

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
NATIONAL JEWISH HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTER DINNER

Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 21, 1976

It is a great pleasure for me to accept this beautiful and meaningful award.

As Jay Phillips told you, I have been a strong supporter of the National Jewish Hospital and Research Center for nearly 30 years.

Its pioneering work has set an important example for other similar institutions.

Its credo of helping all those in need regardless of race, religion or financial status is a tribute to its founders and those who sustain its good work.

Too many Americans take their own health or the collective health of our people for granted. We forget too often the billions spent each year on health care.

We forget the countless careers devoted to research and the prevention of disease.

We forget the great sacrifices made each day for better health.

As an old proverb has stated:

"He who has health has hope.
He who has hope has everything."

In our bicentennial year I hope that we may begin to understand the inextricable connection between good health and the mandate of our Declaration of Independence: Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

A people who are not well cannot enjoy the fruits of political freedom.

A people who live in fear of disease which kills, causes great pain and financial loss cannot be truly free.

Yes, our children are taught to hate dictatorships of the right and the left.

Political despotism around the world is a major enemy for those who love freedom.

But one of the greatest enemies of the American people, one of the greatest obstacles to full and rich and free lives is disease and poor health.

This year above all others our nation should make a major commitment to three basic health goals which would change the nature of American life and greatly improve the health of a free people.

It is my hope that the United States as part of its bicentennial would make a commitment to three major health goals:

- The reduction of infant and adult mortality;
- The reduction of the staggering cost of health services;
- And the adoption of a Comprehensive National Health Insurance Plan.

Comparing the United States with other industrialized nations in the health field, we fall far short.

Why do we rank 15th in infant mortality?

Why do we rank 7th in life expectancy among females and 19th among males?

Why is our relative rating in each of these categories no better now than it was 20 years ago?

Health service and medical research can improve our standing in these areas. But it will take a greater commitment of public and private resources. I know that Americans are ready to make such a sacrifice.

Americans are also saying that medical services are unaffordable and many times unobtainable.

The average American spends one month's pay for health care, a considerably higher total than is spent by the average citizen of any other industrial country.

And the risk of financial ruin from prolonged disease hangs over millions of American families.

Last year the total health cost in the United States was over \$118 billion, or \$547 per person. Health costs have tripled since 1965 and now represent over 8 percent of our gross national product.

The \$15 billion increase in total health costs between 1974 and 1975 was the largest in our history. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates that the 1976 increase will be equal to that sum.

Next year the Congress will be involved in a major debate on national health insurance, in response to the urgent problems of our people in meeting the high costs of health care.

No one can predict today the exact details of the national health insurance plan that will be enacted, but Congress has a number of proposals before it for consideration.

One thing is certain. We will have a national health program which will go well beyond anything the government has done in the health field in the past. It is inconceivable that our nation will not develop a major system of national health insurance for our people.

Whatever we decide concerning a national health insurance program will have an impact on our lives.

The title of the very beautiful award you have presented to me this evening is "The Struggle."

All of us here today know the struggle ahead to improve the health of the American people. I firmly believe that in our lifetimes we can make major strides in conquering many diseases and easing the suffering of those afflicted by illness.

But it will involve a difficult struggle -- a struggle in our research centers, a struggle in our great hospitals and universities, a struggle in the halls of Congress and throughout the government.

I want the health of the American people to become a priority at least equal to the defense of the American people from enemies beyond our shores.

In doing our part tonight to aid the National Jewish Hospital and Research Center we begin our commitment to better health care for Americans. Let us start now to insure a new birthright for every American: The right to a life free from disease, pain, and the financial hardship of prolonged illness. These goals are within the reach of a great nation.

*delivered by
Skip Humphrey
Paraphrase.*

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

NATIONAL JEWISH HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTER DINNER

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

JUNE 21, 1976

Rbt Pursh.

Burton Joseph
Robert Pursh
Mayor Geo. St.

Richard Blaustein
on behalf of my father

IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME TO ACCEPT THIS BEAUTIFUL

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AND MEANINGFUL AWARD.

Paraphrase

my dad was

AS JAY PHILLIPS TOLD YOU, ~~I~~ ^{my dad was} HAVE BEEN A STRONG SUPPORTER OF

THE NATIONAL JEWISH HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTER FOR NEARLY 30 YEARS.

ITS PIONEERING WORK HAS SET AN IMPORTANT EXAMPLE FOR OTHER
SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS.

ITS CREDO OF HELPING ALL THOSE IN NEED REGARDLESS OF RACE,
RELIGION OR FINANCIAL STATUS IS A TRIBUTE TO ITS FOUNDERS AND
THOSE WHO SUSTAIN ITS GOOD WORK.

TOO MANY AMERICANS TAKE THEIR OWN HEALTH OR THE COLLECTIVE
HEALTH OF OUR PEOPLE FOR GRANTED. WE FORGET TOO OFTEN THE BILLIONS
SPENT EACH YEAR ON HEALTH CARE.

WE FORGET THE COUNTLESS CAREERS DEVOTED TO RESEARCH AND THE
PREVENTION OF DISEASE,

WE FORGET THE GREAT SACRIFICES MADE EACH DAY FOR BETTER HEALTH.

AS AN OLD PROVERB HAS STATED:

"HE WHO HAS HEALTH HAS HOPE.

HE WHO HAS HOPE HAS EVERYTHING."

IN OUR BICENTENNIAL YEAR I HOPE THAT WE MAY BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND
THE ^{clear} ~~INEXTRICABLE~~ CONNECTION BETWEEN GOOD HEALTH AND THE MANDATE OF
OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF
HAPPINESS.

A PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT WELL CANNOT ENJOY THE FRUITS OF
POLITICAL FREEDOM. — *in sickness there is no*
"pursuit of Happiness"

A PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN FEAR OF DISEASE WHICH KILLS, CAUSES GREAT PAIN AND FINANCIAL LOSS CANNOT BE TRULY FREE.

~~YES~~ ^{reject} OUR CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT TO ~~SEE~~ DICTATORSHIPS OF THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT.

POLITICAL DESPOTISM AROUND THE WORLD IS A MAJOR ENEMY FOR THOSE WHO LOVE FREEDOM.

BUT ONE OF THE GREATEST ENEMIES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, ONE OF THE GREATEST OBSTACLES TO FULL AND RICH AND FREE LIVES IS DISEASE AND POOR HEALTH.

THIS YEAR ABOVE ALL OTHERS OUR NATION SHOULD MAKE A MAJOR COMMITMENT TO THREE BASIC HEALTH GOALS WHICH WOULD CHANGE THE NATURE OF AMERICAN LIFE AND GREATLY IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF A FREE PEOPLE.

HEALTH SERVICE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CAN IMPROVE OUR STANDING
IN THESE AREAS. BUT IT WILL TAKE A GREATER COMMITMENT OF PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE RESOURCES. I KNOW THAT AMERICANS ARE READY TO MAKE
SUCH A SACRIFICE.

Some AMERICANS ARE ALSO SAYING THAT MEDICAL SERVICES ARE UNAFFORDABLE
AND MANY TIMES UNOBTAINABLE.

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN SPENDS ONE MONTH'S PAY FOR HEALTH CARE,
A CONSIDERABLY HIGHER TOTAL THAN IS SPENT BY THE AVERAGE CITIZEN
OF ANY OTHER INDUSTRIAL COUNTRY.

AND THE RISK OF FINANCIAL RUIN FROM PROLONGED DISEASE HANGS
OVER MILLIONS OF AMERICAN FAMILIES.

LAST YEAR THE TOTAL HEALTH COST IN THE UNITED STATES WAS OVER
\$118 BILLION, OR \$547 PER PERSON.

*or over \$2100 for
a family of 4*

HEALTH COSTS HAVE TRIPLED SINCE 1965 AND NOW REPRESENT OVER 8 PERCENT OF OUR GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT.

THE \$15 BILLION INCREASE IN TOTAL HEALTH COSTS BETWEEN 1974 AND 1975 WAS THE LARGEST IN OUR HISTORY. THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE ESTIMATES THAT THE 1976 INCREASE WILL BE EQUAL TO THAT SUM.

NEXT YEAR THE CONGRESS WILL BE INVOLVED IN A MAJOR DEBATE ON NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE, IN RESPONSE TO THE URGENT PROBLEMS OF OUR PEOPLE IN MEETING THE HIGH COSTS OF HEALTH CARE.

NO ONE CAN PREDICT TODAY THE EXACT DETAILS OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN THAT WILL BE ENACTED, BUT CONGRESS HAS A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS BEFORE IT FOR CONSIDERATION.

ONE THING IS CERTAIN. WE WILL HAVE A NATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM WHICH WILL GO WELL BEYOND ANYTHING THE GOVERNMENT HAS DONE IN THE HEALTH FIELD IN THE PAST. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT OUR NATION WILL NOT DEVELOP A MAJOR SYSTEM OF NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE FOR OUR PEOPLE.

WHATEVER WE DECIDE CONCERNING A NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON OUR LIVES.

THE TITLE OF THE VERY BEAUTIFUL AWARD YOU HAVE PRESENTED TO

my father
THIS EVENING IS "THE STRUGGLE."

ALL OF US HERE TODAY KNOW THE STRUGGLE AHEAD TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT IN OUR LIFETIMES WE CAN MAKE MAJOR STRIDES IN CONQUERING MANY DISEASES AND EASING THE SUFFERING OF THOSE AFFLICTED BY ILLNESS.

BUT IT WILL INVOLVE A DIFFICULT STRUGGLE -- A STRUGGLE IN
OUR RESEARCH CENTERS, A STRUGGLE IN OUR GREAT HOSPITALS AND
UNIVERSITIES, A STRUGGLE IN THE HALLS OF CONGRESS AND THROUGHOUT
THE GOVERNMENT.

I WANT THE HEALTH OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO BECOME A PRIORITY
AT LEAST EQUAL TO THE DEFENSE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FROM ENEMIES
BEYOND OUR SHORES.

IN DOING OUR PART TONIGHT TO AID THE NATIONAL JEWISH HOSPITAL
AND RESEARCH CENTER WE BEGIN OUR COMMITMENT TO BETTER HEALTH CARE
FOR AMERICANS. LET US START NOW TO INSURE A NEW BIRTHRIGHT FOR
EVERY AMERICAN: THE RIGHT TO A LIFE FREE FROM DISEASE, PAIN, AND
THE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OF PROLONGED ILLNESS. THESE GOALS ARE
WITHIN THE REACH OF A GREAT NATION.



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