

Bert Reeves - Columbus SC
Debbie Meyer - Sacramento

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

OPENING CEREMONY

AAU JUNIOR OLYMPICS

SYLVAN THEATER

WASHINGTON, D. C.

AUGUST 21, 1967

Mel Campbell
Channel 7
Sports

Dick Kline
Punch
all champions
here

Track, Field + Swimming

IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE HERE THIS EVENING ...

TO WELCOME YOU AAU JUNIOR OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS TO WASHINGTON ...

AND TO OFFICIALLY OPEN THESE GAMES.

L I EXPECT TO HEAR ABOUT MANY OF YOU NEXT

YEAR WHEN YOU GO ON TO INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION IN

MEXICO CITY AT THE '68 OLYMPIC GAMES OR IN THE 1972 GAMES.

L I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THERE IS A LONG LIST OF

YOUNG AMERICANS WHO PICKED UP GOLD MEDALS AFTER FIRST

WINNING IN THE AAU'S JUNIOR OLYMPICS. NOTABLY ABSENT FROM

THAT LIST IS CONGRESSMAN BOB MATHIAS, WHO IS WITH US TONIGHT.

Decathlon

AT THE AGE OF 17, HE WON THE DECATHLON AT THE 1948 OLYMPICS. HE WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN A JUNIOR OLYMPICS WINNER, BUT THE AAU DIDN'T GET AROUND TO ORGANIZING THESE GAMES UNTIL TWO YEARS LATER.

Bob went on to repeat as Decathlon Champion in 1952. It is too bad he had to spoil such a fine

record by joining the wrong political party.

BUT THESE GAMES ... THE JUNIOR OLYMPICS OF THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION ... RISE ABOVE ALL PARTY LABELS.

THAT'S BECAUSE THE INTERESTS OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ABOVE PARTISAN POLITICS. I ALWAYS FOUND OUT IN THE CONGRESS THAT WHEN A PROGRAM WAS FOR THE YOUNGSTERS, IT GOT BROAD BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT.

~~AND THAT'S WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THIS SUMMER.~~

This summer

PEOPLE ALL ACROSS AMERICA HAVE BEEN PUTTING FORTH AN

UNPRECEDENTED EFFORT TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR

BOYS AND GIRLS, ~~DEMOCRATIC~~ MAYORS AND ~~REPUBLICAN~~

~~MAYORS~~ ~~DEMOCRATIC~~ GOVERNORS AND ~~REPUBLICAN~~ *People*

IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHICH -- ALL HAVE JOINED IN TO

GIVE OUR YOUNGSTERS A BETTER CHANCE FOR WORTHWHILE

EMPLOYMENT, RECREATION, AND LEARNING EXPERIENCE.

I HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVING AS CHAIRMAN
OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON YOUTH OPPORTUNITY. THIS
COUNCIL COORDINATES THE FEDERAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE,
AND TRIES TO MAKE THEM WORK A LITTLE BETTER. BUT,
MAINLY, WE TRY TO GET LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND LOCAL
CITIZENS INVOLVED IN HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES.

2 WHILE THESE PROGRAMS DON'T ALWAYS MAKE THE
HEADLINES, THE SUCCESSES ARE NOTEWORTHY.

2 MILITARY INSTALLATIONS HAVE BECOME YOUTH
CAMPS; TENEMENT WALLS HAVE BECOME MOVIE SCREENS; OLD
WAREHOUSES AND IDLE FAIRGROUNDS HAVE BECOME MASS RECREATION
CENTERS;

STREETS, VACANT LOTS AND PARKING LOTS HAVE BECOME
PLAYGROUNDS; TRUCK BEDS HAVE BECOME STAGES, BRINGING
ENTERTAINMENT TO GHETTO NEIGHBORHOODS.

THESE THINGS HAPPEN BECAUSE PEOPLE CARE.

MANY OF YOU ARE HERE TONIGHT BECAUSE SOMEONE
CARED. YOU WERE ENCOURAGED BY A BOYS CLUB OR A POLICE
ATHLETIC LEAGUE OR A YMCA OR A COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY.
YOU DEVELOPED YOUR SKILLS AND YOUR ABILITY, AND TOMORROW
YOU WILL BE IN AAU COMPETITION FOR NATIONAL HONORS.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE IS DUE A COMPANY THAT
CARES -- THE QUAKER OATS COMPANY -- FOR MAKING THIS
FIRST NATIONAL COMPETITION POSSIBLE. LIKE HUNDREDS OF

OTHER GREAT BUSINESS FIRMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, IT SEES
THE WISDOM OF GIVING YOUNGSTERS A BREAK. *o Thanks*

THERE ARE SOME WHO ADVOCATE PROVIDING MORE
YOUTH OPPORTUNITY BECAUSE THIS WILL PREVENT RIOTING
AND VIOLENCE IN OUR CITIES.

✓ THERE ARE SOME WHO CITE THE ALARMING NUMBER
OF YOUNGSTERS WHO ARE REJECTED BY THE DRAFT AS A
JUSTIFICATION FOR MORE EDUCATION AND RECREATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH.

✓ ~~BUT THE MAIN REASON WE ALL NEED TO GET INVOLVED~~
~~IS BECAUSE IT IS RIGHT.~~ ✓ HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE HELP
THEMSELVES IS AN AMERICAN TRADITION. ~~AND BECAUSE WE~~
~~ALL~~
~~ARE NOT DOING WE SHOULD BE TODAY TO HELP MANY OF OUR~~
~~YOUNG PEOPLE~~ ✓ WE ALL NEED TO ROLL UP OUR SLEEVES AND
GET TO WORK.

✓ OUR HISTORY ECHOES WITH THE NAMES OF CITIZENS
WHO GREW UP IN POVERTY, BUT GOT A HELPING HAND -- AND
OVERCAME GREAT ADVERSITY TO LEAVE THEIR MARK ON THIS
WORLD. ✓ AMONG THE MOST DRAMATIC EXAMPLES ARE THE ATHLETES
WHOSE SKILLS CARRIED THEM TO THE BIG TIME OF THE OLYMPICS
AND PROFESSIONAL SPORTS.

BUT WE MUST ALSO ASSURE THAT A YOUNGSTER
WITH AN INTEREST IN SCIENCE, WHO MAY FIND A CURE FOR
CANCER, GETS SIMILAR OPPORTUNITIES AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO
DEVELOP HIS TALENTS. THAT'S WHY WE HAVE MADE AN EFFORT
TO GET YOUNGSTERS INVOLVED THIS SUMMER IN EDUCATIONAL
ENDEAVORS AND MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT, AS WELL AS RECREATION.
/ THAT'S WHY WE ARE NOW LAUNCHING A STAY IN SCHOOL
CAMPAIGN TO GET ACTUAL DROPOUTS AND POTENTIAL DROPOUTS BACK
TO SCHOOL. O

YOU, THE YOUNG ATHLETES OF THE NATION, ARE
NATURAL LEADERS IN YOUR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES. YOUR
FRIENDS LOOK UP TO YOU.

/ I URGE YOU TO GO HOME AND URGE YOUR FRIENDS TO
GO BACK TO SCHOOL NEXT MONTH ... TO GET THAT DIPLOMA WHICH
WILL MEAN SO MUCH. / POINT OUT TO THEM THAT IN LIFE, AS IN
SPORTS, IT'S THE GUY WHO DOESN'T QUIT THAT WINS!

YOU KNOW THAT, FOR THE AAU JUNIOR OLYMPICS
HAS GIVEN YOU AND TWO MILLION OTHER Young People YOUNGSTERS THIS
YEAR AN OPPORTUNITY TO TEST YOUR SKILLS AND TO LEARN
THE MEANING OF FAIR PLAY.

THERE ARE MANY GREAT CHAMPIONS, FORMER
OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL WINNERS, HERE ON THE PLATFORM
TONIGHT. THEY WILL ALL AGREE THAT THE IMPORTANT
THING WAS NOT SO MUCH THE WINNING, BUT THE TAKING
PART IN THE GAMES, AND DOING YOUR BEST TO WIN.

AND THAT'S WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO IN OUR
COUNTRY -- TO GIVE EVERY YOUNGSTER IN AMERICA THE
CHANCE TO TAKE PART ... TO OPEN THE DOOR TO EMPLOYMENT,
EDUCATION, AND RECREATION.

WE DON'T CLAIM TO HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS. BUT
MORE AND MORE YOUNGSTERS ARE GETTING A CHANCE, AND WE'RE
NOT GOING TO QUIT.

Pledge of Allegiance

AND NOW, I WISH EACH OF YOU THE BEST
OF LUCK IN TOMORROW'S COMPETITION AND OFFICIALLY
PROCLAIM THE 1967 JUNIOR OLYMPIC GAMES UNDERWAY.

#

Edited

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Remarks Opening the First

AAU Junior Olympic Games

Washington, D. C.

August 21, 1967

What a wonderful sight it is to look out over this great auditorium and see these fine champions, all these excellent young people. If ever there was a time when criticism of our young people ought to be proven false and put aside, I think it's tonight. I want to compliment you on the wonderful example that you are setting for the youth of America, and I want to wish each and every one of you the best in your forthcoming competition.

I welcome you to the AAU Olympic games in track, field, and swimming. I welcome every champion to Washington. And what an honor it is to officially open these games.

Some of you may not know, but I have looked forward to this day for many years. In fact, when I was a United States Senator, time after time, I introduced resolutions, offered amendments, spoke on the floor of the Senate in support of what I called the Junior Olympics. I believe that this is the way that we develop the talent that ultimately brings us the great victories, but above all, brings us that fine sense of sportsmanship and competition for which this nation ought to stand. Many of

you will go on to international competition in Mexico City for the '68 Olympic games or possibly in 1972 in those games. I've been told that there's a long list of young Americans who have picked up gold medals at the Olympics after first winning in the AAU Junior Olympics.

I might add that in 1968, there's another competitive event going on in America. I don't know just which category it falls under --- track, field, or swimming. But I can assure you of one thing, it'll be hotly contested and you ought to be in shape for it.

Now this summer, people all around your great country --- this country that you've just spoken of in your Pledge of Allegiance --- have been putting forth an unprecedented effort to provide genuine opportunity for boys and girls.

Governors, Mayors, Federal Government officials, people in the great sports organizations and many voluntary organizations, the churches, the business community --- all of them have joined together in an effort to give our youngsters a much better chance for worthwhile employment, for wholesome recreation, and a rich learning experience.

We call this our Youth Opportunity program.

Now I've had the privilege of serving as the Chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity. Of all my work in the Government none has been more inspiring to me, more challenging, and more rewarding than this chance to be Chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity.

I serve as chairman of the National Aeronautics and Space Council, which coordinates all of your Government's efforts in the field of space research. Only recently the Congress gave me the opportunity to serve as Chairman of the Council on Oceanography, all of our Government's efforts in the field of deep ocean research.

I jokingly have said from many a platform that whenever the Congress gave the Vice President anything to do, such as in the space or in oceanography, it was either out of this world or at the bottom of the sea.

But I can tell you that when the President gave me something to do, it was to be Chairman of the Youth Opportunity Council. And what a joy this has been.

This Council coordinates the Federal programs designed to help young people. And it tries to make them work, just a little bit better. But mainly, what we try to do is to get people to do what they ought to do anyhow. We try to get local government officials, private organizations, churches, business organizations, labor unions, veterans' groups, fraternal groups to maximize their efforts in helping our young people live a better life. Helping young people just to help themselves --- to lift themselves a little higher.

Now while these programs don't always make the headlines, I tell you that their successes are noteworthy. Oh, so much has happened. We've had more people in wholesome recreation in the United States this past

summer --- in these months since the first of June --- than ever before in the history of the country.

We have more playgrounds open; more playgrounds properly staffed; more camps for young people --- more fully occupied than ever before. We have more swimming pools --- more swimming pools open to people without regard to race, creed, or color --- more than ever before in the nation's history.

I know that it isn't enough, but I can say to you that it's the best that we've been able to do thus far. And if you will just take an interest in this, now that you have become champions in your own right, we'll do a better job next year.

Let me give you another example of what's happening. Military installations --- that is, military camps --- have become youth camps. There's one opening up in California this week at Camp Roberts. There's another one down in Arkansas at Camp Robinson. There's another in Maryland at Fort Ritchie.

These are military camps that are today being opened for young people for wholesome outdoor camping, the first experience in camping that thousands of our young people have ever known. And we have literally hundreds of thousands of others that are in private camps where somebody that cared enough saw to it that a needy boy or girl had the chance to see nature in all its beauty as God wanted that boy or girl to see nature

-- in a camp, outdoors, in wholesome recreation.

Yes, we've been able to take military camps and make them boys' camps and girls' camps for recreation. And tenement walls in the slums of our cities have become movie screens, with hundreds of thousands of youngsters seeing top-grade, first-class movies free, because somebody cared. Old warehouses and idle fairgrounds have become mass recreation centers.

You know what we found out? We found out that we didn't have to build anything new; it was already there. We found out that there were thousands and thousands of facilities going unused because nobody took time out to find that they were there. And when we all got working together -- Governors and Mayors and Congressman and sports directors, recreation departments, churches, public and private groups -- we found that there were facilities galore that could be used if somebody cared.

Streets have been opened up and made into parks. Vacant lots and parking lots have become playgrounds. Business firms have equipped many of these playgrounds, free of charge to the public. And where there used to be trouble when a boy turned on a water hydrant, now we turn it on and say, "Have a good time."

Truck beds have become stages, mobile stages to put on plays and concerts, bringing entertainment into the ghetto neighborhoods and into the poorer neighborhoods of our cities. The Marine Band, which is with us tonight, has been playing for our youngsters around the Washington neighborhoods. There isn't a finer musical organization in the world, and I salute them wherever I go. They're great.

All over America, good things are beginning to happen, because some people care enough to see that they happen.

Now many of you are here tonight because someone cared. You were encouraged by a Boys Club or a Police Athletic League or a YMCA or a Community Action Agency or some other group. You developed your skills and your ability and tomorrow you will be in the AAU competition for national honors. And people will know that somebody cared and that you cared enough to do your best. When we do that, no one can do better.

A special tribute tonight is due to a business firm, a fine company that really cares. And I'm not accustomed to giving commercials; that doesn't go along with the job of being Vice President. But I've made up my mind that when somebody does something that's good and noteworthy and unselfish and generous and civic-minded, somebody ought to let the world know. And I want to salute the Quaker Oats Company for making this first national competition possible.

Now if I get scolded for saying that, you all stand alongside of me and say it was all right. Because somebody's apt to say, "Why did he select them out?" Well, I like oatmeal, anyhow, I think I should tell you. It didn't make me a champion, but I like it.

Like hundreds of other great business firms across the country -- and there are hundreds that are doing great things -- this company saw the wisdom of giving youngsters a break. And I take this moment tonight to thank the American business community, small and large, for your generosity in helping young people. Never will you make a better investment, Mr. Businessman.

And I might just as well tell you, all that you did this summer was just a prelude to what we're going to ask you to do next summer. Because next summer we're really going to get going. We were just in the preliminaries this summer. And the competition is going to be better than ever. Helping young people is what we're interested in. and that's an old American tradition.

What I'm asking tonight from this platform is for everybody to roll up his sleeves and get to work. There are a lot of young people that need a helping hand these days.

Our history echoes with the names of citizens who grew up in poverty, but they got a helping hand and overcame great adversity to leave their mark on this world.

And most of us that are here in this auditorium tonight started out with very little or nothing, and somebody gave us a break. I got my chance from a great university -- the University of Minnesota -- where the tax-payers literally paid for my education. I've never forgotten it. And I often think how much we in public life, and we in corporate or business life, or we in the professions, who have been privileged to have a higher education owe to the rest of the country.

Every one of us was given that great gift. None of us ever paid our own way, really. Even though many of us had the privilege of "working our way through college", as we put it. Who is it that paid for the laboratories out of his small tuition? Who is it that paid for the libraries out of what little he paid in tuition? Those have been paid for through generations -- hundreds of years -- of greatness and of sacrifice. And they've been paid for frequently by generous givers and, in public institutions, by tax-payers.

So we all have had a helping hand. I've had many, and I'm grateful. Among the most dramatic examples, though, of getting a helping hand and of coming from little or nothing to greatness are the athletes whose skills carried them to the big time of the Olympics and then possibly on to professional sports.

You take a look at the roster of champions of the last 25 or 50 years, my dear young friends, and you'll find that almost every one of them started from poverty or slightly above it. With somebody that cared and gave them a little lift, with somebody that inspired them and told them that they could do it, and with the young man or woman feeling that they wanted to do their best, a champion was born... or at least a competitor. that brought honor to himself and to his community. But we must also assure that a youngster with an interest in science, who may have hidden back in his mind -- unknown to himself or anyone else at the moment--a cure for a dread disease, gets similar opportunities and encouragement to develop his talents. That's why we've made such a strong effort to get our youngsters involved this summer in special education programs and meaningful employment, as well as recreation.

That's why we are now launching a Stay-in-School campaign to get actual dropouts and potential school dropouts back to school. And you--you right here in this auditorium, the young athletes of this nation--you are the natural leaders in your schools and communities. Your friends look up to you. They'll listen to you. And I want you to do them a favor.

I want you to do them the greatest favor that you could ever do them. Urge your young friends and your classmates and those in your neighborhood to go to school. Urge them to get back into school next month. Too many of them plan on not returning, and that's a terrible loss to this nation and an even greater individual loss to the person. Point out to them that in life, as in sports, it's the guy who doesn't quit that wins.

Now you know this, for the AAU Junior Olympics has given you and two million other young people this year an opportunity to test your skills and to learn the meaning of fair play and to test out that principle that the guy who doesn't quit wins.

Now there are many great champions, former Olympic gold medal winners, here in this auditorium tonight. And I think that they will all agree that the important thing was not the winning, but taking part in the games and doing your best. The Olympic Creed --

I noticed it in your program here just as I came in -- "The important thing in the Olympic games is not the winning, but taking part. The essential thing in life is not conquering, but fighting well."

What a wonderful creed! It applies to everything that we do. And that's what we're trying to do here in our country: To give every youngster in America the chance to take part... to open the door to employment... the chance to take part in education and in recreation... the chance to be something, to be himself.

Now we don't claim to have all of the answers by a long shot. But more and more youngsters are getting a chance, and we're not going to quit until every boy and girl that wants a chance, that wants an opportunity, has that chance and has that opportunity.

That's the only way I know to make that Pledge of Allegiance that you recited come true. I hope that every one of you meant it. I hope that every one of you meant it as you mean your prayers. When you say, "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation" -- not two, one -- "under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all" -- that is the meaning of this country. One people, one country, one purpose, one freedom... for everybody... justice for everyone and liberty for everyone adds up to opportunity for you and for everyone.

And now I wish each of you the very best of luck. I wish I were young enough and good enough to compete. I remember once winning third place in the district track meet for the half-mile run. I think there were only four competitors, and the other fellow didn't arrive. But, I thought it was great fun.

What a wonderful day to live. What a wonderful time to be young. And believe me, I see right now -- I think I see tonight -- people that I'm going to be reading about in the years ahead, because I'm a sports page reader.

I love competition, all kinds of competition. And frankly, I've tried both winning and losing. And I like winning best, I think I should tell you.

And now, officially, as your Vice President, I proclaim the 1967 AAU Junior Olympic Games underway. 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