

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

DEDICATION OF  
MINNEAPOLIS REGIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER

Minneapolis, Minnesota

May 4, 1975

This is a memorable day. It marks the beginning of American Indian Week in the state of Minnesota. And today marks the beginning -- the dedication -- of this new Minneapolis Regional Native American Center.

I think it is very important to note that this building is named the Minneapolis Regional Native American Center.

I commend Mr. Don Cook, the Chairman of the Board, Mr. Irv Sargeant, the Director of this center, and all the board and staff members who have worked so hard to make this Native American Center a reality. I commend you for your vision in selecting the name Regional Native American Center for this location.

This title says "welcome," not only to the Indian people in the greater region. It says welcome to our many Indian brothers in our sister city of St. Paul, as well as to our Indian brethren in the 7 Chippewa and the 4 Sioux reservations of Minnesota.

As a regional center, it welcomes the Native Americans from our neighboring states as well.

This beautiful center shows vision in many other ways. Besides being a fine building -- well constructed and functional -- it shows vision in the design of interior space, to handle the varied activities that are planned.

The excellent gymnasium facilities will provide many, many hours of fun and competitive sports, not only for our young people in this urban area, but also for many adults and, as I understand, for visiting Native American teams from around the state.

In addition to recreation, this facility will offer vitally needed social services to our Native American population. Services to be provided here under one roof include legal aid, family and children's service, Hennepin County Welfare service, and Indian Health service. It will also headquarter the manpower training program to assist Native Americans in obtaining jobs.

But there is more. The educational facilities of this building are remarkable. There will be here a museum, a photo gallery, a marvelous library, open to all for research on the great heritage of our Native Americans. The library not only will be filled with books and microfilms, but also will have valuable audiovisual equipment and many other works. A gallery will feature Native American works of art by artists of all tribal nations and will include traditional, contemporary and protest art.

These facilities will assist Native American youngsters to learn about their heritage and will offer adults vital education opportunities. Moreover, non-Indian people in the area, school children as well as adults can come to learn the rich history and major contributions of the first Americans.

This Center is unique. It is unique in that the planning and designing was done with a great deal of consultation and input from the Native American community of Minneapolis. It is unique in that it is the first center of its type in this entire nation in an urban area.

It is unique in that it once again shows to these United States that we here in Minnesota can get together, can cooperate as citizens, as minority groups, as government at all levels -- city, county, state and federal -- and can put together this nation's first urban Native American Center.

But it is mainly the dedication, the conviction, the idealism, and the vision of the Native American population of this city, that are to be most highly commended.

It is fitting that this Center should open now, during America's Bicentennial. For the past month and for the remainder of this year and extended to July 4, 1976, America will be celebrating its 200th year as a nation. Today, across this land in many towns and villages throughout America, various celebrations are planned in honor of that Bicentennial year.

But we as Americans -- all of us -- must seriously re-evaluate and examine this Bicentennial celebration. We in Congress, those of you who are officials in state and local governments, all of us who are citizens of America must use this year of the Bicentennial to examine and re-evaluate.

Certainly, it is a year of celebration -- the celebration of independence and democracy. But if we are truly to rededicate ourselves to the wise, constructive use of these hard-won gifts and opportunities of political freedom, then a first priority on our agenda should be to work toward assuring the rights of justice and the opportunities of freedom for Native American people.

There is no longer any need to spell out the record of countless ways in which America's progress has been established at a great cost to Native Americans. The heavy costs they have borne -- the loss of property, of self-sustaining economy, of human dignity and freedom, of life itself -- in the course of America's drive toward its "Manifest Destiny," are now well known and fixed upon our conscience.

The time has come for government and the people to respond to the urgent petition for a redress of grievances that has been put forward, patiently and responsibly, for years by Native Americans.

There can be only one answer to this petition: To assure to every Native American his just and God-given right to self-determination, as a full and equal citizen of the United States.

When I served as Vice President of the United States, many federal programs were initiated to address the plight of Native Americans in areas of housing, health, education and job training.

But the Native American deserves a chance to develop further his talents and share fully in the future of our Nation.

There are about 800,000 Native Americans in America today. This includes Aleutians and Eskimos in Alaska.

Native Americans are taking more leadership and initiative in solving their problems. But they need to have more opportunities to make their own plans and decisions in programs affecting their daily lives.

Yes, we have made progress. The number of scholarships to Native Americans from the federal government for higher education has risen significantly -- from 139 in 1950, to 12,438 in 1972.

But there is much more that can and must be done.

The median education of the Native American is 9.8 years, compared to 12.1 years for the general population.

Only one third of Indian children graduate from high school. The general population figure is 52.3 percent.

Life expectancy is 5 years less for a Native American than for the general population.

One out of every four Native Americans lives in overcrowded housing. Compare this to one out of twelve for the general population.

And more than one-fourth of Native Americans live in housing which lacks plumbing.

Economically, unemployment rates are painfully higher for Native Americans.

Their median income is far below the national average.

In this year of the Bicentennial we must erase the old attitudes of paternalism toward Native Americans. We in the Congress must support federal programs which stress self-help, self-development and self-determination.

We must continue to work to bring the standard of living for Native Americans to equal that of the country as a whole.

We must equip those Indians who choose to live in cities with the necessary skills to live in equality and dignity.

This Regional Center is a good start toward achieving these goals at the grass-roots level, where there is first-hand knowledge of the job that needs to be done. And it can become a model for the nation of what can and must be accomplished.

The Declaration of Independence, which proclaimed America's independence, states that all men are created equal with certain God-given and unalienable rights, including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Our forefathers established a government to secure these rights. This is what the whole Bicentennial is about. It is about a revolution for human dignity and decency.

Let us now, therefore, dedicate ourselves to guaranteeing these rights for all our people.

# # # # #

- May & Hofsted
  - Don Cook - chairman
  - Lee Cook -
  - Du Sargent -
- Members of the Board
- John Lewis - Tomalin
  - Law Demars
  - Earl Netwald
  - (6th ward)

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DEDICATION OF  
MINNEAPOLIS REGIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER

Tom  
Hodney  
architect

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

MAY 4, 1975

Tom Fraser  
Federal funding

THIS IS A MEMORABLE DAY IT MARKS THE BEGINNING OF AMERICAN  
INDIAN WEEK IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA. AND TODAY MARKS THE  
BEGINNING -- THE DEDICATION -- OF THIS NEW MINNEAPOLIS REGIONAL  
NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER.

I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THIS BUILDING  
IS NAMED THE MINNEAPOLIS REGIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER.

I COMMEND MR. DON COOK, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, MR.  
~~IRV SARGEANT~~ IRV SARGEANT, THE DIRECTOR OF THIS CENTER, <sup>See Cook</sup> AND ALL THE  
BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS WHO HAVE WORKED SO HARD TO MAKE THIS  
NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER A REALITY. I COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR VISION  
IN SELECTING THE NAME REGIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER FOR THIS  
LOCATION.!

↳ THIS TITLE SAYS "WELCOME," NOT ONLY TO THE INDIAN PEOPLE  
IN THE GREATER REGION, IT SAYS WELCOME TO OUR MANY INDIAN  
BROTHERS IN OUR SISTER CITY OF ST. PAUL, AS WELL AS TO OUR  
INDIAN BRETHERN IN THE 7 CHIPPEWA AND THE 4 SIOUX RESERVATIONS  
OF MINNESOTA. *and the Wampanoag's + all the Indian Tribes.*

↳ AS A REGIONAL CENTER, IT WELCOMES THE NATIVE AMERICANS  
FROM OUR NEIGHBORING STATES AS WELL.

↳ THIS BEAUTIFUL CENTER SHOWS VISION IN MANY OTHER WAYS.

↳ BESIDES BEING A FINE BUILDING -- WELL CONSTRUCTED AND  
FUNCTIONAL -- IT SHOWS VISION IN THE DESIGN OF INTERIOR  
SPACE, TO HANDLE THE VARIED ACTIVITIES THAT ARE PLANNED.

↳ THE EXCELLENT GYMNASIUM FACILITIES WILL PROVIDE MANY, MANY  
HOURS OF FUN AND COMPETITIVE SPORTS, NOT ONLY FOR OUR YOUNG  
PEOPLE IN THIS URBAN AREA, BUT ALSO FOR MANY ADULTS AND, AS  
I UNDERSTAND, FOR VISITING NATIVE AMERICAN TEAMS FROM AROUND  
THE STATE.

↳ IN ADDITION TO RECREATION, THIS FACILITY WILL OFFER VITALLY  
NEEDED SOCIAL SERVICES TO OUR NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATION.

↳ SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED HERE UNDER ONE ROOF INCLUDE LEGAL AID,  
FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICE, HENNEPIN COUNTY WELFARE  
SERVICE, AND INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE. IT WILL ALSO HEADQUARTER  
THE MANPOWER TRAINING PROGRAM TO ASSIST NATIVE AMERICANS IN  
OBTAINING JOBS.

↳ BUT THERE IS MORE, THE EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES OF THIS BUILDING ARE REMARKABLE. ↳ THERE WILL BE HERE A MUSEUM, A PHOTO GALLERY,

A MARVELOUS LIBRARY, OPEN TO ALL FOR RESEARCH ON THE GREAT

HERITAGE OF OUR NATIVE AMERICANS. ↳ THE LIBRARY NOT ONLY WILL BE

FILLED WITH BOOKS AND MICROFILMS, BUT ALSO WILL HAVE VALUABLE

AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT AND MANY OTHER WORKS. ↳ A GALLERY WILL

FEATURE NATIVE AMERICAN WORKS OF ART BY ARTISTS OF ALL TRIBAL

NATIONS AND WILL INCLUDE TRADITIONAL, CONTEMPORARY AND PROTEST

ART. (Benedict State College)

↳ THESE FACILITIES WILL ASSIST NATIVE AMERICAN YOUNGSTERS TO

LEARN ABOUT THEIR HERITAGE AND WILL OFFER ADULTS VITAL EDUCATION

OPPORTUNITIES. ↳ MOREOVER, NON-INDIAN PEOPLE IN THE AREA, SCHOOL

CHILDREN AS WELL AS ADULTS, CAN COME TO LEARN THE RICH HISTORY AND MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE FIRST AMERICANS.

*yes,* THIS CENTER IS UNIQUE! IT IS UNIQUE IN THAT THE PLANNING

AND DESIGNING WAS DONE WITH A GREAT DEAL OF CONSULTATION AND

INPUT FROM THE NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY OF MINNEAPOLIS IT IS

UNIQUE IN THAT IT IS THE FIRST CENTER OF ITS TYPE IN THIS ENTIRE

NATION IN AN URBAN AREA.

IT IS UNIQUE IN THAT IT ONCE AGAIN SHOWS TO THESE UNITED

STATES THAT WE HERE IN MINNESOTA CAN GET TOGETHER, CAN

COOPERATE AS CITIZENS, AS MINORITY GROUPS, AS GOVERNMENT AT

ALL LEVELS -- CITY, COUNTY, STATE AND FEDERAL -- AND <sup>we</sup> CAN PUT

TOGETHER THIS NATION'S "FIRST URBAN NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER."

IT BUT IT IS MAINLY THE DEDICATION, THE CONVICTION, THE IDEALISM,

AND THE VISION OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATION OF THIS CITY,

THAT ARE TO BE MOST HIGHLY COMMENDED.

↳ IT IS FITTING THAT THIS CENTER SHOULD OPEN NOW, DURING  
AMERICA'S BICENTENNIAL ↳ FOR THE PAST MONTH AND FOR THE  
REMAINDER OF THIS YEAR AND EXTENDED TO JULY 4, 1976, AMERICA  
WILL BE CELEBRATING ITS 200TH YEAR AS A NATION. ↳ TODAY, ACROSS  
THIS LAND IN MANY TOWNS AND VILLAGES THROUGHOUT AMERICA, VARIOUS  
CELEBRATIONS ARE PLANNED IN HONOR OF THAT BICENTENNIAL YEAR.

↳ BUT WE AS AMERICANS -- ALL OF US -- MUST SERIOUSLY  
RE-EVALUATE AND EXAMINE THIS BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION. ↳ WE  
IN CONGRESS, THOSE OF <sup>us</sup> ~~THE~~ WHO ARE OFFICIALS IN STATE AND LOCAL  
GOVERNMENTS, ALL OF US WHO ARE CITIZENS OF AMERICA MUST USE  
THIS YEAR OF THE BICENTENNIAL TO EXAMINE AND RE-EVALUATE.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of  
the U.S. and to the Republic  
for which it stands -  
one nation, under God,  
indivisible, with liberty  
& justice for All"

✓ CERTAINLY, IT IS A YEAR OF CELEBRATION -- THE CELEBRATION  
OF INDEPENDENCE AND DEMOCRACY. ✓ BUT IF WE ARE TRULY TO  
REDEDICATE OURSELVES TO THE WISE, CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF THESE  
HARD-WON GIFTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF POLITICAL FREEDOM, THEN  
A FIRST PRIORITY ON OUR AGENDA SHOULD BE TO WORK TOWARD  
ASSURING THE RIGHTS OF JUSTICE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES OF  
FREEDOM FOR NATIVE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

*"liberty & justice for all"*

✓ THERE IS NO LONGER ANY NEED TO SPELL OUT THE RECORD OF  
COUNTLESS WAYS IN WHICH AMERICA'S PROGRESS HAS BEEN  
ESTABLISHED AT A GREAT COST TO NATIVE AMERICANS. ✓ THE HEAVY  
COSTS THEY HAVE BORNE -- THE LOSS OF PROPERTY, OF SELF-  
SUSTAINING ECONOMY, OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND FREEDOM, OF LIFE  
ITSELF -- IN THE COURSE OF AMERICA'S DRIVE TOWARD ITS "MANIFEST  
DESTINY," ARE NOW WELL KNOWN AND FIXED UPON OUR CONSCIENCE.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE TO RESPOND  
 TO THE URGENT PETITION FOR A REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES THAT HAS  
 BEEN PUT FORWARD, PATIENTLY AND RESPONSIBLY, FOR <sup>many</sup> YEARS BY  
NATIVE AMERICANS.

THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE ANSWER TO THIS PETITION: TO ASSURE  
 TO EVERY NATIVE AMERICAN HIS JUST AND GOD-GIVEN RIGHT TO  
SELF-DETERMINATION, AS A FULL AND EQUAL CITIZEN OF THE  
UNITED STATES - *to every right, privilege, + opportunity to education, health care, housing, jobs*

~~WHEN I SERVED AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES~~, MANY  
FEDERAL PROGRAMS <sup>have been</sup> ~~WERE~~ INITIATED TO ADDRESS THE PLIGHT OF  
NATIVE AMERICANS IN AREAS OF HOUSING, HEALTH, EDUCATION AND  
JOB TRAINING.

*I served as chairman of*  
*the Indians*

BUT THE NATIVE AMERICAN DESERVES A CHANCE TO DEVELOP  
FURTHER HIS TALENTS AND SHARE FULLY IN THE FUTURE OF OUR  
NATION.

THERE ARE ABOUT 800,000 NATIVE AMERICANS IN AMERICA TODAY.

THIS INCLUDES ALEUTIANS AND ESKIMOS IN ALASKA.

{ NATIVE AMERICANS ARE TAKING MORE LEADERSHIP AND INITIATIVE

IN SOLVING THEIR PROBLEMS. BUT THEY NEED TO HAVE MORE

OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE THEIR OWN PLANS AND DECISIONS IN PROGRAMS

AFFECTING THEIR DAILY LIVES.

{ YES, WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS. { THE NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS TO

NATIVE AMERICANS FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR HIGHER

EDUCATION HAS RISEN SIGNIFICANTLY -- FROM 139 IN 1950, TO

12,438 IN 1972.

↳ BUT THERE IS MUCH MORE THAT CAN AND MUST BE DONE.

↳ THE MEDIAN <sup>average</sup> EDUCATION OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN IS 9.8 YEARS,

COMPARED TO 12.1 YEARS FOR THE GENERAL POPULATION.

↳ ONLY ONE THIRD OF INDIAN CHILDREN GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.

THE GENERAL POPULATION FIGURE IS 52.3 PERCENT.

↳ LIFE EXPECTANCY IS 5 YEARS LESS FOR A NATIVE AMERICAN  
THAN FOR THE GENERAL POPULATION.

↳ ONE OUT OF EVERY FOUR NATIVE AMERICANS LIVES IN OVER-  
CROWDED HOUSING, COMPARE THIS TO ONE OUT OF TWELVE FOR THE  
GENERAL POPULATION.

↳ AND MORE THAN ONE-FOURTH OF NATIVE AMERICANS LIVE IN HOUSING  
WHICH LACKS PLUMBING.

↳ ECONOMICALLY, UNEMPLOYMENT RATES ARE PAINFULLY HIGHER FOR  
NATIVE AMERICANS.

↳ THEIR ~~MEDIAN~~ INCOME IS FAR BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

↳ IN THIS YEAR OF THE BICENTENNIAL WE MUST ERASE THE OLD  
ATTITUDES OF PATERNALISM TOWARD NATIVE AMERICANS. ↳ WE IN THE  
CONGRESS MUST SUPPORT FEDERAL PROGRAMS WHICH STRESS SELF-HELP,  
SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

↳ WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK TO BRING THE STANDARD OF LIVING  
FOR NATIVE AMERICANS TO EQUAL THAT OF THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE.

↳ WE ~~MUST EQUIP~~ THOSE INDIANS WHO CHOOSE TO LIVE IN CITIES  
*must have the opportunity to acquire*  
WITH THE NECESSARY SKILLS TO LIVE IN EQUALITY AND DIGNITY.

↳ THIS REGIONAL CENTER IS A GOOD START TOWARD ACHIEVING THESE  
GOALS AT THE GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL, WHERE THERE IS FIRST-HAND  
KNOWLEDGE OF THE JOB THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, AND IT CAN BECOME  
A MODEL FOR THE NATION OF WHAT CAN AND MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED.

↳ THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, WHICH PROCLAIMED AMERICA'S  
INDEPENDENCE, STATES THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL WITH CERTAIN  
GOD-GIVEN AND UNALIENABLE RIGHTS, INCLUDING LIFE, LIBERTY  
AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

↳ OUR FOREFATHERS ESTABLISHED A GOVERNMENT TO SECURE THESE  
RIGHTS. THIS IS WHAT THE WHOLE BICENTENNIAL IS ABOUT. IT IS  
ABOUT A REVOLUTION FOR HUMAN DIGNITY AND DECENCY.

↳ LET US NOW, THEREFORE, DEDICATE OURSELVES TO GUARANTEEING  
THESE RIGHTS FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE.



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