

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY

Thank you very much, thank you. Thank you very much for not only your introduction but for your patience and I want to thank Congressman Cohellian for being here to give you a good message. I know that you've heard--you've had a rich program this morning. You started out with at least the best that we had to offer in Mr. Meany and then you got the best that you can find from the House of Representatives. I haven't looked over the Senatorial list yet, but I'm sure it will be very good quality. I happened to glance at a paper when I was up here. It looked like Paul Douglas might be coming on over here, too. Well, all I can say is you're getting the grand prize when you get Paul Douglas. He's the best. So if I don't do too well today, this just sort of balances it off. You can't expect to have it good all the time.

First just let me pay my respects to President Lloyd. It is so good to be back in the company of my good friends from the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen. I've been with you on other occasions, not only once or twice, but several times, and see that fine nobleman, Patrick Gorman, and once again to be able to express my good warm greetings to Mr. Lloyd and Pat and, of course, to Leon, and to Arnold Mayer. Arnold is your top legislative representative. He does a great job for you up in Congress. He sort of drilled me. When he was very young and I was older, he gave me some of the real effective lessons in how you lobby. That is a lobbyist with a capital L, I'll tell you. He's a good one.

And I do want my friend Ray Winst to know how much I appreciate his being at the gate out here to receive me. He's been waiting for me and

receiving me for so long that it is like old hat with him. But he always has a smile and he looks better. I think I'm doing good by him. He looks healthier, younger and better all the time. So, Ray, I won't, well, shed any tears over you today.

I asked Ray on the way coming in here, I said, "How many Vice Presidents does this organization have?" And I think somebody interrupted and said, "I think it is twenty-one or twenty-three,"--what is it? Twenty-one Vice Presidents. My goodness, I just want to say to President Lloyd if you have as much trouble with twenty-one Vice Presidents as President Johnson does with one, may the Lord bless you. I have a feeling that our President figures that he has one too many some of the time. And so, the International President of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen must feel overburdened and overloaded at times. Or you can put it the way I see it. I'm doing the work of twenty-one. And I have a feeling that I should be brought in under the coverage of the National Labor Relations Act along with the farm workers. If you can get the Administration to endorse that amendment, I'll lobby for that up in the Congress.

Let me first of all just say a word in reference to the subject that is closest to our hearts right now, the international situation. I'm going to be very brief on it and maybe not very informative. I think you all know that the Vice President is a member of the National Security Council, and I'm sure that you know that we are putting hours and hours and hours of time in on this international situation. Very candidly, I've been up six hours already today, working with the President and with others on matters that relate to the situation

in the Middle East and, of course, the continuing problem that we have in Southeast Asia.

The most difficult assignment that America has today is this role of responsibility, leadership with responsibility. It is not difficult just to be a leader if you want to just fly off in several directions. But to be in the role of leader with tremendous power, well, hopefully, influence and at the same time to act in a responsible, restrained manner, is a very difficult task. It is a heavy burden. I've said many times that leadership is not a luxury. I think the officers of this union could tell you that. They have their problems, and any of you who are here in your role as leaders. It is not a luxury. It is not even a privilege. Leadership is a responsibility and a burden and at times it imposes very heavy duties. Now there are very few countries in the world today that are willing to take on these responsibilities on the international scene. If there is any one thing that I have learned in my travels for this nation, first in the Far East and then into Europe, it is that many people want to avoid that responsibility that comes with power and even with being a nation. They'd like to just leave it to others. And we live in a nation and a world of trouble and turmoil and change and crisis. Every place you look, whether it is in South America, where just in the last few weeks the Castroites have been at work again in Venezuela, or in economic crisis that takes place in a country or a coup, the overthrowing of a government, or only a year and a half ago or less than two, the problems in the Dominican Republic, you take a look there and that's enough to make you turn grey almost overnight and wish that you didn't have to face up to these difficult ordeals.

You look to Africa and there is far too much instability, far too much want and deprivation, far too much danger in all areas. You look to Europe and you see our--some of our allies in difficulty, governments overthrown, constitutional processes cast aside. You see an old friend withdrawing from the command of NATO causing us to rearrange the whole structure of NATO. You look to Asia and you see in the sub continent unbelievable poverty and travail and difficulty, the great nation of India facing a food shortage that in some areas borders upon starvation, and our own nation attempting to fill that void with all too little help, may I add, from others. Only a little over a year and a half ago conflicts between India and Pakistan, and the tenuous peace now being maintained. A little over a year and a half ago, two years ago at the most, Indonesia, which is Communist dominated and Communist controlled, that at long last has rid itself of that plague, but still finds itself weak, literally bankrupted or close to it. I don't mean that their problems--I should put it this way, that their problems of financing are immense. And then we see Southeast Asia with a cruel and hard war, and our heavy commitments in that area. And then the Middle East, literally exploding.

And the policy of your government in each of these areas has been what we call, hopefully, maintaining the peace or if the peace is broken, we try to build back the structure that makes possible peace. This is the highest goal of this country. We have no interest in war. We have nothing to gain from it, but we are required at times to fulfill commitments and to remember at all times that the integrity of that American commitment is the greatest

single hope for a world of law and order and peace that we know in this time.

Now the goal of your nation in the Middle East is, as put by the President on May 23 in what I think was a very precise and straightforward statement, namely, that we continue to support the American commitment and the American policy of supporting the territorial integrity and the political independence of the nations of that area. We've done this in the past and we will have to continue to do it in the future, and, as you know now, there is a very very dangerous situation. It doesn't take any brilliance to get the world into a world war. It doesn't take any statesmanship to permit, or to have a conflagration of what appears to be a limited one extend itself into a major conflagration. The task of statesmanship is to find the peace, work to its attainment without the sacrifice of principle or without the sacrifice of peoples, or without the sacrifice of commitments. This is what we're trying to do and we're working right as I speak to you right now in the United Nations Security Council. I know many people say, well the U.N. doesn't seem to be doing very well. Let me tell you ladies and gentlemen, it is vitally important that we have that forum through which we can work, through which we can state our policy, through which we can seek to bring together the powers of the world, the major powers on some common ground to prevent the spread of this conflict and to bring it to a halt. And the objective of the government of the United States is the preservation of the territorial integrity and political independence of nations. And that, of course, includes the state of Israel. And it is also

the objective of this government to find a peace, to find the path to peace, to find the peace, to stop the fighting, and to find peaceful resolution of the issues that confront nations today. And if you don't think that is some assignment, you try it. It is the toughest one that anybody ever had and we're involved deeply into it. Now I don't want to say any more about it, because there will be other things said by the President and the Secretary of State. But I must say to your International President here, it doesn't help when you have officers of a union doing too much talking when you've got a difficult labor-management problem on. And it doesn't help too much for the cause of peace and successful diplomacy to have the Vice President or somebody else running around talking too much either, because you can surely cause trouble. This is a very very sensitive situation. I only say to you, believe in your country, believe in your government, have faith that we will pursue the honorable course. We've never betrayed friends. And yet at the same time, we do not want our actions to be governed by irrationality or emotion or passion. We have to have those actions governed by the best interests of this nation and the best interests in the cause of world peace and our commitments, as they have been stated over the years by four Presidents--President Truman, President Eisenhower, President Kennedy and the fifth President, President Johnson. So, President Truman, President Eisenhower, President Kennedy and President Johnson--four Presidents. And if we have those four--if we look over the record of those four Presidents, I think you've got a pretty good idea of what your nation stands for and what it means to the world.

That's what I wanted to say to you on the international scene. I know that you're going to watch this very carefully, as we are. In fact, I wasn't at all sure that I was going to be able to get over here.

Now let me just say a little more to you about the Congressional situation. Before I do that, I think I ought to tell you a little bit about this job of mine. You know we haven't had a chance to talk about the work that you assigned me to a couple of years ago. I suppose that some of you thought, well, no matter what the Vice President won't have to work too hard. He can't cause too much trouble because really what it says in the Constitution is that he shall be the presiding officer of the Senate, and in case of a tie, he may cast a vote to break the tie. I took a look at that and I said, now with the pay that they're offering and the working conditions and that responsibility, this ought to be a soft job. But I didn't know all the fine print. It's like one of those old fashioned insurance policies that you get. You forget to read the fine print. Well I just thought maybe you'd like to know what has happened since I read the Constitution.

It is a fact that even at this hour I ought to be presiding over the United States Senate, but I can assure you that someone is there doing very well. I don't like to have them do it too much lest they get to thinking they ought to have the job. So I interrupt them quite often on this assignment. But my task and my responsibility is a member of the President's Cabinet, by act of Congress, a member of the National Security Council, by act of Congress, and then a number of activities at the direction and the discretion of the President. I am the President's liaison officer with all the local government officials, working with mayors and city councilmen, supervisors, county

commissioners all across this country. In the past two and a half years I've had over forty meetings, many of them unpublicized because we're trying to work on legislative matters, trying to get better cooperation between local, state and federal government.

Another assignment I have is to try promote a good deal of travel in this country from abroad and people within the country so they don't take the dollars out of here and run across the pond and have them see America. You know, we need to get acquainted in this country. Would you believe it that 50% of the people of the United States have never been 200 miles away from home? You wouldn't believe it, some of you, the way you have to travel, I know that. 60% of the people of the United States have never stayed in a hotel or a motel. And over 80% of the people of the United States have never been on an airplane. So we're saying that before you see the whole world, would you mind just getting acquainted with Minnesota and Texas. I got Texas in there. Now I hope that fellow got that down there. And California.

Another assignment that has been mine is to be the Chairman of the Peace Corps Advisory Committee working with our Peace Corps, keeping this wonderful instrument of American policy alive, working, recruiting, training young men and women to go overseas and represent this nation.

Another assignment is I'm Chairman of the--Honorary Chairman of the Economic Opportunity Council, coordinating the programs of this government in the field of economic opportunity. And only recently, the

President of the United States has made me the Chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity. And I've been working at that day and night gearing up these youth programs particularly for this summer, across this land. Before I came here, just about ten minutes in my office, met with one of my staff people, to go over an item on that program. We are in contact with Governors and Mayors and trade unions and Chambers of Commerce and voluntary organizations and churches all across America for our youth program, training, jobs, schooling, education, recreation, for young people, all across America.

Another little responsibility that comes my way is to even serve on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution. Now that isn't supposed to be a very lively Institution, but believe it or not, it's quite an educational establishment. And it is an excellent one, as a matter of fact, and when you're in Washington, you ought to go see some of the wonderful museums and exhibitions that we have.

But then I have two other assignments, both of which could be a full day's work every day of the week, Chairman of the Space Council, which is by act of Congress, and Chairman of the Council on Oceanography or Marine Resources, which is by act of Congress, coordinating the government's programs in these areas.

Now you'll notice that when the Congress gives the Vice President anything to do, it is either out of this world or on the bottom of the ocean. So somebody asked me the other day said, well just what is your job. I said, well I'm sort of like the country doctor, I'm a general practitioner, a

specialist to none, but keeping a weather eye over the whole situation, and I hopefully try to do it for your President and for our Congress. I travel about this country a great deal and in traveling about, I come back and when I return to my office I prepare reports for the Congressman or the Senator of what I saw in his state, what I heard, for the President or a Cabinet Officer. And I don't try to make them look good either. I said early this morning to a particular member of the government, I said, "I will do you no good, nor am I a faithful friend and loyal supporter of the President if I try to give you reports to just make you feel good." What kind of a doctor is it that tells you you're well when he knows you're sick? What kind of a person is it that glosses over the facts when he ought to be willing to face up to reality? So I try to act as the eyes and ears of the Administration in many a project in this country.

You know of my deep commitment to education and human rights and civil rights, and social welfare legislation. And somebody said to me the other day, not only the other day, they keep saying, well I think he is changing. Well, I am changing. I had my 56th birthday here the other day. That's one change. It isn't so much who is changed as the fact that the world in which we live has changed, changed a great deal. I can remember the very first bill I ever introduced in Congress, May 17, 1949. That was a bill provide hospital and nursing home care for persons aged 65 and over under the terms of Social Security. Sixteen years later that was passed and called Medicare. That's where we started, and I remember when I sent out a copy of that bill around this country and asked people for their opinions of

it and they gave it to me. And because I have respect for the ladies here, and also for the gentlemen, I shall not tell you what was in those letters. They spelled it out in words that were very understandable for a country boy. I knew exactly what they meant.

The other bills that I introduced in that first session of Congress related to civil rights, to education, to labor legislation. And one of the very first bills that I held a hearing on was on your agenda here, the coverage of farm workers under the National Labor Relations Act. I held hearings, Arnold must have been about 12 years old then, if you hired him, you should be responsible for child labor about that time. But I don't know whether it was Arnold or not, but it was one of your officers that got me started in that about 1950. And we held hearings in the Subcommittee of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare on this very subject. I remember we had Archbishop Lucey up here to discuss it, down from San Antonio. He was one, and the labor movement sent their representatives in. And it took--that was about 16 or 17 years ago and it takes, you know, what, a scientist told me the other day, he says it takes 15 years from a successful experiment in a laboratory to application in general life. And I think that's just about what it takes for legislation. You start out about 15 years ago and you get--15 years later it starts to come into fruition. That's basically what happens in many an important controversial issue. It takes infinite patience, dogged determination, and unbelievable will and stick-to-it-iveness to get these things done. But if you believe in it, you have to stick with it. This is when you separate the men from the boys, as we say. It doesn't take much gumption to get up

and say I'm for it. But to stay with it and fight it out and win your case takes a lot of time.

Now I want to just briefly run over two things that I believe that you're interested in. First, I'd like to ask the question, and I want to give you my answer, because that's the way that I get the answer that I like. The question is what are we trying to do in this Administration? What is the purpose? And the purpose as I see it is to broaden the base of opportunity for as many Americans as we can possibly touch in our period of service. The greatest good for the greatest number. You know sometimes we take an awful lot of things for granted and you people that have been in this labor movement, you know it. You have new members that have never known what it was to really have to fight to build a labor organization, lots of them. You have people that are griping because they have to pay dues and they have to join the union, they say. And I think you know what I mean. Well this union didn't get--this union was not built by people who just said, well I think it is a good idea. I hope everybody agrees. The labor leaders that built the American labor movement had to literally fight and die for it. Many of them were the victims of unbelievable calumny and unbelievable vilification. And if you think that if some of us just let our memory go back 30 years ago, in the 1930's during the labor movement when it was really struggling, and it was literally live or die, survive or perish. But there is a whole generation that doesn't understand that.

I had my boy, my youngest son, he was getting ready to take, you know, finish those final examinations over there in college out in Minnesota,

at Hamlin University, and he called me up one day here and he said, "Dad," he said, "I'm in a jam." I said, well what's he in now. You know, you never know. I thought--his mother never gets those messages, you know. And she wouldn't believe it anyway. And I wasn't sure just what the jam was. And I said, "What is it, Doug?" And he said, "Oh, Dad, I've got to write a term paper," and he said, "I'm late," and he said, "It's on the Depression." And he said, "I know you have all kinds of material down at the office." He said, "Could you tell me something about it?" I said, "Listen, son. I've been trying to tell you for ten years about the Depression." "Yes," but he said, "I never paid any attention to you." But he said, "Now I've got to write a term paper. If you have some pamphlets, and some material down there," he said, "I'd like to know a little bit more about it."

Well isn't it interesting. Here's a young boy that's 19 years of age. As far as he's concerned there's never been a Depression. And I think that you in this union know just what I mean. As far as some people are concerned, there's never really been any problem of organizing the labor movement, you know, it just came. But you know better than that.

Well this is true of the progress that we've made in this country. We take some of it for granted. Let me tell you what I mean. We have appropriated more money from the federal Treasury, the Federal Aid to Education, in the last three years than in the preceding 150. That's a fact. Now if I were to go through this office and ask you to give me a real honest answer as to what you would like most for your boy or your girl, I think what you'd really say is a good education. Now there may be some of you that

have different points of view. You'd like to be sure that he had a good education. You'd like also to be sure that he would not have to be taken in battle. So you want peace on the one hand, every mother does. I've never met one that didn't. So do the dads if they'll fess right up to it. And secondly, what most of all they want is their boy or their girl to have at least training, technical training and education so that they have a chance in life.

One of the first bills that I ever voted on when I came to Washington was the Federal Aid to Education, and we used to either kill it in the Senate or the House, depending on--we sort of divided the responsibility. I voted for that bill. We passed it in the Senate. I always was for it. We passed it in the Senate and they'd kill it in the House. Two years later they passed it in the House and killed it in the Senate. It was sort of like a tennis match with the ball being netted every other serve. We never got it. Finally we made some breakthroughs. I was the author of the Federal Aid for School Construction under which we put \$2-1/2 billion in federal aid, as one of my first bills that I got my name on. That always makes you feel good.

But then we got the National Defense Education Act when we were able to apply certain federal aids because of the defense of our country. I was the author of that bill. I felt mighty good about it. I wasn't the only author, but I was the principal author.

Then we came along to President Johnson's Administration and we got the major breakthrough in elementary--federal aid to elementary and

secondary education, and federal aid to higher education--billions of dollars. And what was the purpose of it? To see to it that every boy and girl in this country was able to get all of the education of which they were capable of absorbing.

Now we haven't fulfilled that promise yet, but we've made a big stride forward. And I repeat, we've appropriated more money for federal aid to education in the last three years than the preceding 150. Oh I know the critics. They say we haven't done enough. Well that's just like raising a family. You've never quite done enough.

And then there are others who say you've gone too far. Then there are others who say, we're for it but we'd like to rework it. It's just sort of like when you get the TV set or something and the dial, it doesn't adjust right, you start taking it apart. That means that you're either going to lose the TV or you've got to get another one, you know, because this do-it-yourself on these instruments doesn't always work too good.

So we had a problem here in Congress just a little while ago where they wanted to rework the whole thing. And we could have ended up with much less than we had, but fortunately we were able to stem that tide.

So we're moving on the front of education, and what is education? It is the key to the door called opportunity. You can't get through that door of opportunity without it.

But we also had to do something else. We had to decide whether or not this country was going to have two kinds of citizens--white citizens and

black citizens, rich citizens and poor citizens. And we decided that we'd have one kind of citizenship. Now that's the decision that was made. I think somebody once said that Abraham Lincoln made the promise of emancipation, and if I may say most respectfully and loyally and frankly and honestly, Lyndon Johnson made the reality of emancipation.

I was privileged to be the floor manager of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and my friend Congressman Cohellian remembers that that debate started in the Senate in February and ended in June. That's how long it took. But we were there day in and day out, night in and night out. There were 292 amendments that we had to defeat, they were the chippers, you know, just clip, clip, chip, chip, chip away at it, salami type, just cut it to pieces. I thought I would put it in butcher workmen language. And we passed a comprehensive Civil Rights Act. And then next year, 1965, the President went before the Congress and passed a Voting Rights Act. We've made progress. We decided that adults ought to believe in what their children are asked to repeat in school--one nation, under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all. We said if it is good enough for the kids to say, it's good enough for mom and dad to do. And that's just what we said.

Now the people say, it hasn't all worked. Well let me tell you my dear friends that there are a lot of people that take commitments in church and if everybody lived up to everything that they said, we wouldn't need any priests, preachers or rabbis. But I don't think because there are some people that violate their vows that you tear down the church, or that

you denounce the clergy. We have made great progress. The point is, we haven't made enough. And we're a restless people, and we are a determined people, and this is a determined Administration. And we're going to do our level best to proceed not only systematically and not only orderly, but proceed with all possible haste in fulfilling those promises and those commitments.

So we've moved on the area of equal opportunity, one citizenship, education, and then we've done something else. We've said, look here, the young people, I used to put it this way, that the least that a government can do is to see that in the dawn of life that every child has an education, that in the twilight of life that every elderly person has social justice and humanitarian compassionate care. And that in the storm clouds of life, when you are disabled or sick, that you have a helping friendly hand of a grateful nation and a compassionate society. So that's what we have been trying to do-- education for the young, we've fought the good fight for mental health and mental retardation, that is, **programs** to help in these afflictions, overcome these afflictions. We've done more in the field of mental health and mental retardation in the last three years than since the beginning of this republic. We just sort of forget it.

I had a fellow say to me, he said, "Aw listen, Humphrey, you're not as liberal as you used to be." I get that about once a week, depending on where I am. And I said, "What do you mean?" "Well, what's your liberal program?" I said, "Now listen. To be a liberal doesn't mean that you always have to suffer defeat. That doesn't make you liberal. That just makes you a failure. And to be an intellectual doesn't mean that you always have to be

cynical and skeptical and critical. You can be an intellectual and be positive and be optimistic and be constructive. Yes, you can even go to school and feel that way."

Somebody said to me, "Mr. Vice President, what happened to the liberal program?" I said, "We passed it. Does that bother you?" And we have. But we also have new programs to build on what we have done thus far. Franklin Roosevelt was claimed to be the great liberal and I voted for him and I loved him and I supported him and I was for him for four terms and if he had been around I would have voted for the fifth. But the first Social Security Act isn't very liberal when you look back at it, is it? Boy it didn't offer much. And the first Fair Labor Standards Act didn't cover many workers and it didn't offer much pay. But I'll tell you it was the breakthrough. It was the beginning. And as that old Chinese proverb, only to paraphrase it, the longest journey is the first step. When you make those breakthroughs, those first steps in federal aid to education, in Medicare, protection and care of our elderly. We've spent years to get Medicare. And now they're pointing out--I see they've got big articles in the papers showing its limitations. It has got limitations. I agree there are many things about Medicare that need to be improved, but I want to tell you something, what we have is a whole lot better than what we used to have, and there were last year since July of last year over five and one half million senior citizens in this country that have had the benefit of the best hospital and nursing homes and medical care that modern medicine

and healing arts can give under Medicare. And what's more the bills have been paid. Hospitals have received over \$2 billion in cash payments. Why, they're almost solvent. Any of you ever serve on a hospital board? You know they're always having some trouble. The bills are paid, secondly, the doctors have received over \$200 million in cash payments for their services. And you went to the hospital of your own choice, if you were under medical care, and the doctor of your own choice.

Now we've got some other things that we want to do. We made the beginnings. We want to improve the Medicare, and we're going to, and that's where we come in, and that's where you come in. That's where you come in under Social Security. The President has a great program for Social Security. And right away I hear people say, well he's gone a little too far. We've got these great pausers around this town. I suggest they get a bottle of Coke or Pepsi, just pause on that. Don't pause on the legislative processes. The pause that refreshes is not in Congress, I guarantee you that. That's the pause that regresses backward. We have a program. I don't need to go into its details. All I'll tell you is the opposition says it is for it in part, not much. They just don't want to be against it. It is sort of like being against Mother's Day, but they don't want to give her a whole day. They'd like to spend about five minutes.

We have a broadened Social Security program, a better Social Security program. Now listen, this trade union has been fighting for Social Security before Hubert Humphrey could pronounce the words. We wouldn't have Social Security if it hadn't been for the labor movement, and if it hadn't

had been for people that you supported. And the chips are down up in Congress in this Congress there. Let me tell you, we started out after this last election, this is a well organized speech as you can see--I mean, I'm just thinking out loud with you. But I came back after this election, now let me tell you what you read every day. The President has been repudiated. That's number one. They started out with that. That was supposed to make the President feel bad or frighten him. But if you know the President like I know him, that didn't frighten him. He just battened down the hatches. He dug his feet in a little deeper, and made up his mind that he was going to stand his ground. That's number one.

Secondly, they said, he must now just do a job of sort of looking over what we passed, just kind of get acquainted with what we'd done. And then thirdly, we ought to slow down the process of legislative, social legislative, slow down the process of social legislation. And for about three months that was preached to you and the American people and your neighbors. You know it. Number one, the President suffered a stinging defeat, so they said. Well, we lost 45 seats--47 **seats**. **Franklin** Roosevelt lost 81 in 1938. Every President that ever received over 55% of the vote lost more seats in the off year election than Lyndon Johnson did, without exception. We knew we were going to lose some seats. We didn't want to, but we knew that the inevitability of it was almost, well that the certainty of it was there, unless we had a miracle.

So the first thing was that you had to say that the President had been defeated and why? Because he tried to do too much. Then the next thing was, let's review what we've done. And I want to tell you, there are

a lot of studiers in this town. Sometimes I begin to think that they are slow learners because they've got to study so long before they want to do anything--study, study, study.

And then the next thing was after they had made up their minds they had to study, they already knew what the decision was, that they'd learn, namely, stop. Study and stop. And that doctrine has been preached in this city, and out through the country, and that is one of the reasons that we're having a rather slow process, may I say, in the Congress, because some people have been brought up to believe that the public, that the American public wants this program slowed down. Well now maybe some people do. But I want to tell you what Franklin Roosevelt once said. He said, "It is not the duty of government to see to it that those who already have too much have more, but rather that those who have too little have enough." And for some of the people that want to slow down these processes of social betterment, they are the ones who already have more than they can use. We need to try to bring up the standard of those who have too little, so that at least they begin to have enough. And we're not trying to do it with handouts. We're not trying to do it with giveaways. We're trying to do it through education, through training, through health, through jobs. That's what we're trying to do. I work every day with the deprived and needy people of this country. You're often accused of sort of being a bleeding heart on these things. Well I want to say to those of us that are fortunate, it is very difficult to know what a fellow goes through that isn't fortunate. My Dad once told me. He said, "You'll never know what it is, son, to suffer pain, to understand pain, until

you've suffered it. You'll never know what it is to really, to know sorrow until you've experienced it. And you'll never really know what it is to really know the meaning of deprivation and poverty until it has gripped you, and touched your life." I told an audience Sunday in South Dakota that I learned more economics in one South Dakota dust storm than in seven years at the university. I learned that when you don't have a crop, and when the banks are broke, and when the soil has blown away, that there just isn't anything. That's basic economics. And I didn't need to go seven years to the university to find that out. Just one bad afternoon out in the plains of South Dakota.

So what I'm saying here is that those who are asking us to slow down are the original slow downers. They are the ones that are, you know, no, no, not know, go slow, veto. That's been their formula. So we'd like to have you be aware of what these problems are. We can pass that Social Security legislation. We can pass this new--these appropriations, and by the way, that's what it really boils down to now in many instances. Are we going to fund these programs? Are we really going to do something about our cities, or are we just going to have speeches about them? We've all made too many speeches about the cities. 70% of the people of America now live in cities. 80% of the people of America will live in cities by the year 1980. That's where you're going to live. Now if you want to choke to death there that's your privilege. Or if you want to have clean air, you can do something about that. If you want no longer a place to go swimming, you can have every lake and water and stream polluted or you can do something about it. We passed the legislation. What we need now is the funding of it. We need

to clean up our slums. If I had one program that I'd like to advocate for all Americans, and I think that just as every American that wants to work is entitled to a job, I think that every American that wants to live a whole-some life ought to have a decent home in which to live. We ought to make that as a matter of faith, an article of faith in this country. It is a pity to come to a city in the richest nation on the face of the earth, a nation that has almost 50% of all the wealth of the whole world and to come in to see some of the hovels and some of the miserable shacks and some of the unbelievable ghettos and slums that characterize certain areas of our cities.

Now we've proposed programs to get at it, at least the beginning, sort of Roosevelt type programs, the beginnings. I don't **say** that they've gone as far as they should, or as they will. But they are the beginnings, and yet we get them cut to ribbons.

We'd like to have teachers to go on out to the slum areas and help the children that never had a break in schools in the National Teachers Corps. Who are these teachers? The best that you can recruit. They can come in and upgrade a person quickly, just exactly like if you had a bad accident and you'd lost a lot of blood. You'd go to the hospital and they'd give you a transfusion. You can't wait until they feed you iron and liver and everything. They've got to get your blood balanced. We need teachers desperately, in some of the areas so that young people can be trained and equipped rapidly, quickly, so that they can be participants.

And then we need to take a look at, as we've said here in some of the legislation that you've proposed for these agricultural workers, giving

them the right to organize. Why not? They are the least paid. They have the most difficulties. And we want your help. Thank goodness you're the instigators of it, I don't have to ask your help. You know what I mean exactly.

On the Civil Rights front we have legislation there, a composite package, and we've broken it up into four separate bills, because last year people said, well if you hadn't have tried to do too much, you would have gotten some. So we said all right, we'll try it both ways this year. We'll try too much, as some of you call it. We'll put it all in one package, which isn't too much, but somebody likes to label it that way. Then we'll let you chew it up bit by bit. It's just like taking a sandwich like that do at these fancy parties, cut it in four pieces instead of just leaving it in one big slice.

Well, we have a chance to get this legislation. We have a chance to get it. The extension of the Civil Rights Commission, protection of Civil Rights workers, legislation on federal juries, and legislation for open housing. At least we have a chance to get some of it. But we're going to need your help.

Well, I got wound up here and I guess maybe I ought to quit. One of my problems is that I enjoy my subject matter so much--somebody said to me the other day, "Why do you speak so long?" I said, "Because I enjoy what I'm saying."

I just want to leave you with this thought. I've spent, well maybe it has been over twenty years now, about twenty-five years in public life. Prior to that I was a Director of Worker's Education when Ray used to know me when I was a real young fellow. And we've been working together during

this quarter of a century. And I think the real test is not so much what you promise as what you've done. The real test of a party of an Administration is not so much what you say but what you're doing. Now I just want this great organization to know one thing, that the President of the United States and this Administration works closely, intimately, with the responsible, duly elected leadership of the American labor movement, AFL-CIO; Mr. George Meany is at the White House today and he doesn't have to come in the back door. And I want you to know something else, that if the President of the United States is sitting there meeting with the heads, let's say, of the big steel companies or the automobile companies, or the packing companies, or the food processors, and he has them in a room. And if Mr. Meany and Mr. Lloyd or Pat Gorman or others come on in, we don't hide the boys off in the side room and say, gee we've got to get the leaders of industry out of here. We've got some labor fellows coming in. The President of the United States, I've seen him do it time after time, he walks right on out and brings right on in his friends from the labor movement and says, "I want you fellows to get acquainted. Here is Mr. so and so from such and such company and here is Mr. so and so from this bank and here is Mr. so and so from this utility and here is George Meany and here is the other representative of labor, whatever his name may be. Sit down and let's talk things over." And I think this program of talking things over has been of great benefit to our country. Anybody can promote antagonism, but it takes leadership to promote understanding without the sacrifice of principle.

We're grateful to you for your help and we know that there are differences between us on occasion. There can't help but be. The role of the President of the United States is a different role than yours. He must represent the entire nation. He has unbelievable heavy duties and burdens and responsibilities. But I can say this, you have never heard from a President of these United States, you've never heard from President Lyndon Johnson one public or private word of criticism of the labor movement or of its leaders, not one. You don't hear it from the high offices of this government, people making such statements as they made some years ago, those labor crooks, or those labor bosses. You don't hear that. You hear the President of the United States speak with great respect and affection and esteem and admiration for the American labor movement, for the trade unions of this country, for the duly selected and elected leadership, even when we have disagreements, which are inevitable in a free society, there is a respect and an affection that is evident in every day and every word in every action. And ladies and gentlemen, when you have that kind of a relationship, I think you've done all right. And I want to compliment you, and I want to thank you for inviting me to this meeting.

Thank you very much.



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