

Remarks  
of  
Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey  
HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
Washington, D. C.

September 19, 1966

We are here today to mark the formal opening of the Centennial of this great Howard University. Born out of the First Congregational Church's concern that a new institution be founded in the Nation's Capital, where, "all races and both sexes have . . . in the pursuit of knowledge a fair and equal favor," Howard University has contributed beyond measure to the community, to this blessed nation and to the world.

Several of your founders believed this institution should concentrate solely on the preparation of ministers and teachers, but that great patriot and soldier General Oliver Otis Howard -- then Commissioner of the Freedman's Bureau -- objected and he amended the original charter to provide additionally for the teaching of medicine, law, agriculture and the liberal arts to make this University an integral part of a growing and exciting community.

And so Howard's tradition of growth and relevancy to contemporary problems was established even before the university was formally chartered. And this tradition has flourished ever since. It is the theme of this Centennial.

Yet, as I review this history, beautiful and interesting as it is, I feel, above all, a tragic sense of loss. This great university, for most of its existence, has been one of all too few institutions of higher learning giving an opportunity for advanced education and training to the Negro American.

Howard has produced about one-half of the nation's Negro physicians, dentists, pharmacists, engineers, architects, and lawyers.

This fact speaks volumes about the genius and productivity of your teachers and students. But it also tells us of the denial of the equality of opportunity to most Negroes in our country -- and it is a stark accusation that America has squandered and wasted an irreplaceable part of its human resources.

The cost has been tremendous, measured by any criteria. And we are still paying the price -- the price of doctors who never healed and of teachers who never taught.

But this inequality in educational opportunity is only a part of the inequality and denial which continue to rob our country of vast reservoirs of talent and ability.

You see, I am one American who believes that we need everybody -- everybody in this land contributing to his or her ability, everyone a participant in an active society.

As President Johnson who stood on this platform about a year and a half ago said to the graduating class of this university:

The great majority of Negro Americans ... are still another nation. Despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.

Then he went on to say that our goal must be that of ending "the one huge wrong of the American nation, and, in so doing, to find America for ourselves. . ." Never before has a President of the United States spelled out so precisely what this nation must do to fulfill the reality and the promise of the Emancipation Proclamation.

What has America accomplished in the year and a half since President Johnson addressed the Class of '65? Let's take stock.

Where have we succeeded and where have we failed?

And what do the past months tell us about our future prospects? At this university's Bicentennial in the year 2066, will your speaker be able to point to Howard's many contributions to a society where achievement by Negro Americans is the rule rather than the exception?

It is possible, of course, to assemble facts and statistics demonstrating the remarkable progress which has taken place, and, indeed, much progress has taken place. Since June of last year, for example:

---7151 hospitals have been desegregated;

---4724 school districts have been desegregated;

---450,000 disenfranchised Negroes have been registered in the Voting Rights Act;

---Federal investments in the war-on-poverty, education and health have been doubled;

---A higher and expanded minimum wage touching the lives of many of our minority groups has been established;

---A rent supplements program has been established to expand the supply of decent housing available to persons of low income; and in the Congress,

---A Demonstration Cities bill has been proposed and will be enacted to enable us to mount the first concentrated, coordinated attack on urban blight in a way which respects and protects the rights of the people.

Now this has been part of our response to the dual challenge voiced here by President Johnson a short 15 months ago. He said: ". . . it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates. . ."

But to you -- as it is to me -- the mere recitation of facts and statistics is not a sufficient portrayal of either our recent progress or our remaining problems.

Facts and statistics, taken alone, can never, never indicate the relief that sweeps over a Negro husband and wife as their sick child is taken to the newly integrated community hospital where first-class medicine is practiced . . . or the joy and hope that is born anew as a Negro family leaves a rat-infested tenement for a fairly-priced, clean apartment in a safe and attractive neighborhood.

And facts and statistics cannot convey the sense of anxiety and terror which grips the heart of a brave 9-year-old Negro girl attending for the first time a newly integrated school . . . or the hopelessness of an unemployed Negro father who realizes his family will receive more money on welfare than he can provide with his limited skills.

We know, moreover, that in every large American city we still encounter the shame, America's shame, of slumism -- where apathy and resentment have strangled hope, and patience and faith have given way to outrage and despair.

Yes, my fellow Americans, face the fact and the truth. There is poverty, illiteracy and disease in this, the richest and most powerful nation on earth.

There is danger on the stairs and violence in the streets.

There is high rent for dilapidated and unkempt housing.

There is discrimination and frustration and bitterness even today.

We realize that despite the progress of the past years, the reality of equal opportunity and achievement has regrettably not been fully won.

The federal government recognizes its obligations, and is deeply and irrevocably committed to its responsibilities.

As a result of President Johnson's speech at this great University, a White House Conference, "To Fulfill These Rights," was organized to devise and set in motion an action program for citizens and communities across the nation.

The recommendations made by the White House Conference have been described as radical or as pie-in-the-sky proposals set forth only to allay criticism.

Similar words were used to describe the recommendations made by the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights in 1960 and 1961. And yet these recommendations, made in advance of their time, were not only translated into proposed legislation, but have been enacted into law in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

I believe the same will be true for the Report of the White House Conference "To Fulfill These Rights." In ten years that report will be recognized as the master plan for all the major actions and programs begun after 1966 to

advance the cause of civil rights and equal opportunity.

A report of that conference rightly emphasizes what must be accomplished, not only at the federal level, but at the state and local level -- by local governments, by business and labor unions, by churches and universities, and the individual American people.

All the federal legislation in the world will remain hollow and empty if it is not given substance at the local level.

It is in our cities and towns where men find jobs, or where they walk the streets unemployed.

It is there in our cities, our towns, our rural areas, where children's minds are opened to the excitement of learning and accomplishment, or are deadened under the impact of second-rate, custodial education.

And it is there, where you live, where decent low-priced housing is available to all, or families are forced to live in over-priced, dilapidated, obsolete, unhealthy tenements.

And it is there where a community must decide whether it will respond affirmatively to the needs of all its citizens, or foolishly attempt to hold back the course of history which decrees that all men shall enjoy the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I have heard it said that the cause of civil rights has fallen backward in this past year, and those who are critical say that:

---riots and violence have produced new waves of white resistance to further progress;

---the civil rights movement itself is rent by factionalism and extremism;

---vital civil rights legislation has apparently floundered in the Congress for this session; and,

---political candidates running on a platform of "Never!" have defeated good men of moderate, progressive views.

Now, my fellow Americans, I would be less than honest with you if I did not say that there is some truth in this assessment.

But to these persons I can only say what is in my heart: The morality of the struggle for freedom and human dignity -- the necessity, the imperative necessity -- is just as clear today as it was one or two years ago.

And I am absolutely confident that the ultimate victory is just as sure.

Victory is sure for many reasons.

Never before in history has a nation consciously acknowledged the reality of racial discrimination and set about to combat it. But America has made that commitment.

From all parts of our society an alliance, a strong alliance, has been forged, with common commitment to the dignity and equality of all men.

The handful of courageous persons who were marching to freedom ten years ago in Montgomery and Little Rock has today swelled to a mighty tide of humanity. And this tide will not be turned back. A new force is at work. A new power, human power, is on the march in defense of human dignity.

Of course, the wrongs and evils of generations cannot be corrected easily or without sacrifice -- just as a mighty storm cannot pass without creating turbulence and unrest.

But after that storm comes the brilliant sunshine of a new day -- and with the sunshine comes renewed faith and strength.

America has been passing through a difficult period of turbulence.

It was inevitable -- an old system meets a new. Powerful new forces of social justice come in combat with old forces of injustice.

But I say that if we hold true to our course, if we navigate with skill and courage, we shall break through into the bright new day of justice and opportunity.

And that new day is coming.

This new day is visible, visible to all who see, in the deep concern, expressed by so many of our young people, for preserving human dignity and self-respect in this age of mass technology and industrialization.

It is visible in the attitudes of the people most affected by the war on poverty -- the Negroes who live in big-city ghettos -- who back the war on poverty by a 5-to-1 margin because they believe these programs will help to alleviate the causes of racial tension and unrest.

It is visible in the steadily rising number of young Negro Americans, and members of other minorities, who are entering for the first time the business and academic worlds, the professions, and the other occupations that were for generations closed to them.

And it is visible in the courage displayed by young Americans who braved the attacks of bullies and bigots in Grenada, Mississippi, because they sought their education in an integrated school.

It is visible in the action of universities across this vast land of America, following Howard's example, reaching out into the surrounding neighborhoods with programs of self-help and community action.

Yes, there are many, many ways our universities can and should move to the offensive against the forces of poverty and prejudice. We have only begun to explore creatively how to release the intellectual energies stored up in our centers of higher learning -- and how incidentally to inject these centers with a good dose of realism and social responsibility.

A university should be an action center, not a safe retreat for reflection and meditation alone. It must be a part of the life of people, or it fails to serve its purpose.

Universities should take the lead in organizing non-profit housing corporations which, in turn, could take full advantage of special federal programs for low-income housing, programs which today are not fully used. Universities should organize urban centers to study the problems of our cities and to bring to bear upon those problems the interdisciplinary forces of a university -- just as we use the system approach to study problems of space and national defense.

Universities, working closely with business, industry and labor, should seek new ways to train the unskilled and the hard-core unemployed workers -- ways which instill in the worker a sense of motivation and hope and at the end of his training provide him with a real job.

Universities should unite to promote actively equal employment opportunity in their own hiring of professional and administrative employees -- as well as requiring such standards from all firms with whom the universities do business. Churches of many denominations are doing precisely this through Project Equality, an equal employment opportunity program, begun as I recall by the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice. Can universities, above all, afford to do less when they are to be the standard-bearers of our civilization?

Universities should become centers of educational excellence, not just for some, but for the deprived children of our ghetto areas -- providing them with the finest educational experience possible, and thereby, for the first time, offering real hope of overcoming the mammoth back-log of educational and cultural deprivation. Not just Project Headstart for the little ones, but Project Catch-up for all of us.

And our better universities should take far more seriously their responsibilities to work closely with the smaller colleges and schools unable to develop or maintain high standards of research or teaching.

Student-faculty exchanges are only the beginning of the type of programs which creative and imaginative thinking could devise.

Why not sponsor joint research efforts? Share your talents! Or joint internship programs in government and industry? Why not apply the principles of foreign aid to domestic life, because here, too, there is a revolution of rising expectations. Why not a cooperative overseas study program for students and faculty?

These are the kind of bold steps which should be taking place on every university campus in America -- and not one of them needs to be inspired by government. I congratulate this university, Dr. Wormley, for a record which clearly demonstrates that this can be done -- which demonstrates this awareness and concern over these vital social and economic problems.

I ask the universities to enlist, to volunteer in the war-on-poverty -- to volunteer in man's eternal battle against prejudice and bigotry. I ask you not only to enlist, I ask you to lead the fight, to be in the forefront, to prod government, to prod business and labor and church. It is from our universities that social reform should emanate. The university should be the ferment, the incubator, the seed for that which is to come into flower.

The cry for freedom now will not be stilled -- nor should it be.

Today the very concept of democratic government -- implemented in an environment of justice and freedom -- is undergoing one of its most crucial tests, and also facing one of its greatest opportunities.

Yes, a hundred years after Lincoln we are still deciding whether or not this nation, with a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall perish from the earth. The decision has not been finalized.

The task facing our democratic system today is to generate an ever-widening spectrum of people ready and willing to welcome the new day with rejoicing and praise -- yes, with the rejoicing and praise such as a song which we heard by this beautiful choir, "The Hallelujah Chorus," rather than seeking refuge behind the walls of outworn prejudice and baseless fears.

Yes, the time has come to broaden the base of the civil rights movement -- to reach out into the community -- and the university must do this -- and enlist vital new sources of energy and strength. We must strive ceaselessly to perfect one citizenship -- one destiny for all Americans.

If democratic government is to survive -- in America or elsewhere -- we must be capable of responding to the cries of fellow citizens who have been living for two centuries as exiles and strangers in our midst.

My fellow Americans, what makes you believe that people who know us not in other lands will ever accept the sincerity of our purpose there unless we can demonstrate it here. If we are to wage war-on-poverty throughout the world with any

credibility, we must wage it with success right here in our own blessed America. This is the test -- the inseparability of foreign policy and domestic policy. Morality at home begets morality abroad, expediency at home begets expediency abroad, force and power at home beget force and power abroad. We will be what we are, and we can only project that which we are.

So if democratic government is to survive, in all that we believe it to mean, we must be capable of binding our citizens together with a sense of shared responsibility for preserving the peace and tranquility of our communities -- and this entails responding to the obvious and long-postponed apparent needs of all our people.

We cannot acquiesce to those who would destroy our system of laws and justice through violence, riots and civil unrest . . . who fail to understand that rights and responsibilities are bound together in the tightly woven fabric of society.

But neither can we acquiesce to those conditions which have contributed so directly to the outrage we encounter among so many who believe themselves sentenced to lives of poverty, dependency and misery.

Yes, if democratic government is to survive, we must be capable of producing in the hearts of all men a realization that the door of economic and social progress is not marked "White Only." For to diminish the quality of freedom and justice for some is to mortgage irretrievably the sacred rights enjoyed by all.

The time has come to see our struggle for equal rights in proper perspective . . . to see that not only as a struggle to benefit the Negro American and other minorities, but primarily as this country's greatest challenge in building a system of self-government under which every American must live -- and our greatest opportunity truly to "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

If we fail, the loser will not be just the Negro American, but every American; and, if we succeed, we shall all bask in the glory of our achievement.

And even more than this: The failure of democracy in America would surely threaten freedom's growth around the world. For we know that racial prejudice and bigotry are worldwide phenomena, and that few nations are spared this ancient and brutal curse.

America -- more than any other nation on earth -- has committed itself to the liberation of all the children of God. We have sensed this priceless opportunity in our time to demonstrate to all humanity that man need not be bound by the color of his skin.

And I profoundly believe that America will not squander this opportunity.

I believe with Abraham Lincoln that we shall either meanly lose or nobly save this last best hope on earth. It was true

when he said it, and it will be true to the last days of this republic.

For one hundred years this university has been tending to the survival of our democracy -- and who can ever properly assess the magnitude of this contribution?

As we -- one people, under God -- strive to fulfill the vision President Johnson proclaimed here 15 months ago, Howard University will continue to send forth men and women dedicated to the final perfection of our democratic enterprise.

There is no higher calling, no higher duty, no more priceless opportunity.

And you will carry with you, soldiers of freedom, the blessing and appreciation of a proud nation. I salute this university on its 100th birthday, which indeed is not only a centennial, but also a commencement -- a new beginning -- to a greater second century of service and commitment. You have given us hope; you have pointed the way. And now others are privileged to follow.

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Dr Wormley  
Dr Nabrit (antennas)  
Mr Tobriner

For Monday P.M.'S

# REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

September 19, 1966

Dr David Colwell

Your Experiences!

Today we gather to mark the formal opening of the Centennial of Howard University.

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David Colwell

Several of your founders believed this institution should concentrate solely on the preparation of ministers and teachers, but General Oliver Otis Howard (then Commissioner of the Freedman's Bureau) objected and amended

the original charter to provide additionally for the teaching  
of medicine, law, agriculture and the liberal arts.

∠ And so Howard's tradition of growth and relevancy  
to contemporary problems was established even before the  
university was formally chartered. And this tradition has  
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∠ Yet, as I review this history, I feel, above all, a  
tragic sense of loss. This great university, for most of  
its existence, has been one of all too few institutions of  
higher learning giving an opportunity for advanced education  
and training to the Negro American.

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Negro physicians, dentists, pharmacists, engineers, and  
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Genius and  
This fact speaks volumes about the productivity  
of your teachers and students. But it also tells us of  
the denial of equal opportunity to most Negroes in our  
country -- and it is a stark accusation that America has  
squandered, wasted, an irreplaceable part of its human  
resources.

The cost has been tremendous, measured by any  
criteria. And we are still paying the price -- the price  
of doctors who never healed and teachers who never taught.

But This inequality in educational opportunity, ~~of course,~~  
is only a part of the inequality and denial which continue  
to rob our country of vast reservoirs of talent and ability.

As President Johnson ~~said last year~~, in his historic  
address to the graduating class of this university ~~last year~~ --  
had this to say --

"The great majority of Negro Americans... are still another nation. Despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening."

∠ He went on to say that our goal must be that of ending "the one huge wrong of the American nation, and, in so doing, to find America for ourselves. . ."

∠ Never before has a President of the United States spelled out so precisely what this nation must do to fulfill the promise of the Emancipation Proclamation.

∠ What has America accomplished in the year and a half since President Johnson addressed your Class of '65?

∠ Where have we succeeded and where have we failed?

And what do the past months tell us about our future prospects? ∠ At this university's Bicentennial in the year 2066,

will your speaker be able to point to Howard's many contributions to a society where achievement by Negro Americans is the rule rather than the exception?

↳ It is possible, of course, to assemble facts and statistics demonstrating the remarkable progress which has taken place. Since June of last year, for example:

---7151 hospitals have been desegregated;

---4724 school districts have been desegregated;

---450,000 disenfranchised Negroes have been registered;

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---A Demonstration Cities bill has been proposed

and will be enacted to enable us to mount the first concentrated, coordinated attack on urban blight in a way which respects and protects the rights of people.

↳ This has been part of our response to the dual challenge voiced here by President Johnson just 15 months ago: ". . . it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates. . ."

↳ But to you -- as it is to me -- the mere recitation of facts or statistics is not a sufficient portrayal of either our recent progress or our remaining problems.

↳ Facts and statistics, taken alone, can never indicate the relief that sweeps over a Negro husband and wife as their sick child is taken to the newly integrated community hospital where first-class medicine is practiced. . . or the joy and hope that is born anew as a Negro family leaves a

rat-infested tenement for a fairly-priced, clean apartment in a safe and attractive neighborhood.

∠ And facts and statistics cannot convey the sense of anxiety and terror which grips the heart of a brave 9-year-old Negro girl attending a newly integrated school. . . or the hopelessness of an unemployed Negro father who realizes his family will receive more money on welfare than he can provide with his limited skills.

∠ We know, moreover, that in every large American city we still encounter the shame of slumism--where apathy and resentment have strangled hope, and patience and faith have given way to outrage and despair.

*yes my fellow americans,*  
There is poverty, illiteracy and disease.

There is danger on the stairs and violence on the streets.

There is segregated and inferior schooling.

There is high rent for dilapidated and unkempt housing.

There is discrimination and frustration and bitterness.

∟ We realize that despite the progress of the past years, the reality of equal opportunity and achievement has not been fully won.

∟ The federal government recognizes its obligations and is deeply and irrevocably committed to its responsibilities.

∟ As a result of President Johnson's speech at Howard, a White House Conference was organized to devise and set in motion an action program for citizens and communities across the country.

*an action program*

The recommendations made by the White House Conference have been described as radical or as pie-in-the-sky proposals set forth only to allay criticism.

Similar words were used to describe the recommendations made by the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights in 1960 and 1961. And yet these recommendations, made in advance of their time, were not only translated into proposed legislation, but have been enacted into law in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

*I believe that*  
~~I believe the same will be true for~~ the Report of the White House Conference "To Fulfill These Rights."  
~~In ten years that report~~ will be recognized as the master plan for all the major actions and programs begun after 1966 to advance the cause of civil rights and equal opportunity.

<sup>10</sup>  
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The report rightly emphasizes what must be accom-

plished on the state and local level -- by local governments,

business and labor unions, churches, universities, and

individual American people.

*It establishes a plan of action.*

↳ All the federal legislation in the world will remain  
hollow and empty if it is not given substance at the local  
level.

↳ It is in our cities and towns where men find jobs,  
or walk the streets unemployed.

↳ It is there where children's minds are opened to  
the excitement of learning and accomplishment, or are  
deadened under the impact of second-rate, custodial education.

↳ It is there where decent low-priced housing is  
available to all, or families are forced to live in over-  
priced, dilapidated tenements -- *afraid to complain because*  
*of retaliatory convictions.*

↳ And it is there where a community must decide  
whether it will respond affirmatively to the needs of all

its citizens, or foolishly attempt to hold back the course  
of history which decrees that all men shall enjoy the  
right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

✧ I have heard it said that the cause of civil rights  
has fallen backward in the past year. Those who are  
critical say that:

--riots and violence have produced new  
waves of white resistance to further progress;

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by factionalism and extremism;

--vital civil rights legislation has apparently  
foundered in Congress for this session;

--and political candidates running on a platform  
of "Never" have defeated men of moderate, progressive  
views. *In all of this there is some <sup>momentary</sup> truth.*

*But,* To these persons I can only say what is in my heart:  
The morality of the struggle for freedom and human dignity

is just as clear today as it was one or two years ago.

And ultimate victory is just as sure.

Victory is sure for many reasons.

Never before in history has a nation consciously acknowledged the reality of racial discrimination and set about to combat it. But America has made that commitment.

From all parts of our society an alliance has been forged, with common commitment to the dignity and equality of all men.

The handful of courageous persons who were marching to freedom ten years ago in Montgomery and Little Rock has today swelled to a mighty tide of humanity.

And this tide will not be turned back. *Human Power is on the march in defense of human dignity.*

Of course, the wrongs and evils of generations cannot be corrected easily or without sacrifice -- just as a mighty storm cannot pass without creating turbulence and unrest.

But after the storm comes the brilliant sunshine of a new day -- and with the sunshine comes renewed faith and strength.

America has been passing through a difficult period of turbulence. But if we hold true to our course, if we navigate with skill and courage, we shall break through into a bright new day of justice and opportunity.

This new day is coming.

This new day is visible in the deep concern, expressed by so many of our young people, for preserving human dignity and self-respect in an age of mass technology and industrialization.

↳ It is visible in the attitudes of the people most affected by the war on poverty -- Negroes who live in big-city ghettos -- who back the war on poverty by a 5-to-1 margin because they believe these programs will help to alleviate the causes of racial tension and unrest.

↳ It is visible in the steadily rising number of young Negro Americans, and members of other minorities, who are entering ~~from almost every college campus~~ the business and academic worlds, the professions, and other occupations previously closed to them.

↳ And it is visible in the courage displayed by the young Americans who braved the attacks of bullies and bigots in Grenada, Mississippi, because they sought their education in an integrated school.

↳ It is visible in the action of universities across America, following Howard's example, reaching out into the surrounding neighborhoods with programs of self-help and community action.

✓ Yes, there are many ways our universities can move to the offensive against the ancient forces of poverty and prejudice. We have only begun to explore creatively how to release the intellectual energies stored up in our centers of higher learning -- and how incidentally to inject these centers with a good dose of realism and social responsibility.

✓ Universities should take the lead in organizing non-profit housing corporations which, in turn, could take full advantage of special federal programs for low-income housing.

✓ Universities, working closely with business, industry and labor, should seek new ways to train unskilled and hard-core unemployed workers -- ways which instill in the worker a sense of motivation and hope and at the end of his training, provide him with a real job.

∟ Universities should unite to promote actively equal employment opportunity in their own hiring of professional and administrative employees -- as well as requiring such standards from all firms with whom the universities do business.

∟ Churches of many denominations are doing precisely this through Project Equality, an equal employment opportunity program begun by the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice.

∟ Can universities, above all, afford to do less?

↳ Universities should become centers of educational excellence for the deprived children of our ghetto areas -- providing them with the finest educational experience possible, and thereby, for the first time, offering real hope of overcoming the mammoth back-log of educational and cultural deprivation.

↳ And our <sup>bigger and</sup> better universities should take far more seriously their responsibilities to work closely with smaller colleges and schools unable to develop or maintain high standards of teaching or research.

↳ Student-faculty exchanges are only the beginning of the type of programs which creative and imaginative thinking could devise.

↳ Why not sponsor joint research efforts? Or joint internship programs in government and industry? Or cooperative overseas study programs for students and faculty?

These are the kind of bold steps which should be taking place on every university campus in America -- and I congratulate this university for a record which clearly demonstrates this awareness and concern over these vital social and economic problems.

The cry for freedom now will not be stilled -- nor should it be.

Today the very concept of democratic government -- implemented in an environment of justice and freedom -- is undergoing one of its most critical tests, and also facing one of its greatest opportunities.

The task facing our democratic system today is to generate an ever-widening spectrum of people ready to welcome the new day with rejoicing and praise -- rather than seeking refuge behind the walls of outworn prejudice and baseless fears.

Yes, the time has come to broaden the base of the civil rights movement -- to reach out into the community and enlist vital new sources of energy and strength. We must strive to perfect one citizenship -- one destiny for all Americans.

If democratic government is to survive -- in America or elsewhere -- we must be capable of responding to the cries of fellow citizens who, have been living for two centuries as exiles and strangers in our midst.

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✓ The time has come to see our struggle for equal rights in proper perspective . . . to see it not only as a struggle to benefit the Negro American and other minorities, but primarily as this country's greatest challenge in building a system of self-government under which every American must live -- and our greatest opportunity truly to "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

✓ If we fail, the loser will not be just the Negro American, but every American.

And even more than this: The failure of democracy in America would surely threaten freedom's growth around the world. For we know that racial prejudice and bigotry are worldwide phenomena, and that few nations are spared this ancient and brutal curse.

America -- more than any other nation on earth -- has committed itself to the liberation of all the children of God. We have sensed this priceless opportunity to demonstrate to all humanity that man need not be bound by the color of

his skin.

And I profoundly believe that America will not  
squander this opportunity. - *Lincoln*  
*meanly lost or nobly saved*  
*the last best hope on Earth*

For one hundred years this university has been  
tending to the survival of our democracy -- and who can  
ever assess the magnitude of this contribution?

As we -- one people, under God -- strive to fulfill  
the vision President Johnson proclaimed here 15 months ago,  
Howard University will continue to send forth men and women  
dedicated to the final perfection of our democratic enterprise.

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And you will carry with you the blessings and appre-  
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