

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY

MAY 25, 1966

25th  
Biennial

at city - I like it here!  
23  
Vice Presidents  
Mr. Potofsky, Mr. Rosenblum, Mr. Blumberg,  
Mrs. Sidney Hillman, and my good friends of the  
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America:

Before saying another word today, I wish to pay tribute  
to one of your distinguished officers who gave me so much  
help as I began my career in public life more than twenty  
years ago. I refer, of course, to my good friend Sander  
Genis, Manager of the Minnesota Joint Board. And now  
we are both Vice Presidents.

I cannot address this convention without expressing  
my appreciation to all of you for your loyal support through  
these years.

"Right to dissent"

and to President Potofsky  
President

↳ But even more important than your support of me has been your support of programs in the public interest -- programs in pursuit of social justice and economic security and world peace.!

↳ And there is another ground for deep appreciation to the Amalgamated.

↳ You have sent to Washington some real Amalgamated ~~heavyweights~~ champions.

Two of them now hold important government posts.

As a matter of fact, they are so valuable that each holds down two government jobs.

↳ There is Esther Peterson, that dynamic, effective champion of the public interest, who serves both as Assistant Secretary of Labor and as Special Assistant to the President of the United States for Consumer Affairs.

↳ And there is Hyman Bookbinder, doing a fine job both as Assistant Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity -- the war on poverty -- and as Special Assistant to the Vice President of the United States.

↳ And Jane O'Grady is following in the footsteps of Esther and Bookie as a most effective representative of labor. Thank you for all of them.

↳ The Amalgamated has always had the sophistication to realize that what happens in Washington -- and in the state capitals, and the city halls -- affects the welfare of its members as importantly as what is gained on the picket line or at the negotiation table. }

But ↳ This has not been a narrow self-interest.

It has been a recognition of the truth so simply but eloquently expressed by your first president, Sidney Hillman.

↳ "There is no welfare," he once said, "without the social welfare."

↳ The labor movement -- and especially the Amalgamated -- has understood this so well. It has pursued the social welfare with dedication, with wisdom, tenacity and skill.

↳ You have spearheaded the drive for social justice for all, for economic security for all, for international peace.

↳ Over the years you have worked, step by step, to build a better America and a freer world.

↳ The tasks have all too often been hard and painful. Take minimum wages, for example.

↳ In 1938, after many years of failure, the Congress finally did enact the Fair Labor Standards Act.

There were some who scoffed at the victory.



The first federal minimum was 25 cents an hour, going to 40 cents after a few years. Of course, that wasn't good enough, even at that time, but it made possible the beginning of a vital program. ! *The first step is the longest journey*

2 <sup>#</sup> And by 1961, the rate had been increased to a dollar and twenty-five cents -- a five-fold increase.

2 And this year, perhaps this week, the Congress will take another step forward -- increasing the minimum to a dollar and sixty cents -- and extending coverage to millions of additional workers.

2 Again, there will be those who say it isn't good enough.

*2DR Let us move forward with a strong and active faith.*

2 Perhaps.

But it will be a giant step forward.

Today we are ~~taking our~~ <sup>moving</sup> forward ~~steps~~ <sup>taking giant size</sup> faster than ever before -- forward steps toward our goal of a Great Society.

∟ The dream of the Great Society was never better expressed than it was exactly twenty years ago, in this city, on this platform. You know the words well, I am sure.

∟ "What we do in concert with other Americans," the President of the Amalgamated said, "will decide the future of this nation . . . will determine what kind of America we are going to leave to our children and the generations to come . . . ∟ It is within the power of America to provide for our people conditions beyond the dreams of generations past . . . ∟ This earth can be made a place where men and women can walk together in peace and friendship and enjoy all that this world can provide for us . . . "

∟ "We want a better America, an America that will give its citizens, first of all, a higher and higher standard of living, so that no child will cry for food in the midst

of plenty. ↳ We want to have an America where the inventions of science will be at the disposal of every American family, not merely for the few who can afford them; an America that will have no sense of insecurity and which will make it possible for all groups, regardless of race, creed or color to live in friendship, to be real neighbors; an America that will carry its great mission of helping other countries to help themselves. "

↳ Yes, that was the dream of Sidney Hillman as he <sup>*his Heart Society*</sup> closed the 1946 convention of the Amalgamated.

↳ It was to be his last convention.

Less than two months later, the voice and heart of this great statesman were stilled. But his dream of a better America became the living agenda of his union and of his nation. The Amalgamated did not stop dreaming,

or building — *and america did not stop dreaming or building*

*I lost a dear friend!*

✓ In these twenty years, our country has indeed made progress -- progress beyond our imagination in 1946. —

Edus — ~~Jefferson - Government & Free~~  
In this next year almost two billion dollars of

federal funds will be invested in our elementary and secondary schools. Almost a billion of it will be specifically earmarked to help seven and one-half million children who most need the help -- I mean children from homes of poverty.

✓ Hundreds of millions of federal dollars will be invested in school libraries, textbooks and educational laboratories.

✓ Hundreds of millions of federal dollars will be invested in higher education.

Since Lyndon Johnson became President of the United States, we have increased our appropriations for education by more than 100 per cent. Today they stand at 10.2 billion dollars.

Civil Rts =  
1957  
1960  
1967  
Voting Rts  
1965

Twenty years ago we could not have dreamed of national investment in our young people on such an imaginative scale. We could not have dreamed that the old fears about federal involvement in education would largely have passed.

Today America is united in its determination to give every child entering life the educational tools to reach to the outward limit of his abilities.

*Health - + N.H. - Medicare - Mental - Rehab*  
*medicare*  
In the year beginning this June, 3 billion dollars will be paid out under Medicare to cover major hospital and medical costs for our fathers and mothers. Medicare will be supplemented by a grant program to the states, for some 7 million Americans who still ~~subsist~~ <sup>receive</sup> on public assistance.

Since Lyndon Johnson became President of the United States, we have doubled our appropriations for health. Today they stand at 10 billion dollars.

Almost one and one-half billion dollars will go this year alone into the fight against heart disease, cancer, stroke, <sup>and</sup> ~~communicable and other~~ <sup>other</sup> diseases.

*War on Poverty*  
*consume*  
We will invest one billion seven hundred million dollars in the year to come in Head Start, in Job Corps, in community action programs, in the Neighborhood Youth Corps, in adult education, in work experience programs, in VISTA -- <sup>these are</sup> ~~that is,~~ <sup>that</sup> ~~in programs~~ <sup>that</sup> to strike at the very roots of the ~~forces~~ <sup>forces</sup> which trap Americans in spirals of ~~poverty~~ <sup>many</sup> and despair.

Yes, ~~my fellow activists in the cause of freedom~~, we have come further than we dared dream twenty years ago.

We can take pride in our national investments in self-help, in enterprise, in opportunity, in social justice and social welfare.

We can take satisfaction in our more than 700-  
billion-dollar economy. *in over 70 million jobs*

↳ We can take satisfaction in the fact that a distinguished

Negro scholar serves in the President's Cabinet.

*that race, religion or region are no longer a barrier to public life*

↳ We can be proud of not only the quantitative change,

but of the qualitative change as well. For who will deny

that America today is a freer, happier, *stronger, more just* ~~more open~~ nation

*and a more sensitive* than it was when Sidney Hillman told his dream to this

convention.

↳ But I cannot tell you that all is right with America, or in the world.

*+ Progress*  
↳ Despite our prosperity, more than 30 million Americans suffer degrading poverty.

↳ Despite our laws and our national commitment, many Americans do not enjoy full first-class citizenship -- because of their skin color, their religion, their last name, or the place they come from.

## Thomas Wolfe Quote -

"To every man regardless of his birth, his shining golden opportunity -- to every man the right to live, to work, to be himself and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him -- This is the promise of America."



Despite our housing and urban development, and education and health programs, large parts of American's cities are not fit for daily life. *- yet it is in the cities that most of us live*

The enemy today within our gates is "slumism."

Slumism is poverty . . . illiteracy . . . disease.

Slumism is discrimination and frustration and bitterness.

Slumism is ungathered garbage and dilapidated buildings. Slumism is a family of eight in an unheated room. Slumism is danger on the stair and violence in the street.

Slumism is rent so high a desperate man is moved to tears, or crime. Slumism is the pent-up anger of people living on the outside of affluence.

Slumism is decay of structure and deterioration of the human spirit.

Slumism is a virus which spreads through the body politic.

As <sup>with</sup> other "isms", it breeds disorder and demagoguery and hate.

We must make our declaration of war against slumism. It is a war in which all of must enlist and our goal can be nothing less than total victory.

We have the resources -- in know-how, in manpower, in capacity -- to abolish the scourge of slumism. And we must have the will to do it. [Thomas Wolfe]

We have the burning desire, too, to bring about peace in the world and to prevent future outbreaks -- and we have the strength and perseverance to see it through.

We -- who have been blessed with so much -- will continue our struggle to build a safer . . . a freer . . . a happier world society where large and small nations may live alike in peace.

- U.N. Arthur Goldberg  
✓ U Thant's Address

① Building Peace -  
U.N. - IN AID - Peace Corps  
Labn,

We will continue our struggle to bring the faceless, by-passed millions of this world some reason for hope . . . for faith . . . for the opportunity to have a share of mankind's benefit.

We have been entrusted with leadership.

It is up to us to prove that the wish of many to end human misery and suffering transcends the will of a few who would tolerate it.

Seventeen years ago, as a Freshman Senator, I learned how well you in the Amalgamated understand what the Great Society is all about.

On the morning of October 26, 1949, your distinguished President, Jack Potofsky, was in the White House when President Truman signed into law the measure that raised the minimum wage from 40 cents to 75 cents. He then handed Mr. Potofsky one of the pens used in signing the bill.

That was an important symbolic act -- an expression of appreciation for everything that all of you had done to achieve that happy event.

But earlier that year, another Amalgamated member was in Washington. A mother of four from Tennessee, a cotton garment worker, had come to testify before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

I was on that Committee. The woman was addressing seven United States Senators. She had no text, no notes.

This is what the record shows she said to us:

"My youngest girl, she's 9 now, goes straight to the piano when we go to a house where they have one. She does want to play the piano so bad. I've thought that maybe I could save 50 cents or a dollar a week to buy a second-hand piano for her . . . But I haven't found a way to do it yet.

Maybe I've been foolish to talk to you people about music for one of my children when the main question is getting enough to eat and wear, or blankets for the bed, or a chair to sit on. But down in Tennessee we love music, and factory workers don't live by bread alone anymore than anyone else does."

That woman from Tennessee was talking to us about a society where every man, every woman, every child can have the opportunity to live by more than bread alone.

*Yes, dear friends,* this is the America that you have been building these many years. This is the kind of America we believe is possible. *Yes, this is the America and the world we are determined to build.*

*We shall not turn back.*

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JACOB S. POTOFKY  
GENERAL PRESIDENT

[Transcript]

*Leuth*

# Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America

AFFILIATED



WITH AFL-CIO

OFFICE OF  
RECEIVED  
JUN 15 1966  
THE VICE PRESIDENT

15 UNION SQUARE

New York 5, N.Y.

*Letter is  
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and returning  
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June 13, 1966

The Hon. Hubert H. Humphrey  
The Vice President of the United States  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Hubert:

Enclosed is copy of your presentation  
to our recent convention.

I would be most grateful if you would  
correct it and return to me as soon as possible.

With all good wishes and kindest regards,  
I am

Sincerely,

  
General President

JSP:lc  
Enc.

Delegates, I am deeply honored and proud to present to you the Vice President of the United States, Hubert H. Humphrey.

(Applause, a five minute ovation.)

THE HON. HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (Vice President of the United States): Thank you very much my good friend, President Potofsky, thank you not only for your introduction, but may I thank you through the members, and the members to you for this wonderfully warm and generous and friendly reception.

It reminds me of the good days that we have had together, I am might proud to be present once again with my friends from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, in fact the world's great American trade union.

I have a few observations I would like to make: First of all I do enjoy coming to Atalntic City, especially since last summer, when a very important thing took place up here, at Atlantic City when the President of the United States exercised his good judgment and suggested that I might be the Vice Presidential candidate on the same ticket with him in 1964. Not last summer, the summer before. Time does fly.

There is one other observation that I should



make, President Potofsky, - President Johnson has only one Vice President, you have twenty-three.

I would like to say to my friends of the press, if you think I move around too much, I am doing the work of twenty-three. (Applause)

President Potofsky is a union man, he only believes in 40 hours a week, I work for a man that believes in 80 hours a week.

What a joy to be at the 25th Biennial Convention of this fine and wonderful organization, and how good it was too, may I say, to be welcomed out at the airport by one of the dearest friends, one of the finest friends that I have ever had or ever will have, my own good friend Sander Genis of Minnesota.

Thanks for the welcoming committee, the Escort Committee.

I am going to talk to you a little bit today about our country. I want to talk to you a little bit about what your rule is in this great country.

Before I say another word, I want to pay my respect to all of those who through these many years have built this union. It brought a very wonderful feeling to me when I walked on this platform to see Mrs. Sidney Hillman



here. (Applause)

I am going to mention our beloved friend Sidney Hillman in my remarks, but it makes it so much more personal in these surroundings.

I cannot address this Convention without expressing my deep and sincere appreciation to all of you, and particularly my friends over there from Minnesota, to all of you for your loyal support through these years. A man in public life doesn't get there on his own.

He arrives at his position, whatever it may be, because others helped him. If ever the scriptural question, that eternal question, "Am I my brothers keeper?" should be answered, it should be answered by a man in public life, because you have helped so much. You made it possible for Hubert Humphrey, and indeed for the President of the United States, for men before both of us, to occupy these high offices.

My only hope and prayer is that we may be worthy of your trust, worthy of your confidence and worthy of your friendship. This is our hope and our commitment.

(Applause)

But more important than the support of an individual has been your support of the programs in the

public interest, the programs for America and for the world, programs in pursuit of social justice and economic security and world peace.

There is another ground for deep appreciation on my part for the Amalgamated; you sent to Washington some real Amalgamated champions. Two of them are now in important government posts. As a matter of fact, they are so valuable that each one of them holds down two jobs at once, - I trust getting paid for only one. There is Ester Peterson, (Applause) that dynamic, effective champion of the public interest, who serves both as an Assistant Secretary of Labor and Special Assistant to the President of the United States for Consumer Affairs, the real friend of the American household, the friend of the consumer, and then there is Hyman Bookbinder. Hy, where are you? Stand up. (Applause) He is doing a fine job as both Assistant Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, a three-star general on the war on poverty, and Special Assistant to the Vice President of the United States.

And then we have that gifted and charming Jane O'grady. Janie, stand up and take a bow. (Applause) Jane is following in the footsteps of Esther and Bookie as a most effective representative of labor, and on behalf

of our Administration and this Government, I would want to thank you for all of them, they are of great help.

The Amalgamated has always had a special type of know-how and sophistication, the ability to realize that what happens in Washington and in the State capitals and in the City Halls affects the welfare of its members as directly and as importantly as what is gained at the picket line and at the negotiating table.

You understand, you are not only members of a great union, you are citizens of a great country. Your recognition of what happens in Washington is important and is not a narrow self-interest. It has been a recognition of a truth so simply but so eloquently expressed by your very first president, Sidney Hillman. Here is what he said, "There is no welfare without social welfare." The labor movement, and especially the Amalgamated has understood this so well. Your distinguished President and his officers, all of whom are here with you today, have brought this message of public interest and social welfare to the nation's capital and the State capitals time after time.

Mr. Rosenblum and Mr. Blumberg, and others who represent you, these vice presidents, have come to tell us on many occasions that this legislation or that piece of



legislation was in the public interest and therefore, in the union's interest.

You have spearheaded the drive in this nation for social justice. And what is a democracy if it is not one that seeks social justice? Social justice for all and economic security for all and opportunity for all. And you have been valiant soldiers in the struggle for international peace, knowing that it does not come easily but knowing above all that you must give of yourselves tirelessly, patiently, tenaciously, and courageously in the search of peace. Over the years you have worked step by step to build what I see back there on that sign. "A better America." Your goals have been high and for a freer world.

The tasks have often been very difficult and hard and some of us remember them. I think I have a little acquaintance with this business of building for social welfare. Many of the items of legislation that I see today, that are held indeed as great achievements, we had to fight for and suffer for and indeed endure much paid for in order to gain these objectives. It wasn't always so easy.

Take minimum wages, for example. In 1938 after many years of failure even with the great Franklin Roosevelt

at the helm, the Congress, five years after Mr. Roosevelt had been President, finally did enact the first Fair Labor Standards Act, and it was your union that helped make that possible.

Now, there were some that scoffed at that victory. They said it doesn't amount to anything because the first Federal minimum was 25 cents an hour, and then it went up to that astronomical figure of 40 cents an hour after a few years. Of course, it wasn't good enough, even at that time, but it made possible the beginning of a vital program. More importantly, it was better than we had ever had it. It was a first step and as the old Chinese philosopher says, "The first step is the longest journey," and we made that step and by 1961 the rate had increased to \$1.25. A five-fold increase. This year, perhaps this week, maybe this hour as I speak to you in this auditorium, in the House of Representatives the Congress will take another forward step, increasing the minimum to \$1.60 and extending the coverage to millions of additional workers. (Applause)

I know there are going to be those that say that isn't good enough. I will let you in on a secret. I don't know when anything is good enough. It is like the Humphreys in building their home at Minnesota. If I could

If I could have built it all at once, I could have saved so much, but nobody would loan me that much money. Each year it has been a little better and each year I have been able to get a little more money, and we keep building, at least, mother does. She is the best friend of a contractor. I have never seen anything like it.

I told President Johnson that I had to build in an esclator for the economy. Mrs. Humphrey will take care of it all by herself. Don't you tell her I said that.

But I repeat to you, that the advances we made was a giant step forward and I recall, for your memory, what Franklin Roosevelt said. He said the only doubts of the realization of tomorrow are our doubts of today. Then he went on to say, We must move forward with strong and active faith. He didn't say we would accomplish everything at once. He said we must move forward relentlessly. This is what he meant by strong and active faith.

Today we are moving forward and faster than ever and we are taking giant-size forward steps towards our goal, and your goal, of a great society.

Let me tell you a little story here: Seventeen years ago as a Freshman Senator, I learned how well you in the Amalgamated knew what the great society was all about.



On the morning of October 26, 1949, your distinguished President Jack Potofsky was in the White House when President Truman signed into law the raising of the minimum wage from 40 to 75 cents. The President then handed Mr. Potofsky one of the pens that signed this bill. I bet he still has it. That was an important symbolic act, an expression of appreciation for everything that this Union had done to achieve that happy event. Earlier that same year another Amalgamated member was in Washington, one that I met, a mother of four children. She was from Tennessee, a cotton garment worker who came to testify before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. This is a matter of official record. I was on that Committee.

The woman was addressing seven United States Senators. She had no text. Little or no education. She had no notes. She made more sense than anyone I have ever heard when it came to this legislation. Here is what she said and the record reads as follows:

"My youngest girl, she is nine now, goes straight to the piano when we go to a house where they have one. She does want to play the piano so bad. I thought that maybe I could save fifty cents or a dollar a week to buy a second-hand piano

for her, but I have not found a way to do it yet. Maybe I have been foolish to talk to you people about music for one of my children when the main question is getting enough to eat and to wear or blankets for the bed or a chair to sit on, but down in Tennessee we love music, and factory workers don't live by bread alone any more than anyone else does."

That was it. That was the most persuasive evidence that had ever been presented to that Committee. That woman from Tennessee, that simple woman but profound was talking to us about a society where every man, where every woman, where every child can have the opportunity to live by more than bread alone.

This is the America that you have been building these many years. This is a better America that you are talking about. This is the kind of America that we believe is possible. We not only believe it is possible we know it is. We are determined to achieve it, the dream of a great society.

Well, it wasn't original with President Johnson or with Hubert Humphrey. It was never better expressed than it was exactly twenty years ago in this city on this



platform and many of you know the words well. Let me read them to you.

"What we do in concert with other Americans," the President of the Amalgamated said, "will decide the future of this nation ... Will determine what kind of America we are going to leave to our children and the generations to come ... It is within the power of America to provide for our people conditions beyond the dreams of generations past... This earth can be made a place where men and women can walk together in peace and friendship and enjoy all that this world can provide for us ...

"We want a better America, an America that will give its citizens, first of all, a higher and higher standard of living, so that no child will cry for food in the midst of plenty. We want to have an America where the inventions of science will be at the disposal of every American family, not merely for the few who can afford them; an America that will have no sense of insecurity and which will make it possible for all groups regardless of race, creed or color to live in friendship, to be real

neighbors; an America that will carry its great mission of helping other countries to help themselves."

Tehse were his final words as he closed the Convention of 1946, of the Amalgamated. It was to be his last convention because less than two months later the voice and the heart of that great statesman was stilled, but his dream of a better America, his definition of a great society became the living agenda, the worksheet, the schedule of operations of his union and of his nation.

The Amalgamated did not stop dreaming, nor did it stop building. My feelow Americans, America did not stop dreaming. We don't intend to stop dreaming. We intend to keep on moving forward as Roosevelt said, and we have been moving.

In these twenty years our country has made unbelievable progress, progress beyond the imagination of anyone in 1946. Think of the progress in civil rights. I was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Monday of this week. I was there, my dear friends, eighteen years ago at a Democratic Convention, asking my party to walk out of the shadows of States' Rights into the bright sunshine of Human Rights, asking my party and our nation to take a stand for emancipation, for freedom now, to take a stand

for equal opportunity. And what has happened in these less than twenty years? We have moved from segregation to desegregation. We have moved from a country which not only tolerated but in many ways embraced discrimination and prejudice and bigotry to a nation that knows today that discrimination, bigotry and prejudice are evils not to be tolerated but evils to be uprooted and destroyed.

(Applause)

We passed the Civil Rights Act in 1957 and I was there. We passed the Civil Rights Act of 1960 and I was there. The President of the United States was there. He managed the Bill, he was there. We passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the most far-reaching and comprehensive piece of Civil Rights legislation ever passed by any nation in all of history, in 1964. I was there. I managed that Bill. (Applause)

President Johnson put the full power of the Office of the Presidency behind that legislation. He inspired us, he directed us, he guided us and we started to build the framework of equal justice under the law, and in 1965 we passed the Voting Rights Act, which, by the way, has brought literally hundreds of thousands, millions of new voters into participation in this Government. It



will change America, and it will change it for the good.

Yes, we are making progress and there is even more yet to come: New proposals to guarantee that jury trials will be just and fair; new proposals to guarantee the protection of civil rights workers from violence; new proposals to provide equal opportunity for housing.

We march on, we make progress, but don't take it for granted. Let it be something to inspire you for even greater needs ahead.

Then in education Thomas Jefferson once said, "A nation cannot be both free and ignorant." We made the choice. We want to be free and so we wage war upon ignorance and illiteracy.

In this year alone, almost two billion dollars of Federal funds will be invested in our elementary and secondary schools for your children, most of them children of workers. Almost one billion dollars of it will be specifically earmarked to help seven and one-half million children who most need help, whose schools are inadequate, whose education has been inadequate, children from the homes of the poor and hundreds of millions of Federal dollars will be invested in libraries and text books, and educational laboratories.

We are going to have Federal aid for education for children. Year after year, Federal aid was defeated, either on the basis of racism or religion. Finally President Johnson said the purpose of Federal aid is to help educate a child, wherever that child may be, wherever he goes to school, whatever church he may attend, whatever his status.

Since Lyndon Johnson became President of the United States, we have increased our appropriations for education by more than 100 per cent. Today we stand to spend for education and invest in education over ten billion two hundred million dollars out of the Federal treasury.

Three years ago it was less than five billion dollars. (Applause)

Lest some of you think this is too much, let me give you one word of assurance, - there is no recorded word in history where a state, nation, county or city has spent itself into insolvency or bankruptcy by education. Education is the wisest investment that a people of a nation can make.

Twenty years ago we just simply couldn't have dreamed of a national investment in our young people on such an imaginative scale. Today your America is united

in its determination to give every child, every child entering life, the educational tools to reach to the outward limit of their ability. That is our commitment.

Take a look at our health. I was saying to Sander Genis and Esther Peterson, the first bill that I introduced in Congress as a Senator was a bill in May 1949 to provide nursing homes and hospital care under Social Security for persons aged 65 and over. (Applause) What some people said about me in that proposal should not be repeated in a public meeting. It wasn't popular. It was looked upon as being far out. That is a polite way to describe what some people said, but it was right. From 1949 to 1965, we battled insistently for Medicare and in 1965 we passed the proposal that provides hospital and nursing home care and medical aid for our senior citizens. (Applause)

Then this year, this June, three billion dollars will be made available under Medicare to cover major hospital and medical costs for our fathers and our mothers. Medicare will be supplemented to aid another seven million who as yet do not qualify.

Since Lyndon Johnson became President of the United States, we have doubled our appropriations for the



health of the American people. Today we stand to invest in the health of the American people through Federal deposits over ten billion dollars per year, to help you live longer and better. (Applause)

Almost one and a half billion of that amount of money will go alone in the fight against heart disease, cancer and stroke, communicable diseases and others. And lest you think that this is too much, let me say that one out of every five in this room will perish from cancer, one out of every three will be the victim of a heart attack or cancer. These are killers and this administration is waging war on those killers. We think that a nation that can learn how to split the atom can find some of the answers to these dread diseases. (Applause)

My fellow Americans, at a time when this nation was richer than ever before, it dawned on us, through participation of people like yourselves, through the wise words of spiritual leaders and social workers that there was poverty in the middle of affluence, that, there were poor in the midst of great multitudes of well-to-do and rich. We declared war on poverty and I submit to you that this is an act of conscience. No other nation has seen fit to do so much.

Remember what the facts are about this. One out of every five in our time lives in that area of economic status called poverty. Franklin Roosevelt, remember, said, one-third were ill-housed, ill-fed and ill-clad. We have come a long ways. Even now with the rich and powerful America, it is one-fifty ill-housed, ill-fed and ill-clad.

We are going to invest one billion seven hundred million dollars this year in project Head Start for the little children. In Job Care; in Community Action; in Neighborhood Youth Corps; in Adult Education; in programs to Combat Illiteracy; in Work Experience programs, in Vista. These programs are designed to strike at the root causes of poverty. We are not seeking to make poverty more tolerable. We are not seeking just to ease the pain, we are seeking to get at the cuase of it. And I must tell you, we will undoubtedly make mistakes and there will be glaring headlines telling you what the mistakes are.

My dear friends, we have been trying to find a cure for cancer for fifty years. We have spent millions but you do not ride the doctor out of town on the rail because he didn't find the answer. You say get more doctors, get more scientists, give them more resources,



try, try again.

My fellow Americans, there are more people afflicted by the curse of poverty in America today than there are by cancer, and both of them are killers. One kills the body and the other the spirit.

Yes, we have come much further than we ever dreamed twenty years ago. We can take pride in these national investments in self-help, in the enterprise and opportunity and social justice. My favorite prophet is the Old Prophet Amos who said, "Let justice roll like a mighty river," and, a society that is not just is not free. Justice is the standard by which we must judge our actions. We can take great satisfaction today, too, in the fact that we have an economy that is surging ahead at over 700 billion dollars a year. Incredible, Unbelievable.

Do you remember Henry Wallace and his fifty million jobs? They said, "That is ridiculous." That is being polite. That is what they said. Today there are seventy-five million gainfully employed workers in America earning more, and under better working conditions than ever before in the history of this nation. (Applause)

We can take some satisfaction in the fact that

the gates of opportunity are being opened to people of every race, creed and color. In 1960 we proved once and for all that religion should not stand in the way of a man's claim to high office in this land. (Applause)

In 1966 President Johnson appointed as one of the senior officers of this Government the first Negro to be a cabinet officer of the President's Cabinet. (Applause)

We are making progress. Yes, it is maybe not good enough, but it is better than you and I have ever known it. The most important thing is that while we are proud of what we have done, we are not yet satisfied. We can be proud of the quantitative change, but even more so of the qualitative change. For who will deny amongst us today that America is better?

Yes, Sidney Hillman, your America is better. It is freer, it is happier, it is stronger, it is more just it is more compassionate.

I think the history books of our time will have to record that this, indeed, has been a glorious era in which to live. (Applause)

I am not so naive as to believe that all is well. I can't tell you that all is right with America. Surely not in the world. Despite our prosperity, and it is

incredible, and our progress, more than 30 million Americans suffer degrading poverty. Despite our laws and national commitment, many Americans do not really enjoy full first-class citizenship. They have it in law but not in fact.

Many Americans are still the victims of ingrained prejudice because of skin color, religion or last name or place where they come from. We still have many miles to walk. Despite our housing and urban development and our education and health programs, large parts of American cities are not fit for daily life, yet it is in the cities where most of you live.

And, President Potofsky, may I say, I read every word of your remarkable address at the opening of this Convention. I have read these words of yours about our cities, what you said today, that one of the overwhelming problems facing the vast majority of our people is to remake our cities, we are strangled by inadequate urban transportation, limited by lack of transportation and threatened by crime and so on. A powerful message from a great American. Lest there be any doubt about it, Mr. President, I have read every line of it and I find myself in full agreement, including the other part about slums.



Let me talk to this audience about our enemies. I understand the nature of the world in which we live. At least I try to. I am aware that the forces of totalitarianism, whether they are red or black, fascist or communist are a menace to free men everywhere. I am not unaware that even if there had never been any communism there should would be trouble about this world.

I would like to talk to you about another enemy, the enemy that is within our gates, the enemy that is right here in Atlantic City, the enemy that is in Minneapolis, the enemy that is in New York, Pittsburgh, in Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, you name it. That enemy is "Slumism". S-l-u-m-i-s-m.

What does it mean? Not just a broken down building that characterizes vast areas of our metropolitan centers where you live.

But slumism is poverty, not only the poverty of the person, the poverty of the spirit.

Slumism is illiteracy.

Eleven million Americans can neither read nor write.

Slumism is disease that is rampant amongst our poor.

Slumism is discrimination and frustration and hatred and bitterness which is all too evident in America the Beautiful.

Slumism is the ungathered garbage that I have seen in far too many cities and the dilapidated broken down buildings, rat-ingested tenements.

Slumism is the family of eight, a poor family in an unheated room with inadequate facilities.

Slumism is danger on the stairway, violence in the street, hoodlumism in the part.

Slumism is rent so high that a desperate man is moved to tears, or to crime.

Slumism is the pent-up anger of people living on the outside of affluence.

Slumism is the decay of the structure, yes, but it is even more so in the deterioration of the human spirit.

Slumism is a sickness that grips us.

It may not have touched you yet but it is a contagious virus which spreads through the body politic.

We have two Americas.

The America that most of us know, of reasonably good homes and some beautiful.

The America of jobs and good income.

The America of fairly good education and excellent education.

Then we have the America of the slum, the rural slum and urban slum.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is the enemy within. That enemy can destroy a nation. It can destroy the city. The poet of early years said, "The City should be man's most beautiful institution, the center of culture and industry," and we are making our cities dumps, because we are not caring for the people there.

We can't afford two Americas. We need only one. "One nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all." You either believe it or you don't. If you don't believe it and you are unwilling to practice it, quit saying it. Woe unto ye hypocrites. But America can say it and do something about it. All of these isms breed disorder and demagoguery and hate.

I say to this great audience that has preached the doctrine of a better America, who lives within the spirit of a Sidney Hillman, an organization as American as 4th of July, and is as interested in world peace as the United Nations, I say, we must make a declaration of



war against slumism. (Vigorous applause.)

It is a way in which all of us must enlist. Our goal must be nothing less than total victory. We have the resources, known-how and capacity to abolish the scourage of slumism. We must have the will to do it.

Here is the creed that I think we ought to have before us: The author Thomas Wolfe in the thirties wrote this many times, and I have used this many times. Repetition does not destroy its meaning. Listen to this plea from an American author that is as relevant today as the day he wrote it:

"To every man, regardless of his birth, his shining golden opportunity, to every man, the right to live and to work and to be himself and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him. This is the promise of America."

That is it. That is what it is all about. That is what you work for, that is what this union is for, that is what this Government is for. We have to get our people dedicated to that proposition. It is only in so doing that we can be worthy of world leadership.

We have a burning desire as a people and as a

nation and a Government to bring about peace in this world and to prevent the threats to the peace and future outbreaks, and we have the strength and the perseverance to see it through.

You see, I have always believed that our wealth and our power were not for ourselves alone. I believe the only way that a man saves himself is to help others. I do not believe that America can be a land of plenty in a sea or in a desert of want. I do not believe that America can be a land of freedom in a sea of poverty and tyranny.

This is a smaller world every day, so that we who have been blessed with so much would have to continue our struggle to build a safer and freer and a happier world society so that large nations and small nations may live alike in peace.

I know that you have had some great addresses at this Convention, every one of them stimulating and thought-provoking, every one of them important. I read in this morning's press the remarks of the Secretary General of the United Nations. May I say to you, as Vice President of the United States, that his wish and his prayer is ours. (Applause)



Our regard for the United Nations and what it stands for is testified to by the kind of people we send there. The President of the United States when we lost our late and beloved Adlai Stevenson didn't select an ordinary man. He didn't take just anybody. He in fact asked a man who had a lifetime appointment on the highest court in this land, a man that you know, a man that served you well, a man who loves and respects you, he selected Arthur Goldberg to go represent America.

(Applause)

Arthur Goldberg is an apostle of peace and he works for a man of peace. The President of the United States is committed heart and soul and mind to the cause of peace now and forever. He knows, as you know, and I know, peace does not come for the pasking, peace, as John Kennedy said in that memorable address on June 10, 1963, at the American University, "Peace is building, peace is not static, it is active." You struggle for peace, you sacrifice for peace, you build it stone by stone like a mighty cathedral. The cathedrals of Europe which are the wonders of modern civilization did not come by a magic wand. Some of them required centuries to build. They were the product of the plan of master architects and the

work of many, and the labors of generations.

We are building peace, this great nation is building peace.

We build peace through the United Nations.

We build peace through our foreign aid, where we need your help right now.

We build peace through the Peace Corps.

We build peace when we have domestic tranquility here at home in America.

We build peace when we warn the aggressor that the patterns of aggression cannot be tolerated in the nuclear age.

And we sacrifice for peace, my fellow Americans, now as in other days when we resisted aggression, not because we love war, but because we hate it. We resist aggression and the pattern of aggression because we love peace. We seek not to defend merely a piece of territory these days in Southeast Asia. We seek to prevent the success of aggression, so that the world may know that political objectives are not to be obtained or attained by the use of force.

Lest anybody think this decision has been easy, may I show you that it has been painful, distressing and

at times heart-sickening. No President, no member of Congress, that I know, wishes war. This is a peace-loving nation. We have given much for peace. We have given a great deal, World War II, Korea, many other places. We have had to face the possibility of aggression in Berlin, Cuba and in many other areas. But we do pursue relentlessly every avenue for the opportunity of a negotiated peace.

Mr. President, I have read with great interest what you have had to say. There are no easy solutions to the problems of Viet Nam -- if there were it would have been solved a long time ago -- or to the more basic problems that underlie it.

However, it has become apparent that the only satisfactory way out of the impasse of Viet Nam will come through negotiations for peace. Only through a negotiated peace will we be able to establish a true foundation. That is not a statement of weakness. That is a statement of courage. It is the strong that are willing to be peaceful, it is the weak who in their emotionalism, their demagoguery and irrationality are unwilling to talk peace.

Your President has ordered his officers of Government to be ever on the search for the path to peace.



The Secretary of State said only last evening in New York City that he leaves as of today to go to Geneva, prepared to talk peace and to negotiate peace and to find peace with anybody. And I say to you, as Vice President of the United States, we are prepared to go anywhere, any time, under any auspices to meet with anybody, anywhere, to seek a just peace. (Applause)

Our problem is not our will or our desire. Your President and your Vice President have seen too many men the victims of this war. We know what could be done with the resources that are expended in this struggle there at home. Our problem is not with us. The roadblock is not in the White House. The roadblock to peace is not in Arthur Goldberg's office. The roadblock to peace is in the minds of the enemy, of the aggressor. We seek no one's territory, we seek to overthrow no regime, we seek no bases, we ask no sphere of influence. All we seek is the opportunity to bring this terrible war to a conclusion, to bring it to a peaceful settlement where the peoples of Southeast Asia can make their own decisions, where the people of South Viet Nam can finally have their own elections, turbulent and difficult as they may be, where they can, if you please, chart their own course, make their

own decisions, design their own form of government, unite with the north or not unite with the north, elect their own officers.

It seems to me that is a worthy purpose. I lift my voice in reverence from this platform in a plea to those who continue the struggle to de-escalate, to sit at the conference table, to come to talk peace, to come to their senses, because it is so dangerous, it is so frightening to tamper with the fate of the world on battlefields. The problems of man kind should be settled in the councils of international institutions, not in the rice paddies with gun and bomb and fire and death. (Applause.)

I know I have kept you long and this part of my address, I really hadn't intended to say to you today, but I felt after I read the morning press that it should be proper that you should once again hear from a spokesman of this Administration who has given a good deal for peace.

I spent most of my public career in this cause. I thought you ought to know what our voices are. Let there be no doubt about it. We are unafraid, a man of peace walks with his God unafraid. (Applause.)

Even though I carried on too long, I did note that one of the leading publications saw fit to ask a

question. Speculation was raised as to what the response from Vice President Humphrey, who is to address the Convention on Wednesday, would be.

Let us end the speculation. There has been a little too much speculation as it is. There is no need to speculate. President Potofsky speaks as a great American, as a loyal American, he speaks the policy of this nation and the Vice President of the United States finds it a singular privilege to march side by side with you. (Applause)

I say, Mr. President, regardless of our viewpoints, debate must not be stifled or discouraged. Once discussion and debate are shut off, then the public loses its only means of making intelligent decision. This is at the heart of our democratic process. This couldn't have been said more eloquently than by a philosopher or professor of government. Discussion and dissent are the very life blood of freedom. Once there is discussion and dissent those of us who are in possession of responsibility also have to make decisions.

We are not always sure that those decisions are right, but we have to make decisions on the body of evidence that we have.



The three D's of democracy: Discussion, dissent and decision. The difference with the person on the outside of government and the man on the inside is that the man on the inside has to practice all three: Discussion, dissent and decision. When you are on the outside it is just discussion and dissent, but I also believe in the right of advocacy. I believe that when you believe you should have the courage to stand up and say so.

Mr. President and members of the Amalgamated, I think you for the courtesy that you have extended to me, but more importantly, I thank you for what you are.

I thank you for what you have done and I thank you for what I know you are going to do, build a better America.

Thank you very much.

(Applause and standing ovation.)

PRESIDENT POTOFISKY: The Convention will please come to order.

Mr. Vice President, we are deeply grateful to you for coming to us to give us the factual and the inspirational talk that you have given us this afternoon.

I am glad I don't have to worry about the



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