



news release

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE • PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION • 2600 VIRGINIA AVE., N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20037 • 202/333-8750

Release for Wednesday PMs
September 25, 1968

For Further Information:
Ev Munsey, Ext. 201
DC-512

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY PROPOSES PROGRAM TO AID OLDER AMERICANS

Washington, D. C., September 25 -- Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey today promised to propose to Congress the establishment of a National Senior Citizens Community Service Corps in which older persons could earn money or serve as volunteers in jobs vital to American growth.

The Vice President also urged a 50 percent across-the-board increase in Social Security benefits -- with graduated increases from the present monthly minimum of \$55 to \$100 for an individual, and from \$82.50 to \$150 for a couple -- during the next four years.

The Democratic-passed Medicare programs must be broadened to give oldsters the "freedom from the financial ruin which once threatened to turn the Golden Years into a nightmare for many of our senior citizens," Mr. Humphrey declared.

Addressing a Senior Citizens Rally in Los Angeles today, the Vice President said: "I want to discuss the Humphrey-Muskie program for Senior Citizens, built on the proud Democratic record of past accomplishments but looking forward to a new day of security and involvement for older Americans. The Democrats built it and the Republicans fought it."

Mr. Humphrey said that time after time "the Republican Party has turned its back on the parents and grandparents of America. They turned their backs in 1935 when Franklin Roosevelt created Social Security. They turned their backs when Harry Truman called for Medicare. I know, because that was the first bill I introduced as a freshman U. S. senator."

In the 1960 Presidential campaign, Richard Nixon turned his back on Medicare, Humphrey said, claiming: "It makes no good sense at all."

The text of the Vice President follows:

. . . more

REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
SENIOR CITIZENS RALLY
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
SEPTEMBER 25, 1968

You can measure the quality of a civilization in two crucial ways: how it educates young people and prepares them for adulthood -- and how it regards older citizens and provides for their health and happiness.

During this campaign I will discuss in detail the educational needs of America -- and how the Humphrey-Muskie administration proposes to meet these needs.

Today I want to discuss the Humphrey Muskie program for senior citizens . . . built on the proud Democratic record of past accomplishments . . . but looking forward to a New Day of security and involvement for older Americans.

We hear a good deal about people and groups left out of American society. The urgent task of reconciliation and unity in America does, indeed, depend upon reaching those who have not participated fully in the decisions and benefits of this society.

Operation America needs everybody -- the rich and poor . . . people of all races and creeds . . . and the old as well as the young.

In these days of crisis and challenge, we need particularly to draw upon the skills, experience and dedication of our older citizens -- to devise ways for their knowledge and talents to be fully used . . . even as we guarantee them a life increasingly free from anxiety over financial security and health.

* * * *

The past record on security and opportunity for our older citizens is clear enough.

The Democrats built it -- and the Republicans fought it.

On issue after issue . . . time after time, the Republican party has turned its back on the parents and grandparents of America.

They turned their backs in 1935 when Franklin Roosevelt created Social security.

They turned their backs in 1949 when Harry Truman called for Medicare. I know, because that was the first bill I introduced as a freshman U.S. Senator.

Throughout the Republican-Nixon years of the 1950s -- the Democrats fought for Medicare and the GOP fought against it.

John F. Kennedy made Medicare a major campaign issue in 1960. Richard Nixon turned his back, again, claiming -- and I quote -- "it makes no good sense at all, except that in an America that has given up its heritage of freedom and joined the dull, drab ranks of the bureaucratic superstate."

But we kept fighting and -- in 1965 Medicare became law of the land -- even though 93 percent of the Republicans in the House tried to kill it.

What does Mr. Nixon say now about Medicare? Have the 19 million Americans now covered "given up their heritage of freedom?" Have they "joined the dull drab ranks of the bureaucratic superstate?"

Or -- as the Humphrey-Muskie team believe -- have these 19 million Americans found a new freedom . . . freedom from the financial ruin which once threatened to turn the golden years into a nightmare for many of our senior citizens?

What does Mr. Nixon plan now for Medicare? Has he changed his mind? I say the American people have a right to know.

And what about Mr. Wallace? He says he plans to throw the bureaucrats out of Washington. Does that include the bureaucrats who run Medicare and Social Security? I say the American people have a right to know.

The difference between Humphrey-Muskie Democrats and Nixon-Agnew Republicans is summed up in just one sentence: with a single exception -- 1954 -- every expansion in the coverage of Social Security . . . every increase in benefits . . . has been proposed by the Democrats and opposed by the Republicans.

In the past eight years, under John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, Social Security benefits have increased by 66 percent -- more than double the increases of the previous eight recession-ridden Republican years.

Just last year we passed the largest and most comprehensive increase in benefits in 17 years.

We proposed it . . . the Democrats pushed it to passage in Congress . . . and a majority of the Republicans in the Senate voted for a substitute bill which contained much smaller increases.

I am proud to have been part of this great tradition of humane Democratic Government.

But today I come to say that the great work is yet unfinished . . . and I come to set forth the Humphrey-Muskie program for getting it done.

* * * *

I am today releasing a policy statement which spells out in detail major new proposals in three areas -- income, health and utilizing the talents of our senior citizens.

Let me give you the highlights:

First, Social Security. Eighteen and a half million Americans now receive Social Security benefits. For more than half of those, it provides a poverty income for people who deserve a living income. That is not worthy of America.

As President I would call for: increasing Social Security benefits by 50 percent across the board -- with graduated increases from the present monthly minimum of \$55 to \$100 for an individual and from \$82.50 to \$150 for a couple during the next four years.

We would begin with at least a 15 to 20 percent general boost and a \$70 minimum for an individual and \$105 for a couple.

The first increase alone would lift at least 1.3 million people out of poverty immediately.

I shall also propose -- and we urgently need -- a built-in system of automatic increases -- tied to consumer prices -- to keep pace with rising living costs.

In addition, we must liberalize the Social Security provisions which reduce benefits for people who are able to work. They earned their Social Security -- and they need it. I say, let them have it.

And let this country have the benefits of their productivity in a paying job.

And finally, I believe it is time to ease the burden which Social Security contributions place upon our working people, by financing part of the increase I propose from general tax revenues.

Second, health care. Medicare works and it works well, despite Mr. Nixon's dire predictions. Now it is time to perfect it.

We must put the medical payments portion of the program on the same insurance pre-payment financing basis as the hospital part.

This will make it unnecessary for older citizens to pay four dollars a month out of their retirement incomes for medical insurance.

We must provide protection under Medicare from the heavy costs of prescription drugs.

And we must extend the umbrella of Medicare to cover Social Security disability beneficiaries who, like older people, have high medical costs at a time when their income is sharply reduced.

I believe these programs are sound and sensible.

I shall put them before the Congress -- and see that America gives its older citizens the kind of protection our resources permit . . . and our dignity as a civilization demands.

* * * * *

I've save for last what -- to me -- is the most exciting proposal.

My vision of America is one of unity . . . of people helping people.

My vision is an America where human resources are cherished . . . and put to good use to develop other human resources.

. . . more

And if we ever needed unity . . . if we ever needed to put everything we have into the pursuit of human excellence . . . it is today.

I shall therefore propose to the Congress establishment of a National Senior Citizens Community Service Corps, in which people at or near retirement age can earn money, or serve as volunteers in jobs vital to the growth of America.

For some it will mean a whole new career.

For others it will mean a chance to pass on the skills and wisdom of a lifetime to young people who find themselves rootless in an uncertain age.

There is an essential strength and greatness in the American people.

In this campaign I mean to call forth this strength and greatness.

We are faced by stubborn and difficult problems . . . this is no time for easy answers . . . and I will offer none.

But it is a time for mobilizing the full resources of this nation to accomplish the unfinished business of America.

I have come to Los Angeles to ask your help.

#

STATEMENT BY
HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
SEPTEMBER 25, 1968

A NEW DAY FOR OLDER AMERICANS

The quality of life of today's generation of older Americans is far better than that enjoyed by any previous generations of older Americans. More of them own homes, they have better health care, and practically all are now assured of continuing income in retirement.

Playing a major role in providing a better life for older Americans is the Social Security program, which today provides monthly cash benefits for 18.5 million people age 62 and over, and which helps virtually all of the 20 million people age 65 and over meet the cost of hospital and doctor bills.

The Social Security program was established under Democratic leadership in 1935 -- and 95 out of 96 Republicans in the House voted to kill the old age benefits section.

Since then, almost all the major improvements have been made by the Democrats. In fact, with a single exception -- 1954 -- every expansion in the coverage of Social Security . . . every increase in benefits . . . has been proposed by the Democrats and most of them have been passed over strong Republican opposition.

In the last three years, benefits have been increased twice-- raising minimum benefit levels by two-thirds and the average payment by 23 percent.

President Roosevelt and President Truman proposed a program of disability benefits . . . but the Republicans killed it.

Richard Nixon voted against the program in 1949 and 1950.

In 1956 the Democrats finally passed the program over the protests of the Nixon-Republicans.

President Truman proposed Medicare in 1949; it was the first bill I introduced as a freshman senator.

The Nixon-Republicans fought Medicare for 16 years and denied these benefits to millions of our older citizens. In

PAGE TWO

the 1960 campaign Mr. Nixon attacked Medicare with these words: ". . . it makes no good sense at all, except in an America that has given up its heritage of freedom and joined the dull drab ranks of the bureaucratic superstate."

In 1965, 93% of the Nixon-Republicans in the House notwithstanding, the Democrats passed Medicare.

Despite the major progress that has been made over the years, much still remains to be done. Too many people still have to face the problem of inadequate income in old age. Fully one-third of those age 65 and over live in poverty. That fact alone should challenge the conscience of all Americans.

Our elderly also face other major problems. For many, there is the critical question of what to do with their vastly increased leisure time. Each older person needs to know that his remaining years can be spent in useful, meaningful pursuits -- of value to himself, his fellow neighbors, and his community.

Toward the solution of these problems we pledge a program in three crucial and urgent areas -- income, health, and the use of the abilities of elderly Americans.

Our proposals improving the retirement, disability and health benefits would bring an immediate increase of approximately 25 percent in these benefits.

Retirement Income

Although private pension plans provide supplementary benefits to those fortunate enough to be covered under such arrangements, for most retired Americans, Social Security is the main source of continuing income.

Many retirees would be destitute if there were no Social Security system. Today 10 million people are kept out of poverty because of their Social Security benefits. They would have to rely on relatives who often could not readily afford to supply the needed support or they would be on relief rolls. Nineteen out of twenty of those now receiving Social Security benefits would not be able to achieve a moderate living standard without these benefits.

Even with recent increases in Social Security payments, the average benefit for the retired worker is only \$98 per month, and for the retired couple, \$165 a month. Inadequate income is the biggest problem for older people.

We need a substantial increase in Social Security benefits -- and we need to make these benefits inflation-proof. As President I would call for:

- Increasing Social Security benefits by 50 percent across the board, with an increase from the present monthly minimum of \$55 to \$100 for an individual and from \$82.50 to \$150 for a couple in steps during the next four years. We would begin with at least a 15 to 20 percent general boost and a \$70 minimum for an individual and \$105 for a couple. The first increase alone would lift at least 1.3 million people out of poverty immediately. Over 125,000 older people would no longer have to turn to public assistance for basic sustenance, and there would be a saving of about \$175 million to the assistance program.
- Making benefits inflation-proof after retirement by raising them automatically to reflect price increases. From time to time benefits should be further raised to take account of general increases in the standard of living.
- Making it more attractive for the Social Security beneficiary to earn more by liberalizing the provisions which reduce benefits when he or she works. There should be incentives, not disincentives, for those who want to continue to work.
- Increasing the amount of annual earnings on which contributions and benefits are based so that benefit amounts will be more closely related to the full earnings of the great majority of workers.
- Financing a part of the increased benefits from general

revenues to ease the burden of social security contributions on the workers, especially to finance the rise in minimum benefits to \$100 per month.

-- Making it easier to qualify for disability benefits.

Health Costs and Medicare

Until Medicare became law, older Americans faced the constant threat of financial disaster. Today, however, for most senior citizens the threat has been lifted of a hospital bill that could wipe out their hard-won security -- bills that would not only wipe out their own savings but also those of their children.

Twenty million older Americans are protected under Medicare.

To date, \$7 billion in hospital insurance benefits has been paid, as well as \$2.3 billion in medical insurance benefits. In 1968 alone, 7.5 million persons will receive \$5.6 billion (an average of nearly \$750 per beneficiary) in hospital benefits under Medicare.

Now that we have proved Medicare successful, let us perfect it.

As President I would ask Congress to do the following:

- Put the doctor bill part of Medicare on the same social insurance pre-payment basis as the hospital part. This would make it unnecessary for older citizens to pay \$4.00 a month for medical insurance out of their retirement incomes. Both parts of the Medicare plan would be financed from Social Security contributions and matching contributions from the Federal Government.
- Provide protection against the heavy cost of prescription drugs which are so often necessary to health and well-being, and which now account for about 30 percent of private expenditures for health care by the aged.
- Extend Medicare's protection to disabled Social Security beneficiaries who, like older people, have high medical

PAGE FIVE

costs at the time when their income is sharply reduced.

Participation Through Community Service

Security is important, but it is not enough. We must provide opportunity for our elderly -- opportunity for gainful employment, for those who seek to continue to work, and the opportunity for volunteer activity or for other meaningful functions that yield personal satisfaction to the volunteer and benefits to others.

Americans are looking around their hometowns and their neighborhoods and discovering that there is much that needs doing. The so-called "helping professions" are badly in need of manpower. There are now over 5 million significant public service tasks that could be performed, if our available manpower is properly mobilized. Many senior citizens have the aptitude and competence and desire to provide services in institutions for young and old, in schools and libraries in ghettos and in suburbs.

Americans are also beginning to realize that among our population of older persons is a deep, rich reservoir of talent, wisdom and experience.

We should match up older people who want to serve with the tasks that need doing.

What is needed now is a sustained, national program that will give hundreds of thousands, and possibly millions of able-bodied older Americans new opportunities for service and participation; and which will give communities more of what they need. Older people can do much toward taking care of the long-neglected needs of society.

Therefore, I propose

- The establishment of a National Senior Citizens Community Service Corps in which persons both over and approaching retirement age can earn incomes or volunteer to do jobs which can help communities throughout the nation achieve vital social goals. We need the wisdom and experience of our older people.

To Sum Up . . .

We must ask what our Americans who are aged or aging seek and we must strive to better meet their objectives.

Will their final share in life's experience be a time of dignity, of renewed purpose, deepened and enriched by experience?

Or will these years be a time for waiting and empty intervals, full of the sounds and visions of the past, full of foreboding of the future?

If we can work on a forward-looking program along the lines I have just outlined, we will speed the dawn of that New Day which will bring a better life for all older Americans and for their families.

REMARKS
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
SENIOR CITIZENS RALLY
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
September 25, 1968

Steve Rhinhardt
Rev Bishop

Jess Unruh
Mayor Sumner
of Seal Beach

Leisure World

John Dean
Orange County
Democrat

Tom Maguire
Pres. Democlub
Jimmy Durante
Pam Bennett

∟ You can measure the quality of a civilization in two crucial ways: How it educates young people and prepares them for adulthood -- and how it regards older citizens and provides for their health and happiness.

∟ During this campaign I will discuss in detail the educational needs of America -- and how the Humphrey-Muskie Administration proposes to meet these needs.

Today I want to discuss the Humphrey-Muskie program for senior citizens ... built on the proud Democratic record of past accomplishments ... but looking forward to a New Day of security and ^{opportunity} involvement for older Americans.

The Poor
The Young

↳ We hear a good deal about people and groups left out of American society. ↳ The urgent task of reconciliation and unity in America does, indeed, depend upon reaching those who have not participated fully in the decisions and benefits of this society.

↳ America needs everybody -- the rich and poor ... people of all races and creeds ... and the old as well as the young.

In these days of crisis and challenge, we need particularly to draw upon the skills, experience and dedication of our older citizens -- to devise ways for their knowledge and talents to be fully used ... even as we guarantee them a life increasingly free from anxiety over financial security and health.

* ~~##~~ *

↳ The past record on security and opportunity for our older citizens is clear enough.

↳ The Democrats built it -- and the Republicans fought it.

↳ On issue after issue ... time after time, the Republican Party has turned its back on the parents and grandparents of America.

They turned their backs in 1935 when Franklin Roosevelt created Social Security.

↳ They turned their backs in 1949 when Harry Truman called for Medicare. I know, because that was the first bill I introduced as a freshman Senator.

↳ Throughout the Nixon-Republican years of the 1950's, we Democrats fought for Medicare and the GOP fought against it.

↳ John F. Kennedy made Medicare a major campaign issue in 1960. ↳ Richard Nixon turned his back, again, claiming -- and

I quote: "It makes no good sense at all, except that in an America that has given up its heritage of freedom and joined the dull, drab ranks of the bureaucratic superstate."

↳ But we kept fighting and -- in 1965 Medicare became the law of the land -- even though 93 per cent of the Republicans in the House tried to kill it.

↳ What does Mr. Nixon say now about Medicare?

Have the ^{can 20} ~~19~~ million Americans now covered "given up ?
their heritage of freedom?"

↳ Have they joined the dull drab ranks of the bureaucratic superstate??

Or -- as the Humphrey-Muskie team believes -- have these ²⁰ ~~19~~ million Americans found a new freedom ... freedom from the financial ruin which once threatened to turn the golden years into a nightmare for many of our senior citizens?

↳ What does Mr. Nixon plan now for Medicare? Has he changed his mind? I say the American people have a right to know.

∟ The Republican Platform failed even to mention
the existence of Medicare. Does this mean they don't
even know the program exists? Or, does it mean they
hope it will go away?

∟ And what about Mr. Wallace?

He says he plans to throw the bureaucrats out of Washington.

∟ Does that include the bureaucrats who run Medicare and Social Security?

∟ I say the American people have a right to know.

∟ The difference between Humphrey-Muskie Democrats and Nixon-Agnew Republicans is summed up in just one sentence: With a single exception -- 1954 -- every expansion in the coverage of Social Security ... every increase in benefits ... has been proposed by the Democrats and opposed by the Republicans.

∟ In the past eight years, under John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, Social Security benefits have increased by 66 per cent -- more than double the increases of the previous eight ~~recession-ridden~~ Republican years.

↳ Just last year we passed the largest and most comprehensive increase in benefits in 17 years.

↳ We proposed it ... we pushed it to passage in Congress ... and a majority of the Republicans in the Senate voted for a substitute bill which contained much smaller increases.

↳ I am proud to have been part of this great tradition of humane Democratic government.

But today I come to say that the great work is yet unfinished ... and I come to set forth the Humphrey-Muskie program for getting it done.

* * (the future)

↳ I am today releasing a policy statement which spells out in detail major new proposals in three areas -- income, health and utilizing the talents of our senior citizens.

↳ Let me give you the highlights:▲▲

First, Social Security. Eighteen and a half million Americans now receive Social Security benefits. For more than half of those, it provides a poverty income for people who deserve a living income. That is not worthy of America.

As President I would call for:

↳ Increasing Social Security benefits by 50 per cent across the board -- with graduated increases from the present monthly minimum of \$55 to \$100 for an individual and from \$82.50 to \$150 for a couple during the next four years.

↳ We would begin with at least a 15 to 20 per cent general boost and a \$70 minimum for an individual and \$105 for a couple.

↳ The first increase alone would lift at least 1.3 million people out of poverty immediately.

*Cost of living
Escalator*

I shall also propose -- and we urgently need -- a built-in system of automatic increases -- tied to consumer prices -- to keep pace with rising living costs.

In addition, we must liberalize the Social Security provisions which reduce benefits for people who are able to work. They earned their Social Security -- and they need it.

I say, let them have it.

— So let's lift the earnings limitation.

And let this country have the benefits of their productivity in a paying job.

— no welfare

And finally, I believe it is time to ease the burden which Social Security contributions place upon our working people, by financing part of the increase I propose from general tax revenues.

Second, health care. Medicare works and it works well, despite Mr. Nixon's dire predictions. Now it is time to perfect it.

↙ We must put the medical payments portion of the program on the same insurance pre-payment financing basis as the hospital part.

↙ This will make it unnecessary for older citizens to pay four dollars a month out of their retirement incomes for medical insurance.

We must provide protection under Medicare from the heavy costs of prescription drugs.

↙ And we must extend the ^{Protection}~~umbrella~~ of Medicare to cover Social Security disability beneficiaries who, like older people, have high medical costs at a time when their income is sharply reduced.

I believe these programs are sound and sensible.

I shall put them before the Congress -- and see that America gives its older citizens the kind of protection our resources permit ... and our dignity as a civilization demands.

* * *

I've saved for last what to me is the most exciting proposal.

My vision of America is one of unity .. of people helping people.

My vision is an America where human resources are cherished ... and put to good use to develop other human resources.

And if we ever needed unity ... if we ever needed to put everything we have into the pursuit of human excellence ... it is today.

and human development

5,000,000 - Social Service
Jobs needed
- 11 -

I shall, therefore, propose to the Congress the establishment of a National Senior Citizens Community Service Corps, in which people at or near retirement age can earn money, or serve as volunteers in jobs vital to the growth of America.

↳ For some it will mean a whole new career.

↳ For others it will mean a chance to pass on the skills and wisdom of a lifetime to young people who find themselves rootless in an uncertain age.

yes ↳ There is an essential strength and greatness in the American people.

In this campaign I mean to call forth this strength and greatness.

We are faced by stubborn and difficult problems ... this is no time for easy answers ... and I will offer none.

Jimmy
Durante

↳ But it is a time for mobilizing the full resources
of this nation to accomplish the unfinished business of
America.

I have come to Los Angeles to ask your help.

#

SENIOR CITIZENS
LOS ANGELES

WED PM. 9-23
Release
Los Angeles, Calif

10.
FOR RELEASE - WEDNESDAY P.M.S

LOS XXX VP HUBERT HUMPHREY ADDRESS TO SENIOR CITIZENS
RALLY, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, SEPTEMBER 25, 1968

YOU CAN MEASURE THE QUALITY OF A CIVILIZATION IN TWO CRUCIAL WAYS:
HOW IT EDUCATES YOUNG PEOPLE AND PREPARES THEM FOR ADULTHOOD--AND
HOW IT REGARDS OLDER CITIZENS AND PROVIDES FOR THEIR HEALTH AND
HAPPINESS.

DURING THIS CAMPAIGN I WILL DISCUSS IN DETAIL THE EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS OF AMERICA--AND HOW THE HUMPHREY-MUSKIE ADMINISTRATION
PROPOSES TO MEET THESE NEEDS.

TODAY I WANT TO DISCUSS THE HUMPHREY-MUSKIE PROGRAM FOR SENIOR
CITIZENS...BUILT ON THE PROUD DEMOCRATIC RECORD OF PAST ACCOMPLISH-
MENTS...BUT LOOKING FORWARD TO A NEW DAY OF SECURITY AND INVOLVEMENT
FOR OLDER AMERICANS.

WE HEAR A GOOD DEAL ABOUT PEOPLE AND GROUPS LEFT OUT OF AMERICAN
SOCIETY. THE URGENT TASK OF RECONCILIATION AND UNITY IN AMERICA
DOES, INDEED, DEPEND UPON REACHING THOSE WHO HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED
FULLY IN THE DECISIONS AND BENEFITS OF THIS SOCIETY.

OPERATION AMERICA NEEDS EVERYBODY(U-LINE)--THE RICH AND POOR...
PEOPLE OF ALL RACES AND CREEDS...AND THE OLD AS WELL AS THE YOUNG.

IN THESE DAYS OF CRISIS AND CHALLENGE, WE NEED PARTICULARLY TO
DRAW UPON THE SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND DEDICATION OF OUR OLDER
CITIZENS--TO DEVISE WAYS FOR THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND TALENTS TO BE
FULLY USED...EVEN AS WE GUARANTEE THEM A LIFE INCREASINGLY FREE FROM
ANXIETY OVER FINANCIAL SECURITY AND HEALTH.

THE PAST RECORD ON SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR OLDER
CITIZENS IS CLEAR ENOUGH.

THE DEMOCRATS BUILT IT--AND THE REPUBLICANS FOUGHT IT.

ON ISSUE AFTER ISSUE...TIME AFTER TIME, THE REPUBLICAN PARTY
HAS TURNED ITS BACK ON THE PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS OF
AMERICA.

THEY TURNED THEIR BACKS IN 1935 WHEN FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT
CREATED SOCIAL SECURITY.

THEY TURNED THEIR BACKS IN 1947 XXX 1949 REPEAT 1949 WHEN HARRY
TRUMAN CALLED FOR MEDICARE. I KNOW, BECAUSE THAT WAS THE FIRST BILL
I INTRODUCED AS A FRESHMAN U.S. SENATOR.

THROUGHOUT THE REPUBLICAN-NIXON YEARS OF THE 1950'S--THE DEMOCRATS
FOUGHT FOR (U-LINE) MEDICARE AND THE GOP FOUGHT AGAINST (U-LINE)
IT.

2
JOHN F. KENNEDY MADE MEDICARE A MAJOR CAMPAIGN ISSUE IN 1960. RICHARD NIXON TURNED HIS BACK, AGAIN, CLAIMING --AND I QUOTE--"IT MAKES NO GOOD SENSE AT ALL, EXCEPT THAT XXX IN AN AMERICA THAT HAS GIVEN UP ITS HERITAGE OF FREEDOM AND JOINED THE DULL, DRAB RANKS OF THE BUREAUCRATIC SUPERSTATE."

we
BUT ~~PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND THE GREAT DEMOCRATIC 89TH CONGRESS~~ KEPT FIGHTING AND--IN 1965 MEDICARE BECAME LAW OF THE LAND--EVEN THOUGH 93 PERCENT OF THE REPUBLIANS IN THE HOUSE TRIED TO KILL IT.

WHAT DOES MR. NIXON SAY NOW ABOUT MEDICARE? HAVE THE 19 MILLION AMERICANS NOW COVERED "GIVEN UP THEIR HERITAGE OF FREEDOM?" HAVE THEY JOINED THE DULL DRAB RANKS OF THE BUREAUCRATIC SUPERSTAGE"? (NOTE: QUOTE BEGINS AT 'JOINED' IN PREV. LINE)

OR--AS THE HUMPHREY-MUSKIE TEAM BELIEVE--HAVE THESE 19 MILLION AMERICANS FOUND A NEW FREEDOM...FREEDOM FROM THE FINANCIAL RUIN WHICH ONXW ZZZ ONXW RXXX ONCE THREATENED TO TURN THE GOLDEN YEARS INTO A NIGHTMARE FOR MANY OF OUR SENIOR CITIZENS?

WHAT DOES MR. NIXON PLAN NOW FOR MEDICARE? HAS HE CHANGED HIS MIND? I SAY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW.

AND WHAT ABOUT MR. WALLACE? HE SAYS HE PLANS TO THROW THE BUREAUCRATS OUT OF WASHINGTON. DOES THAT INCLUDE THE BUREAUCRATS WHO RUN MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY? I SAY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HUMPHREY-MUSKIE DEMOCRATS AND NIXON-AGNEW REPUBLICANS IS SUMMED UP IN JUST ONE SENTENCE: SXXX WITH A SINGLE EXCEPTION--1954--EVERY EXPANSION IN THE COVERAGE OF SOCIAL SECURITY... EVERY INCREASE IN BENEFITS...HAS BEEN PROPOSED (U-LINE) BY THE DEMOCRATS AND OPPOSED (U-LINE) BY THE REPUBLICANS.

IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS, UNDER JOHN KENNEDY AND LYNDON JOHNSON, SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS HAVE INCREASED BY 66 PER CENT --MORE THAN DOUBLE THE INCREASES OF THE PREVIOUS EIGHT RECESSION-RIDDEN REPUBLICAN YEARS.

JUST LAST YEAR WE PASSED THE LARGEST AND MOST COMPREHENSIVE INCREASE IN BENEFITS IN 17 YEARS.

we
~~LYNDON JOHNSON~~ PROPOSED IT...THE DEMOCRATS PUSHED IT TO PASSAGE IN CONGRESS...AND A MAJORITY OF THE REPUBLICANS IN THE SENATE VOTED FOR A SUBSTITUTE BILL WHICH CONTAINED MUCH SMALLER INCREASES.

I AM PROUD TO HAVE BEEN PART OF THIS GREAT TRADITION OF HUMANE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

BUT TODAY I COME TO SAY THAT THE GREAT WORK IS YET UNFINISHED... AND I COME TO SET FORTH THE HUMPHREY-MUSKIE PROGRAM FOR GETTING IT DONE.

I AM TODAY RELEASING A POLICY STATEMENT WHICH SPELLS OUT IN DETAIL MAJOR NEW PROPOSALS IN THREE AREAS--INCOME, HEALTH AND UTILIZING THE TALENTS OF OUR SENIOR CITIZENS.

LET ME GIVE YOU THE HIGHLIGHTS:

3. FIRST, SOCIALSXXX SOCIAL SECURITY (U-LINE). EIGHTEEN AND A HALF MILLION AMERICANS NOW RECEIVE SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS. FOR MORE THAN HALF OF THOSE, IT PROVIDES A POVERTY INCOME FOR PEOPLE WHO DESERVE A LIVING INCOME. THAT IS NOT WORTHY OF AMERICA.

AS PRESIDENT I WOULD CALL FOR: INCREASING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS BY 50 PERCENT ACROSS THE BOARD--WITH GRADUATED INCREASES FROM THE PRESENT MONTHLY MINIMUM OF \$55 TO \$100 FOR AN INDIVIDUAL AND FROM \$82.50 TO \$150 FOR A COUPLE DURING TEXXX THE NEXT FOUR YEARS.

WE WOULD BEGIN WITH AT LEAST A 15 TO 1XXX 20 PERCENT GENERAL BOOST AND A \$70 MINIMUM FOR AN INDIVIDUAL AND \$105 FOR A COUPLE.

THE FIRST INCREASE ALONE WOULD LIFETXXX LIFT AT LEAST 1.3 MILLION PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY IMMEDIATELY.

I SHALL ALSO PROPOSE--AND WE URGENTLY NEED--A BUILT-IN SYSTEM OF AUTOMATIC INCREASES--TIED TO CONSUMER PRICES--TOKEEP PACE WITH RISING LIVING COSTS.

IN ADDITION, WE MUST LIBERALIZE THE SOCIAL SECURITY PROVISIOS CORRECTION PROVISIONS WHICH REDUCE BENEFITS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE ABLE TO WORK. THEY EARNED THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY--AND THEY NEED IT. I SAY, LET THEM HAVE IT.

AND LET THIS COUNTRY HAVE THE BENEFITS OF THEIR PRODUCTIVITY IN A PAYING JOB.

AND FINALLY, I BELIEVE IT IS TIME TO EASE THE BURDEN WHICH SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS PLACE UPON OUR WORKING PEOPLE, BY FINANCING PART OF THE INCREASE I PROPOSE FROM GENERAL TAX REVENUES.

SECOND, HEALTH CARE. (U-LINE HEALTH CARE). MEDICARE WORKS AND IT WORKS WELL, DESPITE MR. NIXON'S DIRE PREDICTIONS. NOW IT IS TIME TO PERFECT IT.

WE MUST PUT THE MEDICAL PAYMENTS PORTION OF THE PROGRAM ON THE SAME INSURANCE PRE-PAYMENT FINANCING BASIS AS THE HOSPITAL PART.

THIS WILL MAKE IT UNNECESSARY FOR OLDER CITIZENS TO PAY FOUR DOLLARS A MONTH OUT OF THEIR RETIREMENT INCOMES FOR MEDIAXXX MEDICAL INSURANCE.

WE MUST PROVIDE PROTECTION UNDER MEDICARE FROM THE HEAVY COSTS OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.

AND WE MUST EXTEND THE UMBRELLA OF MEDICARE TO COVER SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFICIARIES WHO, LIKE OLDER PEOPLE, HAVE HIGH MEDICAL COSTS AT A TIME WHEN THEIR CXXX INCOMESXXX INCOME IS SHARPLY REDUCED.

I BELIEVE THESE PROGRAMS ARE SOUND AND SENSIBLE.

I SHALL PUT THEM BEFORE THE CONGRESS--AND SEE THAT AMERICA GIVES ITS OLDER CITIZENS THE KIND OF PROTECTION OUR RESOURCES PERMIT...AND OUR DIGNITY AS A CIVILIZATION DEMANDS.

I'VE SAVED FOR LAST WHAT--TO ME--IS THE MOST EXCITING PROPOSAL.

MY VISION OF AMERICA IS ONE OF UNITY...OF PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE.

MY VISISXXX VISION IS AN AMERICA WHERE HUMAN RESOURCES ARE CHERISHED...AND PUT TO GOOD USE TO DEVELOP OTHER HUMAN RESOURCES.

4
AND IF WE EVER NEEDED UNITY...IF WE EVERYXXX EVER NEEDED TO
PUT EVERYTHING WE HAVE INTO THE PURSUIT OF HUMAN EXCELLENCE...IT
IS TODAY.

I SHALL THEREFORE PROPOSE TO THE CONGRESS ESTABLISHMENT OF A
NATIONAL SENIOR CITIZENS COMMUNITY SERVICE CORPS, IN WHICH PEOPLE
AT OR NAXXX NEAR RETIREMENT AGE CAN EARN MONEY, OR SERVE AS VOLUNTEERS
IN JOBS VITAL TO THE GROWTH OF AMERICA.

FOR SOME IT WILL MEAN A WHOLE NEW CAREER.

FOR OTHERS IT WILL MEAN A CHANCE TO PASS ON THE SKILLS AND WISDOM
OF A LIFETIME TO YOUNGPEOPLE WHO FIND THEMSELVES ROOTLESS IN AN UNCER-
TAIN AGE.

THERE IS AN ESSENTIAL STRENGTH AND GREATNESS IN THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE.

IN THIS CAMPAIGN I MEAN TO CALL FORTH THIS STRENGTH AND GREATNESS.

WE ARE FACED BY STUBBORN AND DIFFICULT PROBLEMS...THIS IS NO
TIME FOR EASY ANSWERS...AND I WILL OFFER NONE.

BUT IT IS A TIME FOR MOBILIZING FXXX THE FULL RESOURCES OF THIS
NATION TO ACCOMPLISH THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF AMERICA.

I HAVE COME TO LOS ANGELES TO ASK YOUR HELP.
DEM FOR HHH DC

THE END

X
OPR I WANT TO SEND A TAPE TO L.A.XXX TOLEDO--EA TIME I
DIAL THE NBR 810 442 1618, T I GET A RECDG TO TRY AGAIN. MY NBR
IS 710 822 9211

OK MIN
HHH TOLEDO

DEM FOR HHH DC
PLS ADV IF U ARE RECG?////????????? ES YES
ATTN: HHH ADVANCE, TED VAN DYK.
SENDING TEXT FOR L.A. SR. CITIZENS RALLY

OK WILL DELIVER MESSAGE END HERE OR GA

HERE'S AN ADDITIONAL FACT FOR THE SENIOR CITIZENS SPEECH:

AS VICE PRESIDENT, NIXON FAILED TO CAST A TIE-BREAKING VOTE IN THE SENATE WHICH WOULD HAVE INCREASED PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS TO THE AGED, BLIND AND DISABLED BY FIVE DOLLARS A MONTH. MAY 28, 1958.

DID YOU RECEIVE OK?

YES I DID AND WILL DELIVER END OR GA FLS

FINE PLEASE DELIVER BYE-BYES

NNNNNN

*Joe
Green
Citizens*

There are now 19 million Americans over 65 years of age. Many of them have energy, time, and special competence which is not presently being used. But much of our senior population feels rejected, friendless and frustrated in a society increasingly oriented to the young. They want to remain active, to work and to participate, but they do not know how.

There is therefore a need to --

- make the elderly feel productive and wanted
- make use of their talents
- give them a sense of dignity, independence, and involvement.

PRESENT PROGRAMS

The Foster Grandparent Program, now administered by the Administration on Aging in HEW, is funded by the Community Action Program of OEO. The program employs low income men and women over 60 to serve as foster grandparents to a variety of dependent, neglected and otherwise needy children in many institutional and community settings. These settings include institutions for the mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and physically handicapped; day care centers; and children not in institutions but in clinics, special classes, sheltered workshops, or even Headstart Homes. Older people have shown considerable interest in the program, and it is rapidly expanding to new communities.

Green Thumb, a non-profit organization funded by OEO, was created primarily for the older rural worker. His task is to plant

trees, build or restore parks, beautify highways or anything else which would make rural America more beautiful. The program has been expanded into Operation Mainstream now administered by the Department of Labor.

Project FIND (Friendless, Insolated, Needy, Disabled) is OEO's latest demonstration project for older people. It employs low income men and women over 55 to locate the older people in the community who need housing, health, employment, nutritional and recreational services, and then to direct them to these services. The project is apparently growing in popularity.

The Administration on Aging is supporting pilot demonstration projects in these areas of concern to elderly Americans: sound nutrition, economy food purchasing, purchase of credit, avoidance of quackery and fraudulent practices, safe use of drugs, accident prevention, management of retirement income, medicare and supplementary insurance, and care of household equipment.

An Office of Older Persons Program has been established in OEO. Its present duty is to seek agencywide assistance for solving problems of the elderly poor. It may, in the future, play a very significant role as the office which coordinates all programs for the elderly.

There are about 700 Senior Citizen Centers in the country which are designed to provide opportunity for pursuit of cultural, educational, recreational, and other interests.

PENDING LEGISLATION

Two relevant bills are pending in Congress. H.R. 18037 (S.R. 1484, p.87), the Senate Appropriation for the Labor Bill, has specifically earmarked \$50 million to establish a Senior Opportunities and Services (SOS) Program in OEO. SOS would pay older citizens to serve other poverty stricken older people and find out about their various needs. The earmarking provision has passed the Senate but was omitted from the House appropriation. House-Senate conferees will decide the fate of the provision soon.

S. 3677 (H.R. 19747) would add a new Title VI entitled "Service Roles in Retirement" to the Older Americans Act of 1965. Proposed Title VI would authorize \$10 million per year for projects enrolling older people over 60 to render supportive services to children and older people having exceptional needs. To be administered through the Administration on Aging, the program would permit enrollment of volunteers but is designed primarily for older people in need of a salary. Hearings have been held in both Senate and House subcommittees. In both bodies the bill has been reported out of subcommittee and is now in committee.

NEW PROPOSALS

It seems rather clear that existing programs and proposals cover the waterfront of senior citizens activities. Little of substance will be proposed that is new. However, existing programs can be placed in a new form.

The Senator could propose a central office to coordinate and administer all existing programs (and those created later). This could be done through AoA, OOP, or in an entirely new office. Adequately funded, the center could -

- create multipurpose senior centers in every community with educational, recreational, voluntary service, nutrition and health maintenance, consumer guidance, and informational services.
- create workshops and craftshops for part time employment of older persons no longer in the work force
- develop educational programs for the aged at existing colleges and universities
- establish programs for visits to retired workers who are lonely, homebound, or ill
- operate counselling and referral services dealing with post-retirement income management and employment.

Alternatively, an entirely voluntary senior citizens effort could be operated through states and communities. Under this proposal senior citizens could act as -

- foster grandparents
- tutors and classroom aides in Headstart and other programs
- VISTA volunteers
- green thumbs
- FINDers
- and in other similar ways,

SENIOR AMERICANS CORPS

An elderly gentleman was asked recently what he thought was the best preparation for growing old. "The hardest part," he said, isn't really the aging itself, but getting accustomed to the growing neglect."

There is evidence that much of our senior population is growing frightened and resentful. They feel rejected, friendless, and frustrated in a society increasingly oriented to the young, a society which seems unconcerned with the hardships of growing old. And they feel unwanted.

In a culture where youth is so highly prized, older men and women need to know that their wisdom, experience, and the example they have set are important to all of us. They should have the right to dignity and independence. They should be able to feel that their contributions are valued.

We have programs which provide financial security for our older citizens. Social Security and Medicare are fine as far as they go. Now, perhaps for the first time, we can look forward realistically to the day when America will be able to provide physical and financial well being for all of the elderly.

But merely bringing retirement income over the poverty level is not enough. If one lesson emerges from the experience of recent years, it is that financial well being does not guarantee happiness or emotional tranquility. We are without doubt more prosperous today than we, or any other nation, has ever been. Yet there is a restlessness and frustration in our land. We are a great, and wealthy, ship, but we are moving through troubled waters.* When and how we reach quiet waters and distant shores will depend upon, not the cost of the ship, but its quality and the quality of its crew.

* In the 1967 State of the Union Message, the President used words similar to those: "There is a restlessness in our land. Why? Whenever a great ship travels to more distant shores it must travel through troubled waters."

So, we must do more than merely providing financial security
for the aged. ~~So, too, providing financial security for the aged is not~~
enough. It is not sufficient to a retired person to tell him that he has

received his minimum daily requirement of nicotin, iron and Vitamin C.

The self-respecting retired person needs meaning and quality in his life.

He needs to be involved with others.

There are now 19 million Americans over 65 years of age. Half of these are under 73. Each year this group of Americans over 65 increases by 300,000 people. When the average person leaves the job at age 65, he has left 30,000 man hours to use as he chooses. [¶] This time could be a blessing or a misfortune. It could become a time of idle, meaningless existence in which one is continually threatened by boredom. But it should become a time for engaging in new, creative activities and defining new goals - a time for having fun and doing something worthwhile.

One of the criticisms heard in various quarters today is that our society is apathetic and unconcerned. This complaint could not be made of the elderly. They are concerned, and they do care.

They care about the problems of the young.

~~They care about instilling a sense of meaning into people's lives.~~

They care about improving the lot of the underprivileged.

They care about the quality of life.

And they are in a position to do something about it.

They have the time to love, the experience to understand, the temperament to tolerate, and the capacity to cherish children, youngsters, and grownups too.

These qualities are too dear to assign to a rest home - out of sight, out of mind, and out of use. They should serve instead as a transfusion

to reinvigorate our society.

Two elections ago, John F. Kennedy proposed the Peace Corps to give our youth a chance to become involved, to grow, and to learn while helping others. VISTA serves a similar function on the domestic scene.

This election the Vice President and I propose a counterpart to these programs to give our older citizens a chance to become involved, to help others, and to enrich their own lives in the process. We would make use of their talents, give them a sense of dignity, and make them know they are wanted.

^{elder americans}
The Senior ~~Citizens~~ Corps, to operate here at home, would bring together in one office under centralized control and direction programs now scattered through the government and new programs as well. Many Senior Americans would be volunteers. They would contribute their time with the same sense of public duty as VISTA workers. But not all would be volunteers. About 30% of older people live below the poverty line; and another 10% are on the border. These Senior Americans would be paid a minimum wage to supplement retirement income.

We would hope to expand these existing programs. Under the Foster Grandparent program, now administered by the Administration on Aging in HEW, and funded by the Community Action Program of OEO, low income men and women over 60 serve as foster grandparents to a variety of dependent, neglected, and otherwise needy children. These older citizens serve in institutions for the mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and physically handicapped; in day care centers; and ~~children not in institutions but~~ in clinics, special classes, sheltered workshops, or even Headstart Homes. Older citizens have shown considerable interest in the program, and it is rapidly expanding to new communities. This is encouraging. But as at the end of last year, only 8,000

children were served by only 3,927 foster grandparents. Too few children are benefitting from the program and too few grandparents are participating. As part of the new Senior American Corps, the program would be enlarged, and its quality would be improved.

Project FIND (Friendless, Isolated, Needy, Disabled) is OEO's latest demonstration project for older people. It employs low income men and women over 55 to locate the older people in the community who need housing, employment, health, nutritional, and recreational services, and then to direct them to these services. The project seems to be growing in popularity. But as of the beginning of this year, only 372 older Americans were employed in FIND. Here too, we need to involve more people.

Green Thumb, a non-profit organization funded by OEO, uses older rural workers to plant trees, build or restore parks, beautify highways or do anything else which would make rural America more beautiful. The program has been expanded into operation Mainstream now administered by the Department of Labor. But it employs only 1,179 older men. We should employ more.

We would not stop after we expanded existing programs. Then we would add these new efforts, to existing programs--

- create multipurpose senior centers in every community with educational, recreational, voluntary service, nutrition and health maintenance, consumer guidance, and informational services.
- establish programs for visits to retired workers who are lonely, homebound or ill.
- establish programs for visits to homes where children are in need of attention and care.
- establish programs to assist Headstart and other projects as tutors and classroom aids.
- create workshops and craftshops for part time employment of older persons no longer in the work force.

- develop educational programs for the aged at existing colleges and universities.
- operate counselling and referral services dealing with post-retirements income and management.

It will help to have all these efforts coordinated under one roof. With all the talent available among our retired people, I believe that much of the administrative work could be done on the spot by the Senior Americans themselves.

This is a modest proposal.

But it would be a beginning.

It may bring new opportunities to young people.

It may help re-involve our retired people.

And it may give them a chance to show us a thing or two.

It is worth a try.

call Max Kauffman

DRAFT

Speech Section: Senior Americans Corps

Social security is fine as far as it goes.

So is Medicare.

But each has obvious, finite limits -- dollar limits -- and more often than not those dollar limits are too low. I don't propose to get into the numbers game, but \$1014 a year -- the 1967^{*/} average annual old age benefit for retired workers doesn't sound like a living wage to me.

There is a continuing, pressing need to increase that figure and there will be until retirement incomes -- from all sources -- actually provide adequate income for retired people.

But merely bringing retirement income over the poverty level is not enough. It is no answer to a self-respecting retired person to tell him that he has received his minimum daily requirements of niacin, iron and vitamin C, if he doesn't also have friends and opportunity for involvement.

^{*/} Compiled from Statistical Abstracts (1968) Table 411.

Without these, there is little opportunity for dignity and dignity is the birthright of every human, black or white, handicapped or able, retired or employed.

Now, perhaps for the first time, America has it within its means (public as well as private) -- at least within its view -- to provide physical well being to a great portion of our citizens in retirement.

It is time, now, to start searching for better techniques to match physical well being with social well being.

This is no easy task.

But it must be undertaken

And we would all benefit.

The generation gap, as I measure it, is only one generation wide. Grandparents and grandchildren are often in harmony where father and son, mother and daughter, politician and protestor are at odds. If I am right in my measurement of the generation gap, bringing the old and the young together may be enriching for us all.

Grandparents have the time to love , the experience to understand, the wisdom to tolerate and the capacity to cherish their children's children -- indeed, most people's children.

These qualities are too dear to assign to a rest home rocking chair -- out of sight, out of mind and out of use.

Two elections ago, John F. Kennedy proposed the Peace Corps to give our youth a chance to be involved, to grow and learn while helping others.

This election, the Vice President and I propose a counterpart of the Peace Corps to provide a similar opportunity for retired people to be involved, to help themselves by helping others.

The Senior Americans Corps, to operate here at home, would provide the structure to permit retired people to become re-involved -- especially in helping children.

* At federal day care centers

* At children's homes and children's wards in hospitals

* In classrooms where teachers' aides are needed

* In helping, make sure that existing programs reach more children and serve them better.

* And in many other ways.

Later, the Senior Americans Corps might be expanded.

But we better not bite off more than we can chew at first.

Less rigorous than VISTA, the Senior American Corps need not require a minimum tour of duty but could pay nominal salaries like those for VISTA and the Peace Corps workers.

And, with all the talent available among our retired people, I believe that much of its administrative tasks could be performed on the spot by the SAC members themselves.

It is a modest proposal.

But it would be a beginning.

And if it helps re-involve our retired people,

And if it brings new opportunities to our young people,

- 5 -

We may find some of the frustrations of living
today are less acute,

And we may find new ways to trust one another.

WED. PM release

9-25-68

Los Angeles, Calif

~~REVISED~~

September 20, 1968

①

New Day
A PROGRAM FOR OLDER AMERICANS

The quality of life of today's generation of older Americans is far better than that enjoyed by any previous generations of older Americans. More of them own homes, they have better health care, and practically all are now assured of continuing income in retirement.

Playing a major role in providing a better life for older Americans is the Social Security program, which today provides monthly cash benefits for 18.5 million people age 62 and over, and which helps virtually all of the 20 million people age 65 and over meet the cost of hospital and doctor bills.

~~The Social Security program was established under Democratic leadership in 1935 and practically all the major improvements that have been made in the program over the years have been proposed and adopted by Democratic leadership. In the last three years benefit amounts have been increased twice raising minimum benefit levels by two-thirds and the average payment by 23 percent. Most importantly, Medicare was adopted to help assure the elderly the health care that they need.~~

The Social Security program was established under Democratic leadership in 1935--and 95 out of 96 Republicans in the House voted to kill the old age benefits section.

Since then, almost all the major improvements have been made by the Democrats. In fact, with a single exception--1954--every expansion in the coverage of Social Security. . . every increase in benefits . . . has been proposed by the Democrats and most of them have been passed over strong Republican opposition. In the last three years, benefits have been increased twice--raising minimum benefit ~~xxxx~~ levels by two-thirds and the average payment by 23 percent.

President Roosevelt and President Truman proposed a program of disability benefits . . . but the Republicans killed it.

Richard Nixon voted against the program in 1949 and 1950.

In 1956 the Democrats finally passed the program over the protests of the Nixon-Republicans.

President Truman proposed Medicare in 1949; it was the first bill I introduced as a freshman senator. The Nixon-Republicans fought Medicare for 16 years and denied these benefits to millions of our older citizens. In the 1960 campaign Mr. Nixon attacked Medicare with ~~this~~ these words: ". . . it makes no good sense at all, except in an America that has given up its heritage of freedom and joined the dull drab ranks of the bureaucratic superstate."

93% of the in the House
In 1965, ~~this~~/Nixon-Republicans/notwithstanding, the Democrats passed ~~Medicare~~ Medicare.

Despite the major progress that has been made over the years, much still remains to be done. Too many people still have to face the problem of inadequate income in old age. Fully one-third of those age 65 and over live in poverty. That fact alone should challenge the conscience of all Americans.

Our elderly also face other major problems. For many, *Here is the critical* the question of what to do with their vastly increased leisure time, ~~is critical~~. Each older person needs to know that his remaining years can be spent in useful, meaningful pursuits -- of value to himself, his fellow neighbors, and his community.

Toward the solution of these problems we pledge a program in three crucial and urgent areas -- income, health, and the use of the abilities of elderly Americans.

Our proposals improving the retirement, disability and health benefits would bring an immediate increase of approximately 25 percent in these benefits.

Retirement Income

Although private pension plans provide supplementary benefits to those fortunate enough to be covered under such arrangements, for most retired Americans, Social Security is the main source of continuing income.

Many retirees would be destitute if there were no Social Security system. Today 10 million people are kept out

of poverty because of their Social Security benefits. They would have to rely on relatives who often could not readily afford to supply the needed support or they would be on relief rolls. Nineteen out of twenty of those now receiving Social Security benefits would not be able to achieve a moderate living standard without these benefits.

Even with recent increases in Social Security payments, the average benefit for the retired worker is only \$98 per month, and for the retired couple, \$165 a month. Inadequate income is the biggest problem for older people.

We need a substantial increase in Social Security benefits -- and we need to make these benefits inflation-proof. As President I would call for:

- Increasing Social Security benefits by 50 percent across the board, with an increase from the present monthly minimum of \$55 to \$100 for an individual and from \$82.50 to \$150 for a couple in steps during the next four years. We would begin with at least a 15 to 20 percent general boost and a \$70 minimum for an individual and \$105 for a couple. The first increase alone would lift at least 1.3 million people out of poverty immediately. Over 125,000

older people would no longer have to turn to public assistance for basic sustenance, and there would be a saving of about \$175 million to the assistance program.

- Making benefits inflation-proof after retirement by raising them automatically to reflect price increases. From time to time benefits should be further raised to take account of general increases in the standard of living.
- Making it more attractive for the Social Security beneficiary to earn more by liberalizing the provisions which reduce benefits when he or she works. There should be incentives, not disincentives, for those who want to continue to work.
- Increasing the amount of annual earnings on which contributions and benefits are based so that benefit amounts will be more closely related to the full earnings of the great majority of workers.
- Financing a part of the increased benefits from general revenues to ease the burden of social security contributions on the workers, especially to finance the rise in minimum benefits to \$100 per month.

- Making it easier to qualify for disability benefits.

Health Costs and Medicare

Until Medicare became law, older Americans faced the constant threat of financial disaster. Today, however, for most senior citizens the threat has been lifted of a hospital bill that could wipe out their hard-won security -- bills that would not only wipe out their own savings but also those of their children.

Twenty million older Americans are protected under Medicare.

To date, \$7 billion in hospital insurance benefits has been paid, as well as \$2.3 billion in medical insurance benefits. In 1968 alone, 7.5 million persons will receive \$5.6 billion (an average of nearly \$750 per beneficiary) in hospital benefits under Medicare.

Now that we have proved Medicare successful, let us perfect it.

As President I would ask Congress to do the following:

- Put the doctor bill part of Medicare on the same social insurance pre-payment basis as the hospital

part. This would make it unnecessary for older citizens to pay \$4.00 a month for medical insurance out of their retirement incomes. Both parts of the Medicare plan would be financed from Social Security contributions and matching contributions from the Federal Government.

- Provide protection against the heavy cost of prescription drugs which are so often necessary to health and well-being, and which now account for about 30 percent of private expenditures for health care by the aged.
- Extend Medicare's protection to disabled Social Security beneficiaries who, like older people, have high medical costs at the time when their income is sharply reduced.

Participation Through Community Service

Security is important, but it is not enough. We must provide opportunity for our elderly -- opportunity for gainful employment, for those who seek to continue to work, and the opportunity for volunteer activity or for other meaningful functions that yield personal satisfaction to the volunteer and benefits to others.

Americans are looking around their hometowns and their neighborhoods and discovering that there is much that needs doing. The so-called "helping professions" are badly in need of manpower. There are now over 5 million significant public service tasks that could be performed, if our available manpower is properly mobilized. Many senior citizens have the aptitude and competence and desire to provide services in institutions for young and old, in schools and libraries in ghettos and in suburbs.

Americans are also beginning to realize that among our population of older persons is a deep, rich reservoir of talent, wisdom and experience.

We should match up older people who want to serve with the tasks that need doing.

What is needed now is a sustained, national program that will give hundreds of thousands, and possibly millions of able-bodied older Americans new opportunities for service and participation; and which will give communities more of what they need. Older people can do much toward taking care of the long-neglected needs of society.

Therefore, I propose

-- The establishment of a National Senior Citizens Community Service Corps in which persons both over and approaching retirement age can earn incomes

or volunteer to do jobs which can help communities throughout the nation achieve vital social goals.

We need the wisdom and experience of our older people.

To Sum Up . . .

We must ask what our Americans who are aged or aging seek and we must strive to better meet their objectives.

Will their final share in life's experience be a time of dignity, of renewed purpose, deepened and enriched by experience?

Or will these years be a time for waiting and empty intervals, full of the sounds and visions of the past, full of foreboding of the future?

If we can work on a forward-looking program along the lines I have just outlined, we will speed the dawn of that New Day which will bring a better life for all older Americans and for their families.

~~Secretary~~

File

September 20, 1968

TO:

FROM: Robert Nathan

RE: A PROGRAM FOR OLDER AMERICANS

THIS IS THE REVISED PAPER -- THE FINAL
PAPER FROM OUR STAFF.

REVISED

September 20, 1968

A PROGRAM FOR OLDER AMERICANS

The quality of life of today's generation of older Americans is far better than that enjoyed by any previous generations of older Americans. More of them own homes, they have better health care, and practically all are now assured of continuing income in retirement.

Playing a major role in providing a better life for older Americans is the Social Security program, which today provides monthly cash benefits for 18.5 million people age 62 and over, and which helps virtually all of the 20 million people age 65 and over meet the cost of hospital and doctor bills.

The Social Security program was established under Democratic leadership in 1935 and practically all the major improvements that have been made in the program over the years have been proposed and adopted by Democratic leadership. In the last three years benefit amounts have been increased twice raising minimum benefit levels by two-thirds and the average payment by 23 percent. Most importantly, Medicare was adopted to help assure the elderly the health care that they need.

Despite the major progress that has been made over the years, much still remains to be done. Too many people still have to face the problem of inadequate income in old age. Fully one-third of those age 65 and over live in poverty. That fact alone should challenge the conscience of all Americans.

Our elderly also face other major problems. For many, the question of what to do with their vastly increased leisure time is critical. Each older person needs to know that his remaining years can be spent in useful, meaningful pursuits -- of value to himself, his fellow neighbors, and his community.

Toward the solution of these problems we pledge a program in three crucial and urgent areas -- income, health, and the use of the abilities of elderly Americans.

Our proposals improving the retirement, disability and health benefits would bring an immediate increase of approximately 25 percent in these benefits.

Retirement Income

Although private pension plans provide supplementary benefits to those fortunate enough to be covered under such arrangements, for most retired Americans, Social Security is the main source of continuing income.

Many retirees would be destitute if there were no Social Security system. Today 10 million people are kept out

of poverty because of their Social Security benefits. They would have to rely on relatives who often could not readily afford to supply the needed support or they would be on relief rolls. Nineteen out of twenty of those now receiving Social Security benefits would not be able to achieve a moderate living standard without these benefits.

Even with recent increases in Social Security payments, the average benefit for the retired worker is only \$98 per month, and for the retired couple, \$165 a month. Inadequate income is the biggest problem for older people.

We need a substantial increase in Social Security benefits -- and we need to make these benefits inflation-proof. As President I would call for:

-- Increasing Social Security benefits by 50 percent across the board, with an increase from the present monthly minimum of \$55 to \$100 for an individual and from \$82.50 to \$150 for a couple in steps during the next four years. We would begin with at least a 15 to 20 percent general boost and a \$70 minimum for an individual and \$105 for a couple. The first increase alone would lift at least 1.3 million people out of poverty immediately. Over 125,000

older people would no longer have to turn to public assistance for basic sustenance, and there would be a saving of about \$175 million to the assistance program.

- Making benefits inflation-proof after retirement by raising them automatically to reflect price increases. From time to time benefits should be further raised to take account of general increases in the standard of living.
- Making it more attractive for the Social Security beneficiary to earn more by liberalizing the provisions which reduce benefits when he or she works. There should be incentives, not disincentives, for those who want to continue to work.
- Increasing the amount of annual earnings on which contributions and benefits are based so that benefit amounts will be more closely related to the full earnings of the great majority of workers.
- Financing a part of the increased benefits from general revenues to ease the burden of social security contributions on the workers, especially to finance the rise in minimum benefits to \$100 per month.

-- Making it easier to qualify for disability benefits.

Health Costs and Medicare

Until Medicare became law, older Americans faced the constant threat of financial disaster. Today, however, for most senior citizens the threat has been lifted of a hospital bill that could wipe out their hard-won security -- bills that would not only wipe out their own savings but also those of their children.

Twenty million older Americans are protected under Medicare.

To date, \$7 billion in hospital insurance benefits has been paid, as well as \$2.3 billion in medical insurance benefits. In 1968 alone, 7.5 million persons will receive \$5.6 billion (an average of nearly \$750 per beneficiary) in hospital benefits under Medicare.

Now that we have proved Medicare successful, let us perfect it.

As President I would ask Congress to do the following:

-- Put the doctor bill part of Medicare on the same social insurance pre-payment basis as the hospital

part. This would make it unnecessary for older citizens to pay \$4.00 a month for medical insurance out of their retirement incomes. Both parts of the Medicare plan would be financed from Social Security contributions and matching contributions from the Federal Government.

- Provide protection against the heavy cost of prescription drugs which are so often necessary to health and well-being, and which now account for about 30 percent of private expenditures for health care by the aged.
- Extend Medicare's protection to disabled Social Security beneficiaries who, like older people, have high medical costs at the time when their income is sharply reduced.

Participation Through Community Service

Security is important, but it is not enough. We must provide opportunity for our elderly -- opportunity for gainful employment, for those who seek to continue to work, and the opportunity for volunteer activity or for other meaningful functions that yield personal satisfaction to the volunteer and benefits to others.

Americans are looking around their hometowns and their neighborhoods and discovering that there is much that needs doing. The so-called "helping professions" are badly in need of manpower. There are now over 5 million significant public service tasks that could be performed, if our available manpower is properly mobilized. Many senior citizens have the aptitude and competence and desire to provide services in institutions for young and old, in schools and libraries in ghettos and in suburbs.

Americans are also beginning to realize that among our population of older persons is a deep, rich reservoir of talent, wisdom and experience.

We should match up older people who want to serve with the tasks that need doing.

What is needed now is a sustained, national program that will give hundreds of thousands, and possibly millions of able-bodied older Americans new opportunities for service and participation; and which will give communities more of what they need. Older people can do much toward taking care of the long-neglected needs of society.

Therefore, I propose

-- The establishment of a National Senior Citizens Community Service Corps in which persons both over and approaching retirement age can earn incomes

or volunteer to do jobs which can help communities throughout the nation achieve vital social goals. We need the wisdom and experience of our older people.

To Sum Up . . .

We must ask what our Americans who are aged or aging seek and we must strive to better meet their objectives.

Will their final share in life's experience be a time of dignity, of renewed purpose, deepened and enriched by experience?

Or will these years be a time for waiting and empty intervals, full of the sounds and visions of the past, full of foreboding of the future?

If we can work on a forward-looking program along the lines I have just outlined, we will speed the dawn of that New Day which will bring a better life for all older Americans and for their families.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org