retrain and to provide jobs for those who need them; and to build adequate housing for everyone.

We all want our cities to be clean, pleasant, and efficient, and they ought to be. Cities ought to be mankind's best achievement, combining his culture, his science, his technology, and his sense of material and spiritual values. But just as important, we want a proper spiritual and cultural environment that fosters a free society and the greatest possible development of the individual.

Now this is a distant and complex goal, and we know we can move forward only one step at a time. But that first step is very important, and it is that first step to which we need to dedicate our energies. We have found no panaceas, no instant answers. Each success has come only after much hard work and planning. Failures have not been unknown and false steps have been frequent, but we are making progress and we have learned a great deal from our mistakes and from our experiences.

Perhaps, in the last analysis, it is this that gave birth to the Honolulu Conference: the recognition that the road to success is a terribly expensive one in time, in money, and in energy, and because it is such a difficult and expensive one, no country can afford to travel it alone. It is easy to see that unless countries share their experiences with each other, every step must be a trial step, every experiment must be a tentative one, and the costs will obviously be much greater.

It is readily apparent, of course, that the problems we encounter in New York, Chicago, or Honolulu are not identical with those confronted in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, or New Delhi; the problems of Karachi and Lahore are not exactly the same, nor are those of Tokyo and Kyoto. Nonetheless, there are similarities in the problems present in all of these cities. It is widely recognized that there are few, if any, urban growth problems unique to a single country or city, and therefore it is incumbent upon each of us to encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences with others who share these problems.

When Governor Burns first envisaged this conference nearly a year ago, and approached the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Agency for International Development to act as co-sponsors, it was because he foresaw the advantages to be gained from just such an exchange of ideas and experiences. In other words, we can learn so much from each other if we will but visit and talk.

A conference was planned which would draw together technical experts and responsible government officials identified with Asian problems of urban and regional growth. The objectives of the conference are: to identify the problems of urban growth common to the areas represented, and to encourage a more comprehensive approach to finding a solution for those problems; to demonstrate how available domestic resources may be effectively mobilized to attack urban growth problems, and to examine how resources currently being used can be used more effectively; to promote the adoption throughout the Asian area of appropriate planning and institutional techniques; to emphasize the need for immediate action to meet the growing crisis; and to seek means for future cooperative actions in the Pacific and Asian area in solving urban problems.

These kinds of objectives, it would seem, are typical of the objectives of many conferences, perhaps too far reaching, perhaps too broad in their scope. Yet these objectives present a new and unique challenge, because for the first time in history it is becoming both technically and economically feasible to provide adequate housing and all of the other things we associate with great cities. And now that these solutions are evident, people are demanding that we political leaders put them to use. We should ask ourselves

whether we have the will to accept change. There are new goals in sight, yet it is only through relentless pursuit that they will be achieved.

Let me say also that the problem is broader than building and rebuilding cities. It centers on people and their needs. We must provide the food to feed the people in our cities; we must have adequate medical facilities to assure their good health; there must be educational systems to provide them with skills, abilities, and motivations. In addition, we must be concerned with the development of raw materials needed to build great cities. These are just some of the concerns that are ours.

In closing let me again say I am truly sorry I cannot be with you. What a great, exciting experience it would be to share in your conference! I am pleased that this distinguished body of persons has been assembled to discuss this critical area of our collective domestic concerns. We shall await your recommendations, your findings, and your proposals. It is encouraging that we can work together for better urban conditions, and I can assure each and every one of you that the United States will give you the fullest cooperation and assistance possible. I wish you well in your endeavors.



Ladies and Gentlemen, first let me pay tribute to my good friend,  
Governor Burns, for his foresight and deep sense of public service  
exemplified by his calling and working on this very significant conference.  
From the beginning I have followed the development of your program with  
great interest and was so impressed with the preparations made by  
Governor Burns, Secretary Weaver, and Administrator Bill <sup>Gaud</sup>~~(Goude)~~  
that on my recent European trip I recommended a similar conference  
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sincerely that I cannot be with you today as I had originally planned.  
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only in magnitude. We know that the world population will double between  
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Only once again in greater magnitude. For example, how do rid the cities  
of slums, how to eliminate unpaved streets and <sup>to</sup> provide adequate drainage

and sanitation facilities. How to plan for and achieve <sup>orderly</sup> ~~elderly~~ growth. However one difference from the past is that we are becoming increasingly aware of the scope of our urban problems, and we have taken the first positive steps to find solutions. We have begun to untangle the traffic<sup>f</sup> that clogs our city streets and that by the way is the world over. ~~The-~~ To push back the smog that blots out the sun. To clean up our lakes and streams and to provide better educational opportunities for our children. To improve health facilities, to retrain and provide jobs for those who need them and to build adequate housing for everyone. You see we all want our cities to be clean, pleasant and efficient and they ought to be. The cities <sup>ought</sup> ~~are~~ to be mankind's best achievement combining his culture, his science, and his technology, his sense of material values as well as spiritual values, but just as important we want a proper spiritual and cultural environment that fosters a free society and ~~among~~ the greatest possible development of the individual. / <sup>Now</sup> This is a ~~distinctive example~~

distant and complex goal I know and we know we can move forward only one step at a time, but might I add that that first step is a very important one and it is to that first step that we need to dedicate our energies. We found no panacias, no instant answers and each success has come only after much hard work and planning. Failures have not been unknown and false steps, <sup>have,</sup> yes, they have been frequent. But we are making progress and we have learned a great deal from our own mistakes, yes from our own experiences. Perhaps in the last analysis it is this that gave birth to the Honolulu Conference. The recognition that the road to success is an expensive one, very expensive in time <sup>money</sup> and in energy, and because it is such a difficult one and so expensive that no country can afford to travel it alone. It is easy to see that unless countries share <sup>their</sup> experiences with each other every step must be a trial step, every ~~experiment~~ experiment must be a tentative one, and the cost obviously will be much greater. It is readily apparent of course that the problems we ~~encounter~~ encounter in New York or Chicago or Honolulu

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effectively. And then to promote the adoption <sup>through</sup> to the Asian area of ~~a~~  
appropriate planning and institutional techniques to emphasize the need  
for immediate action, and I underscore the need for immediate action, to  
meet the growing crisis and to seek means for future cooperative actions  
in the Pacific and Asian area in solving urban problems. Now that is  
a big order but those are the goals and objectives that we have. These  
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in their scope. Yet these objectives present a new and unique challenge  
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can assure each and every one of you that the United States will give the fullest cooperation and assistance possible. I wish you well in your endeavors. We look forward to your report. Thank you.



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