

# Lyon County Centennial

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President  
Burton Ness

THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

MARSHALL CENTENNIAL

MARSHALL, MINNESOTA

JULY 2, 1970

Minnesota

- Dr. William Merritt

- ~~Sen. Joe Jacobson~~

- Josephson

Carltonwood High School  
Board

Americans in small towns and rural

areas have a right to demand of their state  
and national governments a fifth freedom --  
the freedom of residence.

This means that young people will not  
be forced, as they are now, to migrate to large  
and turbulent metropolitan areas because there  
are no jobs at home. This means that people  
who may want to live in small town areas can  
expect to find good schools for their children,  
a decent transportation system, and the best  
of medical care and medical facilities. This  
means new industries, modern social service  
and cultural activities.

It means that Americans should be able to enjoy all the benefits of life, liberty, and property not only in big cities, not only in suburbs, but all over America.

When Lyon County was founded a hundred years ago, there was no reluctance on the part of the federal government to act to encourage population movements. "Go West, Young Man" was more than a tourist travel slogan. It was a firm national population policy designed to help America's best interests.

Accordingly, the federal government gave incentives to settlers -- the Homestead Act. And the federal government gave incentives to railroads to open up the West -- large land grants to the railroads made some people millionaires who probably didn't deserve it, but they did provide highways of steel to bring in people and bring

out the crops. And just a little more than a hundred years ago the federal government encouraged the growth of higher education in the mid-Western and Western areas by establishing the Land Grant College Act. The government was concerned with the everyday necessities of life as well: in 1896 a federal act established the Rural Free Delivery service.

And then, somehow, we stopped. As farming became more mechanized in the early decades of the century, as Americans tumbled into cities and then out of cities and into suburbs, just when we needed a population policy -- we stopped.

In recent years some new action has finally taken place -- highways, medical facilities and aid to education have all helped smaller towns. Southwest Minnesota State College here in Marshall was founded recently and helped by federal funds.

There was a new beginning, a new hope, for rural America. When President Nixon gave his State-of-the-Union Message in January, he said quite correctly that the federal government ought to "create a new rural environment which will not only stem the immigration to urban centers, but reverse it."

But now there is an apparent turnabout. In its most recent edition, U. S. News and World Report tells of a closed-door White House meeting,

attended by the President, where this conclusion was reached: "No amount of money or other federal help can reverse or stop the decline of the small towns in rural America." The Nixon Administration seems to say Good-bye and Good-night to rural America.

The reasons given for this conclusion were that "a city seems to need about a quarter of a million people to offer the kinds of jobs, incomes, and other attractions the majority of the people want. (The) Implication is that it will be difficult to get people to settle in the smaller towns and build them into cities."

That is no answer, I say. We have seen what a no -policy population program has done

to rural areas. Men in politics are trained to find answers to the problems of the people -- not to say that there are no answers or there are no problems. There are problems, and there are answers.

We must develop a long range population policy in the United States to bring vitality back to rural areas. Americans must enjoy the fifth freedom: The freedom of residence.

And we must start Now.

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EXCERPTS FOR MARSHALL CENTENNIAL

Americans in small towns and rural areas have a right to demand of their state and national governments a fifth freedom - the freedom of residence.

This means that young people will not be forced, as they are now, to migrate to large and turbulent metropolitan areas because there are no jobs at home. This means that people who may want to live in small town areas can expect to find good schools for their children, a decent transportation system, and the best of medical care and medical facilities. This means ~~smaller attractions, as~~ *new industries, modern*

*social and cultural activities. It means that Americans should be able to enjoy all the benefits of life, liberty & property all over America.*

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in the early decades of the Twentieth century

~~This lack of policy in the early decades of the Twentieth Century helped bring about hard times in the small towns of the United States.~~ In recent years some new action has taken place - highways, medical facilities and aid to education have all helped small towns. Southwest Minnesota State College here in Marshall was founded recently and helped by federal funds.

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