

NOTES

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

NATIONAL POSTAL FORUM

WASHINGTON, D. C.

SEPTEMBER 15, 1967

FIRST, LET ME SALUTE OUR POSTMASTER GENERAL,
WHO HAS DEMONSTRATED OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS THAT HE
CAN DELIVER THE MAIL AS WELL AS THE VOTES.

*Great
Public
Servants*

↳ HE HAS LIVED UP TO THE HIGHEST BI-PARTISAN
TRADITIONS OF HIS OFFICE. JUST LAST WEEK, I UNDERSTAND,
HE WAS TALKING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF ISSUING A
GEORGE ROMNEY COMMEMORATIVE STAMP.

↳ AND WHO CAN DENY THAT LARRY O'BRIEN HAS
IMPROVED THE U. S. MAIL SERVICE?

This meeting and the response to it are a dramatic example of the vast reservoir of knowledge and experience in the private sector that can and must be tapped by the government. I know how hard -- and, I might add, successfully -- Larry O'Brien has worked since he became Postmaster General to expand and strengthen the Postal Service's contacts with the business community it serves.

I am particularly pleased to note that the members of the Post Office Department Advisory Board are attending this Forum. The outstanding citizens appointed by the President to serve on this Board tackle some of the really tough problems facing the Postal Service. The Postal Service is indeed fortunate to have the wisdom and experience these gentlemen have gained in a wide variety of fields. The same, of course, can be said about the other postal advisory groups which contribute their time and energy in the public interest.

My good friend and fellow Minnesotan Fred Gates tells me that he and his colleagues on the Presidential Advisory Board are now immersed in what they believe will be a most significant study of postal employee motivation. With a workforce of over 700,000, the Postal Service is still a "people" business -- and highly motivated employees are essential to efficiency and economy. ~~I know the Postmaster General is anxious to see the results of the Advisory Board's study in this important area.~~

NO LONGER NEED WE AGREE WITH MARK TWAIN,
WHO SAID: "TRUST THE MAILS ONLY WHEN YOU HAVE
NOTHING TO SAY. FOR MY PART, I PREFER TO CORRESPOND
BY MENTAL TELEPATHY."

BE THAT AS IT MAY, OUR POSTAL SYSTEM HAS
COME A LONG WAY UNDER LARRY O'BRIEN'S LEADERSHIP.

ONE OF HIS MOST IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS IS ILLUSTRATED
Another Part 2 days
HERE TONIGHT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL POSTAL FORUMS,

DESIGNED TO LET THE MAIL USERS THEMSELVES TELL US HOW
THE POSTAL SYSTEM CAN BE IMPROVED. I KNOW THIS

GATHERING HAS PRODUCED SOME REALLY CREATIVE THINKING,

AND I WANTED TO THANK YOU ALL FOR THE TIME YOU HAVE

DEVOTED TO IT.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN POSTAL AFFAIRS HAS
NOT ALWAYS BEEN OF SUCH A HIGH-MINDED ORDER. THERE

WAS A TIME WHEN MOST PEOPLE THOUGHT OF THE POST OFFICE AS A

GIANT PORK BARREL.

*over
2300
every state*

BEN FRANKLIN, A DISTINGUISHED DIPLOMAT AND STATESMAN, WAS OUR FIRST POSTMASTER GENERAL. THE INK WAS NO SOONER DRY ON THIS APPOINTMENT THAN FRANKLIN BEGAN ORGANIZING HIS POST OFFICE. HIS FIRST ACT WAS TO PUT FIVE RELATIVES ON THE PAYROLL.

and ABE LINCOLN HAD HIS TURN, ~~AT THE PORK BARREL~~, SERVING FOR 55 DOLLARS A YEAR AS POSTMASTER OF NEW SALEM, ILLINOIS. AS PRESIDENT, HOWEVER, HE HAD AN ANSWER TO JOB SEEKERS. DURING HIS TRIP TO GETTYSBURG TO MAKE HIS FAMOUS ADDRESS, HE CAME DOWN WITH A CONTAGIOUS FEVER. *But* JOB SEEKERS STILL WOUND UP AT HIS DOOR.

"LET THEM ALL COME IN," LINCOLN TOLD HIS SECRETARY. "I FINALLY HAVE SOMETHING I CAN GIVE TO EVERYONE."

* * *

THIS HAS BEEN A DIFFICULT SUMMER ~~IN THE~~
~~UNITED STATES~~, AND I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OCCASION
TO CHAT WITH YOU BRIEFLY ABOUT ^{it} ~~WHAT IT MEANS TO ALL OF US~~.

¹⁹¹⁹
ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-ONE YEARS AGO, THOMAS
JEFFERSON GAVE THIS COUNTRY WHAT HAVE BECOME THE
HIGHEST IDEALS OF AMERICAN LIFE -- "ALL MEN ARE
CREATED EQUAL ... THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR
WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS ... AMONG THESE ARE LIFE,
LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS."

FROM TIME TO TIME IN OUR HISTORY WE HAVE
SEEN CRISES WHICH THREATENED THOSE IDEALS, BUT ON
THE WHOLE WE HAVE MADE STEADY PROGRESS TOWARD ^{their}
REALIZATION.

THE NOTION OF HUMAN EQUALITY -- THE BELIEF THAT
EVERY MAN, NO MATTER WHAT HIS RACE OR CREED, SHOULD HAVE
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO REALIZE HIS FULL POTENTIAL --

IS ONE THAT EXPRESSES A DEEP-SEATED HUMAN NEED FOR
A FEELING OF PERSONAL DIGNITY. It is an idea so
FUNDAMENTAL AND SO POWERFUL THAT IT HAS DICTATED THE
BROAD COURSE OF HISTORY FOR THE LAST 200 YEARS --
NOT ONLY IN THE UNITED STATES, BUT THROUGHOUT THE
WORLD. It has brought about, as John Adams said it
would, "THE ILLUMINATION OF THE IGNORANT AND THE
EMANCIPATION OF THE SLAVISH PARTS OF MANKIND ALL OVER
THE EARTH."

Our own history suggests that the American
people are especially well-endowed to make the ideal
of equality a reality. Clinton Rossiter, the American
HISTORIAN, HAS SAID -- AND I AGREE WITH HIM -- THAT OUR
POLITICAL TRADITION INCLUDES "AN AVOWEDLY OPTIMISTIC,
IDEALISTIC, EVEN LIGHT-HEARTED WAY OF THINKING ABOUT
MAN AND GOVERNMENT. It is stamped with the mighty name and
spirit of Thomas Jefferson, and its articles of faith,

*my
cultural*

A SORT OF AMERICAN HOLY WRIT, MELIORISM, PROGRESS,
LIBERTY, EQUALITY, DEMOCRACY, AND INDIVIDUALISM."

↳ BUT DESPITE THE VERY REAL PROGRESS WE HAVE
MADE TOWARD EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL, OUR WORK
IS NOT FINISHED. *America represents beginnings!*

*1/2 of our people
poor*

IT IS ALL TOO EASY FOR MOST OF US WHO ENJOY
Keep WELL-BEING AND PROSPERITY TO OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT
THE GREAT DEPRESSION STILL LINGERS ON IN A VERY REAL
WAY FOR MANY AMERICANS.

GHETTO

↳ THE UNDER-EMPLOYMENT RATE IN SOME URBAN
GHETTOS TODAY IS AS HIGH AS 35 PER CENT.

↳ THE POOR IN AMERICA HAVE 4 TIMES AS MUCH
HEART DISEASE, 6 TIMES AS MUCH ARTHRITIS AND
RHEUMATISM, 6 TIMES AS MUCH MENTAL AND NERVOUS ILLNESS
AS THE REST OF OUR POPULATION.

SIXTY PER CENT OF ALL POOR CHILDREN NEVER
SEE A DENTIST; 50 PER CENT NEVER SEE A DOCTOR; 80 PER CENT
OF THOSE WHO JOIN THE JOB CORPS HAVE NEVER SEEN EITHER.

↳ THE POOR PEOPLE ARE 4 TIMES AS LIKELY TO DIE
BY THE AGE OF 35.

↳ THIRTY MILLION AMERICANS STILL LIVE IN
THOSE CONDITIONS. THEY LIVE ON THE MARGINS OF
PROSPEROUS AMERICA THAT MOST OF US KNOW TODAY.

↳ AND THE CHALLENGE BEFORE US IS CLEAR: IT IS
TO INCLUDE THAT SMALL MINORITY, TO PROVIDE THEM WITH A
DECENT LEVEL OF OPPORTUNITY, AND TO MAKE THEM FULL,
PRODUCTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS REMARKABLY RICH AND
SUCCESSFUL DEMOCRACY WHICH HAS GROWN OUT OF THE IDEAS
CONTAINED IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

↳ NOW SOME PEOPLE, MOST OF THEM EXTREMISTS TO THE
RIGHT OR LEFT, HAVE SAID THAT THE INSTITUTIONS WE HAVE
BUILT OVER THE YEARS -- OUR FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM,

OUR ~~DEMOCRATIC~~ ^{representative} GOVERNMENTS AT ALL LEVELS, OUR CIVIC GROUPS -- CANNOT MEET THIS CHALLENGE.

↳ THEY SAY THAT THIS RICH, PROSPEROUS, ~~stable~~ ^{changing} SOCIETY WILL BE UNABLE TO INCORPORATE THE AMERICANS WHO ARE LEFT OUT OF IT. (Inclusion) ^{Peace of the} ^{action}

But ↳ OUR HISTORY PROVES THE OPPOSITE.

~~I THINK WE CAN HELP LIFT THESE LEFT OUT FELLOW AMERICANS.~~

↳ BUT SUCCESS WILL NOT COME AUTOMATICALLY.

IT IS GOING TO TAKE A COMMITMENT OF TIME, RESOURCES, AND, MOST OF ALL, VISION. (our lives, our fortunes, our sacred honor)

Nation Building →

↳ THIS IS A TASK FOR BUILDERS -- FOR THOSE WHO LOOK BEYOND THE COUNTRY CLUB VERANDA TO THE NATION WE ARE BUILDING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.

↳ FOR THE TIME HAS PASSED IN AMERICA -- JUST AS IT HAS PASSED IN THE WORLD AT LARGE -- WHEN "TRICKLE-DOWN" PROSPERITY, "TRICKLE-DOWN" EDUCATION,

"TRICKLE-DOWN" SOCIAL PROGRESS WILL BE ENOUGH TO
SATISFY MEN AND WOMEN WHO ^{Can+do} SEE ON TELEVISION, AND
HEAR ON TRANSISTOR RADIOS, WHAT THE OUTSIDE WORLD
HAS TO OFFER.

↳ IT MEANS WE SHALL HAVE TO MAKE AN EXTRA
EFFORT FOR THE 6-YEAR-OLD CHILD WHO COMES TO SCHOOL
FROM THREE GENERATIONS IN HIS FAMILY OF ILLITERACY,
IGNORANCE AND DISCOURAGEMENT. ↳ WE SHALL HAVE TO GIVE
HIM THE BEST, NOT THE-LEAST, THAT SCHOOL ^{Training} HAS TO OFFER,
OR ANOTHER GENERATION WILL BE LOST.

↳ WE SHALL HAVE TO MAKE ROOM IN OUR OFFICE,
FACTORY, AND BUSINESS TRAINING PROGRAMS -- AND IN OUR
TRADE UNIONS -- FOR THE WILLING BUT UNTRAINED YOUNG *men and*
women WHO WILL NEVER GO BACK TO SCHOOL, WHO DO NOT HAVE
THE STANDARD CREDENTIALS FOR THE WORLD OF WORK; OR THOSE
YOUNG ^{People} ~~men~~ WILL BE PERMANENTLY LOST IN THE WORLD OF WELFARE,
RELIEF AND CRIME.

and

*Free Enterprise being tested
Jobs being - 1st quality.*

ALL OF US WILL HAVE TO RE-EXAMINE OUR OLD

WAYS OF DOING THINGS. WE SHALL HAVE TO ASK SOME HARD
QUESTIONS. *L* DOES OUR PUBLIC WELFARE SYSTEM BREAK UP
FAMILIES? HOW CAN IT BE CHANGED?

L DO WE FORCE OUR OLD PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THOSE
TRAPPED IN POVERTY, TO LIVE ON SMALL, FIXED INCOMES IN
AN ECONOMY OF GROWTH? HOW CAN WE HELP THEM NOT JUST TO
SUBSIST, BUT TO LIVE?

L ARE OUR UNITS OF GOVERNMENT -- ESPECIALLY AT
STATE, LOCAL, AND MUNICIPAL LEVELS -- ORGANIZED,
FUNDED AND STAFFED FOR THE ~~LAST~~ ^{Past} CENTURY, OR FOR TOMORROW?

L CAN OUR RESOURCES BE CONCENTRATED ON SOLVING
NEW PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE POISONOUS POLLUTION OF OUR
WATER AND AIR AND TRANSIT CONGESTION, WHICH CUT ACROSS
OLD JURISDICTIONAL LINES? *L* OR ARE OUR TAX DOLLARS BEING
WASTED THROUGH THE SHEER INEFFICIENCY BECAUSE OUR DIVISIONS
OF GOVERNMENT WERE ESTABLISHED IN AN AGRARIAN SOCIETY? *long*

gone in Urban America. (70% cities)

AND, FINALLY, WE MUST ASK OURSELVES: DOES
EACH ONE OF US REALLY BELIEVE THAT EVERY OTHER AMERICAN --
REGARDLESS OF RACE, NAME, RELIGION, OR COLOR -- OUGHT
TO HAVE THE SAME EQUAL CHANCE THAT WE HAVE? OR DO
WE SAVE THAT BELIEF FOR LIP-SERVICE AT SCHOOL
COMMENCEMENTS, ^{Church} AND PATRIOTIC MEETINGS?

EVERY ONE OF THESE QUESTIONS CARRIES WITH
IT A CHALLENGE FOR OUR AFFLUENT, GENERALLY WELL-OFF
AMERICA. FOR, IF WE CHOSE TO DO SO, WE COULD IGNORE
EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM. OH YES, THERE WOULD BE
DISTURBANCES FROM TIME TO TIME. WE COULD PUT THEM
DOWN. WE WOULD PAY A LOT IN TAXES TO SUPPORT THE
UNPRODUCTIVE PEOPLE IN OUR MIDST, AND FOR THE COST
OF CRIME.

WE WOULD BE OFFENDED ^{as} WE DROVE PAST THE
DIRTY, DILAPIDATED NEIGHBORHOODS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN.

BUT EVERYTHING WOULD STILL BE COMFORTABLE ENOUGH --
AT LEAST FOR QUITE A WHILE -- FOR MOST OF US AND FOR
THE PEOPLE WE KNOW.

↳ BUT THE PRICE WE WOULD PAY IN CONSCIENCE IS
ONE WE COULD NOT AFFORD. ↳ AND OUR MORAL STATURE IN
THIS WORLD -- AND I BELIEVE IT IS CONSIDERABLE --
WOULD BE DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIR. !!

JOBS.

EDUCATION.

TRAINING.

DECENT, LOW-COST HOUSING.

CONVENIENT MASS TRANSIT.

HEALTH SERVICES.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION BY PEOPLE IN THE LIFE
OF THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD.

RESPECT FOR EVERY FELLOW CITIZEN.

THESE ARE THE THINGS OUR SOCIETY WILL HAVE
TO PRODUCE IN THE MONTHS AND YEARS AHEAD -- FAR MORE
THAN THE NEWEST ACCESSORY FOR THE ^{MAN} WOMAN WHO HAS
EVERYTHING -- IF THE WORK OF NATION-BUILDING IS TO GO
ON IN AMERICA.

THIS WILL TAKE FEDERAL PROGRAMS. WE HAVE
SOME GOOD ONES, WHICH HAVE ^{HELPED} REDUCE THE PERCENTAGE OF
POOR PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES FROM 21 PER CENT TO
15 PER CENT IN THE LAST SIX YEARS. BUT WE MAY NEED MORE
AS WE REACH OUT FOR THOSE AMONG US WHO ARE WORST OFF.

IT WILL TAKE STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS, AND ^{above all}
THE WORK OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE FREE LABOR
MOVEMENT.

BUT MOST OF ALL, IT IS GOING TO REQUIRE A COMMITMENT FROM CIVIC-MINDED PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELVES WHO ARE WILLING TO DEVOTE TIME AND ENERGY TO MEETING THE CHALLENGE I HAVE DESCRIBED.

AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON YOUTH OPPORTUNITY, I HAVE FREQUENTLY URGED CIVIC GROUPS TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN PROVIDING RECREATIONAL, *Education* AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE.

I HAVE DISCOVERED AN ENORMOUS WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF OUR PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS -- CHURCHES,

~~SYNAGOGUES, LODGES, AND OTHER FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS,~~

~~LABOR UNIONS, CORPORATIONS, COOPERATIVES, AND MANY~~

~~OTHER CIVIC GROUPS -- TO VOLUNTEER TIME, ENERGY, AND~~

~~CREATIVE INITIATIVE WHICH IT IS BEYOND THE CAPACITY~~

~~OF ANY GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE.~~

I AM HAPPY TO SAY THAT MY IMPRESSION HAS BEEN BORNE OUT RECENTLY BY A GALLUP POLL WHICH SHOWED THAT "THREE OUT OF EVERY FOUR OF THE RESPONDENTS WHO ATTENDED COLLEGE SAID THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO DEVOTE TIME EACH WEEK WITHOUT PAY TO THE SOLUTION OF SUCH LOCAL PROBLEMS AS CRIME, HOUSING, RECREATION, JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, TRAFFIC CONGESTION, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND THE LIKE."

Civic Service - Americans are volunteers.

DR. GALLUP STATES THAT "THESE PEOPLE ARE READY AND EAGER TO GO TO WORK ON THE PROBLEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THEM. NOW THERE IS A VERITABLE NIAGARA OF BRAIN-POWER THAT CAN BE UTILIZED BY ANY STATE OR LOCAL COMMUNITY AT ANY TIME."

need direction & leadership

Some THOSE ENERGIES ARE ALREADY BEING ORGANIZED AND UTILIZED ACROSS THE NATION. BECAUSE OF MY OWN WORK WITH YOUTH, I KNOW THAT AT LEAST 2 THOUSAND CITIES AND TOWNS HAVE COUNCILS ON YOUTH OPPORTUNITY WHICH SERVE AS CLEARING HOUSES FOR VOLUNTARY PROGRAMS.

THERE ARE ALSO COMMITTEES ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND
MANY OTHER VOLUNTARY GROUPS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO
COORDINATE THE KIND OF ADVENTURE IN OPPORTUNITY WHICH
AMERICA NEEDS TODAY.

AND YOU CAN HELP.

YES, THIS IS A TIME WHEN EVERYONE IN OUR
NATION MUST HELP. FOR IT IS A TIME WHEN OUR VERY
FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS
ARE BEING CHALLENGED.

↳ CAN THAT SYSTEM, AND CAN THOSE INSTITUTIONS,
PRODUCE NOT ONLY A BETTER QUANTITY OF GOODS, BUT A
BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE?

↳ CAN OUR FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM, AND OUR
DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT, PRODUCE NOT ONLY A
RICHNESS OF PURSE BUT A RICHNESS OF COMPASSION AND
HUMAN VALUES?

↳ CAN WE PROVIDE FOR THE FORGOTTEN FEW AS WELL AS THE PROSPERING MANY?

↳ CAN WE, FINALLY, IN OUR AMERICAN FRAMEWORK, BUILD A NATION WHERE ALL MEN -- CREATED EQUAL, ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS -- MAY FIND LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS?

* * *

↳ THERE ARE PEOPLE TODAY WHO BELIEVE NOT AND WHO SEE MORTAL SICKNESS IN OUR SOCIETY. THAT IS A FAMILIAR REFRAIN IN TIMES OF CRISIS,

↳ BUT THIS SOCIETY IS NOT MORTALLY ILL JUST BECAUSE ITS TASK IS YET UNDONE, ↳ IT WILL DIE ONLY WHEN THE PEOPLE OF THIS NATION NO LONGER HAVE THE ~~STRENGTH~~ WILL TO CARRY ON A STRUGGLE WHICH THEY HAVE WAGED SUCCESSFULLY FOR ALMOST TWO CENTURIES.

IT WILL DIE ONLY IF IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, WE ARE ABLE TO ACCEPT OUR PROFESSED PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ONLY AS AN ABSTRACTION, AND NOT AS A REALITY.

I SEE NO SIGNS OF THAT NOW. BUT WE
HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE REAL AMERICA, THE ONE WE
HAVE ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT, THE ONE WE HAVE ALWAYS
WANTED, LIES AROUND THE CORNER IN THE FUTURE.

↳ WE DO NOT YET LIVE IN IT.

↳ I AM REMINDED OF THESE FEW VERSES BY THE
GREAT NEGRO POET LANGSTON HUGHES:

"OH, LET MY LAND BE A LAND WHERE LIBERTY
IS CROWNED WITH NO FALSE PATRIOTIC WREATH,
BUT OPPORTUNITY IS REAL, AND LIFE IS FREE,
EQUALITY IS IN THE AIR WE BREATHE ...

OH, YES,

I SAY IT PLAIN,

AMERICA NEVER WAS AMERICA TO ME.

AND YET I SWEAR THIS OATH --

AMERICA WILL BE!"

#

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before the

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THE NATIONAL POSTAL FORUM
 THE WASHINGTON HILTON HOTEL
 WASHINGTON, D. C.

- - -

International Ballroom,
 Washington Hilton Hotel,
 Washington, D. C.,
 Friday, September 15, 1967.

BANQUET MEETING

- - -

WARD & PAUL

917 G St., N. W., Washington 1, D. C.

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2
3 MR. BUCHANAN: Thank you, Mr. McGowan and Sea
4 Chanters. I know I speak for everyone here, you are superla-
5 tive. (Applause.)

6 Now, may I introduce the head table. On my right
7 and your left, you have met the Very Reverend Frederick Brown
8 Harris. Sir, it is good to have you with us this evening.
9 (Applause.)

10 And next to the Doctor is the very lovely Mrs.
11 Harris. Mrs. Harris, thank you for coming. (Applause.)

12 Last evening we had the pleasure of meeting Mrs.
13 O'Brien, and it is so good to see you again, Mrs. O'Brien.
14 (Applause.)

15 On my left, I suppose the far left, it wouldn't sur-
16 prise you to learn that that is the Deputy Postmaster General.
17 (Applause.)

18 Fred, may I just pause and say I am not quite sure
19 how I got tied into the Post Office, but I certainly enjoyed
20 working with you for the last few weeks and certainly the last
21 two days. You and your associates put on a tremendous show.
22 It is good to see you here. (Applause.)

23 And next to Mr. Belen is Mrs. Belen. I almost lost
24 you behind the Postmaster. (Applause.)

25 To introduce our speaker this evening, it is a
privilege to present the Postmaster General, Lawrence F.

1 O'Brien. (Applause.)

2 REMARKS OF LAWRENCE F. O'BRIEN

3 POSTMASTER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

4 MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you very much. I, too, have
5 enjoyed these two days.

6 Reverend and Mrs. Harris, Mr. Vice President, ladies
7 and gentlemen. As we come to the close of this great National
8 Postal Forum, I think several comments are very much in order.

9 First, I think a well-deserved vote of thanks goes
10 to our Co-Chairman who symbolically is representing the part-
11 nership of business and of government, and our appreciation
12 goes to him. (Applause.)

13 Our appreciation certainly goes to a dynamic Senior
14 Vice President of the Prudential Insurance Company whose
15 activity during this conference proved, beyond any doubt, that
16 separation between private and public sectors need not lead to
17 divorce. (Applause.)

18 And equally important to the success of this program
19 is my partner and colleague, the Co-Chairman, a great public
20 official, and I want at this point to ask Fred Belen and John
21 Buchanan to stand together, and I want to hear your applause.
22 (Applause.)

23 Now, of course, it goes without saying, there are
24 many others, many others, really too numerous to mention here
25 tonight, who have worked long and hard to generate this

1 creative dialogue, creative dialogue certainly between those
2 who use the mails, and we who try to serve them.

3 As you know, or you may have suspected, I have spent
4 much of my life in the political arena. Since the only
5 certainty in politics is uncertainty, I am used to surprises,
6 pleasant and otherwise. I, for one, had hoped that this
7 Forum would be well attended. I hoped it would be productive.
8 I had hoped that we could see some expression of cooperation
9 on the part of hard and vital men, but being by nature a hope-
10 ful pessimist, or at best, a cautious optimist, frankly, I
11 simply never expected the outpouring of cooperation and con-
12 sent for good government that we have seen during this Forum.
13 (Applause.)

14 I think the only word that fits the response of this
15 Forum, truly fits it, is "fantastic." I find it deeply grati-
16 fying to see the quantity of your participation, and more
17 important, the quality of your participation. The combination
18 of enthusiasm and thoughtfulness that has characterized every
19 one of our panelists. Of course, only you can answer the
20 question, the question of whether these two days were as
21 meaningful as you hoped them to be. To a large degree,
22 whether they will be as meaningful as we all hoped will depend
23 on how both you and the postal service carry forward this
24 creative dialogue, how we together work on solutions to the
25 many problems that have been presented here during these last

1 two days.

2 I can assure you that there will be no red tape
3 between the end of this Forum and the beginning of our work
4 on the findings of the Forum. The panel reports will not be
5 filed on shelves gathering dust. I can tell you now, and I
6 can pledge to you that beginning Monday we will roll up our
7 sleeves and sharpen our brains to work on those reports. You
8 want action, and that is what we aim to produce. (Applause.)

9 Now, the President often tells me, and I am sure he
10 has mentioned this to the Vice President, that an ounce of work
11 is worth a pound of words. Well, many words as well as much
12 work have been produced by this Forum, and we assure you that
13 you can expect more than words, more than words, from the Post
14 Office Department. In the past few years we, you and your
15 postal service, working together, have moved rapidly from
16 aspiration to institution, and together we have created an
17 institution we can be proud of. Mail Users Council activities
18 have picked up speed and it has gained in effectiveness.
19 Today, and the evidence is here before us, you are a powerful
20 force, a force operating to produce better mail service, and
21 we need to assure a continuing effort. We would like you to
22 report back to your communities and your membership, report
23 back on what you have discovered here. Please, tell them the
24 story of this Forum, and also let us know what you think of the
25 Forum. Send us your critiques. We have no monopoly on ideas.

1 We need and welcome your continuing help and your insights.
2 And we would also like your further cooperation in our next
3 major effort, our next and immediate effort, which is to be a
4 membership drive, a drive designed to achieve more of the
5 potential of the Mail Users Council as an instrument of ser-
6 vice. Today we have 20,000 members of the Mail Users Council
7 in this country. Our goal, starting tonight, over this next
8 year, is to double our membership. Will you join us in that?
9 (Applause.)

10 Now, during the past two days we have all been held
11 by the inspiration of speakers from many different areas of
12 American life, and now, in our next speaker, we will move
13 toward a fitting climax of our Forum. He has, as most of you
14 know, I am sure, spent literally a lifetime in the cause of
15 good government. His experience as a great Senator and as a
16 progressive mayor of a major American city gave him insight
17 into the problems of government possessed by few other Ameri-
18 cans. His achievements, already legion, are, I am sure,
19 certainly but prologue to a future filled with many more
20 brilliant contributions to his country. He is a good friend
21 of the Postal Service, a good and dear friend of mine, and let
22 me add, he uses ZIP Code. (Applause.)

23 I want to take this opportunity to thank him for
24 joining us and for making this National Forum a memorable
25 experience for all of us.

Ladies and gentlemen, one of the truly, truly great Americans of our time, the Vice President of the United States of America. (Applause.)

ADDRESS OF HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

MR. HUMPHREY: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Postmaster General, my very good friend, Larry O'Brien, and your friend, and his wonderful and lovely Elva, two of the finest friends that Muriel and Hubert Humphrey have in this great city. Dr. and Mrs. Harris, and Fred and Mrs. Belen, and I saved for last, because I want to honor him particularly and specifically because of his title, Mr. John Buchanan, Vice President. (Applause.)

Two Vice Presidents must stand together, John, without any regard to politics, region, race, creed, color, nationality or origin. We must stand together.

Truly I say tonight that I have been very, very pleased and moved by what I have heard of the Forum and what I have known of them. I want to join with Mr. O'Brien in congratulating all the members of the committees. Some of you may have noted that I was looking your National Postal Forum program for September 14th and 15th, these two days, and I could not help but be just overwhelmed by the quality of manpower and womanpower that serves here on the Committee on the National Postal Forum. A host of committees, or at least

1 several of them, helping make this great department of govern-
2 ment your department because a governmental department does
3 not belong to the government officials. It should belong to
4 the people, and, indeed, it should belong to the users, in
5 this instance above all, the mail service.

6 Well, Larry, you gave me the kind of introduction
7 that a man needs at this hour of the night after a long day.
8 Adlai Stevenson used to say, "Flattery is all right if you
9 don't inhale it," but Larry looked over at me and he noticed
10 I was breathing more deeply as he was going along, and as he
11 got a little more flattering with his comments, and he has
12 lifted my spirits and undoubtedly extended my speech.

13 (Applause.)

14 Many of you were wondering what I whispered to this
15 dear friend as I came to the podium, and I think I should let
16 you in on the secret, because there are no secrets in Washington.

17 (Laughter.)

18 I said, "Larry, any time you want to introduce me,
19 I am for it."

20 Now, let me just salute this good man who is serving
21 as our Postmaster General during these past two years, who has
22 demonstrated that he can deliver the mail. We knew he could
23 deliver the votes. (Laughter.)

24 And I might add that he has lived up to the highest
25 standards of bipartisan traditions of his office. Why, just

1 last week the rumor was around Washington that Larry O'Brien
2 was talking about the possibility of issuing a George Romney
3 commemorative stamp. (Laughter and applause.)

4 I don't want anybody to believe that that is any
5 more than rumor. There is no problem finding rumors in
6 Washington, and who could deny that Larry O'Brien has improved
7 the United States mail service? No longer need we agree with
8 Mark Twain, that great American who said, "Trust the mails
9 only when you have nothing to say. For my part, I prefer to
10 correspond by mental telepathy." (Laughter.)

11 Well, that is a long way away from the days of Larry
12 O'Brien's leadership. We have come a long, long way since
13 then, and one of his most important contributions, I think,
14 is illustrated here tonight and during these past two days
15 in this tremendous program that you have had, with topic after
16 topic, specialists and speakers working with you in this
17 regional, National Postal Forum, all designed to let the mail
18 users tell us how the postal system can be improved, and this
19 is but one, as I said, of several efforts that are being made
20 in and out of government.

21 I am particularly pleased to note that there are
22 members here tonight of the Post Office Department Advisory
23 Board. I have met with these members on occasion, both in
24 terms of the public service and privately. The outstanding
25 citizens appointed by the President to serve on this Board,

1 along with others, tackle some of the really tough problems
2 that face the postal service. I think the postal service,
3 Larry, is mighty fortunate to have the wisdom and experience
4 of these gentlemen and the Commission on Postal Organization
5 and others, because their experience is bound to improve the
6 quality of the service. I have an old friend of mine back in
7 Minnesota that is on this Advisory Board. I wanted him to stay
8 here tonight, but he was a victim of illness recently and
9 could not stay that long. He is my friend, Fred Gates, who
10 tells me that his colleagues on the Presidential Advisory
11 Board are now immersed in what they believe will be the most
12 significant study of postal employee motivations ever under-
13 taken, and when you have a work force of about 700,000, I
14 believe it is, a motivation study is mighty important, and it
15 also reveals that the postal service is still a people's
16 business and highly motivated employees are essential to
17 efficiency and economy. I mention this Advisory Board because
18 it is just another effort, a continuing effort, to improve the
19 quality of service in a tremendous enterprise, one of the
20 greatest enterprises in the world, the United States postal and
21 mail service.

22 Well now, public participation in postal affairs has
23 not always been, however, of such high-minded order. Some of
24 you may know that I was a teacher at one time. I always mention
25 that because of the precarious nature of public office.

1 (Laughter.)

2 You never know when you may be returning to your old
3 haunts, and I was a teacher of both political science and
4 history, and I was looking through some of my notes the other
5 day as I was getting ready for this occasion, and I thought the
6 best thing for me to do would be, of course, to refer to some
7 of the great Americans. I want to refer to one of them, above
8 all, who started the postal service, Ben Franklin, a dis-
9 tinguished diplomat and statesman who had as his first govern-
10 ment job under the new Constitution that of being the first
11 Postmaster General. So, Larry, you walk in the footsteps of a
12 wise man. I'll tell you a little bit more about Ben Franklin
13 later on. He was quite a man too in many ways. The ink was
14 no sooner dry on his appointment, though, that Ben Franklin
15 began organizing his Post Office. He got right down to busi-
16 ness, and his first act was to put five relatives on the pay-
17 roll. (Laughter.)

18 Oh, those days are gone I am afraid. (Laughter.)

19 Oh, when you hear some of us these days pleading the
20 case from the wisdom of our forefathers, you know now of what
21 we speak. And then there was a great beloved President,
22 Abraham Lincoln, who even had his turn at the postal service,
23 serving for \$55 a year as postmaster in New Salem, Illinois.
24 Now, as President he had a lot of trouble with job-seekers.
25 My, the pressures upon that man. But, he had an answer to the

1 job-seekers, finally. During his trip to Gettysburg to make
2 that famous Gettysburg Address, you may have forgotten that he
3 came down with a contagious fever, but the job-seekers were
4 pounding at the door, literally, leaving him with no peace at
5 all, and Abraham Lincoln told his secretary, "Let them all
6 come in. I finally have something I can give to everyone."
7 (Laughter.)

8 Well, the postal service has quite a history, from
9 even the great, the early great men of our nation.

10 Now, I want to talk to you very seriously tonight
11 about our country. It is always good that Americans have a
12 sense of humor. It is a sign of our basic strength. Only
13 the people who have confidence can afford to laugh at them-
14 selves, only the strong can be willing to admit that on occasion
15 they are weak, only those who have real moral stamina are
16 willing to admit their limitations. When I find my fellow
17 Americans willing to stand up and admit that we have problems
18 and then seek to do something about them, I know that America
19 is the America that we all want it to be and the America that
20 we know it to be.

21 This past summer has been a difficult one, and the
22 months ahead are not going to be much easier, so I want this
23 evening to take some of your time, maybe a little too much of
24 it, to talk to you about this America as I see it in these
25 months past and possibly these months ahead.

1 One hundred and ninety-one years ago, Thomas
2 Jefferson gave this country what became the highest ideals of
3 American life. We all know it, but seldom do we ponder its
4 full meaning -- "All men are created equal ... they are
5 endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ...
6 among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
7 What a doctrine! What a powerful statement of human purpose!
8 The final answer to the doctrine of divine rights of kings is
9 the most eloquent plea for man's emancipation. Our own
10 Thomas Jefferson, he synthesized the thinking of centuries.
11 He put in those few words the real meaning of human dignity
12 when he said, "They are endowed by their Creator with certain
13 inalienable rights." He didn't list them all, but he said,
14 "among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
15 That is what America is all about. This is our unfinished
16 business. Some people would put it the unfinished American
17 Revolution which possibly never will be finished, at least not
18 in our lifetime. We are a restive, restless people,
19 establishing our own standards, always seeking higher ground,
20 and may it ever be so.

21 Well, from time to time in our history these noble
22 ideals have been threatened, but I think it can be said on
23 the whole that we have made rather steady progress toward
24 their realization. Let me digress for just a moment to say
25 that I become a little peeved with those who are constantly,

1 constantly criticizing our land and whatever it does as if
2 this was a sign of some super-intelligence. You do not have
3 to be particularly intelligent to be negative. As a matter
4 of fact, it may take a little more intelligence and faith,
5 wisdom and understanding to be affirmative. I happen to
6 believe that the record of this nation gives us good reason
7 to believe that progress is our history and our standard, and
8 that the future can be even better than the past.

9 Now, the notion of human equality -- and that was a
10 revolutionary idea when Jefferson enunciated it -- the belief
11 that every man, no matter what his race or creed, nationality,
12 that every man should have an equal opportunity to realize
13 his full potential, is one that expresses a deep-seated human
14 need for a feeling of personal dignity, and it is an idea so
15 fundamental and so powerful that it has dictated the broad
16 course of history in this land for the last 200 years. But,
17 not only in the United States, but throughout the world.
18 The power of an idea, without an American battalion ever
19 setting foot on the soil of Europe in the 18th Century, the
20 idea of the American Revolution and the doctrine of human
21 equality made every throne uncertain, and, in fact, brought
22 revolution to every country in the European Continent.

23 And it has brought about, as John Adams said it
24 would, "the illumination of the ignorant and the emancipation
25 of the slavish parts of mankind all over the earth."

1 You know what I liked about those early Americans?
2 They were able to think big. They thought in broad concepts
3 and basic fundamental principles. They did not get caught
4 down as if they were a walking world almanac. I do not con-
5 sider a man to be really intelligent by knowing details. You
6 can buy that for a dollar each year in a book. The purpose
7 of education is not to make a mind a computer, but rather,
8 fill it with a sense of judgment and beauty, to be able to
9 differentiate between the ugly and the lovely, between the
10 good and the evil.

11 Now, our own history -- and I said to Larry as I
12 was listening to the Sea Chanters, I said, "I'm just a plain
13 unabashed sentimentalist, a simple patriot, I just love to
14 hear those men sing. Weren't they great?" (Applause.)

15 They were going to keep me outside, you know, for
16 a while, because I did not get here in time for dinner tonight.
17 I told them, one of my people, "Listen, I want to get in.
18 Don't leave me out here. I want to get in and get the feel
19 of what is going on. I want to look at those young men in
20 the United States Navy." I want to be out here with you, not
21 out there and then have me come strutting across the stage
22 like a new act. (Laughter.)

23 So, I got in, even if somebody did drop the dishes.
24 (Laughter.)

25 Well, our history suggests that the American people

1 are especially well-endowed to make the ideal of equality a
2 reality. Clinton Rossiter, that famous American historian,
3 has said -- and this is my feeling, and I thoroughly agree
4 with him -- that our political tradition includes "an
5 avowedly optimistic, idealistic, even light-hearted way of
6 thinking about man and government. It is stamped with the
7 mighty name and spirit of Thomas Jefferson, and its articles
8 of faith, a sort of American holy writ, meliorism, progress,
9 liberty, equality, democracy, and individualism."

10 Now, that is one of the greatest historians, and yet
11 I must say that there are cynics today that feel that if you
12 speak with such simple yet profound words that you are just a
13 sort of a sentimentalist, a generalist, that you really do not
14 understand what it's all about because you have not been able
15 to pinpoint the fly specks upon the great mosaic of history.
16 Oh, yes, we have good reason to be optimistic. I am accused of
17 being a perennial optimist. Well, I will tell you, I am going
18 to let you in on a secret why I am so optimistic. There are
19 so many well-developed pessimists around here I have decided
20 to stake out a little area of my own where it isn't crowded on
21 the optimist side. (Applause.)

22 But, I must say that despite the very real progress
23 that we have made, and it surely has been substantial, toward
24 equality of opportunity for all, our work is not finished.

25 My fellow Americans, this country represents the

1 unfinished business of mankind. That is what is great about
2 it. We are not sleepy and sluggish and content. If we ever
3 are, we will have lost the meaning of this country. Now, it
4 is all too easy for some of us that are quite well off to
5 overlook the fact that the Great Depression still lingers on
6 in a very real way for many of our fellow Americans.

7 Let me give you some of the information that may
8 help our judgment. This is information that is readily avail-
9 able. The under-employment rate in some big urban ghettos
10 today is as high as 35 percent. And we talk about ghettos,
11 ghetto in America. That's an un-American word, I want to say
12 right now. The whole idea of a ghetto has no place in this
13 country. People came to America to get rid of the ghetto and
14 get away from the ghetto, and to think that we have allowed
15 one to grow here in some of our cities! It is a challenge to
16 us today as never before. It is an enemy within our gates
17 and the walls of those ghettos must be torn down, and they
18 cannot be torn down with just noise. I know the Walls of
19 Jericho, Dr. Harris, came down after much shouting and
20 trumpeting, but it also requires work.

21 The poor in America have four times as much heart
22 disease, six times as much arthritis and rheumatism, six
23 times as much mental and nervous illness as the rest of our
24 population. Now, that is the meaning of poverty. Not just
25 poverty in the purse, but of the body and the soul, the

1 spirit.

2 Sixty percent of all poor children never see a
3 dentist; 50 percent never see a doctor; and 80 percent of
4 the young men who go into a Job Corps Center today have never
5 been either to a doctor or a dentist. And then you wonder
6 why there is restlessness and frustration.

7 The poor people are four times as likely to die by
8 the age of 35 as a person of middle income. That is a medical
9 fact. And in the past we could conceal some of those facts,
10 but you cannot any more. Radio and television, free press,
11 have made it an open society. And even those that cannot read
12 can hear and look. And, as I said, the most revolutionary
13 instrument in America today is the tube called the television.
14 The whole world is before everybody and all of its dimensions.

15 Thirty million Americans still live in these con-
16 ditions that I speak of. Not as many as used to, but too
17 many. They live on the margins, on the fringes of the
18 America that you and I know.

19 So, I think the challenge is very much before us,
20 and I am only here to state it because the answers are not
21 going to be in Washington alone. They are going to come from
22 you, the people.

23 The challenge is to find a way to include that small
24 minority, to provide them with a decent level of opportunity.
25 Now, I did not say "welfare." I said "opportunity." I am

1 opposed to the welfare state. (Applause.)

2 We are not trying to build a welfare state; we are
3 trying to build in this country a state of opportunity where
4 people can take care of their own welfare if they get a fair
5 chance. (Applause.)

6 That's what we are trying to build. The challenge
7 is to find a way to make this limited group in numbers, to
8 make them full, productive participants in this remarkably
9 rich and successful democracy which has grown out of the
10 ideas contained in the Declaration of Independence.

11 John Stewart Bell, one of the great philosophers of
12 the 19th Century said, "When a man has nothing to do for
13 his country he does not love it." And we speak in this
14 country that people should love America, and they ought to,
15 but the sure way to give a person a cause for love and
16 affection is to have him be a part of it, not removed from it,
17 but a participant in it. That which you know and that of
18 which you are a part you will love. That is our purpose.

19 Now, some people, and most of them are extremists
20 to the right and the left and in the same breed of cats, they
21 just have different color clothes on, have said that the
22 institutions that we have built over the years -- such as our
23 free enterprise system, our representative governments at all
24 levels, our civic groups -- simply cannot meet this challenge.
25 They have already written it off. They say we are a failure.

1 They say that this rich, prosperous, stable and even
2 changing society will be unable to incorporate the Americans
3 that are left out of it. But, our history proves the opposite.

4 But, the success that we want will not come auto-
5 matically or instantly. It is going to take a commitment of
6 time, of resources, and, most of all, of vision. Remember,
7 Thomas Jefferson in that same statement that I read to you
8 of our Declaration of Independence had these other words.
9 In order to make sure that that high ideal could be consum-
10 mated, he said, "We pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our
11 sacred honor." He did not say we pledge a few minutes a day
12 or a year and about two percent of our money and an occasional
13 time to think about it on Sundays of our honor, he said that
14 we pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor. What
15 a commitment! And, as John Hancock put his name on the
16 Declaration of Independence it is so big that you can see it
17 for a city block. Somebody said, "Why so big, John?" And
18 he said, "So the king can see it without his spectacles."
19 That is the history of this country. Great commitment.

20 Now, what I am talking about is a big job, but this
21 is a country that does big things. It does the impossible or
22 it would not be what it is. And every time I hear somebody
23 say it is impossible, that simply means that we ought to get
24 busy and do it. We are a nation of builders. For those who
25 look beyond the country club veranda to the nation we are

1 doing something, and we are building something for the 21st
2 Century.

3 Nation building is our business, here and abroad.
4 Some day people will really understand what we are trying to
5 do in Southeast Asia, not to destroy, but to build, and nation
6 building takes time like raising a family, gaining an educa-
7 tion, building a business. Prudential Life did not happen
8 overnight, Mr. Buchanan, and as you well know, it has come a
9 long way for a long time. Everything that is good took time.
10 Build. The time has passed in America -- just as it has
11 passed in the world at large -- when "trickle-down" prosperity,
12 "trickle-down" education, "trickle-down" social justice, and
13 "trickle-down" social progress will be enough to satisfy men
14 and women who can, as I said, and do, see on that television,
15 and hear on their transistor radios, what the outside world
16 has to offer. Those two instruments, the transistor radio
17 that is in the bush of Africa, that is in the jungles of
18 Southeast Asia, and that television, has opened the world wide
19 open. There is no way to get out of it now.

20 Now, it means that we shall have to make an extra
21 effort here in our own country, and I am just going to give
22 you an example. For the six-year-old child who comes to
23 school from three generations in his family of illiteracy,
24 ignorance, and discouragement -- that is his inheritance --
25 we shall have to give that child the best, not the worst

1 schooling, but the best, the best that we have to offer, or
2 we are going to have another lost generation. We shall have
3 to make room in our office, in our factory, in our business
4 training programs and in our trade unions for the willing, but
5 the untrained, young men and women who will never go back to
6 school, who do not have the standard credentials for the world
7 of work, or those young people will be permanently lost in a
8 world of welfare, relief, and crime, and they go together.

9 We need to have a concept in America of learn and
10 earn at the same time. There is nothing that is better for a
11 person than some work. You would be surprised at what it can
12 do to build character or to deny you the time to destroy what
13 character you have. All of us will have to re-examine our
14 old ways of doing things. That is what I am here to say
15 tonight, and I want to come to this fine business group as well
16 as my friends in the government and say we are going to have
17 to take a brand new look, because a lot of things we have been
18 doing need to be changed. We shall have to ask some hard
19 questions. For example, does our public welfare system break
20 up families? If so, how can we change it? Do we force our
21 old people, particularly those trapped in poverty, to live
22 on a fixed income, small income, in an economy of growth?
23 How can we help them, not just to subsist, but to live? You
24 will note, the Declaration of Independence did not say life,
25 liberty, and subsistence. It said life, liberty, and the

1 pursuit of happiness.

2 Let me ask another question. Are our units of
3 government, state, local, and municipal levels, as well as
4 federal, organized, funded and staffed for the past century,
5 or for the 21st Century, because we are in the last third of
6 the 20th Century?

7 Can our resources be concentrated on solving some
8 new problems of modern technology such as water pollution,
9 air pollution, transit congestion, all of which cut across
10 old jurisdictional lines? It does not do any good to have an
11 air pollution program in New York and not one in Newark. It
12 does not do any good to have a traffic control program in one
13 community and then have none in the suburbs. Things have
14 changed.

15 We have to ask ourselves whether the structure that
16 we have today, which is essentially from agrarian rural
17 America orientation, is adequate for an urbanized America.
18 I do not have the answers. I am asking the questions.

19 And finally, we must ask ourselves: Does each one
20 of us really believe, really believe, that every other American
21 -- regardless of race, name, religion, or color -- ought to have
22 the same equal chance that we have? Or do we save that belief
23 for lip service at school, church, commencements, and patriotic
24 meetings?

25 Now, every one of these questions carries with it a

1 challenge for our affluent, generally well-off America. We
2 could ignore them. We could ignore the answers for a time,
3 just as America can become garrison America, fortress America.
4 I suppose we could just ignore the rest of the world for some
5 time, but the day of reckoning will come. The price that we
6 would have to pay in conscience I think is one that we could
7 not afford, and our moral stature in this world, which is
8 considerable and is a powerful force, I believe would be
9 damaged beyond repair if we ignore these challenges.

10 So, we are talking about jobs, and education, and
11 training, decent housing, convenient transit, health services,
12 active participation by the people in the life of their neigh-
13 borhood, respect for every fellow citizen. This is what we
14 are talking about. These are the things that our society will
15 have to produce, not just for you and me. I think we have
16 those things for us, but we will have to produce them in the
17 months ahead for everyone. We will have to do this much more
18 than just trying to find the newest accessory for the man and
19 woman who has everything if this work of nation-building in
20 America is to continue.

21 Now, this is going to take Federal programs, it is
22 going to take state and local efforts, and, above all, it is
23 going to take what Larry O'Brien emphasized here that you
24 have been doing, the work of our great private institutions.
25 This work of the great free America, free enterprise, voluntary

1 organizations, fraternal, labor, business, cooperative organi-
2 zations. America is not the government. The government is
3 but a symbol of America, and every organized society needs a
4 government, but America's unique quality is that its great
5 strength of resources is in its people.

6 I have never forgotten that my father brought me
7 up on the philosophy of Woodrow Wilson. One of his great
8 books, entitled, The New Freedom, Woodrow Wilson said,
9 "America is not as rich as the money in its banks or the
10 assets of its industries or the value of its land and its
11 forests and mines. America is as rich as its people, its
12 people educated, its people helping, its people believing with
13 deep faith in America." Woodrow Wilson understood the
14 strength of this land. What he was saying is that we must
15 have a commitment from civic-minded people like yourselves who
16 are willing to devote time and energy to meeting the challenges
17 that I have described, and I have done it inadequately.

18 I happen to be Chairman of the President's Council
19 on Youth Opportunity. It is the best assignment the President
20 has given me, and I am grateful to him for giving the Vice
21 President the chance to work with our young people. My task
22 is to try and be a catalyst to activate Federal agencies,
23 state and local governments in programs that relate to the
24 well-being of our young people, and above all, to invite into,
25 to excite, if possible, the wholehearted participation of

1 business and of private groups in our country, the great
2 civic organizations, the help for our disadvantaged young
3 people. We have had quite a record. We did not do as well
4 as we would like, but we did better this year than last.
5 1,400,000 jobs for disadvantaged, needy boys and girls this
6 summer, 1,400,000. That is 300,000 more than last summer
7 that we were able to find. We had thousands of playgrounds
8 all across America, illuminated playgrounds, enrichment of
9 our educational system for disadvantaged. Well, I have dis-
10 covered something this last year, and this country is always
11 discovering something. I discovered that there is an enormous
12 willingness on the part of our private organizations to
13 volunteer time, energy, and creative initiative.

14 There is a book written entitled, "Looking Backward,"
15 and I believe in that book there is this business about acres
16 of thunder under your feet. This country is rich with re-
17 sources to do any job that we need to do. I am happy to say
18 that my impression has been borne out recently by a Gallup
19 Poll which shows this, and I quote from Dr. Gallup, "Three
20 out of every four of the respondents who attended college said
21 they would be willing to devote time each week without pay to
22 the solution of such local problems as crime, housing, recre-
23 ation, delinquency, traffic congestion, unemployment, and the
24 like."

25 Americans are civic-minded. This is the unique

1 quality of this country as compared to others. Americans are
2 volunteers. And Mr. Businessman, you represent the most pro-
3 gressive, economic and social, most progressive economic social
4 system that the world has ever known.

5 I have said to my friends who are the leaders of
6 capitalism, it is we in this capitalistic, as they call it,
7 our enemies at least, this capitalistic society which have
8 the social consciousness. Our enterprise system has done
9 more for the working man than all of the socialistic, com-
10 munist systems all put together. We know what to do. We
11 have benefited the people by it. (Applause.)

12 We have done much more, not more, much more, and we
13 have done it without the sacrifice of freedom.

14 Well, Dr. Gallup states that "these people" -- that
15 I speak of -- "are ready and eager to go to work on the prob-
16 lems of special interest to them." He said, "There is a
17 veritable Niagara of brain-power that can be utilized by any
18 state or local community at any time." What it needs is
19 direction, what it needs is mobilization, what it needs is
20 for your mayor and your governor, what it needs is for the
21 head of the chamber of commerce, the head of your union to get
22 busy and tap that great resource that is there, a volunteer
23 effort that wants to go to work to make America a better place.

24 Now, some of these energies are already being
25 organized. I mentioned my work with the Youth Council. This

1 past year we had at least 2,000 cities and towns in America
2 with Youth Councils, Councils on Youth Opportunity, which have
3 been at work serving as clearing houses for voluntary agencies
4 activating the program. There are also committees on urban
5 development and many other voluntary areas designed to
6 coordinate the kind of opportunity that America needs today.

7 You know, we have got this slogan, "War On Poverty,"
8 and have kind of tried to do something positive about that.
9 I would like to change that and call it, "Adventure in
10 Opportunity." That is the positive thinking of the Americans.
11 We are not warriors at heart. We are adventurers. We are
12 discoverers. And we are thinking about not trying to make
13 poverty a little less painful; we are trying to get rid of it,
14 we are trying to get people elevated to a new level. An
15 Adventure in Opportunity, a whole new world for them. And
16 you can help. This is a time when everyone in the nation must
17 help. It is not a time to look to Washington alone. It is
18 not a time just to look to your government. My fellow Americans,
19 this is a time for Americans to take care of America and not
20 just to put it off on somebody else, and above all, not just
21 to leave it to the government.

22 I think we have to ask ourselves some basic questions
23 because free enterprise and democratic institutions are being
24 challenged. Can that system and can those institutions pro-
25 duce, not only a better quality of goods, but a better quality

1 of life? I think so.

2 Can our free enterprise system and our democratic
3 form of government produce not only richness of purse but a
4 richness of compassion and human values? Can we provide for
5 the forgotten few as well as for the prospering many? Can
6 we finally, in our American framework, build a nation where
7 all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with
8 certain inalienable rights, and where they may really find
9 life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

10 Now, there are some people that say we cannot do
11 it. They believe that they see in this society a mortal
12 sickness. That is a familiar refrain from the downhearts, the
13 men of little faith. But, I do not think this society is
14 mortally ill just because its task is undone, and I think it
15 will die only when the people of this nation no longer have
16 the will to carry on a struggle which they have waged suc-
17 cessfully for almost two centuries. I cannot believe that
18 this generation that has more than any other generation ever
19 dreamed, would do less with it than our forebears have done.

20 There are so many pieces of poetry that I would like
21 to end this meeting with, and I am torn now as to which I
22 should use, but I frequently stated from this platform in this
23 hotel this, my favorite verse, as a sort of secular scripture
24 for my fellow Americans in this period of our crisis and this
25 period of our opportunity, and it is from Thomas Wolf. You

1 have heard our President use it, but like the Golden Rule
2 or the 23rd Psalm, it is worth repeating, and it is worth
3 every American taking it into his bosom and understanding in
4 his heart as well as his mind.

5 Thomas Wolf laid it down in words that men should
6 never forget of what America is and what it promises.

7 Here is what he said, and here is what I believe,
8 and I think this is what you believe:

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

14 That's the America that we love. That's what
15 America can be.

16 Thank you very much.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Vice President, our deepest
19 thanks for joining us here tonight, and to all of you, thank
20 you very much for being here, and a safe journey home.

21 (Applause.)

22 (Whereupon, at 9:50 p.m., the National Postal Forum
23 banquet meeting was concluded.)

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