

PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON YOUTH OPPORTUNITY
January 31, 1968 --- Shoreham Hotel

The Vice President of the United States

This Conference was not intended to be the last word. We did not come here with the thought in mind, I trust, that we would go away with all of the answers, or even with the resources. We came here to discuss the problems that we face and some of the solutions that we might offer or, hopefully, to get a dialogue amongst the different groups to find some answers.

I told you in the beginning that I thought this would be a free-wheeling conference; and it has been just that. I am sure that you know that we deal with a very volatile subject: American youth. Those who have been denied desire their chance to be a part of this American community, and to have something to say about their participation in it, including the supposed answers designed to alleviate some of our more trying conditions.

This afternoon I met with a very fine representation of ^{young} delegates from this Conference. We talked very frankly to each other. But I think in a

spirit of mutual respect. I want to put on the record here that I am very grateful to the younger members of the Conference for the manner in which they approached their problems and their differences with us. They presented to me a resolution for immediate action. When you are seventeen, eighteen, twenty -- immediate is a little slow! They wanted action! Well, they don't want it any more than I want it -- and, frankly, I joined up with them.

We discussed some of the matters in their resolution and I told them what I thought I could do, and what I thought my limitations were. For example, they want representation -- good representation -- on the Citizens' Advisory Board on Youth Opportunity. I said they will have it; it's within my power. They will have it. Secondly, I said: Go talk to your governor and your mayor and get him to do the same.

I made it quite clear when I opened this Conference, and I make ^{it} equally clear as we close it, that these youth programs will not be successful simply

because of what the Federal Government can do. If they are to succeed they must have local leadership, local sponsorship, local initiative, local participation. There must be a broadly-based Urban Coalition at the local level. There must be a Mayor's Youth Council that is fully representative, including young people. There must be the same thing at the state level. Every community has to be rallied to this program. There is just not going to be in this country a federal youth program dictated out of Washington. The federal government can cooperate with local government, state government, private agencies, and private groups, but we have enough power concentrated in Washington, D. C. What we need now is responsibility and activity at the local level with the federal government doing what it can in terms of its resources. I think that is the way you want it, and I ask every person here, whatever criticism you may have of the federal activity, that you take that same analysis back and apply it where you live.

Your young people are in your town, and you've got to work with them there and mobilize the resources of your community there. It is your

young people that need to be on that local Mayor's Youth Council.

I said to the young people: Look, once you get involved you also take responsibility. You get on these councils and, then, if it doesn't work, it's partly your fault. You would be surprised what happens to you once you get involved in a management role. You start to lose friends in a hurry and you have to take on some of the complaints!

Well, I was pleased at what I saw today. These fine young delegates could have just bolted and raised Cain. I laid it right on the line. They are here with you. I am not saying to you anything I didn't say to them. I said: if you want to get your name in the paper, just be obnoxious. But that doesn't get you what you want in your program. The people that you need to talk to are still over in that Conference, and they are back home, and they are up in Congress. And you generally don't get anywhere by being abusive or insulting. You get there by being persistent, persuasive, and having deep conviction and commitment. That doesn't mean that you are a jellyfish. It doesn't mean

that you are weak. It means that you are strong in purpose, but also proper in manner. You know, we understand each other when we talk that way. Just a good stand-up, free-for-all talk.

The young people also suggested that we needed more money. I discussed this with them, and I said I was going to see that the Members of Congress get a copy of your deliberations. I said: I'll speak up for you.

Then I talked quite frankly about the money situation. Now we had a most unfortunate development on the first day of the Conference. The budget came down at the very time that we were holding our Conference and the headline said that there was less money for the Youth Program. Now, that is not true! There is as much or more money in this budget for the youth program if it is properly used at the local level.

I said to these young people: Look here now, ~~We~~ we have two billion one hundred million dollars in this budget for hard-core unemployed to be employed. That is five hundred-and-fifty million dollars more than last year.

And what we need for our young people more than we need a dance in the street is a job.

When President Johnson set up this Jobs Program, he took a good look at what was the top priority in this Country. People do not want more welfare. They want opportunity. They want jobs. Now, we've called upon the private sector to provide six out of every seven jobs. We've called upon them to open their gates, open their personnel offices, open their hearts, open their shops, open their factories. We've called upon them to give jobs to these disadvantaged, hard-core unemployed, some of which are age sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty. As a matter of fact, the largest block of unemployed today in America is between the age of sixteen and twenty-five. Those are young people. And we are putting two billion one hundred million dollars into that program. And what's more, that's substantially over any thing that has ever been done.

We have added to it Henry Ford, Chairman of the National Alliance of Businessmen appointed by President Johnson. Henry Ford brings with him

many of his personnel resources, and his full commitment. The Alliance has made a commitment to go to work and provide at a minimum, two hundred thousand jobs for disadvantaged young people this summer.

Summer programs for youth are not the answer for long-term problems!

I realize that. They don't get at the root causes. But I'll tell you this, once a young man or young lady is on a job, even if it is just for the summer, the odds are they can produce, and if the employer is willing to give some training and some guidance, they have a chance to keep at it. That's what we are working on.

Now, let me just give you a little something. You know, people say we haven't done enough. Well I know that nobody likes to hear - "you've never had it so good!" But, I think it's just fair to recite the record. In January 1961, in this country, there were three billion, nine hundred million dollars for Education and Health out of the Federal budget. That's an actual, factual figure. ^{In} January 1964, ^{there were} five billion, seven hundred million dollars; ^m January 1968, fifteen billion, four hundred million dollars. Not enough? I've always

been a little more than anxious to do more. All I'll say is that it's close to four times as much as we had six-and-a-half years ago! And it's substantial. In January 1961, there were fifteen billion dollars of social security payments. In this year, thirty-three billion dollars. The total for social security payments, plus job^s, plus education and health, in the Federal budget this year, is forty-seven-and-a-half billion dollars. Now those educational resources are Elementary and Secondary Education, Vocational Education, Project Upward Bound, ~~the~~ Head^{start}, ~~Aid to~~ Higher Education, Student ~~loans~~ a million four hundred thousand student loans. When I went to the university, I had the sum total of fifty-two dollars assistance; from family, state, Federal, and local government. That's what I got! And I made it through seven years of university life.

Now there is no use of comparing notes and figures; the things that we are talking about here are things that some of us have worked for all of our lives. And I know what ~~the~~ job^a is to get a job done. I know what a difficult

job it is. When I came down here in 1949, we didn't have a ~~C~~orporal's ~~G~~uard to get anything done! There wasn't any ~~Y~~outh ~~P~~rogram. There wasn't any ~~J~~ob ~~P~~rogram. In 1963, there were only thirty-three thousand people in training for jobs, under ~~F~~ederal programs. There are a million four hundred thousand this afternoon! One million four hundred thousand! Maybe there ought to be two million. But to put it bluntly -- one million four hundred thousand is a whole lot more than thirty-three thousand.

There wasn't any aid to Elementary and Secondary Education. We used to knock that bill off just like a tennis match. One year they'd pass it in the Senate, the next year they'd kill it in the House. It was either killed on ~~r~~ace or religion every other session of Congress!

We ought to be able to find enough money to take care of our young people
Not a welfare check.

Our young men and women do not want to be coddled. They don't want you to always agree with them either. You spoil it when you do that. Stand up and fight; they'll fight you back. If they're wrong and you're wrong you ought to have a good argument about it.

I respect them for the way they came to me today. I want to personally pay my tribute and respect to the manner in which they presented their thoughts, their resolutions. They have done more good by this than all the parades put together. I'll tell you, they got some converts this afternoon. I joined up, as I said earlier, to help. I was already on the ball team, but now I want to make a home|run. When you go home now, you do what you can to get us the most active program at the local level that you possibly can get.

I am the Chairman of the President's Youth Council. I can think of no work that is more important for me to perform and to perform well. I can think of no work that is more important for you to perform. And I want you to know that I am with you, and want to help you, and I hope that you will help us.

Go home now, carry the message, meet with your young people, talk to your "establishment crowd", as they call it. Go to the business community. Get a hold of the superintendent of schools and the school board, and let them

know that those school facilities are to be used not nine months a year, but twelve months a year. See that those funds from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are, in part at least, used for your summer program.

Make every effort that you can to keep the Congress of the United States alerted as to your needs. And also make every effort you can to alert the legislature of your state. And the city council. This is a partnership arrangement. It isn't all on Washington. It's also on the State Capitol, the City Hall, the County Courthouse, and then with the people.

~~Copy~~
~~Handwritten~~

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Thank you very much.

Thank you Chairman B and may I just take the liberty on behalf of all of us to thank you for your chairmanship of this Conference. And may I again express my thanks to the delegates to the Conference for your patience, and your deliberation, and to your good work here.

I had planned on being with you at about 2:45 ... We had a little mix-up in signals. I told our young people that were at the conference, that had some special problems they wanted to discuss with me, that I would meet with them. My time is not always as close to the schedule as I would like because the demands on us are not what we can predict. We had a much longer meeting today over at the White House than we had contemplated. And it meant that my schedule for the day was somewhat changed. But, that's the way it's supposed to be. And then I think our young friends were somewhat dubious as to whether or not I would meet; and I made up my mind a long time ago, with my own children, and my own young people, as well as my friends amongst the young people, that if you can't keep your word with them you are worthless; and they never believe you, and they never trust you. And I want to keep my word with them and I did. And they were just wonderful about their patience with me.

Now, I just want to quickly review some things that I believe have developed:

→ This Conference was not intended to be the last word, in conference perfection. This was a conference called amongst of people concerned about the problems of our Society, particularly as they relate to some of the needs of our young people, and particularly as they relate to the needs of our disadvantaged youth.

→ We did not come here with the thought in mind, I trust, that we would go away with all of the answers, or even with the resources. We came here ~~at least~~

~~I was of the opinion that we would come here with a desire to discuss amongst ourselves, both problems and problems and opportunities. The problems that we face and some of the solutions that we might offer, or, hopefully, to ~~try to~~ get a dialogue amongst the different groups to find some answers. I believe this has been what you have tried to do. And I think it has been somewhat successful.~~

I told you in the beginning that I thought this would be a free-wheeling conference; and it has been just that. I am sure that you know that we deal with a very volatile subject: American youth! ~~What desires, particularly those~~ ^{who} ~~that~~ have been denied ~~desired~~ their chance to be a part of this ~~community, this~~ American community, and to have something to say about their participation in it, including ~~the answers that are supposedly designed, or the supposed answers de-~~ signed to alleviate some of our more trying conditions.

This afternoon I met with a very fine representation of delegates from this Conference. We talked very frankly to each other. But I think in a spirit of mutual respect. ~~And I would~~ want to put on the Record here that I am very grateful to the younger members of the Conference for the manner in which they approached their problems and their differences with us. They presented to me a Resolution for immediate action. ~~And~~ when you are seventeen, eighteen, twenty immediate is a little slow! ~~And~~ they wanted action! Well, they don't ^{want} it any more than I want it. ~~And~~, frankly, I joined up with them. (~~Applause~~)

We had ~~some discussion about~~ ^{discussed} some of the matters in their Resolution and I told them what I thought I could do, And what I thought ~~maybe~~ my limitations were. For example; They want representation, ~~and~~ good representation on the Citizens' Advisory Board on Youth Opportunity. I said they will have it; it's within my power. They will have it. (~~Applause~~) Secondly, I said: Go talk to

your governor and your mayor and get him to do the same. ~~(Applause.)~~ I made it quite clear when I opened this Conference, and I make it equally clear as we close it, that these youth programs will not be successful simply because of what the Federal Government can do. If they are to succeed they must have local leadership, local sponsorship, local initiative, local participation.

There must be a broadly-based urban coalition at the local level. There must be a mayor's youth council that is fully representative, including young people. There must be ~~at the gubernatorial or state level the same thing.~~ ^{the same thing at the state level;} ~~Now,~~ every community has to be rallied to this program. There is just not going to be in this Country a Federal Youth Program. ~~By that I mean~~ dictated out of Washington. The Federal Government can cooperate with local government, ~~and~~ state government, ~~and with private agencies, and private groups,~~ But we have enough power concentrated in Washington, D.C. What we need now is responsibility and activity at the local level with the Federal Government doing what it can in terms of its resources. I think ~~that~~ ^{is} that the way you want it, And I ~~now~~ ask every person that is here, ~~to make sure that what you have discussed here, and whatever criticism you may have of the Federal activity, that you take that same analysis back and apply it to where you live.~~ ~~Because the young people are in your town.~~

~~Mayor Washington - I'm working with him down here in Washington, D.C. We are going to work on the problems of Washington, D.C. He's got a wonderful mayor here. And he is going to do a bang up good job! But when you go back to your town, that's where your young people are.~~ ^{in your town,} And you've got to work with them there and mobilize the resources of your community there. ~~And~~ it is your young people that need to be on that local Mayor's Youth Council, ~~representation.~~ And I said to the young people: Look, Once you get involved you also take responsibility. You get on these councils and then, if it doesn't work, it's partly your fault. ~~And~~ ^{would} you be surprised what happens to you once that you get involved in a management.

~~or a responsible~~ role. You start to lose friends in a hurry and you have to take on some of the complaints! Well, I was ~~so~~ pleased at what I saw today, ~~because~~ these fine young delegates could have just bolted and raised gain, ~~and~~ I ~~laid~~ it right on the line, they are here with you. I am not saying to ~~you~~ ^{anything} I didn't say to them. I said: ~~look~~, if you want to get your name in the paper, just be obnoxious. But that doesn't get you what you want in your program. The people that you need to talk to are still over in that Conference, and they are back home, and they are up in Congress. And you generally don't get anywhere by being abusive or insulting. You get there by being persistent, ^{and} ^{ing} persuasive, ~~have~~ deep conviction and commitment. That doesn't mean that you are a jellyfish. It doesn't mean that you are weak. It means that you are strong in purpose, but also proper in manner. You know, we understand each other when we talk that way. Just a good stand-up, free-for-all talk.

~~Then~~ the young people also suggested that we needed more money. ~~And~~ I discussed this with them, ~~And~~ I said I was going to take their Resolution, ~~present it to the President, which I will. And to the Speaker, which I will. To the Majority Leader and Minority Leader, which I will.~~ ~~And we had a representative from California, Tom Gersman Weiss with us that dropped in, and we are going to see that the members of Congress get a copy of your deliberations. here~~ your Resolutions if you pass some; and these young people that gave me their Resolution. I said: I'll speak up for you. ~~And~~ then I talked quite frankly about the money situation. Now we had a most unfortunate development on the first day of the Conference, the Budget came down at the very time that we were holding our Conference and the headline said that there was less money for the Youth Program. Now, that is not true! There is as much or more money in this Budget for the Youth Program if it is properly used at the local level.

~~Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides, under this - what the local government plan, what the school districts and states apparently to allocate - about a hundred million dollars for Youth Summer programs. But they can provide a hundred-and-fifty. It's their decision. Well, to put it in broad terms: There isn't much more, ^{but} there ^{is} about the same amount of ~~money~~ ~~from the~~ federal resources this year as last year for specific youth programs. But as I said to them - and let me say to you - when I say "them" our young delegates. ^{to these young people!} I said, look here now, ~~let's take a look.~~ We ^{have} got two billion one hundred million dollars in this budget for hard-core, unemployed to be employed, ~~training, placement, employment.~~ That ^{is} five hundred-and-fifty million dollars more than last year. And what we need for our young people more than we need a dance in the street is a job. (Applause.)~~

~~Now, the social security benefits have been increased for grand'pa. We're not talking about hard core unemployed age sixty-two or sixty-five. Social security benefits were substantially increased. But when we set up this Jobs Program under the President's Budget this year, ^{when} President Johnson set ^{this Jobs Program} it up, he took a good look at what was the top priority in this Country, ~~what~~ is it that ^{do not} people ~~want~~ ~~not~~ more Welfare. They want opportunity. They want jobs. Now, we've called upon the private sector of this Country to provide six out of every seven jobs. We've called upon them to open their gates, open their personnel offices, open their hearts, open their shops, open their factories. ~~We've called upon them to give jobs to these~~ ~~and give~~ these disadvantaged, hard-core unemployed, some of which are age sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, ^{thirty-five, forty, forty-five.} As a matter of fact, the largest block of unemployed today in America ^{is} ~~are~~ between the age of sixteen and twenty-five. Those are young people. And we are putting ~~in~~ two billion one hundred million dollars of ~~funds~~ into that program. And what's~~

more, that's substantially over anything that has ever been done. ~~And~~ ^{have} we added ~~to it~~ ^{Chairman of the National Alliance of Business men appointed by President Johnson} Henry Ford, ~~and bringing a few dimes and nickels.~~ ~~And Henry Ford brings~~ with him many of his personnel resources, ^{and} his full commitment. The alliance of the ~~Executive Committee of the Alliance for Jobs~~ ^{has made} with a commitment from the private sector that they are going to go to work and provide at a minimum, ~~for~~ ^{this summer!} young people, two hundred thousand jobs for disadvantaged young people. ~~Now I say this with as much vigor as I can because we've worked our hearts out to get this program underway. And Youth Programs, Summer Programs for Youth are not the answer for the long-term problems! I realize that, much of it as in this Resolution that I received - a very frank and candid and helpful Resolution - many of them are surface, just ephemeral. They don't get at the root causes. But I'll tell you this, - that once that a young man, ^{or young lady} is on a job, or a young lady is on a job, even if it is ^{just} for the Summer, the odds are that if they can produce, and the employer is willing to give some training and some guidance, they have a chance to keep at it. That's what we are working on.~~

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Now, let me just give you a little something. You know, people say we haven't done enough. Well, I know that nobody likes to hear - "you've never had it so good!" But, I think it's just fair to ~~kind of~~ recite the record: In January 1961, in this Country, there were three billion, nine hundred million dollars for Education and Health out of the Federal Budget. That's an actual, factual figure. January 1964, five billion, seven hundred million dollars. January 1968, fifteen billion, four hundred million dollars. Not enough? I've always been a little more than ~~were than~~ anxious to do more. All I'll say is that it's close to four times as much as we had six-and-a-half years ago! And it's substantial. In January 1961, there were fifteen billion dollars of social security payments. In this year, thirty-three billion dollars. The total for

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social security payments, plus job, plus Education and Health, in the Federal Budget this year, is forty-seven-and-a-half billion dollars. Now those educational resources are Elementary and Secondary Education, Vocational Education, Project Upward Bound, the Headstart, Aid to Higher Education, Student loans, a million, four hundred thousand student loans. And I said to these young friends: When I went to the university, I had the sum total of fifty-two dollars assistance; from family, state, federal and local government. That's what I got! And I made it through seven years of university life. So, I had to be quite blunt about it. I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I just had a tongue; and I've been using it ever since! (Applause and laughter.)

Now, there is no use of comparing notes and figures; all I'd ... you know, when you put your hearts to these things ... the things that we are talking about here are things that some of us have worked for all of our lives. And I know what the job is to get a job done. I know what a difficult job it is.

I reminded my young friends, as I remind you, that ^{when} I came down here in 1949, where we didn't have a Corporal's Guard to get anything done! There wasn't any Youth Program. There wasn't any Job Program. ^{in 1963,} There were only thirty-three thousand people in training ^{for} jobs, in this Country in 1963, under Federal programs. There are a million four hundred thousand this afternoon! One million four hundred thousand! ^{Maybe there} ~~Now they ought~~ there ought to be ~~maybe~~ two million.

But to put it bluntly - one million four hundred thousand ~~is a heck of a lot~~ more, I could say it more explicitly than that ... is a whole lot more than thirty-three thousand. There wasn't any aid to Elementary and Secondary Education. We used to knock that bill off just like a tennis match. One year they'd pass it in the Senate, the next year they'd kill it in the House. It was either killed on Race or Religion, every other session of Congress!

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Now, having said that, what I am here to tell you is: I need your help in the Congress. We need your help every place. I put it right on the line with our young friends: we have - we even have a tax bill up there, it isn't much, it doesn't cost a person with five thousand dollars a year income or less a nickel, not a penny. It doesn't tax the poor man. And I am here to tell you that if you are earning six, seven, eight, ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty thousand dollars a year, you can pay a few extra dollars! And I know - I've had most all the questions put to me. They said: Well, if we didn't have all this international involvement, everything else -- we'd have all this money. I've been around here my dear friends! You can tell that to some kid, don't tell me! I was here after Korea and we had more poor then than we had before and we didn't have a poverty program, we didn't have a youth program, we didn't have one living thing going for you. All we did is cut the taxes. So it isn't war. What it really amounts to is whether or not we've got the steam and the commitment to get the things done in this Country that we can afford to do.

Now, we can afford Youth Programs. And we can afford Training Programs. And we can afford jobs. And we can afford to do the things that this Country needs to have done.

We're increasing the gross national product this year by over fifty billion dollars. Fifty billion dollars. And out of that fifty billion dollars we ought to be able to find enough money, out of just the increase, to take care of our young people. And not to give them a welfare check; but to give them a helping hand, a cooperation, a friendship, a dignity and self-respect - jobs - education - training - participation. And I want to emphasize

participation. ^{Our} These young men and women do not want to be coddled. ~~And~~ they don't want you to always agree with them either. You spoil it when you do that. Stand up and fight; they'll fight you back. If they're wrong and you're wrong

you ought to have a good argument about it. ~~You know don't you? (Applause.)~~

I respect them for the way ~~that~~ ^{came to me} they ~~are~~ today. I want to personally pay my tribute and respect to the manner in which they presented their thoughts, their Resolutions. They have done more good by this than all the parades put together. I'll tell you, they got some converts this afternoon. ~~And~~ I joined up, as I said earlier, to help. I was already on the ball team, but now I want to make a homerun. ~~I was willing to settle for a two-bagger before then. So, when you~~ go home now, you do what you can to get us the most active program at the local level that you possibly can get.

~~If my staff, at the Vice-President's office can be helpful, there is John Stewart that is with me, and Mr. William Welch; here's the Executive Director - Jerry Christiansen of the President's Youth Opportunity Council. We stand ready to do what we can. I am an expeditor at the National level. I do not run the Country. I do not have the votes in the Congress. I am the Vice Presidency, only office with responsibility and very little authority that's ever been constitutionally devised! (Applause.)~~

~~But~~ I am the Chairman of the President's Youth Council. I can think of no work that is more important for me to perform and to perform well. I can think of no work that is more important for you to perform. And I want you to know that I am with you, and want to help you, and I hope that you will help us.

~~I guess that's about all that I need to say at this time except to say thank you. You were kind to wait for me. I have fifty members of the Junior Association of Commerce waiting for me back in my office and I am enlisting them. I'm out recruiting every living day. Every day. (Applause.)~~ [Go home

now, carry the message, meet with your young people, talk to your "establishment crowd" as they call it. Go to the business community, get hold of the superintendent of schools and the school board, and let them know that those school facilities are to be used not ~~only~~ nine months a year, ^{but} twelve months a year.

See that those funds from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are, in part at least, used for your ~~Summer Program~~. Make every effort that you can to keep the Congress of the United States alerted as to your needs. And ^{also} make every effort you can to ~~make~~ ^{alert} the Legislature of your ~~state alerted to~~. And the City Council. ~~Because~~ this is a partnership arrangement. It isn't all on Washington. It's also on the State Capitol, the City Hall, the County Court-house, and then with the people.

Thank you very very much! ~~(Applause.)~~



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