

FOR RELEASE MAY 22, 1967  
MONDAY AM'S

REMARKS OF VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE  
DALLAS, TEXAS  
MAY 21, 1967

You meet to examine facts and debate the issues involved in humanizing an environment that, in all too many respects, seems increasingly depersonalized.

I know that many believe this to be an impossible objective.

But if we are to be true to our belief in human dignity and in social progress, I believe we must challenge the problems of our environment on the basis that they can be solved.

And if we, in this rich and technologically-advanced nation, cannot overcome the problems of our society, how in the world can we expect other nations to overcome theirs?

If we fail, what hope may others have?

Gunnar Myrdal put it very well not long ago:

"In the long run it detracts from the position of America as leaders of the Western world if, in spite of its wealth, it leaves its cities blighted by horrible slums...if it lags behind other countries in Social Security for its old people, its invalids, its widows and its children...and if generally it accepts so much poverty for a large part of the nation. None has so little license, needs all its virtues so much as the leader. And America for its own security cannot retreat from leadership."

What it comes down to is this: In this age when man is conquering outer space, we must find the ways for man to control his social space right here on earth.

Social space is the space man uses, as a unique personality, to seek his purposes and hopes in a social order.

We know the inner-life and the social life of man are both individual and indivisible.

We know that man's environment today is at once greatly expanded and sharply contracted.

It is expanded because man has access to the world through rapid transportation, communication and increased knowledge. It is contracted through the concentration of population, the confusions and speed of change, the swiftness of communication, and the growth of fear and distrust among people -- particularly those people crowded together in our urban ghettos.

The convergence of these forces leaves many of our citizens feeling powerless, hopeless and futile. They have become isolated from people, purpose and significance.

Let there be no doubts about public policy in meeting these converging forces.

We have over the years found ways to enrich human life. And we shall continue to seek new ways. W

We seek new commitments to our deepest national conviction--our belief in the equality of man and equal opportunity.

We seek to inter-relate laws with the intricate interweaving of social problems.

We seek to increase the supply of technical and professional personnel--to help bring the right people, with the right skills, to the right places--to challenge these problems.

We seek to add to our knowledge of social problem -- solving through research and development.

We seek to apply modern technology to the solution of human problems, in full recognition, however, that people do not--and should not--lend themselves to automation.

We seek through legislation to engage the states, their political subdivisions, voluntary agencies and private resources in cooperative arrangements to meet needs that cut across old jurisdictions.

You know first hand about our public efforts. Because they have paralleled your own.

We have shared together the achievements, the disappointments, and the stresses of national struggles for opportunity and social progress.

And we have, thankfully, seen some of those struggles won--together.

Up until now, because there has been so much to be done, we have by necessity had to concentrate on the quantitative-- and with this has come the habit of too often thinking of "the people" in the collective sense.

Now, as we have broken many of the old barriers, we are able finally to concentrate more fully on "the person" in the individual sense.

We know from cumulative knowledge and experience that man's needs are not limited to physical and economic aspects of living.

There is an old truth: Man does not live by bread alone.

His life has meaning in his social relationships.

His life has meaning to the extent he is respected by others...to the extent he is in command of his own destiny...to the extent his environment nourishes his aesthetic senses and his feelings of well-being..to the extent his environment accords him the dignity of choice...to the extent to which his community needs his individual and unique contribution to achieve its goals and plans.

This is not a new list of individual human needs. What is new is our ability to do more to satisfy it.

Where to put first priority?

I suggest we look to youth.

Half the people of the United States are now under 30 years of age. The proportion is increasing.

Young people have known only this rapidly-changing technological scene. They see it as natural.

And each young person is in a sense a social experiment-- a chance to break the old pattern.

Youth is a time of tremendous energy.

This energy can be used for personal and social development.

Or it can go unharnessed and lost, or be used in action destructive to the person and society.

Young people need to test their aptitudes and interests against reality.

They need to be a part of problem-solving that is significant to themselves and others.

In response to the particular needs of young people today, President Johnson recently established the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, which I am privileged to chair. In setting the goals for the Council he stated:

"We must meet the needs of youth so that the formative years will equip them for a productive role in society and prepare them for citizenship."

I want to enlist your help. I ask that we engage-- and I mean engage in the real sense of that word-- youth in the work of citizenship and most specifically in building a better qualitative as well as quantitative America.

We can start this summer.

We can make sure each young person is in good health.

We can develop opportunities for our young people to serve others, to act on urgent social problems..to go where the going is tough.

Our young people have proved they can serve effectively as aides in hospitals. They can bring technical assistance to Community Action Programs. They can organize neighborhood playstreets and day camps. They can provide tutoring and story hours in slum areas. They can help out with convoying children to clinics or chaperoning trips and excursions.

Members of the 11 national voluntary youth agencies are today busy and effectively conserving and beautifying this landscape "from sea to shining sea."

Some are paid; others volunteer their time.

Experience with citizen action should not be denied to any youth. But it is.

Nor should young people be denied this chance to help others. But they too often are.

Young people also should have the chance for summer adventure -- the chance to test themselves in camps, in the arts, in laboratories, in trips, in drama and music. This cannot be reserved for the few; it must be an opportunity for all.

I ask that we provide diversity for learning -- learning from experience in our city streets . . . learning from travel . . . learning from partnerships of adults and youth in which they work together on a shared problem.

I ask that we find the means to permit experience with economic independence for young people from low-income families when they reach 14 years of age.

We have a start with Work-Study, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and other programs of financial aid to students. But, as you and I know, we do not yet fulfill our promise of equal opportunity for all.

I ask that we further notice the hazards of chance for far too many of our youth.

We cannot delay in making equal the life chance for our Negro youth, our Puerto Rican youth, our Mexican-American youth, and our Indian youth . . . for the youth of low-income rural and urban families . . . and for the girls of low and middle-income families who have been neglected in our social thinking.

I ask that we commit ourselves now to year-round programs:

--Year-round programs in which all youth may have ready access to health, education, recreation, work and community responsibility.

--Year-round programs in which they may have the choice of alternatives in moving toward their goals.

--Year-round programs in which schools, private enterprise, public and voluntary agencies arrange their resources for the development of competent young citizens and workers.

--Year-round programs that will equip youth to be well educated, compassionate, competent citizens -- able to assume individual choice and responsibility -- in this inter-dependent world.

Young people are citizens today -- now. They can best be prepared for the responsibilities of citizenship by doing. It fits our time and theirs.

All over this country our new programs for youth are getting underway. At the state level, and at the city level, Youth Councils are being organized to work with our new federal Youth Council.

I know that in your state and community today new programs are being formulated and organized. Many of you have already been a part of this work. If you have not been, I hope you will be.

When you return to your home communities, I hope you will make it your business to ask these questions of your elected and appointed officials, and community leaders:

What are we doing now to tie-in to the new national youth programs?

What is being done in our city to provide summer jobs to young people who need them?

What programs are planned to encourage our young people to return to school next fall, so they will not become dropouts and future social problems?

How are our young people being brought into the everyday work of building a better and more just community?

If you can't get the right answers, I hope you will write to the Vice President, Washington, D. C. and I'll help.

I want each of you to be an extra set of eyes, ears and hands for your Vice President this summer.

I'm going to deputize you now to help get this summer job done.

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What do you personally see happening?

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What should we plan on for summer 1968?

Please help us . . . help those this summer that so desperately need a summer of happiness and opportunity.

I expect to hear from each of you at least once and hopefully several times this summer.

I believe that this is the kind of action which, in the long run, will do far more to humanize and personalize our nation than any program of physical urban renewal or slum clearance -- because this is the kind of action dealing with renewal of people, and the clearing away not of old buildings, but of old barriers and prejudices.

I think this is a place we can indeed humanize our environment, and where we can move forward in building a society where the full promise of our society -- the promise described a generation ago by the author Thomas Wolfe -- may be fulfilled:

"To every man his chance, to every man, regardless of his birth, his shining, golden opportunity. To every man the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever things his manhood and his vision can combine to make him. This . . . is the promise of America."

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REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE

94th Annual Forum!

DALLAS, TEXAS

Whitney Young

MAY 21, 1967

Mayor Johnson

Frank Bursell  
Earle Cobell

~ San Francisco  
~ Joe Hoffer

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↳ I know that <sup>some</sup> ~~many~~ believe this to be an impossible objective.

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ⓧ Auditorium

Program Committee  
Award " "

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*The Great Social Scientist*

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## Mobilizing Resources

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↳ We can start this summer. - and here's how!

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WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR., president  
JOE R. HOFFER, executive secretary  
SARA LEE BERKMAN, asst. exec. secy.

[Transcript, Edited Version]  
national conference on social welfare  
*a national forum for social welfare since 1874*

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PLEASE REPLY TO — COLUMBUS OFFICE

May 25, 1967

Mr. Martin McNamara  
Office of the Vice President  
Executive Office Building  
17th & Pennsylvania Aves.  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. McNamara:

We are enclosing a copy of the tape and transcript of the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey's speech given Sunday night, May 21 in Dallas Texas as you requested.

The National Conference on Social Welfare was very honored to have the Vice President give this Address to the Opening General Session of our 94th Annual Forum.

Sincerely yours,

Joe R. Hoffer  
Executive Secretary

jrh:mb

WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. President New York City	MRS. DOROTHY B. DALY Secretary Washington	FRANKIE V. ADAMS Atlanta	HOWARD G. BROWN Milwaukee	MRS. NAOMI T. GRAY New York City	CHARLES E. ODELL Washington	HELEN E. WOODS Baltimore
C. VIRGIL MARTIN First Vice President Chicago	HENRY L. ZUCKER Treasurer Cleveland	FLORENCE AITCHISON Kansas City, Mo.	EUGENE H. FREEDHEIM Cleveland	HAROLD A. HAGEN Washington	RUTH M. PAULEY Boston	C. F. McNEIL Chairman, Public Relations & Development Committee New York City
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MILTON CHERNIN Third Vice President Berkeley, California	WAYNE VASEY President-Elect St. Louis	PHILIP BERNSTEIN New York City	MITCHELL I. GINSBERG New York City	GEN. JOHN F. McMAHON New York City	FRANKLIN W. WALLIN Jenison, Michigan	KENNETH KINDELSPERGER Louisville, Ky.
	EILEEN BLACKKEY Los Angeles		SAM S. GRAIS St. Paul, Minn.	MILDRED I. MURPHY Oklahoma City	ROBERT C. WEAVER Washington	

ADDRESS BY  
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY  
before the  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WELFARE  
Sunday, May 21, 1967

HUMANIZING THE CITY FOR YOUTH

Thank you for inviting me to attend this meeting of the National Conference on Social Welfare. I see it is your 49th Annual Forum. You have been at it a long time, and I doubt if I can tell you anything new. But I do want you to know that I am delighted to be with you here today and that I consider it a rare privilege and a high honor, not only to receive your citation but to have it presented by a man that I consider to be one of the truly great Americans, one of the finest leaders that America has, Whitney Young, Jr. He is a dear personal friend of long standing, and a tower of strength for all that is good in this country.

I have come here to talk to you about matters that are very close to your heart--about humanizing an environment that seems increasingly impersonal. In our time things are moving so rapidly and urbanization has developed so quickly that a degree of impersonalization has beset our society. There are those who say that it would be impossible to bring back the human and personal touch. But I say that if we are true to our belief in social progress, then we have an obligation to challenge the problems of our environment on the basis that they can be solved. If we, in this rich nation--advanced in education, science and technology--cannot overcome the problems of our society, how in the world can

we expect other countries to overcome their problems? Just ponder that for a while. Remember that we produced 44 percent of everything produced in the world last year. The gross national produce of this nation is larger than the gross national products of all of western Europe, Japan and Canada combined. The gross national product of this country is ten times that of China. We have an incredibly rich country with a vast storehouse of physical and human resources. So if we are unable to meet the problems that beset our society, we can't expect very much of Asia or Latin America or Africa.

If America is to represent hope for people, then we must demonstrate that this system of ours knows how to personalize society--how to humanize it and how to give a real meaning to human dignity--how to preserve self-identity in a highly complex, urbanized, industrialized and technically advanced society. That is our task.

Gunnar Myrdal, the great sociologist, once said about our country, "In the long run it detracts from the position of America as leader of the western world if, in spite of its wealth, it leaves its cities blighted by horrible slums, if it lags behind other countries in social security for its old people, its invalids, its widows and its children, and if, generally, it accepts so much poverty for a large part of the nation. None has so little licence--needs all its virtues so much--as a leader. And America for its own security cannot retreat from leadership."

What he was saying is that leadership is not a privilege, it is a burden; leadership does not give you luxury, it imposes responsibility. He is saying that if you are a leader, and America must be a leader for its own security, then we must make sure that in the pattern of our social order social justice is the prevailing stripe. In this age when man is conquering outer space, we must find a way for man to control his social space right here on earth. If this nation can afford to make all the investments that are required to put a man on the moon, then this same rich nation can afford to make the necessary investments to help put a man on his feet right here on earth.

Now let me define social space. Social space is the space man uses to seek his purposes and hopes in a social order. We know the inner life and the social life of man are both individual and indivisible. We know that man's environment today is at once greatly expanded and at the same time sharply contracted. It is expanded because man has access to his world as never before through rapid transportation, communication and increased knowledge. It is contracted by the concentration of population, the speed of change and, indeed, by the speed of communication and the growth of fear and distrust among people, particularly those people who are crowded together in our urban centers. We have made a fantastic change in this country in the last 25 years, and it is no wonder that there are some social disturbances.

Compare what is happening in America today with the weather system. I fly often, all over this vast land, and every time I take a trip in a plane I check the weather. I know that when there is a high and a low and the chart shows a front, we will be going through turbulence. Well, ladies and gentlemen, we are going through a change of social systems. We are going out of one system in which there was first and second class citizenship for Americans, and we are coming into a new system in which everyone is to be a participant. The high and low systems are in conflict, and until the fresh winds of change have covered this entire social structure, there will be turbulence. Until the air is cleared there will be troubles, but I think we have built a Ship of State that can weather it, and I trust that we have a pilot and crew to guide us through this turbulence.

What we are seeing now in our cities is the impact of change. And the convergence of forces bringing change leaves many people feeling powerless, hopeless, futile, lost and not needed. They become isolated from people and from purpose. This is a problem that you face in your work. But let there be no doubts about public policy in meeting these converging forces. Over the years we have found ways to enrich human life, and we are committed to seeking new and better ways. We seek renewed commitment to our deepest national conviction, our belief in the equality of man and his equal access to opportunity. We seek to increase the supply of technicolored professional personnel, to help bring the right people with the right skills to the right places at the right time to challenge these problems. We seek to add to our knowledge of

social problem-solving through research and development, and to apply modern technology and the systems approach to human problems, just as we do to the complex problems of aeronautic space engineering. We seek through legislation to engage the states and their political subdivisions, voluntary agencies and private resources, in cooperative arrangements to meet needs that cut across old jurisdictions. This is a way of saying that we are seeking to upgrade the quality of government, to modernize the techniques of social service, and to recognize that all of these problems that face us are so big, so complex and so challenging that no single level of government and no single agency is capable of handling them alone. In other words, partnership is the theme. Cooperation in mobilizing resources to face the problems of urban life is essential. We must focus attention on the problems that need to be solved, and bring to bear on them the talent and resources of all the agencies and instrumentalities that are represented here in this auditorium tonight. This will mean that people have to give up old habits. Old jurisdictions that no longer relate to human need must be cancelled out or at least revised.

You are all well aware of the tremendous efforts that have been made in the public sector in the field of human welfare, because they have paralleled your own efforts. We have shared together through the years the achievements and the disappointments of national struggles for opportunity and social progress. All of us have had wounds inflicted upon us by carping critics for what they

considered to be our failures or inadequacies, and yet you and I know that there is no greater joy in life than the realization that you have helped somebody find himself and become a participant in society. That is the reward of public service.

We have seen some of these struggles won, and we won them together. Every piece of social legislation that has been passed, at Federal, State or local level has been the result of our working together. In fact, right now, the Congress of the United States needs your guidance and your expressed interest. Important programs passed by the 89th Congress can literally be starved to death through the appropriations process by the 90th Congress.

America is rich enough, my dear friends, to fulfill its commitments abroad to other people, and to fulfill its commitments at home to its own people. In the past, because there has been so much to do, we have taken a quantitative approach, too often speaking of people in a collective and impersonal sense. Now I think that we are coming into a time when we will be able to concentrate more fully on the individual. We are not a mass, we are a mosaic of individual differences. And that is the miracle of creation, the beauty of God's work, and the mystery of nature. The whole purpose of democratic society is to permit difference to live and grow and be enriched. Man's life has meaning to the extent that his environment affords him the dignity of choice, and to the extent to which his community needs his unique contribution.

Those of us who are engaged in social welfare work are not just relieving the pain of poverty, but also are releasing the uniqueness of personality. The War on Poverty is not designed to make poverty more palatable; its purpose is to find the cure. That is why it takes so long. That is why it is going to require experimentation, and that is why it is going to be under attack. Because the old approaches didn't work we have to try something different. We are having to work with individuals, not merely to relieve the poverty of the purse which can be done by a hand-out, but to relieve the poverty of the spirit--the poverty of being unwanted, of finding no place, of having no identity and no relationship to the community. This terrible poverty finally ends up with bitterness, hatred and fear.

It takes no particular professional competence to hand out relief checks, in fact, we can do it with machines. The purpose of a social worker is to find the answer to another man's need. While this is no more new to you than is the long list of human needs, what is new is our ability today to do much more to satisfy those needs.

For a first priority, I suggest that we look at youth. Half the people in our great country are under the age of thirty, and the proportion is increasing. These young people have never known depression and virtually all have known only this rapidly changing technological scene. In a sense, each young person feels he is a social experiment unto himself. He represents a chance to break the old pattern. His tremendous energy can be used for

personal and social development or, as we have long known, it can go unharnessed and be lost or turned to destruction. Young people are always testing. They are testing you and society, the establishment, and the norms of the day.

In response to the needs of the young, we are making a concerted effort. The government is interested. But let me make it clear that the government has a supplementary role, not a dominant role. The Federal government should help those who work closely with the people and provide resources with which they can do the jobs at the local level. President Johnson recently established the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, and I am privileged to be its Chairman. Of all the assignments the President has given me, none has pleased me more than this for many reasons. For one thing, I like young people. Also, we are doing a lot of things at the governmental level that I think we can do better. And finally, I think we can do some experimenting that may result ultimately in some breakthroughs.

When he set up this Council, the President said, "We must meet the needs of youth so that the formative years will equip them for a productive role in society and prepare them for citizenship." I want to enlist your help in this endeavor. If I can get the help of everyone in this room, our youth opportunity program will surely be a great success and the young people in this auditorium will be assured a very hopeful future.

I ask that we engage youth in the work of citizenship and, most specifically, in building a better America--qualitatively as well as quantitatively. I ask their help in designing what we mean by a better America. This is the third successive summer of the

Youth Opportunity Program, and if you will follow through on some of the suggestions that I make we can make this summer a productive one for our young people. For example, we can make sure that each youngster is in good health. We should redouble our health efforts. We can make opportunities for young people to serve others and to act on urgent social problems--as they put it, "to be where the action is." Young people have proved that they can serve effectively as aides in hospitals, just to mention one social service. They can bring technical assistance to community action programs. They are bright. Many of them are very well taught. They can help organize neighborhood play streets and day camps. They can provide tutoring and story hours in slum areas. They can take children to clinics or on trips and excursions. There are one hundred and one things that talented and socially concerned young people can do. Help them to do it. Find ways to mobilize them, to attract them. Show them the work that needs to be done. This month two hundred and fifty thousand college students are giving freely of their time as volunteers in these activities that I speak of. Those quarter of a million youngsters represent the social concern of America and I salute them tonight from this platform. And I want to thank the 250,000 high school seniors who are doing the exact same thing. This is the young America that I know and that I like. This is the volunteer generation and we want to work with them.

There are members of eleven national voluntary youth agencies' today that are busily and effectively conserving and beautifying this landscape from sea to shining sea, doing things that their parents ought to have done, and doing it out of the goodness of

their hearts and their love of the country. They didn't get their pictures in the paper. They didn't burn their draft cards. They just volunteered for America--volunteered for a better life. I think they're entitled to a pat on the back.

Experience with citizen action should not be denied to anyone, particularly to youth--but sometimes it is. Nor should young people be denied the chance to help others when they want to help. But they are often denied this chance. Young people should have summer adventure, should test themselves in camps, in the arts, in laboratories, in trips, in recreation. These opportunities cannot be reserved for the few. Therefore, I ask that we mobilize our resources to provide diversity of learning. Learning from experience in our city streets, learning from travel, learning from partnership of adults and youths in working on a shared problem. I ask that we find the means to permit 14 and 16 year old youngsters from low-income families to experience economic independence. We have a start already with the work study programs, with Neighborhood Youth Corps, and other programs of financial aid to young people and students. But, as you and I know, we do not yet fulfill our promise of equal opportunity for all. And until that promise is fulfilled, we cannot really say that our work has been successful. I ask that we further reduce the hazards of chance that cast such a dark shadow over the lives of too many of our youth. We cannot delay in making equal the life chances for our Negro youth, our Puerto Rican youth, our Mexican-American youth, our Indian youth, for the youth of our low-income families, or for the girls of the low-income families who have been neglected in our social thinking.

They don't have a fair chance and you know it. That is what I mean by the adventure and the opportunity that we are engaged in now in our country. A tremendous thing is happening in America. For the first time we have seen the vision of this nation really fulfilling its highest calling. One nation under God, and indivisible, with liberty and justice for all is not just a little verse that children recite. I want to lay it on the line to you. Either you believe it or you don't. I think we ought to ask every person to stop and discuss each word. This is not a divided nation. It must not be. It cannot be a nation of rich and poor, of white and black, of different religious groups with no contact and no sense of common purpose. And it isn't a nation that is strictly materialistic. You don't get human dignity from materialism. Human dignity is in the soul and in the spirit and that is what is precious about man. So when we speak of one nation, we mean just what we say--or we don't. When we say it's under God, we mean that we recognize this thing called dignity for what it is--a spiritual quality. And when we talk about a nation that is indivisible, with liberty and justice for all, we mean just that. Every American has the equal rights and duties and privileges and responsibilities of American citizenship. That's the purpose of your government. That is my objective and that is the objective of your President. I know that this objective sometimes meets strong resistance. That is why the victory, when it is fully achieved, will be all the greater. We will achieve it--make no mistake about that. It will be won.

So I ask you tonight to commit yourselves now to year-round programs in which all youth may have ready access to health, education, recreation, and work in community responsibilities. I am not just talking about summer programs, but year-round programs in which schools, private enterprise, public and voluntary agencies arrange their resources for the development of competent young citizens and workers; year-round programs that will equip our youth to be well educated, compassionate, competent citizens, able to assume individual choice and responsibility in this inter-dependent world. This is a big order, but you have to think big if you intend to do great work. Might I say, my fellow Americans, to those who say this is impossible, that this is a challenge. Anyone can do what is possible. You don't get any merit badges for that. The difference between the great and the average man is that one will undertake what seems impossible and make it possible. We have been doing that throughout our history. We started this Republic when it was impossible to have government by the consent of the public. We held a nation together after a bloody war when it was impossible, some people said, to hold it together. We've won wars that people said were impossible to win. The only people who are remembered in this world's great contest for attention are those who did what most people thought was impossible.

I don't think it is impossible to unify our people. I don't think it is impossible for this nation in the days ahead to be a totally integrated society where we speak not of Negro and white, but of people as individuals; where we do not divide on the basis of size, or color, or ethnic origin, or race, or religion, or how you

spell your last name. I think this dream of America is possible, and that some people think it is impossible makes it all the more enjoyable and interesting.

All over this country of ours new programs are getting underway. Youth Councils are being organized to work with our new Federal Council office. I've had 32 meetings with Mayors and local officials in the past 18 months to organize youth activities. Let me put it to you once again. If there is going to be a better community, it is not going to come from Washington, It is going to be because of what you do where you are. You can look to us for help, but you cannot look to us to do the work. If there are to be better schools it will be thanks to local effort. If there is to be better housing, it will be because the community works for it. Coordinated community action is needed all across this country. Every place in America today there is a need for a youth council. No matter how large or how small a town it is, that yough council should be broadly based. It should represent the entire fabric of the community and not just the establishment. It must represent all ethnic groups, religious groups, labor, business, and public officials so that people are brought into the process of deciding what is to happen in their town.

Now I know that new programs are being formulated and energized today in your State and community. Many of you have already been a part of this work. If you have not been, you ought to ask why not and I hope that you'll soon be a part of it. I want you to be the carrier of my message. I want you to ask these questions of

your elected and appointed officials and your community leaders:

"Mr. Mayor, what are we doing now to tie into the new national youth programs?" "Mr. City Commissioner, or Mr. Mayor, do you have a youth council? Who is on it? When was it appointed? What funding does it have? What's it doing? What are its plans? Who is undertaking the administration of these plans? What's being done in our city to provide summer jobs for young people who need them?"

There is no better therapy for a mixed-up young man or woman, or a highly energized one, than work--good old employment. That is the best social therapy that you can give most people. We need a minimum of two million jobs this summer for young Americans between the ages of 16 and 20, two million jobs for deprived, denied, poor, young Americans. Tell your Chamber of Commerce, or your Mayor, or your labor movement, that it will be a whole lot easier to provide jobs than it is to go around, after there has been trouble, picking up the pieces. It's a lot better to do it that way.

Might I make another suggestion? I don't think we ought to be rewarding violence and lawlessness in this country. Freedom does not live in a lawless society. Disregard of the law is the enemy of freedom. But the law also must be just. We want law enforcement, but we also need law observance. When the laws are just, and when they apply equally, they are observed.

I want to talk to people about this. I want you to point out that these jobs that we speak of here tonight ought to be available before some demagogue grabs hold of your people. Mr. Mayor, Mr. Leader of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Corporation

Executive, open up your mind, your heart, your gates. Don't wait for violence on your streets. Don't wait for somebody to come in and threaten you. Don't honor and reward violence. Honor and reward justice. Speak up now. Act now. Open up these training programs and give young men and women a chance to make something out of their lives. Recruit them. I'll tell you that a demagogue knows how to stir up violence and recruit converts. I would hope that every responsible leader in America will make it his business to challenge those who challenge us. Challenge those who challenge law and order not merely by law enforcement, but above all, by constructive community programs of jobs, and education, and recreation and community activity that will dry up the source of trouble.

Ask your school administrators and others: "What programs do you have to encourage your young people to return to school next year?" I am an educator-of-sorts, and I have a high regard for teachers and school administrators. But I should think that when you lose as many customers as some of our schools do, you would look at what is wrong with the merchandise. There isn't any reason why education shouldn't be an interesting experience if it is relevant to modern living. Let's take a look at this school drop-out problem. How are your young people being brought into the every day work of building a better community?

These are some of the questions I want you to ask. If you can't get the right answers, I hope you will write the Vice President in Washington, D. C. and I'll try to help you get some answers. But if you do get some answers, share them with me, will you? We need to talk to each other. We need to know what other communities

are doing. I want each of you to be an extra set of eyes and ears and hands for me this summer. I'm going to deputize you to help get this summer job done. The Vice President can't do it. The President can't do it. The Mayor can't. We're going to need a lot of help. I don't know whether it is very becoming of a Vice President to come and beseech people to help us, but I must do that tonight. I ask you to join in this struggle for a better America. You are in it already. Put in the extra measure. Help those young people make this summer one of happiness and opportunity. I believe that this is the kind of action which in the long run will do far more to humanize and personalize our nation than any program of physical urban renewal or slum clearance, important as they are. We need action dealing with the renewal of people. We must not only clear away old buildings that are a blight, but also we must clear away old barriers and prejudices that are like barnacles on the boat. I think this is the way in which we can, indeed, humanize our environment, and move forward to realize the full promise of our society.

My concluding words are those of the author, Thomas Wolfe, who told us about the promise this nation represents. He said, "To every man his chance. To every man, regardless of his birth, his shining golden opportunity. To every man the right to live, to work, to be himself and to become whatever things his manhood and his vision can combine to make him."

This is the promise of America, ladies and gentlemen. Let us help make it come true.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

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SOCIAL WELFARE

Sunday

Vice President Hubert Humphrey

May 21, 1967

Thank you very much. Mr. Young, Mayor, Mrs. Shelburne, Mr. Hopper, Mr. Sam Gray, Delegates and Representatives of the National Conference on Social Welfare. I see it's the 94th Annual Forum. You have been at it a long time and I don't know why in the world you ought to invite me as a speaker as I can't tell you anything new. There isn't much that one can say but first of all to say to my friend Whitney Young how honored I am to be in his presence to receive this award, this citation, this National Conference on Social Welfare Award for distinguished service. I know that you expect that I would say that I am unworthy of it and I do say it because I am. I don't know whether you would expect that I would say that I am highly flattered by it but I am and I want you to know that I consider it a rare privilege and a high honor, not only to receive this award but above all, to have it presented by one of the men that I consider to be one of the truly great Americans, one of the finest leaders that America has, Whitney Young, Jr. This is a dear personal friend of long standing. My wife and I have been very fond of Whitney and his family, we look upon him as a tower of strength for all that is good in this country. When he asked me if I would be available to come here after your program committee was kind enough to suggest that I should be the speaker. I think he will tell you if he were asked to testify that I didn't hesitate a moment. I said "Whitney, if you asked me, I know two things; number one, that it must be an important occasion and number two

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that if you asked it shall be given and believe me I am delighted to come here to be with you and with your leaders here today. I want to talk to you a little bit about some of the problems of mutual concern. Whitney Young said that he wanted you not to leave at the conclusion of my speech. He didn't say that you could not leave during my speech. I thought we ought to set the ground rules. From time to time I've had some people leave when I started to speak and then there are always those that decide there is something more meritorious or worthwhile than staying through what I have to say - but you do it as you wish because I'm going to have the joy of it. I have been in Dallas for a few hours this afternoon, I was in Miami, Florida, last night and this morning and I've been on the speaking circuit. I've been doing a little partisan speaking that I hope was more than partisan about the welfare of our country. I come here tonight to talk to you about matters that are very close to your heart and matters that you know were with great comprehension but the phrase that we all use these days is that we need to have a dialogue quite often these dialogues turn into monologues and I'm afraid tonight the dialogue will be from one end of the tube here and that you will not have your chance to respond until later on. When I travel across the country visiting with our young people in our colleges and universities I generally use the format of a-sort-of "Meet The Press" Conference where there are four or five of the student leaders on a panel and the Vice President is there to make a short presentation, lay the ground work for the controversy that undoubtedly will take place - then we go to it for about an hour. I feel that every tax payer and every potential tax payer is entitled to one good bite at a live politician so I've gone around

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presenting the carcasses as often as I could, to as many people as were available. Tonight it's going to be a little more gentle than that. I'm going to be in the role of the Professor. I was once a college professor and I feel that I am a refugee from the college classroom. I also like to renew my credentials amongst professionals. Elective political life is such an uncertain and precarious existence that there are times that you like to make sure that folks remember you when... and what you were. I just told Sam Gray when I came in here this evening. I asked him about his drug stores. He said they were still operating and that he was selling them. I asked him if he was tired of making money and he didn't say yes but I think he is - he wants to give all of his time now over to social welfare. I tried to remind him that I am a Pharmacist as well - that I was first a Pharmacist and Sam just nodded - he didn't make any commitment - sort-of like being Secretary of State. He didn't say what he was going to do right at the moment. But at least I refreshed his memory and I think you ought to know also that back in the depression days I was an administrator or a divisional head with the WPA. My mother never used to like to have me tell all about it - better healed friends about that - she wasn't sure this was the way you gained social status. My father was more broadminded about things like that and he figured if you had a job it was worth talking about at least. In those days I was very active in that period of my life in all aspects of social welfare and I enjoyed talking to and working with and being part of the social welfare workers and movement. I'm happy to come here to do several things; to thank you for what you do, to thank you for what you are and to thank you for what you can be in what we are trying to do in this country. Now you meet here to examine

the facts as you see them and to debate the issues involved in humanizing an environment that is in all too many respects seems increasingly de-personalized. I believe that one of the facts of our time that things are moving so rapidly - urbanization has developed so quickly that there is a degree of impersonalization that has beset our society seeking to bring back the human and the personal touch. Now I know that some believe this to be an impossible objective. There are those that simply say 'Look why waste your time, it will be as it is and people will become adjusted to it - the human mind and body is very adjustable'. But I say that if we are true to our belief in human dignity and we surely profess that belief and if we are true to our belief in social progress then we have an obligation to challenge the problems of our environment on the basis that they can be solved and that we may not turn aside and let, as some people say, let nature take its course. We're a part of nature and we have an obligation to act as a part of nature in directing the course of nature's people. And I must say that if we, in this rich, advanced nation, advanced in education, science and technology - if we cannot overcome the problems of our society with all of its affluence and all of its resources, how in the world do you expect other countries in the world to overcome their problems. Now you just ponder that for a while - remember that you are the custodian and the stewards of a nation that produced 44% of everything produced in the world last year. The gross national product of this nation is larger than the gross national products of all of western Europe, Japan and Canada combined. The gross national product of this country is ten times that of China. It is an incredibly rich country and we have vast storehouses of physical

and human resources, so if we are unable to meet the problems that beset our society with these tools and resources, how do you expect them to do very much in Asia and Latin America or Africa - or other areas of the world. If we fail - what hope is there then for anyone else, in other words, we can't fail. If America is to represent what I think it represents, namely, hope for people, then we've got to demonstrate that this system of ours knows how to personalize society - how to humanize it and how to give a real meaning to human dignity - how to preserve self-identity in a highly complexed, urbanized, industrialized and technically advanced society. That's our task. We are all familiar with the writings of Gunnar Myrdal, one of the great sociologists, and he put it very well some years back, I've met him many times and talked with him. He's a fascinating individual and a great scholar. Gunnar Myrdal said this "In the long run", he was speaking of America, "In the long run it detracts from the position of America as leaders of the western world, if in spite of its wealth it leaves its cities blighted by horrible slums, if it lags behind other countries in social security for its old people, its invalids, its widows and its children and if generally it accepts so much poverty for a large part of the nation, none has so little license, needs all its virtues so much as a leader and America for its own security cannot retreat from leadership". End of quote - There's a powerful lot of learning and lesson in that statement. What Gunnar Myrdal is saying is - leadership is not a privilege it's a burden - leadership does not give you luxury - it imposes responsibility - it gives you no cloak of comfort - it clothes you with the robe of responsibility. He is saying that if you are a leader, and America must be a leader, for its own security, then we must make that the pattern of the

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social order that we represent is one in which social justice is the prevailing fact. What it comes down to then is this - in this age when man is conquering outer space we must find a way for man to control his social space right here on earth. I said it another way - that if this nation can afford to make all the investments that are required to put a man on the moon, and we are doing that and we shall do it, then, indeed, this same rich nation can afford to make the necessary investments to help put a man on his feet right here on earth. You are the "earthnauts" so to speak, you know, others are the astronauts - they are both important. Very few people are going to make that trip to the moon - I have a couple of candidates and some think I ought to make it but we have a number of friends we need to be working with and talking to right here on this earth. Now let me define social space. Social Space is the space man uses as a unique personality to seek his purposes and hopes in a social order. We know the inner life and the social life of man are both individual and indivisible. We know that mans environment today is at once greatly expanded and at the same time sharply contracted. It is expanded because man has access to his world as never before through rapid transportation, communication and increased knowledge. It is contracted through the concentration of population, the confusion and the speed of change and indeed, by the speed of sommunication and the frowth of fear and distrust among people, particularly those people that are crowded together in our urban center, our urban ghettos. We've made a fantastic change in this country in the last 50 years - the last 25 years - and as I said to a group speaking to them this afternoon - Is it any wonder that there are some social distrubances. Compare what is happening

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in America today with the weather system. I fly a great deal all over this vast land of ours, and every time I take a trip in a plane I check the weather. And I know that when I see a high and a low - and they say on the chart that there is a front, we're going to have ~~g~~ to go through a turbulane. I know that the plane better be a good one, and the pilot ought to be very good - and the crew ought to know what they are doing. And I hope and prary - and I say both reverently - I hope and pray that the plane is strong and the pilot is competent. Well, ladies and gentlemen, we are going through a change of systems too. But not weather systems. We're going out of one social system in which there was first and second class citizenship for Americans. Some people had it very well and others had never been permitted to participate in the citizenship responsibilities or opportunities and we're coming into a great new system in which everyone is to be a participant. The high and the low systems are in conflict. One is coming in and the other is going out. And until it happens, until that air is cleared - until the fresh winds of change have covered this entire social structure, there will be turbulence. There will be troubles - but I think we have built a Ship of State that can weather it and I trust that we have the pilot and the crew that have enough faith to tide the Ship of State through this turbulence.

That's what we're talking about now. That's what you are seeing happening in our cities too - the impact of change - the convergence of these forces of change leaves many of our people feeling powerless, hopeless, futile, lost and not needed. They have become isolated, literally isolated ~~an~~ from the rest of the world. Isolated from people and from purpose and significance. This is the problem that you face in your work. But let there be no doubts about public policy in meeting

these converging forces. At least the statement and the commitment of public policy. We have found, over the years, ways to enrich human life and we are committed to seeking new and better ways to enrich human life. We seek new commitments to our deepest national conviction. And what is that conviction. Our belief in the equality of man - or at least in his equal treatment - his right to be a man. And we can add that commitment and conviction to equal opportunity for every person. We seek to inter-relate laws with the intricate interweaving of social problems. We seek to increase the supply of technicolored professional personnel to help bring the right people with the right skills to the right places at the right time to challenge these problems. We seek to add to our knowledge of social problem-solving through research and development. We seek to apply modern technology to the solution of human problems in full recognition, however, that people do not and should not be the victim or indeed lend themselves to automation. What I'm saying then, in other words, is the tremendous work that we've undertaken in science and technology of the systems approach to every complex problem of aeronautic space engineering, we are seeking now to take that same conceptual approach to and put it on human problems, in fact we are using some of the same industries to do it today - they are expertise. We seek through legislation to engage the states and their political subdivisions, voluntary agencies and private resources in cooperative arrangements to meet needs that cut across old jurisdiction. This is a way of saying that what we are seeking to do is to upgrade the quality of government - to modernize the techniques we use in our social services - and to recognize that none of these problems - or to put it another way - that all of the problems that face us are so big - so complex - so intricate - so challenging - that

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no single level of government or single agency alone is capable of handling that problem. In other words - partnership is the theme. Cooperation is the theme - mobilization of the resources so that you can face the problems of your city - of the urban life - of the poverty of the people - or the fear of our people. I think that if there has ever been a time that Americans needed to understand that we have to have full mobilization of the human resources of this country for social betterment - it is now. You, in this room alone cannot do it. Your Federal government cannot do it. Most of your state governments are not properly organized to do the jobs that you know need to be done - and all too often our cities and local jurisdictions of government are inadequately financed - inadequate in professional personnel and do not have the resources. An surely our private agencies alone do not have the organization to do them. Then, what do we do. We develop a cooperative arrangement of all the resources. We focus the attention of the problem that needs to be solved, and we bring to bear the talent and the resources of all the multiplicity of agencies and instrumentalities that are represented here in this great auditorium tonight. This is the way I see it. This requires some new thinking. It means that people have to give up old habits. It means that old jurisdictions that no longer have any relationship to human need must be cancelled out or at least revised. You know first hand about our public efforts. You are all very well aware of the tremendous efforts that have been made in the public sector in the field of human welfare - because they have paralleled your own efforts. We have shared together through the years the achievements and the disappointments and the stresses of national struggles for opportunity and social progress. All of us have had wounds inflicted upon us by carping critics. Every man and woman in

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this audience at some time or another has had people assail you for what they considered to be your failure or your inadequacy - and yet you and I know that there is no greater joy in life than the realization that you have helped somebody find themselves. That you helped somebody gain a new life - to find their way and become a participant in society - to make their citizenship a meaningful and rich experience. That's the reward we get. That's the reward of public life. That's the reward of social service and we have thankfully seen some of these struggles that I speak of won. We won these struggles together. Every piece of social legislation that has been passed - at federal, state or local level has been the result of our working together. By the way, since I mentioned that - we need you now, too. The Congress of the United States needs your guidance, your instructions - needs your thought - needs your expression of your interest. Important programs passed by the 89th Congress can literally be starved to death through the appropriations process by the 90th Congress. Don't let that happen. American is rich enough, my dear friends, to fulfill its commitments abroad to other people and to fulfill its commitments at home to its own people. You and I know that there has been so much to do and sometime we are almost overwhelmed by the amount that there is to do and therefore we have taken generally the quantitative approach. We've had to concentrate on the quantitative - and with this has come the habit of too often speaking of the people in the collective sense rather impersonal too - and now as we see that we are breaking through some of the old barriers, I think that we're coming into a time when we'll be able to concentrate more fully on the individual - on the person in the individual sense. There's one word in the English language relating to people that I have never really liked - and that's the word "mass". When I hear people talking

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about the masses of people - there is no such thing. Every person is different. This is what we mean by human dignity. This is the miracle of creation. This is the beauty of God's work. This is the mystery of nature. How can we all be so different - and yet we are. And the whole purpose of democratic society is to find that difference and to permit it to live and to grow and to be enriched and not to curb it - not to spill it - rather - to breath life into it. We live in a pluralistic society - not a monolith. At least that's what we want - that's the difference between the totalitarian and the free man. We believe in a pluralistic society. We're a mosaic - and let us hope that it is a mosaic of beauty, or at least of some system or order - that we are not one sort of pale or placid wall of constant color. We have varieties and individual differences. We know that ~~man~~'s needs are not limited to physical and economical aspects of living. We have said this so many times in so many ways. There's that old truth that man does not live by bread alone. How true that is. His life has meaning in his social relationship. His life has meaning to the extent that he is respected by others to the extent that he is in command of his own destiny. To the extent that his environment nourishes his esthetic senses - and his feeling of well being. Man's life has meaning to the extent that his environment affords him the dignity of choice to the extent to which his community needs him. Needs his individual and his unique contribution to achieve its goals and plans. This is what we mean today when we say that modern youth is seeking its identity. Who am I? What am I? What is my purpose? Why am I here? These are the questions that are asked silently by thoughtful people - and those of us that we engaged in social welfare work are not engaged of just relieving the pain of poverty that we ought

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to be interested in is releasing the uniqueness of personality. I've said so many times about the program that we call the War on Poverty - It's not designed to make poverty more palatable - or more acceptable if that's its purpose - then it's a terrible mistake. Its purpose is to find the cure. To get at the root causes and that's why its so difficult. That's why it takes so long. That's why its going to require experimentation and that's why it's going to be under attack - because the old approaches just didn't work. We have to try something different and we're having to work with individuals - not merely to relieve the poverty of the purse which can be done by a hand-out rather than to relieve the poverty of the spirit - the poverty of being not wanted - of finding no place of having no identity - of having no relationship to your community. This terrible poverty finally ends up with bitterness, hatred and fear. That's what our task is. If this were just a meeting to call together people who hand out relief checks, then it would be a useless meeting. It takes no particular professional competence to do that, in fact we can do it with machines. The purpose of a social worker is to find the answer to another man's need. What I have said is not new to you. This is not a new list of individual human needs. I think what is new in all of this, however, is what I have tried to stress. Our ability to do much more today to satisfy those needs. Now where would we put some of the first priority then. Well, let's start with our young people. I suggest that we look at youth. Half the people in our great country today are under the age of thirty and the proportion is increasing. This is a young country and it's getting younger. Young people have known only this rapidly changing technological scene. By the way, these young people have never known depression - most of them. Some have known war.

Too many have seen this rapidly changing technological scene as the natural way - it's their norm. Each young person is, in a sense, in a social experiment unto himself. He represents a chance to break the old pattern. I look around here and I seem some very young ones. Youth is a time of tremendous energy. This energy can be used for personal and social development. Or, as we now know, and as we have known a long time - it can go unharnessed and lost and it can be used in action that is destructive to person and to society. Young people need to test themselves. They're always testing. They're testing you and they're testing society. They are challenging the establishment - they're testing the norms of the day. They're testing what they call the moral of our time. They're testing their attitudes and their interests against reality. Now in response to these particular needs of young people, we are trying to make a concerted effort. The government is interested as well, but let me make it quite clear - the government has a supplementary role - not a dominant role, and that is as it should be. The federal government should never take over responsibilities. What the federal government should do is to help those who work intimately and closely with the people to have the resources to do the job at the local level with the people. President Johnson recently established the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, and I am privileged to be its Chairman. Of all the assignments the President has given me, none has pleased me more than this, for many reasons. I like young people, secondly we're doing a lot of things at the governmental level that I think that we can do better, and thirdly, I think we can do some experimenting that may result ultimately in some breakthroughs. When I say we - I mean all of us. That's why I've come here to you. The President stated when he set up this Council, "We must

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meet the needs of youth so that the formative years will equip them for a productive role in society and prepare them for citizenship. I want to enlist your help in this endeavor. If I can get the help of everyone in this room, then our youth opportunity program would surely be a great success and these young people that I see in this auditorium tonight would be assured of a very hopeful future. I ask that we engage - and I mean engage, in the real sense of the work - youth - engage youth in the work of citizenship, and most specifically to building a better qualitative - as well as a quantitative America. I ask that we do our best to engage these young people in building that better America and letting them help design what we mean by a better America. We can make a start this summer, and all over this City of Dallas I see signs about our Youth Opportunity Program. We have an effort that we are making for the third consecutive summer, and if you haven't heard about it, then you're hearing about it tonight. I want you to follow through on some of the suggestions that I make. We can make this summer a very, very productive one for our young Americans. We can make<sup>sure</sup> for example, that each young person is in good health. We can redouble our health efforts. We can develop, yes, we can make opportunities for our young people to serve others and to act on urgent social problems. To go where the going is tough - or as they put it "to be where the action is." Our young people have proved that they can serve effectively as aides in hospitals, just to mention one social service. They can bring technical assistance. They're competent, they're bright. Many of them are very well taught. They can bring technical assistance to community action programs. They can help organize neighborhood play streets and day camps. They can provide tutoring and story hours in slum areas. They can help out with getting children to clinics or chaperoning them on trips or excursions.

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There are one hundred and one things that talented and socially concerned young people can do. Help them to do it. Find ways to mobilize them - to attract them. Show them the work that needs to be done. Open up the assignments for them. Two hundred and fifty thousand college students in this month of May are now giving freely of their time as volunteers in these activities that I speak of. Tutoring disadvantaged children, helping in recreation programs, working in hospitals, helping the mentally retarded, helping in a hundred agencies. Giving of themselves - 250,000 - that's a quarter of a million, represents many more than those who get their picture in the paper time after time for some kind of activity that doesn't always please their elders. Its this quarter of a million, if you please that represents the social concern of America - not the handful that stir up violence or that have failed in the first preogative and responsibility of higher education, namely, good maners. I want to salute that 250,000 students tonight from this platform and to thank them. And I want to thank the 250,000 high school seniors who are doing the exact same thing. This is the young America that I know and that I like. This is the volunteer generation and we want to work with them and I need your help to work with them.

There are members of eleven national voluntary youth agencies today that are busy and effectively conserving and beautifying this landscape from sea to shing sea, engaged in conservation, engaged in national beautification, doing things that their parents ought to have done and doing it out of the good of their hearts and the love of their country. They didn't get their picture in the paper. They didn't burn a draft card. They just volunteered for America. Volunteered for a better life. I think they're entitled to a pat on the back, don't you? Experience with

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Experience with citizen action should not be denied to anyone, particularly to youth - but sometimes it is. Nor should young people be denied the chance to help others when they want to help but they are often denied. Young people should have the chance for summer adventure, the chance to test themselves in camps and arts, in laboratories, in trips, in drama, in music, in recreation - and this cannot be reserved for the few. It must be an opportunity for all. I therefore ask that we mobilize our resources to provide diversity of learning. Learning from experience in our city streets, learning from travel, learning from partnership of adults and youths in which they work together on a shared problem. I ask that we find the means to permit the experience with economic independence for young people of low income families when they reach the age of 14-16. We have a start already with the work study programs, with neighborhood youth corps and other programs of financial aid to young people and students, but as you know and I know, we do not yet fulfill our promise of equal opportunity for all. And until that promise is fulfilled, we cannot really say that our work has been successful. I ask that we further reduce the hazards of chance that casts such a dark shadow over the lives of too many of our youth. We cannot delay in making equal the life chances for our negro youth and those life chances today are not equal - or of our Puerto Rican youth - or our Mexican American youth - our Indian youth, or the youth of our low income families, or for the girls of the low income families who have been neglected in our social thinking. They don't have a fair chance and you know it. We have an obligation to see to it that they have a chance. That's what I mean by the adventure and the opportunity

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that we are engaged in now in our country. A tremendous thing is happening in America. For the first time we have seen the vision of the possibility of this nation really fulfilling its highest calling. One nation under God, and indivisible with liberty and justice for all. That's not just a little verse that children recite. I want to lay it on the line to you. Either you believe it or you don't. One or the other. I think we ought to ask every person to stop and discuss each word. This isn't a divided nation. It must not be. It can't be a nation ~~for~~ of rich and poor. Of white and black. Of different religious groups with no contact and no sense of common purpose. And it isn't a nation that is strictly materialistic. You don't get human dignity out of materialism. Human dignity is in the soul and in the spirit and that's what is precious about man. So when we speak of one nation - we mean just what we say - or we don't. When we say its under God - we mean that we recognize this thing called dignity for what it is - spiritual - soul quality, and when we talk about liberty and talk about a nation that is indivisible and liberty and justice for all - we mean just that. Every American with equal rights and duties and privileges and responsibilities of American citizenship. That's the purpose of your government. That's the objective/<sup>of</sup>this man that's speaking to you tonight. That's the objective of your President - and I know that this objective sometimes meets strong resistance. That's why the battle is all the more interesting and that's why the victory, when its fully achieved, will be all the greater and all the more honored - and we'll gain it - make no mistake about that. It will be won. So I ask you tonight to commit ourselves now to year around programs - speaking now primarily of

our youth again. Year around programs in which all youth may have ready access to health, education and recreation and work in community responsibilities. Not just summer programs, but year round - year round programs in which our young people can have the choice of alternatives in meeting or moving toward their goals. Year round programs in which schools, private enterprise public and voluntary agencies arrange their resources for the development of competent young citizens and workers. Year round programs that will equip our youth to be well educated, compassionate competent citizens, able to assume individual choice and responsibility in this inter-dependent world. This is a big order, but you have to dream big dreams. You have to think big if you ever intend to be great. Might I say, my fellow Americans, when some people say this is impossible that this is a challenge. Most everybody can do what is possible, you don't really get any merit badges for that. Things are so well arranged to in this modern world of ours that practically everybody can do what somebody says is possible. The difference between the great and the less great - the difference between the great and the average - is the one that can do what is impossible and make it possible. We've been doing that all of our lives. We started this Republic when it was impossible to have government by the consent of the public. We held a nation together after a bloody war when it was impossible, some people said, to hold it together. We've won wars that people said were impossible to be won. We've done so many things - science and technology said were impossible, and the only way you ever remember anybody in this great contest for attention in this world is to remember those that did what you thought was impossible. What most people thought was impossible. I don't think it's impossible to have a unity of our people. I don't think it's impossible in the days ahead to have this nation be a living fact of totally integrated society where we speak - not of

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negro and white, but where we speak of people with their first name and their last name as individuals - and where we don't divide on the basis of size or color or ethnic origin, or race, or religion - or how you spell your last name. I think this dream of America is possible and because some people think it's impossible - makes it all the more enjoyable and interesting. All over this country of ours new programs are getting under way. Deals of opportunity in social betterment with new programs for our youth at the state and local levels - youth councils being organized to work with our new federal council office. I'm meeting tomorrow morning here with the Mayor of the City and with others in this community on youth programs. Then I'm going to go into Huntsville, Alabama - and then up from the area of Huntsville to Memphis to meet again with local officials. I've had 32 meetings with the Mayors and the local officials of America in the past 18 months to organize youth activities. Just let me put it to you once again. If there's going to be a better community, it's not going to be from Washington - it's going to be because of what you do where you are. You can look to us for help, but you cannot look to us to do the work. If there is to be better schools or schools that are not so good, it'll be in your community. If there is to be better city and better housing - or not so good housing - it's where you live. Individual responsibilities through coordinated community action, all across this country, every place in America today, there is a need of a youth council. I don't care how big the town - how large or how small, that youth council should be broadly based. It should represent the entire fabric of the community not just the establishments. But it must represent all across the ethnic

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groups, religious groups, the labor, the business, the public officials - so that people are brought into the decision-making process of what is to happen in their town.

Now I know in your state and community today, new programs are being formulated and energized. Many of you have already been a part of this work. If you have not been, you ought to ask why not and I hope that you'll soon be a part of it. So when you return now to your home communities, I want you to take a message to the local officials and you don't need to ~~me~~ go back there and say that you are being abrasive with this message - but that the Vice President was that way. Just say that I heard that fellow talk and he wanted me to ask you some questions. And I am asking some questions tonight and I want you to be the carrier of my message. Bring that message back to the people in your areas. Your elected and appointed officials and your community leaders and here are the questions: Mr. Mayor, what are we doing now to tie into the new national youth programs? Mr. City Commissioner, or Mr. Mayor, or whomever it may be - "Do you have a youth council? Who is on it? When was it appointed? What funding does it have? What's it doing? What's its plans? Who is undertaking the operation of the administration of these plans? What's being done in our cit to provide summer jobs for young people who need them?" There is no better therapy for a very mixex-up young man or woman or a highly energized one - than work - good old employment. That's the best social therapy that you can give most people and we need a minimum of two million jobs this summer for young Americans between the ages of 16 and 20 - two million for deprived, denied, poor young Americans. I'll tell you - you can tell your

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Chamber of Commerce - or your Mayor - or your labor movement - you can tell them that it will be a whole lot easier to provide jobs than it is to go around afterwards when there's been trouble - picking up the pieces. It's a lot better to do it that way. Might I make another suggestions. I don't think we ought to be rewarding violence in this country - and lawlessness. Freedom does not live in a lawless society. Disobedience - disregard of the law is the enemy of freedom. But the law also must be just. We want law enforcement, but we also need law observance - and law observance comes when the laws are just and when they apply equally and when they are so filled with the sense of justice that they bring about the desire to observe the law. I want you to talk to people about this. I want you to point out that these jobs that we speak of here tonight ought to be available before some demagogue grabs hold of your people. Mr Mayor, Mr. Leader of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Corporation Executive - Open up your mind - your heart - your gates. Don't wait for somebody to come in and threaten you. Don't wait for violence on your streets. Don't honor and reward violence. Honor and reward justice. Speak up now. Act now. Open up these training programs and give young men and women a chance to make something out of their lives. Recruit them. I ll tell you that the demagogue that stirs up the violence and recruits his converts. He knows how to do it. I would hope that every responsible leader in America would make it their business to challenge those who challenge us. Challenge those who challenge law and order - and not merely to challenge them by law enforcement which, of course is a minimum requirement. But above all, to challenge by

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by constructive community programs of jobs and education and recreation and community activity - so that the source of trouble is dried up. That we have a better America. Ask your school administrators and others - "What programs do you have to encourage your young people to return to school next year?" You know I am an educator-of-sorts and I have a high regard for teachers and school administrators. But I think you lose as many customers as some of our schools do - you might want to look at what is wrong with the merchandise. There isn't any reason why education shouldn't be an interesting experience if its relevant to modern needs. Relevant to modern living. Let's take a look at this school drop-out problem. How are your young people being brought into the every day work of building a better community. These are some of the questions I want you to ask. If you can't get the right answers - or whatever answers you get - I hope you will write to the Vice President in Washington, D.C. and I'll try to help you get some answers. But if you do get some answers - share them with me will you? We need to talk to each other. We need to know what other communities are doing. I want each of you to be an extra set of eyes and ears and hands for the Vice President this summer. I'm not recruiting you for the CIA - just recruiting you for the summer program. I'm going to deputize you now. I don't know if I have any such authority but it makes me feel better to think that I have. I'm going to deputize you to help get this summer job done. The Vice President can't do it. The president can't do it - alone. The Mayor cant. We're going to need a lot of help. I would like a report from each of you on your city by not later than the first week of June. I need it. What are you doing in your town? Listen, tell me - I won't

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I won't divulge your letters. I'll keep it secret. I won't even tell my wife if you want to put a nice little note in there, girls. Tell me what you think is going on in your town. Tell me what you think is being done. The good and the bad. I don't want to just hear the bad - I know some people think they prove themselves to be great intellectuals by constantly being critical. I think it's alright to be critical if you have some constructive proposals to back up your criticism. Tell me what's going on. If there's something happening that seems to be working - if you have job training programs like some of our wonderful programs that are under way now. Tell me how its working. Is it working? Tell me what you see. If you think trouble is brewing in your city, tell me. I want other people in this country to know what is going on. What do you, personally, see happening? What are the good summer programs that other cities and communities should know about. What isn't being done and what should be done? Gee, can't we get some fine letters if you'll just do this. And I expect to hear from you. I've got the roster of everyone that's here and I'm going to check you off. I may even write you myself - which I will if you'll write to me. Please help us. I don't know whether it is very becoming of a Vice President to come and ask people in a sense of almost beseeching them to help us - but I must do that tonight. I ask you to join in this struggle for a better America. You're in it already. Put the extra little measure in there - without that extra mile. Help those young people make this summer one of happiness and opportunity. I expect to hear from each of you at least once. Hopefully several times this summer. I believe that this is the kind of action which in the long run will do far more to

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humanize and personalize our nation than any program or physical urban renewal or slum clearance important as they are. We need action dealing with the renewal of people - not just renewal of physical environment. We must not only clear away old buildings that are no longer useful - that are a blight - but also we need clear away old barriers and prejudices that are like barnacles on the boat. I think this is the place that we can, indeed, humanize our environment and where we can move forward in building a society where the full promise of our society can be realized and fulfilled.

And my concluding words are from those of the author and the great prose write, Thomase Wolfe (some of you have heard me use it again and again because I think its so appropriate to what we are trying to do. You ought to put it on a little card and stick it in your pocket and look at it about once a week. Thomas Wolfe told us about the promise that this nation represents. He said, "To every man his chance - to every man - regardless of his birth, his shining golden opportunity - to every man the right to live, to work and to be himself and to become whatever things his manhood and his vision can combine to make him."

This is the promise of America, ladies and gentelemen. I think that is the promise of America. Let's help make it come true.

Thank you very much...

Good night....



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