

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

TEXAS AFL-CIO

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

August 4, 1967

Hank Brown
Rosa Walker
Cope
Ray Evans (sect)

Shuman Miller

Cong Jim Wright
Cong Jack Brooks
Sen J. J. Pickens

of Mott

We meet today at a time of national pain
and crisis.

The violence that has erupted in many of
our cities is an historic challenge to the democratic
process on which American civilization has been built.

It challenges the ability of our institutions --
public and private, spiritual and secular, labor and
business -- to serve the real needs of the American
people.

It calls into question the real human value of
the social and economic progress this country has made
in recent decades.

COPE

Civilization

threatens

It tells us that this is a time when every American -- black or white, rich or poor -- must reaffirm his willingness to bear the responsibilities of American citizenship.

Let me remind you of the words of Abraham Lincoln, spoken at another time of crisis: "No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The firey trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the last generation ... We shall nobly save or meanly lose this last, best hope on earth."

Our response to what we face today will determine whether or not the American dream -- the dream of a free and equal people, living together in harmony and peace -- will be meanly lost or nobly saved.

There is an immediate problem of lawlessness and crime, violence and riot. Then there is the fundamental problem of what has brought us to our present state and what must be done about it.

With regard to lawlessness and crime, I can only say this -- and to this audience I hardly need say it:

There can be no freedom, no equal opportunity, no social justice in an environment of mob rule and criminal behavior. There can be no safety for the vast majority of law-abiding citizens. And there can be no progress.

I can assure ^{you} that those of us who have received a public trust will do our duty. We shall do whatever is necessary to assure that the rule of law is preserved.

But the violence we have witnessed, however inexcusable, is only a symptom of a much deeper problem - a problem of poverty and hopelessness.

It is the end result of inadequate opportunity and frustrated ambition which exist not only in the slums of our cities, but in rural slums throughout our country. It is born among people who have not shared in the unprecedented prosperity of our America, who literally are outsiders in their own country.

These are people who lack the skills to hold a decent job, who lack the sense of personal dignity that comes from doing a steady job well.

These are people who cannot afford decent housing, but must pay exorbitant rents for rat-infested hovels, who find themselves and their children in the street if they complain to the slum landlord.

These are people who pay higher prices in slum shops than their fellow citizens pay in suburban supermarkets.

These are people whose children leave school in the seventh grade or sooner.

These are people who have four times as much heart disease, six times as much arthritis and six times as much mental illness as the rest of the American people.

∠ The ghetto -- and I mean the ghetto that exists within the tar-paper walls of the rural shack just as much as I mean the ghetto of the urban slum -- is by definition a place where opportunity is denied ... the opportunity to move freely ... the opportunity to choose freely, the opportunity to participate in the larger, richer society.

∠ The American labor movement knows how to face the challenge: —

Jobs.

Education.

Training and retraining.

Decent low-cost housing.

Convenient mass transit in the cities.

Crime control.

Recreational facilities.

Health services.

↳ It means getting trained people, with their sleeves rolled up, to help these isolated Americans become full citizens.

↳ And it means creative, carefully-conceived public and private programs.

and We have a good start at the federal level.

Job Corps, VISTA, Head Start, Upward Bound,
Model Cities, Medicare, the Youth Opportunity Campaign
all these things have been added to our vocabulary, and to our society, in a period, literally, of a few months.

*your
Programs
for Youth
Family
Action
Sculpt*

↳ The President recommended almost ~~26~~ billion dollars for federal programs directly helping the poor, and building opportunity, for fiscal year 1968.

↳ That sum was some 3.6 billion dollars above fiscal year 1967 -- and almost three times that requested only six years ago.

Our federal programs for health, and for education, are two to three times what they were before the 1960's.

- In Cities 1960 \$3 - 1967, 10B 11

With measures, particularly, passed by the historic 89th Congress, we have the basic building blocks with which to eliminate the slum and build a stronger nation.

Now these programs, and others to supplement them, need help - *your help in Congress*

As a minimum first step, we must make sure that legislation now before the 90th Congress is passed and that outstanding requests for funds are met.

I know we can count on your support -- the same kind of support that has helped give this country progressively higher minimum wages through the years, the same kind of help that made Medicare possible.

*Safe Streets,
Rent
Supplements
Economic
Opportunity
Model
Cities.*

But government can not do this job alone.

It needs the support of the entire private sector -- business,
labor, the universities and voluntary agencies.

It needs the help of every employer, every
teacher, every shop steward, every policeman, every
social worker, because those are the people whose actions
and decisions can spell perpetual poverty or success for
the disadvantaged citizen.

Labor has a special opportunity and a special
responsibility in this regard.

You have an opportunity to help because you
have the experience:

-- in communicating with poor people who do
not know how to make themselves heard;

-- in identifying the problems of the working man;

└-- in organizing people so that they can
work together for common goals;

└-- in negotiating with industry and government
for economic gains which benefit the whole society;

└-- and most important of all, as a result of
all the others, in giving the large majority of the American
workers a sense of dignity and full participation in
American society.

└ That experience -- the experience that has
made organized labor a great and creative force in America --
must be put to work in the slum.

└ And there is where your responsibility comes in.
You must reach out to these people.

└ While you continue to improve the lot of your
membership, you have an almost sacred obligation to extend
your help and protection to the millions of American workers
who still lack the benefits of union membership

and
full participation in American
life.

Most of those millions lack skills. Many of them have skins that do not happen to be white.

L Every union has the responsibility to see that equality of opportunity without regard to race or creed, truly prevails in its own ranks -- trade unions -- craft unions and industrial unions.

L Where is the poor, unskilled working man to turn for protection if not to the unions? How is he to find job security if not through the unions? How is he to become a producer and a consumer ^{unless he has a job} How is he to achieve his full citizenship ^{unless he is to have opportunity.}

I know that the American labor movement is ready and able to shoulder this crucial responsibility.

And when I say this, I am talking about people who work on the soil as well as in industry.

As a member of the United States Senate,
I fought to amend the National Labor Relations Act
so that all workers -- urban and rural -- might enjoy
a better and more decent chance in life. I have not
changed.

* * *

Let me conclude on a hopeful note.

America has passed through crises at home
before. We have weathered them, and we have been the
better for our trials.

Let me conclude on a hopeful note. The most recent was the Great Depression
which was a time of awful suffering, but which gave
birth to the New Deal ... which saw the American labor
movement emerge as a powerful force for progress in
American society ... and which began the massive
national effort that has brought us to our level of
freedom and prosperity today.

Now we face a new challenge.

We face a new test in a new time.

And the focus of what we face is in the
American city.

└ The future of the city is our country's
future. It is your future.

└ The future of the city is the future of your
children's health and education ... the future of your
family's happiness and well-being ... the future of
your work ... of your leisure time ... of your hopes
and aspirations.

└ Life in the American city can be more than
steaming asphalt and crowded tenements ... more than
filthy air and polluted water ... more than clogged
highways and congested streets ... more than bursting
schoolrooms and underpaid teachers ...

more than hopelessness and discrimination and
despair ... yes, and more than just material satisfaction.

↳ The way lies open to cities filled with green
and open space ... to transportation that is safe, comfortable,
rapid ... to neighborhoods once more filled with
neighbors ... to schools and universities that truly
care about our children ... to an environment where
people -- because they are citizens, because they are
people -- can live together in harmony and cooperation.

↳ Every man and woman in this room loves America.
The America of the next generation will be urban America.

I appeal to you who have fought over the years
for education, for workmen's compensation, collective
bargaining, Social Security, Medicare, aid to education ...
to you who have fought and resisted all forms of tyranny
and aggression -- step forward once more. Speak out.

Reach out to those Americans who need a break ...
who want a chance ... who must have our help.

And if we meet this challenge, it will be our
greatest victory of all. For in our time we will truly have
built "one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty
and justice for all."

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[Transcript]

September 22, 1967

Dear Mr. Evans:

Please see enclosed a copy of the transcript of the Vice President's remarks at your convention in August.

If there are any plans for reproduction and distribution of this transcript, please let us know, and we will arrange for proper editing before release.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ted Van Dyk
Assistant to the
Vice President

Mr. Roy R. Evans
Secretary-Treasurer
Texas AFL-CIO
Box MM, Capitol Station
308 W. Eleventh
Austin, Texas 78711



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JOHN ROGERS

September 12, 1967

Mr. Martin J. McNamara
Special Counsel to
The Vice President of the United States
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. McNamara:

Would it be possible for you to forward to our office a copy of the transcript of Vice President Humphrey's speech to our convention on Aug. 4, 1967, in Fort Worth, Texas.

We have not yet transcribed our convention tape but did pay the cost to Miss Marina Johnson to have your tape transcribed.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Roy R. Evans
Roy R. Evans
Secretary-Treasurer
Texas AFL-CIO

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VICE PRESIDENT H. H. HUMPHREY'S SPEECH TO TENTH CONVENTION OF
TEXAS AFL-CIO

HOTEL TEXAS, FORT WORTH, TEXAS, AUGUST 4, 1967

Ladies and gentlemen, after an introduction like that the only thing that a fellow can hope is that you believe every word of it. And I trust that at least you have enough faith in your Congressman to know that he said it in good taste and that he said it to make me happy.

Adlai Stevenson used to say that flattery is alright if you don't inhale it. Some of you may have noticed that I was breathing deeply just as Jim was talking to you.

My good friend Hank Brown, President Brown, my very good and close friends of the Congress, Jim Wright and Jack Brooks, and the officers of the Texas AFL, and I pay particular tribute to Rosa Walker and Roy Evans and of course to all of you for the work you are doing and to the delegates of this convention I want you to know that Muriel Humphrey and Hubert Humphrey feel highly honored to be included in your family. We feel very privileged to be here again in Texas. Just this morning we were with Congressman Brooks in Galveston and Texas City. We had a wonderful morning and early noon and now here we are in this great city of Fort Worth.

I should tell you that Fort Worth has infiltrated the

ranks of the Vice Presidency because my executive assistant, Bill Connell, was born and reared right here in Fort Worth. And I gather from him what I gather from Jim Wright that there just isn't any other place of the globe that equals this city according to their interpretation. So, you can see that I come properly indoctrinated and that I should add that as Vice President it wouldn't be a bad idea for me to pay my respects to the entire state of Texas -- there's a man who thinks it's a great place. And I must say to you what I said to your neighbors in Galveston -- the President of the United States reminds me that all that is good in the world will be found in Texas. And I tell him that anything that is left over that is good will be found in Minnesota. So.....

There's much in my heart today, friends, that I want to talk to you about. These are not the easiest days to face or to live through. Ordinarily, on an occasion like this, as Hank knows, I spend quite a bit of time just in old fellowship because I look out over this audience and see representatives of unions that I have worked with for years. Just a short time ago I was with our friends, the communications workers, and I was down with the retail clerks and then with the longshoremen and I am going to be with three or four other of the great labor organizations in a very short time.

My friends are here from the IBEW, the machinists, the ILGW, the amalgamated, the textile workers, my, you name them -- the

laborers and the boilermakers; I could go down the line and cut them off one after one. And I think I have been to about every labor convention of the Internationals of our country. And I want to say from this platform what I've said every place I've been -- that I have found throughout the years that the leaders and the rank-and-file membership of organized labor have adopted programs and policies by resolution and by action which are not selfish, which are not self-serving, but rather which serve this nation. I have never been asked in public or private life to do anything that would ever cast reflection upon my character, upon my public trust, by organized labor.

I have been asked many times, however, to take a stand for people who have very few to stand by them. I have been asked in the spirit of Franklin Roosevelt to remember that it is not the duty of government to see to it that those who already have too much have more, but rather that it is the high responsibility of public service to see that those who do not have enough have a chance, and that is what we are trying to do.

I know you've had a great convention. I was visiting here briefly with Hank and I met all of you here in a hurried moment. I know the Secretary of Labor has been here with you because yesterday he called me to tell me he was coming to your meeting. I know that you have had your great Senator, Ralph Yarborough,

here, and by the way he's a great Senator. I am happy to be in that good company and above all to be here as a friend and a compatriot and a worker in the vineyards of progressive democracy with these two outstanding members of Congress. You couldn't do better -- you couldn't do better. And Jack Brooks and Jim Wright.

By the way I want to remember the legislators that are here too; members of your state legislature that battle for the people. It's a hard fight -- it is not easy and not always popular. You don't always get the plaudits that you deserve. But I know that there are men and women here in this assemblage today that in the legislature -- in your state government -- have fought for the best interest of this state and for the people of this state. And as one who has served sixteen years in the Congress of the United States I take a moment to pay you deserved tribute for your service.

Now today we meet at a time of great pain. Indeed, a national crisis. You know what I speak of. It's everywhere evident. The violence that has erupted in our cities is in fact a historic challenge to the very democratic processes on which American civilization has been built. My fellow Americans, this country is in trouble. This violence challenges the ability of our institutions, public and private, spiritual and secular, labor and business, to serve the real needs of the American people. And it calls into question and indeed threatens the real human value of social and economic

progress that this country has made in recent decades. This is one of the few times in public life that I have felt depressed and sad, because I see the seeds indeed the harvest of much of the trouble and injustice that has afflicted us. This violence tells us that it is a time when every American, black or white, rich or poor, north or south, must reaffirm his willingness to bear his full responsibilities of American citizenship. I note that we have here a fine circular on a bill of rights -- not just for labor but for everyone -- and I know that those who prepared it would agree with me that with every right comes the responsibility, with every freedom comes a burden and a duty.

Now let me remind you of the words of that great emancipator, Abraham Lincoln; it was historical but it was prophetic as well. He spoke in another time of crisis. Here's what he said: he said no personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the last generation and then every boy and girl remembers these lines: we shall nobly save or meanly lose this last best hope on earth. Those were the words of Lincoln when our nation was in strife and civil war, and those are not just historical words -- they are words of the present. We shall meanly lose or nobly save the last best hope on earth. Our response to what we face today will determine whether or not that American dream -- the dream of a free and equal people, living in harmony and peace, will be lost or nobly saved. Now there is the immediate problem of

lawlessness and crime and violence and riot of which you are familiar. Then there is the fundamental problem of what has brought us to the present state and what must be done about it. With regard to lawlessness and crime I can only say this and to this audience I daresay I need hardly mention it. There can be no freedom, there can be no equal opportunity, no social justice in an environment of mob rule and criminal behavior. There can be no safety for the vast majority of law-abiding citizens and there can be no progress. And might I add that the true and real victims of this violence are the ones who have suffered so long, and had so little. I can assure you that those of us who have public trust will do our duty -- we can do no less. We shall do whatever is necessary to assure that the rule of law is preserved and that violence is put down. But the violence that you had witnessed and we have seen it on our televisions or some people have seen first-hand in their towns and cities -- however inexcusable it may be, and it is inexcusable, is only a symptom of a much deeper problem and it is to that I address my remarks. The problem of poverty -- you have some of it here in Texas -- as we have in Minnesota -- the problem of hopelessness; it is the end result of the inadequate opportunity and frustrated ambition which exists not only in the slums of our cities but exists in the rural slums throughout our country. And poverty in rural America is even more than in urban America. It is borne among

people who have not shared in the unprecedented prosperity to which Jack Brooks referred. This unbelievable prosperity of this rich and powerful America -- there are people in our midst who are literally outsiders in their own country. They live apart from us. These are people who lack skills to even hold a decent job, much less get one; who lack the sense of personal dignity that comes with earning a living rather than being on welfare and doing a steady job well. These are the people who cannot afford decent housing. I had somebody ask me the other day -- Mr. Vice President, you talk about poverty, but gives us your definition. Well, I can tell you that it's not an academic subject. It's not a theoretical concept. It has ugly, real meaning. And the people we are speaking of who are in our own midst in this so rich and prosperous America are the people who cannot afford decent housing even if they can find it but must pay exorbitant rents for rat-infested hovels and find themselves and their children in the street if they complain to the slum landlord. If you think people get an even break, my dear friends, I ask you to get in your car in any great city in America as Mrs. Humphrey and I have only two days ago and drive through what are called low-income areas and what do you find? The streets are poorly cared for and you wouldn't tolerate it for a minute. At least, I know most people wouldn't. The garbage is uncollected or collected last, if at all. In the winter of my way it's to spare the streets that are shoveled last.

I want to say now to my friends in government that if we were

half as willing to enforce the building code and sanitation code as we are to put on traffic tickets, we wouldn't have as many slums in America.

I am always aware that there are those who say, well, the Vice President speaks of these things rather glibly, but let the Vice President document this case. If a little country like Norway, a poor country in a very real sense with less than one-seventh of its land even arable, a nation that was occupied for five years by Hitler, that little country can rid itself of poverty and slums and slummism, and it has, don't tell me that the richest country on the face of the earth with \$775 billion gross national product can't equal what the sea-faring Norwegians are able to do with their limited resources.

When I speak of the poor and the poverty stricken, I speak of the people who pay higher prices -- mind you, higher prices in slum shops than their fellow citizens pay in suburban super markets. These are the people whose children leave school in the seventh grade or sooner. They are the dropouts. These are the people, and get this, who by your own government statistics have four times as much heart disease, six times as much arthritis, six times as much mental illness, and many other diseases over and beyond the rest of the American people. Victims of disease and poverty, of unemployment, of poor education, of illiteracy, that adds up to desperation, to despair, to frustration and alienation. The ghetto, they

call it in the big city -- an ugly word that doesn't belong in our language -- the ghetto that exists with the tar-paper walls of the rural shack just as much as the ghetto of the urban slum. It's by definition of place where opportunity is denied -- the opportunity to move freely, the opportunity to choose freely, the opportunity to participate in the larger and richer society. And, my fellow Americans, everyone that lives in that ghetto can see the other world. The television has changed it all. That machine that I point at -- the tube as we call it -- no longer do the ignorant and the poor and the illiterate and the hopeless and the unemployed live just by themselves -- they may live there -- but they are able to see what the rest of the world is like, and it has changed everything. It has created a restlessness, it has created a spirit of despair and of tearing things apart the likes of which the world has never known. We even now fight wars on television. Never before did a nation see men in battle -- die before their very eyes. Mothers have seen their sons shot down some 10,000 miles away before their very eyes as they sat comfortably -- mother and dad sat comfortably in the living room while their son died in a rice paddy and they have witnessed it on the screen. It's changed things, my friends. There is no place to hide. You can't sweep it under the rug. This is an open society even for those that want to close it. The media has opened it, and while many times we are critical

of it, let me tell you that they have in a sense shown the best and the worse of us. So we have to face up to it.

I come to the right people to talk about this because the American labor movement knows how to meet this challenge. You are in a sense born out of struggle, you were born out of travail, you came into being because of hardship. You know how to meet the challenge and here are just a few of the ways you've met it -- through jobs, through education. Who fought for public education first? The American laborman. Training and re-training, decent and low-cost housing for low-income groups, convenient mass transit in the cities, crime control. Who is it that needs the crime control the most? The person who lives in suburbia? No. The person in the central city -- the poor, the Negro, the Puerto Rican, the Mexican-American. They are the victims of crime more than anybody else. They need law enforcement. You know how to face the challenge -- through recreation, through health services. You know that to face the challenge it means getting trained people with their sleeves rolled up -- to get them out into the battlefield of human progress to help these isolated Americans become full citizens. And it means creative, daring, carefully conceived public and private programs. The old remedies no longer work. New things must be tried. Now we've tried and we've made a good start and there are men here at this table that have helped make it possible, and your President has helped make it possible. I said to Jack Brooks coming

on the plane here today -- I said isn't it unbelievable and so sad that the President of the United States, Lyndon Johnson, who has done more for health, more for education, more for the poor than any President in the history of this country, has so many critics that would deny him that deserved honor. I can speak somewhat, let me say, as an objective observer. I spent sixteen years of my life fighting for these programs and about the only people I get to listen to them are Hank Brown and you folks. I didn't have much support in Congress and I took my fair share of the criticism and a little more sometimes I thought than I really deserved, but that was just my personal point of view. But we've made a good start. There are new words in our vocabulary today -- listen to it -- job corps, VISTA, Headstart, Upward-bound, model cities, Medicare, the youth opportunity program, model cities I said, yes, whole new endeavors made to lift the light and lift the sights of the American people. All of these things have happened literally in a few short months.

I hear people say today, oh, but we're not doing enough -- did we ever? Have you ever done enough for yourself, for your family, even for your country, for your union? But the question is are we doing more. I don't know if we're doing enough. Some people think we're doing too much. Your President has put in this year's budget almost \$26 billions of dollars for aid to the poor in the war on poverty. The war on poverty, you know, includes many things

from Medicare to social security, to unemployment compensation, to VISTA, to the job corps -- it's spread throughout your government. This is quite a big load. Some people think it's too much. A few think it's too little. I think it's about what we can do. This sum was \$3 billion 600 hundred million above fiscal 1967. This sum of money that I mention is almost \$26 billion -- is three times what it was six years ago. And I ask my friends in the labor movement to remember it. It may be that we haven't done enough~~y~~, but our critics were unwilling to have us do anything.

And what about our federal program for health and education. They're two to three times what they were in the early 1960's. Two to three times as much. For our cities in 1960 we spent a little over \$3 billion. This year we'll spend \$10 billion 300 million. Not enough -- but more than our critics dreamed possible or were ever willing to support.

Now most of these measures were passed by that historic 89th Congress and they are the building blocks with which we hope to build a better America. They're not the finished product. They represent the foundation -- the building blocks -- and now we must fill in and make it a working, going program. And these programs need supplements. They need addition, they need improvements and those improvements are in the Congress of the United States today. And have we members of Congress in a large majority like the two that are here I wouldn't have to speak about what I'm about to say. But there are certain forces in that Congress --

and I've been admonished not to say this by some -- but I repeat there are some conservative, very backward-looking forces in the Congress that are able to obstruct, that are able to slow down, that are able to hold back the things that we ought to do. They'll not win in the long run. They'll just make it more painful as we seek to move ahead.

The 90th Congress has a number of measures there that need your help and your support. I want the labor movement to get active once again. Not for yourselves alone -- for your neighbor; I want you to get active for American business because our revenues are going to be down this year. Business isn't as good this year as last. I want you to get active for the schools and for the needy and for the sick -- union or non-union. You're Americans first. Safe streets and crime legislation, languishing. It needs your help. You have the right to be able to walk the streets of any city -- mother, sister -- without the fear of attack. You ought to be able to walk through any park in America and never worry for a moment as to your safety. And we have legislation proposed that will strengthen the great police forces and the law enforcement agencies of every state, county and city of America. We need your help -- not for Lyndon Johnson, not for Hubert Humphrey -- we're well protected. I have all kinds of protection. But what about my neighbors. What about you. What about gun control legislation. I love to hunt pheasants but I've never shot one with a sub-machine gun. And I don't think they're needed. There's a lot of

difference between the person that wants to have good outdoor hunting and recreation and just the free flow of lethal weapons that end up in violence.

What about narcotics control legislation in a society that is faced evermore with dope problems, dope peddling and addiction. We need your help. You don't need to tell Jack Brooks and Jim Wright -- they're already there. They're doing their job. But speak up, my friends of labor. You're mothers and fathers, you're sisters and brothers, you're citizens, you're church members, fraternal members -- and the labor movement of America has gained a place of respect in America. And if others are unwilling to ^{the} carry/torch for a better America, you carry it. Be in the vanguard -- fight for the decent and wholesome and a growing country.

Well, those are just a few of things that need your help. The Economic Opportunity Act, the Model Cities Act -- everybody's proposing new legislation these days. Let me tell you we have plenty of legislation. Oh, yes, we'll need some more. But we have legislation today that is yet to be implemented. What America needs is not more law -- it needs the will to use what it has -- to mobilize its own resources. Now, why do I say this to you, because I like to get where the action is. And I know that this is it. You helped get minimum wages through. Listen, last year your fight for the minimum wages legislation did more to strike a blow against ^{almost} poverty than/anything we've done. And you helped make possible

Medicare. And you remeber the anguish and the pain that was being heard throughout the land saying what it was going to do all of us. Well, ladies and gentlemen, 4 million Americans have been the recipients of Medicare -- the hospitals have received over \$2 billion in cash payments -- doctors have received over \$2 million in cash payments -- bills have been paid, hospitals are better off, better run, and the people that needed medical care, the senior citizens of America, for the first time in their lives have had the best that American medicine can offer. And American medicine offers the best.

Well, what I ask you to do, dear friends, cannot be done by government alone. It's going to require business and labor, and universities, and every force in the American community. It needs the help of every employer, of every teacher, of every shop steward, every policeman, every social worker, because the people we seek to help are going to need all of your cooperation. And the ones that I've mentioned that ought to be in this struggle are the people whose actions and decisions can spell perpetual poverty or success for the disadvantaged citizen. Now labor has a special opportunity and a special responsibility here. You have an opportunity to help because you know how. You have the know-how. Other people do not. You have the experience. Let me document it. In communicating with poor people -- you know how to communicate with poor people who do not know how to make themselves heard. You know how to identify the problems of the working man. That's

why you are union members. You've had experience in organizing people so that they can work together for common goals. You've had experience in negotiating with industry and government for economic gains which benefited the whole society. And most important of all, you've had the experience as a result of all others in giving the large majority of American workers a sense of dignity and a full participation in the American society. Now that experience, the experience that has made organized labor a great and constructive force in America must be put to work in the slums...be put to work in areas of rural poverty as you have done here in Texas. You've done the right thing and don't back away from it. Here is where your responsibility comes in. You need to reach to the people that for a many decade have literally been lost. And while you continue the lot of your own membership and I know that you will you have almost a sacred obligation to extend your help and protection to the millions of American workers who still lack the benefits of union membership and who still do not have full participation in American life. There are a lot of workers unorganized and there are far too many Americans who still do not get a minimum wage.

Now, most of those millions lack skills. Many of them have skins that do not happen to be white. I might add that two-thirds of the world have skins that do not happen to be white. You talk about a minority, my Caucasian brothers -- we are it. Every union

has the responsibility to see that equal opportunity without regard to race, creed or color truly prevails in its own ranks -- in trade unions, in craft unions, in industrial unions. And I want the labor movement of America to set an example. I've met your equal opportunity representatives of this great AFL-CIO of Texas. I salute you for the work you are doing but I think you would be the first to agree with me that there's more work to be done. Ladies and gentlemen, America will not be the weaker because we permit everyone to have a chance. America will not be weaker because we bring into full citizenship people of different names and different ethnic groups and different backgrounds. America is a pluralistic society -- it is a society like a mosaic -- it's a beautiful society if we'll let it be so. But when you separate people, when you identify them primarily by color or race or religion, or ethnic origin or region, you don't build the United States of America -- you build the dis-United States of America. I must say to you that your obligation as a union member who believes in solidarity is to practice it. Where is the poor/unskilled working man to turn for protection if he can't look to you, who have learned the lesson of cooperation and unionism. How is he to find job security, if not through the unions. How is he to become a producer and a consumer unless he has a job. How is he to achieve his full citizenship unless he is to have opportunity. I know that the American labor movement is ready for this assignment, and when I say this

I am talking about people who work on the soil as well as people in industry. As a member of the United States Senate I fought to amend the National Labor Relations Act so that all workers, urban and rural, might enjoy a better and more decent chance in life. And I haven't changed my attitude one bit. The shame of poverty... in a land of wealth. Some nations can rationalize their poverty because there isn't anything for anybody, but not here. Unless I be misunderstood, let me make it clear, I'm not just talking about welfare -- I'm not just talking about writing federal checks. That's not the point at all. What I'm talking about and what I'm asking for in America is that we help people help themselves, that we educate them, train them. I do not want a welfare state. I want a state of opportunity for every single American.

Well, my friends, let me conclude on a more hopeful note -- America has passed through many crises at home and abroad. We've weathered them and we've been the better for the trials. At home the most recent great crisis was the Great Depression which was a time of awful suffering -- it's the time, Hank, of your boyhood and mine -- but which gave birth to the New Deal, which saw the American labor movement emerge as a powerful force for progress in the American society and which began the massive national effort that has brought us to our level of freedom and prosperity today. Interestingly enough, the critics of that period have never seen fit to repeal the work that was done. You know why? Because to

do so would have injured themselves. Now we face a brand new challenge. We face a new test in a new time. And I think we're a stronger people now -- a stronger nation and we ought to face this test confidently. And the focus of what we face is in a very large measure in the American city. The future of the city is our country's future. It's your future because that's where most of the people live. 70% of the Americans live in the city. By 1975, 80% of the Americans will live in the city. By 1980, 85% of the Americans, they say, will in the cities. That's where most of you live. The future of the city is your future. It's the future of your children. Of their health and education. It's the future of the family's happiness and well-being. The future of your work, of your leisure time, of your hopes and aspirations. The city is you. If the city fails, you fail. If it is rotten and corrupt, you are contaminated. Life in the American city, I think, can be much more than steaming asphalt and crowded tenements. It can be more than filthy air and polluted water. It can be more than clogged highways and congested streets. It can be more than bursting schoolrooms and underpaid and oftentimes overworked teachers. It can be more than hopelessness and discrimination. Yes, it can be more than just material satisfaction. I think the city, in a way, lies open, I should say, the cities which are filled with green and open space, why not. It was so intended. The city ought to be man's finest creation. The center of culture, industry, commerce, of joy and of play rather than the center of crime and congestion and polluted air

and tension. I think we can have cities where transportation is safe and comfortable and rapid -- neighborhoods once more filled with neighbors and not just somebody else. And I think the way lies open to schools and universities that truly care about children. And don't identify them with a punchcard -- to an environment with people because they are citizens -- because they are people -- that live together in harmony and cooperation.

Every man and woman in this room I know loves America. And you should. It's been good to you. And America is more than a piece of ground -- it's more than a nation. America is a hope -- it's what Lincoln said: the last best hope on earth. It's not only something to us but something to everybody else in the world. Because, my dear friends, if we can't succeed here with our wealth, our science, our technology and all that we have, what makes you think it can succeed any place else. If we can't cure the sickness of poverty here, what makes you think we can do it in Africa or Latin America or Asia. My dear friends, the best thing we can do for the whole world is to set the example here of the good society -- the Great Society.

So, my dear friends, if we meet this challenge that I've outlined for you, and I've done it in a sketchy and inadequate manner, I think it will be the greatest victory of all. It'll be greater than the victory over the Depression, greater than victory of

World War II, greater than any of our victories. For in our time I think we will have truly created something man has dreamed for for centuries. And I've concluded many a speech on this note because I believe it. I believe this is our purpose and this is our commitment.

Your President used these words the other night as he concluded his address to the nation following the tragic days in Detroit. But these words come through history, through the mouths of many Presidents, and from the lips of millions of children. Here's what it's all about -- here's what we're talking about and here's what the union movement is all about. Here's what America is all about. One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all -- that is the American promise. That's why we're here. That's for what we work. And to fail in that endeavor is to be unworthy of being an American. Thank you very much.



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