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ADDRESS BY VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY

Youth Opportunity Conference - 1968
Department of State Auditorium, January 29, 1968

I welcome you to the Youth Opportunity Conference of 1968. With us are the Mayors of many of our major cities, their Youth Coordinators, representatives of your State Governors, outstanding leaders of American business and labor, members of the National Urban Coalition, federal officials, and most importantly, a number of young people themselves. How fortunate that is. I wish there were more. And I can say in all candor as I look around the room, I wish there were more of the women here.

We are here on urgent business: How can we make the summer of 1968 a time of genuine opportunity for every young person in America? How can we translate the wish and the desire to work into jobs, into pay checks, and into training? How can we transform what can be -- and will be, unless we do something about it -- hours of idleness, boredom and frustration into exciting days of challenge, of opportunity and discovery?

When President Johnson signed the Executive Order creating the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, he said this: "Many youths, particularly those who live in impoverished areas, need special help in improving their lives and in finding a place in the mainstream of our society. The summer months provide an exceptional opportunity to enhance the sound growth and guidance of youth."

What the President has said to us is that the summer months represent your chance to come to grips with the problems that confront youth. He didn't say that we have only to be concerned about the summer months. He said the summer months were the key to the door of youth opportunity.

We want you to go hold of that key and start opening that door.

Our task is to make the most of this special opportunity, not on a crash basis, not for three months only, but as a part of a year-round, continuing, growing effort in every community in America.

Now, there are those who will say that our major concern, of course, is to prevent further civil disorder in our major cities. Well, if helping young men and women live a better life contributes to a more tranquil and a more serene community, all the better. Every responsible American is determined, of course, to maintain law and order. Every responsible American knows that injury, death and the destruction of homes and businesses means heartbreak and hatred, not progress. And every responsible American is willing to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent a repetition of those tragic events.

But let the record clearly state that we talk of youth opportunity, we plan for it and work for it -- we talk of jobs, education, recreation, arts and culture -- to help the law-abiding majority help themselves, so that they can live a rewarding life.

We do not do these things to buy off the riotous few. We are seeking to help the vast majority of these young people live the kind of a life that they would like to live.

We seek to inspire young people to higher standards. The success of the programs initiated as a result of this Conference -- and as a result of your efforts in your own cities -- will be measured largely by your ability to broaden horizons, to raise standards, and to tap the wellspring of imagination, self-confidence and hope which lies dormant within these young men and women.

And I want to emphasize here as strongly as I can, what we plan here will be of little use unless we are going to put it into action where we live, in our respective localities.

The United States of America is the sum total of its neighborhoods, its families, its communities. Sometimes I grow a bit weary of what we call national programming, without local follow through.

If there is to be a better America, it will be because you make it better where you live. That better America does not come out of Washington, D. C., alone. We can make a contribution; but in truth the better America must come from the efforts of our people wherever they are.

If ever there were a time for local initiative, local responsibility, revitalization of local spirit and local government, it is now.

We inaugurate our planning for the summer of 1968 on the foundation of our successes and failures over the past three summers. Last spring the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, with a minimum of lead time, established a program of youth activities for the summer of 1967.

We contacted 50 Governors, 2500 Mayors and City Managers, 2100 United Funds in your communities, 125 women's organizations, 900,000 employers, 35,000 school administrators, 2100 public employment services offices, over a thousand community agencies, and hundreds of private organizations.

Every one of these that I have listed were contacted by letter, by bulletin, by telegram, and many of them by telephone. There wasn't a single day of last summer that the Vice President of the United States did not call anywhere from five to ten leading citizens, public officials, publishers, or people in charge of media, to encourage them to do a better job for youth in their respective communities.

In each case the message was the same. I asked that we establish local Councils for Youth Opportunity, mobilize community resources, and might I add that the local Council for Youth Opportunity also needs a local Urban Coalition. The national Urban Coalition will be as effective as its parts, as its local counterparts.

We asked that communities find jobs, run job fairs wherever possible, make full use of their public facilities, schools, armories, military training camps, churches, and fair grounds.

We said: Take your bands, your movie projectors, your sports equipment out to the disadvantaged neighborhoods. We got the military bands in Washington, D. C., out to the neighborhoods. A great idea, too.

Find the empty bunks in your summer camps, and fill them with young people who need a break. Use your local media, radio, television and newspapers, prove to your young people you really care.

Many of you were stalwarts in those local campaigns. I see some of the champions right here who did a remarkable job.

In city after city there were imaginative and hard-hitting efforts to reach disadvantaged, often alienated, young people.

Pride, Inc., in the District of Columbia, employed a thousand youngsters in a massive clean-up campaign. Youth-conceived and youth-implemented, Pride truly gave these young people "a piece of the action". It is a kind of program, may I say, that could be worked out with both public and private resources in almost every major community in the United States.

Might I add there is an awful lot of clean-up that needs to be done. The American city is becoming a very ugly place with trash and rubbish lying around -- in a country that has Mr. Clean on the television. I suggest that we do something about it.

In New York City, a small group of Puerto Ricans showed inner city hustle in forming a non-profit corporation, the Real Great Society. They now have 400 members and run two small businesses and a "university of the streets," offering programs ranging from remedial education and music workshops to college preparatory courses.

In Calexico and Fullerton, California, Mexican-American pre-schoolers who could speak only Spanish in June came out of eight-week Head Start programs fully at home in English as well as Spanish.

In Cleveland, a summer festival of the arts which captured the imagination of this city brought a rich diversity of arts and culture into the inner city, and involved thousands of local residents in planning, implementation and participation. Roger Stevens, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, will suggest this afternoon how other cities can follow Cleveland's example.

In Philadelphia, the Twelfth and Oxford Street Gang independently produced and directed a film about a subject they knew intimately, gang warfare. The script, music, acting and camera work were done by gang members.

Project STEP in Washington, D. C., directed by the U. S. Department of Commerce, placed 350 disadvantaged high school youngsters in a variety of career-directed technical jobs, despite their lack of experience or preparation. At the end of the summer, 98 per cent of the trainees were judged to have made a contribution far above the cost of their salaries.

I could list a dozen more great cities that have produced amazing results -- Chicago, Baltimore, Houston, Dallas, Detroit, the Twin Cities, San Francisco, Los Angeles, St. Louis -- programs that really captured the imagination of the community as well as the young people to which the programs were directed.

Here are some statistics on last year's programs: Two and a half million youngsters in summer education programs funded by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; more than 43,000 disadvantaged young people hired by the Federal Government (private employers and state and local governments hired hundreds of thousands more); 457,000 youngsters enrolled in Project Head Start; 367,000 boys and girls hired by the Neighborhood Youth Corps; 1.4 million reached by special summer programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity; and 25,000 inner city youngsters in Boy Scout camps, compared with 275 in the summer of 1966.

We know that more happened last summer than ever before but we also know that this effort fell far short of the need, and we know from our evaluation studies that there were far too many failures.

Many programs failed to use the unique talents of the young people themselves. Too many of the oldsters planned for the youngsters. I suggest you get the youngsters in to help you plan for themselves.

Consequently, many youngsters found programs irrelevant to their needs and unresponsive to their desires. I don't think we can afford to waste those tremendous dormant reservoirs of insight and ability.

Some programs were not adequately tailored to the needs of the groups they were designed to serve. All the groups, Mexican-Americans, Negro-Americans, Spanish-speaking Americans, Caucasians, or Indian-Americans, need to grow and achieve, enjoy life a little more, but each group has its own special problems and its own special opportunities for growth.

Programs suffered because of late funding, and we want to talk about that in this Conference -- lateness in getting funds from the federal government to you. And programs suffered because of inadequate planning. We are trying to do something about that right here -- now.

We found too many make-work jobs, which offered neither challenge nor reward -- jobs which served only to solidify a youngster's vision of a hostile or an unconcerned world beyond his immediate neighborhood.

We learned that trained and sensitive supervisors were usually a crucial factor in determining the success of any summer program involving disadvantaged youth. Put it simply: It all depends on leadership. People are pretty much alike until they get leadership. If they have good leadership they respond. If they have poor leadership, they do not. This leadership may require special training and selection.

We discovered that many summer education programs lacked imagination and innovation, despite improvements made over the preceding years.

We found recreation programs often poorly conceived and supervised. To quote from a recent report, "A basketball court is not a recreation program. A program is not a thing. It is a plan of action. It is something designed and purposeful, organized and supervised."

We learned of too little follow-through in the winter months. Summer programs suddenly ended and young people again found themselves on the street, or without any chance for participation.

Now, these deficiencies can and must be remedied through careful planning, hard work and the willingness to ask the basic question over and over again: "Does this program serve the real needs of the participants? Does it draw on the special ability of the participants to help in the planning and the execution?"

Now, with our past experience and four months ahead of us before school is out, we cannot be excused if last year's mistakes are repeated. This year we are trying to get a little bit ahead of the problem. We are getting together now in these last days of January to think about and plan for the execution of a program that starts in June.

I know many cities are already at work. The next two and a half days offer an opportunity to design programs which can dramatically change the lives of millions of our less fortunate young people. So the theme is, let's shift into high gear.

Through the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, special funds have been made available to 50 large cities to facilitate planning for 1968. Each of those cities has designated a Youth Coordinator who will serve as a focal point for summer mobilization.

The 50 Youth Coordinators with us this afternoon bear the largest share of responsibility for success this summer.

Let me say that we are not only interested in 50 cities. I always find it somewhat disturbing to select out a certain number. Every city is important; every community is important. And sometimes the better programs are in the smaller communities, and not the big 50 cities. Sometimes the best business talent isn't to be found in the largest corporation. It can be found in a medium or a small sized one.

We are interested in all the communities. We selected the 50 because we thought concentrated attention could be placed upon them, and because they represent the large population centers; but I do not want this Conference to go away with the feeling that our concern is only in the 50. To the contrary, every county, every locality in America, is of equal concern.

Now, we look to the Youth Coordinators for drive and enthusiasm at the local level. The Youth Coordinator, working closely with the mayor, the community action agencies, voluntary associations, business and labor leaders, is the man who has to stop passing the buck and transform words into action.

We hope that every city will also have an active, broadly representative Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity.

And I want to say to those of you who are here from cities other than the 50, if your mayor doesn't have a Youth Opportunity Council, go down and ask him why not. It is time for you to speak up. And if it isn't broadly representative, suggest to him how to do it. There isn't any excuse at all for a single mayor in the United States not to have a Youth Opportunity Council in his city. It is needed, the wringing of hands will do no good. The time is at hand to get to work. For three years now we have been pleading for youth councils to be established at the local level to mobilize community resources. You need a Mayor's Youth Council and a local Urban Coalition to back up the public officials -- and not only to back them up, but to stimulate them, to make sure the things are done that need to be done.

Let me underline one vital fact. At the federal level we have no illusions about our ability to provide ready-made answers to the complex problems you will encounter in your cities. When I was Mayor of Minneapolis, I never heard from anybody in Washington.

Except when they wanted to collect taxes.

Nobody came out and suggested a single program to me, and I didn't get help from the Governor, either.

This time you need help, and frank talk is going to help us a good deal. But anybody who thinks we can run these programs out of Washington is living in a fool's paradise, or should I say nightmare. I think they ought to be run from right where you are.

Our job in Washington is to help with what little resources we have to get a maximum of results in your town.

When I talk to many people, they say, "What are you going to give us from Washington?"

Well, you will get some bad advice on occasion, and hopefully good advice sometimes.

You are going to get bulletins, proposals, all the things you would ordinarily expect, and you are going to get some financial help; but I would be deceiving you if I told you we were going to do it for you. Even if we

could, we should not, and you know that. It has got to come from you, and that is why every youth program will be a little different, and I appeal to my colleagues in government to have enough flexibility in looking at these programs to avoid getting bogged down in a great big book of rules and regulations.

The main thing to do is get the funds and resources out to the community, and let the community design the programs -- with real flexibility at both levels of the pipeline, where it starts up here and where it comes out down there.

We expect this Conference to provide federal officials with an invaluable opportunity to learn about your problems and your solutions. I have had about 50 meetings of the Mayors in the last three years -- some of my friends down here are nodding their heads -- and those meetings have been closed sessions. We have had a Donnybrook in some of them, and I tell you, Cabinet officers and other federal officials have learned a good deal from the Mayors. I don't know whether we have taught the Mayors anything, but we have learned something.

I have learned where programs were stymied -- literally set in concrete. In a meeting like that, we were able to break them loose. We were able to revise regulations and get things done. That is what we want to do here.

We expect you to assemble the nuts and bolts of a comprehensive summer program in the working sessions of this Conference. In the weeks ahead, you must find the jobs -- and I want to emphasize what I have on the paper -- you must find the jobs. Mobilize the youth, open the schools, light the playgrounds, mount the media campaigns and guarantee success in the summer of 1968.

I want to say to my fellow elected officials, you won't lose a vote doing it. You won't hurt yourself politically being interested in young people. And I want to say to the business community, there is more teenage youth purchasing power today across America, almost than there is adult. You can't lose on this one, no matter how you look at it. Morally, politically, economically, this is the best proposition you ever had -- to extend opportunity to our young people.

Let us also frankly recognize that the federal government cannot foot the bill for all the essential summer activities you plan. Every effort will be made to provide each community with enough federal help to develop the nucleus of a summer program in all major activity areas.

But I will give you a suggestion: Ask for help wherever you find anybody who looks like a possible donor. "Ask and it shall be given." Just put that line up in your office some place. "Seek and ye shall find."

In Washington we needed lights for our playgrounds. We didn't have any federal funds, so we went out and tapped the lifeline of the community, private business.

There are department stores and factories that will put up playgrounds and staff them and equip them, if you ask.

There are men and women of means today in this country who want to help, and don't know how to do it. I am talking about help over and above any United Fund campaign you have. There isn't an excuse in any community in America for not having lighted playgrounds.

In Minnesota -- jerkwater towns, some folks call them -- they even have lighted playgrounds. Why not here?

We finally got old lights from Griffith Stadium -- and I found out why the Senators lost all those ball games.

I mention those things to you because I was brought up on the philosophy that you have to make do with what you have, and it doesn't do any good to cry about what you don't have.

Now, we are going to provide substantial federal assistance, but I am here to tell you it won't be nearly enough. And I will tell you where the money is. It is where the federal government gets it -- right where you live. We don't make any money down here; we get it from you. So you go out and tap the source. Right out there where you live, that is where the taxes are paid. We collect them down here. You pay them out there. Get ahead of the tax collector, and you may be surprised, some of them may be willing to figure out how to make contributions deductible.

Don't take my word for it if you get in trouble, though.

This afternoon each Cabinet Member with a responsibility for youth programs will set forth specifically how his agency can contribute to your summer effort. I want to say for each Cabinet Officer, they all want to do more than they are able to do. But at this juncture we do not expect federal expenditures to exceed the level they reached last year. Last year, however, they reached over \$600 million, and that isn't small change. It is a sizeable amount of money.

We do expect these funds to be used far more effectively this year, with a greater sense of priorities, with greater sensitivity and greater imagination.

For example, we expect each community to take advantage of the funds available under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for truly innovative summer school programs. You must convince your local school board that education is a 12-month proposition. Those funds were not designed just to take care of new salaries. They are designed for the young people. Title I funds are to be used for the express purpose of enriching an education program for the disadvantaged.

We also expect a far broader effort to generate support from private sources. I have mentioned that to you. Considerable time will be devoted in the next two days to the specifics of how this private support can be mobilized most effectively in your communities.

There is, in short, every reason to believe that our total effort, public and private, can be substantially greater in 1968 than in previous years. It has to be. It simply must be.

Now, a special word about jobs. Mr. Henry Ford II has agreed to serve as chairman of the National Alliance of Businessmen. This is a great service on his part. We are ever indebted to him. That Alliance was called together by President Johnson to attack the urgent problem of the unemployed.

Mr. Ford and his committee will tackle a closely related challenge -- finding productive jobs for at least 200,000 youths this summer -- over and above the hiring that will result from our annual summer job campaign.

That is 200,000 extra, and I am talking about the needy ones, not your cousin. You can get him a job any time, but these are for the needy ones.

Within days the National Alliance of Businessmen will be organizing local committees in your 50 cities, and we expect these local committees to work with the Mayor, the Youth Coordinator, the Urban Coalition, and other groups.

Mr. Ford is with us, as I said, and he will join Under Secretary Howard Samuels of the Department of Commerce, Secretary Wirtz of the Department of Labor, and Chairman Macy of the Civil Service Commission in spelling out plans for the most intensive job campaign ever waged.

We are also honored to have with us Mr. Joseph Keenan representing the AFL-CIO. At its recent Miami Convention, the AFL-CIO adopted a resolution supporting the objectives of the Youth Opportunity program for 1968. Mr. Keenan will say a few words later in the program.

Also present this afternoon are members of local Urban Coalitions now forming around the country. Their help will surely be a major factor in meeting the challenge of summer 1968.

You will hear from the distinguished Co-Chairman of the Urban Coalition -- Andrew Heiskell -- a little later.

We hope this Conference will signal the beginning of a close and productive relationship between the Youth Coordinators and the staff of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity.

I want it clear that the Vice President of the United States and his office, along with the President's Council staff, are willing and hopefully able to help you in every possible way.

There isn't a thing I want to do in my life that is more important than helping young people. I am in this because of a commitment of the heart -- not just mind. I know what can be done. I have worked with young people all my life, and you will get the greatest satisfaction you have ever had from knowing that you helped one or two or a dozen or a hundred or a thousand young people find their way.

If there ever was a challenge to this country, it is to our young people. They need our help, and they need it as never before. Many of them have been denied an equal chance because of poverty, because of discrimination, because of unbelievable living conditions.

Some young people are denied opportunities simply because of the nature of our economy. It isn't like it was when I was a boy, when Dad could take his son to the store and have that boy work alongside of him. A modern corporation doesn't believe that you can mass produce goods by having the little kid alongside of Dad at the assembly line. It is a different world. I don't know whether it is better or worse, but I know it is different.

Participants in the working sessions will receive a preliminary draft of a manual prepared by the Council to assist Youth Coordinators in their responsibility. The final version will be forwarded to each city after the results of this Conference have been evaluated.

I didn't want us to prepare a manual and send it out. I said, "Let's prepare a draft of a manual, and we will go over it page by page in this Conference and see if it makes any sense," because you people are out there where you have to face the problems, where the people live, and we want your input.

I don't think there is anybody in Washington, D. C., smart enough to write all the manual for you.

Gerald Christenson is here, Executive Director of the Council.

He has an experienced and able group ready to work with you literally around the clock.

Bill Arntz, Deputy Director, PCOYO State and Local Government Relations, the man with the curly hair over there on the end. He will be working with state and local relations.

Al Zuck, Deputy Director, PCOYO, Federal Program Planning and Coordination.

George Arnstein, Deputy Director, PCOYO, Organizational and Media Relations.

Les Levine, Director of Research and Evaluation.

Now, as I said, each city must ultimately decide what kind of a summer it wants. Will the playgrounds be open all day and well into the evening, or will they be locked up and vacant? The padlock industry is doing all right. You don't need to padlock anything more. Put the key industry to work now.

Will the business community provide stimulating summer jobs -- or will our youngsters be forced to settle for street corners, back alleys or rejection?

Will we demonstrate faith in our future citizens by involving them in summer planning -- or will we persist in thinking that adults know best about everything?

Will we creatively use all media of communication to mobilize the full resources of our community -- or will we assume that no one really cares about the youths of America?

Now let me get my lick in about the media. I hope we will have some cameras focused on the good things the young people are doing. I don't believe the story of America is just the story of its mistakes or its violence, or its crime. I happen to believe that most Americans are doing good work, and I happen to know that most young people want to do good things, and when they are given a chance, do it, and I hope we will get equal time for the positive.

That doesn't mean that we don't cover what is happening. News is news, but I will tell you, it is news when you see boys go on out and build themselves a camp, and I saw it last year. And I will tell you that it is great news when a National Guard camp is turned over to a group of youngsters, and they live together in peace and harmony for two weeks, working together, and growing into being better citizens. It is good news -- and there is a lot of it. I make a personal appeal and a public appeal on behalf of the people of the United States to give our kids a chance. They all like to see their pictures in the paper, they all like to see themselves on TV. Why not take a good look at some of those that are really doing the good things? Because I tell you, everything is contagious. Evil is contagious, and so is good. Violence is contagious, and so is constructive work.

I think it is time we started paying attention to the youth leaders who work for constructive good, and to the young people --

I raise my voice now for the young Americans who badly need a chance, a chance to express themselves, to express their capabilities, to broaden their horizons, to raise their hopes. Young people who want a friend, desperately need a friend, and who want to know that their country cares about them.

They do not want to be coddled. They want to be men and women.

Give them that chance and you will have captured a vital source of untapped energy.

Deny them that chance, and you deny America.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. in relation to the matter mentioned therein. I am sorry to hear that you are unable to attend the meeting on the 20th inst. I have the honor to inform you that the meeting will be held on the 25th inst. at 8 o'clock in the evening at the Hotel... I am sure that you will find the meeting very interesting and profitable. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

January 29, 1968

REMARKS OF VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CONFERENCE 1968

WASHINGTON, D. C.

JANUARY 29, 1968

On behalf of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity and the distinguished members of the Cabinet here with me, I welcome you to the Youth Opportunity Conference, 1968.

With us are the mayors of our major cities, their Youth Coordinators, representatives of your state governors, outstanding leaders of American business and labor, members of the Urban Coalition, other federal officials, and, most importantly, a number of young people themselves.

We are here on urgent business.

How can we make the summer of 1968 a time of opportunity for every young person in America?

How can we translate the wish to work into paychecks and training?

How can we transform hours of idleness, boredom and frustration into exciting days of challenge and discovery?

When President Johnson signed the Executive Order creating the Council on Youth Opportunity, he said: "Many youths, particularly those who live in impoverished areas, need special help in improving their lives and finding a place in the mainstream of our society . . . the summer months provide an exceptional opportunity to enhance the sound growth and guidance of youth."

Our task is to make the most of that special opportunity -- not on a crash basis . . . not for three months only . . . but as part of a year round continuing, growing effort.

There are those who will say that our major concern is the prevention of further civil disorder in our major cities.

They are dead wrong.

Every responsible American is determined to maintain law and order. Every responsible American knows that injury, death, the destruction of homes and business mean heartbreak and hatred -- not progress.

And every responsible American is willing to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent a repetition of those tragic events.

But let the record clearly state that we talk of youth opportunity -- of jobs . . . education . . . recreation . . . arts and culture -- to help the law-abiding majority help themselves -- not buy off the riotous few.

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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

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Keep this in mind: An evaluation of last summer's activities produced the unexpected, even startling, conclusion that a very high percentage of the obviously disadvantaged youth of our inner cities were generally satisfied with their environment.

Eighty-eight per cent thought the schools provided good education "if one tries."

Eighty-nine per cent were satisfied with the employment situation.

Eighty-nine per cent were satisfied with recreational opportunities.

Those statistics tell me only one thing: deprivation and lack of opportunity in some American neighborhoods has been so all-encompassing that young people fail even to understand the depths of their denial.

They are satisfied because their standards are substandard.

They are young Americans who have been denied a normal American quotient of hope.

In these circumstances, the success of the programs initiated as a result of this conference -- as a result of your efforts in your own cities -- will be measured largely by your ability to broaden horizons, to raise standards, and to tap the wellspring of imagination, self-confidence, and hope which lies dormant within these young men and women.

As for those who are now dissatisfied -- our job is to provide productive outlets for the energies already aroused.

* * *

We inaugurate our planning for the summer of 1968 on the foundation of our successes and failures over the past three summers.

Last spring the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, with a minimum of lead time, established a program of youth activities for the summer of 1967.

We contacted 50 governors -- 25 hundred mayors and city managers -- 21 hundred United Funds -- 125 women's organizations -- 900 thousand employers -- 35 thousand school administrators -- 21 hundred public employment service offices -- over a thousand communtiy action agencies -- and hundreds of private organizations.

In each case the message was the same:

Establish local councils on youth opportunity.

Find jobs.

Make full use of your public facilities -- schools, armories, military training camps, churches, and fair grounds.



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

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Take your bands, your movie projectors, your sports equipment out to disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Find the empty bunks in your summer camps and fill them with young people who need a break.

Use your local media -- radio, television, newspapers.

Prove to the young people that you really care.

Many of you were stalwarts in those local campaigns.

In city after city there were imaginative and hardhitting efforts to reach disadvantaged, often alienated, young people.

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But we also know that this effort fell far short
of the need -- and that there were failures.

Many programs failed to use the unique talents of
the young people themselves. Consequently, many youngsters
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We cannot afford to waste those tremendous dormant
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Some programs were inadequately tailored to the
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We found too many make-work jobs which offered
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We learned that trained and sensitive supervisors
were usually a crucial factor in determining the success of
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require special training and selection.

We discovered many summer education programs which
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We found recreation programs that were often
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"A basketball court is not a recreation program...A program is
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These deficiencies can and must be remedied through careful planning, hard-work and a willingness to ask the basic questions over and over again: "Does this program serve the real needs of the participants? Does it draw upon the special ability of the participants to help in the planning and execution?"

With our past experience and four months ahead of us before school is out, we cannot be excused if last year's mistakes are repeated.

I know many cities are already hard at work.

The next two and a half days offer an opportunity to design summer programs which can dramatically change the lives of millions of our less-fortunate young people.

Let's shift into high gear.

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The 50 Youth Coordinators with us this afternoon bear the largest share of responsibility for success this summer.

We look to them for drive and enthusiasm at the local level. The Youth Coordinator -- working closely with the mayor, community action agencies, voluntary associations, business and labor leaders -- is the man who has to stop the buck and transform words into actions.

We hope that every city will also have an active and broadly representative Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity. A Mayor's Council is a crucial instrument for identifying community resources available for youth programs, and for generating public support.

Let me underline one vital fact: At the federal level we have no illusions about our ability to provide ready-made answers to the complex problems you will encounter in your cities.

On the contrary, we expect this conference to provide federal officials with an invaluable opportunity to learn about your problems and your solutions.

We expect you to assemble the "nuts and bolts" of a comprehensive summer program in the working sessions of this conference.

In the weeks ahead you must find the jobs, mobilize the youth, open the schools, light the playgrounds, mount the media campaigns...and guarantee success in summer '68.



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Let us also frankly recognize that the federal government cannot foot the bill for all the essential summer activities you plan. Every effort will be made to provide each community with enough federal help to develop the nucleus of a summer program in all major activity areas.

This afternoon each Cabinet member with responsibility for youth programs will set forth specifically how his agency can contribute to your summer effort.

But at this juncture, we do not expect federal expenditure to exceed the levels reached last year.

We do expect these funds to be used far more effectively...with a greater sense of priorities...with greater sensitivity...and with more imagination.

For example, we expect each community to take full advantage of the funds available under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for truly innovative summer school programs. You must convince your local school board that education is a 12 month proposition.

We also expect a far broader effort to generate support from private sources. Considerable time will be devoted in the next two days to the specifics of how this private support can be mobilized most effectively in your communities.

There is, in short, every reason to believe that our total effort -- public and private -- can be substantially greater in 1968 than in previous years.

Now, a special word about jobs.

Henry Ford II has agreed to serve as Chairman of a National Alliance of Businessmen called together by President Johnson to attack the urgent problem of the hard-core unemployment.

Mr. Ford and his committee will also tackle a closely related challenge: finding productive jobs for 200 thousand needy youths this summer, over and above the hiring that will result from our annual summer job campaign.

Within days the National Alliance of Businessmen will be organizing local committees in your 50 cities. We expect these local committees to work closely with the mayor, the Youth Coordinator, the Urban Coalition, and other community groups concerned with summer programs.

Mr. Ford is with us this afternoon and he will join Secretary Wirtz and Chairman John Macy in spelling out plans for the most intensive job campaign ever waged.

We are also honored to have with us Mr. Joseph Keenan representing the AFL-CIO. At its recent Miami Convention, the AFL-CIO adopted a resolution emphasizing the objectives of the Youth Opportunity program for 1968. Mr. Keenan will say a few words later in the program.



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Also present this afternoon are members of local Urban Coalitions now forming around the country. Their help will surely be a major factor in meeting the challenge of summer 1968.

You will hear from the distinguished Co-Chairman of the Urban Coalition -- Andrew Heiskell -- a little later.

We hope this Conference will signal the beginning of a close and productive relationship between the Youth Coordinators and the staff of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity.

Participants in the working sessions tomorrow will receive the preliminary draft of a manual prepared by the Council to assist Youth Coordinators in their responsibilities. The final version will be forwarded to each city after the results of this conference have been evaluated.

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In the final analysis, however, each city must ultimately decide what kind of a summer it wants for its young people.

Will the playgrounds be open all day and well into the evening -- or will they be locked and vacant?

Will the business community provide stimulating summer jobs -- or will our youngsters be forced to settle for street-corners, back alleys or rejection?

Will we demonstrate faith in our future citizens by involving them in summer planning -- or will we persist in thinking that adults know best about everything?

Will we creatively use all media of communication to mobilize the full resources of our community -- or will we assume that no one really cares about the youths of America?

There are a lot of young Americans who badly need a chance -- a chance to express themselves...to express their capabilities...to broaden their horizons...to raise their hopes.

Give them that chance and you have captured a vital source of untapped energy.

Deny it, and you deny American.

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REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CONFERENCE, 1968

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JANUARY 29, 1968

h On behalf of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity and the distinguished members of the Cabinet here with me, I welcome you to the Youth Opportunity Conference, 1968.

h With us are the mayors of our major cities, their Youth Coordinators, representatives of your state governors, outstanding leaders of American business and labor, members of the Urban Coalition, other federal officials, and, most importantly, a number of young people themselves.

We are here on urgent business.

How can we make the summer of 1968 a time of opportunity for every young person in America?

↳ How can we translate the wish to work into paychecks and training?

↳ How can we transform hours of idleness, boredom and frustration into exciting days of challenge and discovery?

↳ When President Johnson signed the Executive Order creating the Council on Youth Opportunity, he said:

"...Many youths, particularly those who live in impoverished areas, need special help in improving their lives and finding a place in the mainstream of our society...The summer months provide an exceptional opportunity to enhance the sound growth and guidance of youth."

Our task is to make the most of that special opportunity -- not on a crash basis...not for three months only...but as part of a year-round, continuing, growing effort.

There are those who will say that our major concern is the prevention of further civil disorder in our major cities.

~~They are dead wrong~~

Every responsible American is determined to maintain law and order. Every responsible American knows that injury, death, the destruction of homes and business mean heartbreak and hatred -- not progress.

And every responsible American is willing to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent a repetition of those tragic events.

But let the record clearly state that we talk of youth opportunity -- of jobs...education...recreation...arts and culture -- to help the law-abiding majority help themselves -- not buy off the riotous few.

out

↳ Keep this in mind: An evaluation of last summer's activities produced the unexpected, even startling, conclusion that a very high percentage of the obviously disadvantaged youth of our inner cities were generally satisfied with their environment.

Eighty-eight per cent thought the schools provided good education "if one tries."

Eighty-nine per cent were satisfied with the employment situation.

Eighty-nine per cent were satisfied with recreational opportunities.

Those statistics tell me only one thing: deprivation and lack of opportunity in some American neighborhoods has been so all-encompassing that young people fail even to understand the depths of their denial.

They are satisfied because their standards are substandard.

They are young Americans who have been denied a normal American quotient of hope.

~~In these circumstances~~ the success of the programs initiated as a result of this conference -- as a result of your efforts in your own cities -- will be measured largely by your ability to broaden horizons, to raise standards, and to tap the wellspring of imagination, self-confidence, and hope which lies dormant within these young men and women.

As for those who are now dissatisfied -- our job is to provide productive outlets for the energies already aroused.

* * *

∟ We inaugurate our planning for the summer of 1968 on the foundation of our successes and failures over the past three summers.

↳ Last spring the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, with a minimum of lead time, established a program of youth activities for the summer of 1967.

We contacted 50 governors -- 25 hundred mayors and city managers -- 21 hundred United Funds -- 125 women's organizations -- 900 thousand employers -- 35 thousand school administrators -- 21 hundred public employment service offices -- over a thousand community action agencies -- and hundreds of private organizations.

In each case the message was the same:

Establish local councils on youth opportunity.

Find jobs.

Make full use of your public facilities -- schools, armories, military training camps, churches, and fair grounds.

Take your bands, your movie projectors, your sports equipment out to disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Find the empty bunks in your summer camps and fill them with young people who need a break.

Use your local media -- radio, television, newspapers.

Prove to the young people that you really care.

Many of you were stalwarts in those local campaigns.

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