

Hubert
Elaine Cohen
Williams

Dr. Winston

Jim O'Brien

ADDRESS OF VICE PRESIDENT

HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

STATE EXECUTIVES AND LEADERS ON AGING

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 4, 1965

How many times
Cong Fraser

Mr Walker

Comm Sec
Loewinger

Today, during Senior Citizens Month, I wish to

congratulate you in this audience on what you are doing
for our senior citizens.

You here this evening and we in this Administration
are working hard to build a better life for our aging
generation.

Opportunity

Conservation of
Human
Resources

The effort is well worthwhile in terms of
compassion and the welfare of our aging. But the effort
is also important for the benefit it brings to all of us.!!

For today, more than ever before, we realize that
our senior citizens are valuable resources which we
cannot afford to waste.

They possess indispensable talents which can contribute a great deal to our society. We must fully utilize those talents.

We need the experience, maturity, wisdom and perspective of our senior citizens.

⌞ How great a task confronts us in mobilizing and utilizing these human resources?

The facts are not kind.

⌞ Two-fifths of the nation's aging live below the poverty line.

⌞ About 20 percent of the housing units occupied by the elderly in this country are substandard.

⌞ More than three-quarters of our senior citizens suffer from chronic illness -- and that illness often becomes chronic because of inadequate medical care.

⌞ Yes, too many of the elderly are poor -- are badly housed -- are badly cared for.

The statistics tell us the scope of our task. But statistics do not describe the empty, isolated days and nights which fill the lives of too many of the aging in America.

For where there is not opportunity for human expression and usefulness, man's spirit withdraws within itself. And that withdrawal in itself breeds poverty -- yes, physical and spiritual poverty.

Our elder generation needs opportunity for work and for contribution to our society.

Through the work of all of us -- in federal, state and local government; in public and private organizations; in industry; in labor and agriculture -- we must create that opportunity.

I can tell you this evening that neither President Johnson nor Vice President Humphrey will be satisfied until that goal is reached.

L We already know the service to this nation which our elder citizens can provide.

For example, the Small Business Administration, working in cooperation with the U.S. Office of Aging, has initiated the Service Corps of Retired Executives. The Corps brings together the retired business brainpower of this country to assist in advising small firms eager for help. L More than 2,000 small businesses have been helped by the Service Corps in the past eight months.

L VISTA -- Volunteers in Service to America -- will sometime in calendar 1966 have 5,000 volunteers working in homemaker services, counselling, health services, pre-school training, and other anti-poverty activities. And a good percentage of these volunteers are over 65 years of age.

L And in the Peace Corps, our senior citizens have proved their ability to take on the toughest of jobs and

to do them well.

↳ But these programs, and others like them on the state and local level and in the private sector -- these things have barely scratched the surface.

↳ In the present 89th Congress, the most comprehensive program for the elderly in our nation's history will be enacted. ↳ This Congress will provide new help toward making more of our senior citizens full and valuable members of American society.

↳ The Social Security amendments provide a 7 percent increase in cash benefits for about 20 million persons, most of them over 65. ↳ In addition, 365,000 now excluded -- age 72 and over -- will receive Social Security benefits for the first time.

↳ To cover cost of medical services for the aged, we will shortly have an historic three-fold combination, including: Social Security payments for hospital and

nursing home care, optional payments to cover physician's bills and many other medical services, and liberalized help to the states on behalf of those who require medical assistance.

↳ The victory of Medicare, in particular, makes possible one of the finest and soundest instruments for the improved health of our people. (9)

↳ To strengthen job opportunities for the handicapped, provisions of the Vocational Rehabilitation law will be amended. The earning potential of more seriously disabled persons will be better evaluated, more and improved sheltered workshops provided.

9 SPKs
to the
Mentally
Retarded

↳ To enrich the minds of the elderly, adult education will be strengthened by Aid to Higher Education.

↳ To assure better living quarters, the Housing and Home Finance Agency will be enabled to help rehabilitate

many ~~slums~~ substandard housing areas.

↳ To enable communities to plan and provide comprehensive services for the aged, the "Older Americans Act" will provide invaluable matching grants. ↳ You know that every sizeable community needs centers for the elderly. ↳ We only have 400 now. To reach our goal, 7,500 additional centers may be necessary. Many centers should provide more than recreational programs. We need "one-stop" centers where the elderly are offered not only recreation, but education, counselling and other services.

But ↳ To man these centers and to provide a wide variety of other services, expanded numbers of personnel must be trained.

↳ Thirty thousand skilled specialists in the aging -- ranging from social workers to housing and medical experts -- must be provided.

I am told, for example, by the National Institutes
of Health that in the next decade we must train not
less than 1,000 gerontologists for the health
professions alone.

To deal head-on with the problem of poverty,
the Office of Economic Opportunity will be given
increased resources. This Agency and others are
now well along in spearheading "America's war
against poverty." It is my privilege to serve
the President in co-ordinating this Inter-Agency
activity. Fortunately, every title of the Anti-
poverty ~~enabling law~~ ^{Act} offers opportunities for
older people. Even under Title I, the Youth Corps,
positions will be opened for the retired as
teachers and counsellors.

Under the Community Action Program, projects have already been approved which deal specifically with the needs of the elderly. In Baltimore, for instance, an imaginative program is getting underway which will expand an employment service for older people and set up neighborhood centers to serve the needy aged.

Adult illiteracy will be combatted by Title II-B of the Economic Opportunity Act. Thousands of teachers will be needed; plans call for a substantial proportion to be recruited from the ranks of the retired.

In many other community programs, the needs of the elderly will receive prominent attention.

But all these new services will not be enough in themselves.

There are the crucial intangibles which must be provided:

The realization by all Americans that senior Americans have valuable contributions to make for the good of all of us.

And then, in turn, the realization that all of us are ~~less~~ ^{readily affected by} for what is lacking and unjust

among us. *We are one nation - one People.*

In this task I ask your dedication and your

work. *Our Strength - our Wealth
is in our People -*

[Transcript]



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
WELFARE ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

OFFICE OF AGING

*Mary
List to
Julie pls*

May 6, 1965



The Vice President
United States Senate
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. Vice President:

I am forwarding to you the transcript and tape of your address at our National Conference of State Executives on Aging. Also enclosed is an up-dated list of the Conference participants.

Let me express my deep appreciation to you for making our conference the outstanding success it was. Your address was truly inspirational and will motivate all who were privileged to hear you for a long time to come. It was indeed the highlight of the Conference.

Again, my heartiest thanks.

Sincerely,

Don Kent

Donald P. Kent
Director

Enclosure

Our distinguished guest of honor shares with the President this deep sense of obligation and commitment to people. His long career of public service is illuminated by the glow of this fixed star of compassion. His joy in the service of his country, his unquenchable valor, his eloquence and his dedication are well known to all present. I am honored to present to you the Vice President of the United States, the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Thank you very much, Dr. Winston. Thank you not only for your gracious introduction but also for the call to action that you have given to all of us tonight. I was so interested in the introductions that were made this evening. First may I say how good it is to have with us the very great Governor, a distinguished public servant from the state of North Dakota, Governor Guy, and Mrs. Guy. We're really honored that they can be here. They're fine public servants. Governor, I want to wish you the very best, and thank you for your presence.

And I'm particularly grateful tonight that Minnesota is so abled represented. You'll have to understand that comment because every once in awhile, I get to thinking maybe I'm still a Senator or Congressman, and I have to be reminded by my Senators that I'm not. But we have with us Congressman Donald Fraser, who is one of my political heroes, and I'm sure one of yours, and we're very proud of Congressman Fraser. And we also have the Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission, Commissioner Lee Loevinger, who is one of our most distinguished lawyers, a former member of the Minnesota state Supreme Court, and a very fine public servant in this government of ours. And then Mrs. Walker. And she's been a friend for a

long time, and has done so much for our state. You see, I still feel sort of Senatorial. I just can't help it. I just start bragging on Minnesota.

But I was delighted to have the chance to meet at rather remote distances Eliose Cohen tonight, Mrs. Wilbur Cohen, because I've been meeting Wilbur for so long, I just wanted to know what inspired him. Now I find out. And I wish to say to Mrs. Cohen that we're deeply grateful to you for keeping this man in good humor. And we're deeply grateful to Wilbur for doing the many great things that he has been able to do in the service of his country, and in advancing the cause of human dignity and human welfare. This is truly a great public servant that deserves our praise.

The other night we had a little meeting over at the White House and we were getting reports, Wilbur, as you remember, and everything seemed to be coming out of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It's a great department of our government--not to minimize any other--but it's had tremendous responsibilities in this year of the 89th Congress.

Dr. Winston, as I understand, this is the Fifth Annual National Conference of the State Executives on Aging. And I realize that while we do not have thousands of people in this banquet room tonight, we have people that represent hundreds of thousands of people in their respective states. It's very difficult for me to know just which of these many invitations we receive, to accept. We get about 200 a day, and it's mighty difficult to know whether you ought to accept any. And I get as much conflicting advice on a minor

subject like this as the President does on the foreign policy or national security. And I always have somebody come to me and say, "You ought not to do that and you ought to do this." And I generally get a letter from some dear friend who says, "You're working too hard. You're speaking too much. But I just wanted to mention to you we're having a little meeting." And this is invariably the case.

Tonight, a little earlier, we had a meeting at the Cabinet Room at the White House where the President met with the members of the Steering Committee of the House of Representatives. This is a very important group. They steer through the House of Representatives our program. And I was over at the Senate today trying to steer through a couple of little items over there that we needed some work on. And I arrived at the meeting about 6 o'clock at the White House, and we spent another hour there discussing our efforts in the coming weeks and months. And then I recollected that I was supposed to go to the National Press Club because there was the Congressional Night at the National Press Club. And you know we do have to pay some attention to the members of the National Press Club. Besides that, all of my colleagues of the Congress were there. And the President says to me every day, he says, "Hubert, I hold you accountable for what happens in Congress." What he really means is he holds me accountable for what doesn't happen in Congress. And I know that. So I went to the National Press Club. We've had a busy day. But people must understand that the busy days that we have in government are exciting days and they're challenging days and they're very rewarding too,

because you have an opportunity to do something for your country, at least as you see the importance of doing it. And I have had a wonderful experience these weeks as Vice President, to work with many groups from many areas of our nation in the common cause of strengthening our national unity, of improving our community life, and I hope, of making our individual lives just a little richer. Because the ultimate purpose of government is to help enrich the lives of the individual citizens, not of the mass. That's too impersonal. But of the individual. And we're going to talk about individuals tonight, because that's why you're here. You're here to talk about people that could be forgotten, and in many places they have been. You're here to reflect upon and to think about programs and policies that will help a group in our society that's known by its age. But essentially and fundamentally you're here because you want better to help a person to help himself, finding a place in this busy society of ours.

So tonight I want to talk to you a little bit about it. We Americans have a wonderful way of doing things. We either have a week for this or a day for that or a month for that. You know what I mean. It's sort of a way to remind us that there are things going on. It's so busy. Everything is so active that unless you sort of pinpoint it, or designate it--the activity--you're apt to forget the whole business. So we have what we call now a Senior Citizens Month. And I'm talking to the people tonight that are going to make this Senior Citizens Month something more than just another period on the calendar. I've had this gentleman that was introduced tonight with that long

title--Jim O'Brien--reminding me every day--I guess he just walked out. He thought I was going to mention him. He just couldn't take it. Reminding me every day that the programs of our government, and of our private agencies, relating to senior citizens, that these programs were possibly the most important of all. Because it's very difficult you know to forget your youngsters. It's very difficult to forget your daily job. But you'd be surprised how people can forget those who are in the twilight of life. And I'm afraid that in some areas we have let that happen.

There was a time that we shunted aside our mentally ill, but we had enough instances of almost tragic treatment, inhumane treatment, that finally forced us to take a look at that problem.

There was a time that we ignored those who were the victims of many diseases, some of them almost unmentionable. But finally we got talking about that. We were able to do something about it.

And then all at once it dawned on us that life had changed in America, that it wasn't just a little town with the brothers and the sisters all living in the same town with mother and father. And that when mother and dad got a little older that brother and sisters could help or son and daughter. This was a big society, cities, apartments, industrialized, urbanized, not rural. We still live in the sort of romanticism of a rural America. Now I happen to come from an area in which much of our life is rural. But I also am a student of statistics, and of the facts about life, and the facts are that by the year 1980, eighty percent of the American people

are going to be living in large cities. I don't know whether I like that or not, but I guess there isn't much I can do about it. Therefore, I better start to think about how they're going to live, and that's why some of us have been giving a good deal of attention to urban living to make our cities liveable, not tolerable, but liveable, to make our cities a part of nature, not contrary to nature, because man is supposed to live within the habitat of nature, to make our cities a place in which to enjoy life, not merely to die and to work. And when we talk about all of that, then we talk about how do you organize society or how do you promote an organization of society that makes it possible for people to enrich their lives. And we're trying in this Administration, and I'm sure others have tried it too. I refuse to be one of those that claims that we have a monopoly on either wisdom or virtue. I speak for myself. I know I have known. But I'm quite sure that most people want to do what's right. And the President said a little earlier tonight, that's no problem for him to try to do what's right. When you become President, I'm sure that's about as high as you can get. The problem is to know what's right, to find that answer. And really what we're trying to do, and what America is trying to do is to find ways and means to develop this greatest asset of all, this asset of people, human beings, this precious entity called man, a person. So we're engaged in the program of the conservation and the development of human resources. That's what Federal Aid to Education is about. It isn't just for brick and mortar. It isn't just to pay better salaries. It's to help conserve and develop human resources. When I think of the number of young people that have been really deprived and

denied a good education because we didn't have the means, the tools, and in a sense, didn't have the will to provide it--the millions of people in this country, mind you, over 50 million that have never had a high school education. In America, it seems incredible. The fact that a substantial number of our young people that were in the upper ten percent of their class graduating last year, never went on to college. We have people every day worrying about if somebody in government drops a paper clip and wastes it, or that somebody appropriates more money in Congress than they ought to, and there's a waste. The greatest waste is the waste of human resources. People that ought to have a better opportunity, people that ought to be encouraged to develop their God-given talents, the waste of talent, the waste of people. If we could eliminate that waste, we could afford some others. The waste that comes with unemployment. The President's Council on Economic Advisors only recently advised this government and this country that the annual cost of discrimination and of segregation was over \$20 billion in lost gross national product or income to the American people.

We'd like to see these human resources developed, not by an edict of government, but by making opportunity available for people to develop their own resources, and then inspiring people to want to go on and develop their potential. If we can do that we make a better country. To put it in economic terms, tax eaters become tax payers, or to put it in moral terms, God's children become truly precious.

So you're here tonight and you've been here these days to work on this program of the conservation and the development of human resources. And the theme of our time and of this administration is the advancement and the enhancement of opportunity. I want to make it quite clear that we do not believe in a so-called welfare state. We believe in a state of opportunity and are committed to it. We believe in human welfare. That's high on the list of our values. In fact, many of the large corporations of the country do as much or more for what you might call human welfare as the government. We believe in a social structure in which there is a society that is dedicated to human welfare. But we don't believe that the government as such must order it by edict or decree. We seek to have government and the people working together to build for a better country.

I can say to you, and I do say to you, that we're trying to build a better life for the aging generation. And I would say that this effort is worthwhile in terms of compassion and welfare of the aging. But the effort is also even more important as it benefits all the rest of us. For it can be said that today more than at any other time, we realize that our senior citizens, many of them in physical vigor, and surely in great mental capacity, are valuable resources, which we cannot afford to waste. And frankly unless we do something about it, they will be wasted. These senior citizens, or the elderly, call them what you will, they possess indispensable talents, which this nation needs and which can contribute a great deal to our society. And I'm one that believes that with the burdens that this country has today that we must fully utilize those talents.

Let me just say to you as one that's been in government now going on my seventeenth year--well, better than that, in fact, my twentieth year--that I don't see any day ahead in the foreseeable future, at least in my lifetime and in the life of my children when this country will have less to do than it has now. In fact, I must be very candid with you. I expect that our difficulties will be intensified, rather than minimized. This world that we live in is going through an unbelievable change and that change can be either for good or bad. It depends upon what sense of inspiration and direction it receives. And let me make it equally clear to you that unless we give leadership with the proper values and standards that this world will not be a world in which freedom reigns or in which freedom has the ascendancy. It will be a world in which there is more misery and in which there is dictatorship and in which human values are lost. I do not believe that we ought to go around telling the American people that life is going to be easy. It isn't. I also happen to be one that believes that we've been given this great prosperity and these great resources of forests, land and water and minerals, and human resources, that we've been given these for the purpose of leadership. And leadership doesn't give you any privileges. It gives you responsibility. If you want privileges, and if you want luxury, and if you want fun, stay out of the role of leadership. Don't even get elected Vice President. Believe me, with leadership, comes responsibility. With liberty, comes duty. With freedom, comes responsibility. We have to start to teach our people that these blessings of our individual liberty and our political and social freedom and this great honor of world leadership carries with it responsibilities and

duties and burdens that few people have ever experienced. And I am engaged as one servant in this country in trying to encourage our young and anyone else to face up to the fact that for the foreseeable future at least for the balance of this century, that people of the United States of America will have to carry the torch of freedom and responsibility. And that's going to mean that we're going to need every arm, every hand, every body, every mind. If we don't have them that torch will be taken from us. So it isn't any longer just a matter of whether you want to be a nice fellow, and please people by saying that everybody ought to have a chance. When I think of the minds that go unused, and the hands that go unwanted, or that are idle, it makes me ill, because I know that what we lose is just what we need for the victory, that what we don't have at this moment is that margin that we need for our achievement at home and abroad. We need the maturity, and we need the experience, and we need the wisdom, and we need the perspective, the balance, of our senior citizens. They're not old. As a matter of fact, modern living and modern medicine and science keeps you pretty young. I might say I feel as young tonight at age 53 as I did at 43. And I can just about do as much work as the 33 year olds. In fact, I have several of my office that are collapsing regularly. And I intend to keep it that way too, I want you to know.

I remember my father one time told me, it isn't how long you live, son, it's what you do. He also had another little--he was a great fellow. He always told me, he said when we talked about sleep. He said, because he never really got too much sleep, he said, "Don't worry about that, son," he said, "Most people die in bed. Stay out of it." I can't say that my wife and

mother ever agreed with all those little gems of wisdom. But dad was an interesting man.

Now how great a task confronts us in mobilizing and utilizing these human resources, because after having said these things that I have said, we have to face up to some other facts. And the facts are not kind. Here are some of the facts that you know, but I used to be a teacher. And I found out that most people didn't learn by meditation. They learned by osmosis. You just steep them in it. Education is really repetition. I have people say to me, how do you remember so and so's name. I say, "Because I repeat it a hundred times and think about him a thousand times." And the only way that I know to remember anything is just having it loaded on you until there is no way to escape it. And in this busy day when everybody is talking about everything and there's everybody trying to attract your attention, command your attention, you have to get right in there. And one of the things that we haven't learned, as Americans, in political propaganda and political ideas, is to repeat what we believe. Our opposition knows that. Oh, they repeat it all the time. They call us an imperialist five thousand times a day. Murderers, and everything else. And we stand and say, "Well now why do they keep saying that?" Because some people believe it. And I might suggest that we better remember some facts too or you'll just plain forget what's going on.

Two-fifths of the nation's aging live below the poverty line--below the poverty line. In fact, they're the real poor. You talk about the War on Poverty. You're talking about grandpa and grandma, the people that you put

on the third floor and shove away, in many many cities, country towns. And I think we just have to go around reminding people every day. Just become slightly obnoxious about it. I said to a friend in Congress to day--I think it was you, Governor--that I do believe in the power of love. I also believe in the power of occasionally just being sort of, well, I hesitate to use the word obnoxious, but to be sufficiently persistent so people don't forget you. And if you're going to get a bill passed in Congress, you don't get it just because somebody said it's a noble idea. Ask Wilbur. You get it because you're up there day after day, and you're there because you recite the facts until people can no longer ignore them. And believe me people do like to ignore the facts.

I never forget that cartoon about a fellow that looked so miserable in one of these big nice private clubs, and he saw a man walking by him and he said, "That fellow bothers me. All he knows are facts." Well, these people who know facts are bothersome. But we need to have them around.

About twenty per cent of the housing units occupied by the elderly of this nation are sub-standard, sub sub standard. The worst. More than three-quarters of our senior citizens suffer from chronic illness. And that illness often because--becomes chronic because of early inadequate medical care. And it also is a fact that the elderly have more serious illness and their length of illness is longer than anyone else and their income to pay for the cost of the illness is less than anyone else, speaking of them as a group. It's a fact that too many of our elderly are poor, too many are badly housed, and too many are badly cared for. And a society that wishes to command the respect of the law must be a society that earns that respect and merits it.

And I have long been of the mind that a society that is really just is one that provides opportunity for its young who are in the dawn of life, that provides care for its elderly who are in the twilight of life, and provides rehabilitation for those who are the crippled or who are in the shadows of life. And if you can do that, then you can say that you have some moral tone to your society. The statistics tell us the scope of our past. Of course, you know those statistics. Get them seared right into your soul. Then you'll be motivated more than ever. But these facts and these statistics do not describe the empty, isolated days and nights which fill the lives of too many of the aging in America.

I'll never forget a Minister that once said to me, "You'll never know what it is to be sad until you have truly suffered pain and sorrow." The personal experience. Have you ever tried to tell your children about the Depression? I have. They say, "Oh Dad." You know, "Cut it out." Even after they've been to college and they're read it and you've paid high prices for it, they still don't believe it. And you can understand why. They've never experienced it. Oh, it's an intellectual experience, a dime a dozen. Oh, it's more than that now, but they come at a price. But I don't think anyone knows the humiliation of discrimination until he's been discriminated against. And I don't think you can really understand the statistics until they apply to you. You can talk about unemployment all you want. You can get tears and get programs. But just be unemployed for awhile. Just be not wanted, no place. Then it becomes meaningful.

But where there is not opportunity for human expression and

usefulness, man's spirit withdraws within itself. And with that withdrawal in itself, it within itself breeds poverty, physical and spiritual poverty. And that's what we're struggling against right now. The easiest poverty to overcome is the physical, the economic poverty. Really that's something we can do something about fairly well. The other kind of poverty, the sense of hopelessness, not wanted, frustration, bitterness, this barrenness of life that grips people who have been long the victims of poverty. Our older generation needs opportunity, opportunity for work. They need to be needed. Opportunity for a contribution to our society, and through the work of all of us, the federal government, state and local government, and the public and private organizations, industry and labor and agriculture, and you're all here tonight, our task is to create that opportunity. And I can tell you this evening that neither President Johnson nor Vice President Humphrey will be satisfied until that goal is reached. That's why I arrived tonight and spoke to you. I want to be identified with this fight. And I do not mean to be any kind of sunshine soldier. We're going to be in this till the end. We already know the service to this nation which our elder citizens have provided and can provide.

Let me give you a few examples. The Small Business Administration, working in cooperation with the U.S. Office of Aging has initiated the Service Corps of Retired Executives, a rather new program. But it's doing things. This Corps brings together the retired business brainpower of the country, to assist in advising smaller business firms, many of them new, firms that are eager for help. And more than 2,000 small businesses in America have been helped by the Service Corps in the past eight months. And

they are just beginning. This within itself is worth the effort.

Take a look at VISTA--Volunteers In Service To America--our Domestic Peace Corps, so to speak. Will some time in the calendar 1966 have 5,000 volunteers working in homemaker services, counseling, health services, pre school training, and other anti poverty activities. And a goodly percentage of those volunteers are over 65 years of age. The first one to be enlisted was 80, and raring to go. I hope I feel so good when I'm 60. And in the Peace Corps, our senior citizens have proved their ability to take on the toughest of jobs anywhere, and to do them well. But these programs and others like them on the state and local level in the private sector, these things have barely scratched the surface. And I mention them to you only as sort of seeds to see if we can get a bigger harvest.

In the present 89th Congress, the most comprehensive programs for the elderly in our nation's history has been presented and will be enacted. I don't come here with any idle prophesy. I can tell you that it will be enacted. And this Congress will provide new help toward making more of our senior citizens full and valuable members of the American society. Right now I can here somebody saying, "Ah, but you're not doing enough." And I will answer, "You're right." And then I will state again what the poet has said many times, "The longest journey is the first step." And the trouble with some people is that they never want to take the first step. They're waiting for more evidence. I've been around a lot of those people a lot in my life, just got to wait another year, just got to wait a little longer. In the meantime, the world burns. In the meantime, people perish. You can wait and wait and wait. Well, this

is not a waiting administration. We're an action group. And we're going to start. Now we may stumble, and we may fall. And I imagine that's what will happen on occasion. But we're going to get right up and start going again, dirty face and all. I never really have much time for these people who always want to look clean shaven and pants pressed and shirt white when they're out there battling the elements. Those are the folks that just got their picture taken. They weren't in the fight. I know them.

Now we're going to try to do things, and we're going to do some things. We're going to make some beginnings and we're going to ask you to start talking about what we need to do next year, because you're the pioneers, the advance guard. The Social Security amendments before the Congress provide a seven percent increase in cash benefits for about 20 million persons, most of them over 65. In addition, there will be 635,000 persons now excluded age 72 and over who will receive Social Security benefits for the first time. That's pretty good. To cover the cost of medical service for the aged, we will shortly have the historic threefold combination, including Social Security payments for hospital and nursing home care. That's what we've been trying to get. Listen--the first bill I introduced in Congress on March 17th, 1949--I guess they called me a socialist or something after that. I can't remember what the word was. But that bill was to provide hospital and nursing home care under Social Security for persons aged 65 and over. March 17, 1949. I'm proud of the fact. I didn't get it passed, but I introduced it. And I kept introducing it year after year. And finally one day I went up to Senator Clinton Anderson--he was on the Finance Committee--and I'd

learned by then if you wanted to get something done, find the man in the committee, because you do learn in Congress after awhile. And I sat right alongside of Clinton Anderson, and I said, "Senator Anderson, would you mind introducing this bill. I'd like to co-sponsor it." And when he started to introduce it, things started to happen. And we started to pass that bill quite regularly in the Senate, at least making some progress towards it. And here we have it now passed the House, hospital and nursing home care. And then somebody thought they might just trip us up by adding a few extras. And you know what happened. The President said, "Thank you. We'll take that too."

Of course, Wilbur was over there encouraging it, I might add. We have optional payments to cover physician's bills, and many other medical services, liberalized help to the states on behalf of those who require medical assistance. I must say to you that this--the victory of medicare makes possible one of the finest and the soundest instruments of social progress and improved health of our people that this nation has ever known. And I couldn't imagine it a year ago. But as surely as my name is Hubert Horatio Humphrey it's going to be law, very shortly. It's a happy day, I can hardly wait.

To strengthen job opportunities for the handicapped, provisions of the Vocational Rehabilitation Law will be expanded and amended. I spoke to the Conference on the Handicapped here the other day, and oh what thrilling stories there are, what drama. There's a hundred speeches, a thousand movies right there, if you wanted to really portray it to the American people. The earning potential of more seriously disabled persons will be better

evaluated, more improved sheltered workshops provided. We're making a breakthrough in employing, rehabilitating the mentally retarded, and they're becoming earners, and look what it means to them. To enrich the minds of the elderly, adult education will be strengthened by our proposal of aid to higher education, and we're going to pass that very shortly. To assure better living quarters, the Housing and Home Finance Agency will be enabled to help rehabilitate many of the slums and the substandard housing areas. We have the broadest housing act before the Congress in the history of this country, to enable communities to plan and provide comprehensive services for the aged, the older Americans act will provide invaluable matching grants. Now you know that every sizable community needs centers for the elderly. You know sometimes I wonder why we have to remind ourselves. We have only 400 such centers now. We have many more nightclubs, many more private clubs, many more race tracks, many more everything. And yet we're going to have by the year 1970, 22 million people in this country aged 65 or over. Now to reach our goal, of 7,500 additional centers, **will** be needed. Many centers should provide more, however, than recreational programs. We sort of need one stop centers where you can get tuned up all the way, you know, not just to stop in for gas, where the elderly are offered not only recreation, but education, counseling, and other services. But to man these centers and to provide a wide variety of other services, we have another task. We need expanded numbers of personnel, and these must be trained. Thirty thousand skilled specialists in aging, ranging from social workers, I suppose you might even start out with census takers--social workers to housing and medical

experts, might be provided. I'm told, for example, Dr. Winston, that by the National Institutes of Health that in the next decade we must train not less than 1,000 gerantologists for health professions alone--the field of geriatrics--to deal head on with the problem of poverty, the Office of Economic Opportunity will be given increased resources. This agency and others are now well along in spearheading America's War on Poverty. I am privileged to serve as the President's coordinator of this inter-agency activity. And fortunately, every title of the Anti-Poverty Act offers opportunity for older people. Even under Title I, the Youth Corps, positions are now open for retired teachers and counselors. And we've been recruiting them, and you ought to see some of them. They're terrific. They have more pep than the youths, and they're inspiring young people. Under the Community Action Program, projects have already been approved which deal specifically with the needs of the elderly. In Baltimore, for instance, an imaginative program is getting underway which will expand a employment service for older people, and set up neighborhood centers to serve the needly aging. Adult illiteracy will be combated by Title IIB of the Economic Opportunity Act. Thousands of teachers will be needed. Teachers that we don't have right now, frankly. Plans call for a substantial proportion of those new teachers to be recruited from the ranks of the retired. In many other community programs the needs of the elderly will receive prominent attention. But all of these new services will not be enough in themselves. That's why we need your planning. That's why we need this Fifth Annual Conference. That's what Dr. Kent is doing. That's what Dr. Winston is thinking about.

There are the crucial intangibles which must be provided. First intangible, the realization by every American, young and old, that senior Americans have valuable contributions that make for the good of all of us. This is the same intangible that we need in terms of people of different races, creeds and nationalities. We all have something to contribute. And then, in turn, there must be the realization that all of us are adversely affected by what is lacking and what is unjust amongst any of us. Man is not an island unto himself. We love to be independent, but we're also interdependent. We are in a very real sense, the victims or the beneficiaries of our environment. We live as a family of people, and when any member of that human family is in want, denied, abused, the victim of injustice, we suffer just a little bit. We're that much weaker. It's one way of saying that we're one people.

I've ended practically every talk that I've made by reminding people of what they ask their children to say in school, the pledge of allegiance. They get up, you know, the little ones, we've seen them so often, and they recite, "We pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States, and to the republic for which it stands." Everybody just repeats it like parrots. "One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." Just one country, united, a country in which the leadership must seek to unite and to heal, not to divide, a country in which there must be no north, no south, no east, no west, no white, no colored, but just people, and an American. And a country in which this pledge is a reality, liberty, and a man is not free nor is he in liberty if he is a victim of disease, or illiteracy or unemployment or if he's ignored in terms of his human needs and human wants, and with justice

for all.

I know that's sort of what they call the old patriotism. But it's about time that we started to think with our hearts as well as our minds. I have witnessed in my lifetime the head thinkers. They had some in Germany. They have some in Russia. They have some everyplace. What you need is a sort of an integration of heart and mind, and if the heart is right, and the mind is trained, then the thought will be right and the action will be good.

So I ask for the integration of heart and mind for the action for the people.



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