

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION SYMPOSIUM

Washington, D. C.

June 14, 1977

I am honored to be here today to participate in the Smithsonian's sixth international symposium on "Kin and Communities: The Peopling of America." And I am especially honored to be the recipient of the Institution's Joseph Henry Medal. Thank you very much.

The Smithsonian holds a very special place in my heart. I am sure that James Smithson, the Englishman who endowed the Institution so generously -- even though he never visited the United States -- would be particularly pleased with the vital issues that will be addressed at this symposium. I feel certain that he would strongly approve of the direction the Smithsonian has taken and its truly outstanding accomplishments.

Today is the Queen of England's official birthday, so I would like to take this opportunity of saluting Queen Elizabeth and adding my congratulations in this year of her Jubilee celebration. She has been an outstanding example of dedication to her family and her country in her 25 years on the throne.

The Smithsonian is a learning center, where youngsters can get their first glimpse at a DC-3 and scholars can continue to explore the mysteries that have puzzled the mind of man for hundreds of years.

I'm proud of this Institution, and I'm proud of you, Dillion, and your colleagues who have distinguished yourselves in carrying out its work.

I'm particularly pleased that you have chosen to discuss the Peopling of America at this symposium. There is no topic that is more important to our country and to those who inhabit it.

But where do you begin when you take on such a discussion? You begin where God began when he created the first man and the first woman. You begin with the family.

I have asked myself why are we seeing the disintegration of the family?

If I go back only as far as my own childhood, I can see examples of what I thought was good, and perhaps is not so prevalent nowadays. I am talking about the interaction among family members, the shared concern.

When I was growing up in South Dakota, in a small town, parents and children knew each other well. It was natural for children to learn the lessons of life in their most useful form -- by observation and participation.

In our cities, today, it often takes a special effort to get the whole family together. Parents at work and in their social lives often are strangers to their children, and the children are strangers to them.

I was at my father's elbow constantly, watching him, listening to him; eventually, of course, debating with him. It was the finest legacy he could have left me.

With my own family, I have tried to fashion my relationship with my children similar to that which I have enjoyed with my father. I had my political career and was away much of the time. But when I was home, family time at the breakfast table was the most important part of my day and Sundays were generally reserved for family.

Muriel and I had sort of a family contract, unwritten, almost unspoken, but understood. I was a public man, restless, busy, traveling, speaking, working long hours away from home. Muriel, in a very real and almost total sense, held the family together -- giving doubly of herself to the children.

She took on extra burdens -- to give me more time to attend to the tasks I had outside the family. This sacrifice, on her part, has rendered so much joy and pride in return.

Over the years, I have had the great happiness of seeing in my own children this sense of purpose, responsibility and concern for the welfare of those we love.

In 1960, on election night, we were celebrating not only my re-election to the United States Senate, but also the birth of our first grandchild. She was named Victoria, to celebrate in the child's name our political victory.

The next day we learned that Vicky was retarded, a victim of Down's Syndrome.

My daughter Nancy, her husband, Muriel and I all wept at this news, shocked by Vicky's condition, frightened by our lack of knowledge about retardation, unsure what the future held in store for little Victoria. The decision was made to rear Vicky at home, in a family atmosphere, and it is a decision we have never regretted.

We could not tell then what a source of joy and love she would be, how her handicap would lead us, and more particularly Muriel, into some of the most satisfying and productive work of our lives, working with the families, teachers and medical specialists for whom retardation is a special concern.

The family is the basic moral and economic element of society. It is vital to human development. It is imperative, therefore, that those of us who recognize its importance accept the responsibility for taking whatever steps are necessary to preserve the family's moral foundation.

And we have no time to spare. The breakdown of the family unit is occurring at an unprecedented rate throughout this country. In fact, according to the most recent data compiled by the National Center for Health Statistics, the divorce rate of our population has doubled in the last decade!

And the extended family in this country is all but extinct. According to a major study, in 1900 fifty percent of the households in Boston included parents, children and at least one other relative. Today the comparable figure is four percent. We cannot afford, as a nation, to let this continue.

There are many reasons for the breakdown of the family unit -- a loosening of morals, a changing and highly mobile society, religious indifference and even television, to name a few.

Long ago we should have asked: What has been the effect of urbanization on our homes and families and neighborhoods? And, what has been the impact of the increasing necessity for wives, as well as their husbands, to enter the labor force, with the result that almost one-half of the women in our nation are working today?

So today I want to talk to you about these things. And I especially want to talk to you about morality in America's families and communities.

It is unfortunate that so many people think when you talk about morality that you are talking just about sexual behavior or misbehavior -- promiscuity, adultery and the like. This is a serious misunderstanding, because morality concerns every kind of human behavior -- towards ourselves, toward our fellow human beings, other living creatures, and even the earth itself.

Man is unique among all living creatures. Man alone is aware of himself as a separate being, with the ability to choose how he will act and the ability to assess the consequences of his actions upon himself, his family and his community.

This special quality of man, the knowledge of good and evil, is a great miracle and a great mystery. It also is a terrible burden.

No one ever has fully understood why it is that man knows that some actions are good and others are evil. Philosophers have been trying to understand and explain this for thousands of years. Personally, I think the Old Testament gives the best account.

In the simply and beautifully told story of Adam and Eve in the book of Genesis, we have an account of the crucial moment at the outset of the history of mankind -- the moment at which man became human, when he acquired his soul and his freedom.

Whether you accept the biblical account literally, or as a parable that expresses the deepest and most mysterious truths about the human condition, the fact is that at some point man, and only man, did acquire the knowledge of good and evil.

We may not understand how we know that some things are good and other evil, or why we know it, but we do know it. And it is on this knowledge that what we call morality and ethics are based.

Because he is aware of his actions and of their consequences, because he possesses the knowledge of good and evil, man feels responsible. And this feeling of responsibility for our actions is the key to understanding all ethical and moral standards.

It transcends race, religion, culture and history. It is what makes human society possible. It is the foundation of the family.

No matter how different human institutions may appear on the surface, no matter how infinite the variety of geographical, historical and cultural peculiarities they represent, they all have one thing in common: they are the means by which one generation passes on to the next the rules of social and individual cooperation which are necessary for survival.

Everyone knows that man is a social animal; it has been said so often that it has become a cliché. But far too few of us ever really stop to think what that means.

What it comes down to is this: If we deny the existence of moral standards, if we deny responsibility for ourselves, for the people we love, and for our fellow human beings in general, we cannot survive as individuals or as a society.

If we do not live by standards of truth and justice and kindness and respect for the integrity and rights of others, we will perish; we will lose our humanity. It's that simple.

If you don't subscribe to this, you might consider the frightening example of the Ik, a tribe of nomadic hunters and gatherers who live in northern Uganda, along the borders of Kenya and the Sudan.

A few years ago, the valley where the Ik did most of its hunting was set aside by the government as a national park and wild-life sanctuary. The Ik were forced off their land and ordered to become farmers.

Unfortunately, the mountains where they live have virtually no fertile soil, and very little water. For the tribe, it was a death sentence.

None of their institutions -- religion, family, work -- were organized for settled life as farmers, and so they were useless in the struggle to adapt to a new way of life. They were abandoned one by one, and life for the tribe became simply the battle of each individual to obtain enough food for himself to keep alive from one day to the next.

The family in the society of the tribe has disintegrated. Children are abandoned by their parents at the age of three. Anyone who cannot obtain food for himself -- the sick, the elderly, the weak, the timid -- is left to die of starvation.

What food there is is not shared with husband, wife, parents, children or anyone else, because it would mean death for the one who shares. Honesty, truth, loyalty and love -- in short, all the values we associate with being human -- simply do not exist anymore among this tribe.

Colin Turnbull, the anthropologist who tells the story of the Ik in his book, *THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE*, believes that their experience should be a warning to all of us. Our families, too, are breaking down under the strain of too rapid technological and social "progress." The parallel with our own family structure is lethal.

And we must learn from our past, in order to analyze our present, and predict our future. As George Santayana reminds us:

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

I long have felt that the major problem in our country is social disintegration.

By this I mean the breakdown of the family, which is so vital to human development, and the personal irresponsibility, the lack of commitment to community and country, the callous selfishness and self-indulgence, the seeming lack of moral sense, that lies behind so much of our vandalism, petty crime, drug and alcohol excess, business and tax and welfare cheating, divorce and child neglect.

In the absence of strong moral standards, wealth and luxury have become the measure of personal success. We have used our wealth to buy off our personal responsibilities to ourselves, our families and our country.

But I am more optimistic than Mr. Turnbull; I think we still do have a choice. We do not have to give up our humanity as the Ik did. Nevertheless, Mr. Turnbull's warning is worth repeating. He says:

"...We have tinkered with society, patching it up to cope with two thousand years of change, but it shows signs of collapse almost everywhere... Family, economy, government and religion, the basic categories of social activity and behavior, despite our tinkering, are no longer structured in a way that makes them compatible with each other or with us, for they are no longer structured in such a way as to create any sense of social unity involving a shared and mutual responsibility between all members of our society."

"The sorry state of society in the civilized world today," he states, "is in large measure due to the simple fact that social change has not kept up with technological change," which is "carrying us with it in an unknown direction, leaving our old form of society behind but," as he believes the signs seem to indicate, "holding in store for us the future already tasted by the Ik..."

Turnbull concludes that the same kinds of societal breakdown suffered by the Ik are beginning to produce the same results among ourselves. But I disagree.

I think we do have the capacity to choose. We can, if we will, create new institutions, build new bonds of trust and affection and cooperation in families throughout our society.

It will not be easy, because it will require a massive new affirmation of personal and individual responsibility, for our own behavior, and for the welfare of others -- our family, our community, our country.

Most of our problems today are symptoms of an almost universal flight from responsibility. In personal life we see the abuse of drugs and alcohol, mental illness, apathy, the lack of personal goals, and an unhealthy fascination with speed, luxury and violence.

In family life we have spiraling rates of divorce and juvenile delinquency, the exile of our elderly to retirement communities, and the substitution of promiscuity and pornography for truly loving and caring relationships between the sexes.

In the community and society as a whole we find general disrespect for the law and the exploitation of political, economic and governmental power for selfish and corrupt purposes.

It is not a question of abolishing our institutions and starting over.

What we must do, instead, is come to a new understanding of ourselves as moral, responsible human beings.

We possess the miraculous gift of knowledge of good and evil, and the ability to choose between them. We cannot escape the consequences of our behavior. We must accept responsibility for our own actions, for the welfare of those we love, and for the future of our society.

Perhaps the fate of man is best described in the new novel by Reynolds Price, THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH, which chronicles a family of four generations spanning the years 1903 to 1944, by the character who says: "We are very plain people, we are the history of the world."

We do not have all the answers on rebuilding a sense of responsibility within our families and our communities. How do we regain or restore a sense of community? How do we reestablish the close personal relationships that have characterized the family? These should be the two central questions of this Conference. And it is precisely the purpose of this conference to begin the search for these answers. But we do share a deep concern about restoring this foundation of our society.

Let us, therefore, dedicate ourselves to establishing this issue as being of the highest national priority.

Let it be said of this conference that this is where the movement began in America's third century to build a better life for future generations of American families.

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REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION SYMPOSIUM

WASHINGTON, D. C.

JUNE 14, 1977

Margaret Mead
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Dillon Ripley

I AM HONORED TO BE HERE TODAY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
SMITHSONIAN'S SIXTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON "KIN AND
COMMUNITIES: THE PEOPLING OF AMERICA." AND I AM ESPECIALLY
HONORED TO BE THE RECIPIENT OF THE INSTITUTION'S JOSEPH HENRY
MEDAL. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THE SMITHSONIAN HOLDS A VERY SPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART.
I AM SURE THAT JAMES SMITHSON, THE ENGLISHMAN WHO ENDOWED THE
INSTITUTION SO GENEROUSLY -- EVEN THOUGH HE NEVER VISITED THE
UNITED STATES -- WOULD BE PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH THE VITAL
ISSUES THAT WILL BE ADDRESSED AT THIS SYMPOSIUM. I FEEL CERTAIN
THAT HE WOULD STRONGLY APPROVE OF THE DIRECTION THE SMITHSONIAN
HAS TAKEN AND ^{with} ITS TRULY OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

h TODAY IS THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND'S OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY, SO I
WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY OF SALUTING QUEEN ELIZABETH
AND ADDING MY CONGRATULATIONS IN THIS YEAR OF HER JUBILEE
CELEBRATION. SHE HAS BEEN AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF DEDICATION
TO HER FAMILY AND HER COUNTRY IN HER 25 YEARS ON THE THRONE.

h THE SMITHSONIAN IS A LEARNING CENTER, WHERE YOUNGSTERS
CAN GET THEIR FIRST GLIMPSE AT A DC-3 AND SCHOLARS CAN CONTINUE
TO EXPLORE THE MYSTERIES THAT HAVE PUZZLED THE MIND OF MAN FOR
HUNDREDS OF YEARS.

h I'M PROUD OF THIS INSTITUTION, AND I'M PROUD OF YOU,
DILLON, AND YOUR COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED YOURSELVES IN
CARRYING OUT ITS WORK.

L I'M PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO DISCUSS THE
PEOPLING OF AMERICA AT THIS SYMPOSIUM. THERE IS NO TOPIC THAT
IS MORE IMPORTANT TO OUR COUNTRY AND TO THOSE WHO INHABIT IT.

L BUT WHERE DO YOU BEGIN WHEN YOU TAKE ON SUCH A DISCUSSION?

L YOU BEGIN WHERE GOD BEGAN WHEN HE CREATED THE FIRST MAN AND THE
FIRST WOMAN. YOU BEGIN WITH THE FAMILY.

L I HAVE ASKED MYSELF, WHY ARE WE SEEING THE DISINTEGRATION
OF THE FAMILY?

L IF I GO BACK ONLY AS FAR AS MY OWN CHILDHOOD, I CAN SEE
EXAMPLES OF WHAT I THOUGHT WAS GOOD, AND PERHAPS IS NOT SO

PREVALENT NOWADAYS. I AM TALKING ABOUT THE INTERACTION AMONG
FAMILY MEMBERS, THE SHARED CONCERN.

↳ WHEN I WAS GROWING UP IN SOUTH DAKOTA, IN A SMALL TOWN, PARENTS AND CHILDREN KNEW EACH OTHER WELL. ↳ IT WAS NATURAL FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN THE LESSONS OF LIFE IN THEIR MOST USEFUL FORM -- BY OBSERVATION AND PARTICIPATION.

↳ IN OUR CITIES, TODAY, IT OFTEN TAKES A SPECIAL EFFORT TO GET THE WHOLE FAMILY TOGETHER. ↳ PARENTS AT WORK AND IN THEIR SOCIAL LIVES OFTEN ARE STRANGERS TO THEIR CHILDREN, AND THE CHILDREN ARE STRANGERS TO THEM.

↳ I WAS AT MY FATHER'S ELBOW CONSTANTLY, WATCHING HIM, LISTENING TO HIM; EVENTUALLY, OF COURSE, DEBATING WITH HIM. ↳ IT WAS THE FINEST LEGACY HE COULD HAVE LEFT ME.

↳ WITH MY OWN FAMILY, I HAVE TRIED TO FASHION MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY CHILDREN SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH I ~~HAVE~~ ENJOYED WITH MY FATHER.

I HAD MY POLITICAL CAREER AND WAS AWAY MUCH OF THE TIME, BUT WHEN

I WAS HOME, FAMILY TIME AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE WAS THE MOST
IMPORTANT PART OF MY DAY AND SUNDAYS WERE GENERALLY RESERVED

FOR FAMILY,

MURIEL AND I HAD SORT OF A FAMILY CONTRACT, UNWRITTEN,
ALMOST UNSPOKEN, BUT UNDERSTOOD. I WAS A PUBLIC MAN, ~~REVERENT~~

BUSY, TRAVELING, SPEAKING, WORKING LONG HOURS AWAY FROM HOME.

MURIEL, IN A VERY REAL AND ALMOST TOTAL SENSE, HELD THE FAMILY
TOGETHER -- GIVING DOUBLY OF HERSELF TO THE CHILDREN.

SHE TOOK ON EXTRA BURDENS -- TO GIVE ME MORE TIME TO ATTEND
TO THE TASKS I HAD OUTSIDE THE FAMILY. THIS SACRIFICE, ON HER
PART, HAS RENDERED SO MUCH JOY AND PRIDE IN RETURN.

↳ OVER THE YEARS, I HAVE HAD THE GREAT HAPPINESS OF SEEING
IN MY OWN CHILDREN THIS SENSE OF PURPOSE, RESPONSIBILITY AND
CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF THOSE WE LOVE.

↳ IN 1960, ON ELECTION NIGHT, WE WERE CELEBRATING NOT ONLY
MY RE-ELECTION TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE, BUT ALSO THE BIRTH
OF OUR FIRST GRANDCHILD. SHE WAS NAMED VICTORIA, TO CELEBRATE
IN THE CHILD'S NAME OUR POLITICAL VICTORY.

↳ THE NEXT DAY WE LEARNED THAT VICKY WAS RETARDED, A VICTIM
OF DOWN'S SYNDROME.

↳ MY DAUGHTER NANCY, HER HUSBAND, MURIEL AND I ALL WEPT AT THIS
NEWS, SHOCKED BY VICKY'S CONDITION, FRIGHTENED BY OUR LACK OF
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RETARDATION, UNSURE WHAT THE FUTURE HELD
IN STORE FOR LITTLE VICTORIA.

↳ THE DECISION WAS MADE TO REAR VICKY AT HOME, IN A FAMILY
ATMOSPHERE, AND IT IS A DECISION WE HAVE NEVER REGRETTED.

↳ WE COULD NOT TELL THEN WHAT A SOURCE OF JOY AND LOVE SHE WOULD
BE, HOW HER HANDICAP WOULD LEAD US, AND MORE PARTICULARLY
MURIEL, INTO SOME OF THE MOST SATISFYING AND PRODUCTIVE WORK
OF OUR LIVES, WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES, TEACHERS AND MEDICAL
SPECIALISTS FOR WHOM RETARDATION IS A SPECIAL CONCERN.

↳ THE FAMILY IS THE BASIC MORAL, ~~AND~~ ^{# educational and} ECONOMIC ELEMENT OF SOCIETY.

↳ IT IS VITAL TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. ↳ IT IS IMPERATIVE, THEREFORE,
THAT THOSE OF US WHO RECOGNIZE ITS IMPORTANCE ACCEPT THE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING WHATEVER STEPS ARE NECESSARY TO
PRESERVE THE FAMILY'S MORAL FOUNDATION.

AND WE HAVE NO TIME TO SPARE. THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY

UNIT IS OCCURRING AT AN UNPRECEDENTED RATE THROUGHOUT THIS

COUNTRY. IN FACT, ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT DATA COMPILED

BY THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS, THE DIVORCE

RATE OF OUR POPULATION HAS DOUBLED IN THE LAST DECADE!

AND THE EXTENDED FAMILY IN THIS COUNTRY IS ALL BUT EXTINCT,

ACCORDING TO A MAJOR STUDY, IN 1900 FIFTY PERCENT OF THE HOUSE-

HOLDS IN BOSTON INCLUDED PARENTS, CHILDREN AND AT LEAST ONE

OTHER RELATIVE. TODAY THE COMPARABLE FIGURE IS FOUR PERCENT.

~~WE CANNOT AFFORD, AS A NATION, TO LET THIS CONTINUE.~~

THERE ARE MANY REASONS FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY

UNIT -- A LOOSENING OF MORALS, A CHANGING AND HIGHLY MOBILE

SOCIETY, RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE AND EVEN TELEVISION, TO NAME A FEW.

~~The father & mother both with jobs outside the~~

~~home~~

↳ LONG AGO WE SHOULD HAVE ASKED: WHAT HAS BEEN THE EFFECT
OF URBANIZATION ON OUR HOMES AND FAMILIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS?

AND, WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF THE INCREASING NECESSITY FOR
WIVES, AS WELL AS THEIR HUSBANDS, TO ENTER THE LABOR FORCE, WITH
THE RESULT THAT ALMOST ONE-HALF OF THE WOMEN IN OUR NATION ARE
WORKING TODAY?

↳ SO TODAY I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THESE THINGS, AND I
ESPECIALLY WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT MORALITY IN AMERICA'S
FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

↳ IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT SO MANY PEOPLE THINK WHEN YOU TALK
ABOUT MORALITY THAT YOU ARE TALKING JUST ABOUT SEXUAL BEHAVIOR
OR MISBEHAVIOR -- PROMISCUITY, ADULTERY AND THE LIKE.

THIS IS A SERIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING, BECAUSE MORALITY CONCERNS

EVERY KIND OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR -- TOWARDS OURSELVES, TOWARD OUR

FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS, OTHER LIVING CREATURES, AND EVEN THE EARTH

ITSELF.

MAN IS UNIQUE AMONG ALL LIVING CREATURES. MAN ALONE IS

AWARE OF HIMSELF AS A SEPARATE BEING, WITH THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE

HOW HE WILL ACT AND THE ABILITY TO ASSESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS

ACTIONS UPON HIMSELF, HIS FAMILY AND HIS COMMUNITY.

THIS SPECIAL QUALITY OF MAN, THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, IS

A GREAT MIRACLE AND A GREAT MYSTERY. IT ALSO IS A TERRIBLE BURDEN.

NO ONE EVER HAS FULLY UNDERSTOOD WHY IT IS THAT MAN KNOWS

THAT SOME ACTIONS ARE GOOD AND OTHERS ARE EVIL.

PHILOSOPHERS HAVE BEEN TRYING TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN THIS FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. (PERSONALLY, I THINK THE OLD TESTAMENT GIVES THE BEST ACCOUNT.

(IN THE SIMPLY AND BEAUTIFULLY TOLD STORY OF ADAM AND EVE IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS WE HAVE AN ACCOUNT OF THE CRUCIAL MOMENT AT THE OUTSET OF THE HISTORY OF MANKIND -- THE MOMENT AT WHICH MAN BECAME HUMAN, WHEN HE ACQUIRED HIS SOUL AND HIS FREEDOM.

(WHETHER YOU ACCEPT THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT LITERALLY, OR AS A PARABLE THAT EXPRESSES THE DEEPEST AND MOST MYSTERIOUS TRUTHS ABOUT THE HUMAN CONDITION, THE FACT IS THAT AT SOME POINT MAN, AND ONLY MAN, DID ACQUIRE THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL.

(WE MAY NOT UNDERSTAND HOW WE KNOW THAT SOME THINGS ARE GOOD AND OTHER EVIL, OR WHY WE KNOW IT, BUT WE DO KNOW IT.

↳ AND IT IS ON THIS KNOWLEDGE THAT WHAT WE CALL MORALITY AND
ETHICS ARE BASED,

↳ BECAUSE HE IS AWARE OF HIS ACTIONS AND OF THEIR CONSEQUENCES,
BECAUSE HE POSSESSES THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, MAN FEELS
RESPONSIBLE. ↳ AND THIS FEELING OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR ACTIONS
IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING ALL ETHICAL AND MORAL STANDARDS,

↳ IT TRANSCENDS RACE, RELIGION, CULTURE AND HISTORY. ↳ IT
IS WHAT MAKES HUMAN SOCIETY POSSIBLE. ↳ IT IS THE FOUNDATION
OF THE FAMILY.

↳ NO MATTER HOW DIFFERENT HUMAN INSTITUTIONS MAY APPEAR
ON THE SURFACE, NO MATTER HOW INFINITE THE VARIETY OF GEOGRAPHICAL,
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PECULIARITIES THEY REPRESENT, THEY ALL
HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON:

IF YOU DON'T SUBSCRIBE TO THIS, YOU MIGHT CONSIDER THE FRIGHT-
ENING EXAMPLE OF THE IK, A TRIBE OF NOMADIC HUNTERS AND GATHERERS
(pronounced Eek)
WHO LIVE IN NORTHERN UGANDA, ALONG THE BORDERS OF KENYA AND THE SUDAN.

A FEW YEARS AGO, THE VALLEY WHERE THE IK DID MOST OF ITS
HUNTING WAS SET ASIDE BY THE GOVERNMENT AS A NATIONAL PARK AND

WILDLIFE SANCTUARY. THE IK WERE FORCED OFF THEIR LAND AND
ORDERED TO BECOME FARMERS.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE MOUNTAINS WHERE THEY LIVE HAVE VIRTUALLY NO
FERTILE SOIL, AND VERY LITTLE WATER. FOR THE TRIBE, IT WAS A DEATH
SENTENCE.

NONE OF THEIR INSTITUTIONS -- RELIGION, FAMILY, WORK -- WERE
ORGANIZED FOR SETTLED LIFE AS FARMERS, AND SO THEY WERE USELESS IN
THE STRUGGLE TO ADAPT TO A NEW WAY OF LIFE.

↳ THEY WERE ABANDONED ONE BY ONE, AND LIFE FOR THE TRIBE BECAME

SIMPLY THE BATTLE OF EACH INDIVIDUAL TO OBTAIN ENOUGH FOOD FOR
HIMSELF, ^{vs himself} TO KEEP ALIVE FROM ONE DAY TO THE NEXT.

↳ THE FAMILY IN THE SOCIETY OF THE TRIBE HAS DISINTEGRATED.

↳ CHILDREN ARE ABANDONED BY THEIR PARENTS, ~~AT THE AGE OF THREE~~ ANYONE

WHO CANNOT OBTAIN FOOD FOR HIMSELF -- THE SICK, THE ELDERLY, THE
WEAK, THE TIMID -- IS LEFT TO DIE OF STARVATION.

~~↳ WHAT FOOD THERE IS IS NOT SHARED WITH HUSBAND, WIFE, PARENTS,
CHILDREN OR ANYONE ELSE, BECAUSE IT WOULD MEAN DEATH FOR THE ONE
WHO SHARES. ↳ HONESTY, TRUTH, LOYALTY AND LOVE -- IN SHORT, ALL THE
VALUES WE ASSOCIATE WITH BEING HUMAN -- SIMPLY DO NOT EXIST ANYMORE
AMONG THIS TRIBE.~~

↳ COLIN TURNBULL, THE ANTHROPOLOGIST WHO TELLS THE STORY OF THE
IK IN HIS BOOK, THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE, BELIEVES THAT THEIR EXPERIENCE
SHOULD BE A WARNING TO ALL OF US. ↳ OUR FAMILIES, TOO, ARE BREAKING
DOWN UNDER THE STRAIN OF TOO RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL
"PROGRESS." THE PARALLEL WITH OUR OWN FAMILY STRUCTURE IS LETHAL.

↳ AND WE MUST LEARN FROM OUR PAST, IN ORDER TO ANALYZE OUR
PRESENT AND PREDICT OUR FUTURE. ↳ AS GEORGE SANTAYANA REMINDS US:

"THOSE WHO CANNOT REMEMBER THE PAST ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT."

↳ I LONG HAVE FELT THAT THE MAJOR PROBLEM IN OUR COUNTRY IS
SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION.

↳ BY THIS I MEAN THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY, WHICH IS SO
VITAL TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, AND THE PERSONAL IRRESPONSIBILITY, THE
LACK OF COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY,

THE CALLOUS SELFISHNESS AND SELF-INDULGENCE, THE SEEMING LACK
OF MORAL SENSE, THAT LIES BEHIND SO MUCH OF OUR VANDALISM, PETTY
CRIME, DRUG AND ALCOHOL EXCESS, BUSINESS AND TAX AND WELFARE
CHEATING, DIVORCE AND CHILD NEGLECT.

IN THE ABSENCE OF STRONG MORAL STANDARDS, WEALTH AND LUXURY
HAVE BECOME THE MEASURE OF PERSONAL SUCCESS. WE HAVE USED OUR
WEALTH TO BUY OFF OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO OURSELVES, OUR
FAMILIES AND OUR COUNTRY.

BUT I AM MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN MR. TURNBULL; I THINK WE
STILL DO HAVE A CHOICE. WE DO NOT HAVE TO GIVE UP OUR HUMANITY AS
THE IK DID. NEVERTHELESS, MR. TURNBULL'S WARNING IS WORTH
REPEATING. HE SAYS:

"...WE HAVE TINKERED WITH SOCIETY, PATCHING IT UP TO COPE WITH TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF CHANGE, BUT IT SHOWS SIGNS OF COLLAPSE ALMOST EVERYWHERE... FAMILY, ECONOMY, GOVERNMENT AND RELIGION, THE BASIC CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY AND BEHAVIOR, DESPITE OUR TINKERING, ARE NO LONGER STRUCTURED IN A WAY THAT MAKES THEM COMPATIBLE WITH EACH OTHER OR WITH US, FOR THEY ARE NO LONGER STRUCTURED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CREATE ANY SENSE OF SOCIAL UNITY INVOLVING A SHARED AND MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN ALL MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY,"

"THE SORRY STATE OF SOCIETY IN THE CIVILIZED WORLD TODAY," HE STATES, "IS IN LARGE MEASURE DUE TO THE SIMPLE FACT THAT SOCIAL CHANGE HAS NOT KEPT UP WITH TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE,"

WHICH IS "CARRYING US WITH IT IN AN UNKNOWN DIRECTION,

LEAVING OUR OLD FORM OF SOCIETY BEHIND BUT," AS HE BELIEVES

THE SIGNS SEEM TO INDICATE, "HOLDING IN STORE FOR US THE

FUTURE ALREADY TASTED BY THE IK..."

TURNBULL CONCLUDES THAT THE SAME KINDS OF SOCIETAL BREAK-
DOWN SUFFERED BY THE IK ARE BEGINNING TO PRODUCE THE SAME RESULTS
AMONG OURSELVES. BUT I DISAGREE.

I THINK WE DO HAVE THE CAPACITY TO CHOOSE. WE CAN, IF WE
WILL, CREATE NEW INSTITUTIONS, BUILD NEW BONDS OF TRUST AND
AFFECTION AND COOPERATION IN FAMILIES THROUGHOUT OUR SOCIETY.

IT WILL NOT BE EASY, BECAUSE IT WILL REQUIRE A MASSIVE NEW
AFFIRMATION OF PERSONAL AND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY, FOR OUR
OWN BEHAVIOR, AND FOR THE WELFARE OF OTHERS -- OUR FAMILY, OUR
COMMUNITY, OUR COUNTRY.

MOST OF OUR PROBLEMS TODAY ARE SYMPTOMS OF AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL FLIGHT FROM RESPONSIBILITY. IN PERSONAL LIFE WE SEE THE ABUSE OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL, MENTAL ILLNESS, APATHY, THE LACK OF PERSONAL GOALS, AND AN UNHEALTHY FASCINATION WITH SPEED, LUXURY AND VIOLENCE.

IN FAMILY LIFE WE HAVE SPIRALING RATES OF DIVORCE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, THE EXILE OF OUR ELDERLY TO RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES, AND THE SUBSTITUTION OF PROMISCUITY AND PORNOGRAPHY FOR TRULY LOVING AND CARING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SEXES.

IN THE COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE WE FIND *all too much* DISRESPECT FOR THE LAW AND THE EXPLOITATION OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND GOVERNMENTAL POWER FOR SELFISH AND CORRUPT PURPOSES.

But, IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF ABOLISHING OUR INSTITUTIONS AND STARTING OVER.

WHAT WE MUST DO, INSTEAD, IS COME TO A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF
OURSELVES AS MORAL, RESPONSIBLE HUMAN BEINGS,

↳ WE POSSESS THE MIRACULOUS GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL,
AND THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THEM. ↳ WE CANNOT ESCAPE THE
CONSEQUENCES OF OUR BEHAVIOR. ↳ WE MUST ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR
OWN ACTIONS, FOR THE WELFARE OF THOSE WE LOVE, AND FOR THE FUTURE
OF OUR SOCIETY.

PERHAPS THE FATE OF MAN IS BEST DESCRIBED IN THE NEW NOVEL
BY REYNOLDS PRICE, "THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH," WHICH CHRONICLES
A FAMILY OF FOUR GENERATIONS SPANNING THE YEARS 1903 TO 1944, BY
THE CHARACTER WHO SAYS: "WE ARE VERY PLAIN PEOPLE, WE ARE THE
HISTORY OF THE WORLD."

WE DO NOT HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS ON REBUILDING A SENSE OF
RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN OUR FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITIES. How
DO WE REGAIN OR RESTORE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY? How DO WE
REESTABLISH THE CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS THAT HAVE
CHARACTERIZED THE FAMILY? THESE SHOULD BE THE TWO CENTRAL
QUESTIONS OF THIS CONFERENCE. AND IT IS PRECISELY THE PURPOSE
OF THIS CONFERENCE TO BEGIN THE SEARCH FOR THESE ANSWERS. BUT
WE DO SHARE A DEEP CONCERN ABOUT RESTORING THIS FOUNDATION OF
OUR SOCIETY.

LET US, THEREFORE, DEDICATE OURSELVES TO ESTABLISHING THIS
ISSUE AS BEING OF THE HIGHEST NATIONAL PRIORITY.

LET IT BE SAID OF THIS CONFERENCE THAT THIS IS WHERE THE MOVE-
MENT BEGAN IN AMERICA'S THIRD CENTURY TO BUILD A BETTER LIFE FOR
FUTURE GENERATIONS OF AMERICAN FAMILIES.

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(Draft)

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5 KIN AND COMMUNITIES:
6 THE PEOPLING OF AMERICA

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8 Sixth international symposium
9 of the Smithsonian Institution

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11 OPENING CEREMONY

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19 Eisenhower Theater
20 John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
21 Washington City

22 Tuesday, June 14, 1977, at 10:30 a.m.
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25

1 propose, Dieu dispose". In Washington it is transposed as,
2 "L'Homme propose, Le Senate dispose." We have a dear friend
3 with us today who has found to his cost that the Senate requires
4 him to get a foreign aid bill through in the next few hours,
5 and we had used this occasion to recognize our dear friend by
6 presenting him with the Smithsonian award called the Henry
7 Medal. So, without further ado, I would like to read the
8 citation for Hubert Horatio Humphrey:

9 "A man of bubbling imagination and vision, coupled
10 with practicality, your devotion to the Smithsonian reflects
11 your caring for the cultural and scientific heritage of this
12 nation and the civilizations which still nourish us. The
13 Regents of the Smithsonian gain honor for all in presenting
14 to you the Henry Medal, not only for your vital service to the
15 Board of Regents, your Chairmanship of the Woodrow Wilson
16 International Center for Scholars in its infancy, your enduring
17 support of our aims, but also for your exemplary career in
18 improving the quality of life for all peoples."

19 "You pay homage to your ancestors in Norway, Wales,
20 and France by what you are contributing to the American experi-
21 ence." So, if I may, I would like to give Senator Humphrey
22 our Henry Medal at this time.

23 (Applause.)

24 SENATOR HUMPHREY: Thank you very much. Thank you
25 very much, Mr. Ripley, my friend Dillon Ripley, and the

1 distinguished, much respected and admired Margaret Mead, and
2 those who are in attendance at this symposium, I am embarrassed,
3 and I am also apologetic. Yesterday I was informed that the
4 Senate would take up what we call the International Financial
5 Institutions Act, which is legislation of paramount importance
6 dealing with the World Bank, the Interamerican Development
7 Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and huge sums. I am the
8 Chairman of the subcommittee that handles that legislation,
9 and I was pleading yesterday to be able to delay it a little
10 while because of this occasion.

11 But, as the Majority Leader told me, he said, "Sen-
12 ator, you are a member of the Senate leadership, and you know
13 that we have been telling everyone that we want to get our
14 work done. And, our work is over here, not over there. I
15 think I knew what he meant. So we have been in session since
16 9:30 this morning, and I have made the opening statement on the
17 International Financial Institutions Act, and now I want to
18 make a very brief statement here as a part of your program,
19 and I hope that you will understand that if what I say to you
20 is not as coherent as I would like it, it is because I am going
21 to hop, skip and jump around in an effort to leave you with
22 just a few questions, not answers.

23 You are the ones that come up with the answers. I
24 raise some of the questions. But, we do have some copies of
25 what is billed on your program as the keynote address. That

1 always frightens me and it ought to terrify you. And, if you
2 want them, I think they will be available.

3 First, it is a singular privilege to share in this
4 symposium, and the topic could only be one that was proscribed
5 or defined by the Smithsonian or Dillon Ripley, "Man and
6 Communities, the Peopling of America." That says so much, and
7 yet it leaves so much to be said. And then I am very particu-
8 larly honored by being presented today or being the recipient
9 of the Institution's Joseph Henry Medal. This is a singular
10 honor. I understand that it has come to a very few, and there-
11 fore it is much cherished. So, I thank you very much.

12 The Smithsonian has a very special place in my heart.
13 I had the opportunity to serve on its board, and, as has been
14 indicated, I have been the first Chairman of the Board of the
15 Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and one of
16 our fine new programs and endeavors.

17 But, you know, I think that James Smithson, the
18 Englishman who endowed this institution so generously even
19 though he never visited the United States, would be particularly
20 pleased with the symposium that is being held today, of
21 course, with the vast array of endeavors and accomplishments
22 of the Smithsonian Institution. Really, these accomplishments
23 are outstanding.

24 The Folk Festival that is held every summer, Dillon
25 is one of the real highlights of the Smithsonian program. For...

1. I believe, is the Queen of England's 50th birthday. So,
 2. I would like to take the opportunity of saluting Queen Elizabeth
 3. and adding my congratulations in this year of her jubilee
 4. celebration. I have been watching it occasionally on television.
 5. ion.

6. She has been an outstanding example of dedication to
 7. her family, and that fits into this program. And, to her
 8. country in her 25 years on the throne. Now, the Smithsonian
 9. is a learning center. I am going to get our commercials in
 10. here today, Dillon, while I have a chance.

11. It is a learning center where youngsters can get
 12. their first glimpse at a DC-3, or a Linbergh Spirit of St.
 13. Louis. And scholars can continue to explore the mysteries
 14. that have puzzled the mind of Man for hundreds of years. And,
 15. I am proud of this institution, proud of its master minds so
 16. to speak, Dillon Ripley and others who have distinguished them-
 17. selves in making this institution a working, lively, instrument
 18. of communication and of education and of scholarship in the
 19. American Scene.

20. And, I am going to try to discuss for a few minutes
 21. here your topic, because it is one that seems to me is so imp-
 22. ortant. As I said in the beginning, it leaves so much to your
 23. imagination. But, where do you begin such a discussion? Well,
 24. I suppose that we could begin, as it says in Genesis, "In the
 25. Beginning". I guess you begin where God began when he created

1. the first man and the first woman.

2 He began with the family, which is the basic social
3 institution of all civilization, and of all humanity. I have
4 asked myself again and again why are we seeing what appears
5 to be at least, a growing disintegration of the family? Because
6 it is my judgement that the social disintegration that is taking
7 place is the major problem that confronts our society. It is
8 much more serious than the energy problem, much more serious
9 than whether or not cities pay their bills.

10 All of these other matters that we talk about, crime,
11 alcoholism, whatever it may be, these are but symptoms of a
12 much more fundamental disease, or fundamental problem. If
13 I go back only as far as my childhood, and I see my sister
14 and my niece here today, and my sister, in-particular Francis,
15 will remember our wonderful home out in South Dakota. Now,
16 we were very simple people, and I am very proud of that. I
17 am very happy that I can stand before an audience and say that
18 I do not come from what we call "blue blood".

19 But, I come from very simple, hard working stock.
20 I can see examples of what I thought was good as I reflect on
21 that home life. And, I can also compare it with what I see
22 today. I am talking about the interaction among family members,
23 the shared concern.

24 When I was growing up in these small towns out in
25 South Dakota, because we moved a couple of times, parents and

children, they knew each other, we had time for each other. Now, I am not sure that this was characteristic of everybody, but most of the people that I knew, in that limited environment, ~~we~~ did have time for each other. It was natural for children to learn the lessons of life in their most useful form, by observation and by participation, by being in the family unit, in the family circle.

In our cities of today, you know it often takes a very special effort to get the whole family together, and once again I want to go back to what I heard Margaret Mead say, "The family is not just our biological family, it is a larger family. It is the family, yes, of ourselves, mother, father, children, relatives. But, it is also the family of the community."

The most influential person in my life was my father. And, may I also add that the one that gave me the best understanding of what the true meaning in life was in deep religious faith was my mother. I was lucky. We didn't have very much money; we didn't talk very much about poverty; everybody was poor or anyhow, that would be talking about yourself. But, we really weren't poor in the sense of the poverty of spirit. We had spirit. We had hope, we had love. Oh, we had debates and arguments too. Lots of family music as I put it, a certain amount of family noise.

But, we were a family. I was born above a drug

store, raised inside of one. I know more about ~~the~~ ~~business~~ at the age of 18 than when I graduated from the university. I have often wondered why I went to college. I was brought up in it; it was part of my life. But more importantly, business was not just business. Business was also conversation. It was fellowship. My father's business was open, not only to the customers that wanted to buy our product, but it was every day conversation, dialogue. We didn't even use the word "dialogue", we just talked to each other.

Our interests were centered around school, church, some community. Community activities, yes, they weren't too fancy, but ~~it was~~ ^{there} there, and I met some remarkable people. I met more interesting people in the little town of 600 to 700 people than any place in my life. I have been in public life for a long time and I am supposed to have met all kinds of interesting people, but I tell you there were none more interesting than old Joe Garwick out in Delford ⁹ South Dakota. None more interesting than LeBris. I can name these people, A.S. sky.

There were a lot of them. These were intelligent, wonderful people, and we understood each other. We communicated. We had all of the debates, the arguments, all of the interplay, interaction that you can imagine. I have a wonderful privilege to grow up in that kind of environment. I grant that my perspective on the world wasn't too big. I know

to Washington as a boy, I did get to know my
during a basketball tournament at Slick Field.
So, my horizons weren't too big. But my imagination
ited. And I also was brought up with books and records
y. That was a part of our family fear. Mother made
ate home, she knew how to keep a good home. And my
aw how to embellish it. I can tell you that Dad
all records in the drug store. Very interesting,
really sold any, he just bought them. And then he
ng them home, because mother was always worried about
, you know, we never had enough to get a new
new rug or anything that we want. And now would
wondering when that great day would come when we
decorate.

The next thing dad would be coming home with those
d records. They were expensive in those days. Mother
, "Why are you bringing these records home, Dad?" He
l, mom, I over bought; they just didn't sell. Now
hey weren't going to sell. But I tell you what, we
ost beautiful music in our home. I remember my father
dio time at the local radio station. This is what
to a town of about 12,000.

And he used to read poetry, and somebody said to
aid, Mr. Humphrey, do you think that is a business
o be up there reading poetry?" He said, "Look, is

if my money, I buy the time, I like to read poetry. And, if I want to read poetry, I want to read poetry.

Well, those are precious memories. What I guess I am trying to say is that we were very much a family, but ours was not unique. There are many others, and there were even more in days gone by. And, I tried to fashion my own relationship with my children on somewhat of a similar pattern, but I have not done it as well, because public life, there friends, leaves little time for family life, very little time.

There is no forty-hour week, there is no dinner at home with the children. I had lunch with my family only when I had the influenza. I wouldn't know, if I ever came home to lunch, Mrs. Humphrey would faint. But, we always had breakfast together as a family, and it has become a very important hour in our home. When the children were little, before they went off to school, and we tried to have Sundays together, breakfast and Sundays was family time.

And then I had a sort of unwritten contract with my wife Myrtal, and while the children were little, she gave ~~them~~ ^{to them} of her time unstintingly. We were not much in the social circle in Washington. As a matter of fact, it is slightly boring after you have been around a few times. These receptions give you varicose veins as you stand; you keep meeting the same people too.

So we just sort of divided up our work. I was the

ic man, she was the private woman. And I think that if we were able to rear a family, and many times people have, "How are your boys?" I say, "well, they are not at all; are coming along all right." "How is your daughter?" "Well, I tell you she is a fine mother. And, our sons are just ordinary, good young men."

And, I think they are trying to also bring up their lies. We promote that. I thought I would talk these women to tell you about that, because it takes time, it takes. We have a little home out in Minnesota. I go home there every weekend, well, with few exceptions. In the winter time it is not that easy.

But, I go home. And, all during the years when our children were little, we had that home there. We couldn't afford it but we had it. And, I have often said that that home cost us hospital bills, most likely a divorce, and most likely may I say a disintegration of our family, because the pressures on you in public life, on time, the demands, the obligations, they are tremendous. And, it has been sort of a testing ground to us. And, even this past weekend it was the same thing.

Children now, they are grown to manhood, but their children come back to the nest, because mother is there, dad was there this weekend. I tell you that investment that family life is what counts. Now, I am a public man.

pose you expect me to talk to you about housing. I know
 little about that. If you want one speech on that, or come
 to it a little bit later. I can talk to you about jobs,
 am deeply concerned about it, and don't misunderstand
 housing is important, jobs are important, and our
 national product is important. The rebuilding of the
 social structure of our cities. All of this is tremendous
 important.

All all of ~~this~~ makes a contribution to what we might
 call "sense of community", and, hopefully, an enduring and
 family life. But, unless there is a will of the indiv-
 to make the family life a truly meaningful experience,
 and understanding, of give and take and of sharing,
 the housing in the world and all the jobs in the world
 help you. Because so many of us have seen people of
 wealth and privilege miserable, families broken up,
 segregated. They have no moorings.

Now, that is not to be interpreted as being a lack
 of interest on my part or on your part. It is the great
 economic and social service needs of our people. These
 must be met. And, today is a far different world than
 I grew up as a child, that I know. And I know that the
 unit is as vital today as it was in 1945. I do, even
 years ago. I don't care how many T.V. sets or how
 many cars you have, or how many telephones, or how many

sums, or how many cultural institutions you have, that unless you have the will to make a family unit an operating institution of love and understanding, of education and communication, of fellowship and sharing, that all of this is for naught. You are just spending your time spinning your wheels, and using your resources.

At least, that is my experience. I remember one experience in 1960 on election night. My wife celebrated only my re-election to the United States Senate, and the birth of our first grandchild, and she was named Victoria, to celebrate in the child's name our political victory. ~~It~~ on the very night of my re-election.

The next day we learned from the doctors that Vicki was retarded, a victim of Down's syndrome. We had never anything like this in our family. We wanted to know, there was no such thing. But there it was. Why us? Why were we the ones? We asked a thousand times. My daughter Nancy, a trained nurse, her husband, a young business man, Marie and I literally wept all evening over the news and shock by Vicki's condition.

We were frightened by our lack of knowledge about education. I am sure what the future holds in store for individuals, being told to grow up in an institution, I hate that "institution". We want to institution everything. It is humanizing. I love the word "community".

The decision was made to rear Vicky at home, not on a basis of medical advice, but on the basis of ethical understanding, moral commitment. I believe in the healing power of love, and I am no preacher, I am a sinner, and know it. But I believe in it, and I believe in the healing power of positive thinking, of not giving in, of knowing that you can do better. And I have had to experience some of this in my private life.

Well, I cannot tell you what a source of joy and love this little girl has been to us, how her handicap would lead into a whole new dimension of life, and more particularly how it would lead my wife Muriel into some of the most satisfying and productive work that she has ever experienced. And how we have been able to work with other families and share with them their grief, and then raise their hopes. And how we have been able to work with teachers and medical specialists for whom retardation is a special concern.

Just this past week we dedicated community residences, they are called the Muriel Humphrey residences, out in ^{Eden Valley} Minnesota, in the Eden Valley, where young adults, retarded, will live in a normal community life, ~~getting them~~ ^{and} out of the warehouses, putting them into homes where there ^{are} parents in those homes, foster parents, to be sure, but where these young adults will live a normal life, go to the shopping centers, go to the schools, have special training programs.

^{Beautiful} Beautiful homes they are. I remember the community

didn't want them at first, and I said to one member of the community, Is it because the homes are going to be too beautiful because they are architectural dreams? Now everybody is happy about it. ^{on} Sunday this week we dedicated a \$2 million opportunity workshop for the retarded, getting these people out of the shadows, out into the bright sunshine, letting them become part of the community, ^{with} ^{and} loved compassion. ~~There isn't quite enough of it. It is talked about, or acted upon.~~

Well, ~~What~~ I guess I am saying is that the family is the basic moral, educational and economic ^{unit} element, or economic factor in our society. We know this, we know it is vital to human development, and I think therefore that it is imperative that those of us who recognize ^{its} ~~this~~ importance, accept the responsibility for taking steps that are necessary to preserve the family's moral foundation, and we have no time to spare.

The breakdown of the family unit is occurring at an unprecedented rate. The extended family in this country is all but extinct. That is where you have mother, father, children, and possibly grandmother, grandfather or a relative. I have got all of the figures here on that. There are many reasons for the breakdown of the family unit; a fast changing society, technological change overwhelming people, mass transportation, the speed of our times, an avalanche of information that literally is overwhelming us.

I remember one time I heard some preacher say, "the way you treat God is the way you treat people."

So, really when I am speaking of morality, I am talking about every kind of human behavior, towards ourselves, towards our fellow human beings, other living creatures, and even the Earth itself. Environmental protection is morality; conservation of our resources is morality. Abuse and waste of our resources is immoral. And the abuse and waste of ourselves is the worst of the immoralities.

Now, Man is a unique creature. And, I say Man in the generic sense, Man and Woman, human specie. Because Man alone is aware of himself as a separate being, with the ability to choose how he will act, and the ability to assess the consequences of his actions upon himself, his family and his community.

This special quality of Man, this knowledge of good and evil is a great miracle and a great mystery. It is also a terrible burden. No one has ever really understood why it is that Man knows that some actions are good and others are not. Philosophers have been trying to understand and explain this for thousands of years.

And, of course, we find it even in the Old Testament. It is simply and beautifully told in the story of Adam and Eve in the Book of Genesis, ^{the} moment at which Man became human when he acquired his soul and his freedom. Now, whether you accept

the Biblical account literally, which is your privilege, or as a parable, that expresses the deepest and most mysterious truths about the human condition, the fact is that at some point, Mankind, human beings, did acquire the knowledge to be able to differentiate between good and evil, between that which was acceptable and that which was not.

We may not understand how we know that some things are good or evil, or why we know it. But we do know that different human institutions may appear on the surface. No matter how infinite the variety of geographical, historical and cultural peculiarities they represent, they have one thing in common, they are ^{the} means by which one generation passes on to the next the rules of social and individual behavior which are necessary for survival.

That is what the family unit has done over the generations and the centuries. Now everyone knows that Man is a social animal. That is a cliché literally. But I imagine that too few of us have ever really stopped to think what it means. As I see it, what it comes down to is this: If we deny the existence of any ethical standards, if we deny our responsibility for ourselves, for the people we love, and for our fellow human beings, we cannot survive as individuals, or as a society.

In other words, you cannot survive as a society and even as an individual by self-centered conceit. If we

not live by some standards of truth and justice, of kindness and respect for the integrity and the rights of others, we perish, we will lose our humanity.

So that when we speak of civil rights and civil liberties of others, we are really protecting ourselves, because the only protection that one has in the ultimate is the family, the community, the larger community in which we live. Now, you don't subscribe to this, you might consider the frightening example of what I read about, and Margaret Mead knows more about this in one minute than I will know in a month.

The example of the Eke, a tribe of nomadic hunters and gatherers who lived in northern Uganda along the borders of Kenya and Sudan. A few years ago that valley where they did most of their hunting was set aside by the government as a national park and a wildlife sanctuary. And the Eke tribe was forced off their land in order to become farmers.

Unfortunately, the mountains where they live have actually no fertile soil, and very little water. For them it was a death sentence. None of their institutions, religion, family and work, were organized for settled life as farmers. And so they were useless in the struggle to adapt to a new way of life, and they were abandoned one by one, and the life of the tribe became simply the battle of each individual to obtain enough food for himself, or herself, to keep from one day to the next.

The family and the society of the tribe had disintegrated. Children were abandoned by their parents. Anyone who could not obtain food for himself, the sick, the elderly, the weak, the timid, was left to die of starvation. Now, Cullen Turnbull, the anthropologist who tells this story of the Ika in his book, The Mountain People, believes that their experience should be a warning to all of us.

Our families too are breaking down under the strain of too rapid technological and social progress. This is what was referred to earlier here today. The parallel with our family structure is all too frightening, and we must learn from the past in order to analyze our present, and predict our future.

As George Santayana reminds us, "those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it". Now, we have been going through a period in which nobody wanted to think about their past. Young people didn't want to learn history. And I have been reading about that they have very little knowledge of geography. We call this the "New generation". What is important is now.

But the problem with now is that it disappears. So I think what is more important is to remember that simple little phrase that many of you have seen on some colored postcard of the little child skipping through the wild flowers in the field, and she says, "Today is the first day of the rest of my

life", the future and building on the heritage of the past.

Somehow, some way in this great country, fast moving, changing, with news flashes every five, ten, fifteen seconds, we are going to have to remember where we have been, as well as where we are if we are going to have any understanding of where we are going. And whether this can be done in our school system or not, I am not quite sure. I hope so, more emphasis in it.

But again, as I said in the beginning, when we sat around our family table, we talked about grandpa and grandma, we talked about our heritage, we talked about the problems of the day and we dreamed of what could be tomorrow. That was the cement that held us together in many ways. But, regrettably there is an emphasis today that what is happening now is all that is important, without any understanding of how it came about.

So we treat symptoms rather than causes. And we lay no plans for the tomorrows. Well, I have much more that I wanted to tell you. ~~What I think that~~ I should end up by saying ~~is~~ that it is not a question of our abolishing our institutions and starting all over. I have heard people say that we have lost our way. Maybe some, but possibly what we ought to be saying is that we are looking for a better way.

And sometimes in that process of looking for a better way there seems to be some confusion. But, if there is that

1 sense of community, that sense of togetherness, that sense of
2 understanding of our past as well as our present, we have some
3 morays, we have some guidelines, we have some way of finding
4 that better way.

5 You know, Man studies the miracles, but the greatest
6 miracle of all is Man himself, and the greatest mystery. One
7 of the things that has always bothered me about 'scholarship',
8 with the exception of a few, is that we are constantly studying
9 the works of Man, rather than why and how Man works. What is
10 it that motivates us? What is this all about, we ourselves?
11 A sense of appreciation of who we are, what we are and why we
12 are.

13 So, what we must do as I see it, is to come to a new
14 understanding of ourselves as moral and responsible human beings.
15 There is no substitute for self-discipline, no amount of law
16 can impose it, as well as ^{an} individual will. And there is no
17 freedom in the jungle. Freedom requires also respect for auth-
18 ority and for law, as well as the right to change authority
19 and law.

20 We possess this miraculous gift of knowledge, know-
21 ledge of good and evil and the ability to choose between them.
22 I think that it must be said that we cannot escape the conseq-
23 uences of our own individual behavior. Therefore, we must accept
24 responsibility for our actions, and not just rely upon legis-
25 lators and presidents and governors and senators as a way or

1 means or the instruments of ^{giving} us direction.

2 Perhaps the fate of Man is best described in the
 3 new novel by Reynolds Price, Surface of the Earth, which chron-
 4 icles a family of four generations spanning the years 1903 to
 5 1944, by the character who simply says, "We are very plain
 6 people, we are the history of the world". We do not have
 7 all the answers. In fact, we have very few. ^{But we must} ~~I am rebuilding~~
 8 a sense of responsibility within our families and our commu-
 9 nities.

10 We have to keep asking ourselves, How do we regain
 11 or restore a sense of community, of belonging, of saying,
 12 "This is my neighborhood, this is where I live, these are my
 13 people." How do we reestablish the close personal relationships
 14 that have characterized the family throughout the many gener-
 15 ations?

16 I think that these should be the two central questions
 17 of this conference, and it is precisely the purpose of this
 18 conference to begin to search for these answers. Let us there-
 19 fore dedicate ourselves to establishing this issue ^{as our} ~~as our~~
 20 highest national priority. Let it be said of this ~~conference~~
 21 and this conference that this is where the movement began in
 22 America's third century to build a better life for future
 23 generations of American families, not only American individuals.
 24 Not only our individual rights, but the American family was
 25 is the protector and indeed the enhancer of ~~and~~ our individ.

1 and our liberties. Thank you very much.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. RIPLEY: I think we heard more than possibly
 4 the Senate is going to be looking for a more cogent message, perhaps
 5 of a more cogent message, perhaps. In any case, I want to tell you how much
 6 meant to us at the Smithsonian, and that we are able to
 7 have it as a continuation of last year's. 1976 was a
 8 It was a triumphant year, incidentally. Not the anniversary
 9 because it represented the culmination of 100 years of planning
 10 for that birthday.

11 The birthday, in a sense, has just begun. So
 12 thinking about the past leads us inevitably to the next century
 13 tury and the next hundred years, for which we should have been
 14 preparing from the first day of 1976. It is all for
 15 all for being here this morning. It is all for the
 16 of our seminar and joining with you in the future of
 17 of all of us in humanity. So now we are going to speak. I
 18 think we are going to break what's left of the ice, and we are
 19 going to be having luncheon and coffee after lunch.

20 Thank you so very much.

21 (Applause.)

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