

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

DEDICATION OF HOMEWARD BOUND

New Hope, Minnesota

May 7, 1977

It is very good to be back with you. It has been my privilege to be identified with the progress of this fine institution. I helped inaugurate its fund drive. I broke ground for the construction.

And now I have the great satisfaction of seeing a vision materialize and Homeward Bound become a reality that brings hope and comfort to the parents and families of the children to whom it is dedicated.

Most important, it provides these severely handicapped children with a wholesome and agreeable environment and treatment and training of the highest quality.

Although this achievement reflects this community's sense of responsibility and commitment, it is not an isolated event. It reflects a growing national concern for the well-being and development of this nation's handicapped citizens.

In a short span of years, we have seen a revolution in the treatment and the public attitude toward the retarded.

The retarded once were seen as a family affliction or disgrace to be hidden from public view. Little thought was given to their own feelings, needs and rights. The potential of the retarded for development was underestimated and ignored.

Too often, large institutions grouped together persons of all ages with widely differing needs, and could provide little better than custodial care.

Whatever our intellectual endowment, there is a universal trait of human nature. We all tend to respond to the expectations of others and of society. To dismiss the learning capabilities of the retarded is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Curiosity that is not stimulated turns to apathy. Skills that are not exercised die away. Disadvantages too often are compounded by the arbitrary limits of a negative self-image and a sense of defeat.

Fortunately, the approach to retardation has changed dramatically. We no longer believe that institutions exist to segregate the retarded from their relatives and society, and to do little else. As the focus shifts from custodial care to development, there is a corresponding shift from despair to hope; and from public indifference to active and supportive concern.

It is true that resources remain limited. We still are a nation of private wealth and public poverty.

But we now are committed under public policy to provide retarded persons the least restrictive environment possible. We have pledged to integrate the retarded into the community wherever it will help them live a happier, more meaningful and more productive lives.

We believe that where institutional care is necessary, it should be accessible to community activities and services, and to visits from families and volunteers.

Moreover, there is encouraging progress in our methods to prevent and to treat retardation. As we better distinguish the causal factors -- such as birth injury, heredity, metabolism or environment -- we can respond with more effective treatment.

Many cases can be helped by early detection; others can profit by new techniques of education and vocational training. Homelike living arrangements can help develop normal social and functional skills.

The crucial step has been taken. New steps should be progressively easier as we build a record of success that provides its own human and economic justification.

The United States Congress has gone resolutely on record in support of enabling the retarded to live their lives as close as possible to a normal life, with all its challenges and satisfactions. For the retarded, and other handicapped, the progress of the 1970's is comparable to the great civil rights breakthrough for black Americans in the 60's.

The 94th Congress enacted major legislation in the areas of developmental disabilities, education of the handicapped, vocational rehabilitation and mental health.

The Developmental Disabilities Act provides support to state efforts to plan, coordinate and implement programs for developmentally disabled, a high proportion of whom are the retarded. To qualify for aid, states submit plans for both deinstitutionalization and institutional reform.

Another very significant feature of this legislation is the inclusion of a Bill of Rights, which asserts the right of the mentally retarded to appropriate treatment and services. And it backs up those rights with the demand that a specific system be devised to protect and advocate those rights.

Another legislative step, with revolutionary potential for the welfare of the retarded, was passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Under this law, in order to be eligible for federal aid a state must provide a free and appropriate public education for all handicapped children by September, 1980. And priority attention must be given to the most severely handicapped.

For the less severely handicapped who are able to learn work skills, and even to become self-supporting and contributing members of the community, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, provides important support for training programs. But this law also mandates priority attention for those with the most severe handicaps.

One measure of the impact of this law is the increasing number of severely disabled being served in this nation's rehabilitation programs, including sheltered workshops. In the past, these people had little hope of achieving the sense of purpose, satisfaction and self-respect that comes with successfully performing a useful and productive task.

Many of the severely handicapped cannot hope to earn a decent wage based on productivity alone. I have introduced a proposal to provide wage supplements that will reward the efforts of long-term workers in sheltered workshops with a living wage. I sincerely hope that Congress will enact this measure.

As you may know, federally financed programs are now subject to the prohibition against discrimination in section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. This will open doors and widen opportunities available to the retarded in education, jobs, health care and public services. Only recently, after years of study and revision, the Secretary of HEW has issued the regulations to implement this provision of the law.

But I do not want to dwell today on changes in the law. Not that they are unimportant. Legislation may not always change attitudes, but it does change behavior. I have noticed that the two have a very high correlation.

What I want to emphasize today are those changes of heart, and changes in attitude, that will make our society a more humane and civilized environment for the disabled.

Curiously enough, when the stigma is removed from a physical or mental handicap, a fresh breeze of creativity stirs.

It is as if scales fall from our eyes, and we begin to see the fallacies in a lot of conventional thinking, and to dare to think beyond care and treatment, to prevention and cure of retardation.

I stay in touch with many spokesmen for the handicapped, so I very frankly confess that I find food for thought in their views. I am particularly impressed by an exciting prophecy of the National Association of Retarded Citizens that has come to my attention.

The theme is that the effort to incorporate the retarded in the mainstream of community living has been successful. If its objectives are not universally realized, they are at least accepted in principle.

So, the association has identified a new goal for the future, and that is to seek a cure for retardation. It is pointed out that a whole series of new developments removes this ambition from the realm of fantasy or science fiction, and puts it in the area of attainable national goals.

The hope for cures is based on achievements in regenerating nervous systems that have been damaged, and on experiments in controlling the automatic nervous process. It is built upon advances in metabolic chemistry and in our understanding of basic cell machinery.

Hope and promise also result from our growing knowledge of the role of nutrition, microsurgical techniques, and even prenatal intervention.

But despite the rapidly expanding horizons of science, the persons who are afflicted with an illness or a handicap NOW must have the best attention, training and care available to our present state of knowledge. This is important.

We should not praise only those who are making remarkable progress of future solutions. We should also express our deep respect for pragmatic people who are willing to move forward one step at a time.

Homeward Bound is a tribute to the new spirit and the high hopes of the 70's for the retarded. All of you who devoted time, effort and resources to constructing this exemplary institution understand that action is better than dreams. And, best of all, is the action that is impelled by a dream.

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Marsha Fleur

Donald Katz -

Mayor Ed. Erickson (New Hope)

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Vera Siskins - State Dept. Welfare

DEDICATION OF HOMEWARD BOUND

Tom Tierney - HUD

NEW HOPE, MINNESOTA

MAY 7, 1977

↳ IT IS VERY GOOD TO BE BACK WITH YOU. IT HAS BEEN MY
PRIVILEGE TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE PROGRESS OF THIS FINE
INSTITUTION. I HELPED INAUGURATE ITS FUND DRIVE. I BROKE
GROUND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION.

↳ AND NOW I HAVE THE GREAT SATISFACTION OF SEEING A VISION
MATERIALIZED AND HOMEWARD BOUND BECOME A REALITY THAT BRINGS
HOPE AND COMFORT TO THE PARENTS AND FAMILIES OF THE CHILDREN
TO WHOM IT IS DEDICATED.

↳ MOST IMPORTANT, IT PROVIDES THESE SEVERELY HANDICAPPED
CHILDREN WITH A WHOLESOME AND AGREEABLE ENVIRONMENT AND
TREATMENT AND TRAINING OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY.

↳ ALTHOUGH THIS ACHIEVEMENT REFLECTS THIS COMMUNITY'S SENSE
OF RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMITMENT, IT IS NOT AN ISOLATED EVENT.

IT REFLECTS A GROWING NATIONAL CONCERN FOR THE WELL-BEING AND
DEVELOPMENT OF THIS NATION'S HANDICAPPED CITIZENS.

IN A SHORT SPAN OF YEARS, WE HAVE SEEN A REVOLUTION IN
THE TREATMENT AND THE PUBLIC ATTITUDE TOWARD THE RETARDED.

THE RETARDED ONCE WERE SEEN AS A FAMILY AFFLICTION OR
DISGRACE TO BE HIDDEN FROM PUBLIC VIEW. LITTLE THOUGHT WAS
GIVEN TO THEIR OWN FEELINGS, NEEDS AND RIGHTS. THE POTENTIAL
OF THE RETARDED FOR DEVELOPMENT WAS UNDERESTIMATED AND IGNORED.

TOO OFTEN, LARGE INSTITUTIONS GROUPED TOGETHER PERSONS
OF ALL AGES WITH WIDELY DIFFERING NEEDS, AND COULD PROVIDE
LITTLE BETTER THAN CUSTODIAL CARE.

WHATEVER OUR INTELLECTUAL ENDOWMENT, THERE IS A UNIVERSAL
TRAIT OF HUMAN NATURE.

WE ALL TEND TO RESPOND TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF OTHERS AND OF

SOCIETY. TO DISMISS THE LEARNING CAPABILITIES OF THE RETARDED

IS A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY.

CURIOSITY THAT IS NOT STIMULATED TURNS TO APATHY. SKILLS

THAT ARE NOT EXERCISED DIE AWAY. DISADVANTAGES TOO OFTEN ARE

COMPOUNDED BY THE ARBITRARY LIMITS OF A NEGATIVE SELF-IMAGE AND

A SENSE OF DEFEAT.

FORTUNATELY, THE APPROACH TO RETARDATION HAS CHANGED

DRAMATICALLY. WE NO LONGER BELIEVE THAT INSTITUTIONS EXIST TO

SEGREGATE THE RETARDED FROM THEIR RELATIVES AND SOCIETY, AND TO

DO LITTLE ELSE. AS THE FOCUS SHIFTS FROM CUSTODIAL CARE TO

DEVELOPMENT, THERE IS A CORRESPONDING SHIFT FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE;

AND FROM PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE TO ACTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE CONCERN.

IT IS TRUE THAT RESOURCES ^{are} LIMITED.

~~ARE A NATION OF PRIVATE WEALTH AND PUBLIC POVERTY.~~

BUT WE NOW ARE COMMITTED UNDER PUBLIC POLICY TO PROVIDE

RETARDED PERSONS THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT POSSIBLE.

WE HAVE PLEDGED TO INTEGRATE THE RETARDED INTO THE COMMUNITY

WHEREVER IT WILL HELP THEM LIVE A HAPPIER, MORE MEANINGFUL

AND MORE PRODUCTIVE LIVES.

WE BELIEVE THAT WHERE INSTITUTIONAL CARE IS NECESSARY,

IT SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES,

AND TO VISITS FROM FAMILIES AND VOLUNTEERS.

MOREOVER, THERE IS ENCOURAGING PROGRESS IN OUR METHODS

TO PREVENT AND TO TREAT RETARDATION,

AS WE BETTER DISTINGUISH THE CAUSAL FACTORS -- SUCH AS BIRTH INJURY, HEREDITY, METABOLISM OR ENVIRONMENT -- WE CAN RESPOND WITH MORE EFFECTIVE TREATMENT.

MANY CASES CAN BE HELPED BY EARLY DETECTION; OTHERS CAN PROFIT BY NEW TECHNIQUES OF EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

HOMELIKE LIVING ARRANGEMENTS CAN HELP DEVELOP NORMAL SOCIAL AND FUNCTIONAL SKILLS.

THE CRUCIAL STEP HAS BEEN TAKEN. NEW STEPS SHOULD BE PROGRESSIVELY EASIER AS WE BUILD A RECORD OF SUCCESS THAT PROVIDES ITS OWN HUMAN AND ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION.

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS HAS GONE RESOLUTELY ON RECORD IN SUPPORT OF ENABLING THE RETARDED TO LIVE THEIR LIVES AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO A NORMAL LIFE, WITH ALL ITS CHALLENGES AND SATISFACTIONS.

FOR THE RETARDED, AND OTHER HANDICAPPED, THE PROGRESS OF THE
1970'S IS COMPARABLE TO THE GREAT CIVIL RIGHTS BREAKTHROUGH
FOR BLACK AMERICANS IN THE 60'S.

THE 94TH CONGRESS ENACTED MAJOR LEGISLATION IN THE AREAS
OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, EDUCATION OF THE HANDICAPPED,
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND MENTAL HEALTH.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ACT PROVIDES SUPPORT TO STATE
EFFORTS TO PLAN, COORDINATE AND IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS FOR DEVELOP-
MENTALLY DISABLED, A HIGH PROPORTION OF WHOM ARE THE RETARDED. To

QUALIFY FOR AID, STATES ^{must} SUBMIT PLANS FOR BOTH DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION
AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

BILL OF RIGHTS
ANOTHER VERY SIGNIFICANT FEATURE OF THIS LEGISLATION IS THE
INCLUSION OF A BILL OF RIGHTS, WHICH ASSERTS THE RIGHT OF THE
MENTALLY RETARDED TO APPROPRIATE TREATMENT AND SERVICES.

AND IT BACKS UP THOSE RIGHTS WITH THE DEMAND THAT A SPECIFIC SYSTEM BE DEvised TO PROTECT AND ADVOCATE THOSE RIGHTS.

ANOTHER LEGISLATIVE STEP, WITH REVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE RETARDED, WAS PASSAGE OF THE "EDUCATION FOR ALL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN ACT."

UNDER THIS LAW, IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL AID A STATE MUST PROVIDE A FREE AND APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

BY SEPTEMBER, 1980. AND PRIORITY ATTENTION MUST BE GIVEN TO THE MOST SEVERELY HANDICAPPED.

FOR THE LESS SEVERELY HANDICAPPED WHO ARE ABLE TO LEARN WORK SKILLS, AND EVEN TO BECOME SELF-SUPPORTING AND CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, AS AMENDED, PROVIDES IMPORTANT SUPPORT FOR TRAINING PROGRAMS.

↳ BUT THIS LAW ALSO MANDATES PRIORITY ATTENTION FOR THOSE WITH
THE MOST SEVERE HANDICAPS.

↳ ONE MEASURE OF THE IMPACT OF THIS LAW IS THE INCREASING
NUMBER OF SEVERELY DISABLED BEING SERVED IN THIS NATION'S
REHABILITATION PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SHELTERED WORKSHOPS.

↳ IN THE PAST, THESE PEOPLE HAD LITTLE HOPE OF ACHIEVING THE
SENSE OF PURPOSE, SATISFACTION AND SELF-RESPECT THAT COMES
WITH SUCCESSFULLY PERFORMING A USEFUL AND PRODUCTIVE TASK.

↳ MANY OF THE SEVERELY HANDICAPPED CANNOT HOPE TO EARN A
DECENT WAGE BASED ON PRODUCTIVITY ALONE. ↳ I HAVE INTRODUCED A
PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE WAGE SUPPLEMENTS THAT WILL REWARD THE EFFORTS
OF LONG-TERM WORKERS IN SHELTERED WORKSHOPS WITH A LIVING WAGE.

↳ I SINCERELY HOPE THAT CONGRESS WILL ENACT THIS MEASURE.

As you may know, FEDERALLY FINANCED PROGRAMS ARE NOW

SUBJECT TO THE PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT. THIS WILL OPEN DOORS

AND WIDEN OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THE RETARDED IN

EDUCATION, JOBS, HEALTH CARE AND PUBLIC SERVICES. ONLY

RECENTLY, AFTER YEARS OF STUDY AND REVISION, THE SECRETARY OF

HEW HAS ISSUED THE REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS PROVISION

OF THE LAW.

BUT I DO NOT WANT TO DWELL TODAY ON CHANGES IN THE LAW,

NOT THAT THEY ARE UNIMPORTANT, LEGISLATION ^{MAY} ~~NOT~~ NOT ALWAYS

CHANGE ATTITUDES, BUT IT DOES CHANGE BEHAVIOR. I HAVE NOTICED

THAT THE TWO HAVE A VERY HIGH CORRELATION.

↳ WHAT I WANT TO EMPHASIZE TODAY ARE THOSE CHANGES OF HEART,

AND CHANGES IN ATTITUDE, THAT WILL MAKE OUR SOCIETY A MORE

HUMANE AND CIVILIZED ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DISABLED.

↳ CURIOSLY ENOUGH, WHEN THE STIGMA IS REMOVED FROM A
PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HANDICAP, A FRESH BREEZE OF CREATIVITY
STIRS.

↳ IT IS AS IF SCALES FALL FROM OUR EYES, AND WE BEGIN TO
SEE THE FALLACIES IN A LOT OF CONVENTIONAL THINKING, AND TO
DARE TO THINK BEYOND CARE AND TREATMENT, TO PREVENTION AND
CURE OF RETARDATION.

↳ I STAY IN TOUCH WITH MANY SPOKESMEN FOR THE HANDICAPPED,
SO I VERY FRANKLY CONFESS THAT I FIND FOOD FOR THOUGHT IN
THEIR VIEWS.

THE HOPE FOR CURES IS BASED ON ACHIEVEMENTS IN REGENERATING
NERVOUS SYSTEMS THAT HAVE BEEN DAMAGED, AND ON EXPERIMENTS IN
CONTROLLING THE ~~NERVOUS~~ ^{AUTONOMIC} NERVOUS PROCESS. IT IS BUILT UPON
ADVANCES IN METABOLIC CHEMISTRY AND IN OUR UNDERSTANDING
OF BASIC CELL MACHINERY.

HOPE AND PROMISE ALSO RESULT FROM OUR GROWING KNOWLEDGE
OF THE ROLE OF NUTRITION, MICROSURGICAL TECHNIQUES, AND EVEN
PRENATAL INTERVENTION.

BUT DESPITE THE RAPIDLY EXPANDING HORIZONS OF SCIENCE,
THE PERSONS WHO ARE AFFLICTED WITH AN ILLNESS OR A HANDICAP
NOW MUST HAVE THE BEST ATTENTION, TRAINING AND CARE AVAILABLE
TO OUR PRESENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE. THIS IS IMPORTANT!

WE SHOULD NOT PRAISE ONLY THOSE WHO ARE MAKING REMARKABLE
PROGRESS ^{toward} OF FUTURE SOLUTIONS. WE SHOULD ALSO EXPRESS OUR DEEP
RESPECT FOR PRAGMATIC PEOPLE WHO ARE WILLING TO MOVE FORWARD ONE
STEP AT A TIME.

HOMEWARD BOUND IS A TRIBUTE TO THE NEW SPIRIT AND THE HIGH
HOPES OF THE 70'S FOR THE RETARDED. ALL OF YOU WHO DEVOTED TIME,
EFFORT AND RESOURCES TO CONSTRUCTING THIS EXEMPLARY INSTITUTION
UNDERSTAND THAT ACTION IS BETTER THAN DREAMS. AND, BEST OF ALL,
IS THE ACTION THAT IS IMPELLED BY A DREAM.

Congratulations

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