

Western Tri-County Community Action
Council.

OUTLINE OF REMARKS FOR MONTEVIDEO

Victor Jorges Executive Director
Jack Mills - mayor Montevideo

SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Board of Directors - 15 members

JUNE 17, 1974

Harold Wendingstad

Margoy Burns

Hauer Gatchell

Margaret Warnke

↳ SINCE MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN QUITE ACTIVE
IN VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE "POVERTY PROGRAM," I
THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN A BRIEF UPDATE
ON WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING
THE "POVERTY PROGRAM."

FORTUNATELY I CAN BRING YOU SOME PRETTY
GOOD NEWS. NOT AS GOOD AS I WOULD LIKE, BUT
BETTER THEN I EXPECTED A FEW MONTHS AGO.

↳ ON MAY 29, THE HOUSE PASSED BY AN
OVERWHELMING VOTE OF 331 TO 53 THE "COMMUNITY
SERVICE ACT OF 1974." THE BILL WOULD EXTEND
THE COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS FOR THREE YEARS
AND PLACE THE PROGRAM IN A NEW COMMUNITY ACTION
ADMINISTRATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION, AND WELFARE.

IT AUTHORIZES \$1 BILLION FOR THE THREE YEAR PROGRAM.

↳ THIS BILL ALSO EXTENDS THE HEADSTART PROGRAM,
THE FOLLOW THROUGH PROGRAM, THE SENIOR OPPORTUNITIES
AND SERVICES PROGRAM, THE RURAL HOUSING AND RURAL
LOANS PROGRAMS, AND A WIDE RANGE OF ADDITIONAL
"POVERTY PROGRAMS."

↳ WHILE I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO HAVE SEEN
THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY CONTINUED AND
ITS PROGRAMS EXPANDED, FRANKLY THIS JUST WAS NOT
IN THE CARDS. ↳ IN FACT, THE THREAT OF A VETO STILL
HANGS OVER THE HOUSE PASSED BILL, ALTHOUGH THE
OVERWHELMING VOTE (331-53) CERTAINLY REDUCES MY
CONCERN IN THAT AREA.

∟ THIS BILL IS NOW UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC
WELFARE. IN FACT, I AM PROPOSING A NUMBER OF
SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FOR THE SENATE VERSION OF
THIS BILL, TO STRENGTHEN ITS RURAL PROGRAMS (IN
KIND CONTRIBUTIONS, EQUAL URBAN/RURAL POVERTY
LEVEL, ETC.)

∟ I UNDERSTAND THAT THE SENATE COMMITTEE
WILL HOLD HEARINGS ON THIS BILL BEFORE THE END
OF JUNE ∟ SENATE ENACTMENT OF THIS LEGISLATION
APPEARS LIKELY SOMETIME THIS SUMMER, HOPEFULLY
IN JULY.

Given the BITTER DISPUTES AND THE UNJUSTIFIED
ATTACKS ON THE "POVERTY PROGRAM," IN RECENT YEARS,
I AM VERY ENCOURAGED BY THE SUPPORT FOR THESE
PROGRAMS THAT HAS EMERGED ALL OVER THE COUNTRY,
AS REFLECTED BY THE ACTION IN THE HOUSE.

In THE UPCOMING DEBATE MY EFFORTS WILL
BE DIRECTED TOWARD THREE GOALS - ASSURING
ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR THESE PROGRAMS, FOCUSING
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE PROGRAMS IN ONE PLACE
WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, AND GUARANTEEING
EVEN HANDED TREATMENT FOR THE POVERTY PROBLEMS
OF OUR HARD PRESSED RURAL AREAS.

AS CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSUMER ECONOMICS
SUBCOMMITTEE IN THE SENATE, I HAVE BECOME EVEN
MORE AWARE OF THE TERRIBLE COST TO OUR NATION'S
POOR, AND TO THOSE ON FIXED INCOMES, OF THE
CURRENT ECONOMIC CHAOS, AND THE APPARENT INABILITY
OF THIS ADMINISTRATION TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

< CERTAINLY WE NEED ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMS.
THEY ZERO IN ON SPECIFIC SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ILLS
AFFECTING LOCAL PEOPLE AND ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE
THE NEEDED MEDICINE TO DEAL WITH THEM.

h BUT, TO PULL THOSE MIRE
DOWN IN POVERTY
UP TO A DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - AND TO KEEP
THEM THERE - REQUIRES THAT THE NATIONAL ECONOMY
BE KEPT HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS.

REGRETTABLY, THIS HAS NOT BEEN ACHIEVED
IN THE LAST FEW YEARS. AS A RESULT, THE ELDERLY
AND THE POOR ARE BEING CRUSHED UNDER AN ECONOMIC
BURDEN THEY SIMPLY CANNOT SUSTAIN.

AT A TIME WHEN UNEMPLOYMENT IS AT 5.2%
AND RISING, IT IS THE YOUNG, THE POOR, AND THE
ELDERLY, THAT LOOSE THEIR JOBS AND CANNOT FIND
OTHER WORK. UNEMPLOYMENT OF 5% PLUS, ACCEPTED
AS NORMAL BY THIS ADMINISTRATION, MEANS THAT 15%
- 20% - OR MORE OF THE PEOPLE IN THESE GROUPS,
ARE WITHOUT JOBS.

economists THIS MAY BE A DESIRABLE ECONOMIC PRESCRIPTION *for Professionals*
~~FOR~~ THE BIG BANKERS, AND CORPORATE LAWYERS - THEY
DO NOT HAVE TO DO THE SUFFERING - BUT IT IS A
BITTER MEDICINE FOR THOSE IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT LINES
WHO HAVE TO TASTE IT *+ live with it*

THIS POLICY IS SIMPLY UNFAIR. IT CALLS UPON THOSE WHO CAN AFFORD IT LEAST TO DO ALL OF THE SACRIFICING. SUCH A POLICY BREEDS FRUSTRATION, DEPRIVATION AND INDIGNATION - IT IS A TRAGIC WASTE OF AMERICA'S PRODUCTIVE HUMAN RESOURCES.

∟ I BELIEVE THAT OUR HIGHEST NATIONAL ECONOMIC GOAL MUST BE THE FULL EMPLOYMENT OF OUR PEOPLE - AND NOT WITH A "WEAK-KNEED" DEFINITION THAT ACCEPTS 5% OR MORE OF OUR PEOPLE OUT OF WORK AS "FULL EMPLOYMENT."

∟ AND, THE BURDEN OF INFLATION, WHICH EXPLODED BY 10.2 PERCENT IN THE LAST YEAR, WEIGHS MORE HEAVILY ON THE POOR AND ON THOSE ON FIXED INCOMES THAN ON ANY OTHER GROUPS IN AMERICA.

(cost of living up again)

EARLY THIS SPRING I RELEASED A STUDY OF
THE IMPACT OF LAST YEARS INFLATION ON CONSUMERS,
IN GENERAL, AND LOW AND MODERATE INCOME FAMILIES
IN PARTICULAR. THIS REPORT, BY THE ECONOMISTS OF
THE JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, CONCLUDED THAT
"THE IMPACT OF HIGHER PRICES ON LOWER INCOME
CONSUMERS WAS ABOUT ONE-THIRD LARGER THAN ON
OTHER CONSUMERS IN 1973."

THIS SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE, FOR THE
LOWER THE FAMILY INCOME THE LARGER THE SHARE OF
THE TOTAL INCOME THAT MUST GO TO BUY FOOD, COVER
HOUSING COSTS, PAY MEDICAL BILLS, AND PURCHASE
FUEL - AND YOU DON'T NEED AN ECONOMIST TO TELL YOU
THAT THESE PRICES HAVE GONE OUT OF SIGHT IN THE LAST
FEW YEARS.

I AM MANAGING A PACKAGE OF AMENDMENTS IN THE SENATE THIS WEEK THAT WILL HELP DEAL, IN PART, WITH THIS COMPLEX AND CONFOUNDING PROBLEM. THIS TAX CUT AND TAX REFORM LEGISLATION WILL INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF MONEY IN THE POCKETS OF LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME PEOPLE TO HELP THOSE HURT HARDEST BY INFLATION. AT THE SAME TIME, IT WILL RAISE MOST OF THE MONEY FOR THE TAX CUT BY CLOSING A NUMBER OF THE MOST BLATANT CORPORATE LOOPHOLES - INCLUDING THE OIL DEPLETION ALLOWANCE.

I HAVE NO QUICK AND EASY ANSWERS TO THE BASIC PROBLEM OF INFLATION - TO BE QUITE HONEST WITH YOU - AND NEITHER DOES THE ADMINISTRATION OR ANYONE ELSE I KNOW.

BUT, WHILE WE GROPE IN THE DARKNESS FOR THE
WAY OUT OF THIS ECONOMIC NIGHTMARE, NOTHING
SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO STOP US FROM MAKING OUR
TAX SYSTEM FAIRER AND HELPING OUT THOSE HIT
HARDEST BY INFLATION.

2 THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY THAT THE POOR
IN THIS NATION DESERVE, TO MAKE A BETTER LIFE
FOR THEMSELVES, WILL ONLY BE POSSIBLE WHEN THE
RECENT ECONOMIC BREAKDOWN - IN MANY WAYS THE
WORST SINCE WORLD WAR II - IS REVERSED.

4 A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY - WITH HIGH LEVELS
OF EMPLOYMENT, THE FULL UTILIZATION OF AMERICA'S
PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY, ON THE FARM AND IN THE FACTORY,
AND RELATIVE PRICE STABILITY - IS THE BEST HOPE
FOR IMPROVING THE LIVES OF AMERICA'S POOR.

OF COURSE, I WILL BE WORKING IN THE SENATE TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE THOSE NATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICIES THAT I BELIEVE WILL RETURN ECONOMIC PROSPERITY TO AMERICA, ECONOMIC POLICIES THAT WILL INCREASE THE SHARE OF SO MANY IN OUR COUNTRY WHO HAVE SO LITTLE, AND NOT SIMPLY PAD THE BANK ACCOUNTS OF THOSE WHO ALREADY HAVE TOO MUCH.

AND, I WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE MY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THOSE PROGRAMS OF HUMAN DIGNITY THAT I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO HELP TO CREATE AND ADVANCE DURING THE LAST 25 YEARS.

AS THE CURRENT PRICE INCREASES FOR JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING HAVE SHOWN, CONGRESS CANNOT SIMPLY ENACT LAWS AND ASSUME EVERYTHING WILL THEN TAKE CARE OF ITSELF -- YOU CAN'T JUST PASS'EM AND FORGET'EM. UNLESS YOU WATCH THE CHANGING NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE CLOSELY AND CHANGE PROGRAMS ACCORDINGLY, THEY SOON LOOSE THEIR VALUE.

WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN LEGISLATING AUTOMATIC COST OF LIVING INCREASES, IN SOCIAL SECURITY, FOOD STAMPS, AND A VARIETY OF SIMILAR SOCIAL PROGRAMS. THIS WEEK I WILL BE URGING THE SENATE TO PASS MY PROPOSAL TO DO THE SAME FOR THE ELDERLY, THE BLIND, AND THE DISABLED RECIPIENTS OF SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME PAYMENTS. I DO NOT INTENT TO "FORGET'EM."

↳ NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE, THE NATURAL FOLLOW-UP TO MEDICARE AND MEDICAID, IS COMING FAST NOW. OF COURSE, FOR THOSE OF US WHO HAVE BEEN PULLING AND PRODIGING RELENTLESSLY ON THIS FOR 25 YEARS IT IS GREAT TO SEE THIS HAPPENING.

HOWEVER, WHEN I THINK OF THE TRAGIC PERSONAL HARDSHIP AND FINANCIAL DISASTER THAT PEOPLE AND FAMILIES I KNOW HAVE BEEN THROUGH - UNNECESSARY HARDSHIPS AND DISASTERS THAT COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED EASILY WITH A DECENT NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM - IT IS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME WEEP IN SORROW AND CRY OUT IN RAGE.

↳ BUT THANK THE LORD THAT ATTITUDES CHANGE OVER TIME, AND WHAT WAS CONSIDERED A "FAR OUT" IDEA TWENTY YEARS AGO WILL VERY SOON BECOME THE LAW OF THE LAND.

I WILL ALSO BE GIVING A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION IN THE WEEKS AHEAD, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, TO STRENGTHENING THE ANTI-POVERTY LEGISLATION NOW BEING CONSIDERED IN THE SENATE.

IN PARTICULAR, THE HOUSE PASSED BILL NEEDS TO BE "BEEFED-UP" IN TERMS OF RURAL POVERTY PROBLEMS / I AM CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL BE. WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE THAT THE TWO LEADING SENATORS HANDLING ANTI-POVERTY LEGISLATION ON THE LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE COMMITTEE, AND WITH WHOM I HAVE BEEN WORKING VERY CLOSELY ON THIS, SENATOR MONDALE AND SENATOR NELSON, BOTH UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF THE RURAL POOR AND WILL DO ALL THEY CAN TO STRENGTHEN THE PROGRAMS FOR THEM.



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