

Louis Brandeis
+ Cardozo
" oh what I'd
see to be
70 again
again

EXCERPTS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES

FOR GREATER BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 8, 1965

and Greater
Boston
it is.

Greetings of
Senator Saltstall
Sen Ted
Kennedy

It is an honor to address an organization
which has been a pioneer in American philanthropy.

For 70 years, your Federation has epitomized
the conscience, the compassion, the concern which
are the hallmarks of the American character.

Mr. Starnman
Republican
We need your talents

In 1895, your founders opened a new chapter
in the history of charity. They established a team
to meet community needs on a united basis -- through
joint planning, budgeting and fund-raising.

Team

Mrs Whitman -
election of officers -
Presiding Officer of
Senate

↳ Your Federated Philanthropies inspired citizens of Jewish faith all over America to similar joint efforts.
And you encouraged Americans of every faith to unite successfully in Community Chests and United Funds.

Voluntary Service

↳ Your aid has reached to the ends of the Earth in the service of your kinsmen. The funds you have made available have rescued, and rehabilitated countless numbers of refugees. You have enabled them to open new lives in our sister democracy of Israel.

↳ How fitting it is that here in Boston and elsewhere, so many sons and daughters of immigrants should have kept faith so well with strangers -- wanderers from so many lands. They had never ceased to dream -- for 2,000 years -- of return to the Promised Land. Your generosity helped to make their return possible.

Israel - Human Dignity

We Americans have owed a debt to mankind. And you have helped discharge that debt.

↳ Here in Greater Boston, you are Americans of many origins, living in harmony and productivity.

↳ Common to all of us is the Judao-Christian heritage.

↳ This is the bedrock on which your Federation's philanthropy is built. It is the legacy that "the Lord our God, the Lord is One" -- the one God of love and mercy. It is the concept that we serve God by serving man, created in His image, by loving our neighbor as ourself, by "doing justly and loving mercy and walking humbly" before our Maker.

↳ From Sinai, the basis of this message first came to Mankind. Later, that message was elaborated and

trumpeted by the Prophets. *It lives today and molds men & nations.*

and Other great faiths expressed the message --
each in its own way.

∟ And, here, now, as in the past, your Federation
has exemplified this creed by daily deed.

The spirit which has guided you today guides
our nation. It is a spirit expressed in classic form
800 years ago by the sage, Moses Maimonides. *mi-mon-ideez*

∟ You will recall how he described the eight rungs
on the "Golden Ladder of Charity." ∟ The first -- *and* the
lowest -- of these rungs he stated, is an act of charity
which is reluctant -- a gift of the hand, but not of
the heart. ∟ The second -- he noted -- is a cheerful
gift, but one which is not proportionate to the distress
of the sufferer. ∟ And the third rung is a cheerful
and proportionate gift, but one which is not given until
the donor is solicited.

And so on up the line to higher levels of giving.

↳ In the seventh step, charity is made available in such a way that the self-respect of the recipient is fully assured, ~~protected~~.

↳ The eighth and most meritorious rung was described as preventive -- to anticipate need by assisting one's brother in advance -- either by a gift, or by a loan or by teaching him a trade or by putting him into an enterprise, so that he might earn his own livelihood.

↳ This, wrote ^{Mi-Mon-ideg} Maimonides, is the summit of charity's golden ladder. And this is the summit to which this nation has now climbed.

↳ We are acting not just to relieve poverty, but to prevent poverty by striking at its roots. We are enabling the 1/5th of our American families who are poor to break

out of a "prison" -- economic, psychological, cultural Prison -
which has condemned generation after generation to
misery and despair.

Men long to stand erect, with honor, with respect
and self-respect. ^{But} They cannot stand erect without
livelihood, or hope.

So America wages war on poverty. ^{! and we}

Today, too, we are enabling the persecuted, the
~~oppressed~~ ^{oppressed} -- the 1/10th of our citizens who are Negroes --
to achieve their birthright. ^{With the Civil Rights Act}
of 1964 and the Voting Rights of 1965, we have provided
legal framework on which to build the equality of opportunity
promised to the Negro 175 years ago -- but never achieved.

yes ^{Yes} We are moving forward toward a more just America.
We are moving forward toward a better educ
We are also working for a healthier America.

FDR
Luther
forward

Greater Boston
The Athens of the Modern
World -
Universities & Colleges
Clement + Sec
Higher Ed
- Voc -

Greater Boston has always been a center of medical achievement. Two great medical institutions are supported by your Federation's funds. These institutions are famed throughout America for their high standards of medical research, education and patient care.

↳ Today we seek to encourage similar high medical standards throughout the nation. Now pending before the House of Representatives is a landmark bill to establish Regional Medical Complexes for cancer, heart disease and stroke -- the three most wide-spread killing and crippling diseases.

↳ This same bill will enable your community to achieve even greater medical leadership.

↳ The goal of the legislation is, I can assure you, not to pre-empt private action. Far from it. America

needs more -- not less -- professional self-responsibility,
more, not less -- private philanthropy.

↳ It was private action which first awakened the
nation to a vast blight which darkens 5-1/2 million lives --
mental retardation. Then, in 1963, two historic federal
laws took up the private counter-attack against this condition
and expanded the national program. John F. Kennedy,
conceived and proposed these magnificent laws. He signed
those laws in the last weeks of his life.

↳ Today, too, we are working for the education of
our children . . . for the revival of our cities . . . for
the full development of this nation's material and human
resources.

↳ We seek to build a strong and free American society
able to carry, for years ahead, growing burdens and

→ Education
Boston

We need long term state!

responsibilities at home and in the world. This is the great society, in the words of our President, "not a safe harbor, a resting place, a final objective, a finished work. It is a challenge constantly renewed, beckoning us toward a destiny where the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous products of our labor."

Congress

Our American Congress is today providing the vital ingredients with which we can seek that destiny. It is passing the broadest and most important, long-lasting legislation ever passed in any American Congress.

For this accomplishment, we owe much to many. But no one deserves more honor than the devout and humble man for whom you and I have such deep affection: Speaker John W. McCormack. He has been ^{and is} a great Speaker leading a great Congress to victories long needed, long sought.

And we owe honor, too, to our American people --
a people who, today, increasingly cast aside the old
prejudices, the old hates, the old slogans . . . a people
who have broken through the old barriers.

~~We owe a debt to American men and women who say:
I am white and you are black, but we are equal before
God.~~

~~We owe a debt to those who say: I am rich and you
are poor, but we together will find hope and opportunity.~~

~~We owe a debt to those who say: I have one faith,
you have another, . . . my last name is not your last
name, but we are brothers in mankind.~~

Today we dare to say, without hypocrisy, that our old
and long dreams can be fulfilled.

Today we challenge the ^{so called} "inevitability" of poverty,
of discrimination, of injustice -- not only in America,
but in all the world. ^{you,} In all the world.

My message to you is this: Tomorrow, as today,
work for your fellow man with courage and with
perseverance. What our fathers ^{dreamed} ~~lived for~~ we can build
~~for our children.~~ *The future is ours.*

FDR - We ^{###} must Move Forward
With a Strong and Active
faith. }

REMARKS OF VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY BEFORE
THE COMBINED JEWISH PHILANTHROPIES FOR GREATER BOSTON,
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, SEPTEMBER 8, 1965

It is an honor to address an organization which has been a pioneer in American philanthropy.

For 70 years, your Federation has epitomized the conscience, the compassion, the concern which are the hallmarks of the American character.

In 1895, your founders opened a new chapter in the history of charity. They established a team to meet community needs on a united basis -- through joint planning, budgeting and fund-raising.

Your Federated Philanthropies inspired citizens of Jewish faith all over America to similar joint efforts. And you encouraged Americans of every faith to unite successfully in Community Chests and United Funds.

Your aid has reached to the ends of the Earth in the service of your kinsmen. The funds you have made available have rescued, have rehabilitated countless numbers of refugees. You have enabled them to open new lives in our sister democracy of Israel.

How fitting it is that here in Boston and elsewhere, so many sons and daughters of immigrants should have kept faith so well with strangers -- wanderers from so many lands. They had never ceased to dream -- for 2,000 years -- of return to the Promised Land. Your generosity made their return possible.

We Americans have owed a debt to mankind. And you have helped discharge that debt.

Here in Greater Boston, you are Americans of many origins, living in harmony and productivity.

Common to all of us is the Judao-Christian heritage.

This is the bedrock on which your Federation's philanthropy is built. It is the legacy that "the Lord our God, the Lord is One" -- the one God of love and mercy. It is the concept that we serve God by serving man, created in His image, by loving our neighbor as ourself, by "doing justly and loving mercy and walking humbly" before our Maker.

From Sinai, the basis of this message first came to Mankind. Later, that message was elaborated and trumpeted by the Prophets.

Other great faiths expressed the message -- each in its own way.

And, here, now, as in the past, your Federation has exemplified this creed by daily deed.

The spirit which has guided you today guides our nation. It is a spirit expressed in classic form 800 years ago by the sage, Moses Maimonides .

You will recall how he described the eight rungs of the "Golden Ladder of Charity." The first -- the lowest -- of these rungs he stated, is an act of charity which is reluctant -- a gift of the hand, but not of the heart. The second -- he noted -- is a cheerful gift, but one which is not proportionate to the distress of the sufferer. And the third rung is a cheerful and proportionate gift, but one which is not given until the donor is solicited.

And so on up the line to higher levels of giving.

In the seventh step, charity is made available in such a way that the self-respect of the recipient is fully protected.

The eighth and most meritorious rung was described as preventive -- to anticipate need by assisting one's brother in advance -- either by a gift, or by a loan or by teaching him a trade or by putting him into an enterprise, so that he might earn his own livelihood.

This, wrote Maimonides, is the summit of charity's golden ladder. And this is the summit to which this nation has now climbed.

We are acting not just to relieve poverty, but to prevent poverty by striking at its roots. We are enabling the 1/5th of our American families who are poor to break out of a "prison" -- economic, psychological, cultural -- which has condemned generation after generation to misery and despair.

Men long to stand erect, with honor, with respect and self-respect. They cannot stand erect without livelihood, or hope.

So America wages war on poverty.

Today, too, we are enabling the persecuted, the oppressed -- the 1/10th of our citizens who are Negroes -- to achieve their birthright. With the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights of 1965, we have provided legal framework on which to build the equality of opportunity promised to the Negro 175 years ago -- but never achieved.

We are moving forward toward a more just America.

We are also working for a healthier America.

Greater Boston has always been a center of medical achievement. Two great medical institutions are supported by your Federation's funds. These institutions are famed throughout America for their high standards of medical research, education and patient care.

Today we seek to encourage similar high medical standards throughout the nation. Now pending before the House of Representatives is a landmark bill to establish Regional Medical Complexes for cancer, heart disease and stroke -- the three most wide-spread killing and crippling diseases.

This same bill will enable your community to achieve even greater medical leadership.

The goal of the legislation is, I can assure you, not to pre-empt private action. Far from it. America needs more -- not less--professional self-responsibility, more not less private philanthropy.

It was private action which first awakened the nation to a vast blight which darkens 5-1/2 million lives -- mental retardation. Then, in 1963, two historic federal laws took up the private counter-attack against this condition and expanded the national program. John F. Kennedy, conceived and proposed these magnificent laws. He signed those laws in the last weeks of his life.

Today, too, we are working for the education of our children . . . for the revival of our cities . . . for the full development of this nation's material and human resources.

We seek to build a strong and free American society able to carry, for years ahead, growing burdens and responsibilities at home and in the world. This is the society, in the words of our President, "not a safe harbor, a resting place, a final objective, a finished work. It is a challenge renewed, beckoning us toward a destiny where the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous products of our labor."

Our American Congress is today providing the vital ingredients with which we can seek that destiny. It is passing the broadest and most important, long-lasting legislation ever passed in any American Congress.

For this accomplishment, we owe much to many. But no one deserves more honor than the devout and humble man for whom you and I have such deep affection: Speaker John W. McCormack. He has been a great Speaker leading a great Congress to victories long needed, long sought.

And we owe honor, too, to our American people -- a people who, today, increasingly cast aside the old prejudices, the old hates, the old slogans . . . a people who have broken through the old barriers.

We owe a debt to American men and women who say: I am white and you are black, but we are equal before God.

We owe a debt to those who say: I am rich and you are poor, but we together will find hope and opportunity.

We owe a debt to those who say: I have one faith, you have another . . . my last name is not your last name, but we are brothers in mankind.

Today we dare to say, without hypocrisy, that our old and long dreams can be fulfilled.

Today we challenge the "inevitability" of poverty, of discrimination, of injustice - not only in America, but in all the world. In all the world.

My message to you is this: Tomorrow, as today, work for your fellow man with courage and with perseverance. What our fathers lived for we can build for our children.

SPEECH - VICE PRESIDENT - Hubert Humphrey

70th ANNUAL MEETING

SHERATON BOSTON HOTEL

September 8, 1965

Thank you, Chairman Morse, for permitting me to join you tonight on this happy occasion, to be with these fine fellow citizens.

May I pause for just a moment to pay my respects to the acting Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, your distinguished Lieutenant Governor, Elliot Richardson, and also to say, once again, Hello, to a gentleman with whom I have worked for many years and a gentleman that I admire greatly, the Mayor of this great city of Boston, Mayor John Collins.

I have already been asked a question or two by the newsmen about my friend, Eddie McCormack. I just want Ed to know that I am more grateful than ever tonight for your extra invitation that I come to Boston for this occasion. I gather, Mr. Stoneman, that you know - and I am sure that Mr. Morse knows and Mrs. Whitman knows - that Eddie McCormack became a sort of personal invitation committee of one and said, "You've never lived, Mr. Vice President, until you have come to the Combined Jewish Philanthropies". With that kind of dramatic explanation of invitation, I readily accepted.

I'm so pleased tonight, too, that I have had the privilege of joining you in welcoming the new Consul from the State of Israel to this Greater Boston community, Consul Cohen.

My goodness, when I came here and looked over the program - I knew about it ahead of time, but I just wanted to check and make sure that the person on the program and on the dais was the same - I looked up here behind me and there I saw my old friend from days back in Minneapolis, when I was the Mayor of that city, none other than Rabbi Albert Gordon of Temple Emanuel of your neighboring community of Newton. Albert, it sure is good to see you. Albert prayed me through many a crisis, I want you to know. I would put on my yamalka and dahven in the shul many times. But this is a dear friend and I am pleased that I can be here tonight in his presence with you, and also with, of course, Rabbi Gittelsohn, who it is not my privilege to know quite so intimately, but I look forward to that happy experience.

There has been some reference made to the Secret Service this evening. They are really a delightful group, I want you to know. One of our men is from this community and I believe that members of his family may be in the audience, and I do want you to know how much we appreciate the competence, the professional skill, and the courtesy and the attention and the care of these men. And I want to pay special note tonight to Bill Backerman of the community of Boston, who is known by some of you and is much respected, may I say, and appreciated by me. These are good people.

Well, I have so many notes here that I can't tell you how long this speech is going to be. I just couldn't help but think as I was listening to Mr. Stoneman conduct this meeting, what a wonderful talent this man has and how we could use it in the Democratic Party.

I must say as the presiding officer of the United States Senate, I occasionally put the question to the members of that body, "all those in favor please signify by saying aye", but I carry on, I say, "all those opposed may signify by saying no", and then I make a rather judicious decision, in behalf of the majority and say "the Ayes have it", but tonight I noticed the efficiency of the chairman, the presiding officer, of the chairman of the nominating committee and I can only wish that this could happen to me all the rest of my life - Mrs. Whitman, you really set the standard. I'm sure glad I said some nice things to you before we got into this hall - I want to be on your side.

Before I proceed any further, I do want to bring you the greetings of your two United States Senators, two very remarkable men, both of whom would like to be remembered to you, and who have asked me to bring their warm regards and felicitations to this gathering, your senior Senator, Leverett Saltonstall and your very fine junior Senator, Edward "Ted" Kennedy. I have had the privilege of working with these men and I really wouldn't want this occasion to pass without bringing their good wishes to you. I regret that Governor Volpe cannot be with us. I share with you his sorrow and extend my sympathy and condolences.

Well, I know that you're celebrating a birthday party - I just came from my home in Minnesota and I have a little granddaughter there. In fact I have three, but one of them is more like her grandfather. She's rather articulate and everytime that she sees anyone bake a cake, or everytime that one of the girls comes back from the beauty parlor she says, "are we having a party" and she's constantly singing "Happy Birthday" -that's her favorite song- and she ends up, no matter who she's singing that little song for, and she's only three years old- she ends up with happy birthday for Papa too. That's me you see, so I get a happy birthday no matter what happens; and I feel that this is a happy birthday- your 70th birthday.

And I can't help but think that while some may say that 70 years takes you into the twilight life, that's all a matter of opinion and youth is not determined by chronology, it's determined by mind, attitude and spirit. You may recall, I'm sure it's fiction, but it seems somewhat apropos, the words that great Justice of the Supreme Court, Louis Brandeis - Louis Brandeis and Justice Cardozo were very close friends - and when Louis Brandeis was in about his 83rd or 84th year, in the full vigor of life, he was walking down one of the fine streets in Washington at about 4:30 - 5 o'clock in the afternoon, he saw these very lovely attractive young ladies pouring out of these government buildings and Louis nudged his old friend, Judge Cardozo, and he said, "boy, what I'd give to be 70 again". So you see that the Combined Jewish Philanthropies are really young in heart, young in spirit.

It is a real privilege to me and a high honor to address this organization - to address an organization that has pioneered, set new standards in American life, in American philanthropy. You know better than I the history of this remarkable federation. For seventy years you have epitomized what I would call the conscience and the compassion and the concern, which are the hallmarks of American character. That conscience and compassion and concern is not merely reflected in the halls of Congress, in the laws passed by your legislature, or by the public bodies. That conscience and compassion and concern is more manifested, or is more real, in the work and the life of individuals and of great voluntary organizations, such as this. It's voluntarism that is a unique characteristic of this society of ours. I dare say that there is hardly a nation in the world, I don't believe there is any, that so fully exemplifies voluntary activity in service to the United States of America. It sets us apart from others and it has been of such value, of such great importance to the development of our national character and our well being.

Now, in the beginning of this great federation, your founders back in 1895, opened a new chapter in the history of charity. You established what I would call the "team concept", a sort of a Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff, before they even thought of it down at the Pentagon or any place else. A team to meet community needs on a united basis, rather than competing with one another, to pool your efforts, to join forces, through joint planning and budgeting and fund raising and we know this works. In fact it works so well in private life that we have begun to adopt it in public life. Your federated philanthropies inspired citizens of the Jewish faith all over America, in my home city of Minneapolis, for example, to enter into similar joint projects and efforts. You have encouraged Americans of every faith to unite successfully in community chests and United Funds.

I was looking at a display of placards that had been used by some of our voluntary organizations to interest people in their work, to attract the attention of the potential giver - I couldn't help but think of one tonight as the Lieutenant Governor was speaking of the story of Cain and Abel, it's been referred to before in this meeting, that he spoke reminding us that we are not "our brother's keeper", "we are our brother's brother". Well, the Catholic Charities for many years has had a placard that shows a little boy, carrying on his back another boy, even of larger size than the one that's doing the carrying, and you can see this face speak out at you that says, "he is not heavy, Father, he is my brother". I think this typifies what we are trying to talk about here tonight and the reason of this meeting.

Quite frankly, I wondered many times whether meetings that we have, and we Americans are addicted to meetings - we are the "meetingest" people of any people in the world - I sometimes wonder whether they are really necessary. But I know this one is, and I know that it does great good, not only because you have conducted the business of your organization, but more importantly because we do have a chance to think aloud, to talk to each other about the importance of sharing, of giving, of helping, of lifting, and of building. We need those moments of reflection and dedication and I hope that the time that I am with you is a moment of inspiration.

Your aid that you have generously provided through the years has literally reached to the ends of the earth in your service to your kinsmen and of all mankind. The funds you have made available have helped to rescue and to rebuild and rehabilitate countless thousands of fellow human beings - the refugees. My how our world is characterized by these wandering individuals and hordes of people - the refugees; even now as I speak to you, more of them in Vietnam, in India, in Pakistan. It seems as if man doesn't quite know how to live together or to respect one another.

But you can be happy and you ought to be happy that you've helped someone. You've helped someone help themselves.

I have tried, as I have spoken to audiences such as this on other occasions, to try to make what I have to say somewhat meaningful to you as individuals, and so often, you know, we do things in a rather impersonal way. Sometimes we write a check and we mark it down and it's well that we made the gift; and you wonder what kind of satisfaction there is in that. Well, let me tell you that that check or that gift represents life; it represents possibly education, training; it represents health; it represents shelter; it represents literally physical salvation.

Isn't it a wonderful thing if one can just personalize his own endeavors for a moment to think about the fact that you may have saved rather than have taken one. That you may have extended a helping hand rather than a hard fist. I think this is the way we ought to think about our efforts. It isn't selfish - there's nothing selfish about thinking about a good act or trying to interpret one's endeavors into a personal relationship even with a stranger.

You've opened up new hope and new lives for millions, literally, and you have helped so generously, as has been stated here tonight, our sister democracy of Israel. Why do we so often mention this little country? No one can say, "well you mention it amongst an audience like this because there's a blood relationship, there is a kinship", but it is mentioned elsewhere, too. The reason is, I think, quite obvious, because this little country represents a very big and great principle - a set of ideals - the principle of human dignity, the ideals of freedom, the ideal of a chance, an opportunity, the ideal of an education and a good life, the ideal of self respect and self sufficiency. Isn't that what we are interested in - isn't that what people really aspire to?

This is, of course, what we are going through in America today in this great civil rights struggle. Not merely the removal of the barriers, the so-called legal barriers, but more importantly how do we get down to the practice of self respect and mutual understanding and how do we engender self respect and self sufficiency? How do we bring out the true meaning of human dignity, rather than just "mouth" it as a phrase? This is the real test of our society; that test is yet to be won.

Well, it's mighty fitting right here in Boston, a nation so filled with the history of freedom and a history of immigrants, that so many sons and daughters of immigrants should have kept the faith so well with strangers, people you've never met, and wanderers from so many lands; they have never ceased to dream these wonders for over 2,000 years of return to the promised land. I want everyone of you tonight to feel good; I want you to get a little glow of warmth in your soul and heart right now, because you have helped to make their return to that promised land possible. There are people there that stand a little taller, a little more secure, with a little more pride and dignity because you have helped. I have always felt that when you get that sense of participation, you'll want to help even more and, may I suggest, that's not a bad idea.

Now, I have been accused, on occasion, of telling people or asking people to do too much, but I don't think so. Now we Americans have owed a debt to mankind; we've received a great deal from the rest of the world. Look what we've received - an Albert Einstein, just to mention one that I just think of at the moment. We've received the sons and daughters of every land; we've received the accumulated, cultural heritage of many civilizations.

I've said, when I spoke yesterday to a group of teachers in Cleveland, most of them with masters and doctors degrees, I said- look, you are the most privileged of all people - you above all others have been subsidized, you have been pampered by society, so have I. I'm a graduate of a great State University, but whether it's a public university or a private one, or a public school or a private school - does any one ever think for a moment that he really paid for his education? Who can pay for the works of Shakespeare, or the writings of the prophets or the art that's available for our study and our appreciation in our galleries? What person in this generation thinks that he has that much wealth that he can pay for it? The hope that we ought to have is that we live to be a hundred years so that we can start to repay the interest, and every year of our lives give some of it to someone else.

Those of us who are fortunate- we have much to be grateful for and we owe much to all mankind. This America of ours, I noticed the figures yesterday about our gross national product - for the first six months of this year, we produced approximately 50% of the total gross national product of the whole world - the rest of the three billion two hundred million people got the other 50%. We produced and consumed it right here. You bet we have much to be grateful for, and we owe much, and we must give and we must share.

I believe that it can be demonstrated by empirical evidence that no society ever destroyed itself by generous giving, but many a society has destroyed itself by selfishness, by the unwillingness to share. I think it also could be noted that many of the best givers in any community are the people who seem to find the next year, that despite their generosity of the preceeding year of their gifts, that they have more to give.

The only time the United States of America was in serious crisis, in mortal danger, was in those selfish years of the twenties, when we closed our gates to the immigrant, when we closed our ports to trade, when we closed our minds to progressive thought, when we closed off our nation from the rest of the world, isolated ourselves, when we could even live without a troubled conscience when there was a Hitler at loose; and after we had gone through that kind of closing, my dear friends, we closed our banks, closed up our businesses, we almost closed up the whole country; not because we gave, but because we didn't give, not because we shared, but because we tried to keep it. So the story of philanthropy and charity is the story not of wealth spent and given, but of wealth gained and renewed again and again.

Here in Boston, you demonstrated this concept that I've spoken of, so fully and so often. You are Americans of many origins here, and living in relative harmony and creativity and productivity, and there is a common philosophy - a common strain for all of us - a common cord that unites us. It's this great religious, spiritual heritage which finds its way into our political and social institutions - this heritage, the Judeo Christian faith. Now this is the bedrock upon which your federation's philanthropy is built.

It isn't built just by the committees. There has to be a purpose - there must be something more than just the framework, even in man, to make life meaningful. There's a soul and there's a spirit - there's a philosophy and there's a purpose.

It is a legacy of this federation that the Lord our God - "the Lord is One" - as the prophets would say, the one God of Love and Mercy. It is the concept that we serve our God by serving man. The men and women of our time, created in His image, or to put it in even more precise spiritual terms, by loving our neighbor as ourselves and by doing justly, in loving mercy and by walking humbly before our Maker. This is what motivates people to do good. If it were not for this belief and this faith, these organizations couldn't possibly last. They would die of their own weight, but they live because there is a common belief - a common faith.

From Sinai, the basis of this message first came to mankind. Later this message was elaborated and trumpeted by the prophets of old and lives today, and it moulds the minds of man and nations. Other great faiths, too, have expressed this same message - we have no monopoly on it. Each in its own way and here now as in the past, your federation has exemplified this creed by daily deed, and it is the daily deed that is the test of the faith.

Now, the spirit which has guided you today, I believe, guides our nation. Oh, I know that our nation makes its mistakes. We're mortal; we err; we commit greivous errors on occasion, and it is the spirit that was expressed in classic form some eight hundred years ago by the sage, Moses Maimonides. You will recall how he described the eight rungs of the golden ladder of charity - the first and indeed the lowest of those rungs, he stated, is an act of charity which is reluctant, the kind that you twist out of somebody, a gift of the hand but not of the heart - the second, he noted is a cheerful gift, but one that is not proportionate to the distress of the sufferer, and the third rung is a cheerful and proportionate gift, but one that is not given until the donor is solicited and so on up the line to the higher levels of giving. Thus this great sage tells us his story.

In the seventh step, he reminds us that charity is made available in such a way that the self respect of the recipient is fully respected and assured. And then the eighth rung of that ladder of charity and the most meritorious was described as preventative, to anticipate need by assisting one's brother in advance, either by gift, or by a loan or by teaching him a trade or a skill, or by putting him in enterprise so that he may earn his own livelihood. This wrote Maimonides, is the summit of charity's golden ladder and this, I say, is the summit to which this nation aspires, and now climbs these eight steps of this ladder, not only of charity, but I would say the ladder of opportunity.

Now, we're not acting in America just to make poverty more tolerable or to make inequality more tolerable. I am originally a pharmacist by profession. I know all about the pain relievers, and I can testify here in the presence of my superiors in the healing arts, that there isn't a pain reliever that ever killed the disease. It sometimes can kill the patient, but you don't really cure the disease; so, if our purpose, for example, in the War on Poverty, or if our purpose in charity alone is just to ease the pain - then it's hardly worth the effort. What we seek to do is to strike at the root, causes of pain, of the indignity, of the poverty, of the inadequacy.

We're trying now to enable at least one fifth of the families of this great nation of ours who are poor, and you can analyze why they are poor- that's up to you- I don't have that time- I just know they are- but we're trying to enable that one fifth of those some 30 million Americans to break out of a prison; and they're locked in a prison, an economic, psychological and cultural prison which has condemned generation after generation to relief, to despair, to hopelessness and to misery- to their own misery and to others.

Men really long to stand tall and erect, with honor, with respect and with self respect. But I tell you they can not stand long and erect without livelihood, without skill, without training, without a chance, an equal chance. So we have grown to understand this, even at the time that we are richer than ever before.

I think this is the saving grace of our beautiful country. This is what makes me want to sing, "America the Beautiful". The fact is that when we have more wealth than ever before as a nation, more power than any nation or combination of nations, that we seek to limit that power and the use of it; and we seek to use that wealth, not merely for selfish purpose, but for the general good. Even as we're almost overwhelmed by our wealth, we know that in our midst there is a brother that's been by-passed, left behind in the backwaters, as the main stream of American life moves on. I think this is a test of character.

By the way, only a strong nation dares admit it's weaknesses and the fact that our nation and our leaders, and we the people of this nation can stand up and talk about our weaknesses and our limitations, is the best testimonial to our strength. You can generally tell the weakness of a nation by the amount of gusto, the braggadocio, that comes from its leaders.

Yes, we have inadequacies, but we seek to remedy them. We believe in beginnings. We know that the longest journey is the first step and we're willing to take that first step.

So today, we wage war on the many fronts, on this enemy of poverty, and we're going to win it. At least we can feel that we're going to win it, because we have the tools to win it; the know-how, the technology- for the first time in recorded history, we have the tools, the means and the know-how to win the war on poverty, on illiteracy, on ignorance, on hunger, on sickness. We can - we will it!

What a wonderful time to be alive! I have very little patience with people that groan about the difficult days in which we live; they've always been difficult. I hear people talk about the good old days. I must have missed them- I like this day, and by the way, it's the only one I have anything to say about anyway. So I suggest we make the most of it, and that we plan a little bit about tomorrow.

And today, too, we're doing something else that's right and long overdue. We're enabling the persecuted and the oppressed, and they have been persecuted and oppressed, the one tenth of our citizens who are Negroes, to achieve their birthright.

And I want to say now, once again, that birth is painful. There never was a great social change, anywhere, anyplace, anytime, that did not bring with it a certain degree of disorder, whether it was the industrial revolution or the political revolution, or a change in the morays of culture. It brings with it what we call a kind of commotion, a pattern of disorder. Thank goodness, it hasn't been any worse. This is not to condone disorder, nor is it to proclaim it - it is just to recognize it.

With the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, we've now provided, at long last, the legal framework, within which to build the equality of opportunity which was promised by Abraham Lincoln, and by the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Promised, but never achieved, that promise today is becoming a reality. Now the legal framework is there.

From here on out it becomes a matter of personal commitment, personal patterns of conduct, education, training, rebuilding social institutions, strengthening family - a host of activities and we must do them all at once, because to do them one at a time, regrettably will yield little result. I'm happy to say that we're moving to a more just America, in which the law is more just, and we're moving forward to a better educated America.

I speak here in the Athens of the modern world, Boston, with all of its great Universities. There is no place in the world quite like it, you know. Sometimes the man in his own community cannot see the greatness of his neighbor. This fabulous, educational, scientific complex of Greater Boston - this Commonwealth is the envy of the world and indeed it is an inspiration to every citizen in this country.

But we seek to do even better. I must say that we might have no right to compare ourselves with others; we have more to do with; we must set our own standards. And so we seek now to do better in education, elementary and secondary education. Your Federal government is deeply involved. Now and once again, let me say, that there is no instance in history where a society has bankrupt itself through its investment in education.

Thomas Jefferson said, "a nation cannot be both ignorant and free", and Jefferson will be remembered, above all, for his love of education and culture. People cannot be both ignorant and free.

H. G. Wells says, that civilization is "a race between education and catastrophe". Make no mistake about it, education is the life-blood of hope. It is the one way that we know to bring people back to self-respect, dignity and self-sufficiency. We're doing great things in education and we're learning.

We're also working for a healthier America, and why not? We have the means, the know-how, and what a blessed day it will be, my dear friends, when we make these break-throughs in health that we ought to make.

I look around this room, and I don't want to frighten anyone, because may I say this has happened in my own family and I feel the pain of it - one out of every five in this room will be stricken with cancer. Some people say one out of every three. We must find the answer and we can.

A nation that knows how to mobilize its resources, its brain-power, its technology, so that we can put a man in orbit, so that we can put a man on the moon and bring him back, so that we can have inter-planetary travel in this century - and we will have it - we just plan it that way - it's going to happen; why don't we get excited about a few other things?

I remind you that we will spend some thirty billion dollars to put a man on the moon, and I think we should. There are great benefits - scientific, technological, educational, industrial - tremendous benefits in the space program. I'm privileged to serve as its Chairman, and I have been fascinated by it. It's an experience the likes of which I never believed possible. It's making better people out of us - our students are better - our scientists are better - our industry is better - our labor is better - our government is better - our society is better because of it.

But I submit that any country that can spend thirty billion dollars to put a man on the moon, can also invest to help put man on his feet on this earth. And that's what the Combined Jewish Philanthropies is doing - Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston. That's what your government is trying to do - to invest, to help put man on his feet.

Greater Boston is the center of one of the great medical complexes of the nation. Two great medical institutions are supported by your own federation funds, maybe more. I know of two and these institutions are noted in fame throughout America and the world, for their high standards of medical research, education and patient care.

Today we seek to encourage high medical standards throughout all America. Now pending before the House of Representatives is a landmark bill to establish regional medical complex centers for cancer, for heart disease and stroke - the three most wide-spread killing and crippling diseases. That bill can be passed and I say that it will be. This bill will enable your community to achieve even greater medical leadership.

The funds there will work side by side with what you're doing. It's not competitive and I want to make it clear that one of the needs today is to understand that your Federal government works side by side with the voluntary agencies and with local and state government.

It's no pre-empting of the field; it's partnership - we supplement one another. The goal is partnership and it's not pre-empting private action - far from it because America needs more and not less professional self-responsibility, more and not less private philanthropy.

Let me just show you how important this private action is for a moment. It was private action in America, not government, that first awakened this nation to the frightful blight - the vast blight which darkened the lives of five and one half million Americans - Mental Retardation. It was private action that aroused the conscience of Americans. And now we find that many of these people can be rehabilitated - we're learning something about mental retardation - we're learning something about mental illness.

In 1963, two historic Federal laws took up the private counter-attack against this condition and expanded the national program. The late and beloved President, John Kennedy, conceived and composed these magnificent laws that came from his great mind and heart - personal commitment. I know, I spoke to him about them - I had the privilege of handling that legislation on the Floor of the Senate. He signed those laws in the last days of his life.

Today we're working for the education of our children; for the revival, Mr. Mayor, of our cities, where people live. By the way, eighty per cent of the American people will be living in the cities by the year 1975. So, cities become a major concern for every American, not just for Bostonians or Metropolitan areas; and we're working for the full development of this nation's material and human resources.

The waste of human resources is colossal - the waste of human potential. Just think of what it would mean in America if we could up-grade the standard of performance of the under-employed, of the less skilled. Just think what it means to have school drop-outs, growing at the rate of almost one million a year. Ten years from now, there will be thirty-two million workers in the American labor force, unless we do something about it, with no skills, with no education and without a high school diploma.

I don't say that everyone needs a high school diploma, in order to make something out of his or her life. We know better than that. But, I do say, that in the main, on the average, it will be required.

This is why education is no longer a topic for educators. This is a matter of concern for evrybody that loves America.

What makes you think that this great nation can last for the long pull with some of our resources being less than productive? Even a rich country can't afford that. What we seek, therefore, is to build a strong and a free American society that's able to carry on for years ahead, with growing burdens and responsibilities at home and abroad.

Mark my words, my dear friends, those responsibilities will be ours till death do us part and the coming generation's until death do us part. There is no easy way out.

There's a fierce contest on in this world, and interestingly enough, the power for winning this contest is in our hands, if we but will it. The question is whether we'll put ourselves to the task. Therefore, we must build for the long race.

This is the Great Society we speak of. Not one of quantity, but of quality. Not a safe harbor, as President Johnson said, or a resting place, or a final objective or a finished work, it is a challenge, constantly renewed, beconing us towards a destiny where the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous product of our labor.

It's almost music, we ought to put it to memory, repeated as a personal commitment. Our American Congress is today providing the vital ingredients with which we can seek that destiny. It's passing the most comprehensive, long-range, meaningful legislation that any Congress ever passed in the history of this country. I've been there sixteen years and I've never seen anything like this.

For this accomplishment, we owe much to many. I must say as I listen tonight - these words in reference to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, a great Congressman, statesman, from this state - no one deserves more honor for all that has been done, for all of these achievements, than this devout and humble man for whom you and I have such deep affection and respect - and I'm proud to say that one of the closest friends that I have, in private or public life, is the Speaker of the House of Representatives, who is the Honorable John McCormack. He's a great Speaker and he will continue to be one.

Now we owe honor also to the American people. To a people today, increasingly casting aside the old prejudices, the old hate and the old slogans. We're making progress. Yes, really, the old haters are not popular anymore.

We are a people who are breaking through old barriers. Today, we dare to say without hypocrisy that our old and long dreams can be fulfilled. We honestly believe, and I think it is right, that we can bring the benefits of our modern science and technology to all mankind.

So I leave you tonight with the challenge that was given in 1945, by a great President - we challenge the so-called inevitability of poverty. We challenge the inevitability of discrimination and of injustice - and we challenge, not only in America - I want the word to go out of this place that we challenge them throughout the world.

We do not believe in just justice for Americans; we believe in justice for all people everywhere. We are not only interested in eliminating prejudice and bigotry and discrimination on these shores, but we have as our goal and as our aim - and let the world know it - its elimination everywhere.

I get a little weary hearing about how the Communists have something for the whole world. We have something, too, and something much better - something that people really want, love, longed for - that's freedom. And we have one nation, not two or three, under God and indivisible, and we have a belief that we can have liberty and justice for all. These are not just the words of children to be recited in our schools. This is the prayer of the people, the commitment of a whole nation.

Franklin Roosevelt said, "We must move forward". Even as this man was stricken, as his life was being taken away, weary from war and depression, weary from the burdens of leadership, jauntily he said, "We must move forward, and now, with a strong and active faith". You don't move forward any other way.

So tonight, to the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston and people everywhere, I say, "let's move forward". Let's not set small goals or limited standards - let's have a strong and an active faith, and live by it and if need be, die for it.

[Type of this speech transferred to
Audiovisual dept. Dec. 1976]



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org